

Virtual Tucker Hotel



Issue Twenty-Five

<http://www.ustream.tv/channel/novacon>

<http://tuckerverse.livejournal.com>

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VTH is primarily an electronic fanzine, available on <http://www.efanzines.com>. Paper copies of this fanzine do exist, however, and are available for the fannish usual.

Thanks to: Bill Mills (“FanLounge”), without whom the original Virtual Fan Lounge would never have happened. And to Kat Templeton and Chris Garcia for all their help setting up the arrangements from Baycon.

Member fwa.A Startling Press Production. Today is Sunday 1st November 2009.

Looking Back

Over the Memorial Day Weekend, The Virtual Fan Lounge dropped in at Baycon, the annual regional convention held in the San Francisco Bay Area. We spent two hours on both the Saturday and Sunday lunchtime in the Fanzine Lounge with our genial host Chris Garcia, talking to various people who wandered by. On the Monday, we were dreadfully unfannish and actually went to a panel. This was on the perennial topic of “The Hugos – Do They Matter?” The panel was moderated by Chris Garcia, with fellow panellists Randy Smith, Kevin Standlee and Milt Stevens contributing to the discussion.

Our thanks go to everyone involved in helping to make the webcast happen, but especially to Kat Templeton, who managed to fit several hours of webcasting for us over the weekend around a very heavy gophering schedule.

Looking Forward

Our next series of events in The Virtual Fan Lounge will focus around Novacon, the annual convention in the English Midlands, which celebrates its 39th year this year from a new venue in Nottingham.

Novacon takes place over the weekend of Friday 13th to Sunday 15th November, 2009.

We are still building our exact schedule for the weekend, but will definitely several hours of live panel coverage from the convention, mainly focused on the Saturday. We will post a 'definitive' schedule just before the convention – plus any updates during the convention – on the web at:

<http://tuckerverse.livejournal.com>

Caveat: All of these plans are subject to us getting a sufficiently good internet connection to be able to stream video live from the convention. However, assuming everything works, we will be aiming to stream video from several panels and other events.

Joining the Virtual Consuite

To use the chat-room for Novacon, just go to either our livejournal community at <http://tuckerverse.livejournal.com> or the actual ustream show page at <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/novacon>

On the left hand side of the page is the live video feed – replaced by a slide show when there isn't anything happening. On the right is the text chat-room. You can see what everyone else is typing in the top window, and add your own contribution in the smaller box at the bottom.

You will be assigned an initial user name in the format “ustreamer-12345.” If you'd rather change this – to your real name, livejournal name, or whatever – you can do this by clicking the “Sign Up” link at the top to register for free. Some people have been slightly put off by the amount of information that the registration form asks for, which I can empathize with. But registration is entirely optional – you can simply stay as “ustreamer-12345” if you prefer.

Alternatively, we have discovered another way of changing your screen name without having to register. Simply type in the chat window

`/nick your_chosen_name`

The main constraints on this seem to be that:

a) Your chosen name must be one word (i.e. including hyphens or underlines, but not spaces)

b) If your chosen name is already in use somewhere else on ustream, it will assume that you are trying to log in as this user, and you'll get a login box asking for your password. We've found from experience that an amazing number of unlikely user names appear to have already been registered. Try adding a random number to the end of your chosen name to make it unique.

Technical gubbins

You will probably need at least a low-spec broadband connection to watch the video stream. (Dial-up users in the past have reported that the video gets very choppy without a broadband connection – but the text chat room still works.)

If feed goes down, this can either be a problem at your end, a problem at our end, or (much rarer) a problem with ustream. The first thing to try is to click the refresh button on the screen. If this doesn't work, let us know in the text chat. If several people tell us this all at once, we'll deduce that the problem is likely at our end, and see if we can restart the feed. We know how frustrating this can be, so rest assured we'll do all we can to fix it.

If you are using an internet connection at work or college, be aware that the chat room uses port 6667, which is often blocked by work or college firewalls. Mainly because systems administrators know that it is used by chat room software – so asking them to unblock it is unlikely to be successful! Home users should usually have no problem, however.

Chatroom Netiquette

Like most text chat on the internet, the pace in the chat room can be fairly fast and furious. But remember this is a semi-public forum, and please play nice. We do have the power to ban users, but I'm pleased to say that we have never had to use it.

Further Information

For more details about Novacon in general, see their website (now newly reclaimed from cybersquatters!) at:

<http://www.novacon.org/>

Art Credits:

Front Cover: Novacon logo, from the con website.