

# BCSFA Zine

The Newsletter of the British Columbia Science Fiction Association

#450

\$3.00/Issue

November 2010



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*BCSFAzine* © November 2010, Volume 38, #11, Issue #450 is the monthly club newsletter published by the British Columbia Science Fiction Association, a social organization. ISSN 1490-6406.

Please send comments, suggestions, and/or submissions to Felicity Walker (the editor), at [felicity4711@gmail.com](mailto:felicity4711@gmail.com) or #209-3851 Francis Road, Richmond, BC, Canada, V7C 1J6. *BCSFAzine* solicits electronic submissions and black-and-white line illustrations in JPG, GIF, BMP, PNG, or PSD format, and offers printed contributors' copies as long as the club budget allows.

*BCSFAzine* is distributed monthly at White Dwarf Books, 3715 West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V6R 2G5; telephone 604-228-8223; e-mail [whitedwarf@deadwrite.com](mailto:whitedwarf@deadwrite.com). Single copies C\$3.00/US\$2.00 each.

## This Month in BCSFA

- Thursday 11 November @ 7 PM: **November Book Discussion** at the Grind gallery & café, 4124 Main Street (near the corner of Main and King Edward), Vancouver. Book to be discussed will be *A Midsummer Tempest* by Poul Anderson.—[Doug Finnerty](#)
- Sunday 21 November @ 7 PM: **BCSFA meeting**—at Ray Seredin's, 707 Hamilton (Recreation Room), New Westminster. Call 604-521-0254 for directions. (Date confirmed!)
- Friday 26 November: **'BCSFAzine' production.**

## About BCSFA

The incumbent BCSFA Executive members are:

President & Archivist: R. Graeme Cameron, 604-584-7562

Vice President: TBA

Treasurer: Kathleen Moore, 604-771-0845

Secretary: Barb Dryer, 604-267-7973

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VCon Ambassador for Life: Steve Forty, 604-936-4754

BCSFA's website is at <http://www.bcsfa.net/>. The BCSFA e-mail lists are BC SciFi Assc ([http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bc\\_scifi\\_assc/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bc_scifi_assc/)) and BCSFAnet (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bcsfanet/>).

## Letters of Comment

[*Editor's responses in brackets.*]

**Steve Green**

Sunday 3 October 2010

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Hi Felicity,

I would argue Dave Haren is being unduly reverential when he proposes the early publishers of SF would feel embarrassed by the admittedly sparse and barely-developed plotline of *Avatar*. With a few acclaimed exceptions, 'scientific romances' were rife with barely-disguised knock-offs of themes from the cowboy and adventure pulps. As a true genre, SF didn't really take form until the mid-1940s. Thematically, *Avatar* would not feel out of place amongst the SF of the early 1970s. (Incidentally, I considered the movie overblown, ponderous and ill-focused. I am not unduly optimistic about the proposed sequels.)

Sadly, despite plenty of notice via UK broadcasts of *The Daily Show*, I'm unable to attend either Jon Stewart's rally or Stephen Colbert's march, although I guess I'd be drawn more to the former. Colbert sounds a bit like a Canadian surname, and we all know what kind of people *they* are.

[*Sexy, funny, and smart! And humble, of course.*

[*The two rallies ended up merging into one. I haven't seen any footage of it on the news or on The Daily Show/Colbert Report (the build-up, yes; the rally proper, no). Has anyone seen anything about it in the mainstream media?*]

All best

—Steve

**Lloyd Penney**

Sunday 17 October 2010

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Dear Felicity:

Thank you for both the online and paper versions of *BCSFazine* 449. It's been such a busy weekend, but not busy enough that I can't fire off a quick letter.

I will start with the local, as you did...I am glad Dave Haren is enjoying Earl Kemp's *eI*, available through eFanzines.com. Much of the current issues contains the oldest parts of his son Terry's extensive SF collection, with cover shots of the beginnings of SF specialty publishing. If you go back to the beginnings of this zine, Dave, you will find that *eI* was started as an autobiographical zine, and there are details of Earl's life, how he went to prison for being one of the biggest publishers of soft core

porn in the '50s and '60s, thanks to Richard Nixon's The President's Report on Pornography, his life in Mexico, and how he chaired Chicon III, the 1962 Worldcon in Chicago. Very interesting reading.

Also, in my own opinion, I think it's true that the original message of *I Am Legend* was dumbed down for sequels and remakes. I could say the same of any number of similar properties that got redone. Does this happen when a movie is revamped, is the message changed in the name of artistic re-interpretation, or lack of imagination on Hollywood's part? Or both, or another reason entirely?

My loc...I found out not long after seeing that Ubisoft was moving here, when I contacted my agent to see about voiceover work with the games they produce, that he had been pitching them for several weeks. I am still hopeful that I can get myself into some game alongside some famous names, but I imagine there won't be much left over. Also, I have found there is another steampunk group formed and in touch with Steampunk Canada. Steampunk Niagara is in the southernmost part of Ontario, and they seem to be busy as well. I hope there will be the opportunity soon to meet up with them, and have some fun.

The Victoriana Show in Cobourg? We didn't go after all, mostly because we were forced by an imminent breakdown and expensive repairs to buy a new car. Better transportation, but of course, can't afford to go anywhere. Also, the Steamposium in Hamilton was cancelled due to low ticket sales. The chairman also had personal crises to deal with, so October was not as busy as we thought it might be. Oh, well, SFContario is in four weeks. (EEEE!, goes the committee...)

While CanZine West took place yesterday in Vancouver, the original CanZine will take place on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Not sure if I will be going yet. And, after SFContario is Futurecon, Liana K's New Year's Eve party which morphed into a three-day convention. In the spring coming up will be the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary Ad Astra.

Just got onto the second page, so time to drop it, and start getting ready for the new week coming up, Awwwww...Take care, have a good one, just remember the next weekend is just five days away...

Yours,

Lloyd Penney

**Dave Haren**  
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Thursday 28 October 2010

Hi Felicity,

It is almost time for the wild hunt to run again.

As usual I have a bunch of odd stuff that crosses the interests of SF in some way or another.

I got a real surprise in the mail. CJ Cherryh sent me a signed copy of *Explorer*. This is one of the sections of the epic tale of Bren Cameron, whose job is to translate across the boundaries of alien cultures. I'm a drooling fanboy of hers (have been for years) so it means a lot to me. This is the only form of literary material where the connection between fans and authors is more than just stately formalisms.

I also heard that Harlan Ellison is ailing. That I didn't want to hear. I remember him as the *enfant terrible* of SF authorhood who rushed at everything like a bull and had no doubt he was going to win. So I want him to get well.



*Makers* by Cory Doctorow is a very good book, and because it has the elements of real world geekdom embedded in a matrix of quite a plausible near future coupled with believable characters it is well worth your time to download and also to buy.

Authors@Google on YouTube has Cory doing a reading excerpt and a very interesting rundown on various aspects of copyright and the bizarre methodology of companies that don't understand technology.

What he has to say is relevant to the lives of anyone who uses the Net for anything.

The whole issue of copyright has turned into a barroom brawl where a lot of the casualties are bystanders being hit by flying debris.

For anyone with a dog in the fight of modern politics I highly recommend going to Project Gutenberg and picking up

etext #33920 by Lulu Wightman [*The Menace of Prohibition*]. It's only 21 pages but well worth considering the ideas enclosed.

If you'd like to have a pair of greys with tiny saucers, Pegasus Models 9102 is a quick and easy build that makes quite robust saucers with pilots.

CJ Cherryh is working on getting her Russian fairytales available as ebooks. *Rusalka* and *Chernevog* are two of the trilogy. Jane Fancher is supposed to be putting her unique spin on the vampire genre as an ebook. That one should be interesting because it isn't going to be a clone of the stuff you have seen recently published.

I got a copy of *Starship Troopers 3* on DVD. If you want a cheesy horror movie with campy over the top acting and some bizarre storyline don't pass this up.

[*It's going to be on TV soon. I have it marked in TV Week as a "maybe."*]

Bear in mind that RAH would have strangled Verhoeven with his own guts for what he has done to one of the best SF books ever written. I ran it as a double feature with *Re-Animator* which brings the same gang in *From Beyond* together to re-do an HPL tale in high style.

PLOS [*Public Library of Science*] journal is doing open source publication of peer reviewed science papers. Lots of good stuff available if you have let what's going on pass for a few years.

Perfect Captain has a new game up for downloads, an epic row between the Byzantines and the Franks inspired by the Princes of Achaia which can be obtained from archive.org (volume 2). If you're looking for an epic of ancient political double dealings try the first twenty pages of this.

Librivox has a new format, .M4B, which lets you hear an entire one of their voicebooks without messing with individual files using VLC to play back. I

stumbled across this when I went to get a copy of *The House on the Borderland*. Lots of good stuff in this format, well worth a look with your browser.

If your comp has a dual-layer DVD burner the .ISO file is available from Project Gutenberg. 8.5 gigs is lots of books. I read a lot and I read very fast but I won't live long enough to finish everything on that DVD.

What these are really good for is giving them to kids and people with kids, because a Stanford study concluded that far from making people into illiterates that the current crop of young people writes far more than any generation of the past and reads more too. The shortcuts they use make a lot more sense if that's true.

CYA L8R

Dave Haren

**Michael Bertrand**  
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Sunday 31 October 2010

Is it *BCSFazine* time again? Feels like VCON was so long ago that I guess it must be time to dust off the last issue and share my thoughts.

Hey...you're welcome.

I agree with David Haren that it is odd to think of science fiction as, less than 100 years ago, being solely the domain of tiny press runs and low production values. I think it has never entirely lost that feel either, that it has to fight to stay alive and be seen as legitimate. And no matter how many trillions are made by science fiction properties, I get the feeling it will stay that way.

To me, it's so obvious that science fiction is not only as legitimate as any literature but often superior to it in terms of breadth of vision, the exploration of truly interesting ideas, and scope of imagination, that I find it hard to believe that anyone still thinks of science fiction as "that kid stuff with ray guns."

But the people behind science fiction television shows will tell you that those people are still out there and those people will always be unsettled by science fiction, regardless of commercial or critical success, and deep down, they will always seek to make that weird stuff go away.

Sorry you got socked by some big backpacks, Lloyd. Being six feet tall, built more for horsepower than speed, and somewhat oblivious to "reality," I have been the sock-er on a few occasions. On behalf of all my fellow lummoxes (lummoxen?), I am terribly sorry. Sometimes I think I should have one of those "warning: backing up" sirens that large vehicles like dump trucks do, and possibly a big sign that says "WARNING: Driver lives in own little world which only abuts this one when absolutely necessary."

Sorry to hear of Kevin McCarthy's passing. I only remember him from *UHF*, but he plays the most gloriously over the top comedy villain of all times in that movie, the kind of guy who makes the villain's comeuppance at the end of the movie be the kind of thing that makes you want to stand up and cheer, and so to me, that's quite enough.

Well, that's my thoughts for this month. Seeya next time, folks!

**We Also Heard From:** Nalini Haynes, Taral Wayne, Spider Robinson, Cathy Palmer-Lister

## Calendar

[The printing costs for this month's "Calendar" were paid for by a donation from Kathleen Moore.]

Note to print readers: underlined events have an associated URL. Links included in the PDF version at <http://www.efanzines.com/BCSFA/>.—[Julian Castle](#)

### Already in Progress

6 July–23 December 2010: [From Pong to Pokemon: Video Game Exhibition](#) at the Surrey Museum, 17710 56A Avenue, Surrey, BC. Artifacts from history of video games in four hardware categories: arcade (*Computer Space*, *Street Fighter II*), home console (*Super Mario Bros.*), computer (*World of Warcraft*), and handheld (Game & Watch). "Play days" (where visitors can play the games): "The Moderns," 17 July 2010—Nintendo 64, Playstation 3, etc.; "8- and 16-Bit Era," 25 September 2010—Nintendo Entertainment System, Sega Genesis, etc.; "Early Days," 27 November 2010—Atari 2600 [*E.T.*], Intellivision, ColecoVision, etc. Register at <http://www.surrey.ca/>.—[Julian Castle](#) "Enjoy this look at how video gaming has changed people's recreation time and opened up new industries and career opportunities. Find out how gaming itself has changed from arcade days and *Pac-Man* to the latest handheld devices and *Pokemon Platinum*. Adults \$5, seniors/students \$3.75, child/youth \$2.50, 5 & under free. Space is limited, so registration is recommended by calling 604-592-6956."—[Keith Lim](#)

22 October–14 November 2010: [Robots & Monsters Exhibition](#) at Ayden Gallery, 88 West Pender Street, Suite 2103, International Village (Tinseltown) Vancouver, BC, V6B 6N9. Featured Artists: Megan Majewski, Rachel Sawatzky, Kelly Haigh, Brianne Tweedle, Chris Brett, Peter Hogan, Steffen Quong, Ben Worth, Shimona Hendry, Emily Dohler-Knox, Morgan Jeske, Curtis Hamm, Benson Musaev, Russell Alton, Mandy Tsung, Shwa, Nasimo, Jenn Brisson, Rheanna Fancypants, Cam Strudwick, Phresha, Nomi Chi, Alison Lilly, Matt Linares, Xavier Smith, Christopher Williams, Kristian Adam. Music: Cherchez La Femme.—[Keith Lim](#)

### November 2010

November is National Novel Writing Month (AKA NaNoWriMo), National Model Railroad Month, and Movember.

1, 8, 15, 22, and 29 November 2010: [Drexoll Poco Game Days](#), 1–6 PM at Drexoll Games Port Coquitlam, 107B–2748 Lougheed Highway (Westwood Center beside Westwood Street), Port Coquitlam, BC.—[Keith Lim](#)

2 November and 7 December 2010: [Greater Vancouver Boardgames Meetup Group Monthly Meetup](#), 7 PM. [Location shown only to members of the Meetup group.] The games played depend on what everyone brings. If there is a game that you

would like to play let it be known and we'll see if someone can bring it. Also if you have a great game to share we're always excited to try it out. \$1.—[Keith Lim](#)

3, 10, 17, and 24 November 2010: [Cloudscape Workshop](#) at the Grind Gallery and Coffee House, 4124 Main Street, Vancouver, BC, V5V 3P6.—[Keith Lim](#)

3, 10, 17, and 24 November 2010: [Board Gamers: Dungeons & Dragons—Encounters](#), 5 PM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New Westminster, BC, V6A 2B2.—[Keith Lim](#)

5 November 2010: Guy Fawkes Day. Premiere of film *Megamind* (computer animation/comedy/superhero).

5 November 2010: [VSteam's Meeting to Discuss Future Meetings \(and Tea\)](#), 7–10 PM at Steamhouse, 1207 East 53<sup>rd</sup> Avenue (at Sherbrooke), Vancouver, BC. “Do you have ideas about Steampunk culture in Vancouver? What about skills or knowledge to contribute? Well on November 5<sup>th</sup>, we're having a meeting to discuss the possibilities of VSteam, and plan out our future events—and this time we'd like you all to come by and help us out! The meeting...will be covering everything from advertising to legal status to future and past events[.]”—[Keith Lim](#)

5, 12, 19, and 26 November 2010: [Strategies Open Board Game Nights](#), 6 PM at Strategies Games & Hobbies, 3878 Main Street (at 23<sup>rd</sup>) Vancouver, BC.—[Keith Lim](#)

5, 12, 19, and 26 November 2010: [Drexoll Vancouver Game Nights](#), 7–11 PM at Drexoll Games Vancouver (Kitsilano), 2860 West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue (west of MacDonald), Vancouver, BC V6K 1R2.—[Keith Lim](#)

6 November 2010: [The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bellingham ComiCon](#), 10 AM–6 PM at Ferndale Events Center, Bellingham, Washington. Special guests: James Lloyd, Ian Boothby, Erik Larsen, Stephen Sadowski, Pia Guerra, Michel Gagne, John Lustig, James Dean Smith, Randy Emberlin. Comic books from every era: Golden, Silver, Bronze, and Modern Age; graphic novels, action figures, original art, collectibles, and much more! Exit 262—just three blocks off the freeway, 10 minutes from Bellingham, and 15 minutes to the Canadian border. Free parking! Admission: \$6 (kids 7 and under: free).

6 November 2010: Book Lovers' Day.

6 November 2010: [Howloween 2010](#), 10 AM [Saturday morning]–12:30 AM [late Saturday/early Sunday] (“1 AM is the hard ‘out’ time. We'll be winding down prior to that”) at Compass Point Inn, 9850 King George Highway, Surrey, BC. “The furry event of the winter is ready and eager to have your lives...I mean attendance in 2010! Join us for contests, panels, headless lounge, art and socializing with a fully DJed dance floor...Meet new friends! Dance your paws off! Test your art skills against others! Kick tail at fursuit games! Summon the dead!...Well, we're still

working on that one. Plan to be there or be cursed forever...with regret!” \$20 at the door. “Special event hotel room rate is \$89 Canadian plus taxes per night. When reserving a room, state that you are attending the Howloween event on November 7<sup>th</sup> and you will automatically get the discounted rate. The special event rate can be applied upon check-in as well.” Admission: \$20. “Volunteers who pre-arrange to work with us and do four hours or more of work will have the option to donate (or not) for their admission at the event!”—[Julian Castle, Keith Lim](#)

6 November 2010: [Veritable Shrine Commemorative Ball: Eugene’s Axe Reunion + Thickets](#), 8:30–11:30 PM in Chilliwack. After 666 years, Eugene’s Axe AKA Diesel Division is re-uniting for an unforgettable night of metal and they’ve invited the Darkest of the Hillside Thickets and Blisterin’ Barnacles to join in.—[Keith Lim](#)

6, 13, 20, and 27 November 2010: [Strategies Miniature Figure Painting](#), 10:15 AM–12 PM at Strategies Games & Hobbies, 3878 Main Street (at 23<sup>rd</sup>) Vancouver, BC. Free, but book in advance: space is limited.—[Keith Lim](#)

6, 13, 20, and 27 November 2010: [Board Gamers: Saturday Afternoon Gaming](#), 12–7 PM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New Westminster, BC, V6A 2B2.—[Keith Lim](#)

6, 13, 20, and 27 November 2010: [Strategies Miniature Gaming Day](#) at Strategies Games & Hobbies, 3878 Main Street (at 23<sup>rd</sup>) Vancouver, BC.—[Keith Lim](#)

6–18 November 2010: [8-Bits of Destiny Art Showcase: All Your Art Are Belong to Us](#) at Metropolis Comics and Toys, 4735 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC. First annual 8-Bits of Destiny Art Showcase, inspired by video games and video game culture, and presented by AWS Creative, Metropolis Comics and Toys, and Anime Evolution. For the first showcase, All Your Art Are Belong to Us, the theme will be art inspired by video games from ’85–’95. Kick off with a “Mountain Dew and Cheetos” (the equivalent to wine and cheese for gamers) social, where the artists will have a chance to mingle with the public and potentially sell the pieces they have submitted. Part of the proceeds will be donated to a charity to be announced in the near future. Currently accepting submissions.—[Keith Lim](#)

7 November 2010: [Knotty Knitting!](#), 1 PM at La Fontana Caffè, 3701 Hastings (at Boundary), Burnaby, BC, V5C 2H6. “We’ll continue with our wonderful Sunday afternoon sessions—knitting, crocheting and telling yarns! We didn’t finish *Across the Universe*, so if we can quiet down for long enough, we’ll watch the end of that. I might bring my sewing machine. Getting ready for Hallowe’en has made me itch to get more sewing done. Anyone know how to build a corset?”—[Keith Lim](#)

10 November and 8 December 2010: [Valinor, A Vancouver J.R.R. Tolkien Monthly Meetup](#), 7 PM. [Location shown only to members of the Meetup group]. Meet several of the organizers of Valinor to learn about continuing events (such as the Reading Group and RPG) and events to come in the future. \$2.—[Keith Lim](#)

11 November and 9 December 2010: Vancouver Astronomy Monthly Meetup, 7:30 PM at HR MacMillan Space Centre (downstairs auditorium), 1100 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, BC, V6J 3J9. Royal Astronomical Society of Canada—Vancouver monthly meeting, shared with the general public at no charge.—Keith Lim

11 November 2010: Remembrance Day.

12 November 2010: Premiere of film *Skyline* (SF).

12 November and 3 December 2010: Trumpeter Games Night, 7 PM at Bonsor Recreation Complex (by Metrotown), 6550 Bonsor Avenue, Burnaby. Non-members: first meeting free, \$6 drop-in fee thereafter.—Keith Lim

13 November 2010: Strategies: Miniatures Game Day: Flames of War and Wings of War, 1–6 PM at Strategies Games & Hobbies, 3878 Main Street (at 23<sup>rd</sup>) Vancouver, BC. “Bring down your fully painted Flames of War forces to battle. Meet a new opponent or challenge a friend. Our tables are open for games. Bring down 1000-pt. or more Late War force. Or bring down your Wings of War models and rules for a massive aerial dogfight!”—Keith Lim

13 November 2010: Serenity’s Got Game!—RPG Session, 3 PM at La Fontana Caffe, 3701 Hastings (at Boundary), Burnaby, BC, V5C 2H6. “Jenni is an experienced RPG (role playing game) game master who wants to start up a *Serenity* game. And, we want her to, too! She’s going to start with sessions where each player takes on the role of any one of the following BDHs: Mal, Zoe, Wash, Inara, Jayne, Kaylee, Simon or Book (River’s in-game abilities can be a game-breaker if not handled just right, so she’ll always be a non-player character).”—Keith Lim

13 November 2010: Screening of *Earthlings: Ugly Bags of Mostly Water*, 5:30 PM at La Fontana Caffe, 3701 Hastings (at Boundary), Burnaby, BC, V5C 2H6. “New group member Qov was featured in the movie *Earthlings: Ugly Bags of Mostly Water*, a documentary about members of the Klingon Language Institute. We will watch the film, hear some background about it and have an opportunity to examine the costume Qov wore in it. Qov and Charles will also teach some basic Klingon grammar and answer questions you may have about the language. Definitely bring your copy of *The Klingon Dictionary!*”—Keith Lim

13 November 2010: Life Beyond Earth? Exo-Planets and the Search for Earth-Like Worlds, 8 PM at HR MacMillan Space Centre, 1100 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, BC, V6J 3J9. Join renowned UBC professor Dr. Jaymie Matthews as he presents an engaging talk about the search for exo-planets and the possibility of planets which might harbour the ingredients for life. Presented as part of National Science and Technology Week through the Fall lecture series at the Space Centre. \$10.75 or \$15 for lecture + 7 PM astronomy show. Space Centre (“Coming This Fall”)/BC Brown-coats.—Keith Lim

13 November 2010: Sin City Steampunk Fetish Night, 9 PM–3 AM at Club 23 West, 23 West Cordova Street, Vancouver, BC. “Ladies and Gentlemen, Messieurs and Madames and all other applicable monikers, the next Sin City Fetish Night is soon to commence! So shed your daily inhibitions for an evening of dancing, decadence and the partaking of spirits. Spruce yourself up in your favorite finery and equip yourself with tools of titillation! Gramophone grinders (TBA) will retrofit your brain with a revolutionary ruckus of steam-powered vociferations. Fancy a flogging? Indulge in our fully equipped dungeon with experienced dungeon monitors from the Vancouver DM Team. And as always, hosted by the *mad mad* majestic Mr. Dark! Strict fetish dress code as always, and though of course any fetish outfit you can dream up is great, we *highly* encourage sexy outfits for *sinner*s! Theme...*steampunk!* *Outfit ideas*: historical military outfits, lace, ruffles and bustles, gears, cogs, copper and brass, goggles, spectacles, monocles, cigars, pipes, cigarillos. *Suggested shopping locations*: Gorilla Surplus (Broadway, between Clark & Commercial), New World Designs (downtown, on Cordova), Deadly Couture (downtown, on Cordova), Flaming Angels (downtown, on Seymour), Party Bazaar (4<sup>th</sup> Ave., between Cambie & Main). For more info visit [www.sincityfetishnight.com](http://www.sincityfetishnight.com). See pics @ [www.gothic.bc.ca](http://www.gothic.bc.ca). 19+. \$9 with pass/\$12 without.—Aaron Harrison/Keith Lim

13 November and 4 December 2010: Pop Culture Collectibles Fair, 11 AM–4 PM at Scottish Cultural Centre, 8886 Hudson Street, Vancouver, BC. New & vintage comics, toys & collectibles, records, CDs, VHS, DVDs, manga, anime, books, video games, magazines, *Star Wars*, Hot Wheels, wrestling, Canucks. Free parking. Door prizes. \$3.—Keith Lim

14 November 2010: Vancouver Comicon, 11 AM–5 PM at Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street (Main & 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue), Vancouver, BC. “Admission: \$4; kids under 14: free. Dealer tables: \$45/center; \$55/wall. 604-322-6412. Special guests: Nina Matsumoto (*Yokaiden*, *The Last Airbender*, *Simpsons Comics*), Steve Rolston (*Ghost Projekt*, *The Escapists*, *Emiko Superstar*), Robin Bougie (*Cinema Sewer*), Kelly Everaert (*Jungle Tales*, *Trilogy of Terror*), Miriam Libicki (*Jobnik!*), Andrew Salmon (*Sherlock Holmes*, *Secret Agent X*), Jeremy Sawatsky (*Purple Soul*), Robin Thompson (*Champions of Hell*, *Hemp Island*), Carrie McKay, Molly Nemecek, Critical Hit Comics, Gurukitty Studios, Monster Attack Team Canada. Follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/vancomicon/>. Comics for Classrooms: Donate a new or gently-used school-appropriate graphic novel for free admission to this show. Books collected will be donated to Vancouver schools.”

16 November 2010: Button Day.

## RANDOM NOSTALGIA

WILD PALMS  
THAAO PENGHLIS  
CANDY-FLAVOURED CIGARILLOS  
ZACK MORRIS PHONES  
SCORPINA

17 November 2010: The Red Hulk (“Rulk”) joins the Avengers in *Avengers* #7, written by Brian Michael Bendis, pencilled John Romita, Jr., and inked by Klaus Janson. Ask your local comic shop if they are having an “Avengers Party”: selling *Avengers* #7 variants: blank cover variant, Marko Djurdjevic gatefold variant, Ed McGuinness variant, and *Tron* variant, and giving away free Marko Djurdjevic exclusive limited edition gatefold cover prints.



17 November 2010: [Drawing Life, the Universe & Everything: Drawing Graphic Novels 101 \[One Book, One Vancouver\]](#), 6:30–8:30 PM at Peter Kaye Room, Lower Level, Vancouver Public Library Central Branch, 350 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, BC, V6B 6B1. Learn how to illustrate your own guide to life, the universe and everything with graphic novel artist Julian Lawrence. No experience necessary. Materials will be provided. Open to all ages. Free admission but registration is required, call 604-331-3607.—[Keith Lim](#)

18 November 2010: Occult Day.

19 November 2010: **Ashton Green**’s birthday. Premiere of film *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part I* (fantasy).

19 November 2010: [IPMS \(International Plastic Modellers Society\) Vancouver meeting](#), 7:30–9:30 PM at Bonsor Recreation Complex, “Arts Studio” (second floor), 6550 Bonsor Avenue, Burnaby, BC. Door prize draw. Non-members: first meeting free, \$2 drop-in fee thereafter.—[Keith Lim](#)

19–21 November 2010: [Steamcon II: Weird Weird West](#) at Hilton Seattle Airport Hotel & Seattle Airport Marriott, Seattle, WA, USA. “The first Steamcon, held last year in October, was a huge success. We wanted to try and do something bigger and better this year.” Writer Guest: James P. Blaylock, Artist Guest: Jake Von Slatt, Games Guest: Shane Hensley. Full weekend memberships: Adult (18+) \$45.00, teen (6–17) \$25.00, children (0–5) free. [Vancouver Steampunks/Facebook](#).—[Keith Lim](#)

19–21 November 2010: VSteam at Steamcon II at Hilton Seattle Airport Hotel & Seattle Airport Marriott, Seattle, WA, USA. Vancouver Steampunks (VSteam) are attending Steamcon II. The Facebook Event page “is to find out who is going to Steam Con II in Seattle, and to help people arrange group rides and accommodations.” [Vancouver Steampunks/Facebook](#).—[Keith Lim](#)

20 November 2010: **Chris Stubbs'** birthday.

20 November 2010: Hitchhiker's Innovation Expo [One Book, One Vancouver], 12–3 PM at Promenade, Vancouver Public Library Central Branch, 350 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, BC, V6B 6B1. Come see what the future holds for us! Check out the latest gear, eco-gadgets and technology at our expo and electronic petting zoo. First 100 visitors get a free One Book, One Vancouver iPhone cover. Free.—Keith Lim

20 November 2010: BC Browncoats: [save the date], 2 PM. [Venue TBA.] “We have something special in the works. Save the date and I’ll post a meetup as soon as we work out the details.”—Keith Lim

21 November 2010: Strategies: Miniatures Game Demo: AE Bounty, 12–2 PM at Strategies Games & Hobbies, 3878 Main Street (at 23<sup>rd</sup>) Vancouver, BC. “This AE Bounty demo game pits a force of four elite, power armoured Bounty Hunters against a force of heavily armed mercenaries. Can you help lead Osawl to safety? Or would you rather help capture him for your bank clients? AE Bounty is a 28mm sci-fi skirmish game that can be played with any science fiction miniatures. The game is designed for small, quick battles ranging from crews of 2 to 12 figures.”—Keith Lim

21 November 2010: Geeks Go See *Deathly Hallows*, 1 PM. [Venue/time to be determined.] “We’ll try to see it at Metrotown, provided it is playing there. I’m going to make this a joint event with the Creative Geeks Society. Depending on when the show is on, we can go to Red Robin for dinner afterwards.”—Keith Lim

24 November 2010: **Spider Robinson'** birthday.

26 November 2010: Premiere of film *Tangled* (FKA *Raiponce*) (computer animation/fairy tale).

27 November 2010: Crafty Geeks Make Cunning Christmas Ornaments, 2 PM at Cocoa Nymph, 3739 West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue (at Alma Street), Vancouver, BC, V5K 0A1. “Have an idea for a fannish ornament? Let’s get together and get our creative juices going. Any ideas on how to make a Death Star ornament? An ice planet would be cute. What would we use to make a teeny Stargate? What about an origami Viper? A TARDIS couldn’t be that hard to make, eh? Could we make a light sabre with a glow stick? I bet Amber could show us how to cross stitch some lovely ornaments. BSG and Stargate dogtags would make cute geeky ornaments. Hmmm, something with a Leaf on the Wind...How could we make a frilly Kaylee’s dress into an ornament? Of course wooden stakes and crosses could be ornamental as well as useful. Bring your gear and your ideas and we’ll get brain-storming.”—Keith Lim

28 November 2010: Red Planet Day.

28 November and 26 December 2010: Vancouver Roleplayers' Collective Monthly Social Gathering, 3 PM at the Grind Gallery and Coffee House, 4124 Main Street,

Vancouver, BC, V5V 3P6. The purpose of the recurring meetings on the last Saturday of every month is to meet and greet and chill, to share a drink or two with fellow gamers, talk about your common interests and maybe even find yourself a gaming group.—[Keith Lim](#)

29 November 2010: [Vogon Poetry Slam & Vog-Off \[One Book, One Vancouver\]](#), 7 PM at Alma VanDusen & Peter Kaye Rooms, Vancouver Public Library Central Branch, 350 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, BC, V6B 6B1. Come to the Restaurant at the End of the Universe for our first-ever Vogon Poetry Competition. Fifteen of the universe's *worst* poems will be presented slam style for your pleasure (or not). Come cheer on your favourite Vancouver Vogon and you may win a prize. Free.—[Keith Lim](#)

## December 2010

2 December 2010: VSteam: Winter Ball benefiting BC Cancer Foundation at Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street, Vancouver, BC. “VSteam is hosting a Winter Ball to benefit the BC Cancer Foundation. Live bands, DJs, and enough steampunkery to fill a ballroom, we’ve got an amazing night planned to help out an amazing cause!... steampunk music playing all night. In addition, we’ll bring a bar, snacks, and enough tea fill a zeppelin. Also, to raise money for the BC Cancer Foundation, we will be auctioning off some steampunk tree ornaments (as well as other donated prizes). If you have anything to donate, or wish to make an ornament for our tree, let us know! 100% of all profit will be donated to the BC Cancer Foundation, so come out for a night of top-hats, gowns, dancing, and all sorts of steampunkery!” [Vancouver Steampunks Calendar/Vancouver Steampunks Forum/Facebook](#).—[Keith Lim](#)

4 December 2010: [Cthulhupalooza II: Son of Cthulhupalooza](#), 1–11:55 PM. [Venue TBA, possibly VanCity Theatre.] Second Level Wizards have tentatively scheduled Cthulhupalooza II: Son of Cthulhupalooza for Saturday 4 December 2010. “[Second Level Wizards](#) present a Cthulhu film showcase, live performance by the Darkest of the Hillside Thickets and more. The first Cthulhupalooza included a *Rock Band* contest, a screening of the HPLHS’ *The Call of Cthulhu* film, and a live performance by the Darkest of the Hillside Thickets. This year we will have more films, more diversity, and another live show by the Thickets. If you have a film you’d like to submit or an idea for a performance or activity at this year’s Cthulhupalooza, please contact the Second Level Wizards ([info@secondlevelwizards.com](mailto:info@secondlevelwizards.com))!”—Toren Atkinson/[Keith Lim](#)

5 December 2010: [Tron-a-Thon](#), 6:30 PM at La Fontana Caffè, 3701 Hastings (at Boundary), Burnaby, BC, V5C 2H6. Showing of the original *Tron* (1982) before the release of the new *Tron* movie. This movie is about a hacker who is literally abducted into the world of a computer and forced to participate in gladiatorial games, where his only chance of escape is with the help of a heroic security program. (Previously scheduled on Friday 3 December 2010.)—[Keith Lim](#)

11 December 2010: Browncoats Celebrate the Season—SteamPunk Style, 11 AM at HR MacMillan Space Centre, 1100 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, BC, V6J 3J9. BC Browncoats' annual Christmas brunch bash. Theme is steampunk. "Lunch will be pot-luck. Please give us an indication of what you'll be bringing in your RSVP or the comment section of this meetup...In keeping with our long-standing tradition, we'll be celebrating the shiny holiday with a Chinese gift exchange. Please bring a wrapped, Whedon-themed gift worth up to \$10 for the tree."—Keith Lim

## News-Like Matter

### Obscenity Charges Laid Against Canadian Horror Filmmaker

Alert reader Julian Castle submitted a clipping from the Friday 15 October 2010 issue of the *Metro* newspaper, which says that police arrested gore filmmaker Remy Couture because of "international complaints about the extremely gruesome and realistic-looking violence on his website [...] innerdepravity.com." Couture is charged, under Section 163 of the Criminal Code, with moral corruption and distributing obscene material. Demonstrators, dressed as zombies and ghouls, gathered in support of Couture outside the Montreal courthouse where Couture pled not guilty and requested a jury trial.



Felicity Walker

Friday 29 October 2010

### Notes from the October 2010 BCSFA Meeting



*Stephen Fry is slowly morphing into Jon Pertwee.*

In attendance were Ray Seregin (host), Graeme Cameron (president), Kathleen Moore (treasurer), Barb Dryer (secretary), Felicity Walker (editor), Joe Devoy, Julian Castle, Stu Smythe, and Michael Bertrand.

Last month's "This Month in BC-SFA" incorrectly listed the date of the October 2010 meeting as Sunday 24 October 2010. I had wrongly assumed that the meetings are the second-to-last Sunday of the month; in fact, they are *always the third Sunday* of the month. (Normally, that would be the same thing, but October was a five-Sunday month.)

The date of the November meeting is confirmed: Sunday 21 November 2010, the third Sunday in November.

Good news from VCON: although all the numbers are not in yet (for example, the hotel bill has not been received), Kathleen estimates that VCON 35 made a profit, which can go towards paying back its loan.

Ray said that at VCON 23 in 1998, he asked writer David Gerrold if his *Babylon 5* script came from a rejected *Star Trek: Phase II* or *Star Trek: The Next Generation* story that Gerrold had had in mind since the late 1970s, but which Paramount had rejected because they feared it would be too controversial for Jehovah's-Witness-owned stations in Newark, New Jersey and Miami, Florida.

Gerrold's episode of *Babylon 5* was "Believers," in which an alien couple won't let the doctor save their fatally ill son because medicine is against their religion; Jehovah's Witnesses are not allowed to accept blood transfusions, and doing so is grounds for shunning. Gerrold's *Star Trek: The Next Generation* script (which was purchased, but never used) was "Blood and Fire," which contained an AIDS metaphor and would have included a gay couple among the crew of the *Enterprise*. He later rewrote it for both his *Star Wolf* novel series and as a *Star Trek: New Voyages* episode.

Gerrold's being censored made Stu feel like things hadn't changed since 1953, when there were objections to a black child appearing at a birthday party on an episode of *Captain Marvel*, and pregnant women couldn't be shown on TV. Fortunately, there was Marty Engels & John Astin less than a decade later.

Graeme said that Astin came up with his trademark wild-eyed look as a way to stave off confrontation when walking through dangerous neighbourhoods. Stu said that another actor known for playing crazy characters is Bruce Dern. I'm sure Bruce Dern is a nice person, but I've disliked him in every role I've ever seen him in [for example, *The Burbs* (1989), *The Great Gatsby* (1974), and *Down Periscope* (1996)]. "Which means he did a good job," said Stu. The actor whom Stu hated for years was Nicolas Cage, because he starred in *Valley Girl* (1983), which seemed to be saying that there was no such thing as a poor Jew in the suburbs. This was a slap in the face to Stu's childhood (and I'm guessing Harlan Ellison's, if he saw the movie).

Graeme considers Steven Spielberg a good director, but it drives Graeme up the wall when Spielberg's movies feel too overtly manipulative. I asked if Spielberg's remake of *War of the Worlds* (2005) was darker than the usual Spielberg movie, and Graeme said yes; in fact, it was also darker than the classic George Pál version (1953), in which the hero never doubted he could whip the Martians. Gene Barry, the actor who played that hero, was at the Calgary Stampede in 1965 (presumably because of *Bat Masterson*, not *War of the Worlds*), where he bored the audience by going on about himself incessantly, and was rude to fans. Someone else had had a similar experience with Rubin "Hurricane" Carter (the boxer generally believed to have been wrongly convicted of multiple homicides in 1966). I remembered a 2000 episode of *Politically Incorrect* in which Carter was disappointingly unsympathetic to the prisoners of Sheriff Joe Arpaio in Maricopa County, Arizona, where the talk show was taping that week.

Stu said that Westerns aren't historically accurate. Graeme replied that a *Bonanza* he saw had one accurate scene, in which the family killed some trespassers on their property, and got away with it. I said that even Westerns written *during* the 19<sup>th</sup> century were mythical [as in a scene in *Unforgiven* (1992) in which a sheriff (Gene Hackman) tells a writer (Saul Rubinek) the truth about the outlaw (Richard

Harris) whose exploits the writer has been romanticizing]. According to Graeme, Texans were so famous for their swearing that the Mexican army called them “The Goddamns”; also, Alfred Hitchcock wanted to do a Western, but only if it was accurate. Someone said that people back then wore bowler hats or top hats, not cowboy hats—though sombreros became popular with white people once they realized they kept the sun out of their eyes.

The subject changed to David Lynch’s film adaptation of Frank Herbert’s novel *Dune* (1984). Graeme recently rewatched it and found it was as silly as he remembered. He said that he saw it during its first movie-theatre run and when Sting came out of the steam shower, rotating around, the audience laughed. Stu felt that the movie mispronounced Finnish names such as “Harkonnen” (which Stu said should be pronounced “Härkönen”). We all agreed that it was a visually cool movie, however. I recommended the 2000 TV mini-series with John Hurt, which I watched with Ashton Green and found very comprehensible—though less aesthetically cool, and Matt Keeslar is no Sting. Whale fur.

Stu didn’t like the 1980s *Twilight Zone*. I said that I liked it, and that in a way it was *two* series—the two CBS seasons (with well-known writers and actors), and the low-budget, made-in-Toronto third season. *The Twilight Zone: The Movie* (1983) could count as yet another 1980s *Twilight Zone*, but we decided that was pushing it.

Graeme had recently bought *Bubba Ho-Tep* (2002) and, based on the premise (Elvis vs. the Mummy), was looking forward to some delightfully campy schlock. We warned Graeme to brace himself for a more melancholy, non-zany movie, but he said that as long as the actor playing Elvis was good, it would be OK. (Bruce Campbell plays Elvis, so I think Graeme will be OK.)

Stu saw *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy* (2004) and didn’t like it. I recommended *Semi-Pro* (2008) if he wanted to give *Anchorman* star Will Ferrell one last chance. The *Land of the Lost* remake (2009) starring Ferrell came up, and someone said that the studio made a mistake in marketing it as a movie parents (who might have been fondly remembering the 1974 Krofft show) could take their kids to. Sleestaks are cute though.

According to Kathleen, the most common public-domain tunes used in filk are “Greensleeves,” “Ash Grove,” “Cwm Rhondda,” and “Lobe den Herren.” Someone told Woody Allen’s Gregorian chant joke: which monks kept the beat? (Hey, just because it’s *a cappella* doesn’t mean there’s no time signature.)

Ray said that, incredibly, Prime Minister Trudeau (late 1960s to early 1980s) once made it illegal for American publications to cross the border into Canada. This meant that Canadian tourists who bought comics and magazines in the US and were able to sneak them into Canada could make a tidy profit selling them to other Canadians.

Barb reported that the Hollywood Theatre (in the 3000 block on Broadway in Vancouver) would be marking its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary on Thursday 21 October 2010, reshewing its original double-bill on that night as well as other classic movies (such as *Casablanca*) over the following two days.

I passed around some old fanzines and SF magazines I’d bought at the Comic Shop on West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue the previous week. The first issue of *Vertex* (April 1973) contained a transcript of “Discovery of the Future,” Robert Heinlein’s Guest of Honour speech at the 1941 Worldcon. The speech might have been lost had it not been

recorded by Walter Daugherty on acetate records and transcribed by Forrest Ackerman. Graeme said that Heinlein wasn't happy that Ackerman sold that speech to *Vertex* without his permission, and that Heinlein called Ackerman "an adolescent who never grew up"; Heinlein said that, having decided that, he then found Ackerman easier to deal with. Graeme added that when Ackerman was in the army in World War II, he was under peer pressure from the other men to have a pinup of a girlfriend for his locker; he wrote to Heinlein for help, and as it happened Heinlein's hobby was photographing his friends' wives nude, so he sent Ackerman his photo of L. Sprague de Camp's wife. Wowsers.

In a newer magazine, Graeme spotted an ad for *The Lost Skeleton of Cadavra* (2001), which he liked. He said it was a hilarious, very faithful send-up of 1950s films, including the insane optimism.

Ray suggested BCSFA have B-movie nights. Between Graeme and me, we must have several decades' worth of B-movies. His archives begin with early SF movies such as *Aelita* (1924), carry through to the present day, and centre on the Atomic Age—I have a pleasant memory of Graeme showing *The Giant Claw* (1957) at a convention, a movie so hilariously bad that Graeme says the star, Jeff Morrow, sneaked out of the theatre early to avoid being recognized—in his home town! Meanwhile, I've been steadily accumulating movies from the late 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s and am happy to present the (hors d') oeuvres of Menahem Golan & Yoram Globus, Brian Yuzna & Stuart Gordon, Charles & Albert Band, Jalal Merhi, and Albert Pyun. And we've probably both got movies by Roger Corman. So be sure to send Count Floyd \$20 for your 3-D glasses, and remember to sit in the centre of the room if you have an Advent screen.

Someone (I'll assume Ray) said that there are now slot machines on BC Ferries.

Also referenced were Spider Robinson, temperance, the Caboodle cat ranch, Vincent (Fan GOH), and coffee, but there was too much cross-talk to hear clearly and/or my notes are too brief.

Felicity Walker

Sunday 17 October 2010

## **New Baron/Baroness of Lions Gate ISO Susan/Michael Walsh**

James Welch wrote to Garth Spencer:

"Hello Garth,

"It is Jim Welch here, long time gafiated fan and founding member of the Surrey Contingent.

"I am wondering if you could forward on my email to Susan and Michael Walsh. Although I haven't been involved much with SF fandom, my wife and I have been active in the SCA.

"Indeed, we just accepted the honour of becoming the next Baron and Baroness of Lions Gate. Michael and Susan were the founding Baron and Baroness, starting the work that led to the Shire becoming a Barony. They stepped down before Lions Gate actually became a Barony and I would like to invite Michael and Susan to come out to our step up in November.

"I tried to find an email for either one of them but have not found one yet. I did run across your email and figured you might remember me.

“You could pass on either this email or my SCA email [jameswolfden@yahoo.ca](mailto:jameswolfden@yahoo.ca) if you desire.

“Thanks,

“Jim Welch AKA HL James Wolfden of Lions Gate”

James Welch via Garth Spencer

Wednesday 20 October 2010

## **SMOFCon Scholarships Awarded**

CanSMOF Inc., parent non-profit organization of Anticipation, the 2009 Worldcon, is pleased to announce that two \$500 scholarships for the purpose of attending SMOFCon 28 in San Jose have been awarded.

The first scholarship was open to a Canadian citizen or resident, while the second was open to anyone involved in running conventions, regardless of their place of residence or citizenship. CanSMOF Inc. created these scholarships to allow promising convention-runners to attend the annual SMOFCon convention-runners convention.

The two scholarships have been awarded to Kent Pollard of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and Norman Cates of Wellington, New Zealand. We wish to congratulate Kent and Norman and to thank all those who applied.

Diane Lacey via Garth Spencer

Friday 22 October 2010

## **Vancouver Fandom Events—Now a Website**

Hello everyone,

Vancouver Fandom Events is now formally a website rather than a weekly emailout. The website at <http://keithlim.com/vancouver/fandom/> has been upgraded and will now be what I will spend my time on updating. Please bookmark and visit it to get lists of events.

Just to be clear, I'm not stopping or cutting back on compiling events; rather, I'm changing gears from doing a weekly emailing-out of the newest list to doing a weekly-or-more-frequent updating of a website.

The main reason for this is that number of events keeps growing, and merely keeping up is taking more and more time. Something had to give, or I'd have to just stop completely. Though it's true that it doesn't take much time **per email**, I was sending emails to multiple places, and doing so weekly, and that time adds up. So the weekly emails are being given up—please pull the info from the website now. I have absolutely no objection to anyone else who wants to take over sending out emails, by taking info from the website and emailing it out.

With the time saved, I'll have more time available to spend looking out for more events, and to update the event lists more often than just once a week.

Best wishes, and perhaps I'll see you at an event some time.

Keith

Keith Lim

Thursday 4 November 2010

## VCON 35 Report (Part 1)

Joseph Picard

[Ray Seredin obtained author Joseph Picard's permission for us to print his blog entries from VCON 35 as a convention report in BCSFAzine. Thanks, Ray! It's a long report with many images, so I'll print half of it now and half of it next issue. Underlined words are hyperlinks.—Felicity]

### **Friday, Part 1—Establish Camp**

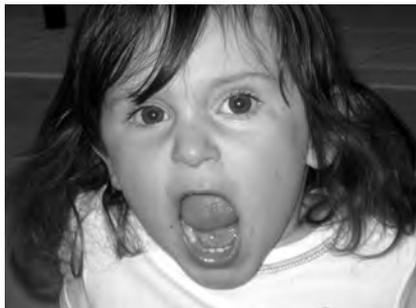
This might take a few posts; the con was a blast.

October 1

I wake up. This annoying habit happens every day, but today the mission was different. As a parallelogram, a paralegal, a parenthesis, heck, a gimp, I had to pack a little extra gear for my two nights away from home. I had most of it all ready, as well as my books, the stuff for my table, posters, banners, and a handful of things I wouldn't need...but...just in case...

I only needed help getting the cargo to the con, but my nominee for that favour was my dad, who made it his mission to make sure that I didn't have to face the evils of transit. This year, transit was a tad more favourable than previous years. VCON likes to settle in three hours from my home via transit, but this year it was going to be two. But he was determined. My Aunt Brigitte joined the party, and we ended up using her car.

To those not in the know—getting a paraplegic into any given car can be a challenge, depending on the car. But we got it working. I bid farewell to my darling Caitlin...



*"What? You're still here, dad?  
Get lost, already!!"*

And we were off. A block later, our organizational skills were put under the microscope. "What do you *mean* it's in *Richmond*?"

All right, all right, the "V" in "VCON" stands for "Vancouver," but...he never saw the address, and I had my plans written in transit instructions. No matter! Between the three of us, we could figure it out! We were one member short of a *Seinfeld* re-enactment. I wasn't too fond of that show.

It wasn't that bad. Aside from two-minute clusters of panic, separated by 20 minutes at a time of holding our breath, we finally got there. Never having been issued a map of the convention venue itself (VCON info can be hard to track down...), getting to the vendor room was an extra little cap-off to the navigation fun. The con was actu-

ally held in two neighboring hotels. Upon finding the room, the tables were not yet all set up.

Jeff (an ex-bouncer, no less), who's been an organizational asset to VCON for at least as long as I've been going (probably a lot longer)...Anyway, Jeff sees me and my crew coming. He knows I was looking for a table that was at an end, so my getting in and out wouldn't mean trashing my wheelchair through someone else's stuff. I got a table right inside the door visitors would pass by, and with a wall to my back. Score. Couldn't have picked better, really.

I put my big black box of doom onto the end of the table. The fellow setting up the table for "Atomic Fez Publishing" asks me, "No spikes this year?" He was referring to these:



I attended VCON last year with those goggles and spiked shoulderpads. The hair, face-blood and bunny ears evolved later that month...But I didn't want to wear all that to the con. I wanted to appear...a *tiny* bit professional...I guess...

When he asked about the spikes, I smiled, and tapped on the big black box of doom. Until that moment, I wondered if I'd even be bringing them out. Steel-belted chafing aside, I'm glad I did.

I got my stuff spread out—this big poster of Alisia on the table, serving as a colourful “placemat” to the books. One tower of the three, completing the design on the spines...

Then a semi-circular array of each book showing its front, angled like reflectors feeding sunlight back to the central collector. In the space between, I laid each book face down, inviting people to pick 'em up, and read the back. I set up a couple other posters on the handy wall behind me, like Regan and an eye-catching one of Alisia.

BC Chains’ Kevin (Kevin? I think...) was set up all the way across the room. I’d have to raid his little treasure chest of candy when I got my VCON bucks. A lot of familiar faces from the last two years were in effect. The first time I went to a VCON, it felt like a family of nerds, and that notion becomes more apparent every year. Let’s save us both some time. If you wanna see a list of “the gang,” look here. A couple are new, a couple are missing from previous years, but yeah. Well-timed lent tape, nods and chatter as the last bits were being put into place. It was 1 PM. We were now “on.”

### **Friday, Part 2—Rehearsal**

I call it dress rehearsal, because most of this “shift” (1 PM–7 PM) is slow as mud. People get off work at 5 or 6, maybe even have dinner, then straggle by. That leaves most of the day in the vendor’s room pretty quiet.

Gung-ho early-birds were first on the scene, I guess. The people milling about were soon a mix of early visitors and slowpoke vendor setups. Such visitors are there on a recon mission. Scope the scene, absorb a mental overview of the room, then continue mapping the rest of the con. Some of this type wander the whole con all weekend. I call 'em Orbiters.

Orbiters provide some good company when things are otherwise slow.—Er, not to slight my neighboring vendors, but Orbiters bring news from the outside. Vendors are all shackled to their tables, except when Jeff (Jeff Currey; I mentioned him in the last post) comes by to unlock us to go to the water cooler, or washroom. All hail Jeff! Paradigm of Order! I just learned that this was Jeff’s last VCON before moving to Ontario. Doubtlessly to bring Order to that savage land.



One such Orbiter was named Gabe:

Hark ye, Gabe, young man seeking his destiny! A quest, an epic quest! Being an Orbiter, I'd learn more of this epic quest in days to come. Little did I know that I was to be integral to this quest. And I'm gonna be a dick, and hold you in suspense until I blog about Sunday.

In a totally unrelated note, on my table also lay an item I built to strike up convers—I mean to showcase before the U.N. snapped it up:



I thought the world needed to see it before the U.N. snatched it up, and it disappeared into some black ops involving eggs, pancakes, and possibly assassinations. The smaller text that you probably can't see:

“—LASER GUIDANCE (batteries dead)

“—PHOTONIC-BASED NIGHT VISION ASSISTANCE

“—AM TRANSISTOR RADIO (option not yet included in this year's model)

“—SNIPER SCOPE (broken)

“This spatula was more recently used to flick fleas off of a rabid, muddy dog, and may carry a variety of diseases. This is a good thing! It's like a poison coating to enhance attacks. As long as I'm at VCON, I'm

also selling my books. They are not scoped, laser guided, and have no night vision, so they are just \$15. I'm pretty sure they don't carry diseases.”

Photo credit goes to Steve Fahnstalk. Speaking of Steve—

He was running his table alongside his wife across the aisle. Used books. He was running a kind of clearance sale. Most of his books were \$1 or \$2. Hmm. And I'm selling for \$15. Hmm. *But my books are shiny.* And have a much higher lesbian ratio! Zombies, too! And I highly doubt that any of his have an exploding, flying log.

Oh yeah, it was on. He was also giving out free bookmarks. Again, mine were shinier. And in CoLoUr!! All right, all right, anyone walking around in that room was offered a bajillion free bookmarks, but it was war anyway. When a visitor walked between us, they were liable to be in the middle of an outlandish slander-fest about opposing bookmarks. They carry disease, they carry nanites of good and evil varieties, Gypsy curses, and upon reading the bookmarks, a person is then doomed to buy the associated book.

Here's a picture of Steve. Or one of his employees. Tell me, would you take a bookmark from this guy?

I didn't think so. Spikes beat balloons, simple mechanics.

At the end of the "shift" things had picked up a little in terms of traffic. Sales were still low, but this was recon day. Most of us were multi-VCON veterans; we knew this was normal. Anyone new this year was probably pretty worried at this point. Nothing I or anyone could say about this being normal can entirely wash away the little voice saying "I'm wasting my time here." Patience, little ones. Patience.

OK, that's a good place to wrap up a post. I skipped a lot of great folks, but I'll have to catch up on them in later posts. No one likes *huge* blog entries. So this is where we'll end...end of dealer hours on Friday, Oct. 1.

Next up: Friday, Part 3—book launch event.

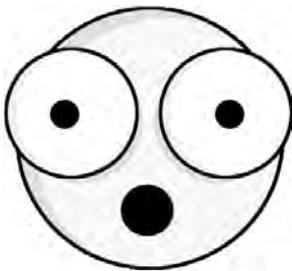


### **Friday, Part 3—Book Launch**

So, during the first vendor day, I'd handed over two copies of each book to Walter, (Was it Walter? I'm pretty sure...) of White Dwarf Books. He's a retailer, and each year, he sets up a table at the annual "book launch event," where people can grab books being pitched at the event. This leaves the authors free to schmooze, and not carry around books, looking desperate to make sales. Walter gets a cut, which hey... that's okay.

Three years ago, I was invited to the launch event for the second edition of *Lifehack*. I was told I would be doing a reading. In public. Out loud. To humans. Live.

Eep.



And I didn't have many days to prep for that. That first "book launch" event was terrifying. I showed up, I asked Walter stupid questions, I chatted with a ton of people, waiting to be called up to read...waiting for... anyone to be called up to read. There was about ten authors in the crowd, all with new books within the last year. All right, maybe I was cheating, only the second edition of my book was launched in that year...but the VCON organizer didn't seem to mind.

And then it was announced that due to the noisiness of the room, readings were canceled. As disappointed as I was, I suddenly realized that I could now breathe. Good thing the reading was canceled too, I had some reading experiences shortly after that told me I was not ready.

Skip ahead a year. New venue, better acoustics. I showed up to chatter, not expecting to, but ready to read. I'd had some practice in writing meetup groups. No pro by any means, but good enough to not embarrass myself. Reading started late, but it went well.

Skip ahead to this year. The time got moved to 7 PM, right when the dealer room was closing. No loss, so I miss five minutes for the lengthy chatter period.

I'm looking for the launch event, expecting to find a lounge-like environment, with tables spread out like a cafe. I stick my head in one door, and see a room not much larger than a classroom, with dealer-like tables set up along the sides. Whoops, that's not right. I ask someone outside.

"Do you know where the book launch event is?"

"This is it."



Ya rly.

Kay. Um...so...other authors are here with books set up like rushed vendor tables, all with a stack of their books in front of them. And here I am, no table. Oh, there's Walter over there. Walter's apparently only getting a cut off of me this year, I guess. No worries, really. I was more in WTF mode to care.

I looked for an empty table—there was none. I heard later that I was not the only table-less author in the room by any means. The lady who organized the event, I'm told, ran it two years prior. No one seemed that pleased with how the event was going. I can't remember the lady's name, she seemed nice enough, but...this was a mess.

As it was, I had to email VCON a month beforehand to make sure I was *invited* to the book launch event, which I'd never had to do before. Maybe part of being lost in *that* shuffle was me missing a memo where the event had been turned into... something else. Ish.

All right, enough pouting, lemonade time. I camped in a blank spot next to one of the tables, and met Geoff(rey W.) Cole. He was there representing a book he's contributed to, *The Blackness Within: Stories of the Pagan God Moccus*. We grumbled about the muddy chaos that was the launch event, and the lack of readings. It turned out that he had a solo reading scheduled on Sunday. I'd seen single-author readings in the VCON program, and wondered how a person got such a thing. I guess you just ask! At any rate, he'd been given the room for an hour, and wasn't sure if he could fill the time...so...*Hi!* Why *yes*, I think I can fill up some time!

I sat at my invisible table for a while longer, handing bookmarks out as visitors made the rounds...There was a lot of people there, and it was noisy, but overall...it felt like there was nothing going on. Maybe that was just my WTF still lingering.

Walter came by, giving up for the night, returning my books to me. He stated the obvious and told me there were no sales. I smirked and glanced around the room. He nodded. No shock, I didn't care. I wanted to do a reading; that was what I looked forward to at the launch event.

I didn't hear the announcement, but at some point, it must have been declared over, people started leaving *en masse*. Yeah, well, that was it. It was over.

Friday was unexpectedly slow in the vendor room, and this kind of felt like a bonus kick in the teeth. I could have been crashing someone's party or something. Heck, I could have gone and hung out in the gaming room, and check out what the D&D kiddies are playing these days.

Silver lining to the event? I had a reading anyway, on Sunday, and met Geoff. Still...overall, a realllly disappointing book launch event. With any luck, next year's will be better...and I won't have a new book to launch.

Piss on it. Day one wasn't a wash, but it felt pretty close at that point. It was okay, it was okay, the vendor room went good for a Friday. Moving on.

Next post: the hotel room.

### **Friday, Part 4—Hotel Night 1**

With the book launch event thankfully behind me, I had to go find my room. My room was in a different hotel than the convention. Why? I'm che—*frugal*. Gotta say though, I *kind* of felt like a chump abandoning the hotel hosting the convention, in favor of a nearby competitor. Oh well.

I had a large bin that I'd been hauling around since the close of the vendor room. A masterpiece of rubbermaidery; when it sat in my lap, it came up to my chin. No one asked what it was. I learnt from Dr. Who (paraphrased):

“What do people do when they're walking along and see a big blue box sitting in the middle of the street? They keep walking.”

And my box was no where near as big, nor time-travelly. It was, however, filled with paraplegic overnight stuffies. And it needed to go for a walk. A ride. In my lap, down the street, across it, and to my destination hotel. It was not super stable in my lap, and I needed to pull it back into place regularly, especially when there's any little abnormality in the terrain.

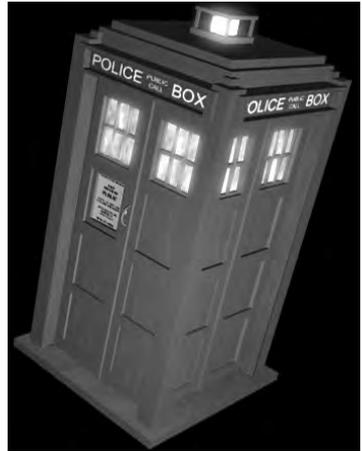
The trip looked like five blocks or so on a map. No biggie. I wheel more than that around town taking kiddo to the gym/preschool, whatever. When I used Google Maps' Street View (also useful for checking out flatness of terrain) it looked like two or three blocks.

When it came to actually making the trip, I got to the corner of the convention hotel's property, and poof. There was my destination practically across the street.

Huh. That was—



Though I still had to cross. I hit the button to get the signal, and waited my turn, then off I went. I had to adjust the bin a lot. Off the sidewalk cutout, onto the street, rushing to get out of the way, and now I needed both hands to “jump” safely onto my target cutout. Just an inch or so of wheelie to make sure my front wheels decide to continue forward, as opposed to stopping hard, and dumping me out. I stayed in my chair; it was a little jump that was easier than most. The bin disagreed.



Time slowed a little as I watched it teeter, unable to get a hand safely up to it in time. I had time to know that the bin was going to go over, and judge where it was going to land. I had time to imagine all of the contents spilling out. There was no drain or anything nearby to claim my things, and I easily accepted that I'd be spending some time picking my things up and putting them back in the bin.

It fell forward, in the direction I had predicted, landing where I had predicted. The top fell off, and...

Huh. Everything else stayed in. Well. That was anti-climactic.

After check-in, I headed to my room on the ground floor. No elevator ride? Aww. Once I got in there, I did a little inspection for my needs. Bathroom was a little smaller than I would ideally want, but it beat the snot out of a lot of "accessible" rooms I've seen elsewhere. The bed was a tad high, but no big deal. And yup, there was a Gideon Bible there. But who wants religious advice from this guy?



Seriously. What a douche. BTW, I so want the *Scott Pilgrim* DVD/Blu-Ray to come out...thought I'd like to watch it on a big...

Hey wait...! Wait one effin' second...!

The cheap hotel room has a bigger TV than me! A lot bigger! Wh...I...No! Hotels are supposed to have crappy little TVs that barely work.

First things first. There's a few people I have to call. Paranoid people, some of which thought that the epic journey in the dead of night (uh...10 PM?) in this seedy neighborhood (seriously, you could have figuratively eaten off of that neighborhood)



would be too dangerous for widdle ole' me. Rang my mum first, then my dad, who had been calling my cell (which I can never hear ringing, especially not in a crowded room), then my wife.

She had been taking calls from my dad, who...I don't know, was calling around to see if my body had been found yet. My wife had a new issue for me to worry about, concerning my tenant. (Long story, I might blog it after I'm done the VCON stuff; it's kinda funny. Kinda. In a sad way.)

All right, enough phone calls. Oh, by the way, I couldn't get a call out of the room. Dialed 9 and all that crap, but I just kept getting an odd busy signal for everything. Thankfully, I had my cell.

I unpacked my bin of overnight stuff. My teddy bear, my iPod loaded with David Hasselhoff music, and my inflatable sex doll. Or not. My "rations" were in there too. A box of granola bars that I wasn't in the mood for. There was a vending machine in the hall less than 10 feet from my door, so I summoned up the loose change I had (I wasn't dealing in coins in the vendor table) and got a chocolate bar and Sun Chips.

I eat very little during a VCON...roughly a meal's worth of food, a snacky bit at a time, and energy drinks. As if I wasn't hyper enough already at VCON. I got my findings, and went back to my room. Hey, was it chilly in here?

I flipped on the TV. *Stargate: Universe* was just coming on. Aw, piss. I really should do my gimp-stuff and get that over with. No biggie. At that moment, my PVR was waking up at home, nabbing it for me. I didn't have PVR last year and I managed to catch a rerun later anyway.

I wasn't in the mood to enjoy the show now anyway. Between the lackluster Friday sales, the belly-drop of a book launch, and the news of my tenant being an extra pain...well, at this point, being here at VCON didn't feel like a good idea. Sales-wise, it wasn't worse than any other VCON Friday. I knew that. And the book launch event wasn't really a selling point anyway. But I wanted to do my reading. But tomorrow is the big day. And I have a reading Sunday anyway. Still...the logic didn't help my mood much.

By the time I got my gimp-stuff done, I'd forgotten about *Stargate*. No sense tuning in part-way anyway. I double checked that I had everything I needed for bed.

Aw piss. I brought my favorite sport bottle for water, and left it in the dealer's room. The coffee table in the room had paper cups...too small for my tastes, and I didn't feel like having a row of cups of water on the nightstand. So I filled up the coffee pot with water, and sat that on my nightstand. Cuz that makes *so* much more sense.

I got settled into bed, and got attached to what needs attaching. Set the alarm. Everything was good. Turn on that TV, and skim things to wind down before passing out. Tomorrow was going to be the busy day.



Frig it's cold.

And yet, Carrie Fisher wasn't calling out for me. The air conditioner was essentially right next to the bed, and seemed to be set to "No disintegrations, Mr. Fett" mode. I kept waiting for it to turn off. It didn't. It was noisy, and freezing me. No biggie, it's a big thick blanket, and I can "man up" until my bod warmed the blanket up.

The fridge was noisy too. Outside the door, someone came to use the vending machine about once an hour...to claim one's purchase, you had to push in a wide, heavy noisy metal door, which would then fall back into place. It was cold. It was noisy. I had no way of reaching the AC's controls despite the large unit nearly being in my lap. Disappointment in Friday, as well as tenant stress was banging around in my head. It's okay, it's okay. Man up, get to sleep.

5 AM or so, I passed out from sheer exhaustion. The alarm went off at 8. Yeah, this was gonna be a good day.

I got myself together (the bin could stay for the day) and saw the cord for the AC. Now that I was rolling, I double checked that I couldn't reach the controls. I could reach the cord. Pop. Yeah, well, it'll be nicer tonight, I guess. Off to claim my free breakfast. The room off of the lobby had very little wheeling space, and a pile of people. I got in far enough to grab a little box of Fruit Loops, and headed out.

It was a new day, and I had three hours of crabby sleep. Uh huh. It was time to get to my energy drink stash waiting for me in the dealer room. Welcome to Saturday.

Joseph Picard

Ozero

Thursday 18 November 2010

## Upcoming Nifty Film Projects

R. Graeme Cameron

**Mutants:** is a French film centred on Marco and Sonia. He's infected by a virus and slowly turning into a zombie, but they're on the run (from other zombies) together in search of a cure. Said to be intense, heart-wrenching and quite original in approach.

**Robocalypse:** will be directed by Spielberg. This is based on the novel by Daniel H. Wilson not available till June of 2011! Must be pretty good I guess. Some-



thing to do with a revolt of the androids. Not exactly original in concept, but in treatment?

**Satan Facebook:** Now *this* is original! Dare you avoid an Indonesian film starring Cindy Anggrina and Boy Hamzah? In the trailer Cindy looks worried. No wonder, because every time she (or anyone) makes out the lover turns into a demon.

**Darkchylde:** is a comic book by Randy Queen now become John Carpenter's latest film project. A southern belle transforms into whatever creature she has experienced in her latest nightmare, thus extending said nightmare to friends and neighbours. Neat.

**Yakshiyum Njanum:** appears to be a Bollywood horror comedy featuring bats, dancing lovers, comic relief with magical powers, singing lovers, corrupt officials, insane priests, flying chairs, and yet more bats. Come to think of it, maybe it's a documentary.

**The Last of Aporvor:** is a Czech fantasy film combining live action and animation, a Czech film tradition that goes back decades. Said to be a non-Disney fairy tale, i.e. more like the original fairy tales of Europe, dark and scary with heroic aspects.

**Day of the Triffids:** a remake of the 1962 film based on the 1951 SF novel by John Wyndham will be directed by Sam Raimi! Apparently he's a huge fan of the original film and with his trademark off the wall humour the result should be a hoot!

**John Dies at the End:** is being filmed by Coscarelli, the director of *Bubba Ho-Tep*. Based on a novel (same title) it apparently features sentient, hallucinogenic soy sauce, a monster made of cold cuts and Ghu knows what else. Said to be quite bizarre.

R. Graeme Cameron  
Tuesday 2 November 2010

## Zines Received

'Opuntia' #69.5 (October 2010). Published by Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7. Perzine issue.

"When We Last Heard..." (changes in Calgary in the last year) and "Into the Home Stretch" (Dale's final year as Weekend Trouble Calls Supervisor for the Calgary Parks Department before retirement, the visit to Calgary of Princess Margriet of the Netherlands, and Chinatown's centennial parade): Dale's clear, concise writing makes it all interesting. There are some nice high-resolution grayscale photos, and the 8½×5½-inch two-column layout and minimalist typography is attractive as always.

## E-Zines Received

'Dark Matter' #1 (October 2010). Published by Nalini Haynes, 6 Wodalla Place, Lyndhurst, Victoria, Australia, 3975, [darkmatterfanzine@gmail.com](mailto:darkmatterfanzine@gmail.com).

"Changing the Climate: Utopia, Dystopia and Catastrophe": I don't think that utopia is a bad idea. It may be impossible to achieve in real life, and it may be hard to write for in SF, but it's still worth aiming towards. Let's get as close as we pos-

sibly can to everyone being OK. I don't remember science being masculinized and art being feminized in *The Handmaid's Tale*, but it's been a long time since I had to read it in university.

I enjoyed the reviews: anime (*Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*), books [*Terminal World, And Another Thing...* (a *Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy* sequel by a new author?!), *The Bird King and Other Sketches, I Shall Wear Midnight, The Way of Kings, Mogworld, Hamlet's Blackberry*, and *This Is Not a Game—You Don't Get a Second Life*], video games (*Knights of the Old Republic and Evolution*), internet video (*Save the Murlocs*), and movies (*Joffa the Movie, The Lost Thing, The Hedgehog, I Am Love, and Going Postal*). The reviews reminded me that I'm not interested in the fantasy genre. I'm perennially surprised by this; when I was a teenager, I thought fantasy was cool!

**'The Fortnightly Fix' #16** (11 October 2010). Published by Steve Green, [steve.green@livejournal.com](mailto:steve.green@livejournal.com), <http://efanzines.com/FFix/FortnightlyFix-16.pdf>. Read and enjoyed but no comment.

**'Ethel the Aardvark' #150** (October–November 2010). Published by the Melbourne Science Fiction Society, PO Box 212, World Trade Center, Melbourne 3005, [ethelardvark@yahoo.com.au](mailto:ethelardvark@yahoo.com.au). Edited by Ian A. Chapman.

Layout criticism: PDF zines should be single-column or landscape; otherwise, the reader has to scroll up and down to get from one column to the next. The articles seemed to be jumbled; they would stop in mid-sentence at the end of a page, then resume a few pages later, with no "continued on page..." pointers. Also, with narrow gutters, this happens: "This issue's template is based endorsed by the DWCV committee to unite the science fiction upon *Sonic Screwdriver*, the and editors. We believe all the community and to show just how DWCV magazine; its use is fully clubs should be working together well we can do working together."

"Science Fiction 101" by Murray MacLachlan: My mileage varied on the terminology: I don't believe that the term "sci-fi" is derogatory, or that it refers to moving pictures while "science fiction" refers to books. Technically, all fiction is "what if" fiction. Murray's test of whether something is SF is interesting: "Think of a book or film, decide what the science fictional thing is that has changed, and then ask, would the story fall apart if that science fictional thing suddenly wasn't there?" (If yes, it's SF.) The article was an edited transcript of a speech Murray intended for a mundane audience, but was still fun to read, and I learned new things.

I also enjoyed the DVD (*Katsuhiro Otomo's Memories, The Last Battle, Subway*, and *The Fifth Element*), film (*The Road*), book (*Five Wounds, Star Wars: Fatal Alliance*, and *Eighth Grade Bites*), and comic (*Zatanna*) reviews. I agree with Peter Ryan's review of *Subway* (1985; AKA *Metro*): the "heroes" were jerks—a particularly demoralizing state of affairs when I was a young fan of Christopher Lambert (who played the ostensible hero).

**'The Newsletter'** (November–December 2010). Published by the Burnaby Writers Society, 6584 Deer Lake Avenue, Burnaby, BC, V5G 3T7, <http://www.bws.bc.ca/>, [info@bws.bc.ca](mailto:info@bws.bc.ca). Submitted by Eileen Kernaghan. (Sent to my Hotmail address.)

## Art Credits

Sheryl Birkhead.....	Masthead 3
Brad Foster.....	Cover
Clip art (provided by Dave Haren).....	Page 3
Clip art (by John Romita, Jr. and Klaus Janson).....	Page 10
Clip art (provided by Julian Castle).....	Page 13 (top)
Clip art.....	Pages 13 (bottom), 27 (bottom)
Joseph Picard (photos).....	Pages 18–21 (top), 22 (top)
Steve Fahnstalk via Joseph Picard (photo).....	Page 21 (bottom)
Clip art (provided by Joseph Picard).....	Pages 22 (bottom)–25, 27 (top)
A QR code generator.....	Page 30

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