

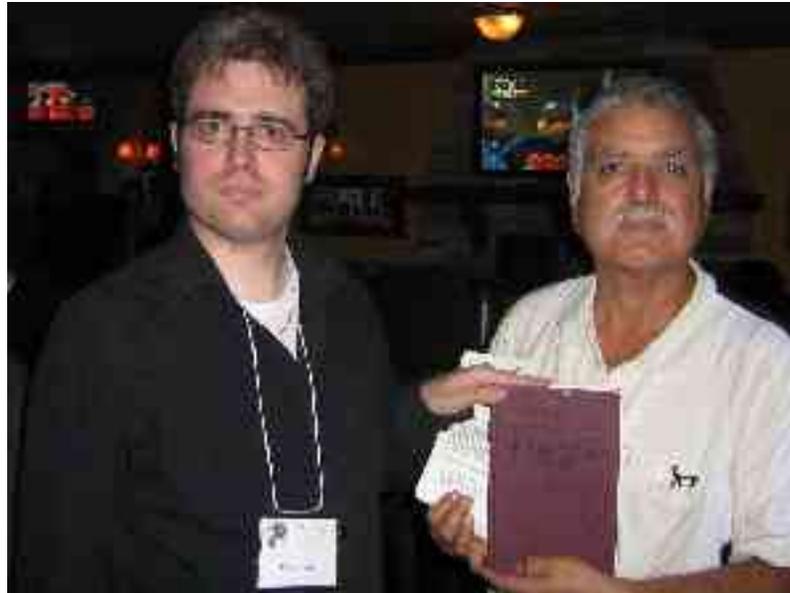
BCSFA Zine

The newsletter of the B.C. Science Fiction Association

#404

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Masthead/Colophon/and other Wallpaper

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This Month in BCSFA

- Friday, Jan. 12: **BCSFAzine deadline** - see Garth at FRED (from 8 pm on at Boston Pizza, Broadway near Granville) if you want to submit to issue #405
- Saturday, Jan. 13 @ 7 p.m.: **Feeding Frenzy** at Memphis Blues Barbecue House, 1465 West Broadway, Vancouver
- Thursday, Jan. 18: **December book discussion** at "Our Town" café, 245 East Broadway, Vancouver, starting at 7 pm. Book to be discussed will be *Icelenge*, by Kim Stanley Robinson.
- Saturday, Jan. 20: **BCSFA party/meeting** at 7 pm at Kathleen Moore-Freeman's, 7064 No. 1 Road, Richmond, BC V7C 1T6
- Friday, Jan. 26: **BCSFAzine production** - distribution starts at FRED
- Saturday, Jan. 27 @ 7 p.m.: **Kaffeeklatsch**, our group exercise in hard-headed imagination, at Garth Spencer's place, 82 East 41st Avenue, Vancouver; call 604-325-7314 or email garthspencer@shaw.ca for directions

Art Credits

Sheryl Birkhead..... Masthead
Felicity Walker?..... cover photo
Felicity Walker..... pp. 11, 28

Errata

It appears I have to correct some of my misapprehensions. Vcon 31 and 32 committees are more in touch with local fandom than I imagined. And Alyx Shaw, for one, approached the last VCon committee directly with her complaints (about the hotel).

Are You Guys Serious?

Sometimes I think BCSFAns won't, or *can't*, pay enough attention to what they're doing. Sometimes I think VCon committees won't, or *can't*, learn from congoers, or remember anything from one year to the next – except the preconceptions they brought to their VCon.

Some of the problems I have seen in BCSFA – or in VCon – are not just one-off things, specific individuals making specific mistakes once. BCSFA members, and VCon committees, have repeated mistakes that were made before, *by people they never knew* – which is unlikely enough I have to call it “cultural.”

Consider: when fans in Victoria were thinking of organizing a club, about 1975 – in fact, as a branch of BCSFA – Daniel Say came over the water to tell them BCSFA was “bored and boring”, and the Victorians should start their own club. That sounds just like the late 1980s, when I came to Vancouver: it dawned on me slowly that a lot of the active fans – whose names I used to read about – had moved on from BCSFA, the ones I met were bored and boring, until an influx of new members came in. The difference was like the difference between free-swimming marine organisms, and the kind that settle down to a rock and become sessile, plantlike objects. Now, fast-forward to the present. We've gone through two or three more influxes of new members, who have done BCSFA and done VCon ... and have left both, and gone on to other things. A *few* relatively new faces show up at FRED, and BCSFA meetings (although most of the new faces and activity has been at BIFF). I know, I know, it isn't that longstanding BCSFAns are dullards, precisely; more like the oldest members are simply getting old, not so energetic, and are not spectacularly well off. Still ...

Consider: we used to hold some of the same events any SF club holds – group outings to movie premieres or previews; guest speakers at meetings, ranging from scientists and writers to SCA presentations, costumers and inventors; we also used to have some original events, swim parties or hot-tub parties or whatever. We can't *all* be old and tired and broke; what are we doing now, instead?

Consider: As early as the 1970s, and continuing through the 1990s, VCons started exhibiting some unfortunate tendencies. Some were trivial,

like holding VCons on the Victoria Day weekend, rather than the U.S. Memorial Day weekend. (VCons used to be held in May.) Other trivial tendencies were not holding volunteers to the sign-in/ sign-out procedure, or not keeping track of where the bar money went.

Much more serious was the recurring failure to control expenses and revenues, most blatantly at VCon 12 and at Westercon 44. The story there was that we brought upon ourselves a \$14,000 loss arising out of Westercon, pretty much the same way we brought upon ourselves a \$1,600 loss arising out of VCon 12. We *knowingly* let a subcompetent person stand as VCon 12 chair, and later failed to hold the chair to some standards of accountability. We learned well before Westercon 44 that the chair abused our finances and our reputations, and we failed to rein her in. Both times, nobody had the spine to *confront* the chair.

I have argued inconclusively with Graeme about this. Apparently, because both chairs left our conrunning community and we recovered from the losses, he thinks these stories are dead issues. But it should be obvious, if the foregoing stories show what our conrunning *culture* is like, then we'll do the same silly thing *again* sometime. Am I under the same curse as Cassandra, that nobody listens when I say this?

Then again, there have been net changes in our behaviour over the decades. Were they improvements?

Consider: when I served as Westercon 44 secretary, and as WCSFA secretary, I could find complete financial statements for only a few VCons, within the late 1980s (due largely to the good work of Norma Beauregard). I *tried* to compile more complete records of VCon finances, in the 1990s; it couldn't be done, I couldn't find the materials. They weren't there. And they used to exist, VCons used to publish the last con's final statement with the next con's first progress report. Is there some good reason we don't do that anymore?

Consider: Mike Bailey, when he was incumbent secretary of WCSFCCA, waxed sarcastic about Westercon 44's poor bookkeeping and uncontrolled spending. We later found out that *he had failed to file WCSFCCA financial statements* for several years, so WCSFCCA was no longer registered, so Westercon had not even the minimal limited-liability protection of a registered society. (In fact, he had made himself nearly impossible to contact, to the prejudice of WCSFCCA business for some years. This was why we had to set up WCSFA, a whole new society.)

Consider: originally, VCon bids were selected before the existing VCon, and that meant a basic promotional flyer for the next year would appear before the Dead Dog party, complete with advance membership rate and address. WCSFA's procedure (last I heard) *required* that VCon

bids present a venue and some of their seed money, as well as a date. But VCon 32 did not have a basic promotional flyer ready before Orycon, which meant it missed one of its major opportunities for promotion. Has it become harder, in this decade, to get a letter of intent or contract with a hotel signed, as much as 12 months before a convention?

Consider: Greg Slade reported that while he was promoting VCon 31, he found out-of-town fans surprised that there was still a VCon in operation. What channels of advertising could we be missing?

Consider: Palle Hoffstein reported that volunteers and concon members typically bugger off entirely after Sunday night, apparently thinking all the work is over. It isn't; apart from Monday strikedown and cleanup and moving paraphernalia out of the hotel, there is some documentation to be done in the following weeks or months. People seem not to *know* that.

Finally ... Every time someone describes VCon as a "literary" convention, I want to laugh. Or throw up. Read a bloody dictionary, why don't you?

I could go on and on, of course, with details like did we maintain our trademark registration of "VCon". The bottom line is, I don't think you *are* serious, about the con or the club; or else a whole lot of you unconsciously think entertainment is only something you pay for and watch - not something you do, and participate in.

For some reason I thought fans would *attend to all the details* of the jobs they take on, like the best of professionals, despite being amateur volunteers. For one thing - and I've argued with Kathleen Moore-Freeman about this - if you're serious about a job, *paid or unpaid*, you document what you've done. (*After* the job is done. Of course. Obviously.) Otherwise you haven't finished your job.

Here is why I accused you of wanting to make only half-assed gestures at what you do: some people don't realize or believe all the tasks that have to be done, all the follow-through involved.

Some solutions to the foregoing are obvious. BCSFAns could, at any time, decide what we are offering that fans can't find elsewhere, and start up a sustained outreach program. VCon committees could have - and Danielle Stephens *has* - consulted our archivist for guidelines on running a VCon (and a Convention). But most of you are too "sessile" to take that much trouble.

So I ask myself, from time to time: are you guys serious about being a club? Are you serious about holding a convention? Or do you just want to make half-assed gestures at it?

Dale Speirs wrote, in a recent issue of *Opuntia*, what he considered a basic, stripped-down convention: only two tracks of programming, no costume masquerade, no artshow, maybe no dealers' room even - a convention that revolves around the consuite and maybe room parties. This suggestion appeals to me, because it sounds like "*cutting your suit to fit your cloth*" - that is, cutting *down* the challenges of conrunning to a manageable size, for amateur volunteers. If I went mad and offered to chair an upcoming VCon - which I won't; I realize how little any concom will listen to me - this basic con would be my style.

But the niche for this sort of convention is already filled, in North America and in the Pacific Northwest. Corflu, the original fanzine fans' convention; Ditto (also a travelling con, just six months apart); Potlatch, which alternates between the Southwest and the Northwest; and Foolscape, in Washington - they already satisfy this need.

I say "niche" because the majority of congoers want and expect a combination county fair, three-ring circus, writers' conference and boat show indoors, that challenges any sane hotelier's idea of a convention; *and* they want it on the cheap. Nobody has said this in my hearing, so I'll say it: conventions as we expect them are extraordinary challenges for an unpaid, somewhat inexperienced group of amateur volunteers.

It's actually impressive how much competent work goes into the majority of conventions, everywhere in fandom. I used to think running a convention looked a lot like war - you try to operate a complex structure just to do simple things, but it's constantly beset by breakdowns, diversions, and the just plain unexpected. Now, I think it's more like driving: we are all subject to horrendous accidents, at any time, due simply to normal distractions, lulls in our attention, or episodes of being overwhelmed.

I've put my constructive suggestions for fun creative activities later in this zine, but why don't you tell me what *you* thought of doing, here? Have you ever even put that into words?

Letters

Richard Graeme Cameron [canfancylopedia@shaw.ca] November 29, 2006

Garth wrote:

*I'm feeling fed up with BCSFA these days,
and I haven't enjoyed VCon in a while either.
How about you?*

Cameron's law of movie fun also applies here. If you lower your expectations low enough, you'll have a great time... or to put it another way, there's the way you want things to be, and the way things are. Even at the best of times fannish apathy defeats crusaders. Tilting against windmills only works if everyone wants to do it. Personally, I'm no longer interested in beating my head against a wall. I just enjoy what I can.

Garth wrote:

For years I've heard some fans muttering about oldpharts trying to keep BCSFA what it was years ago, but they aren't more specific than that.

Old news, old guard retired, no longer relevant.

((Oh, YEAH? It's only irrelevant if current BCSFA executives aren't doing the same dumb things as some of their predecessors. Ditto for VCon committees.))

Somewhat related: long ago many of the core group decided they were no longer interested in partying with just any BCSFAn (there being some they preferred to avoid) and started invite-only events, to share with select BCSFAns which excluded the rest. Eventually, they clued in they could have friends-only parties by themselves, without BCSFA. So we lost those folks.

((Now, why don't I do that?))

Others, like myself, drifted away from steady active participation because they're now decades older, and no longer interested in partying on a regular basis. Other things, like quiet evenings at home, or sleep, have greater attraction. Hence the need for new blood, young new blood with lots of energy, if the club is to be reinvigorated.

Then there were those who fled because they perceived the club as a hotbed of pointless politics and personal abuse, a complete waste of time, something that was no longer fun. Westercon fallout had a lot to do with that. And endless Constitution debates...

((That reminds me. Did you ever clue in that I was EXCLUDED from the entirely oral arguments following Westercon? That I had no idea any debate was going on, and that was why I was trying so hard to start up a discourse in print? Did you know it took over five years for some clue about this situation to reach me?

((Nobody can blame me for creating divisive argument; I was trying to start some friggin' communication for a change.))

And of course, there are those whose primary interest has always been VCON. All they need do is belong to WCSFA. Our club is irrelevant to their interests.

Garth wrote:

Other fans have also been muttering for years something about VCon not responding to what congoers demand, but they haven't been specific about that, either. That means you, Ashton, and that means you, Alyx,

Well, not to speak for Alyx, but she did buttonhole a member of next year's concom and recite her list of concerns, plus she took the trouble to fill out the VCON survey in depth. In her case it wasn't the con so much as the choice of hotel, i.e. fecal matter under the counter and urine soaked carpet in our room.

((Good show, Alyx! That's the kind of direct communication I want to promote.))

Garth wrote:

I think it's past time the specific complaints got read into the record and published, here and on our email lists, just so there's no excuse for BCSFA executives and VCon organizers not getting the message. But BCSFA executives and VCon organizers don't talk with most Vancouver fans, do they? So they probably still won't get the message. That means you, Graeme, and that means you, Kathleen, and I might as well name Clint and Donna and everybody on the VCon 32 committee.

First, VCON 31 made a great effort to get feedback from congoers, and the VCON 32 committee is consequently armed with a great deal of info as to what people liked and disliked, and moreover is determined to address these issues. Such included in *BCSFAzine* is worthwhile, but would not be filling a vacuum so much as merely adding to the info already gathered.

Second, there is no 'message' from fandom, only individual experiences, impressions and suggestions. Would be great to get more such printed in *BCSFAzine*, and discussed on this forum. This is a very passive forum compared to most. Not much of a forum at all really, more like a message board.

((Your mileage may vary. I get very different mileage from attending fans, even if it's not very coherent, i.e., not written down.))

As for my not making an effort to talk to people, guilty as charged. Let me put my life in perspective. I get up at 4:30 in the morning and I get home circa 5:30 PM. My warehouse job is physically tiring. I routinely shift multiple 50 lb cartons of copy paper from skid to rack, for instance. At a minimum I need a 2-hour nap as soon as I get home. Work + commute + nap = 15 hours a day. I try to get 6 hours sleep - not counting nap - (though usually I get less) per night. Leaves a grand total of about 4 hours (minus any shopping time on the way home) a day where my wife actually gets to see me, let alone talk with me. I'm actually rested and mentally alert at home maybe a grand total of 1 hour per day. Into that hour I try to cram my assorted writing and research projects, plus actually share life with my wife. Some nights I have no energy at all. By weekend I'm totally exhausted. Weekends are full of errands. By the time I'm rested enough to feel human again and tackle multiple tasks of interest, it's Sunday night and too late. In short, I live to work. I have a very limited life of my own. I am capable of stirring myself into action, but only for short bursts. I have so damned little energy. Chronic, mind-numbing fatigue. And don't talk to me about exercise. I get plenty of exercise at work, plus the nearest bus stop to my workplace is a half hour fast walk away, so I put in an hour a day walking rapidly. In short, there is no solution, short of winning the lottery and quitting work...

To sum up, I have little time for BCSFA, or anything else for that matter. I'm only a place-holder President anyway, taking the position because no one else can be bothered. I'd love for someone else with fresh ideas and enthusiasm to take my place. I freely offer the club presidency to anyone who wants it (and meets with membership approval of course), since I'm not really capable of fulfilling my duties due to circumstances beyond my control. My one remaining area of enthusiasm is the club archives, and that of course I can handle at home. (Currently trying to put together a comprehensive listing of Elrons...)

((I thought it was something like that. Neither you, nor anyone else can be blamed if you're working with limited time and energy. But that doesn't describe everyone on our executive, now does it?))

((Local fans are faced with the challenge - if they choose to face it - of overcoming their lethargy and doing some interesting, fun, attractive things.))

((We all need to increase our energy and achieve better incomes.))

Garth wrote:

Personally I came looking for people who play with ideas, people with active minds,

people who come up with original ideas, people who follow through a line of speculation. Instead I found BCSFA....I think I should have stayed at the university....

I too enjoyed university, four years of stimulating conversation and debate, a wonderful time. But the real world is full of people who are *proud* they haven't read a book since leaving high school. They aren't stupid, just anti-intellectual. All the stuff I talked about in University, if I inject it into conversation with my coworkers, leads to A) a rep for being a weirdo & B) a rep for being a stuck up elitist. What do I talk about at work? The weather. Traffic. And sports (which I hate). Fortunately one guy is interested in world politics, and two like old movies. But then, we're not allowed to talk, except on breaks. Sigh.

((Proud of not being literate? I have trouble believing that's possible. Life is just too ... big, for me.))

As for BCSFA, a general interest club, members want to talk about their particular areas of interest, which alas do not always coincide. Me, I'm interested in everything: movies, comics, art, TV, fandom, etc. Trouble is, I no longer keep current or up to date. Don't have the time. I'm strictly a 20th century guy, pure retro. I'm so disappointed with the 21st century I'm no longer interested in the present, or the future. I know it can only get worse. So I'm spending the rest of my life exploring 'my' century further. Sad, but true.

((Omnia mutantur, et mutamur in illis. That means, things change, and we change with them.))

But even now I believe the membership in general exhibits both intelligence and a good sense of humour, despite the occasional bickering and hobbyhorsing you'll find in any group of people. Granted, we're not a university debating society, but most of the people I know in the club I find interesting to talk to, yourself included Garth. Plus the monthly Kaffeeklatsch, the few times I've had energy enough to attend, impressed me with the enthusiasm and wit of participants. I don't think BCSFA is as bereft of intellect as your remarks appear to suggest. I'm just sorry your expectations haven't been met. (Bearing in mind, it can be fairly stated that in the past, BCSFAns were more interested in partying and having fun than they were in debating philosophy. That's pretty much true at all times of just about all people.)

Garth wrote:

Let me ask you something: what kind of club do you want?

Frankly, I no longer know. Something I can contribute to from time to time. Something motivated and run by fresh blood.

((Why am I visualizing a steampunk invention, conceived by a vampire?))

Garth wrote:

Or do you have any concept of making your own entertainment, at all?

I do, but increasingly it involves things I do on my own.

((Some straight lines are just too easy.))

Garth wrote:

Editing BCSFAzine has been getting me down, because I keep expecting more of you to participate.

Do what Steve Forty did (and did well). Ask people to contribute, and once they do, trick them into contributing on a regular basis. I keep meaning to, but then the veil of fatigue descends. Badger me. With a little encouragement and threats I might be able to come up with something.

((Okay, why not write about the basic patterns of human interaction, i.e., silly-ass things you've seen people do in fandom and mundania, in as solemn and straight-faced a fashion as an anthropologist from Mars? Or how to tell apart mere crank theories from fringe science that may actually have merit?)

((Your suggestion reminds me ... Bernie Klassen used to joke that I asked him to do zine reviews for MLR, and he declined, and some goons came upon him that night, and when I visited him later in the hospital he agreed with some fervour that zine reviews would be a wonderful idea! Sure he'd do it! And his wife returned home unharmed the next day. I wish to state that the whole passage was one of his fannish inventions. Me and my boys never do things like that. Boys? What do you say, boys?))

Garth wrote:

Most of you obviously don't care what I put in. Most of you, I suspect, don't even read.

Don't mistake lack of feedback for lack of interest. I read BCSFAzine from cover to cover every issue. When I was Ghod-editor I used to think

no-one did that, but eventually I discovered that if you buttonhole members you'll find they do read BCSFAzine, and most have something to say about it except they never get around to doing so unless confronted. So I learned to forge ahead on the assumption that members DID read BCSFAzine. This is always mostly true.

((Too late! I always equate lack of feedback with lack of interest. Or intelligence, even. Since I rarely get out to see people, I rely on telephone and email contact, and if I don't get that ... I don't merely feel ignored, or unappreciated, but as if I don't really exist.))

Garth wrote:

I used to ask you: what do you want in BCSFAzine? Now I ask the silent majority: do you want BCSFAzine at all?

... And Garth, if you can hold on as editor up to and including the May 2007 issue you will finally have beaten my record of 77 issues of BCSFAzine and become the longest serving editor in the history of the club. So don't quit yet!

John Bartley, john.bartley@gmail.com, 27 November 2006

"If it wasn't for the gold braid and the shiny boots, why are you with us?" (Brothers In Arms, LMB)

Garth wrote:

Personally I came looking for people who play with ideas, people with active minds, people who come up with original ideas, people who follow through a line of speculation.

You lil' ol' seditious thought-monger, you.

Garth wrote:

Instead I found BCSFA.

The will to be stupid is a very powerful force, as the little admiral noted (*op cit.*) We define ourselves as a thinking animal... (but) in fact ... very rarely (indulge) in actual thinking.

So, now is the winter of your discontent. Umm, the folks who think AND read AND enjoy conversation AND have time on their hands

(instead of swooping off in a Tardis or the NSEA *Defender* to save the Galaxy) are, apparently, a concentric series of what were very small subsets of *H. sapiens* to begin with. ...

((See my note to Lloyd Penney, below, about my Royal Swiss Navy plan. See also my elaboration about it in my Birthday bio.))

Tests are a gift. And great tests are a great gift. To fail the test is a misfortune. But to refuse the test is to refuse the gift, and something worse, more irrevocable, than misfortune. (*Shards Of Honor*) Your test, Mr. Spencer, should you decide to accept it, is to be flayed by the whip of dumbth while lashed to the cross of literacy. I'd send ya a bullet to bite, but, well, you know Customs would freak...

And, in other news. I had the supreme pleasure of reading Spider's *Variable Star* (a damn fine read, and worth substituting for a good bottle of wine in the category of mind-altering substances) while working twelve-hour-plus days on the Washington Floods disaster relief operation as an American Red Cross volunteer, oscillating between Cape Horn, Concrete, Hamilton, Bellingham and Everett for over a week in early November, shortly before Orycon 28.

((As you know by now, we had our turn with floods and stuff at about the same time.))

That Orycon hosted Cory Doctorow - and any opportunity to expose folks to his wit - is a *mitzvah*, I figgur.

Enough topic drift; but one minor request. Garth, Wikipedia has no entry for dumbth, and you are the lifeform to solve that deficit. May I ask you consider so doing?

((I'm thinking about it ...))



73s and best regards to all our friends in Civilisation. Lea and I truly missed y'all this year, but with me unemployed (still), the schlep across the border from the Land of the Formerly Free (hearing "may I see your papers, please" still shocks the hell out of me) had to be considered Optional.

Au revoir, mes amis.

((I'm planning to attend Rustycon in January 2007.))

"Hearts and minds stuff: Islamofascists are really "Mufsidoon engaged in Hiraba." Learn the difference between a Muslim and an Islamofascist."
((What's that mean??))

Lloyd Penney [penneys@allstream.net], 1706-24 Eva Rd. Etobicoke, ON M9C 2B2 December 1, 2006

For the first time in a long time (with this zine, anyway; I fall behind with lots of others), I have two issues of *BCSFAzine* to catch up with. I've got 402 and 403 here, and this might take a while...

402... To give you time to live a life and yet put out a *BCSFAzine* with fewer mistakes, it might be time to take on an assistant. Felicity Walker, you were interested a while ago...are you still? Not that we want to get rid of Garth, but I think he may need some assistance in this, even if the assistance is a paid of fresh eyes to check the next-to-final product before it gets sent out to the myriad of appreciative readers. "*Mea fucking culpa*," indeed...could this be the reason you get no help?

((If I ask people politely to participate, I get minimal response. If I say what I think, and get rude, then I appear to get more notice.

((One of the ways that I could open up the production process - at the cost of slowing it down - is to take unsorted, unstapled pages home from the copy outlet, and have a collation party. Another is to tell people I'm showing them our trade zines in order for them to spot interesting news items for *BCSFAzine*..))

Issue 134 of *Emerald City* is indeed the final issue. I must write Cheryl one final letter. She did have her audience; it just wasn't fanzine fandom, and some fans in that interest would rather rip others apart rather than leave alone something they might not like, or in this case, a person they might not like.

I wish 6/49 might come through for me...I'd like nothing better than to go to the next Corflu, in a couple of months in Austin, Texas. The one in Toronto this year was enjoyable, but the Austin event seems like it will be

so much more. A few are pleading for me to go, but money just doesn't allow, and like many, I am overbilled and underemployed.

Based on what I saw and heard in Anaheim, Rochester and Montreal, the Montreal in 2009 Worldcon bid seems to be a going concern, and a popular idea. Looks like no one is holding a grudge about Torcon 3 against the Montreal folks, which is a great idea.

Did everyone get a look at Christina and Martin's *RenFair Newsletter* 3? Things are starting to happen. From their years in Toronto, I know how hard they work to make things happen; please give them your attention and support. Renaissance Faires are great fun, and it would be great to have one to enjoy in your own region. (Toronto's RenFaire rises and dies regularly, so Vancouver should treasure theirs once it gets going.)

(I believe that's the same newsletter I have reproduced later in this issue.)

403...Garth, you didn't like the last VCon? Others seemed to rave about it. Even at conventions at which I haven't found much for myself, it's always the people who make the convention for me. Also, I'm still enough of a conrunner to try to find out attendance figures, and if the convention made or lost money. I would prefer the convention be a popular and financial success. Garth, you are very unhappy here. If you don't get the response you are looking for, what will you do? Is there a group out there for you?

(I didn't say much about VCon, because I was unwell that weekend and I knew it affected my outlook, not just my hours in attendance. I still don't have any firm idea of the total attendance or final statement.

(I've been chronically unhappy in Vancouver. I guess I'm just an unhappy person. Maybe I'm a miner's canary, then, an early detector for some kind of general problem.

(I intend to make my own kind of SF group. I intend to turn the Royal Swiss Navy into an active group, a much more fannish one than BCSFA, and try to disprove the apparent law that everyone's energy and creativity decline after the age of 45. See my bio in the Birthdays section this issue. I don't expect to succeed, necessarily, but at least to let people show me what they've got.)

John Bartley, that quote you used in your loc was from me. I haven't seen any of the enhanced Trek episodes, and wondered aloud if anyone had seen them, and what their reactions were.

I think the Jonathan Rose you're thinking of is John Rose, who purchased Bakka Books from Raymond Alexander and Charlie McKee (who is now a bookseller in New Westminster, if I recall), and who just less than two years ago now, sold it to Ben Freiman, who is an extremely hobbitish looking fellow. Ben renamed the store Bakka-Phoenix, and it is

now on Queen St. W., about one major block north of where I work. John, to the best of my remembrance, didn't spawn the Bunch of Seven writers' group. That was actually me and Tanya Huff, both Ryerson students at the time.

((That's right, Bakka Books is what I was thinking of. People circulating in and around Bakka spawned the Bunch of Seven, anyway.

((So you and Tanya are responsible for S.M. Stirling?? :)))

I mentioned in another fanzine or two that Con-Version was going to reinvent itself as Nexus, a media SF convention. Because I place all my locs on my LiveJournal (lloydpenney.livejournal.com), the Con-Version chairman read it, and asked me to make a correction, which I am happy to do. The following is a comment left on my LJ by drakkenfyre ...

Lloyd, it's not being called Nexus. After my motion at the AGM, we had to have a general meeting of the membership to discuss the change. This past Saturday, the membership voted that it should remain "Con-Version." So Con-Version 23 is a go. We're working on hotel and guests as I type this.

BTW, I'm the Con-Version chair for this year, and I'm managing editor of a literary small press, so I think it's safe to say there will be some literary content. Good literary content. ...

And happily done. I hereby apologize for my inadvertent relaying of incorrect information, and I wish Con-Version many years of successful litcons. Wish I could come out and visit with you sometime.

I received a call from my ophthalmologist, and I have an appointment on Monday for a check of my retinas. I may have a detached retina or possibly a hole in my retina in my right eye. It will be treated, and treated soon; my vision is my life. Wish me luck on Monday, and I hope to see you all (clearly, and without worry) next issue.

Lynda Williams, Lynda @ okalrel.org, 27 November 2006

Thanks for listing "Harpy" in *Mythspring* in the list of things eligible for the Aurora Award. The next book in the Okal Rel Universe saga should be out by Dec 15th and eligible as well. I'll take your advice and notify

Dennis. Keeping my fingers crossed that the next anthology of stories set in the Okal Rel Universe will have a 2006 release date as well but that depends on the production team at Windstorm Creative.

Felicity Walker, BCSFAZINEzine 1:52.403, 14 December 2006

Some Simple Questions for You:

"I'm feeling fed up with BCSFA these days, and I haven't enjoyed VCon in a while either. How about you?"

I have no complaints about BCSFA. I won't be going back to FRED for a long time, if ever. I didn't enjoy the last VCON as much previous ones, but the reasons were personal and nothing to do with the quality of the con.

"What kind of club do you want? Or do you have any concept of making your own entertainment, at all?"

Certainly I have a concept of making my own entertainment. I've been doing it since childhood. It's my dream to do it professionally.

"Editing BCSFAzine has been getting me down, because I keep expecting more of you to participate."

I'd like to do more.

"What kind of convention do you want to see?"

I want to continue to enjoy VCON the way it has been since I started attending it in 1997. I don't want it to be too expensive, and it's not necessary to have big-name actors as guests. I'd like panels on how to upgrade your skills at making your own entertainment. In the hospitality room, I'd like a party atmosphere, as long as it's not too loud and there are enough comfortable chairs and flat surfaces for drawing.

Letters: *"I am not sure how to make the composition a group effort."* Nor am I. I'll ask around.

((I've started applying a few ideas like getting you an early draft before the deadline. I also want to show people our trade zines, as I described above to Lloyd Penney.))

Members' Birthdays: I guess nobody says this to you often enough, but: well-written, Garth.

((Thanks. Mind you, I had hoped to force people to send me their real bios.))

Events: Bill Marles has disbanded the Richmond Writers' Group.

Into a Red Hole: The American *Red Dwarf* pilot was pretty bad, but still interesting to see. I've seen Craig Bierko (Lister) in several things since then: *The Long Kiss Goodnight*, *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, *The Thirteenth Floor*, and *For Your Consideration*. Chris Eigeman went on to star in Whit Stillman's film trilogy, *Metropolitan*, *Barcelona*, and *The Last Days of Disco*.

Sheryl Birkhead, 25509 Jonnie Court, Gaithersburg, MD 20882, USA, Nov. 30, 2006

Uh ... you may not believe this, but the evidence is enclosed ... found a response (now well over a year old!) tucked into some *BCSFAzines* - can't believe it has been quietly sitting there ... Sorry.

((I have material for my next personalzine that is over 18 months old. I have finally admitted to myself that I can't afford to distribute my personalzine in hardcopy. So who am I to criticize?))

I have here two gorgeous big issues - thanks!

Ah, robot parking cars in Hoboken, NJ - shades of *I, Robot*. I am presuming the bit is not a hoax, but it sounds so tempting!

(("Robot" and "Hoboken" in the same sentence makes me think of Super Heroes of Hoboken, including the inimitable ROBO-MOP.))

Taral's artwork is always a pleasure to see.

The term "cider" has gotten me confused before - "your" cider is what I would call "hard cider" - and, given my druthers, I'd druther have "my" cider soft ... Just one more similar term to keep straight.

((We keep dictionaries of Canadian English for these occasions.))

Hmm, JETS - and there is the fund to get John Hertz over to Japan. I had heard there was a fund to get a European fan to Japan, but had not read the particulars before. ... Ah: here I see the name of the Hertz fund is HANA. All information is found in fanzines. Or something like that.

Oh, yeah, about clubzines - forgot that *Ethel* has a calendar and when Ian Gunn was still among us, I loved the little images he put in the daily blocks. The calendars were hand-done, not pre-drawn rectangles that were filled in, so each month was a treat.

I saw one or two episodes of *Red Dwarf*, but unfortunately I did not choose the best episodes to watch, and was pretty much lost. Maybe if I

had kept going back and watched more episodes, it would all have made sense, but walking in at the middle is not a spot to get one involved rapidly. ...

It will be interesting to see if Shatner's TV show *Show Me the Money* makes it; I know nothing at all about it, just that it is Shatner.

Hope your holiday season is quiet and enjoyed – thanks for the issues!

Birthdays

- Jan. 1: **Bill Salmon** is not affiliated with the B.C. Salmon Farmers' Association.
- Jan. 2: **John Coffey** is not affiliated with Folgers, Nestlé or Sanka.
- Jan. 4: **Mike Wolf** is not affiliated with any animal-rights organizations.
- Jan. 5: **Garth Spencer** is giving up on fandom as we know it, and intends to promote his own fan organization, his own political party, his own cult and even his own language. By day he works at a mundane job and slowly pays down his bank overdraft. But late at night, when darkness falls and the moon rises, he and his minions don their masked crimefighter outfits and silently track down members of the evil sinister multinational Power Elite ... Or he just *talks* about getting a bunch of friends to do public Silly Walk marches, and perform a *cappella* filk, at conventions and on April Fool's Day.
- Jan. 5: **June Osborne** made the mistake of being drafted as BCSFA president once, and fled screaming for the anonymous shelter of BC's Interior. Her present whereabouts are uncertain.
- Jan. 6: **Eileen Kernaghan** wins too many Aurora Awards.
- Jan. 10: **Anne Kelly** has or had something to do with Allan Kelly.
- Jan. 15: **Ed Hutchings** has or had something to do with a film society, an astronomy society, and a society for the recreation of Stonehenge in our green and pleasant land.
- Jan. 19: **J. Stewart Smyth** needs no excuses.
- Jan. 19: **Gary Owens** could tell you the meaning of life, but he doesn't want you all to panic.
- Jan. 25: **Pat Burrows** may be a lifetime member, or is that Jo Burrows? I'm confused.

Jan. 25: **Gerald Boyko** used to be our archivist.

Jan. 31: **Brandon Sackett** just is.

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<http://www.cafepress.com/royalswissnavy> (no dot between royalswiss and navy)

Regular Monthly Events

Weekly Events

Monday

Astronomy Café is an informal weekly gathering of people interested in Astronomy. Every Monday night at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Bruno Quenneville, the Vice President of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada: Victoria Centre.
(<http://victoria.rasc.ca/events/AstroCafe/Default.htm>)

Tuesday

Kamloops Anime Club
(<http://www.geocities.com/kamloopsanimeclub/>) holds casual meetings on Tuesdays from 6:30 to 10:00 p.m. at Boston Pizza in downtown Kamloops. (Note that the meeting times and locations are occasionally different, so check the schedule on the Kamloops Anime Club web site if you are planning to attend.)

Thursdays

Ink Studs (comix radio show) from 2 pm to 3 pm on CiTR (101.9 FM or <http://citr.ca/live.rm>); <http://inkstuds.livejournal.com/>

Fridays

5pm to 6pm: **Hi-Sci-Fi** (science-fiction radio show) on 90.1 FM and <http://www.cjsf.ca/listen/listen.m3u> . Info and archived shows at <http://www.hiscifi.com/index.php?cat=Show> .

6:30 p.m.: **BIFF** (formerly F.A.N.S.) - Watch videos, and generally hang out every Friday night until closing at: Eighties Restaurant, 110 West 14th Street, North Vancouver. See biff.digitaldoodles.com for more details.

8:00 p.m.: **OR COME TO FRED!** every Friday til whenever, usually at Boston Pizza on Broadway near Granville, Vancouver, BC - a casual drop-in gathering of fans for conversation. (Still looking at new venues for the long term)

Saturday

Kamloops Anime Club

(<http://www.geocities.com/kamloopsanimeclub/>) holds its main meetings on Saturdays from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. downstairs at High Octane Comics & Collectibles, 250 3rd Avenue, Kamloops.

Fortnightly Events

Every Second Monday

Perpetual-Motion Inventors & Gadgeteers Meet: 7 to 9 pm at Ariel Café, 73 Kingsway x Broadway, Vancouver, BC.

Second Tuesday

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada: Okanagan Centre
(<http://www.ocrasc.ca/>) meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 in the Science Building at Okanagan College on KLO Road, Kelowna. (Note that the Vernon and Kelowna meetings are occasionally combined, so check the schedule on the RASC: Okanagan Centre web site if you are planning to attend.)

Second Wednesday

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada: Victoria Centre
(<http://victoria.rasc.ca/>) meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m., in the Elliott Lecture Theatre, Room 060, University of Victoria. (Note that the meeting times and locations are occasionally different, so check the schedule on the RASC: Victoria Centre web site if you are planning to attend.)

Second Thursday

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada: Vancouver Centre (<http://www.pcis.com/rascvan/>) meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m., downstairs in the auditorium of the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre, 1100 Chestnut Street, Vancouver. Each meeting usually has a program which is a blend of current astronomical research and local amateur activities. The meeting is followed by an informal gathering at the Gordon MacMillan Southam Observatory for coffee, cookies and conversation. Visitors are welcome to attend most meetings, which are free.

METROTOWN WRITER'S GROUP is open to new members. Meetings are held twice a month at the Metrotown library, on Thursdays from 7 to 9 p.m. For information call Ken, 604- 876- 5751 email ktran@vcn.bc.ca Need skills and experience your business just doesn't have? Consult

Third Wednesday

The Vancouver Electric Vehicle Association (<http://www.veva.bc.ca/>) meets on the third Wednesday of each month (except July and August) from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., in the cafeteria of the Electrical SE1 Building at BCIT.

Last Wednesday

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada: Okanagan Centre (<http://www.ocrasc.ca/>) meets on the last Wednesday of the month at 7:15 p.m. at the Okanagan Science Centre, 2704 Highway 6, Vernon. (Note that the Vernon and Kelowna meetings are occasionally combined, so check the schedule on the RASC: Okanagan Centre web site if you are planning to attend.)

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada: Prince George Centre (<http://www.vts.bc.ca/pgrasc/>) meets on the last Wednesday of the month from August to November and January to May from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Prince George Astronomical Observatory (20 km South West of Prince George near West Lake on Tedford Road.) Topics of discussion include astronomy viewing tips, constellations, star charts, photography and much more. The meetings are informal and visitors are welcome.

Conventions**January 2007**

Jan. 12-14: **Rustycon 24** in Seattle, WA. Memberships \$25. See www.rustycon.com

February 2007

Feb. 24: Noon to 9:00 p.m. ?? UAA Student Union, Anchorage, Alaska (Anime - please note that their web site is under construction, but there is a link to a forum where you can find out more: www.rei-chan.net/senshicon)

March 2007

Mar. 9-11: **Potlatch 16** at the Red Lion Hotel Portland Convention Center, Portland, OR. Memberships TBA. Information: Potlatch 16, c/o OSFCI, Box 5703, Portland, OR 97228-5703; tel. (503) 283-0802; email potlatch16@gmail.com; URL www.spiritone.com/~jlorenz/potlatch

Mar. 16 – 18: **Anime Oasis V** - Boise, Idaho (anime); see www.animeoasis.org

Mar. 24: **Nishikaze III** - Lethbridge, Alberta (anime); see www.nishikaze.org

Mar. 29 – Apr. 1: **World Horror Convention 2007** at the Toronto Marriott Downtown Eaton Centre, Toronto, ON. GoHs: Michael Marshall Smith, Nancy Kilpatrick. ArtGoH: John Picacio. MC: Sephera Giron. Publisher GoH: Peter Crowther. Editor GoH: Don Hutchison. Email Amanda@whc2007.org; URL www.whc2007.org.

Mar. 30 - April 1: **Gamestorm** - Portland, Oregon (gaming); see www.gamestorm.org

Mar. 31 - April 1: **Fifth Annual Emerald City ComicCon** - Seattle, Washington (Comics); see www.emeraldcitycomiccon.com and look at the samurai rabbit!

Let's Get Fannish!

By Garth Spencer

My brain cell kicked into gear, a little while ago, and positive suggestions occurred to me for what we could do.

What do you consider fannish? To use Karl Johanson's formula, I would call it having fun, and doing neat stuff. Mind you, my idea of "fannish" is coloured by my university years, by Monty Python and Discordianism, and by fannish fandom of the 1950s and 1960s - the people who invented games like ghoodminton, filksongs which were originally jokes about fandom, faanfic which was originally stories about fans and fandom, fannish religions like GhuGhuism and Roscoeism.

Given the space, I will put an article in the next *BCSFAzine* about neat stuff to do.

- Proposition A: starting our own political movement on the lines of the Rhinoceros Party, to be called anything we wish - I usually suggest names like the Christian Anarchist Party or the Salmon Surrealist Party or the All-Night Nude Nazi Garden Party With Live Entertainment Inc.
- Proposition B: starting our own religion, titled something like the Wholly Unorthodox Church or the Liberal Secular Humanist Cult. I've got some materials.
- Proposition C: starting up our own sports team, playing something absurdly unplayable like 43-Man Squamish. (I owe that inspiration to Ray Seredin.)
- Proposition D: dressing up in absurd mismatched brightly coloured camo outfits - the field uniform of the Royal Swiss Navy! - and holding street marches on Emperor Norton Day and April Fool's Day, demonstrating synchronized silly walks and close-order swanning about.
- Proposition E: just to be artistic, forming a Royal Swiss Navy A Cappella Choir and singing things like "The Last Saskatchewan Pirate," songs from "The Pirates of Penzance," or some filk I'm generating based on Stan Rogers songs. I'm compiling a songbook.
- Proposition F: getting people to play Mad Scientist roles at club meetings, and present crank inventions of their own design.
- Proposition G: brainstorming actually original SF and fantasy ideas. I'm so *sick* of the standard formula story premises! Check out *Slate* or disinfo.com for futurist/science/tech news, maybe.

- Proposition H: forming a Cacoventilation Group, doing online research and volunteer espionage, and defusing powerful people and groups with public ridicule and disrepute.

Have you any other propositions? After criticizing the hell out of fandom as we know it, we can go on to design fandom as we want it to be. I realize I've probably got a totally different idea of fandom than anyone else in Vancouver, though.

Thoughts for VCon

by Line Noise [l_noise@telus.net], December 7, 2006

(Note: This loc by one of our many-named correspondents strikes me as good article material, so I'm running it as an article. -GS)

On 26-Nov-06, Garth Spencer wrote:

With this issue, I'm challenging people with some blunt questions. ...

I'm feeling fed up with BCSFA these days, and I haven't enjoyed VCon in a while either. How about you?

I am not a member of BCSFA. I must say I have been underwhelmed with the last few VCons.

...and here is why: I go to cons to convene, or rather to converse.

An ideal con for me would be one where the vast majority of programming ended at 5 p.m. The average fan is now pushing 50, and staying up until 3 a.m. yakking in room and hall parties is a thing of our long-gone youths. Ending all panels at 5 p.m. would mean we could more easily arrange a group outing for dinner; it means people could have room parties *before* oldpharts' bedtime. How about next time, instead of getting in and collapsing on Friday night, we toss our crap in our room, and around 5:30 order in some pizza and Chinese food - hell, order in a potluck from all over Richmond! - then head down to ballroom B with the food, and have a mass party pig-out? We could actually spend an evening chatting with old friends, and making new ones. No, *not* a banquet with faces giving speeches ... I have never gone to a con to meet a GoH, and if I

really want to chat them up, I will wander over to their table, and offer them some of the food I brought, or try to snag some of theirs.

Some may say that they like panels and want them to go on late into the evening, but I am not there for the panels.

Even if at one point, some others might have found the panels informative, 20 years later they are not. My mother fandom was club fandom, and so panels tend for me to be 1 hour long introductory treatments of topics that I and other fen have talked about off and on for *months*, if not years.

If there has been a panel on a topic that I liked, in my experience there is always some member of the audience lacking the manners to let the panellist get a word in edgewise.

In short, a waste of my time.

I am also not there for the costumes. I like the folks that wierdrobing attracts, more than I like the costumes themselves. Yes, I like the costume judging, and the dance which should follow, but I can live without them.

About the dance: we have to take into account the aging of the fen. Let's face facts; the age group that likes dancing is absent from our cons. Folks in their 20s are compelled to dance, not folks in their 50s, or in their wheelchairs! (Unless, that is, they entered the costume competition as Davros or Captain Christopher Pike.) The reason we are not dancing any more has nothing to do with the music the DJ is playing (so stop bitching about the music!) when we were young we would dance to anything and now that we are old we won't dance to anything no matter what it is. What we need for the Saturday night costume ball is some configuration of the space that allows dancers, spectators and conversationalists to share the same floor, to move from one state to the other. Somehow, discos and bars manage to do this; why can't we?

Now, what about all those other fandoms that come to VCon – the anime, comics, furry, Goth and gaming fans? My guess is that they come to meet their own kind, and to recruit from the pool of others. Can VCon be structured in such a way that the subfandoms get some time and space to themselves, and also some time and space set aside to meet, greet and party with people outside there interest?

What is true for them should be true for the "filthy pros" as well. Sure, they have their private room parties for writers only, but at set times the concom should wade in with bullwhips and drive the writers out, to mingle with the unwashed masses. If VCon has 25 writers in attendance, but the other 275 attendees never get to sit and talk with them, then why bother inviting GoHs, or advertising the names of writers that you can never meet?

More radical than shutting down programming at 5 and telling the hotel that "there will be room and hall parties - cope", will be telling vendors and the con organizers that they, too, will have to reduce the hours per day that they work at the con. Several of my friends are vendors, and purchasing their product took 90 seconds. If the store were open for only 3 hours a day, would they really sell that much less? If people really want to renew memberships or pick up that book, object or collectible, won't a sign on the door saying, "open 1-4 Sat & Sun" be enough? Do the vendors really sell more because they are there for longer hours? And if not then why should we force long hours on them, and deprive them of the chance to enjoy the con? ...

Speaking of 90 seconds to buy something ... I have bought a lot of stuff in my life, and why buying a con membership should be so complicated is a mystery to me. Just announce in advance that it is cash only. Take the money and put it in one box; and take a DVD on a string out of a second box, and give it to the gal/guy who gave you the money. The string or ribbon should be distinctive and secret, until just before VCon. Wear it at all times; it is your proof of purchase. The DVD is the programming guide, plus all the fliers and other junk that you normally get in the plastic bag (and don't read until you come home from the con, anyway). A DVD holds a *lot* of stuff, so go crazy. Include everything that could possibly be of use, and then some. Mail the DVD out to prepaid members a week or two before VCon. They can trade in the envelope that the DVD came in for the string; that is the proof-of-purchase.

Years ago, it was legal to use the names and addresses harvested at the registration desk to make up mailing lists to send out updates to the con attendees. This is now legally much more difficult, and with the advent of the wwweb, completely superfluous. So it is really no longer necessary to get the names of at-the-door con members. If one of them really needs a receipt for tax reasons, then point them to the mound of blank envelopes (next to the mound of that day's pocket guides), and tell them to self-address it and give it back. It can then go into the same box with all the money, and in a month or two, the attendee will get that same envelope containing their receipt in the mail. Staff the Registration table with 2, *not* 5 people: the first to say "give me \$60; thanks, now take this DVD-on-a-rope. NEXT", and the second to scrutinize the proceedings. Two, not five, means more of the concom can mingle at VCon, instead of doing useless make-work at Registration. Some attendees would like to interact with the concom, but watching them perform administrivia is hardly quality interaction.

Well, most of you can probably see a common theme here: more freedom to convene. Free time, and free space, promoting the meet-and-

greet philosophy. Gatherings where I can be with old friends, and also venues where I can talk to folks from the other fandoms. The subfandoms must be given a chance to cloister, but also a chance to meaningfully meet other subfandoms; otherwise, why would they bother to come to VCon? No, I am not saying we have to go the total relaxicon route. But I am saying that the part of the con that once happened between 1 and 4 am (in the 80s) now must be given time earlier in the evening. That space must be reassigned. For example: Hospitality should be in one of the ballrooms after 5 pm. The dance music should be loud enough to dance to, but should not deafen the folks in the Hospitality suit next door ... it should, instead, act like a lure to them.

Most importantly, we need a change in attitude. Sometime in the mid-90s, the consensus amongst oldpharts was that the newpharts stunk, or that they could not be trusted (all those stories about nasty next-gen monsters), or that they just weren't trufan enough to waste precious con time with. Yes, the oldpharts still had room parties, but more and more, they were closed-door parties.

The attitude of hotels changed too. It seems that the hotel management finally realized that congoers who spent all their time at room parties, hall parties, stairwell parties, pool parties and elevator parties were spending ZIP in the hotel bar. Hence pools get locked at night; stairwell doorways become one-way; big bulletin boards in prominent places announcing parties are moved, discouraged or forbidden; and pre-booking for rooms on party floors becomes difficult or impossible. Not all of the changes in the hotel policies exist just to frustrate us - there is the safety issue, after all - but they tend to have that effect.

If we *want* a con with lots of distracting passive entertainment, unreachable luminaries and tons-o'-junk to buy, then go to a Creation-Con™; but if we want a convention where we can *convene*, then VCon is going to have to get serious about structuring some unstructured party time at the con.

My Idea of News

WORLD HORROR CONVENTION 2007 ANNOUNCES SPECIAL MEDIA GUEST OF HONOUR

"World Horror Convention 2007 (<http://www.whc2007.org>) is pleased to announce that screenwriter/author PETER ATKINS will be the Special Media Guest of Honour at the event in Toronto at the end of March.

"Born in Liverpool in 1955, Peter Atkins has lived in Los Angeles since 1992. He has published two novels, *Morningstar* and *Big Thunder*, and the short fiction collection *Wishmaster And Other Stories* (1999). Along with fellow horror authors Glen Hirshberg and Dennis Etchison, he co-founded The Rolling Darkness Revue, an annual Halloween reading and music tour of bookstores on the West Coast.

"In 1988 he scripted *Hellbound: Hellraiser II*, the first sequel to Clive Barker's ground-breaking horror film franchise, and he continued the exploits of Pinhead and his demonic Cenobites in *Hellraiser III: Hell On Earth* and *Hellraiser: Bloodline*. In 1997 he created his own franchise character when he wrote *Wishmaster*. So far there have been three movie sequels based on his characters - and Atkins himself revisited the franchise when he adapted the first movie into the stage musical *The Djinn*.



"Other features he has co-scripted include *Fist Of The North Star* and *Prisoners Of The Sun*, and he has also written for television.

"For the first time in its seventeen-year history, The World Horror Convention is being held outside the United States. With a theme exploring "The Diversity of Horror", World Horror Convention 2007 will take place over March 29-April 1 at the TORONTO MARRIOTT DOWNTOWN EATON CENTRE, located in the heart of Toronto, Canada.

"The convention's official airline is AIR CANADA, a Star Alliance Member (www.staralliance.com).

"Peter Atkins joins previously-announced Guests of Honour MICHAEL MARSHALL SMITH, the multiple award-winning author of such novels as *Spare*, *Only Forward*, *One Of Us* and the best-selling *The Straw Men* trilogy; Montreal-based author NANCY KILPATRICK, whose

books include novels *Near Death*, *Child Of The Night*, *Jason X: Planet Of The Beast* and *The Goth Bible: A Compendium For The Darkly Inclined*; Chesley Award and World Fantasy Award-winning American illustrator JOHN PICACIO; British writer/editor/publisher PETER CROWTHER and Toronto editor and pulp magazine authority DON HUTCHISON. Canadian writer SEPHERA GIRON, author of such novels as *House Of Pain* and *Borrowed Flesh*, is Mistress of Ceremonies.

"Among those authors and editors also scheduled to attend are MORT CASTLE, GEMMA FILES, JO FLETCHER, STEPHEN JONES, TIM LEBBON, BRIAN LUMLEY, L.H. MAYNARD & M.P.N. SIMS, DAVID MORRELL, MARK MORRIS, PETER STRAUB and F. PAUL WILSON, amongst many others.

"The convention already has more British and Canadian attendees than any previous World Horror, making it a truly international event, and PROGRESS REPORT #2 (which will include a Grand Master ballot form for those who have not yet voted via the website) will be mailed to all registered members in the next few weeks.

"THE 2007 HWA BRAM STOKER AWARDS PRESENTATION will be held at the convention on the Saturday evening. For details about how to purchase your tickets to this very special event, please consult the HWA or WHC websites.

"For more information, please contact Convention Chairperson: AMANDA FOUBISTER <amanda@whc2007.org>

"www.whc2007.org"

Mandy Slater, Nov. 30, 2006

High Weirdness

ANTIKYTHERA MECHANISM RECREATED

"This fascinating device [*appearing to be a 15th-century-style clockworks salvaged from a pre-Christian shipwreck - GS*] has long been a favourite of the Atlantis/Lemuria contingent, but now someone has made a recreation, and speculates on where it actually originated."

<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v444/n7119/full/444534a.html>
Timebinders, Nov. 29, 2006

Fandom News

BCRF NEWSLETTER #3:

"Keep the last weekend of July free good folk. For on that weekend we will be putting on such a show as you have not yet seen here in British Columbia. We are in negotiations with a group that are willing and ready

to provide support in order for us to start our BC Renfest life. The plan is to have the Renfest as a co-event with another event with them providing a site and us providing the atmosphere. It is an interesting venture and we can only hope that it will bring us the final support and advantage we require in order to have our permanent site in 2008. So.. Keep your day planners open and let us make merry that wondrous weekend.

"On that note:

"A final Meet and Greet will be held on the weekend of January 27 and 28. Now is the best time to book your space so go ahead and send an email to: meet@bcrenfest.com. You can also check out the Meet and Greet page at: <http://www.bcrenfest.com/meet2.pdf>.

"If you think you are too far out of town in order to attend the Meet and Greet, have something that you believe we need now and/or don't want to wait until January in order to get involved then feel free to send me an email (via: ccmh@bcrenfest.com) and let me know. We have talked with out of town people interested in coming in, via email, as well as done a few one on one Meet and Greets with those who are determined to join in now. We could probably arrange one for you.

"Feel free to pass on this information.

"Now that the end of the year is near we must ask.... Did we miss an event that you know of that would love to have us in the future? Do you have a report or blog that talks about our presence at any of our past events or functions? Let us know so that we can attend in 2007 or simply trade links. Do you have photos and/or video and/or news reports of any of our attendance at any of these events? We would love to acquire copies.

"Help us make next year bigger and better!!"

Christina Carr & Martin Hunger, Nov. 28, 2006

Member News

MICHAEL BERTRAND ENTERPRISES

"Hi there folks. This is a shameless plug for my new website, www.phunni.com :)

"If you've been to digg.com, you already know how this site works. Anyone can submit a URL to something they find funny (or phunni), and the users, then vote on what they like. If enough people vote for a link, it makes it to the front page.

"Basically, it's digg.com with a focus on nothing but COMEDY.

"Feel free to check it out, I'm adding new content all the time, and hopefully once there's enough users, they'll be adding lots of good stuff too. :)

“Thanks for the chance to plug my site! You're all invited to participate. :)”

Michael Bertrand to BCSFA list, 17 November 2006

ALYX SHAW WRITES:

“Timothy Richard Shaw was born by Caesarean section at 11:45 November the 26th in Holland. He is 50 cm. long, and weighs 3,950 grams. (That's about eight pounds for you non-metric types.) Mother, father and baby are all doing well. Pics to be posted when I get them.”

Alyx Shaw to BCSFA list, 27 November 2006

VCon News

On December 17, 2006, 20 people showed up at Tammy and Clayten Hamacher's building to thrash out some outstanding WCSFA business. Clint Budd chaired the meeting.

Officially the agenda was to settle:

1. the date, and
2. the location of VCON 32; as well as
3. the adoption of the VCON Logo.
4. the adoption of the recommendation of the committee on pricing for children

It took a long time to hear all the opinions about the issues. I found out why the date and hotel hadn't already appeared online – Danielle and her concom needed to fix a venue first in order to fix a date, and in order to sign even a letter of agreement, they still needed some sort of legal go-ahead from WCSFA.

Rose Wilson, among others, argued strongly for holding VCon on the Thanksgiving weekend. At unnecessary length. With a supporting letter from the Fahnstalks. This failed to address the facts that a) the VCon 32 concom were accepted on their proposal, from the outset, to choose another weekend (preferably 19-21 October, 2007); b) a **lot** of congoers choose family gatherings over fan events; and c) existing events at preferred venues precluded the long weekend.

After much confusion, inattention and repetition, we eventually moved and voted to give Danielle the go-ahead to choose the venue and date. (That is, we decided to let Danielle and company decide.)

At least that's the story I understood and I'm sticking to it.

Garth Spencer

Author News

The website for Jim McPherson's PHANTACEA on the Web is: <http://home.istar.ca/~jmcp/index.shtml> Look for the winter update

sometime after Xmas. I'm hoping to have a book publishing announcement ready by then. While there's lots to read re PHANTACEA online (it's been going since 1996) a good place to start is my publisher's commentary page: <http://home.istar.ca/~jmcp/phpubs.htm> There are also many photos and graphics I prepared specific to PHANTACEA. Have a boo at the 'essentials' list:

<http://home.istar.ca/~jmcp/phpubs.htm#pHlynx>

or the covers gallery: <http://home.istar.ca/~jmcp/ph4and40.htm>

if you're so inclined. If you're curious about the PHANTACEA Mythos I can email you a cost-free PDF I prepared earlier this on it at your request. You can also order it from here:

<http://home.istar.ca/~jmcp/phorder1.htm#pdfEmail>

Jim McPherson

Writer/Publisher

The PHANTACEA Mythos

<http://home.istar.ca/~jmcp/ph2.htm>

McPherson to VCon-members list, 27 November 2006

UNSOLICITED

“I hope that you don't consider this to be spam. Please consider letting people now about my first novel. I'm a therapist in a children's mental health program in West Virginia -- the state with the highest rate of child maltreatment deaths in the U.S. Author proceeds are donated to prevent child abuse. Following is a review. Another review was written by Barry Hunter: www.baryonline.com. *SpecFicWorld* gave me a year's free advertising. A few of the blurbs I've collected are on the publisher's site. Thanks.

Robert Eggleton, 21 November 2006

I OWE ONE TO ROBERT EGGLETON

By Evelyn Somers, *The Missouri Review*

Earlier this year I was contacted by a first-time novelist asking if I would review his forthcoming e-book. If people knew how many requests of this kind editors get, they would understand that out of self-preservation we sometimes . . . well, I ignored it.

Robert tried again. There was something in the tone of his e-mail. Clearly this mattered to him. So I said yes, I'd take a look, though I didn't think we could review *Rarity From the Hollow*. This is all fogged somewhat in memory: in the months since then our magazine moved its office, I was hospitalized for a cat bite (yes, they're dangerous!), we've published several issues, read hundreds of manuscripts, I went to Africa, etc., etc. But as I recall, Robert sent me the first chapter, which begins with two

impoverished schoolgirls (from the Hollow of the title) studying together and spelling the word for an adult sex toy. It was quirky, profane, disturbing. I said I'd look at the book, not entirely sure what I could do to help.

He sent me the whole thing. I read portions of the book, which is subtitled "A Lacy Dawn Adventure," after the girl protagonist, Lacy Dawn. I liked Lacy, who lives in a world of poverty, classmates with precocious sexual knowledge and/or experience, unemployed men, worn-down women and cruelty so casual that it's more knee-jerk than intentional. Maybe I was just too bothered by the content, but at a certain point I knew I just couldn't do anything. Time was nonexistent.

So I deleted the book.

Robert contacted me again, and I got soft. You see, there was something about the whole project in general. Robert is a social worker who has spent at least a portion of his career working with child-abuse victims in Appalachia. The book was partly about that, and mostly very strange. In the Hollow, Lacy takes up with an android named DotCom, from "out of state," which really means out of this world. Under DotCom's wing, she decides that she will "save" her family. Little does she know she will end up saving the universe. Robert was donating the proceeds from sales to help child-abuse victims.

Robert is not a kid; he's maybe my age, maybe older. This wasn't about youthful ambition, vanity and reputation. It was about some kind of personal calling. I believe in those. I also believe in people who are driven to get their writing out there to an audience, through whatever venue. The e-book idea intrigued me. The earnestness of the appeal got to me. Send the book again, I said. He did. It's still on my hard drive. (I suppose I should delete it, since I haven't paid for it.)

Robert kept after me. If I liked it, could I write a blurb? Yeah, of course. I was fund-raising for my African trip (a Habitat build), teaching, editing, raising three kids. But who isn't busy? We set our own priorities. I put Robert and his book lower than some other things, which really wasn't fair because I said I would do something, and I didn't.

And it has bothered me. Here's another thing people don't know about editors. They sometimes have consciences about books/stories/poems/whatever that they've allowed to get lost or neglected in the shuffle of what amounts to thousands of pages.

So I'm belatedly giving *Rarity From the Hollow* a plug. Among its strengths are an ultra-convincing depiction of the lives, especially the inner lives, of the Appalachian protagonists. The grim details of their existence are delivered with such flat understatement that at times they almost become comic. And just when you think enough is enough, this world is

just too ugly, Lacy's father (who is being "fixed" with DotCom's help) gets a job and Lacy, her mother and her dog take off for a trip to the mall "out of state" with Lacy's android friend, now her "fiancé" (though as Lacy's mother points out, he doesn't have any private parts, not even "a bump.") In the space between a few lines we go from hardscrabble realism to pure sci-fi/fantasy. It's quite a trip.

Rarity is published by FatCat Press, which has other e-books for sale as well. You can find it at www.fatcatpress.com. The blurb on the website says in part:

Lacy Dawn is a true daughter of Appalachia, and then some. She lives in a hollow with her mom, her Vietnam Vet dad, and her mutt Brownie, a dog who's very skilled at laying fibre-optic cable. Lacy Dawn's android boyfriend, DotCom, has come to the hollow with a mission. His equipment includes infomercial videos of Earth's earliest proto-humans from millennia ago. DotCom has been sent by the Manager of the Mall on planet Shtiludrp: he must recruit Lacy Dawn to save Earth, and they must get a boatload of shopping done at the mall along the way. Saving Earth is important, but shopping - well, priorities are priorities.

Yes, priorities are. I should have had mine in order. Robert Eggleton's book deserves your attention. Check it out.

Media News

MGM'S BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE ONE-SHEET!

On behalf of MGM Distribution Company, we are pleased to present the official one-sheet for their upcoming release *Blood and Chocolate*, opening in theatres January 26, 2007. Directed by Katja Von Garnier (*Bandits*), produced by Ehren Kruger (*The Ring*) and starring Agnes Bruckner (*Blue Car, Haven*) and Hugh Dancy (*Black Hawk Down, Ella Enchanted*), this darkly romantic thriller explores the world of a teenage werewolf. Her secret is threatened when she falls in love with a human, and she must choose between love and the honor of her family.

[http://server.mammothnyc.com/bloodandchocolate/b&c_finish_LS01b\[2\].jpg](http://server.mammothnyc.com/bloodandchocolate/b&c_finish_LS01b[2].jpg)

I'll be sending out additional updates as soon as more assets and information is available. Please, feel free to contact me if you have any questions!

Jennifer Freeman, Account Coordinator, Mammoth Advertising

www.mammothnyc.com

jennifer@mammothnyc.com

Greg Slade [grra@bluebottle.com] November 30, 2006

BUFFY SINGALONGS

A new trend I saw in a weekend listing in the *Boston Globe* clued me in on something I'd never heard of before: Apparently midnight showings of the musical *Buffy* episode "Once More with Feeling" are spreading across the continent, where theatre-goers sing along and interact with the screen *Rocky Horror*-style. There's even a new word, "Buffy-oke."

I just wish I could be sharing this with rich brown....

Boston: <http://www.buffysingalong.com/buffysingalong.htm>
<http://www.buffysingalong.com/buffysingalong-text.htm> ==> Join in the FUN with these interactive activities:

Throughout The Show: Sing along, dance along, and re-live your favourite scenes! Whenever Dawn enters the scene, yell "SHUT UP DAWN!". Whenever Spike enters the scene, yell "BITE ME!".

"Going Through The Motions": You're just getting warmed up, get those pipes flowing and sing along with Buffy. Wave your MONSTER FINGER PUPPET when the bad guys line dance.

"Bunnies": Make Bunny ears to scare Anya.

They Got The Mustard Out: Wave your MUSTARD PACKET in the air (don't squirt it, please, cause we actually can't get the mustard out!).

I'm Under Your Spell: Us your BUBBLES to show Willow and Tara's erotic passion. By the end you best be blowing those bubbles really fast.

I'll Never Tell: Get in the aisles and...look at you! You're dancing crazy!

The Parking Tickets: Wave your PARKING CITATION at Marti Noxon, and sing extra loud the missing last line, "Hey I'm not wearing underwear!"

Rest In Peace: Put in those VAMPIRE TEETH and sing Spike's widdle song. See how hard it is to be a character actor in Sunnydale?

Dawn's Lament: Scream real loud when creepy puppet-face appears.

What You Feel: Snap your fingers in time to Sweet's artful tapping. When sweet makes magic happen, say "PAH!".

Standing: Giles ballad makes us so sad. Have those TISSUES ready.

Dawn's In Trouble...It must be Tuesday: Reply by yelling "EIGHT O'CLOCK!"

Walk Through The Fire: Wave the PAPER FLAMES in the air when the fire trucks pass. The whole theatre will look like it's on fire! Sort of... (no real flames, too dangerous!)

Something To Sing About: When Giles sends in "backup" EVERYONE STAND UP and really belt it out! Don't forget those spirit fingers!

When Buffy hits her refrain, prepare your KAZOOS and hum along as she tries to hit that high note: "I think I was in heeeeaaven"

What You Feel Reprise: Join in as loud as you can when Sweet says the title: "ONCE MORE WITH FEELING".

Where Do We Go From Here: Grab hands with your neighbours and go hand in hand. C'mon, just do it.

Grr! ARGH!: Put on your MONSTER FINGER PUPPET and join in with Joss himself for a little of the old "Grr Argh".

New York: <http://www.ifccenter.com/event?eventid=999915>

"The musical episode is a fan favourite and inspired such adoration that it just had to jump to the big screen. Buffy fans (and those who have yet to be converted) can watch it larger-than-life, surrounded by 200 singing, shouting, and laughing fellow Buffy-heads, with subtitles to help lead the audience in a sing-a-long with all the characters. And, in the tradition of *Rocky Horror* and other interactive fan-favourites, there are goodie bags filled with tools for participating in the show. Before the screening starts, audience members can take part in a Buffy-oke contest and show off their own acting skills. Plus trivia, prizes, and more Buffy-inspired fun."

Austin:

http://blogs.usatoday.com/popcandy/2006/03/once_more_with_.html

Vancouver:

<http://firefly.meetup.com/12/calendar/?eventId=5165127&action=pastdate>

Mike Blake to Timebinders list, 17 November 2006

Media File

SCI FI GREEN-LIGHTS TIN MAN

SCI FI Channel has given a green light to *Tin Man*, a wild SF reimagining of *The Wizard of Oz*, as its next six-hour original miniseries. Written by Steven Long Mitchell and Craig Van Sickle (*The Pretender*), *Tin Man* (working title) is slated to begin shooting in Vancouver, B.C., in early 2007, with an eye to a December 2007 premiere. Casting is currently underway. SCI FI is re-teaming with RHI Entertainment (Legend of Earthsea) to produce *Tin Man*.

The miniseries is a sometimes psychedelic, often twisted and always bizarre take on *The Wizard of Oz*. It centres on DG, a young woman plucked from her humdrum life and thrust into The Outer Zone (the O.Z.), a fantastical realm filled with wonder, but oppressed by dark magic. DG discovers her true identity, battles evil winged monkey-bats and attempts to fulfill her destiny. Her perilous journey begins on the fabled Old Road that leads to a wizard known as the Mystic Man. Along the way, she is joined by "Glitch," an odd man missing half his brain; "Raw," a quietly

powerful wolverine-like creature longing for inner courage; and "Cain," a heroic former policeman (known in the O.Z. as a "Tin Man"), who is seeking vengeance for his scarred heart. Ultimately, DG's destiny leads her to a showdown with the wicked sorceress Azkadellia, whose ties to DG are closer than anyone could have imagined.

Tin Man will be executive-produced by RHI's Robert Halmi Sr. and Robert Halmi Jr. Mitchell and Van Sickle will also serve as executive producers.

Yes, yes, yes after 30 years, I get the last word.

Take *that*, Mrs. Magwood, for breaking the tie in my Grade five class at Van Anda School in 1976, voting for *The Wizard of Oz* over *The Time Machine*.

From the Sci-fi Channel's Website.
Cosmic Ray Seredin to BCSFA list, 27 November 2006

About BCSFA

The current BCSFA Executive members are:
 President & Archivist: R. Graeme Cameron, 604-526-7522
 Vice President: TBA
 Treasurer: Kathleen Moore-Freeman, 604-277-0845
 Secretary: Barb Dryer, 604-267-7973
 Editor: Garth Spencer, 604-325-7314
 Keeper of FRED Book: Ryan Hawe, 604-448-8714
 VCon Ambassador for Life: Steve Forty, 604-936-4754
 BCSFA's new website is at www.bcsfa.net.
 The current BCSFA email list is bc_scifi_assc@yahoo.com, archived at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bcscifiassc/>

Memberships/Subscriptions

e-mail (PDF or TXT format)	C\$15.00/US\$13.65 per year
new members	C\$26.00/US\$23.50 per year
renewals	C\$25.00/US\$22.50 per year
New Family members*	C\$32.00/US\$29.00 per year
*(including 2 votes in WCSFA meetings)	

Please send membership money to the Treasurer at 7064 No. 1 Road, Richmond, BC V7C 1T6. These prices include subscription to *BCSFAzine*. Make cheques and money orders payable to WCSFA (West Coast Science Fiction Association). (NOTE: The West Coast Science Fiction Association is a separate, officially registered society. In effect, BCSFA is a committee of WCSFA.)

Why You Got This

- You are a member.
- You are a non-member.
- You wrote in!!
- You advertised!!
- You trade with us!!!
- You called off the contract!!!!
- You didn't cancel your membership!!!!
- What motivates you, and the people you know, to do things in your club?
- What do people come to your convention to enjoy?