Science Fiction/San Francisco

Issue 161
Spring 2015

Dickens Fair
Geek TV and Movies
World Fantasy
Sac Anime
New Bohemia
Game of Thrones in Napa
Furries in the Fog
Supernatural
New York
NASA Ames
...and more!
Contents

Editorial .......................................................... ..................................................................................................................... Jean Martin .......................................................................................................................................................... 3
Letters of Comment .......................................................... Christopher Erickson ........................................................................................................................................................................... 6
My First Time at the Dickens Fair .................................................. Kara Nagle .................................................. Photos by Christopher Erickson .................................................................................................................................................. 9
A Return Trip to Dickensian London .......................................................... Jean Martin .................................................. Photos by Jean Martin ........................................................................................................... 14
The Year in Geek TV and Movies .......................................................... Christopher Erickson .................................................................................................................................................. 20
World Fantasy Convention Report .......................................................... Yvette Keller ........................................................................................................................................................................... 22
Sac Anime Winter 2015 .......................................................... Robbie Pleasant .................................................. Photos by Robbie Pleasant .................................................................................................................................................. 26
Bohemian New Year’s Eve .......................................................... Christopher Erickson .................................................. Photos by Jean Martin .................................................................................................................................................. 30
Game of Thrones in Napa Valley .......................................................... Denise Tanaka .................................................. Photos by Denise Tanaka .................................................................................................................................................. 35
Furries in the Fog: Further Confusion 2015 .......................................................... Christopher Erickson .................................................. Photos by Christopher Erickson .................................................................................................................................................. 42
Salute to “Supernatural” Convention .......................................................... Kara Nagle .................................................. Photos by Kara Nagle .................................................................................................................................................. 49
New York City in Photos .......................................................... Jean Martin .................................................. Photos by Jean Martin .................................................................................................................................................. 56
NASA Ames 75th Anniversary .......................................................... Jean Martin .................................................. Photos by Jean Martin .................................................................................................................................................. 62
My 2014 Year in Events Review .......................................................... Jean Martin .................................................. Photos by Jean Martin .................................................................................................................................................. 67
BASFA Meetings 1277-85 .......................................................... BASFA ........................................................................................................................................................................... 86
Bay Area Fannish Calendar .......................................................... Christopher Erickson .................................................................................................................................................. 96

Art Credits
Cover ........................................................................................................................................................................... The quiet contemplation of a bear by Lucy Huntzinger
Page 5 ........................................................................................................................................................................... Happy Birthday Jean! by Rick Lucey

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Happy spring everyone! I hope you’ve noticed that we didn’t publish a February and March issue. January is the busiest time of the year at my newish job (where I had to relearn the job that I left five years ago and came back to last year, but with added responsibilities) and I was pretty much just working day and night. February was crazy busy not only with work but I was also out of town for events every weekend. I also suffered from severe back pain in January when I had major trouble lying down, getting up and walking. In February I came down with a cold for a week, which turned into a sinus infection for another couple of weeks. So now we’re already in March as I’m writing this.

In January, I did manage to go to (and perform) at the PEERS 12th Night Ball, my friend Cordelia’s annual Hobbit party (celebrating J.R.R. Tolkien’s birthday), Kat Robichaud’s CD release concert/party (Christopher and I are in the music video for her first single “Somebody Call the Doctor”) and see “Amadeus” at Hillbarn Theatre. Yeah, it was a slow month for events for me.

February started and ended with “Game of Thrones”-themed events. The first weekend was the PEERS A Dance of Ice and Fire Ball (where Christopher portrayed Robb Stark and I was Talisa Maegyr-Stark). The last weekend was the GBACG Game of Thrones tour and wine tasting at Castello di Amorosa in Calistoga. Since the start time was early in the morning and Calistoga is a couple of hours away, Christopher and I stayed at the Calistoga Inn the night before where we got a huge discount on a nice dinner as well as free beer tasting (for Christopher) and complimentary continental breakfast. I love Calistoga so it was a good excuse to go there. I’ll review the PEERS ball in our next issue, as I’m still backlogged on my articles, but in this issue we have a guest writer, Denise Tanaka, covering the GBACG event.

In the second weekend of February, Christopher and I went to Gallifrey One in L.A., which was a lot of fun because I got to have a photo opp with almost the entire regular cast of “Torchwood” (except for Ianto Jones), and John Barrowman recognized my costume as Toshiko Sato and pointed that out to Naoko Mori.
who was the actress who played that role. It was also very memorable because I got a photo opp with the legendary Nichelle Nichols, Uhura from “Star Trek.” It’s ironic that I just recently got photos with both Sulu and Uhura recently and just over a week ago Leonard Nimoy passed away. It was sad to find out he died but it was also great to realize that he did live long and prosper. Christopher will be writing about Gallifrey One in the next issue. In this issue, he has several articles including a retrospective of movies and TV shows in 2014, a review of the New Bohemia NYE event and coverage of Furcon 2015.

A week after Gally, I was back in L.A. for the One Last Party put on by TheOneRing.net. It was going to be their last celebration of all things Tolkien during Oscar weekend and so I wanted to experience it once before I couldn’t anymore. It was also the same weekend as the Xena Convention in Burbank, but I didn’t realize it until it was too late and I wasn’t able to plan accordingly. In any case, I was still recovering from my cold so I’m glad I didn’t plan on going back and forth to two events. I just stayed in Hollywood and also went to the Hollywood Costume Exhibition. More on these in the next issue.

In this issue, I’m catching up with my New York trip photo essay, coverage of the NASA Ames 75th anniversary open house and 2014 Year in Events review. I also did a Dickens Fair review, which I haven’t done in a while because Christopher has been doing it these past few years since he goes every weekend whereas I only go once or twice a season. Kara Nagle also did a Dickens Fair piece for this issue. Hers is from the perspective of a first-timer. I’ve been going to Dickens Fair since the late 1980s or early 1990s when it was still at the San Francisco waterfront so mine is from a different angle. Kara also has a review of Supernatural con. Robbie Pleasant has a piece on SacAnime and Yvette has a report on the World Fantasy Convention, which was held in D.C. in 2014.

So while we missed a couple of issues, we’re back in full force this time. However, I’ve realized that with my job and needing to take care of my health more, I can’t do SF/SF monthly anymore. 2015 is the 10th year of SF/SF and I still love doing it. So I have to adjust things so that it still works for me (and Christopher and Tom). Thus, we are going quarterly starting with this spring issue. I think it’s a good transition to do it at this time since our last issue was three months ago. And it seems to work with my job and life to publish on January 1, April 1, July 1 and December 1.

Now we’re in March, I’m already looking forward to the weather getting warmer and the days getting longer. I’m also excited about my upcoming trip to New Zealand next week. And I just celebrated my birthday at the PEERS Dances of Mystery and
Imagination (Edgar Allan Poe) Ball and at Paint Nite where Christopher and I painted a tropical sunrise scene with the help of an instruction who played awesome 1980s music at the Swingin’ Door pub in San Mateo.

Speaking of art, my friend Rick Lucey whipped up a fantastic drawing in honor of my birthday. So I’ll end this here so you can admire his work.

Join our crew!
We are always looking for writers to cover local events, conventions, fan groups and the fannish scene in general.
Contact Jean Martin at SFinSF@gmail.com
Milt Stevens writes:

That certainly is an interesting looking thingie on the cover of Science Fiction/San Francisco #160. I see from the table of contents that it is an entendre photographed by Lucy Huntzinger. I understand those thing usually travel in pairs which is why we hear so much about double entendres. I suspect we should take it to our leader.

Christopher writes:

That joke was pretty much a single entendre.

I’m glad to hear they’re making a “Man From U.N.C.L.E.” movie. The original series was very popular with fans. Terry Carr was the editor of the novel series and fans like Ted Johnstone and Buck Coulson wrote novels in the series. Fans and all sorts of other strange things started showing up in the novels. I nearly made it into one of the novels myself. Don Wollheim (who was the editor of the series) ordered that there were to be no more fans appearing as characters. Don Wollheim didn’t know me at the time. I was a young fan and little known outside of Los Angeles. Unfortunately, the series ended before I made an appearance. I think being a Thrush villain would be fun.

I became a fan of the series when it was in syndication on one of the local UHF channels in Minneapolis in the summer of 1992. The show was fun overall but I remember an episode that was hard to engage the “willing suspension of disbelief” that involved a trained ape. The ape was an actor in a very bad suit you could get at a costume shop. I remember making a reference to the “The Man from U.N.C.L.E.” while doing the road portion of driver’s ed class during the summer as our instructor was having us tail a car that was taking the driver’s test.

I’ve only visited two of the California missions: Los Angeles and San Fernando. I know they built missions a day’s march apart. I know there is a mission in Santa Barbara which is about 40 miles to the west. That means there should be two missions between San Fernando and Santa Barbara. I have no idea where those two missions may be. If they could have foreseen the future, they would have put one in Malibu. California real estate would have been cheap back then.

The missions were not all built at the same time. The first Alta California mission was built in San Diego and the second was built in Monterey, almost 400 miles apart. The missions were meant to establish colonies using the local native populations (eventually converting the natives to subjects) so that Spain could claim the land and keep out other countries, particularly the United Kingdom and France during the late 1700s and American expansion from the east and Russian encroachment into Northern California after Mexico gained its independence.
That’s an ambitious list of geek events for 2015. It doesn’t appear we are going to attend any conventions in common. I plan on attending Westercon, Worldcon and Loscon. I’ve been attending those three cons for ages. As you probably recall, I think the field has more than enough cons at the moment. I have enough money to attend an indefinite number of conventions but not enough energy.

Most of the events that we attend happen to be local, so it is easier to go to them. Less travel and I get the advantage of being able to sleep in my own bed.

I may or may not get around to seeing most of those movies eventually. I’m not obsessive about seeing movies in the year they were released. With TV series, I usually see one or two episodes before losing interest. I came across an ad for a new show titled “I Zombie” which will be starting in March. It’s about a young girl who is having trouble fitting in as a zombie. She also has trouble locating her next meal. It sounds like the sort of thing that would appeal to my sense of humor.

I try to see the ones that interest me or the big “event” movies like the Marvel films or “Star Wars.” I have seen the ads for “iZombie” while watching “The Flash.” It is an adaptation of a Vertigo Comics series of the same name. It looks interesting and I will probably give it a whirl since it is horror comedy and I am a fan of both “Shaun of the Dead” and “The Walking Dead.”

Lloyd Penny writes:
Many thanks for issue 160 of SF/SF. I am slowly but surely digging myself out of a huge pile of fanzines that have arrived either on eFanzines.com or in my IN box. There’s always something to say...

Christopher Erickson responds:
Good to have reading material.

I might wait for the DVD release for the three Hobbit movies. Didn't see the second or third movies. As many have said, the book was stretched too thin for three movies.

The last movie had enough going on for it for the 2 ½ hours since there were a lot of battles going on. The addition of the side stories involving Gandalf and Radagast the Brown were good since there has always been the fan speculation of what Gandalf was doing when he left the group.

I always wondered how Chris Garcia got all that writing done. Guess no one was supervising him at work? A very smart guy, and one with the gift of putting his thoughts on paper very quickly. Married life might change him, or simply give him more to talk about. I suspect it’s the latter.

I am sure he was supervised. Writing during your lunch break is a good way of getting things done as I do that myself. And there are people who have a great ability to write efficiently and produce a large amount in a short period. Dashiell Hammett was known for writing quickly and only having to revise after the first draft.
My letter...all those BBC stations are available through the BBC website, and with the use of the Radio Player, which seems able to access most British radio stations, with the exception of some who will not or cannot be broadcast outside of the UK. Porridge bowl?? One series of stations I can get through the Radio Player is the Absolute Radio stations. Great music.

Please send us the information as I would love to listen sometime. The Porridge Bowl is pretty much more of a trophy for bragging writes than anything.

Nice big list of movies...the only one to catch my eye is Pixar's “Inside Out.” We don't go to too many movies, but we did see a preview of “Inside Out” when we saw “The Imitation Game.” Looks interesting, and I am rarely disappointed by Pixar. And then, of course, is the 7th Star Wars movie. I HAVE to see that.

People seem to like Pixar except for “Cars 2.” There is a crazy Internet theory about how all of the Pixar movies are connected due to the Easter eggs that are put in involving the eventual extinction of man, the rise of a machine class that eventually falls and then animals gaining human-like intelligence and taking over the world. I think everyone is excited for the next “Star Wars” installment. We plan on seeing it with a group of friends.

I wish we had something like the balls you enjoy in the Bay area. We'd need a lot more costumes...

The balls tend to fall into specific time periods, mostly Regency and Victorian/Edwardian with one or two Art Deco themes and a couple of science fiction. It makes the costuming much easier.

I think the Wizard World event in Reno was at the same facility that Worldcon was in 2011. The background shots look familiar.

Both events were held in the Reno-Sparks Convention Center. It is about the only place that can hold a large scale event like those two.

Wizard World bought an existing convention in Toronto some years ago, but shut it down not long afterwards. Some U.S. companies simply do not know how to deal with foreign borders.

Even foreign companies that buy U.S. companies eventually downsize what they have bought.

Take care both of you, keep coming out with these great fannish newsletters/newszines, and we will see you with the next one.
By Kara Nagle

Staff Writer

The Bay Area Christmas tradition for the costuming crowd is definitely The Great Dickens Fair. The 36-year old fair is a phantasmagoric experience worth visiting at least once yearly, if not every weekend, every season it is open. A substantially comprehensive troupe of actors and a talented production crew impeccably transform the innards of the Cow Palace into Christmas-time Victorian London for five weekends between Mid-November and Christmas.

Despite the five years I’ve spent in the Bay Area, and my love of faires and anachronistic offerings, I’d only heard of The Great Dickens Fair this last year. The last day of the 2014 Dickens season was my first day of exploring “Little London,” but it will definitely not be my last. I greatly enjoyed my time at the fair, and will be attending at least one full weekend next season. There is simply too much to cram into one day, on the last day of the fair!

The experience of Dickens doesn’t start inside the building; it starts as patrons wander from their cars and through the lots up to the Cow Palace. There are guards at gate posts, such as you would see in outside the palace grounds. Occasionally a street urchin or impoverished waif will wander by, or maybe even a dapper gentleman or gaggle of ladies will be there to provide some conversation during the walk to the ticket line. Even in line, the actors transport a patron to the 1800s. Chimney sweeps and drunkards josh and rib each other or...
patrons to get everyone into the spirit.

Walking through the doors into London is a full frontal assault on the senses. Fantastic Victorian costumes adorn nearly everyone, patron and actor alike. Sumptuous fabrics and textures dazzled my eyes, as mulling spices and Christmas scents such as juniper and cinnamon flooded my nose. Over the house band at Fezziwigs, fiddling and piping away, I could hear Big Ben tolling the time. I swear I could hear dockside gulls as well. Occasionally I’d hear a town crier, trying to deliver a news headline or a telegram. Storefronts adorned either side of the streets, such as they were, with the typical faire artifacts and souvenirs available, with a Victorian flair.
Since this year was my first visit, and I was attending without my usual group of faire friends, I received a personalized tour from a friend. Christopher is a regular at Dickens, as well as many other area faires and conventions, and happily showed me the sights. He was a good partner in crime, too, since I was attired as the Tenth Doctor and he was attired as the Fifth Doctor; both proper costumes for a little anachronistic wandering.

Each time Christopher and I walked a circuit of the fair I saw something new. It wasn’t that storefronts moved or were replaced; the fair is just that full of things to see and do. At least half a dozen stages boast hourly shows, either of the...
song-and-dance variety, or a reading from an era-appropriate author, or a comedy act. I received a quick Waltz lesson at Fezziwigs, and learned that chucks are probably the worse dancing shoes ever. The Adventurers Club offered a sampling of what was on display at The Crystal Palace. Education disguised as entertainment at its very finest. At some point in time the crowd had to make way for the Steam Man, a clockwork-and-steam-powered automaton nearly eight feet tall!

Food and drink a plenty were on offer. Tea and biscuits could be had, either at tea-time or for just a quick cuppa to refuel for the day’s wanderings. Near Mad Sal’s an absinthe
bar offered a handful of cocktails that were very tempting. Ale houses were scattered about at intervals, and good English fare such as meat pies and fish and chips were available to pair with any of those ales. Other fare was available, too, for those in need of something different. I made do with some delicious roasted nuts, a typical faire treat for me.

I tried to take it all in at once, which is a grave mistake. I was far too overwhelmed to really get my bearings and get involved. Despite that, I did enjoy the fair. It was great to step into an era I know precious little about, and learn while having fun. It really did feel like I traveled back in time, the production is that grand. Every costume, every storefront, every sound and visual kept me in London.

The continuous action and immersive atmosphere is mesmerizing. The production cast and crew pulled out all the stops to transform a contemporary venue into a jolly romp through Victorian London. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to “Little London,” and thank Christopher for my tour and Vivianne for my ticket. The fair is definitely worth the admission, and very much worth a season pass. There just is too much to try and see in one day or one weekend. No other faire I’ve attended can hold a candle to Dickens in terms of production value or activities offered. It is a spectacularly fun tradition to add to the Christmas season.
By Jean Martin
Editor-in-Chief

The Great Dickens Christmas Fair is a magical trip into Victorian London that’s based on the work of Charles Dickens, in particular his novella “A Christmas Carol.” The first time I went was when it was still at the San Francisco waterfront and I felt like I stepped into another world and loved it. Dickens, the Victorian era and Christmas are among my favorite things so all these combined is a winner for me. However, I didn’t get the chance to go again until several years later when it transferred to the more spacious Cow Palace Exhibition Halls. Since then, I’ve been going at least once a year.

To my delight and amazement, my costuming and dance worlds have intersected with the Dickens Fair. My entrée into the costuming and dance communities were through re-enactment groups (PEERS and BAERS) and science fiction...
conventions. But it didn’t take me long to find out that lots of people who go or work at the Dickens Fair are the same people. It seems like each year, more and more of my friends and people I know work the Fair. Christopher goes every weekend.

This year, he and I were again invited to attend the Press Tea at Tavistock House. We went last year and we had a great time being feted by Charles Dickens and his family, friends and characters from his novels and the Fair. I took a picture of Mr. Dickens in front of his Christmas tree. I also got to snap photos of Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig and Mad Sal. I got to meet Denise Lamott, who is the PR rep for the Fair, and she was very nice. I also got to say hello again to the organizer of Dickens Fair, Kevin Patterson, and was introduced to his wife Leslie.

The Press Tea was a nice way to experience the Fair in an even more interactive way. It was a bit disconcerting, though, to attend the Dickens Fair before Thanksgiving as it didn’t feel
quite like Christmas yet. But opening weekend was when the Press Tea was and I really wanted to attend it. I guess it started the Christmas season early for me and I really don’t have a problem with that. The food at the Press Tea was quite bountiful and delicious. There were mince pies, scones and English sandwiches. Tea and sherry were also served.

But the dining didn’t stop there. We didn’t have time to do the private meal at the Tippling Toad nor the High Tea (yes, I know it really shouldn’t be called that but that’s what Americans call it) at Cuthbert’s Tea Shoppe. We’ve enjoyed these several times in the past but we just couldn’t fit it in. As it was, it was quite hectic just meandering along the streets and window shopping. Well, there was some real shopping that went on at least for me. I bought a beautiful bonnet from Strawbenders and a feather fascinator from PiumaMia. I enjoyed the Dark Garden live mannequins at their windows and looked at hats at Primrose Parlour. I didn’t buy anything from Dark Garden as I just bought one of their corsets from their real store in San Francisco. I did buy some hair curls from Primrose Parlour. I was also able to enjoy a meat pie and fish and chips. Dickens Fair is just not complete without these British staples.

As far as entertainment, the expanded Crystal Palace was new in 2014 and I got to meet Charles Darwin and Mary
Anning. Mary Anning was a paleontologist from Lyme Regis in the U.K. and we got to see her museum there in September. My friend Jim Bull just joined the Crystal Palace as steam train pioneer George Stephenson and he gave me a short lecture about his invention. I saw a bit of “A Christmas Carol” that is now in a spacious dedicated stage as well as Bill Sikes scaring his crew from “Oliver Twist” on another stage.

I was just in time for a sketching session at the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood Artist Salon. It’s always fun to do something interactive. Also participatory was the dancing at Fezziwig’s Warehouse. I always try to dance at least a handful
of dances, even though there’s hardly any time for it, as I love Victorian dances.

We ran into some friends who were guests as well as participants. There were two Doctors that I saw that day and one of them was our friend Kazran Spasojevich who’s the spitting image of David Tennant as the Tenth Doctor. I usually go to Dickens Fair in Victorian garb, though, as I like feeling like part of the time period. Also, Dickens Fair is where Christopher and I have our photos taken with either the Christmas tree at the Grand Concourse or at the Happy Christmas Store for our Christmas cards for the next year.

We didn’t get to see the French Postcards show that day. But I’ve seen it enough. What I hadn’t seen in a while is the blowout at Mad Sal’s at the end of the day and so I went to go see that. It is a pretty wild Music Hall revue with samples from several of the acts who performed that day and capped with a naughty version of the Twelve Days of Christmas led by Mad Sal herself.

After that, we ended the evening, as per usual, with the singing of Handel’s “Messiah” at Fezziwig’s Warehouse. It’s always exciting to me to be in a huge group of people singing this masterpiece in four-part harmony. Then the cast of Fezziwig’s sing Christmas carols as they usher us out of the
Fair. It’s always a bittersweet ending to leave the Dickens Fair but I’m at least comforted by the fact that I do get to experience some of the spirit of the Fair through the PEERS balls almost every month. And there’s also always next year for the Dickens Fair itself. I can’t wait until it’s time to travel to Christmas time in Victorian London again.
By Christopher Erickson
Managing Editor

2014 was a pretty good year for geekdom. The television airwaves were dominated by science fiction and fantasy shows and the most successful movies were similarly themed.

In the television department, the CW launched “The Flash” and had crossover episodes of the character with Oliver Queen from “Arrow.” The network also launched “The 100” based on the post-apocalyptic novel of the same name and continued established series “Beauty and the Beast,” “The Vampire Diaries,” “The Originals” and “Supernatural.”

ABC also continued the popular series “Once Upon A Time” with the characters from “Frozen” after the events of the movie. The network also picked up “Marvel’s Agents of SHIELD” for a second season, focusing the show on the fallout of the events depicted in the movie “Captain America: The Winter Soldier.” The new show “Forever” about a New York City medical examiner who is also immortal.

Fox established a new series in “Gotham” showing the formative days of Gotham City shaping the lives of Jim Gordon as a police detective, the rise of the Penguin, the criminal gangs and police corruption and the youth of Bruce Wayne. The network also renewed “Sleepy Hollow” for a second season following the further adventures of soldier Ichabod Crane in the present day as he tries to destroy the Headless Horseman.

NBC launched the show “Constantine” based on the character from the DC Comics “Hellblazer” series. The show will at least fill out its original order of 13 episodes. CBS aired the third season of their version of Sherlock Holmes “Elementary.” The BBC One version, “Sherlock” aired on PBS in America.

Cable continues to support genre shows. FX continued “American Horror Story” with its fourth season dubbed “Freak Show.” “Game of Thrones” continued with its fourth season on HBO. AMC debuted the fifth season of “The Walking Dead.” BBC America showed series 8 of “Doctor Who” and season 2 of “Orphan Black.” TNT aired the fourth season of the alien invasion/resistance fighter show “Falling Skies.” Nickelodeon completed the animated series “Avatar: The Legend of Korra” this year as well.

On the movie front, there were a number of successful movies. [Writer’s note: all box office numbers are as of January 20, 2015.] “Transformers: Age of Extinction” was critically panned but was successful, being the number one movie worldwide with $1.0874 billion ($245 million domestic/$842 million overseas). “The Hobbit: The Battle of Five Armies” was also a huge success with $805 million worldwide ($245 million domestic/$560 million).

One of the surprising hits was “Guardians of the Galaxy” with $773 million worldwide ($333 million domestic/$440
million overseas). Fellow Marvel films “Captain America: The Winter Soldier” ($260 million domestic/$454 million overseas/$714 million total), “Amazing Spider-Man 2” ($203 million domestic/$506 million overseas/$709 million total) and “X-Men: Days of Future Past” ($234 million domestic/$514 million overseas/$748 million total) were also huge hits. The other superhero movie, “Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles,” was also a major hit ($191 million domestic/$286 million overseas/$477 million total).

Science fiction movies were also huge this year with “Dawn of the Planet of the Apes” ($209 million domestic/$500 million overseas/$709 million total), “Interstellar” ($186 million domestic/$477 million overseas/$663 million total), “Godzilla” ($200 million domestic/$328 million overseas/$528 million total) and Lucy ($127 million domestic/$332 million overseas/$459 million total) leading the way. Other hits included “Edge of Tomorrow” ($100 million domestic/$269 million overseas/$369 million total) and RoboCop ($59 million domestic/$184 million overseas/$243 million total).

Dystopian movies were also successful with “The Hunger Games: Mockingjay – Part 1” ($333 million domestic/$379 million overseas/$712 million total), “The Maze Runner” ($102 million domestic/$238 million overseas/$340 million overseas) and “Divergent” ($151 million domestic/$138 million overseas/$289 million total) being huge hits.

Fantasy movies proved successful at the box office as well. “Maleficent” ($241 million domestic/$516 million overseas/$757 million total), “Noah” ($101 million domestic/$261 million/$362 million total), “300: Rise of an Empire” ($106 million domestic/$231 million overseas/$337 million), “Exodus: Gods and Kings” ($64 million domestic/$185 million overseas/$249 million total), “Hercules” ($73 million domestic/$170 million overseas/$243 million total) and “Dracula Untold” ($56 million domestic/$159 million overseas/$215 million total) were all huge successes. “Into the Woods” ($116 million domestic) was also a late hit during the year.

Animated films were also huge in 2014 with “How to Train Your Dragon 2” ($177 million domestic/$442 million overseas/$619 million total), “The LEGO Movie” ($258 million domestic/$211 million overseas/$429 million total), “Big Hero 6” ($217 million domestic/$212 million overseas/$429 million total) and “Mr. Peabody & Sherman” ($112 million domestic/$161 overseas/$273 million total) taking in good hauls.


Based on both the successful television shows and the huge box office numbers for superhero, fantasy and science fiction movies, we should continue to see more of the same in 2015 and beyond.
By Yvette Keller

Staff Writer

If you’ve been reading my SF/SF submissions over the past year, you’ll know by now that I’m a fandom newb. I continue to be deeply grateful that Kevin Roche introduced me to WorldCon in 2000, inviting me to stage ninja for him at the ChiCon Masquerade. He has subsequently included me in creative scheming as a member of the League of Evil Geniuses, and I remain absolutely in his debt for many things…including my attendance at this year’s World Fantasy Convention (WFC).

Although I have been reading SF and Fantasy since reading became THE THING I DO (around 1st grade), until the calendar clicked over to the aughts I had not managed to catch on that whole communities of people meet frequently to discuss and celebrate my favorite genres. Or indeed my favorite authors.

As a result of Kevin’s kind and inclusive nature, I was a member of the con staff for WFC in San Jose in 2009. It was a wonderful introduction to what is now my favorite con to attend. Though I am not able to go regularly, this con has authors – lots of them – and authors READING THEIR OWN WORK. That’s a thing I adore.

Now, WFC is not a con for everyone – in fact, it has a very narrow charter:

“The World Fantasy Convention is an annual gathering (almost a reunion) of professionals, collectors, and others interested in the field of Light and Dark Fantasy art and literature.”

I have heard it referred to as a “professional” con. When I was asked, “What’s this World Fantasy Con all about?” by the leather-clad, Harley-riding, U.S. veterans sharing the Hyatt for a Veteran’s Day convention, I described it like this:

“You know how medical specialists – Orthopedic Surgeons, for example – go to conventions to talk to all their surgeon friends? They hear lectures, network, drink, and learn how to be better surgeons? Well, this is a convention for Fantasy writers, editors, artists, and some (lucky) readers to do the same. Participants show up and talk about the Fantasy they have painted, read, written, and want to get better at writing.

Because of WFC’s focus, hall costumes are infrequent, and there is no masquerade. The parties common at WorldCon don’t exist at WFC because they would detract from “BarCon.” Attendees like Gail Carriger and Vanessa Applegate convene in the hotel lounge and bar areas to socialize, instead of in cramped hotel rooms on the suite floor. They also have meetings, both public and private, to discuss the past, present and future of the Fantasy Genre.

Entertainment during the con comes from excellent programming that lasts until late in the evening. There is also a ton of fun in meeting fellow lovers of Fantasy, discussing...
books, pitching ideas, and celebrating the accomplishments of colleagues at the mass signing and awards banquet.

This idea, that professionals crave the opportunity to convene and commune with their fellows, is reinforced by some of the special WFC programming. There are a lot of kaffeklatches – opportunities to be in open, unlimited discussion with a renowned author, editor, or artist. There are a lot of readings: opportunities for authors to read their work aloud to an audience. Panels tend to be very specifically focused, and kept on track by skilled moderators.

I wanted to attend the 2014 WFC because the Guest of Honor was Guy Gavriel Kay, my favorite fantasy author. This year marks 30 years since Kay’s first book, “The Summer Tree,” was published. I have read every book Kay has written, and although I have enjoyed some more than others, the “Fionavar Tapestry” and “Tigana” remain my go-to re-reads when I need to lose myself cathartically in a fantasy world.

When it comes to attending cons, I am very lucky. In this case, because I travel for work, I was able to tack-on some vacation time at the front of a business trip. This helped offset airline costs. I also have friends who live in D.C. and were willing to put me up. I didn’t need to pay for a hotel. And finally, because Kevin had given me the opportunity to staff WFC 2009, I knew I enjoyed volunteering, so I applied for a cheap “staff” membership in exchange for some hard-work.

Excited to be on an adventure that met my “fan” needs and my “budget” needs, I packed my bag, including my very-loved and frequently read copies of Kay’s first trilogy. I arrived at Reagan National Airport after two full airplane flights and a stressfully short layover in Denver. I came in at one end of the airport and RAAAAAAAAAAAAAAN all the way to the opposite end. Dang! Traveler Beware! The Denver airport is LOOOOOOOOONG.

Eventually I managed to get from the airport to the hotel, have some dinner, and acquire my MEGA TOTE OF AWESOME. An incredible reason to attend WFC is that everyone registered gets a great big, sturdy, zippable bag FILLED with free books! And for the 40th Anniversary Project, past World Fantasy Award winners, Guests of Honor, and Life Achievement Honorees all contributed to an electronic compendium of short stories, vignettes, art work, and other items. Each participant received a USB drive with hundreds and hundreds of pages of wonderful content. I hadn’t even made it to Opening Ceremonies and already I was ecstatic, loaded up with reading materials: YAAAAY!

Over the previous months, I had discharged some of my staff duties by contributing to the WFC Progress Reports and copyediting stories for the compendium. My first “job” after check-in was to support tech setup for the opening ceremonies. I think it is fun to setup speakers, run power, and connect mic cables. Besides, it means that when the Master of Ceremonies, Mary Robinette Kowal, needs bobby-pins, I’ll be in the right place at the right time. (Have I mentioned I LOVE playing with hair?)

Due to some technical issues, the opening ceremonies started a tad late, but ran without a hitch and ended on time. A full-house applauded all of the amazing guests and nominees for the World Fantasy Awards…then exited to enjoy the much-anticipated ice cream social afterwards.

The next WFC highlight is a perfect example of what makes a great con: Four strangers in an elevator, heading for the top floor ConSuite to gather up some lunch. One casually
states, “If the 18th is the highest floor, what does the ‘R’ button do?”

Suddenly the whole elevator is full of possibility:

“Maybe we are in a Wonkavator that goes sideways, and slantways, and any other ways you can think of!”

“I think it lets you out into the ‘Real’ world – we don’t want to go there.”

Maybe it stands for ‘Restaurant’ level. Don’t a lot of hotels have restaurants at the top, for enjoying the view?”

“‘R’ for roof – but would they actually let us just go walking out onto the roof...or off it?”

**DING**

We get out on the 18th floor, smiling and giggling.

That could have been the end of that, but it just so happened that we all got our food at about the same rate, and were back in front of the bank of elevators, plates in hands, waiting with awkward smiles.

I don’t know who said it: “Let’s go to the roof.”

Soon I was jumping on – not an elevator – but an adventure with Mark Holt, C.S. MacCath, and Heather McDougal. Someone wondered if the button would even light up when pushed – would it allow us to go up, not down? There was nervous laughter, and when the “R” button lit up brightly, there was excitement. We had only moments to wonder what, exactly we would find. A locked penthouse hallway an access hatch? A noisy troop of air condensers and HVAC units at parade rest?

What we found was a beautiful, accessible, but unstaffed event space. It had walls of windows for overlooking D.C. We wandered, with huge smiles and wide eyes, past a boozeless bar. Linen covered tables seemed naked without flatware and glassware. The four of us relished the silence and emptiness uncommon in con-filled hotels. Then there were a few antics before we headed back to the elevators and our “con lives.”

I had plenty of time in between staff assignments to do the things I really wanted: I attended an interview with Guy Gavriel Kay. I listened to Stephen R Donaldson read, despite some noisy hallways. I listened to intense conversations about writing, because there is an author (or 12) in every hallway. I participated in a late-night, multi-part reading, designed to keep everyone from falling asleep. It worked! So Fun!

At the mass autograph signing, Kay graciously signed all three of my Fionavar Tapestry, Sci-Fi Book Club editions. We chatted briefly about Kepler’s Books – the last time I saw him in person was in Menlo Park. With my books signed, and my thank yous said to a man whose work I love, I headed to the entryway of the ballroom to guard the doors. For hours everyone went in and out of the ballroom. Every attendee gets a name tent, and if they grab a table space, they can sell and sign their work. One of the best parts is to watch the authors leave their own tables briefly to take a book over to another author and ask for a signature. It is heartwarming when Fans who are Authors get to take a turn at being Authors who are Fans.

While checking badges, I people watched, joked around, ate, drank, and met all sorts of people coming and going. Sure I was “working,” but for me, it was just about the best possible place to be.

Also during the con, I attended the Mary Robinette Kowal alumni meeting. I took a very rewarding online class from Kowal over the summer, and was excited to meet up with my cohort and other alums. When I showed up in the crowded bar,
I found a slightly fretful Kowal. Apparently, the bar was supposed to be closed, and Kowal had discussed a semi-private space for our group to meet…but that had clearly not happened.

I asked Kowal how many alums she was expecting: More than 30. Luckily, I knew of a secret, empty place that the lot of us could meet. After clearing it with Kowal, as the Pied Piper of MRK town, I led my fellows up to the spectacular roof! We spent an hour or more chatting, networking, enjoying the view, and swapping good writing news.

My final day at WFC included a fascinating panel all about collecting rare books and autographed copies of books. I even got a couple of my own questions answered about the value of books with inscriptions, versus just signatures, and even multiple signatures.

My last hours involved more tech setup, and then a quick change into banquet clothes for a sumptuous luncheon. The decorations included kaleidoscope centerpieces, set on mirrors that reflected onto the ceiling of the ballroom. Kowal was an inspirational speaker. Plus, I’m a sucker for awards shows. I enjoyed meeting all the wonderful folks at my table and clapping until my hands were sore as the winners of the World Fantasy Awards happily accepted their statues. You can see the list of winners, and read their fantastic works here: worldfantasy2014.org/awards4.php

Sadly, there isn’t time for everything. Still, I appreciated all of the generous authors, fellow readers, and staff people who made World Fantasy an incredibly pleasant reality.
By Robbie Pleasant

Staff Writer

In the first weekend in January, Sac Anime returned to Sacramento, bringing with it plenty of fans and some excellent guests. The three-day event ran from Friday to Sunday, and as always, filled the center and the nearby hotels with all the attendees.

Sac Anime is known for bringing in some outstanding guests, and this time it had Peter Cullen, the voice of Eeyore and Optimus Prime, as its main draw. His autograph sessions were significantly more expensive than the other guests (around $135 compared to the usual price of nothing), although Transformers fans were willing to pay it. Each one he met he spoke to at length and kindly, making sure they all got their money’s worth.
Of course, he was far from the only guest. John DiMaggio (voice of Bender in *Futurama*) was also in attendance, along with voice actors like Matthew Mercer, Kyle Hebert and Ashly Burch, to name a few. Each day, long lines stretched around the back of the convention center as attendees lined up to meet the actors they admired. Although the lines got very long at times, the fans were willing to wait through as many as they needed to.

The dealer’s hall was mostly unchanged from previous years, with some recognizable vendors and artists selling their wares, but as the selection has always been pretty good, that’s not a complaint. One welcome addition was a cosplayer dressed as the 10th Doctor with a life-sized TARDIS, who would take pictures with attendees and let them walk inside the giant prop (although it wasn’t quite bigger on the inside, but that’s forgivable).

Throughout the weekend, there were several panels to check out and events to participate in. Industry and Q&A panels for many of the guests filled very quickly, and the lines for those could grow quite lengthy as well.

For the cosplayers, there was the masquerade on Saturday night, which always drew large crowds and lots of viewers. A standout winner that night was a massive suit for the Armored Titan from “Attack on Titan,” which towered above the
crowds. Aside from the masquerade, there were gatherings each day for various series, which were great opportunities to get photos with other fans, assuming the organizers showed up to run them.

There were a few series that were commonly cosplayed there, including those seen at every Sac Anime as far as memory goes (“Homestuck,” “Hetalia” and “Black Butler”) to some newer but very popular shows and games, like Disney’s “Big Hero 6” and the “Five Nights at Freddy’s” games.

However, there were occasional instances where the attendees could get a little too excited and loud, crowding the middle of the hallway or ignoring noise levels. During a Q&A panel with John DiMaggio, people standing right outside were singing so loudly he had to interrupt the panel to yell at them to shut up. While there is nothing wrong with having fun, of course, there is also respect for one’s surroundings to consider.

The staff was also on full alert that weekend, checking for badges before allowing attendees to even go upstairs, and once they were upstairs, checking again before letting them into any rooms. While it was in an effort to prevent “ghosting” (going to the con without a badge to see people and sneak into things), it got a little overbearing on attendees who were there with badges and grew tired of constantly being asked to show them just while walking down the halls.
All in all, this may not have been the best Sac Anime yet, but it still had a lot going for it. The convention had some incredible guests, the location is still good, and there was plenty to do. It cannot be faulted for the immaturity of some fans as well, as the attendees need to meet the convention halfway in order to make it truly great. But for a convention weekend, it was a fine way to welcome 2015.
Bohemian New Year’s Eve

By Christopher Erickson
Managing Editor

Jean and I rang in the New Year in a Burning Man/circus atmosphere in San Francisco. We attended the Bohemian NYE held at the Armory in San Francisco. This event was filled with a huge amount of entertainment.

The setup inside of the Armory was split into three separate areas on the first floor with a dungeon dance floor in the lower level. There was also a VIP level on the fourth floor featuring a separate dance floor, bars and lounging areas.

The big main area for entertainment was the Vau de Vire stage. This stage featured a diverse lineup of acts including singers, comedians, burlesque dancers and acrobatic performers. One of the main performances was a small-scale recreation of the Soiled Dove show by Vau de Vire complete with Emperor Norton, the Master of Ceremonies and the dance hall girls. They performed feats with poles, balancing swords and feather dances.

Another group performing on the Vau de Vire stage was the Tourettes Without Regrets variety act. The group featured an eclectic line up of beat boxers, slam poetry/rap battle sessions, burlesque performers and comedians. It was reminiscent of the...
old vaudeville acts mixed with modern-day club entertainment.

Another area on the main floor was the Opel’s Crystal Palace stage. It featured a lineup of prominent DJs throughout the night spinning music. It is similar to The Opulent Temple that is featured at Burning Man. The stage was reminiscent of an MC Escher drawing and featured a changing display of graphics. The lineup of DJs included Lee Coombs and Syd Gris. There were many people dancing in this area including people with glowsticks, lighted dance balls and lights built into their costumes.
The area in between Opel’s Crystal Palace and the Vau de Vire Stage was set up for displays of art including paintings, sculptures and large set pieces including a huge tea pot, columns that shot out smoke and the “Dusty Rhino,” a lighted art car structure that people could climb on. It also had a bar with a large screen over it showing video displays.

Performances by the Trashkan Marchink Band opened the festivities by striding through the area and performing in the Vau de Vire area. This middle location was also used for the countdown clock and a balloon drop at midnight.

There was an opportunity for people to have their portrait taken at a small setup by a professional photographer. The
setup was a gold frame with a black backdrop. People were able to see an artist paint while standing in line.

There was a side area where organic food was sold, a couple of booths selling steampunk hats, fascinators and accessories and a lounge tent was set up.

The lower level dungeon area was the Catacombia. It featured a darkened room with a dance floor, décor including wrought iron fencing, a cross rack, stocks and an electric chair for people to pose and take photos with. The DJ booth featured bright lights and smoke released to give it an eerie feel.
The people who came dressed up were in wildly different outfits. There were ensembles that you can find at Burning Man. There were plenty of kilts, steampunk outfits, wearable art, Western outfits, goth clothing, post-apocalyptic fashion similar to “Mad Max,” flapper outfits, near-nudity and Dia de los Muertos-inspired costumes.

There were several VIP tents set up near each stage for people to sit down and enjoy their drinks and the show. There was also a separate fourth floor sponsored by Kink.com. It had two separate bars, a dance floor with its own DJ, lounging areas and bondage/suspension practitioners for those who wanted to experience it or watch.

If you are looking to find a taste of Burning Man without the travel or sunburn, the Bohemian NYE is the perfect place to find it.
Someday, wouldn’t it be great to travel to the green hills of Italy and explore the Tuscan region known the world over for its fine art and wine? Wait... I’ve got an office job and bills to pay.

Someday, wouldn’t it be great to travel back in time to the period when lords carried swords and ladies wore elegant gowns? Wait... time machines don’t exist yet.

Well, it just takes some creativity and imagination to turn

courtesy of Denise Tanaka
“someday” into “today.” The Greater Bay Area Costumers’ Guild (GBACG) organized a “Game of Thrones”-themed group tour of a winery in the Napa Valley. Not just any winery but an authentic reproduction of a medieval Tuscan castle. A short drive beyond the main street of downtown Calistoga, the castle crowns a hill overlooking a spectacular view of meadows, woodlands, creeks and vineyards. The Castello di Amorosa is the fulfillment of an impossible dream. It was built by Dario Sattui based on his experience traveling the castles and wineries in Italy. He devoted almost 20 years to his obsession of planning and constructing an authentic European castle in the United States. Dario purchased materials from neglected and crumbling castles. He used traditional building methods wherever possible, employing master craftsmen from around the world to chisel the stones and hand-forge every one of the hinges, doorknobs, and nails.

Our adventure began—as most costume events tend to do—in the parking lot with assembling the finishing touches to our fantasy wardrobe. Wigs, hooded cloaks, body armor, hoop skirts and swords make it a bit difficult to drive a car. It’s also important to hide away those modern necessities such as wallet and car keys into secret pockets or leather pouches that hang off a belt. Many of us arrived as nondescript ordinary people in T-shirts and jeans. As the tailgates and hatchbacks opened, we transformed into lords and ladies of another era. “Game of Thrones” characters sprang to life—there was Daenerys Targaryen carrying a baby dragon on her arm, Tyrion Lannister, Brienne of Tarth and Jon Snow dressed all in black, as well as an archer from the icy north and nobles from the court of Westeros. For those like me who did not have a specific Game of Thrones character to portray, a generic

by Denise Tanaka
medieval-inspired costume fit the ambiance of the day. Some of us created new designs just for this event. A few of others happened to have a little something stored in the closet that could be dusted off for the occasion.

From the parking lot, it’s a short stroll past a pig sty where real pigs are kept. Ducks waddle freely around the moat. Goats munch on grass behind a fence. Stone stairs ascend to the gatehouse arch which is equipped with a fully-functioning portcullis gate. Right away, there is the feeling that one has stepped back in time. The stonework is authentically battered and aged. The towers feel taller and more formidable than they appear in the website’s photographs. Archers’ windows are narrow and deeply set for concealment; indeed, I peeked out and spied my niece and nephew on the steps below, but they did not see me!

Once inside the crenelated walls, we were fully immersed in another world. Our guided tour began in a large open courtyard surrounded by Romanesque arched loggias and mysterious heavy doors. Looking up to the second-story balcony, one could expect a lord or a prince to make a proclamation.

The tour guide walked us through the Great Hall of the castle. This majestic room is where a baron would hold court to conduct business followed by the pleasure of feasting in true Italian style. This room can host up to 140 people with the largest hand-carved banquet table I have ever seen outside of the Harry Potter films! Iron wheel chandeliers hang from the ornate ceilings. Frescoes decorate the walls in reproduction of scenes that Dario photographed in European castles. A working fireplace, that is older than Christopher Columbus, was transported from overseas.

We moved on to the chapel—a fully consecrated sanctuary by Denise Tanaka.
complete with an altar and a bowl of holy water by the door. The frescoes decorating the walls have a faded brightness as if they truly are centuries old. Unfortunately, the county ordinances and zoning laws prohibit weddings or worship services to be held in this lovely chapel.

From there, we strolled to the winery’s actual working area. Castillo di Amorosa is an independent boutique winery that produces a comparatively small number of whites and reds each year. We saw their fermentation vats and stood near the pressing machinery. The tour guide described the process of extracting juice by inflating a large balloon that squeezed the grapes upwards to a sieve rather than crushing them under the bare feet of smiling maidens. No doubt the fur-clad barbarians among us were disappointed to hear about that process.

Descending into the wine cellars, we passed between rows and rows of stacked barrels. The arched doorways are low and the corridors are dimly lit, all adding to the fun of going back in time. Die-cast iron dragons are fixed to the tops of doorways and snarl at the passers-by. I was glad for my wool cloak in the underground caves that are kept at about 58°F year-round. I was also glad for my comfortable walking shoes as the tour lasted at least an hour. By the way, the castle is fully ADA compliant including an elevator that can take guests from the courtyard to the underground cellars. The corridors
are wide enough for a wheelchair and have gently sloping ramps winding through the labyrinth.

From time to time, our group dragged its feet to enjoy taking photographs of each other in our costumes against the backdrop of this spectacular venue. Our tour guide had to promise that the wine tasting was soon to come! The armory and the dungeon were especially distracting. When one is dressed in armor and carrying a sword, who can resist posing for a photo next to a rack of antique spears and halberds? The torture chamber is fully furnished with an iron maiden, a rack, chains and handcuffs, a spiked chair and dungeon cells populated by zombie manikins.

Our tour ended, as promised, in the so-called Fourth Cellar with a tasting of wine and cheese. We sampled from bottles uncorked in series progressing up the taste and color scale from a white pinot grigio, a light rosé, a sangiovese, and a cabernet sauvignon. We finished tasting the castle’s own creation La Fantasia, “an Italian style soft sparkling wine which is lower in alcohol, naturally sweet and refreshing with bright aromas of cherry, exotic flowers and wild berries.” For children or those who do not drink wine, they also provided a delicious Muscat Canelli grape juice and pitchers of flavored ice water.

My spouse-in-tow was a good sport. Although he does not
share my enthusiasm for dressing up in fantasy or historical garments, he wore the simple one-piece coat that I whipped together at the last minute. Okay, I gave him permission to take it off as soon as we headed for the car. The important thing is to have fun!

Find more information about visiting the winery or purchasing their wines at www.castellodiamorosa.com

Denise Robarge Tanaka is a fantasy author living in the SF Bay Area. By day, she works as an immigration paralegal while managing to pursue her hobbies in genealogy and costuming. Her latest short story is in SQ Mag #17 (sqmag.com/2014/10/31/edition-17-results-by-denise-robarge-tanaka/) and previous stories appeared in issues of New Realm magazine and Once Upon A World #7. Her epic fantasy novel “A Blighted Touch” will be released in the near future.

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The new year opened up with one of my favorite conventions, Further Confusion, or known as FurCon for short. It was a nice start to the convention season and to the year for costumers and convention goers alike.

This year’s theme was “London Fog: A Victorian Murder Mystery.” Besides the promotional imagery on the website, the theme of course extended to the program book, which featured an anthropomorphic Sherlock Homes, stories set in Victorian London and artwork of characters in period garb. The pocket guide/schedule featured a portrait of Doctor Watson to go with the program guide.

The theme was also featured on other items. Hotel keycards featured murder mystery imagery and the convention badges showcased artwork of characters in Victorian outfits. Even the tags for the Fursuit Parade participants was in the shape of a top hat. The convention also tied the theme to the building by putting out signposts that looked like gaslamps with street names like Baker Street and Downing Street.

The guests of honor also had an English and Victorian theme. Lex Rudd is a noted designer of puppets, costumes and creature effects. Andy Heath and Warrick Brownlow-Pike are noted puppeteers who worked on “Muppets Most Wanted” and the BBC3 adult comedy show “Mongrels.”

Despite the difficulty of finding top hats and bonnets that could fit on the heads of their costumes, there were many
people who were dressed for the theme. Most were in the gentlemen’s or ladies’ garb, but there were a few who were in commoner garb as well. This theme also let people who might not attend the chance to wear an outfit that could be modified by attaching ears and a tail to a costume they would normally wear at the Dickens Fair or wear a half mask. It was nice to see people that I have seen at Dickens Fair or PEERS at FurCon that I would not have expected to be there.

Unfortunately I was not able to attend some of the major events such as the Masquerade, the Fursuit Parade, Dance Competition and FC Unleashed. I was still able to see a good
number of costumes and chat with people. I did catch a band performing jazz covers.

I was also able to see all of the dealer room. There was a lot for sale. There were numerous artists to choose from. There were also dealers selling ears and tails. There was a stand with puppets. One stand was selling custom collar tags and license plate covers. Others were selling artisan crafted soaps and lotions. I purchased a few pieces of badge art from one dealer that featured various fandoms.

I did attend a number of the party rooms. There were plenty to choose from this year. The Black Hole was back and ended up running out of alcohol both days. There was a pirate-themed party. There were also plenty of rooms promoting other conventions like the upcoming BABSCon and Biggest Little Fur Con in Reno.

It was nice to see plenty of other costumes at FurCon. There were plenty of people in costumes that were not furries. I snapped photos of Sweeney Todd and Kaneda from “Akira.” There was also a minor theme of Communist outfits with the
members of the Communist Party hanging out with people dressed as immigration officers from the online game “Papers Please” as well as a person dressed as an East German crossing guard.

The city of San Jose has been embracing FurCon as an annual event. There are banners on the street lights similar to those hung out during FanimeCon. A number of the downtown cafes and restaurants had advertising featuring animal characters as wearing a suit for a few hours can be hungry and thirsty work. The furry-themed dance event Frolic even had a special session in one of the downtown clubs. Local donut store Psycho Donuts had a stand inside of the convention center with a specially-themed treat called My Furry Lil’ Heart.

One of the more encouraging developments at the convention was the harassment policy. It was posted outside of
Papers Please  
by Christopher Erickson

East German Crossing Guard  
by Christopher Erickson
the fursuit den letting everyone know that harassment of any kind is not tolerated and let people know who to go to for help.

There are always amazing costumes at FurCon. One person did a version of Deadpool in fur coloring. Another was a giant carrot that was immediately surrounded by rabbits. There was a scalie (lizard) that was amazing. Another was dressed as a Krispy Kreme worker. There was a moose with a stuffed moose dressed like a hunter. Others were dressed in outfits approximating an animal. One woman had an armor top and wings.

FurCon is one of the more laidback conventions to attend in costume or enjoy the spectacle. There is plenty of opportunity to wear a costume even if it is not furry related.
Pop culture conventions celebrate icons and idols of popular culture. Some conventions are broad, all-encompassing festivals of all things popular and niche culture. Other conventions are specific carnivals honoring specific genres or realms of geek culture. Specialized conventions are Creation Entertainment’s forte. Forty years of weekend revelry honoring a plethora of properties has made Creation an efficient powerhouse on the convention circuit.

January 16-18 Creation hosted the Salute to Supernatural convention at the Burlingame Hyatt Regency. It was a weekend of carefree, raucous carousing commemorating The CW’s young-adult, urban-fantasy/horror television hit “Supernatural.” The Burlingame stop is just one along the nationwide tour celebrating the show’s decade-long run in the tough industry of genre TV.

Each of the tour’s stops boasts the same features. Question-and-answer panels fill up most each day. Some panels are headlined by a single celebrity, some are multiple celebrity panels. Each day of the three-day con features a different assortment of stars, and those stars rarely do two panels in the same day. Friday nights feature a themed karaoke party hosted by show favorite Richard Speight, Jr., with audience participation greatly encouraged. Many of the show’s guest stars and secondary stars participate as well, often in themed costumes. Saturday night was the Louden Swain concert. This
is the band headed by one of the stars of “Supernatural”, Rob Benedict, and often times other stars rotate in as subs for the drummer, guitarists and bassist. Mark Sheppard, “Supernatural”s” Crowley, is well-known to sub-in for the drummer each Saturday. Louden Swain will play covers and original pieces to fans’ delight, into the early hours of Sunday morning.

Each convention stop does have a vendor room. Some vendors move with the show, others are specific to the locale. Only licensed memorabilia is available for sale in the vendor hall, and as such there are few vendors. Some peddle goods that can be found at the local Hot Topic, and others sell items that are convention exclusive. I was tempted by some of the prop replicas on offer, since these are con exclusives, but the price point was predictably prohibitive.

The Hyatt Regency is no stranger to pop culture conventions and the crowds these conventions attract. It is Creation’s go-to venue choice for Bay Area conventions, and was the venue for the Star Trek convention only a few weekends prior to Salute to Supernatural. An airy and naturally lit atrium makes photographing costumes a dream for convention photographers. The light is also already diffused through the skylights, preventing harsh shadows and garish white-balance distortions. All I had with me was my smart phone, and it worked wonderfully. I didn’t need to use the flash, and I didn’t need to adjust for the environment like I have had to at other conventions. My DSLR would have worked at this con, whereas at others there is too little light, and the on-board flash just doesn’t work.

The atrium also diffuses sounds. Unlike convention halls, which just echo and cause sound distortions, something about
the Hyatt’s atrium acts as a baffle. This could be the lush garden of umbrella trees and ficus plants, or it could just be the vertical construction of the atrium. Whatever it is, there was no loud, head-pounding ambient noise, but instead a low susurrus more likely to be found in a university library.

Convenience is the name of the game for the Hyatt Regency. It is easily located right off the 101 freeway, just a little south of the San Francisco International Airport. The parking structure is attached to the hotel, and within a five-minute walk depending on starting point and ultimate destination. Parking fees are on par with any others in the Bay Area, and can be mitigated by validation machines within the convention, producing a flat-rate fee instead of an hourly-rate fee. Inside the venue there are two restaurants open for all meal times, with a third a la carte food service option available at lunch time, serving finger foods and sandwiches. Hyatt also provides secured mobile-device charging-station lockers in the vendor’s room, behind certain vendor tables. These proved to be a godsend for me at the end of the evening.

Creation conventions follow the paid-encounters convention model. This is not a model I am particularly fond of, as I feel it turns celebrities and attendees into commodities. However, the convention also features fun programming all weekend long, so even if an attendee cannot purchase all the encounters they would like, they can still participate in other celebratory activities.
Salute to Supernatural is headlined by the show’s four regular stars, and emceed by one of the regular guest stars. Other guest stars and series regulars jump onto the tour as shooting schedules allow, so each con is a little different. Certain celebrities only participated in panels on certain days, and only participated in photo opportunities and autograph opportunities on certain days. The tentative days are featured upon guest announcement, and are cemented the week of the convention. The guest line-up is announced with more than enough lead time to plan accordingly, and cancellations or changes are rare because of that lead time.

Salute to Supernatural San Francisco, the convention’s official designation, started bright and early Friday morning at 9:30 a.m. The vendors open before the theatre to allow memorabilia shoppers a chance before full programming begins. The main theatre opened at 11:30 a.m., allowing a half hour for guests to find their reserved and designated seats before the opening ceremonies with the emcee, Richard Speight, Jr., commencing at noon. Panels and stage shows were scheduled at regular intervals. The stage was rarely empty for longer than 15 minutes. Once the show gets going, it keeps on trucking along until the end of karaoke sometime around midnight or a little later.

Throughout the weekend, between panels and shows, the music video competition finalists were featured. This is a contest for the final cut pro savvy fans, or anyone willing to make the effort of splicing screen shots and clips to a song. Heart, hard work and humor are definitely appreciated in this contest.

Saturday programming starts even earlier than Friday programming. Saturday opening ceremonies started at 9:20
a.m. The vendor hall was open at 8:30 a.m.! No rest for the wicked on Saturday, with more panels and shows than featured on Friday, and the concert at the end of the night starting at 10:30 p.m. The costume contest is held on Saturday, and is frequently judged by Misha Collins, sometimes assisted by Osric Chau, who often participates on panels in cosplay. Prizes include gift certificates to be used during the weekend.

Sunday is milder, and opening ceremony times reflect that. Main theatre doors did not open until 11:55 a.m., and opening ceremonies started at 2:00 p.m. The vendor room was open at 9:15 a.m. There were quite a few more quiet events, such as photograph opportunities, autograph opportunities and private meet-and-greets on Sunday than any other day. The no-minimum-bid auction and more music videos closed the gap between panels, since there was fewer than Friday and Saturday. Two of the fan favorite celebrities also made a few surprise appearances on the vendor floor to shake things up. This is not a convention for the faint of heart or quiet of mind. The cast members keep everyone on their toes and definitely live the “go big or go home” mantra.

Registration seemed smoother than most other cons. Tickets did not require photo identification to verify purchase. All that was needed was a scannable print out of a ticket, and space for a lanyard and/or wristband, depending on which ticket option was purchased. Volunteers were on hand to check the presence of wristband, and verify seat designation at all times, but they were not pushy about checking. They were polite, and helpful if assistance was required.

I sat in on three panels during Sunday. I gained quite a bit of respect for Curtis Armstrong, who portrays Metatron in season 9 of “Supernatural.” I was entertained by the dynamic duo of Jared Padalecki and Jensen Ackles, who portray the series’ main characters. I was charmed by the gracious nature of Tahmoh Penikett, who guest starred as Gadreel in season 9. Each panel fielded questions I’d heard before in various bootleg interviews or recorded panels from past cons. They were fun, nonetheless, since they offered insight into how each actor approaches his role and the art of acting as a whole.

The photo and autograph opportunities were clockwork machines. They followed a rote routine, and only at the discretion of the celebrities did they alter. My tickets for each opportunity had to be verified, which was not done until I was queued up with everyone else. Special poses for photos could be requested, and were almost always honored, but I stuck with the tried and true “grin and look at the camera.” I am horrible at improvisation, and did not want to unnecessarily impose upon Mr. Penikett’s or the very helpful photographer’s time. A print of the photograph opportunity was available for pick-up during the same day as well. Turnaround time depended greatly on time demands placed upon the photographer, but by end of con Sunday, all prints are available for pick-up.

Items for autographs needed to be handed to a handler before it was handed to the celebrity in question. Again, this was done in line, not before. This was probably just for efficiency sake, but could have been for safety, too. I had Mr. Penikett sign a “Battlestar Galactica” comic I found at work only a few days before the convention. We had a brief discussion about Battlestar, and I was on my merry way after we wished each other happy New Year, something he does until February.
Both brief encounters were very pleasing. The efficient machine, polite and professional volunteers, and cordial celebrity personality closed my weekend on a high note. These encounters made me regret not purchasing the private meet-and-greet opportunity, but lesson learned.

Salute to Supernatural is returning to the same venue December 2-4 2016. Ticket prices for the 2016 date have not been announced, yet, but will probably be close to the pricing tier for the 2015 event. Gold tickets started at $859 and ranged to $700 for the full weekend and some complimentary autographs, as well as complimentary Friday and Saturday night shenanigan access. These seats were closest to the stage during panels. Silver tier pricing started at $600 for the weekend, and included middle-of-the-road reserved seating, some complimentary autographs as well as complimentary Friday and Saturday night shenanigan access. Copper packages started at $150 for the weekend, included reserved seats, but no other complimentary additions.

Photograph and autograph opportunity prices varied wildly, and ranged from nearly $400 to less than $50, depending on the opportunity and the celebrities involved. Private meet-and-greets were done in groups of 10 people per celebrity, and
started at $500 and were no lower than $125. Memorabilia for purchase ranged from $5 for a simple photo print to hundreds of dollars for prop replicas. This is a convention that will ravage your wallet, so save and be savvy.

Because this convention model is one that leaves a lot of unstructured time for those not participating in encounters, I suggest attending with a friend or a group of friends. The target audience of “Supernatural” is young-adult and female. Not since high school, more than a decade ago, have I watched such a large crowd of angst-ridden, denim-and-flannel-plaid clad, teenage girls try to play nice. This is a clique-y crowd, and one that is fiercely protective of its fandom. I do not fit the mold of the target audience, and stuck out like a sore thumb. I wasn’t so much ostracized, as I was just ignored, or rudely dismissed if I could not be identified by a social media handle.

Every convention is a subjective experience, unique to each attendee. Internal and external factors will color the experience and determine the level of enjoyment procured from attendance. Salute to Supernatural is a specialty convention, geared to a certain fan domain, and built around the paid-encounter model. This is a convention worth the weekend ticket at whatever tier is affordable, and worth attending with friends. It is also one worth participating in to the fullest extent, by taking advantage of the after-hours merriment, the contests and paid-opportunities. This is not a general pop culture convention, and not for a casual convention attendee, but good for a fan of the show “Supernatural.”
I heard about Kenneth Branagh staying “Macbeth” in New York City last July from a friend who was going to go overnight just to see it. Inspired by her carpe diem spirit, I decided to go for a weekend trip for the same purpose. I used to go to New York frequently and I love the place. But I haven’t been in more than 10 years.
Then a week before my departure date, I saw Neil Patrick Harris do a number from “Hedwig and the Angry Inch” at the Tony Awards and I was blown away. I managed to get a ticket to see it a few hours before curtain. New York is definitely worth going to for theatre lovers like me. My reviews of both shows are on pages 19 and 20 in SF/SF 156: www.efanzines.com/SFSF/SFSF156.pdf. By the way, I forgot to mention in my “Macbeth” review that I got to meet Ben Stiller who was just there to see the show.

This photo essay captures the highlights of my trip, which also included seeing the Metropolitan Museum and the Cloisters. I’d been to the Met 20 plus years ago and it’s my
One of the Unicorn Tapestries, Me at the Cloisters, Arms and Armor Centerpiece, Egyptian Exhibit

by Jean Martin
second favorite museum after the British Museum. At that time, I found out about their satellite museum of medieval art and architecture, the Cloisters, but didn’t get to go because it was far and I didn’t have time. So this time I made it a point to go there first.

The Cloisters is in the Bronx and it was a trek to get there via the subway. I asked some people if I was getting on the right train and two people double checked that I really wanted to go to the Bronx. But I called the Museum previously and the lady reassured me that it was safe especially in the daytime. It was pretty obvious on the train who were going to the Museum. And when I disembarked, the area was actually quite nice and there were lots of people heading in the same direction so I stuck with them.

The Cloisters is actually a medieval French monastery and it was pretty impressive. The grounds were lovely with trees and parkland and the area was right next to the Hudson River and you can see New Jersey and the George Washington Bridge that crosses the river. Each room in the monastery had religious art. But the museum is famous for the colorful Unicorn tapestries. There is, of course, the actual cloister in the middle. I have a penchant for cloisters and I try to see if there are any wherever I go. There was also a medieval herb
garden. The Cloisters is a beautiful and peaceful refuge not too far from the hustle and bustle of New York City.

After that, I only had four hours to tour the entire Metropolitan Museum. Apparently, I only saw the tip of the iceberg when I went before because I don’t remember anything from that time except for the elegant and airy American courtyard. Four hours isn’t enough to see all four floors (plus a mezzanine) of this incredible museum. So I ran around as fast as I could. I’m sure I missed a few things but managed to see most of it. The Met has fantastic collections ranging from ancient to modern art from different cultures around the world. My favorites were the Egyptian temple,
Assyrian palace, 19th century paintings, arms and armor exhibit, medieval galleries, Greek and Roman art, historical musical instruments and 18th century furnished rooms. I also enjoyed the Pre-Raphaelite and Impressionist paintings. I saw lots of famous paintings but the one that was a pleasant surprise was the enormous “Washington Crossing the Delaware.” I was intrigued by the Africa, Oceania and America exhibits and was in awe of the Buddha collection. There were some rooms that recreated Chinese, Japanese and Islamic cultures. The Costume Institute had two exhibit rooms but I wasn’t too impressed by what was on display.

I stayed at the Park Lane Hotel adjacent to Central Park. It was a great location and way more luxurious than I expected. I guess I got a really good deal through Expedia. I was only able to see a little bit of Central Park as well as Columbus Circle. I walked to Times Square after “Hedwig and the Angry Inch” and I was surprised at how packed the place was even around midnight. There were lots of tourists just hanging around enjoying the neon signs and billboards and some stores and restaurants were still open. So it’s true that New York is the city that never sleeps.

It was exciting to visit a major cultural and tourist center even for a short time. I’m hoping it won’t be too long before I go back and sample its delights once again.
By Jean Martin
Editor-in-Chief

I was lucky enough to be able to get a ticket for NASA Ames’s 75th anniversary last October 18th. Apparently, tickets sold out really quickly. It was expected to be a huge event and parking was going to be a nightmare. So I went before the freeway exit was scheduled to be closed down at 8:00 a.m. I got there at 7:30 a.m. and was able to park right behind the beautiful steel frame of Hangar One.

It was a good decision, which was difficult to enact as I’m not a morning person, because the place was almost empty at the time and the weather was still nice and cool. So I was able to see the exhibits in the main plaza as well as the actual buildings where the scientists work and conduct experiments at a leisurely pace.

The suggested walking tour in the event program said to allow two hours. But it took me four hours to really see most everything. By noon, the place was so packed that it was difficult to see anything and it got unbearably hot.
The festivities began with the opening ceremony at 9:00 a.m. that included a presentation of the colors, someone singing the national anthem and remarks by Congresswoman Anna Eshoo. The mayors of Mountain View and Sunnyvale were also on hand. Then Center Director S. Pete Worden officially declared NASA Ames open to the public.

It was quite exciting seeing all the historic buildings where numerous leaps of technology were made. The best human minds have been and are still making advances that benefit the world on these premises. I was surprised, though, that there didn’t seem to be much security. There were security people around that I saw, but bags weren’t checked and that kind of thing. But that made it all the more like we were welcome. And it was amazing to see so many people interested in
science in technology. There were people of all ages. So there were families with young kids.

The exhibits that were memorable for me were the Roverscape (where a working robot was navigating a varied landscape); inflatable replicas of the Orion multi-purpose crew vehicle, Delta IV Heavy rocket and International Space Station; the National Full Scale Aerodynamic Complex (an enormous wind tunnel that I’ve only ever seen from the freeway); the heat shield; Kepler mission exhibit; and various planes and jets. The museum was closed that day as it wouldn’t have been able to hold the number of people expected to show up, which was 120,000. So I went back a few weeks later just for the museum, which was very interesting.

I didn’t get to see any talks but I did go to the gift shop, which was quite fun as there were so many cool memorabilia available for purchase. The store was very well organized and I bought a t-shirt and a tote bag.

The other things I missed out on were the backstage tours of the office buildings and wind tunnels, which needed special tickets. These tickets were even more limited in number and were all sold out. But I got to see enough and I was exhausted after walking around for four hours and needed food, drink and shade.
Luckily, there was an area on the other side of the main attractions where there literally was a mini city of food trucks. According to organizer Moveable Feast, this was the largest food truck gathering ever in the West Coast. I’ve never seen so many food trucks in my life! They were grouped roughly by cuisine and there were made-up street signs that gave you a clue as to what food trucks were in that area such as Taco Town and Bacon Blvd. I had fun browsing around the incredible array of food on offer. I settled for Guatemalan food as I’ve never had it before and it was very good. I also had sushi after that as I love sushi.

I saw some people I knew throughout the day, but I saw on Facebook that several people were having a hard time getting in. It took a few friends three hours or more to get in. And by the time they did, it was just too crowded for them to enjoy the exhibits, which was too bad.

At some point, I witnessed this huge mass of people just coming in through the front gate. It was quite a site to behold. Apparently, people with tickets were in line for so long that they were just all let in all at the same time after a several hours of patiently waiting.

Although I lucked out getting in, I had a hard time getting out. It took me three hours in my car in the heat. I’m glad I grabbed a couple of cupcakes before I left. I was planning on saving them for later but ate both of them while I was stuck in the parking lot. I also had an audiobook, which helped pass the time.

All in all, it was worth it for me as I always enjoy going to NASA Ames and especially more so to see areas of the complex I wouldn’t otherwise have been able to see and to celebrate this important milestone.
Here are mostly quick reviews of notable events that we haven’t covered yet or someone else has covered but I would also like to write about from my perspective. I’ve picked different types of events, one for each month of 2014, which proved to be quite a jam-packed year of amazing conventions and events.

**Edwardian Ball**
Regency Ballroom, San Francisco
January 18

The Edwardian Ball is one of the biggest and most glittering events of the SF Bay Area season. It is a visual and auditory treat as there were several performances on the main stage as well as throughout the Regency Ballroom. People in elegant, creative and diverse costumes make people watching enjoyable. I hadn’t been to the Edwardian Ball in a few years.
as I remember it being a bit too crowded for me. So this time I went early and enjoyed the ballroom dancing and just hanging out with my friends Nedy and Cindy before more people packed the venue.

The Steam-Powered Tea Garden was new this year and it was a peaceful oasis in the middle of the main ballroom. The vendor room was incredible, as usual. There were so many unique and beautiful things for sale by artists and artisans. If there’s one thing that the Edwardian Ball promotes is the creativity of people in the Bay Area and beyond. The vendor room had a small stage where swing music was played and that’s where the Swing Goth folks gravitated toward, and I was able to dance with my friend Joey who’s a fantastic dancer.

My favorite part of the Edwardian Ball is the Museum of Wonders upstairs, which resembles an exhibit in the home of a Victorian explorer. It’s like stepping into a magical past that was and could have been. The highlight of the evening is the performance of one of Edward Gorey’s work with music by Rosin Coven and acrobatic drama by the Vau de Vire Society. This year’s theme was “The Curious Sofa.”

**JASNA Valentine’s Day Celebration**  
Capp Music Center Recital Hall, San Francisco  
February 16

As much as I love Jane Austen and go to a lot of Regency events, this was the first time I’ve been to an event hosted by the Jane Austen Society of North America. Most of JASNAs offering are more scholarly in nature and are often on days I can’t go. This time, though, I was not only available but also we from the Bay Area English Regency Society (BAERS) were invited to perform a few dances as intermissions in between nine dramatized scenes of love and marriage from Jane Austen’s novels. These vignettes were performed by the Bella Union Theatre company directed by Gene Mocsy and adapted and costumed by Christine U’Ren. Some of the scenes were serious and some funny. There were also two musical interludes on Jane Austen’s music by Professor Cheryl Ziedrich as the pianist and soprano Emily Bender as the vocalist.

During the intermission, six of us from BAERS (Greg, Jane, Kat, Thena, Carol and me) did three dances that Gregory rehearsed with us just before the show. There were also Regency refreshments, which were quite delightful. There
were several other costumers in attendance and I enjoyed celebrating Valentine’s Day the Jane Austen way.

**BAERS Cyprians Ball**
San Mateo Masonic Hall  
March 22

Speaking of Regency events, the BAERS Cyprians Ball has been held annually for several years and is quite a popular theme. Cyprians, or courtesans, were the love goddesses of their era. Since no one stepped up to organize it this time, I volunteered at the last minute. The last time I spearheaded the Cyprians ball was in 2010 when I opted for a Greco-Roman masquerade ball. That was a lot of fun. I went with straight-up Regency this time as I couldn’t think of anything else on short notice.

I worked in the kitchen so I didn’t get to dance as much but I got to lead the Grand March with BAERS dance master Alan Winston. Music was provided by the Divertimento Dance Orchestra. The atmosphere was appropriately romantic and lively and we had a good turnout. There were some new people who came and I got to meet and make friends with them. The event went well with lots of help from Christopher and George McQuary as well as other BAERS organizers.

**PEERS Downton Abbey Ball**
Alameda Elks Lodge  
April 5

“Downton Abbey” is a very popular TV show and it was fun to re-create it especially at the elegant Edwardian Alameda Elks Lodge. So it felt like we were at the home of a rich aristocrat of the period. The cast that PEERS Artistic Director Cathleen Myers put together was fantastic. Everyone was perfect for their parts especially Miriam and Nicholas as Lady Mary and Matthew Crawley, Breanna and Jeffrey as Lady Sybil and Tom Branson, and James and Cathleen as the Earl and Countess Grantham. I was Ivy the maid and Christopher was Harry Gordon Selfridge (making a crossover appearance from “Mr. Selfridge”).

The ball was set after the First World War and we did some improv bits. The most important and memorable of which was Matthew proposing to Lady Mary. Lady Sybil showing up in risqué 1920s harem pants also caused quite a stir.

Guests showed up in beautiful and colorful costumes. I wasn’t a big Edwardian-era fan originally and I didn’t like the
first season of “Downton Abbey.” But both have grown on me over the years. The dancing was a lot of fun too.

PEERS Once Upon a Time Ball
San Mateo Masonic Hall
May 3

At this ball, I got to portray a Disney princess and it was a lot of fun. I’ve always loved Disney but I never thought it would feel so amazing to costume as a Disney character as an adult! Well, Mulan, who I portrayed, is technically not a “princess” but Disney often groups her in its Princess line. My favorite Disney character is Sleeping Beauty but Mulan is a close second. And I’m more suited to be Mulan anyway. Also, she gets to save her country and not just wait for a Prince to wake her up.

The official theme for this ball was geared more toward the “Once Upon a Time” TV show but fairy tales of all types were welcome. So it was more of a mix between the Disney movies and the hit ABC show. ABC is owned by Disney anyway. In a hilarious, somewhat inside joke, since Disney just bought the “Star Wars” franchise, James Myers showed up as an Imperial officer who got transported to Storybrooke.

Since Mulan had a (spoiler alert) love triangle going with Aurora and Prince Phillip, Louise as Aurora, Chris K. as Phillip and I had a marvelous time portraying this plot point. Mulan was, of course, in love with Aurora (which is fitting because as I mentioned, I do love Sleeping Beauty). Sherry as Maleficent, typically, made a grand entrance later in the evening and I protected Aurora from her. My “reward” was the oblivious Aurora relating her happy news that she was pregnant with Phillip’s child.
There was also a showdown between the cast of Princesses and Princes arguing over who had to deal with greater challenges. A couple of other storylines involved Snow and Charming as well as Mr. Gold/Rumplestiltskin and Belle. Christopher portrayed Robin Hood from the TV show.

Guests were dressed in a variety of characters. Some also wore Ren Faire and fantasy costumes. There were some crossed-dressed couples with two as Beauty and the Beast and one as Aurora and Phillip.
The theme for this tea was Jane Austen’s “Pride and Prejudice” and it was held at this adorable tea place in San Francisco that I didn’t know about previously. GBACG events have become more popular these past several years as more and more people have been discovering the joys of costuming. So to accommodate everyone who wanted to attend, two seatings were set up. The original venue was the Fairmont Hotel and that would have accommodated everyone. But it was nice to experience tea in a more intimate atmosphere. The
only downside was I didn’t really get to interact with the people from the previous seating as they left before we arrived for the later seating. I knew more people in the earlier seating but then it was nice to get to know more people as well.

The food and tea were fantastic and so was the service by the owner and staff. The costumes were lovely and the quality was pretty high as GBACG members are great costumers.

Disney Princesses

courtesy of Jean Martin
I haven’t been to Comic-Con since the first and only time I went in 2005. I haven’t been in a while as it’s quite a big endeavor to go, not just getting tickets and hotels, but also spending money and taking time off at a time that’s busy for my work. But my friend Cordelia invited Christopher and I myself to join her “Doctor Who” masquerade group. We both love “Doctor Who” as I’m sure everyone knows, and I love performing with Cordelia. The first masquerade I ever did was with her “Firefly” group at Comic-Con 2005.

My Comic-Con experience began on several bad notes with us getting a speeding ticket on the I-5 and then we left our IDs at the hotel in Sylmar where we stayed at overnight on our way down. The hotel wanted them for security reasons and they forgot to give them back. As it was around midnight and we were tired after a long day of work and traveling, we didn’t notice. We only realized it when we got to San Diego and couldn’t check into our hotel because neither of us had our IDs. Luckily, our roommates Jade and her husband Erik already checked in and they were there and were able to vouch for us. But that meant that Christopher had to miss out on Thursday’s programming to drive back to get our IDs.
Christopher has gone to Comic-Con several times in recent years so he told me to just go enjoy myself that day because there are lots of outside of the con activities. I did try to get my badge without my ID and they accepted my credit card and business card as proof of my identity. So I was able to enjoy the con that afternoon, which included a “Doctor Who” cosplay photoshoot. I was wearing a Clara Oswald costume so I’m glad I was able to participate in this.

However, the next day, I lost my badge as we swam through a mob of fans trying to get to see the cast of “Walking Dead” in the dealer room. I did get to see the actors but it was quite an unruly crowd that Security had trouble with. I was fortunate that I was able to replace my badge for a nominal fee. I was told I could only do this once so I had to protect my badge the rest of the weekend.

The vendor room was huge and I went back all three days to see everything. There were so many things to do and see. I guess vendor room is a misnomer as there were several booths by big entertainment companies that were really just there for promoting their shows and also hosting appearances by their stars. For me WETA, “Star Wars” and “Outlander” were the most memorable. WETA had Smaug the dragon overhead. “Star Wars” did have items for sale. And “Outlander” had a castle with people in costume.

Exclusives are the name of the game at Comic-Con. I’m not that big on these but I texted my sister to ask her if my nephew wanted anything and he said he wanted a Stan Lee Pop! Figure, and serendipitously, the booth that carried it was right in front of me when I got her reply. For myself, I bought mostly bags and books.

On Friday I was wearing my Mara Jade costume and I was surprised that nobody recognized my costume. Granted I picked one of her lesser known looks, and she’s a “Star Wars” Extended Universe character, but I would have thought that at Comic-Con people would know who Luke Skywalker’s wife was! This guy dressed as Luke didn’t know who I was and

![Arrow panel with Paul Blackthorne, John Barrowman, Willa Holland and Stephen Amell](image.jpg)

by Jean Martin
someone didn’t even know that what I was carrying was a lightsaber.

Since lining up for panels takes hours, with no guarantee of getting in, my goal was to just see one panel. I was able to get into the “Arrow” panel and it only took two hours in line. Unfortunately, only other panel I wanted to see, the “Sleepy Hollow” panel, was scheduled at the same time. At the end of the day, Christopher and I ate at Roy’s at the Marriott next door and enjoyed Hawaiian food, warm weather, the beautiful marina and a lovely sunset.

Saturday, I wore my Arwen costume, which worked out well as I finally got to meet WETA’s head, Richard Taylor. He said I looked beautiful, which was a huge compliment coming from him. I was able to get his autograph along with some other WETA folks. Russell, the owner of Hobbiton in New Zealand, kindly offered to keep my place in line while I bought a book to be signed. That autograph line wasn’t that bad. The next day, though, I saw the line for Evangeline Lilly (Tauriel in the “Hobbit”) at the same booth and it went across the length of the vendor room.

Long lines were pretty ubiquitous at Comic-Con, which starts with the shuttle from the hotel. On Saturday night, on our way back to our hotel around midnight, I saw people sleeping on the pavement from end to end of the convention center. They were waiting to get into Hall H, where the popular panels where, and to get into the vendor room early to buy exclusives.

Saturday afternoon most of our masquerade group went to see John Barrowman, who had a panel in a hotel next door. He was quite funny and outrageous. Then we rushed off to the masquerade green room to change into our costumes. It got
quite hectic as we needed to be ready by a certain time and then we just waited until the show began. Hanging out backstage with our group and other people we know in other teams was a lot of fun. We also got to meet some other contestants who we didn’t know. The level of costuming is pretty high at Comic-Con and I admired several that were just amazing. It’s quite friendly and not competitive.

Our costumes, the Twelve Doctors of “Doctor Who” was actually quite simple so we didn’t expect to win anything. But it was thrill to be on stage and perform at one of the biggest and most prestigious costume contests in the world. The audience loved our routine. But it was still as surprise that we won Judge’s Choice (second place) and an Honorable Mention for Re-creation. Yeah, it was surprising considering there were these three dragons from “Game of Thrones” that were amazing and this beautiful Sleeping Beauty in the woods ballet that I found quite charming. The Best in Show went to a group of ladies doing Japanese monsters as showgirls that was hilarious and well done. The most popular themes for the evening were “Game of Thrones” and “Frozen.” In fact, there was one act that combined both.

There were lots of cosplayers on all days. This has got to be one of the most popular places for cosplayers to showcase their work. There were photographers everywhere. I guess my costumes weren’t so recognizable so people didn’t stop me for photos too much. Whereas Christopher got stopped all the time as he was dressed as the First Doctor one day and a Jedi on another day.

On Sunday, I wore my Twelfth Doctor costume and Christopher his Fifth Doctor costumes, both from the masquerade the night before. These worked out well as there was another “Doctor Who” cosplay meetup that afternoon. This was an even bigger group than the one on Thursday and it was fun to see members of group being appreciated. Phil’s First Doctor was screen accurate and Cordelia got a lot of applause for being the only one as the Sixth Doctor. Afterwards, we went to see the masquerade replay where we got to see all the acts that we didn’t get to see as we were backstage, and we also got to see how our routine looked, which was actually quite awesome even though it was short and sweet.

Despite the initial troubles I had, I had an amazing time and was sad to leave and say goodbye to my friends and the geek capital of the world.

Steampunk Safari at the SF Zoo by Jean Martin
GBACG Steampunk Safari
San Francisco Zoo
August 23

My friend Nedy hosted the GBACG Steampunk Safari and it was wonderful going around the zoo in costume with several people. I haven’t been to the SF Zoo in a while and it looks like it’s been improved and updated. The African section was new and worth seeing as it replicated an African landscape. Then most of us had lunch at the café. My favorites were the red panda, giraffe, lions, tigers, polar bear, dolphins, penguins and flamingos. I also loved the colorful carousel, which was a great location for a photo opp. In fact, the entire zoo was perfect for photos in our Steampunk gear.

Jane Austen Festival
Bath, UK
September 12-21

I’ve wanted to go to the Jane Austen Festival for a few years now and finally managed to go when my friend Jane and her husband Greg invited us to join her group. They rented a house in Bath that could house 14 people. Bath is such a perfect setting for the festival as the city has predominantly Georgian architecture. Jane Austen also lived there for a few years and set two of her novels there.

The house we all stayed at was the Admiral’s House and it was a beautiful Georgian mansion. We knew most of the people in the group as they all are part of the costume and dance community and several work at the Dickens Fair. It was a wonderful experience living like we would have in Regency times except with electricity and indoor plumbing. The house was a short walk to the main attractions in Bath and where most of the events were going to take place.

A major highlight of the Festival for me was the Promenade, which began at the Assembly Rooms. In one room, we were all counted and we broke the Guinness World Record for the most number of people in Regency costume. We beat the previous record set by the Kentucky Jane Austen Festival, which was ironic as we have friends who were counted at that festival and everyone was saying in Bath that we beat the Americans. It was fun to be a part of a world record though. Then we all walked five miles around the city and were photographed by people lined up on both sides of the...
streets watching the parade go by. It was quite exhilarating! We passed by several major landmarks in the city and we ended up at the Parade Grounds next to the river. It was a beautiful park and we got to take photos of ourselves and other people. I was able to meet Adrian Lukis, who portrayed Mr. Wickham in the Colin Firth “Pride and Prejudice.”

Attractions we went to included the beautiful Bath Abbey, the Jane Austen Centre (where we also had afternoon tea), No. 1 Royal Crescent (which was made up to look like it would have been in the 18th century), the Pump Room (where we had a Jane Austen tea) and the Fashion Exhibit at the Assembly Rooms (which had costumes from the Georgian era to today). Other museums we got to see was the William Herschel one (that was at his former home) and the Buildings of Bath (which was a few doors down from Admiral’s House).

We also did two day trips. One was to Hampshire through the Jane Austen Festival. With this one, we got to see Steventon where Austen was born, Chawton where she lived and Winchester where she died. Steventon has the parish church where she was baptized, Chawton has the Jane Austen House Museum and Winchester has the house she passed away in and the cathedral where she is buried. Winchester was also the seat of Alfred the Great and I got to see his monument. It’s also where King Arthur’s supposed round table is housed. I’ve wanted to see this for a long time and when we got there it was closed and I was so disappointed. But luckily they opened just as we were about to give up.

The other day trip we did was to Lyme Regis, which was a private tour arranged by our group mate Virginia and was led by Natalie. Natalie greeted us in Regency costume and took us to locations that had tie-ins with Jane Austen including the
place she lived in, which is now a women’s clothing store. Lyme Regis is known for the Cobb, a harbor wall that featured prominently in Jane Austen’s “Persuasion” and in John Fowles’s “French Lieutenant’s Woman.” The town is also famous for Mary Anning’s Jurassic marine fossils and we visited the museum where her fossils are on display.

The Jane Austen Festival ended with a Costume Masquerade Ball that began with a reception at the Roman Baths. It was so magical as we walked in and were handed drinks and were announced by the Master of Ceremonies. At night, the Roman Baths, with lit torches, was so otherworldly and I felt like I was transported back in time. Then we went up to the Pump Room for dinner. The Pump Room is an elegant hall with a dance floor. As was customary in the Regency period, we had a couple of sets of dancing before food was served. Our group was split up into different tables so we got to meet some new people while feeling comfortable with some people we knew. The food for the sit-down meal was delicious! Then it was back to more dancing. This experience is probably the pinnacle of my 10 years of Regency dancing. To be able to do this as Jane Austen would have done was just exhilarating… a dream come true.

The next evening was the Farthingale Ball, an unofficial ball that extended the festivities one more day. This ball was held in the Assembly Rooms, which is where dances in the Regency era would have actually been held. As much as I love Regency dancing, two balls in a row proved too much. Also, for some reason, the dinner just seemed chaotic and the dances weren’t as much fun. It wasn’t as memorable as the night before other than being able to dance at the Assembly Rooms.
Other activities I did in Bath were a soiree that was held at our house. We had guests over who were mostly friends of Jane and Greg as they’ve gone several times before. It was great to experience what a Regency house party would have been like. But I’m afraid I’m not really into parties much. Especially after several days of non-stop touring and activities. But I did enjoy the musical performances and seeing my friend Jim who was also there for the Festival but not part of the Admiral House group. It was also nice to get to know our fellow group mates who I see at events but don’t really get to hang out with.

I also indulged myself one afternoon at the Thermae Bath Spa. Bath was after all originally intended as a spa by the Romans and people in the Georgian era took the waters for their health. The Thermae Bath Spa was five floors of heaven. I’ve never been to one of these before and it is quite organized. You pay for the number of hours you want, are given an electronic key and you can spend your time in any of the floors as you would like. The changing room and showers are co-ed, which was a surprise, but not uncomfortable. I spent most of my time in the top floor, which had an outdoor hot spring pool with a view of Bath and the surrounding countryside. The indoor pool at the ground level was nice too. Then there’s one floor with circular glass steam rooms with a tropical shower in the middle. I emerged from the spa feeling healthy and rejuvenated.

Jean as Batgirl with one of the Hornet's Planes courtesy of Jean Martin
USS Hornet Monsters Ball
Alameda
October 25

I don’t usually costume for Halloween because I costume almost every weekend. But this year I wanted to try something different… well, more mundane. I’ve heard of the Halloween parties at the USS Hornet and since this time my favorite station 107.7 the Bone was sponsoring it, I decided to go. Early on in the evening, I got to meet my favorite DJ Steven Seaweed.

I wore my Batgirl 1966 costume and I got a lot of compliments for it. There were actually lots of imaginative and creative costumes, which I was surprised at. It wasn’t just cheap Halloween store stuff. There were even Hobbits, “Game of Thrones” characters and a group who did characters from the board game “Clue.”

When Christopher, Pat and I got there, RockSkool was playing. They performed songs from the Hard Rock/Heavy Metal era, which I loved. So I was so happy banging my head and dancing. They were very good! The band later in the evening was good too but they played more conventional songs so I didn’t enjoy them as much.

There was a costume contest, which was judged by audience applause measured by a smart phone app. I’m not sure if that app is reliable, though, because the winning entry didn’t get as much applause, I thought. Maybe because I didn’t like them so I’m biased. But streakers with fake naked body parts is just not appealing to me. The second runner up was a woman in a fabulous peacock showgirl masquerade outfit. Third was two men dressed as princes from what looked like Arabian Nights.
It was also fun going around the huge aircraft carrier and get our photos taken with planes, helicopters and Apollo 11 artifacts.

**ARCE Tea with Amelia Peabody**  
Garden Isle Clubhouse, Alameda  
November 2

I found out about this event from a Facebook post that George, a fellow dancer and costumer, did. I’ve always been interested in Egyptology, and coincidentally, I just finished reading my first Amelia Peabody novel. The Amelia Peabody series, written by Elizabeth Peters, are historical mystery
novels set mostly in Egypt and is a cross between Indiana Jones and Agatha Christie. So I scrounged around my storage unit and managed to put together a costume that fits the description of Amelia’s typical working wear… basically Steampunk Egyptologist.

There was a costume contest, which was won by Leia, one of the women at our table and who I know from the GBACG. She had a gorgeous Victorian bustle gown. Also at our table was Kelly, a PEERS regular, who was dressed as Nefertiti. It was nice to see familiar faces and to meet people who are also interested in ancient Egypt. There was also a silent action and I won these beautiful lapis lazuli earnings done in the Egyptian style.

There was a fantastic afternoon tea prepared by members of the ARCE (The American Research Center in Egypt). Since theme for the tea was Amelia Peabody, the lectures, by Egyptian teachers and scholars, were linked to digs that were mentioned in the novels. I learned a lot and hope I get to go to more of their events (and maybe even one of their tours to Egypt) in the future.

**Star Trek Convention**

Hyatt Regency, Burlingame  
December 14

After a year of so many amazing events, it came to a close on a high note with the Creation Star Trek Convention. This is a fairly relaxed convention and now I’ve started going to Creation conventions again, I know the drill and I know what to expect.

There’s only one track, and most are guest appearances, so you can decide to go them or to go around the small, but good,
dealer room or take photos of people in costume. There are also autograph and photo opp sessions with the celebrities.

What made this particular convention special is listening to George Takei talk. He is so inspiring and such a happy and fulfilled person. He’s done so much not just as an actor but as a role model and force for good. He talked about his experience as a child in a Japanese internment camp, his getting involved as a spokesperson for gay and lesbian rights, and his becoming an Internet celebrity. Christopher and I also got to meet him as we did a photo opp with him.

If just for that, the convention was worth going to. But I also got to meet three people from “Star Trek: Voyager,” which I loved. Kate Mulgrew, Garrett Wang and Robert Picardo were there. Garrett was especially fun to talk to and Christopher, he and I had a great conversation. I also got to meet James Darren, who was one of my early idols as he was in the show “The Time Tunnel.”
BASFA Meetings 1277-85

Meeting 1277

January 19, 2015

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
Began at 8 pm - for the greater good
22 people attended
We established a [secret] Marina jar
The minutes of meeting 1276 were accepted as “Louie, Louie”
The Treasurer reported that last week we took in $5.50 in the regular jar and $27.65 in the Spider Robinson’s family jar
The Vice President reported that there is a new “Drink Tank” out, that there will be an issue of “Journey Planet” out soon & the deadline for “Drink tank” issue 400 is January 25
The President welcomed long-time fan Alex Cox, visiting us for the first time, having moved here last August
The Sports Committee reported there are still tickets available for the BASFA outing to the Giants/Marlins game,
Announcements:

Ken announced that the Legion of Rassilon meeting is this Friday at the IHOP in Santa Clara & starts at 7:30 pm

Ric announced that there is an “escape from the walled city” event in San Francisco Feb 1st, as a recreation for the ‘Escape from Titan’ manga, check for details and *cost* at www.realescapegame.com & he announced that the new Fanboy Planet is now out & announced that the newest issue of the Marvel comic ‘Star Wars’ comic is really good & announced that a play called ‘Build’ will be performed by City Lights thru Jan 22 [www.sanjose.com/build-by-michael-golamco-e2171881]

Lisa announced that the Mythopoeic Society has published a book called ‘Perilous and Fair’ [www.mythsoc.org/press/]

Dave G announced that he & Spring moved recently and that this Saturday they will welcome help from others in opening boxes and putting things away, contact him if interested - and he announced that ‘Robot Planet Rising’ will be performed Friday, March 6 at Zellerbach Hall at Cal Berkeley [calperformances.org/performances/2014-15/theater/intergalactic-nemesis.php]

Dave C announced that Ebay zombie listings are still a thing, but that Ebay did cancel a negative listing against him that was unfounded

Adrienne announced that she has notepads to give away & announced that a documentary, ‘Changing Boundaries’ will be shown at the California Theatre on Thursday, Jan 22 = sanjosetheaters.org/theaters/california-theatre/

JC announced that Nerdvana Podcast episode 47, part 2 ‘from-the-future’ will be out on Wednesday & he announced that he had an interview with the podcasters of Gigahoes via Skype [gigahoes.com/] & also announced that he plans to restart Blue Mirage Studios [bluemiragestudio.com/] with an eye towards going full time as a graphics designer with it in 6 months

John O announced that Joy Day, a local artist, who does art glass and ornaments, did over 1000 glass ornaments during December [and they look awesome] = glasssculpture.org/artglass/holiday/planet-ornaments.html - and he announced that Hugo nominations are now open and that he is eligible in the ‘related work’ category - see his photo link at twitter.com/johalloran [as were many others in the room, it was pointed out]

Dave G announced that there may be a Hugo nominations night Feb 1 ... maybe

Chris announced that Santa Cruz is a city & that they will be doing ‘a Addams family play there’ from Jan 29 thru Feb 8 [www.allabouttheatre.org/The_Addams_Family.php]

Reviews:

JC reviewed this week’s new Mythbusters as an extrememly good episode & reviewed getting new phones as he really digs the iphone 6 & recommends it

Chris reviewed being Fan GoH at Illogicon in South Carolina [illogicon.org/] as he had a grand old time there and ate grits with 5 meals & he reviewed ‘Winter Soldier’ as really good & reviewed ‘Grand Budapest Hotel’ as it was odd and awesome

Beth reviewed ‘Bring it on the Musical’ as fantastic

Dave G reviewed ‘A Soldier's Tale’ as very good and recommended
Ric reviewed ‘Man in the High Castle’ [based on a Philip K Dick story] is being produced for amazon.com and he highly recommends it & he reviewed ‘Cabin in the Woods’ as just awesome & reviewed ‘The Black Mirror’ as amazingly crafted & reviewed the ‘Little Wine Counter’ in the Pruneyard as ‘you will enjoy whatever you order there’

Lisa reviewed Further Confusion as their programming was a bit messed up, but she saw wonderful costumes and had a marvellous time & John O had a lovely time there too

Dave C reviewed ‘Single Barrel’ as he let the bartender experiment & it was good - and Mo loves the bar’s signage we did auctions

We adjourned at 9:38 pm

And the rumor of the week was: ‘it wasn’t long before the meat-sticks came out’

Meeting 1278

January 26, 2015

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
Began at 8 pm - with waffles
27 people attended
We established a [secret] Marina jar

The minutes of meeting 1277 were accepted as ‘Roberts rules of meat products’

The Treasurer reported that last week we took in $13.80 in the regular jar and $36.60 in the [secret] jar

The Vice President left early

The President welcomed Ashley Cox, visiting us for the first time, having moved here last August with Alex

The Sports Committee reported there are still tickets available for the BASFA outing to the Giants/Marlins game, May 8 at 7:15pm; the ticket cost is $23 for view reserve seats in section 319

Announcements:

JC announced that Nerdvana Podcast episode 47, part 3 ‘from-the-future’ will be out on Wednesday & announced that he plans to restart Blue Mirage Studios [bluemiragestudio.com/] with an eye towards going full time as a graphics designer with it in 6 months

Ric announced that episode 383 of Fanboy Planet is out & announced that the ‘Batkid’ event inspired a documentary & announced that Jay Hartlove has a Kickstarter out about C/i/n/d/e/r/e/l/l/a -Snow White!- that is open for a week

Adrienne announced that Mo is in hospital because of pain from muscle damage

Carole announced that Conflikt is in Seattle this weekend & that Con27ilkin will be in England Feb 6-8

Bill announced that Skymall has declared bankruptcy & that bacon jerky is a thing

Lynn announced that Diana Coygan’s [sp?] car was totalled & that Eric P Scott died last week & she has contact info for his folks
Reviews:
Ric reviewed that Lindsey Stirling did a version of the Star Wars theme [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIFGsZsVjE] & it’s wonderful & reviewed Amazon’s pilot for ‘Salem Rogers, Model of the Year’ [studios.amazon.com/projects/18517] as a really bad trainwreck of a show & reviewed the Windows 10 product announcement as astonishing.
JC reviewed ‘Divergent’ as he really enjoyed it & reviewed the 2nd half of season 1 of the ‘The Flash’ as excellent & recommends it.
Adrienne reviewed ‘Changing Boundaries’, a documentary about early SJ history as the earlier history was more interesting & she reviewed ‘Birdman’ as beautifully done but she really didn’t enjoy it.
‘Selma’ was variously reviewed as inaccurate & sanitized.
Bill reviewed Aresia in Boston as ‘half a Worldcon’ & overall they had a great time & Carole reviewed the Masquerade as she thought the enterants were very nice.
Beth reviewed ‘American Sniper’ as very emotional and recommended & JC recommends you bring tissues to it.
Dave C reviewed the Mythbusters Indiana Jones episode as he saw it & felt nostalgic.
We birthday auctioned off Ashley Cox for $4.
We adjourned at 9:04 pm - to do Hugo recommendations.
And the rumor of the week was: ‘Hugo nominations - vote early - vote often’.

Meeting 1279
February 2, 2015
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
Began at 8 pm - with dinner interruptus
26 people attended
We established a secret [Marina] jar.
The minutes of meeting 1278 were accepted as ‘not just for the internet’.
The Treasurer reported that last week we took in $5.75 in the regular jar and $15.41 in the [secret] jar.
The Vice President gave a proxy [text] report = ‘hello! New Drink Tickets out if you 400 and 399’ - plus Chuck is his hero and he likes pie.
The President had nothing fannish to report.
There will be Hugo nomination ideas after the regular meeting.
The Sports Committee reported there are still 6 tickets available for the BASFA outing to the Giants/Marlins game, May 8 at 7:15pm; the ticket cost is $23 for view reserve seats in section 319.
The Party Committee reported that there was a successful FC party & the next party will be in April at Babcon & it is unlikely that there will be a Baycon party.
Announcements:
Adrienne announced that Mo is improving
Dave C announced that Dame Edna will be in SF with her Glorious Goodbye tour in March 17-27 at the Orpheum & announced that ‘Atlas Shrugged part 3’ is available now, direct to video
Ric announced that Borderlands is closing because of economic reasons & announced that episode 384 of Fanboy Planet is out & announced that episode 362 has an interview with the director of the ‘Batkid’ documentary
Jc announced that Nerdvana Podcast episode 47, part 4 ‘from-the-future’ will be out on Wednesday
Dara announced that new books are coming out
Aatheus announced that a radio drama - ‘Welcome to Nightvale’ will be at Tuesday, April 21 at Fox Theatre as part of their tour
Jon announced that he is still couch surfing & looking for a place
[evil] Kevin announced that the theme of the Gallifrey ball is ‘Evening on the Orient Express’

Reviews:
Barbara reviewed ‘Earth versus Asteroid’ - a Skiffy film as not that bad
Adrienne reviewed ‘the Grand Budapest Hotel’, as recommended and goofy & reviewed ‘The Judge’ as she enjoyed it & she enjoyed
‘Box Trolls’ & thought ‘Gone Girls’ was creepy
JC proxied a review from Chris as ‘Jamba Juice is wonderful’

Ric reviewed a trailer for the ‘Fantastic 4’ as the movie looks like it’ll be a fantastic train wreck & JC thought it looked interesting; then Ric reviewed the Superbowl game as the last 5 minutes has 2 of the best ‘WTF’ moments of any Superbowl he’s ever seen
Aatheus reviewed ‘Animaniacs Live’ as good & worth paying SF parking prices for
Valerie reviewed the Portland Comic Con as very corporate & it had cute fans & she had 2 zombie minions, but sales were ‘meh’ & the ATMs didn’t work on Saturday
Dave C reviewed a book = ‘Aberswyth Bon Amour’ by Malcolm Pryce as an alternate reality story & worth reading
We birthday auctioned off Beth for $6 to JC
We adjourned at 9 pm - to do Hugo recommendations
And the rumor of the week was: ‘You had me at hot Asian kid’

Meeting 1281
February 16, 2015

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
Began at 8-ish
20-ish people attended
We established a secret-ish [Marina] jar
The minutes of meeting 1280 were accepted as ‘timey whimey’

The Treasurer was missing, but the proxy-ish report was that last week we took in $0 in the regular jar and $36.00 in the [secret] jar.

The Vice President was also absent & there was a proxy-ish report that he may be here next week.

The President had nothing fann-ish to report.

**Announcements:**

Howeird announced that he auditioned for the play ‘Iolanthe’ and got a part - and that it will be at the SJ Montgomery Theatre in June.

Fred announced that tickets for Makers Faire are now available on the ‘intrawebs’ & recommends you buy them early.

Adrienne announced that Mo is improving & can withstand visitors now - at Valley Med [Bascom & Moorpark] - building C, 3rd floor, room 36.

John O announced that Sasquan 2015 admissions for the Hugo base are closed & that judging decisions are being made now.

JC announced that Nerdvana Podcast did a retrospective of podcast #8 & announced that his graphic design business will relaunch in march & he’ll be going to part-time at Michaels then.

Brad announced that mid-June is the meeting of the SFRA - the Science Fiction Research Association - & he’s been invited to speak on a panel there.

**Reviews:**

JC reviewed ‘50 Shades of Grey’ as a really good movie & much better than he expected - worth full price.

Adrienne reviewed ‘Foxcatcher’, as ‘another creepy rich person movie’, reviewed ‘Big Hero 6’ as cute & reviewed ‘Whiplash’ as ‘okay, I guess’ & then reviewed Gallifrey 1 as she enjoyed herself & learned that the ‘Avengers’ TV shows are being released on blueray in letterbox format - then there were follow-ons for Gallifrey 1 that were all positive.

[another] Chris reviewed ‘The Almanac Project’ as they aren’t a fan of ‘found footage’ films, but it was reasonably entertaining.

John O reviewed the LA Hilton as a very nice hotel & the bed was comfy & the bistro is open 24 hours.

Pat reviewed ‘The Imitation Game’ as she’s a ‘Cumberbunny’ and Benedict can do no wrong - it’s worth full price & then reviewed ‘Exodus’ as terrible archeology & acting but the special fx saved the movie.

Bill reviewed Conflict as they had a good time & enjoyed their time in London & reviewed Pantheacon as a chance to meet fun people & he had a great time & then Carole agreed.

Bill also reviewed ‘The Mousetrap’ as the play is somewhat dated.

[newly evil] Chris reviewed Herbert Franke’s ‘orchid Cage’ as well-acted and enjoyed it, albeit was flawed & sexist.

Bradford reviewed a 1-day comic con as pretty good & well-attended & reviewed ‘The Innovators’ by Walter Isaacson as comprehensive, good history & recommended.

Howeird reviewed a play, ‘Curtains’ as quite well done, despite the plague & worth full price & reviewed Coastal Rep Theatre in Half Moon Bay as a very good group & they did ‘I
Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change’ as well done, except for a few mike problems & it’ll be playing there for the next 2 weeks, but mind the terrible beach traffic

we did auctions
We adjourned at 9:14 pm
And the rumor of the week was: ‘Agatha Christie has always been a mystery to me’

**Meeting 1282**

February 23, 2015

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
Began at 8pm - with bittersweet feelings [since it was Marina’s last night]
27 people attended
We established a secret [Marina] jar
The minutes of meeting 1281 were accepted as ‘wobbly wobblney’
The Treasurer reported that last week we took in $2.25 in the regular jar and $55.21 in the [secret] jar
The Vice President was absent [meeting #5]
The President had nothing fann-ish to report
The Sports Committee reported there are still 5 or 6 tickets available for the BASFA outing to the Giants/Marlins game, May 8 at 7:15pm; the ticket cost is $23 for view reserve seats in section 319

**Announcements:**

Ken announced that the Legion of Rasselon meeting is this Friday at 7:30pm at the IHoP on Steven’s Creek/Lawrence & announced that Bellarmine College Prep school will begin performances of ‘Spamalot’ this Friday, Saturday, Sunday - and next Thursday thru Sunday with a $15 ticket cost & he announced that he may have a phone interview this week

JC announced that Nerdvana Podcast, episode 36, show 141 will be Oscar coverage & released Wednesday & announced that his graphic design business, Blue Mirage, is restarting & he’ll be going to part-time at Michaels

Ric announced that Feb 24 begins the 2 weeks of Cinequest & he’ll be covering it with a filmography, check www.ricbret.com/ & he announced that Oni Press is bringing back ‘Invader Zim’ & announced that Pechakucha is returning on Tues., March 31 at Cafe Stritch - check www.presentationsroundtable.com/pksj/ & also announced that 2 Fanboy Planet podcasts have been released

John O announced that Consonance is happening March 6-8 & announced that the Sasquan 2015 Hugo base winner is Matthew Dockery, a Seattle fan

Adrienne announced that Mo is improving
Bill announced that he & Carole have a new-to-them cat that is getting used to them
Gerry Nordley asked for information on a subject
Fred announced that Leonard Nimoy is in hospital right now
Dave C announced that a Disney ride has closed & that Dapper Day at Disneyland will be March 1st

**Reviews:**

Gerry reviewed a Nancy Kress novella - ‘Yesterday’s kin’ as really good, reviewed a short story by Bridget McKenna - ‘King in Exile’ as a fun and bittersweet story & reviewed Rad-Con as a fair-sized con & pleasant

Dave C reviewed Mark Hodder’s ‘The Return of the Discontinued Man’ as fun and strange - worth trade paperback & reviewed Gallifrey 1 that for him as a dealer, it was wonderful - then there were a LOT of other positive comments about Gallifrey 1, then Dave reviewed ‘Kingsman’ as fun and violent and worth full price

Howeird reviewed a play by the Sunnyvale Players, ‘Little Mermaid Junior’ as having a young cast, it was written for kids & quite well done, despite mike problems, with delightful costume & worth full price

Beth reviewed ‘Newzies’ at the Warfield in SF as absolutely spectacular & it may be playing thru March 17 & they got a bobblehead

John O reviewed Craig Ferguson’s ‘Walking the Earth’ stand-up show as ribald & fun

Dave G reviewed visiting and trying to escape from Levi Stadium as the light rail was slammed, getting into the stadium was reasonably simple, they seemed to have elevator issues and a lack of food

Adrienne reviewed ‘Dawn of the Planet of the Apes’, as she enjoyed it, reviewed an anime she couldn’t recall the name for was too long, but nice animation & reviewed ‘Inherent Vice’ as it had some nice scenes & reviewed ‘American Sniper’ as the plot didn’t tie up well & reviewed ‘Boyhood’ as too long & reviewed ‘Theory of Everything’ as enjoyable & reviewed ‘Imitation Game’ as well-acted & she thought the AMC theatre handled showing the 4-movies-in-a-row rather poorly

Ric reviewed 2 musicals that will be shown at Cinequest as both look interesting & highly recommends both & reviewed a game, ‘Pairs’ as it costs $9 and he highly recommends it

Lisa reviewed Stitches West as there was fan content among the hand crafts & knitting - and she had fun we did auctions

JC bought a BASFA membership for Marina

We adjourned at 10:10 pm

And the rumor of the week was: ‘Fifty Shades of Dave’

**Meeting 1284**

March 9, 2015

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

Began at 8 pm - with accord

26 people attended

We established a party jar

The minutes of meeting 1283 were accepted as ‘drunk typing and/or drunk reading’
The Treasurer reported that last week we took in $5.97 in the regular jar.
The Vice President was not here.
The President had nothing fannish to report.
The Sports Committee reported there are still tickets available for the BASFA outing to the Giants/Marlins game, May 8 at 7:15pm; the ticket cost is $23 for view reserve seats in section 319.

**Announcements:**

[evil] Kevin announced that March 28 is the Transgender day of Visibility & he’s producing the nightclub part at the Billie Frank Center & the weekend of April 3rd he’s entered Robogames in 2 categories, check robogames.net

JC announced that Nerdvana Podcast episode 36, part 2 will be out on Wednesday & announced that he had a gall bladder attack & will be having it removed April 2

[newly evil] Chris announced that a friend of his has a costume for sale

Adrienne announced that Mo should be discharged March 26

Beth announced that she will be graduating

Josh announced that a friend of his has a Kickstarter going for a game - ‘Super Slam Dunk Touchdown’ & on March 19 will have the game featured at 7 Stars Bar & Grill

Howeird announced that the BASFA Time Travellers committee will meet here last week at 8pm

Dave C announced that the August 2014 Cargo Cult catalog is out now

Brad announced that the Missouri state legislature has inducted Robert Heinlein into their famous men museum & that the Heinlein Society is raising money for a bust & plaque for him

Carole announced that she has the Costume Con 33 Fashion Folio out the door

**Reviews:**

I reviewed ‘Jupiter Descending’ as visually stunning and light on plot, but well-supplied with eye candy, worth full price

Bill reviewed Consonance, a filk con, as having good singing, a fun con & Lisa reviewed it as very nice, with good singing and they had a fun time

Josh reviewed a play, ‘Richard the 3rd’ at the Impact Theatre as absolutely perfect & spot on

Howeird reviewed a play, ‘Little Mermaid Jr’, as he saw it with the 2nd cast on closing night & they were even better & reviewed a book ‘All My Friends are Dead’ by Avery Monsen & Jory John as funny

Dave C reviewed a book, ‘The Sapphire Sirens’ as fun & Silly & worth full price & reviewed Fogcon as a nice con from a dealer’s perspective, Brad followed, saying that he liked the panels and recommends it & Fred thought it was a really good con

Brad then predicted that there would be a change in the show ‘Walking Dead’

Dave G reviewed a play, ‘The Intergalactic Nemesis - Robot Planet rising’ as interesting

We adjourned at 9:09 pm

And the rumor of the week was: ‘Methinks he puns too much’
Meeting 1285

March 16, 2015

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
Began at 8 pm - with excessive zaps
19 people attended
We failed to establish a party jar
The minutes of meeting 1284 were accepted as ‘accepted’
The Treasurer reported that last week we took in $13.25 in the regular jar & $8.25 in the party jar
The Vice President was not here [week 5]
The President had nothing fannish to report
The Sports Committee reported they have sold out

Announcements:
Dave C announced that Norwescon is coming up on April 2-5th
[evil] Kevin announced that March 28 is the Transgender day of Visibility & he’s producing the nightclub part at the Billie Frank Center & the weekend of April 3rd he’s entered Robogames in 2 categories, check robogames.net

Josh announced that a friend of his has a Kickstarter going for a game - ‘Super Slam Dunk Touchdown’ & on March 19 will have the game featured at 7 Stars Bar & Grill
Ken announced that ‘Life of Brian’ will be shown at the Blue Light cinema at 7 pm, check lifeofbrianmovie.eventbrite.com & Geri has made beards & announced that a Psychotronic Film Festival will be at Foothill this Saturday at 7pm

Reviews:
Andy reviewed seeing some of the Eurovision stuff as worth streaming, especially the Swedish stuff
Alex reviewed ‘Atomita’ - available on Netflix - as kinda a B movie but quite good
Bill reviewed ‘Jupiter Ascending’, as having good costumes and stunning visuals, it didn’t hold up to close inspection and worth matinee
Brad proxied for Gerry, saying that Marscon had good science and writing panels
Fred reviewed the Single Barrel bar as a good place but that it closes at the end of May
Josh reviewed a milkshake bar on 2nd street in SJ as worth every overpriced penny
We adjourned at 9:40 pm
And the rumor of the week was: ‘In time we will all become artifacts’
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.

Friday-Sunday, April 3-5
**BabsCon**
SFO Hyatt Regency
1333 Bayshore Highway, Burlingame
babsccon.com
Convention devoted to “My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic.”

**Saturday, April 4**
**PEERS Dance Comes to Pemberly: Pride and Prejudice 10 Years Later**
Alameda Elks Lodge
2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda
peersdance.org
Ball featuring the 10th wedding anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. Fitzwilliam Darcy and their friends with English country dancing, quadrilles and waltzes. Music provided by Bangers and Mash.
8 p.m. $20 (advance), $25 (at the door)

Saturday, April 11
**GBACG Workshop**
Topic and site TBA
www.gbacg.org/gbacg-calendar.html
Expand your skills at this hands-on workshop

**Saturday-Sunday, April 11-12**
**San Jose Fantasy Faire**
Guadalupe River Park, Downtown San Jose
www.sjfantasy.com/
Fantasy themed faire in Downtown San Jose in the shadow of the Shark Tank (SAP Center)
$12 (adults), $7 (children 6-12), Free (under 6)

Saturday, April 18
**GBACG Barbecue at Twelve Oaks**
Rengstorff House at Shoreline Park
3070 North Shoreline Boulevard, Mountain View
www.gbacg.org/gbacg-calendar.html
Victorian-style 1860’s picnic at the historic Rengstorff House. The picnic is fully catered
8 p.m. $20 (advance), $25 (at the door)

Saturday, April 18
**The Rite of Spring Ball**
Lake Merritt Dance Center
200 Grand Avenue, Oakland
www.gbacg.org/gbacg-calendar.html
Ballroom dancing featuring the music of The Brassworks Band
7 p.m.

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Saturday, April 18
**Bay Area Printer’s Fair and Wayzgoose**
History Park/History San Jose
635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Demonstrations and exhibits on antique printing press techniques.
10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Free

Saturday-Sunday, April 18-19
**Big Wow! ComicFest**
San Jose McEnery Convention Center
150 W. San Carlos Street, San Jose
bigwowcomicfest.com
Comics convention.
$30 (Pre-registration) $35 (at the door)
Sunday, April 19
Golden Gate Chapter Vintage Volkswagen Club Spring Meet
History Park/History San Jose
635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Come see classic VW cars in History Park.
8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Saturday-Sunday, April 18-19
High Desert Steampunk Expo
Reno-Sparks Livestock Event Center - Exhibit Hall
1350 N. Wells Avenue, Reno, NV
www.facebook.com/HighDesertSteam/events
www.highdesertsteam.org/
Reno's own Steampunk Expo.
$15

Saturday, April 25
Bombs United Annual Picnic and Car Show
History Park/History San Jose
635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Have a picnic while seeing pre-1954 cars.
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Saturday-Sunday, April 25-26
Kraken Con
Oakland Convention Center
550 10th Street, Oakland
www.krakencon.com/
General anime convention
$30

Spring 2015
Wednesday-Thursday, May 13-14
60th Anniversary Screening of Japanese Version of “Godzilla”
Alameda Theaters and Cineplex
2317 Central Avenue, Alameda
www.alamedatheatres.com
Prior to screening, there will be a reception in the lobby from 5:30 to 6:40 pm, offering the opportunity for attendees to obtain copies of the second edition of “Eiji Tsuburaya: Master of Monsters” (Chronicle Books), the lavishly illustrated biography of the visual effects mastermind behind Godzilla and Ultraman. 7 p.m.

Saturday, May 16
Walk Now For Autism Speaks
History Park/History San Jose
635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Fundraiser for Autism Speaks to help fund research
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Saturday-Sunday, May 16-17
Fresno Pirate Festival
Kearney Park
7160 W Kearney Boulevard, Fresno
twofayreladies.com/
Pirates invade Kearney Park in Fresno.
$12 (adults), $8 (children and seniors)

Sunday, May 17
Hands-On History Days
History Park/History San Jose
635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Come enjoy the chance to see San Jose’s history come to life.
12 p.m. - 4 p.m. $5 (non-members), Free (Members, Children 2 and under)

Friday-Monday, May 22-25
Clockwork Alchemy
Doubletree Hotel
2050 Gateway Place, San Jose
www.clockworkalchemy.com/#/home
Steampunk convention in conjunction with Fanime.
$65 (until May 1), $75 (May 1 and after)

Friday-Monday, May 22-25
KublaCon
Hyatt Regency San Francisco Airport
1333 Bayshore Highway, Burlingame
www.kublacon.com
West Coast’s largest gaming convention.
$60 (at the door)

Friday-Monday, May 22-25
BayCon
Hyatt Regency Santa Clara
5101 Great America Parkway, Santa Clara
baycon.org/2015/
General interest science fiction/fantasy convention.
$60 (pre-registration)

Thursday-Monday, May 28-June 1
San Francisco Silent Film Festival
Castro Theater
429 Castro Street, San Francisco
www.silentfilm.org
Classic silent films presented with live musical accompaniment including the “Sherlock Holmes (1916).
Saturday, May 30
BAERS Congress of Vienna Ball
Alameda Elks Lodge
2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda
baers.org
Celebrate the bicentennial of the Dancing Congress that spread the waltz all across Europe but did nothing politically.
$20 (advance), $25 (at the door)

Saturday-Sunday, May 30-31
and Friday-Sunday, June 5-7
Valhalla Renaissance Faire
Camp Richardson
1900 Jameson Beach Road, South Lake Tahoe
www.valhallafaire.com
23rd Anniversary celebration of magic, mayhem and merriment. $18 (adults), $13 (seniors, military, children 13-17) $8 (children 6-12), Free (under 6)

Saturday, June 6
PEERS The Doctor Dances: 1756 (Time Travel with The Doctor through the Fireplace to Madame du Pompadour’s Grand Costume Ball)
Alameda Elks Lodge
2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda
peersdance.org
Join the Doctor and Rose at an 18th Century ball hosted by “Reinette,” the beautiful Madame du Pompadour, at the Court of Louis XV for English and French country dances and waltzes. Music provided by Bangers and Mash.
8 p.m. $20 (advance), $25 (at the door)

Sunday, June 7
GBACG Costume Salon: Edwardian
Site TBA
www.gbacg.org/gbacg-calendar.html
Join us for potluck tea snacks, socializing, and sharing resources. Theme appropriate books, patterns, garments, or projects also welcome. Our Salons are free and no dress-up is required. If you’d like to attend, email costumesalons@gbacg.org.
Free

Saturday-Sunday, June 6-7
Charlie Chaplin Days
Niles Essanay Silent Film Museum and Downtown Niles
37417 Niles Boulevard, Fremont
nilesfilmmuseum.org
Celebration of Charlie Chaplin with film festival, games, a lookalike contest on Sunday and activities at the local stores in the neighborhood.

Saturday, June 13
Dia de Portugal Festival
History Park/History San Jose
635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Celebrate Silicon Valley’s Portuguese history and culture.
10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Free

Sunday, June 14
GBACG Zorro Rescues the Peralta Adobe
Peralta Adobe at San Pedro Square
155 W Santa Clara Street, San Jose
www.gbacg.org/gbacg-calendar.html
Picnic in the shadow of the historic pre-Gold Rush adobe house where you can catch a glimpse of the famous masked stranger.

Friday-Monday, June 19-21
WizardWorld Sacramento Comic-Con
Sacramento Convention Center
1400 J St, Sacramento
www.wizardworld.com/home-sacramento.html
General comic book and pop culture convention $80 (advance), $90 (onsite)

Saturday, June 20
Dia de San Juan Festival
History Park/History San Jose
635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Celebrate and experience Puerto Rican history and culture. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. $25

Sunday, June 21
Hands-On History: Trains, Trolleys and Automobiles
History Park/History San Jose
635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Experience all the forms of transportation that shaped the Silicon Valley.
10 a.m. - 5 p.m. $5 (non-members), Free (members, children 2 and under)
**Friday-Sunday, June 26-28**

*Broncho Billy Film Festival*
Niles Essanay Silent Film Museum and Downtown Niles
37417 Niles Boulevard, Fremont
nilesfilmmuseum.org/
Silent film festival with panels on silent film history and screenings of silent movies including ones featuring famous cowboy actor Bronco Billy.

**Saturday, June 27**

*GBACG Workshop*
Topic and site TBA
www.gbacg.org/gbacg-calendar.html
Expand your skills at this hands-on workshop

**Thursday-Sunday, July 2-5**

*Westercon 68*
Town & Country Resort and Conference Center
500 Hotel Circle North, San Diego
westercon68.org
General interest science fiction/fantasy convention

**Sunday, July 12**

*Strangers Car Show and BBQ*
History Park/History San Jose
635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Enjoy traditionally styled hot rods and custom cars, barbecue and art.
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**Saturday-Sunday, July 18-19**

*California Extreme Classic Arcade show*
Hyatt Regency Santa Clara
5101 Great America Parkway, Santa Clara
www.caextreme.org
Classic arcade games show featuring coin-operated video games, pinball machines and other arcade novelties.

**Sunday, July 19**

*GBACG Edwardian Whites Summer Picnic*
Palo Alto Lawn Bowling Club
474 Embarcadero, Palo Alto
www.gbacg.org/gbacg-calendar.html
Dawn your Edwardian summer whites (or colors) for an afternoon of picnicking and spirited lawn bowling.

**Saturday, August 1**

*PEERS Alice In Wonderland Picnic Dance*
Lincoln Park
1450 High Street, Alameda
peersdance.org
A Victorian fantasy afternoon of picnic and dance with Alice, the Mad Hatter and the Queen of Hearts. Music provided by Bangers and Mash..
11 a.m.

**Saturday-Sunday, August 1-2**

*Carnival of the Stars World Dance and Art Festival*
Richmond Memorial Auditorium
403 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond
www.carnivalofstars.com/home.htm
Belly dance performances, comic book artists, movie room and costume contest on Saturday.
$15

**Saturday-Sunday, August 1-2**

*San Jose Renaissance Faire*
Guadalupe River Park, Downtown San Jose
www.sanjosefaire.com
The South Bay’s own renaissance faire in the shadow of the SAP Center.
$18 (adults), $13 (seniors, military, children 13-17) $8 (children 6-12), Free (under 6)
Friday, August 7
Spirit of ‘45 Weekend: 1940’s Dance Party
History Park/History San Jose
635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Dance under the lights of History Park to the big band sounds of The Swing Solution. Free swing dance lesson. 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Saturday, August 8
Spirit of ‘45 Weekend:
History Park/History San Jose
635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Celebrate the Greatest Generation and the Spirit of America with dancing, vintage cars, 1940’s fashion show, WWII era living history and a homecoming parade. 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Saturday-Sunday, August 8-9
Stockton-Con
Stockton Arena
248 W Fremont Street, Stockton
stocktoncon.com
San Joaquin Valley’s only comic and pop-culture convention.
$15 (presale), $20 (at the door)

Wednesday-Sunday, August 19-23
Sasquan/WorldCon 2015
Spokane Convention Center and Downtown Spokane
Spokane, Washington
sasquan.org
73rd Annual World Science Fiction Convention. Guests of Honor: Brad Foster, David Gerrold, Vonda N. McIntyre, Tom Smith, Leslie Turek
$190

Saturday-Sunday, August 22-23
Willits Kinetic Carnival
Recreation Grove Park
400 East Commercial Street, Willits
www.kineticcarnivale.com
Annual celebration of 19th century life featuring a Fair, live music and entertainment, Handcar Races and a Grand Ball. $10 per day, Check website for Grand Ball pricing

Sunday, August 23
Hands-On History: Fandango - Celebrating Life at the Adobe
Peralta Adobe at San Pedro Square
155 W Santa Clara Street, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Celebrate the life of Luis Maria Peralta, one of the first Alcaldes of Pueblo de San Jose de Guadalupe with activities and tours of the Peralta Adobe and the Fallon House. 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Saturday-Sunday, August 29-30
San Jose Super Toy Comic & Collectible Show
Santa Clara County Fairgrounds
344 Tully Road, San Jose
www.timetunnelnews.blogspot.com
Toy, comic and collectible show. $8 (General admission), $15 (early bird)

Friday-Sunday, September 4-6
WizardWorld San Jose Comic-Con
San Jose McEnery Convention Center
150 W. San Carlos Street, San Jose
www.wizardworld.com/home-sanjose.html
General comic book and pop culture convention. 8 p.m. $75 (advance), $85 (at the door)

Friday-Monday, September 4-7
CelestiCon
Fremont Marriott
46100 Landing Parkway, Fremont
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. $40 (before June 1)
**SacAnime**
Sacramento Convention Center
1400 J St, Sacramento
www.sacconventions.com
Anime and pop culture show
$31 (before April 30)

**Pacificon Game Expo**
Santa Clara Marriott
12700 Mission College Boulevard, Santa Clara
pacificongameexpo.com
Gaming convention
$45 (before April 1)

**PEERS Age of Innocence Ball: An Evening in Beautiful but Ruthless New York in 1870s**
Alameda Elks Lodge
2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda
peersdance.org
Have an elegant time with old New York’s social elite in Edith Wharton’s “Age of Innocence” with waltzes, schottiches, contradances and more. Music provided by Bangers and Mash.
8 p.m. $20 (advance), $25 (at the door)

**GBACG Costume Salon: Doctor Who**
Site TBA
www.gbacg.org/gbacg-calendar.html
Join us for potluck tea snacks, socializing, and sharing resources. Theme appropriate books, patterns, garments, or projects also welcome. Our Salons are free and no dress-up is required. If you’d like to attend, email costumesalons@gbacg.org.

**Renaissance Tudor Fayre**
Cameron Park Lake
2989 Cambridge Road, Cameron Park
twofayreladies.com
Sacramento’s own Renaissance Faire $12 (adults), $8 (children and seniors)

**Gatsby Summer Afternoon**
Dunsmuir Helman Historic Estate
2960 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland
artdecosociety.org/gatsby.htm
Afternoon picnic party with dancing, cars and the Deco Belles inspired by “The Great Gatsby”.

**Hands-On History: Antique Autos In The Park**
Peralta Adobe at San Pedro Square
155 W Santa Clara Street, San Jose
historysanjose.org/wp/events/
Enjoy the largest Antique Auto Show on the West Coast. See cars, fire equipment, bicycles and motorcycles from the late 1800s to 1945.
11 a.m. - 4 p.m. $5 (non-members), Free (Members, Children 2 and under)

**GBACG Brighton By The Sea - A Beach Picnic**
Pescadero
www.gbacg.org/gbacg-calendar.html
“They must all go to Brighton.” Follow Lydia Bennet’s advice from “Pride and Prejudice” and enjoy a seaside Regency-style picnic.
<table>
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<th>Date</th>
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| **Saturdays-Sundays,** **September 19-October 18** | *Northern California Renaissance Faire* Casa de Fruta 10031 Pacheco Pass Highway, Hollister, CA [www.norcalrenfaire.com](http://www.norcalrenfaire.com)  
Northern California’s annual Elizabethan festival.  
Prices TBA                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Casa de Fruta 10031 Pacheco Pass Highway, Hollister, CA [www.norcalrenfaire.com](http://www.norcalrenfaire.com)  
Northern California’s annual Elizabethan festival.  
Prices TBA                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  

| **Saturday, September 26** | *Superhero Street Fair* 1700 Indiana Street, San Francisco [superherosf.com](http://superherosf.com)  
The co-creators of How Weird Street Fair and Burning Man Decompression present a street fair with a superhero theme to celebrate all the heroes in the community. 1 pm - 11 pm. $10 (early bird)/$15 (general)/$50 (VIP)  
**Saturday-Sunday, September 26-27** *Much Ado About Sebastopol* Ives Park 7400 Willow Avenue, Sebastopol, CA [www.muchadoaboutsebastopol.com](http://www.muchadoaboutsebastopol.com)  
Immerse yourself in life of 1578 England in this historically recreated village.  
Prices TBA                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  

| **Friday-Sunday, October 2-4** | *Convolution 2015: Legion*  
Hyatt Regency SFO Airport 1333 Bayshore Highway, Burlingame [con-volution.com/2014/](http://con-volution.com/2014/)  
General science-fiction/fantasy convention  
$45 (pre-registration)  
**Saturday, October 3** *Impalas United Car Show and Picnic*  
History Park/History San Jose 635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose [historysanjose.org/wp/events/](http://historysanjose.org/wp/events/)  
Car show and picnic featuring custom Chevy Impalas.  
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
**Ongoing**  
**Daily** *Cartoon Art Museum* 655 Mission Street, San Francisco [www.cartoonart.org](http://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/](http://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](http://www.sfghosthunt.com)  
Closed Mondays & Tuesdays, and on November 21-22 for Thanksgiving.  
7-10 p.m.  
$20  
**Nightly Nerd Show**  
KCSF Radio, 90.9 FM [nightlynerdshow.tumblr.com/](http://nightlynerdshow.tumblr.com/)  
Radio show covering nerdy topics. 5-6 p.m.  
**VIZ Cinema** 1746 Post Street, San Francisco [www.newpeopleworld.com/films](http://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.  
**Sundays**  
**Amtgard Game Day**  
Codornices Park 1201 Euclid Ave, Berkeley (Across from Berkeley Rose Garden) [caamtgard.com](http://caamtgard.com)  
Amtgard is a swords and sorcery styled medieval combat, culture, and sciences LARP. The Shire of Wyvern’s Spur plays Sundays at noon. We play on the main lawn or within sight of picnic areas 1 or 2. Loaner gear is available 12 p.m.  
Free | Hyatt Regency SFO Airport 1333 Bayshore Highway, Burlingame [con-volution.com/2014/](http://con-volution.com/2014/)  
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Codornices Park 1201 Euclid Ave, Berkeley (Across from Berkeley Rose Garden) [caamtgard.com](http://caamtgard.com)  
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Free  

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**Ongoing**  
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Current exhibitions: Chuck Jones, Drawing on Imagination (till May 5)  
11-5 p.m.  
$6 (Closed Mondays)  
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Current exhibitions: Alice in Wonderland starts May 1.  
10-6 p.m.  
$20 (Closed Tuesdays)
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<tr>
<td><strong>Golden Gate Knights (Lightsaber Instruction Class)</strong></td>
<td>Studio Gracia 19 Heron Street, San Francisco goldenateknights.com <a href="http://www.facebook.com/groups/goldengatejedi">www.facebook.com/groups/goldengatejedi</a></td>
<td>Instructor-led class on lightsaber stage combat and choreography. 12 p.m.</td>
<td>$10</td>
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<td><strong>Cloondara Fighter Practice</strong></td>
<td>Golden Gate Park 47th Avenue @ Fulton, San Francisco <a href="http://www.westkingdom.org">www.westkingdom.org</a></td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<td><strong>Vintage Ballroom Dance Classes sponsored by PEERS</strong></td>
<td>Alameda Elks Lodge 2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda peersdance.org/dance.html</td>
<td>2 dance classes offered: the first one covering basics for newcomers and those wanting a refresher, the second class offers choreography for experienced dancers and adventurous newcomers. Suggested attire is comfortable clothes and leather-soled shoes that glide easily. 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<td><strong>Bad Movie Night</strong></td>
<td>The Dark Room Theater 2263 Mission Street, San Francisco <a href="http://www.darkroomsf.com">www.darkroomsf.com</a></td>
<td>Featuring bad movies old and new. 8 p.m.</td>
<td>$5</td>
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<td><strong>Sakuramento Anime Society</strong></td>
<td>Rancho Cordova Library 9845 Folsom Boulevard, Rancho Cordova <a href="http://www.saclibrary.org">www.saclibrary.org</a></td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<td><strong>East Bay Strategy Games Club</strong></td>
<td>EndGame 921 Washington Street, Oakland <a href="http://www.endgameoakland.com/event-calendar">www.endgameoakland.com/event-calendar</a></td>
<td>Various games played throughout the week, check website for times and games.</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<td><strong>Sundays and Fridays</strong></td>
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<td><strong>SF Games</strong></td>
<td>Taqueria San Jose, 2830 Mission Street, San Francisco (Fridays, 7 p.m.) Zephyr Cafe, 3643 Balboa Street, San Francisco (Sundays, 2 p.m.) <a href="http://www.sfgames.org/">www.sfgames.org/</a></td>
<td>SF Games is a collective name for a bunch of people who get together and play board games and card games every week.</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mondays</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Bay Area Science Fiction Association</strong></td>
<td>Coco’s 1206 Oakmead Parkway, Sunnyvale <a href="http://www.basfa.org">www.basfa.org</a></td>
<td>Featuring bad movies old and new. 8 p.m.</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<td><strong>Sacramento Science Fiction/Fantasy Book Club</strong></td>
<td>Midtown Crepreville 1730 L Street, Sacramento <a href="http://www.sacgeeks.com">www.sacgeeks.com</a></td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<td><strong>Silicon Valley Boardgamers</strong></td>
<td>Mountain View Community Center 201 S. Rengstorff Avenue, Mountain View <a href="http://www.davekohr.users.sonic.net/svb">www.davekohr.users.sonic.net/svb</a></td>
<td>Group meets regularly to play mostly German-style strategy board games such as Settlers of Catan; also multi-player Avalon Hill-style, historical war games, and others. 6:30 p.m.</td>
<td>$2</td>
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<td><strong>Sundays and Fridays</strong></td>
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**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.

**Vintage Waltz**
Lake Merritt Dance Center
200 Grand Avenue, Oakland
vintagewaltz.com
Weekly drop-in class in Victorian Waltz. No experience or partner needed.
7 p.m. - 8 p.m.

**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.

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**Wednesdays-Sundays**

**Escape From The Time Travel Lab**
Real Escape Room
1746 Post Street, San Francisco
realescapegame.com/rersf2_ttlab/
You are trapped in a mysterious laboratory where they study time travel and must escape in this immersive game.
$28 (online booking), $33 (at the door)

**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.

**Fridays-Sundays**

**Real Escape Room San Jose**
Real Escape Room
77 N. First Street #740, San Jose
realescapegame.com/sj-mroom/
You are trapped in a mysterious locked room with mysterious codes and must escape in this immersive game.
$28 (online booking), $33 (at the door)
### 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

### Saturdays

**Niles Film Museum Saturday Movies**  
Niles Essanay Silent Film Museum  
37417 Niles Boulevard, Fremont  
www.nilesfilmmuseum.org  
www.nilesfilmmuseum.org/movies.htm  
Weekly showing of selection of silent features and short subjects with live musical accompaniment.  
7:30 p.m.  
$5

### 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.

### Bimonthly

**Gaslight LARP**  
289 8th Street, San Francisco  
gaslight.endogaming.net  
www.facebook.com/groups/gaslightlarp  
www.facebook.com/gaslightlarp  
Full immersion Victorian-era World of Darkness Boffer LARP bimonthly weekends in the Santa Cruz Mountains  
Time and dates available on website, contact organizers for cost

**Electric Swing Set**  
Balancoire  
2565 Mission Street, San Francisco  
electricswingset.com  
Learn to swing dance to an eclectic mix of House and Swing music.  
Held on first and third Thursday of each month.  
6 p.m.  
$10 for entry, $5 for dance lesson

### Monthly

**Dorkbot-SF**  
www.dorkbot.org/dorkbotsf  
www.facebook.com/pages/dorkbot-SF/101954222010  
Dorkbot hosts regular forums for artists, designers, engineers, students, and other people doing strange things with electricity. Dates vary.  
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

**Doctor Who Perv Society**  
Wicked Grounds Cafe  
289 8th Street, San Francisco  
www.wickedgrounds.com/regular-events.html  
Gathering for Doctor Who fans to discuss the show and other topics. Meets first Sunday of every month.  
4 pm  
Free

**The Tech After Hours**  
The Tech Museum of Innovation  
201 South Market Street, San Jose  
www.thetech.org/programs/after-hours  
The monthly evening event where adults 21 and older can enjoy science, technology, entertainment and cocktails together with their friends. Held on the first Thursday of the month.  
7 p.m.  
$10
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

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 Street, 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

QS&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

BAERS Second Friday Dance Party
St. Mark’s Episcopal Church
600 Colorado Avenue, Palo Alto
baers.org
Learn Regency dances in a informal, supportive atmosphere. Dances led by Alan Winston and guest callers.
Held on second Friday of each month.
8 p.m - 10:30 p.m. $10

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.
Free

No-Name Anime
Saratoga Library
13650 Saratoga Avenue
Saratoga
www.nnanime.com
Anime screenings usually take place on the second Saturday of the month.
Free

SF Browncoats
Cafe Murano
1777 Steiner Street, San Francisco
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
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
Monthly book club discusses classic and contemporary selections from suspense, thriller, and horror fiction genres. Meets every third Sunday of each month.
5 p.m. Free

USS Defiance
5026 Don Julio Blvd, Sacramento
1566 Howe Ave, Sacramento
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/uussenorthernlights
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 RSmiith2678@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/
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
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
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

Vintage Invasion (Vintage Waltz Party)
Finnish Brotherhood Hall
1970 Chestnut Street, Berkeley
vintagewaltz.com/Invasion.html
Parties held each 4th Friday of the month with lessons in vintage waltz with DJs.
8 p.m - Midnight. $7
**Wicked Games**
Wicked Grounds Cafe
289 8th Street, San Francisco
[www.wickedgrounds.com/regular-events.html](http://www.wickedgrounds.com/regular-events.html)
Gaming at Wicked Grounds. Meets fourth Saturday of every month.
6 pm to 10 pm  
Free

**USS Augusta Ada**
Round Table Pizza
3567 Geary Blvd, San Francisco
[trek.starshine.org](http://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

**Queered Science Book Club**
Au Coquelet Restaurant
2000 University Avenue, Berkeley
[queeredscience.weebly.com](http://queeredscience.weebly.com)
[www.facebook.com/groups/qsbooks/](http://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 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

For even more events in the Bay Area, check out Bay Area Geek Guide: The San Francisco Bay Area Guide to Geek Events & Nerd Culture: [bayareageekguide.com](http://bayareageekguide.com)