

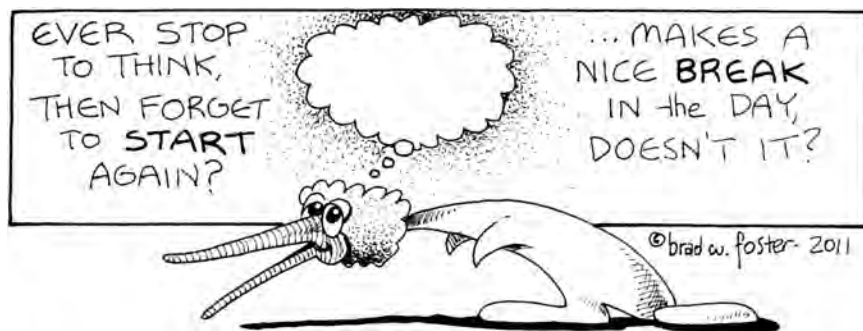
# BCSFA Zine

The Newsletter of the British Columbia Science Fiction Association

#466

\$3.00/Issue

March 2012



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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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The secret unofficial theme of the last issue was *marine life*. The cover paper was *salmon*-coloured, the shadow of a *lobster* was the monster in *Teenagers from Outer Space* (1959), the obituary was for *Zalman King*, the short story by Michael Bertrand (who comes from the *Maritimes*) had alien *seals*, and the back cover illo was a heraldic rebus for *Zalman King* (ideally, a Chinook, the king of salmon).

This issue marks my third anniversary as editor.

## This Month in BCSFA

Sunday 18 March @ 7 PM:

**BCSFA meeting**—at Ray Seredin's, 707 Hamilton Street (recreation room), New Westminster. Call 604-521-0254 for directions.

Friday 30 March:

**'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/> (webmaster: Garth Spencer). The BCSFA e-mail list is BC Sci-Fi Assc. ([http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bc\\_scifi\\_assc/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bc_scifi_assc/)). See <http://bcsfa.net/events.html> for more events. Back issues of *BCSFAzine* are also archived at <http://efanzines.com/BCSFA/index.htm> (webmaster: Bill Burns).

## Letters of Comment

[*Editor's responses in brackets.*]

**Dave Haren**  
[tyrbolo@comcast.net](mailto:tyrbolo@comcast.net)

Wednesday 22 February 2012



Hi Felicity,

As usual an edifying glimpse into the grand life of Vancouver's SF community.

We have elected a number of clowns into government but they're afraid to tell us what they do.

[*Ha! ☺*]

I see it is contagious, since I've been following the transmutation of C-11 with interest. So far the high point was the originator claiming he didn't know that part was in it. GRIN.

It is almost as much fun as watching Ahmadinejad fondling a reactor fuel rod.

Here we have freedom of choice, the Republicans are crazy, and the Democrats are worse, while the bureaucratic mills want to grind the rest of the world up and steal their valuables.

I picked up an ebook reader at a very low price, stuffed it full (actually twice, 8 GB SD cards) have been endlessly tinkering to see what works and what doesn't. It works better than the usual stacking of partially read books with place markers. I've been getting some good stuff from Baen's Free Library. And sending them money, since I like the idea.

It also plays background music, but that got stuffed full of McKenna's odd lectures, since I'm quite partial to the idea that there is a better future on the way and he's not afraid to say so.

[*I'm aware of Terence McKenna's work but haven't read or heard anything, apart from summaries. Which lectures would you recommend to start?]*

I hope Graeme remembered to name his baby hernia *Oww*, since that is an Indian style of name.

I bought a copy of *TAGTFOS (The Awful Green Things from Outer Space)*, designed by Tom Wham, since Steve Jackson and I go way back when. I'm amazed at the production values of this game. Mounted map, nice thick parts, full-sized slick paper rules. SF gaming has come a long way since the microgame era.



[*Kathleen Moore, our treasurer, sometimes brings microgames to club meetings.*]

This will let my grandson off the hook of being cheated at *Munchkin* by the treacherous ancient.

For those who want to be nostalgic or see what the olde dayes were like, the Net has a print-and-play version of SPI's *Napoleon at Waterloo*. It was their original introductory game used to teach newcomers hexmap gaming.



[I like hexagons. I was recently disappointed to learn that there is no Platonic solid made of regular hexagons; I'd wanted to use one for a fictional company logo. The truncated icosahedron (at left) and pentakis dodecahedron offer some consolation.]

I have been thinking about sending Graeme some anecdotes from the gamer episodes of my youth, since there's a lot more to it than pushing pieces around.

[I look forward to that!]

I liked Spider's idea of VR convention attendance, since the author contact is the part of cons I liked most.

I found the three-volume set *Monarchs of the Main* at the [gutenberg.org](http://gutenberg.org) site. It's the history of piracy and anarchy in the early expansion into the New World. It seems to be one of those eras that fell through the cracks when they wrote history books. The resemblance to Somalian piracy is amazing as is the divergence from it.



Anyway that's the random blessing from Eris. May her hand rest lightly on you and yours.

[Synchronistically, that's the second friendly Erisian blessing I've received recently.]

The attached is how book collectors are in their secret lives.

[Readers: see upper-right corner.]

Warm regards,  
Dave Haren



**Lloyd Penney**  
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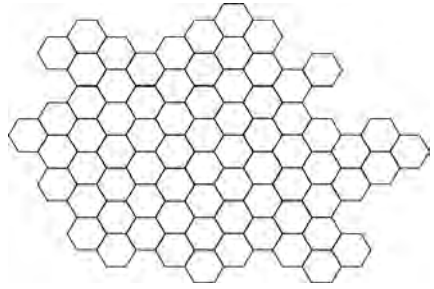
Tuesday 28 February 2012

Dear Felicity:

I've got the .pdf of *BCSFazine* 465 here, and I am sure the full printed paper copy is wending its way through the mails as I write. There's some things to say about this issue, and I might as well start now.

The Oscars have come and gone...I didn't watch the ceremony, but I am pleased with some of the results. First of all, the movie *Hugo* won five Oscars, all for production. I wish Martin Scorsese had won for best director, but all those Oscars mean that this is indeed a great movie. *Hugo* will definitely be on my Hugo ballot. I am also very pleased that Christopher Plummer won Best Supporting Actor. Not many Oscar-winning actors have played Klingons...

Re Sheryl Birkhead's loc...in my own adventures within the audio book business, many producers demand that you have your own studio so you can look after your own recordings, be your own producer, and save them the cost of renting the recording studio. Some places do have access to a studio or are willing to rent one. I live in an apartment, so no home studio for me. I've put my voice-work career on hold for the moment because I finally have found daytime work! I'm doing some substantial proofreading work for a large ad agency in Mississauga.



[Great! ☺]

As Others See Us...I presume this is taken from the regular feature in *Ansible*. This is proof that both the press and the public employ tired, stale stereotypes to deal with us. It is this lack of objectivity on the press's part that proves my opinion that the press is not your friend.

[*The title of my "As Others See Us?" is a nod to the Ansible feature, but the items appearing in BCSFAZine are edited by me. Also, I finally got around to subscribing to Ansible so it comes directly to my e-mail. When (or if) I catch up to the present, it will appear in "E-Zines Received."*]

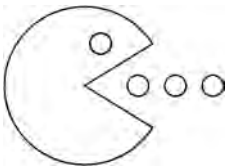
I have read more elsewhere about what's affecting Spider Robinson, and now directly, his daughter Terri. Good sir, you have had to deal with far too much pain and sorrow, and now it looks like more has come your way. Please know that you and Terri are in our hearts, minds and prayers. Hugs from both of us.

I wrote above I have found daytime work. It is with an advertising agency, but not the one I referred to in my previous loc. This agency in Mississauga has me proofing food packaging, and it could be a long-term assignment. I sure hope so.

The Super Happy Hacker House sounds like a Maker faire. Toronto's had a Mini Maker Faire (I think Vancouver has had one, too), and given it took a lot of effort with not enough time to put out last year's initial version, the next one will take place next year, and give them enough time to properly produce the sequel. It was expensive to get into the Maker Faire, but it was a lot of fun.

I hope Graeme is doing better, and is starting to shuffle around in less pain. Soon, he'll be back to his regular shuffle.

[*Graeme made it to the last club meeting, which is a good sign.*]



I think you can find just about anything on the Web. It's a matter of using the right terms in the search engine you use, and some search engines are more effective than others.

[*It's easier now than it was when I first started hearing that you could find anything on the Web (1994). There's even a [Wikipedia entry for the Pac-Man cartoon!](#)*]

I'm done, I'm tired, and I have to get ready for work in the morning, so off this goes, and off I go. Zzzzz...See you later...zzzzzz...

[*Sleep well!*]

Yours,  
Lloyd Penney

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

Monday 5 March 2012

Now *that's* fantasy!

Sorry, had to share this...

Last year, China's 3D adult movie *Sex and Zen 3D: Extreme Ecstasy* famously topped *Avatar's* opening day gross in Hong Kong.

For the *Sex and Zen* sequel (of course there's going to be a sequel), they're taking it to the *fourth dimension*.

Producer Stephen Shiu Jr. claims the sequel—tentatively titled *4D Sex and Zen: Slayer of a Thousand from the Mysterious East*, will make use of motion technology within their seats to give audiences a “physical sensation.”

[*Filmed in Perceptorama!*]



**Michael Bertrand**  
[fruvousfox@gmail.com](mailto:fruvousfox@gmail.com)

Monday 12 March 2012



Well, here I am, a little later than intended, but fresh (ish) from the premiere VancouFur, the first Vancouver furry convention ever, and boy was it fun. All the knowledge that the local furies absorbed from being the Secret Underground Masters of VCon (or SUMOVs), as well as helping out at Rainfurrest (a Seattle furry con), obviously paid off big time, because the whole thing

went off great, the hotel rooms were amazing (kitchens in every room, with a full-sized fridge and everything!), I had a ton of fun, and I am already eagerly wagging my little tail in anticipation of the next one.

Sorry to hear things are going too badly for you to talk about, Sheryl Birkhead. ☹ I hope the storm ends and lets the sunshine back into your life soon.

Re: Lloyd Penney's comment about his experiences learning the accordion and hence learning to hate “Lady of Spain”...that song has got to be the “Chopsticks” of accordion songs, if not the “NO STAIRWAY.” Everyone who has done accordion seems to hate that damn song. Me, I wouldn't know it if I heard it. I know it only by its fell reputation.



I'm glad Lloyd is getting work! For those of us living vicariously through you, Lloyd...go for it! ☺

As for feeling superceded by the newer generation of furry (or sci fi) fans, I can relate, but I don't mind. I just came back from a furry convention, and I was quite pleased with the younger furry fans' enthusiasm and energy and how fresh and open to new things they all were. I am so glad that generation has not inherited the Generation X apathy and ennu. I am glad to turn things over to them. Maybe they will do something with our ideas, unlike my generation and its morass of diffidence.



Glad to hear R. Graeme's hernia came to term and was born without excess complications. While I am of course pleased to hear of its successful birth, I feel I speak for all of us when I say that we will gladly eschew any viewing of baby pictures.

And of course, I am always extremely glad to see my writing in print. That particular story I wrote more or less as an exercise in light science fiction, based on a factoid about a certain breed of seal I got from a David Attenborough special. I hope folks liked it.

Well, I guess that's enough out of me for now!

Seeya next issue, folks!

**We Also Heard From:** Joseph Bardsley, R. Graeme Cameron, Carolyn Clink, Linda Earl, Doug Finnerty, Steve Forty, Sue Lange, Kathleen Moore, Garth Spencer, and Taral Wayne.

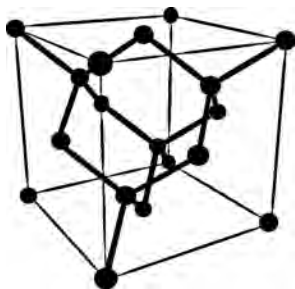


## Calendar

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

### March 2012

March is Humorists Are Artists Month, International Ideas Month, March into Literacy Month, and Small Press Month.



1, 15, and 29 March and 12 and 26 April 2012: 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)

2 March 2012: Premiere of films *Dr. Seuss's The Lorax* (computer animation/fantasy; Zac Efron, Taylor Swift, Betty White, Ed Helms, Danny DeVito, Rob Riggle, Dee Bradley Baker, Marina Sirtis) and *Tim and Eric's Billion Dollar Movie* (comedy; Eric Wareheim, Tim Heidecker, John C. Reilly, Will Ferrell, Robert Loggia, Ray Wise, William Atherton, Ron Austar, Gabriel Bartalos, Mark Cuban, Will Forte, Zach Galafianakis, Jeff Goldblum, Michael Gross, David Liebhart, Ron Lynch, A.D. Miles, James Quall, Ron Stark).



2 March 2012: [Costume party to help with those post con blues!/pool party](#), 8:30 PM–6:00 AM at 1668 Stanhope Place, Victoria. “OK so I was thinking of doing a costume party at my place at the end of the month! Semi-BYOB. Some room-mates are moving out and we can be loud and have fun! Might try and get the pool fixed by then too! Plenty of room to crash if ya need to as well! Might have a DJ as well, who knows, and maybe head to Denny’s after. If I forgot to invite someone feel free to yourself!”—[Christopher Faith](#) via [Joseph Whovianart Cassidy](#)

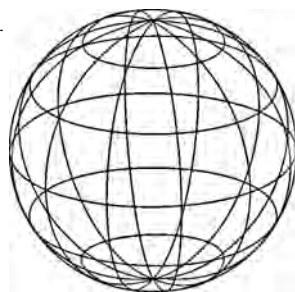
2 March 2012: [Trumpeter Tabletop Games Society Game Night](#) at Bonsor Community Centre, 6550 Bonsor Avenue, Burnaby, east side of MetroTown Shopping Centre. Drop-ins welcome!

2–4 March 2012: Year End Sale at [Imperial Hobbies](#), 5451 #3 Road, Richmond. Hours: Friday, 11–9 PM; Saturday, 10–5:30 PM; Sunday, noon–5 PM.

3 March 2012: If Pets Had Thumbs Day.

3 March 2012: [Super Happy Hacker House 20](#), 7:00 PM–12:00 AM at Vancouver Hack Space, 45 West Hastings Street, Vancouver. “VHS will be opening its doors for another awesome SHHH. Please join us for a night of hacking and socializing. Because it’s the 20<sup>th</sup> SHHH ever, we’ve decided to rent out more space than ever. All the fun of a normal hacking night *plus* extra space *plus* no self-imposed bed time curfew. Bring a project you’re working on, or just come down and find out what Vancouver’s hackers, crafters, and makers are working on. Lightning talks starting at 11 PM.”—Keith Lim

3 March 2012: [Dr. StrangeGeek or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Party](#), 7:00–11:00 PM at Royal Canadian Legion Branch #179 (Grandview), 2205 Commercial Drive, Vancouver. “Ladies and Gentlenerds of all ages...that are over 19. We welcome you to the splendiferous event known only as Doctor StrangeGeek. We encourage you all to dress up in your favourite costume, put your worries aside and come join us for an evening of fun, dancing, prizes, endurance, and drinks! All this in a *very* safe environment where it’s almost certain you won’t need to watch your friends battle in some sort of geek themed combat to the death. Costumes are not mandatory, but odds are it will be in your favour. Doors will open at 7 PM. Cover is \$15. We can not stress this enough, this is an event where you almost certainly won’t die. Also there will be snacks.”—[IRL Events](#) via [Cormorant Hadoken Russball](#)



9 March 2012: Premiere of films *John Carter* (action/SF; Bryan Cranston, Ciarán Hinds, Willem Dafoe, Thomas Haden Church, Don Stark), *Silent House* (horror), and *Playback* (horror; Christian Slater, Mark Metcalf).

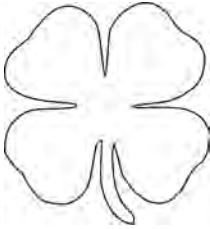


9–11 March 2012: VancouFur 2012. Anthropomorphic art and costume convention at Executive Hotel and Conference Center at 4201 Lougheed Highway (west of Brentwood Town Centre SkyTrain station), Burnaby. Full weekend membership: \$40 until 24 February 2012, \$45 at the door. Single day passes (cash only at door): Friday \$20, Saturday \$30, Sunday \$15. Single day passes do not get a conbook included with admission, but conbooks can be bought. Hotel rooms \$119 per night. Hotel is taking reservations only via phone (1-800-590-3932). Mention VancouFur to the clerk and use the code 12720 during the booking. (Brief post about the event at IRL Events).—Julian Castle



10 March 2012: Geeks After Dark V: With Great Sexy Comes Great Responsibility, 6:00–10:30 PM at the Cellar Nightclub, 1006 Granville Street, Vancouver. “Who am I? You sure you want to know? The story of my life is not for the faint of heart. If somebody said it was a happy little tale...if somebody told you this was just your average, ordinary club night... somebody lied. Whatever life holds in store

for me, I will never forget these words: ‘Hey, I’m kind of busy Friday night. Maybe give Saturdays a shot?’ So we set the show up for Saturday. That is our gift. That is our curse. That is...*Geeks After Dark V: With Great Sexy Comes Great Responsibility!* That’s right, hot on the heels of our last event, we’re coming out *again* with a great show. We just couldn’t keep ourselves away from you wonderful folks after our editor, a moustachioed, cigar-chomping tyrant demanded pictures of a certain wall-crawling, web-spinning...Yes, fine, it’s Spider-Man themed. There’s only so much we can draw this out, really. *Geeks After Dark* is now going to be coming at you faster and harder than ever, so *get ready!* All the *ladies*, all the *dancing*, all the *prizes* and all the *nerdy madness* you can handle! Sponsored by *GameDeals*, *Golden Age Collectables*, *Gotham Collectables*, and *The Connection Games!* Check out our hosts *J. Jonah Jameson* with his on-site photographer *Peter Parker* for an amazing evening of burlesque, trivia, comedy and the best geeky dance music since the Cantina Band went on tour! Featuring an amazing lineup of nerdlesquers but including fan favourites like: *Sherry Hymen*, *Dollie Nox*, *Misty Meanor*, *Chai Tea*, *Sweet Sashay*; Stage Kitty/Balloon Girl is the Vixen from Venus, the Seductress from the Stars, the Time Twirling Tassels of Tomorrow, the Dame in Lace from Outer Space, Newcomer *Iva Raygun!* Doors: 6:00 PM . Show: 6:30 PM. Dance party craziness: 7:30 PM! Featuring music from: *’90s cartoons! geeky movies and TV shows! nerd-core rap! video games! and user requests!* Leave yours in the comments, and if we can shake our things to it (thing-shaking is a patented process), we’ll put it on the playlist. Now, unsheathe your adamantium claws, strap on your arc reactor powered armor, shine up your no-prizes and get ready to party! Excelsior, fans, and *make mine Geeks After Dark!* Tickets at the door: \$10 in costume, \$12 without so *dress to the 9s!*”—Geeks After Dark via Cormorant Hadoken Russball



11 March 2012: **Cameron Russell**'s birthday. Daylight Saving Time: advance one hour at 2 AM.

14 March 2012: Pi Day.

15 March 2012: **Jenni Merrifield**'s birthday.

17 March 2012: St. Patrick's Day.

17–18 March 2012: Vancouver Retro Gaming Expo, 11 AM–2 AM at the Columbia, 530 Columbia Street, New Westminister. “March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012 will mark the first of many Vancouver Retro Gaming Expo events. The Greater Vancouver Area has a large retro-gaming community and a need for more large-scale community events. Other nearby cities host yearly retro gaming expos including Seattle & Portland, but Vancouver has gone without for too long. Unlike other cities though, Vancouverites like to party. We’ve taken the basics of: vendors, retro video games, tournaments, panels, charity auction, costumes, etc. and spiced it up a bit with a licensed venue, a DJ spinning some awesome old-school tracks & remixes, and a little nerd burlesque into the evening. On top of that, we’re working with Lafflines upstairs to bring in some comedy well suited for our crowd (with 2-for-1 deals). Instead of 2–3 shorter days with the same content spread out, we crammed as much as we could into one big day. Come join us for 15 hours of celebrating with your retro gaming community. For more information, including confirmed guests, exhibitor info, tickets & more, visit us online at <http://www.vancouvergamingexpo.com/>.”—Brian Hughes via Cor-morant Hadoken Russball



18 March 2012: Vancouver Comic Con, 11 AM–5 PM [at *Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street, Vancouver*]. “Special Guests: Ken Steacy (*Astro Boy, Tempus Fugitive*), Joan Thornborrow Steacy (*Aurora Borealice*), Alex Steacy (*Shards*), Derek DeLand (*Copyright Infringers, Swell™*), Kim Glennie (*Girls’ Room, Emily & Zola*), Albert Art, Mary Karaplis, Critical Hit Comics, Gurukitty Studios, and others! Dealer tables: \$50/centre; \$60/wall. Hourly door prizes! Admission: \$4.00; kids under 14: free. 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. Follow us on Twitter at: [twitter.com/vancomicon](https://twitter.com/vancomicon). For more information: <http://www.vancouvercomiccon.com/> or call 604-322-6412.”—Leonard S. Wong

18 March 2012: Naked Girls Reading Neil Gaiman, 7:30–10:30 PM at the Backstage Lounge, 1585 Johnston Street, Granville Island, Vancouver. \$15/\$20 (for reserved table seating) in advance, \$5 more at the door. Tickets: ClubZone or EventBrite. With readings from: Riannaconda, Sweet Sashay, Mama Fortuna, and Diamond Minx. Dark and sultry burlesque performance by Scarlet Delerium. Doors at 7:30, show at 8:30. With wonderful prizes from our fantabulous sponsors, Ultra Love and Temple of the Modern Girl.

20 March 2012: Extraterrestrial Abductions Day.

23 March 2012: Premiere of film *The Hunger Games* (action/SF; Woody Harrelson, Stanley Tucci, Donald Sutherland, Lenny Kravitz).



27 March 2012: National “Joe” Day.

30 March 2012: Premiere of films *The Wrath of the Titans* (fantasy; Liam Neeson, Sam Worthington, Ralph Fiennes, Bill Nighy), *Mirror Mirror* (comedy/fantasy; Julia Roberts, Sean Bean, Nathan Lane, Michael Lerner, Danny Woodburn), and *Intruders* (horror; Clive Owen, Daniel Brühl).

30 March–1 April 2012: Trumpeter Salute 2012 Tabletop Miniatures Gaming Convention, Bonsor Community Centre, Burnaby (next to Metrotown). “Three days of gaming! A sampling of games: Warhammer 40K, WWI air combat, Napoleonic battles, sci-fi land & naval, American Civil War...and a lot more! Everyone can come and play! For more info: [gamesmaster@trumpetersociety.com](mailto:gamesmaster@trumpetersociety.com) or [www.trumpetersalute.com](http://www.trumpetersalute.com).

31 March 2012: Bunsen Burner Day.



31 March 2012: 2012 Auto Modelrama, 9:00 AM–3:00 PM at Scottish Cultural Centre, 8886 Hudson Street, Vancouver (between Granville & Oak Streets at West 73<sup>rd</sup> Avenue). Admission: \$3 for spectator admission (children under 12 with an adult—free); contest entrants: seniors \$5 (includes fee for up to five entries, \$1 for each additional entry; \$10 maximum), juniors (18 and under) \$2 (unlimited entries); vendor tables \$30. “Celebrating our 28<sup>th</sup> annual model car show and swap meet. Hosted by the Automotive Model Builder’s Club of Vancouver. Theme category: ‘panels, vans, and wagons.’ (If there is no ‘trunk,’ and the roof extends all the way to the rear of the vehicle, it is probably eligible.) Please note: previous entrants in past Modelramas can be entered, but are only eligible for category awards. For more information please contact Iain at [nicolsmith@shaw.ca](mailto:nicolsmith@shaw.ca).”

## April 2012

1 April 2012: **Dean McGee**’s birthday.

2 April 2012: **Colin Upton**’s birthday.

6 April 2012: Premiere of film *ATM* (horror).

7 April 2012: Computer Swap Meet & Pop Culture Collectible Fair, 11:00 AM–4:00 PM at Scottish Cultural Centre, 8886 Hudson Street, South Vancouver (short walk from the Marpole loop at Hudson and Marine). “Computer items including new & used monitors, printers, hardware, software, parts, games, cameras, electronics, cell phones, and lots more! New & vintage comics, toys & collectibles, records, CDs, VHS, DVDs, movie memorabilia, video games, jewelry, *Star Wars*, die-cast, art, Beanie Babies, Canucks.” Admission: adults \$3; kids under 12 free; family rate \$9 (four members). For table reservations and more info: [www.funpromo.ca](http://www.funpromo.ca), 604-521-6304, [funpromo@shaw.ca](mailto:funpromo@shaw.ca).



10 April 2012: **David Langford**'s birthday.

11 April 2012: **Jennifer Hawe** and **John Herbert**'s birthdays.

12 April 2012: **Robert J. Sawyer** launch for his new SF novel *Triggers*, 7:30 PM at W2 Media Café, 111 West Hastings Street, Vancouver. (In conjunction with *but not at* White Dwarf Books.) Doors open at 7 PM.—Carolyn Clink



13 April 2012: Premiere of films *The Cabin in the Woods* (horror; Bradley Whitford) and *Movie 43* (sketch comedy; Chloë Grace Moretz, Emma Stone, Gerard Butler, Hugh Jackman, Anna Faris, Kate Winslet, Naomi Watts, Liev Schreiber, Justin Long, Richard Gere, Uma Thurman, Patrick Warburton, Christopher Mintz-Plasse, Johnny Knoxville, Tony Shalhoub, Jack McBrayer, Stephen Merchant, Aasif Mandvi, John Hodgman).

17 April 2012: **Carolyn Clink**'s birthday.

19 April 2012: **Stephanie Ann Johanson**'s birthday.

20 April 2012: Premiere of films *Lockout* (SF/action; Guy Pearce, Peter Stormare) and *The Moth Diaries* (horror; Scott Speedman).

23 April 2012: **Greg Cairns**' birthday.

25 April 2012: **Steve Green**'s birthday.

26 April 2012: **Brad Foster**'s birthday.

27 April 2012: **Joe Devoy**'s birthday. Premiere of film *Sound of My Voice* (drama/SF?).

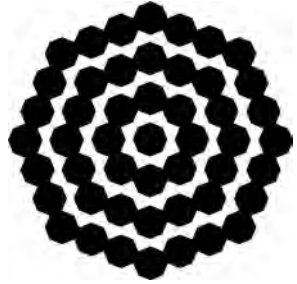
29 April 2012: **Robert J. Sawyer** and **Trevor Hoffert**'s birthdays.

# News-Like Matter

## Notes from February 2012 BCSFA Meeting

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

Ray and Barb passed out copies of a script Ray wrote for a video advertisement for VCON 37, to be viewed online. This was a first draft, submitted to the club for feedback. Graeme saved a copy for the BCSFA archives. Kathleen had several edits regarding wording, clarity, brevity, relevance to the prospective viewer, and making full use of a visual medium. Graeme and Kathleen stressed that Ray would have to check with the convention committee before making the video, because “the concom alone is responsible for VCON publicity and anyone else involved must first get the concom’s permission.” We congratulated Ray on his initiative and fanaticism.



From the script, I learned for the first time that VCON 37 will be in Surrey! I’d originally been told that it was going to be in Richmond again, but apparently last year’s hotel got a better offer from a mundane convention, and there was no room for our contract this year. The new hotel is the Sheraton Vancouver Guildford Hotel, which has free parking for guests, and allows one to four guests per room for the same rate, \$99 per night.



*Where VCON 37 will not be.*

There was some self-examination, where we tried to figure out what BCSFA is, what it offers to local fandom, and what its purpose should be. This has been a problem for at least the last ten years, but we haven’t given up. Here are the notes I took, in semi-arbitrary order:

Graeme said that “at one time BCSFA and WCSFA were essentially one organization with two names; then BCSFA became a subcommittee of WCSFA, and now the two are entirely separate.” He added that “we created ‘WCSFA’ because we wanted the outfit sponsoring VCON to be a legally registered society and, since the Provincial Government wouldn’t let a ‘local’ club use ‘B.C.’ in its title, came up



*“There! See? She mentioned us again!”*

with the more ‘acceptable’ title ‘WCSFA.’ Today the British Columbia Salmon Farmers’ Association is legally registered as ‘BC-SFA’ so the title is still not available.” Also, “BC-SFA members long ago



*“No way! That was last month’s theme!”*

were automatically members of WCSFA, whether they went to VCON or not, but this is no longer the case.” According to Graeme, “even long before BCSFA stopped being the same thing as WCSFA, there was an exodus of BCSFA members to WCSFA activities only, because their primary interest was VCON, not BCSFA’s other activities, such as *BCSFazine*, book discussions, video nights, or FRED.”

We also learned from Graeme that “WCSFA is still using its 1993 constitution, which is outdated and is in the process of being rewritten. WCSFA is a legally registered society, whereas BCSFA is a social club that publishes a newsletter. To qualify for the Society Act BCSFA would need to change the name of the club. Meanwhile BCSFA can use the Society Act as our ‘constitution’ for the sake of being organized, if we want to.”

Also, Graeme told us that “thirty years ago, BCSFA had meetings twice per month that attracted 60 or 70 members. At the time these meetings were important social outlets for the members, especially as they would turn into parties once the meetings were over.”



*Wanted: someplace without one of these.*

What do we offer to new members? I said “The one thing we offer that fans can’t get anywhere else is *peace* and *quiet*.” This idea was more successful than I expected. Kathleen added, “We are not a sports bar.”

Barb said that when she talks up BCSFA to non-members, they’re turned off as soon as they hear that it meets in an apartment building, even before she gets a chance to mention that it’s in the building’s meeting room, which is an ideal location.

Relatedly, I added that we will have to make peace with the fact that wherever we meet, it will *not* be central. Central means loud, crowded, expensive, and no good parking. Kathleen said: “Geography is not our friend,” explaining that Greater Vancouver is so spread out that people who are close friends in another city, then move here, lose track of each other because their daily lives no longer intersect.

Someone asked if FRED is still happening. The last I had heard, Ryan Howe was still doing FRED, but less frequently. Others had heard that it had stopped altogether. I said that if it has stopped, I would be willing to bring it back, starting by asking Ryan if he still wants to be involved, and inviting anyone present at the meeting, or other current active FREDgoers such as Ashton Green. But no-one heard me. On the other hand, if no-one but me is interested in reviving it, I can start it in Richmond, where my roommates and I already go out for dinner every Friday night. [Later, Ashton’s reaction to this was that the “D” in “FRED” stood for “drinking,” i.e. in bars; since drinking in bars tends to be, shall we say, *comorbid* with noise, I tried to think of an acronym for a new quiet event, like FNORD—Fuck Noise, Opt for Relaxed Discourse, or FLEQ—Fuck Loud, Enjoy Quiet. (It still needs work.)]

Ray and Barb said that we should try having an event at La Fontana Caffe. We can make it a crossover event with one of the other groups that meets there, such as the *Doctor Who* group, which next meets Sunday 4 March 2012. I said that we’ll

have to see how it is for parking, noise, and food selection, but it's still a good idea to at least try it at least once and see how it goes.

Barb said we could distribute flyers; whose address and phone number would we use? Kathleen said she would be OK with having her cell phone number on the flyer, and a few of us said we would be OK with having our e-mail addresses.

Kathleen said something about a zine called *Lemon Meringue Pie*.

We talked about Asperger's Syndrome.

Stew said that Hayley Mills passed away, along with the guy who played the Robot on *Lost in Space*. Also, he said, Jonathan Harris died about ten years ago, before which a *Lost in Space* reunion movie was being planned—though Graeme added that Guy Williams would never have agreed to be in it, since he was still bitter about Dr. Smith becoming much more popular than Dr. Robinson, thereby stealing what was supposed to have been his (Williams's) show.

Felicity Walker

Sunday 19 February 2012



### **Funny Activity Needed for 1 April 2012**

We gotta do something funny. What are we planning for April 1<sup>st</sup>?

Any funny activities involving aerostat balloons, hot tubs, guerilla street theatre, or all three.

Garth Spencer

to Second Reformed Anarcho-Surrealist Party with a Hot Tub in the Back Yard Society Inc. Facebook Group

Sunday 19 February 2012

### **CUFF Voting Is Open**

I am pleased to announce that we have two nominees for this year's CUFF delegacy to the Convention at When Words Collide in Calgary this August.

Jane Garthson and Debra Yeung have both agreed to be considered by Canadian fans.

Voting is open effective Monday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, and will remain open until April 17<sup>th</sup>.

Further details and voting instructions are available on the web at: [https://docs.google.com/document/pub?id=1JesC\\_0CDfjV0zAcf5bAhQTAekEK9g0RtiqymfwUIy18](https://docs.google.com/document/pub?id=1JesC_0CDfjV0zAcf5bAhQTAekEK9g0RtiqymfwUIy18) (bitly'd to: <http://bit.ly/xzeKER>).

And a PDF of the same may be downloaded here, and distributed: [cometdust.ca/cuff12.pdf](http://cometdust.ca/cuff12.pdf).

Kent Pollard

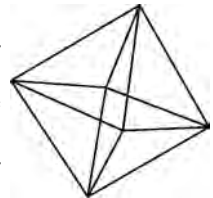
2011 CUFF delegate to the Convention and current western administrator

Kent Pollard

to CanadianConrunners Yahoo! Group

Forwarded by Garth Spencer

Tuesday 6 March 2012



## Steve 40's Moving in Two Years

I have decided to move to a new place in two years.

I would have to spend a lot of money in the next few years on my present house, and when I sell it, it will be bulldozed anyway as new houses in this area are 3,500 to 5,000 square feet and this one is at most 2,000 including the basement.

I liked the look of this new building they are going to build, and I really like Coquitlam. I have lived in this house for 37 years this summer, and it is home.



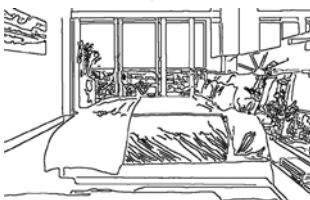
My new place will be seven blocks or so away (or will be in two years) so I can still walk around the lake (Como), buses aren't that bad, and traffic is not too bad.

It is quiet here at night, even with my window open.

[...] The view [...] [from] the 17<sup>th</sup> floor overlooking an expensive golf course means I should not have too many views blocked to the west, and to the south there is a church on the corner, so I should have that view protected for a while as well. I will have an unblocked view of downtown Vancouver from my southwest apartment/condo.

[...] I will have a balcony west and a balcony south and a complete floor-to-ceiling arc of windows between the two. [...] You can see the mountains south in the States and west on Vancouver Island.

I have never lived in a condo/apartment before so this will be interesting, and I am a little afraid of heights so doubly scary. But the view, wow. I always wanted a view, so now I will have one.



I will miss the garden as I like gardening, and I will miss using my tools and grinders except when I help others with things around their houses.

For me this will be a big change, but I think it is the right time to do it. It is scary not knowing what my house will go for, as I don't want to move twice so I have to wait to sell it, and who knows what the market will be like in two years (I may sell sooner if I can rent it back until I can move in to the new place).

Steve Forty  
Sunday 11 March 2012

**RANDOM NOSTALGIA**

**FIDO DIDO**

**"DOOM" FOR THE SUPER NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM  
"THE ARSENIO HALL SHOW"**



# Super-Advanced Civilizations Are Bullshit

Michael Bertrand

I've been pondering books like Arthur C. Clarke's *Rama* series and his Kubrickian stepchild, the movie *2001: A Space Odyssey*, and I've realized that this whole idea that contact with an advanced alien civilization would be this mysterious and mystical experience is just plain bullshit.

It doesn't follow. The aliens should at least have comprehensible and consistent motives for why they do what they do, and why they do it that way, otherwise all you're doing is slapping a thin patina of science fiction on basic religious mumbo jumbo.

Explaining everything with "They are super-advanced aliens, who have motives we could not possibly comprehend" is basically the exact same cheap dodge as explaining away religious inconsistencies with "God moves in mysterious ways. Who are we to know the mind of God?"

It gives the appearance of an answer without actually answering anything, and also passive-aggressively punishes the poser of the question. Oh, it's nothing *you* could understand.

That's bad enough for a priests, but for a science fiction author to do it is just plain galling. It's basically admitting "Look, I don't know why they did it that way either, OK? It just seemed cool and impressive for them to do it that way, so that's how I wrote it!"

Well, when the only explanation for why something is how it is in a story is meta-textual, that's bad writing.

In fact, it's worse than bad writing. It's bullshit.

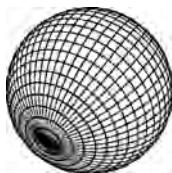
For example, why do so many advanced alien races seem to favour basic geometric shapes? Grab any random relevant science fiction story and you will find giant cubes, spheres, pyramids, and so on. Why? What about being advanced aliens makes you suddenly fond of the basic regular solids?



Why? Because they're very impressive to us human beings and yet comprehensible to our minds. If the alien spaceship was some impossibly complicated asymmetrical five-dimensional  $n$ -solid, we would not be able to wrap our brains around it and therefore we would just stare blankly then ask again "But what does it *look* like?" until we got something we could grasp.

But say "It's a sphere...a *really big sphere!*" and people will nod their heads and say "Oh, wow. I can totally picture that."

We're a fairly advanced civilization, and we don't build in regular solids. Try to describe to me what the shape of an airplane is. You can't. It's airplane-shaped. If you had to describe it to someone who had never seen an airplane before in their lives, you couldn't.



*"It's a big, metal bird."*

So what makes us think that with thousands of more years of progress, we'll suddenly be back to spheres and pyramids and cubes?

The answer is, that's not what we think. It's just what makes the aliens seem comprehensibly impressive to our limited imaginations.

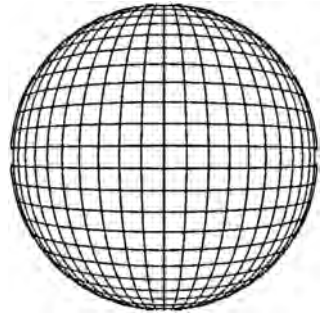
And furthermore, while our technology would be incomprehensible to a primitive human from the dawn of civilizations, our motives would not. Said primitive would not understand how a car works, but he would understand why someone would want to get from place to place faster. He might not understand how a microwave oven works, but he understands the desire to cook food.

So why should the motives of super-advanced alien races be so incomprehensible? Advanced or not, they would do what they did for consistent and logical reasons that make sense to them and in all likelihood would make some sort of sense to us.

And even if they don't make sense to us, the reader, on a conscious level, they should at least make sense to the writer. The writer should know why their hyper-advanced aliens built their ships that way, why they interact with us poor Earthlings the way they do, and what the heck they are actually up to.

Because if the writer doesn't know, then nobody knows, and the story will be much the poorer for it.

And we, the readers, will know, deep down, that it's bullshit.



Michael Bertrand  
The Million Word Year  
Thursday 12 August 2010

## Zines Received

**'Opuntia' #71.5** (St. Urho's Day 2012). Published by Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7. Perzine issue.

"Letters to the Editor": Dale writes that on wilderness hikes, "the only predators I have ever come across was the occasional coyote, which would bolt and run away as soon as it saw me." In the last few years I've seen coyotes here in the city and suburbs. They don't bolt, but they do back away, watching me warily. They may be more accustomed to humans than the ones in the wilderness.

Also: "Buzzing About"; "Roadside Memorials of Alberta: Part 1"; "Signs, Signs, Everywhere a Sign"; "Lest We Forget"; "World Wide Party #19."



## E-Zines Received

**'Dark Matter' #5** (September 2011). Edited by Nalini Haynes, PO Box 144, Lynbrook, Victoria, Australia 3975, [darkmatterfanzine@gmail.com](mailto:darkmatterfanzine@gmail.com). [eFanzines](http://efanzines.com).

- "News & Articles":

- "Googlopoly" (Nalini Haynes): Googlopoly (designed by Youseff Hachouch) is a version of Monopoly based on Google+. Google+ seems to be the new

MySpace, in the sense of being the bloated, sluggish social networking website that crashes my computer but no one else's.

○ “Flaming Parasol Productions” (Connie Griffiths): On impulse, a group of friends wrote a play and performed it at a fringe festival, then spun it off into a comic. I admire this and want to do something similar, though filmed instead of live.

○ “The Tao of Collecting”: “Do you have an anecdote on collecting that you'd like to share with other readers? A gripe? A collection of which you are justifiably proud?” I'm collecting 1980s Del Rey paperback editions of Isaac Asimov books. I thought I was doing pretty well, but then I noticed that some of the books are set in Times (good) and others in a less pretty, less readable slab serif that I don't recognize immediately (Egyptienne, I think). Checking the indicia, I found that the Times versions are printings from November 1983 to October 1987, while the slab serifs are from March to June 1989. Now I have to be even *more* anal retentive!

Times (1983–1987 Asimovs)	DejaVu Serif (similar to 1989 Asimovs)
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● “Interviews”:

○ “David Freer talks to *Dark Matter*”: “Fiction revolves around characters and situations and a good plot. Occasionally you have ‘literary’ fiction that has no real characterisation, no real plot and involves a slice of life that you're looking at. I'm afraid we also have that in fantasy and science fiction but for people to enjoy our trope, our form of writing, we have to write the good characters. Those have to be characters that readers can identify with. This is one of the big difficulties with writing the far future because how much in common would we have with someone from a far future setting?” This is well-said, and explains why, despite being a lifelong fan of SF, I find some of it boring and hard to relate to. It's such a relief to know there's an explanation for that and it doesn't involve me not actually liking SF.

I also enjoyed: “There's a very fine line between knowing too much about a subject and knowing nothing at all. I've often found that if you want a maths problem explained it is absolutely no good going to someone who has a PhD in maths. You actually want somebody who is only about a year ahead of you and has recently done what is difficult for you. Fortunately, I'm very bad at a lot of things. I have a lot of memories of how I got to that point.” This is exactly why I'm able to teach: I have low systematizing intelligence and a large vocabulary; therefore, I'm forced to see things in smaller steps, which I can then articulate to others.

Also: “No-one explained to me that in science it's fine to use a 24-word sentence. It's not a good thing when you do it in fantasy. The idea is to carry your audience along with you, and this is something I work on every day. To make it so easy to read and yet carrying so much that the reader almost doesn't realise they're reading it. To me there's no genius in using long sentences and high-sounding words and looking up everything in a thesaurus. But any fool can do that. Any fool can write a turgid story that you read 15 times to get, but if you manage to write a complicated story in simple words you're a genius.” I love this person!

And: “[*My wife is*] my first reader and usually cuts great swathes out of them and tells me she doesn't get this and that and the next thing. And I listen. There's no point in asking someone to read your work and saying ‘Well I hated what you said and I'm not going to pay any attention to it.’ Your one chance at feedback is before it goes to publication. There's no thinking that all those readers who didn't get what

I was saying, ‘Well they’re stupid! I could explain this to them if I had them here.’ That’s just it, you won’t have them there.” Fantastic advice for creators!

Also, I know someone who would like this: “This is one of the things about being an author, you have to be a Jack of all trades and you have to pick up bits from everywhere. In fact, if you’re a mine of useless information you’re probably designed to be an author.”

Great interview, fascinating person. The books *Slow Train to Arcturus* (hard SF) and *Cuttlefish* (alternate history) sound interesting, and I’ll keep my eye out for them.

Font criticism: 1. Too many fonts were used. Three should be the upper limit. 2. I found the fonts Smegalomania, Gill Sans, and Perpetua ugly; Comic Sans, contrary to reputation, is a good font, but not for headlines. 3. Sans serifs are less ideal for body text than serifs. [You can’t go wrong with Times. Some other old standbys are Bookman, Garamond (ITC version), and Palatino (AKA Book Antiqua).]

[Review to be continued next issue.]

## Art Credits

Sheryl Birkhead.....Masthead  
Brad Foster..... Cover  
Felicity Walker (combining clip art from Clker.com).....Page 1 (top)  
Clip art (Clker.com).....Pages 1 (bottom), 2 (left), 3, 4 (top right),  
.....5 (bottom), 6 (bottom), 8 (top), 9–10,  
.....11 (top and bottom), 12–13, 15–16, 18  
Clip art (via Dave Haren).....Page 2 (right)  
Clip art (*Lawrence Welk Show* screenshots).....Pages 4 (left), 5 (top)  
Felicity Walker.....Pages 4 (right), 11 (middle) (photo)  
Clip art (via Christopher Faith).....Page 6  
Clip art (*Spider-Man and His Amazing Friends* screenshot).....Page 7  
Clip art (via Brian Hughes).....Page 8 (bottom)  
Felicity Walker...14 (photos from theaustin.ca, converted with *PhotoS*)

