

APRIL 1989
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60¢

LAST DANGEROUS PULSAR



APRIL 1 NEWS

IN A SURPRISE MOVE THE PORTLAND SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY (PORSFIS) WAS VOTED OUT OF EXISTENCE TODAY IN A RATIONAL LIBERTARIAN FIT OF RESPONSIBILITY. THE RECENTLY ELECTED PRESIDENT DAVID JOHNSON STATED THAT IT WAS JUST THE BEST AND MOST "KINDER AND GENTLER" THING TO DO. THE GROUP WAS SPEECHLESS WHEN MR.(?) JOHNSON SHOWED UP LATER AT THE GROUPS' WATERING HOLE AND CASUALLY DROPPED THIS INFORMATION TO THE "POTTED PLANTS" AT THE TABLES.

THEREFORE THIS WILL BE THE LAST DANGEROUS PULSAR THAT YOU SHALL RECEIVE. BEING THE UNOFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE PORSFIS CLUB THIS IS TOTALLY AN UNOFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT. NEXT MONTHS EDITOR DOES NOT EXIST.

IN OTHER UNOFFICIAL NEWS:

THE UNDERGROUND PEOPLE LIVING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE EARTH WILL SOON STAR IN THEIR OWN SITCOM COMING TO A MAJOR NETWORK IN THE FALL OF 1989.

ORYCON 11 MEETING

The next OryCon 11 general committee meeting will be held on Sunday, April 2 at 4PM, at the usual place (6323 NE Mallory). Although committee positions are starting to fill, we still need a *lot* of workers. Remember, this meetings is the deadline for budget requests!

ELECTION RESULTS!

The ballots have been counted, and the new PorSFis officers are ready to take over on April 1st. David Johnson was elected President, with Eric Simonson getting the Vice-President slot. John Andrews (running unopposed) was elected Treasurer, and David Levine overcame a strong bid by his computer to be re-elected Secretary.

ARE YOU PAID UP?

The PorSFis year starts over again on April 1st, and it's time once more to part with \$10 for dues for the new year. Pay up soon, so you won't miss any thrill-packed page of the Pulsar (this issue is the last one you'll receive).

Minutes of the PorSFis meeting of March 4, 1989
Respectfully submitted by David Levine

Phil called the meeting to order at Howdy Doody Time (2:09 PM). There were only about 13 people present at that time (perhaps it was because we were in the back room at the Service Center). About 25 had wandered in by the end of the meeting.

ANNOUCEMENTS

Dick Pilz: Fred Ecker, homebrewer emeritus of the Northwest, held a Chocolate and Beer Tasting on Valentine's Day. (The brewmasters of several prominent brews were asked to recommend the appropriate chocolate to go with their beers. Would you believe Henry's Private Reserve and M&M's?) If you're interested in future beer tastings, contact the Dublin Pub.

Eric Simonson: The the Future Is Now department, the Navy has successfully shot down a supersonic (cruise) missile in flight with a laser.

Anthony Pryor and Kris Demien are looking for accomodations at Norwescon.

John announced the results of the election:

President.....David Johnson
Vice President...Eric Simonson
Treasurer.....John Andrews
Secretary.....David Levine

Michael Pearce showed off photos of a personal VTOL craft which he referred to as "the Jetsons' car". It certainly looks like it.

John Lorentz: On a related note, the actor who provided the voice of George Jetson died recently, having just completed his work on The Jetsons Movie.

Also, Gary Larson was in town recently; he's playing a musician in the movie Love At Large which is being filmed here.

Keith brought the latest Archie McFee (the Pink Plastic Lawn Flamingo Capital of the World) catalog and a Spud Gun purchased therefrom, with which he attempted to assassinate Phil.

Joyce: There will be an exhibit this summer at OMSI about comic book superheroes.

I announced that Mike Teidy at NIKE (the sneaker people) has heard that some local fan organization has a full-size Star Trek (old series) bridge set. They want to photograph a commercial on it. Contact him at 295-6453 (work) or 223-7832 (home) if you know anything about this.

John Lorentz: Marion Zimmer Bradley will be doing a reading in Portland in the next few months. Possibly May 25 at the Northwest Service Center; possibly not. Definitely sponsored by Powell's.

Bryce Walden's gray cat Bilbo died at the age of 19 years and 8 months; the funeral will be tomorrow at 4:00 at Bryce's (it is NOT a party).

John Lorentz: there was an article in Thursday's paper (news section) about a professor who has developed a science curriculum using SF movies such as Forbidden Planet and Them. It appears to be quite successful.

Anthony Pryor: announced that his Battletech Source Book Wolf's Dragoons has been published by FASA (which stands for "Fredonia Aeronautics and Space Administration," in case you didn't know).

Eric Simonson: It's snowing! (As indeed it was.)

Kris Demein will be moving to Seattle in September (she got a 1-year sabbatical from her job). She'll explain later.

David Johnson is looking for a copy of the Koran.

Michael Pearce has put out a contract on the lift of the Ayatollah: \$50 for a color photograph of his severed head.

MAILCALL

Ed Foster received a copy of Roz and Dick's latest Renaissance Fan.

BUSINESS

Time to select a picnic site. After some discussion, we settled on Mount Tabor Park as our first choice and Sellwood Park as our second choice; August 19th is our first choice for a date, August 5 our second choice. John will walk in and reserve us a spot Monday morning (the first day possible to do so).

Memberships expire at the end of this month. Only 8 people have renewed so far (including only one of the newly elected officers!) Renew now!

TREASURER'S REPORT

We have about \$900 and are paid up for the meeting space thru April 1. We authorized John to pay for some more meeting space.

NEW PEOPLE

"I'm John Alvarez. I'm an artist." (cheers.)

PROGRAMMING

Programming was an exercise in creating Silly Super-heroes. We came up with the following (some are not original):

The Interesting Four (Staple Man, Chronus, etc. from the show Fridays)
Beaureaucrat Boy ... turns forms into triplicate
The Incredible Shrinking Libertarian ... as he gets smaller his views get shriller
Sloth Man ... he outlives his opponents
Mucilage Man
Beast Man ... turns wine into water
The Yodeler
PolkaMeister
Mr. Negativity ... he pisses everyone off (sounds like Morton Downey...)
Sartre Man ... he just is
Peanut Brittle ... he can crush peanuts with his mind
Radio Man ... his powers vanish when he walks under a bridge
Diaper Pail Man ... capable of clearing a room or a set of sinuses in seconds
President Peter Principle
No-Man, the Zen superhero who does nothing
Deadman (from the National Lampoon)
Fax Man ... he can get anywhere instantaneously, but he fades quickly
Gestalt Man
Milk Man ... he's white with foam!
Congress Man
Bicycle Repair Man
The Grammarian ... she weilds a red pen
The Anti-Vandals ... they travel around at night repairing cars
Captain Koala, terror of eucalyptus leaves
Critic Man ... he can do nothing original
Adjourn Man

and so we did at 3:05 P.M.

PorSFis TIMELINE

Compiled by David D. Levine

Note: Unless otherwise noted, Saturday PorSFis meetings are at the Northwest Service Center, 1819 NW Everett, at 2 PM. We adjourn to Bogart's, NW 14th and Flanders, after the meetings, and some people gather for dinner at the listed restaurants, usually around 5:15-5:45. Non-members are always welcome. If you plan to join us for dinner and cannot make the meeting, please call us at Bogart's between 3:30 and 4:00 and let us know that you're coming!

- APRIL 1 PorSFis meeting. Programming: TBA
Restaurant: Yen Ha, 8640 SW Canyon Road
292-0616
PorSFis New Year Party and Outaugural
Ball at Ariel & Phil's, 3135 SW Florida
St., 8:00 PM. BYO drinks and vegie snax.
- APRIL 14-16 Leprecon - Phoenix, Arizona
- APRIL 15 PorSFis meeting. Programming: Religious
Blasphemy in Science Fiction as in
Satanic Visions by Salman Rushdie or The
Last Temptation of Christ. Bring your
favorite pieces. Press will bring To
Reign in Hell by Steven Brust.
Restaurant: Old Town Pizza, 226 NW Davis
222-9999
- APRIL 22 Rose City Prose Reading Series at the NW
Service Center, 10 AM-12 Noon. Featured
writer: Steve Perry. Topic: Science
Fiction.
- APRIL 29 PorSFis meeting. Programming: Any suf-
ficiently advance of magic is indistin-
guishable from technology. We will
design a magic system to create our
current technology.
Restaurant: Jarra's Ethiopian Restaurant,
607 SE Morrison 230-8990
- MAY 5-7 ANGLICON - Seattle, Washington
- MAY 26-28 V-CON - Vancouver, British Columbia
BAYCON - San Jose, California

Minutes of the PorSFIS meeting of March 18, 1989
Respectfully submitted by Ariel Shattan

Before the meeting was called to order, Paul told his tale of drinking in Salt Lake City (don't bother). This led to a discussion of strange liquor laws we have known.

The meeting was called to order by Phil Jansen at 14:10. Ariel took the minutes, because David was at Mac Camp.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ariel: Don't forget about the party at Ariel & Phil's on April 1st. The invitation says BYOE, but beer and some munchies will be provided. David Johnson asked if this meant he could bring carnivore munchies. This was nixed.

John L: Buy your PorSFIS memberships now and avoid the rush. They run out on April 1st.

Phil: The post-meeting beer gathering will be at Blue Moon Tavern at NW 21st and Glisan, instead of at Bogart's. This is not permanent, we just thought we'd checked them out. [Consensus is that we'll stay at Bogart's. The Blue Moon was OK, but not enough to switch to.] - Also, the restaurant was Al Amir.

David J: He's looking for an inexpensive apartment of quality in the Tigard/Sherwood area. Inexpensive means less than \$600 a month (hopefully much less).

Allen Moore: Has for sale many games: war, fantasy, and mundane. See him if you're interested.

Eric S: The Discovery landed safely. If you get the Vancouver cable service, you can see live video over the NASA cable channel.

At this point, the meeting was interrupted by what sounded like a beeping watch. It was definitely inside the meeting room, but no one would claim it. It stopped beeping before its location could be pinpointed.

John L: There will be no more issues of the Twilight Zone magazine after the current one.

Paul: He is selling books. This time his top wares consist of a book called Carrior Comfort by Dan Simmons. It has an effusive jacket quote by Ed Bryant.

Joyce: The Northwest Film & Video Center is showing a film titled Earth Girls Are Easy in the near future. She didn't have the details, but thought it was going to be on a Wednesday night.

MAIL

Phil brought in the latest edition of the IEEE Spectrum for those who wanted to read about the Pegasus rocket.

The P.O. box yielded up:

BCSFAzine

File 770

The February Westwind (with a review of a recent Pulsar)

TREASURY

About \$900.00 (we got in a bunch of memberships).

BUSINESS

John stood in line for two hours to get us our first choice picnic spot. The PorSFis Picnic will be at the Mount Tabor park shelter on Saturday, 19, August, 1989. Someone still needs to organize this, folks.

The room at the NWSC is reserved and paid for through May 27. There is NO ROOM at the center on June 10th (the entire place is reserved), so we need to decide on an alternative to meeting at the NWSC. We are pencilled in for June 24th, but may not want to have a meeting that day because of Sue & Dave's wedding later that afternoon.

The current officers decided to leave any decisions of future meetings to the next group of officers.

PROGRAMMING

John brought in a Dr. Demento tape again, this one filled with songs with dirty lyrics and double entendres. The biggest hit was Have Some Madeira, M'Dear, recorded by the Limelighters.

The playlist was:

Bull Moose Jackson	That Big Ten-Inch Record
Oscar Brand	The Clean Song
Larry Vincent	The Freckle Song
Bowser and Blue	Polka-Dot Undies
Rusty Warren	Bounce Your Boobies
The Tubes	Don't Touch Me There
Butterbeans and Susie	I Want A Hot Dog For My Roll
Jim Backus	Dirty Old Man
The Limelighters	Madeira, M'Dear
Damaskas	Making Love In My Subaru
Sulu	Locked In The Closet With You
Ray Noble	Turkish Delight
Die Yuppers	Three Months Late
Benny Bell w/Paul Lynde	Shaving Cream

For me, it started with Arthur C. Clarke's "I remember Babylon." In this story, Mr. Clarke foresees the time when radio and television can broadcast (via the communication satellites he first envisioned) directly to individual homes, uncensorable by national government. The specific story plot involves the suggestions that an enemy nation might undermine America by using these satellites to inundate us with pornography. I do not know how seriously he considered that specific threat; in reality, I suggest that nations like the United States, where everything from the Thunderbolt to Pravda are already available on the open market, would have the least to fear. Nor is he in any way responsible for the ideas which I have developed since first reading his story. Regardless, it was this story that first made me realize how direct satellite broadcasts, beyond the control of individual governments, would have profound and often threatening effects on the world.

Consider the manner of censorship practices by many developing (and some developed) nations. It is not just a matter of suppressing news that is embarrassing to the government in power or pictures of naked females folded in three with staples in their navels. It is an attempt to erect a gate that will admit the good and beneficial products of modern technology (by whatever criteria the regime defines good) while keeping out that which might threaten their traditional society, customs, and national sovereignty. In the Beetle Bailey cartoons, a Miss Buxley wearing an inked-in granny dress has her reference to "Christmas vacation" changed to "holiday vacation." When, through a case of mistaken identity, a West German official is falsely identified as frequenting a homosexual bar, the local press describes it as an "establishment of the lower classes." A world atlas has all references to Israel obliterated (oh, those convenient modern felt pens!) But that gate is a tricky one; what to let through and what not? A modern direct-dial telephone network is installed; suddenly, the women of the household can call their women friends without the supervision of their male guardians. Another small piece of traditional society crumbles.

Of course, this gate is as much a fantasy as Maxwell's daemon. The moment Newton proclaimed that the heavenly bodies were governed by the same force of gravity as earthly objects, the medieval world-view was dead. The very notion, when first seriously contemplated, that machinery could replace back-breaking labor, was the doom of the aristocratic American South. The news constantly pouring out of the industrialized nations is dangerous — not for any particular isolatable statements — but because every last phrase, every last thought, every last solitary word, is permeated with the social upheavals and revolutions of the last four centuries of Western history.

In the midst of this dangerous stalemate, Salman Rushdie has written a book designed to be as pointedly, sarcastically biting as possible, aimed primarily at one of the world's major religions and the religion of many of those countries most uncomfortable with our modern press. The actions of Iran are no less than assault on the sovereignty of a major industrial nation. Every writer, every columnist, every publisher in the developed world is looking down the barrel of a loaded rifle.

Those rifles, however, have been there a long time. Ever since our news first started seeping inconveniently across national frontiers, there have been desperate attempts to keep it out. As it becomes more and more impossible to halt it at the border, the more determined the effort to stop it at its source. The recent plan of UNESCO to "license and regulate" journalists internationally was one such attempt. Threats have been made against relatives of American news columnists. I would not say that action as extreme as Iran's was inevitable. I suggest, however, that modern, practically uncensorable communication has made some manner of international assault on our press a certainty.

By the simple fact of its existence, modern technology, modern thought and philosophy, particularly as embodied in our modern news and publishing industry, is likewise a loaded rifle, aimed at the established society of developing nations. The old ways of life yield to the newer ones, but they seldom do so quietly. Did the medieval Church calmly open up to Renaissance philosophy and science? Did the feudal monarchs cheerfully agree it was time to transfer power to elected officials? Did the grand plantations gracefully make room for modern America's Atlantas?

Arthur C. Clarke ends his story with the words "... for I remember Babylon." Babylon we can handle; I remember Magdeburg, and the Bastille, and Gettysburg. We may have just witnessed the first salvo.

NORWESCON 11 - A REVIEW

TRAPPED IN THE DEALERS ROOM AGAIN - BY SAM BUTLER

ALTHOUGH THIS CONDITION IS OF MY OWN CHOICE IT DOES LEAVE A REVIEW A LITTLE BIT INCOMPLETE, BUT HERE GOES. FOR THE SECOND TIME NORWESCON WAS HELD AT THE TACOMA SHERATON. THE HOTEL IS NICE, BUT I HAD FORGOTTEN ABOUT THE WAITING FOR ELEVATORS. SOME OF THE NEED FOR ELEVATOR WAITING WAS ELIMINATED BY THE PLEASANT RELOCATION OF THE HOSPITALITY SUITE TO THE MID-LEVEL AREA USING MEETING SPACE THAT HAD BEEN USED BY THE REGISTRATION GROUP LAST YEAR. THIS GAVE HOSPITALITY AS "DROP IN AS YOU GO BY" ATMOSPHERE WHICH WAS QUITE PLEASANT.

THE DEALERS ROOM AND ART SHOW WERE IN THE SAME LOCATIONS AS LAST YEAR, AND ALTHOUGH THE DEALERS ROOM SEEMED A SMIDGEN LARGER RUMORS OF DISPLEASURE WERE MUTTERED BY VARIOUS DEALERS. THE ART SHOW, ALTHOUGH IT CONTAINED A LARGE NUMBER OF GOOD WORK WAS ALSO MARRED BY THE POORLY LIT LAYOUT. PERHAPS THE CONVENTION COUNTED TOO MUCH ON SUNSHINE - SOMETHING AFTER 10 NORWESCON'S I'VE REALIZED IS AN GRAVE OVERSIGHT.

I DON'T KNOW HOW THE PROGRAMMING WENT, ALTHOUGH I DID HEAR OF SEVERAL PEOPLE WHO "NEVER GO TO PROGRAMMING" DID INDEED GO TO PROGRAMMING THIS YEAR AND SEEMED TO HAVE SOME NICE THINGS TO SAY ALONG WITH THE TYPICAL PROBLEMS OF ILL PREPARED PANELISTS. AUTHORS AND ARTISTS DON'T TEND TO WANDER WITH A GREAT REGULARITY THROUGH THE DEALERS ROOM I DID SEE A NUMBER OF THEM.

AS USUAL I HAVEN'T LOOKED THROUGH THE PROGRAM BOOK, AND BARELY LOOKED AT THE POCKET PROGRAM A STUDY IN ORGAMI. PERHAPS I'M JUST TIRED OF SEEING COLOUR ARTWORK DONE IN BLACK/WHITE TONALITIES.

AS THE FATHER OF A MASQUERADE CONTESTANT I WAS BACKSTAGE AND WITNESS ANOTHER OF THE 'NORWESCON MASQUERADES ALWAYS STARTS ON TIME' SYNDROME. THE AUDIENCE WASN'T EVEN LET INTO THE ROOM UNTIL AFTER 8 PM THE SCHEDULED STARTING TIME. ONCE THE SHOW STARTED IT MOVED SLOWLY AND WITH THE EXCEPTION OF POOR VIDEO TRANSMISSION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED A SUCCESS.

NORWESCON 12 WILL BE HELD MARCH 29 - APRIL 1, 1990 IN THE SAME HOTEL, GUESTS TO BE ANNOUNCED EXCEPT FOR FAN GOH PAT MUELLER AND toastmaster DAN REEDER. A WORD OF WISDOM - DON'T LEAVE THE HOTEL BY YOURSELF AT NIGHT.

PORTRAIT OF THE WRITER AS A YOUNG FAN by John Raymond Lorentz

Science fiction has been part of television almost since the beginning ("Captain Video" aired in 1950). Over the years, there's been some good programs ("Max Headroom") and bad ("V" and "Battlestar Galactica" come to mind). A couple of shows started in the 60's, and look to be here until the 90's.

Star Trek barely limped through three seasons on NBC, but rose from the dead through syndication, and has spawned four (soon to be five) feature films, and a new television series, **Star Trek: The Next Generation**, set some 78 years after the first incarnation. The first season of the new show often showed Gene Roddenberry's heavy hand, but late in the season it started having episodes that weren't rewrites from 20-year-old storylines. This year, albeit with an occasional slip back, the stories have showed even more promise. Recently, I started thinking that there had been very little conflict in the shows this season (the usual "blast the Klingons (oops, I mean Romulans) before they blast us" plot). Then I realized that the conflict has been internal, with much more exploration of the characters, and the future setting of the show. Although "Elementary, My Dear Data" was yet another show using the holodeck to provide the setting (why bother having a spaceship, when they never use it for the setting?), there was an excellent scene in which the computer-generated Moriarity realized that he **was** a computer simulation, and feared being turned off. Another episode explored whether the android Data was a sapient being, or simply Star Fleet property. Of course, other episodes have been re-hashed melodrama, but there are sparks that make the show worth watching.

Other than a short hiatus a few years back, **Doctor Who** has been on British TV constantly since its introduction on November 23, 1963, and first appeared in the States in the 70's. It, of course, has an advantage, since seven different actors have played the Doctor on the tube. This change, as well as turnover in writers and producers, has kept the show fresh for much longer than possible for other television programs, with each actor bringing a different look to the character. (The off-camera personnel have helped, also. In the 70's, when Tom Baker [who resembled Harpo Marx in appearance, hairstyle, and frantic energy] played the Doctor, one of the writers was Douglas Adams, also known for "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy".) Recently, on a special called "The Making of Doctor Who", John Nathan-Turner (the producer of Doctor Who, who's been with the show for 19 years) stated that when he started with the show, it was entering the 70's, and now they're preparing for the 90's. After seeing Sylvester McCoy play the Doctor, I have to agree. At first, I dreaded the advent of someone who was best know for holding the world's record for having a ferret down his pants. But he works well as the Doctor, playing the role with a light-heartedness reminiscent of Tom Baker. I think the show is set up well to continue for another decade or two.

(By the way, if Oregon Public Broadcasting holds to its announced schedule, they should be now showing the Tom Baker episodes again. That version of the Doctor has always been my favorite.)

Speaking of television, it astonishes me that **bad SF** on tv can attract such hordes of fans, simply because the characters wear blasters in place of six-shooters. I've always treated televised SF that same as I treat written SF- if it's not well-written, I'll skip it.

PULSAR is the monthly newsletter of the Portland Science Fiction Society (PorSFIS). Opinions expressed herein are solely those of the writers, who retain all rights to the material. Pulsar has a rotating editorship, open to all PorSFIS members. This month's editor was Sam Butler, next months editor is Art by Sam Butler.

Issues of Pulsar are available: free with PorSFIS membership (full year - \$10), by trade with other newsletters, or for \$0.60 per copy. Contributions are always welcome and may be sent to the PorSFIS address listed elsewhere on this page.

PorSFIS meets on alternate Saturdays. Check the Timeline in this issue for dates and times of these meetings and other events.

1989-1990 OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT: David Johnson
VICE-PRESIDENT: Eric Simonson
SECRETARY: David Levine
TREASURER: John Andrews

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