

# PULSAR

December 1988  
Number 122  
60¢



## Yuletide Party

A party to celebrate the winter holidays will be held at the apartment of David Levine and Kate Yule on Saturday, December 17th, beginning at 7:30 pm. All are welcome. There will be a tree to trim, popcorn and cranberries to string, paper for cutting snowflakes, etc., and room for you to create your own handmade decorations (some materials provided by the house).

Some refreshments will also be provided by the house, but please contribute food or drink if you plan to consume food or drink. Munchies appropriate to the season are especially encouraged.

117 NW Trinity Place #37  
Portland, Oregon 97209

### Upcoming Conventions

If you're interested in going to the 1991 WorldCon in Chicago, buy your membership soon because prices are rising sharply.

Rates:

\$50<sup>00</sup> postmarked by Dec. 31, 1988  
\$75<sup>00</sup> throughout 1989  
more later...

Send your money to:

ChiCon V  
P.O. Box 218121  
Upper Arlington, Ohio 43221

Also, if you are interested in going to next year's World Fantasy Convention, it is in Seattle, October 27 - 29 of next year. Membership in this convention is limited to 750 people. The theme in 1989 is "The Roots of Fantasy: Myth, Folklore, and Archetype." This is a professional convention with panel programming, art show, and a dealers room, but without masquerade or dances. Costumes are discouraged by the convention. The price is \$70<sup>00</sup> through May 1, 1989. The address is:

World Fantasy Convention 1989  
P.O. Box 31815  
Seattle, Wa 98103-1815

# PorSFIS Timeline

Compiled by David D. Levine

- Dec. 3** OryCon 10 Wrap-Up Meeting at Paul Wrigley and Debbie Cross's house, 5429 SE Bush, at 7:30 PM.
- Dec. 10** PorSFIS meets at the NW Service Center, 1819 NW Everett, at 2 PM. *Programming:* To be announced. *Restaurant:* Rose's, 315 NW 23rd, 227-5181.
- Dec. 17** Yuletide Party at Kate Yule and David Levine's apartment, 117 NW Trinity Place #37, at 7:30 PM. See announcement below.
- Dec. 31** New Year's Eve Party at John Andrews' house, 4311 SE Cora, at 8:00 PM. BYOE.
- Jan. 7** PorSFIS meets at the NW Service Center, 1819 NW Everett, at 2 PM. *Programming:* To be announced. *Restaurant:* Mazzi's, 5833 SW Macadam, 227-3382.
- Jan. 15-17** Rustycon 6 (Seattle, WA)
- Jan. 21** PorSFIS meets at the NW Service Center, 1819 NW Everett, at 2 PM. *Programming:* To be announced. *Restaurant:* Hunan, Morgan's Alley (on Park between Washington and Alder), 224-8063. [No, they were not burned out by the fire. — DDL]



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## A BOOK REVIEW

Ariel Shattan

I seem to be reading Science Fiction detective stories lately. That isn't too hard to do these days. A lot of recent SF is detective fiction in one way or another. But the three books I'm going to review here are truly detective stories, with the protagonists as detectives by vocation or avocation.

Who Censored Roger Rabbit - Gary Wolf:

Phil tells me that this book has already received a favorable review in the Pulsar, and I would like to also recommend it. By now you are probably quite familiar with the movie that was taken from this book, Who Framed Roger Rabbit. The book is different. Quite different. Only the detective, Eddie Valiant, has close to the same character. The mystery starts with Eddie trying to discover why Roger Rabbit hasn't been given the starring contract he's been promised, and continues through three murders, toon porn, an art forgery scam, a special teapot (ala The Maltese Falcon), blackmail, toon doppelgangers (doubles), and transvestitism before it is finished. As in Raymond Chandler's The Big Sleep, there are more characters than you really want to track, but Wolf does tie the threads into a very neat bow by the end of the book. The writing gets a bit florid at times, with lines like "I prayed for him to poke me in the chest with his finger so I could snap it off and hand it to him wrapped in a hot dog bun..." This is actually a boon at times, since one of the nifty ideas in the book is that when toons talk, their words come out in balloons, with what they are saying visually matching the feelings behind the words. These word balloons can be hard to describe when all you have is black and white text, but Wolf does pretty well at helping you visualize.

I thought that Roger Rabbit was a pretty decent read, and I think it is worth the paperback price (\$3.50). Look for it in the Mystery section.

*A letter from Roger Wells:*

Dear PorSFis,

Seems the infamous PorSFis grapevine reaches clear to the wilds of Los Angeles (in fact, they named the northern approach to the city after it). My own reaction to roseCon is quite simple. When I was actively working on OryCon I got more than my fill of people who were quite ready to tell us everything we were doing wrong but would never consider actually doing any of the work themselves. If a group of people like RoseCon have different ideas than OryCon on running a convention and are willing to do the work to bring it off, well, more power to them.

Roger

*Some Comments on RoseCon '88*  
by VanderVecken

As some of you may know, I am the only member of Portland Fandom to have the dubious honor of working on the convention committees of **all three** of Portland's annual conventions -- including RoseCon '88, which Con West Inc considered enough of a success to attempt a RoseCon '89. With an initial attendance of about 900, RoseCon was not the roaring success it's sponsors hoped; Our private guess among the hospitality staff was 600 paying full-weekend members. However, RoseCon, even though it was ill-recieved by much of ensconced fandom, did very well for a first convention --especially if one takes into account the fact that they could not draw upon many of the OryCon regulars. Why is this? Because RoseCon is a for-profit convention, while OryCon and most other northwest conventions are non-profit (and fiercely defend that tax status for reasons we won't discuss here). This makes many of the fans in the area more than a little bit unhappy -- as one fan put it, "I feel that my volunteer time is cheapened." Unfortunately, the result of this is that a number of the RoseCon organizers have been turned off to conventions in general, while others are tolerant, but disappointed that there seems to be a feud in Portland fandom. I do know that RoseCon '88's organizational structure left some things to be desired -- but then so does ours on occasion. And they did a far better job of publicity than we have. Meanwhile, they're still working on RoseCon '89.

# Minutes of the PorSFis meeting of October 29, 1988

Respectfully submitted by David D. Levine

The meeting was called to order at 2:05. There were 27 people present, including all four officers.

## Announcements:

Terry Roff has posters for sale: five copies of "Devil's Lake" at \$7.00 each, five Corbin prints at \$8.00 each, and five "Book of Samathrace" (signed and numbered) at \$10.00 each.

Keith Lofstrom is having a "Zen Moving Party" on November 19th. He's moving to a house in Hillsboro that is "surrounded by cows."

There will be no meeting next week due to OryCon. Sunday is the 50th anniversary of the Orson Welles War of the Worlds radio broadcast. Terry Roff announced that KBOO will be broadcasting the new War of the Worlds radio drama.

Speaking of radio, John Lorentz announced that KOAP will be broadcasting "Duck's Breath Home-Made Radio" at 6:30 Sunday Nights, starting in November.

Chuck: Earlier this month, the US Space Station was given a name: "Freedom." The name was selected from those submitted by employees and contractors of NASA. It had to be translatable into foreign languages without having a defensive or ambiguous meaning.

Eric: The Soviet Space Shuttle is still on the pad at this time.

Alan: Channel 49 on Saturdays is showing "Sci-Fi theatre". (Hisses and catcalls.) "No, really, that's what they call it..."

Michael: Many cable companies took the USA Network off their roster in favor of Ted Turner's "TNT" channel. Call your cable company... ask them to restore USA!

Roz: The Portland Brewing Company is just down the block from Bogart's... and it's *Non-Smoking!*

*Pulsars* were distributed. Reviving an ancient PorSFis tradition, it was a "Collate Your Own Pulsar" party.

**Mail Call:** *Event Horizon* and *WestWind* were in our mailbox this month.

**Business:**

We need more programming ideas. We always need more programming ideas. Also restaurant suggestions. Debbie suggested that PorSFis donate a membership or two to the Sue Petrey Fund. It was debated but no decision was reached. (At a later officers' meeting, we decided to donate one membership, to expire next April 1st.)

**Treasurer's Report:** Still about \$1000.00. We haven't spent anything since the last meeting...

**New People:** Honore Langdon and Bill (who admits to having a last name but not what it is... he found out about us from Chris Oldham) were new faces at this meeting.

There was a **Sue Petrey Auction**.

**Programming:** Great Truths Revealed by Science Fiction.

We broke up into small groups and tried to come up with some of the Great Truths that had been revealed to us by science fiction. Here are some of the best:

Never stow away on a space ship. You'll only be deep-sixed or forced to listen to Vogon poetry. Never read trilogies (especially if they run to 9 volumes).

English is the lingua franca of the Universe.

Earth is the center of the Universe.

Robots always have their own agenda.

There's always someone around familiar with 20th century history.

If you punch enough buttons, it should take off.

Humans are the most successful life form in the universe.

Bad aliens will always be wiped out in the last reel.

Space is a long way away.

Always keep your airlocks in perfect working order.

Always have a key to the room (at a con).

ANOTHER BOOK REVIEW  
Ariel Shattan

Deep Quarry - John E. Stith

This is the book that Berkeley sent to PorSFIS to be reviewed. It is in uncorrected galley format, and will go into the PorSFIS Library if you want to read it, too. This book does not take place on Earth, but it could very well have. It is an archaeological mystery. The detective is hired to discover who is ripping off artifacts from a dig, which he does. He then proceeds to discover more about the dig than the archaeologists who are working it had imagined was possible.

The detective is nicknamed "bug-eyes" by non-human friends, because he can think like a non-human, but we really never see any of this. He is very intelligent, to the point of having ideas about the dig that escape the trained archaeologists, but nothing he comes up with seems non-human in nature, just human with a knowledge of non-human behavior. A sort of specialist in how non-humans think. Actually, I'm ragging at this point because when I read the cover blurb, I was really intrigued and wanted to see how a human author would get across non-human thought to humans. He probably managed to do it, but since I'm human, I can't think enough like a non-human to see it. Oh, well.

The story is not in the mystery of who is stealing from the dig. That just serves to get our protagonist out to the site. Once he's there, not only does he solve the thefts, but uncovers a huge alien artifact (shades of Rendezvous with Rama and Ringworld). But this huge alien artifact still has ... Oops, almost broke the reviewer's code. The book introduces (too briefly) some interesting non-human species, particularly the Wompers. I'd like to see more of these guys.

All in all, I would like to see more of most of the characters in this book. The protagonist was sketchily drawn, but what we see of him is attractive and interesting. If this is the beginning of a series of books with this guy in it, I would follow it for a while to see where it went.



## PORTRAIT OF THE WRITER AS A YOUNG FAN

by John Raymond Lorentz

*(I'd hoped to write this before the election, so I wouldn't know who had won yet. I didn't make it. Maybe it was all a bad dream -- I'll wake up and be back in Iowa. Now, where did I put those ruby slippers?)*

Time for some reviews:

Is the Great and Powerful Turtle still alive? What was happening back in New York while the Aces were touring the world in **Aces Abroad**? These stories and more (but no Andy Rooney) are covered in the newest *Wild Cards Book: Down and Dirty*. For the two or three of you who haven't heard of the *Wild Cards* series, it's a science fictional look at the world of super-heroes and super-villians. The books are a series of "mosaic novels", written in sections by several authors, including George R. R. Martin (the editor of the series), Edward Bryant, Roger Zelazny, Walter Jon Williams, and others. The earlier books have felt like short story collections, while the later ones were blended well into a single storyline. **Down and Dirty** fits the later pattern. The title refers to its main emphasis: those individuals inhabiting the seamier side of life. The book is excellent, and -- while some stories follow through to a conclusion -- others are setting up a confrontation for which we'll have to wait until the next book to learn more about. The *Wild Card* stories have a great popularity among people who would never think to read comics, although both are forms of super-hero stories. Many of us started with comics (I'm still spending \$50 a month on them). The idea of an ordinary person (not belonging to the "in crowd") suddenly having great abilities, is attractive to those of us who also aren't in the "in crowds". However, time passes and (despite what the comic companies think) we grow older, and we no longer accept people not seeing that Clark Kent is just Superman with glasses.

But we still like the idea of nobodies being able to make real changes in the world. The folks writing the *Wild Cards* stories also like the idea. These stories are grown-up, "real-world" versions of the hero motif. If you haven't read these, give them a try. You might like them. (By the way, Looking Glass Books has now installed a time machine for people who can't wait for books to come out. I purchased this book -- officially published December, 1988 -- on October 30th.)

"Wierd Al" Yankovic has become well known for his rock parodies. He has now turned to classical music. In conjunction with Wendy Carlos, he's recorded the complete version of "Peter and the Wolf" (school concerts usually leave out the scene with the National Rifle Association, for some reason). The result is another hilarious "Wierd Al" record for your collection, and a classical record really for kids, not just one which parents think they'll like. (By the way, all the music for this album was produced using a Macintosh Plus.)

## We Need You!

Just because OryCon 10 is over (after attracting 996 people), don't think that convention planning stops. It's time to start cranking up both OryCon 11 and the 1990 WesterCon. And to do this, we need committee people. At this point, there are many positions still open with both conventions. Committee meetings for both conventions will start sometime after the first of the year. If you're interested, please contact us through the numbers listed below. In particular, we are seeking a hotel assistant to help Patty Wells with OryCon and Debbie Cross with WesterCon. This person would then be moving into the position of hotel liason for future conventions.

OryCon 11	Paul Wrigley	(503) 774-7592
PO Box 5703	John Lorentz	(503) 283-0802
Portland, Oregon	97228	

WesterCon 43	Patty Wells	(503) 232-5692
PO Box 5794	John Lorentz	(503) 283-0802
Portland, Oregon	97228	

## ONE MORE BOOK REVIEW!

Ariel Shattan

### The Long Orbit -- Mick Farren

Of the three books reviewed here, I liked this one the best. As in *Deep Quarry*, the initial mystery is solved halfway through, and the remainder of the book goes off into Science Fiction.

The protagonist lives on the Earth of the (near) future; a world where certain people can opt out of reality and go to special areas to live out their lives in fantasy. Our hero is known only as Marlowe, and he's chosen to live as a 1940's-style detective. He spends his time playing at being a hard-boiled gumshoe, and one day a woman perfectly dressed to match his fantasy walks into his office and hires him to find her sister. For real. The sister is needed to complete a deal for the family business, and she was last seen in the Zone, where "leisure-outs" live out their lives in fantasy.

Marlowe sets off to find the woman, plunging into the most dangerous part of the Zone, where the Vampires live. His search for the sister reads like a Chandler story, but what happens after he finds her (or rather, she finds him) takes Marlowe out of the Zone and into a reality that matches the cyberpunk futures of Gibson for weirdness and oppressive bleakness.

The story is told through Marlowe's eyes (in third person), and his confusion and disorientation when he is snatched from his fantasy world and thrust into the future is quite well done.

I really recommend this book for those who like hard-boiled detective stories, cyberpunk, near-future stories, and sociopolitical stories. I liked this book very much and will be forever grateful to Jeff Peck for recommending it to me.

### **Editorial**

#### **by VanderVecken**

I know, I know -- the end of the issue is a silly place to put an editorial -- it was the only way to make everything fit! Well, I hope you liked it, and if you didn't you can complain over a beer after the next PorSFis meeting! Ta-Ta For Now. VanderVecken

PorSFis

P.O. Box 4602

Portland, OR 97228

PULSAR, the newsletter of the Portland Science Fiction Society (PorSFis), comes free with membership (currently \$5 for the half-year ending April 1st). It is also available for trade with other fanzines, and can be purchased for 60¢ at Portland area bookstores.

PULSAR has a rotating editorship. This month's editor was Richard Threadgill; next month's is John Lorentz. Deadline is generally the 20th of each month. Contributions are always welcome, and may be sent to the P.O. Box above.

PorSFis meetings are open to everyone. Check the timeline for meeting times and places.

PorSFis Information Lightline: 283-0802



DICK LYNCH

PO BOX 1270

GERMANTOWN

MARYLAND 20874