

The Drink Tank Issue 176

This time, the cover is from Brianna SpaceKat! It's very much the kind of thing that I love to run. You might wanna check out her site www.spacekat.org

WorldCon is coming. That should be striking fear in my heart. This is the first time I've got a real role at a WorldCon, running the Fanzine Lounge, but it's also a WorldCon where I've gotta be raising funds for TAFF (No Auction, though, since there was no way I could get auction items from Sunnyvale to Denver without having to pay an arm and a leg) and I've got a few panels and there's the Hugos that I'm presenting at and a FanEds dinner that Joe Major is putting together that The Lovely and Talented Linda and I will be going to. There's also running the Lounge that will be something of a challenge, but not that bad.

The Lounge will feature an honest-to-Ghod mimeo machine. We'll be auctioning it off to support TAFF in a Silent Auction. That'll be fun. I submitted an article that'll be used in the zine they're doing with the machine. I even managed to get David Thayer, aka Teddy Harvia, to do the art for it! That was a good get!

So, here's my traditional look at

my schedule and what it means!

***Fan Funds: Past, Present & Future
Thursday at 11:30am.***

This is an obvious one. I'll be pushing Teh Awesum Fan Fund and talking about the way we'll be working the Funds for years to come. I'll be pushing the electronic side, especially not mailing out reports if it can be avoided. I'm also going to talk a lot about the smaller Funds...and maybe push John Coxon's Eastercon Fund concept that he said he should start to bring one American (ME) over to Eastercon every year. I'm not against it!

The others on the panel are Steve and Sue Francis, the reigning DUFF administrators, and my pal Guy Lillian. He's a good dude.

***Fans of the Future: The Alternative to the Greying of Fandom
Thursday 2:30pm***

I always find it kinda weird that I'm considered to be one of the young guys. As far as the Fans of the Future goes, there are a lot of us. There's me, to a degree, and Espana and a few others in the US, but when I think of the next Gen, I'm thinking of John Coxon, Persephone Hazard, Flick, and a few others. Oh yeah, there's a bunch of

folks who have taken to Con-Running in their younger, more vulnerable days, but I don't know them very well.

This could be an interesting panel or it just could be a thing that's not overly exciting. I mean, sitting around talking about the next generation of Awesum is fine, but it's nothing compared to having them sitting around the table and talking about how awesome they are! THE panel is me, Jared Dashoff, who I've never met, Matt Mishalak, who I've never met, Robert Hyot, who I've never met, and Robert Marshall, who I've never met.

We Pick The Panel: The Audience Picks the Topic

Friday, 11:30am

OK, this could be awesome or it could be a disaster. I have no clue who's on the panel, and that's what's key to this one. I'm pretty sure I'll be able to do this one pretty well. It's a little like the 2 Minute Warning panel I did at Eastercon that turned out to be so much fun. I'd love it if the others were folks like David Howell, Tadao, or the like. What I have is a different matter. There's Jay Lake, Connie Willis, Greg Bear and me. One of these things is not like the others...

The Hugos Reception and Ceremony

Since I have no chance at winning one of these things, this is really going to be a fun time for me. If I



thought I had a chance, I'd probably be a nervous idiot. This time, I only have to worry about presenting a Hugo, which is much easier. I'll be doing one of the Artist Hugos (and it would have been so cool to give one to Frank, but I'm not sure who'll win this time) and I'm hoping it's the Pro Artist and my man Phil Foglio wins it.

Working with Science and Science Fiction Museums

Sunday, 10am

This should be a decent one, though I've always wanted to do a Museum of the Future panel. There's a lot to talk about in that area. It's a big panel, but it features my good buddy Bob Hole on the panel and that's enough for me!



In very sad news, on the 29th, Ann Green passed away. Her husband, Steve Green, is one of the Drink Tank's regular columnists and an all-around good guy. I'm re-printing a part of my TAFF report here that covers one of my favourite memories of my trip: the meal that Ann cooked for me when I stayed with them.

I got there so early that I didn't want to bother Steve for at least another hour. I decided a walk was in order and I dragged my suitcase with me and took a leisurely tour of Solihull by foot. I made a large circle of the Town Centre and found that it was a lovely time. I managed to get myself nice and tired and then I called Steve to come and grab me. He did and we took off to Green Acres, the home of Steve and Ann.

It was a lovely little place and my room was at the top of the stairs. That's been a theme so far on this trip. I was happy to say that it was a small, clean and perfect room for what I was looking for. I happily set my stuff down there and Steve and I chatted while Ann made dinner. The smell of the place was amazing. I knew from the moment I entered the house that this was going to be one of those great home meals that I so seldom get my mouth around. Steve and I talked movies and fanzines and so on for a good while. until dinner was served.

And Dear Jesus, let me eat like this again in my lifetime.

The meal started with French Onion Soup. I love soup and I love French Onion Soup. This was, without question, the best I've ever had. Sweet and tangy and a lovely piece of

bread with cheese and just so flavorful that I had no idea how I'd ever manage to eat the regular stuff ever again. I gulped it down and was amazed. The onions were the magic. They were perfectly prepared and more than I could ever have expected. I was happy to have had it. It was already the best thing I'd eaten in the UK.

And then more conversation over a decent bit of wine. The second course arrived and it was simplicity itself. Chicken with Roast Vegetables. The chicken was great, slightly tastier than the specialty ones we get at Whole Foods in the States, and the meat was perfectly done. The vegetables included a wonderful cherry tomato vine, roasted whole, sweet onions, brilliant red and yellow peppers and mushrooms. It was heaven. This was easily the best meal I'd had in England and probably among the three or four best homemade meals I've ever eaten. In fact, it ranks higher than Thanksgiving with the Menzie family in Belmont, MA in 1998, Higher than Roast Garlic and 40 Clove Chicken we did while watching Iron Chef in 1997, and just about even with Linda's amazing Beef Stew. It was incredible, and it was followed, about an hour later, by a cheese course that was equally exceptional.

I wish I had more of a chance to get to know her, but two days in Solihull was all I could manage. I will always have that memory, and wish I could have had more chances to get to know her. Condolences to Steve and the rest of Ann's family & friends.

**Letter Graded Mail
sent to garcia@computerhistory.org
by my gentle Readers**

Let us start with Lloyd Penney!

Dear Chris:

Two more issues of the Drink Tank, one more loc from me. That seems to be the exchange rate these days. Here come comments on issues 174 and 175.

Wow, the US-Canadian exchange rate hasn't been that favourable in a while!

Great cover to it...cats in space? I plan to monitor this steampunk convention around Halloween...there will be a similar event coming up next year here. It will be interesting to see what happens. I've also heard about a Québec steampunk event in September of this year via Facebook. We're also doing our research about steampunk costumes, and it shall be interesting to see what we can come up with. Haven't costumed since the late 80s.

It should be a good time. It's weird that it's taken the better part of 25 years for a SteamPunk fandom to grow out of the writing.

I look forward to the American presidency being redeemed by Barack Obama, but I am also afraid that he's

going to be assassinated, which will plunge America and the world into more crises, and especially American into a racial war. Please, let me be wrong...

I've got the same fear. I want Obama to be President, but there's just a bit of JFK in him that worries me.

My loc...work is wonky. Just let me win the lottery...Yvonne's contract came to an end at Diageo, so she's looking for work. However, I have now found a day-time part-time job, and I am being trained to be the new membership and publications clerk at the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. It's crazy time, but at least if I can't find a full-time job, two part-times will have to do for right now.

Good for you! No good for Yvonne. Give her my best and I'm sure she'll end up with something soon.

Snakes! You do the rest of the Indiana Jones line... Snakes are neat. I've been near covered by boa constrictors before,

and I know snakes love the water. Around here, we get mostly garter snakes, little guys, while Massasauga rattlers are not far into the bush, and they're poisonous.

Rattlers are tough snakes. No fun usually.

Not all the reports on the Vegas

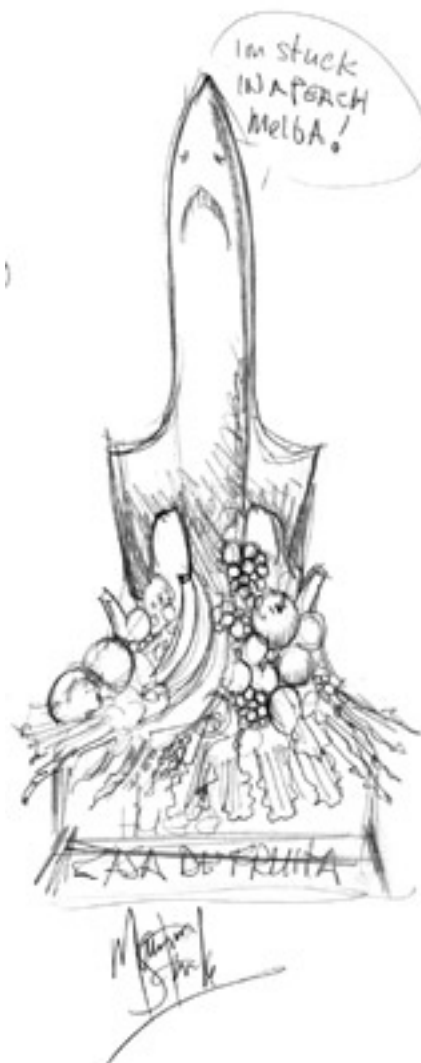
Westercon were positive, but I'm glad you had a good time. If just over 300 people went to the con, a regional convention which draws large numbers, or is supposed to, does Westercon have a future outside of the big cities with the big fannish populations?

That's the big question. Maybe it's a small con waiting to admit it's a small con (in the vein of Midwestcon) or some such. Time, and me convincing folks that's the case, will tell.

175...Ah, someone's on ICanHasCheezburger.com. Great stuff lately.

Apparently that Breakdancing Panda thing was less than a day old!

I can sympathize



with Lee Lavell on the condition of her eyes. I can tell that a cataract is forming in my right eye, based on slight changes in my vision, and I expect to have to have another operation, sometime in 2009.

Ouch! That's not good. I've gotta work on my vision too. I've lost a fair bit of clarity in my right, which is worrying.

Yeah, these annoying Canadians...with wrestling, what are you going to do? Much of the WWE started as Maple Leaf Wrestling in Toronto, with Sweet Daddy Siki and the like...

Well, at least Siki has slowed down. He was wrestling a few years ago about 100 dates a year...in his 70s!

All done, and off it goes. Preview of SF/SF...you're presenting a Hugo in Denver? How lucky can you get? Wish I could be there to heckle! Hope you're having a good weekend, I sure am, and Denver is in just over a week? Do us all proud, and see you soon. A Denvention report is eagerly awaited.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

I'll have a full report for ya'll just as soon as I recover.

Thanks, Lloyd!

And now, Mr. Eric Mayer!

Chris,

The heavy metal doom panda on the cover is pretty neat. Not exactly the same feeling as those lolpandas inside. Maybe it needs a caption. "I can Has Apocalypse" Hmmm...I doubt a cat could spell apocalypse. I love LolCats, though. They crack me up every time. Have you seen the LolCat translation of the Bible?

No, but it must be awesome!

And that comic strip looks promising. Love the animated logo on the Dork Knight's costume. Poor Bat Man. He was always my favorite but he gets a lot of stick. I recall Mark Martin had a comic hero called Gnat Rat who reminded me of a Bat Man evolved on the same world as Ren and Stimpy.

You can't make jokes about Superman, he's too much the symbol of good and light in this country, but Batman's a psycho (I believe it was Lech Walesa who once said "Batman is super-spiffing cool!") and you can make jokes about psycho. I love what Dann's done with the strip (and has turned it into full pages after the first 20) and I'm ultra-pleased to be able to run them!

So even in wrestling people compete at different levels. I can see how they might be more human, less polished, less drug aided and gym molded, particularly if they weren't doing it full time. (Or are they?) A lot



of people for unknown reasons develop interests that consume all their time and effort, no matter that it makes no real sense, financial or otherwise (like me and writing). I like that sort of fanaticism in a person.

Very few indy guys wrestle full-time. The few that do tend to travel a lot. There was a joke back in the 1990s: How do you know if you're a full-time indy wrestler? You died in a car crash. That's actually a sad truth, as a lot of guys would drive all over the place, and while steroids and such aren't as big in the Indies, meth, coke and booze are huge and that don't help none.

Glad you saw that rattler and not me. I don't like insects, but smallish spiders are tolerable. Mary and I never kill them. We figure when they're in the house they are controlling worse pests. The exceptions are the spiders the size of my palm -- honestly -- that we see every so often. One I had to beat to death with a shoe.

I try not to kill insects...except for ants. Fuck those guys!

Anyway, hard to believe you would every find yourself stalled with your writing. I hate to say it but have you got out that dipstick lately and tested your inspiration level? (Did that sound right? Hey, it's late!)

Best,
Eric

Well, I seem to have gotten my groove back...at least a little!

Always good to hear from ya, Eric.

That's it from here. The Games issue should be done by Wednesday and that'll lead to a short break until I come back with my WorldCon report. I'll be posting a few other things for folks to read on my Scribd.com account (johnnyeponymous). Art this time from Brianna SpaceKat, Mo Starkey, Frank Wu and Dann

Tales of the DORK KNIGHT



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