

# BCSFA Zine

The Newsletter of the British Columbia Science Fiction Association

#461

\$3.00/Issue

October 2011

## GHOSTS of CUTE CARTOON ANIMALS



(SPOOKY!)

@brad w fester • 2011

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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.

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## This Month in BCSFA

Sunday 16 October @ 7 PM:

**BCSFA meeting**—at Ray Seredin's, 707 Hamilton Street (recreation room), New Westminster. Call 604-521-0254 for directions. [*November meeting is Sunday 20 November 2011, same time, same location.*]

Thursday 20 October @ 7 PM:

**October 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 *Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card.—Doug Finnerty

Friday 28 October:

**'BCSFAzine' production** (theoretically).

## 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

Editor: Felicity Walker, 604-448-8814

Keeper of FRED Book: Ryan Hawe, 778-895-2371

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 Asse ([http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bc\\_scifi\\_asse/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bc_scifi_asse/)) and BCSFAnet (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bcsfanet/>).

## Errata



There are two errata this time, both relating to art credits in *BCSFAzine* #460.

In the electronic version, the illustration “T-Shirts from the Future” is credited to “Arthur Thompson via Steve Green.” I misread the signature. The illustration is actually by Steve Green. Fortunately, I heard from Steve before the issue went to print, and the mistake was corrected in the print edition.

In both the electronic and print versions of *BCSFAzine* #460, Jim McPherson’s “Phantacea” poster was credited to “Verne Andru via Jim McPherson.” I leaped to the wrong conclusion there, and the issue had already gone to print. For the correct credits of the poster, see Jim’s LOC below.

## Letters of Comment

[*Editor’s responses in brackets.*]

**Sheryl Birkhead**

25509 Jonnie Court,  
Gaithersburg, MD 20882  
USA

Sunday 28 August 2011

Aug. ...? Oh, about the 30<sup>th</sup> or so...make that Sun. 28<sup>th</sup>.

Um—I *know* the date is wrong but—

(1) Intended to use my new-to-me Mac-Book, but

(2) Hurricane wiped out the electricity

(3) At the best of times the inside of the house is *dark*—so I, also, cannot see too much too well (while I wait...)

So—nice stamp—thank you.

I have issues #457 and 458 here—always love seeing Brad’s artwork. Congrats to him on the Reno win for fanartist. I have it on good authority that the Hugo is gorgeous.

John Purcell’s comment on *BCSFAzine*’s age surprised me—*then* when 1973 was verified as the “birthdate” I realized I don’t yet think of ’73 as *that* far back.

(Agh—I have a smallish battery lantern and have *known* from previous power outages that I need a much better one for reading. Right now, I can *barely* read—and hardly read what I’ve written/scrawled—I *do apologize*.)

[*I don’t want to discourage you from writing LOCs, but please take care of your eyes above all else! J.S. Bach went blind because he tried to write sheet music all night by lantern, candle, and moonlight.*]



*Card from Sheryl.*

I tried (really I did) to watch *Red Dwarf*. Maybe I need to see if Netflix has it so I could actually see the beginning and maybe it would interest me more. Ah well, once current is back I'll hunt online (library if nothing else).

[*I definitely recommend watching Red Dwarf from the beginning, if only because those are better episodes than the later ones. Seasons one to five are the best. After that the show became much more hit-or-miss. Make sure to watch the original versions, though, not the new versions with added CG effects.*]

(Ah—outside I hear the sound of chainsaws—people are cutting their ways out!)

Dave Haren—ghood thoughts, but that's one *heck* of an excuse for gafiation!

Wow—Spider Robinson as WAHF!

[*He had a one-sentence message of encouragement; I asked if I could run it as a LOC, and got no reply, so I assumed I should not.*]

Seeing my Feb. letter—brakes repaired—went bad again [*unknown word*] several weeks, *this* time → Subaru and they gave me a loaner—kept it a full week.

Um—Felicity, if you thought the *last* note was difficult to read—

I tried—but...

Thanks,

Sheryl

[*On the back of the envelope, Sheryl added...*]

Caution—almost total illegibility ahead!

Agh—just found #456—so *that's* the Manx cat comment.

Oh yeah—Lloyd—I did *vote*, just could not (yet?) come up with the cost for (at that point site voting) now supporting membership for 2013.

Did I miss follow up on *Torchwood*? Did it air July 8? I'm so far behind—when “someone” says the latest *Dr. Who*—I have absolutely no idea...

I gave up on Au and Ag—not in my budget.

*Agh*—lantern just died so that is *it*.

**Jim McPherson**

[jmcp@phantacea.com](mailto:jmcp@phantacea.com)

Monday 19 September 2011



Greetings, Felicity,

With respect to the Art Credits in this issue, Verne Andru is currently working on the cover for *Goddess Gambit*, true. (It's a trade paperback Phantacea Publications hopes to publish b4 the year ends.) However, he did not do any of the artwork for the b/w promo intended for the VCon program that I sent you—and you printed (thanks).

The Goddess figure (Nergal Vetala, Blood Queen of Hadd) is actually by Ian Fry, the same artist who drew the graphic novel *Forever & 40 Days—The Genesis of Phantacea*, which came out in 1990. That suggests he did it circa 1988. (Can't be certain of that, though I still have ori-

ginal. Lost track of Ian Fry 20-odd years ago and he doesn't seem to Google, so maybe he left business, as well as Vancouver, howsoever many years ago.)

As per attached, I took his drawing, added some colour, the Pictish warrior in background, supernova 1987A (which also featured in *4Ever&40*) and the text. I cut out the Pictish warrior from a postcard I bought in Scotland some years ago. It's by John White. (Since he wasn't active until ca. 1575–93, he wasn't around for *Contagion Collectors*. Torquemada, Bosch and Durer were, however, which provides some degree of plausibility as to how they ended up in the mini-novel.)

I did the collages for all three mini-novel covers. There is more on them here: [www.phantacea.com/1000characters.html#Announcements](http://www.phantacea.com/1000characters.html#Announcements). A little information on the images that went into their covers is here: [www.phantacea.com/1000characters.html#graphics](http://www.phantacea.com/1000characters.html#graphics). There's also more on the Pictish warrior here: [members.shaw.ca/jmcpjimps/trapants1.htm#PictishAttis](http://members.shaw.ca/jmcpjimps/trapants1.htm#PictishAttis).

Somewhat off topic, I notice in the States there's a lot of yap re the relationship between the resurgent Republicans and this Tea Party of theirs. Apparently none of it's Science Fiction or even Fantasy Fiction. Indeed, while it may ultimately prove a (very) dark fantasy, the Tea Party in particular seems altogether anti-science. To my mind sadly, even criminally, nowhere near enough of the coverage I've seen or heard is derisive.

What I'm wondering is why no one, or no one I've ever heard, refers to our prisons and planes ruling party as the Tar Party. There's nothing fictional, let alone fantasy fictional, about them either. Plus, what's extracted, and emitted, and sunk into the water table, by the Tar Sands is so dark it's nightmarish.

Another thing that amazes me is how few people ever seem to mention that *Tonto* means *stupid, silly fool* in Spanish. All the more reason why Johnny Depp's decision to play him's so mystifying.

[I owe my awareness of that word to Weird Al Yankovic's song "Taco Grande" which contains the lyrics: "Entiendes lo que digo gringo estúpido tonto?"]

Jim McPherson

Creator/Writer/Publisher

The PHANTACEA Mythos

**Garth Spencer**  
[garthspencer@shaw.ca](mailto:garthspencer@shaw.ca)

Monday 19 September 2011

Dear Felicity,

The Anarcho-Surrealist Party etc. met on October 12<sup>th</sup> at my place for Thanksgiving dinner. Topics discussed were (or were not, depending on which timeline we were in) any intelligence initiatives conducted by Pratt & Muggins, our intelligence branch; any active measures conducted by the Royal Swiss Navy, our fictive espionage branch; financial statements from the Rational Secular Humanist Church, our cult branch; and we heard a paper titled "The Belgian Presence in the World Chocolate Industry—Threat or Menace?"

Garth

[*Exhibit A: Guylians.*]

**JOIN THE  
NINJA SOCIETY!**

**Lloyd Penney**  
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Etobicoke, On.  
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Sunday 23 September 2011

Dear Felicity:

The month is flashing past, and I am trying to get as many fanzines responded to as I can, and I do get a lot of them. Next up, of course, is *BCSFazine* 460.

Garth may be the guardian of the hot tub time machine, from the movie of the same name, so that would make him the most popular guy in fandom, if not the entire town. I hope he'll consider franchising.

I prefer the paper book, with its physicality, its ease of use (open the cover and look at it), and its collectibility, but yet, I'd be foolish not to be aware of e-readers. We have more choice than most...the Nook, the Kindle and the home-grown Kobo. There are so many formats, I would hate to be forced to buy all three e-readers, but I have found out there is a website that will convert your e-book from one format to another, called Calibre. If e-readers are starting to go below \$100 in price, they are becoming more and more attractive.

My loc...as much as we would like to go to the Worldcons in Chicago and San Antonio in 2012 and 2013 respectively, we would really like to go to the London Worldcon in 2014, should they win it, of course. With that in mind, we plan to skip Chicago and San Antonio to make sure we can afford London. It'll take that long to save what we think we'll need, anyway. Help me, 6/49, you're my only hope...

The theme balls in Vancouver are similar to the balls that are held in the BArea in southern California. I wish someone in Toronto could hold them as well, but there's no interest, and I would even say no one has thought to do them. There seems to be a semi-fannish burlesque group in town, but I know little of them, beyond what I see on their Facebook page.

Some news from Reno is indeed a new Hugo category, Best Fancast, which will be given to the best electronic fannish podcast or website, leaving Best Fanzine to just that, the best fanzine of the year. Taral indeed did receive his tenth Hugo nomination for Best Fan Artist...he's long overdue for a silver rocket.

I believe today is the first day of the second annual Victoria Steam Expo, held at Craigdarroch Castle in Victoria, and the weekend after will be this year's VCon. Good luck to the committees, and I wish all who attend the conventions the best time you've ever had. Wish I could join you.

Recently, Yvonne and I hit a huge used book sale at a shopping mall in Mississauga, and found not only thousands of paperbacks and hardcovers, but also some DVDs and many VHS tapes. When we left, the VHS tapes were largely untouched. I guess their time is past, and it's looking like that for DVDs too, given the popularity of downloads. Yet, I keep hearing of the possible demise of Netflix. I don't think anyone really knows what the future of movies at home is.



[There should always be some way to buy and keep your own permanent copy of a film or show. Netflix is good, but you can only watch something on it as long as you're still paying for your subscription, and what if someday Netflix deletes one of your favourites from its catalogue?]

For the first time ever, I think, I am running out of fanzines to respond to. I shall check eFanzines.com to see if there's anything new. If the flow of fanzines is decreasing, I might just put my own fanzine together, and send it out, and see what the response is.

[A flood of LOCs from grateful faneds reciprocating!]

I'm done...have a great time at the two conventions mentioned, everyone, and I hope there will be reports on both next issue. I'm looking forward to it.

[My VCON resolution for this year is to take notes for a convention report, like I used to do. Also, to draw better at the Turkey Readings.]

Yours,

Lloyd Penney

**Brent Francis**

[b-francis@sympatico.ca](mailto:b-francis@sympatico.ca)

Saturday 24 September 2011



By Steve Green (see signature).

A professional camera crew (I checked IMDB, they all were) had to be told not to leave things in front of the camera during shooting. Hey, relax—we can fix it in post, eh?

Want a neat commentary on the effect CGI & digital technology has on the art of film? A recent edition of *Canadian Cinematographer Magazine* had an interview with a director who had the radical idea of shooting/processing/printing a movie on film *only*—no CGI, no digital computer input—

“On the third day of shooting I called everybody together and said ‘Look guys, this is not a conventional DI-production process. We will not be able to scan the negative and erase a wire or a boom or a stand or stuff like that. Every department should look through the camera or from the camera viewpoint, because that is what we are going to get.’ ”

**We Also Heard From:** Steve Green, Spider Robinson, Cathy Palmer-Lister.

#### RANDOM NOSTALGIA

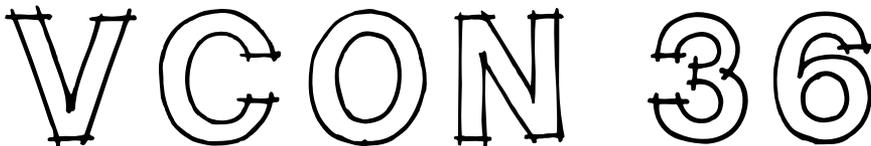
ANDY EDDY  
DON MESSICK  
MCDONALD'S COMMANDRONS  
COCA-COLA RUGBY SHIRTS  
MACINTOSH II

## Calendar

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

29 September–14 October 2011: VIFF (Vancouver International Film Festival) at four theatres in downtown Vancouver, Canada. More info at <http://www.viff.org/> or phone 604-683-FILM (3456) 9 AM–7 PM.—Julian Castle



30 September–2 October 2011: VCON 36 at Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel, 7551 Westminster Highway, Richmond, BC, V6X 1A3. Vancouver's Science Fiction & Fantasy Convention. Theme: Visions of the Future: Imagining Tomorrow in Science Fiction from the Past to the Present. Guests of Honour: Larry Niven, Jean-Pierre Normand, Lisa Lassek.—Keith Lim

### October 2011

October is National Pizza Month, National Depression Education and Awareness Month, National Reading Group Month, and Starman Month.

1 October 2011: Dave's Pop Culture Opening Day, 10 AM–5:30 PM at Dave's Pop Culture, 4962 Bridge Street, Delta, BC, V4K 2K1, 604-952-4480, [dspopculture@gmail.com](mailto:dspopculture@gmail.com). "Hey everything is falling into place at my place. This is not the grand opening as that will follow mid-month. Stock will be on the shelves! And the tables will be ready!"—Dave Strutt

1 October 2011: World Vegetarian Day. Magic Circles Day.

2 October 2011: National Custodial Worker Day.

7 October 2011: Premiere of film *Real Steel* (SF; Hugh Jackman, Phil LaMarr).

**RANDOM NOSTALGIA**

**OPUS FLOPPY DISKS  
MARKY MARK AND THE FUNKY BLUNCH  
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**

8 October 2011: Collectible Fair & Computer Swap Meet, 11 AM–4 PM at Scottish Cultural Centre, 8886 Hudson Street, South Vancouver. Admission: adults \$3; kids under 12 free; family rate \$9 (four members). Short walk from the Marpole Loop at Hudson and Marine. Computer items include new & used monitors, printers, hardware, software, parts, games, cameras, printer refills...and lots more! All at great prices! New & vintage comics, toys & collectibles, records, CDs, VHS, DVDs, movie memorabilia, video games, magazines, *Star Wars*, Hot Wheels, wrestling, Canucks. Phone 604-521-6304; e-mail [funpromo@shaw.ca](mailto:funpromo@shaw.ca).

**THESE VIDEO  
GAMES ARE SO  
EXCITING!**

12 October 2011: Anarcho-Surrealistic Party meeting and Thanksgiving dinner at Garth Spencer's, 82 East 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC. Cooking by Jenn Hawe. See letter column for more information. Entrance by donation, to cover food costs.

13 and 27 October 2011: Burnaby Sci-Fi Writers' Group meets alternate Thursdays 7–9 PM at Metrotown Public Library (program room) or Connections lounge. Open to new members, mainly sci-fi/fantasy or what have you. Contact Allan @ (604) 946-2427 or email [lowson@dccnet.com](mailto:lowson@dccnet.com) for details.—Allan Lowson (on Richmond Writers Network Facebook Group)

14 October 2011: Premiere of film *The Thing* (SF/horror/prequel).

14 October and 4 November 2011: Trumpeter Tabletop Games Society game night at Bonsor Community Centre, 6550 Bonsor Avenue, Burnaby, BC (east side of Metrotown shopping centre). A group of multi-interest gamers. Drop-ins welcome!

18 October, 15 November, and 13 December 2011: Alternative Worlds Book Club, 6:30–8:30 PM at Morris J. Wosk Board Room, Level 7, Central Library, 350 West Georgia Street, Vancouver. “Explore the diverse worlds of fantasy fiction. Registration limited to 20, begins Saturday 9 July at 10:00 AM at the Level 3 information desk. Call 604-331-3691 for more information.”—Julian Castle

21 October 2011: Premiere of films *Paranormal Activity 3* (horror) and *Red State* (horror; Stephen Root, Jennifer Schwalbach Smith, John Goodman, Kevin Pollack, Molly Hagan).

25 October 2011: Punk for a Day Day.

27 October 2011: **Peter Tupper's** birthday.

28 October 2011: Frankenstein Friday. Plush Animal Lovers' Day. Premiere of film *In Time* (SF; Justin Timberlake, Johnny Galecki, Cillian Murphy).

29 October 2011: Thrill the World Thriller Dance, 7 PM. [Venue TBA.] “Mark your calendars...!” <http://ttwvancouver.com/content/blog/2010/10/thank-you> (last paragraph).—[Keith Lim](#)

31 October 2011: Halloween. National Magic Day. Increase Your Psychic Powers Day.

## November 2011

4 November 2011: Premiere of film *Puss in Boots* (computer animation/furry; Antonio Banderas, Salma Hayek, Zach Galifianakis, Billy Bob Thornton).

11 November 2011: Premiere of film *Immortals* (fantasy; Mickey Rourke, Henry Cavill, John Hurt, Stephen Dorff, Stephen McHattie) and *Melancholia* (SF/drama; Kirsten Dunst, Kiefer Sutherland, John Hurt, Stellan Skarsgård, Udo Kier).

18 November 2011: Premiere of film *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn—Part 1* (Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson, Taylor Lautner, Dakota Fanning, Stephenie Meyer) and *Happy Feet Two* (computer animation; Elijah Wood, Robin Williams, Hank Azaria, Pink, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Common, Hugo Weaving, Anthony LaPaglia, John Goodman, Ned Beatty, Frank Welker, Carlos Alazraqui, Danny Mann).

HEY!  
WHAT'S  
GOING  
ON OUT  
THERE?!

23 November 2011: Premiere of film *The Muppets* (comedy/puppets; Mila Kunis, Neil Patrick Harris, Danny Trejo, Jack Black, Whoopi Goldberg, Katy Perry, Ricky Gervais, Billy Crystal, Sarah Silverman, Mickey Rooney, French Stewart, Alan Arkin, Liza Minelli, Kathy Griffin, Judd Hirsch, Wanda Sykes, David Grohl, Brian Henson, James Carville, Jeff Ross), *Piranha 3DD* (horror; Christopher Lloyd, Ving Rhames, Gary Busey, David Koechner, David Hasselhoff, Clu Gulager), and *Arthur Christmas* (clay animation; Johnny Brennan, Matt Lucas, Bill Nighy, Hugh Laurie, Jim Broadbent, Will Sasso).

24 November 2011: **Spider Robinson**'s birthday.

26–27 November 2011: [Foodhammer](#) at GameStars, 19860 Langley Bypass, Langley, BC, V3A 4Y1. Charity 40K and WHFB tournament for the Langley Food Bank. Warhammer 40,000 at 1750 points Saturday November 26<sup>th</sup>. Warhammer Fantasy Battle at 2000 points Sunday November 27<sup>th</sup>. Local accommodations available. For more details see: [foodhammer.blogspot.com](http://foodhammer.blogspot.com), [facebook.com/foodhammer](https://www.facebook.com/foodhammer), or e-mail [foodhammer@shaw.ca](mailto:foodhammer@shaw.ca). Twitter: [@Foodhammer](https://twitter.com/Foodhammer).

## News-Like Matter

### Notes from September BCSFA Meeting

In attendance were Ray Seredin (host), Graeme Cameron (president), Kathleen Moore (treasurer), Barb Dryer (secretary), Doug Finnerty (book discussion group), and Felicity Walker (editor).

Graeme brought a draft of the VCON 36 program book. Good news: this year, the Elron Awards are not scheduled opposite the Turkey Readings. In fact, the Turkeys are followed by the Elrons (followed by Graeme's new Canadian Fanzine Fan-ac Awards) in the same room!

As previously reported, Graeme has the late Al Betz's audio tapes with recordings of the earliest VCONs. Recently Graeme paid to have Al's old high-quality tape recorder repaired. When Graeme upgrades to his new computer (the current one is dead), he'll get one with a sound card so he can also digitize the tapes.

The subject of joke WorldCon bids caused a mention of Spuzzum (a town in BC). Ray said that the people of Spuzzum are hoping to have a mega-prison built there. Someone asked why, and I theorized that it would mean jobs, and Graeme said that the city would also get money from renting the land to the prison. Ray said that Alberta is also vying to get the prison. Graeme mentioned the disturbing fact that the private prison industry in the U.S. lobbies politicians to increase the sentences for crimes (for example, for a crime that used to result in a small fine, the lobbyists want the sentence changed to a year in prison) so that the prisons get more prisoners for longer, charging the state for the cost of housing them and/or using them for cheap labour.

Graeme just saw two recent movies that featured tentacled/squid-like/Cthulhoid monsters: *Skyline* (2010) and *Monsters* (2010). Graeme said they were both bad, but *Skyline* was less bad, because it had good effects to go with the unrealistic and stupid story. At one point, a man looked directly at a nuclear explosion and shook off the blindness a second later (whereas in reality, said Graeme, during the first atomic tests, a soldier could be in a trench, facing away from the explosion, with his eyes closed, and his hands in front of his eyes, and the light was so bright that he could still see the bones in his hand). In another example, one of the heroes punched out a giant alien, reached into its body, and ripped out its brain. *Monsters*, made in Central America and set in Mexico, was worse than bad—it was boring, and never got to the proverbial fireworks factory. It began low-key and stayed that way until the end. Every so often Graeme thought he was about to see monsters battling, but the story would carefully avoid the monsters and continue be-



ing about the romance of the two main characters. Despite the title, the monsters are only seen briefly at the end, embracing at a gas station, evidently symbolizing something rather than being the actual subject of the movie. Graeme realized that he had just watched a bad 1970s European romance movie, full of long pauses and awkwardly improvised dialogue. Kathleen suggested *Monsters* be edited down to the most interesting six minutes, although she said it sounded like *any* six minutes would be more interesting than the entire movie.

[REDACTED] I said that *Signs* (2002) was also a movie that felt like a 30-minute, stagey, trapped-in-a-small-space *Twilight Zone* episode padded out to two hours, with only a token appearance by the aliens. Graeme ran through the list of other movies directed by M. Night Shyamalan: he said *The Sixth Sense* (1999) was great, and *The Village* (2004) was OK, but needed a better ending. I said that sadly, Shyamalan had peaked with his first movie. Kathleen replied that it's nice that he keeps trying. Someone asked what he'd done lately; I said it was *The Last Airbender* (2010), which was hated by the critics for being a bad movie and by the fans of the original cartoon for being a bad adaptation.

Doug asked why the *Family Guy* parody of *Star Wars* was called *Blue Harvest*. We told him. The words "blue" and "*Star Wars*" segued to the news that all six *Star Wars* movies are coming out on Blu-Ray. Naturally, the original trilogy Blu-Ray Discs are the Special Editions; Graeme said that there have been *even more* changes, such as dubbing in Darth Vader shouting "No" at a point that changes the meaning of the scene. Graeme added that George Lucas wants to destroy all the original versions of *Star Wars* so that 100 years in the future only his latest reversioning will remain. This made me even more glad that I have two copies of the original trilogy—original, completely unenhanced versions—on VHS, rescued from video rental stores. The Empire's not getting these data tapes!

Felicity Walker  
Sunday 18 September 2011

### October Book Discussion

Dear Felicity:

Here's notice of October's book discussion. Enjoy!

Next book discussion is Thursday October 20 @ 7 PM. It's at the Grind gallery and coffee house, 4124 Main Street, Vancouver. This time, we're discussing *Ender's Shadow* by Orson Scott Card. In November, we're discussing *Left Hand of Darkness* by Ursula K. LeGuin.

Doug Finnerty  
Saturday 24 September 2011

## The Tube Is Life

Taral Wayne

[This article was previously published in The Reluctant Famulus #73 (January 2010, edited by Tom Sadler).]



A while ago I wrote on-line about some odd, local, kids' TV shows that I remembered. I had trouble recollecting the proper names, so went searching on Wikipedia. Eventually I found a link to a very amusing article called "Here's Looking at You, Kiddo" by Bill Brioux. You can read it yourself at [http://jam.canoe.ca/Television/TV\\_Shows/K/Kiddo\\_The\\_Clown/2001/04/04/734046.html](http://jam.canoe.ca/Television/TV_Shows/K/Kiddo_The_Clown/2001/04/04/734046.html).

To start with, *The Professor's Laboratory*, as I misremembered it, was properly *The Professor's Hideaway*. A British actor played the part of the avuncular professor, who closely resembled Albert Einstein in lab-coat, shock of white hair and glasses slipping down his nose. The Professor had an assistant, Kiddo the Clown. Low ratings or chronic high blood alcohol levels did in the Professor's show and he was soon mercifully forgotten. One detail I never forgot, though, was the show's theme music, curiously borrowed from Leroy Anderson's "Sleigh Ride," a popular 1948 instrumental piece. Of all music, what made the producer think of that?

The assistant, Kiddo, later went on to be the star of his very own program. When I wrote earlier, his name slipped my mind. All I could think of was Krusty, or Koko, or something like that. But it was Kiddo.

There were two Kiddos, actually. The first was also a British actor, named Bobby Ash. He was the Kiddo who was the assistant on *The Professor's Hideaway*. When the show was canned, Bobby Ash went back to Britain for a number of years, and didn't become the Kiddo of the eponymous TV show. When he returned to Canada, though, Ash went on to become the star of the locally notorious *Uncle Bobby Show*. He was a surprising choice. I would go so far as to say the guy was potentially "unsuitable" for such a job, for lurid reasons most of you can imagine if you put your minds to it. None the less, his show was on the air many years without hint of scandal. It was aimed at the under-six crowd, so by and large it followed a mindless and repetitive formula. But he had odd guests. One regular on the program was Toronto fandom's Barry Kent MacKay—the fanartist.

Thanks to Barry, I am the proud owner of a genuine Uncle Bobby ballpoint pen. I bet the kiddies loved them, but whether to write with them or just chew on the plastic end, I don't know.

Barry was more than a fanartist; he was a serious nature painter, and an expert in bird species. He was also a gifted raconteur, and told incredibly funny stories at OSFiC meetings. Including stories about Bobby Ash, naturally.

Nobody over six ever watched *Uncle Bobby*. Except me. For one thing, it aired at some ungodly hour of the morning when adults were drowning their sleep in coffee, and in a hurry to leave for work. For another thing, the show would stun the intellectual processes of a potato. Naturally, I didn't make a habit of *The Uncle Bobby Show*, but if I was awake that early in the morning (having been up all night), I might switch over to channel 9 to see if Barry was on. He usually wasn't. But sometimes I was rewarded for suffering through Bimbo's "Birthday Song," advice from Traffic Officer John and gratuitous accordion music to find Barry drawing a crow or muskrat on an easel. It left no impression, usually.

There was only one time that I specifically remember Barry's appearance on *The Uncle Bobby Show*. He was sketching animals, as always. It was the one time, however, that he decided to pull a fast one that no one could possibly understand. He began by sketching a small pointed face. He added small round ears and beady eyes. He drew in quills. Then he announced it was an unusual, rare species of porcupine, called the South Porcupine. Possibly the other guests assumed that it was a reference to the South Porcupine River in Northern Ontario. Why would Barry make a joke about an obscure watershed in a sparsely populated part of the province? Who could say? He was known to everyone as having an offbeat sense of humour. But if that's what they thought, they were sadly mistaken. Barry must have thought he'd gotten away with a private joke completely.

After all, only a member of the local SF club would understand that a South Porcupine was actually an in-joke about the obscure birthplace of a certain, ceaselessly-talkative member. And of course, no member of an SF club would be up at the break-of-dawn, watching a wretched TV show aimed at five year-olds. Except me.

I was club newsletter editor, too, and printed the story in the next issue. Sometimes one-in-a-million odds are not safe enough.

As for Kiddo the Clown, they found another actor to take the part. Trevor Evans stepped into Kiddo's size 22 shoes, and the show was popular for three years. The difference between the two was that as a kid I never would have watched a baby-show like *Uncle Bobby*, but actually enjoyed the antics of Kiddo enough to watch on a somewhat regular basis.

Kiddo in this incarnation was the janitor of a building rather than the assistant of a mad doctor. He stoked the furnace, mopped the floors, repaired the plumbing, and dealt with unlikely visitors. He even did the tenants' laundry for some reason. There was no end of laundry. It would arrive, always catching the clown by surprise whenever he peered up the chute. Why did he look up the chute? Because there was no laundry coming down, of course. Surreal things sometimes happened on the show. Once, Kiddo began digging a tunnel to the center of the Earth. Another time, notable Canadian journalist Pierre Berton fell out of the laundry chute, only to be sprayed with a fire extinguisher by the improvising Kiddo. Not expecting a face full of foam, Berton was apparently a long time forgiving the actor. The boiler room was rented out to jazz musicians, and Kiddo briefly imagined he was a spy for Prime Minister John Diefenbaker.

Eventually the show went off the air, as all TV shows must. Kiddo must have had his share of funny off-camera stories to tell. Alas, I lack an inside source. Most programs on TV are cancelled because ratings fall. But on the CBC, cancellations are more often inspired by false economies. Someone upstairs finally decided to save

twenty bucks by firing the clown, and that was that. In the final episode, subway construction workers broke through the basement walls, putting Kiddo out of his home and the actor out of a job.

But I don't think I'll ever forget the words the indomitable clown sung whenever he was happiest—doing the laundry.

“Washing and ironing,” he sang to the tune of the “The Toreador’s Song” from *Carmen*, “and answering the door...who could ask for any-thing morrrrrre!”

At the age I was in 1965, I couldn't. I've never again been able to be content with a life as simple as Kiddo the Clown's.

Taral Wayne

Sunday 7 March 2010



## **Rust in the Sunset**

Michael Bertrand

“Would you power down already?” complained Armsman McElroy. “We’re done here, there’s no Frab left in this sector. Hell, the whole quadrant must be clean by now.”

Armsman Chatterjee smiled indulgently at his friend as he continued to wash the ground with a low powered continuous beam from his weapon. “You know the regs, Mac. No inch of soil is officially Frab free until we do a low level sweep at Frequency over it to make sure there are no Hasty Bugs hiding under the ground, waiting to pop up and start a new Wave right in the middle of a brand new playground or something.”

“Regs, right,” said McElroy bitterly. “Beside, you’re wasting energy. Isn’t wasting cycles still a crime?”

“Warp cycles, sure. But solar cycles? On low beam? I could leave this thing going for a year and the battery would still be half full. Besides, it relaxes me.”

“Well it bugs the hell out of me, so could you just stop it already?”

Chatterjee snapped off the flow and stared at his friend. “All right, out with it. What the function is wrong with you lately? You’ve been chewing on my ass since Venus Dome.”

McElroy turned away, and looked off into the distance. “Nothing’s wrong. I am just tired of you wasting energy, that’s all.”

“Shipwaste! We’ve been together for fifteen years, you monk, since we enlisted together three days after Incidence. You think I don’t know when something is eating at you? You’ve been impossible to live with for the last three months, and it’s not getting any better. So spit it out before I have to beat it out of you.”

McElroy looked down at his tiny friend, a foot and a half shorter than him and looking like he was made of beads and wire, and laughed. They'd been threatening to beat each other up since boot camp. Normally it didn't mean a thing.

But his laugh died fast when he saw the fire flashing in his friend's dark eyes. Ship, he was really pissed. "OK, OK, spin down. No need to go thermal on me. It's just that I have a lot on my mind lately."

"Obviously. So what's eating you up so bad that you can't share it with your old bunkie? Hell, I already know more about your love life than most of your dates ever will."

McElroy sighed and once more turned to look out over the landscape. As far as the eye could see lay the wreckage of Frab invasion. Buildings smashed like sand castles meeting the tide. Human bones scattered thoughtlessly here and there like dirty laundry. The occasional smear where a Dreadnought tank had simply run someone over without even slowing down. And above it all the constant, ever-present blood red smoke that marked the first stages of Frab xenofoming. If it had been allowed to continue, the atmosphere would have been inhospitable to human flesh within a year.

It was not a pleasant sight, and it made what McElroy had to say no easier. "Chat...I just don't think I can do this any more."

Chatterjee blinked, and sat. "Do what? Sweep work? Look, I have connections, I can get us any job you want. Materials, Backup, Support...heck, I could even get us back on Front if you really wanted..."

"No! I mean...no, it's not that. I'm not unhappy with our assignment, Sweep work is fine by me. It's more...all of it. All this...I don't even know what to call it any more."

"All this what, then? This Regiment? This planet? This color uniform? What the hell is your problem, old bunkie?"

McElroy shrugged, and gestured all around. "All of it! The whole thing! I just...I don't think I can fight the Frab any more, Chat."

"*What?* You have got to be gassing me. Armsman James Titian Armstrong McElroy, the Ultimate Soldier, the guy so dedicated he broke every Academy record in the book and then started on a new book? The soldier's soldier, the guy every soldier wants to be, or fuck, or both? That guy doesn't want to fight any more? I never thought I'd hear it." Chatterjee laughed. "You haven't gone all Peach Patrol on me, have you?"

But instead of laughing, McElroy just sighed and shook his head. "I don't think so. Maybe. I don't really know."

"Now I know what happened. That crazy monkhead Ellesburg pulled Chef duty again, and he slipped some Space Fuzz into our warm goop, and I am hallucinating this entire conversation. In reality, I am back at base in the Med chamber, with tubes sticking into places even I don't like them, waiting out a detox cycle. That's the only possible explanation, because the last time I checked, we both hated those peach-colored peaceniks and their 'no direct action' shipwaste. Like it makes a difference whether you blaze a Frab with a weapon like we do or just fix those same damn weapons at a Back Base somewhere."

"Maybe it does make a difference. I don't know. I just...this just isn't what I signed up for, Chat. I don't know how else to put it."

“What isn’t what you signed up for? Winning? Would you prefer to go back to the way it was before the Frequency, when the best we could do was get a couple of million people off a planet before the Frab landed and massacred the other billions?”

“No, not that. I would never want that. They killed my whole family too, remember?”

“Oh, I remember it quite well. I was *there*. But I was beginning to wonder about you. So what’s the problem? Since the Frequency, it’s been nothing but victories for us. One modification to our weapons, and now anything Frab just melts away like cotton candy. Tanks, guns, soldiers, armor...in the last year we’ve gone from nothing but a minor obstacle to the people that are wiping them off of every planet they ever took from us!”

“That’s the problem, Chat. That’s not what I signed up for.”

“It isn’t? Because I thought that is what we *both* signed up for: to kill the Frab. Or did I hear you wrong all these years?”

“You did hear me wrong! I signed up to *fight* the Frab. This...this isn’t fighting. This isn’t a war. This is slaughter, plain and simple. And I signed up to be a soldier, not a butcher.”

Chatterjee laughed wildly. “Man, this must be some wild Space Fuzz, I could have sworn I just heard you complain about killing the Frab. What did you think fighting them would entail, touch football and a couple of beers afterwards? These weapons we carry aren’t just for play, you know. They kill things.”

“I know that! And when I signed up, I was just as ready as you to kill every Frab I could point my blazer at. But I never thought it would go like this. I thought we’d fight battles and win. I thought the human cause would triumph in an interstellar war, and that I would be proud to be a part of that. But this isn’t war any more. We don’t even take casualties any more. This is something else, and it’s something that makes me sick to my stomach.”

“Oh, poor you, the big bad soldier has an upset tummy because not enough humans are dying for him to feel all noble any more. Cry my boots full, you fucking coward. Do I need to remind you...you of all people...what the Frab are like? What they did to the human race before the Frequency? They slaughtered entire planets full of real live human beings without so much as slowing down. You know what the Saberhagen report said. To a Frab, there’s no difference between killing a human being and mowing the lawn. Other races simply do not exist for them, we aren’t real. If it’s in their way, they destroy it, whether it’s a tree stump or a kindergarten. Makes no difference to them. Only Frab matter to Frab. Everything else is just matter.”

“That doesn’t make it right to just wipe them out. That doesn’t make it fair.”

“*Fair*? Who gives a fuck about fair? Do you think the Frab give a shit about how ‘fair’ it was to punch our commuter ships out of the sky and not even pause to watch them crash? You think they were concerned that crushing terrified humans huddled together in the dark under the wheels of their tanks was not quite cricket, huh? Not entirely ‘according to Hoyle?’”

“I know...but we’re not like that, at least, I didn’t think we were. We are supposed to be better than them. But now we’re acting just like them.”

“Well that’s just fine by me! In case you haven’t noticed, this isn’t a fucking game. It’s war, and we are finally winning. In the last year, the human race has gone from being reduced to a couple of billion people barely surviving in a space fleet that

had to be constantly on the move to being well on the way of taking back all our planets and wiping the Frab out once and for all.”

“Wait...nobody said anything about wiping them out. The Homeworld Accord only authorizes the military to clear them from human worlds.”

“Yeah, well...” Chatterjee looked away for a long moment, then turned back. “Look, I told you I have contacts. Well, according to them, there’s no way in hell that the military is going to stop at just re-taking human worlds. They are going to keep going until the Universe is finally free of the fucking Frab forever.”

“But...that’s genocide! I can’t believe the brass would ever agree to that, especially not when it goes against the direct orders of the Convocation.”

“Really? I find it highly plausible. What’s the Convocation going to do about it? Yell into their communicators? Whine on the viewcasts? Declare the whole thing illegal and then just wait for the military to meekly surrender? Nothing in the Universe can save the Frab now, and I could not be happier. Genocide? Sure. I’ll cop to that. We’re going to wipe them out. By this time two years from now, there will not be one Frab alive anywhere. I dare you to tell me one way in which that will not make the Universe a better place.”

“That’s not for us to decide! Who are we to decide what alien races get to live and which ones get wiped out?”

“I’ll tell you who we are! We are the human fucking race and we have half a trillion lives to avenge and we are not going to stop until the evil bastards that dared to fuck with us are gone forever, every last one of them. Because you’re right, Mac. This isn’t war. It’s not even slaughter. It’s extermination, plain and simple, and if you ever thought it was anything else, then you’re an idiot and a child and you were never the kind of soldier I thought you were.”

“And if you think we can wipe out an entire sentient race, even one like the Frab, and not lose something precious and vital in ourselves, then you’re a monster and a devil and you were never the good man I thought you were.”

Chatterjee threw down his weapon and its power supply backpack savagely. “To hell with you, then. Fuck transport, I’ll walk back. Don’t talk to me again, ever.”

And with that, Armsman Chatterjee stalked off towards Base.

Armsman McElroy sat there for a long time, staring off into the distance. The primary sun was setting in the southwest, and the blood red Frab smoke now looked like a dirty red stain across the sky.

No more Frab incursions. No more children scalded to death by troopers who didn’t even have enough humanity to be sadistic. No more buildings full of terrified citizens ground under by an alien invader who saw anything that wasn’t Frab, be it a rock, a dog, or a human being, as equally disposable. No more cowering in ships designed to take one hundredth of the population, wallowing in your own stink, living in fear that the next Encounter Alarm would be it, the end, humanity’s tenure cut short in less time than it takes for a child to grow into an adult. No more fire and blood and death and horror and nightmares come true.

No more rust in the sunsets.

And all it would take was the planned and deliberate extermination of the only other sentient race that the human race had encountered in its centuries of space exploration and colonization.

Chat's challenge looped endlessly in Mac's mind. *I dare you to tell me one way in which that will not make the Universe a better place.* For the life of him, he could not think of a single one. The Frab were pure evil, by any measure. If it wasn't humanity, it would be some other race, some other time. By any objective, logical measure, the Universe would be a better place if the mistake it had made in creating such a race were erased forever.

But he couldn't accept it. War was one thing. War had rules, limits. You fought, won, took prisoners, sent the aggressors back where they came from, even made them pay reparations for their crimes. You might even, in the heat of the moment, talk about wiping them out.

But you didn't actually do it. You certainly never trained your weapons on civilians, if any member of the ruthlessly warlike Frab could be said to be a civilian. You won or you lost, you fought and you died, but you never simply exterminated the other side. Everything human inside him railed against the very thought of it.

But maybe that was the problem. Human rules only work for humans. Nothing says that any alien race has to conform to our expectations. And there's nothing that says an entire race can't find our definition of evil. And if that's so...and you have the power and the opportunity to take them out of the picture...then why not?

Strike a blow for good by destroying evil. He thought that's what it was all about. It had all seemed so simple not that long ago. Now, nothing was certain.

A noise near his feet drew his attention away from the rusty sunset. As he watched, a Hasty Bug emerged from under an unidentified shard of bone...human? animal? Impossible to tell...and began to vibrate with increasing volume and violence as the sunlight hit its solar energy absorbing shell.

Must have missed a spot, thought McElroy. He knew he should stop it. If it got away, it could find someplace inaccessible to pupate and start the whole Frab cycle over again. Hasty Bug to adult Frab was supposedly only a matter of a couple of months, if the conditions were right. Three months at the latest.

He knew he should blaze it, but instead, he just sat, staring, as the creature built up energy. Once it took off, it would be impossible to track or stop. He only had this brief time while it charged up its tiny living engines for the journey in which to stop it.

It doesn't know it's evil, McElroy thought. It doesn't know that a human being stands poised to end its young life just because its race lacked that quirk of compassion that allowed human beings to recognize the humanity in things that weren't even remotely human. Shapes in rocks that look like faces to us. Pets that become members of the family. Even alien beings born to destroy or control all that is not them.

Does that give us the right to decide that this race does not deserve to exist? Or was that the kind of question only a human being would ask?

He watched the Hasty Bug as its vibrations built in frantic intensity. Maybe sometimes there is no good answer. Maybe sometimes there's no right thing to do. Maybe the best you can hope for is to be the animal that is still alive after the fight.

He watched until the very last moment before the Bug would zip off at supersonic speed and cause who knows how much trouble, then keyed his blazer and reduced it to nothing but a dark brown streak of grease on the grass.

Always the good soldier, he thought to himself. Attack the enemy and destroy them, no matter what the cost, to them or to you.

He stared at the grease stain for a long time, not even sure what he was thinking any more.

He then got up, grabbed Chat's gear, and keyed for transport.

Michael Bertrand

The Homepage of Michael John Bertrand

Wednesday 31 August 2011

## **Why There Was No Part Two for My Norwescon 34 Top Ten List**

Ray Seredin

Sorry, my fellow members of British Columbia fandom, but there will be no part two for my Norwescon 34 top ten list, because on June 15 of this year I went into withdrawal.

As most of you recall, on the night the Vancouver Canucks lost their third chance to bring the Stanley Cup to Vancouver for the first time since 1914 and its first return to Canadian soil since 1993...

OK, please do not turn your backs on me and run me out of the fandom community, but I am going admit I am a die-hard Vancouver Canucks fan. This may be bad news to some of you. Still, look at the bright side—not getting to read my report on Norwescon 34 is a million times better than my rioting with the other nut-cases after game seven, because the way I felt that night I would have taken out the Lion's Gate Bridge or something.

OK, you could blame it on my growing up here in Canada, but if my dad hadn't transferred to Sarnia when I was not even two (note: how I ended up in BC is another story that I may tell you sometime if you want), I would have stayed in Melbourne's answer to Surrey, and grown up to become a die-hard fan of Australian Rules Football.

So, being of my age (45+), I recall being at home in Gillies Bay on September 28, 1972, along with a good number of other Canadians (at their place, not at mine) watching the goal by Paul Henderson into the Soviet net in the last 34 seconds of the third in game eight of the Summit Series and the late great Foster Hewitt yelling "Henderson has scored for Canada!!!" Yes, Canada won the Summit Series against what was at that time the best team in hockey. Too bad that I'm one-third Russian and felt sorry for my dad, who is one-half Russian, and went to help him on a tow job the night the team returned to Canada, but my ataxic fully-Hungarian mother filled us in on the details.

Yes, I was hooked, and from then on, I started to watch the show that followed *The Bugs Bunny/Roadrunner Show* on CBC on Saturday nights, known as *Hockey Night in Canada* (well, at least 'til 6 PM when my parents turned the station to *All-Star Wrestling* airing on BCTV), and so after that started to follow the Vancouver Canucks. At this time the Canucks were the unofficial "joke" team of the NHL, and most of the other boys at school followed either the Montreal Canadiens or one of

the “Original Six” American teams, or the old standby “joke” team, the Toronto Maple Leafs, was the odd one out—but the Canucks did not make the playoffs so I started to follow Montreal and watched them win the 1973 Stanley Cup.

After that, things in the NHL started to change. In 1974, the Philadelphia Flyers became the first post-1967 expansion team to win the Cup in a battle with the Boston Bruins (boo, hiss) and did the same the next season in battle against another expansion team, the Buffalo Sabres. Then in 1976 the Canucks finally made it to the playoffs for the first time, only to be shot down in flames by the New York Islanders—but the Broad Street Bullies got the shit kicked out of them as the Montreal Canadiens beat the Philadelphia Flyers in four games straight to bring the Cup back to Canada.

By making the playoffs in '76, the Canucks started to get fans' attention, and so BCTV started to air mid-week games that, if my mother had nothing else to watch that evening, I could enjoy watching. Although the Canucks did not make the playoffs again until 1979, they did replace 1977's *Star Wars Holiday Special* in the areas of Southwestern BC lacking cable, and having seen it at a Norwescon a few years back, I knew that was a good thing, since it was the biggest piece of shit ever made. Luckily for us hockey fans, the Canadiens won the Cup in '77, '78, and '79, when the Canucks were knocked out in the first round by the still-potent Broad Street Bullies. Also, during this time, I got a look at Maple Leafs Gardens in Toronto after begging my mother to make a short stop there while visiting my uncle in nearby London, Ontario, and since it was the middle of summer, nothing was happening there, just like the rest of the year.

The next few years were dominated by the New York Islanders, but while this was happening, I got to see my first two hockey games in the flesh. It wasn't the Canucks or even another NHL team, but the WHL old New Westminster Bruins (now the Kamloops Blazers, if there are any here keeping count) at Queen's Park Arena. Yes, they sucked worse than the Canucks at that time, but I was getting very hooked.

It was also at this time that I learned a life lesson from playing floor hockey. I was playing a game with two teams of troubled teens like myself when our counselor, the biggest counselor you've ever seen, checked me quite hard and bruised my ribs. I was in great pain for a while, sat out the rest of the game, and even wanted to go to see a doctor. Still, he knew first aid and told me that they were only bruised, although I didn't get much sleep that night.

The next day the other boys were ribbing me about getting back at him, so much that I joined in on the game and when that big counselor just wrestled the puck away from a teammate I checked him hard, as hard as a runaway freight locomotive. Next thing I knew, he was on his way to see the other person who had first aid, while I was sent to the bench for two minutes. Later that night I found that he had to go the doctor for x-rays. Turns out I put small crack in one of his ribs and the next thing I felt was that I was going to be grounded for the next few weeks, yet to my teammates I was quite a hero.

Just before bed-time he phoned my parents. My dad walked into my room to say “John wants to talk to you.” When I picked up the phone John sounded not

angry, but proud of my actions that day, because for the first time in my life I fought back and stood up for myself. So after that when the school bully picked on me just a little too much (and providing that he was not one of the school's top athletes because using some smart-ass James Bond move on them would have been quite foolish) I would send him flying into his desk ass-first.

OK, in late 1981 my family moved from Texada Island to the Wildwood neighbourhood of Powell River, just in time to see the Canucks make their first run at the Stanley Cup. One of the team's stars that year was "The Pride of Powell River," Gary Lupul, who grew up not too far from where I lived, and had a brother and sister who worked at the town's recreation complex. Since most of you are not hockey fans: Gary was one of the smallest scrappers in NHL history, being only 5'9" and weighing only 175 pounds, but he was the first player to take on 6'4", 235-pound hockey super-star Mario Lemieux in his very first game. Back in the mid-'70s when my mom went ice skating at the complex (I did not go myself because as you know I have two left feet), I used to watch Gary and the other local boys practise in the other arena and I would find the pucks that went over the boards. My parents had guests from Down Under staying with us at that time, and they saw as I turned my mother into a diehard fan hockey before their eyes. Though the Canucks did lose in four games to the New York Islanders in the final, this was a real bonding experience between me and my mother.

Gary Lupul entered my life in the flesh just over a year later. My dad was here in Vancouver at VGH after finding cancer in one of his kidneys, which had to be removed, and it was very, very hard on both me and my mother. For a while we could not take it and we both returned to Powell River, but after a few days I went back down to spend time with him. I would spend about three to four hours a day with him and used the rest of day to explore Vancouver (remember, this was about two and half years before SkyTrain, so getting around then was a lot harder than today), where I spent a quite a bit of time at the old main Vancouver Public Library on Burrard and Robson to read up on trains. One day while I was on my way down there, I heard someone say "Ray," and I turned around to see Gary Lupul on a bike waiting for the light to change.

"Ray, Ray Seredin, it's Gary," he said.

"Oh, Terry's brother. How're you doing?" I replied.

"Oh, fine. Just heading back from the gym," he said.

"Oh, getting ready for next season?" I replied.

"Yes. So why are you down here?" he said.

"Oh, my dad had cancer in his kidneys and had to remove one," I answered.

"Oh yes, I remember Terry telling me something about it. Is he going to be OK?" he said.

"I hope so. They are giving him treatment for it and we won't know for a few months," I replied.

"Will he be down here that long?" he asked.

"No, they may let him return home in ten days or so," I said.

"So where is he?" he asked.

"Vancouver General."

"Would he like it if I paid him a visit?" he asked.

“No, my dad is not a hockey fan. Being from Europe, he really loves soccer,” I replied.

“Oh, too bad, Ray. I would have brought the Tiger with me,” he said.

Then I said, “That would be nice, but then he would have me track down all the Whitecaps or something.”

“So, Ray, I have to get going. Say hi to Terry for me.” And before I could say “goodbye” he headed down Burrard Street at a rather good clip.

My dad did get better and now lives in Florida, but Gary died in the summer of 2007 in his condo in Burnaby. Such is the high price of being a scrapping hockey star, and I feel that unless both the NHL and the players do something about this, Gary’s sad story will continue with other players’ names filling the obituary pages.

Still, on to better times.

While the Vancouver Canucks went back to being the joke team of the NHL, about 820 KM northeast of here a hockey dynasty was in the makings, as the greatest player in the history of hockey, Wayne Gretzky, led the Edmonton Oilers to their first Stanley Cups between 1984 and 1988 (it was the Montreal Canadiens who won the Cup in 1986, with the Oilers getting kicked out by the Calgary Flames in the second round).

I best remember the 1984 win, because I was living in North Vancouver at the time and came down with mild tonsillitis on the afternoon of game five, so I went up to the Lion’s Gate Hospital’s ER to get medication just before the start of game five. The whole city was like a ghost town since the Oilers were on a roll, beating the New York Islanders by five in the last two games, and when I got there all the doctors were watching the game in their lounge, saying the only way they were coming out was for life-and-death emergencies. So I waited along with a teen who fallen off his dirt bike, whose broken leg was partly set by the ambulance crew, and his father, ’til the end of the first period. When the doctors came out, four of them went to work on the teen’s leg and one quickly looked me over and gave me a prescription for acetaminophen, as well as telling me that the Oilers were leading 2–0.

From Lion’s Gate I took a bus to the only drugstore open after 5 PM on a Saturday night, which was up in Lynn Valley, and was quite surprised when the pharmacist asked me what the score was. I said “2–0 Edmonton,” and he smiled. I soon headed out the door and got the next bus home because I was not going miss the third period.

I returned just in time to see the puck drop in the third period and Northlands Coliseum roof was being raised by the fans watching the game there, because the Oilers now led 4–0. Those darn Islanders scored two quick ones in the opening minutes of the third, but that was all they wrote as the Oilers scored an empty netter and in doing so brought the Cup back to Canada, while becoming the first team west of Chicago to win it since the Victoria Cougars did way back in 1925! So after that a huge party broke out in Edmonton and soon spread out all the way from Masset to St. John’s.

Though my 1984 Stanley Cup story ended there, about a month or so before, I was at a TV shop in Powell River with a guy I went to high school with (same guy that pissed me off one day about 18 months before and I sent him flying ass-first into his soon-to-be-broken desk) who happened to be a diehard Islanders fan, and soon we started to talk about hockey, so before I knew it I made a \$20 bet with him on

who was going to win the Cup that year. I went with the Oilers and when they won I was looking forward to returning to Powell River to get my twenty bucks. I was quite surprised when he phoned me up late the next day, asking me if I could go out to Langley to claim my winning. I said yes and after taking so many buses that I lost count (remember, this was before SkyTrain) I met him at the local McDonald's, where I was happy to buy him lunch and still had about \$11.00 of my winnings.

OK, others write for *BCSFazine* too and I'm sure that most of you would like to get back to reading about science fiction and fantasy, so I'm going bring my story about hockey to an end for now, although if you want me to tell you more sometime in the future, I'll gladly do so.

So, see you next time with my VCon 36 report. Until then, Go, Canucks, Go!  
Cosmic Ray Seredin

Raymond Seredin

Sunday 25 September 2011

## Zines Received



**‘The Voyageur’ #175** (September/October 2010). Published by Infinite Diversity International Corporation, % Lynda L. Ciaschini, 7050 Weston Road, Suite 301, Woodbridge, Ontario, Canada, L4L 8G7. Edited by Georgina Miles, 26 Doddington Drive, Toronto, Ontario, M8Y 1S4, [ga.miles@rogers.com](mailto:ga.miles@rogers.com). Official newsletter of the *U.S.S. Hudson Bay*.

“Most Earth-Like Planet Yet Spotted in a Habitable Zone—September 29, 2010”: Neat info about the Gliese 581 star system. Enjoyed.

Also: “Editorial”; “Casa Loma Has Haunted Fun”; “Fake Skin Gives Robots Senses”; “New Series Lost Girl”; “Wordoku”; “Wonder Woman to Return”; “Dr. Who Some Info on Series 6”; “Star Wars Movies in 3D”; “Fannish Inquisition—Tom Baker”; “Aurora Award Nominees and Winners 2010”; “Conventions and Events”; “Club Meetings”; “Hailing Frequencies” (contact information).

**‘The Voyageur’ #176** (November/December 2010). Published by Infinite Diversity International Corporation, % Lynda L. Ciaschini, 7050 Weston Road, Suite 301, Woodbridge, Ontario, Canada, L4L 8G7. Edited by Georgina Miles, 26 Doddington Drive, Toronto, Ontario, M8Y 1S4, [ga.miles@rogers.com](mailto:ga.miles@rogers.com). Official newsletter of the *U.S.S. Hudson Bay*.

“Panda Parenting”: Chinese panda conservation researchers dress in panda costumes before handling the cubs. Wow! Adorable!

“Scott Bakula New Role”: Scott Bakula and Ray Romano star in *Men of a Certain Age*, a TV show about dreamers settling down and making lives for themselves as they push or turn 50. It actually sounds pretty interesting.

Also: “Editorial”; “Dr. Who Christmas Special”; “Dr. Who Rumour Mill”; “Eureka Christmas Special”; “Dr. Who...More Rumours”; “Warehouse 13 Christmas Episode”; “Things Worth Mentioning”; “James Bond History?”; “Super-powered TV Stars”; “Film Director Irvin Kershner Dies”; “Conventions and Events”; “Club Meetings”; “Hailing Frequencies.”

‘**The Voyageur**’ #177 (January/February 2011). Published by Infinite Diversity International Corporation, % Lynda L. Ciaschini, 7050 Weston Road, Suite 301, Woodbridge, Ontario, Canada, L4L 8G7. Edited by Georgina Miles, 26 Doddington Drive, Toronto, Ontario, M8Y 1S4, [ga.miles@rogers.com](mailto:ga.miles@rogers.com). Official newsletter of the *U.S.S. Hudson Bay*.

“The Grand Design by Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow”: All that *The Grand Design* says about religion is that “it is not necessary to invoke God” to explain the creation of the universe. In this article reprinted from *The Observer*, Robin McKie reprimands the media for “setting religion against science” in their attempts to create controversy—but then can’t resist adding that “Worse, the furore suggests that at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, in our apparently rational, secular society, the declaration by a leading scientist that God was not involved in the universe’s creation is deemed to be newsworthy and deserving of front-page headlines in national newspapers”—a statement that, if not equally incendiary, is certainly insensitive.

“Editorial”; “Birthday Wishes”; “Joanne Muth July 11, 1950–January 1, 2011”; “The Listener Is Back”; “Unlikely Comic Superhero”; “Stargate Universe Interviews”; “Conventions and Events”; “Club Meetings”; “Hailing Frequencies.”

## E-Zines Received

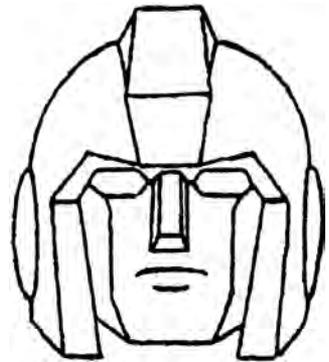
‘**One Swell Foop**’ #4 (May–June 2011). Published by Garth Spencer, 82 East 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V5W 1L4, Canada, [garthspencer@shaw.ca](mailto:garthspencer@shaw.ca).

Cover: I like the way that Brad Foster’s “Sea Horsey” illustration visually echoes Garth’s choice of title font (Trinigan FG, which he used in VCON 35’s program book), or vice-versa.

- “Monkey Mind”:

- “Seeing a concentration of movies or episodes in one series can be a mistake, the way that reading a concentration of works by one author can be a mistake. I found this out when I overdosed on James P. Hogan just before he was a Guest of Honour at our local convention.” I want to know the details of this!

- “This winter I was again reminded of the need to tap into our climate’s most ignored power source: RAIN! Yes, all we have to do is turn windmills *sideways*, hook up a power generator and you’re laughing! At least when the rain is really pissing down...” Awesome. I’ve been wanting to harvest and harness rain! I was so disappointed when I found out it’s not safe to save for drinking or bathing.



○ “Sometimes I think I am retreating into a fantasy world not unlike that of the Nowhere Man, the strange critter in the Beatles movie *Yellow Submarine*.” Any port in a storm.

● “The Art of the Con”: Interesting reading; summary of Garth’s years of thinking about conventions and conrunning.

● “Crank Theory”: Psychohistory. Processing human behaviour/interaction with math/logic works better for Garth. It wouldn’t work at all, let alone better, for me. I’d have to take courses, starting from a pre-school level of simplicity, in the symbols of Garth’s system and their usage, and even then, I’d probably hit a wall somewhere at the junior-secondary-school level, as I did in real life with matrices, or at the first-year-university level, as I did with probability. Thus, while Garth’s idea of adding quantitative precision and logical clarity to traditionally-softer disciplines like history, psychology, anthropology, and sociology would probably help civilization, it’s another opaque barrier to me until I have systematizing intelligence wetware installed in my brain. In addition to logic and mathematics, Garth also invokes computer programming, the *I Ching*, and the Myers-Brigg Type Indicator, all of which I have also failed to master at some point. However, on a more positive note, Garth’s article meets none of his criteria for a crank theory—“unsound premises, unsound reasoning, poor understanding of the field, unproven or disproven premises, answer for everything, resorting to double-talk.”

● “Future Recall” by Taral Wayne: Clever and funny. Written in 1989, and disturbingly prescient in places, as Taral’s present-day footnotes acknowledge.

Also: “LOCs”; “Bill Wright on Machiavelli”; “L’Esprit d’Escalier.”

‘**Auroran Lights**’ #5 (August 2011). Published by R. Graeme Cameron, [rgraeme@shaw.ca](mailto:rgraeme@shaw.ca). [eFanzines](http://eFanzines). “The Fannish E-Zine of the Canadian Science Fiction & Fantasy Association—Dedicated to Promoting the Prix Aurora Awards and the History of Canadian Fandom.”

● “Editorial”: “Hmmm, what do people think of my new double column format? Easier to read? A nuisance? Let me know.” Attractive on paper, but hard to read on-screen since I have to scroll up and down to read each page. I recommend either landscape format for two-column zines (see *Opuntia* or *Ish*), or strictly one column for portrait-format zines.

● “Fallacious Fannish History Articles”:

○ “Our SF Fandom: A Stimulating Diversion” by Mike Glicksohn: Good article! What’s an eo-fan? A koan: what was Sturgeon’s Law before ten things had been made?

○ “Whither Fandom?”: It’s cathartic and therefore useful to talk about “the death of fandom” in the sense of the fandom we imprinted on (for example, the fandom of print). A lot of culture has changed so much in the last 25 years that it no longer speaks to me: the look and feel of film, TV, comics, animation, computer operating systems, car body styling, fonts, fashion... *Star Trek* is dead. *Doctor Who* is dead. Popular culture achieved perfection in 1986. It’s a scientific fact. Continue to pursue and reward excellence and hope that people will eventually see the light. I loved Taral Wayne’s flying police motorcycle drawing in this article. His Mars rover is very good too.



- “Frenetic Fanzine Reviews”:

- *BCSFazine* #458 (Felicity Walker): Graeme writes that he’s saddened by the concept of World UFO Day. Why? He says he feels anal for wanting to correct some errata in my June 2011 BCSFA meeting notes; he is welcome to correct them—I want the information to be right too. Thank you, Graeme, for the glowing review! It’s reassuring.

- *Swill* #9 (Neil Jameison-Williams): Graeme says that fans resist change; Neil says that everything has changed, so why should fandom be any exception? See my comments on “Whither Fandom?”

Also: “CSFFA News & Announcements”; “Fabled Fandom/Prodom News & Notes”; “Fanatic Fanniche Fanactivity”; “Stuttering Stratospheric Static”; “Terribly Important Stuff.”

‘**The Fanactical Fanactivist**’ #1 (August 2011). Published by R. Graeme Cameron, 13315 104<sup>th</sup> Ave., Apt. 72G, Surrey, BC, V3T 1V5, [rgraeme@shaw.ca](mailto:rgraeme@shaw.ca). [eFanzines](#). The Fannish E-Zine of the Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards Society Dedicated to Promoting Canadian Fanzine Fandom.

“Oops! I Did It Again!”; “Concerning the Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards”; “To Sum Up”; “Colophon.”

Art criticism: Good William Rotsler cover illo, and it looks very cool enlarged to (almost) a full page. It’s also the style of Rotsler figure I like: cartoonish, yet well-constructed, with a sense of balance and volume. I also like the (uncredited) clip art of astronauts in the interior. They’d make great Faned statues (see next entry).

‘**The Fanactical Fanactivist**’ #2 (September 2011). Published by R. Graeme Cameron, 13315 104<sup>th</sup> Ave., Apt. 72G, Surrey, BC, V3T 1V5, [rgraeme@shaw.ca](mailto:rgraeme@shaw.ca). [eFanzines](#). The Fannish E-Zine of the Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards Society Dedicated to Promoting Canadian Fanzine Fandom.

Cover: Faned Award sculpture design proposal sketch by Eric Chu. The basic premise of the design—an astronaut blasting off with a jetpack, which is a fountain pen—is OK, but I humbly suggest it be less cartoony and more realistically proportioned. (This doesn’t necessarily mean more detailed.) Graeme says that he’s still open to submissions, so during a spare moment at VCON I’ll try to draw something.

“Letters of Comment”: Neil Jamieson-Williams: Neil writes, “Here is a type of fanzine that I would like to read/watch/engage in; a fusion of text, audiovisual, possibly with music and animations, that has an interactive synchronous chat as well as asynchronous forums/blog, and links to past articles/essays of the zine, and so on.” I’d love to do a zine in TV show format on the Web. As for the CFFAs, they’d be unnecessary if they covered podcasts, blogs, and other non-zine fanac. There are already the Hugos and the Auroras for that. The statuette for the CFFA should be a tree—if your fanac doesn’t consume one, you don’t qualify.

Neil also warns that print zine fandom is greying. Generation X gets overlooked (as usual) in these greying-of-fandom debates. We’re too young to be greybeards

and too old to be the future. We were born at the same time as the personal computer, but grew up reading books on paper and watching video on TV sets. We're also the reason comics are still printed on paper and sold in brick-and-mortar stores. (We were the last generation to get the chance to write to a comic's letter column. They don't have those anymore—not even an e-mail address.) Zine fandom doesn't need to stock up on Grecian Formula just yet.

In "Whither Fandom?" (see above), Graeme writes that he took over as editor of *BCSFazine* in 1989, and was told even then that print was dead. He would have been roughly the age I am now. That means our editor in the year 2033 (if *BCSFazine* is still going—if *BCSFA* is still going—if *the world* is still going) is now starting high school!

Also: "To Sum Up."

## Art Credits

|   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| Sheryl Birkhead.....                          | Masthead                     |
| <u>Brad Foster</u> .....                      | Cover                        |
| Clip art (Gil Kane).....                      | Page 1 (top)                 |
| Clip art (via Sheryl Birkhead).....           | Page 1 (bottom)              |
| <u>Jim McPherson</u> /Ian Fry/John White..... | Page 2                       |
| Clip art.....                                 | Pages 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 19, 26 |
| <u>Steve Green</u> .....                      | Page 5                       |
| Unknown (font).....                           | Page 6                       |
| Clip art (Bob Budiansky/Janice Chiang).....   | Page 8                       |
| <u>Taral Wayne</u> .....                      | Page 11                      |
| Michael Gaines (font).....                    | Page 13                      |
| Clip art (Shohei Kohara/Floro Dery).....      | Pages 22, 23, 25             |

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