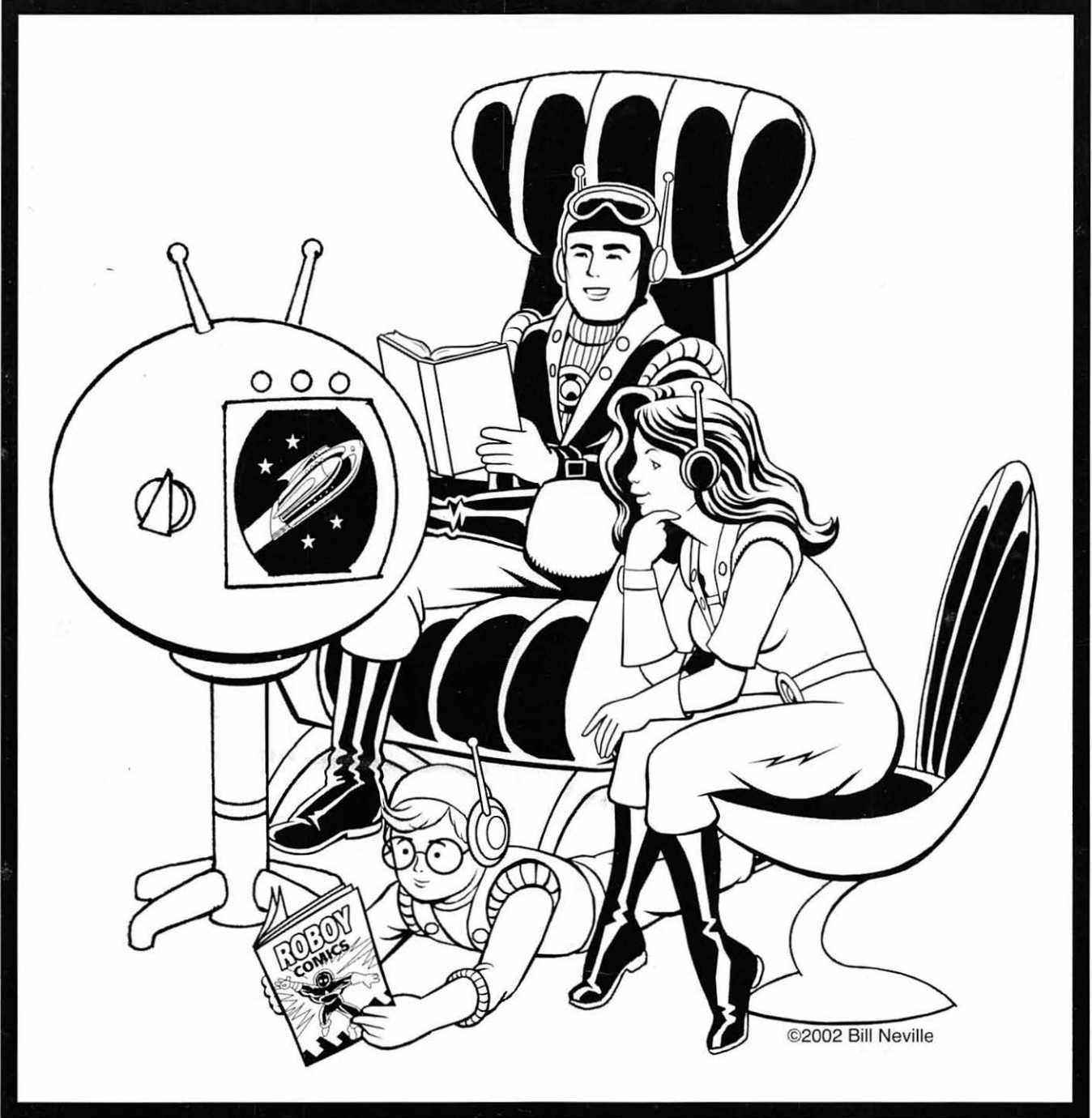


# Noreascon 4



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# Noreascon 4

# Noreascon 4

The 62<sup>nd</sup> World Science Fiction Convention

September 2-6, 2004

Boston, Massachusetts, USA



*Pro Guests of Honor:*

**Terry  
Pratchett**

**William  
Tenn**

*Fan Guests of Honor:*

**Jack  
Speer**

**Peter  
Weston**

## FACILITIES

Hynes Convention Center  
Sheraton Boston Hotel  
Boston Marriott Copley Place

## MEMBERSHIP RATES (Through Mar. 1, 2003)

Attending membership: \$ 140

Supporting membership: \$ 35

Upgrade existing supporting  
membership to attending: \$ 105

Child's admission: \$ 105  
(12 & under as of Sept. 6, 2004;  
Child's admission does not include  
publications or voting rights.)

Installment plan available; write  
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## QUESTIONS

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To advertise in progress reports,  
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## ADDRESSES

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P.O. Box 1010  
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United States of America

Fax: +1 617.776.3243

Web page:  
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*Chairman's staff:* Mark L. Olson & Sharon Sbarsky

*Advertising:*

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*Placement:* Janice Gelb

*Information triage:* Lis Carey

*Mark Protection Committee Representative:* George Flynn

*Publicity/Flyer Distribution:* Ed Dooley & Tim Roberge

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*Pre-con Registration:* Bonnie Atwood

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*Publications:* Joe Siclari

*Progress Report Editors:* Joe Siclari & Edie Stern

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## Noreascon 4 Progresses

**From our Chairman:**

"At the height of laughter, the universe is flung into a kaleidoscope of new possibilities," noted Jean Houston. We want to share the colors of wonder and the giddy laughter of amazement with you.

So let me tell you where we're at in our planning process. We have a cool city (but you knew that). We have a great committee (and we hope many of our members will join us in crafting the 62<sup>nd</sup> Worldcon). We've got some really nifty facilities, and we've got some creative imagination.

Our ideas run the gamut from the definite (we'll have program, dealers, special events, art, music, intelligent discussions, enlightening exhibits) to the probable (in the next Progress Report, you'll read about a retrospective exhibit of SF/F art we're building) to the unlikely (one person suggested a three-story exhibit that people would enter the convention center *through* – while it's a really swell idea, we just don't think we'll be able to pull it off – that doesn't mean we're not going to try!).

And we insist on having fun.

Starting this fall, our meetings will probably become more raucous. We'll be busy recruiting (so expect a knock on your email if you've volunteered). Our committee will enthusiastically explore ways to highlight our guests, our shared interests, and our special history. Please join us if you're in town.

You may notice we have a happy band of lunatics Division Heads, Chairman's staff, officers, and some amazingly capable area heads in place (with many more to come!). If you have ideas for what we can do to make the Worldcon better, more insightful, more visionary, and particularly more fun, we want to hear from you.

Our Progress Reports will probably continue to look a lot like a really top-notch fanzine (edited, as they are, by a pair of really top-notch faneds): you'll read about our guests from their own pens and from their friends and admirers, our history, our members, and the state of our committee. We think the PRs should also be historic documents. That's why we included Greg Bear's speech from last year's Worldcon.

We want to use other methods to keep in touch with you, too. Visit our web site ([www.noreascon.org](http://www.noreascon.org)), email us ([info@noreascon.org](mailto:info@noreascon.org)) or look at our web log ([noreascon4.blogspot.com](http://noreascon4.blogspot.com)) and tell us *your* crazy ideas. We probably won't be able to use all of them – but we want to hear them. Your visions can catch us on fire.

And on Labor Day weekend in 2004, we'll all get together for some solid fun.

As Victor Borge said, "Laughter is the shortest distance between two people."

– Deb Geisler



**Commit Volunteerial!**

This is the time of year when one's thoughts turn to sun...sand...mountains...Worldcon volunteering...amusement parks...and Worldcon volunteering!

Making the Worldcon go takes all kinds of talents, and you don't need to have had any previous convention work to be a volunteer. Many people make use of skills they have acquired in life. Others choose to learn new things through convention work. Whatever your aptitude, we can use you!

Use our new handy and dandy electronic form at [www.noreascon.org](http://www.noreascon.org) to sign up. You can also get a paper form by writing us at [volunteers@noreascon.org](mailto:volunteers@noreascon.org) or at Noreascon 4 Volunteers, PO Box 1010, Framingham MA 01701.

**Noreascon 4 Financial Report**

Sep 1, '01 - Jun 1, '02

**Income**

Interest \$295

**Memberships**

Attending @ 50	27,550
Attending @ 60	35,640
Attending @ 90	7,380
Attending @100	35,000
Attending upgrade@65	1,490
Attending@\$120	3,120
Child @ \$85	85
Children	3,345
Friend NV	250
Supporting	1,015
Supporting voters	72,825

Total memberships 187,700

T-shirts 70

Misc. 39

PR ads 300

Other 360

**Total Income \$188,764**

**Expense**

Bank Fees 2,434

**Marketing**

Ads	704
Parties	399
Sales to Members	200
Table expenses	23
Marketing - Other	150
<b>Total marketing</b>	<b>1,476</b>

**Publications**

Progress reports	
PR0 postage	539
PR0 printing	442
PR1 mailing supplies	49
PR1 postage	698
PR1 printing	2,952
<b>Total Publications</b>	<b>4,680</b>

Software 354

Total treasury 34

Web fees 12

**Total Expense 8,990**

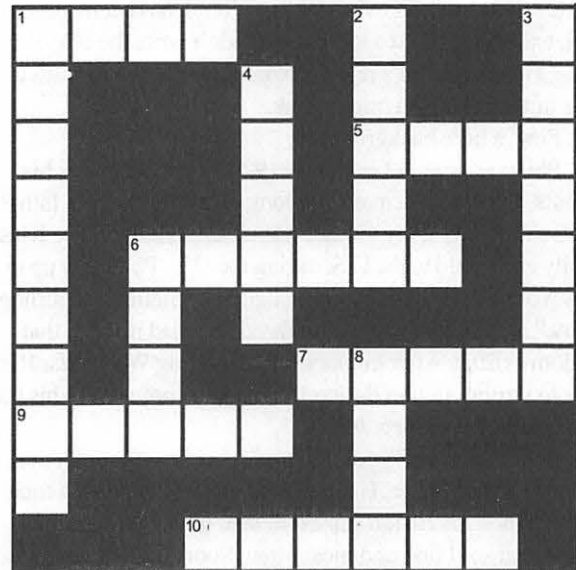
**Net Income \$ 179,774**

**Artists Wanted!**

Let everyone see your art in the N4 progress reports. If you are willing to do artwork for the N4 progress reports, please contact us at [progressreport@noreascon.org](mailto:progressreport@noreascon.org).

**N4 Crossword #2**

(all answers are in this issue)



**Across**

- 1. His license plate was SMOF2
- 5. This Progress Report's sponsor
- 6. Noreascon's home
- 7. N4 Guest of Honor
- 9. Suford's suggestion for a GoH project
- 10. Promulgated the cosmic mind

**Down**

- 1. Alphabetically our first GoH
- 2. Our GoH's student's creation
- 3. Boss lady
- 4. Not the UFOlogist
- 6. Author of Infinity Concerto
- 8. Wrote it all: from elves to the end of the universe

*Solution to last issue's crossword:*



# More Than a Touch of Klass

## William Tenn's Influence on American Popular Culture

Laurie Mann

One of our Guests of Honor, Phil Klass, also known as the satiric science fiction writer William Tenn, has been known to, well, exaggerate. Just a tad. But he didn't write the title of this piece. Honestly. Phil's reach into popular culture extends a little further than you might think.

First, a little background.

Phil was born in London in 1920. As he describes his parents, "They had a marriage-long fight because my father was a socialist and my mother was an imperialist." The Klass family emigrated to the U.S. during the '20s. Phil grew up in New York City and read science fiction ("intellectual pornography," as he called it in those days), but had no idea that fandom existed. After military service during World War II, he took to writing fiction during the lengthy commute to his day job at Bell Labs in New Jersey.

Phil wrote voraciously in many genres: science fiction, mystery and romance. He had different pen names for each genre. When his fiction started to sell, it was his science fiction that sold first and most often. Soon, Phil Klass was much better known as the science fiction writer, William Tenn. He sold over 60 stories in about 20 years. Theodore Sturgeon was his agent (and that of other up-and-coming writers like Damon Knight and James Blish). Sturgeon introduced Phil to fandom in the late '40s. At first, people thought William Tenn was a new pen name for Lewis Padgett. But, soon, Phil was making the convention circuit in person, as he relates in his essay elsewhere in this progress report.

Tenn's short fiction has recently been collected by NESFA Press and published as *Immodest Proposals* and *Here Comes Civilization*. Unlike much science fiction from the '50s, the Tenn stories are quite fresh. Most of his stories are societal and business satires, demonstrating that the more things change, the more they stay the same.

Phil is probably fortunate to have written most of his professional fiction under a pseudonym. There is another Phil Klass out there who writes about things out-of-this world. Philip J. Klass is an academic, about the same age as our Phil Klass, who writes to debunk UFO sightings. As a result, some people confuse the science fiction writer with the anti-UFOlogist. The TV talk show host David Susskind once wanted the two Phils to debate UFOs on his show, with William Tenn taking the "pro" position to Philip J. Klass's "con." Our Phil declined. To this day, checks or invitations to speak are sometimes sent to the "wrong" Phil Klass.

Phil is also part of a literary dynasty of sorts. Phil's wife, Fruma, has published SF poetry and received an honorable mention in the Writers of the Future contest. His younger brother, Mort Klass, was an anthropologist who wrote anthropological textbooks (*Ordered Universes: Approaches*

*to the Anthropology of Religion*) and the occasional work of SF (*Earthman's Burden*). Mort's daughter, Judy, has written science fiction short stories and a *Star Trek* novel. Another daughter, Perri, has written very successful non-fiction about the life of a physician. Their brother, David, has written screenplays for movies like *Kiss the Girls*. Phil's sister-in-law, Sheila Solomon Klass, writes juvenile non-fiction. His sister, Fran Klass, is not a writer, but is active in the arts as a painter.

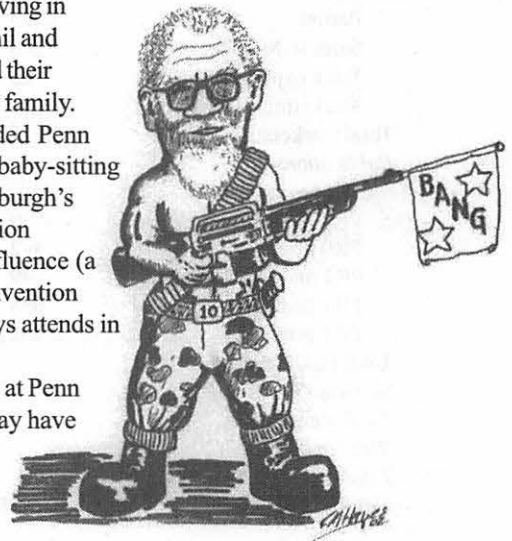
Phil isn't just a writer. He has edited several anthologies, notably *Children of Wonder* in 1953. He was one of the first editors to anthologize now-classic stories like "That Only a Mother" by Judith Merrill and "Born of Man and Woman" by Richard Matheson. Phil showed himself to be an editor of excellent taste.

During the '50s and early '60s, Phil and his wife Fruma lived in Greenwich Village. They got to know the writers living in the city at the time, folks like Robert Silverberg and Harlan Ellison. He has many amusing stories about the foibles of writers who lived in New York City in those days.

He helped many young writers. Daniel Keyes, who wrote the wonderful "Flowers for Algernon," was a friend of Phil's. Daniel told Phil that an editor wanted him to change the ending of "Flowers" to a happy ending. Phil is reported to have said, "If you change one word of that story, I'll go break the editor's kneecaps." Keyes did not change the ending. The story was extremely well-received, won a Hugo and a Nebula and received a literate translation to the big screen.

During the '60s, '70s and '80s, Phil was a professor of English at Penn State. Dozens of his students went on to be writers and thousands more continued to be readers. Many of his former students, including Kevin Riley, Eva Whitley and Bill Jensen, are active in fandom to this day. During the late '70s, while living in State College, Phil and Fruma welcomed their daughter into the family. Adina has attended Penn College and ran baby-sitting for years at Pittsburgh's local science fiction convention Confluence (a lovely, small convention which Phil always attends in late July!).

It was while at Penn State that Phil may have made his most well-known  
(cont. on p.21)



# Remembrances of Worldcons Past

by  
**Philip Klass**  
 (William Tenn)

Francois Villon wondered, "Where are the snows of yesteryear?" You can tell him from me that they have damn well melted, and so have the science fiction conventions of years gone by — but, unlike the snows, those wonderful conventions are still solid, in my memory at least. The pranks, the drunken uproars, the sexual hoohah!

The first one I attended, the 1948 Philcon, was comparatively quiet sexually. Except of course for the nymph who wandered in from the hotel lobby, asked everyone "What in the world is this *science fiction* you keep talking about?" and proceeded to make it with everyone who answered her question, from the major figures in the field on down. (With everyone? Yes, the conventions were overwhelmingly male in those days, just before Judy Merrill arrived on the scene with her publication of "That Only a Mother.") The nymph emerged from a crowded hotel room on the last day of the con, shopworn and a bit bruised, but withal quite happy.

My second story, "Child's Play," had been published about a year and half before (*ASF* Feb. 1947) and had been well received. Fan after fan came up to me at the con and told me that while they liked the story, they *knew* it had to have been done by a well-known professional and not a newcomer. Right to my face they told me I was no more than another pen name for Henry Kuttner.

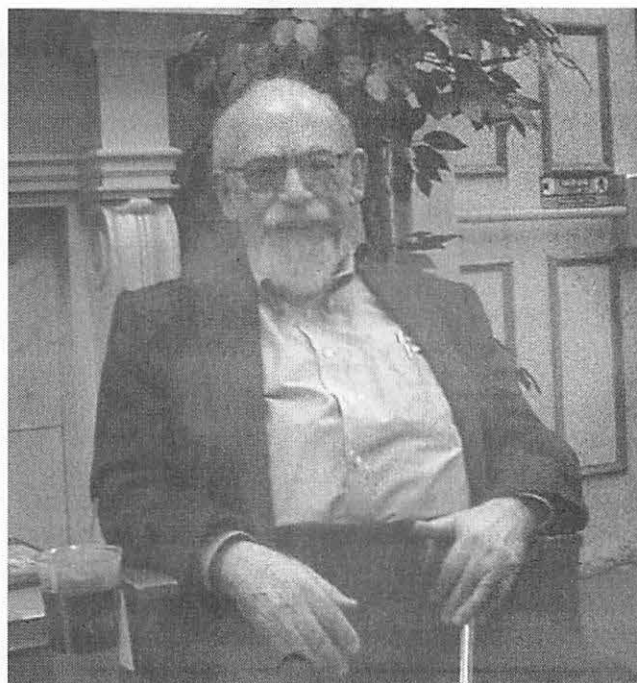
Well, now you can tell them — retroactively, of course — that the piece has just been optioned for the movies. A Henry Kuttner *nom de plume* — hah! (Damn it, after fifty-four years, it still burns.)

And pranks? It was almost as much as your life was worth just to walk to the elevator. A group of new young writers (Chandler Davis, for one, before he tangled with HUAC, the House Un-American Activities Committee) and well-established fans (Jay

Kay Klein, Milt Rothman, etc.) got their hands on several boxes of firecrackers, lit strings of them, and kept dropping them everywhere, but mostly down the elevator shaft and airshaft of the hotel building until the fire department arrived. The firemen confiscated the firecrackers, but, according to legend, went off to another part of the building to set them off themselves.

My seventeen-year-old brother, drunk to the gills, encountered John W. Campbell in an elevator and shook his hand and announced, "You've never heard of me, but I'm Morton Klass and I'm going to be the best damn writer you've ever published in your magazine. Put it there, Johnnie!" Campbell, even drunker to the gills, put it there, sobbing, "No one in this whole, whole convention really, really understands me."

Yes, I tell you there were giants in those days. They were still larger than life at the 1950





Metrocon, a joint production of the Hydra Club professionals and local New York fan clubs. Not only did seven separate and distinct famous pro marriages break up at that con — no, I will not name names, some of those people are still alive and litigious — but there exists a great photo of the con (taken, I believe, by the aforementioned Jay Kay Klein) in which you can see *a)* a number of individuals peering about in an attempt to locate their spouses, and *b)* those same mislaid spouses cavorting uproariously on camera with other people's spouses. Nymphs? They were underfoot, underbelly, *everywhere*.

That photo! Not only can you see me at the speakers' table, to the right of Willy and Olga Ley, under an enormous mop of hair (I had been flat broke and financially unable to have it cut for four full months), but also a superb shot of Isaac Asimov seeming to be lolling backward in his chair.

Ike was so thoroughly potted that he couldn't sit without sliding forward out of the chair. He whooped each time he did this, warning the photographer not to click the shutter just yet. After a number of such slides and such whoops, the photographer drafted a young fan to sit on the floor under the table at the Good Doctor's feet and push against his knees until the picture was taken.

This meant, of course, that the young fan was not in the final photograph. A great shame, because the picture later appeared as a double-page spread in *Life* magazine, with Ike gurgling as he leaned backward and slid forward, but the young fan nowhere to be seen.

By the 1956 Worldcon in New York City, science fiction had become almost respectable and the people who were involved with it were getting older. It was a

somewhat quieter affair. No nymphs, no firecrackers, no loopy drunkenness — just one important pro marriage breaking up during the proceedings. (No, I still won't name the name — please see me in private if you *must* know.)

Still, that one breakup was a pretty good one: it almost cost us yet another person who had nothing at all to do with the breakup. The female half of the separating couple was carrying a very well-filled leather handbag by its long leather strap. At a given point, exasperated by her conversation with the male half (the argument had been going on for three loud hours), she apparently decided to use the purse as a weapon in a kind of Trial by Combat.

She swung the purse by the leather strap in a wide arc through the crowded convention floor, aiming it at the face of her spouse. Several dozen people ducked frantically, all except Aurea Keyes, who had her back to the argument and was talking quietly to her husband, Dan Keyes.

Fortunately, Aurea suffered only a very slight concussion and a minor scalp wound. But Dan Keyes did not get over seeing his wife slugged until well after the end of the con.

The last Worldcon I attended — the Millennium Philcon, 2001 — was intellectually stimulating, but essentially a pallid affair. To the best of my knowledge (and I inquired most, most carefully) no important marriages broke up, no drunken editors were accosted by drunken, importunate fans — and the general sexual hijinks were at an absolute minimum. The only nymphs I saw were people actually constumed as such.

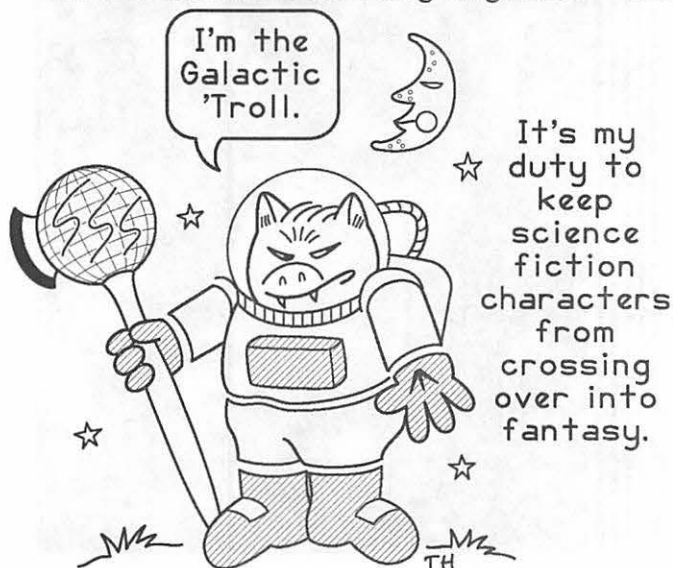
Well, a man can dream. A man even must dream. Surely, before I die, there will be at least one more great big splashy, gory, colorful, head-blasting, marriage-sundering science fiction convention!

And please — Jehovah, Vishnu, Zeus, Ahura Mazda, Quetzlcoatl, Great Cosmic Mind, Whatever or Whoever — please, may I be *there*.

---

**unendurable pleasure indefinitely prolonged** – (Moskowitz)  
A quotation from *My First Two Thousand Years*, which SaM used with a quite different context in saying that fans who attended the First World Convention experienced unendurable pleasure indefinitely prolonged. The original story is about the Wandering Jew, who pursues the equally immortal Wandering Jewess through two millennia and several books, in order to enjoy the aforementioned u.p.i.p., tho his desire for her does not prevent him from stopping off at numerous other places en route.

– from the *Fancylopedia* (1944) by John Bristol Speer





# LOS ANGELES IN 2006

**A Bid for the 64<sup>th</sup> World Science Fiction Convention  
to be held August 24-28, 2006 in Anaheim (L.A. Area), California**

- Convention facilities contract (upon success of bid) for the **Anaheim Convention Center**, and the **Hilton Anaheim** and **Anaheim Marriott** hotels – site of the 1984 and 1996 Worldcons. Locus described as them as "An ideal facility for a Worldcon ... The best space I've ever seen."
- The proven track record of the **Southern California Institute for Fan Interests (SCIFI)**, Inc., sponsoring organization of L.A. Con II (1984 Worldcon) and L.A. Con III (1996 Worldcon), ConuCopia (1999 NASFiC), Conosaurus (1989 Westercon) and ConoZoic (1994 Westercon)
- **A fabulous location**, right across the street from Disneyland and close to beaches, restaurants and many other popular resort destinations
- **A convention near the heart of Los Angeles..** the world's largest entertainment industry, home of countless authors, producers and potential guests!

**JOIN US FOR THE ADVENTURE OF A LIFETIME!**

## MEMBERSHIP RATES

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*Pre-Support \$20.00 • Pre-Oppose \$40.00  
Pre-Dither \$60.00 • Friends Of The Bid \$75.00*

*Checks payable to "SCIFI Inc" in US Funds Only*

### CANADA

*Pre-Support \$30.00 • Pre-Oppose \$61.00  
Pre-Dither \$91.00 • Friends Of The Bid \$115.00*

*Checks payable to "Lloyd Penney" in Canadian Funds Only*

### UNITED KINGDOM

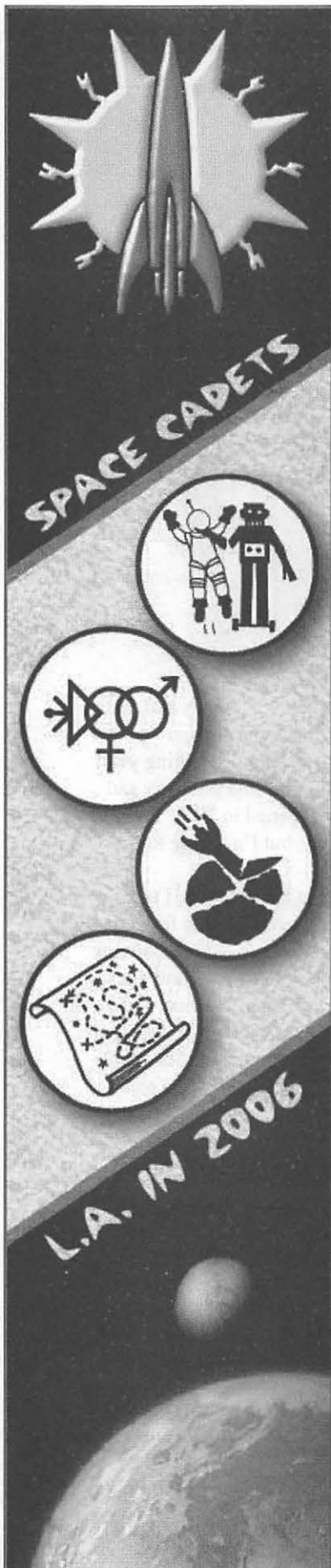
*Pre-Support £14.00 • Pre-Oppose £28.00  
Pre-Dither £41.00 • Friends Of The Bid £52.00*

*Checks payable to "John Harold" in UK Funds Only  
(Additional Currency Rates are available at our table, our party, or  
on the Los Angeles in 2006 Bid Website!)*

## JOIN THE SPACE CADETS LOS ANGELES IN 2006

c/o The Southern California Institute for Fan Interests (SCIFI) Inc.  
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# Greg Bear

## Guest of Honor speech

### Millennium Philcon

### 59th World Science Fiction

### Convention - 2001

Transcribed by Edie Stern  
 Edited by Greg Bear

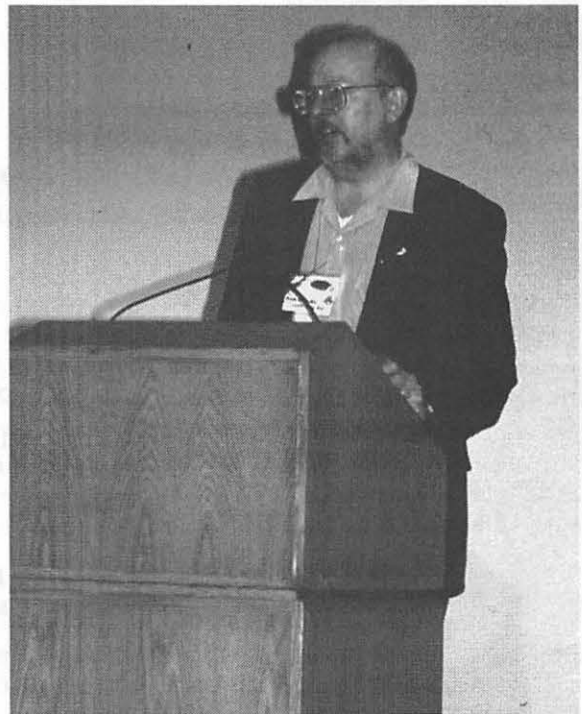
This speech was delivered in early September, before 9/11. The podium is far back from the edge of the platform, and farther still from the audience. Bear surveys the situation and begins...

This is so remote and far away, and I want to do a Dean Martin down there in front so I'm going to get my scotch and microphone. Actually, I've got my water here, so I'm all set.

Well, caffeine has kept me going. This convention has been, as usual, full of far too many interesting people to talk to, and now I have a whole crowd here to keep amused for the next 45 minutes. Worldcon is where we get to hang out with five to ten thousand of our favorite people, and catch up on everything. You realize how exhausting that can be. So I've been babbling all day, and getting highly theoretical on different panels and making scientists into skeptics and skeptics into scientists and it's just been great fun.

It's a true privilege of course, everyone knows that, to be Guest of Honor at a Worldcon. It's one of the premium honors afforded people from the fan community and the convention runners, who are really to be blessed here so let's give a hand for the people that do the hard work. The people behind the scenes, all the people doing the paper work, all the people listening to writers and guests complaining madly about things not being right, and then making them go right. That's an extremely tough job.

It's kind of daunting to stand up here and deliver a guest of honor speech at Worldcon; you have to sum up your entire life and leave them inspired at the end and get it all done in one speech and so I'm not really going to do that. I'm going to talk about a special year. A very strange year. A year that sums up in a lot of ways what I got into science fiction for when I was just a kid eight or nine years old. Didn't really even know what I wanted to do. The year is 2001. It's a magic year. It should have been the year in



which we celebrated so many tremendous things and, in fact, we have been celebrating tremendous things.

On the personal side, this has been a fascinating year, with many pluses and many highlights, and one very sad moment. Which shouldn't have happened in 2001. I don't know who to blame for this entirely, but I'm going to get into that.

Quite often when I give talks at conventions, I talk about what science fiction did for me, the paying forward of all the writers who talk to young people, who encourage them, who basically give them the secret words and the secret handshakes and let them move up and become writers themselves. There's no way to pay back the writers who inspired us, so we simply pay it forward and that is how conventions like this remain so incredibly friendly and accessible and where there is outreach, incredible outreach to everybody, and acceptance that would make any democratic society either extremely proud or extremely suspicious, I'm not sure which.

Anyway, I just wanted to tell all of you out there, all of you since the beginning of science fiction conventions, you have *kicked ass*! For American culture, for American literature, for young people everywhere who come into conventions and meet people who are due to inspire them. You have changed the world, and you've changed my life.

For me, this began in a real sense back in 1968 in Baycon. I guess there's a panel (is there a panel?) coming up on Baycon. If I can I'll make it there, but if I'm cross scheduled it won't work.

Baycon: I was 16 years old. I rode on the bus to Berkeley with two friends, David Clark and Scott Shaw, and we were all very young and we stayed at the Shattuck Hotel,

and somehow or other managed to get to the Claremont Hotel and to hang out with people, and it was mind blowing. You could walk through the lobby of the Claremont Hotel and there would be, oh, Lin Carter, sitting over here on a circular couch holding forth. You walked over here, and there was John W. Campbell and his wife sitting behind a table. You step into the ice cream shop and there's Ray Bradbury, whom we had already met and established a friendship with, holding forth. And then, as all of us kids were sitting there, watching, talking to Ray in very friendly and open terms, in walks John Brunner and he's carrying a copy of his new book, and he gives it to Ray, and we're all watching, awestruck, and Ray says "Oh, thank you John" and it's *Stand on Zanzibar*. And we walk down the hallway, and there's Dorothy Fontana, and they're showing *Star Trek* episodes, and handing out free copies of a Ballantine paperback book on *Star Trek*, and we're glum. We're sitting out on the concrete at the front doorway, you know, teenagers being glum the way we can, because we didn't get copies, and Dorothy walks out and she says "Why are you so sad?"

"We didn't get one."

To which Dorothy says, "I'd give you this one, but it's my only copy."

Dorothy Fontana, of course, was one of the people, who along with Gene Roddenberry, and David Gerrold and a number of other writers, established the look and feel and sound of the television show that changed fandom forever. After *Star Trek*, suddenly women started appearing at conventions. They appeared at Baycon; they came out in droves.

We had the SCA, we had costuming, filking, Edgar Rice Burroughs fandom, pulp fandom, movie fandom, characterized most succinctly by my friends the Warrens, Bill and Beverly; we had all these ways in which fandom spread out to conquer the earth and a lot of people thought this was the splintering of fandom; the focus taken away. What they had forgotten is that before costuming and the SCA there were also the poker players who never read science fiction, people who collected *Argosy* magazine, and went to the conventions just for that. There's always been a fragmentation of interests.

What we were doing was creating explorers who would go out and infiltrate and shape the entire culture of the world and 1968 was really the first I think, possibly 67-68, the first years in which that became patently obvious. That we were going to win. That we had the best and the brightest, from Ray Bradbury already world famous, to John Brunner, who was writing incredible books that to this day are groundbreaking, like *Stand on Zanzibar* and *The Sheep Look Up*, to guest of honor Philip Jose Farmer, already involved in his Riverworld series. To John W. Campbell, whose quiet steady influence at that point was being kind of derided, and yet Campbell was one of the fathers. You could still go back and touch one of the fathers



of modern science fiction. Almost as great in its way as going back and meeting H. G. Wells would have been. Pretty incredible convention.

1968.

I was 16 years old.

I had some paintings hanging in the art show room. I had been working on paintings; I'd discovered acrylics and later found out about oils, and I had painted some of these things. They were pretty crude, but they weren't terrible, and they were hanging in the art show. And Bjo Trimble walks up to me and asks if I'd like to do some more art for her publications. Bjo Trimble was at this time the secret mother of fandom, for me anyway, and eventually she sent me a set of clippings of *Star Trek* episodes. Actual 35 mm film clips which had strange little things like people breaking up laughing and so on. They weren't usable—they were outtakes. They were bloopers and special effect shots and I picked things out of those stacks of film clips and stared at them in the sunlight, and drew pictures of them for Bjo's *Star Trek Concordance* and other publications, and started realizing there was a thing called fandom. And that you could send sketches and pen and ink illustrations to fanzines in Los Angeles, *Shangri L'Affaires*, and magazines like that. I got one of my first illustrations published in the *Shangri L'Affaires Christmas Calendar*. It was happy go lucky Yog Sothoth wishing you a happy Christmas, a merry Christmas. We remember these things, because when we're young these things are as important as anything that happens later, and Science Fiction gets us when we're young. Science fiction fandom taught me what it was like to have my name in print.

Science fiction touches us deeply, it tells us that life is



an endless adventure. It also tells us that along the way there will be more than adventure; there will be trauma, and sadness and tragedy and misery, and that nevertheless, pointless or no, depending on your philosophy, and we absorb all in the sf community, science fiction reminds us that life is an adventure, and that change is an adventure. How can we quantify *that* in a world that seemed perpetually locked in teenage angst about fashion and class and social standing. How can we qualify the quality of this vision that is passed on to children through the mesh of *Star Trek*, through *Star Wars*, through the seventy thousand science fiction shows on television we can't possibly keep up with, many of which are very fine in individual episodes if not in the whole. This total mass vision that tells us that life is an adventure, that exploration is necessary. That what we do and what we think matters in the universe. When we are not concerned about our social status or bank accounts, we all become fans. We become enthusiasts and there is nothing that the jaded journalists and historians of the world love less than enthusiasts. We are supposed to be sophisticated. We are supposed to be knowing and untouched, and we are supposed to be cool. Very few fans are cool. (laughter) Well, Robert Silverberg is cool, but I've seen him be uncool. (laughter) And when I look deep into Robert's beautiful eyes, I know that in his heart he is really uncool. (crowd laughter)

Most of us in this room are caught in a perpetual and wonderfully regal childhood where we can go back and touch those things that touched us early—the comic books, the pulp magazines, the old stories that were honored this evening in this lovely ceremony, the Retro Hugos. You don't see Retro Nobels. You don't see the literary brahmans going back and handing Nobels out to Nikos Kazantzakis and James Joyce or to Jorge Luis Borges. You don't see them handing out what they should have handed out. You don't see that. We do that. We look backwards because we know how to look forwards. We know how to accept change and to revere those who changed us. (Applause)

And I mean here, I do mean a friendly reverence. We are not frightened of our saints. We are not frightened of our gods and our mentors. Because they helped teach us the ropes. They weren't mysterious and lofty and inscrutable. They were people. They were editors. They were people having troubles. They were people writing books or not writing books. They were people acting drunk in the hallway. They were people behaving — pontificating — sometimes wisely, sometimes not. They were people, they were people everywhere we looked. Wonderful people blessed with wonderful visions, or nightmares, or both.

One of those was a man I first saw in 1966 in the 20 minutes that I spent at the Westercon in San Diego, California, at the Stardust Hotel which shall remain *Bouncing Potatoes* forever. Famous for its disappointed hookers, and for the committee that was called up to service in the navy.

I was only there for 20 minutes. I had read about it in the local newspaper. I was 14 years old and the only face I recognized was, god bless him, Forrest J Ackerman. I read *Famous Monsters* and *Spaceman*. Even then I preferred *Spaceman* to *Famous Monsters*, but I now realize *Famous Monsters* was cool too. And Forry was sitting in the lobby of the Stardust Hotel, perfectly willing to talk to a 14 year old kid who had just wandered in, sitting down, talking about science fiction for 20 minutes. I didn't know you could stay. Didn't know that.

My parents found all this to be vaguely interesting. They found the sweaty dealers handing out pulp magazines in the small, very small, dealers room to be a little strange, but they accepted it. They didn't discourage me. My parents, of course, are the ones I have to thank chiefly for all of this, they were excellent parents, and I had so many other parents as well. Some of them to this day might not know it. You can't pay back, really, because a lot of these people are too modest. You must pay forward.

This gentleman that I saw, but did not speak to, would have been a little over 6 feet tall. Big shock of hair. A bright expression, a friendly expression. He could look at you with his blue eyes and you'd know instantly this was someone you could talk to. He was a writer; he was a very good writer. In 1959, I think it was, he had been the youngest Guest of Honor at a world science fiction convention. Started writing in 1947. His name was Poul Anderson, and already to me he was a legend.

I first really met Poul, to speak to, for him to recognize me, in 1970 and 1971. I was writing pretty furiously then, but publishing almost nothing. Didn't matter. I could chat with these writers, hang out, get to meet them, and so gradually Poul came into my view. Astrid came into my view too. (laughter). And that was very nice also. And as the years passed by, more and more conventions, more and more discussions, sitting down and talking about black holes with Poul and a number of other people at one convention, you know, regaling pretty young women about naked singularities and all, hanging out with Poul and Karen and watching how they interacted with fans and with each other.

This was the man who had written *The High Crusade*, and for me, two seminal works I had read back to back, *The Broken Sword* and *Tau Zero*, in 1970 and 1971, I'd read those, and I'd realized that was the range that you could have in one human being. You could do Norse tragedy, tell of strange Wagnerian, Scandinavian elves at the same time that you could tell us that we could live forever and survive the end of time in a spaceship based on physics, not magic. What an amazing range. And I think at that point, I realized that I might never have that range, but by god it would be worthwhile to try. If Poul could do it, because Poul looked so modest and unassuming, maybe I could do it too. So I set out to do that.

I loved fantasy. I loved H. P. Lovecraft and Clark





# KANSAS CITY IN 2006

## A BID FOR THE 64TH WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 4, 2006

### Why Kansas City? Why 2006?

- ✦ In 1976, Kansas City hosted the 34th World Science Fiction Convention. A generation of new fans emerged from that experience and spread throughout the midwest, founding clubs and starting conventions, many of which still exist today. We look forward to the opportunity to provide a similar transformative experience to the youth of today and tomorrow, 30 years down the road.
- ✦ Overland Park (one of the many suburbs that make up the greater Kansas City area) is constructing a state-of-the-art convention center that will provide more than enough function space for a WorldCon's needs. Phase One will be finished in 2002, and Phase Two, which will double the size of the Convention Center, follows immediately thereafter, to be completed in 2005. Phase One includes 237,000 square feet of total space, including a 60,000 square foot exhibit hall, a multi-purpose facility with stage that seats 2500 and meeting rooms that can be configured as needed. The attached Sheraton hotel offers a 12,000 square foot ballroom and 13,000 square feet of meeting room space. There is also a 25,000 square foot courtyard between the hotel and convention center for outdoor demonstrations, and 225 covered and 1200 surface parking spaces. All parking spaces, both at the convention center and the hotels, will be free. You can watch the progress from our website, [www.midamericon.org](http://www.midamericon.org). There will be over 1100 rooms connected to or immediately adjacent to the convention center, with a total of over 5,000 rooms within a 10 minute drive. The hotels, convention center, convention and visitors bureau and the city of Overland Park are working together to coordinate shuttle service between the hotels, the convention and nearby shopping and dining areas.
- ✦ Our Bid Committee consists of fans both from the midwest and throughout the country with experience working local and regional conventions, as well as WorldCons. Our local group hosted the Nebula Weekend in 1997 (which went over so well we're doing it again in 2002). Our annual convention, ConQuesT (now in its fourth decade), is renowned as one of the finest (and most fun) cons in the midwest. And members of our committee are also part of the group hosting the 2003 World Horror Convention in Kansas City.
- ✦ Kansas City is in the heart of America; it's a major transportation hub with easy travel connections and a modern, spacious airport. You'll be amazed at how little you'll have to pay for hotel rooms and fine dining in our fair city. The convention center is located directly adjacent to a major interstate and is easily accessible from any direction.
- ✦ Kansas City is famous for its jazz, blues, fine dining, barbecue and its park-like, scenic beauty. There are also many attractions awaiting your discovery, including the Kansas City Zoo, the Harry S Truman Library and Museum, the Nelson-Atkins Museum (with a massive expansion to be completed in 2005), the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, several riverboat casinos, the world-renowned Country Club Plaza shopping district and much more, all within thirty minutes of the convention.

The Bid Committee believes we can make Labor Day weekend 2006 one of the most memorable in WorldCon history. We invite you to join us in the effort by presupporting our bid at one of the four levels explicated below. The benefits listed will be received if you vote and we win. We thank you for your support, and look forward to seeing you in 2006.

<b>Presupport: \$20</b>	<b>Preoppose: \$25</b>	<b>Yardbird: \$50</b>	<b>Count Basie: \$100</b>
supporting membership	supporting membership	attending membership	attending membership
1/2 credit for conversion	1/2 credit for conversion	listing in program book	listing in program book
to attending membership	to attending membership		special seating & more

For Up to Date Information on All Aspects of the Bid, see our Website: [www.midamericon.org](http://www.midamericon.org)

Questions? Comments? Just want to chat? Our email address is: [MidAmeriCon@kc.rr.com](mailto:MidAmeriCon@kc.rr.com)

Make checks (in U.S. funds) payable to Kansas City in 2006 and mail to:

Kansas City 2006, P.O. Box 414175, Kansas City, MO 64141-4175

Ashton Smith and Ray Bradbury and I loved Theodore Sturgeon and I also loved John W. Campbell and Robert Heinlein and Isaac Asimov and Arthur C. Clarke. And especially Arthur C. Clarke. It was like I was constantly swinging back between the two extremes of Arthur C. Clarke and Ray Bradbury, and along the way meeting Poul going both directions, (laughter) and actually being able to hang out with most of these people, to meet them.

In the early 1980s I attended an ABA with my wife, Astrid, and walked across the street beside Robert and Ginnie Heinlein. Mr. Heinlein looked at me, nodded his head, and said, "Pretty good book you wrote there." I'm baffled, wondering "what, who, who, where," you know. Total disbelief that Robert Heinlein himself would read my novel. I believe he was referring to *Strength of Stones*, just published by Ace.

Poul did the same thing to me in 1976 after I had a cover story in *Analog*, and the same reaction — you know, "you're talking to me?" I couldn't really believe that the writers who had inspired me were reading and enjoying what I was writing.

My god. Is that possible? I still don't believe it. I come here, and you see me wandering with a camera on my chest because this is a great chance to get pictures of my favorite writers. (laughter) Sorry guys — I'm still a kid. (applause)

It's easy to be self-important and arrogant, and I have that problem in spades, as Astrid will tell you. But I'll remind you, I'll tell you all, whether you were there or not, fandom raised me, you raised me. All of you. This is a culture.

As I've said before, and I'll continue to say because it is true, this is the most important literary movement, artistic movement, in western literature and western arts and popular culture since the Romantics. And we've lasted and stayed viable decades longer. We are the heirs to the Romantics, but we've carved our own ground. We're the American literary equivalent of jazz, and we dance and we sing and we tap in a way that few can imitate successfully. And our success is something that no one really acknowledges outside of our field, but it's a success that has taught tens of millions, hundreds of millions of people, in the last thirty years, around the world, what a robot is, what warp drive is, what a starship is, what a ray gun is, what a blaster is, what artificial intelligence is, what a clone is, a hobbit, dungeons, dragons, Conan, what all of these things are. What matter transporters are.

In 1968 when I finished my last year in high school, there were maybe one out of ten kids who could have told you what those things were. Now, its ten out of ten. This is worse than Marxism (laughter and applause). The communists are gone but fandom lives on. (more laughter and applause)

When I married Astrid, Poul didn't sit down and lecture me. He didn't sit down and lecture her. I became part of the family. I'd come to dinners and we'd just sit and talk and it always felt odd and wonderful to me. That here was a guy that I could just talk to as a guy, as a friend, but he was

the same man who had helped raise me when I was 13, 14, 15, 16 years old reading the *High Crusade* and reading stories in *Analog* for which he got these beautiful covers by John Schoenherr and Chesley Bonestell. The writer who had a career that I could only dream of was my friend, and we often loosely touched on collaborating, but you know, we never did. I'm not much of a collaborator. Poul has collaborated with many people, including one of his best friends, Gordy Dickson. Gordy is gone this year too.

2001 — a strange year. I regularly send e-mail to Sir Arthur C. Clarke. Given the weight of messages he receives in this year of years, it's a wonder he can respond, but he does. A mutual friend, Karl Anders, visited Sri Lanka and took a couple of photographs that are posted on the con's web site which I think perfectly exemplify the spirit of science fiction. Karl took some of my books to Sir Arthur when he went to Sri Lanka, and snapped pictures of Arthur holding the books on his lap as he's sitting comfortably in his wheelchair, and then Arthur said "Let's show Greg what we really think about his works." and the second photo has Arthur holding up a book and (gestures holding his nose). Look that up on the convention web site. That's being blessed, isn't it? I mean, when you can crack jokes with people like that, or when I can drive down or fly down to Los Angeles, and call up Ray Bradbury and say "Ray, I'm coming to town; can we go out and have lunch?" and he says "Sure," And we get together and we talk like kids. . . We talk like kids. And Ray tells me about the movies that he's making, about the movies that are disappointing him or turning out wonderfully. And I'm saying to myself, "Man, I wish I could talk about any movies at all." It's just his life. He's being perfectly open with me. I've always loved Ray Bradbury. We've been friends for thirty-three years.

I first met Ray Bradbury in 1968. The two points between which my pendulum swings, Arthur C. Clarke and Ray Bradbury, and I met both of them for the first time in 1968.

The same love applied to many different authors snuck up on me with Poul. Poul was quiet. He was charming. He never offended; he never yelled. Some people said he didn't suffer fools gladly, but you know, he suffered a lot of fools. He suffered me. And he got under my skin. It was as if he would always be available to talk to. These writers that I met seemed to be able to live forever, and some of them probably will. Jack Williamson for example. They're our history. They did so many incredible things and pumped so many incredible ideas and philosophies into our culture that to watch them pass has always shaken me.

When John Brunner died at a convention, he stole one of the ideas I wanted to turn into a mainstream novel. About a writer who realizes that his home always was science fiction conventions — that he had to go back there to die. But John didn't plan this, he didn't go there intentionally. It crept up on him. Suddenly he was gone. Other writers passing over the years. I can't go through the list for

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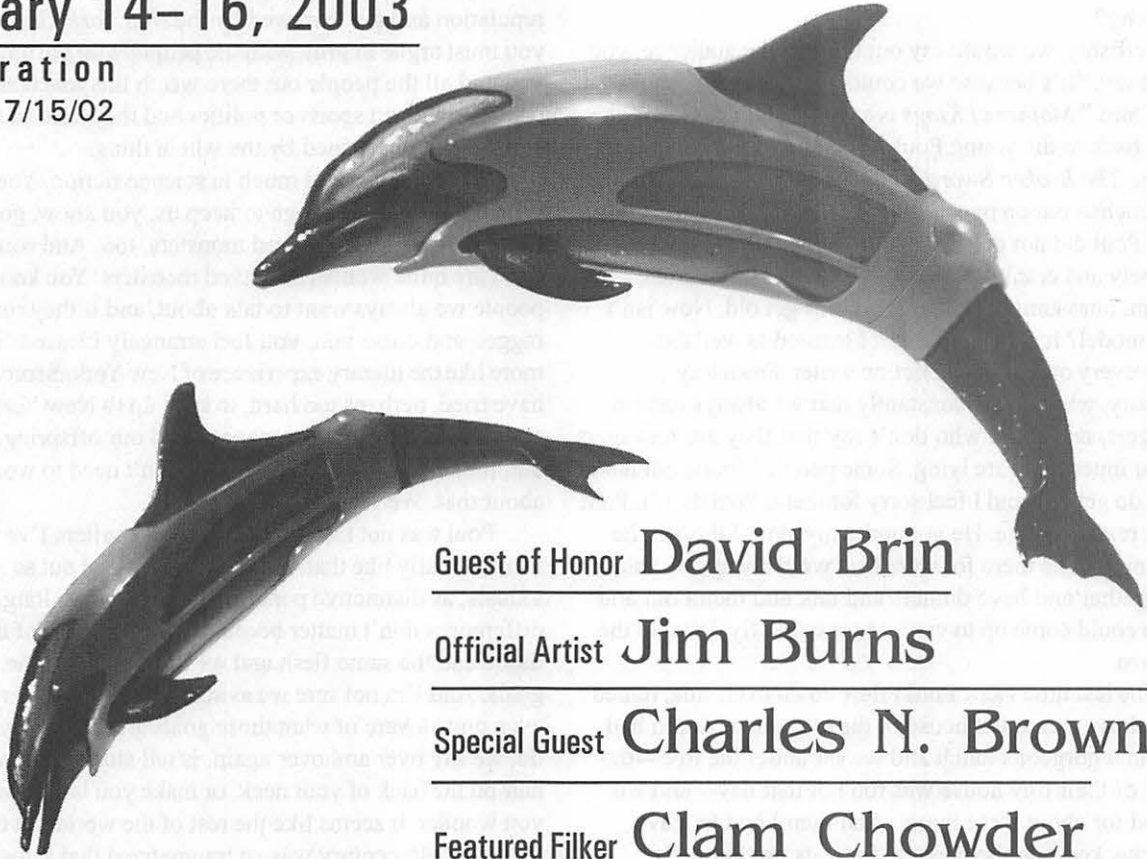
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this year because it's just been dreadful.

Some of them have led long and full lives, but Poul did not live long enough. I blame the Norms for this. I really do. They screwed up. Here's a man who helped make the 21<sup>st</sup> century. He should have lived longer to see what he had done.

Why?

Selfishly, we would say out there in the audience, you would say, "It's because we could get more great books out of him." *Mother of Kings* is a wonderful novel; it's like going back to the young Poul Anderson of the 1950s and reading *The Broken Sword* all over again. It's startling. It's like Sibelius put on paper. It's a startlingly fresh and young book. Poul did not get old in his writing. He did not get crotchety and cranky. He was always the same varied, smooth, unassuming stylist. He didn't get old. Now isn't that a model? It's the model that I learned as well from nearly every other science fiction writer. From Ray Bradbury, who told us constantly that we always remain teenagers, and those who don't say that they are teenagers in their inner brain are lying. Some people I found out later really do get old, and I feel sorry for them. Poul didn't. Poul didn't really change. He got under my skin. I thought he was going to be there forever. That we'd always be able to get together and have dinners and talk and then Poul and Karen could come up to visit, or we could fly down to the Bay area.

The last time I saw Poul I flew down to Orinda, rented a car, drove out to the house in the afternoon. Karen had laid out a gorgeous lunch and we sat under the tree—the inside of their tiny house was too hot that day—and we chatted for about three hours. And then I had to leave. Poul checked into the hospital for tests not long after. Weeks passed, and the news got worse.

And it was a phone call, or a couple of phone calls and Astrid had to fly down there and all of a sudden he was gone.

It is as if a huge silence fell over us. I'll tell you one thing. He touched us all. He was mainstream in our hearts and minds.

The work of all of these authors is part of American flesh and bone now. We have won. We have won an incredible cultural war to tell people that the future is important. That you must be there to criticize and yell and stomp and scream and enthuse and be alive. That you have to live the future before you can make it. You have to imagine it and dream it. And Poul did that for us. In a quiet way he punched his way through. He was one of the strongest science fiction writers that we have had. And he did it so quietly. And it embarrasses me to say I am not like that. I am more arrogant and more headstrong and more forward, and most of my friends, the Killer B's, are the same way.

And Poul is still the quiet and unassuming voice of science fiction welcoming us all. How many conventions have you been to where Poul and Karen were there,

friendly, accessible, greeting, not self important, not neurotic about their presence, about their established place in the field. So many of the science fiction writers were and are like this. And you must understand how different this is from other areas of literature where you have to fight and scratch and claw and biff people in drunken rages to get a reputation and get reviewed by the *New York Times*, where you must argue in print with the people who are most like you and all the people out there watch this much as they watch American sports or politics and they kind of feel cynical and cheapened by the whole thing.

You don't see that much in science fiction. You see a little bit of it. Just enough to keep us, you know, gossiping. (laugh) We have our sacred monsters, too. And some of them are quite wonderful sacred monsters. You know the people we always want to talk about, and if they run you ragged and curse you, you feel strangely blessed. That's more like the literary experience of New York. Some of us have tried, perhaps too hard, to suck up to New York literary culture, to offer up our saints and our offspring, crying out, look here, we are worthy. We don't need to worry about that. We've won.

Poul was not like that. Most of the writers I've met weren't really like that. All the writers stand out as individuals, as distinctive personalities, but in the long run, our differences don't matter because we are all part of the same tissue and the same flesh and we have many of the same goals. And I'm not sure we as science fiction writers are even quite aware of what those goals are. All we want to do, we say over and over again, is tell stories that raise the hair on the back of your neck, or make you laugh, or make you wonder. It seems like the rest of the world out there in the twentieth century was so traumatized that it lost its sense of wonder and started to feel instead a sense of dread and fear, and the thought of change terrified people, quite rightly. Science fiction fans are naive. We don't always understand that change can mean death and sickness and disease and trauma. We don't get that really. It's not part of our tissue to understand that. The outside world knew that and so it acted as a kind of foil while we grew up. It ignored us in the 30s, the 40s, the 50s. It ignored us and despised us and when it met with us it didn't understand what we were talking about and that was great because we could grow in the womb unbothered, being ignored, developing our own tropes and our own fashions and our own ideas, and suddenly when we were born, perhaps in the 1960s, and spread out everywhere, we found that people like Robert Heinlein had gone before and Isaac Asimov and Arthur C. Clarke and Harlan Ellison and Gene Roddenberry had gone before and Ray Bradbury had gone before and sown the ground with thousands and thousands of infants springing up to read the books, to watch the movies, to make the movies, to write the books.

Poul Anderson was there. He did it quietly. He wrote almost up to the end. The room in Orinda where he wrote



for over 40 years I last saw a month ago. Snapped pictures of it. Couldn't believe he wasn't there. The bed had been taken out. He died in that room, where he had written most of his books and stories. The photographs of his grandchildren, my son and daughter, Erik and Alexandra, were still on the walls. Some of his artifacts passed on from his grandfather, his grandmother, pictures of his grandmother, a lot of textbooks, a lot of research materials, beautifully printed and illustrated sagas in Danish, history books, science books, well-thumbed reference books like Dole's *Habitable Planets for Man*, and his own books sitting in shelves under the window, with a huge broadsword hanging nearby. Being in that room was like looking into the heart of Poul Anderson. It was a very pleasant, small study, out of which sprang starships and aliens and elves.

When I wrote my own books, the fantasy novels, *The Infinity Concerto* and *The Serpent Mage*, I borrowed Poul's elves. He taught me what elves really were. I borrowed them, and some people came back later and said to me these elves weren't like other fantasy elves, they were more like aliens, and I said to myself, "But isn't that the way elves would really be? Aren't elves inscrutable and powerful beings that should scare the pants off you if they meet you in the dark?" Really, I think they are. Poul taught me that. Poul influenced me in that way and so many others.

Poul influenced me when I wrote my hard science fiction. I wanted to make a movie out of *Tau Zero*. In 1977, when I turned in a piece for the *Los Angeles Times* calendar section on this movie that was coming out, that had come out, that had really done very well at the box office, I wrote a short article explaining some of the possible predecessors and inspirations for new film, *Star Wars*, everything from Jack Williamson to Doc Smith to Robert Heinlein and Asimov, and suddenly I started getting phone calls from studios, and they wanted me to come in and explain why they had rejected *Star Wars*. (laughter)

I heard the rumor that the people at Universal Studios, the story editors, who had taken meetings with George Lucas and had rejected his proposal, had all been fired. And so, Dino de Laurentiis Productions wanted me to explain to them why they hadn't bought *Star Wars*. I couldn't explain that to them.

But then they said, "Can you tell us what other movie we should do?" and I said "How about *Tau Zero*?" So I called up Poul, and I said, "Would you let me present this to them?" and Poul, very naively said "Yes, sure." So I took in a proposal to them and just as they had turned down *Star Wars*, they turned down *Tau Zero*. I took in *The House on the Borderland*, by William Hope Hodgson and they didn't like that either and finally in my exasperation, I realized they were just kind of playing with me, just having fun. I was getting fed well in good Beverly Hills restaurants around Rodeo Drive. But I had not come prepared. At 27 years old, I didn't have a screenplay under my arm; I

wasn't made for this. And they asked, "What *other* movie would you make from any science fiction novel, if you could make just one?"

And I said, "You know, I think Alexander Jodorowski has let *Dune* go. I think it's available now." So they made *Dune*. (laughter)

Now Brian (Herbert) tells me they'd actually bought the book before that, but I haven't established this to my complete (satisfaction) — they didn't say they'd bought it. They didn't say "oh we already own the rights to that." Maybe I was just confirming what they'd already done, but you know that was pretty interesting. They didn't make any of my books.

*Tau Zero* is now being taken around Los Angeles. A number of very interesting people really want to do something by Poul. *Brain Wave* is quite popular. *Brain Wave* was Poul's first major novel. It's a Jimmy Stewart movie. It's a Tom Hanks movie. It's a Tim Robbins movie. It's about animals that get smart and dumb people that get smart. It could be a wonderful film. It's Frank Capra meets Steven Spielberg in a lot of ways and yet it's a very convincing novel. It's just gritty and convincing and real and totally sympathetic and in the end, loving. *Brain Wave* could get made, any minute. Who knows? Because many of the people who are in the studios now, many of the people who write the screenplays, and nearly all of the good directors are science fiction fans. They may not come to conventions, because you know when you're worth two or three hundred million dollars you can't just hang out at a convention. You've got places to go and people to see.

You're caught up in the angst of maintaining your career. But when you pierce some of our best filmmakers to their heart and ask, what do you love? What do you want



Poul Anderson

to do? People like James Cameron, and George Lucas and Stanley Kubrick and Steven Spielberg, and we could go on and on. Alex Proyas, I could be leaving people out, Luc Besson, Jan De Bont, Steve Norrington, and all of these people. What they say is “we want to do a good science fiction movie”. They say it in many accents, because we’ve spread our words and ideas all over the planet.

I’ve had my 21st or 22nd translation. I don’t know how many languages Poul was translated into. But it was at least as many as he had Hugos and Nebulas and Gandalfs and everything else out there. He had awards that aren’t being given out anymore. The shelf of awards stretched so long a lot of them had to be stored in the garage.

Humility was taught to me as I looked at Poul’s shelf of awards, and as my pitiful few were beginning to stack up. And even at the last count, he was beating me out. I don’t know how many he had in all.

So I’m going to try to get some of those movies made.

The people I grew up with are now making movies. Fellow science fiction readers and fans are making movies. When I was 16 years old, another young man attending Baycon, whom I had met earlier when I first attended a speech by Ray Bradbury, was Phil Tippett. I wanted to be a stop motion animation fellow like Ray Harryhausen, but Phil showed me his sculptures of dinosaurs made in clay and wax and bronze, and I said forget it. Just forget it.

Over the years, Phil went on to do everything from *Star Wars* to *Jurassic Park* to *Starship Troopers*. He now employs 200 people in his studio in Berkeley. Phil and his wife Jules make so many movies I can’t keep up with them.

The science fiction field expands out from the friends of Poul Anderson. Jack Vance for example. Elegant writer. Influential writer. Read by people like Jimmy Hendrix. Who then influenced people like Paul Allen. Whose favorite writer is Jack Vance. Most of the billionaires that we’ve been fortunate enough to meet in Seattle are science fiction fans. We get invited through Neal Stephenson, and George Dyson to go to Jeff Bezos’s house for a party celebrating their finished manuscripts. I look at the book shelves in Mr. Bezos’s library and there’s a couple of yards of science fiction books.

The politicians read science fiction. Gregory Benford tells me that Harry Truman loved reading pulp science fiction magazines for relaxation. It’s in Truman’s memoirs.

Many of the scientists at Los Alamos, New Mexico, had subscriptions to *Analog*, or rather to *Astounding* magazine. That’s how Cleve Cartmill got in trouble. And you know how he got in trouble? You can read this in Gregory Benford’s essay in my collection *New Legends*. “Old Legends” he calls it. They got in trouble because their issues of *Astounding* arrived. There was a story by Cleve Cartmill in there, and they talked about it in the cabin after their long day at work. People like Edward Teller and Feynman. They talked about the science fiction they had read, about this story about nuclear fission, and the FBI

agent sitting in the shadows in the corner perked up, and started taking notes and sweating bullets and saying “Oh my god. It’s out there. Who let this loose?” And they went and knocked on John W. Campbell’s door, and they said “Can you explain this, Mr. Campbell?” And I think he quietly explained it and (I paraphrase, and reconstruct) said “It’s been going in science fiction since 1914. *World Set Free*, H. G. Wells. There it is. Go look at it gentlemen. I didn’t do this and you want me to stop publishing stories about nuclear fission?” And they said “Oh no no no. Never mind. Never mind.” And John W. Campbell had set Cleve Cartmill out as a belted sheep to see if there were any eagles waiting to strike, and when they came back and struck, he said “Ah, they’re building an atom bomb.” I just *KNOW* he said this. (laughter) He had that kind of mind. (applause)

That means that science fiction has known sin, too. Because both Heisenberg and Leo Szilard when they were faced with this distinct possibility of nuclear fission being used to make a bomb, they said, “I think it will be more like what H. G. Wells wrote in *The World Set Free*.” (written in 1913 and 1914, just on the cusp of the first world war). Wells got it right. He got so many things right. So many of our writers have got things right, but they don’t get them exactly right. We’re not prophets. We’re not here to inform the rich people of the world on how to make more money, or to inform governments on how to direct themselves. We are here to allow you to dream your dreams and make them happen, and have your nightmares a little in advance so you can prevent them from happening.

That’s what we do. It’s an incredibly powerful function, when you realize that we have gone out and touched the lives of so many people. All of you out here, by contributing to the culture of science fiction fandom, you are, in a very real sense the center of the universe. On this planet. You have done something that historians will be discussing, once they get their act together, for centuries.

Jerry Pournelle had Poul and Gregory Benford and Larry Niven, and a number of us, Dean Ing and a number of other writers, Robert Heinlein (Larry should remind me who the rest of them were). Bjo Trimble was there with her daughter, Lora. Lot of science fiction writers getting together with generals, rocket scientists young and old, new and experienced, and people from NASA, and politicians and discussing this possibility that perhaps nuclear war was going to become a push button affair where computers would make the decision, and no one could tolerate that and we had to start building defensive shields. So we started putting together different ideas, General Danny Graham had one vision and some of the writers had another. And they had a science fiction fan for a president; his name was Ronald Reagan.

Now we laugh. Do you want your presidents to be smart? Do you want them to be dreamers? Or do you want them to be lucky? Because this thing that went forth that



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Jackie Casada, Library Journal 11/15/2000

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R. N. Stephenson, <http://www.altair-australia.com/reviews4/htm>

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...all in all, this is a more-than-worthwhile tale set on a planet that makes the TV "Survivors" look as if they were hanging out in Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood. I read it in print-on-demand format with an attractive, thoroughly professional-looking 4-color cover.

Georgess McHargue, <http://www.mcquark.com/fiction2.htm>

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Ronald Reagan did was the vastest bluff in the blue bottom baboon history of the whole cold war. Ronald Reagan said we could put a whole umbrella over the United States and protect you, and he said it to Gorbachev, and Gorbachev said, "My God. My god. They're Americans. They may be right." And Gorbachev himself apparently, has indicated this was a major factor in him folding his cards, and going home.

Science fiction writers helped the rocket scientists elucidate their vision, clarified it. They put it together in prose that Ronald Reagan could understand and Ronald Reagan, who read science fiction, said "why not?" and he was lucky and so, that thing that had terrified me as a child, surviving the Cuban missile crisis, that thing that we had all thought would go on into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, that I had written about continuing into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the ever present shadow of nuclear war, all of that, suddenly wasn't really there any more. And in *Terminator 2*, James Cameron had to have one of his characters say, "Well, aren't we friends with the Russians?" We really kind of are. There are so many science fiction readers who are Russians. When Ray Bradbury was in a reception line, waiting to meet Gorbachev and Raisa, when he got up there, Gorbachev looked at his name tag, and the interpreter said his name, and Gorbachev says "RAY BRADBURY!" He says: "Raisa, this is our daughter's favorite author!" And they gave him a big hug, and every time Gorbachev comes into LA, he wants to get together with Ray Bradbury.

Ok. One-ups-manship. Arthur C. Clarke gets to meet the Pope. (laughter) Isaac Asimov got to meet everybody. Newt Gingrich one time, walked into Isaac's New York apartment. Now Isaac was a New York, very liberal Jew, and Newt Gingrich was this guy from Georgia who's about to wreak havoc with the US Congress and President Clinton and everything, but at that point he was a freshman Congressman and he was just in heaven to be in Asimov's apartment. We've got to get more democrats to read science fiction. They tend to read mysteries. And James Bond. That was what Roosevelt and Kennedy liked to read — mysteries and James Bond.

So my politics over the years have been kind of indefinable, because I've been taught from so many different directions, by so many different people, so many different realities and views of how politics works. I watched Jerry Pournelle wangle this thing, along with a lot of other people of course, into a political reality that really did help to shut down the Cold War. I had a very small part in that. I can't claim real credit for it. It wasn't my original vision. But I helped. We all helped. Science fiction fandom helped.

Because we had laid the groundwork for the impressions the Russians got of America that we could do anything. That we could build rockets. We could go to the moon. We could beat them in a moon race, hands down. We couldn't beat them into space first. They were very, very good and they still are. But we inspired the Russians,

and Russian science fiction inspired the Russians. And American science fiction finally took over the Russian. Getting to sit down with Doris Lessing and the Strugatsky brothers at Brighton in 1987, I believe it was or 88, was really impressive because Doris Lessing, one of the great writers in the literary circles, was a science fiction fan. She was writing science fiction. The Strugatsky brothers, we would sit there, and discuss whether or not science fiction was really about story telling or in a sense a satire, and trying to bring about change. And they were quite convinced that it was a secret message that would slip past the Politburo and effect change, and they were right, in Russia it did. But American science fiction hit the Politburo hard, as we know now. It hit the nomenclature. They were watching our science fiction movies. We had influence. We, who were not really appreciated by the *New York Times*, changed history. Who's written that story? It's not out there yet. So, in a sense, science fiction has redeemed itself from the sin that it knew when it informed the nuclear scientists back in the 1940s that a bomb could be built. We helped shut down that particular nightmare; it's not completely gone. We can still write scenarios. Tom Clancy still has a career. (laughter)

But for a minute there he was very scared. And so was I. What are we going to write about? What are we going to do next? Ok, we changed the world. There's the ending to the famous novel which was made into a famous movie which I believe goes back to an old fannish saying. I believe it was Claude Degler, who said "We have a cosmic mind. What do we do now?" And of course, the ending of 2001 is really that line rewritten. [Actually, this was a sarcastic response written on a postcard to Degler by Jack Speer. — Joe Siclari] [Jack Speer was at the convention — more continuity! — Greg]

What do we do now? It's the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It's 2001. It's official, no matter how populist you are. It really is the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The 20<sup>th</sup> century is past. Science fiction was essentially made by H.G. Wells, and a fair number of other people in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We must look back of course to Verne, and to Twain, and to all the people who wrote science fiction going back to Mary Shelley. They were seminal. But H. G. Wells was our Shakespeare. He laid down all of the forms.

Why don't we get credit for helping to shape the 20th century? Quite possibly, because H. G. Wells, who was a friend of Henry James for many years, published a book in 1915 called *Boon*, a satirical, anonymous novel in which he examined the literary lights around him with really sharp, precise, parody. And Henry James decided he'd had quite enough of this upstart who sold millions more books than he did. And Wells wasn't really capable of understanding his own motivations and this man who had helped to raise him as a writer, and so they had a fight. The literary world came down on the side of Henry James because it was after all, World War I, and science fiction was young, but sci-



ence was killing people on the fields of France. Poison gas was invented by a Nobel Prize winning German chemist, etc., etc. World War I killed millions, millions. Not as may as the flu did, but almost. And they blamed science. Can't really blame humanity. You know, who shoots people? The guns or the people behind them? The literary people blamed the scientists to a great extent, and cut themselves away and we witnessed the birth of C.P. Snow's *The Two Cultures*, the separation between privileged upper classes who truly feared change, the academic classes who tended to espouse Marxism but adored upper-class literature... an incredible mix of antagonisms and contradictions arrayed against our nascent culture.

So we go back, circling back now, to where science fiction was left alone for a while to develop a new voice, a new flavor, a new rhythm, a new approach. A light approach in many cases. And not a particularly arrogant approach. We were not interested in style, and in many cases, character wasn't even particularly interesting. This was the literature of ideas. It was ideally suited to hit young people hard. Because young people don't really understand who people are either, they don't understand who they are, but ideas, visions, dreams and nightmares they get implicitly. It's what they're born to get. They feed off of them. So we were better than the Catholic church at converting the world. Because our dreams were bright dreams. Our hells were avoidable. We didn't have to do strange, ritualistic things to get out of the perils that we foresaw in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Sometimes we could solve them with ballpoint pens and paper clips. What a vision: ingenuity. Brains, imagination and a sense of a loving appreciation of the life you are given was instilled through science fiction, injected into so many minds, including mine.

The histories written in the 21<sup>st</sup> century of the 20<sup>th</sup> century must include this and it will include examinations of the sociology of this; it will include examinations of how this all came to be in much the same way that people go back now and look at the origins of the Romantic movement and the poets and the brilliant geniuses who worked there. I was raised by you all in a really incredible time.

People will say that the golden age was the 1940s and 1950s, but Damon Knight is right; the golden age is 13. (laughter/applause)

So how do I pay it forward? I pay it forward by occasionally in a sane number of intervals over a number of years teaching at Clarion West and talking with incredible people who are now going forward and publishing their own books and, man, am I proud of that. I don't take credit for it, but you know, I had a little hand in it. I was there. A lot of the writers of my generation were there. We're doing a pretty good job. We're hitting the *New York Times* list; probably in a few years the *New York Times* will have to separate out the science fiction and fantasy list into its own list, which J. K. Rowling forced them to do.

The *New York Times* published an article on J. K.

Rowling in which they said "We don't really understand where this woman came from, possibly from Tolkien . . . But you know," they said, rather approvingly, but grudgingly, "Bruno Bettelheim in the 1960s gave us the freedom to read fairy tales, so maybe this is all good after all." They seem to have missed *Star Wars*, and *Xena*, and Robert E. Howard and Conan and all the comic books and the *X-men* and 10,000 movies and 10,000 TV shows which had set the stage for J. K. Rowling to come in and just sweep the audience away. Rowling did a good job, and you know what, she had fun. The audience had fun. We have fun. So let me end this on a quote that I've never actually confirmed, and if you like we can have some questions after.

Another very good author, John Barth, and someone correct me if they know the truth of this, but not right now. (laughter) John Barth said, "Science fiction writers. They are not like you and I. They have more fun."

Thank God for that! (Applause).

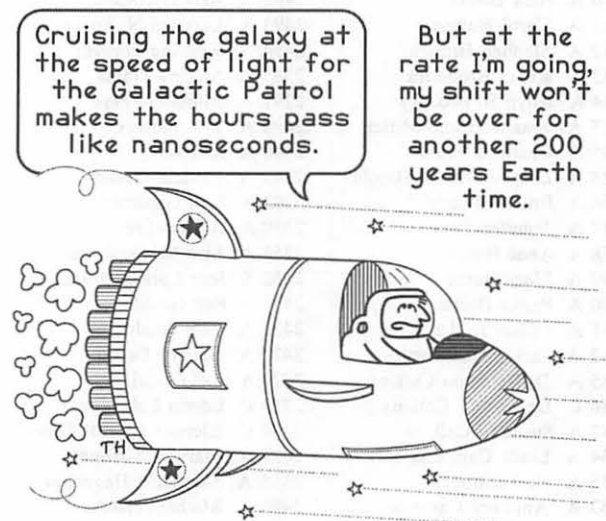
(cont. from p. 7)

contribution to popular culture.

Rambo.

No, he did not wander through the Pennsylvania wilderness with a sweatband, guns and ammo, mumbling incoherently and shooting at anything that moved. But one of Phil's students was David Morrell. David wrote a number of novels over the years, including one called *First Blood*. *First Blood* featured a dark protagonist named Rambo who became a vigilante, later made famous by Sylvester Stallone. Morrell wrote in a later edition of *First Blood*: "...if not for the CBS Evening News, if not for Rimbaud, my wife, and the name of an apple, if not for Philip Klass and my determination to be a fiction writer, a recent edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* wouldn't have cited this novel as the source for the creation of a word."

Phil's teaching and writing will continue to influence generations of readers and writers. Talk to Phil at Noreascon 4 — there may be a little Rambo in you too.



## Noreascon 4 New Members joining between 11/2001 and 4/30/2002

**A = attending**  
**S = supporting**  
**C = child**

2317 A	AAHZ	2464 A	Susan Carpenter	2497 A	Gwyneth G. Hannaford	2371 A	Catherine Langrehr
2432 A	David Adams	2465 A	Annette Carrico	2498 A	Henry C. Harrison	2301 A	Dave Le Van
2419 A	Peter Addicks Jr.	2466 A	Harrison Carter	2628 A	Richard Harter	2302 A	Nancy Le Van
2318 A	Lisa Adler-Golden	2467 A	Bill Cavin	2636 A	Doug Hazen	2372 A	Steven Lee
2319 A	Aaron Agassi	2468 A	Stephen L. Cherry	2293 A	Bronwen M. Heap	2426 C	Gabriel Lefton
2433 S	Robert Alivojvodic	2469 A	Randy Cleary	2499 A	Jeff Hecht	2427 A	Jacob Wolf Lefton
2434 A	Deb Allen	2470 A	Carolyn Cocklin	2500 A	Susan Herzberg	2428 A	Talia Rebecca Lefton
2420 A	Duncan W. Allen	2471 A	Bob Colby	2294 A	Elizabeth Hess	2535 A	Alexandria Levine
2435 C	Ryan Allen	2336 A	Larry M. Cole	2356 A	Richard Hill	2373 A	Benjamin M. Levy
2436 C	Nathan Alvord	2337 A	Adam Connell	2501 A	Nancy T. Hilton	2303 A	Steve Lewis
2437 A	Andrea Amitrano	2472 S	Norman L. Cook	2502 A	Jan Hise	2630 A	Ben Liberman
2320 A	Thomas A. Amoroso	2338 A	Tracey Cornogg	2618 A	Beth A. Hoffman	2374 A	Julia Liberman
2438 A	Christopher L. Amshey	2473 A	Guest of John Costello	2357 A	Melissa Honig	2536 A	Bob Lidral
2281 A	Alison Anderson	2474 A	Donna Cox	2503 A	Aren J. Horowitz	2375 A	Marcia Litt
2321 C	Anders Anderson	2288 A	John G. Cramer	2504 A	Eli Horowitz	2304 A	Carol A. London
2322 A	Axel C. Anderson III	2289 A	Pauline B. Cramer	2505 A	Joan Q. Horowitz	2305 A	Kenneth London
2323 A	Axel P. Anderson	2339 A	Laurel R. Cunningham-Hill	2506 A	Miriam J. Horowitz	2376 A	Bradford Lyau
2282 A	Doug Anderson	2475 A	David D'Antonio	2507 A	Nathan Horowitz	2537 A	Kerry Lynch
2439 A	Gunther Anderson	2340 A	Alan Dashoff	2508 A	Simon J. Horowitz	2538 A	Norman Lynch
2324 A	Janet C. Anderson	2341 A	Bonnie Davis	2509 A	J. Holly Horsman	2619 A	Michelle Malkin
2325 A	Paul Anderson	2342 S	Brian A. Davis	2510 A	Betsy Hosler	2539 A	Richard Mandrachio
2440 A	Sue Anderson	2476 A	Richard De La Casa	2511 A	Cathy Hranek	2377 S	Nyani-Iisha L. Martin
2441 A	Steve Andraschko	2342 S	Gina DeSimone	2512 C	Karen Hranek	2540 A	Michael Matthew
2442 A	Joey Angeli	2477 A	Darcy Champion Devney	2513 C	Michael Hranek	2541 A	Sandra McDonald
2443 A	Cokie Bailey	2478 A	Samantha Dings	2514 A	Jenwa Hsung	2542 A	Julie McGalliard
2444 A	Craig Bakke	2479 A	Karen L. Dolley	2295 A	Sharon M. Huff	2378 A	Hannah McLaughlin
2283 S	Chris Ballowe	2480 A	Alexandre Donald	2358 A	Steve Hughes	2379 A	Sean M. Mead
2445 A	Brian Bambrough	2481 A	Eleanor Dorn	2359 A	Suzanne Hughes	2306 A	Leslie Meiselman
2326 A	Bonnie Barlow-Turner	2343 C	Mike Dorn	2515 A	Lisa M. Hunt	2543 A	Annette R. Merkel
2327 A	Richard E. Bartlett	2344 A	Carol Downing	2516 A	Walter H. Hunt	2544 C	Julia M. Merkel
2446 A	Paul Bean	2482 A	Gary L. Dryfoos	2425 C	Benjamin James	2545 C	Phillip J. Merkel
2328 A	Andrew Benson	2345 A	Donna M. Dube	2517 A	Elizabeth Janes	2380 A	David Messina
2329 A	Melinda Berkman	2483 A	Sarah Duff	2518 A	Bill Jarosz	2381 A	Dale Miller
2447 A	Woody Bernardi	2484 A	Thomas A. Easton	2360 S	Pedro Jorge Romero	2382 A	Tamlyn Penndragon Miller
2448 A	Nancy J. Biancamano	2485 A	Matthew Ender	2361 S	Earl Josserand	2546 A	Guest of Patrick Molloy
2449 A	Mark Bissell	2486 A	Lynn Evans	2296 A	Keith G. Kato	2547 A	Alexandra Morgan
2330 A	Johanna Bobrow	2487 A	Sandy Farrow	2519 A	Alexx Kay	2383 A	David Morgen
2331 A	Cassandra Boell	2625 A	Guest of Kenneth Fields	2520 A	Linda Tiernan Kepner	2384 A	Jacqueline Mae Morgen
2332 A	Ruth N. Bolton	2626 A	Kenneth Fields	2521 C	Quinn Kepner	2385 A	Marla Tanzman Morgen
2284 S	Bernadette Bosky	2290 A	Stephen C. Fisher	2522 A	Terry Kepner	2386 C	Taylor Morgen
2450 A	Alex Boster	2488 A	Mary Fishler-Fisk	2297 A	Guest of Deborah A King	2307 A	Pat Morrissey
2451 A	Carol Botteron	2489 A	Deborah Fleurant	2298 A	Guest 2 of Deborah King	2548 A	Karen Muir
2452 A	Stephen Brinich	2490 A	Erin Fleurant	2362 A	Guest 3 of Deborah King	2549 A	John M. Mulhern
2453 A	Kevin Broderick	2491 A	John Fleurant	2363 A	Guest 4 of Deborah King	2620 A	Eric Mumpower
2454 A	Allyn B. Brodsky	2492 A	Kristin Fogard	2524 A	Guest 5 of Deborah King	2550 A	Mark Murray
2333 A	Joanne Bruno-Miller	2493 A	Leonard N. Foner	2525 C	Haley King	2551 S	Kennett Neily
2455 A	Charlene Brusso	2494 A	Kristina Forsyth	2526 A	Sabine Kirstein	2429 A	Leah O'Connor
2624 A	Lois McMaster Bujold	2347 A	Marina Frants	2527 A	Kathy Kittredge	2387 A	Antony M. Orlandella
2456 A	Erik L. Bunce	2291 A	Marianne Frye	2364 A	Peter Knapp	2388 S	Joan Manel Ortiz
2457 A	Jennifer Bunce	2495 A	T. J. Furniss	2365 A	Robert H. Knox	2552 A	Susan Osthaus
2458 A	Anne Burke	2348 A	Ken Gale	2366 A	Steve Knox	2308 A	Nina Pantazis
2459 A	Mary Burke	2349 A	Patricia Geisler	2528 A	Edward F. Koenig	2309 A	Stephen Pasechnick
2460 A	Peggy Burke	2292 A	Paul Giguere	2299 A	Janet Kofoed	2553 A	David E. Paul
2461 A	Lillian Butler	2350 A	Bill Giuffre	2300 A	Karl Kofoed	2554 A	Donald E. Paul
2462 A	Jack Butterworth	2351 A	Lisa M. Goldstein	2529 A	David Kramer	2389 A	Jennifer Pelland
2285 A	D. Cameron Calkins	2352 S	Jose Luis Gonzalez	2530 C	Jessica Kramer	2555 A	Roger Perkins
2286 C	Deanna C. Calkins	2421 A	Ben Gould	2531 A	Susan Kramer	2310 A	Sheila M. Perry
2287 A	Susan E. Calkins	2422 A	Beth Gould	2532 A	Herman J. Krauland	2556 A	Daryl L. Phillips
2334 A	Linda Campana	2423 A	Daphne Gould	2367 A	Bryan Krauthamer	2557 A	James Pilvinis
2335 A	Neal Carney	2424 A	Joel Gould	2629 A	Ralph Kristiansen	2558 A	Kelly Pitman
2463 A	Anthony Caronna	2353 C	Edwin Luke Grace	2533 A	Joseph F. Krull Jr.	2559 A	Mark D. Pitman
		2354 C	Eleanor Carroll Grace	2368 A	Karen H. Kruzycka	2560 A	Shirley Babine Pitman
		2627 A	Mary A. Grosner	2369 A	Joseph Kubinski	2311 A	Pamela Pittman
		2355 A	Marianne Hageman	2534 A	Robert Kuhn	2561 A	Barbara Place
		2496 A	Michael Hanna	2370 A	Stephanie M. Kwadrans	2562 A	Rickland Powell







# Bruce Pelz

August 11, 1936 – May 9, 2002

Fan Extrodinaire  
Fellow Committee Member  
Friend

## Our Memories of Bruce Pelz

**Suford Lewis:** I met Brucifer in 1960. That's when I joined LASFS, but for a number of years I just knew who he was. I wasn't exactly in his set; as a female dating three other LASFS members (four if you count Ron Ellik), I was more easily recruited to trace art onto stencil and get introduced into costume fandom by Bjo. At that time, Bruce was very enthusiastic about *Silverlock* by John Myers Myers and avid to decode all the arcane references in it. He got everybody trying to identify the works they had come from – who knows how many fans were motivated to read “real literature” on this account. This led to enthusiasms for related matters – epics, *Gilgamesh* in particular, and ballads. I remember a gathering with Bruce at its center. Bruce was singing “Gaudy Days,” a poem from *Silverlock* to a tune by Poul Anderson. Now, I am almost certain that other people were singing and at least one playing a guitar, but I only remember Bruce's expression and the sound of his voice.

At this point I had been reading science fiction for 8 years, had a near complete collection of Ace doubles, all the *Astounding/Analog* issues that had come out in those years plus some copies of *If*, *F&SF*, and *Galaxy*. I was a member of the SF Book Club. I read everything that came out (in those days this was still possible). So, of course, I had to have a copy of *Silverlock*. However, “everything that came out” meant in paperback. My quest for *Silverlock* introduced me to hardcovers and used book stores. Bruce's enthusiasm was that contagious. And he had also recruited me to filk fandom.

These were the days of eclectic fandom. It was a virtue to be a fan of everything. Bruce set this standard.

He was a fanzine fan and an APA fan. At one point he was a contributor to every APA that existed. He was a costume fan. I did not go to Discon in 1963, but his Fafhrd there was famous. It was said that Bruce would do anything for a costume. For Fafhrd he dyed his hair and beard blond. For another he tied up one leg. And for Gertrude of Gormengast he first cultivated a particularly luxuriant beard then shaved it off the hour before the masquerade. I still remember looking at him in the lineup and wondering who “that old lady” was. Nobody guessed it was Bruce.

When the novels of Georgette Heyer burst upon the fannish scene, Bruce was an early adopter. He was also an early participant in the Regency dances that grew out of the Heyer Teas. I remember one Worldcon when Bruce and I were partners for Childgrove – a dance I am fond of because it is so flirtatious. We had just danced our way up the set and were standing out to re-enter going down, when Bruce suggested we swap with the couple standing out of the set next to us and dance down their set. I thought it was a great idea. We had no trouble persuading the other couple. Only because it is seldom done, is this even the slightest bit shocking, but it felt deliciously wicked at the time and we thoroughly enjoyed our boldness all the way down the other set. Bruce liked a good time and often had some novel (wicked) idea to make a good thing better. He had panache.

One of the challenges of Regency dancing is The Waltz. If you only dance twice a year – maybe four times if you hit a lot of regionals as well as Worldcon – it is hard to get really facile at the waltz. In the 70s Bruce had his own tactic – he didn't bother waltzing. Others might struggle with the “one-two-three, one-two-three, one-two-three” he just walked through it: “one, one, one” It works fine. John Hertz *may* have been able to teach him to waltz later, but Bruce had his own solution.

The 70s saw the founding of P. I. G. S., the Prestigious International Gourmand Society. Bruce was a

founding member. The 70s also saw the rise of convention fandom and the coining of the term SMOF. In those early days, there was controversy over who was *The Secret Master of Fandom*: Tony Lewis, Bruce Pelz or Charlie Brown. Bruce had his own solution to this mystery and his car soon sported the vanity plate: SMOF2. What could be a better camouflage? Was he really *The Secret Master* pretending to be #2 or was he saying to Tony and Charlie “Let’s you and him fight”? SMOF evolved into a general term, but it started out meaning the power behind all fandom – a “One Ring to Rule Them All” fannish conspiracy theory, before the rise of conspiracy theories and the Illuminati.

In 1980 Bruce was Fan GoH at Noreascon II. The question arose what can we do to honor Bruce? “I know,” quoth I, “we can help him finish and publish his Tarot deck!” The natural answer to which was “His *what?*” For almost ten years Bruce had been collecting artwork from various fan and pro artists to make a Tarot deck. Over the years it had acquired a new court card – the Lady – due to Bruce deciding that it needed one, and two new *Major Arcana* via artist inspiration. By 1978 it was still unfinished as a collection and no publication plans existed. What a great project! Little did we know... I took over the administration of gathering the originals, a contract was written covering the artists’ share of proceeds of sale and we went looking for a printer. It was finished only just barely in time for the convention. Two full pallet loads (roughly a ton) arrived after some confusion in delivery destination. Then it was discovered that most of the decks were mis-sorted – a result of haste by the printer. Since the cards were printed on a single sheet then cut, there was no question of all complete decks existing, but there were 4000 of them. Bruce and a number others spent Thursday and Friday night resorting a thousand or so decks for sale at the con. Afterwards we shipped the rest to Bruce’s home for him to finish sorting and sell. I sometimes wonder if we really did Bruce a favor... To this day they are not completely sold out.

Bruce was an enthusiast and a proponent of all good fannish things. There was Tolkien fandom, of which Bruce was also a founding member with his fanzine *I Palantir*. Are you getting the picture? He had an incredible fanzine collection which he was indexing. When he talked me into running the Retro Hugo Ceremony at LAcon III, he sent me xeroxes of fan art and fan writing from his collection for the fan artist, fan writer and fanzine category nominees. He was a vocal supporter of TAFF and DUFF. He wanted the TAFF and DUFF Reports to always be available and got LASFS behind the project. He wanted LASFS to have a clubhouse – and behold! it came to pass. Then there were The Carousel Lovers of America (who sought out carousels to ride), Moroccan Fringe Fandom (who participated in the close-out sale of a shop specializing in clothing from Morocco, some of which had fringe, at the Louisville NASFiC), Sweet Wine Lovers and who knows what other bizarre and obscure fannish groups. Bruce collected them all – or founded them – right down to the DREGS (the Drinking Readers Entropic

Gaming Society) – like he collected art and like he collected ribbons. He liked collections. He was a librarian, after all. He once explained to me that it was the ideal career for him because it left him plenty of time for fanac. A dubious statement, but then, Bruce relished drama, and his real career was fanac...

**Leslie Turek:** Bruce Pelz was a pillar of fandom as far back as I can remember. I first got to know him when I was invited to join the Prestigious International Gourmand Society (a.k.a. P.I.G.S.), one of Bruce’s many inventions. We used to hold our “meetings” at every major convention, usually at the finest restaurant in town. (I remember one event at the old Trader Vics in Boston that featured roast suckling pig.)

I guess, looking back, that my P.I.G.S. experience told me a lot about Bruce’s character. He enjoyed the physical pleasures of life, food and drink, but even more when enjoyed in the company of friends. He was good at organizing things, and even better at thinking up new things into existence. He had a childlike sense of fun. (P.I.G.S. had membership cards complete with secret codes that didn’t really mean anything — at least as far as I knew.) And the name alone should tell you that he hated pretension and poked holes in it whenever he could.

When we were bidding for the 1980 Worldcon, it seemed really obvious to most of us that we should ask Bruce to be Fan Guest of Honor. No one at that time had a more extensive fannish resume. He was active in all areas of fandom: fanzine fandom, convention-running fandom (chairing the 1972 LA Worldcon), club fandom (he was a leading light of the LA Science Fiction Society), literary fandom, book and fanzine



collecting, costuming, filksinging, even Georgette Heyer dances. For our program book cover, we arranged for a painting of the Boston Common, with pro guests Kate Wilhelm and Damon Knight riding in a swan boat, and with Bruce sitting in the driver's seat. Seemed appropriate for someone who was the motivating force behind so many fannish projects.

What I haven't mentioned yet, and which no description of Bruce can leave out, is that he was the consummate curmudgeon. I never met anyone who could curmudgeon quite as well as he could. He had strong opinions and wasn't afraid to state them. And he didn't suffer fools gladly. But when he saw something that needed to be done, he would do it, usually with a humorous flair. At the 2001 Philadelphia Worldcon, where everyone complained that the name badges were hard to read, Bruce actually tried to do something about it. He made a motion at the business meeting that instigated an impassioned debate about 24-point type.

Even people who disagreed with Bruce respected him. He was someone who was a lot better to have on your side than against you. (Perhaps that's why we invited him to join the Noreascon 4 committee.) He could be cutting, but he was usually right, and he always made people think. And he was unfailingly generous with helping people out, from advising Worldcon bids, to running auctions for fannish charities.

A lot of Bruce's projects over the years have had to do with the history of fandom. He put together a History of Worldcons exhibit and started the Fan Gallery photography project. Some time ago, he came up with the idea of an annual gathering of past Worldcon chairs at each year's Worldcon, familiarly known as the Old Pharts party. It had gotten to be a pleasant routine that Bruce would track me down at each year's Worldcon to personally deliver my invitation to that year's event. He made me feel that we were both part of a select fraternity — we had been through the fire and we had both experienced something that set us apart from mere mortals.

At the recent Chicago Worldcon, I arrived late to the Old Pharts party, missing the annual group picture. Bruce gave me a stinging rebuke for not having shown up on time, and I dismissed him with an airy, "Oh, there'll be another one next year." But of course, at the Millennium Philcon, I was quite sure to arrive in time for the picture. No way I wanted to have Bruce mad at me for another year.

And now, damn it, Bruce won't be there next year. And fandom will be the lesser for it.

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**Deb Geisler:** When we decided to ask Bruce Pelz to join MCFI, the organization behind the Boston in 2004 bid, the general feeling was he would be a phenomenal addition to our group, but that he probably already had so much on his plate that he wouldn't say yes.

Sometimes, you get lucky.

Bruce was a solid rock of fannish lore and history, and

he contributed a different kind of perspective that we very much needed as we bid for the 2004 Worldcon.

As tight as the connection between Bruce and Boston was, I figured he must have lived here at some point. He had many good friends in Boston fandom. He was well-respected and quite well-loved. He was the Noreascon Two Fan Guest of Honor. A fellow of NESFA. He came to Boskone so regularly he had a life membership. And, most recently, he was a member of our committee and a font of good advice from which I could draw at need.

I don't remember the first time I met Bruce. At some convention or other; he attended thousands, probably. I remember the first time he grilled me on a panel; I remember him sitting me down that first time for a long, hard chat about a con-running issue; I remember the first time he was part of a convention dinner group full of sparkling, wry conversation; and I remember him pulling absolutely no punches giving me the third degree at a fannish inquisition.

People have said that Bruce did not suffer fools gladly. Certainly, that's true — he did not happily tolerate people who *knew better* acting in any way less than he believed them capable of being. And he took great pride in his reputation as a curmudgeon.

But Bruce spent a lot of his time *making sure* people knew better — explaining, helping, greeting, introducing. If there was someone in a room I didn't know, and I asked Bruce, "Who's that man/woman/tentacled Lensman over there," he'd tell me... then introduce me in such a way that we two strangers would know our common ground.

In the tributes written about Bruce, one fan described him in the 1960s with his hair dyed blond, hefting a broadsword for a costume in a masquerade. Bruce-as-Viking is a resonant image for me.

Yet Bruce was one of the gentlest people I've ever met. He was the kind of Viking that would carefully ensure the house was empty of helpless creatures and people *before* the pillaging and the burning.

And then, of course, he'd build 'em a new house.

His kindness was unbounded. If someone needed him, he was there, uncomplaining, comforting, and offering what help he could.

We miss him. We love him.

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**Edie Stern & Joe Siclari:** Bruce was a decade or so older than we, and for us, kind of an elder brother (or maybe a funny uncle). He did the things we wanted to do some day. Bruce chaired the first Worldcon Joe ever attended (LAcon). Bruce pubbed a couple of the early filk manuals, among the first ones that Edie ever saw. He was a renaissance fan, and also did things we never wanted to do, like costuming and business meetings, and of course, he did them brilliantly. Joe went to college in Florida, just like Bruce. Some of the used books he bought had the previous owner's name on the inside front cover — Bruce Pelz. Bruce was a good friend. He

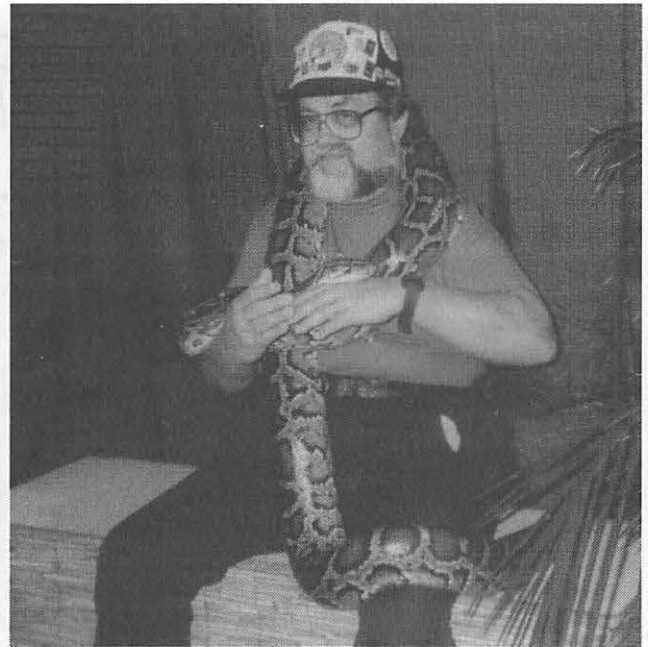


introduced us to sweet wines, historical mysteries, and very nearly to cruising, and we miss him.

Bruce had a grand reputation – curmudgeon, authoritarian, fannish tyrant. It wasn't particularly false, either. When Joe became chair of a Worldcon, he told one sensitive fan that he wanted "to be a chairman just like Bruce." The fan was so horrified, he nearly ran screaming from the room. Years later we told this story to Bruce and he got a great kick out of it. Bruce enjoyed his reputation as one of the tyrants of fandom. It's been said that Bruce did not suffer fools gladly, but the reverse is also true. Bruce appreciated wit, well-turned comment and apparently having his name taken in vain. He was an excellent consultant for all things fannish, and smoffish.

Bruce couldn't resist collections and collecting. His fanzine collection is legendary, with the listing alone consuming acres of trees. We had fanzine listing envy. His Worldcon exhibits are fascinating windows on the past, with membership cards, arcane publications and ephemera. Bruce was always a completist, and was particularly avid in seeking the last few items to complete a collection. Perhaps as part of the Worldcon exhibits, Bruce started collecting the myriad ribbons of Worldcon. For MagiCon, we decided to "help," and created a ribbon just for him. Well, just so that we could make sure he couldn't collect one, and watch the ensuing action. It was the "Set Completer" ribbon. By the end of the convention, Bruce looked the very model of a modern major general, with ranks upon ranks of convention ribbons. Of course, we did relent, and he had one of the two "Set Completer" ribbons made. We did worse.

At MagiCon, we built a fannish-themed miniature golf course with the holes constructed by various bids and fan groups. At the end of the convention, we were faced with trashing all this lovely work; it was sad and depressing to contemplate. There was one chance to save it, and a slim one it was. We started telling Bruce that "it was too bad about the golf course — it was the largest Worldcon artifact ever, and it should be part of his Worldcon exhibit. What a shame it was being destroyed!" Of course, Bruce knew exactly what we were doing, and refused to be baited. At the end of the



convention, Joe called him out from a committee meeting, and made him one last offer he could not refuse. "Bruce, this is your last chance. Either we tear it apart and throw it away, or we take it apart carefully, pack it up, and ship it to you." Bruce growled response, "You're playing on my magpie instinct." He hesitated, and then said "Ship it to Lex." (which meant ship it to LA for later delivery to Bruce). The entire golf course was stored as part of his Worldcon collection. Elayne very nearly killed us, all three, and relegated the 2 x 4s and such out to the back porch. By the way, it is not true that the big LA earthquake was caused by the overburdening of the land by the weight of Bruce's collection. It did destroy the poor golf course though.

Bruce was fun to know, to play with, and to play off. He was charming and witty, and had a hard time maintaining the facade of curmudgeon that he so favored. When we visited Limoges, we bought a porcelain elephant salt & pepper shaker set for Bruce but kept forgetting to bring it to him. And now we can't.

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We have bragging rights. We've been to every major party and almost every open party hosted at the Worldcon during the last ten years. Quite a hangover, eh? — For Scott; Kurt doesn't drink. How did we end up as the Worldcon party reviewing team?

#### *Tales from the Battlefield (Not the Party Reports)*

It all began at — surprise! — the parties. We each noticed the other hopping parties at Worldcons back in the early 80s. We also noticed our synchronicity in encounters coincided with the party's quality. We got to where we could, by a meaningful exchange of looks, determine if a party warranted lingering time to enjoy the "buzz of many bright conversations" (as we once described a Bridge Publications party at Buccaneer).

So we teamed up and began to party-hop with a loose and ever-changing troupe of partying fans. It culminated in an all-night party-hopping spree in 1986 with a dozen or so of our closest friends and a swollen-headed view of sunrise from the 10th-floor con suite in Atlanta. By the late 1980s, we had a certain (dubious?) reputation as dedicated party animals, and many of our fannish friends would ask us which were the best parties, expecting us to have attended all of them.

SMOFs noticed (i.e., Willie Siros and Fred Duarte) and persuaded us to review parties for the 1992 MagiCon newsletter. To foster a stronger spirit of partying, we decided to report upon the best party

of the night and even of the Convention. We believe this competition has led to innovation — and better parties. In this spirit of reporting *Excellence in Partying*, we will declare the *Party of the Decade* in this article.

We awarded our first *Party of the Night* at MagiCon to a Thursday night party hosted by fans bidding for Atlanta in 1995. Here's a snippet of what we had to say about Atlanta's party:

Fans flowed throughout the suite, decorated with bowls of M&Ms and orchids [the suite, not the fans]. We were never thirsty with peach daiquiris and a blue concoction aptly named "Whatizit." The low lighting and skillfully-stacked fans provided good circulation of air and fans, ensuring a lively atmosphere still partying at 1:30 a.m.

#### *Kurt and Scott Find Their Encounter Group and Complete Steps 1 and 2*

Despite having partied at Worldcons for the past 20 years (the last 10 years "officially"), we learn something new at each party. So what makes a good party? (Hey, what's the spice of life?) Variety! Some of the most memorable parties we've seen offered variety, ranging from selection of food to decoration to entertainment. Also, add a pinch of unique. The most-noticed parties are those that are different — flavor and flair, you might say. Toss in a level of comfort. Are the hosts welcoming and gracious? Is the party imbued with an exuberance that isn't obnoxious? Do you feel like you want to stay and meet some really interesting fans? Tie all these

elements together with a theme, preferably one emphasizing the hosts' regional attractions. Mix in tasty food and drink, add a touch of entertainment, and *voilà!* you have a memorable party.

Now apply these criteria to Atlanta's Thursday night party in 1992. The theme: Atlanta and the South, highlighting "Whatizit" (Atlanta's Olympic mascot) and Georgia "Peach State" daiquiris. The hosts kept the room comfortable, employing a unique method of presenting fans to cool fans. The party bubbled with life and conversation; you didn't want to leave. In fact, some fans didn't, opting to nap on a couch or in a corner.

**Theme.** This isn't your grammar teacher's theme here. This is serious stuff, and theme provides the kick that makes a party memorable. Theme unites each element (food, decoration, favors, entertainment, etc.) of a successful party. We named the party hosted by Japanese fans in 1993 at ConFrancisco the *Party of the Worldcon* largely because of their unifying theme, namely Japan. All their decorations, party favors, hors d'oeuvres, drinks and entertainment centered around Japan. As we noted:

The party hosted by the Japanese was certainly the most cosmopolitan of affairs. We tasted dried and pressed calamari washed down with two varieties of saki. These folks used handmade origami bowls for condiments and for party favors. Our friend Steve [Steve Eardley who, sadly, has passed away] was hosted to a private tea ceremony as he loitered outside the party to smoke. Our hosts graciously showed us the appropriate departure bow.

That was one party filled with many lingering fans, enjoying the party milieu. Remember the Z'ha'dum in 2260 party at LoneStarCon 2? We awarded it Friday's *Party of the Night*.

Z'ha'dum in 2260 provided the night's biggest surprise. This mock bid party shattered our preconceptions of media fandom parties by offering a bid pastiche of party stickers, interstellar cuisine and costumed hosts. They featured Shadow Chili, Kosh Lorraine, Vorlon Sweetmeat, Breen-du Vorlon and Narn toes. Whew! We had to quench our thirst with Shadow Bock, they had so much food!

The hosts united every element of their party, from the hoax-bid party stickers offered at the door by our "Babylon 5" costumed hosts to the Vorlon Sweetmeat which taunted our palate to the Shadow Bock poured to quench our thirst.

We pointed out on Wednesday at Bucconeer that Orlando's [bid] party was like being in Orlando, specifically Disney's Swan and Dolphin Hotels. They covered the walls with murals of the hotels ("Bobzilla" Eggleton even sketched

a Godzilla as part of the mural), hung mylar palm trees from a ceiling of woven pinlight strands, and placed flamingos everywhere.... For excitement, our friends hosted at midnight a "bashing" of a flamingo piñata, playfully teasing fans who tried to hit the prancing flamingo.

Could you guess Orlando's bid parties theme? We were so impressed, we proclaimed them the *Wednesday Party of the Night*.

Perhaps you remember Xerps in 2010 at 2001's Millennium Philcon, our *Party of the Night* for Sunday? As we mentioned:

We had our senses bedazzled and knew we were in for an abducting experience when a lit alien greeted us at the door to Xerps in 2010. Passing through alien love beads, we surely had entered another world. Every corner revealed an alien theme. Overheard: "I was abducted by an alien, and all I got was this stupid pregnancy!"

The Xerps hosts explained that three years of collecting alien party decorations and favors, not to mention hours of putting up those decorations, went into their black-light lit, fluorescent green alien extravaganza. What could a fan do but stand back and say "Wow!" Yes, these parties had strong themes and were unique, making them memorable.

#### *Accessories Highlight Saturday Parties*

**Variety.** And not just your average garden variety, either! This particular flavor of variety in Worldcon parties offers a new life experience to the partying fan. You might say it's like a blow between the eyes, offering a view not of stars but of supernovas. Variety can be in any element of a fine party. Can anyone forget the mountain of Pixie Stix at last year's ssf.net party at the Millennium PhilCon? Every imaginable flavor and color of sugar stick was piled in a two-foot high mound surrounded by a stellar array of sugar candies. Let mundanes use Mount Rushmore as a photo backdrop; we had that mountain of 20,000 Pixie Stix!

Consider the variety of food and drink served at Worldcon parties. Consider the Millennium PhilCon bid parties and their dely-licious buffets. As we gushed in our Bucconeer Thursday night party review:

If you missed dinner last night (we know: that's a non sequitur in fandom but, hey, it could happen), you had another chance to catch a bite from the sumptuous buffet Philadelphia 2001 had laid on the table. Piles of authentic Philly hoagies, chocolate fondue for the chocolaholic (you had to fight past Scott to get to this), and ice cream sundaes graced a table decorated with tablecloths patterned with alien spacemen.



And the Philly-Chili ice cream served at LoneStarCon2 where we exclaimed “We cannot describe the conflicting sensations of ice cream *burning* our mouths.” ConFrancisco offered a couple of parties which featured truly unique hors d’oeuvres. We mentioned visiting a Saturday night party called Coenobium where we “discovered smoked buffalo.... It was totally bison — and that’s no beef.” That’s one taste Kurt has never forgot. What about sautéed walleye cheeks? Yes, cheeks. This was an hors d’oeuvre popularized by chef Hans Schweitzer who accompanied the Winnipeg in ’94 crew. And at other Worldcons, we’ve sampled Toronto rye and kielbasa with sour cream horseradish (Toronto 2003), chocolate pizza (Chicago 2000), musk flavored Lifesavers and Anzac Australian Army Corps biscuits (Aussiecon 1999), dried pressed octopus (Japanese fans), science fiction-themed fortune cookies (ConFrancisco 2002). If you missed any of these hors d’oeuvres, you missed a unique experience.

### *Tales of the Chemically Decrepit*

What goes better with food than drink? Worldcon parties offer a variety of beverage only an SF fan could appreciate. If you attended Intersection in Glasgow, you may have been lucky enough to have been served one of 30 varieties of Russian vodka at the Moscow in 2017 bid party, our Saturday Party of the Night.

We began on the steppes of Russia at the Moscow in 2017 bid party. (They’re serious, folks, and they’ve got 19 years of bid partying; we couldn’t be happier!) To judge from their start, Moscow is going to be a force to reckon with, what with *thirty* different bottles of Russian vodka. The Central Committee greeted us with red bandanas and a song. They were ready to party! Scott’s favourite vodka — he tried them all (oi, my head!) — was a brandy like variety called Maroseika.

Or you may have dropped in to visit the folks who hosted the UK in ’05 bid party on Thursday night during the Millennium PhilCon and been offered the opportunity (as was Scott) to sample some 15 single-malt scotches (as did Scott). Or perhaps you’ve sampled Seattle2002 fandom’s Pangalactic Gargle Blaster or Bucconeer’s rum punches or the Norwegian fans’ Aquavit or local microbrewed beers.

Of course, not every beverage at Worldcon parties contains alcohol. Over the years, Kurt has enjoyed spotting new and different varieties of microbrewed root beer. He was “overwhelmed by the microbrewery root beer float” we sampled at a

Wednesday night Orlando bid party at Bucconeer. We’ve encountered mango cherry fruit punches, fruit smoothies, things that bubble and boil, things colored green and that glow in the dark, drinks that are bright blue (“blue f\*\*\*ers”), red, every color in the rainbow, collections of exotic sodas and on and on.

This sheer variety of food and drink guarantees fans a unique experience at each party. Heck, we haven’t even mentioned the universe of sweets. ... Our ever-expanding waistlines could write volumes attesting to the quality and quantity of sweet encounters, the candies, cookies, custards, cakes, pies, pudding, fudges, did we mention chocolates? or the St. Louis bid “chocohol-athons?” we could not turn down. Hey, the universe is expanding so why can’t we?

### *Friday Night Fever*

By definition, a party is entertainment. We have witnessed some truly unique forms of entertainment which have defined a party. Sunday night at the Millennium PhilCon,

We offered ourselves to the gods at Chichen Itza 2012, Mayans who can throw a party. We oohed and ahed before the sacrificial Jello heart on display (to scale) and stayed for the ancient ritual of Mayan ice cream making. Of course, we know the ancient Mayans did not have ice to make ice cream; they got liquid nitrogen from the aliens. Just ask Erich von Daniken!

Our lives were changed after sampling instant ice cream frozen by liquid nitrogen.

We’ve enjoyed live music in parties over the years. Filkers have often entertained party guests, as has an occasional live band. The Frequency Magazine party on Thursday at Chicon IV hosted a party featuring the band “Don’t Quit Your Day Job Players.” We were entertained by a jazz pianist in the East Coast Conspiracy party Friday night at the Millennium PhilCon. Who can forget the pageant of the piping in of the haggis performed at the various Glasgow in ’95 bid parties? We’ve noted and concluded that live entertainment has always enlivened a party.

### *Men in Skirts!*

What would a party be without a host? A party without a host is like a room after the party: empty. Some of our favorite parties were hosted by fun, clever and inventive fans, folk who epitomize fandom. We’ll never forget seeing Ben Yalow on Thursday at Bucconeer “wearing his trademark smile, display[ing] a tray and quipp[ing] ‘Smoked flamingos, anyone?’ offering smoked salmon, cream cheese, capers,

onions and fresh dill on bread.” Ben was one of the convivial hosts of Orlando’s 2001 bid parties, where they “were plying waiting guests with hors d’oeuvres of chocolate-dipped strawberries before officially opening their party” to waiting (and hungry!) fans.

If a host is having fun, the guests probably will, too. No more was this rule evidence than when we witnessed Vince Docherty sporting a red boa.

As we observed

Ever wonder what Vince Docherty looks like in a red boa? Well, we never had either, but if you were ever curious, the truth was revealed last night at the Disco Glam Rock Alien, aka Renee Sieber’s 25th Worldcon celebration party.

Consider this scene: We once encountered a rendition of a coffee house which was strategically located on a lower floor so that fans could linger after the onerous task of partying for hours and re-energize to do it all over again. The gracious and inventive hosts had prepared bistro tables and offered coffee and tea. Nothing like having a party to prep fans for more partying!

We’ve noticed how devastating a blaring TV can be to a party. Our experience has shown us TVs and parties rarely mix. However, we did find one exception at the sff.net party in the Millennium PhilCon where they featured cult video movies which prompted audience responses. “Somehow, they found a way to run videos and maintain a vibrant party.”

### *Flails from the Bobofield*

Sometimes you don’t need a room for a party. Witness Mark McNary who over the years quenched our thirsts with his toxic waste brew labeled “Biohazard.” He always sported a collection of fans and a party atmosphere, and at nearly every Worldcon, we would find ourselves “careening into Mark’s Biohazard wanderings.” Mark (“resplendent in white toga and dropping such quips as ‘It’s good to be a king but better to be a god’”) exemplified the partying fan.

Even we are guilty of non-traditional partying and have attracted some extensive entourage. Such was the case Thursday night at LAcon III when we “took the folks at the Costumers party by surprise: we brought an entire party with us!” But we pointed out that “it was a rousing start for the evening.”

We’re also guilty of having organized our own party. Just last year at the Millennium PhilCon, we arranged a photo-op to have fans

line the Infinite Hallway (as we described one bizarrely long and barren hall in the Philly Marriott). Well, it wasn’t quite the bash of the convention, but hey! there were a lot of fans crowded into that loooooong hallway. And as we’ve firmly believed, wherever you have fans, you have a party.

### *Badges? We Don’t Need No Stinkin’ Badges Here!*

We’ve noticed an increase in birthday parties, wedding parties (“Kurt and Nancy’s Reception only to find Kurt and Nancy weren’t there” as we observed at ConAdian) and anniversary parties (and not just wedding anniversaries). Even Boston fans on Friday night at LAcon III hosted an anniversary party celebrating the silver anniversary of Noreascon I. “Who else but our friends from Boston would celebrate the anniversary of a past Worldcon? Any excuse for a party. We approve.”

Not all parties need be hosted by an organization. Phil & Ted’s Excellent Party (Friday at ConFrancisco) really was an excellent party. And they were fans just like us! The renowned Xerps parties are hosted by Frank and Millie, a fannish husband and wife team. The Xerps been some of our favorite parties.

### *Fans Attempt to Navigate Friday Night Party Maze*

So how can you know when you’ve found a good party? We’ve picked up on some factors every fan considers at least subconsciously: light level, noise level, comfort zones, chat zones, variety of people,



fans you know, fans you want to know. It's a nearly endless list. Think about light level. Lower lighting helps to generate an atmosphere conducive to conversation. Restaurants drop their lighting based upon this theory. We've always felt that fans appear to be even friendlier in low light. How can fans be even friendlier than they generally are? Well, Kurt says scientifically this is because their pupils are dilated, causing them to look more interested and friendly. The right density of fans is also important. Too low a density and the party won't appear inviting, but too packed and you can't enter the room and enjoy the party. Conversation buzz level is an important subliminal clue. Do you hear snippets of interesting and fun conversations all around you? We've peppered our reviews with some wonderful fannish quotes we've overheard through the years. The right mix of fans is essential so that the gamut of fandom blends into an inviting party. Are you invigorated by the party or are the hosts and guests entering shut-down mode and slowing for the night? You pick up cues from the hosts and guests. Comfort is an intangible quality — and sometimes not just intangible. Are you comfortable with the fans in the room? Do you feel a part of the party? Obviously, meeting fans you know helps establish a feeling of comfort. These factors combine subconsciously to alert you either to stay or hop (or even flee) to another party.

### *The Kurtron Energy Waves*

Here are a few common sense tips for getting the most enjoyment from your partying experience. Kurt and Scott's Party-Hopping Tips.

- Wear comfortable footwear. A must for Kurt: new tennis shoes with gel/air insole supports. "I almost always buy a new pair for each Worldcon!" Aging fans have less cushion in their heels, Kurt points out, so you need to supplement. More spring in your step. Watch Kurt hop!
- Monitor your sugar and alcohol intake. This is very important. (Duh.) For many fans, too much sugar too soon will lower their endurance and they won't make it through the night. Think of the parties missed! Pace yourself, especially when you're drinking. Kurt has always been amazed at how Scott can establish his alcoholic buzz level and maintain it throughout the night. Serious partying fans will party for at least five to six hours each night of the Worldcon. It's essential to know your limits.

- Talk and mix with fans. You're at a Worldcon and what comprises a Worldcon but fans? How can you help but meet new and interesting fans? And always remember, the fan you haven't yet met may be a wonderful friend through the years.

You may recall we mentioned at the Millennium PhilCon that we were wrapping up our duties as Worldcon party reviewers. Don't despair! The sun still rises, and we've draft — er, recruited fresh meat — that is, a couple of able-bodied, partying fans who fear nothing. Heck, they've laughed at death. Witness our Millennium Philcon Saturday night party review:

If you run into David C. Farmer (a/k/a Anton) as we did, ask him to perform his "Hulk Hogan Meets HAL 9000" rendition. He kept us laughing until we begged him to stop. Speaking of laughing, Kurt witnessed a near-death experience at the "@ party wherein well-lubricated Scott, Bill (Child) and David placed "death level" hot sauce on nachos, laughed at death and swallowed whole. Lesson learned: Don't laugh at death.

Kurt can't recall who raced to the bathroom first, Scott or David. It may have been a tie. But we feel Bill and David, being the kind of foo — uh, brave party fans who laugh fearlessly at death, will perform admirably, tirelessly and diligently as Worldcon party reviewers. Party on, dudes.

### *Parties Noir: Flamingos, Bells and the Rrrrrgh!-Floor*

Over the years of reviewing and "picking" the party of the Night and of the Convention, you might wonder if we've ever had a split decision. Surprisingly, no. As we've pointed out, we really don't "pick" the party of the night so much as observe it. Had you party-hopped all night with us, you probably would agree with that sentence, all other things being equal. (Well, add a few years of Worldcon partying experience, perhaps.) Yes, we've had some close calls. We've even had lively debates on the merits of the *Party of the Night* candidates for a minute or two. Once we disqualified ourselves due to the Heisenberg Uncertainty Effect: we realized we were influencing too many parties because of our entourage. As we observed during Chicon IV, "We may have had it (the *Party of the Night*) with us." By the end of a night of party hopping, however, we always know who hosted it. As if such a rigorous procedure weren't arduous enough, over the nights of the convention, we're sorting, evaluating and carefully considering which parties qualify for *Party of the Worldcon*. This process is important (and *that's* an understatement).





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ment). We've experienced the disappointment of fans who hosted parties not awarded *Party of the Worldcon*.

Likewise, you might think we would find it difficult to declare who hosted the Worldcon *Party of the Decade*. Nope. There's no dispute here, folks. Our memories (and Worldcon party reviews) serve us well. The location: Winnipeg. The Worldcon: Conadian. The year: 1994. The party: *Dead Dragon Inn*®.

In our review of Thursday night's parties,

We descended a few floors and many centuries to the Dead Dragon Inn®. This is the place, folks, to take a load off, quaff a dragon's blood brew and enjoy the medieval ambience. Even though well attended, the noise level was very low, giving us a chance to visit with each other. We chose an oaken table near the fireplace, which was close enough to hear the harp. Tonight, we understand a Celtic ensemble will provide entertainment. Check it out!

This party was amazing; it was performance art. The hosts (a medieval group) had the hotel empty a large room of everything. The troupe installed the contents of an entire rental truck, including stage decorations consisting of faux blackened oak beams, candle sconces, rough-hewn benches, and cloth-draped tables topped with candles enmeshed in wire cages. We wondered if they had gone so far as to rip the electrical wiring out of the walls. They strewed the floor with wood shavings, roped off the back of the room to serve as an anteroom, and raised the floor in front to create a stage on which they placed a stone fireplace (with real fake flames!), spinet piano and harp. Above the mantelpiece hung the trophied head of a dragon. The costumed hosts were in full character. They performed as serving wenches, bartender, bouncer, maitre d' and musical entertainment. Although they "served" (as in brought to our table) only a few drink choices and popcorn, we really didn't care. We were numbed with amazement.

The fun continued the next night:

Once again we were whisked to our "reserved" table at Dead Dragon Inn, which was anything but dead. Oh, the pleasures of being recognized when the waiting lines are lengthy. (So this is smofdom, eh?) We were entertained by the Celtic band Dust Rhinos (unplugged); we hear they're MTV-bound. This crowd in the Dragon was absolutely the most convivial group we've encountered so far.

Actually, we waited in line as everyone else (standing room only back in the anteroom), eagerly awaiting a freed-up table as fans departed for other parties. No, our table wasn't reserved for us; that was just

creative license. (But everything else in all our other reviews throughout the years has been absolutely true, honest! No, really. Cross our hearts!) We awarded them Friday's *Party of the Night*.

We gushed some more in our Saturday night parties review:

Yes, again, the Dead Dragon Inn was a party place, helped on by the band Dandelion Wine. Their music was lively, as was the crowd. Even a deluge couldn't dampen the enthusiasm.

Never before had we mentioned a party three consecutive nights, not even bid parties. ConAdian wasn't allowed to use the term party, so we coined the term "non-party" which was adopted by the Newsletter. As we noted for Sunday night:

We returned to the Lone Star suite, noshed awhile, then beelined to the Dead Dragon Inn. Taunting the standing room only crowd, we summoned our favorite maitre d' Sir Tim and found ourselves whisked to our front-row table so we could enjoy Simone's harp music. She exhorted us to dance on the tables if we felt inspired.

Scott had to restrain Kurt, being concerned for the safety of those around us; sometimes his balance is precarious.

After four nights visiting numerous non-parties, we were captives to the Dead Dragon's unique ambience and visual excitement and declare that:

#### PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, fans being the non-party animals they are wont to be, wasted no time in partaking of the hospitality generously provided by the Dead Dragon Inn;

NOW, THEREFORE, by the power vested in us, it is RESOLVED and BE IT KNOWN that the Dead Dragon Inn be henceforth declared THE Non-Party of ConAdian.

And so, be it known that, pursuant to a steadfast perseverance in hosting a truly memorable event (not just a party, dude!), and for continuing to bring a smile to our faces from fond memories years after the event, we convey unto Dead Dragon Inn® all the rights and privileges appurtenant to the:

#### **BEST WORLDCON PARTY OF THE DECADE.**

The party you've never been to is the most fun. And, of course, that's what it's about: Fun. So enjoy and party on!

---

e.t.'s - (de Camp) - Extra-terrestrials; natives of other worlds. Any resemblance to d.t.'s is probably not coincidental.

old-timers - Originally, someone who read *Amazing* before there were any other s-f magazines. It is now used to indicate fans who were acquainted with fandom in the *Fantasy Magazine* days. More recent comers, since the Barbarian Invasion began, sometimes call themselves old-timers, compared to those of less than a year's standing. The word is not exactly synonymous with "veterans."

— from the *Fancyclopedia* (1944) by John Bristol Speer

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