By Christopher Erickson
Managing Editor

I recently wrote about artistic license in interpreting source material or historical events. I have always believed that adaption of different media requires different rules for each media. Movies and television are a mostly visual medium, so everything has to be shown rather than explained through dialogue or the character motivations have to be boiled down to short vignettes or conversations. Books allow for lengthy character development and explanation since you can dive into a character’s mind with introspection of a character. Comic books mix the two with action depicted in the frame but also inner monologues and thoughts being shown. The different rules of media presentation make having to create unique versions a reality for new presentations of old material.

This also extends to shows that are a “rip-off” of another show. We have all enjoyed a number of reboots in recent years such as Christopher Nolan’s “Dark Knight” Batman, the reimaged “Battlestar Galactica” and recent “Star Trek” movies. We have also seen a number of movies, books and television shows that are remakes of other material. Everyone is aware of shows like “The Office” having a British version and an American version, “Game of Thrones” and the Song of Fire and Ice series being loosely based on the English War of the Roses and Star Wars being inspired by Akira Kurosawa’s “The Hidden Fortress.” Other examples are the Justice League and Avengers being based on the original superhero group Justice Society of America, “West Side Story” being a loose modern adaptation of “Romeo and Juliet” and both “A Fistful of Dollars” and “Yojimbo” being loosely based on “Red Harvest” by Dashiell Hammett. All of these examples are unique works and should be considered on their own merits and not rejected outright because it was inspired by a previous work.

A restrictive viewpoint would invalidate almost every work to ever have been made. Rock and roll music was inspired by blues, country, folk, jazz, pop standards and even classical music. Early critics of rock music dismissed it based on artistic merits saying it was so much noise. None of the arguments ever truly lashed out at the influenced sound as being a copy of previous material, but attacked the new composition of the previous sounds. Likewise, a movie such as “Clueless” would be dismissed as trash if it were held that any adaptation of Jane Austen’s “Emma” was worthless since it is just a pale imitation. The movie was judged on its own merits of acting, script, cinematography, directing and other artistic criteria rather than it being a “rip-off” of the original material.

We should all enjoy or disparage a piece of entertainment based on the singular presentation itself, not in comparison with the source material or “other” shows since the people who worked on it have strived to create unique entertainment.
This should be true for both an adaptation of a book into a movie or television show or comparing two similar entertainments such as “Star Trek: Deep Space Nine” and “Babylon 5.” I believe this should also extend to comparing sequels to the original movies.

In other news, I have been burning through episodes of “Once Upon A Time” and have enjoyed the show. I am looking forward to the next season [spoiler alert for the rest of this sentence] and can’t wait to see what they do with Neverland and the Little Mermaid. My hope is that they will eventually bring in Oz and Arthurian legends into the show as those are the only major public domain characters that have not been directly depicted (even though Lancelot was a central character in one of the episodes). Dracula would also be another good addition to the show along with some Slavic, Asian and Arabic tales and creatures like Baba Yaga, Japanese oni (demons) such as the tengu, and Aladdin.

Jean and I also went to see “No Man’s Land” by Harold Pinter starring Ian McKellen, Patrick Stewart, Billy Crudup and Shuler Hensley. It is nice to see people in roles that they are not famous for and get to see them as actors rather than as Magneto or Captain Picard.

Join our crew!
We are looking for writers to cover local events, conventions, fan groups and the fannish scene in general.
Contact Jean Martin at SFinSF@gmail.com
By Christopher Erickson
Managing Editor

The Greater Bay Area Costumers Guild (GBACG) held a Pirate Bonfire picnic last July 20 at Ocean Beach in San Francisco. We had one of the bonfire pits to ourselves. The weather was perfect for a bonfire as the sky was overcast and there was a breeze from the ocean. It made the fire wonderful and gave us an opportunity to cook food on spits and partake of pirate s’mores. People brought meat and vegetables to share along with cupcakes and other treats.

Since we had a large amount of firewood, people were asking to borrow some even though we threatened to make them walk the plank. Other people came up to us and wanted to take pictures with us or asked what we were doing.
Everyone's Got A Little Captain In Them by Christopher Erickson

Pirate Family by Christopher Erickson

Scurvy Dogs and Dog by Christopher Erickson

Seagull by Christopher Erickson
Eventually the fog rolled in and we had to pack up and ship back out for the night.

The GBACG routinely does events throughout the Bay Area in a range of prices with some inexpensive ones as picnics and gatherings. Check the website for details: gbacg.org.
By Jean Martin
Editor-in-Chief

Editor’s Note: What follows is my very interesting and informative interview with author and screenwriter Nick Sagan who was at the Nebula Awards last May 18 at the San Jose Hilton to accept an award for his father, the late Carl Sagan. In this interview, Nick talks about the influence his father has had on his life and career, how he wound up writing for “Star Trek,” his science fiction novels and future projects, his new baby, and his views on the future of mankind.

This is the first of four author interviews I did at the Nebulas. Stay tuned for our next three issues for the rest. If you missed my article about the Nebulas in our previous issue, you can find it at: www.efanzines.com/SFSF/SFSF143.pdf. Special thanks to Christopher Erickson for transcribing this interview from my recording.

Jean: I just have a few questions here for you and feel free to go on tangents. I just have basic questions but the more you elaborate the more I can ask further questions. So just feel free to go wherever you want. I would like to first of all start with the question about your father if you don’t mind. So how has your father’s work influenced you in your life or in your work or in your writing or in general?

Nick: Like so many people I am phenomenally influenced by the work that he did. He expanded my sense of the universe in a way that I don’t think anyone else could ever have done. He had such passion for learning and that is something he instilled in me. I grew up very lucky to have the kind of father
who you can ask any question and he doesn’t say “Look it up!” or “Don’t bother me!” or that kind of thing as so many parents do. He was always so willing to give of his time. “Why is the sky blue?” and the questions he didn’t know the answers to he would tell me that no one knows the answer for that yet but someday we’ll find out. He was so giving in that way. To see his extraordinary example of being able to inspire so many people. He led so many people to a path in sciences or science fiction, myself included in terms of science fiction.

Jean: Myself too.

Nick: We’re members of the same club, you know. I feel extraordinarily grateful and very lucky in that regard.

Jean: What do you think is the most important life lesson you learned from your father?

Nick: Oh, gosh, that is such a great question. I would say to always be willing to, well, there is a whole lesson of the scientific method, which is to treat things with skepticism and to employ a kind of humility that’s very important and at the heart of the scientific method in which you need to be open enough that no matter what you believe that you need to go to where the evidence leads. That’s true in terms of separating fact from fiction and even in terms of being a science fiction writer to pursue your craft in such a way where you need open minded enough where you need a kind of ego to create this science fiction world that you believe that other people are going to want to visit but at the same time you need to be open enough for other people to tell you what’s working and what’s not and sort of absorb that criticism to create the best work of fiction that you can. So both professionally in that regard and in terms of lessons in my regular life to just be willing to view the world with a kind of humility and to not accept arguments from authority but to look for the actual truth.

Jean: Do you personally have an interest in the sciences as well?

Nick: I do. I don’t have a science degree. I have to sometimes disabuse people of that idea because they assume “Well, your dad was a scientist!”

Jean: So what was your degree at UCLA?

Nick: In filmmaking and film and television. I will tell you my educational path. I was actually kind of not a great student for a while for a couple of reasons. One is that I had this extraordinary teacher in my dad and many of my other teachers suffered by comparison. Maybe that is unfair to them but I went to a lot of prep schools where it seemed to me there was more of an emphasis on rote memorization than actual learning. It’s just the opposite of what my dad taught. I sort of bumped around through school as an underachiever for a long time until I discovered a television show when I was a junior in high school. I saw this show and my mother likes to talk about how I walked out of my room with this nimbus of light around me.

Jean: Which one (show) was it?

Nick: It was Patrick McGoohan’s “The Prisoner” which I just absolutely loved. It was the first time and I don’t know why it never clicked for me before but I hadn’t realized you could create entertaining television that at the same time operated on an ethical level, a social level. Patrick McGoohan’s Catholicism informs it too. There’s a kind of thing where you can appreciate on the surface level but the deeper you would look, the more you would find. It just blew me away and I said that’s the kind of thing I want to do. Everyone said “That’s great Nick, but you’re failing high school.” So I wound up dropping out of high school and then I took my California Proficiency High School Exam, which is
just like the GED but in California, and I enrolled in Santa Monica College and wound up taking classes I wanted to take for the first time that I could remember and thrived there. I made the dean’s list and transferred to UCLA Film School, graduated summa cum laude, and I was going to go into the graduate program at UCLA but I’d written a screenplay that an agent sparked to and I was represented and I was off and running. That lead to my career at “Star Trek.”

Jean: Going back to “The Prisoner,” have you ever been to Portmeirion where they filmed the show?

Nick: It’s one of my bucket list checkmarks to go to Portmeirion. I’ve never been there. I’ve meet Patrick McGoohan. I was able to do it before he passed, which was extraordinary and I feel enormously lucky to have had that opportunity. I would so love to go to see where it was shot. I’ve never done that. I’d love to at some point make the time.

Jean: I went there five years ago and it is a lot of fun. Once you get to the beach you can do the whole scene.

Nick: Waiting for Rover to come out of the water.

Jean: Are you involved in the new “Cosmos” series that Neil deGrasse Tyson is doing?

Nick: Not directly. I was just there and able to see some of the footage that’s been done. It looks remarkable. I think it is going to be an amazing reboot. I’m not directly involved but that is what my stepmother, Ann Druyan, is doing. I’ve seen some footage of Neil and Neil was kind enough to appear in a documentary I did for the Science Channel last year about alien invasions. My dad is a hard act to follow but Neil, who’s been so great in so many things, just seems to keep getting better and better. The footage I have seen of him on the new “Cosmos” is just tremendous. I think it will be something really special.

Jean: We’re all looking forward to that. As you said, your father is a tough act to follow. I think science has advanced so much since then that it is time to do something more updated.

Nick: I think so and there is a whole new generation that isn’t aware of my dad the same way that my generation may have been. I think it’s really going to do a lot of good. We’re in such a time now that we need more focus on the sciences and we need to inspire more people, especially young people, and I think “Cosmos” will do that.

Jean: You said you had a documentary on alien invasions. Where was that shown?

Nick: That was shown last year on Science Channel.

Jean: Speaking of aliens, how do you feel that you’re the voice of children of planet Earth? Do you think anyone is going to receive your message and contact us?

Nick: I hope so. My parents, when I was six years old, plopped me down in front of a microphone and said “We’re making a sort of time capsule for potential extraterrestrials to encounter. What would you like to say?” So I said “Hello from the children of planet Earth” and that is now on the Voyager 1 and 2 golden record. It’s the English language representation and it’s this very meaningful part of my life because it’s this capture of my childhood when I was six years old and it’s sent off into space and it’ll survive most likely longer than anything you or I will ever know. Whether anyone ever discovers it I couldn’t say. I hope if they do they’re friendly.

Jean: I hope so too. Most movies seem to think otherwise.

Nick: That’s because it’s very hard to make an entertaining science fiction movie where there is no conflict and everyone gets along well.

Jean: You worked for Space.com for a while. How was that like?
Nick: That was an amazing experience. There were a lot of people there whom I still feel very close to. I was able to work with Sally Ride who invited me into the project. I never had an astronaut invite me to do anything before so it was a chance I jumped at. I had a very nice time there. It was right before the internet bubble at that time kind of burst so the company wasn’t fully sure what it wanted to be and it has gone through some permutations since then. I’m proud of the time I spent there and I wouldn’t trade it.

Jean: You’ve already talked about how you got into writing. Tell me more about when you wrote a screenplay.

Nick: It was kind of an amazing experience. I had written this script in a writing class. Richard Walter was the head of the writing program. He said to me one day, “Hey, Nick, do you mind if I show your script to an agent?” And I said “How dare you compromise my artistic integrity!” No, no, no. I said “That would be great!” I was very lucky. That agent read it and I gave it to him on a Friday and heard back from him on a Monday and I was represented immediately. That script, while it didn’t sell, got optioned to a production company and that company pursued it to hire me to adapt a very famous science fiction novel into a screenplay. That novel is actually “Ender’s Game.” That was back in the mid-90s and the book has been out since the 80s. There have been so many writers that have taken different cracks at it. I’m really thrilled that it’s finally going to be here and hopefully really good. I’m excited by the trailer. Even though my version of it remained in what they call “development hell,” off the strength of it I pitched to “Star Trek” and they liked the script so much they said why don’t take a crack at the teleplay and not just story that we’re buying from you. So I was able to write two episodes of “Star Trek: The Next Generation” and off the strength of that they hired me back for “Star Trek: Voyager.” Really, my career was off and running. I’ve had an odd career in that I’ve done a lot of different things from TV to novels to graphic novels to this documentary to a planetarium show, so I’ve been very lucky that I have been able to dip my toes in many different ponds.

Jean: Where is the planetarium show?

Nick: Chicago at the Adler Planetarium. They kicked of their “Deep Space Adventures” and they completely removed their old Zeiss projector and put in the most amazing new technology. At the time my show premiered it was the most advanced planetarium show in the world. I had the honor of writing the story for “The Searcher.” Other planetariums are developing similar technologies, they are looking to export it to different places but I don’t know if they have been able to do that yet.

Jean: Were you a “Star Trek” fan before you started writing for them?

Nick: To be able to have a show that you got something out of as a child and then give back to and help contribute to the mythology is a thrill. I’m very luck in that regard. I grew up watching the reruns of the old Kirk/Spock “Star Trek.” It’s one of the things that set me on my path. I remember just being astounded by “Mirror, Mirror,” the episode where Spock has the goatee and there is an evil Kirk. The idea that there are potentially parallel universes and all the possibilities of what doesn’t happen here might happen theoretically somewhere else just was such a creative explosion in my head of what the sense of what could be, I was hooked. I was a big “Star Trek” fan as a kid. When the opportunity came to write for it, I jumped at it.

Jean: That’s wonderful. Have you seen the new “Star Trek” movie?
Nick: I haven’t seen “Into Darkness” yet. I saw the first one, which was good. I have mixed feelings about it because it’s very effective. It’s a very entertaining movie. It’s a great movie particularly if you’re not a big hardcore “Star Trek” fan... you can get into it really easily. I sort of got myself tangled up on the canon because it involves sort of this time travel concept. I’ve written an episode of “Star Trek” in which there are time police from the future who go and try to stop the exact kinds of paradoxes that would happen in this kind of movie, so I was like “Where are those guys?” But that speaks more to me than the movie.

Jean: Everybody has their opinion on the new “Star Trek” reboot depending on how big a fan you were of the original, which is understandable.

Nick: I think it’s good for the brand in a way. I think the new one looks really interesting. I’m curious to see it.

Jean: I saw it Wednesday night.

Nick: How did you like it?

Jean: I liked the first one better. I think this one had too many explosions for me. There was a heart to the story but to me “Star Trek” isn’t about explosions, spaceship chases and such.

Nick: It’s a more cerebral show in a way. I’m with you.

Jean: Going to your novel writing, other than the trilogy you wrote, have you written any other novels?

Nick: I’ve written a graphic novel called “Shrapnel” for Radical Comics, and there is another piece I’m working on right now, and there are other novels I have in the works. But I have been slow to get them out of the gate. I’ve been recently distracted with other things. I just had a baby girl who’s been keeping me very busy. I don’t know how anyone gets any writing down with a tiny person around. She’s a delight and we were very lucky because we went into this a little bit later than most people do. We didn’t know if she was going to come out okay and she did and she is really wonderful.

Jean: That’s great. So this is your first child?

Nick: Yea.

Jean: And what’s her name.

Nick: Her name is Zoe. Zoe Hypatia. (Shows picture of Zoe).

Jean: She’s an astronaut in the making.

Nick: Yes.

Jean: My boss the other day sent me a link to this program that there starting that you can send people to Mars now. I think that is interesting. So things are moving along I guess. Things are going slower than the century “Star Trek” is supposed to be in. I don’t think we are going to make that timeline.

Nick: There is the whole Eugenics War with Khan and all that kind of stuff. The canon just falls apart really. I think “Enterprise” also destroyed the canon too in ways.

Jean: But in reality I think we are still far from people occupying different planets. How far along do you think we are?

Nick: I don’t mean to be an alarmist but I really take the Steven Hawking position that we have to figure that out in the next hundred years because we are at a real propensity for destroying ourselves here.

Jean: Which goes to the premise of your novels, so let’s get into that. I just finished reading “Idlewild” so I still have to read the other two actually. What was your inspiration for the post-apocalyptic virus that killed everybody?

Nick: I grew up under the specter of the Cold War and nuclear annihilation. My dad would debate with people on a
show called “The Day After,” which is such a haunting nuclear show. My dad was on the panel afterwards debating with gung-ho people about nuclear war. I grew up like many people in my generation with the feeling that we could be at the end of our rope at any time. It seems to me where here we are with this terrible prescription where technology advances very steadily but the people who know the ramifications of it are few. Fewer people even understand hard science and it becomes even easier in the case of the Boston Marathon bombings where smaller numbers of people inflict more damage more readily and if you look at things like 3D printing that allows people to create their own guns and all the science fiction chestnuts, which we are on the cusp of: biological plagues, designer viruses and what have you. We have a real danger it seems to me that if we don’t figure out a way to curtail our most dangerous ambitions... as altruistic and creative and as wonderful as we are, we also have this very dangerous side of ourselves. If we can’t find a way to cohabitate this planet without taking it to the extreme, I think it could be disastrous. That’s a long way of answering the first question. In terms of “Idlewild” itself, I think there was that sense that we were living in a kind of end times. There was sort of an apocalyptic feeling that was as a haunting specter of my youth and at the same time I was talking earlier about how there were a lot of classes that were not as inspiring as my dad was. It felt to me like a lot of teachers were of the mindset of “Do what I tell you to do and I want you to stay off the street until you are 18” and not that I want to inspire you... in a sense that adults could lie to children that way. I think “Idlewild” is about in many ways someone who is coming of age who is being lied to and what they are being lied to is a secret not only about themselves but the nature of the world itself. I think that largely was a part of the inspiration.

Jean: Why did you choose biological as opposed to other post-apocalyptic endings for extinction stories.

Nick: It could have been any of them really. I don’t know. There has always been something about a plague that has fascinated me and I thought that the idea that there is something that would come up that would be so dangerous for us to handle, that we couldn’t stop, that we would have to do something very experimental, create new kinds of people if there were any hope to survive that, then who would educate those people, who would keep them loyal to us, who would instill in them the hopes and dreams of the future that we humans have. Somehow that has always been interesting to me. It tickles my imagination.

Jean: I don’t think I caught it in the first book, but did you say what causes the Black Ep?

Nick: It is not explained in the first book. The third book kind of gets into it.

Jean: I think you touched upon it a little bit, but why do you think that post-apocalyptic stories are so popular? Are we just more pessimistic as a society?

Nick: For a number of reasons I think we are. There is a danger of being too alarmist. We live in an amazing time with the technology that we live with has made things so much better. If you look at antibiotics alone, I think there is a danger in thinking there was this golden age where we didn’t have this kind of technology. That time gets romanticized in ways that doesn’t merit it but I do think that the singularity is something we may not make it through and part of it has to do with the 2000 millennial panic. I think we are in a dangerous time. The whole thing about earth, we keep all of our eggs in one basket,
I feel that we don’t have a great track record in treating each other or this planet very well and as we get more dangerous and have powerful weapons, those toys become more readily available and more dangerous and it just seems like it is a real danger. My dad, I think, was one of the greatest forces against it, a force of science and restraint and take stewardship of the world. It seems to me we live in a time where there are fewer voices like that and we need them. I feel that without them out there, the danger of things going haywire is higher than they would be otherwise. I used to argue with my dad all the time when he was here. I could argue both sides, but typically I would take the more pessimistic side and he would take the more optimistic side. He would say, “Yes, this is certainly a dangerous time but I would ultimately bet on us.” Maybe that’s where I would fall to, but because he would take that side I would so often take the other side. That’s the side I am more used to arguing. He would make the point that I was talking about these apocalyptic scenarios, but was I doing that because science fiction that’s dark in theme tends to do better than science fiction that’s traditionally optimistic? There are some exceptions, I think “Star Trek” for example is optimistic, but still it is about fighting the bad guy and all that stuff. I don’t know if I wasn’t a science fiction writer if I would have a better or worse view of where we stand right now.

Jean: Among the different types of writing you’ve done, what is your favorite writing medium?

Nick: They all have strengths and weaknesses. For example, novels allow you a kind of depth to tell the story you want to tell, that if you want to spend five pages describing a sunset you can. Maybe it’s not your best choice but you can totally do that whereas you can’t do that in a screenplay. A screenplay, for example is not just a story but is a blueprint for how we should spend millions of dollars so you have to be constantly moving it... go, go, go. That’s a wonderful challenge in and of itself. Movies are the most fantastic because it is the most like dreaming to me but they come with different strengths and weaknesses. Likewise, television has a sort of tremendous reach. A million people read a novel and it’s a huge hit, a million people watch a TV show and it’s a huge flop so you can reach a vast number of people. There is also this fun, collaborative, team-sports quality to it where you are working with a staff and everyone is looking to make it better. I really enjoy that, it is a nice break from the solitude of writing novels or graphic novels or what have you. Graphic novels and comics have their own challenge, you have to think very carefully about the space on the page and how it is going to be used and where you end each page as you turn to the next and what you reveal and does this big reveal merit a splash page unto itself or can I fit more panels in it and it’s a whole different set of challenges. Likewise, the planetarium show I did is a whole different challenge in how to use the technology and how to show people something they have not seen before. Also in the case of “The Searchers,” the planetarium show we wrote, it was an interesting challenge because there was a science fiction element to it. The task became how do we separate the real science from the science fiction of it. For example we had a whole segment on colliding galaxies and a lot of people in the test audience didn’t think that was real. They didn’t think that galaxies could collide, that it was science fiction that we invented for the show. I was like “No, this galaxy will collide with Andromeda a very long time from now.”

Jean: What do they teach in schools these days?
Nick: Well, there is that. Each of these different challenges has a different set of strengths and weaknesses and challenges. I like that I have been able to flex different muscles. Sometimes I think if I had stuck with one thing and kept hammering at it that would have been better in some way. I think that I have been very lucky that I have had a chance to do many different things. I’ve expanded my skill set and it has morphed and changed and grown with each new challenge.

Jean: I don’t know if you know this, but there is a comic book convention next door. My husband is actually covering that one and I am covering this one. So graphic novels are a huge art form these days.

Nick: The project I am working on right now is a science fiction graphic novel. I’ve got most of it scripted and once it’s done I’m looking to set it up. That’s another medium that was dear to my heart. There were plenty of comics and graphic novels I grew up with, some of which, I don’t want to oversell the genre, but there are some that are truly works of art and as moving to me as any books that I have read. I hope to give back to that medium in the same way that I have been inspired by it.

Jean: What would you say is the most influential graphic novel to you?

Nick: There are so many. “Watchmen” first of all. Many of Alan Moore’s creations are fantastic and I am also a big fan of Neil Gaiman’s “The Sandman” series and Mike Carey’s “Lucifer” series, “Transmetropolitan” is a wonderful series, “Preacher”, others too. I could go on and on. There has been lots that have meant a lot to me.

Jean: As far as your novels, who are your main influences?

Nick: Let’s go back to my childhood because I was my dad’s kid and my mom’s as well. My mom, I should point out, is the artist who drew the Pioneer plaque. My dad introduced me to all these great science fiction grand masters. My mother introduced me to all of these fantasists. So for my dad it was Isaac Asimov, Robert Heinlein, Ray Bradbury, and from my mom Madeline L’Engle, Roald Dahl, people like that. Certainly in my formative years that stuff was important to me. In my teenage years, I became a big Michael Moorcock and H. P. Lovecraft fan. Now I am a very big fan of Ian Banks, both his science fiction and his first novel “The Wasp Factory” was fantastic and has meant a lot to me. There are a lot of people out there who impress me and inspire me in different ways including John Scalzi who is running the show here. More names than I can throw out there.

Jean: Do you go to conventions and make appearances at conventions?

Nick: I used to more than I do now. Now it’s a little bit less than I did. I like doing it but I don’t know how people have time to do it. Having a kid, my wife and I talk about how do single parents manage to do this because we are working together and it is a full time job. I hope to find more time to free myself up for a lot of reading and a lot of conventions. I feel there is something really nice about these gatherings to get together but it wasn’t something I did as a kid. I have friend who would year after year go to the conventions. I didn’t really do that so much so it is a new experience for me every time I do it.
Saturday at Steamstock II

By Jean Martin
Editor-in-Chief

I went to Steamstock II only on Saturday, July 27, as the venue is far from where I live and I can only fit in so many activities into my schedule. I also can’t imagine going to a two-day music festival... the same kind of thing for two consecutive days would just be too much for me. But I really wanted to go at least once as I had a great time at last year’s Steamstock, which was only one day.

Christopher and I picked Saturday as there were more bands we hadn’t seen yet in the lineup and also the headliner for the evening was Mr.B The Gentleman Rhymer who’s from England and was making only his second appearance in the US and his very first in the West Coast. There were several bands on Sunday I’d already seen at last year’s Steamstock or other events so I didn’t feel like I was going to miss out too much.

As we went inside the Craneway Pavilion, we were greeted and let in right away. Then the first thing I noticed was that the vendors’ hall was much bigger and even better organized this year. It just felt like it was aesthetically put together and the quality and variety of the items for sale was very high.

We spent a lot of time in the vendors’ hall as we checked everything out, said hello to people we knew who were also browsing, and got our photo taken with a Steampunk backdrop. We also met the organizers of the new San Francisco Steampunk group and one of them took digital Polaroid photos of us. I didn’t intend on buying anything but I lucked out and found a used theatrical Victorian overdress in red that fit me perfectly and wasn’t too expensive.

I noticed that there was a tea tent in the vendors’ hall but I only got to see it briefly as Christopher wanted to get some lunch from one of the food trucks outside (with a fabulous view of San Francisco and the bay). There were three food trucks this year, which was great because last year there was only one, and the wait for food was very long. This time, I got an Indian meal almost instantly.

Eating spicy food always makes me thirsty and crave sweets so I used that excuse to get an apricot-cranberry scone and a rooibos vanilla tea from the tea vendor. I recognized the young ladies serving at the tea tent. They’re members of the Steam Federation, and I talked with them for a little bit and found out that they just thought of this idea a month beforehand, and here they were with high-quality loose leaf teas that they brewed on order, amazingly delicious sweet and savory scones that they baked themselves, tea cups and containers, a cash register and a cute business name—Tea Rex. I loved their scones so much (they were light and flaky, flavorful but not too sweet... much closer to traditional scones than most of those you get here in the US) that I bought several to take home with me. The tea was also wonderful. I hope to see them again at another event someday.

So we finally went into the main hall, which I remember from last year has walls made of glass windows. It is quite
spectacular as you’re indoors but get to see sunlight and the marvelous views. The main hall is spacious enough for two large stages at opposite ends, which makes switching bands go much quicker than having to wait for the next band to set up. However, the place was so huge that I couldn’t figure out where the Aether Brigade comedy troupe was set up and managed to miss them completely.

The festival started at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday and was slated to end around midnight, which made for a very long day. I wanted to make sure I had enough energy to see Mr. B and so opted to come later. We missed the first three hours-worth of DJ dancing, waltz lessons and bands. We arrived when 5 Cent Coffee was already playing so I didn’t get to see much of them. There was some more DJ dancing by DJ Persephone,
whom we’ve seen before so that was around the time we went
to eat.
Eating, taking photos and shopping pretty much spilled
over into Brass Farthing’s set. But I made sure to check them
out, which was a good thing as I’d never heard them better. It
seemed like the acoustics of the place combined with them
having microphones really made their vocalizing come
together well and they sounded tighter and fuller.
Next up was Unextraordinary Gentlemen whom I’d seen
before. I’m not too fond of their gloomy and serious music but
Christopher liked them. Surprisingly, the next performer came
up on the same stage, which I guess was fine as it was just one
woman with a violin who only needed a microphone. Even
Violinist Hannah Thiem and Aerial Rope Artist Kameko  
by Jean Martin

Psyche Corp  
by Jean Martin
though she was just performing on her own, Hannah Thiem, blew me away with her lyrical stage presence, haunting voice and hypnotic music reminiscent of Enigma. To top it all off, aerial rope artist Kameko joined her on stage and they had a sizzling and dramatic connection with each other as Hannah played her music and Kameko danced on the rope. They interacted at the beginning and again towards the end of one song and it was quite magical. Unfortunately, Hannah only played a few songs. I wish she played more.

On the other hand, Psyche Corp played for a long time and she was also just one performer with one dancer. Psyche Corp’s singer was stunning in a gold corset and she sang beautifully and made graceful balletic gestures to pre-recorded music, but I didn’t feel like she was connecting with the audience.

At some point I took a break and hung out at T.E. MacArthur’s booth. Thena has written two Volcano Lady Jules Verne-inspired Steampunk novels so far and also recently started a line of fun and adventure novellas in the vein of dime novels set in the same world as the Volcano Lady. I purchased the first Volcano Lady book and had her autograph it. She also told me stories of her recent research trip to Iceland.

Finally, Mr.B came on stage. I was looking forward to his show as I’d enjoyed Professor Elemental at the Edwardian World’s Fair last year. They are both lumped into the Chap Hop category but their styles are very different. It seems to be a new trend in the DIY world that performers use pre-recorded music as Mr.B also did the same. I understand why pre-recorded music has to be used sometimes. It certainly cuts on the cost and effort of having a band, but it can make for a less exciting show. Sadly, that was the case for me with Mr.B even
though he did play the banjo and he did have a dancer dance to his music too. While some of his lyrics were a bit risqué and he even did a cover of a KISS song, he just seemed too reserved for my taste. Still, it seemed like the audience loved his performance as they were all right in front of the stage watching, laughing, dancing and singing along.

I’m glad I went to Steamstock II even for just one day. Being with the Steampunk community and enjoying costumes, music, dancing, food and DIY creations is always a delightful experience. Major kudos to Brian Gardner and his crew for putting on an impressively organized and professional caliber music festival. I hope they get to do more Steampunk music festivals in the future.
The Aether Brigade

by Shelly Prevost
Steamstock Sunday

By Kory Dean Doyle
Contributing Writer

I must also be very public in my confession that I had a blast at this event.

Steamstock, billed as an antiquarian exposition, expanded in 2013 into two days and Sunday, July 28, had its own distinct feel from the first day. Whereas Saturday had a bit more of a Chap Hop vibe with a number of people (including myself) in vintage Chap Style in honor of the presence of Mr.B The Gentleman Rhymer headlining, Sunday had a more Steampunk feel.

There was so much to see and do between the live music, the vendors’ hall, the hookah lounge and the Aether Brigade improv space that it was impossible to see and do it all and so I will only review the things I actually saw and participated in.

The day started with waltz lessons. The instructor, John Schmidt, is one of the most entertaining teachers around in that he is not as concerned that you are doing it right, but that you are having fun doing it. This created a more relaxed environment that fostered learning the steps quicker than some other waltz events where newbies get angry stares and are intimidated off the floor.

The musical line up for Sunday was actually a tad better than Saturdays in its variety as seen in the first two acts Bloodwire and Saints of Ruin. Both could be called more Goth than Steampunk but rocked the house and were a good choice to open with.
Victoria and the Vaudevillians did a rather elaborate set in Rococo-esque costume and had audience members in zombie makeup shambling about. It was a good performance combining their distinct sound with theatrical elements.

The vendor area had a much better feel this year than last. The variety ranged from jewelry makers doing it out of their home (such as Dr. Brassy Steamington) to a pro tee-shirt business that did the shirts on site (Golden Gear) to a tea shop that brewed the tea when it was ordered and would even deliver it to you (Tea Rex). The vendors’ area was the main social space and people would congregate, especially around the tea shop, while waiting for the next performer they wanted to see. People would wander in and out waiting for the main acts.

One in particular was popular, and that was the infamous Lee Presson and his band The Nails. Lee’s swing band sound and frenetic energy and witty dialog with the audience makes him the consummate showman and his performance could be called the highlight of Sunday as he filled the floor. The great thing about the Craneway Pavilion (and its curse, more on that later) is its size, giving bands like LPN the space to have people dancing without taking all the space from people who would just rather watch. Lee brought in an inventive rearrangement of the “Doctor Who” theme into a waltz.

While an amazing show, as always, the problem with the LPN portion was that many people left afterwards. This left a smaller audience for the three Sunday headliners (all of which were part of the celebrated train tour to Steamstock), and made the venue feel even smaller by the curse of Craneway Pavilion—its size—as the vastness of the space made 500 people feel like 50.
The first up among the headliners for the night was The Cog is Dead. I am pleased the report that for a two-person band, they held their own, largely due to the power of the singer Captain John Sprocket. Though he stayed stationary for most of the set, both singing and playing guitar, his emotive ability was captivating and held the attention for most of the set. Not small feat since it was just he and their drummer on stage.

After COD was the surprise of the evening for me—This Way to the Egress. I had heard of this band, but never actually heard them. When I saw they had on stage a banjo, tuba, trombone, violin, and of course, guitar I knew they would be different. All members got a chance to sing, whether they actually could or not. They were having fun performing and interacting and were entertaining the whole set through. I found out after the set, they were without their drummer,
something I never would have guessed as their performance was so tight. I was so impressed, I bought their CD.

The slightly artsy duo Frenchy and the Punk was last. If any band had to suffer The Curse of the Craneway, it was they. It was well into the evening on a Sunday, even more of the audience had left (got to be at work in the morning after all) and in the vastness of the venue and with the dwindling crowd they were simply swallowed up by the stage and thus fought valiantly to hold what crowd was left. It’s sad actually, because they are really very good and do some clever music and deserved to be heard.

Steamstock tried to expand this year, and that was part of its problem. Two days is one too many. While there where great bands on both days, combining the band list from both days into one would have given a more balanced, higher-quality show. For example, the three Sunday headliners, leading into LPN, leading into Mr.B would have been an awesome show.
Another issue is the venue. It’s too big and too isolated way out on Point Richmond. There are no hotels in the immediate area and so many people from outside the Bay Area did not attend. And of course, the Craneway’s size made the crowd look smaller than it actually was, giving the false impression that the event was lightly attended.

Before I go any further, in full disclosure, I must admit that the promoter and organizer of Steamstock is a good friend of mine and I am friends with the majority of the crew as well. This did not alter my experience or opinion in one way or the other and yet I still find I must praise the crew that made it all happen. Putting on an event like this is no small feat and it was obvious they put a lot of labor and love to pull it all together.

As noted, there were issues, but as someone who has been a convention co-chair I can attest that there are always issues. The Steamstock crew took on the issues (like having to reset the sound boards) in stride and still pulled off a memorable show. The important question is did said issues affect the enjoyment of the attendees? In Steamstock’s case I say that it did not.

It was also clear that this was not just something an outside promoter did to jump on the Steampunk bandwagon to make money, but was done by people with genuine love of the movement. They showed the very Steampunk ethos of doing it yourself and for your community. Steamstock is currently the only Steampunk music festival in the country and I sincerely hope that this unique event happens again.
History Downtown:  
The San Jose Renaissance Faire

By Christopher Erickson  
Managing Editor

San Jose’s Guadalupe River Park was transformed into a Tudor entertainment and historical destination when the San Jose Renaissance Faire came to the capital of Silicon Valley for the second year in a row on Aug. 3 and 4. The faire was expanded to include more events and covered two sections of the park to the point where the side street that runs through the park had to close for the run of the festival. The extra room allowed for more pavilions and the exhibition of full-contact combat.

The exhibition took advantage of the bigger area by including more stages, adding more entertainment, demonstrations, food vendors, booth sellers and hands-on combat and martial arts lesson areas. The larger space also allowed for the increased number of patrons to move smoothly throughout.

Queen’s Court  
by Christopher Erickson

Queen’s Procession  
by Christopher Erickson
The increased area also allowed for more guild pavilions. The Queen’s Pavilion showcased Queen Elizabeth’s court, which had seating to allow her subjects to view court life. Thus, it was a good place to find vignettes of court gossip and life. I witnessed the Queen ask a seamstress why her work for her father wasn’t done. The seamstress had to explain that she was distracted by spending time with a stable boy. She was admonished by some of the nobles, but the Queen defended her and blessed her love. The courtiers also performed traditional dance numbers for the crowd. The Queen didn’t stay in her pavilion the whole time, though, as she did a procession through the marketplace. Watching the royal parade was quite impressive with the bell ringers, flag bearers, personal guard, ladies in waiting and courtiers.

A few other groups were set up where people could also come in and visit, play games with oversized chess pieces, visit with people and learn about Tudor period life. The belly dancing troupe received its own pavilion that was on the ground and made for a more intimate show with the performers closer to the crowd.

The combat areas had their own section with fencing lessons, sword combat and the foam-weapon fighting. There were many people taking advantage of the areas to fight without causing any real physical harm or learn how to combat with arms. One of the masters that I took a lesson from was the Red Sword of the Highlands, which was a Scottish Highland and European martial arts school. The instructor, James Satterlee, taught me a number of techniques using
Daily Tudor Life

Musket Demonstration

Fey

by Christopher Erickson
combat swords, how to fight with knives, how to incapacitate a person into a wrestling-style hold and how to disarm someone without using a weapon. We discussed his methods, which were derived from German and Italian combat manuals, and how a lot of the fighting techniques were universal to many different cultures. It was an intense workout that had me sweating.

Besides the martial arts lessons, there was also the climbing tower, a dunk tank, a pirate ship, face painting, brass rubbings, games and jesters to entertain the crowds. Master Shakespeare was also on hand to gather people to perform scenes from his plays.

There were also several new food vendors to add more variety to the offerings. A meat pie vendor was on hand along with a beer and mead vendor. The alcoholic drink vendor had a small selection of offerings, but there was a nice variety in the beers (an ale, lager and regular brew were available) along with five different kinds of mead. The spirits could not be taken out of the area where they were served, but the drinking section had several tables, and was in a nice shady spot where people could sit down and enjoy their food and beverage.
while cooling off. The Weasel Inn Sarsaparilla booth was also back this year with their wonderful home-brewed root beers and sodas.

The costuming was also part of the draw as there was a wide variety of people in outfits, ranging from Time Lords and other chronal travelers, Scotsmen, barbarians, pirates, knights, fantasy creatures, fairies, Arabs, samurai and many period costumes.

The joust was another major draw as always. There was also a demonstration of musket firing from the Tudor period using black powder, priming powder and fuse rope. It was impressive to see but also demonstrated how much time was needed to reload with going through adding blasting powder, primer and projectile. The demonstrations showed why battles were fought with rows of ranks lined up advancing and then firing with the front line retreating to the back after their firearm was discharged.

The latest addition to the fair was a full-contact battle between armored knights called The Battle of Nations. This featured unchoreographed combat between fully suited warriors with shields and weapons such as maces, swords, hatchets and poleaxes. The competition consisted of two teams...
The fight would be paused if a combatant lost a piece of protective armor. Blows to the base of the neck were forbidden. Fighters were eliminated if they were knocked down. This could make for a situation where a fighter might be facing two enemies at the same time.

The fights were nasty and mean, with blows being struck using not only the weapon of choice, but also shields or bucklers, kicks with the leg or even hitting with arms. The fighters would connect with blows to any body part that they could, including directly to the face.

Most of the combat evolved into trying to smash your opponent to the ground or back him into a corner of the ring and tire him out with repeated blows. You could hear the
contact of the weapons with the armor with the distinct clang of metal-on-metal. The most effective fighter was the one with the poleaxe who could use it to knock an opponent off balance and stagger him to the ground with forceful blows and swings or would use the axe to wrestle him to the ground.

Sometimes a fight would last a while where both fighters would only be able to punch or kick once or twice without a follow-up blow or making a series of combinations. This highlights the reality of the fight since they were too tired to be able to maintain the energy level to create a sequence of moves that are normally seen in fictional fights.

All of the participants were brought out to the combat arena and the winner was chosen by the spectators. His prize was the adulation of the crowd and a prime seat at the Double Crown Dancer pavilion where he received a close-up view of the belly dancers.

The San Jose Renaissance Fair showed its growth with the expanded area, more entertainment offerings, good food and drink and lots of sights and sounds. The intimacy of the faire while being surrounded by modern civilization transformed the park into a pocket of frozen time for all to enjoy.
Geek Theatre Notes

By Jean Martin
Editor-in-Chief

I’ve always loved live theatre and musicals and when said shows incorporate geek aspects to them, it’s even more fun for me. Recently Christopher and I watched two very different shows of interest to folks in fandom.

Return to the Forbidden Planet
Curtain Theatre, Mill Valley, California, June 30

Curtain Theatre Company and Marin Onstage co-produced a musical entitled “Return to the Forbidden Planet.” The show was written in the 1980s by Bob Carlton and is based on Shakespeare’s “The Tempest” as well as the 1950s science fiction movie “Forbidden Planet,” which was inspired by “The Tempest.” It features rock and roll classics from the 1950s and 1960s with a sci-fi setting.

The production we saw was held at the Caldwell Theatre in Mill Valley and it was a total blast. First of all, the set was based on the bridge of the original “Star Trek” TV series and the colorful costumes and characters were overt nods to that show as well as “Star Wars,” “Firefly” and other sci-fi favorites. There was a video screen above the set, which doubled as the ship’s view screen and also showed funny and dramatic shots to enhance the action taking place.

Second, the cast, as directed by Carl Jordan, was hilarious, diverse and very talented. Their solos and group song and dance numbers (with a live band in “Star Trek” red shirts) got the audience going, and the actors even interacted with us… it was like an intimate party. Phillip Percy Williams, who played Captain Tempest, was costumed like Han Solo but had the swagger and charm of Captain Kirk (he even sat on the captain’s chair like Kirk). This actor, I believe, is a star in the making. Also a standout was Steve Beecroft who played the villain of the piece, Cookie. The romantic interest Miranda, played by Maura Tang, had a lovely voice and looked great in her innocent hippie costumes in the first act, and then sultry in her more rock and roll getup in the second act.

And, of course, Prospero (Paul Abbott) was fantastic as the mad scientist, and his creation, Ariel (Melissa Claire), was great as a naughty android who looked like a cross between a Borg and one of the cast of “Starlight Express.” The large cast of actors spoke lines from various Shakespeare creations and it became for me a test of remembering which lines came from what play.

I would have liked more 60s than 50s music, though, but that’s just my personal preference. The standouts for me were the rousing “Wipeout” with the entire crew, “It’s a Man’s World” with the captain and the female science officer, “She’s Not There” by Cookie and “Don’t Let Me Be Misunderstood” by Prospero. My favorite was “Gloria,” which ended the first act and began the second act. It was the song that was performed when the crew was being attacked by a huge space monster.
Miranda, Prospero and Captain Tempest

by Jean Martin
It really was an impressive and entertaining production, and one I highly recommend people go see if it’s ever staged again.

No Man’s Land
Roda Theatre, Berkeley, California, August 18

When I found out that the Berkeley Rep was going to have a play with Sir Patrick Stewart and Sir Ian McKellen, I was immediately interested. It didn’t matter what the play was going to be, I just wanted to see these world-class actors and famous stars of stage and screen interact live. I have seen both of them, separately, in the past at a convention (Stewart) and at a film festival (McKellen), but I’ve never seen them perform in person. And to have them both at the same time was just too fabulous of an opportunity to miss. So I made sure to get tickets as soon as they were available (they sold out pretty quickly so I was lucky).

I’ve been a fan of Stewart since his days as the captain of the Enterprise in “Star Trek: The Next Generation” and I’ve been in awe of McKellen since “Richard III.” So I was very glad when he was chosen to play Gandalf in “The Lord of the Rings” movies. It was also casting genius to have them portray Professor Xavier and Magneto in the X-Men movies. So these actors not only have serious drama cred but they’re also sci-fi royalty.

I would have preferred to see them together in a Shakespearean production, but I found that Harold Pinter’s “No Man’s Land” did have a similar style of wit and play on words that I found quite pleasing. It seemed to be set in the 1970s, so they wore costumes that still seem fairly contemporary. It was quite a shock seeing them portraying doddering old men, though. They always seem so vibrant,
attractive and powerful whenever I see them in movies and on TV.

The play pretty much had Stewart and McKellen talking with each other about their pasts in one elegant living room, with Stewart’s character (Hirst) the more successful one but unhappy and pining for his youth, while McKellen’s character (Spooner) led a free and creative life that has led him to seek help to avoid financial hardship. It was quite a treat seeing these real-life friends performing together.

So it seemed like an intrusion when two other characters arrived on the scene. Billy Crudup (Foster) and Shuler Hensley (Briggs) were great in their roles as Hirst’s caretakers with Crudup as the talkative one and Hensley as the quiet one. However, it just didn’t seem like these two characters were integral to the plot. I’m not familiar with Pinter’s work at all but maybe there is some hidden meaning in there such as the two younger characters mirroring the youth of the older characters. Fannish people like me would recognize Crudup as Dr. Manhattan in the “Watchmen” movie and Hensley as Frankenstein’s Monster in “Van Helsing.”

There wasn’t much of a plot anyway and the ending was quite abrupt and I was left with unresolved questions. I suppose that’s the whole point... showing this no man’s land between youth and death. The play was basically a vignette of when these two people’s lives intersect after several decades. Not my cup of tea but it was still an amazing experience watching all these actors… we were in the front row, off to the side, but with a clear and up close view.

The best part was yet to come, though, as Christopher and I got to meet McKellen after the show. We waited to meet Stewart as well but he wound up leaving through another exit. I’d like to meet him someday!
San Diego Comic-Con 2013 Review

By Robbie Pleasant
Contributing Writer

San Diego Comic-Con is perhaps the largest and most well-known convention anywhere. After all, it’s the one that gets all the big announcements, the biggest guests, the biggest crowds, and the longest lines, and for good reason too. This was my first year attending, so I got the newcomer experience, which I can now share with you, dear readers.

If there’s one experience that all Comic-Con attendees share, it’s waiting in lines. In order to do or see anything, there will be waiting involved, but it’s most always worth the wait. Picking up tickets, surprisingly, took very little time in line compared to the others, though getting tickets in the first place takes a lot of online waiting months ahead of time.

For those who were lucky enough to secure their tickets, though, vast halls filled with booths for all things entertaining awaited. Sure, they were packed so full of people that every attendee wished to have the powers of Kitty Pryde of the X-Men (she can phase through solid objects, you see), but for those willing to take on the crowds and the lines, they could get all sorts of limited-edition goods, such as toys, books, shirts and props.

Attendees could also meet the artists and writers behind some of their favorite comics, webcomics and books. Some autograph sessions required tickets, which meant people would have to wake up early to wait in line for tickets to wait in line again to get the autographs. But they were worth it.

Of course, the big names in comics all had massive booths there. The Marvel booth was showing off props and promotional material for its upcoming movies, like “Guardians of the Galaxy” and “Captain America: The Winter Soldier,” as well as the occasional cosplay showcase or contest. I participated in the showcase as Doctor Nemesis from X-Men, although I don’t think the announcer recognized the character.
The DC booth also had signing tables for guests, and a stage from which they were showing trailers for upcoming games and animated movies. When I was dressed as the Riddler, I took a minute to answer questions and record a commercial break for “DC Nation” on Cartoon Network, so I’ve been watching “Beware The Batman” ever since to try and see myself. More noteworthy were the display cases, featuring the outfits worn in various Superman movies and shows over the years, which made many a fan pause in awe.

There were large booths and exhibits for other companies as well, such as sets for “Once Upon a Time” and the new “Black Sails” show, both of which used pirate ships for their exhibit. “The Walking Dead” had a big fenced-in area with zombies, who guests could pose with.

For a more authentic zombie experience, there was a survival game people could sign up for outside the convention center, where they would run through an obstacle course to escape zombies. While I did not attend it, I heard great things from those who did.

Outside the dealer’s hall were halls upon halls of panel rooms, covering topics of all shapes and sizes. Of course, the biggest panels had the biggest lines, and many had people lined up hours ahead of time, if not camping out overnight. I found myself waking up at six o’clock in the morning to get in line for a panel at noon, and even then had a spot near the back of the room, but again it was worth it.

The two panels I did see were for “The Big Bang Theory” and “Legend of Korra.” While TBBT is a show I have mixed
feelings about, due to its reliance on geek stereotypes and lack of research about some comic book topics (No, Raj, Aquaman does not suck, nor has he sucked since “Superfriends”), the panel was still entertaining. The Korra panel was the one I was looking forward to the most, and the entire audience could barely contain its excitement when we were shown the first episode of the upcoming season early. Sadly, going to the panel meant not getting tickets for the autograph session, so I was unable to meet the cast and creators or show them the Pro Bending Announcer cosplay I had prepared for that day.

Speaking of cosplay, cosplayers were not as plentiful at SDCC than at many other conventions, though there were some costumes of amazing quality. Many attendees were content to walk around in more comfortable outfits, but there were those busting out the armor, body paint, fursuits and face masks to show their dedication and skill. The masquerade was a sight to behold (and a joy to participate in with my “Portal” skit group), showing just how amazingly talented the cosplayers can be; their costumes were works of art, and I felt the need to compliment as many as I could for their creativity and skill, but each were kind and equally complimentary in return.

There wasn’t much in the way of cosplay gatherings, but there were meetups for DC and Marvel cosplayers, both of which I attended, as well as some smaller ones throughout the weekend that weren’t entirely announced. Considering all there was to get to, there were still some great turnouts of very impressive cosplayers, and plenty of photographers for them.

Sadly, not all was perfect in the land of Comic-Con. For some reason, religious demonstrators decided to stand outside and shout at us through microphones about how we were heathens. I fail to see why we can’t go and enjoy a convention...
without someone with a big sign about their religion shouting at us, but this time I felt sorry for some of the kids they had out there handing out pamphlets.

With all the guests there, I had a strange mixture of good and bad luck; I didn’t get to meet a single guest I wanted to, but I met some I wasn’t expecting. For example, I didn’t get to meet Matt Smith, but I did get to meet John Barrowman, which I feel helps even it out. Just walking around, though, a sharp-eyed attendee can spot all sorts of big names in the industry, such as Stan Lee or Geoff Johns.

At the end of the weekend, I was exhausted but satisfied. It was an almost overwhelming experience, and in spite of spending all day going around to everything I could, there was still so much that I missed. It was hard to tell at first if it was an experience worth repeating, or if it was a once-in-a-lifetime trip, but I do hope to attend again. For fans of comics and all things nerdy, attending San Diego Comic-Con is an item for the bucket list at the very least.

Zoot from Castle Anthrax has brought the Holy Grail to Comic-Con

by Robbie Pleasant
BASFA Meeting 1202

12 August 2013

Trey Haddad, President
Chris Garcia, Vice President
Dave Gallaher, Treasurer
Galen Tripp, Sergeant at Arms
Barbara Johnson-Haddad, Secretary
Held at Coco’s, 1206 Oakmead Parkway (Lawrence Expressway/101 Fwy),
Sunnyvale

President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary conspicuously absent
Kevin Standlee, presiding
Adrienne Foster, acting minute taker
Began at 8:01 p.m., with me frantically looking for last week’s minutes
28 people attended
A party jar was established
The reading of minutes from meeting 1201 were postponed to next week
There was no treasurer’s report
There was no vice president’s report
There was no president’s report

Andy made a motion to rename the Republic of Texas “The Republic of Bay”, so BASFA could justifiably meet there. The San Antonio Riverwalk has been redesignated a Bay for our purposes. The VP and treasurer are instructed to set up a BASFA meeting Monday evening at LoneStarCon 3.
Sports committee would like to arrange another outing at a San Jose Giants game, but our coordinator has been too preoccupied to focus on arranging it this year. Maybe next year.

Announcements

JC said Nerdvana will podcast live at 7 Stars Bar & Grill on Sunday, August 18, from noon to 6 p.m. For more info on 7 Stars, please go to: www.7starsbar.com

David S. is currently working to pass the bar exam. He said the latest issue of his fanzine, “Tightbeam”, is out and passed out a few hardcopies. He is also going to be on panels at DragonCon.

Dave C. said that “The Extraordinary Adventures of Adele Blanc-Sec” and the British TV series, “Sapphire & Steel”, are soon going to be released on DVD. They will be available from Cargo Cult Books.

He added that Creepy KOFY Movie Time is back on the air.

Andy said there is a three-way race for Worldcon site selection in 2015. Please vote, no matter what your preference. If you’re eligible to vote, but not able to attend LSC3, please find someone to hand carry it if you haven’t mailed your ballot already.

The Harrigans are going to be wrapping a long driving trip around LSC3, so they will not be at Sunnyvale-based BASFA meetings for several weeks.

I reminded everyone that a special ghost walking tour has been arranged as an off-site excursion for LSC3 members. For more details and to RSVP, please go to: www.meetup.com/Bay-Area-Ghost-Hunters/events/132892122/

Jo said his book on network automation can be found at the unlikely place of O’Reilly Auto Parts.

Ken said that the Grand Prix Malibu complex is going out of business.

Kevin S. said that there are an explosion of issues cropping up for the WSFS business meeting. If any of them mean anything to you, please come to the business meetings at LSC3.

Reviews

Mo has been intrigued by some of the antiques she has run across while helping me clear out my parents’ house. She brought in one of the duplicate antique publications my grandfather worked on and I donated to auction.

JC saw “The Big Lebowski” and really enjoyed it. If you haven’t seen it already, it’s worth seeking out.

He also saw “The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo”, with Daniel Craig, and thought it was incredible.

Jo saw “Pacific Rim” and said it was fun and close to f***ing good. The 3D was awesome. There were followons.

He also reviewed “Elysium” and said it was the best movie he’s seen all year. He’s so impressed by it, he is going out of his way to ensure it’s on his Hugo nomination ballot next year. The followons didn’t quite match his enthusiasm, but believed “Elysium” was above average.

Dave C. saw “#TruthinJournalism”: on YouTube and said it was grim, but worth a look.

He was disappointed by “The Lone Ranger”, but thought the cinematography was so beautiful it could get an Oscar nomination. He rated it worth matinee.
He also read “Flaxen Femme Fatale”, by John Zakour. I missed noting whether he thought it was worth it, but he said it is out of print.

Kevin S. reviewed the commute traffic from Reno after the weekend of Hot August Nights as agonizing.

We did auctions.

Rumor of the Week: “I miss the old days when Worldcon bid committees would just send their champions out to fight to the death.”

We adjourned around 9:15.
(Sorry, I forgot to check the time. That’s the best I can do.)

**BASFA Meeting 1203**

19 August 2013

Trey Haddad, President
Chris Garcia, Vice President
Dave Gallaher, Treasurer
Galen Tripp, Sergeant at Arms
Barbara Johnson-Haddad, Secretary
Held at Coco’s, 1206 Oakmead Parkway (Lawrence Expressway/101 Fwy), Sunnyvale

President and Secretary were absent and some of us are concerned
Vice President presiding
Adrienne Foster, acting minute taker
Began around 8:00 p.m., as my dinner arrived
31 people attended
A party jar was established
The minutes for meeting 1201 were accepted as missing from my notes
Correction from meeting 1202 notes: Jo Rhett’s book on network automation can be found at shop.oreilly.com/product/9781782161745.do. The minutes were then accepted as “That was the week that was.”

The treasurer said that at meeting 1201, we collected $6.50 in the regular jar and $24.78 in the party. At 1202, we took in $4.xx in the regular and $6.xx in the party.

The VP reported there’s a new “Drink Tank” out as well as a new edition of his “Leaf & Let Die” podcast.

There was no president’s report
The VP said we had a couple special guests that evening. Both of this year’s TAFF and DUFF delegates, Jim Mowatt and Bill Wright, were visiting us. Bill also passed out hardcopies of his fanzine, “The Wright Stuff”, which details his progress across the U.S.

I announced that Loncon 3 is planning to present the 1939 Retro Hugos last year and suggested that the Hugo Recommendations committee add those to our lists next year. It was agreed and quickly dismissed without any debate.

**Announcements**

JC celebrated the first anniversary of “Nerdvana”.

Mike M. said Pacificon, the gaming convention, is looking for volunteers.

Valerie announced that she has two new books out.

Randy said he’s taking Bill sightseeing this Wednesday and invited everyone to join them for lunch at di Vinci’s In the East Bay.

Kevin R. said that he and Andy will be at next week’s meeting, the last before LoneStarCon 3, and they would be happy to hand carry any site selection votes for 2015 for people who are unable to make it. (There is no electronic voting for this three-way race.)

He also said he finished sewing his costume for the LSC3 masquerade.

Ric without a k said he has a special D23 edition of “Fanboy Planet” posted.

I mentioned that all of the old Century dome theatres are under threat of demolition and would be a damn shame to lose 21 & 22, since they’re not only the largest regular movie screens in the South Bay, but they have the best acoustics. For those interested in the petition, please go to: [www.change.org/petitions/save-the-winchester-domes](http://www.change.org/petitions/save-the-winchester-domes).

Ken said the Retrodome in exile will be doing sing-a-long showings of “Grease” at a couple of theatres over the weekend.

He added that Oakridge theatre and a couple of others in the Bay Area will be doing marathon showings of the Cornetto Trilogy — “Shawn of the Dead”, “Hot Fuzz”, and “The World’s End” — this weekend.

He also reminded us that Legion of Rassilon will be meeting this Friday, August 23.

Glenn said there’s convention coming up: LSC3 in San Antonio, Texas.[www.lonestarcon3.org](http://www.lonestarcon3.org)

**Night of the 30-Second Flash Reviews**

Chris O. enjoyed both “Much Ado about Nothing” and “Rocky Horror Picture Show”.

Dave C. said “In a World” is a movie that’s worth full price.

JC said his daughter started junior high school at the same one he did and was feeling nostalgic.

Ken said he broke his toe, but the treatment he received from Kaiser was reasonably priced.

Mo said that “Pacific Rim” was fun with big monsters and worth full price.

I agreed with most of Mo’s review of “Pacific Rim”, but thought it was worth matinee. I also added that the series finale of the UK version of “Being Human” was excellent and unexpected.

Ric said the Disney Animated application for iPad is amazing and worth full price ($14).
Tom said LSC3 has a program and is happy to have his spouse back.
Bill W. said BASFA has chaotic meetings with good intentions.
Leigh Ann said something about Heroes of Cosplay.
Jim M. said if you visit the Bay Area, get barbecue ribs from Glenn Glazer.
Dave G.’s time was quickly used up with idle chit-chat.
Fred said an article in “The Wright Stuff” is very well done and encouraged everyone to read it.
Chris G. said “Gravity Falls” is brilliant.

Leo said that the Rifftrax presentation of the Mystery Science Theatre 3000 look at “Starship Troopers” was excellent.

We did auctions.

Rumor of the Week: “It’s not the meeting, it’s the motion.”

We adjourned 9:25 p.m.
Life is complicated; putting on an event is even more so. Please check before attending, as events are sometimes canceled or times and locations changed.

Follow the calendar on Twitter: @sfsfcalendar

New listings are highlighted in red.
Ongoing events are toward the back.

Thursday-Monday, August 29-September 2
LoneStarCon 3
Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center
San Antonio, TX
lonestarcon3.org
The 71st World Science Fiction Convention.

$200

Friday-Monday, August 30-September 2
Celesticon
Fremont Marriott
46100 Landing Parkway, Fremont
www.celesticon.com
Celesticon offers four days of family-friendly gaming in the San Francisco Bay Area. Hundreds of game events, along with exciting special guests, sponsor prizes and gaming, gaming, gaming..

$45 (till August 24)

Saturday-Monday, August 30-September 1
Sac-Anime
Sacramento Convention Center
1400 J St, Sacramento
www.sacconventions.com
Anime show.

$35 (till July 31)

Friday-Monday, August 30-September 2
Pacificon Game Expo 33
Santa Clara Marriott
2700 Mission College Blvd, Santa Clara
pacificongameexpo.com
Gaming convention.

$45 (till June 30)

Saturday, September 7
PEERS Empress of India Ball
Masonic Lodge of San Mateo
100 N. Ellsworth Avenue, San Mateo
peersdance.org
Ball celebrating the Empress of India, Queen Victoria with Victorian Era dancing and music by Bangers and Mash.
8 p.m. $15 (advanced), $20 (at the door)
Saturday-Sunday, September 7-8
Willits Kinetic Carnivale
Masonic Lodge of San Mateo
400 East Commercial Street, Willits
www.kineticcarnivale.com
Steampunk and vintage style carnivale featuring a fair, grand ball, handcar races and steam trains.
Check website for pricing information on various events

Sunday, September 8
13th Annual Antique Auto Show at History Park
History Park
1661 Senter Road, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Antique automobiles up to 1940s on display as well as jazz music and demonstrations.
11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Saturday, September 14
3rd Annual Victorian Steampunk Ball Hosted by High Desert Steam
Historic Piper’s Opera House
B Street at Union Street, Virginia City, Nevada
www.facebook.com/events/605735366106592/
www.highdesertsteam.org/2013/07/3rd-annual-victorian-steampunk-ball.html
Steampunk showcase featuring dancing, train rides, gambling, Victorian artifacts and more.
$20

Weekends, September 14-October 13
Northern California Renaissance Faire
Casa de Fruta
10031 Pacheco Pass Hwy 152, Hollister, CA
norcalrenfaire.com
The annual Elizabethan faire.
$25

Saturday, September 21
History Park San Jose Firefighter’s 7th Annual Car and Motorcycle Show
History Park
1661 Senter Road, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Car and motorcycle show featuring vehicles from 1920 to the present day.
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Free

Saturday, September 21
BAERS Sandition Ball
Arlington Community Church
52 Arlington Avenue, Kensington
baers.org
Regency Period English dancing ball based on Jane Austen’s last unfinished novel.
8 p.m. $15 (advanced), $20 (at the door)
Free

Friday, September 27
Fleurs de Fey: A Masquerade Ball
Oakland Metro Operahouse
630 3rd Street, Oakland
www.facebook.com/events/697371296944368/?ref=3
Benefit concert and ball featuring Extra Action Marching Band, El Radio Fantastique, The Sansa and Shiri Show and 1manbanjo.
8 p.m. $15 to $20 suggested donation

Saturday-Sunday, September 28-29
Sac-Con
Scottish Rite Center
6151 H Street, Sacramento
www.sac-con.com
General Anime Convention $12

Saturday, September 28
History Park San Jose Viejito’s Car Show
History Park
1661 Senter Road, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Classic car show with food, music and vendors sponsored by Viejito’s Car Club Silicon Valley Chapter.
10 a.m. - 4 p.m. $5
Saturday, September 28

SF in SF: Nick Mamatas & Michael Marshall Smith
The Variety Preview Room, 1st Floor, Hobart Building
582 Market Street, San Francisco
sfinsf.org
Reading followed by Q&A.
6:30 p.m. $5-10 suggested donation

Sunday, September 29

GBACG Starverse Picnic
Middle Harbor Shoreline Park, Oakland
www.gbacg.org/gbacg-calendar.html
The dramatic view from Oakland's Middle Harbor Shoreline Park provides an inspiring backdrop for Starverse denizens from all walks of life. The massive, otherworldly cranes at the Port of Oakland (which inspired George Lucas' AT-AT walkers in The Empire Strikes Back) will set the mood beautifully. Costume: Star Wars, Firefly, Fantasy, SciFi or Steampunk. Check website for price

Fridays-Sundays, October 4-26

Firefly (Jaynestown): Live On Stage
The Dark Room Theater
2263 Mission Street, San Francisco
www.darkroomsf.com/
www.facebook.com/events/119065361601801/
Don't miss this live rendition of Firefly! Come to The Dark Room Theater this October to discover the fate of Canton and its impromptu hero before it's too late!
$20

Friday-Sunday, October 4-6

Bid Bad Con
Hilton Oakland Airport
One Hegenberger Road, Oakland
www.bidadcon.com
RPG convention.
$40

Saturday, October 5

PEERS Steampunktoberfest Ball
Masonic Lodge of San Mateo
100 N. Ellsworth Avenue, San Mateo
peersdance.org
Ball celebrating the Oktoberfest and Steampunk science with guests Charles Baggage and Ada Lovelace. Victorian Era dancing and music by Bangers and Mash.
8 p.m. $15 (advanced), $20 (at the door)

Friday, October 11

SF in SF: Litquake, Super Stories of Heroes & Villains
The Variety Preview Room, 1st Floor, Hobart Building
582 Market Street, San Francisco
sfinsf.org
Reading followed by Q&A. Claude Lalumiere and authors TBA
6:30 p.m. $5-10 suggested donation

Saturday, October 12

Author Event with Gail Carriger
San Leandro Public Library
300 Estudillo Avenue, San Leandro
www.sanleandro.org/depts/library/default.asp
www.facebook.com/events/535328903182359
Reading followed by Q&A.
2 p.m. Free

Saturday-Sunday, October 12-13

Alternative Press Expo (APE)
Concourse Exhibition Center
635 8th St., San Francisco
www.comic-con.org/ape
Exposition focusing on independent, alternative and self-published comics and artists. Check website for price

Sunday, October 13

East Bay Mini Maker Faire
Park Day School
360 42nd St., Oakland
ebmakerfaire.wordpress.com
Small scale mini Maker Faire.
10 a.m. $20
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Event</th>
<th>Location/Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday, October 26</strong></td>
<td><strong>Bal-O-Ween Spooktacular</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Bal Theater</td>
<td>14808 East 14th Street, San Leandro</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.baltheatre.com">www.baltheatre.com</a></td>
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<td>BAL-O-WEEN SPOOKTACULAR: Double Creature Feature of Films, ABBOTT &amp; COSTELLO MEETS FRANKENSTEIN &amp; The Cult Classic TALES FROM THE CRYPT DEMON KNIGHT, Come in Costume and enter to win our Costume Contest, Raffle of Prizes and so much more. 2 pm and 7 pm</td>
<td>$12</td>
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| **Friday-Monday, November 1-3**                                           | **Convolution 2013**                                                             |
| Hyatt Regency SFO                                                        | 500 Leisure Lane, Burlingame                                                    |
| con-volution.com                                                        |                                                                                 |
| GOH Wendy and Richard Pini, Richard Kadrey. Featured guests Unwoman, Toby Froud. | $45                                                                                 |

| **Saturday, November 2**                                                 | **PEERS Le Bal des Vampires**                                                    |
| Alameda Elks Lodge                                                       | 2255 Santa Clara Ave, Alameda                                                   |
| peersdance.org                                                          |                                                                                 |
| The annual vampire-themed event with two floors of dancing featuring Bangers and Mash and Nightfall Club, halftime entertainment skit show and Victorian parlour. 6:30 p.m. | $25 (until October 13) |

| **Saturday, November 8-10**                                              | **Conquest Avalon**                                                             |
| The Bal Theater                                                         | Sacramento Red Lion Hotel Woodlake Conference Center                            |
| www.baltheatre.com                                                       | 500 Leisure Lane, Sacramento                                                    |
| www.conquestssac.com                                                    | Tabletop gaming convention.                                                     |
|                                                                        | $50                                                                               |

| **Saturday-Sunday, November 16-17**                                      | **Sci-Fi X Fest Convention**                                                     |
| The Bal Theater                                                         | 14808 East 14th Street, San Leandro                                              |
| www.baltheatre.com                                                       |                                                                                 |
| The Historic BAL Theatre and Bay Area Film Events presents the new annual Sci-fi X Fest Convention. Harken back to the early days of sci-fi Conventions! Where you could enjoy the dealers, films, panels, speakers, celebrity guests and fun in a more intimate environment! Bay Area Film Events and the Historic BAL Theatre bring you a space-age blast. | $100                                                                               |

| **Saturday, November 16**                                                | **GBACG Prohibition Speakeasy Crawl**                                            |
| Various, San Francisco                                                  | www.gbacg.org/gbacg-calendar.html                                               |
| Break out the beaded gowns and rolled down stockings. On this chauffeured joy ride through San Francisco, taste some of Prohibition's finest forbidden delights. Costume: 1920's. Check website for price |          |

| **Saturday-Sunday, November 23-December 22**                            | **The Great Dickens Christmas Fair and Victorian Holiday Party**               |
| dickensfair.com                                                         |                                                                                   |
| Cow Palace                                                             | 2600 Geneva Avenue, Daly City                                                   |
| Victorian Christmas Card come to life with Charles Dickens characters come to life in London. Tickets on Sale in September, check website for prices |          |

| **Sunday, December 8**                                                  | **Sac-Con**                                                                      |
| Scottish Rite Center                                                   | 6151 H St, Sacramento                                                          |
| www.sac-con.com                                                        | Comic, toy, and anime show, $10 early bird entry at 9 a.m.                      |
| $6                                                                     | 10 a.m.                                                                           |
Saturday, December 28

**GBACG Holiday Bustle Tea**
Palace Hotel
2 New Montgomery Street, San Francisco
www.gbacg.org/gbacg-calendar.html
Back by popular demand! A holiday bustle tea for the most fashionable of New York Society. Once again at the Garden Court in the Palace Hotel in San Francisco. Costume: 1870-1890.

Check website for price

Friday-Sunday, January 3-5, 2014

**Sac-Anime**
Sacramento Convention Center
1400 J St, Sacramento
www.sacconventions.com
Anime show.

Check website for ticket prices

Saturday, January 4, 2014

**PEERS 12th Night Ball**
Alameda Elks Lodge
2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda
peersdance.org
Ball celebrating the end of the Christmas season with guests from Charles Dickens’s novels, a reading by Charles Dickens and Victorian Era dancing and music by Bangers and Mash.
8 p.m. $15 (advanced), $20 (at the door)

Thursday-Monday, January 16-20, 2014

**Further Confusion 2014: FurCon Vs. The World**
furcon.org/2014/
San Jose McEnery Convention Center
150 W. San Carlos Street, San Jose
Anthropomorphic costuming convention
$45 (until June 30), $50 (until December 31)

Saturday-Sunday, January 25-26, 2014

**Animation on Display**
Hyatt Regency San Francisco Airport
1333 Bayshore Highway, Burlingame
www.aodsf.org
Celebrating Japanese animation (anime), video games, recent American cartoons, and their related interests.
$25 (till September 14), $30 (till January 1), $35 (at convention)

Saturday, February 1, 2014

**PEERS Middle Earth Ball**
Alameda Elks Lodge
2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda
peersdance.org
Ball inspired by “The Hobbit” and “Lord of the Rings” with music by Celtic-fusion rock band Avalon Rising.
8 p.m. $15 (advanced), $20 (at the door)

Saturday, February 8, 2014

**GBACG A Venetian Carnival**
Location TBD
www.gbacg.org/gbacg-calendar.html
Enjoy an evening of appetizers, desserts and dazzling feats of skill in the glittering atmosphere of the Venetian Carnivale. Costume: 18th Century, all classes or 18th Century Fancy Dress. Masks required!

Check website for price

Friday-Monday, February 14-17, 2014

**DunDraCon**
San Ramon Marriott
2600 Bishop Drive, San Ramon
www.dundracon.com
Gaming convention

Check website for price

**Pantheacon**
San Jose Doubletree
2050 Gateway Place, San Jose
pantheacon.com
Pagan convention. This year’s theme is Networks of Community and Diversity, Pleasure & Service.
$55 (Till September 1)
Friday-Sunday, February 21-23, 2014
Potlatch 23
Sainte Claire Hotel
302 South Market Street, San Jose, California
potlatch-sf.org
Literary SF convention supporting Clarion West.
$40 (through July 15th)

Saturday, March 1, 2014
PEERS Gotham City Black and White Ball
Masonic Lodge of San Mateo
100 N. Ellsworth Avenue, San Mateo
peersdance.org
Ball held at Stately Wayne Manor with familiar guests in black tie featuring Swing Era dancing and music by Sarah and Swingtime.
8 p.m. $15 (advanced), $20 (at the door)

Friday-Sunday, March 7-9, 2014
Consonance 2014
Crowne Plaza San Jose/Silicon Valley
88 Bellew Drive, Milpitas
consonance.bostoncalifornia.com
Filk convention. Guests: Margaret Davis, Kristoph Klover, Johathan Turner, Robin Holly, Mark Osier, Rika Koerte
$50 (until February 14)

Friday-Sunday, March 7-9, 2014
FOGcon 2014
Walnut Creek Marriott
2355 North Main Street, Walnut Creek
fogcon.org
Literary SF/F convention. Theme: Secrets.
$65

Friday-Sunday, March 28-30, 2014
Conquest SAC
Sacramento Red Lion Hotel Woodlake Conference Center
500 Leisure Lane, Sacramento
www.conquestsac.com
Tabletop gaming convention.
See website for pricing packages

Saturday-Sunday, March 29-30, 2014
Twisted Terror Convention
Sacramento Doubletree by Hilton
2001 Point West Way, Sacramento
twistedterrorconvention.com
www.facebook.com/TwistedTerrorConvention/info
Horror/Sci-fi convention.
$45

Saturday, April 5, 2014
PEERS Downton Abbey Ball
Alameda Elks Lodge
2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda
peersdance.org
Ball (circa 1910-1920) hosted by the Earl and Countess of Grantham featuring vintage ballroom dance music performed by Bangers and Mash.
8 p.m. $15 (advanced), $20 (at the door)

Friday-Saturday, May 3-5, 2014
Corflul 31
Holiday Inn Koger Conference Center
1021 Koger Center Boulevard, Richmond, VA
corflu.org
Fanzine fandom convention.
$80

Saturday, May 3, 2014
PEERS Once Upon A Time: A Fairy Tale Masquerade Ball
Masonic Lodge of San Mateo
100 N. Ellsworth Avenue, San Mateo
peersdance.org/
Fairy tale and fantasy inspired ball featuring vintage ballroom dance music performed by Bangers and Mash.
8 p.m. $15 (advanced), $20 (at the door)
Saturday-Sunday, May 17-18, 2014

Big Wow Comicfest
San Jose McEnery Convention Center
150 W. San Carlos Street, San Jose
bigwowcomicfest.com
Comics convention. Pricing TBA

Friday-Monday, May 23-26, 2014

KublaCon
Hyatt Regency San Francisco Airport
1333 Bayshore Highway, Burlingame
www.kublacon.com
West Coast’s largest gaming convention. Pricing TBA

Saturday, June 7, 2014

PEERS Space Cowboy’s Ball
Alameda Elks Lodge
2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda
peersdance.org/
Browncoat inspired ball featuring vintage ballroom dance music performed by Bangers and Mash.
8 p.m. $15 (advanced), $20 (at the door)

Thursday-Monday, August 14-18, 2014

Loncon 3
International Conference Centre, ExCel, London Docklands
www.loncon3.org
$170 (until September 30)

Ongoing

Daily

Cartoon Art Museum
655 Mission Street, San Francisco
www.cartoonart.org
Current exhibitions: Chuck Jones, Drawing on Imagination (till May 5)
11-5 p.m. $6 (Closed Mondays)

The Walt Disney Family Museum
104 Montgomery Street, San Francisco
www.waltdisney.org/
Current exhibitions: Alice in Wonderland starts May 1.
10-6 p.m. $20 (Closed Tuesdays)

San Francisco Ghost Hunt Walking Tour
Begins: Queen Anne Hotel
1590 Sutter at Octavia, San Francisco
www.sfghosthunt.com
Closed Mondays & Tuesdays, and on November 21-22 for Thanksgiving.
7-10 p.m. $20

VIZ Cinema
1746 Post Street, San Francisco
www.newpeopleworld.com(films
VIZ Cinema is a 143-seat underground cinema inside New People in San Francisco. Its programming focuses on the latest and hottest films from Japan, as well as classics, favorites, documentaries and anime.
Please check theater for showtimes and tickets.

East Bay Strategy Games Club
EndGame
921 Washington Street, Oakland
www.endgameoakland.com/event-calendar
Various games played throughout the week, check website for times and games.
Free

Sundays

Cloondara Fighter Practice
Golden Gate Park
47th Avenue @ Fulton, San Francisco
www.westkingdom.org
The Shire of Cloondara (San Francisco, CA) holds fighter practice Sundays at 12:00 p.m. (if there are no major SCA events and the weather permits)
12 p.m. Free

Bad Movie Night
The Dark Room Theater
2263 Mission Street, San Francisco
www.darkroomsf.com
Featuring bad movies old and new.
8 p.m. $5

Sakuramento Anime Society
Rancho Cordova Library
9845 Folsom Boulevard, Rancho Cordova
www.saclibrary.org
Meets every Sunday to watch old and new anime and anime music videos, play collectible card games, practice artwork and make AMVs.
3-6 p.m.
**Fridays and Sundays**

**SF Games**
Taqueria San Jose, 2830 Mission Street, San Francisco (Fridays, 7 p.m.)
Zephyr Cafe, 3643 Balboa Street, San Francisco (Sundays, 2 p.m.)
www.sfgames.org/
SF Games is a collective name for a bunch of people who get together and play board games and card games every week.

**Mondays**

**Bay Area Science Fiction Association**
Coco’s
1206 Oakmead Parkway, Sunnyvale
www.basfa.org
8 p.m.
Free

**Sacramento Science Fiction/Fantasy Book Club**
Midtown Crepreville
1730 L Street, Sacramento
www.sacgeeks.com
A laid-back, friendly social club for people to discuss, recommend, share and trade their favorite SF and fantasy books. NOT a book-of-the-month club.
6:30 p.m.
Free

**Tuesdays**

**Principality of Mists Fighter Practice**
Twin Creeks Sports Complex
969 Caribbean Drive, Sunnyvale
www.westkingdom.org/as46/mar/sunnyvale-fighter-practice
SCA event. Non-members must remember to fill out a waiver form. In case of rain, call from 3 pm on to determine if the facility will be closed that day. 408-534-1169.
7 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.
Free

**Wednesdays**

**Steam Federation - Bay Area Steampunk Society**
Various - check website or Facebook page for information
steam-federation.com/%20cal2.html
www.facebook.com/groups/steamfederation/
General gathering for craftwork, discussions and general fun.
6:30 p.m.
Free

**Thursdays**

**CAS: NightLife**
The California Academy of Sciences
55 Music Concourse Drive, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco
www.calacademy.org/events/nightlife/
Every Thursday night, the Academy opens its doors for NightLife, a chance for adults to explore the museum in a whole new light. Dance to some of San Francisco’s most popular DJs, enjoy food and cocktails, and mingle while you delve into the Academy’s world-class exhibits and get up close and personal with aquarium critters.
6 p.m. - 10 p.m.
Free

**Fanboy Planet Podcast**
Cafe Stritch
374 South First Street, San Jose
www.fanboyplanet.com
Live from Cafe Stritch, it’s the Fanboy Planet Podcast with Planeteers, Derek McCaw, Ric Bretschneider and Nate Costa.
7 p.m.
Free

**Fridays-Mondays**

**Haunted Haight Walking Tour**
Meets at Coffee To The People
1206 Masonic Avenue, San Francisco
www.hauntedhaight.com
Reservations required.
7 p.m. - 9 p.m.
$20
Biweekly

**PenSFA Party**
The Peninsula Science Fantasy Association meets every two weeks for a party at the home of one of their members. They also host parties at local conventions. Email commander@pensfa.org for information on attending. PenSFA standard party rules: bring something edible or drinkable to share, or pay the host $2. Don’t smoke in the house without checking with the host first. Normal start time is 8 p.m. but may vary depending on the host.

**Silicon Gulch Browncoats**
Various locations (see website for details)
www.silicongulchbrowncoats.org
Silicon Valley fans of Firefly/Serenity meet up on the first Saturday of the month.
Noon - 2 p.m. Free

**The Bawdy Caste Presents “The Rocky Horror Picture Show”**
The Clay, 2261 Fillmore Street San Francisco/
The Guild, 949 El Camino Real Menlo Park
www.bawdycaste.org
The Bawdy Caste presents the classic midnight movie the first Saturday of the month, alternating between the Clay in San Francisco and the Guild in Menlo Park.
Midnight

**Monthly**

**Dorkbot-SF**
www.dorkbot.org/dorkbotsf
Dorkbot hosts regular forums for artists, designers, engineers, students, and other people doing strange things with electricity.
Free, donations welcome

**Foothill Anime**
Building 5015, Foothill College
Los Altos Hills
foothill.anime.net
Monthly event where people can get together to watch anime and meet like minded others. Usually meets the first Sunday of every month at noon.
12 p.m. Free

**Barely Legal Presents “The Rocky Horror Picture Show”**
Camera 3 Cinema
288 South Second Street, San Jose
barelylegal.rhps.org/
Barely Legal provides the shadow cast for the South Bay for the classic midnight movie every first Saturday of the month in Downtown San Jose.
Midnight

**Time Warp Cartel Presents “The Rocky Horror Picture Show”**
The Vine Cinema
1722 First Stree, Livermore, CA
www.timewarpcartel.com/
Time Warp Cartel provides the hijinx for the East Bay and Tri-Valley area of the classic midnight movie every first Saturday of the month in Downtown Livermore.
Midnight

**QSF&F Book Club**
Borderlands Books
866 Valencia, San Francisco
www.borderlands-books.com/
about_events.html
Meets the second Sunday of the month.
5 p.m. Free

**East Bay Star Wars Club**
Central Perk
10086 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito
510-558-7375
www.facebook.com/groups/35116614719/
Meets the second Friday of every month.
7:30 p.m. Free

**Fantastic Frontiers**
www.freewebs.com/fantasticfrontiers/
Social club for Sacramento County sci fi/fantasy fans usually meets the second Saturday of the month. Check website for meeting times and locations.
**No-Name Anime**  
Saratoga Library  
13650 Saratoga Avenue  
Saratoga  
[www.nnanime.com](http://www.nnanime.com)  
Anime screenings usually take place on the second Saturday of the month.  
Noon  
Free

**SF Browncoats**  
Cafe Murano  
1777 Steiner Street, San Francisco  
[www.sfbrowncoats.com](http://www.sfbrowncoats.com)  
SF Firefly/Serenity fans usually meet up on the second Saturday of the month.  
Noon  
Free

**Science Fiction and Fantasy Book Club**  
Borderlands Books  
866 Valencia, San Francisco  
[www.borderlands-books.com](http://www.borderlands-books.com)  
Meets the third Sunday of the month. Please contact Jude at jfeldman@borderlands-books.com for more information.  
6 p.m.  
Free

**Night of the Living Book Club**  
Books, Inc.- Mountain View  
301 Castro Street, Mountain View  
[www.booksinc.net/night-living-book-club](http://www.booksinc.net/night-living-book-club)  
Monthly book club discusses classic and contemporary selections from suspense, thriller, and horror fiction genres. Meets every third Sunday of each month.  
5 pm  
Free

**USS Defiance**  
5026 Don Julio Blvd, Sacramento  
1566 Howe Ave, Sacramento  
[www.myspace.com/d2121978](http://www.myspace.com/d2121978)  
Star Trek fan group meets the third Friday of the month.  
7 p.m.  
Free

**USS Northern Lights**  
sites.google.com/site/ussnorthernlights  
Contact firstjedi2000@yahoo.com for specifics.  
The ‘Lights is a chapter of Starfleet International and a swell group of science fiction fans. We do more than Trek. Usually meets the third Friday of the month, with social event TBD.  
7 p.m.  
Free

**Micro Gods, Inc.**  
Berkeley Public Library, West Branch  
1125 University Ave, Berkeley  
mgisciaf.angelfire.com  
groups.yahoo.com/group/MGIFamilyClub/  
Family Club for fans of Science Fiction, Fantasy, Movie, Anime & Manga. Meets every 3rd Saturday, please check Yahoo group for updates.  
1 p.m. - 5 p.m.  
Free

**Religion & SF Book Club**  
First United Methodist Church  
1183 “B” Street, Hayward  
Meets the 4th Sunday of the month. Please contact Rev. Randy Smith at RSmith2678@aol.com for more information.  
7 p.m.  
Free

**Sci-Fi/Fantasy Book Club**  
Inklings Books and Things  
1855 41st Avenue, Capitola  
[www.inklingsbooksandthings.com/](http://www.inklingsbooksandthings.com/)  
Meets every fourth Tuesday of each month.  
6 pm  
Free

**Sci-Fi Book Group with Kym**  
Barnes & Noble  
El Cerrito Plaza, 6050 El Cerrito Plaza, El Cerrito  
[store-locator.barnesandnoble.com/store/2113](http://store-locator.barnesandnoble.com/store/2113)  
Meets the fourth Friday of the month.  
7 p.m.  
Free

**Legion of Rassilon**  
Carl’s Jr.  
2551 N 1st St, San Jose  
[www.legionofrassilon.org](http://www.legionofrassilon.org)  
Doctor Who fan group usually meets the fourth Friday of the month: Episodes of Doctor Who, news, discussion of recent movies, and a raffle.  
7:00 p.m.  
Free
**USS Augusta Ada**
Round Table Pizza
3567 Geary Blvd, San Francisco
trek.starshine.org
Augusta Ada is both a chapter of Starfleet International and a Linux and *BSD user group. Usually meets the fourth Saturday of every month.
1 p.m. Free

**Veritech Fighter Command ONE-THREE**
Round Table Pizza
4403 Elkhorn Blvd, Sacramento
916-338-2300
Anime/cosplay group usually meets the last Saturday of the month at 1800 hours.
6 p.m. Free

**Queered Science Book Club**
Au Coquelet Restaurant
2000 University Avenue, Berkeley
queeredscience.weebly.com
www.facebook.com/groups/qsbooks/
Monthly book club that focuses on science fiction, fantasy, and magical realism that includes trans*, queer, genderqueer, and strong female protagonists and themes.
Meets the last Saturday of each month.
4:30 PM Free
### Bay Area Fannish Calendar – September 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
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<th>Wednesday</th>
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<td>Bad Movie Night</td>
<td>BASFA</td>
<td>MGI Boffers</td>
<td>BA Role-Playing Soc</td>
<td>CAS: NightLife</td>
<td>SF Games</td>
<td>Haunted Haight</td>
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<td>Sakuramento Anime</td>
<td>SV Boardgamers</td>
<td>Principality of Mists</td>
<td>E.Bay Strategy Games</td>
<td>Fanboy Planet Podcast</td>
<td>Vampire Walking</td>
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<td>Sacramento SF/F</td>
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<td>LoneStarCon 3 (thru Mon)</td>
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| Science Fiction/San Francisco is the monthly news zine for the San Francisco Bay Area – www.efanzines.com.