What's WisCon like? by Laurie Marks

In some ways, WisCon is exactly like all other science fiction/fantasy conventions. Your registration fee gets you a program booklet (ours being the most highly organized and extremely useful program booklet on the planet) and a bag of interesting flyers and freebies. We all wear name badges. The days are full of discussions in meeting rooms on the first, second, and sixth floors of the hotel—panels on feminist themes, presentations of feminist genre academics papers, feminist SF/F book discussions, and authors reading their work. WisCon is notorious for having six tracks of wickedly interesting programming that make it agony to choose. We have a consuite on the 6th floor with free soda, coffee, bagels, chips, hot dogs and other munchies (and other real food), which makes it easier on the budget. We have a dealer's room with books, handmade jewelry, and other intereting items to buy. We have an art show with works in various media, most of which are available for sale, as well as posters and convention Tshirts. Oh, and in accordance with the International Code of Science Fiction/Fantasy Hotel Equipment, we, too, have slow elevators that delay us in the lobby and force us to laugh a lot more even though our cheeks already ache.

And yet, WisCon is very different from other science fiction and fantasy conventions. Ours is the only convention that focuses on the exploration of feminism. We define "feminist" broadly to include race and class issues, gay/bisexual/lesbian/transgender issues, and anything else that touches on strong women (authors, artists, readers, characters) in science fiction, fantasy, and horror. As you might expect, our focus draws an amazingly diverse and fascinating group of attendees who share, among other things, keen intellects and open minds.

In short, WisCon has many of the trappings of a traditional science fiction/fantasy convention, but differs in the particulars. One difference we share with some other conventions is defining ourselves as a readers' convention (in other words, a convention that focuses on the literary aspect of the genre, rather than, say, role-playing games or movies and TV).

We don't take ourselves too seriously, though, and WisCon is noted for the laughter that bursts like a tsunami out of the ballroom doors. We think our panels are more interesting than those at a typical convention, and we know that our auction is by far the wackiest. We have events that other conventions

don't have, like bazaars and bake sales. Even the surroundings are cooler than usual: just a few blocks from the hotel are these amazingly great shops, and on Saturday, there's a farmer's market within spitting distance of the hotel.

To do WisCon justice, we'd need pages, and we still couldn't cover it all. To read essays about what other people have to say about us, jump to http://www.broaduniverse.org/broadsheet/think.html and for the archived editorial "Coming Home to Madison" by Diane Silver, and other archived WisCon reports.

Hotel

The *Concourse Hotel* is accepting reservations for WisCon 29. Here's the information you need:

Concourse Hotel, 1 W. Dayton Street, Madison, WI 53703, 1-800-356-8293.

Room rates are: a flat \$90 per night for up to four persons. Governor's Club rates are \$115. Remember to mention "WisCon 29" when you call. The Concourse is a handicapped-accessible hotel; call for specific information about accessibility. Smoke-free rooms are available upon request. For more information, go to:

http://www.concoursehotel.com

If registrants have different postal addresses, please copy this form and complete separate registrations.							 Optional badge names. Normally we print your first and last names on your badge in large type. If you have a special name or "handle" you would like instead, please provide in "badge name" field. We can only accept standard alphabetic characters. 	Please check those items that apply: I would like to volunteer. I have already arranged to volunteer at WisConwith Tome of department or concom member) I would like to participate in the Writer's Workshop. (Deadline April 1, 2005) I would like to be part of programming. I would like to despart of programming. I would like to advertise in WisCon publications. I would like to advertise in WisCon publications. I will bake something for the Tiptree Bake Sale. Please sign me up for one of the 6th floor party suites for one night. I would prefer (Friday, Saturday or Sunday).								
postal addresses, please copy this for	Badge name (person #1) *	Badge name (person #2) *	Badge name (person #3)	Email address (person #1)	Email address (person #2)	Email address (person #3)	* Optional badge names. Normally we print your first and or "handle" you would like instead, please provide in "bat	FREE memberships: Please check appropriate boxes. (We need this info to prepare your nametag.)	Former WisCon Guest-of-Honor Free (check box)	Kid-in-Tow (age 0-6) Free (kid stays with parent); available anytime. (check box)	No registrations accepted May 1–26.	Subscribe to ecube and receive WisCon updates via email. Get yourself onto the ecube mailing list at:	Jan 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19	729/1	Mail by April 30, 2005 to: WisCon 29 PO Rox 1624 Madison WI 53201-1624	, Madisoli, vvi 35/01-1024
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WisCon 29 Registration Form						Country	Phone (eves, weekends)	n PAID memberships: Please fill in the correct amount for each altending person listed above.	Adult (age 13 & up): \$40 through April 30; \$50 at the door	Youth (age 7-12): \$20 through April 30; \$25 at the door	Supporting (non-attending, receive publications only) \$15; available anytime.	Childcare (age 0-6) \$1 if signed up by April 30. Please fill in the age of each child to be enrolled in childcare.	Dessert Tickets (Sunday night) \$10 each	n tables it = 3 tables e WisCon membe	Tax-deductible donation payable to	Total payment
Wiscon 29	Name — person #1	Name — person #2	Name — person #3	Street address	City, State/province	Zip/Postal code	Phone (day)	Person Person Person #1 #2 #3	\$	\$ \$	\$ \$	years years old old	tickets \$	tables &	n 49 4	SA.

Gwyneth Jones

Gwyneth Jones was born in 1952 in Manchester, England. She is an author and critic of SF and fantasy. She also writes teenage fiction as Ann Halam. Jones has won two World Fantasy Awards, BSFA short story award, Children of the Night Award from the



Dracula Society, Arthur C. Clarke award 2001 for *Bold As Love*, and was co-winner of the first Tiptree award for *White Queen*. She achieved cult status as scriptwriter for the eighties scifi tv cartoon *The Telebugs* and currently lives in Brighton, England with her husband Peter, son Gabriel, and two Tonkinese cats, Ginger and her son Frank. For personal information, current news, essays, bibliography and fiction/criticism archive material (1991–1999), visit her home page at:

http://homepage.ntlworld.com/gwynethann

Also, visit http://www.boldaslove.co.uk for science fiction, pictures, and extracts.

Robin McKinley

Fantasy author Robin McKinley's full name is Jennifer Robin Carolyn McKinley, and she shares her year of birth—1952— with Gwyneth Jones. She began her writing career, at age 26. Born in America, McKinley lives in Hampshire, England, with her



husband, English writer Peter Dickinson, and three whippets. McKinley writes about capable, independant heroines because she feels very strongly about the potential for girls to be "doing things" and she feels that the selection of fantasy literature featuring girls is scarce and unsatisfactory. Robin McKinley is the author of the novels Beauty, The Blue Sword, The Hero and the Crown (Newbery Award winner), The Outlaws of Sherwood, Deerskin, Rose Daughter, Spindle's End, and Sunshine and the short story collections, The Door In The Hedge and The Knot In The Grain.

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We'll warn you when the registration price goes up, when the hotel is close to filling, when the dessert tickets start running out, and when programming deadlines fall. We'll notify you when the program schedule gets posted, let you know who wins the James Tiptree, Jr. Award, tell you how to reserve a slot in child care and how to sign up for party rooms. *eCube* is indispensible! Sign up today.

