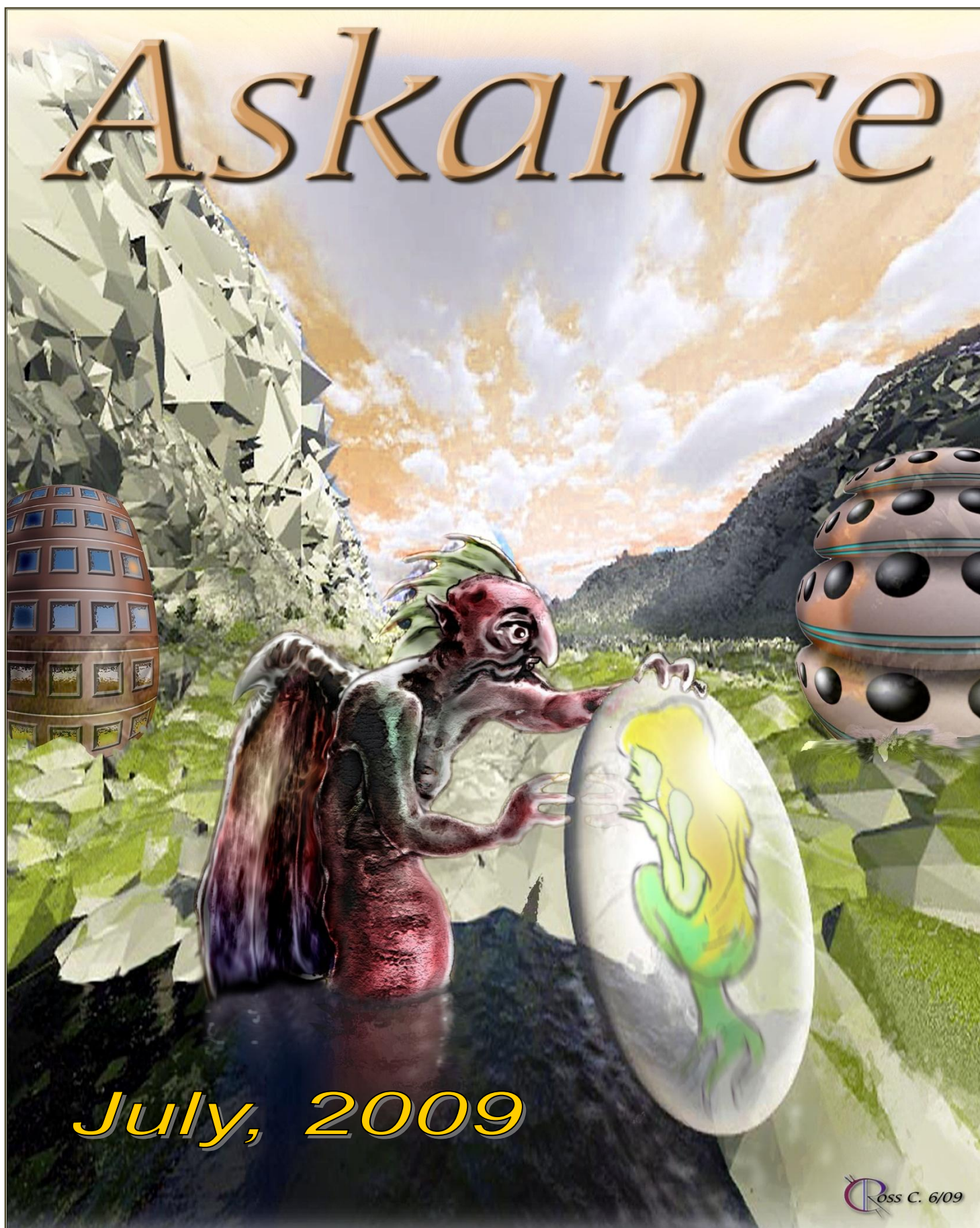


# Askance



*July, 2009*

**ASKANCE**

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# *Bemused Natterings*

**We're having a heat wave, a tropical  
heat wave...**

Yes, indeed, it's that time of the year again here deep in the heart of SouthCentralEastern Texas. As this issue is being assembled – in fact, at this very moment (9:42 AM CDT on Saturday, 4 July 2009) it's 81 degrees outside already – the forecast for the

next week projects daily highs in the low 100's. Checking the Weatherbase website, the average daily high in June is 94° F (34° C for the non-Americans reading this), and College Station has already had two weeks of 100°+ weather already. That kind of nasty hot weather usually doesn't hit until after the Fourth, so we've been suffering through lots of above-average heat. Oh, well. Thank Ghu we had our AC unit serviced last week (finally; needless to say, the AC service people have been putting in plenty of overtime this summer) and had the Freon recharged. Even so, it's only going to get hotter from here.

By the way, the record high for the Fourth of July in College Station, Texas is 101° F (2005) and today's predicted high is 102° F. Can you say "new record high"? We've been having lots of those "new record highs" in the past two weeks. Egad, good thing I'm grilling a steak for dinner. What do you bet all I'll have to do is add seasoning and lay that sucker out on the patio? I am positive it will cook through in a matter of minutes.

Naw... I'd better not do that; I'll have to beat the dogs off with a baseball bat. Cooking on the grill it is.

## **Cooking Wars, Purcell-style**

Texas summers definitely put a crimp on indoor dinner preparations, but we make do. From April through October – essentially "summer" by my standards since daily highs during that seven-month stretch easily, and frequently do, exceed 80° - a lot of our family's meals are prepared outdoors. That is my domain. Don't get me wrong: Valerie can handle the charcoal grill very well, too. Let me tell you, she's a wonderful cook, and her all-day baked beans in the crock pot are to die for. They beat anybody else's beans by a mile. But I love to grill, so it's not uncommon for us to have burgers, brats, and hot dogs a lot in the summer.

Last fall (well, it was in November, but weather-wise "fall/autumn" here lands squarely in December, and that's about it) we bought one of those outdoor fryers for our Thanksgiving turkey, and man, did that taste great! Of course, we can cook whole chickens, roasts, and other yummy treats in that fryer, and we will. The grill is not confined to cooking dead animals; some of our favorite summer foods are vegetable kabobs, corn on the cob, potatoes (take note, Dan Quayle) in various cut up disguises, garlic bread, and

so on. Wrapping fish in foil and grilling them is also delicious. So the garage freezer at present is stocked with loaves of French bread and sourdough, cuts of steak, a nice assortment of beef and pork ribs, a beef roast, boneless pork loin, varieties of fish (salmon, trout, catfish, orange roughy), plus frozen juices and veggies. This summer looks like it's gonna be a busy one.

I think I need a bigger grill.

### R.I.P.: Ken Moore

Fred Grimm posted the news of prominent Southern fan Ken Moore's death at the age of 66 on the evening of June 30<sup>th</sup> to the Southern Fandom Classic listserv, and the ensuing splurge of comments gave me a more complete picture of the kind of person that Khen (as he liked to be called in print) was. Once again, a fan passed on that I had heard of for many years but never met in person. That is definitely too bad because Khen sounded like a real character. With the permission of the fans on the SFC listserv, I offer up a too brief tribute to Khen in this issue. He will definitely be missed.



Ken Moore, Dick Spelman, Bob Tucker (From the collection of Mike Resnick). photo © 2007 [www.fanac.org](http://www.fanac.org).

### Who's in this issue

Along with the usual unusual suspects – Bill Fischer, Chris Garcia, and Lloyd Penney – two new faces make their *Askance* debut:

#### Steven H. Silver

The editor of the Hugo nominated fanzine *Argentus*, Steven unwittingly created the “theme” for this issue by sending in an interesting article about Mabel Normand, one of the great silent film stars. Her story is both intriguing and sad. I enjoyed reading it, and I hope all y'all do too. *Argentus* is available for downloading at [www.efanzines.com](http://www.efanzines.com), natcherly, and I definitely recommend it as one of the more consistent high quality sercon fanzines currently being pubbed.

#### Bill Wright

Bill is yet another fanzine editor, this time of the ANZAPA zine *Interstellar Ramjet Scoop*, who sent along a little tidbit that also ran in his most recent issue of *IRS*. I liked it there, and I like it here, too. If you have never thought a fan writer could combine the names of John Milton, John Bangsund, Justice David Souter, and President Barack Obama all into a one-page article, check this out. Please welcome Bill to these pages, and let's hope it's not the last time, either.



## Ken Moore

(August 19, 1942 – June 30, 2009)

### A collection of tributes and reminiscences

**Editor's notes:** *The following memorials and tributes to the late Ken Moore were spurred by a posting to the Southern Fandom Classic listserv made by Curt Phillips. It was such a fine story that the thought of compiling a collection of tributes and reminiscences of Ken Moore immediately popped into my head. So I asked of Curt (on the listserv) if I could use his posting for this purpose, and asked the members for some contributions. The result is assembled here. Enjoy.*

*Personally, I never met Ken Moore. After reading all of these – and the postings to the Southern Fandom Classic listserv – I definitely*

*wish I had known him. Chances are I have probably seen him at a couple conventions: MidAmeriCon (1976) and IguanaCon (1978) since he was in attendance at those worldcons. As a member of the SFC listserv, I learned that Khen (as many people lovingly referred to him) had been in ill health for a long time, so his death really came as no surprise. Still, the outpouring of affection for Ken was large and heartfelt. The loss of a major fan of Khen's stature hurts, and even a week after the initial posting was made, the shared memories are a mainstay on the SFC listserv. A very nice obituary ran in the Nashville **Tennessean** newspaper on July 4, 2009, which I will not include here. It is viewable online, if anybody is interested. Funeral arrangements for Ken were, I believe, made by Naomi Fisher.*

JOHN PURCELL

**[Picture above of] Ken Moore at some con, sometime. (I would say it was MidWest Con, roughly 1990, but with Ken it could be just about anywhere. -- James W. Anderson III) (Photo by Ned Brooks)**

*Guy H. Lillian III started it all with a poetic tribute to Khen after **Fred Grimm** posted (on the morning of July 1, 2009) the initial announcement of Ken Moore's passing. A selection of postings from the Southern Fandom Classic listserv follows the poem.*

I must be gone; there is a grave  
Where daffodil and lily wave  
And I would please the hapless faun  
Buried beneath the sleepy ground  
With mirthful songs before the dawn.  
His shouting days with mirth were crowned;  
And still I dream he treads the lawn  
Walking ghostly in the dew  
Pierced by our glad singing through.

--Yeats

God bless and God speed our great friend.

-- GUY H. LILLIAN III

Very apropos, Guy. One of my best, early memories of Southern fandom was watching the morning star rise and being thrown a vanilla wafer for breakfast from a balcony by Ken.

--TONI WEISSKOPF

Ken frequently traveled the Midwest Convention Circuit back when I was dabbling in it (like, for example, at Midwestcons). I never had an extended conversation with him, but we'd often be together in chatting groups partying at poolside (which, traditionally, is the social area of Midwestcons; combine that with the convention suite and you had most everyone within reach). I always found him a friendly and interesting fan to have in the conversation. We got along well. Ken is definitely someone I will miss.

-- DAVE LOCKE

Very sad news to wake up to. Ken was a mainstay, and one of the earliest people I met in Southern fandom. As a matter of fact, he gave me my first job volunteering at conventions. When he ran the Art Show at Iguacon, the 1978 worldcon in Phoenix, he noticed me wearing a short low-cut dress to dinner. He asked if I'd wear the same thing to be a runner at the Art Show auction the next day :->

Ken could be difficult, but he was always charming to me, aside from the times he'd insult my choice of pizza toppings ("Black mush and fungus, yum"). At one memorable Chattacon, I even stayed in the



Ken Moore and friend at Midwestcon 47. (From the collection of Mike Resnick) photo from [www.fanac.org](http://www.fanac.org)



Nashville Crash, although I carefully avoided drinking his infamous Swill. One of the T-shirts in the box I lost in my move to Australia that I miss the most is an ancient Kubla Khan Sex shirt, from the convention he founded that was usually named with variations on Latin numbers.

Fandom is a little less fun and eccentric with his passing.

--JANICE GELB

Ken was a really major collector of SF artwork. I know he had more Powers originals than I did, plus a wide range of other artwork...I saw him many times at Midwestcons and other conventions. He was at last year's MWC, but looked horrible. [Ken] had apparently been very sick for a long time, and had a scraggly beard and wild hair. He shaved and looked better after the first day. Ken was always very thin and didn't seem to have any fat reserves, so when he got sick, it really took a big toll.

I know he was involved for years with the Experimental Aircraft Association, or something similar, which had annual air shows in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

I'll really miss him. Another great fan who will be missed by many.

-- ANDY PORTER

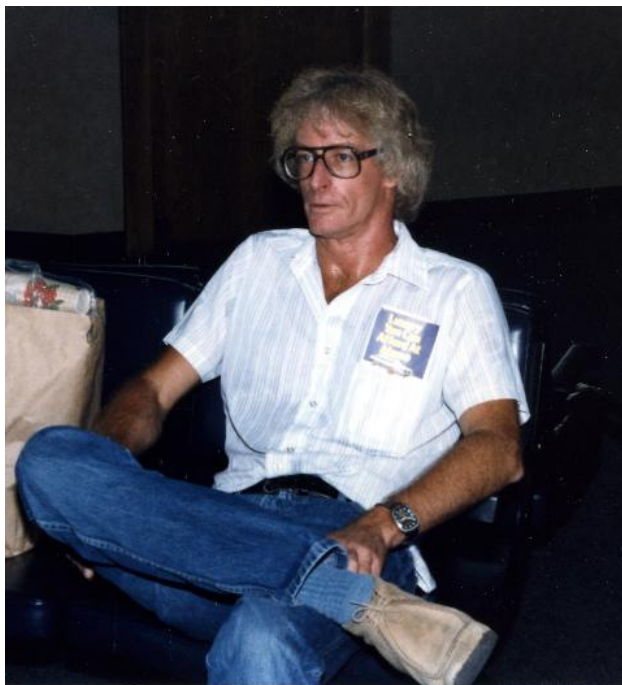


Photo by Andrew I. Porter; all rights reserved

I have one enduring memory of Ken Moore, whom I met only once. That was in 1976 when I was working at The Farm's print shop. Moore came around one day harboring the illusion that we hippies would be only too glad to do a book project for him at \*his\* price, and stomped off pissed when we quoted him a price that (gasp!) included a profit for us.

-- ROBERT LICHTMAN

One of my fondest memories is standing outside a backdoor to the dealers room at Pulpcon one year listening to Howard [DeVore] and Lynn [Hickman] tell stories. I miss them both.

I didn't know Ken much at all. Howard introduced me to him at a Kubla Khan several years ago and I last saw him in the consuite at Hypericon last year.

-- SCOTT CRANFORD

I've known Ken for at least 20-25 years, seeing him at Worldcons, and also at Libertycon, on the few occasions we went.... and strangely, we always got along. I never wore a white t-shirt or drank beer from a can...he never wrote anything down....but still he trusted me when it came to sending me dozens of pieces of art to photograph for my art book on Richard Powers. It was a real surprise to learn that we were the same age – I always thought he was older.

Ken was definitely a 'one of a kind' and as I wrote in the comments of the sfsite....every time we met, or spoke on the phone, he would again repeat my (friendly, but sarcastic) observation many years ago, when seeing him (yet again) "dressed for a Worldcon" in old Bermuda shorts and a raggedy t-shirt "guess you're sartorially challenged" - that just tickled him no end, he just loved that! He'd repeat it over and over, "I'm just sartorially challenged". We amused each other that way.....

And he loved classical music and vintage SF art....with a passion. And for all his seeming lackadaisical ways... he was no-one's fool. For all these reasons, although I hate to be reminded of my own mortality this way....he deserves a tribute.....

-- JANE FRANK

I first encountered Ken at a ChattaCon. ChattaCon is held in the dead of winter and Ken was wearing these beat up cut-off shorts, a very worn t-shirt, and holding a glass with some amber beverage in it. He was a tall skinny man with a shock of grey hair. I met him the same weekend I met Bob Tucker. Ken was part of Southern Fandom and ran a very good convention called Kubla Khan in Nashville.

Ken, or Khen as he was called, had a number of passions in his life including trains, good booze, and art. He could tell you fantasy art and the history of fantasy art with such passion in his voice. He was the tour guide for one of my first art show tours. He could tell you all kinds of things about the paints and the artists. He would have us look at brush strokes and how the artist composed the painting. I thought for years he was an art teacher until I found out that his day job was working for the railroad. I always made time to go hear Khen talk about art.

The symbol for Kubla Khan was this loopy looking crow that looked like Khen. Various people did various interpretations of the character but it usually had a propeller beanie and a "cigarette" hanging from its mouth. The awards for the costume contest were these stuffed crows which were very much coveted by costumers to have in their collection.

I will miss Khen. I haven't seen him in years but his name came up from time to time with various folk and we remembered him fondly.

I am grateful that I knew Khen and I learned so much about fantasy art from him.

--KATHLEEN DAVID O'SHEA

Ken was a stellar presence in Nashville fandom when it brought me fully and permanently into what was to become A Way Of Life. I remember early Southon and Midwestern cons when Nashville fandom, under Ken's direction, would pack as many as 17 fen into a two-room suite (first few to sack out got actual bedspace). The sight of a sleeping Ken was not an esthetic treat, I assure you, even back in the late 1970s. I remember one con where somebody asked, "Who's the ugly chick in bed with So-and-So?" Another fan checked and reported, "That's Ken!" (Like fandom itself, we were all younger and more flexible then, desperate to save cash. I think one of the surest signals of the much-discussed Greying of Fandom is the rarity of this kind of cost-saving nowadays.)

Ken could always be relied upon to mentor new members of fandom, whether about books or about fannish customs and politics.



He was also glad to discuss SF art and film with serious consideration. His personally-owned 16mm prints of *Young Frankenstein* and *2001* were perennial con treats in the dim days before the VCR and DVD, and much appreciated by concons with tiny budgets.

I was told once that he'd "come out of the closet" in his later years. Fen being fen, the reaction seems to have been, "Oh. Okay." He was still Ken, and valued for his presence. I can't believe he won't still be around next ChattaCon, yelling "Hey, Lowrey! How are things in Milwaukee? You ever get to the Fly-In?"

Oh, yeah: the Fly-In. Ken was an fan of Experimental Aviation, and got to as many EAA Fly-Ins as he could afford. He could talk about aircraft of all eras for many happy hours, if he found a fellow enthusiast on the topic.

--

-- MICHAEL J. "ORANGE MIKE" LOWREY

*So here is the story that spurred me to assemble these listserv and blog postings into this tribute. To give a proper lead-in to it, at one point, Andy Porter made the following comment:*

> Ken, like Curt and I, had a major interest in military stuff, concentrating on World War II aviation.

*To which, Curt Phillips wrote this response:*

Sadly, I never really knew of that until after I'd known him for 20 years. At what would turn out to be the very last time I ever saw him, Ken was wearing a t-shirt with a B-17 illo and I struck up a conversation with him about the plane. I was a little surprised at how enthusiastic he was about the Flying Fortress and we had a good enjoyable chat about it. Ken worked in Quality Assurance Engineering for an aerospace company, and was greatly interested in aircraft in general. I never heard him talk much about his work though. I'm pretty sure that SF conventions were a great stress relief from his job for him, and I don't think he liked to think about anything related to work when he was in convention mode. What I'll remember most about Khen (as I usually saw his name spelled in fandom) is the terrible trashcan swill (a pungent beverage containing several different kinds of alcohol cut with grape Kool-Aid and other things) he talked me into trying at my first Kubla Khan (#4). "BLACH!", I spat after the first sip. "This stuff has \*fur\* in it!" "Good", said Khen. "That's just what I needed to know. I'll add another quart of degreaser to smooth it out." I'll also remember his collection of cut-off blue jeans and raggedy t-shirts which comprised his normal convention-going attire. He once told me that he had to wear a suit and tie to work so often that dressing down at cons was his form of rebellion. I also noted, over the years, his keen interest in fannish politics; or maybe it's more accurate to say, his interest in keeping the wheels of Fandom rolling - at least in Southern and Midwestern fandom. Ken didn't really make a loud noise in such matters but seemed to have a knack at working behind the scenes to make things happen. He didn't \*act\* like a typical convention chairman, but Things Got Done at his conventions, and usually with a good measure of style. People had fun at Kubla Khan in those years. They were very memorable conventions.

Someone who was there should tell us the story of the bouncing potatoes, and the one about the stacked up dinner tables.

But I also noted that Ken Moore was a serious reader of science fiction - which many fans aren't - and was quite knowledgeable about the history of the field. He could hold his own in any discussion that ventured to books and writers. One of my favorites poolside chats was at a long ago Midwestcon where I sat with Ken, Howard DeVore, Bill Malardi (sp?) and a couple of others where we discussed early 60's

magazine SF for an hour or two. We all seemed to have a good time with that one. Ken was also very interested in film and collected experimental art films, Ed Emshwiller short films, and others - and I mean, collected them on 16mm films, at least in the old days. I assume he converted to video as most of us did when tapes and dvds opened up the film collecting world. He had distaste for B-westerns that bordered on violence, but other than that he seemed to be a general film fan. He sometimes ran the late night film programming at Kubla Khan himself instead of going to the parties.

And I'll remember that he gave me some excellent advice many years ago when I called him up to discuss hosting a DSC bid for Johnson City, TN. And no, I don't mean that he said "don't". Ken talked with me for over an hour on the phone answering con-running questions and offering advice, and this was when he barely knew my name. Fandom really was his life and he enjoyed it tremendously. And I think that all of us who conventioned with Khen Moore are always going to miss his presence from now on at every convention we attend. But we'll have some good stories to tell about a very memorable fan.

-- CURT PHILLIPS

*There were a number of additional postings to SFC and assorted blogs on the web, quite a few of these being copy-pastes of the obituary that Naomi Fisher wrote for the **Tennessean**. Then there were wrap-up postings about the funeral service and wake for Ken. Here is one that I felt has elements of a proper fannish trip report, and thus would be the proper way to end this conglomeration of memories:*

Naomi really did an excellent job at organizing the funeral. We left the house about noon and stopped at a Kroger's to buy flowers. (Ken was always a strong proponent of sending flowers to funerals, so Anita felt we should take some to his.) Our next stop was to a Burger King two buildings from the funeral home, but while we were in the drive-through line, we got a call on my cell phone from Debbie Hussey that Dan Caldwell's car battery was dead. He was supposed to pick up Charlie Williams and Patsy King so we got them instead. Dan ended up riding with Debbie and Sherry Norris.

When we arrived, the visitation was in full swing. People came from as far away as Indiana and Georgia. The highlight for me was getting to meet one of Ken's cousins, whom Naomi had located. The cousin mentioned that Ken's father had drunk himself to death and was verbally abusive, which explained quite a bit about Ken's personality as well as his great achievement in becoming so well loved by so many people.

There was an open casket, and Ken was dressed in a T-shirt from the Oshkosh experimental aircraft show.

The actual service lasted about two hours and consisted of volunteers going to the podium and telling stories about Ken. Pat and Naomi taped it for the SF Oral History people. The man with whom Ken flew to Oshkosh for many years also spoke. Unfortunately, neither anyone from Avco, Ken's employer, or one of his relatives spoke. I think that Ken's fannish friends were more comfortable with the funeral's informal format.

Then we adjourned to the Gersthaus, a nearby German restaurant which is also convenient to I-24 for people who had long drives home. We raised a glass to Ken, of course.

-- TOM FELLER

# Shh! I Can't Hear the Movie!

## Fans Write about Silent Movies.

**Editorial note:** You can pretty much blame Steven H. Silver for the following section. Earlier this year he asked me if I'd be willing to run one of six articles he's writing about silent movie stars, and I eagerly accepted. I have always had a fondness for silent movies, probably because the motion picture industry was so new and fresh, trying all sorts of experimental film techniques. Well, to make a long story short (too late!), getting Steven's article made me think of asking another fan who has a huge interest in cinematic history for a companion article, Chris Garcia. He agreed to comply, and to round the subject off, I figured I would write about an event from my past that involved a silent movie. Of such stuff are fanzines made.

### Mabel Normand

By Steven H. Silver

This is the second of a series of six articles on silent film comedians. Other articles will be appearing in other fanzines, including *The Drink Tank* and *Chunga*. Eventually, all six will be combined, along with "DVD Extras" in the 2009 issue of *Argentus*.

Even if you have never heard of Mabel Normand as an actress, there is a good chance that you've heard of a film character based on her. When Billy Wilder was writing the film "Sunset Boulevard," about a washed up silent film actress, he named her Norma Desmond. Her first name came from Mabel Normand's last name. Norma Desmond's last name came from someone else who featured in her tragic story.



Mabel Normand was most likely born on November 9, 1892, the youngest of three children. She was born and raised on Staten Island, New York. For a while, she worked at the Butternick garment factory. In 1909, she left the garment industry and began taking on jobs as a model in New York City, posing for Charles Dana Gibson, creator of the Gibson Girl, and James Montgomery Flagg, who would go on to create the "Uncle Sam Wants You" recruitment posters for World War I. When another model, Alice Joyce, found work at the Kalem Film Company, Normand decided to follow suit, and made some films with D.W. Griffith's American Mutoscope and Biograph Film Company.



While working her first season with Griffith, she met one of his directors, Mack Sennett. When Biograph moved to California to take advantage of the weather, Normand stayed behind making films for the Vitagraph Company with John Bunny (1863-1915). Normand wasn't happy working with the older Bunny, and when Biograph returned to film in New York, Mack Sennett lured her back to Biograph.

At Biograph, however, Normand was not given large parts, partly because Griffith felt that her humor was not appropriate for the more serious films he was making. She also distracted the other actresses while they were working. Nevertheless, Normand was effective in dramatic roles and began commuting west with the company during the winter months and making films with Griffith.

In 1912, Mack Sennett left Biograph to form his own company, Keystone Pictures, with the backing of Adam Kessel and Charles Baumann. In making his plans for a new studio which would bring comedy to the masses, Sennett convinced Normand that he would be able to give her larger roles in comedies that were not as sedate as the comedies that were being made at Biograph, since Griffith would no longer be able to dampen Sennett's style.

At some point, Sennett and Normand began a relationship, which was often stormy, but lasted for several years. Although the two never married, they were very close for several years and in the 1970s, a musical, "Mack and Mabel," starring Robert Preston and Bernadette Peters was created, although it was not successful.

In her films for Sennett, she created her own character, also called Mabel, just as Charles Chaplin created the Little Tramp, Harold Lloyd created Glasses, and Buster Keaton created Old Stoneface. Mabel's character was a happy-go-lucky mad-cap girl who was game for anything. In the years leading up to World War I, it was a character that appealed to the American public.

In 1913, Sennett paired her with Roscoe Arbuckle in the film *A Noise from the Deep*. In that film, Normand takes the pie in the face gag first used on film by Ben Turpin in *Mr. Flip* and takes it a step further, becoming the first person to throw a pie in another actor's face on screen. Arbuckle was the recipient of that first thrown pie.



In 1914, Normand was paired with a new arrival on the Keystone lot as Sennett took Charles Chaplin under contract. Chaplin was not happy on the Keystone lot and, in fact, didn't fit in well. Normand was one of the few people on the lot who befriended him and she and Chaplin appeared in several Keystone films together during the year he was with Sennett. Sennett dealt with the situation by having Normand direct Chaplin in *Mabel at the Wheel*, which did not sit well with Chaplin, although as the public began to see Chaplin in films and his popularity grew, Sennett backed off and Chaplin was able to work peacefully with Normand.

In December of 1914, Keystone Pictures released what may be the biggest hit for the Normand-Chaplin team with the film *Tillie's Punctured Romance*. The film resulted in Normand losing Chaplin as a costar when he demanded a huge increase in his pay based on its popularity. Sennett let him go and he signed

with Essanay for a much larger price. As a result, Sennett re-paired Normand with Roscoe Arbuckle for a series of films about Fatty and Mabel.

In the new series of films, Arbuckle and Normand were on a more equal footing than previously and the series enjoyed success. However, in 1915, Normand suffered a head injury. According to Sennett, Normand was injured by a thrown shoe. Normand herself claims that Arbuckle injured her by sitting on her head. Keystone actresses Adela Rogers St. Johns and Minta Durfee (Arbuckle's wife) both claim the injury occurred after Normand walked in on Sennett having a tryst with Mae Busch. Durfee says the Mae threw a lamp than hit Normand, while St. Johns claims that a distraught Normand broke off her engagement to Sennett and tried to commit suicide



Mabel Normand and Fatty Arbuckle, from the film *Mable and Fatty's Married Life* ( 1915).

1915 was a bad year for Normand. Although she seemed to recover from the head injury, later in the year while filming in an airplane with Chester Conklin, Conklin accidentally released the throttle, causing the plane to crash in a fireball. Both he and Normand was laid up for several days, but neither seriously injured.

Normand left Keystone and formed the short-lived Mabel Normand Feature Film Company. One of its first projects was *Mickey*, which was the first feature length comedy to allot top billing to a single actor, in this case Normand. For unclear reasons, however, *Mickey* was shelved until December 1917, when it was accidentally sent out in a mislabeled film can. The film turned out to be a sensation and copies were rushed out as quickly as the film could be duplicated. However, Normand and her company didn't reap the benefits. In fact, by the time *Mickey* was released, she was under contract to Samuel Goldwyn.

More importantly, her busy pace was wearing Normand down, as was the fact that she was having problems weaning herself from the painkillers she began taking as a result of the 1915 concussion and plane crash. Furthermore, while she has previously been known for her diligence on and off the set, her behavior was becoming more erratic and she began attending parties into the early hours and showing up late for work. Her attitude began showing up in her films and her public was turned off.

On February 1, 1922, Normand visited with a good friend, William Desmond Taylor, with whom she may have been having an affair. She left his house and blew him a kiss from her car. The next day, Normand received a visit from the police. Taylor had been found lying in his house, shot from behind with a .38 caliber gun, a photo of Normand nearby.

Although the police never tied Normand to the murder, or even accused her, she was pilloried in the press and by the public. Her popularity suffered and as the press piled on innuendo about a possible sexual relationship between Normand and Taylor, her films were banned in some cities. Normand fled to Europe to escape the press and Mack Sennett held back the release of her film *Suzanna* until the bad publicity died down. When *Suzanna* was released in 1923, it was popular and seemed to presage a renewal for Normand, but it wasn't to last.

On January 1, 1924, Normand visited Edna Purviance and her current paramour, Courtland S. Dines. Dines had some words with Normand's driver. Normand's driver was an ex-convict and he shot Dines with a gun that belonged to Normand. Associated with another murder, there were further calls for her

films being banned, but Normand went on a public relations tour. Even when her films weren't banned, her reputation was damaging the bottom line and was expensive for the studios to overcome.

Later in 1924, Normand's name was again tabloid fodder when Georgia Church named her in divorce proceedings against her husband. Apparently, Norman Church and Mabel Normand had been in a hospital at the same time and Church had told his wife that they had an affair. After Normand's name was dragged through the newspaper columns, Church recanted, explaining he had made up the accusation. The accusations and scandal had taken their toll, and Normand's career was essentially over, although she tried to make a comeback in 1926 and 1927.

In 1926, Lew Cody, who costarred with Normand in *Mickey* surprised her by proposing and the two were quickly married. Their marriage was stormy, but it lasted until Normand's death in 1930. Normand spent much of 1927 suffering from recurrent pneumonia, and in 1928, she was diagnosed with tuberculosis. In 1929, she was put into a tuberculosis sanitarium in Monrovia, California, where she died of the disease on February 23, 1930. Between 1910 and 1927, Normand appeared in 226 films.

-- STEVEN H. SILVER



## AVANT GARDE:

### A SILENT FILM AND A GUY WHO LOVES IT LOUD

by Chris Garcia

I like experimental films. I've bought and rented and Netflixed dozens of discs containing some of the most artistic and strange films of the last century and a bit. It's odd what passes for experimental from the olden days, such as a film that basically documents the Exposition that grew around the not-yet-completed Eiffel Tower followed by a trip up one of its elevators focusing on the passing beams and cables rather than the view from higher up. That's a good piece of surviving footage.

Then there are the two best piece of Avant-Garde filmmaking you'll ever find. Both of them from 1928, both of them from filmmakers who would be influential over a generation of artists. The first of them I consider to be the most intense piece of silent film adaptation, digging more out of the source material than any other filmmaker of the time. It's J. S. Watson and Melville Webber's *The Fall of the House of Usher* is an amazing achievement in Avant Garde filmmaking.



What happens in it isn't really that important. It's the story of a cursed family. It's a story that really isn't the strongest of Poe's work when you look at it as a story, but when you consider it as a piece of atmosphere, you can make an argument that it's one of Poe's most interesting. The wonderful film starts with a shot of the House, which is really the main pusher of the film. It's all atmosphere, and honestly, you probably couldn't follow the film without having already read the story, but it really doesn't matter, because there's an amazing sense of atmosphere to the film. You start to



feel the room you're in getting darker, more singular, denser. It's almost vegetal, the feeling of enclosure, as if the house is simply waiting to burst from roots pushing against the walls.

It's not the story or even the camerawork that's amazing, it's the visualization. If you've watched an Avant Garde film from the last 70 years, you've seen the influence of *The Fall of the House of Usher*. Sets that are not actual representations of what they are supposed to be, a tennant borrowed from the German Expressionist camp but used here with a greater subtlety. Shots of water, moving stairs, strange make-up. There are shadow projections of hammers, hands, movement, often repeated and shown in various states of intensity. There are over-laid images, split screens, odd movements, the actual text of the story put in front of the camera with a kaleidoscope lens. The repetition of images is powerful, and it led to my buddy Steve's saying: once is funny, twice is lame, three times is experimental.

After viewing the film, you're left with a sense of disquiet. The same as the story, actually, but this is different. You've been exposed to a darker world, a heavier world, a world that doesn't let things happen once but forces a certain sense of right that makes you have to think about the world you're heading back to. In 13 minutes, everything is transformed.

It's the fact that there are no words, no attempt at making this a talking piece, a piece with many title cards. It is simply an announcement of mood, of visual textures. You can see David Lynch, The Brothers Quay, David Croenberg, Oliver Stone, all rising out of the mists that are *The Fall of the House of Usher*. Without title cards, you're forced out of the narrative, forced to either attach it to something you've already experienced or assumed.

The other film is even better in that it's actually a piece that could be made today and have the same exact meaning. *The Life and Death of 9413: A Hollywood Extra*. It's an amazing little film that tells a story in 13 minutes that still takes filmmakers a full two hours to come up with today. It's the story of Mr. Jones, a man who comes to Hollywood to become a star. He arrives and meets Mr. Almighty, the head of the studio. This is a moment out of every film made about a star-in-the-making: from *All About Eve* to *The Muppet Movie*. Here, Mr. Almighty writes 9413 on his forehead, taking away all his humanity, making him an Extra, a nothing, not even less than human, but unhuman. It's an amazing piece.

The film goes through showing what 9413's life is like, how he interacts with other numbers, one of whom, #15, rises up out of the pool and ends up a star. That leads to more sorrow in the life of 9413, he eventually gets no more calls, can't pay his bills and eventually, as is told to us through a pair of scissors, he dies, unknown. He arrives in Heaven, has his number removed from his forehead. It's impressive.



The weird thing is the visualizations. The film was made on 97 or so dollars. Much of it was cigar box miniatures that were filmed up-close, giving the illusion of towering figures, all of them Expressionist and dark, shadows and light. There were full-scale acting, all of which was huge, because it was silent film time, but it was also the kind of acting that you'll find today in the work of Johnny Depp (specifically in *Charlie & The Chocolate Factory*) and those that work with folks like Tim Burton or P.T. Anderson. It's expression in the purest form. There is no question as to what emotion they are embodying. It's fear or

sadness or joy, plain, uncut. Watching the film, you realize that everything that was chosen was chosen to be a simple cog. There's little subtlety, but there's an amazing level of truth. It's a simple task to watch *The Life and Death of 9413: A Hollywood Extra*, because every step arrives perfectly in synch and you can grasp it.

There's a reason why two of the greatest experimental films of all-time came in the Silent Era. The entire craft of filmmaking was still being developed, the entire world of film was about 30 years old, but the concept of the Studio was already well-established, which made the subject of the film possible, and the film audience was still being punched into shape, so you could show films like these in conjunction with regular films. It wasn't until the 1930s and talkies that Art Films were less accepted, partly because those that made films like these did so with no budget for sound. It's also odd that these were also not 'Sounded' as many of the silent films made between 1925 and 1928 were. These didn't need it. These were Silent films that were powerful and visual enough that they could survive in their original state. Some classic artistic films, such as Theodor Dreyer's

*The Passion of Joan of Arc* for most of the last 50 years, were lost as silent and only the 'Sounded' version made it.

The surviving Avant Garde films of the 1920s are amazing, and you can even see how they influenced the first generation of Film School graduates. The odd thing is that these films seldom influenced the Art community. They were taking their influence from the works of Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin, either not knowing or not caring that there were art films being made by those outside the community. Sometimes, it is the commercial that sets the expressive off.

-- CHRIS GARCIA



**Or, how John Purcell (along with Steve Glennon and Ted Meuhlaupt) got kicked out of a showing of *Intolerance* (1916).**

This is no lie.

Shortly after Steve Glennon (my best bud in high school) and I were reunited as students at the University of Minnesota in the fall of 1974 – I had just transferred there after two years up at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota – Steve introduced me to a college friend of his, Ted Meuhlaupt, with the comment “He’s not a fan, but he reads science fiction and has a great sense of humor.” *Sounds like fannish material to me*, I thought, and the three of us began hanging about together. (Aside: In January, 1975 I met Bill Fischer, the creator of “Figby”, in my Russian class. I introduced Steve to Bill, who met Ted once, but never were the four of us together at the same time for very long. That might have been dangerous.)



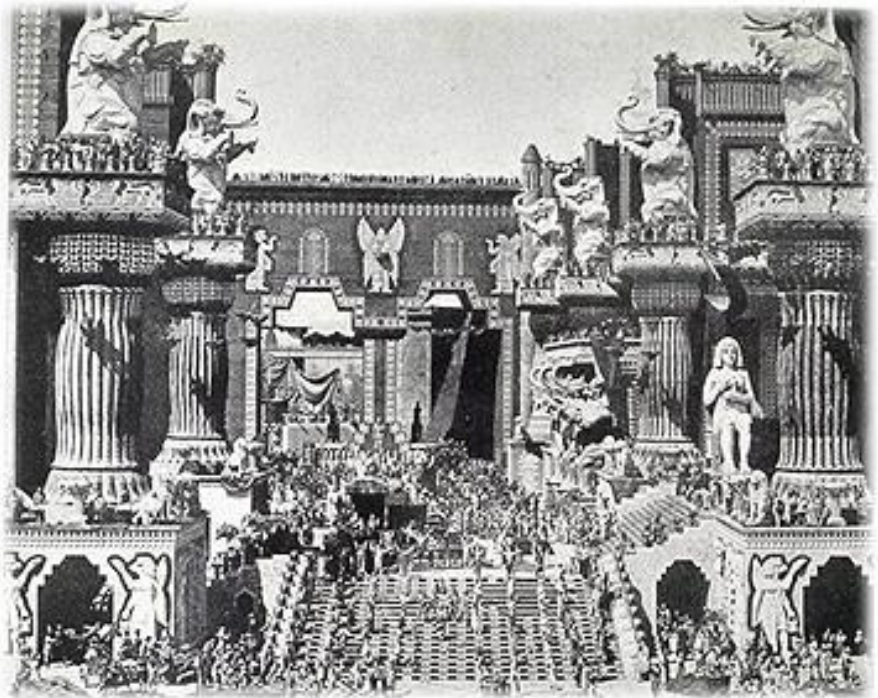
We had fun together, Steve, Ted and I. Like Steve, Ted was an engineering major (they met in a class) and the three of us usually ate lunch together in one of Coffman Union's cafeterias. It was late in fall quarter of 1975 – which meant Steve and I had attended four Minicons by then – when the school paper, the *Minnesota Daily*, ran a promo for a showing of the D.W. Griffith silent masterpiece, *Intolerance*, at Northrop Auditorium (pictured in the header to this article). Just to put this in perspective, this was probably one of the few times that the *Daily* – which U of M students affectionately called the *Doily* – published the correct information. This was the same paper which earlier that school year had publicized a West Bank Movie Series showing of the “classic 1953 Sci-Fi movie classic *The Day the Earth Stood Still*... Thrill again to the immortal words ‘klaha boroho nihi’.” When I read and showed that to Jim Young in the campus *Technolog* office (the IT student publication), all Jim could do was cradle his head in his hands and weep.

But back to my story.

Released in 1916, *Intolerance* is considered one of the great masterpieces of the Silent Era. According to Wikipedia, *Intolerance* was made “in response to critics against Griffith's previous film, *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), for its overt racist content, characterizing racism as people's ‘intolerance’ of other people's views.”

While all that was well and good, the three of us decided it would be grand fun to go and watch the movie. After all, it *\*was\** a classic and ground-breaking film, so since we were all movie junkies we decided to take it in. This meant getting down to campus at night and paying five bucks to get in, but that wasn't a big deal. One of the big attractions of this showing was that the original organ score was to be played LIVE, which is incredible since the movie is three hours long! We thought that was definitely cool, so we sat quietly in our seats enjoying the organ music swell as the movie began.

That didn't last long. The story-line was easy to follow and we all thought the cinematography was great, so twenty minutes into the movie, Steve, Ted and I started making *sotto voce* comments on the marvelous cinematography, plot, and aforementioned organ music. Little comments, you understand, about the authenticity of the costuming, the emotive silent acting, and of course about the wonderful organ music. I opined that it felt like we had stepped into Mr. Peabody's Way-Back Machine™ and transported to a darkened Indiana theater in 1916. It was unfortunately inevitable that our voices got



louder as we began making comments like the following exchange during the Babylonian period of the film:

Me: "That's a mighty impressive set. Wonder how long it took them to build it?"

Ted: "I could make that in a couple hours out of Legos™ and Lincoln Logs™."

Me: "That would take a lot of pieces."

Steve: "If you look closely you can tell the full-sized set was molded out of Shrinky-Dink™ dough then put in an oven for a week."

Ted: "So where'd they get the thousands of really short extras? Shrink them, too?"

Me: "Naw – they hired micro-mini extras to cut costs."

Steve: "Absolutely. They got paid well under minimum wage."

Like that. Every so often people around us – it really wasn't that crowded since Northrop Auditorium, a marvelous old massive structure could seat approximately 3000 people – would try to shush us with an accompanying disapproving look. Did that stop us? Not a chance...



Lillian Gish in *Intolerance*.

If anything, we got even worse. Now, this was a couple years before Steve and I teamed up with Lee Pelton to run Minicon film programs for three years (which I have written about in an earlier zine, *In a Prior Lifetime*) and long before Joel Hodgson began *Mystery Science Theater 3000* in 1988, so the three of us were breaking new ground, so to speak. We were having a blast. Some of the serious movie-goers were giggling along with us, which only encouraged us. Our volume alternated between *pianissimo* and *mezzo-forte*, but mostly in a slightly subdued "normal" speaking tone. I would not have been surprised if the organist way up front in the orchestra pit could hear us. So despite the best efforts of people trying to make us stop or at least quiet down, we continued our intolerable heckling of *Intolerance*.

Nearly two hours into the movie, during one particular snide run of commentary about the French Renaissance section, a lady five rows in front of us turned around and said quite loudly, "Will you clods PLEASE shut up? We can't hear the movie!"

Steve, Ted and I looked at each other. Blinking ingenuously, I asked, "What do you mean, 'we can't hear the movie'? It's a silent movie. You're not supposed to hear it!" If looks couldn't kill, we were at least gravely wounded.

We continued our merciless onslaught of *Intolerance*. By this time our commentary had degenerated into a competition to see who could out-pun the others, making esoteric cultural references, and generally making the silliest remarks. Come to think of it, the organ music seemed to grow louder as the movie

went along. That was probably, I am sure, just to keep up with the plot's complications and conflicts. Still, many more attempts were made by movie patrons to stop us, but none succeeded until **It Happened**.

As the movie rushed headlong to its climax, Griffith mixed in a montage that tied together the four threads that portrayed the 2500-year history of mankind's intolerance towards other humans: the Babylonian period (~539 BC), the Judean era (~27 AD), the French Renaissance (1572), and Modern America (1914). This montage – very effectively done, I might add – consisted of rapid-fire images of a Babylonian army at full charge, Roman centurions confronting a large vocal Jewish crowd, French corsairs on horseback, steam trains barreling down the tracks, and rioting workers. These images rapidly bounced back and forth for about ten minutes or so, which included a sequence that went something like this: steam train – Babylonian army – rioting workers – steam train – Roman centurions – rioting workers – steam train – Frenchmen galloping on horses – rioting workers – steam train – centurions – French crowds fleeing – steam train – Babylonian army *and* rioting workers... At which point Steve, Ted and I pointed at the screen and loudly blurted, "*Can they catch that train?!?*" We didn't plan that explosive group comment. Honest, it just happened that way.

Well, apparently that was the proverbial last straw. Less than a minute after that outburst, two uniformed ushers appeared at our row with an official looking gent in a suit and tie who quietly but firmly requested us to leave the theater and never return. Ever. Not wishing to create a scene – yeah, right; we figured we had done enough damage already – the three of us meekly left to a smattering of applause from the movie audience.

Obviously, we missed the end of *Intolerance*, but that was fine by us. It had been grand fun, and we marveled over what we had accomplished: the three of us – Steve Glennon, Ted Meuhlhaupt, and John Purcell – had been 86'd from Northrop Auditorium. We were University of Minnesota students, so this meant that if one of our classes had a lecture or field trip to that building, or even if we had need of a rest room at any time of the day, none of us could enter Northrop. Indeed a singular honor.

We then spent the next hour or so exploring the tunnels – both public and maintenance – that inter-connected the buildings on the East Bank campus. At least we didn't get caught doing that!

-- JOHN PURCELL

Catherine de Medici views victims of the massacre (the French Story) from *Intolerance* (1916). Either that, or it's the audience at Northrop Auditorium during our harangue of the movie.







## Poetic justice

By Bill Wright

John Milton was a 17<sup>th</sup> century English poet, prose polemicist and civil servant in Cromwell's Commonwealth of England. He is best known for his epic poem *Paradise Lost*, and for his treatise *Areopagitica* condemning censorship. This excerpt is from his poem *Lycidas*...

*Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,  
And daffodillies fill their cups with tears,  
To strew the laureate to hearse when Lycid lies.*  
- [John Milton](#), *Lycidas* (l. 149)

John Bangsund, illustrious founder-member of Anzapa whose fanzines *Philosophical Gas* and *Scythrop* enlivened mailings in the 1970s and who edited the first incarnation of the Australian critical journal *Australian Science Fiction Review* (1966-68), is an admirer of Milton for his flowery allusion – so

much so that he was not averse from appropriating Milton's lines when the occasion warranted. He did that in 1973 when he composed the following allusion to Poetic Justice in the criminal jurisdiction...

*Let daffodillies fill their cups with tears  
For thou art in the jug for fifteen years.*

Thirty-six years later the art of jurisprudence is again in the public mind with high minded principles being bandied about by protagonists on either side of the debate on Judge Sonia Sotomayer's fitness for promotion to the United States Supreme Court, she having been nominated by President Obama after the recent retirement of Justice David Souter.

Poetry is not something that one looks for on the senior bench. "*The contemporary Supreme Court is woefully lacking in eloquence,*" quoth one commentator, "*Justice Souter, despite being an intelligent jurist with a wry sense of humour, was as eloquence-challenged as the others, there being few memorable lines in his opinions.*"

This is borne out by the fact that even Justice Souter's resignation letter was punctilious and reserved. His predecessor in leaving the Court, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor in 2005, said in her resignation letter that she left "*with enormous respect for the integrity of the court and its role under our constitutional structure.*" That, at least, gave a nod to the significance of the occasion.



Justice Souter, on the other hand, invoked nothing that grand. Instead, he told Mr. Obama that was retiring “under the provision of 28 U.S.C. Section 371(b)(1), having attained the age and met the service requirements of subsection (c) of that section.” Not much poetry there!

President Barack Obama, in his brief appearance on the World Stage to date, has employed flights of oratory comparable to those of the iconic President Abraham Lincoln at his best. Perhaps that is why pundits are looking for the same qualities in his first nominee to the Supreme Court. Should Judge Sonia Sotomeyer survive the evaluation process and make it on to senior bench, only time will tell if she makes her mark in language that will ring down the ages for its eloquence and power to evoke mankind’s highest aspirations.

It’s enough to make one pause to reflect on the ironic twists and turns of history; in that, but for the global financial crisis, Barack Obama’s path to the White House might have been less direct than it has been. What a Chief Justice he would have made! Looking ahead to the no doubt brilliant conclusion of President Obama’s second term in office, what could be more fitting than he should step across, ‘in rank’ so to speak, from the highest political office to the highest judicial one? Seldom has any aspirant to either office had a more clearly delineated career path.

**Bill Wright**

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## BOOK REVIEWS IN A BOX

So I have been reading some more non-fiction books again, in particular, *A History of Pirates*, by Nigel Cawthorne, and from the science fiction side of my reading shelf, *City* by Clifford D. Simak. They make for interesting reading. The Cawthorne book is told in a very breezy style, giving a quick overview of the peak pirating period from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> centuries. It has detail enough to make a reader interested in ferreting out more information, such as another book I read a couple years ago, *The Pirate Hunter* by Richard Zacks, which is “the true story of Captain Kidd.” Fascinating book, very enjoyable.

As for *City*, all I can say is that it deserves its place in the pantheon of great science fiction books. I had the pleasure of knowing Cliff from my days in Minn-stf and attending Minicons way back when. He was a gentleman and a wonderful writer. *City* is written with such humanness, at times verging on prose poetry. Now it’s making me look at our dogs in a different light.

## *Fanzine reviews!*

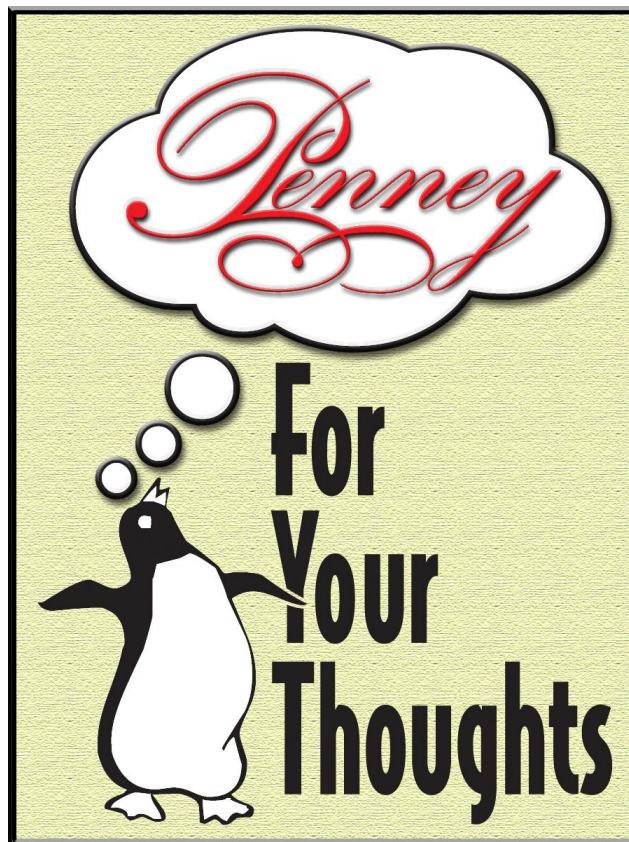
by **Lloyd Penney**

I can't help but feel I'm running out of titles to review. I don't do different issues of the same title; might have to do that in the future. In the meantime, a variety of fanzine titles to comment on.

John Nielsen Hall sent me a hard copy of issue 6 of *Motorway Dreamer*. There's hard copies, and then there's hard copies. Issue 6 had clear plastic sheets as overcovers to protect the cover and backcover, and the whole thing was Cerloxed. There's colour photographs and highlights here and there, and it's pleasing to the eye. High quality paper, too. You're probably expecting me to say the contents were crap, but no, they suit the quality repro job done. Sandra Bond provides a trip down Christmas memory lane with some good and bad experiences during a British fandom party circuit, and then comes probably the part I like the best, an article by Pat Mailer on a trip to China, with those aforementioned colour photographs. A true adventure, and a view into a corner of the world I'll never see. Then comes the poetry corner, an acquired taste for some. And then, there's a substantial local, called by some young'uns as the paper bulletin board. I got WAHFed, but I forgive him, and a flyer for Corflu Cobalt rounds it out. John, even if you'd produced this issue with stolen photocopying from work and stapled in the corner, it would still be an enjoyable issue...a little adventure, a little something to learn, and a little conversation. It all works for me.

Got another British zine...or is it an American zine? The answer is...yes. Nic Farey is producing his more modern series of *This Here...*, and it's both British and American, and it's a great combination. It's been interesting to read how a Brit lives in the cultural madhouse of America, and Nic's doing fine, thenkyaverramush. *This Here...* is a very personal zine, about Nic's brushes with the law, finding what life in the US is like, and likes and dislikes in culture and music. Nic likes NASCAR and wrestling. It's fun to read. Issue 12 contains further commentary about Corflu Silver, visiting the Katzes in Las Vegas, and his past studies at the London School of Economics. Life is starting to change once again as Nic and wife Bobbie move to Las Vegas. To go with some solid articles on life comes a large local. One is always left wondering what will happen to Nic next issue...stay tuned to find out.

Garth Spencer recently left the editorship of *BCSFazine*, the clubzine of the British Columbia Science Fiction Association in Vancouver, and that onerous role has been picked up by Felicity Walker. The club



is not funded by dues, and while the e-mail version of the zine is available for free, the paperzine is Can\$3, or US\$2. I do have a paper copy here... While Garth asked the membership what they wanted in *BCSFAzine*, Felicity seems to know, and puts as much information about upcoming events, book discussions, con reports gatherings and other clubs in it as she can, plus a fairly comprehensive calendar. If nothing else, a clubzine should be useful to the club's members, and this is. Felicity has her sources, and I think most of them were built up by Garth in his lengthy reign as editor. There's a local, plus some of Garth's writings. I'd say ask for it, and you'll get some information about how Vancouver fandom works.

*Motorway Dreamer* - John Nielsen Hall - [rrr5646@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rrr5646@yahoo.co.uk)

Coachman's Cottage, Marridge Hill  
Ramsbury, Wilts SN8 2HG U.K.

*This Here...* -- Nic Farey - [thishere@mac.com](mailto:thishere@mac.com)

P.O. Box 178, Saint Leonard, MD 20685 (Nic and Bobbi have now moved to Las Vegas, Nevada; so I need their new and improved snail mail address to include here)

*BCSFAzine* - Felicity Walker - [felicity4711@gmail.com](mailto:felicity4711@gmail.com)

209 – 3851 Francis Road, BC  
CANADA V7C 1J6

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**OTHER FANZINES RECEIVED IN THE MAIL OR OTHERWISE:**

*Alexiad* #45  
*Ansible* #263-264  
*BCSFAzine* #433  
*Challenger* #30  
*Drink Tank* #214-217  
*el* #44  
*Einblatt!* (June and July, 2009)  
*Feline Mewsings* #36  
*Home Kookin'* #4  
*Horrorshow Archive* (on <http://efanzines.com>)  
*Idle Minds* #3-4  
*Inca* #4  
*Interstellar Ramjet Scoop* (June, 2009)  
*MT Void* #1546-1552  
*Mumblings from Munchkinland* #12, 20  
*Nashville SF Club Newsletter* (June, 2009)  
*Orphan Scrivener* #57  
*Planetary Stories/Pulp Spirit*  
*Relapse* #14  
*Reluctant Famulus* #70  
*Royal Swiss Navy Gazette* #17-18  
*Science Fiction in San Francisco* #86-89  
*Southern Fandom Confederation Update* #6-7  
*Siddhartha* #3.4  
*Virtual Tucker Hotel* #24  
*Visions of Paradise* #141-142



# FIGBY

By Bill Fischer

You know, Figby, there is an eerie "dè ja vu" to all this business of Paper Plate U.F.O.s, Reanimated, icky Zombies..



1.

... Apparent alien "invasions", midnight runs through Cemeteries...



2.



... low-budget special effects...



3.



... same cheesy Props...



4.





## FROM THE HINTERLANDS

*So does it really matter if I know who these young ladies are? No, it doesn't. I image googled the word "hinterlands" like I usually do, and looked for something that epitomized a nice summer's day activity. Horse-back riding came to mind, so in my perusal of many pictures on the Web, I found this one. It comes from the site [www.equathon.com](http://www.equathon.com), which is an Australian Bush and Beach Ride, located at the Noosa North Shore Equestrian centre and is led by Triple Olympian, Alex Watson. If I really do stand for DUFF next year and win, this is one place I would enjoy visiting.*

*Enough of this pandering for nonexistent votes. Onward to the locs!*



May 15, 2009

From: "Eric Mayer" [maywrite2@epix.net](mailto:maywrite2@epix.net)

I enjoyed *Askance 14* and because I appreciate your editorship I am going to refrain from mentioning anything about...well...let's just say something involving a horsehide-covered sphere which occurred last night on the east coast. *{You are very kind.}*

Fascinating article by Chris Garcia. I have never heard of *sous vide* cookery. It sounds difficult. Hasn't Chris ever heard of "cans" (or "tins" if you are of the British persuasion)? It's amazing the things they stick in cans these days -- everything from soup to beans. The most difficult part is avoiding cutting your fingers with the ring-pull lids. And you can live on a diet of 100% delicious canned food. I am living proof!

Once upon a time I tried to cook. I had cook books with recipes that called for 15 different spices. When I ate the results I began asking myself whether all those ingredients were necessary. Could I really taste that 1/4 tsp of coriander, let alone the pinch of cumin? When I started leaving spices out, I realized I

couldn't tell. Maybe my taste buds are simpletons. So I started boiling recipes down. Then I became a vegetarian and made things even simpler. All you really need for chili is a can of beans, a can of tomatoes, a can of chopped peppers and chili powder. Mmmmm! Mmmmm! More or less edible if you don't have a strong gag reflex.. The heck with *sous vide*. I empty some cans into a pan and turn on the stove. It's the dump and heat method.

As an extra bonus, if you cook with canned goods you can get stfnal and pretend you are living off your stock in your backyard fallout shelter after a nuclear war. Everything tastes better when you've survived the end of civilization as we know it. As the old joke goes:

Knock knock.

Who's there?

Armageddon.

Armageddon who?

Armageddon hungry for some of that excellent canned chow in there.

But I wouldn't advise you to open the door. Even if you are tempted after 75 days of canned beans.

*{Around here, canned beans are considered a dietary staple. Heck, sometimes STAPLES find their way into our food, but I'm not going to say anything further.}*

Chris' piece made me hungry and Taral's made me tired. Heck, he writes articles more frequently than I write locs. Literally, judging from his list from the last two years.

I rarely write fanzine articles these days. Neither my style nor preferred subject matter is very suitable, but reading this caused me to remember the days when I did. That was back in the period from 1972 to 1984 mostly. Just recently I was reminded of some contributions to zines I had totally forgotten I had stuff in.

At one point, long ago, I tried to go through my fanzine collection and list my articles, which I hadn't kept track of. Now I've lost the list. There were well over a hundred but nowhere near 200. I think. I do know that Brian Brown (mainly *Sticky Quarters*) and Eric Bentcliffe (*Triode*) published more of my articles than any other editors.

Over the years I've found myself becoming increasingly prone to just say what I want to and stop. I suspect many of the 300 word blogs I write today would've been embroidered into 2,000 word fanzine articles thirty years ago. *{Sounds like me, too. The worst part of fan-writing for me nowadays is that I tend to ramble on too much in my first drafts, so then I go back and edit/revise/rewrite as needed to tighten things up.}*

As for Taral, maybe Hugo voters will buck tradition and award a fanwriter Hugo to someone for actually writing for lots of fanzines, then Taral could win both fanwriter and fanartist, and good for him.

I should note that Figby was particularly amusing this time. And I also noted your attendance at the virtual Corflu. I may yet "show up" at one of those. I am only on dial-up and can't see video, but I suppose I could use the chat, although chat rooms terrify me.

Keep truckin' towards that PhD!

Best,

ERIC

*{My impression is that Taral Wayne stands a very good chance at getting a silver rocket. Good luck to him, says I, and also to all the other nominees. And you could always chat on-line at the Virtual Con Suite when something is going on. It's a lot of fun.}*

*Joe Major, one of the editors of Alexiad, had some assorted comments to make about last issue, some of which reference other sections of his loc.*



1409 Christy Avenue  
Louisville, KY 40204-2040  
[jtmajor@iglou.com](mailto:jtmajor@iglou.com)

May 19, 2009

Bemused Natterings: Count yourself fortunate. At least you *had* an Aggiecon 40. ConGlomeration here in Louisville was canceled outright. They said it was because the hotel had gone bankrupt, and I suppose that was at least involved, but a lot of people here have become more disappointed with each succeeding ConGlom. Which leaves WonderFest, which is not too bad as long as you accept that it's a dealers' room with a con attached.

Death Spiral of a Con?: See above.

Oh I remember Pat Virzi. She did *Pirate Jenny* after a difference of opinion with the club of which she was the clubzine editor. Then she published a different sort of issue, and dropped out of zinedom. And now the new issue is a nineteen-year-old college junior. How time flies.

Cons can die after transferring to a new generation. I ponder the fate of ConCave with some trepidation. Gary and Corliss Robe, the current runners, are retiring. (I dated Corliss a time or two when we were at Western Kentucky University; how time flies. See above.) And it took us so long to find the con again.

Tales from the Convention #6: Lloyd should have consulted Khen Moore before trying to get by with so little bheer. And speaking of Khen, having heard he was at death's door, and not sure which side at that, I was more than a little impressed to see him at ConCave (See above).

Clip Show: Taral seems determined to double-bank, being both Best Fan Artist and Best Fan Writer. Thanks for the kind words, and I'd better double check to make sure I haven't forgotten the "Sleepers" review. I'm getting as washed out as Khen Moore (See above).

Flooding Out the Mailbox: Yes, I got those issues of *Luna* too. Makes you long for the old days when scientifiction fans wrote about real science. Maybe Taral can write an article for them, illustrated with his own art (See above).



Fanzine Reviews: I agree with Lloyd, shock horror. But then, I've been going with *Challenger* since way back when. Guy and I are encouraging all the faneds to have lunch together, probably on Saturday at Anticipation. And Taral will be there, we hope (See above).

From the Hinterlands: Eric Mayer: Now there's someone from the hinterlands. How long did you say you were snowed in, Eric, seventy days?

You can get stamps with the picture of the Earth from the moon, there are companies which will produce stamps to order. The

Smoking Gun got stamps with Ted Kaczynski's graduation picture on them, for example. And the Rosenbergs.

Me: But your loc isn't in as of today, though Lloyd's is.

You all come to the Faneds Lunch at Anticipation (See above). Loccers are invited, too.

Off the Shelf: Ah yes, *Carson of Venus*, Burroughs's anti-Nazi story, as opposed to *Under the Red Flag* (1919), his anti-Bolshevik story. Don't bother looking for that title, it didn't sell, so he rewrote it, turning the Bolshies into moon men, and wrote a prequel and a sequel, thus *The Moon Maid*, *The Moon Men*, and *The Red Hawk* (1926). (There's nothing to see above about, move along now.)

Namarie,

JOSEPH T. MAJOR

*{Y'know, I had completely forgotten about ERB's political leanings and how he worked them into many of his books. That puts an interesting spin to **Carson of Venus** when I think about it that way. Thanks for reminding me.}*

*The ubiquitous and unctuous Lloyd Penney then actually got a loc into me in record time – for him, that is.*



1706-24 Eva Rd.  
Etobicoke, ON  
CANADA M9C 2B2



June 2, 2009

Today is my day for doing what I damn well please, because today is my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday! So, what do I like to do? Read and write, and I thought I'd loc *Askance 14*...this zine is a virtual egoboo festival for me (I'm everywhere in this issue!), so there's lots to comment on.

Great cover. Tough to pick out the SFnal figures in the crowd, isn't it? They might point to Bruce, and say that he did it. We hope he'll keep doing it.

We all go to conventions that may suck the occasional time, and we learn to have a good time there in spite of the convention itself. Besides, we're usually there with our friends. Our last con was our local big anime con. We're not anime fans, but we did have lots of fun because of a raft of friends, and a show to be a part of. Then again, as a con organizer, all the preps in the world, all the confidence and experience will not guarantee that your con will go off without a hitch. We do try to create some documentation that will allow our successors to succeed based on what we've learned, but often, people either won't make record of how they did their work, or if they do, their successors won't read the record. So, every generation of fans winds up re-inventing the square wheel, and once they learn the knock the corners off to make it run smooth, they leave, a new group comes in, and the cycle goes around again.

Learning how to cook is vital for any guy, single or not. The trick is doing it well, following the recipe, even if it appears on the box, and making sure that if you decide to experiment with food, you do not poison yourself, or cause enough of an explosion that can be picked up on the Richter scale. Being able to cook without killing yourself is a valuable life skill, and one a prospective mate would appreciate. We have three crockpots available to us...why do we have three? We've run green rooms and con suites, and they are handy. But, we don't often use them at home.

I wanted to go to Corflu this year, but couldn't justify the cost, and we also have other commitments this year that made travel to Seattle unaffordable. We already are a little overextended when it comes to conventions; the annual con in Montréal wants us to come back to run some programming, but one trip to Montréal is all we can afford. Based on what information I get, I have my doubts that there will be a virtual con suite at Worldcon. Access is just too expensive.

You liked the beer story, John? That con suite is where we learned to hide your stock for successive days. We didn't have a stockroom for that consuite, but when we worked future rooms, the stock for the next days was hidden in our room. *{That makes a lot more sense, a suggestion that many a con has taken to applying as S.O.P.}*

I'd heard there's been a complaint that I muck up the letter column in several fanzines. Maybe it's the fact that I appear in a lot of locals, and I write long locs. Well, I will still remind people, especially those who complained, that if I'm in the local too much, that's their cue to write some letters themselves, and push me into the WAHF file. Murray Moore was the thoughtful fan who picked up my FAAn Award for me; he's done it before.

When I create a typo, I don't screw about, do I. Either I have seen Brad Foster's cheesecake artwork, or I have been looking for it. Me posing for anything like that would be the end of Brad's career, although there are weirds out there we won't know about, and don't want to know about.

I am hereby done, John...I will get you another "Tale from the Convention!", and I have to take some time to see what I can do for you re fanzine reviews...I have been running out of titles to review. I will have a look, see what I haven't reviewed yet, and see what I can do. In the meantime, enjoy the impending summer.

- LLOYD PENNEY

*{You "muck up" the lettercolumns in fanzines? I haven't heard that one before, but then again, I'm a faned who appreciates getting interesting and well-written locs from folks. You always have interesting things to say, which is a VERY Good Thing. As for sending in another "Tales from the Convention!" installment, feel free. Since the next ish is right after a worldcon, a worldcon tale would be most apropos, no? By the way, feel free to start reviewing any fanzine that you feel is worthy of review, even if you've reviewed it before. Nothing wrong with that tactic, mon ami. And may you and Yvonne have a great time at Anticipation. Sure wish I could be there. \*sigh\*}*

*Holy cow! Taking a break from his breakneck fan-pubbing, conning, and movie-going schedule, here's that frenetic fan from the BArea, Chris Garcia!*



June 8, 2009

From: "Chris Garcia" <garcia@computerhistory.org>

I haven't gotten around to much since the untimely passing of my computer. It's back now, actually running better than it did when I was working with it before the melt-down, but I lost almost everything that was on it, except for a few of the things I dumped on to a memory stick. These things suck!

Hey, good lookin' issue! Nice cover, good art (gotta love Brad Foster) and a tidy layout. Always a bonus. *{The way you wrote this makes it sound like Brad Foster did the cover (another Ditmar), so you had me wondering for a second. Then I remembered this was a Chris Garcia loc, and my mind adjusted accordingly.}*

I've done a little more cooking since I wrote that article. Linda and I went to a party and we collaborated on a chili. My idea of a chili and her's are very different, but we combined them, cooking on the fly, and turned out with a wonderful chili with big flavors and a little heat. It was much thicker than when I tend to do, though we both use huge amounts of herbs and spices. My big addition? Chunks of meat to go along with the ground beef. *{Another nice ingredient to add is bouncing potatoes.}*

You know, Aggiecon doesn't sound half-bad. It sounds like the kind of con I go to to have fun with friends. The last Vegas Westercon was like that. Folks complained a bit about it, especially the fact that it was less than 500 people, as I understand it, but it was a blast because there were great people having a great time. Losing a LAN party can hurt a con, though to be honest, out this way, there aren't many of them to begin with, which is strange with us being in Silicon Valley and all.

Pat's absolutely right too: TAMU is a big location of Computer Graphics types. I've met many folks while working on the graphics section that came from out that way. A couple of big names started the

programme and have done wonders. It even rivals CalArts at times. *{Very interesting. This is all news to me, which is fine.}*

I loved CorFlu in Seattle. It was just such a blast. It was the first CorFlu I took Linda to and we had a lovely room over-looking the Neptune Theatre. I loved the food. Great neighborhood for food. Sadly, I spent only a little time on the line with y'all out there in the world. It was in the ConSuite and that was a good time. I enjoyed the Eastercon and BayCon broadcasts, too. I only wish I had a computer that performed well enough to fully interact with the site.

I love Taral's writing and I feel so glad that I get to run as much of it as I do. He's gonna have himself a rocket in a few weeks, so he's got that going for him too. I have to agree: *Banana Wings* is one of my fave zines too. Along with *Relapse*, *el* and *Procrastinations*.

Must fly off, but I thought I'd drop a line and say 'Hey, you're out there doin' great stuff!'

- CHRIS GARCIA

*{Many thanks for the comments, fellow faned! (See? I can use lots of exclamation points, too!) The Virtual Con Suite has fast taken SF cons by storm, and I for one am greatly pleased by this development. Many of the best cons are Far From Here, and the advent of streaming videos and live feeds makes it so much easier for someone like me to enjoy the company and friendly natter-banter of like-minded fen. It is a great idea, and I really enjoy the virtual contact. You don't get those nasty con cooties that way!}*

*Even though it's a short list of loccers, they are all good folks, brought to a rousing close with comments from a lady who has become a staple in the spine of many a fanzine lettercolumn – hmm... that doesn't sound too good, does it? Oh, well... – our favorite female Indiana loc-writer, Lee Anne Lavell:*



July 2, 2009

From: Lee Anne Lavell <leelavell@comcast.net>

Greetings,

Sorry I have taken so long to get in my LoC. I have no real excuse. I've just been on a huge kick of watching movies OnDemand. Things I should have seen, like *Dog Day Afternoon* and *Jerry Maguire*, plus things I have never heard of and were mostly dreck, but with occasional gems like the chilling *Funny Games*. Also I splurged and bought the sets of the old Masterpiece Theater series of *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* (Good grief, there was "Doctor Who #2" in a supporting role!) and *Elizabeth R*. (Glenda Jackson will always be Elizabeth I to me. These current Tudor things are just awful!)

First of all let me say that at present I am not at all interested in conventions so I just skipped the conreports. I am sure you have many readers to compensate for my lack of interest. *{That's cool. Con fans are just one sub-group of fandom. Still, someday I would enjoy meeting you, even if it means both of us going to a con.}*

The Science of Cooking (*Chris Garcia*): I found Chris' article quite interesting. I used to love to cook and to experiment around with ingredients, but since Jim died I mostly just stick to the microwave. It is no fun cooking just for oneself. I once did some experimenting with deviled eggs, creating a version that involved, among other things, sherry.

Clip Show (*Tara Wayne*): My goodness but Tara is prodigious in his writing. I do so envy that ability! I am a slow writer and even after I finish a piece I have a tendency to hold on to it and polish and proof it. Perhaps I am compulsive or too much of a perfectionist (not that my pieces are anything close to perfect). I wish I could just sit down at a keyboard and write something and just be done with it!

Flooding the Mailbox (*John "me" Purcell*): I get no paper fanzines. I don't seem to be on anyone's mailing list and have not sent for any. Dave Burton has given me a few and what I found was that to a great extent my eyes, as they are now, couldn't cope well with them. I am glad to see that this branch of fan pubbing is healthy. After all, that's the field in which I personally pubbed so many years ago. But right now I prefer the ezine with its greater liberties in layout, color, and type size. Not to say that the ezine can't range in quality from great to crud just as easily as the paper zine.

Penney for your Thoughts (*Lloyd Penney*): I enjoyed reading his roundup of nominees. Indeed, how can anyone choose a top zine from such a diverse group!

Figby was, as always, great.

From the Hinterlands: **Joe Major**: My father was from the small town of Grandview, on the river.

**Me**: I really want to thank you, John, for your follow-up to my letter, and I also need to apologize to Graeme for what I wrote. I think this illustrates the difference between letters (especially LoCs) and all the other methods of communication (such as face-to-face, phones, email, instant messaging, twittering, texting and whatever else is out there) which can offer an instant feedback. I was quite aware that Graeme was referring to the *written* content of a zine, but that is not what he wrote, and the statement as it stood irritated the hell out of me. It was my "mea culpa" that allowed me to write something off the top of my head without giving time for my inner censor to kick in. I fell into my own trap, so to speak. My sincere apologies to Graeme for being entirely too harsh. And again, thank you John for your most proper defense.

Cheers,

LEE ANNE LAVELL

*{Aw, shucks, ma'am – 'tweren't nuthin'. In fact, it seemed to me the best way to rephrase things and clarify what Graham was saying. Besides, I don't think he took umbrage at what you said, even though he didn't write a loc in response. Right, Graham? Uh, Graham? Still there, buddy?}*

*So that brings this section to a close, which means it's time for that inevitable listing of who else wrote in. These fine folks are – in alphabetic order – Bill Fischer, Arnie Katz (requesting an article), Andy Kurdman (asking if I needed art for my zine – silly question!), Mark Leeper, Dave Locke (with a non-loc, but a comment), Kathleen David O'Shea (giving me the ok to run her Ken Moore web posting), Tom Sadler (asking me where that book review for *Reluctant Famulus* was; now pubbed in the latest ish).*



# REGIONAL CONVENTION CALENDAR

*For the next four months – July through October – here are the cons of interest in this particular neck of the woods. This time around the emoticon 🤖 means that my plans are to attend. By the time this period ends, the Texas Renaissance Festival will be in full swing; it usually runs for six weekends from the end of September to the beginning of November. That is always a good time, too. I will provide more information on the RenFest in the next issue of **Askance**.*

## **Babelcon 2009**

General science fiction, fantasy, & horror con  
July 17-19, 2009

Cook Hotel & Alumni Center  
3838 Lakeshore Rd.

(next to the lake on the LSU campus)

**Baton Rouge, LA 70808**

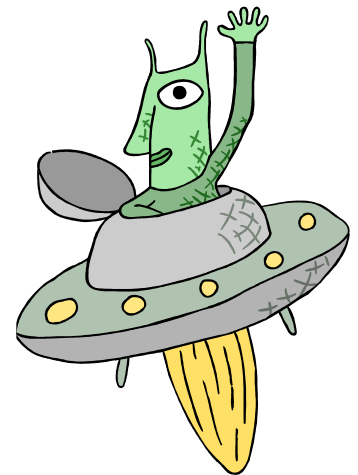
Celebrity Guest: Kandyse McClure (Lt. Dualla)

Anime Guest: Tiffany Grant

Paranormal Guest: Patrick Burns

Anime fans will be glad to hear BabelCon has plans to expand their anime track to include several guests, Cosplay contest, and lots more panel discussions, instead of primarily showing videos. Plus a Horror track, an Author's track, and the Scinema Film Festival (various categories). This will be in addition to the Kids track, Indoor Ren Fair track, Sci-Fi track, Fantasy track, Science track, Paranormal track, and Games track (video and tabletop) from previous years.

BabelCon is a presentation of the Science and Engineering Education Foundation, a non-profit organization that is dedicated to Science education, using Science Fiction media to create interest. A large percentage of BabelCon's shows, panel discussions, demonstrations, and other presentations are related to Science and History.



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## **AniMix 2009**

Where Anime and Gamers Unite

July 17-19, 2009

Plaza Hotel and Conference Center

1721 E Central Texas Expressway

Killeen, TX 76549

**(Killeen / Central Texas area)**

Dealers Room, Artist Alley, Art Auction, Anime Music Video competition, and more! Above all the typical things that conventions have, we will have AniMix's original Final Fantasy VIII ball. So, bring your best FF costumes and show off during the ball. Also we will have video game Tournaments, table top gaming, new anime screeners, video game demos and lots of workshops and panels.

### *Several Unlimited Summer Fan Party*

Club event  
July 18, 2009

#### **Southwest Houston area**

Meet with fellow fans! Book Swap! Party Activities!  
Please RSVP at Web site

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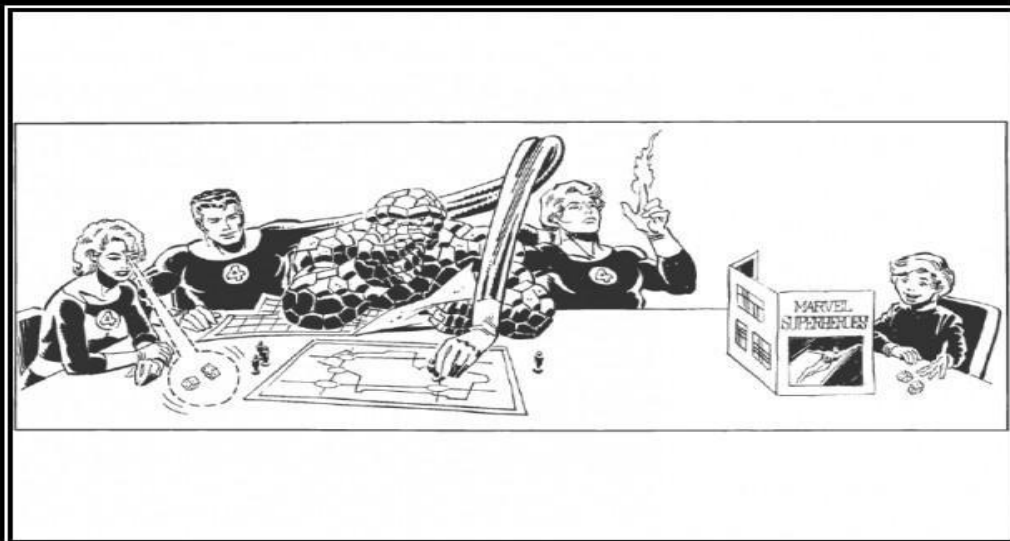
### *MechaCon V*

Anime con  
July 24-26, 2009  
Hilton Lafayette  
1521 West Pinhook Road  
**Lafayette, LA 70503-3158**

"[O]ffers anime and mecha fans of Louisiana and neighboring states a chance to gather in a warm and friendly setting to learn more about the culture of Japan and to share in the experience that is the anime fan culture."

Cosplay, Contests, Gaming, Video Rooms, Panels, Dealers Room, Artist Alley, formal/semi-formal dinner, and more!

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# ROLEPLAYING

A hobby for the whole family

### [Houston U-Con](#)

Comic Books, Gaming, & Collectors one-day con.

August 1, 2009

Northwest Community Unitarian Universalist Church (NWCUUC)

5920 Hwy 6 North

Houston, TX 77084

(Bear Creek area / northwest Harris County)

**(Greater Houston metropolitan area)**

The convention will primarily be Comic Books and Gaming but there is sure to be some Anime, Manga, Sci-Fi/Fantasy and Goth vendors and guests.

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### [Anticipation, the 67th WorldCon](#)

August 6-10, 2009

Palais des Congrès de Montréal

**Montreal, Canada**

Guest of Honour: Neil Gaiman

Invitee d'honneur: Elisabeth Vonarburg

Fan Guest of Honour: Taral Wayne

Editor Guest of Honour: David Hartwell

Publisher Guest of Honour: Tom Doherty

Master of Ceremonies: Julie Czerneda

Five days of programming on hundreds of topics from books to media, from art to costuming, from movies to television to anime, from science fiction to science fact, as well as an art show, masquerades, the Hugo Awards ceremony, dealer's rooms, and much more!

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### [ArmadilloCon 31](#)



Literary Science Fiction  
Convention.

August 14-16, 2009

Doubletree Hotel North

6505 N. IH-35

Austin, TX 78752

**Austin, Texas area**

GOH: Scott Lynch

Artist GOH: Stephan Martinere

Editor GOH: Chris Roberson

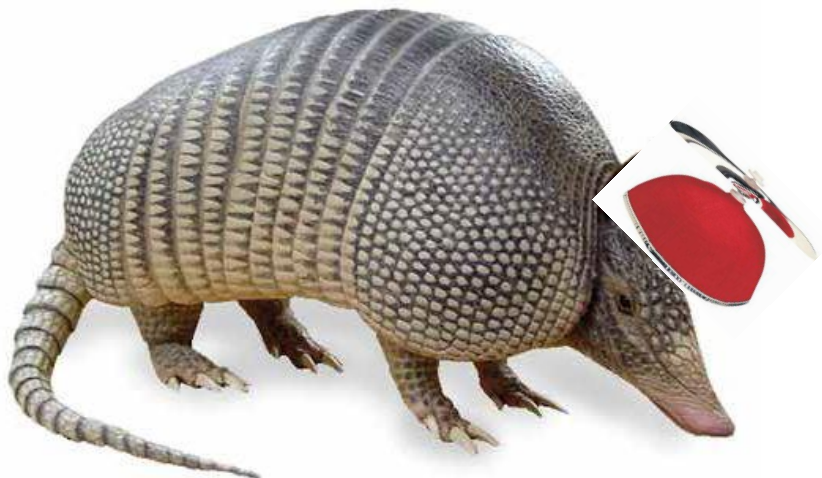
Fan GOH: Karen Meschke

Special Guest: Joan Vinge

Toastmaster: Scott A. Cupp

Panels, Art Show, Gaming, Charity, Full Day Writer's Workshop, Dealer's Room, and more!

ArmadilloCon is a literary science fiction convention held annually in Austin, with several hundred attendees. The primary focus of ArmadilloCon is literary science fiction, but that's not all we do -- we also



pay attention to art, animation, science, media, and gaming. Every year, dozens of professional writers, artists and editors attend the convention. Sometimes they come to make deals, but more often they come to have fun!

Sponsored by the Fandom Association of Central Texas, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

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### [San Japan 2.X](#)

Japanese Anime and Culture Convention

August 14-16, 2009

**San Antonio, TX**

Dealer's Room, Multiple Panel Rooms, Video/Table Gaming, Artist Alley, 24 Hour Video Room. 2 viewing rooms, gaming (both live action and computer) industry panels, and more. Further, trying to emphasize as a cultural convention, we will be bringing you panels, performances, and demonstrations of Martial Arts, Tea Ceremonies, Kabuki, Traditional Japanese games, and more! Come see what it's really all about!

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### [Bubonicon 41](#)

Science Fiction & Fantasy Convention

August 28-30, 2009

Sheraton (NOTE: Same hotel as last year)

**Albuquerque, New Mexico area**

GOH: Michael Cassutt

Toastmistress: Carrie Vaughn

Guest Artist: Peri Charlifu

Panels, Art Show, Dealers Room, Gaming, Auctions, Film Screenings, Readings, Autographs, Filking, Science Talk, Costume Contest, Green Slimes, Audience Participation Events, and more!

Each year, proceeds from Bubonicon go to worthy causes. In 2006, proceeds from Bubonicon 38 benefited the Roadrunner Food Bank, the Children's Hospital of New Mexico and the Williamson Science Fiction Library at Eastern New Mexico University.

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### [AtsuiCon 2](#)

Anime con

(Presumably August 2009)

**Houston, TX area**

AtsuiCon Cosplay, Anime Music Video Contest, Arcade Tournaments, Art Show & Auction, Hentai Art Show, Concert, Ero Genki Adult Cosplay, DJ Laen's Tokio Dance Contest, Card Dueling Tournaments, Panels/Meet & Greet, Hentai Fest, Dealers' Room, & more!

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### [AnimeFest 2009](#)

Convention and Association for fans of Anime, Music, Manga, and Japanese Pop Culture  
(Presumably August 2009)

#### **(Dallas, Texas [downtown Dallas] area)**

Japanese Guests, Voice Actors, Manga/Comic Artists, Dealer Room, 24hr Video Theaters, J-Pop, Gaming, Art Show & Auction, Panel Discussions, Autograph Sessions, Film/Video Premiers

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### [FenCon VI](#)



A Fan-Operated Science Fiction and Fantasy Literary and Filk Convention in the Dallas/Fort Worth Area  
September 18-20, 2009

Crowne Plaza Hotel

North Dallas/Addison

#### **(Dallas / Fort Worth Metroplex area)**

14315 Midway Road

Addison, TX 75001

GOH: Lois McMaster Bujold

Music GOH: Carla Ulbrich

Artist GOH: Kurt Miller

Fen GOH: Warren Buff

Toastmaster: Paul Cornell

Special Guest: Keith R.A. DeCandido

Plus many more guests!

Fan-run convention featuring dedicated Filk Track and Costuming Tracks, Demos, Gaming, an Art Show & Auction, Panel Discussions, Science Programming, our annual Short Story Contest, Open Filking, the legendary FenCon Cabaret, a Writer's Workshop, over 100 Program Participants, and Much More! FenCon is a production of the Dallas Future Society, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of science, literature, and music for the future of all mankind.

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### [Realms Con](#)

5th Annual Anime Festival

October 2-4, 2009

Holiday Inn Emerald Beach

1102 South Shoreline

**Corpus Christi, TX 78401**

Anime Dating Game, AMV (Anime Music Video), Anime Jeopardy, Cosplay, Dead or Alive Volleyball Tournament, The Katamari, Movie Rooms, Panels, Pool Party, Rave, Scavenger Hunt, Table Top Tournaments, Video Game Tournaments, Workshops, and SO MUCH MORE!!!

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### TrickConTreat 2009

Fan-run convention dedicated to Halloween culture.

October 2-4, 2009

**Oklahoma City, OK 73118**

Literary GOH: Craig Wolf

Artist GOH: Dirk Strangely

Horror GOH: Dr. Ignatius Faust Fear II

Special Guests: Dawn the Butcher, Count Gregore, Bill Allen, Steven Wedel, and many more!

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### Oni-Con 2009

Anime con

**Oni-Con rescheduled due to Hurricane Ike**

(Presumably Oct. 2009)

George R. Brown Convention Center

1001 Avenida de las Americas

Houston, TX 77010

Hilton Americas

1600 Lamar

**Houston, TX 77010**

Anime Music Video Contest, Art Show, and more!

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### Re/Max Ballunar Liftoff Festival

(Presumably October or November 2009)

NASA Johnson Space Center

**Houston, Texas**

Visit this exciting and educational family-oriented event at NASA/Johnson Space Center and enjoy hot air balloon competitions, evening balloon glows, skydiving exhibitions, commercial exhibits, concession booths, food from local restaurants, arts & crafts exhibits, entertainment and various aviation equipment displays.

Ballunar Liftoff Festival, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Its mission is to help the public learn about aviation and space exploration, and to sponsor and fund educational activities that encourage young people to learn about aviation and space and to study them.

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“Being able to cook without killing yourself is a valuable life skill, and one a prospective mate would appreciate.”

Next issue is due out this coming September, roughly Labor Day Weekend, which means it will be in between the Montreal Worldcon and Fencon VI up in Dallas. Already on hand is an article by the now ubiquitous due to his prolificity, Taral Wayne, and I have a cover forthcoming from a fan artist in Argentina! That should be very interesting. The 16<sup>th</sup> issue will probably have my thoughts on once again not attending a worldcon and some other items of interest, so it should be another fun ish.

Recently I have had an old Allan Sherman song running through my head, from his *My Son, the Nut* album. If there ever was a popular song turned into a folk song, the lyrics below fit the bill. From 1963, and sung to the sprightly tune "Has Anybody Seen My Gal?" (1914: music by Percy Wenrich, lyrics by Jack Mahoney), here's one of my all-time favorite Allan Sherman songs:

### Eight Foot Two, Solid Blue

[ad lib with spacey music:]

*Last night I met a man from Mars, and he was very sad.  
He said, "Won't you help me find my girl friend, please?"  
So I asked him, "What does she look like?",  
And the man from Mars said, "she's..."*



[up tempo]  
*Eight foot two, solid blue,  
Five transistors in each shoe,  
Has anybody seen my gal?  
Lucite nose, rust-proof toes,  
And when her antenna glows,  
She's the cutest Martian gal.  
You know she promised me, recently,  
She wouldn't stray,  
But came the dawn, she was gone  
Eighteen billion miles away.  
Her steering wheel has sex appeal,  
Her evening gown is stainless steel,  
Has anybody seen my gal?*

*How I miss all the bliss  
Of her sweet hydraulic kiss,  
Has anybody seen my gal?  
Lovely shape, custom built,  
Squeeze her wrong and she says "tilt",  
Has anybody seen my gal?  
She does the cutest tricks, with her six stereo ears.  
When she walks by, spacemen cry,  
'Specially when she shifts her gears.  
If she's found, rush like mad,  
Put her on a launching pad,  
Down at Cape Canaveral,  
And shoot me back my cutie,  
My supersonic beauty,  
Send me back my Martian gal.*

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Ken Moore  
(19 August 1942 – 30 June 2009)

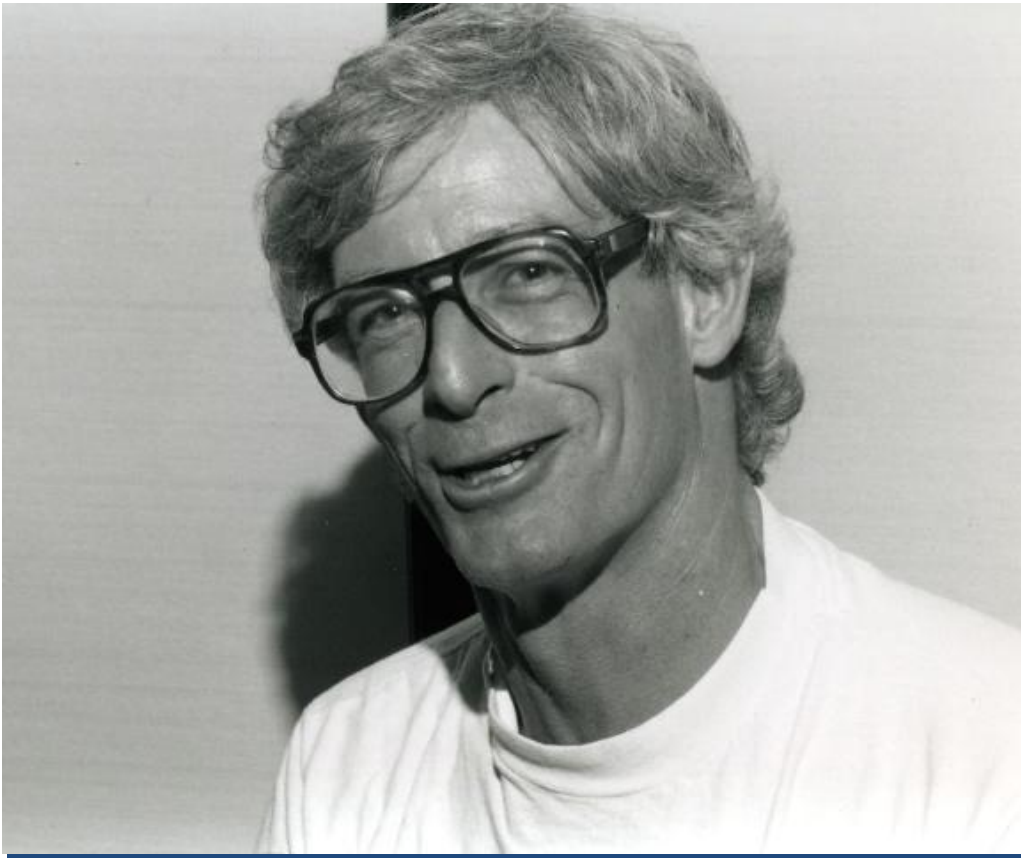


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# ***FENCON VI***

A Fan-Operated Science Fiction, Fantasy,  
&Filk Convention in the Dallas/Fort Worth  
Area

**September 18-20, 2009**

## **Guest of Honor: Lois McMaster Bujold**

multiple Hugo Award winning author, creator of the Vorkosigan series

## **Music Guest of Honor: Carla Ulbrich**

award-winning songwriter, guitarist, and professional smart aleck

## **Art Guest of Honor: Kurt Miller**

freelance illustrator, Baen Books cover artist, gaming artist

## **Toastmaster: Paul Cornell**

a Hugo Award nominated *Doctor Who* writer, comics writer, novelist

## **Fen Guest of Honor: Warren Buff**

president of the Southern Fandom Confederation

## **Special Guest: Keith R.A. DeCandido**

*Star Trek* and media tie-in author and member of the Boogie Knights

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