

BCSFA Zine

The Newsletter of the British Columbia Science Fiction Association

#471

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This Month in BCSFA

Sunday 19 August @ 7 PM:

BCSFA meeting—at Ray Seredin's, 707 Hamilton Street (recreation room), New Westminster. Call 604-521-0254 for directions. [*September meeting is Sunday 16 September 2012.*]

Friday 31 August:

'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

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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/> (thank you to webmaster Garth Spencer). The BCSFA e-mail list is BC Sci-Fi Assc. (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bc_scifi_assc/). See <http://bcsfa.net/events.html> for more events. Low-resolution back issues of *BCSFAzine* are also archived at <http://efanzines.com/BCSFA/index.htm> (thank you to webmaster Bill Burns). Contact Felicity for high-resolution copies.

Letters of Comment

[Editor's responses in brackets.]

Michael Bertrand
fruvousfox@gmail.com

Tuesday 24 July 2012



From the very edges of reality...from the very heart of darkness...from the very eyeball of madness itself...the mists of time part to reveal...uh...me.

Kind of anticlimactic, I know, but what are you gonna do?

Thought it was high time I cleared my throat and reminded the world I exist. Hey world, remember me? I disappeared for a few issues due to mostly absentmindedness.

See, I forgot to LOC one month. So I did not get a contributor's copy. So I had no *BCSFazine* hanging around to remind me to LOC. So I forgot to LOC again, and...well you can deduce the pattern from there.

And yes, I get the PDF in my email, but for some reason, only the paper copy jogs my flabby memory.

Anyhow, I am back! Yay me.

Re: filking. I would love to get into filking. I love science fiction and I love comedy and parody. I nearly worship Weird Al. But filking, from what I have seen, has simply failed to keep up with the times. They are parodies of science fiction that I have not read set to the tune of songs I do not know. So I feel like it has no place for me, or really, anyone who is not a fan of a specific era of folk music and a specific set of science fiction properties. As such, to me at least, it seems like it is doomed to die out with its adherents.

And that makes me sad, because it seems like such a lovely, funny, silly, friendly thing. I am sure it is absolutely magic to the people inside the culture.

Myself, I think the best way to modernize it is to open it up to any song two unrelated people in the room know, and use the karaoke machine as the musical portion. That way you are not limited by the guitar, or by the folk genre, and it would make it far more inclusive and far more likely to survive into the future.

And the point is for people to relax, be silly, and have fun. Right?

That *Struggle for the Galactic Empire* game sounds intriguing. I like that sort of game as long as I do not have to be good at war. But I have greatly enjoyed games like *Civilization* and the *Master of Orion* series.

What can I say, I like being in charge! ☺

Felicity told me about this John B. Calhoun fellow and his attempts to build rodent utopias.

[(This was after I'd read the article linked in Dave Haren's LOC [\[last issue.\]](#))]

This sounds like a fascinating man. I recall learning similar dark truths about urban life from a piece I saw about the Baboon Temple in India, where they are religiously bound to feed all the baboons who show up every day.

Of course, this means they have a lot of baboons, and the same things happen: rape, incest, murder, pedophilia, and every other form of "human" darkness appear.

[I noticed a quote from Jane Goodall in National Geographic, Volume 218, Number 4 (October 2010): “When I first started (...) I thought the chimps were nicer than we are. But time has revealed that they are not. They can be just as awful.”]

Me, I think this has to do with the social stress of being around strangers. Tolerance of people who are not part of our own in-group is in some ways unnatural to us primates, and requires a psychological adaptation that can only take so much stranger-stress. All this ignoring of people we do not know yet encounter by the hundreds every day wears people down, and so in a certain small number of people, you get road rage, physical abuse, workplace shootings, or serial killings.

I think we need to study this deep stress and understand it, so that in the future, we can build our cities to minimize it.

Imagine a more soothing, less stressful future.

Doesn't that sound nice?

See you next month, folks!

Lloyd Penney

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Thursday 26 July 2012

Dear BCSFAns:

I've got issue 470 of *BCSFazine* here, and time for some quick comments. I am fighting my own deadlines...

Project Gutenberg got me tons of out-of-print SF from decades ago, and I'd read it on my Palm Tungsten. I can still enjoy them should I ever get myself an eBook reader. And, then, I'd go and get some more. I am looking at Kobo because it seems able to read just about any eBook format. Ah, one day...

Any reports on the BC Ren Faire? I've asked Chris through FaceBook, but she's been quiet. Probably still working on finalizing the books. Fingers crossed for a popular and financial success. Happy birthday to Christina on August 6...hope the Faire has given her even more to smile about.

I have been noticing more and more that burlesque evenings have become part of the local fanac. When did this happen? Not only do I see it in your listings, but in Toronto as well.

I had forgotten about the regular *Due South* convention here, but coming up in October is Rushcon 12. This is the annual convention for fans of the band Rush, held in either Toronto or Las Vegas, and run by a group from Chicago. It's in Toronto this time, and it celebrates the release of Rush's latest album, a very steampunky release, and Kevin J. Anderson, who is writing a novel to support the album release, will be there, too. We might be there to add some steampunk atmosphere to the event. Rush performs at a couple of concerts locally there, so we might even see Geddy and Alex and the guys.

A Lovecraft dinner? Sounds like it could be gruesome fun! Just don't serve macaroni and cheese, or people really will get confused...



I think I've done enough damage, time to go and get other things done. I've had two excellent job interviews, and with some luck, next time I send a letter your way, I may be fully employed. I've probably said that before, and I don't want to spoil things for myself...cross your fingers, think good thoughts, and that great job I've gone for may be mine.

[*Good luck!* ☺]

Take care, many thanks for all the work you do to put this zine together, and see you the next time.

Yours,
Lloyd Penney

Dave Haren
tyrbolo@comcast.net

Saturday 28 July 2012

Hi Felicity,

How about that *Auroran Lights* #7??

[*I'm so far behind that I haven't read it yet.*]

A bunch of nicely done photos of the Canadian fan greats. "Best Fan Publication," eh?...Sounds good to me. "Best Fan Other" seems a questionable title but it is about SF fan Lloyd. Graeme is looking good in living colour. Taral is posed heroically with some furry lovelies.

Questions: In 1715 Scotland was busily inciting to revolution which died down to rear its head again in 1719 with a token landing of foreign troops and a battle at Glenshiel. The picture of this has to be seen to be believed. The English won by salvaging the heights with the Coehorn mortar. Rebellion broke out again in the rising of 1745. These were the attempts to put the Stuart Kings back on the English throne. They are known as the '15, the '19, and the '45. Inspired music and poetry and other Celtic tales of exaggerated derring do. Things always sound better at a distance.



The Mars rover is fairly conventional for entry until it dumps the heat shield, then switches to parachute, then switches to a quad retro rocket platform, which dangles the rover below it. The theory is the rover will hit the ground [*and*] the retro rocket will fling itself away to one side while disconnecting the lines to the rover. I forsee a few crossed fingers during this sequence.

On another note, it is going to be interesting to see what happens if the world manages to flush the hidden finances into the open from their hidden accounts. The Swiss, the Vatican Bank and Goldman Sachs will probably be less than pleased about such an occurrence but they should be referred to Reverend Stang for reorientation in the way of humour.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkV_NirWgoA. This is a link for *Serenity* fans. You'd be surprised what a modeller can do given enough plastic and glue. I got interested because of his Odin Warlord class Titan diorams.

Warm regards,
Dave Haren

With the relentless predictability of Sideshow Bob stepping on the end of a rake, and getting whacked in the face with the handle, *again*, I find I am once again forced to miss VCON due to events beyond my control. That weekend I will be in Troy, Ohio, helping ride herd on my three-year-old granddaughter and keep house while my daughter Terri is recovering from major surgery that will have just occurred, part of her ongoing battle with breast cancer.

Can't be helped. But maybe could be worked around....

If anyone's sufficiently interested to bother, I could maybe attend from Ohio by Skype, if the surgery has gone well, and if the schedules don't clash with my granddaughter's nap or daughter's meals.



I've attended four cons as their GoH by Skype since Jeanne died in 2010, and all four were quite pleased with the results. All you need is good Wi-Fi, a recent laptop and an LCD wide-screen telly to use as its monitor. I could attend panels, do readings, even lead a Beatles singalong if I turn off my speakers so I don't hear you guys chiming in a second and a half late.... And in place of autographs, you simply take screenshots of me and individual fans chatting on Skype in splitscreen, and send them to a colour printer: *better* than an autograph, if you ask me. (Does cost you paper and pigment—but not a whole lot.) And it sidesteps the problem of there being no practical way to autograph e-books....

Of course, if nobody on the concom wants to be bothered schlepping a big wide-screen TV and a laptop around a crowded building, and keeping an eye on them in a crowd scene (or even if there simply isn't any reliable highspeed Wi-Fi in the hotel), I'll quite understand. Just thought I'd offer.

Spider

We Also Heard From: Laurel Beauprie, R. Graeme Cameron, Cliff Samuels, and Taral Wayne.

RANDOM NOSTALGIA

- JACK KIRBY**
- THE APPLE IIC**
- "MR. T ATE MY BALLS"**
- "WILLIAM SHATNER LENT ME HIS HAIRPIECE"**
- TOM PETERS' "IN SEARCH OF EXCELLENCE"**
- "VEIGUES TACTICAL GLADIATOR"**
- FLOPPY DISK SLEEVES**

Calendar

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

Already in Progress

1–30 June, 1–29 July, *1–5, 8–12, 15–19, 22–26, and 29–31 August, and 1–2, 5–9, 12–16, 19–23, and 26–30 September* 2012: The History of Video Games in BC, 12–5 PM at New Westminster Museum and Archives, 302 Royal Avenue, New Westminster. “Take part in this all-ages exhibition highlighting the history of video games, from *Pong* to more recent titles created for devices like the iPhone. Admission by donation.”—Keith Lim

21–30 June, 2–31 July, and *1–5 August* 2012: Xanadu—Arts Club Theatre Company, 2–5 PM [1 and 4 August], 7:30–10:30 PM [] and 8–11 PM [1–5 August] at Arts Club Theatre Company, 1585 Johnston Street (next to the Granville Island Public Market), Vancouver. “[...] Based on the Universal Pictures film. [...] You have to believe it’s magic! Take a magical ride to a world where fantasy, romance, and shiny satin jumpsuits reign! A beautiful Greek muse descends from Mount Olympus in an impenetrable disguise of leg warmers and an Aussie accent to help mortal Sonny realize the greatest artistic achievement of all time: to open a roller disco! Featuring the cult classics ‘Suddenly’ and ‘Xanadu,’ this musical is ‘Magic’ on roller skates! *Special performances*: Thursday Talk 5 July, 8 PM [?] (nibbles at 6:30 PM and an engaging evening talk at 7 PM [?] at the Granville Island Stage). Talk Back Tuesday 10 July, 7:30 PM (discover how actors get into character and where directors get their inspiration at our post-show Q&As).”—Keith Lim

7 July–1 September 2012: Mansions of the Sun, 7:30 PM Saturdays at H.R. MacMillan Space Centre [*no address given on website*], (604) 738-7827, info@spacecentre.ca, <http://www.spacecentre.ca/>. “Are you truly a Scorpio? Discover what astronomers see when they look at the 13 zodiacal constellations...and how those constellations differ from your astrological sign. (Age: 12+.)”

August 2012

1, 15, and 29 August and *12 and 26 September* 2012: Kitsilano Board Games: Wednesday Is the New Monday!, 7–8 PM at Cuppa Joy, 2083 Alma Street, Vancouver. “Wednesday is the new Monday! And by that I mean, we’re switching our every-other-week, weeknight games to Wednesdays, so that I can actually attend! Also popular opinion (i.e. I asked a couple of people) seems to agree—Wednesdays are superior. Some come on down to Cuppa Joy, grab a pint and a samosa, and play some *board games!* *Wednesday Wednesday Wednesday!*!”—Keith Lim

1, 8, 15, 22, and 29 August and *5, 12, 19, and 26 September* 2012: Cloudscape Comics Weekly Meetup, 7:30–9:30 PM at the Grind & Gallery Coffee Bar, 4124 Main

board games for playing in the store. Playing is *free* except for some tournaments.”—[Keith Lim](#)

4–5 August 2012: [36th Annual Powell Street Festival](#), 11:30 AM–7 PM at Oppenheimer Park, 400 Powell Street, Vancouver. Japanese/Canadian culture, free dance, music, martial arts, food.

4, 11, 18, and 25 August *and* 1, 8, 15, 22, *and* 29 September 2012: [Board Gamers: Saturday Afternoon Gaming](#), 12–7 PM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New Westminster. “Hello. Feel free to come in anytime on Saturday afternoon until 7 PM and play any of the many open games there are here at the store.—Kirby”—[Keith Lim](#)

5 August 2012: **Élisabeth Vonarburg** and **Scott Tycholaz**’s birthdays.

5, 12, 19, and 26 August *and* 2, 9, 16, 23, *and* 30 September 2012: [Kitsilano Board Games: Lazy Sundays](#), 2–3 PM at Cuppa Joy, #295–2083 Alma Street, Vancouver. “Sunday afternoons: they are made for relaxing, cups of warming beverage, and most especially board games. Thus, *Sunday board games!* Cuppa Joy’s large tables, usually unoccupied space and laid-back attitude suits this purpose perfectly. Bring board games, friends, and of course your lovely selves! If anyone has any board game requests, feel free to post them in the comments and I will try to accommodate. You can also post less specific requests (e.g. ‘games that take eight players,’ ‘games that don’t involve math,’ ‘games about farming’) and I’ll see what I can do. Happy Sunday!”—[Keith Lim](#)

6 August 2012: **Christina Carr**’s birthday.

6, 13, 20, and 27 August *and* 3, 10, 17, *and* 24 September 2012: [Board Gamers: Painting Miniatures](#), 5–9 PM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New Westminster. “Hello. Painting miniatures can be fun, challenging, and sometimes even outrageous. Feel free to come by the store to paint, share tips, or maybe even learn a thing or two about the craft, nay artform, that is miniatures painting. There are some paints available to use, and brushes, as well as primer. Warmachine figures will likely be the name of the game for most, but anything is welcome.”—[Keith Lim](#)

6, 13, 20, and 27 August *and* 3, 10, 17, *and* 24 September 2012: [Vancouver Hack Space Craft Night](#), 7:30–10:30 PM at 45 West Hastings—Back Alley Entrance, Vancouver. [*See Vancouver Hack Space Open House for description.*]—[Keith Lim](#)

7, 14, 21, and 28 August *and* 4, 11, 18, *and* 25 September 2012: [Board Gamers: Tuesday Night Board Gaming](#), 5–10 PM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New Westminster. “Feel free to come by anytime from 5 PM to about 10 PM to play a game or two. There are hundreds of open games for playing, or feel free to bring your own. Parking out front is a buck thirty-five an hour (free after 6 PM), or there is a parkade a block away (buck an hour), across Columbia and down by the river. We are located two blocks northeast of the New Westminster Skytrain Station,

at Columbia and Begbie. There is a Waves coffee shop in the same building. Go uphill on Begbie to Clarkson, and the store is to the right. Tuesday is also the Buck a Slice special feature at Fresh Slice Pizza just down the street. Have a good day.—Keith Lim

9 August 2012: Book Lovers' Day.

9 August and 13 September 2012: Vancouver Astronomy Monthly Meetup, 7:30–8:30 PM. [*No location given.*] “Second Thursday of every month. This is the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada—Vancouver monthly meeting and is shared with the general public at no charge. Please be advised that RASC Vancouver’s monthly lectures will be held at different locations throughout 2012. The location of each meeting will be posted in advance, along with details of the speaker and topic. We meet at 7:30 PM on the second Thursday of each month, with astro-coffee, cookies, and juice served after the presentation. Please join us for interesting and informative lectures on all aspects of astronomy and space-science, along with stimulating conversations!”—Keith Lim

10 August 2012: Movie Under the Stars: *The Right Stuff* (1983), 8 PM at Planetarium, H.R. MacMillan Space Centre [*no address given on website*], (604) 738-7827, info@spacecentre.ca, <http://www.spacecentre.ca/>. “A film adapted from Tom Wolfe’s book that looks into what it took to become an astronaut.”

10–12 August 2012: Dragonflight XXXIII at Bellevue Hilton [*no address given on flyer*]. “RPG, board games, miniatures, LARPs, RPGA, war games, auction, movies.”

11 August 2012: Video Game Play Days, 1–3 PM at New Westminster Museum and Archives, 302 Royal Avenue, New Westminster. “See the video games your parents used to play: our History of Video Games Play Days will feature some of the greatest (and worst!) console games, on the original equipment. Consoles available for play will include the Atari 2600, Intellivision, Nintendo Entertainment System, Sega Genesis, Sega Dreamcast, early home Pong systems, and many more. Space is limited. All ages.”—Keith Lim

11 August 2012: Geeks After Dark: Aim to Misbehave, 6–10 PM at the Cellar Nightclub, 1006 Granville Street, Vancouver.—Geeks After Dark via Cormorant Hadoken Russball



14 August and 11 September 2012: Monthly Steampunk Coffee Klatch, 7:30–9 PM at Waves Coffee House—Large Private Room, #100–900 Howe Street (@ Smithe), Vancouver. “Second Tuesday of every month. In the Victorian tradition of conversation in coffee houses, this casual monthly event is open to everyone who wants to just get together and meet up with other local steampunks. Whether you’re new to steampunk or well-seasoned, young or old, silly or serious, please feel free to drop by. We can discuss

whatever folks want, plan nefarious plots, or just relax, hang out, and get to chat with one another. Costumes welcome but not required—dress as you feel comfortable! I will be at least steamily accessorized, since I have to work immediately beforehand. The only requirement for us to have this space is that everyone should purchase something at the coffee house. They offer teas, coffee, hot chocolate, and various cold beverages, as well as some baked goods.”—[Keith Lim](#)

15–17 August 2012: Unforgettable Costumes Costume Sale, 3–8 PM at #5–2741 Skeena Street, Vancouver, BC (across from the Wal-Mart). “With Zombie Walk and Burning Man just around the corner, we thought this would be the perfect week for a sale! Everything will be for sale from \$5 shoes to \$100 cloaks and everything in between. We will also have other non-costume items, books, fabrics, patterns and notions. Cash *only*. This is a sale you do not want to miss!”—[Keith Lim](#)

17 August 2012: National Black Cat Awareness Day. Premiere of films *ParaNorman* (computer animation/comedy/fantasy/horror; John Goodman, Christopher Mintz-Plassé, Jeff Garlin, Tempestt Bledsoe) and *The Odd Life of Timothy Green* (comedy/fantasy; Jennifer Garner, Ron Livingston, David Morse, Dianne Wiest, Common, M. Emmet Walsh).

17 August and 14 September 2012: [Board Gamers: Friday Night Magic](#), 6:30–9:30 PM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New Westminster. Open gaming; 7–8 tables. “For Friday Night Magic we will be running a limited Draft FNM. Cost is three booster packs plus \$2, starting at 6:30 PM. Also feel free to come by for some casual Magic: The Gathering from 6–9 PM. Feel free to use the house decks if you just want to try out the game. Don’t forget to check out [our Facebook page](#).”—[Keith Lim](#)

17 August and 21 September 2012: [IPMS Vancouver Monthly Meeting](#), 7–9:30 PM at Bonsor Recreation Complex, Second Floor “Arts Room,” 6550 Bonsor Avenue, Burnaby. “Club meetings are held on the third Friday of every month (with very few exceptions such as if the third Friday falls on Good Friday or is too close to Christmas—check schedule). Doors open at 7 PM. Meetings officially run from 7:30–9:30 PM.”—[Keith Lim](#)

17 August and 14 September 2012: [Trumpeter Tabletop Games Society Game Night](#), 7–8 PM at Bonsor Community Centre, 6550 Bonsor Avenue, Burnaby (beside Metrotown Centre). \$4 for members; \$6 for non-members.—[Keith Lim](#)

17–19 August 2012: [Anime Revolution](#) at Vancouver Convention Centre [*no address given on flyer*]. “[...] A brand new three-day convention. [...] We cater to a wide range of activities, exhibits, panels, and performances. These include art, animation, comics, costuming, cultural displays, dance, gaming, musical performances, and others. Our goal is to provide people of all ages with entertainment, education, and cultural



exchange. [...] We hope to see you there!” Guests: Vincent Corazza (Tuxedo Mask—*Sailor Moon*), Sugar Beard (Chibi Moon—*Sailor Moon*), Jessica Nigri (cosplayer/spokesmodel), Sarah Edmonson (Lori—*Transformers Cybertron*), Katie Griffin (Ray Hino—*Sailor Moon*), Sam Logan (*Sam & Fuzzy*), Noah Antwiler, Doug Walker [*That Guy with the Glasses—Felicity*], Fighting Dreamers Productions, Mark Nguyen, Inufanne, Susan Roman [Heavy Metal, Rock & Rule, Robocop (TAS), Maxie’s World, X-Men (1992)—*Felicity*], Ron Rubin [C.O.P.S., X-Men (1992)—*Felicity*], & more! Events: speed dating, cosplay café, console wars. Contests: Revolution Idol, cosplay contest, swimsuit contest (19+). Exhibits: anime viewing room, artists’ alley, exhibitors’ hall. [Facebook](#). [Twitter](#).

17–19 August 2012: [RCW 139](#) at [Toronto Marriott Bloor Yorkville Hotel](#) (FKA Radisson Plaza Hotel), 90 Bloor Street East, Toronto, Ontario. [Due South *fan convention*.]—[Garth Spencer](#)

17–19 August 2012: [Imperial Hobbies’ Customer Appreciation Sale](#), 11 AM–9 PM (Friday), 10 AM–5:30 PM (Saturday), and 12–5 PM (Sunday) at Imperial Hobbies, 5451 Number Three Road, Richmond, 604-273-4427, [orders@imperialhobbies.ca](#).

18 August 2012: [Saturn-5 Saturday: Mars Rovers](#), 12:30–3:30 PM at H.R. MacMillan Space Centre [*no address given on website*], (604) 738-7827, [info@spacecentre.ca](#), [http://www.spacecentre.ca](#). “In this session, we’ll be celebrating the Mars rover *Curiosity*’s successful (hopefully) landing on Mars. Free with admission.”

18 August 2012: [Vancouver Zombiewalk \(Regular Route\)](#), 4–7 PM at Vancouver Art Gallery, 750 Hornby Street, Vancouver. “This is a flash mob! An event of zombie revolution! *Important*: I am not taking any responsibility or ownership of the walk or anyone’s actions during the walk. We start [at] *Vancouver Art Gallery*; we end on the far beach, by the concession stand off Davie/Sunset Beach. *No one owns the walk. Be safe! Monitor each other. Respect the community and each other!* Don’t mess up private property or cars passing by. *Don’t damage the walk route or the vehicles or each other! Ham it up. Play up your inner zombie for cameras!* (But don’t touch the cameras.) *Respect and obey the Vancouver Police Department!* Drink *lots of water*. If you have a group, a cause you want to promote, a night, an event, a store to [*promote*], *don’t just hand out flyers or tickets*. Set up water stations, volunteer to help co-ordinate...do it for the *freedom for zombies to walk!* If you have a night, T-shirt, after-party, put it out...as long as it is living-dead positive/*fun* positive! *Be respectful of children!* It can be terrifying if they aren’t old enough to understand what is going on. If a child looks frightened, leave them alone and move on! *Spread the word like a zombie virus!*”—[Aaron Harrison](#)

18 August 2012: [Vancouver Zombiewalk \(Proposed Alternate Route\)](#), 3–5 PM at Vancouver Art Gallery, 750 Hornby Street, Vancouver. “*Less than one year* and counting until the infection spreads again, and the undead hordes shamble through Vancouver in search of brains...and of course give people a bloody good scare!”—[Isaac Terpstra](#) via [Keith Lim](#)

18 August 2012: Super Happy Hacker House + Soldering Contest, 7–11:45 PM at Vancouver Hack Space, 45 West Hastings Street, Vancouver. “Are you the fastest solder in the west? Come on down to SHHH August 18 at the VHS (45 Hastings, alley entrance) and find out. We provide the gear, you provide the skills. First place and second place winners get a Seeeduino. The rest get to flail and gnash in misery and despair. The Drawbots will be there, the 3D printers will be there, and everyone will have an awesome time. I hear a rumor there may even be live music. Remember kids, safety third and August 18 from 7 PM until really really really late. See you there!”—[Keith Lim](#)

18 August *and* 15 September 2012: [Vancouver Comic Jam](#), 8–9 PM at the [Wallflower Modern Diner](#), 2404 Main Street, Vancouver. “The Vancouver Comic Jam is generally held the third Saturday of the month. In cases of long weekends or other conflicting dates, the jam may move to the second or third Saturday. For up to date information, [join the VCJ Facebook group](#) or [follow us on Twitter](#). *Who can come?*: Anyone who is of legal drinking age is invited. *How much?*: No admission fee. There is a \$5 minimum purchase per person required by the Wallflower. They provide their full menu to order from and alcohol galore: beer, wine, highballs and shots. *There will be a gratuity of 18–20% added to all bills because we are a large group*. Bring your own pencils/pens. Paper is provided. If you’re drawing with markers that bleed through paper, be sure to either bring a drawing surface or place extra sheets of paper under the paper you’re drawing on.”—[Keith Lim](#)

18 August 2012: [Fifth Annual Zombiewalk Afterparty/Zombie-A-Go-Go at Sanctuary @ Club 23 West](#), 9 PM–2 AM at Anza Club [?], 3 West 8th Avenue, Vancouver. “Free for zombies before 10 PM/\$7 otherwise.” “For four years now it’s been the official after-party location for the Vancouver Zombiewalk...join us once again at Vancouver’s longest running all-alternative night for our annual ode to *zombies*, *zombies*, and *more zombies!* ■ *Calling all zombies! But also: zombie attack victims, rotted corpses, military zombie fightin’ forces, zombie research scientists, grave-diggers, plainclothes friends of zombies* ■ *A night of zombie-themed club chaos!* Zombie-inspired decorations, zombie visuals & movies all night, zombie burlesque & stage shows, killer DJs & dancefloor mayhem galore, prizes for best costumes! ■ *Zombie burlesque with: Spooky DeLune, Little Miss Risk, Melody Mangler*. Our gore-geous girls tend to make a bit of a *mess* as they take off their zombie fashions to show a little rotted skin, so the front rows are at your own risk, since they’re within the splatter zone! ■ *Bring your own: blood, brains, body parts!* ■ *Zombie/blood/guts ‘n’ gore outfits highly encouraged!* Prizes for best and goriest outfits, given out every hour starting at 11 PM! ■ *Have a bloody good time in the photo booth!* Themed & decorated photo booth on hand, where you can pose for pro zombie glamour shots for the web gallery, and even purchase printouts for takeaway on the spot! ■ *DJs & dancing & destruction galore*. Alternative/electro/industrial/new wave/rock/’80s/’90s/’00s. ■ *With those rotted residents: Pandemonium, R-Lex.*” [Facebook](#).—[Isaac Terpstra](#) via [Keith Lim](#)

18 August 2012: [Vancouver Zombie Walk 2012 Afterparty](#), 6 PM–2 PM at the Celar Nightclub, 1006 Granville Street, Vancouver. Presented by Vancouver Makeup

FX. \$25 advance/\$30 door. “Minutes after the Vancouver Zombie Walk ends [...] the Cellar Nightclub will be opening its doors to the undead for a zombie party like no other! Eight hours of zombie madness and mayhem. With live zombie-themed performances by the Van Dolls, Bloody Betty, Velvet von Doff, Voodoo Pixie, Mama Fortuna, and Mr. Dark’s Gore Show. Music by DJ Joe Pound. With more to be announced soon! Zombie-themed sets & photography by Gabriel Morosan Photography. Special FX zombie makeup by Vancouver Makeup Effects Crew. Prizes for best zombie, best zombie group, best makeup. There will also be a film crew on location shooting the upcoming Vancouver Zombie Walk 2012 mockumentary to be released late 2012! Bring down your friends and participate in our zombie film! *Note*: All attendees *must* be dressed in zombie attire. Participants must agree to be filmed during the event and to having their images used. Two pieces of ID required. 19+ event.”—Keith Lim

18 August–3 September 2012: Star Trek™: The Exhibition, at the Fair at the Pacific National Exhibition [*no address given in print ad or on website*]. Walk-through bridge; original costumes, masks and ship models; photo opportunities in Captain Kirk’s chair, on transporter pad, or with your favourite character (via green-screen); *Star Trek* store. No cameras or videotaping allowed inside the exhibit.

19 August and 16 September 2012: Board Game Swap Meetup, 11 AM–1 PM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New Westminster. “Every third Sunday of the month a swap meet will be held where gamers can sell or trade any board games they would like to get rid of. RSVP for the event and you can list what you are looking to sell, or what you would like in trade. Use the message board to propose trades or list items for sale. Board Game Warriors can be a neutral site for meeting and doing transactions during store hours.”—Keith Lim

23 August 2012: Chinese Valentine’s Day.

24 August 2012: **Karen New**’s birthday. Premiere of films *The Apparation* (horror) and *Robot and Frank* (comedy/SF; Frank Langella, James Marsden, Liv Tyler, Susan Sarandon, Peter Sarsgaard, Jeremy Sisto).



24 August 2012: Movie Under the Stars: *Spaceballs* (1987), 8 PM at Planetarium, H.R. MacMillan Space Centre [*no address given on website*], (604) 738-7827, info@spacecentre.ca, <http://www.spacecentre.ca/>. “Canadians Rick Moranis and John Candy are hilarious in this Mel Brooks spoof of popular sci-fi classics.”

24–26 August 2012: Cos & Effect, 6 PM–12 AM at University of British Columbia, 6138 Student Union Boulevard, Vancouver. “Cos & Effect is an annual costume, cosplay, and alternative fashion convention. [...] It is owned and produced by IRL Events, and made possible with the support of the diverse geek and sub-culture communities of BC. Our convention’s content is targeted towards people 16–30 years old, although most of our content is appropriate for all ages. All 18+ or 19+ content

is clearly marked, and IDs will be checked before entry. Our goal is to provide a fun and creativity fueled convention, featuring tons of original panels and events not available anywhere else. Unleash your creativity!”—Keith Lim

25 August 2012: Summer Dreams Literary Arts Festival, 11:30 AM–5 PM at Trout Lake Park, 3660 Victoria Drive, Vancouver. “Admission: free. Families welcome—kids[’] entertainment and activities provided. Trout Lake Park is a new location for the Festival, so check it out! Just so you don’t forget about us over the summer, the Burnaby Writers’ Society will have a table, so be sure to stop by and let us know how you’re doing. BWS members James Lewis and Daryl Stennett read from their books beginning at 4 PM.”—Burnaby Writers’ Society

25 August and 29 September 2012: Board Gamers: 12 Hours of Gaming, 12 PM–12 AM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New Westminster. “Hello. Feel free to come by anytime on Saturday from noon until midnight and play any of the many open games there are here at the store. The event is perfect for any of those more epic games we have at the store that you’ve been wanting to try or for any you might own but can rarely find the time/space/players to accommodate. Besides a couple of local coffee joints, there are a bevy of nearby eating establishments, and we will probably order some supper at around 6 PM. Hope to see you there.—Kirby & Critty”—Keith Lim

26 August 2012: **Sarah Stierch**’s birthday.

26 August 2012: Comix & Stories, 11 AM–5 PM at Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street, Vancouver. “A day of alternative and small press comics, zines, artwork, and culture. Special guests: Simon Roy (*Prophet, Jan’s Atomic Heart*), Brandon Graham (*King City, Prophet, Multiple Warheads*), James Stokoe (*Orc Stain, Godzilla Half Century War*), Marley Zarcone (*Forgetless, TMNT: April O’Neil, Madame Xanadu*). Featured artists & publishers: Miriam Libicki (*Jobnik!*), Steve Rolston (*Ghost Projekt, Emiko Superstar*), Jason Turner (*True Loves*), Conundrum Press, Derek DeLand (*Copyright Infringers*), Do You Want to Kiss It Better? (*Play*), Trevor Frick (*Centuri Way of the Ninja*), Kim Glennie (*Emily & Zola, Girls’ Room*), Jillian Lerner (*The Peerless Prodigies of P.T. Barnum*), Matthew Ocasio (*The Matter*), Jeremy Sawatsky (*Dogfood Comics*), Jen Vaughn (*Lies Grown-Ups Told Me*), Albert Art, Gurukitty Studios, Elisa Rose, Beth Wagner, Comic Legends Legal Defense Fund, and many more! Creator tables: \$30. Publisher tables: \$50. Admission: \$4. (604) 322-6412. <http://www.vancouvercomiccon.com/>. Twitter: [@vancomicon](https://twitter.com/vancomicon).”—Leonard Wong

26 August 2012: Second Hackery Garage Sale, 11 AM–6 PM at the Hackery, 304 Victoria Drive, Vancouver. “It has been two years since our last garage sale, and we have more equipment this time. This year there will be more than just a large selection of vintage computers and parts. Some highlights are: • 20% off any



item found in our eBay store if paid for at the garage sale and picked up same day. • Hackery eBay store. • Many arcade parts—JAMMA boards (over 40), buttons, power supplies, 100s of manuals, coin doors, and other odds and ends; one stand-up cabinet. • A selection of vintage laptops and luggables. • Commodore, Amiga, and Tandy items. • Large selection of compact Macs, Apple][e, and Apple IIGS units—some working, some for parts only. • Large selection of Apple poster and banners from a closed Apple store—posters range from the early iMac to the iPad 2—some banners are as tall as 8'. • Our laptop cave will be open to the public with each unit selling for \$5 (most units are for parts only; no Core 2 or i7s can be found in the cave, sorry). • There will also be some household items—bikes, pet cat toys, odd and ends. Something for everyone!”—Keith Lim

28 August 2012: Jack Kirby Day. Read Comics in Public Day.

30 August 2012: Frankenstein Day.

31 August 2012: Premiere of film *The Possession* (horror; Jeffrey Dean Morgan, Agam Darshi, Grant Show, Rob LaBelle, Matisyahu).

September 2012

9 September 2012: Vancouver Comic Con, 11 AM–5 PM at Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street (at 15th Avenue), Vancouver. “Special guests: Riley Rossmo (*Debris*, *Wild Children*, *Green Wake*, *Daken: Dark Wolverine*, *Cowboy Ninja Viking*, *Proof*), Kurtis J. Wiebe (*Debris*, *Peter Panzerfaust*, *Grim Leaper*, *Intrepids*, *Green Wake*), Douglas Wheatley (*Star Wars: Dark Times*), Ed Brisson (*Murder Book*, *Acts of Violence*), Jason Copland (*Murder Book*, *Kill All Monsters!*), Angela Bueckert, Gurukitty Studios, and others! Admission: \$4 (kids under 14: free). Dealer tables: \$55/center; \$65/wall. 604-322-6412. Follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/vancomicon>. For more information: <http://www.vancouvercomiccon.com/>. 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.”—Leonard Wong

12, 19, and 26 September or 12 September–31 October [?] 2012: Emily Carr: CEGN 160—F001: The Contemporary Comic, 11 AM–12 PM or 6:30 PM–9:30 PM [?] at Emily Carr University of Art + Design, 1399 Johnston Street, Granville Island, Vancouver. “Comics bring together the arts of storytelling and illustration. In this course, you will learn about building stories through illustration, dialogue, and character development. Body language, passage of time, flow, perspective, composition, and personal style will also be addressed. Through exercises, projects, and critiques, you will learn to develop your own ideas from concept to final product. Prerequisites: None. Comments: Please bring the following supplies to class: one Staedtler Mars plastic eraser*, one Col-Erase blue pencil (light blue; *not* non-repro)*, one Staedtler graphite pencil (2B)*, one aluminum pencil sharpener*, one 9"×12" sketchbook*, one 1-oz. bottle FW black acrylic ink, three 11"×17" Staedtler Mars vellum, two Opus 101 Sablite brush #2, one 14"×17" Strathmore bristol pad, one 8-gr. glue stick,

one 15-ml tube white gouache, two Pigma Micron pens (03 + 08), variety of ‘nibs’/calligraphy pens, one ruler. Estimated cost: \$76.00. Note: Bring items marked with a ‘*’ to your first class. Note: Printer/copy cards can be purchased at the vending machine outside the Emily Carr cafeteria. *Present this ECUAD Registration Statement at Opus Framing & Art Supplies to qualify for a student discount. In order to minimize disruption, students are expected to arrive at class a minimum of 5 minutes prior to the designated start time. If possible, please notify your instructor ahead of time if you expect to be late or absent.* Cost: \$230.00. Days: W. Room: 113. Building: NB.”—Keith Lim

13 September 2012: Fraser Valley Model Club Monthly Meeting, 7:30–9:30 PM at Kariton House Gallery, 2387 Ware Street, Abbotsford. “Meetings held second Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM from September to June (July & August have no meetings—summer break).”—Keith Lim

15 September 2012: Foodhammer at GameStars, 19860 Langley Bypass, Langley. [No times given on flyer or websites.] “Tabletop gaming in aid of the Langley Food Bank. Malifaux. For more details see: <http://foodhammer.blogspot.ca/> or <http://www.facebook.com/Foodhammer>. Follow us on Twitter @Foodhammer or e-mail foodhammer@shaw.ca.”

15 September 2012: Free Comic Book Day 2, 12–8 PM at Metropolis Comics and Toys, 4735 Kingsway (across from Metrotown), Burnaby. “Everybody loves FCBD! Too bad it only comes around once a year! Well not this year, baby! We got 3000 comics that we’re giving away on September 15th and we’ll be having our big ‘Back to School Sale’ to coincide with it! We’ll be having a bunch of activities and guests as well, to be announced. Please keep in mind that events like these are only as good as the turn-out we get. So please share this event with friends, bring friends to the event, link it, link it, link it and make sure to ‘like’ it! No other stores are doing this, so we really need your help to make this an amazing day! Thanks to everybody who came out in may to make FCBD 1 such a success. It is for you all that we’re trying to create more awesome free comic-y goodness! © Stay tuned for more updates and details.”—Keith Lim



15 September 2012: Rascal’s [?]: Steampunk, 8 PM–12 AM [?] at WISE Hall, 1882 Adanac Street, Vancouver. “Rascals [?] is an event geared towards the serious player with the opportunity for newcomers to the lifestyle to see and experience BDSM in all its forms. Since 2002, Rascals [?] Pansexual Play Parties have been held on the third Saturday of each month until the recent First Annual Pre-New Year Black Leash event on December 30th. Rascal’s [?] features a fully-equipped, large dungeon with 12 play stations in the main dungeon area. Four more play stations can be found on the stage where it is more intimate for those who wish to play with some privacy—over 2500 square feet of *fun!* Rascals [?] has, without doubt, the best play equipment in the city with custom-designed spanking benches with stocks, suspension frames, whipping posts and tables, double crosses, and A-frames. You will find Rascal’s [?]

Play Parties to have a friendly, welcoming atmosphere with a large social area and refreshment bar (licensed). *All* are welcome as Rascal's [?] Play Parties which are truly pansexual events for hetero, gay, bi, lesbian and trans-gendered kinksters. Parties begin at 8 PM and go to 1 PM."—[Keith Lim](#)

22 September 2012: [Galaxion Origins: 40 Years of Atari](#), originally scheduled for this date at Club 23 West, has been moved to 6 October 2012 at the Red Room Ultrabar, 398 Richards Street, Vancouver.—[Julian Castle](#)

22–23 September 2012: [Vancouver Book Fair](#), 10 AM–5 PM at UBC Robson Square, 800 Robson Street, Vancouver. Admission: \$5 (good for both days). “Americana, antique maps & prints, art books, author signed copies, books about books, Canadiana, children’s books, detective fiction, ephemera, fine bindings, fine press, First Nations, history, literature, military, modern first editions, nature, photography, science & technology, science fiction/fantasy, transportation, travel & exploration. Over 20 of BC’s top booksellers. Patron: Yosef Wosk. Presented by the [Alcuin Society](#). Sponsored by [AbeBooks.com](#).”

24 [?]-29 September 2012: [Comix Workshop](#) at Emily Carr Concourse Gallery + Room 245, Emily Carr University, 1399 Johnston Street, Vancouver. Con, exhibition, industry day. “Emily Con! As part of our fall Comix Workshop, meet and greet visiting local and international comic book artists displaying and selling work in the Emily Carr Concourse Gallery. Guest exhibitors include Ken Boessem, Ed Brisson, Rebecca Dart, Jeff Ellis, Kelly Evereart, Don King, Jacqueline Klobucar, Dave McCaig, Doug Savage, Robin Thompson, Jason Turner, and Colin Upton. [...] Special events include: *Inkstuds* Live Radio Show Recording (1 PM, Room 245—live interviews with Vancouver’s top comic creators hosted by Robin McConnell, guests TBA); Make Your Own Damn Comic (2 PM, Room 245—panel discussions on how Vancouver’s top independent creators publish their own material, featuring Ed Brisson, Rebecca Dart, and Doug Savage); Canada’s Golden Age of Comics—lecture by Ken Boesem (3 PM, Room 245—a discussion on how Canada’s Golden Age happened, featuring Canada’s first three superheroes); What’s Happening in Vancouver—lecture by Robin Thompson (4 PM, Room 245—information session about special Vancouver events, exhibits, and educational programs pertaining to the world of comics); Comic Jam! (11 AM–5 PM, Foundation Hallway—participate in a wall-sized, hands-on, collaborative comic jam, facilitated by students in Emily Carr’s Illustration and Teens programs). All events are free and open to the public. Presented in conjunction with [Culture Days](#) and the Comeback.” (The Comeback is a two-day Emily Carr alumni event on 28 and 29 September.) Checked paper Emily Carr catalog and Emily Con is part of “The Comix Workshop.” (1) Comix exhibition: 25–29 September. (2) Industry day: 28 September. (Haven’t checked Emily Carr website for URLs for exhibition and industry day).—[Julian Castle](#)



28–30 September 2012: [VCON 37: Post Apocalypse](#) at Sheraton Vancouver Guildford Hotel, 15269 104th Avenue, Surrey. “Guests of Honour: Connie Willis (2011

Hugo- & Nebula-winning author), Dr. Gregory Benford (science guest), James Ng (artist guest). Mayans, zombies, aliens, Mother Nature, giant asteroid, chthonic horrors, nuclear blowup or meltdown, computational singularity...seems like life as we know it is doomed. So let's party like it's 2012! Join us for three days of fannish fun! We have multi-track programming, including: art show & auction, vendors' hall, author readings, 24-hour games room, multi-author book launch, writers' workshops, demos, Academie Duello, artists' alley, Frankenstuffies, 501st Legion, costuming panels, dance, Elrons, Turkey Readings, Uncle Victor's video room. Three-day adult membership: \$45 to Sep. 15; \$60 at the door. Discounts: youth under 18: 50%; students & seniors: 25% off. Daypasses available at the door only. VCON hotel rate \$99 (1-4 people); includes parking and Internet. Book by August 29." [Article at [VanCity Buzz](#).]

28-30 September 2012: [JemCon](#), St. Louis, Missouri. "An annual convention which celebrates the Jem™ animated series and line of fashion dolls from Hasbro©!"—Joseph Bardsley



28-30 September 2012: [Geeks After Dark: Lost in Time](#), 7:30 AM 28 September to 10:30 PM 30 September at Barkerville Historic Town, Barkerville. "Geeks After Dark. The final frontier town. This is the voyage of the Geeks After Dark crew, nerds of every type, and some totally hot burlesque dancers. Our three-day mission: to explore Barkerville Historic Town, to seek out new ways to party and new friends, and to boldly go where no geeks have gone before. Geeks After Dark, Vancouver's only purveyors of nerdy nightlife, are back with a brand-new party convention for everybody who ever just wanted to put on a costume and be awesome for 72 hours. Partnering with Barkerville Historic Town, Geeks After Dark is proud to announce 'Geeks After Dark: Lost In Time,' an action-packed party convention for everyone with a little bit of geekery in their soul, and that means *you're invited!* Join hosts ranging from the Tenth Doctor (*Doctor Who*) to Jayne Cobb (*Firefly*), the Riddler and Ra's Al Ghul (*Batman*), to Obi-Wan Kenobi (*Star Wars*) and of course Sheriff Kirk and Deputy Spock for the party of the (19th) century! Take the Geeks After Dark time-traveling party bus back in time to Barkerville in 1868 for a relaxing weekend of afternoon teas, stagecoach rides, and gold panning. But things are a little wacky, as fandoms collide and holes are ripped in the space-time continuum; is that a TARDIS in the distance? Combining Geeks After Dark's trademark theatricality with a cast of dozens of historical interpreters and Barkerville magic, Geeks After Dark: Lost in Time promises to combine events you've never seen before at cons (after dark-historical town-cosplay-capture the flag, anyone?) with screenings, panels, and our trademark mix of costume contests, trivia, burlesque, and epic parties and thousands of dollars worth of prizes from our generous sponsors: Golden Age Collectables, Gamedeals Video Games, and Admiral Snackbar Chocolate and Confectioneries. For the itinerary, ticketing information, and general information about Barkerville Historic Town, please visit our page at the Barkerville website, [here](#)."—[Geeks After Dark](#) via [Zac Fudge](#)

News-Like Matter

Notes from July 2012 BCSFA Meeting

In attendance were Graeme Cameron (president), Barb Dryer (secretary), Kathleen Moore (treasurer), Ray Seredin (host), Felicity Walker (editor), William Graham, Stewart Smyth, and Sidney Trim!

Ray announced that he was going to Seattle for the Norwescon 35 Volunteer Appreciation Picnic on Saturday 4 August 2012. He hopes there's a working barbecue there.

Ray has been letting his hair grow. This month it looked like a classical music composer's hairstyle. I approved and encouraged him to keep growing it. If you're lucky enough to have a good head of hair, make the most of it.



I lent Graeme the VHS video *Fantastic Dinosaurs of the Movies* (1992). Containing trailers of various giant reptilian monster movies, it boasts “Gorgo, Rodan, Godzilla and more! See the wizardry of special effects geniuses including Willis O’Brien, Jim Danforth, and Ray Harryhausen!” Graeme noticed *King Dinosaur* (1955) was on the cover and commented that it was “not a thrilling movie.” (See

“Notes from April 2012 BCSFA Meeting” in [BCSFAzine #468](#) for further details.) Ray said that a clip from it was featured in *Americathon* (1979), in which two dinos were fighting over a parking spot. The movie was set in the future (1998) and predicted America's oil shortage and debt to China. The same thing happened in *Slapstick of Another Kind* (1982), the frightening adaptation of Kurt Vonnegut's *Slapstick* that starred Jerry Lewis.

Continuing the subject of movies set in the then-near-future, Graeme asked Sid if he'd ever seen *Quatermass IV* (1979), in which a mass exodus of refugees from Africa overwhelms England. Kathleen said that had happened 30,000 years ago. Graeme replied that there was no film of that. Sid asked if anyone had seen *Iron Sky* (2012). No one had, but Graeme said that it had looked promising. (Dave Haren mentioned it in a LOC in [BCSFAzine #437](#), and Graeme covered it in “Upcoming Nifty Film Projects” in [WCSFAzine #10](#).) Sid said that it was disappointing and uneven. Graeme replied that it was funded by fans, and had at least had some nice concepts, such as a German motorcycle with sidecar driving on the moon.

Graeme relayed a recent Robert Sawyer Facebook post: he's in Hollywood in meetings, and notices that he's the only one wearing glasses. It's spooky.

Ray commented that the next VCON is at the Sheraton Guildford in Surrey. William said he knew the place—it's across from “the big flag.” Ray explained to us that this refers to a very big Canadian flag left over from Expo '86 that was bought by a car dealership which came to be known as “Flag Motors” (also “Flag GM” and later “Flag Mitsubishi”). Similarly, a model of the starship *Enterprise* from Expo ended up atop a video store in Kenmore, Washington. Graeme asked, “Whatever happened to the flying saucer that was over the children's fountain?” (Sid explained that this fountain was a demonstration of coherent water—it was precise enough to

shoot out one hole and go neatly into another.) Ray replied that the saucer ended up in Powell River!

Graeme had heard things about the *Alien* prequel *Prometheus* (2012): some guy made a list of all the flaws in the story and it went on for pages. I asked if these were flaws in the sense that they broke continuity with the previous *Alien* movies, and Graeme replied that the guy's main complaint was that the scientists acted like typical movie hero cannon fodder and not scientists. He added that Robert Sawyer's review of *Prometheus* on Facebook was simply: "Meh."

Someone asked Kathleen if she'd been to the BC Ren Fest. She replied that no, the SCA is more her beat. Ray added that he would have gone to the Ren Fest but was not able to get transportation.

Ray gave me a birthday gift—a Best Buy gift card. [I used it to buy the series *Transformers: The Headmasters*¹ (1987) on DVD. In return I took Ray out for dinner as his belated birthday present.—Future Felicity]

In answer to Nalini Haynes' LOC in *BCSFAzine #469* asking about filk, Kathleen said that there is no such thing as filk music videos—it's "SF for the blind"; it's a participatory, not performer-centred, medium. The only filk videos that came to mind for Kathleen were "The Last Saskatchewan Pirate" (filmed on location in Regina) and something else (which I didn't catch). Kathleen said that there *are* filk resources on the Web: lyrics, songbooks², MP3s (though not many, as filk is usually performed live and not recorded, with the exception of one convention she remembers that was wired to record filk). There's a site called "Darn Near All the Filk on the Web" at <http://suburbanbanshee.net/filk/medialk2.html>. Kathleen showed me one book, *The Bastard Children of Argo*, that *did* have sheet music—one staff with melody for the vocalist, and root/quality symbols (e.g. "Cm7") for the accompanist.

Particular names Kathleen recommends Nalini look up are Random Factors (publisher), Leslie Fish, Frank Hayes, Tom Smith, and Cat Faber & Callie Hills (together as Echo's Children). Professional authors who also filk are Mercedes Lackey, Poul Anderson, and Lois McMaster Bujold. Locally (BC), there's Shaddy, as well as Douglas & Julianna McCorison. I like the song "The *Star Trek: The Next Generation* Episode Guide," which Kathleen reminded me is by Blake Hodgetts (available on his CD, *Blindsight*).

My notes say "the Republic of San Merino (as in the breed of sheep)." Ray said that there was a novelty singer who used to sing "Ode to Saltspring Island Sheep" (the joke being that there were more sheep than people on Saltspring Island).

Kathleen showed some filk books. I liked the covers of *The Bastard Children of Argo* (filks derived from or inspired by the *Star Trek* parody "Banned from Argo" by Leslie ~~Star~~), and *Best of Rogow's Rec-Room Rhymes* (by Roberta Rogow). I have a vague childhood memory of seeing the cover of a book titled *Carmen Miranda's*

1 Or "トランスフォーマー ザ★ヘッドマスターズ."

2 Filk songbooks have lyrics but no sheet music, referring instead to what song it's to the tune of. This reminded me of the parody song lyrics I used to see in *Mad* and *Cracked* magazines with notes that this was "to the tune of..." some song I didn't know. Stew replied "Then you go and ask your parents," adding a mention of Harvey Entertainment's bouncing ball singalong cartoons.

Ghost Is Haunting Space Station Three, and I found out from Kathleen that this is an anthology of short stories inspired by Leslie Fish's song "Carmen Miranda's Ghost."

We talked about the *Batman* shooting. Ray said that Seattle has tough anti-gun laws: a gun store had had a fifty-foot-tall "GUNS GUNS GUNS" sign since the 1950s, but under the new laws it had to be replaced with a six-inch version. I thought that the old sign should have been preserved as historic; William agreed that it should have been "grandfathered" in. I knew what Seattle sketch-comedy show *Almost Live!* would have said: replace the Gs with Bs and move it to Aurora Avenue. This reminded Ray that he recently met an *Almost Live!* fan who's currently recording every episode being rerun on KING-TV, because sooner or later the station is bound to stop showing it. I am doing the same, supplementing the episodes I recorded from its original run.



Kathleen mentioned a filk about the "good old days" of computing with the clever line: "Our IP was '3.'" I wondered if there were such a thing as filk that wasn't folk. Has anyone done filk in new wave, heavy metal, rap, or post-punk style? And if so, would it still be called "filk"? If "folk" is to "filk" as "punk" is "pink," Kathleen said, she hopes it's not "pomo pink," a reference to the novel *Bellewether* by Connie Willis—the heroine is researching fads and discovers the same shade of pink ("ashes of roses," to Victorians) repeating throughout history.

Coincidentally, Connie Willis is author guest of honour at the upcoming VCON. I'll have to miss most of this VCON because I'll be house-sitting and cat-sitting for my parents. Barb said my parents should make a video of themselves for the cat to watch. I didn't think cats could be fooled by videos, but Barb and Ray said they could. Ray said that his cat Poopsie once tried to catch a leaping whale on TV, and his other cat Maudie was fooled by her reflection in mirrors.

Sid talked about *Torchwood*. Stew said that the premiere of the original *Doctor Who* had to be shown twice because of the JFK assassination, and that on 2 May 1996, the Duvall earthquake caused the *Wiseguy* TV movie to be preempted by ninety minutes of reporters asking people "Did you feel it?"—which was parodied by Pat Cashman in an *Almost Live!* sketch. Kathleen said she felt it; she was at work, in Vancouver, and felt three waves. Ray also felt it in Powell River (two waves). It caused \$3 billion worth of damage, but thankfully no loss of life. This reminded Graeme of the time an earthquake happened during an interview on *The Joe Pyne Show*, and though the guest was startled, Pyne shouted, "The earthquake doesn't matter! Listen to me!"

On the subject of decaying formats, Sid told us about the missing Apollo 11 tapes: NASA lost or taped over its original recordings of the first moon landing! Fortunately non-NASA people recorded the TV broadcast, so we still have footage, just not the *official* recordings. I added that I had read that the military can't read its old floppy disks, and that its old blueprints and schematics made in obsolete software are unreadable by current software. Sid noted that our books won't last 100 years (the paper will disintegrate), and asked if future civilizations will think we were illiterate. I said that I still have some old 1920s books saved from my late grandparents' belongings, and that they're holding up fine, and Sid speculated that they may have

been made with acid-free paper. Now I'm worried about my comic collection, which is slowly acidifying. I know there are acid-free backing boards, but are there backing boards that are actively alkaline? Or would such a thing cause a "science fair volcano" in my comic bags?

Felicity Walker
Sunday 22 July 2012

2012 Aurora Award Winners Announced



Back row: left to right: Robert J. Sawyer, Dan O'Driscoll, Susan MacGregor (On Spec), Jen Laface (On Spec), Diane Walton (On Spec), Barb Galler-Smith (On Spec), Cat MacDonald (On Spec), Brett Alexander Savory (for Suzanne Church), Ryan McFadden, Billie Milholland, Randy McCharles, Eileen Bell. Front row seated: left to right: Jane Garthson (for Phil Mills), Ann Marston (On Spec), Debra Yeung (for Peter Watts), Sandra Kasturi (for Helen Marshall). Photograph taken by Zev Abosh.

Mississauga, Ontario author, Robert J. Sawyer, has done it again. Not only is this his third consecutive Aurora Award for best English novel, it gives him an Aurora for all three novels in his celebrated WWW science fiction series.

On Saturday night, August 11, 2012, in Calgary, at the Aurora Awards Banquet honouring literary achievement and fan/volunteer work for 2011, Mr. Sawyer won the coveted award for his novel, *Wonder*. In 2009 he won for *Wake* and in 2010 he won for *Watch*. All three books are published by Penguin Canada. Along with the trophy, Mr. Sawyer was presented with a cheque for \$500 from SFCanada, Canada's Science Fiction and Fantasy writers association.

For over 30 years, members of the Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (CSFFA) have chosen exceptional Canadian works for these

trophies. This year the awards ceremony was held in Calgary in conjunction with the When Words Collide festival. Other trophies were presented in the categories of short fiction, poem/song, artist and fan activities.

The other winners were from across Canada. The short fiction award went to Kitchener, Ontario's Suzanne Church for her short story "The Needle's Eye." Toronto's Helen Marshall's poem, "Skeleton Leaves," won the Poetry/Song award. Also from Toronto, song writer Phil Mills won the Filk award, while author Peter Watts won for his lecture at the Toronto SpecFic Colloquium.

From Calgary, artist Dan O'Driscoll won for his exceptional art work and convention organizer Randy McCharles won for founding and chairing last year's When Words Collide Readers and Writers festival.

BC artist Tarol Hunt won the Graphic Novel award for his online comic *Goblins*. An Edmonton magazine, *On Spec*, won the award for Best Related Work. The Fan Publication award went to *Bourbon and Eggnog* from the 10th Circle Project writing group whose members live across Canada.

For more details about the CSFFA, the Auroras and this year's nominees please go to our website at: <http://www.prixaurorawards.ca/>. CSFFA membership is open to all Canadians and landed immigrants.

The following is the full list of winners:

- Best Novel—English: *Wonder* by Robert J. Sawyer, Penguin Canada
- Best Short Fiction—English: “The Needle’s Eye” by Suzanne Church, *Chilling Tales: Evil Did I Dwell; Lewd I Did Live*, EDGE
- Best Poem/Song—English: “Skeleton Leaves” by Helen Marshall, Kelp Queen Press
- Best Graphic Novel—English: *Goblins*, webcomic, created by Tarol Hunt
- Best Related Work—English: *On Spec*, published by the Copper Pig Writers’ Society
- Best Artist: Dan O’Driscoll
- Best Fan Publication: *Bourbon and Egnog* by Eileen Bell, Ryan McFadden, Billie Milholland and Randy McCharles, 10th Circle Project
- Best Fan Filk: Phil Mills, Body of Song-Writing Work including FAWM and 50/90
- Best Fan Organizational: Randy McCharles, founder and chair of When Words Collide (Calgary)
- Best Fan Other: Peter Watts, “Reality: The Ultimate Mythology” lecture, Toronto SpecFic Colloquium

Clifford Samuels

2012 Aurora Awards Administrator
Monday 13 August 2012

Reminder: VCON Drinkware IndieGoGo Campaign

Hey friends and fans of VCON! We’re just sending out a reminder about our *Drinkware IndieGoGo campaign!*

VCON has always thought it would be nice if we could offer members the opportunity to purchase drinkware items, such as beer steins or coffee mugs.

With \$430 raised so far we’re more than half way to the \$800 we need, but there’s just 8 days left for us to raise it. And only if we hit or exceed our goal will these awesome glasses be available.

There are rewards at all the pledge levels, ranging from a thank you and a VCON pin backed button or bookmark all the way up to a set of four Robbotter beer steins, buttons, bookmarks, and even standing as a Moon Level patron for VCON 37.

What’s a Moon Level Patron you ask? Check out the VCON “Support” page for details: http://www.vcon.ca/vcon37/join-us/support#sponsor_levels.

All the details you need to know about the campaign are included in the following text—please check it out and consider supporting this campaign.

VCON Drinkware IndieGoGo Campaign

This campaign runs until Sunday, September 9th, 2012 at 11:59 PM.

What We Need : What we need is enough money to cover the base cost of purchasing a minimum order of the drinkware we want to offer. With art setup fees,

taxes and shipping this comes out to somewhere between \$750 and \$800 for a single type of drinkware—i.e. just beer steins or just coffee mugs.

What You Get: Those who make pledges to help us fund this project will not only earn our undying gratitude but may also receive drinkware items, and even formal recognition as a supporting patron (as described on our website: <http://www.vcon.ca/vcon37/join-us/support>) of our upcoming event—VCON 37, to be held September 28–30, 2012.

For full details about all our pledge options, visit [the IndieGoGo Campaign Page](#).

If we reach our minimum goal of \$800, we will use the funds to purchase a 144-item order of 12-oz. beer steins with an illustration of the VCON mascot, the Robotter.

- Pledges that include one or more drinkware items will have their order made available for pick up at the VCON 37 “Swag Shop.”

- If you wish to have your order shipped by mail, add the specified shipping cost to your pledge. (Expect shipped items to be sent out sometime in October 2012.)

If we do not reach our minimum goal, we will not collect any of the pledged funds, no drinkware items will be purchased, and we’ll chalk the whole thing up to a failed experiment. C’est la vie, and all that.

If pledges to this campaign exceed our minimum goal, the additional money will either be used to increase the number of beer steins in our order or be put towards an order of 14-oz. coffee mugs, also with an illustration of the Robotter, depending on how much additional money is pledged. In addition, we will show our gratitude to our amazing fans with “stretch goals”: extras awarded to those who have made pledges when the total amount pledged surpasses specific dollar amounts.

For full details about our “stretch goals,” visit [the IndieGoGo Campaign Page](#).

The VCON Drinkware IndieGoGo campaign ends at:

Sunday, September 9th, 2012 at 11:59 PM.

Jenni Merrifield

VCON 37 Merchandise Coordinator

to [VCON Announcement List](#)

Saturday 1 September 2012

To the Death of Grind

Michael Bertrand

If you’re a gamer, you know grind. Grind is the million bad guys you have to kill in order to level up in an RPG. It’s the wave after wave of the same enemy you have to blast through to get to a boss in a shooter. It’s the races you have to race over and over in a racing game just to have enough money to buy the next car part and stand a chance in the



race you *want* to be racing. And it's the endless low-level mooks you have to stomp on in order to get to a different, interesting enemy in a side-scrolling brawler.

All gamers have suffered through grind and all gamers hate it. Yet developers continue to pack their games with grind and there doesn't seem to be an end in sight. Why? What is all that mindless grind doing in the game in the first place? Why do we wade through it all? What makes it so bad for the gaming world? Can we replace it or just plain get rid of it? And what lies in the future for grind?



Hell if I know. What are you asking me for? Geez you're full of questions today.

Oh, all right. I guess I'll try to answer the questions the best I can.

You're lucky you're cute.

For the purposes of this article, I'm going to define *grind* in video games as any repetitive activity which is not fun in and of itself but which is necessary in order to progress in the game. Thus, the hundreds of random encounters in an RPG count as grind, but not deliberately staying in one area in order to increase your levels or cash.

Game developers put grind into games for a few reasons.

The first one is the worst one: to make the game longer. At some point "hours of play" become a key metric for the whole gaming industry. It sounds good on the back of the game box to promise that the game has 80 hours of gameplay. It sounds like that means you're going to get 80 hours of entertainment out of the game, which helps justify the price being eighty dollars. But it doesn't take us gamers long to figure out that all they are really promising is that it will take around 80 hours to finish the game. How many of those hours are actually entertaining, let alone fun, is an entirely different question. If I take a pristine copy of the original *Star Wars Episode IV* and insert seventeen hours of random security camera footage from a downtown 7-Eleven, that doesn't mean that I have created 20 hours of *Star Wars*.

Another, somewhat more legitimate reason for grind in games is to make the player feel like they have earned their progress in the game. The reasoning goes that if things come too easily in a video game, you won't enjoy them as much because it took no effort to get them. Grind gives the person a feeling of investing effort into the game, and hence sweetens the game's rewards. This is true up to a point, but most grind-heavy games go far, far past that point. Sure, five random encounters before the next big baddie probably makes things more fun. Heck, maybe even fifty, if the battle system is interesting enough and not just selecting "attack" over and over again. But not 500.



A third argument is that grind teaches people discipline and persistence, valuable life skills. Leveling up is character building, in more than one sense. But I play video games to have fun. One of the primary reasons video games are so appealing is that they provide a great deal of pleasant stimulation in a rich stream of experience. Padding that out with boring grind simply dilutes that. Leisure activities that

build character are for humourless children of humourless parents. Video games are *play*, not *work*.

But with the video game industry hooked on grind for the last twenty years, the question has to be asked: Is it possible to eliminate grind? And if so, how?

My feeling is that we're unlikely to get rid of grind entirely, but I think we can cut it way, way down.

First, by simply cutting it out. I think we're well past the point where games are judged by hours of gameplay. It's too ambiguous a measurement. I'm pretty sure most gamers would agree with me that they'd prefer the twenty-hour RPG to the eighty-hour RPG, if those were twenty grind-free *fun* hours.



And where it can't just simply be excised, grind can be mitigated by giving a lot of care and thought to the exact nature of your grind. How can you make all those battles less repetitive? Maybe you could add different encounter types which require different strategies. Perhaps you can include random non-battle events of various impact and seriousness, from a visit from a mysterious benefactor to a sudden un-planned pie fight versus rogue pastry chefs. Mix it up!

And make your battle system itself non-repetitive. The best example I've seen of this is the *Final Fantasy Tactics* games. The addition of the tactical turn-based elements, for me, made each battle unique enough, with random terrain, troop placements, and enemies, that the battles didn't feel like grind at all. Your grind-busters might not be exactly the same, but the idea of keeping the battle system inherently fresher and thus less grind-y should guide you.

We'll probably not ever be entirely rid of grind, and maybe that's not totally a bad thing. Maybe if all the grind was gone, we'd miss it. Maybe you really do need to do a lot of mindless work in order to truly feel like you've *defeated* Ganon.

But video games are almost forty years old now, and I think it's high time this art form grew sophisticated enough to value quality over quantity. It's not how long you make your game...it's the quality of that experience that matters the most.

And that's all I'm trying to say.



Michael Bertrand
The Million Word Year
Friday 7 May 2010

RANDOM NOSTALGIA

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TYPEWRITERS
HEADHUNTER KAMALA³
"THE NEW SHMOO"
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