

POORLY  
CONCEIVED

*awkward*  
SILENCE



The best thing about running the Fanzine Lounge at BayCon is the fact that you get to run the Fanzine in an Hour panel. OK, that's not the truth. The absolute best thing is the women who throw themselves at your feet because you dare to run such a noble cause in the hotel. It's a wonderful, wonderful benefit.

This year, our Fanzine in an Hour, Poorly Conceived Awkward Silence, is a strange mix of fun stuff that comes from the best bunch of fanzine fans that gathered in our little of the world. Jason Schachat, Derek McCaw and Robert Hole have provided some wonderful art for us to enjoy. Randy Smith, Ed Green, Peter Sullivan, Me, and have contributed some wonderful words. It's all come together in this Poorly Conceived Awkward Silence!

Enjoy!

~Chris

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## ADVENTURES IN THE WINCHESTER

### **Mystery** HOTEL

BY

RANDY SMITH

ART BY **Robert** HOLE

We arrived at the Winchester Mystery Hotel on Friday afternoon. The parking lot, like the hotel, turned in upon itself in Escher-like fashion. There were plenty of parking spaces, most of them occupied by yellow danger tape, large rental trucks, or mysterious-looking storage containers. Parking was soon found in the local neighborhood. The hotel itself could only be approached from the back after climbing over a padlocked chain and walking through the briars and brambles of a three-foot wide forest.

The door of the hotel was open. We entered, encountering long hallways that seemed to go nowhere. There were corners that turned into other corners. Where we least expected it, there was a room with an open door and people inside.

"How do we get to Program Ops," we asked.

The directions involved going to the end of the hall, traveling upward in a secret hidden elevator, and walking down a long windowless hallway. After procuring our badges, it was time to find the rest of the con. This was when we realized that it couldn't be done.

We traversed the third floor of the hotel. Suddenly, we found ourselves on the

second floor. There had been no staircase and no elevator. The transition could only be explained by magic or the interference of the ghosts of Sarah Winchester.

A smiling man at the front desk took our credit card, gave us room keys and gave us a map to our sleeping room which bore no resemblance whatsoever to the layout (such as it was) of the hotel. We followed the directions of the smiling man. Hallways turned in upon hallways. Room numbers rose and fell in no discernable order. We arrived at a dead-end. Logically, our room should have been beyond the wall, but we were unable to find the secret door.

Continuing to traverse the hotel, we passed room after identical room, all with numbers that bore no resemblance at all to the number passed to us by the smiling man. We began to fear that the smiling man was part of a sinister plot to ensure that congoers could become lost



forever in the twisting hallways ("Oh he never returned, no he never returned . . .").

As we collapsed from exhaustion, we found that the numbers on a door in front of us mysteriously corresponded to the number on our keycard holder. We tried the card in the door, trying to hold our tongues in the proper manner. Aha! Success! Our room had successfully come to us.

After a few moments of relaxation and unpacking, it came time to once again venture into the hallways of the hotel. Programming was beginning. The spirits of

Sarah Winchester were again at work. Each function room had two names; one a name that was reasonable for the room in question and the other that was imposed upon it by evil corporate jargon demons. As a means of keeping our very souls from being sucked into the demonic ether, we resolved to remember only the reasonable names. Smiling hotel employees tried to seduce us into thinking in the newspeak of the demonic names, but we resisted. It required a heroic effort.

Our first program item was in the Pool Courtyard (demonically called The Patio). As we held our BoF, smiling hotel mavens came through to take drink orders. Drinks available in function space! Clearly a Cthulian plot!

As we looked at the hotel we saw that it not only had infinite hallways, but infinite and contrasting styles of architecture meshed together. There were medieval cupolas with windows that to all appearances were located a scant three feet from the windows of rooms on

other, seemingly disconnected hallways. What a view that must have been!

Our next program item was located in a place known as Family Friendly. We soon discovered that there was no possible way to get there from here. While Family Friendly claimed to be on the second floor, no other part of the second floor could be found that connected to it. It was located in the hidden hallway, and required the use of the Secret Elevator.

The parties were listed as being on the third floor. The only question in our minds at this point was "Which third floor?" The Mystery of the hotel continued.

Thus ended our first day at BayCon 2007. It was clear: the spirits of Sarah Winchester live on in San Mateo.

**Randy Smith** IS A REGULAR WRITER FOR THE BAYCON FANZINE IN AN HOUR. OFFER HIM A COOKIE



**Jean Martin**, aka Leia #2 here. Winning Best in Show for Workmanship and Performance at the Masquerade last night was quite a thrill. After months of sewing and rehearsing, our actual performance seemed like it a blur. It went so fast! All I remember was rushing on stage and the audience laughing and clapping along. It was a lot of fun. Winning was, as they often say (but true), is icing on the cake. The Masquerade went really smoothly this year. Kudos to the organizers. There wasn't a long wait backstage and for the results. See you all next year!!!

The Actual **Panel** Write-up  
by

## **Moshe Zadke**

So you want to start your own fanzine. Maybe you have a huge ego, maybe you have what you think is a good idea. Maybe you just yearn for a thankless job of bugging people to write, to hand it in in time, and to be much maligned. After all, don't we all?

It can be intimidating to start a fanzine. Where do you start? What will you do? You can choose to go for the scattershot, try everything and hope something will stick. You can try to hone your skill. But honestly, honing skill needs some skill to hone, and that is a rare commodity.

It is easy to get contributors -- beg, bribe and threaten people. Bribing works better than begging. Prime currency for bribes is food and booze, we all love those. Threatening works better than either, but requires having a way to blackmail your victims. Know them, know their weak spots, and let out your inner evil overlord. Know that the first few issues will be crap. Quite possibly, the next few issues will also be crap. Keep at it, and try to find your voice.

Listen to people talking about writing, and pounce on them demanding material. You want to get writers from different backgrounds -- throw a wide net, and tap into the community you know. Throw titles at people, they are always good hooks for articles, and can be made at a rate of 10/minute when you get experienced. Gather a good crew around you -- editors, proofreaders, layout specialists as well as writers.

Get photographs, and get a photograph editing software. Photoshop is the 800lb gorilla, but the MS Photo Editor (or, if you want to stay away from the evil empire, try the GIMP). If you need clipart, your primary one-stop shop should be DeviantArt.com.

Getting permission is good -- again, the beg/bribe/threaten strategy is your friend.

Inspiration: efanzines.com is always a good resource. It's nice to start there, it's a good place to get ideas (and, of course, steal writers). However, there is something irreplaceable about something physical with ink put on dead trees

which cannot be imitated with electrons hitting glassy surfaces. There are also good physical 'zines to inspire you -- PLOKTA for the glossy covers, and Banana Wings for the high quality content.

Financing with ads can be done, but is rare, and not trivial. In any case, you do want to avoid putting an all-ad fanzine.

The deadlines are important, but are hard to keep, especially when you're compelled. While waiting for the deadline, or the content -- whichever comes first, remember that the most important thing is to be repetitive and waste time. Cheating, also, is a prime ingredient of fanzine publishing.

Different issues call for different length. It is popular to find one or two issues to be in-depth covered in 10K word articles, and get the half-column articles to connect them (together with the pictures, photographs and any other space-fillers).

Always remember: you might lose money on every issue, but you'll make it up in word volume.

Moshe Zadka

<http://moshez.livejournal.com>

**Moshe Zadke** IS THAT GUY  
OVER THERE. DON'T SPOOK HIM!



# Respect Your Elders!



## OLD SKOOL, Bitches!!!

*© 2011 Ed Green*

### **Heroes by Ed Green**

I never intended to be a superhero.

And, to this day, I still can't believe that I am one. But my denial doesn't change the fact that I can do things that normal people can't. And I seem to be running into others with abilities that are, pardon the phrase, 'far beyond those of mortal man'.

And, it's not like I'm one of the top tier heroes. Super strength and endurance to match. It suits me, since I do better with solving the problem by swinging things. Fists, cars, small zoo animals, stuff like that.

Which makes this adventure tough. There are a lot of strange things going on, and not much I can swing at.

At least one person is stealing the powers (and body parts, ick!) of the other supers.

The usual government conspiracy is involved, playing all sides against each other, with the real purpose unknown to those of us involved. And perhaps even unknown to the government.

Plus, we have someone who can travel in time.

I hate time travelers! They always show up at the **right** time, and do the **right** thing. Of course, what they do isn't always helpful to you at the moment. And, there's that damn pesky rule of theirs that they can't 'muck up the time line'!

Last year – well, last year for me – I was in the middle of a fight with about three dozen grunts from Doctor Republic. I wasn't doing all that well. Holding my own, maybe. The room was a mess, with walls missing and the floor about ready to collapse.

Suddenly, there was a flash of light, and someone was standing there. He (she?) was wearing some high tech costume and just crackling with electricity. They looked around, saw one thug lying on the ground and ran over to him.

It pulled a purple feather out of its belt, hot glued it to the thugs backside and yelled "Aha! The future is saved" and disappeared in another flash of light.

Huh?

Damn it, could you at least stay long enough and tell me why you had to do that. I

don't need all the details, just something. He was going to mate with an alien and create an evil race of superman. If he wasn't laughed out of the Thugs Union, he'd end up starting WWII. Maybe he made a pass at your sister in 20 years. Please! Something!

And last night, it happened again.

I was chasing down a lead at a local science fiction convention. Which is fine. Its one of the few places where I can wear my costume and not feel like it makes me look fat.

So, there I am walking down a crowded hallway, and suddenly, everything freezes. I look around and all I see are people frozen in mid-action. Walking, talking, drinking. All stopped and there's those two in the corner who really should be taking that action to a room. Or at least the stairwell. And, since it's all now freeze frame...

Oh, the things I'll see in my mind in the coming years.

And I get all hyped up. Is this an attack? Is the villain coming back?

Then from behind me, I hear a voice.  
"Ed?"

I turn around and it's Chris Garcia.  
"Chris?"

"Listen, I can't stay long. I've come from the future. If I stay, I'll..."

"Mess up the timeline. Yeah. Right. I got that."

"No need to be cranky about it!"

"So, give me the clue and get out and keep the timeline safe."

"If you'd act like a human being, I'd tell you about that costume you're considering is a..."

"GET ON WITH IT!"

"Okay!" He got a very serious look on his face and lightly tugged on his beard. He leaned over and began.

"You need to find me. Today."

"But you're here."

"No, I mean the past me."

"Huh? Oh, you mean the you that's living today?"

"Yeah!"

"What's the message?"

He told me.

I looked at him for a long moment.

"I'm not sure that I can tell you something like that."

He shouted "You have to! You have no choice!"

He then turned and started to walk away.

I was going to let him go. I knew the rules, I knew how this part of the superhero game worked.

But I couldn't. I couldn't let this one slide. I ran after him and grabbed his arm. I pulled him around and held him in place. Not hard for me.

"Why? Tell me why!"

"I can't"

"You can!"

"The timeline..."

"SCREW THE BLOODY TIMELINE! TELL ME!"

Chris stared at me and the glanced around.

"Can you keep this between us?"

I nodded.

"I'm serious, this is important. If this gets out, not only will it screw up the timeline,



but people will come looking for me. Not the past me, but this me.”

“I promise!”

“Well, last night, I was at the Worldcon...”

“Which one?”

“Never mind. But trust me, the cholera shots will be a good idea. Anyway, I was there in the fanzine lounge and... well...”

“What?”

Chris pulled out a rolled up stack of papers, and handed it to me. I glanced down and saw the cover, which was a picture of Chris, wearing a cheerleader’s costume.

“What the hell?”

“Find me, find me and tell me this

- ‘Wear a Cheerleader’s Costume, Save the world!’

“How the Hell will \*that\* save the world?”

He looked down at the ground and shuffled his feet a bit.

“I can’t tell you that.” He turned to go and then stopped. “But, I can tell you one thing.”

“What is that?”

“Sometimes, these “fanzines in an hour” panels can get way out of hand!”

**Ed Green** AND I HAVE THIS THING. I CAN’T REALLY TALK ABOUT IT...



FANZINE **Review** COLUMN  
BY  
PETER SULLIVAN

Science Fiction Five Yearly 12 – Nov 2006  
(Lee Hoffman, Geri Sullivan, Randy Byers)

When I first became active in science fiction fandom in the summer of 2005 (yes, just too late to make a last-minute booking for the Glasgow Worldcon), I set myself several targets, just for the fun of it, you know. I wanted to see if I could win the FAAn Award for Best New Fan. This proved a non-starter in a year when The Drink Tank was just beginning its juggernaut-like progress, viciously scything down issue numbers at a rate never before seen. I also wanted to finish behind Lloyd Penney in the letterhack award, which I duly did, although (since Robert Lichtman beat Lloyd) this meant being 3rd not 2nd.

And I wanted to get my name well enough known that I could get on to the mailing list for the hobby institution that was Science Fiction Five Yearly – although my instinct was that this was going to be more likely for the 2011 edition rather than 2006. As it turned out, this last ambition actually proved to be the easiest, mainly I suspect through the good offices of SFFY sub-editor Randy Byers.

The electronic version of SFFY is available on efanazines.com, at <http://efanazines.com/SFFY/index.htm> But if you can get a chance to look at the paper version, I would recommend it. It’s produced on old-fashioned off-white fibretone paper, and done as multi-colour mimeography (using electrostencil) from DTP originals. As someone who has cranked out his fair share of barely-readable mimeography over the years, I have to say that the production quality of this issue matches anything that could be produced with a

colour laser printer – although, to be fair, I believe that some of the pages, including the awe-inspiring bacover, are colour laser prints.

The roll-call of article writers this issue, as with previous issues of SFFY, is pretty much a roll-call of fandom itself, with people like Ted White, rich brown, Andy Hooper, Gray Charnock and a certain Nalrah Nosille (whoever that might be), amongst others.

But the stand-out article for me is the piece by Claire Brialey, entitled “It was Twenty Years Ago Today.” At one level, it’s a simple tale of how Claire realised that the bar chosen for the one-day mini-convention to announce the results of the 2006 Europe-to-Norteamerica TAFF race was also the same bar that she, as a nervous teenager, had made her first contact with fandom via ZZ9-Alpha, the Hitchhikers’ Guide to the Galaxy Fan Club. However, it’s also a good platform for a series of James Bacon stories, which are always entertaining. And Claire also looks forward to



the future, pointing out that the oft-lamented “greying of fandom” is not a universal phenomena – there are young fans out there if you look. She wonders which of them will be writing for the 2011 issue of SFFY.

Sadly, the answer to this has since proved to be none of them. Lee died earlier this year (2007), and Geri and Randy took the – undoubtedly correct – decision that, without its editor emeritus, SFFY should cease publication with this issue.

Oh, and for those of you for whom 5 years is just too fast, there was apparently a fanzine called Science Fiction Fifty Yearly published by Bob Tucker and Robert Bloch in November 1957. Sadly, Bob Tucker’s death last year means that we won’t now be getting a second issue of this.

**Peter Sullivan** IS THE REASON I AM RUNNING FOR TAFF. THAT’S RIGHT EUROPE...YOU CAN BLAME HIM!

POORLY CONCEIVED  
**Awkward** SILENCE  
WAS THE **BayCon** 2007  
FANZINE IN AN HOUR WHICH,  
MIRACULOUSLY TOOK MORE  
THAN AN **Hour**. CHRIS GAR-  
CIA EDITIED IT **with** ARTI-  
CLES FROM **Ed** GREEN, **Pe-**  
**ter** SULLIVAN, **Randy** SMITH,  
**Jean** MARTIN, **Moshe** ZA-  
DKE AND **Me**. THESE THINGS  
HAPPEN

ART IS FROM ROBERT ‘BOB’  
HOLE (PAGES 2, 4 AND 8), GEN-  
EVIEVE COLLONGE (PAGE 5),  
JASON SCHACHAT (PAGE 7  
AND THAT AWESOME COVER)  
AND DEREK MCCAWE (PAGE 3).