



Chris Garcia's

DRINK TANK

Yes, that's a Mo Stakey cover. Why do you ask?

It feels at least slightly weird to write about one of my other zines in *The Drink Tank*, but here goes. *Journey Planet* won the Nova for Best Fanzine. My long-time readers will remember me saying that if I were to win any award, the one that would be the coolest to have would be the Nova. There are a bunch of reasons, the biggest being that I am technically not eligible. The Nova is for British fans, but since *Journey Planet* is a US-UK co-production, like *Dancing with the Stars*, technically I'm eligible. I will forever be saying that I'm the only American Nova Winner (or sharer, I guess)

And this year, we won!

And, of course, I wasn't there when we won. I've won a total of three awards in my lifetime; a local Emmy, a FAAn Award (for Best New Fan) and a Nova and I wasn't anywhere near where they were being awarded. In fact, only once was I even in the same country!

I have to say thanks to just about everyone, starting with the Lovely & Talented Linda! She's been an absolute wonder and without her, well, I might have been able to do it, but it wouldn't have been nearly as much awrsum! Then there's Evelyn and Genevieve, who provided much material for me to write about. More directly, I have to thank Pete Young, our Guest Editor who is a million times better than me at the entire layout thing and the issues that he's done are the best we've had.

And, of course, Claire and James. James is fearless, willing to ask anyone for anything, which allows us to get some great material from very excellent people. Claire has a bum deal: she

does the heavy lifting that allows me and James to be me and James and she gussies it up into something fantastic. It's gotta be rough and I can not be more thankful to her because, obviously, we wouldn't have won this thing, and probably wouldn't even have been able to keep doing the zine!

Of course, there's all those great people who gave us stuff to use that lead to it being such a fantastic zine to work on. Taral Wayne, Mike Perschon, John Scalzi, Paul McAuley, Alistair Reynolds, Cheryl Morgan, Jean Martin, Abby Blackfox, Niall Harrison, James Shields, John Coxon, Martin Easterbrook, Steve Green, Steven Silver, Dave Langford, Mo Starkey, Scott Aleric, Ditmar, Dave Hardy, Pádraig Ó Méalóid, Michelle Guererro, Brad Foster, Emma King, John Neilsen-Hall, Mike Meara, Lloyd Penney, Farah Mendlesohn, Tony Keen, Alan Moore, Cousin Clare Garcia, Diana Glycer, Genevieve, Peter Sagal of Wait, Wait, Don't Tell Me, John Hertz, Glenn Glazer, Steve Sneyd, Maura McHugh, John Purcell, Jay Crasdan, Jon Courtenay Grimwood, Liam Proven, Joe Nolan, Barbara Haddad-Johnson, Warren Buff, Steve Jeffery, Adrienne Foster, Flick, and so many, many more!

I find it hilarious that *Journey Planet* exists at all. It all started with the idea of doing a Fanzine in an Hour at Eastercon to 2008 while I was on my TAFF trip. It was a fun hour, but it lead to many more hours of laying out (and one of my all-time favorite quotes - Mike Scott: This is slowly spiraling out of control. Me: Whaddya mean 'slowly?') and I hadn't quite realised that James had figured we should turn it into a regular zine. It turned out very nicely indeed, and from the first issue, which was a re-imagining of that

Fanzine in an Hour, I knew the combination was something special. I especially loved getting to work with Peter Young on the 1984 issue, and then the Alternate History Issue, which was awesome beyond belief. The one issue that was listed on the Novacon Website as being eligible was issue 6, which was the City of London issue, with the back section look at fandom's more uncomfortable convention matters. It was a powerful issue in more ways than one.

It's a great zine to be a part of, and I'm looking forward to being a part of it for a long, long time!

Of course, it doesn't hurt that the Nova has an awesome little statue that I'll be bringing about with me!

OK, now, back to the Drink Tank!



What to do When the Chips Are Down

Taral Wayne

The other day my toilet exploded. Not in a huge, spectacular fireball, like in the movies. But there was a bang and the chips flew in different directions.

There were no casualties. Nonetheless, it was very disconcerting, since I was sitting on it at the time.

At this point, I should mention that it was a wooden toilet seat and cover. I had enjoyed the warm, organic pleasure of natural wood for many years, ever since coming across a discarded seat in a trash heap. No more plastic for me. Cold one day, sweaty the next, plastic seats are for public washrooms; not the home. The old seat had been assembled with care, the wood fitting tightly and polished luxuriously, like the dashboard of a 1934 Duesenberg. But after years of sitting pleasure, the brass work turned as green as jade and had corroded through. My improvised hinges came to naught, so I had to buy a replacement. \$40 was a lot of money, though, even for quality.

Wal-Mart's wooden seats were under twenty bucks. It showed. There were gaps between the wooden pieces that looked like the trench on the Death Star. I imagined nano-sized X-Wing Fighters peeling off and diving in. Despite the glaring imperfection, the replacement felt *almost* as good as the Rolls Royce of toilet seats that had previously given

me so much pleasure.

Until the day it exploded.



None of the pieces were broken, fortunately. The glue had simply failed and two pieces had come apart. They were tongue and groove type construction, and – with a little straightening – I was able to fit them together again. A new toilet seat was just about last on my list of things to spend money on, after all. I only had Elmer's White Glue around the house, but I remembered from somewhere that carpenter's glue was pretty much the same thing. White glue dries quickly, but I let it sit for twelve hours, just to be sure. I figured I had no pressing need for it any sooner. Next day, I removed and replaced the brass brackets. They had been poorly positioned, and didn't fit over the ends of the tube very well. Under duress, the tube sometimes slipped out of place and the hinge became unhinged.

It was finally time to bolt the seat to

the bowl. That's when I discovered that one of the plastic nuts that held the bolts had cracked. You could tighten it so far, but no farther. On turn more, and it slipped and was looser than before. The result was a toilet seat that shimmied from side to side while you sat. Most unsatisfactory. I needed to buy a new pair of nuts.

No jokes about that, please.

There are hardware stores, and there are hardware stores. Some are Home Improvement Centers, and are very little smaller than the flight deck of an aircraft carrier. They have so many rows of folding garden chairs, lawn hose, sprinklers, plastic tubing, copper pipes, electrical wire, rubber mats, circular saw blades, drill bits, screws, nails, sandpaper, tarpaper, taps, sockets, brackets, chain saws, routers, gasoline generators, propane torches, picture frames, bathroom tiles and house paint that 26 letters of the alphabet are insufficient. Footsore, the consumer wanders from aisle AAT to KBB in search of a "slip-fastening, circular Babbitt clamp." Or is it an "adjustable screw-grip, stay collar" he wants? Nor is he sure whether 7/8 inch is the same as 17.5mm. (It isn't.) The hired help doesn't know either and only waves you in the vague direction of Sector G, North-Northeast corner of the complex. She was hired last week.

Instead, I went to the neighborhood hardware, and happily discovered that hardware stores were *meant* to be old fashioned. A guy in a red shirt, who had run the store since 1966, looked in some boxes and gave me a single, chrome plated nut. Cost? Ten cents. Cash on the barrelhead.

I twirled the nut home with my fingers, then finished the job of tightening with a kitchen knife. Perfect fit. And a perfect sit.

Now, whenever nature calls, I can relax on the job with a sense of security, and leisurely browse through the collection of exotic catalogs I keep in the bathroom for that purpose. An antique, hand painted, hand carved mahogany replica of the U.S.S. Olympia? Only \$1999? Too costly, even if it was made in 1919. A table lamp in the shape of a woman's leg, as seen in *A Christmas Story*? Tempting, at only \$49.95, but a *shade* tacky. How about an ex-Soviet diving helmet for only \$899? Naw... I think I've had enough brass for the time being.

