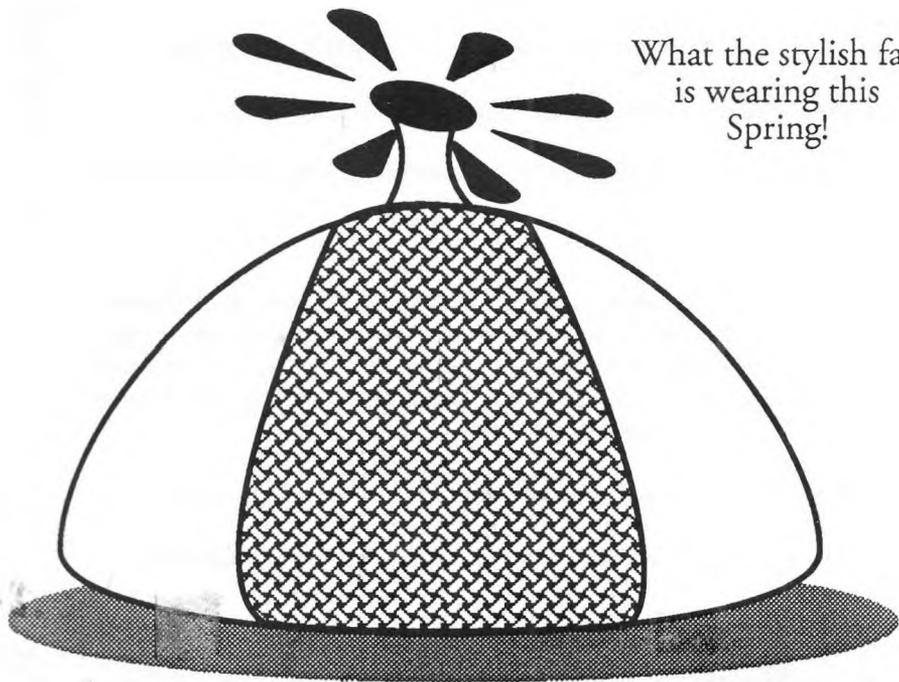


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PULSAR

What the stylish fan
is wearing this
Spring!



The newsletter of the Portland Science Fiction Society



ISSUE #235

MAY, 1998

PorSFIS holds a formal meeting on the second Saturday of each month. Usually these are structured and have a program. After the meeting we adjourn to a social place for snacks, drinks and socialization. Some folks gather after the meeting for dinner at the place listed in the timeline. There is often a social gathering in varying locations on the fourth Saturday.

Everyone is welcome to both.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Saturday May 9 PorSFIS Meeting 2 PM Portland State
University Room 229
Guest Speaker - Steven Barnes

This will also be the "Official Business Meeting" which normally would have been in April.

The reason: Last months meeting was the same weekend as Norwescon in Seattle. Many of our members were in attendance at that convention. Some of us, however, stayed here in Portland and had an early beer and chips. For those who joined us in a 3 hour festive activity, "YES!", for those who didn't, "AHH TOO BAD!".

The restaurant for Afters will be decided at the Market Street Pub.

Saturday May 23 PorSFIS Social Event 7:00 PM Jim & Linda
Pilcher's apartment
It's Movie Night - The adventure continues

Sunday May 31 The Sixth Con 8 - 1998 Meeting, 60th & SE Foster
Road - Round Table Pizza 5 PM

It's still time to put ourselves to work and see what needs to be done for Con 8, the PorSFIS awareness convention, after all it's only 2 months away and counting.

Saturday June 13 PorSFIS Meeting 2 PM Portland State
University Room 229
Guest Speaker - to be announced

Norwescon 21

Con Report by Anthony Ward

Norwescon 21 was held over the Easter weekend at the SeaTac Doubletree Inn. It was great. Well, possibly it was great because I was this year's Volunteer Guest of Honor. No, it was a very nice con for anyone.

If you have to attend a SF con, being a GoH is the best way to attend. I was flown up to SeaTac from PDX on an United Express puddle jumper. It was a very short flight and was very smooth. I've ridden on bumpier bus rides. I was met at the airport and taken to the Doubletree Inn on Wednesday for a meet the GoHs party. It was very nice.

Thursday I helped set up the con and got a packet of strange stuff delivered to my room. The chocolate was nice, but the crackers were so "no fat", "no taste", all healthy things, I couldn't eat them. And I never had a chance to fix the instant chile. I was on my first panel and attended the opening ceremony and was able to meet all the GoHs.

Friday morning was a GoH and workers breakfast and open art show tour. This year's art show was pretty good. Last year's was a disaster, but they seem to have gotten the bugs out. I was particularly impressed with the 3D works. Some beautiful model spaceships and "weapons" were displayed. In the lobby outside the art show, a local Seattle artist spent the weekend building a beautiful "full sized" dragon's head. Amazing to watch it develop over the weekend.

The science GoH works in the Bakersfield morgue. She had some interesting opinions on the "alien autopsy" videos and had some cool, but gross, slides. She was interesting to talk to and I found her major presentation to be fascinating.

The rest of the weekend just blurs. I was on six more panels, two of which were scheduled against the award presentations. Oh well. I attended some great filk sings and performances and had a lot of fun at many of the panels. I also washed dishes and made sandwiches. The Norwescon gets a lot out of their Volunteer GoH. On Sunday I attended the volunteer "give the workers' their freebies" event. I couldn't attend the

Closing because somebody had booked me on a 1735 flight back to Portland, and United was very snippy about changing the reservation.

All in all, I had a great weekend. I missed the maquerade because of a "post panel continuation in the hall for three hours" meeting/discussion, but had a lot of fun. The hucksters' room was nice and I bought some books and other stuff. There are a lot of Camarilla (sp?) live role players who dress up like modern day "goth" vampires with a lot of black leather and lace. One couple had a couple of month old baby with them. The little on was dressed in a black leather playsuit. Real cute.

If you want to spend an enjoyable weekend over Easter next year, think about attending Norwescon 22. I've enjoyed the last five and think most PorSFIS members would. Its only a 3.5 hour drive or a 25-35 minute flight and you should have a fun weekend. Even volunteer. You might be picked as the VGoH for Norwescon 23.

Scratching the Twenty year Itch

Carl Mork

Well, it has now been twenty years that the Pulsar has been published. So where were we twenty years ago? Going to see the hot new movie "Star Wars" for the Xth time? Anxiously awaiting the promised new Heinlein novel, "The Number of the Beast"? At that time I wasn't even aware of fandom outside of the occasional Trek do. I'd heard of Worldcon, but had never been.

Strangely enough though, I was taking a class at PSU on writing SF. Nothing ever came of it. I made a total of two submissions and not surprisingly got the usual letter. I'd been to a total of two cons. In 1973 there was Filmcon in Los Angeles, but it was less of an SF con than a con devoted entirely to the subject of movies in general. The closest I came to SF was meeting Richard Matheson at the banquet(rubber chicken and steamed turnips). Then I went to PSSSTCON in Seattle. This was 1977 but Star Wars was not yet released and no-one had any idea of what the future held.

PSSSTCON was a Trek convention, but had Harlan Ellison and Robert Heinlein as the guests of honor. It was there that I was introduced to the insidious and addictive RPGs. It was a game of Metamorphosis Alpha, a game better lost to oblivion, but it was fun. It was through gaming that I first heard of PorSFis and then the first ORYCON. I don't get much chance to game anymore, but I'm still going to cons.

Interestingly enough, it was thirty years ago this month that I first encountered SF. Sixth Grade, Abernethy Elementary in the Ladd Addition. There used to be(may still be for all I know) a book club for elementary school students. They offered books for about the same price as a comic book(fifteen cents then) and I had gotten a book of short stories. Still have that book. Most of it was dreck that belonged in turkey readings(I know some of you remember those, back before we found out what a nice guy Lionel Fanthorpe is). But amidst all those wretched examples of Sturgeon's Law was Arthur C. Clarke's "The Haunted Spacesuit". I was hooked but didn't know where to look for more stuff like that. It wasn't until I was hospitalized in 1971 that I found out that what I was looking for was called Science Fiction. I didn't even know that my parents were reading a magazine of it called Analog. Oblivious, What? Well, I now had several months in which to devour SF and I would read any sort of dreck if it had time travel or spaceships or anything like that.

Except for E.E. Smith. Don't ask me why, I just never could get into the Lensman books. Along the way, I remember the joy of finding such gems as "The Warlock in Spite of Himself", "Dragonflight", The original Conan books, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Stanley Schmidt, the occasional Ellison where he lives up to hisgive me a while think about this. I want to be precise, but I have this fear he might somehow come to read this. I don't need more scars.

As I look over the last thirty years, my only regret is that I wasted a lot of time reading some really awful stuff, watched some movies so cheesy that even Mystery Science Theater 3000 wouldn't show them, not to mention some of the shows that called themselves SF. When I could have been reading something good.

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PorSFis
PO Box 4602
Portland, OR 97208

PULSAR, the newsletter of the Portland Science Fiction Society comes free with membership(\$20 for the year ending April 1999). It is also available in trade for other fanzines or can be purchased at **Excalibur Books, Future Dreams or Looking Glass Books**, all in Portland.

This Month's Editors are Carl Mork and Deborah Stansbury. Next Month's Editor will be Ms. Stansbury. Submissions of articles and art are always welcome and may be sent to the PO Box above. Deadline for submissions is the 20th of each month.

PorSFis meetings are open to everyone. Check the timeline for meeting time and place.

PorSFis Hotline for meeting times and places is (503)727-3570

President- Sam Butler 503-289-2670
Vice-Pres-Chuck Leon 503-253-2910
Secretary-Roger Wells
Treasurer-John Andrews

- Slings the bull
- Teasing

Note: *up to 15 minutes under the Premium Gold Friends Plan

What friendly activities are not covered under the Managed Friends Network?

Activities that would not be pre-approved include (but are not limited to):

- Bar hopping
- Bending over backwards
- Drinking to excess
- Giving a hoot
- Going the extra mile
- Lending money
- Real empathy
- Truly caring

How can I find out more about the Managed Friends Network?

A simple call is all it takes. If you need a friend, just call our toll-free number (1-800-FRIENDS). Or visit our web site (www.mfn.wegotyounow) Sign up for the Managed Friends Network and rest easier with the knowledge that all of your appropriate friendship needs will be met.

Who decides what's appropriate for me?

We do. Isn't that what friends are for?

MANAGED FRIENDS NETWORK

[Note: This came from a support list for people with Multiple Myeloma. Much talk about HMO's and "managed care".]

Welcome to the Managed Friends Network, a whole new way of thinking about friends and relationships. The Managed Friends Network combines all of the advantages of a traditional friends network with important time-saving and cost-effective features.

How does it work?

Under the Managed Friends Network, you choose your friends from a network of pre-screened, accredited Friends Providers (FPs). All your friendship needs are met by members of your Managed Friends Staff.

What's wrong with my current friends?

If you're like most people, you are receiving friendship services from a network of providers haphazardly patched together from your old neighborhoods, jobs, and schools. The result is often costly duplication, inefficiency, and conflict. Many of your current friends may not meet national standards, responding to your needs with inappropriate, outmoded, or even experimental acts of friendship. Under Managed Friends, your friendship needs are coordinated by your designated Best Friend, who will ensure the quality and goodness of fit of all your friendly relationships.

How do I know that the Managed Friends Network's panel of friends is not made up of a bunch of losers who can't make friends on their own?

Many of today's most dedicated and highly trained Friends Providers are as concerned as we are about delivering Quality Friends in a time-saving and cost-effective manner. They have joined our network because they want to focus on acting like a friend rather than doing the paperwork and paying the high "bad-friends" premiums that have caused the cost of traditional friendship to skyrocket. Our Friends Providers have met the rigorous standards of the Managed Friends Network for companionship and loyalty.

What if I need a special friend, say, for poker or fishing?

Special Friends are responsible for most of the unnecessary and expensive activities that burden already costly relationships. Under the Managed

Friends Network, your Best Friend is qualified to pre-approve your referral to a Special Friend within the Managed Friendship Network should your needs fall outside of the scope of his/her friendship.

Suppose I want to see friends outside the Managed Friends Network?

You may make friends outside of the Managed Friends Network only in the event of a Friendship Emergency.

What is a "Friendship Emergency?"

The Managed Friends Network covers your friendship needs 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, even if you need a friend out of town, after regular business hours, or when your Best Friend is with someone else. You might be on a business trip, for instance, and suddenly find that you are feeling lonely. In such cases, you may make a New Friend, and all approved friendly activities will be covered under the Managed Friends Network, provided you notify the Managed Friends Office or the 24-hour Friends Hot-line (1-800-FRIENDS) within two business days.

What friendly activities are covered under the Managed Friends Network?

Friendly Activities that are typically covered include:

- Agreeing with you
- Appearing sympathetic
- Chewing the fat
- Dropping by
- Feeling your pain
- Gossiping
- Hanging out
- Holding your hand (up to 5 minutes per activity)*
- Joshing
- Kidding around
- Listening to you whine*
- Partying
- Passing the time
- Patting your back
- Ribbing
- Sharing a meal
- Shooting the breeze

FOURTH SUBJECT:

NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER

The new telephone number for PorSFis is:

727-3570 - remember there will be a pop quiz

FIFTH SUBJECT:

MORTALITY

In the last two months a number of people that I have known have died. Obviously the most important to me would have to be my father. I will spare the audience here with my tribute as I was able to eulogize him at his funeral.

Instead I will speak for a couple of sentences about the other two people.

The first was Jo Clayton. I didn't know Jo all that well, and to be honest don't believe that I've even read anything that she wrote, but really that doesn't matter. Quite a few years ago when I was still doing programming at conventions I met Jo. This was just before she moved to Portland. I believe that she was up here checking out whether she wanted to move her. She was quite pleasant. After that time got in the way and I don't remember seeing her any time again until I visited her in the hospital maybe six months or more ago.

Yes I know I could have gone more, but somehow the time never seemed to be there. It wasn't that it was depressing to go there. She was quite cheerful, she painted while we talked. We didn't talk about anything exactly worth remembering, but the idea of sharing time with someone who was living where she would die was still worth the effort. I am glad that I went again and spent time with Jo.

The third person was Alex Schomburg. Most of you probably won't recognize the name, but if you saw the art that he made you would remember. As part of the first Portland Westercon committee back in 1984 we were talked into honoring Alex as our Artist Guest of Honor a position we originally had not planned on having. Alex attended and was probably was greatly pleased for the attention. He certainly deserved it. As one of the artists of the Golden Age [that wonderful time that is always just before you started reading, or anything] Alex deserved much more honors than he probably received. But still Portland did honor him and that is something we should treasure.

McDonnell-Douglas Customer Survey

Rumor has it that the questionnaire below was actually posted very briefly on the McDonnell Douglas website by an employee there who obviously has a sense of humor. The company, of course, does not - and made the web department take it down immediately. (In case you don't know: McDonnell Douglas is one of the world's chief suppliers of military aircraft).

Thank you for purchasing a McDonnell Douglas military aircraft. In order to protect your new investment, please take a few moments to fill out the warranty registration card below. Answering the survey questions is not required, but the information will help us to develop new products that best meet your needs and desires.

1. Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss Lt. Gen.
 Comrade Classified Other

First Name:

Initial:

Last Name:

Password: (max 8 char)

Code Name:

Latitude-Longitude-Altitude:

2. Which model aircraft did you purchase?

- F-14 Tomcat F-15 Eagle
 F-16 Falcon F-117A Stealth
 Classified

3. Date of purchase (Year/Month/Day): 19..... / /

4. Serial Number:

5. Please check where this product was purchased:

- Received as gift / aid package Catalog showroom
 Independent arms broker Mail order
 Discount store Government surplus
 Classified

6. Please check how you became aware of the McDonnell Douglas product you have just purchased:

- Store display Heard loud noise, looked up
 Espionage Recommended by friend / relative / ally
 Lobbying by manufacturer Attacked by one

7. Please check the three (3) factors that most influenced your decision to purchase this McDonnell Douglas product:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Style / appearance | <input type="checkbox"/> Speed / maneuverability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Price / value | <input type="checkbox"/> Weapons Systems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kickback / bribe | <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended by salesperson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comfort / convenience | <input type="checkbox"/> McDonnell Douglas reputation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Backroom politics | <input type="checkbox"/> Negative experience opposing one in combat |

8. Please check the location(s) where this product will be used:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> North America | <input type="checkbox"/> Central / South America |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aircraft carrier | <input type="checkbox"/> Europe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle East | <input type="checkbox"/> Africa |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asia / Far East | <input type="checkbox"/> Misc. Third World countries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classified | |

9. Please check the products that you currently own or intend to purchase in the near future:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Color TV | <input type="checkbox"/> Killer Satellite |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CD Player | <input type="checkbox"/> Air-to-Air Missiles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> VCR | <input type="checkbox"/> Space Shuttle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home Computer | <input type="checkbox"/> Nuclear Weapon |

10. How would you describe yourself or your organization?

(Check all that apply:)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communist / Socialist | <input type="checkbox"/> Terrorist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crazy | <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dictatorship | <input type="checkbox"/> Corrupt |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Democratic |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Primitive / Tribal |

11. How did you pay for your McDonnell Douglas product?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deficit spending | <input type="checkbox"/> Cash |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Suitcases of cocaine | <input type="checkbox"/> Oil revenues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal check | <input type="checkbox"/> Credit card |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ransom money | <input type="checkbox"/> Traveler's check |

12. Your occupation:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homemaker | <input type="checkbox"/> Sales / marketing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Revolutionary | <input type="checkbox"/> Clerical |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mercenary | <input type="checkbox"/> Tyrant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle management | <input type="checkbox"/> Eccentric billionaire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Defense Minister / General | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retired | <input type="checkbox"/> Student |

13. To help us understand our customers' lifestyles, please indicate the interests and activities in which you and your spouse enjoy participating on a regular basis:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Golf | <input type="checkbox"/> Boating / sailing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sabotage | <input type="checkbox"/> Running / jogging |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Propaganda / disinformation | |

ARTICLE:

REF: DARK CITY - Film Review

As this is the last movie that I went to see in the big theater I can echo Skip's comments that it really looks nice on the screen. Whole [hole] plots of course abound, but at least I could grasp the concept of aliens who had the ability to bend matter with their minds into anything they wanted. Grabbing entire bits of humanity is an old theme so there's nothing new there. I enjoyed the creation of the new city wondering at the special effects necessary for the effect while ignoring my disbelief. As for the concept that aliens would kidnap humans and play 'film noir' stories with them, well 'film noir' can get old now can't it? I'd suggest a 'western' scenario, but maybe we should go for a musical, how's that for character development?

If you like visual candy this film will be a most excellent film, if you like puzzles then also this will be a good film for you. If you want something that ties together and has no holes in the plots, then I'm sorry you'll have to go elsewhere, but remember, this is an intriguing ride.

A short Rant

What ever happened to a television year? In the 'golden age' they made over 30 shows and you were lucky if they reran the episodes you liked during the summer rerun season. Now days they seem to make about 20 episodes, they run them in about 3 new ones in a row followed by 4 or 5 reruns when then broadcast the program at all. Programs are taken off the air and shifted around so fast that the tv schedules are never correct, not even the on-line cable ones. They have special showings of their highest rated shows almost every night of the week as a 'special' when what is really 'special' is that all of their other programs suck so bad that they think a 'bonus' will take our minds off them, and then someone in tv land wonders why people keep tuning out the networks.

Well guys and gals, get a clue.

Por SFiS
PO Box 4602
Portland OR 97208



Dick & Nicki Lynch Trade
PO Box 1350
Germantown, Maryland 20875

20875+1350

