

Minicon 34

Progress
Report

1



Minicon 34 All-in-one Form

This is our All-in-one form, which replaces the separate registration, party room request, and volunteers forms. No longer do you need to fill out your name and contact information again and again. We hope you will find this form simple and easy to use.

The first step is to remove the form from the Progress Report (PR), the booklet you're holding. Carefully tear through the stapled bits; the little holes won't hurt. Now, lay it out on a nice flat surface and start filling it out, especially the volunteer section. When you are done, address an envelope to: **Minicon 34, Registration, P.O. Box 8297, Lake Street Station, Minneapolis MN 55408**. Feed this page a couple times, insert it into the envelope you just addressed along with your registration check, stick proper postage on the envelope, and send it in the mail. Simple, huh?

Volunteer

REMINDER: Be sure to fill in your name and contact information (including the optional phone and/or email address, please) on the Registration portion of this form (inside back cover) so we'll be able to contact you. Thanks!

Have you worked on Minicon in the past? _____

If you did, what did you do? _____

Did you enjoy it? _____

Have you worked on other conventions? _____

If you did, what did you do? _____

Did you enjoy it? _____

What kind of things do you want to help with?

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Art Show | <input type="radio"/> Operations | <input type="radio"/> Registration |
| <input type="radio"/> Badges and Signs | <input type="radio"/> Life Support | <input type="radio"/> Publications |
| <input type="radio"/> Childcare | <input type="radio"/> Parties | <input type="radio"/> Volunteers |
| <input type="radio"/> Hotline (voice mail) | <input type="radio"/> Gaming | <input type="radio"/> Guest Liaisons |
| <input type="radio"/> WHAM! (recycling) | <input type="radio"/> Programming | <input type="radio"/> Info Desk |
| <input type="radio"/> Setup/Tear down | <input type="radio"/> Green Room | <input type="radio"/> Badger (check badges) |
| <input type="radio"/> Hucksters Room | <input type="radio"/> Bozo Bus Tribune | <input type="radio"/> Gopher (run errands) |
| <input type="radio"/> Hotel | <input type="radio"/> Restaurant Guide | <input type="radio"/> Data Entry |

Do you have any special skills? Any common skills? Do you have a strong back and a weak mind? A strong mind and a weak back? An extremely rich uncle?

See inside back cover for registration form & hotel reservation information ➡

Minn-StF welcomes you to



April 2-4, 1999
Minneapolis Hilton & Towers
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Writer GoH: Octavia E. Butler

One of the strongest writers in contemporary SF, Octavia is a winner of the Hugo, Nebula, and Tiptree Awards. Author of the Patternist novels, the Xenogenesis series, the acclaimed *Parable of the Sower*, and of short fiction such as "Bloodchild"; works that range from the 17th century to the far interstellar future, and possess an insightfulness, depth, and uncompromising clarity rare in any field of fiction. We are proud to bring this distinguished and fascinating writer to Minicon in 1999. (See reading recommendations on page 8.)

Fan GoHs: Mark and Priscilla Olson

A dynamic duo of fan-ish energy, Mark (who is secretly from Minnesota) chaired the 1989 Worldcon; these days he's a mainstay of NESFA Press, a leading fan-run SF specialty publisher. Priscilla Olson has overseen programming at two different Worldcons and several Boskones; and in her Copious Free Time is a gardener, fan-ish sociologist, and Legion of Superheroes fan. Each has (separately) chaired a Boskone. Together or apart, they're well-informed, approachable all-around fans with a great range of interests.

Bookseller GoH: David Nee

A font of knowledge about SF and bookselling, Dave has been a co-owner since 1977, and manager since 1988, of The Other Change of Hobbit bookstore in Berkeley, California; one of the oldest and most influential SF and fantasy bookstores in the world. Booksellers hold up half the sky, and we hope to hear more about the business (and lore) of SF from Dave's perspective at Minicon 34.

A funny thing happened on our way to the hotel... see pages 10 & 11 for details.



Minicon is brought to you by...

Minnesota Science Fiction Society
P.O. Box 8583
Lake Street Station
Minneapolis, MN 55408

Minn-stf events hotline: 612-824-5559

Minicon's address:

Minicon 34
P.O. Box 8297
Lake Street Station
Minneapolis, MN 55408

Email addresses: See page 17

Dear Davids, Karens, and fans everywhere,

Happy summer! We're pleased to be sending you the first progress report for Minicon 34, even though the convention is still most of eight months away. Why? Because we've got a lot to tell you about next Minicon — where it's going to be different, how it's going to be the same, and the fun we plan on having together, too.

The Minicon 34 committee had a blast at Minicon 33, and we thank everyone who talked with us, came to our panels, and showed their curiosity about and concern for the future of Minicon. The committee may not have consciously adopted Lewis Carroll's "What I tell you three times is true" rule, but we had three signage campaigns, three program items, and three parties in the consuite. If you're like most fans, i.e., still intending to get around to looking through your program book *Real Soon*. Now, please do dig it out and read our 2-page ad. (What, not three pages? So much for tradition.)

We're sending this PR to thousands of fans who weren't at Minicon this year as well as to everyone who was. In addition to giving you an overview of Minicon's plans, it includes lots of information we didn't know at the con — registration and hotel rates, for example. Much to our surprise, we have a new hotel, too. Minicon is moving to the downtown Minneapolis Hilton! (Info on page 10.)

As we said around 1,500 times while handing out badge stickers at this last Minicon, "Minicon 34 will be different." We urge you to join Minicon now if what we're doing appeals to you. (We hope it will.) If it doesn't, we encourage you to learn more before making your decision. Be informed! There's lots of talk (and a few really bizarre rumors) out there. We invite you to read future PRs, check out our Web page, and talk with committee members. Come to Minn-SF meetings if you can; look for our "Ask Me About Minicon 34" ribbons at other conventions.

A big part of what we're trying to do with the convention is to help all Minicon members get to know each other better with every convention we go to. We want it to be easier for everyone to meet new friends, and to renew old friendships with fans from near and far. The Minicon committee will do its best to encourage this, but it will take everyone's active participation to make it real. Making Minicon a place where you spend a fantastic weekend with "a couple thousand of your closest, most intimate friends, many of whom you haven't met yet" won't happen all at once in a blinding flash of light, but rather by thousands of individual efforts large and small.

Speaking of individual efforts, I addressed this introduction to the "Davids" and "Karens" as well as to "fans everywhere" because while I don't know every David and Karen on our mailing list (there are 333 of them — yes, really!), Minicon has long been home to the photogenic "Legion of Super-Davids," and it more recently offered "Karen Tours" for newcomers, with every tour guide named Karen. Every Minicon is made of hundreds of such delightful oddities in addition to the programming, art show, hucksters room, consuite, and other functions that the committee organizes. We invite your active participation in making each and every Minicon a unique celebration of our common interests in fandom, science fiction, and fantasy.

Yours truly,

Gerri Sullivan, PR Editor and Council Member

Find it fast

Art show	9
Contact info	17
Forms.....	Inside covers
Hotel	10
Hucksters	13
Programming	9
Publications	17
Registration	18
Volunteers.....	12

Minicon 34: What's up, what's down, what's sideways

By Patrick and Teresa
Nielsen Hayden
Council Members

"You can't step in the same Minicon twice."

Minicon is a wonderful convention, and it's going to go on being wonderful. But the way it's run is going to have to change, because Minicon has problems. Here's a big one: running the convention has been burning out way too many of the people involved, and putting Minn-SF and Minicon at financial risk. Minn-SF, the SF club that runs Minicon, once had the sense to bid for the 1973 Worldcon in 1974. Now it's running a convention half the size of the Worldcon every year. This isn't working.

It's time to rebuild Minicon in sustainable form. You may have heard rumors about this. Contrary to some reports, we are not banning media fans, costumes, art, music, pagans, beer, or fun, and we're neither setting a membership cap nor accepting Balticon memberships. (Criminally! Who thought those up?) On the other hand, we really are doing away with the Masquerade, the drum jam, the in-hotel Minicon TV channel, and the Minnopolis in '73 Suite; and "Stonehenge" is definitely off the playlist.

Does dropping the Masquerade mean we don't want costume fans at Minicon? Nope. We're costume-positive, and we're cooking up alternate events for costumers. (Masquerade ball or reception? Fancy-dress parties? Hall costume awards? Intensive costuming panels? Lots of fun to be had there.) A joyful freedom of dress is part of Minicon, and that's all there is to it.

In general, stuff that requires lots of money or people-time or both is being carefully re-evaluated. Some things will be dropped completely; others will be morphed into new and intriguing forms. But the things that make Minicon wonderful? Those we're keeping.

"We're the best there is at what we do,
And what we do best is fun."

Minicon will still be big and shaggy and full of fun and weirdness; it'll just be *manageably* big, shaggy, fun, and weird. There won't be a Minnopolis in '73 Suite, but there will be parties, and we're still bidding for '73. There won't be a drum jam, but there will be music. There may or may not be an official dance, but people will surely dance.

We'll have an art show, and art programming to go with it, and a terrific art auction. The hucksters room will be selling all the books you can eat, plus a wide range of those trinkets and numinous artifacts so necessary to sooty technogothic life. We'll be giving out the Mark Time Award for Best Audio SF of the year. Silly things will happen during (and between) the opening and closing ceremonies. There'll be blog songs in the corridors, parties in the suites, post-panel discussions in the corners, inscrutable signs in the elevators, traffic in the stairwells, and munchies and beer and conversation and music in the consuite. In short, it will be Minicon.

(continued next page)



"The best special effects are the ones inside your head."

We're in favor of real live fun, not institutionalized fun. And we're going to bring it back out into the open where everyone can find it.

Fandom has always played more than one game with itself, and encompassed any number of subgroups: fanzine fans, sercon fans, media fans, con fans, and fans of years' standing who claim they're not fans; young fans, old fans, and noofans of all ages. But whoever saw a fan who was just one of those things? Too often, these labels have become barriers that keep us apart. At Minicon 34, we'd like to pay more attention to the things we hold in common.

We want your input, your programming suggestions, your vision for coming years. We hope you'll join us — by suggesting new ideas, by volunteering to help, by showing up and having a great time. Because if our hearts and yours aren't in it, what's the use? And if they are, what happens will be something wonderful.

Questions & Answers

The questions included in this progress report were asked by members of Minicon 33 during our program teams about next year's Minicon, or were dropped off in our question box. Some were answered at the convention — either by the same person answering here, or someone else on the Minicon 34 committee. The responses in this PR are similar in spirit, but different in wording, for it seems that while our main Q&A session was broadcast on Minicon Bazovision, we hadn't asked for a tape to be made at the same time, and we understand there is none. We'd love a copy of one of the hand-held cassette recordings that were made by people in the audience. Thanks!

—Geri Sullivan

You seem to want to turn the con into an acculturation machine. Why? For what end purpose? How come the fanish culture in other parts of the country is seen as the norm to be compared against? — Steve Johnson

But, but, but...that's what Minicon is for. One of the neat and important things that conventions do is provide a painless introduction to fandom. Minicon was never intended to exist in isolation from the rest of the fanish community and the Minicon 34 council considers the disconnection from that culture to be a weakness, not a strength. Fandom is huge, shaggy, weird, provocative, and spiky. There's not much that's normative about it. But it's what Minicon is a part of, not apart from. — Lydia Nickerson

We're not trying to make local fanish culture the same as LASFS or the same as NESFA (to take two widely-separated examples, which are very different). But fandom is a much larger thing than Min-Stif (or SF Minnesota, or...), and it's useful to compare how things are done here with how things are done various other places. Sometimes our goals are different. Sometimes our skills are different. Sometimes our resources are different. But sometimes, other places actually have a better idea. Trying to do everything on our own, without reference to the larger world of fandom, is just as silly as trying to make everything "the same as" the rest of fandom would be. — David Dyer-Bennet

With the spear-head of Minicon 34 for more "fanish" people and trimming down the attendance, wouldn't it be easier for those wanting this to create their own Con instead of messing with Minicon? — Beavis

Minicon is not sustainable in the form it's had over the past seven years; leaving it alone was never an option. — David Dyer-Bennet



How did a con so well-attended as Minicon 32 lose money? — Harry LeBlanc

The old-fashioned way: by spending more money than we took in.

Last that sound too flip, let me expand on my answer a bit. While Minicon is Min-Stif's annual fund-raiser, it is much more than that. If that's all it was, we could probably raise enough funds for Min-Stif's non-Minicon needs by having a couple of bake or rummage sales each year, by going door-to-door selling World's Finest Chocolate, by charging dues, or by any of the other methods traditionally used by non-profit organizations to raise money.

But Minicon is not only Min-Stif's fund-raiser, it's Min-Stif's annual celebration of itself, science fiction, fantasy, and fandom. So normal business goals, or even those of commercial sf conventions, don't really apply. To give an example, we could drastically increase our profits by eliminating most of the hospitality function. If we quit serving fruit, bagels, doughnuts, coffee, espresso, cappuccino, soda pop, and beer in the con suite, it would substantially improve our cash flow. But it would miss the point.

Finally, even in a strict business sense, there isn't necessarily a direct correlation between attendance and profits. For proof of that, just take a look at the current financial status of most of the professional sports teams in the United States.... — Fred A. Levy Haskell

Hi! Are you going to limit membership next year? — Stephen Barer

Hello, Stephen. That's a question that I believe has been on more than one set of lips lately, so I appreciate it that you took the time to ask us directly, rather than looking to the rumor-mill. This way, we can answer it and move on. No, we are not going to limit membership next year. Next question? — Fred A. Levy Haskell

If Minicon is to be shrank — do any of you have in mind specific groups that will be discouraged from attending? — [name withheld]

Groups? Hmmm. Well, just off the top of my head: the Weathermen, the DAR, Thugs, Aerosmith, the Rolling Stones, the Model Railroaders of North America, philatelists, numismatists... Essentially, I'd like to discourage any and all groups from attending our groups. Individuals, however, are another matter — any individual who feels he or she belongs at Minicon should attend Minicon. In my humble opinion, of course.... — Fred A. Levy Haskell

Are you cutting Media Programming and media oriented rooms? — [no name given]

There will be media programming at Minicon 34. We are planning to have significantly less programming at Minicon 34 than in previous years, but the reduction will not be at the expense of media programming. Our goal is to have exciting programming that incites conversation and heated discussion after the panel has ended. We will be favoring applications for party space that emphasize conversation, but we also realize that television is used by many people as a conversation piece. The exact theme of a party is far less important than the goals and ambience. — Lydia Nickerson

(Q&As are continued in sidebar throughout this PR)

Thank YOU!

Our thanks and congratulations to everyone who contributed to making Minicon 33 a success and a joy — the committee members who worked so hard all year long; the hundreds of volunteers who pitched in at the convention; and the programming participants, musicians, and all of the members who in whatever way made the Minicon better for everyone. Preliminary reports from the treasurer show that Minicon 33 exceeded its financial goals, which comes as a great relief to Min-Stif and Minicon. More important, though, are the wonderful memories so many fans carried home at the end of the convention; memories you helped make through your active participation in Minicon. Thank you!

—Minicon 34



Programming

By Beth Friedman
Programming Head
& Council Member

Minicon 34 will be different. You've heard that one before, right? Programming will be somewhat different, as well. There will be fewer programming items than at previous Minicons, and we hope that every item will be interesting enough to gather a crowd. There will be media programming, literary programming, children's programming, and fan-ish programming — and panels that cross over between categories. We're excited about our Guests of Honor and plan to use them for as much programming as they're comfortable participating in.

We also plan to introduce an innovation for Minicon — author roundtable sessions where a dozen or so people sign up to spend an hour with an author who interests them.

If you have any programming ideas you're excited about, we'd love to hear them! The email address for programming is <programming@minicon34.mnmtf.org>, and there are also check-off boxes to show interest in programming on your registration form.

In the Library

By Kay Drache



[Editor's note: The following books by Minicon 34's Writer Guest of Honor, Octavia E. Butler, are available through the Hennepin County Library, and many other libraries as well, no doubt. This list was compiled by Kay Drache, one of the several librarians in Minn-ss. She includes information from Scott Innes, manager of Uncle Hugo's science fiction bookstore, and Margie Lessinger in these brief descriptions. In addition, Kay interviewed Octavia in 1995. The videotape, "A Discussion with Octavia Butler: a cautionary tale," is currently listed as missing at the library, but is probably available through Metronet. (Return past due library materials today!) We hope to show this video interview at one of the Minicon work parties later this year.]

Bloodchild and other stories Seven Stories Press 1996

I haven't read this; Scott Innes tells me it is a collection of previously published stories. I would guess this was to get "Bloodchild," for which she won the Nebula, Hugo, and Locus awards in 1985, back into print.

Parable of the Sower Doubleday 1993

Octavia is currently working on a sequel to this one, according to Scott. *Parable* is set in a relatively near future where walled communities are becoming prevalent and the gap between rich (or not poor) and poor has widened dramatically. The main character is an empathic young girl, Lauren, who is forced out into the world when her community is rocked by violent attacks and ends up leading a small group through the "wilderness" as the prophet of a new religion called Earthseed that has grown up around her.

Dawn Warner Books 1987

Adulthood Rites Warner Books 1988

Imago Warner Books 1989

These three make up the Xenogenesis series, a thematic expansion of the slim novel *Survivor* (1978). Scott says Octavia has suppressed *Survivor* from publication since she feels the trilogy is so much better. There might be some copies floating around, however.

Dawn begins with a young woman on an alien ship. The aliens (called Oankali) have saved the earth from its self-created doom (post-nuclear holocaust), but at the price of required genetic exchange. This is accomplished by means of the Oankali's third sex, the noid. Later in the trilogy the setting moves to Earth and follows the assimilation of humans into the Oankali genetic pool.

I really liked these, as did Scott and Margie.

Patternmaster	Doubleday	1976
Mind of My Mind	Doubleday	1977
Wild Seed	Doubleday	1980
Clay's Ark	St. Martin's	1984

These five are all "Patternist" novels. They cover hundreds of years and I would recommend reading *Wild Seed* and *Mind of My Mind* in that order, as the protagonist of *Mind of My Mind* is the daughter of Doro, the main character in *Wild Seed*.

Kindred	Doubleday	1979
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Kindred was originally marketed as a mainstream novel; it is much less "science fictional" than her others. This is about a black woman who is pulled back in time by her great-great-grandfather, a white plantation owner. She is forced to save his life repeatedly in order to ensure that he fathers her great-grandmother so that she will eventually be born.

Keep the gamers. They can't cost much (except for the space) and tend to supply their own manpower. — Mike Bean

Gamers will game, dandelions will bloom, and fans will argue. We plan to provide flat surfaces upon which to game. We won't be running tournaments or other hyper-organized gaming events, but we would be deeply shocked if nobody brought twenty-sided dice to Minicon. — Lydia Nickerson

Art Show

By David Wilford
Art Show Head

The Minicon 33 Art Show went very well, and a big thanks to everyone who helped to make it a success! A special thanks also goes to Kris Spesz, who has been Head of the Art Show for the past three years and is taking a well-deserved break.

Artists exhibited 1,054 pieces at Minicon 33, of which 438 were sold. Sixty-two pieces went to auction. The highest price paid was \$850 — on a piece that sold directly rather than at auction — and total sales for the Art Show came to \$17,415! The Print Shop had 235 images (709 total prints including duplicates) submitted for sale. The Print Shop sold 159 prints for a total of \$2,994.

For those of you who may have heard the rumor that there would be no Art Show at Minicon 34, rest assured there *will* be one! We are working to make it even better for artists and fans, including fans who buy these special pieces of art so they can look at them all the time rather than just the few days of Minicon. We will continue to accept prints as well as original works in the Art Show, and will be making improvements to the existing Print Shop. Details on any developments regarding the Art Show will follow in future progress reports. I invite any artists with questions to contact me via the Minicon PO box or via email at <artshow@minicon34.mnmtf.org>.



Hotel - 'Rather inspiring view of Marquette Avenue, isn't it?'

By Mitch Pockrandt
Hotel Liaison



Recent History

Yes, it's true. Minicon is being held at a new hotel. We'll be at the downtown Minneapolis Hilton & Towers starting with Minicon 34 in 1999. But how did we come to travel?

Every few years we evaluate the available hotel facilities in the Twin Cities market. We do this routinely to make sure we know our options should we lose the hotel due to an unexpected event (such as a management turnover or a competing convention, both of which have caused other science fiction conventions to lose their hotels). Checking around also helps ensure that we have the best deal possible for the convention and its members. For the past fourteen years, we've always seen the Radisson as our best choice.

Late last year we started looking at our alternatives once again — 1999 was the last year of a 3-year contract with the Radisson. The Hilton came up with a proposal that was

quite competitive. When we went to talk to the Radisson in May to confirm our 1999 room rates and to continue negotiations for 2000 and beyond, we learned that a new investment group had bought the Radisson South that month. To our surprise, the new owners had directed the management to increase revenues by renegotiating several existing contracts, including Minicon's 1999 contract. After several rounds of negotiations with both hotels, we reached a mutual agreement with the Radisson to be released from the 1999 contract and we signed a multi-year contract with the Hilton, beginning in 1999. That's how we came to be moving at this time instead of remaining at the Radisson as we had planned, expected, and previously announced.

We all thank the Radisson South staff for fourteen wonderful Minicons. They've been excellent folks to work with and we're going to miss them. We wish them all the best.

Near Future

The Hilton's function and hospitality spaces are well-suited to Minicon's plans. Program rooms, the art show, and the bucksers room will be centrally located around a large foyer with ample space (and comfy chairs) to hang out and talk while watching fur friends. The hotel has six elevators for getting to and from sleeping rooms and room parties.

The 24th floor has the Presidential Suite, a lovely, large suite that will be a key part of our hospitality space. (We also have smoking and non-smoking consuite space in the function area, which is on the second and third floors and is easily accessible by elevators and escalators.)

The Minneapolis Hilton has 821 rooms, roughly 250 more than the Radisson South, so we can get more people booked into the convention hotel. Our room block for 1999 consists of 600 rooms. As we approach filling the block, there may be an additional 50-100 rooms we can reserve (if we fill the block early enough), and we will also be making arrangements with nearby overflow hotels if needed. We'll keep you updated in upcoming progress reports, but your best bet for getting a room in the convention hotel is to reserve early.

Sleeping Rooms

To reserve a sleeping room, please contact the Hilton directly. The room rate is \$72 per night (+12% tax) for 1-4 people in a standard guest room. This rate is good for Wednesday, March 31, 1999 through Tuesday, April 6, 1999. (Minicon is Friday, April 2-Sunday, April 4.)

Call the Minneapolis Hilton directly at 612-376-1000. Asking for the MINNESOTA SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY group rate worked in our tests of the reservation system. If for some reason that doesn't work when you call, try asking for the MINICON rate.

If you want a quiet room, ask for a lower floor. The open room parties will all be kept on the higher floors, from 16 on up, so if you want your room to be on a party floor, ask for a higher floor. Be sure to state any preferences for *smoking vs. non-smoking king bed vs. double-double* (they have more than 500 double-double rooms!), and *higher-floor vs. lower-floor* (for party vs. quiet) when you make your reservations. Also let the hotel know of special needs you may have, such as reserving one of their 25 handicapped accessible rooms.

Hospitality Suites

Minicon will manage the allocation of all suites. Open room parties will have priority for the eight 2-bedroom Deluxe Parlor suites and eighteen Executive King suites on floors 16 through 24.

Deluxe Parlor suites have a 480 sq. ft. central parlor with a wet bar. They each have a king-bed sleeping room on one side, a double-double on the other side, and a sofa bed in the parlor. The 2-bedroom suites are \$275 per night.

Executive King suites are a single large room of 584 sq. ft. with a king-bed and a sitting area (with a sofa bed). The Executive King room rate is \$130 per night. Some Executive King suites also have a connecting bedroom, which can be reserved at the standard \$72 room rate, for a combined rate of \$202.

To reserve one of these suites, please mark the appropriate circles on the hotel part of the all-in-one registration form. Be sure to let Minicon know what your plans for the suite are. In particular, we need to know which kind of suite you want, and your planned open party schedule, if applicable. Mail your request no later than October 31, 1998! We plan to send a postcard letting you know when we receive your request, and we will do the initial suite allocation in early November. Actual confirmation of suite allocations will go out by early December. On the off chance that we still have suites available at the end of December, we will let everyone know in the final progress report planned for the beginning of January.

If you mail your suite request by October 31st, and Minicon cannot fill it, we will arrange with the hotel for you to reserve one or two sleeping rooms instead. Please do not reserve sleeping rooms directly with the Hilton at this time *unless you want them in addition to your suite*.

Quiet Suites

There are also two Executive King suites on each quiet floor. Request these suites through Minicon by writing "quiet suite" on the hotel part of the all-in-one registration form.

Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact me by mail at the Minicon PO Box (Attn: Hotel), or via e-mail at ehotel@minicon34.mnrf.org.

Minicon at the Minneapolis Hilton & Towers

The Hilton is at 1001 Marquette Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55403-2440. The hotel takes up the block between Marquette and Second Avenues, and 10th and 11th Streets in downtown Minneapolis. We will include directions on how to get there in PR#3.

The Hilton has a pool, sauna, and Jacuzzi in its health club. Pool hours are being extended until 2:30 am for Minicon.

There is a rather pricey city-owned parking garage beneath the hotel (about \$10-12/day); parking is not included in the room rate. We are negotiating with nearby lots and ramps for much lower weekend rates, and expect to arrange something in the \$3/day range for Saturday and Sunday. See upcoming progress reports for specific details.

Check-in time is 3 pm. Check-out time has been extended to 4 pm on Sunday and Monday of Minicon, and is 12 noon other days.

Please note: PR1 went to print just a few days after the Hilton contract was signed and their worldwide-reservations systems (800 number & on-line reservations) were not yet set up to handle our contract terms. We're working with the hotel to get this taken care of and will announce when those systems are up and running correctly.

Hilton Reservations

612-376-1000
Weekdays 7AM-7PM
Saturdays 9AM-5PM
Sundays 10AM-4PM

Ask for the Minnesota Science Fiction Society group rate. If that doesn't work, ask for the Minicon rate.

Rooms are \$72/night (plus tax for 1-4 people, from March 31-April 6, Minicon is Friday, April 2-Sunday, April 4)

PLEASE SPECIFY:

- King (1 king bed) or
- Double-double (2 double beds) — and —
- Smoking or
- Non-smoking — and —
- Lower floor (to be on a quiet floor) or
- Upper floor (to be on a party floor) — and —
- Any special needs you may have

RESERVE ALL SUITES THROUGH MINICON

Volunteers

By Betsy Lundsten
Volunteers Head

Minicon will be different next year. Minicon will also be a lot the same next year. One of the parts that will be the same is that we're going to need a lot of people to work on the convention to make it happen! If you're interested in having fun while helping to throw a party for a few thousand of your closest friends, grab a pen and fill out the volunteer form that's on the same page as your registration form! Thank you very much. We will be in touch with you soon. If you want to volunteer later, after you've mailed your registration, the form is also available at <http://www.mnssf.org/minicon34/vol-form.html>

On Volunteering...

By Laurel Krahn
Council Member
*Reprinted with permission
from Minicon-1.*

Have you thought of requiring 1 or 2 volunteer hours for each member over the age of 16? They could be done either at Minicon or before it. — Linda Steiner

Shudder. This makes the current nightmare of paperwork a LOT worse. Plus it makes our volunteers much less reliable — reluctant conscripts don't make the best workers! — David Dyer-Bennet

Volunteerism is voluntary. You get to decide when and how you want to volunteer. Also, many fans who come to Minicon are prone to helping out informally rather than through an organizational structure, and we welcome those contributions, too. — Gari Sullivan

Usually, I'm out there encouraging people to volunteer to work on Minicon, even if it's their first Minicon or first convention. It's a great way to get involved, to get to know the con, and to get to know a bunch of cool people.

However (this is a big, all caps, large font, italicized **HOWEVER**), when you first volunteer to work on a convention, any convention, you should start small. Certainly with something that plays to your strengths, skills, and talents. By small, I mean with a role that involves a relatively small time commitment and doesn't involve management (these roles are still important — there are no truly "small roles" at Minicon, every volunteer is important). And you should volunteer because you want to learn, want to help out, because you care about this cool gathering of people. (Yes, even if it's your first Minicon or first convention, you can care about it. After the first few minutes of the convention, it may feel right... like home... and you'll want to be a part of things, to help it be healthy and strong).

Do not get pressured into volunteering. Do not volunteer because no one else will take the job. Do not volunteer because you think it will get you fame or fortune or freebies. Do not volunteer because you want to make a Name for yourself and impress everyone (or someone). Do not volunteer because you want to play the martyr. Do not volunteer because you want a T-shirt, a keychain, a pin, or a mug.

You should only volunteer because you care about the convention and the people who make up the convention. Volunteer because you want to do something you enjoy, for a convention you care about. Play to your strengths. If you see how a talent or skill you possess could help make a convention happen, volunteer to use that talent for the convention. But only if you can realistically commit the time it takes to do the job right.

[Editor's note: A heavy round of applause to the thousands of volunteers who have kept Minicon going for the last three decades, and another to all who have tried (and tried and tried) to volunteer before the convention without ever hearing back from us. That's something we're working hard to fix. It won't suddenly be perfect, but please let us know how we're doing both this year and next. Thanks.]

Hucksters Room

By Alice Bentley
Hucksters Room Head
& Council Member

The Minicon 34 Hucksters Room will once again be huge, well-lit, accessible, and will offer the widest possible range of products to entice speculative fiction enthusiasts. Applications for table space are being mailed out at the same time as this Progress Report, so if you are interested in requesting space and haven't received the information in another four or five days, please write to **Minicon Hucksters Room, P.O. Box 8297, Lake Street Station, Minneapolis, MN 55408** or send email to hucksters@minicon34.mnssf.org. The application is also available on the Minicon web page.

The deadline for sending in an application is September 15th.

All applications postmarked on or before the deadline will be considered equally. In the unlikely event that there are still tables available after that date, further applications will be taken on a First Come First Served basis.

Minicon is a science fiction convention, and we're particularly looking for vendors who carry merchandise related to science fiction, fandom, fantasy, horror and closely related topics. There is a lot of room for interpretation within these guidelines, and we're very interested in having a broad range of products, from books to meteorites to feather masts to pulp magazines and more. If you're interested and not sure if you would qualify, please send in an application.

Table confirmations will go out several weeks after the deadline — certainly by Halloween.

A dealer has just been told not to come back next year, that only book dealers will be invited. — Bill Willis

As far as I can determine, many dealers were told that only book dealers would be invited back, while new book dealers were told that Minicon was only open to used book dealers, and used book dealers were told that it was open only to new book dealers. Every single one of these is wrong. Minicon 34's Hucksters Room will not be invitational, and anyone interested in exhibiting there is encouraged to fill out an application. — Alice Bentley

In memoriam
Minicon remembers Crystal Marvig, long-time midwestern fan, Minicon member, and Artst GoH at Minicon 23. Crystal died in an accident when her car ran off the road in Fargo a day after she returned from Minicon 33. We plan to have a memorial display of her work at Minicon 34, including this flyer she drew for Minicon 24.

Spindizzies Hit Twin Cities!

By Sharon Kahn
Reprinted with permission
from the *Bea's Bus Tribune*

Conventions have funny life cycles. Sometimes they shoot across the skies like a comet, sometimes they build slowly to a moment of glory and then burn themselves out, and sometimes they just grow steadily until they start shooting off spinoffs (hereafter, with a nod to James Bligh, referred to as "Spindizzies").

Minicon has spawned some very notable Spindizzies in its time. The first and longest-running is the seemingly endless parade of Fall Conventions. As different committees have taken their turn at the fall slot and implemented their particular vision, the fall convention has ranged in scope from the slightest of teleconos to the gloriously ambitious string of ReinCONations. Last year, ReinCON never built up a full head of steam and drifted into the station as a string of great local parties and no clear plans for 1998. But Falcon never dies! It will be reborn this year in yet another form. Watch for fliers at the con, and the roving registration station.

Fourth Street Fantasy Convention, for instance, was started in 1986 by a group of active Minnief members and local writers and ran for nine years. Originally conceived as an unpretentious little brother to the World Fantasy Convention, Fourth Street's motto was, "The best fantasy convention on the block!" In its eighth year, the Fourth Street Committee bid for and won the right to put on World Fantasy Con right here in Minneapolis.

S.E. Minnesota's Diversicon was a different type of spinoff convention. While Fourth Street focused narrowly on issues of interest to writers, editors, and "serious readers," S.E. Minnesota takes as its guiding principle, "Diversity through Speculative Fiction." Heading into its sixth year, Diversicon is still going strong.

Meanwhile, Minicon continues to grow in popularity, and finds itself increasingly less able to be all things to all con-goers. When the Minicon 34 bid went to the High-Res Committee (which has a stated aim of making Minicon smaller and more focused), the stage was set for a new crop of Spindizzies. Two new conventions are announcing their plans for 1999 at this year's Minicon: Marscon and Convergence. These proposed cons won't just happen by themselves — they need the support and hard work of a good member base.

Is the level of tech support required by the masquerade actually NECESSARY for other functions, as some people have asserted? — *Deag Wickstrom*

No, it isn't. The radio show doesn't need much in the way of lighting, for example. We'll probably need a decent sound system for various mainstage program items. We may need some lighting, beyond room lights, or we may not. We won't need television coverage (which is true had its own lighting requirements).

(At Minicon 33, the play needed a fair amount of tech support, especially in lights and sound. Since we don't have a play planned, we won't need that level of equipment either.) — *David Dyer-Bennet*

What changes will there be in programming? Will there be filking?
— *Chris Wolfson*

We hope to continue the process started with Minicon 33 of providing fewer programming items and striving to ensure that the programming items we do provide are of the highest possible quality.

Filking? Heck, yes! Just try and stop it — it's like dandelions. We have a long tradition of making lots of different kinds of good music for each other at Minicon, and it's my sincere hope and expectation that this won't ever change. What official measures the committee will take to support, discourage, or provide music at Minicon are still being discussed, but have no doubt that there will be filking and other forms of music there. — *Fred A. Levy Haskell*

Congratulations to...

...**Erin McKee** on her 1998 Chesley nomination in the Unpublished Monochrome category for her scratchboard work, "Harlequin." The Chesleys are awarded each year at Worldcon by the Association of Science Fiction and Fantasy Artists (ASFA) and are named in honor of Chesley Bonestell, an artist/illustrator of space flight and astronomical subjects. Erin has been attending Minicon for 28 years, ran Minicon's Art Show for eight years, and was Artist Guest of Honor at Minicon 22.

...**Raphael Carter** on being, for the second year in a row, a finalist for the John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer. The Campbell Award, named after the pioneer SF editor, is sponsored by the publishers of Analog Science Fiction and administered by the Worldcon along with the Hugo Awards. Raphael's debut novel, *The Fortunate Fall*, was published in 1996 by Tor Books.

...**Jane Yolen** for winning the Nebula Award for her science fiction short story "Sister Earth's Lightship," published in *Starlight 1*, edited by Patrick Nielsen Hayden and published by Tor Books. The Nebulas are awarded by vote of the Science Fiction Writers of America. Jane has of course been a Minicon regular for years and was Guest of Honor at Minicon 25. Although she has won innumerable writing awards, this is her first Nebula!

...Minicon 33's Toastmaster **John M. Ford** for winning the Minnesota Book Award for Fantasy and Science Fiction with *From the End of the Twentieth Century*, published by NESFA Press. For interesting answers regarding the comparative purpose, orientation, and atomic weight of these SF&Fantasy awards, check out the next "Ask Dr. Mike" panel coming soon to a convention near you.

CONVERGENCE
WILLIAMSBURG, VA
July 2, 3, 4, 1999

WHAT: A Celebration of Diverse Science Fiction and Fantasy
WHEN: Friday July 2 - Sunday July 4, 1999
WHERE: The Radisson South, Bloomington, VA

Where Science Fiction and Reality Meet.

CONvergence is a new Science Fiction & Fantasy convention coming to the Radisson Hotel South in 1999. Our programming features Movies, Literature, Comics, Anime, Gaming and Hard Science. CONvergence will feature National and Local Guests, Film Rooms, a Dealers Room, Art Show, a 24-hour Anime Room, Parties, Live Music including **Lojo Russo & Funks Grove**, and the **Masquerade!**

Pre-registration is just \$20 through the end of 1998, then \$25 until May 31, 1999, and \$40 at the door, so sign up now and save!

Be sure to keep an eye out for the many CONvergence related events coming your way between now and Fourth of July weekend, 1999.

For more information on registration, volunteering, or any of our upcoming events and Open Meetings, check out our website at www.convergence-con.org or contact us through any of the following channels:

P.O. Box 13208, Dinkytown Station, Minneapolis, MN 55414
612.996.9224 (24 hour hotline) • Converge99@aol.com

CONvergence is Imminent.



We welcome...

by Steven Brust,
Council Member,
responding to a letter
from Star Strat
*Reprinted with permission
Source: Correspondence
with the Executive Council*

So, what sort of people do we want at Minicon? Well, for one thing, the non-threatening sort. The sort who assume that being at a science-fiction convention puts them among friends until proven otherwise. The sort who consider themselves fans. And on, and on. All stuff that's darned hard to communicate.

What I think we need to stress, though, is that Minicon, as it has been for the last few years, cannot *lose*. It will destroy itself—financially, if nothing happens first. If we are going to save anything, we have to make some efforts to scale it back.

Okay, how do we scale it back? Who would we like not to show up? Well, here's my take on it: You seem very concerned about some of the "fringe" groups: Gay, lesbian, B&D, poly, etc. Well, I want to host a Minicon where being a member of any of those groups doesn't matter squat. That is, no one should (in my opinion) show up at Minicon because, "I'm into B&D and Minicon is good place to meet with my fellow enthusiasts." However, we emphatically welcome anyone who says, "I'm into B&D, and at Minicon no one bothers me about it, and the convention is full of the sort of people I enjoy meeting and socializing with." Did that make sense? Your alternative lifestyle should be no barrier to your enjoying Minicon, but, Star, the reason I think you would enjoy Minicon 34 has nothing to do with any alternative lifestyle, it's just that we hope and expect it will be full of the sort of people you'd enjoy hanging around with. Does that make sense?

What is YOUR definition of "fandom?" Are those whose only contact with "fandom" is Minicon considered "fans?" — *Alveta*

Fandom is the community in which I live—it is my "family by choice."

In response to your second question, I have to ask a question of you: Considered "fans" by whom? This is not as nonsensical a question as you might think — anybody who considers themselves to be a member of the community is a member of the community. Further, the reverse is not strictly true — there are those who do not consider themselves to be a member of the community who are nonetheless thought of by many as being members ("Death itself will not release you..."). — *Fred A. Loxy Haskell*

"Fandom" is the worldwide set of people who choose to participate in fandom. You can't be much of a fan by doing only one thing each year, but it's something. — *David Dyer-Bennet*

I don't have a definition of fandom, though I know it's a big "place" with thousands of fascinating people I look forward to spending more time with as the years pass, and a few dozen fascinating people I'd just as soon steer clear of.

I do have a definition of "fan"; I hope it helps: A fan is anyone who self-identifies as a fan. If you say you're a fan, you are.

That said, I know of very few people who self-identify as fans and then limit their fanz ("fan activity") or other contact with fandom to one convention a year, even a convention as wonderful as Minicon. That's like a chocolate-lover choosing to eat their favorite confection just three days a year when a variety of excellent chocolate is always available. I don't eat gourmet chocolates every day, but I certainly enjoyed the fix of truffles Steve Glennos brought back from Italy. They were unlike any I'd tasted before. That's what I'm in fandom for — to explore new conventions, fanzines, and friendships without losing appreciation of my old favorites. — *Geri Sullivan*

Hey, if you have to have a definition for fandom you won't ever get what fandom is. It isn't something that can be neatly encapsulated in words. We've tried, and failed miserably. Fandom is something you have to discover, and you're welcome to come to Minicon and join us in the search! — *David Wilford*

Contacting us



Minicon-L is an unofficial mailing list for people who want to talk about Minicon. (Polish your Shield of Umor, asbestos suits can be useful, too.) Send email to <minicon-l-subscribe@mnsf.org>. A digest version is also available: <minicon-l-digest-subscribe@mnsf.org>.

Minicon 34
PO Box 8297
Lake Street Station
Minneapolis MN 55408

Email: <request@minicon34.mnsf.org>

To join our infrequent Official Announcements mailing list, send email to <minicon-announce-subscribe@mnsf.org>

Minicon's web page: <http://www.mnsf.org/minicon/>

Departmental contacts:

Artshow <artshow@minicon34.mnsf.org>
Executive Council <ecouncil@minicon34.mnsf.org>
Guests of Honor <guests@minicon34.mnsf.org>
Hotel <hotel@minicon34.mnsf.org>
Hucksters <hucksters@minicon34.mnsf.org>
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Publications <publications@minicon34.mnsf.org>
Registration <registration@minicon34.mnsf.org>
Treasury <treasury@minicon34.mnsf.org>
Volunteers <volunteers@minicon34.mnsf.org>
Web pages <webgeek@minicon34.mnsf.org>

Publications

Advertising Rates

Minicon progress reports are mailed to about 7,800 people who have demonstrated their interest in science fiction, fantasy, and fandom by coming to Minicon and/or through other involvement with the Minnesota Science Fiction Society. Ads are accepted on a space-available basis. We may need to hold ads over to another convention publication; we will contact advertisers before doing so. Send camera-ready copy and payment to Liz Cooper at the Minicon P.O. Box. (Electronic files can be sent to <publications@minicon34.mnsf.org>; please send advance notice to discuss file specifications.) Rates for the program book and other convention publications will be announced in PR#2.

Ad Size	Fan Rate	Pro Rate
Full page (4.75 w X 7.75 h)	\$250	\$400
Half page (4.75 w X 3.75 h)	\$125	\$225

Note: We are interested in trading ad space with other conventions. Please write to Publications for further information.

PR timing

Publication	Ad deadline	Mailing date
Progress Report #2	September 10	By October 5
Progress Report #3	December 1	By January 11

Thank you!

Special thanks to Jeff Schalles for scanning; to Pamela Dean, the Minicon Grammarian; to Peer Dadda & Beth Friedman for proof-reading early versions; to Karen Johnson, Nate Bucklin, Dot Bull, and Mike Pins for last-minute coffeehouse proofreading; and to everyone at the mailing party for helping get this PR into your hands at last.

Art credits

Acom: 8, 10, 17 & 18
Ken Fletcher: Mpls. in '73 blimp (modified for Minicon 34 by Geri Sullivan)
Crystal Marvig: 13
Jim Dobert: Min-n-stf logo type
William Rossier: Cover (modified by Andrew Bertke); 3, 6, & 9
Laramie Sasasville: 5

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Headlines: Sarvito Roman 24 pt.
Body type: Adobe Garamond 9 pt.
Sidebars: Univers Condensed 8 pt.
Q&As: Dam 10 pt.
Printing: Impressive Print, St. Paul.

Registration

By Margo Bratton
Registration Head

Please require registration to have an email blank on the pre-reg/reg forms, and actively USE those addresses for a mailing list. I want to hear Progress Reports via email; someone else must want to! — (no name given)

You can get that now, without waiting to register. Subscribe to the minicon-announce mailing list, by sending email to <minicon-announce-subscribe@rossif.org> and replying to the confirmation message you will receive.

We do intend to make more use of direct email for confirming receipt of various kinds of communications; it's faster and cheaper. — David Dyer-Bennet

The PR is a tad long for an email message, but we'll tell you via Minicon-announce when it's up on our website! — Gori Sullivan

The website also shows how you can subscribe to mailing lists and find links to other Minicon members' web-pages (and submit your email address or webpage URL if you want). — Laurel Krab

REGISTRATION RATES	Through 31-Oct-98	Through 14-Feb-99	At-the-door
Membership type			
Adult Attending	\$30	\$40	\$70
Child (age 12 & under)	\$15	\$15	\$30
Supporting	\$15	\$15	N/A

How to register

Complete the form in this progress report and mail it along with your membership check (written in US currency). The registration form is also available on the Minicon web page; however, you'll need to print it and mail it with your check. (On-line registration is not available.)

Minicon will send a confirmation of your membership to the address you provide on the registration form. We expect to mail confirmations first class no later than March 10, 1999 (and sooner, we hope; you can help by registering by October 31, which saves you money, too).

Coming to Minicon from a foreign country?

Fans living outside the US can pay at the door at the pre-registration rate. Please bring proof of foreign residency and pay in US dollars or travellers checks. We'd love to know you're coming; please send us your completed registration form and circle the rate you'll pay when you arrive (\$30 or \$40, depending on when you mail the form to us). Foreign fans who don't pre-register will be charged the \$40 rate.

Have you moved?

If this PR was forwarded to you, please let Minicon know your current address by registering at this time or by sending us a change-of-address notice. Otherwise, you might not receive future mailings.

Name badges

Your Minicon registration badge will have your first and last name on it as well as whatever badge name you choose (badge names are optional). If you have special needs for what goes on your badge, please include a note describing your requirements with your registration.

Supporting Memberships

Supporting members of Minicon 34 will receive progress reports published after they join, and the convention program book and pocket program will be sent after Minicon.

Supporting memberships can be converted to Attending for \$25 at-the-door. If you think you'll come to Minicon, but are short of cash right now, a supporting membership is a good way to avoid the high at-the-door rate. And it helps Minicon better estimate how many members we'll have, so we don't run out of program books, or munchies in the consuite.

Bounced checks

We expect to deposit all checks within one month of their receipt at the Minicon P.O. box. Bounced checks are subject to a \$15 fee and must be cleared before you will be allowed to pick up your Minicon membership badge.



Registration

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Prov _____ Postal Code _____

My address has changed since last receiving a Minicon mailing.

Membership type:	Until 31-Oct-98	Until 14-Feb-99	Specify membership type, including drinking or non-drinking badge for adult memberships. (Legal drinking age in Minnesota is 21; proof of age is required at Minicon.) If you don't specify, you will be given a non-drinking badge. Memberships are transferable, but are not refundable.
<input type="radio"/> Adult	\$30	\$40	
<input type="radio"/> Drinking badge			
<input type="radio"/> Non-drinking badge			
<input type="radio"/> Child (12 and under)	\$15	\$15	
<input type="radio"/> Supporting membership	\$15	\$15	

Optional Information:

Badge name _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Preferred time and method of contact _____

Please mark all that apply:

I am an active:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Artist | <input type="radio"/> Fanzine fan | <input type="radio"/> Publisher |
| <input type="radio"/> Club member | <input type="radio"/> Huckster | <input type="radio"/> Reader |
| <input type="radio"/> Con goer | <input type="radio"/> Listener | <input type="radio"/> Scientist |
| <input type="radio"/> Editor | <input type="radio"/> Musician | <input type="radio"/> Viewer |
| <input type="radio"/> Fan | <input type="radio"/> Pro | <input type="radio"/> Writer |

I'd like:

- To be on programming
- Art show exhibit info
- Hucksters room info
- Child care info

Hotel rooms

Room Rates: Single-Quad (1-4 people) \$72	Executive King suite	\$130
(Room tax is additional; currently 12%)	Exec. King+connecting room	\$202
	2-bedroom Deluxe Parlor suite	\$275

Reserve sleeping rooms directly from the Minneapolis Hilton and Towers. Call (612) 376-1000 no later than March 10, 1999. (Note: the hotel may sell out long before then.) Be sure to request the group rate for the MINNESOTA SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY. If that doesn't work, ask for the rate for MINICON.

Reserve Executive King and Parlor suites through Minicon. Open room parties have priority, but there are also some Executive King suites on quiet floors. Please fill out name and contact info in the Registration section of this form, indicate the kind of suite you want and your arrival and departure dates, and tell us about your party or plans for the suite (elaborate in an attached letter if desired):

Arriving: _____ Executive King Suite

Departing: _____ Exec King+connecting bedroom

Party name/theme/sponsors/special needs: _____ 2-bedroom Deluxe Parlor Suite

Minicon 34

Minnesota Science Fiction Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 8297, Lake Street Station
Minneapolis MN 55408



April 2-4, 1999

PR#1

*"We think the High-Resolution Minicon is the most
famously exciting idea since Burbee invented sex, and
we'd like to be part of it at whatever level you guys
are comfortable with."*

*— Patrick and Teresa Nielson Hayden
September 1997*

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Minicon 34
Minnesota Science Fiction Society
P.O. Box 8297, Lake Street Station
Minneapolis MN 55408