

PULSAR

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The Newsletter of the Portland Science Fiction Society



October 1998

Issue No. 240

TIMELINE

Compiled by Sam Butler

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 are often a social gathering in varying locations on the fourth Saturday. Everyone is welcome to both.

Saturday October 10	PorSFis Meeting	2 PM	Regular Meeting
Portland State University	Room 229		Smith Memorial Center

Guest Speaker: prepare for Orycon 20, wow we have a table!

Come to our meeting and volunteer to sit at our table and tell people about PorSFis. Find out about our guests for December, and January 1999. Buy books at the Multnomah County Book Sale on the 3rd Floor and support our local library.

AFTERS: Market Street Pub SW 10th & Market Street

Dinner is open for suggestions.

Saturday September 26	PorSFis Social Event	Bizzaro PorSFis
The movies at Jim & Linda Pilcher's apartment continue.		7 PM

Saturday November 14 no PorSFis Meeting
at Portland State University
Smith Memorial Center

We hope to see you all at Orycon, especially around the PorSFis table.

PRESIDENTS QUOTES:

FIRST SUBJECT: LAST MEETING WITH K W JETER

If I do say so myself, and I will, this was one of the most exciting and discussion filled meetings that I've had the pleasure to arrange in a long long time. Kudos for those who challenged the paradigm and rocked our boats. This is exactly what I hope that every meeting would be.

SECOND SUBJECT: H. P. LOVECRAFT FILM FESTIVAL

There is an attempt to gather together soon, at the Fifth Avenue Cinema to catch the Portland State University Students showing of H. P. Lovecraft films. John Bartley is

tracking this festival, but does not have details at this time. If you wish to find out more you need to let John know so that you can be placed on the notification list.

THIRD SUBJECT: COUNTER CULTURE

Our member John Bartley III mentioned last month that there was now a science fiction discussion session at Counter Culture, a new eatery on the corner of NE 30th & Killingsworth. I believe that he mentioned the event was going to be held on the 4th Tuesday evening of the month and he suggested that we go there and 'take over', this is certainly an idea worthy of exploration.

John reported that he was unable to attend, and was not able to count the bodies of those who did.

FOURTH SUBJECT: A CHANGE IN PARKING

Portland State University has changed their policy in regards to parking on Saturday. In the past parking in either of the two parking structures on Broadway has been without charge. At the last meeting they were charging \$2 to park there.

If you park there after 2 PM there would be no charge. The parking structure between 12th & 13th and about Montgomery does not charge anything. You can reach this parking structure easiest by taking I-405 from the Marquam bridge and then taking the Sunset Highway exit and turning onto the 12th street exit instead of going towards the zoo. Although this location is further from the meeting room, it is closer to the Afters on 10th & SW Market.

As usual the Portland Science Fiction Meeting, although scheduled to start at 2 PM, usually starts 5-10 minutes later, so if you're not parking in the Parking Structure until 2 PM we will understand.

FIFTH SUBJECT: MAIL RECEIVED

The following fanzines, etc were received, they are available to be looked at if you ask.

De Profundis #314 - The Los Angeles Science Fiction Society - July 1998

De Profundis #315 - The Los Angeles Science Fiction Society - August 1998

De Profundis #316 - The Los Angeles Science Fiction Society - September 1998

Scavenger's Aug 98 No. 174

ASFS Future Times - The Atlanta Science Fiction Society July 1998 Vol. 1 Issue #5 & August 1998 Issues Vol. 1 Issue #6

Instant Message #630 August 26, 1998 - New England Science Fiction Association

Postcard announcing: Proxies - An SF thriller from Tor Books, www.digitalnoir.com

Westwind Issue #232 August 1998 - The Magazine of the Northwest Science Fiction Society

What's New at Wayside - Wayside Books & Video - Battle Ground, WA September 1998

BCSFA Zine August 1998 Vol. 26 #8, #303

File 770 - Issue 125 - fan newszine published by Mike Glycer

Dragon Con '98 - promotional magazine for this convention

SIXTH SUBJECT:

NEW MEMBERS

For all of you members we wish to welcome 3 new members who joined our club at the last meeting. We would also like to encourage some members who have not been to the meeting lately to return. We miss you.

SEVENTH SUBJECT:

NEW OFFICERS

Since we won't be having a November meeting, it is time to remind you that we need to start thinking about having people run for the offices. Since our election is in January or February it's never too early to volunteer to be an officers. Remember, we have a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary and a Treasurer.

Stanley Wells 1915 - 1998

Stanley Wells was born and grew up in Tacoma, Washington, the eldest of three brothers with an older sister. He attended Stadium High School, the College (now University) of Puget Sound, and University of Washington and received a bachelor's degree from CPS.

He served as a navigator for the Army Air Corps in World War II and was one of three to survive an air crash over India.

After the war, he moved back to Tacoma. At one point, he was offered the chance to buy into a new housing development; as was always characteristic of him, he refused because of their discriminatory convenients. This was many years before the Equal Housing Act.

In 1947, he married Margaret Huseman, whom he had first met when they were students at the University of Washington. They raised two sons, Roger and Marc. They lived first in Seattle for a few years, then in Port Orchard on the Kitsap Peninsula.

He started work as an accountant for the civil service. Because of his high aptitude scores, he was selected to train on the early mainframe computers, and thus was one of the early pioneers of computer programming.

He had a lifelong interest in space exploration and science fiction. In school, he wrote an occasional science fiction story for English classwork. He was a member of the Space Society and would read FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION on his commute by boat to and from work.

When he and Margaret retired, they lived in Auburn, Washington, and traveled extensively. When Marc married and had children, he adored his grandchildren.

After the loss of his wife in 1994, he moved to Portland, Oregon to be near his beloved grandchildren.

He is deeply missed by his children, his daughter-in-law, his grandchildren, his many friends in fandom, his associates at his retirement home, and the innumerable lives that he has quietly touched.

DAM NUISANCE!

This was reportedly an actual letter from and a reply to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, State of Michigan:

Mr. Ryan De Vries
2088 Dagget
Pierson, MI 49339

Dear Mr. DeVries:

SUBJECT: DEQ File No. 97-59-0023-1 T11N, R10W, Sec. 20, Montcalm County

It has come to the attention of the Department of Environmental Quality that there has been recent unauthorized activity on the above-referenced parcel of property. You have been certified as the legal landowner and/or contractor who did the following unauthorized activity: Construction and maintenance of two wood debris dams across the outlet stream of Spring Pond. A permit must be issued prior to the start of this type of activity. A review of the Department's files shows that no permits have been issued. Therefore, the Department has determined that this activity is in violation of Part 301, Inland Lakes and Streams, of the Natural Resource and Environmental Protection Act, Act 451 of the Public Acts of 1994, being sections 324.30101 to 324.30113 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, annotated.

The Department has been informed that one or both of the dams partially failed during a recent rain event, causing debris and flooding at downstream locations. We find that dams of this nature are inherently hazardous and cannot be permitted.

The Department therefore orders you to cease and desist all unauthorized activities at this location, and to restore the stream to a free-flow condition by removing all wood and brush forming the dams from the stream channel. All restoration work shall be completed no later than January 31, 1998.

Please notify this office when the restoration has been completed so that a follow-up site inspection may be scheduled by our staff. Failure to comply with this request or any further unauthorized activity on the site may result in this case being referred for elevated enforcement action.

We anticipate and would appreciate your full cooperation in this matter. Please feel free to contact me at this office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
David L. Price
District Representative
Land and Water Management Division

RESPONSE

Dear Mr. Price:

Re: DEQ File No. 97-59-0023; T11N, R10W, Sec 20; Montcalm County

Your certified letter dated 12/17/97 has been handed to me to respond to. You sent out a great deal of carbon copies to a lot of people, but you neglected to include their addresses. You will, therefore, have to send them a copy of my response.

First of all, Mr. Ryan De Vries is not the legal landowner and/or contractor at 2088 Dagget, Pierson, Michigan - I am the legal owner and a couple of beavers are in the (State unauthorized) process of constructing and maintaining two wood "debris" dams across the outlet stream of my Spring Pond. While I did not pay for, authorize, nor supervised their dam project, I think they would be highly offended that you call their skillful use of natural building materials "debris." I would like to challenge your department to attempt to emulate their dam project any time and/or any place you choose. I believe I can safely state there is no way you could ever match their dam skills, their dam resourcefulness, their dam ingenuity, their dam persistence, their dam determination and/or their dam work ethic.

JOB DESCRIPTION: ELEPHANT HUNTERS, BY CATEGORY

MATHEMATICIANS hunt elephants by going to Africa, throwing out everything that is not an elephant, and catching one of whatever is left.

EXPERIENCED MATHEMATICIANS will attempt to prove the existence of at least one unique elephant before proceeding to step 1 as a subordinate exercise.

PROFESSORS OF MATHEMATICS will prove the existence of at least one unique elephant and then leave the detection and capture of an actual elephant as an exercise for their graduate students.

COMPUTER SCIENTISTS hunt elephants by exercising Algorithm A:

1. Go to Africa.
2. Start at the Cape of Good Hope.
3. Work northward in an orderly manner, traversing the continent alternately east and west.
4. During each traverse pass,
 - a. Catch each animal seen.
 - b. Compare each animal caught to a known elephant.
 - c. Stop when a match is detected.

EXPERIENCED COMPUTER PROGRAMMERS modify Algorithm A by placing a known elephant in Cairo to ensure that the algorithm will terminate.

ASSEMBLY LANGUAGE PROGRAMMERS prefer to execute Algorithm A on their hands and knees.

DATABASE ADMINISTRATORS do not need to go out and capture elephants when they can retrieve them simply with an ad hoc query:

```
SELECT * FROM AFRICAN_CRITTERS
WHERE CRITTER_TYPE = 'TERRESTRIAL'
AND SIZE = 'LARGE'
AND COLOR = 'GRAY'
AND TRUNK = 'YES'
AND ODOR IS NOT NULL;
```

ENGINEERS hunt elephants by going to Africa, catching gray animals at random, and stopping when any one of them weighs within plus or minus 15 percent of any previously observed elephant.

SYSTEMS INTEGRATION ENGINEERS are not so concerned with hunting elephants as with creating a seamless interface between the elephants and their environment.

ECONOMISTS don't hunt elephants, but they believe that if elephants are paid enough, they will hunt themselves.

STATISTICIANS hunt the first animal they see N times and call it an elephant.

CONSULTANTS don't hunt elephants, and many have never hunted anything at all, but they can be hired by the hour to advise those people who do.

OPERATIONS RESEARCH CONSULTANTS can also measure the correlation of hat size and bullet color to the efficiency of elephant-hunting strategies, if someone else will only identify the elephants.

POLITICIANS don't hunt elephants, but they will share the elephants you catch with the people who voted for them.

LAWYERS don't hunt elephants, but they do follow the herds around arguing about who owns the droppings.

SOFTWARE LAWYERS will claim that they own an entire herd based on the look and feel of one dropping.

VICE PRESIDENTS OF ENGINEERING, RESEARCH, AND DEVELOPMENT try hard to hunt elephants, but their staffs are designed to prevent it. When the vice president does get to hunt elephants, the staff will try to ensure that all possible elephants are completely pre-hunted before the vice president sees them. If the vice president does see a non-pre-hunted elephant, (in other words, a live one) the staff will (1) compliment the vice president's keen eyesight and (2) enlarge itself to prevent any recurrence.

SENIOR MANAGERS set broad elephant-hunting policy based on the assumption that elephants are just like field mice, but with deeper voices.

QUALITY ASSURANCE INSPECTORS ignore the elephants and look for mistakes the other hunters made when they were packing the jeep.

As to your request, I do not think the beavers are aware that they first must fill out a dam permit prior to the start of this type of dam activity.

My first dam question to you is: (1) are you trying to discriminate against my Spring Pond Beavers or (2) do you require all beavers throughout this State to conform to said dam request? If you are not discriminating against these particular beavers, through the Freedom of Information Act I request completed copies of all those other applicable beaver dam permits that have been issued. Perhaps we will see if there really is a dam violation of Part 301, Inland Lakes and Streams, of the Natural Resource and Environmental Protection Act, Act 451 of the Public Acts of 1994, being sections 324.30101 to 324.30113 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, annotated.

I have several concerns. My first concern is - aren't the beavers entitled to legal representation? The Spring Pond Beavers are financially destitute and are unable to pay for said representation - so the State will have to provide them with a dam lawyer. The Department's dam concern that either one or both of the dams failed during a recent rain event causing flooding is proof that this is a natural occurrence which the department is required to protect. In other words, we should leave the Spring Pond Beavers alone rather than harassing them and calling their dam names.

If you want the stream "restored" to a dam free-flow condition please contact the beavers - but if you are going to arrest them (they obviously did not pay any attention to your dam letter-being unable to read English) be sure they are read the Miranda rights first. As for me, I am not going to cause more flooding or dam debris jams by interfering with these dam builders. If you want to hurt these dam beavers-be aware I am sending a copy of your dam letter and this response to PETA. If your dam Department seriously finds all dams of this nature inherently hazardous and truly will not permit their existence in this State-I seriously hope you are not selectively enforcing this dam policy - or once again both I and the Spring Pond Beavers will scream prejudice!

In my humble opinion, the Spring Pond Beavers have a right to build their unauthorized dams as long as the sky is blue, the grass is green and water flows downstream. They have more dam right than I do to live and enjoy Spring Pond. If the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection lives to its name, it should protect the natural resources (Beavers) and the environment (Beavers' Dams).

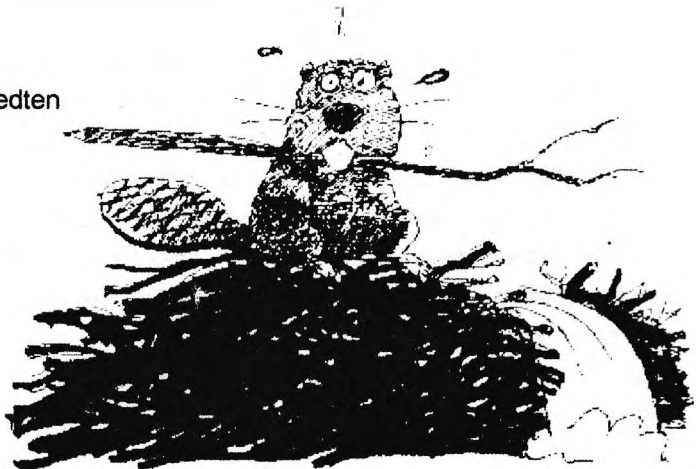
So, as far as the beavers and I are concerned, this dam case can be referred for more elevated enforcement action right now. Why wait until 1/31/98? The Spring Pond Beavers may be under the dam ice then and there will be no way for you or your dam staff to contact/harass them then.

In conclusion, I would like to bring to your attention a real environmental quality (health) problem in the area. It is the bears. Bears are actually defecating in our woods. I definitely believe you should be persecuting the defecating bears and leave the beavers alone. If you are going to investigate the beaver dam, watch your step! (The bears are not careful where they dump!)

Being unable to comply with your dam request, and being unable to contact you on your dam answering machine, I am sending this response to your dam office via another government organization - the dam USPS. Maybe, someday, it will get there.

Sincerely,
Stephen L. Tvedten

cc: PETA



Ask Mr. Know-it-all

A Ms. JB of Olympia asks: Why do the British drive on the left?

There are many advantages to driving on the left, not the least of which is the annoyance it gives to the upstart colonists in America who got rid of their monarch and then began to drive on the right. Another advantage is that it is easier to utilise older Japanese automobiles. Japan prohibits automobiles that are more than a few years old, even though they may still be fine vehicles. These are often sold at bargain prices to other countries and, since the Japanese also drive on the left, they are primarily sold to other left-driving countries.

A Mr. RA of Portland asks: Why are there interstate highways in Hawaii?

The Interstate Defence Highway System, as the name implies, was originally established to provide highways between states. Early in the program, however, it became apparent that without highways within the states, these sections between the various states were of limited practical use. Therefore, the original act was amended to include highway construction within individual states. In summary, there are interstate highways within the State of Hawaii for the same reason there are interstate highways within such states as Oregon.

A Mr. PM of Washington DC asks: what is the most important ruling ever handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court?

This would have to be *Marbury v. Madison*, because it is the ruling that established the right of the Supreme Court to issue such rulings in the first place. This technique is formally known as circular reasoning and, while not acceptable within certain mathematical circles, is often favoured by the legal profession.

A Ms. CW of Torrington asks: why was the TV show *Route 66* never really accepted in Australia?

Perhaps you might ask an Australian what they really mean by 'route'. No, on second thought, better not even ask.

A Mr. BG of Hartford asks: In the U.S., floors of buildings are numbered starting with one for the ground floor; why is it that in Europe, typically the floor above the ground floor is number one?

This reflects the relative impact of computer languages. Because of Microsoft's influence, languages such as C and C++ (which count starting with zero) have only recently had much impact in the U.S. compared to such languages as BASIC, which counts starting with one.

A Ms. GP of New York asks: which came first, fanzine fandom or convention fandom?

According to fanzine fandom, on the first day, the Lord created the Heavens and Earth out of chaos, which can be regarded as the epitome of *pubbing your ish*. However, convention fans counter by pointing out, before even that, someone had to create the chaos.

You may contact Mr. Know-it-all in care of the *Pulsar*
or e-mail on rwell@illuminetSS7.com

PO Box 4602
Portland, Oregon 97208

Pulsar, the newsletter of the Portland Science Fiction Society (PorSFIS), comes free with membership. It is also available in trade with other fanzines, and can be purchased at Excalibur Books, Future Dreams/Burnside and Looking Glass Books, all in Portland, Oregon.

Your editor has been Debra Stansbury. Next month's editor is the same. Deadline is generally the 20th of each month. Contributions are always welcome, and may be sent to the PO box above.

PorSFIS meetings are open to everyone. Check the Timeline for meeting times and places. Membership per year: \$20 individual, \$30 family [1 newsletter]

PorSFIS Officers:

President	Sam Butler	(503) 289-2670
Vice-Pres.	Chuck Leon	
Treasurer	John Andrews	(503) 771-2894
Secretary	Roger Wells	

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