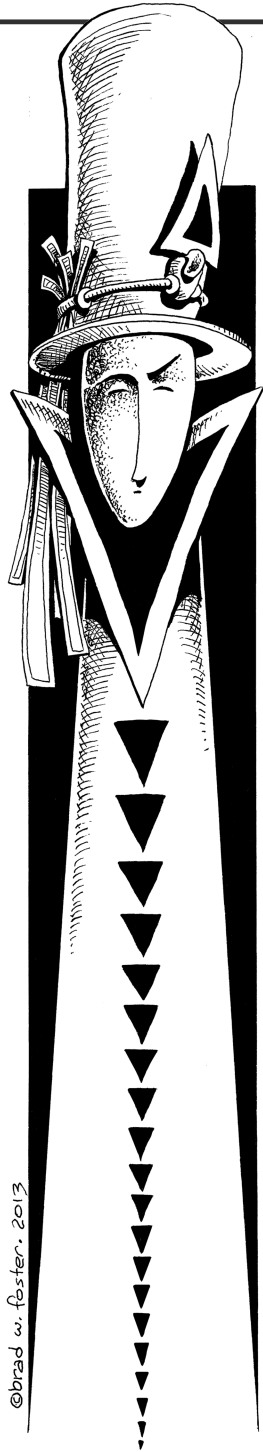


R U N E 90



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Rune #90

Volume 15, No. 4

Matthew and Kelly Strait, editors

Published by the Minnesota Science Fiction Society

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For RUNE:

RUNE
c/o Matthew and Kelly Strait
1228 E 54th St #1E
Chicago IL 60615
rune@mnstf.org
mnstf.org/Rune

Please contact Minicon, the Minnstf fallcon, and Minneapolis in 2073 as directed by each convention.

For general Mnstf correspondence:

Minn-stf
PO Box 8297
Lake Street Station
Minneapolis MN 55408
info@mnstf.org
mnstf.org

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Minn-stf Events

Minnstf throws bimonthly house parties, usually on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays. They're called "meetings", but the only meeting-ish part is the 5-minute "business meeting", mostly for the purpose of announcing the next meetings. The parties officially start at 2pm, but are very quiet until 4pm. Usually they run past midnight. To find the next one, look at the front page of our website or the Einblatt, mnstf.org/einblatt. You can subscribe to the Einblatt by email or on paper. The next meetings:

- There would ordinarily be a meeting on July 5, but it's cancelled in favor of Convergence.
- July 19: the Mnstf picnic, which is at Minnehaha Falls picnic area #2 (same as last year), starting at noon.
- Aug 2: Liz Fish's, 1417 Breda Ave, St Paul.
- Aug 16: Scott and Irene Raun's, 3928 11th Ave S, Mpls.

And we throw conventions. To wit:

- October 10–12: **METHOD Con 2**. Our relaxacon. Theme: MNStf (Re)Visits "War for the Oaks" Featured artist Tim Cooper, featured authors Emma Bull & Will Shetterly. FFI: see reg form later in this issue.

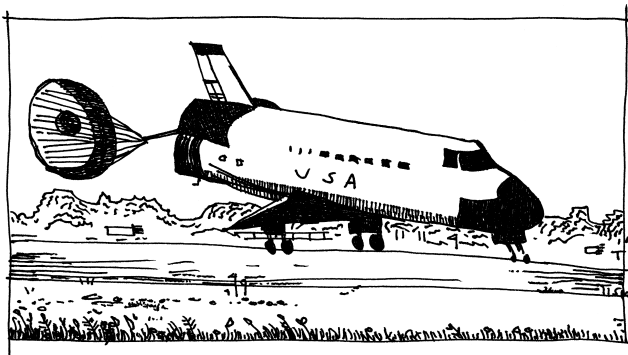
- Easter weekend 2015, April 2–5 (4 days): **Minicon 50**. GoH: authors Brandon Sanderson, Jane Yolen, and Larry Niven, musician Adam Stemple, publisher Tom Doherty, and artist Michael Whelan. FFI: see reg form later in this issue.
- 2073 (dates TBA): **The 131st Worldcon**. Contingent on being selected by the World Science Fiction Society.

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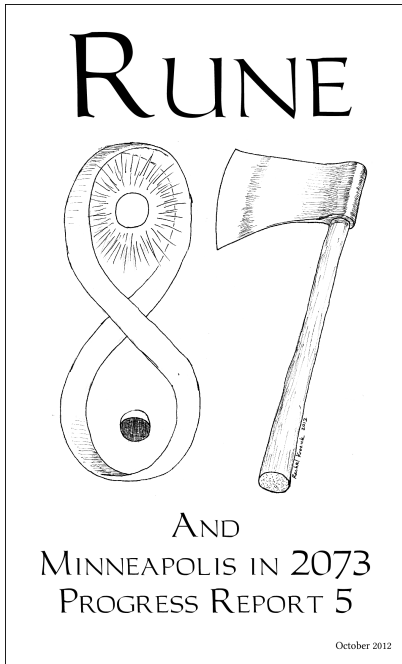
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- Page 2: Larry Tisch
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- Page 29: Rachel Kronick
- Back cover blimp: Rachel Kronick



*bladeandcrown.com

†genocideman.com

Letters of Comment



From Kevin Austin

Thanks for the issue of Rune 87. You accomplished something I failed to and you should be whole heartedly congratulated. (CONGRATULATIONS!)

I enjoyed the remembrances of Jim Young. Even though he hadn't been around much in the last few years, decades really, his passing leaves a hole in Minneapolis fandom.

I also found the update on the Minneapolis in 2073 bid interesting. I hope to support at the Peep level some day when I'm a bit more flush, but that may be a ways off.

On Rachel's articles I have to say I'm pretty much agreement. I can conceive of a scenario where a game developer dies in the middle of creating a game and his vengeful relatives swoop in and destroy all of the materials relating to the game. In that case I'd call the game dead. Even if

someone else took up the torch and tried to develop a game from whatever fragments of information might be left, it wouldn't be the same game. It truly would be a case where every copy of the game was destroyed and every memory of it gone. A game that is simply out of print isn't dead at all. Just look at AD&D 1st edition. It was out of print for what seemed like forever, but I just bought a new copy of the PHB hot off the presses last year. The worldbuilding article is something I completely agree with. Not everything has to have a serious/constructive purpose. Worldbuilding for fun, or as an intellectual exercise, is just as legitimate as worldbuilding for any other purpose.

Most of the minutes were at the edge of readability for type size, but at least they've finally been immortalized on paper.

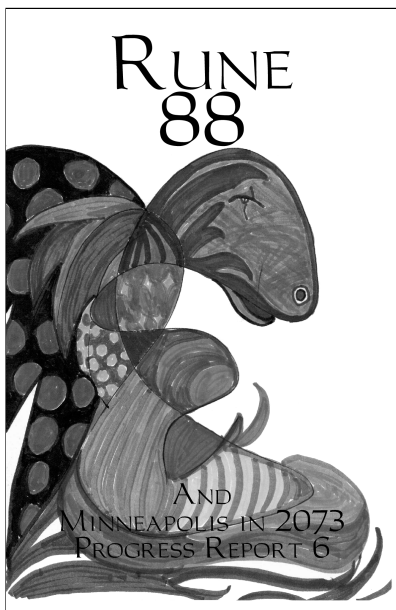
Thanks for printing my "comic", though I have a feeling that anyone I haven't explained it to wouldn't understand it. I can finally now say I'm a "published artist". (Although maybe not with a straight face.)

The Ctein article about the 100 Year Starship Study was also interesting. I hadn't heard anything about it before, and it's a subject I find fascinating.

The Minicon budget article was something I am not currently interested in, though I have a feeling that if I ever decide to be on the exec for another Minicon it's something I'll be looking at.

I always, well almost always, enjoy convention trip reports and Jeanne Mealy's article about her trip for Aussiecon 4 was no exception.

Your red shirt analysis was interesting, though I'm not sure it's worth the time you took to compile it. Hopefully you were able to enjoy watching the shows while you were tallying.



Congrats on the new babies! I also liked seeing the LoCs up front. Brad Foster mentioned how nice it was to see a print zine. I'm a member of two print apas that would love to have new members. Contact me for information about the St. Paul-based one. We have contributors in several countries who like to chat the classic fannish way and welcome new folks.

Sadly, we have lost friends since Jim Young, Ed Rom, Ericka Johnson, Blue Petal, and Myrna Parmentier won't be seen at conventions anymore. I think it would be a good idea to mention local fans we've lost.

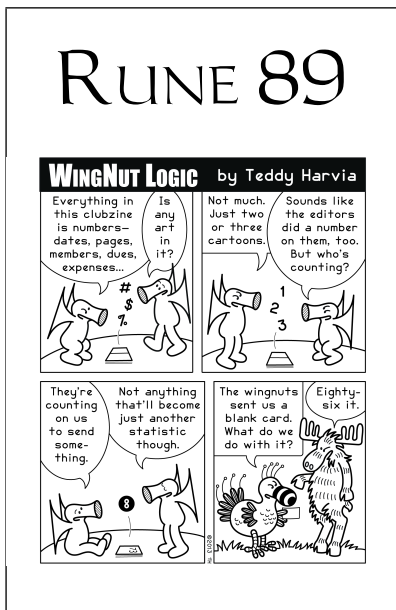
Happy 35 (now 36) years in fandom to Yvonne and Lloyd Penney. I attended my first con in 1976: Minicon. While fandom was still getting integrated back then and women got a little more attention than I was comfortable with, I did appreciate being able to talk with people about my interests and went on to attend more cons and Mn-Stf meetings and get into print fandom. Wish I had time to do more. I was amused by Brad Foster's suggestion that it would be easier to print the list of non-members of the 2073 bid closer to that date than printing the list of members. True, true.

Thanks for Jerry Stearns' article on the Mark Time Awards. I hadn't known all of the history. It was also helpful to get information on various SF audio productions.

I enjoyed doing the "Rules of Rummage" article. One of my special finds this year was a cookbook entirely in French. My sister works as an interpreter and was happy to get it. Thanks, Matt, for listing the cons that Mn-Stf has run. It brought back some fond memories.

Back to RUNE 88: Thanks for listing the upcoming Mn-Stf events. Minicon 49 was great and Minicon 50 promises to be quite an extravaganza!

RUNE 89 (November 2013): I had to do comments from the PDF as I didn't get this



From Jeanne Mealy:

Thanks for RUNE 88 (May 2013). The P.O., or maybe the eels, ate part of the front cover of John's issue. Thanks for the illos by various folks. I like to see *lots* of art.

issue! I would really appreciate getting at least one copy of it, if someone doesn't need to keep theirs. I will be at CONvergence and Detcon in July if a hand-off would be possible. Or send me an e-mail and let me know if you could mail the issue. I would rather not replicate the infamous example of Bob Tucker and the many bricks that began arriving in the mail. Here's an entry from Fancyclopedia 2:

"The Tucker Hotel was based on a suggestion of Bob's, in 1952 when the Chicon II and its prices signaled the start of the Big Convention movement, that fans simply build a hotel of their very own for holding conventions in, moving it from one site to another as required. A campaign arose to send Bricks to Tucker for the construction of this edifice; Rich Elsberry, denouncing this as a vile proish plot to get free bricks, recommended that BT be sent straw with which to make bricks for himself. A group of Anglofans designed, and draftsman Bob Shaw drew up plans for, a Tucker Hotel; Walt Willis and Chuck Harris located a fine site for it."

Thanks for the Teddy Harvia cover art (including a *moose*) and the other fannish illos scattered here and there. The more, the merrier!

Welcome to young Alex, who is now an active young man.

Several good LoCs here. Hello back to Lloyd Penney! Fun to hear that he and Yvonne are now steampunk merchandise dealers. Sounds like a fanzine article to me.

Here's another suggestion for articles: I'd like to hear from people who have unusual jobs, past or current. For instance, Larry Tisch mentioned that he works at a big newspaper in Tacoma. What does he do there, and does he enjoy doing it? I have worked as a typesetter, done medical and legal transcription (ask about the autopsies, I dare ya), and was a receptionist in a private-

client (big bucks) teller area. I believe that *everyone* has interesting stories. Let's hear 'em. See 'em. Uh, you know what I mean.

Good to see the Mnstf board minutes, Minicon financials, and gaming info. I'm sure they will have enthusiastic readers. I tend to find more entertainment in things like the METHOD Con reports. Photos, too, yay! Matt, I agree that it was worth finding out why you arrived late. My favorite part of your report was the list of conversational topics in the car. Any time two or more fans get together, we talk about all sorts of interesting things! I also like your point that Minicon feels more like a glossy bookmark than a glossy flyer. Thanks to DDB for the figurine photos. They appeared to be infiltrating the con in various ways.

Here's a topic that may encourage some amusing answers: what science fiction or fantasy book would you deem worthy *only* to put under a wobbly chair leg, and why? And where are the articles about cats? Many fans have cats, after all. And let's hear what people think about movies and TV shows. Maybe someone would be willing to do a review column.

Jeanne Mealy
1595 E. Hoyt Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55106
jmealy-in-mn@comcast.net

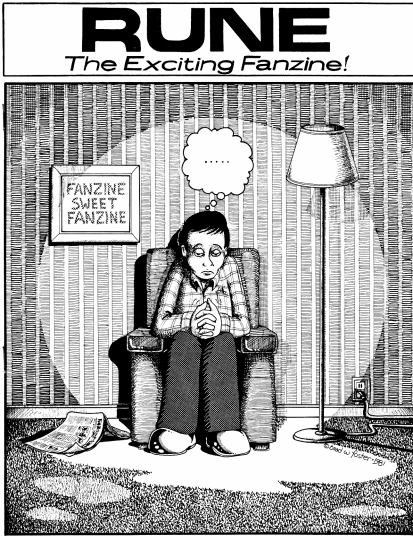
From Brad Foster:

Got in the new issue 89 of R^UN^E this past week. Ever since you've started this back up, it's been such a time-trip to see that title waiting in the po box again!

I see you have no fillos left from me on hand, so while looking to see what I could send to keep my fannish subscription current, found a tall piece that I thought might make an interesting graphic — and realized I've only had one cover piece on

RUNE all these years, wwwwaaayyyy back in 1982.

[That's Rune 70, shown below. -ed]



So, that would be something like 31 years since the previous cover, and you won't have to worry about me bothering you again until around 2044. (When will have to come up with something to fit your 4-D holographic format then.)

Speaking of far future, best of luck to the committee on the 2073 Worldcon bid.

To Rachel Kronick, thanks for mentioning you liked the toons by Teddy and myself last time. And, YES, you should do some more of your own for the zine. When I saw her comment, I immediately flipped through the rest of the issue to see if she had done so since she wrote the loc. No? Okay – then you must do something for the next issue for sure, Rachel.

And speaking of cartoonists, it's nice to see the return of Larry Tisch here. You get Larry back in print, you've got toons from Teddy – I hope you continue this quest to bring back some of the old timers, while continuing to get in new artists as well.

Richard Price's on "Running Gaming at a Con" was on something that I've not had a lot of personal contact with. On the other hand, it's always fascinating to read this kind of nuts-and-bolts piece on how things are actually done at conventions, and all the work that is really involved to make sure that those of us who just show up for the weekend have a good time.

For instance, I was surprised to read that short-term games are favored over longer-running ones. The story/joke/legend I've always heard is how gamers will show up the first day of a convention, check in and get their badges, then disappear into the game room and never been seen again until they leave late on Sunday. My assumption was that it was because they always got involved in some sort of all-encompassing long-term game that ate up the entire weekend. Now, I find that isn't true. You learn something new every day.

Oh, and speaking as someone who often sets up in the dealers room of conventions, I think his rule #6 about how the person running the room should measure it in person is something that should apply to *every* part of a convention. Gaming, dealers, art show, panel rooms, etc. Have too often shown up and found that my table is crammed into a little corner or odd angle because no one actually bothered to see how x-number of tables would fit into the actual space available. So, a good rule for all.

Also feel I should mention that I loved the final advice at the end of item #9: "Treat even the yokels with respect, and be polite when turning down their requests. There comes a point, however, when it's acceptable to just ignore them." I believe that is good advice for all of life.

Brad W Foster
PO Box 165246
Irving, TX 75016

From Lloyd Penney:

As I said in my loc, it's great to see Teddy Harvia's work again, and I am sure he will show up on the Hugo ballot again. The ballot looks very different these days, with little representation from fanzines, so one never knows.

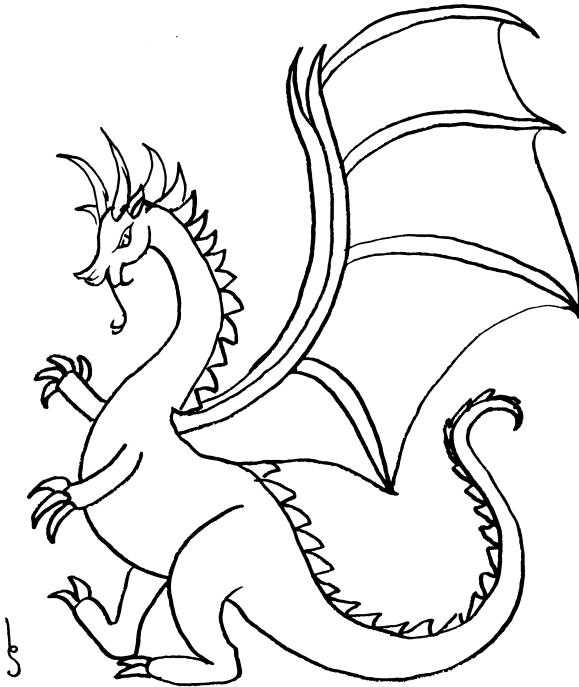
In my loc, I mentioned a Worldcon bid for 2017 for Montreal... there are now four bids for that year. Besides Montreal, Helsinki, Finland (who lost 2015, and who reset their year), the Washington, DC area, and a Japanese bid are all going for that year. There's going to be a lot of choice for voters that year.

The article about running gaming at a con is a valuable one, especially if a

convention decides to incorporate a gaming convention into an existing SF convention. Two different kinds of conventions sometimes means two different groups of potential attendees with different expectations of what they will want to find once they get to the convention, be it gaming or SF or whatever.

Minicon is a convention I've wanted to go to for a very long time, but I know I never will based on inability to afford such travel. Perhaps one day, but I'm not holding my breath.

Lloyd Penney
1706-24 Eva Rd.
Etobicoke, ON
CANADA M9C 2B2



Shaky Times in New Zealand!

by Jeanne Mealy

This is part II of my Aussiecon 4 trip report, continued from RENE 87. The worldcon was held in Melbourne from September 2–6, 2010, and I did some traveling before and after the con.

September 7: Our flight from Melbourne went OK and we eventually got through Customs and Quarantine in Christchurch. We took a shuttle to our downtown hotel, seeing some damaged buildings along the way. The 7.1 earthquake on the south island a few days before had also damaged downtown buildings. The area was fenced off and guarded, at least at night, to prevent people looting or otherwise getting into buildings that had not been checked out. Our shuttle driver talked with the soldiers who said it was OK for us to walk to the Hotel So about a block away.

Our first room was ridiculously tiny and the air in the hallways reeked of some awful scent. I can't imagine anyone liking that smell. We switched to a larger room that hadn't been polluted and another guest suggested turning off the heat (air circulation). That helped. We had to go to the bar downstairs for fresh water because the city water pipes might have been damaged by the earthquake. Our only shopping was at a small convenience store and we had to be back before 7:00 when the curfew began. Bad water, curfew?? This was all new to me. John spent awhile on a lobby computer, but we weren't able to reach Dan McCarthy or Lyn McConchie about visiting with them. That was frustrating. We knew that Dan was going to try to find a place to stay in Queenstown in a few days where the quake hadn't hit. Lyn had said to come when we could.

We got supper from the hotel restaurant and watched TV in our room. The room

had some special features that we tried to set, then found out they were broken. Not quite: the fancy alarm clock turned on the headboard light and the TV about 3:00 a.m. Urgh. At some point I heard the glass bathroom door rattling and thought it was someone going by in the hall with a big cart. Nooo, it was a small aftershock, I found out later. I did not get a good night's sleep.

September 8: We were up early to catch the cab to the train station for the first part of our tour of the southern Alps. Dropped off the luggage, took a few photos, then steadied ourselves as a 5.1 aftershock hit. My first big earthquake. The tour was changed to travel by tour buses, just to be safe. We were happy to get to go at all. The weather was a bit cloudy and foggy at first. The bus driver chatted about some of the scenery and answered questions. Farther on we switched buses and drivers. More sunshine! John was amused to see palm trees *and* snowcapped mountains at the same time. We saw many stunning sights of mountains, lakes, and rivers. In Hokitika, we stopped at The National Kiwi Centre. It's a small aquarium/reptile place where we saw many odd sights like a large tank of incredibly creepy giant eels, a living dinosaur called the tuatara, and kiwis in a nocturnal exhibit. Neat! Didn't have a lot of time to explore the small town, which was too often the case on this tour. We chose to see a lot of scenery rather than stay longer in a few places, but it was a little disappointing.

Our first stay was at the Bella Vista in Franz Josef. We barely had time to drop

off our luggage before jumping into a van that took us to see the glacier. The driver didn't give us a lot of information. We followed some paths, looked at waterfalls and a fast-moving stream, then found the view to the glacier. We didn't have the time to walk close to it. Even so, it was impressive. John and I wore light jackets. Didn't need the gloves. We did a little more walking and picture taking, then went back to the parking lot to meet the driver. He hadn't been specific about when to be there, so we were relieved to see him as it was getting dark and we didn't want to be stranded. A curious kea, a small green parrot, was walking around near the van. I'd heard about their inquisitiveness and wouldn't have been surprised if it tried to join us in the van.

We dropped stuff off at the hotel and walked to a nearby store for a few things. It was a clear, cool night. The stars were beautiful and we could see the Milky Way. We had supper at a good Indian place. Still couldn't reach Dan by phone. Next overseas trip, we are getting a cell phone that works there instead of trying to use phone cards.

September 9: Slept well, yay. We snarfed down some cereal, packed, and headed off on another bus. It was a beautiful sunny day and we saw many gorgeous vistas of mountains, farmlands, etc. We had a few stops by the ocean for photo ops and a salmon farm with a warning sign about how mischievous keas can be. Didn't see any. Thunder Creek Falls was as impressive as you'd expect. Lake Hawea and Lake Wanaka were quite large: 40 km and 60 km long, respectively! We passed a sign for the 45th parallel, halfway between the equator and the South Pole, and whizzed by the original bungee bridge. I'm surprised at the number of people who have asked if we went bungee jumping!

In Queenstown we got settled and went

downtown to do some shopping. I got a picture of John by a Stanley Street sign. We eventually got in touch with Dan. He was at a hotel near ours. We did a little shopping, then walked back up the big hill to meet him at our hotel. We were so pleased that he was able to make it despite the inconvenience from the earthquake. We walked downtown in search of supper, vetoing several noisy places, and found one we could agree on. It was a little difficult to communicate. We took a taxi back to our hotels. Dan brought his zine and the October cover for Stipple-Apa and money for postage and copying. I gave him the August issue and some candy.

Another hotel room, another late night packing before an early morning. I talked with one of our housesitters: we were concerned to hear that Callie was being finicky,

September 10: Off to the airport for a quick flight to Christchurch. I forgot to pack my Swiss Army knife, a multi-tool, and the liquids bag. No problems with Security, to my relief. Toothpaste was handed out after the snacks on board. First time I'd seen that. Safety videos can be very boring. This one featured the All Blacks rugby team and fans in wild outfits and make-up. Two players lifted an old lady up so she could put her luggage in the bin. She was later seen streaking (naked) down the aisle. I laughed a lot.

Speaking of Security... I was stopped twice during this trip for random explosives checks. Both women were fun to chat with and very nice, so I wasn't too bothered by being stopped. John was never stopped, which was unusual as he carries techie tools and gadgets. He laughed and suggested that I was stopped so the security folks could fill their quota of non-typical terrorist types.

We had a two-hour layover at Christchurch where we had lunch in a small food court and chatted with our friend who was housesitting. I was glad to hear Callie

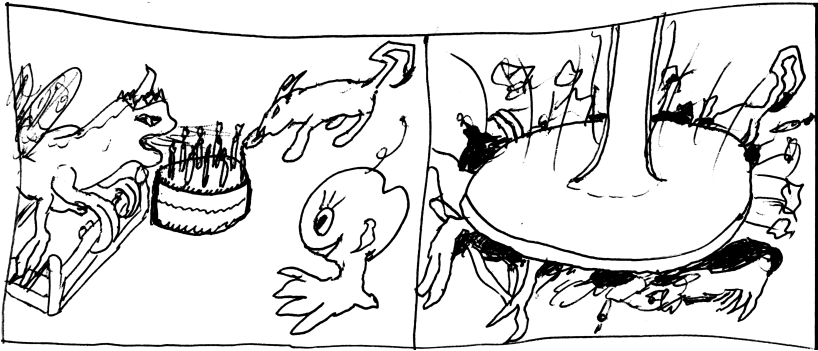
was eating better! I finished reading *Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistlestop Cafe* by Fannie Flag. I started it on this trip. It's a very good book that really made me feel like I was there. It was easier to pull out and read in the cramped airline seats than the ANZAPA envelope I'd brought.

We took a small prop plane to Palmerston North on the north island. I was grateful for the noise-canceling headphones once again. The propeller was right outside my window. I began reading *The Toybee Convector*, a collection of stories by Ray Bradbury and kept getting distracted by the scenery: ocean, land, clouds. When we arrived, it was cloudy and a bit rainy in PN. We got our luggage and the rental car. John did well for his first time at driving on the left. The worst part was a gorge with

very scary, winding roads. Lyn McConchie had recommended putting a sign in the window: "American Driver" so people would understand any odd maneuvers. One careful of people went by waving and smiling. That was fun.

We made it to Lyn's farm around 5:00 or 6:00 p.m. I knew her from ANZAPA years ago. She came once to Wiscon, too. She's a professional author in various genres and collaborated with Andre Norton. I don't know where she finds the time to run a small farm by herself, too. She lives in an old farmhouse with a newer building next door. We stayed in the extension and came into the main house to use the bathroom.

More next time on our stay with Lyn and our short stay in Napier before heading home.



Monster Mash

Minicon reports

Rachel Kronick

Executive summary: Minicon 49 was lots of fun.

In the same vein as this year's Con of the North, I was rushing to get to the con on time Friday. If this keeps holding true, I'll need to start asking for no events before 6pm the first day of the con.

The panel I was rushing to get to:

Fandom or Fandoms?

Is SF Fandom one monolithic thing or a collection of sub-fandoms? Is there a generational difference? "My fandoms are..."

Not *particularly* gaming-related, but definitely concerned with overall fandom(s) and how we tend to segregate and construe ourselves.

It's very interesting that this seems to be primarily a generational thing. Younger fans are much more likely to describe their passions in terms of "fandoms", as in, "My fandoms are Middleman, Utena and BSG". Older fans are much more likely to talk about "fandom", as one big thing, with separate sub-fandoms or interests.

Elise Matthesen made the point that it's not just about differences of scale, though. People who think in terms of "fandoms" often have very different ways of approaching their passions than those who talk about monolithic "fandom". We didn't have time to go into detail about this, and to be honest, it's a kind of geekery I don't have a lot of experience with. However, I'm pretty sure that (for example) fanfic and vidding are major parts of it.

I find it particularly interesting that a lot of "fandoms" seem to be major commercial properties, such as TV shows, specific

movies or major anime series. Is this necessarily a part of the plural form of geekery?

We discussed this a bit: perhaps it's because geekery has become a major form of commerce? If, as they say, "the geeks have won", then we've won by becoming more mainstream and more accepted, which also seems to mean "more exploited by the forces of capitalism". So it'd make sense that people getting into geekery more recently might think of it in terms of commercial properties.

Another possibility is that the big commercial properties are the ones that are more visible. Seems eminently likely that there are people being fannishly engaged with very small-scale or non-commercial realms that I've just never heard of. A parallel with gaming: many people seem to think that D&D is the only RPG in existence. And naturally they would, if they weren't actually involved in gaming; D&D is by far the biggest, most visible RPG around. You have to be relatively well acquainted with gaming before you necessarily know that other games exist, and it takes some true insider knowledge to be familiar with some of the highly obscure games.

Another difficult issue surrounding this divide is the tendency to see media fans as necessarily "shallower" or "less serious" than [insert other type of fan here]. It's especially strong, I feel, when the comparison is being made with fans of prose fiction; it seems that a lot of geeky subcultures still seem to assume that "published author of prose fiction" is and should be the necessary highest state of being that all fans aim for. Add in the tendency for older fans to look down on younger fans as insufficiently dedicated, inadequately serious or lacking in the right type and number of battle scars and

you have a recipe for misunderstanding and hostility. These fights have been going on since the beginning of geekery, and I don't think they're going to disappear any time soon. That doesn't mean I have to like them, though.

Regardless of how we construe our fandom(s), it'd be nice if we could take pleasure in other people's geekiness — compersion, in other words. It seems that a lot of us feel threatened by the existence of other ways of being passionate about things, and so we feel the need to tear down other people's passions in order to elevate our own.

Well, it's not a zero-sum game, and it's a big enough world for all of us to be wonderfully geeky. Approach your passions as “fandom”? Approach them as “fandoms”? Well, so long as you're not trying to tear down other people's passions, then your fandom(s) are good.

* * *

After “Fandom or Fandoms”, I had a choice between two panels that both looked pretty good:

Navigating the World of Small Press Publishing

How does an author break into the world of small press publishing? What benefits do small publishers offer? What should new authors be wary of?

The State of Art in Gaming

What is art's impact on content, style, jobs/work opportunities now and into the future of the gaming industry? What is up now in the gaming art world, and what is just around the corner? From a player's perspective, how does art influence a game?

Which one to go for? Both seemed right up my alley, hopefully covering various aspects of being a small-time publisher, which I am. Discussing art and artists for games sounded very interesting, but “Small Press Publishing” made mention of Kickstarter, which I've been trying to wrap my brain around lately. So I tried that one first.

Unfortunately, that panel turned out to assume everyone wants to publish prose fiction — novels, and to a lesser extent, short stories. Not at all what I wanted.

Why is this assumption — that all fans should aspire to becoming published authors of prose fiction — so prevalent? Why is “publishing” taken to automatically mean publishing novels and short stories? Why is that the default? Not necessarily everyone wants or should want to publish things; and those who want to publish things certainly don't all want to publish prose fiction. Nor should they! It's such a wrong assumption in so many ways, yet so much of fannish discourse seems to revolve around it. Blech.

So anyway, I got out of that panel as soon as I realized how skewed its emphasis was, then headed for “State of Art in Gaming”.

I'm glad I did; it turned out to be quite a good panel. It covered many aspects of art in games, from how art direction works to how art helps instill mood in a game. The art direction segments were a highlight, with discussion of how (bigger) publishers sometimes ask artists to create very particular things, or sometimes request something vague (“there has to be a sword” or whatever). They related one example of a magic card where Daniel Dos Santos (I think it was) did an illustration for a Magic: the Gathering card, and the illustration didn't work — but Wizards liked the illustration so much that they created a new card based around it.

I asked a question about one of the most

difficult topics for small publishers: how do we get art that a) we can afford yet b) doesn't ask artists to sell their work too cheaply?

Lindsay Nohl, one of the panelists, gave some really good answers to this. She mentioned how a game might be a true collaboration between artists and publisher, as a recent card game (Rolemodels: The Battle for Vyk' Tornaahl) she worked on was. The artists were intimately involved in creating the game; I think there was no separation between artists and mechanics designers at all, if I understand right.

She also said that some artists may truly get into a publisher's project for the long haul. Yet there's a weird space between desire to do the work and desire to get paid. If they're in it for the long haul, too, that seems to assume a relatively large publisher, and a project that will eventually become a huge success — increasingly unlikely in an ever-more-fractured and ever-more-niche market, I think. And, I think, it's not ethical to lean on artists' passion for their work in an attempt to get cheap art.

This was obviously something I struggled with in publishing *Blade & Crown*. I could've tried to entice up-and-coming artists with promises of "exposure", but that's both BS and immoral. I could've waited even longer to publish it while I got up the funds for better art, I could've used the same stock art so many other publishers have paid for... Or I could've done what I did, which was publishing with a mix of hopefully-obscure-yet-effective public domain art and my own illustrations.

She also mentioned how Kickstarter can help small publishers pay a decent amount for art. And the panel discussed Kickstarter in general: how it's changed the game publishing industry, making possible smaller, riskier projects that weren't possible before.

And how it allows publishers to get a sense of the demand for a product, and how it acts as a combination of insurance and market survey. I wish they had discussed the actual process of creating a Kickstarter more — as I said, this has been much on my mind of late — but that probably wasn't exactly on track.

At one point, the panel was discussing art in computer games, and Lindsay talked a bit about the computer role playing game *Darklands* and its gorgeous illustrations and glorious isometric combat maps. (Interesting that there's been so much in my life about *Darklands* recently — I may have to fire it up again sometime in the near future.) I mentioned how the cover art had gone on sale a year ago, and we geeked out about *Darklands* a bit. It's relatively rare to meet someone who's even *heard* of *Darklands*, much less an enthusiastic proponent of it, so that was a nice addition to a panel that was already great.

Apparently, back in the "Small Press Publishing" panel, there was some discussion of art & artists that went... um... badly. I don't know enough solid details to go into it more; I'll just say that I'm doubly glad I went to "State of Art in Gaming".

* * *

Again inspired by the *Build a World* events run by Ben Rosenbaum at Wiscon, and encouraged by previous iterations of this activity, I did a session of this at Minicon 49. We were inspired by the con's official theme (Pirates & Airships*) and eventually created a world populated by carnivorous bananas who are conspiring against their parrot overlords with their allies, the telepathic platypi. There were airships, monorails laid down by hamster in giant hamster balls and a Bananasiah. And, it seems, every time the group wants to

*Some assembly required — or other, similar parentheticals

have floating islands, so those worked their way in again. Yes, it got pretty silly, pretty quickly.

Someone asked me afterwards if these things ever stay serious. I still wonder* a lot about this! It'd certainly be interesting to try, though I'm not sure if a group of strangers can form a functional, serious social contract that quickly and still have time left over for worldbuilding.

In any case, it was a lot of fun — a good last activity for Friday night. I hope *Let's Build a World* becomes a regular thing at Minicon.

* * *

One of my favorite panels of the con, this was Saturday afternoon:

Terra Incognita: The Role of Maps in SF&F Literature

A discussion of maps used in speculative fiction, either as endpieces or as part of the story. What are good (and bad) examples of maps of imaginary worlds? Can the inclusion of maps create problems? What can maps tell us of the modes of transportation, natural setting, and politics of the realm? Are maps for modern fantasy novels too modern (i.e. accurate)?

I'd wanted to be on it, lover of maps that I am, but it didn't work out. Also, I tried to record it, but discovered too late that the app I was using had no way to output a sound file. Yuck! Unfortunately, that means I wasn't taking notes as well as I'd like, so my memory of the panel is a bit fuzzy.

Panels about maps and mapping, in my experience, tend to carry one of two primary messages:

1. Maps are a fixture of fantasy, and therefore a sign of lowly, shameful nerd-dom. Avoid them, lest you be mistaken for a geek. Your only hope for becoming a Published Author of Prose Fiction is to put away maps and other childish things.

2. Maps are fun. They can be fun, they're evocative, they help people orient themselves, and they help things stay consistent. If they're well done.

In case it's not clear, I thoroughly disapprove of message #1. Too many people seem to think that the sole purpose of fandom is to cast



off all geeky things

and become a Published Author of Prose Fiction, and to wallow in geek self-loathing as part of that, and to dis maps as a result.

Luckily, this panel was of the second variety. Marissa Lingen remarked about this early in the panel. As she said, she'd been on a similar panel recently where the panelists had mostly agreed that maps are bad (useless, a distraction, unprofessional or something of that nature — I didn't catch exactly how she described it). She found it remarkable that everyone on this panel was so pro-map. (Not that she's anti-map; she just found the contrast interesting.) It was very refreshing.

The panelists discussed the uses and misuses of maps in a quite evenhanded way. One major purpose they identified for maps was just evoking a feeling. This is certainly true! When I look at a map, I can quickly be drawn into the experience that it represents: Ooh, why does Yrkalia control this little section of the mainland, even though it's clearly based around the Semelt Valley? What must it be like to travel

*bladeandcrown.com/blog/2013/10/25/shared-narrative-control-gonzo

the Jade Road from Semelt to Cherus? How did the border forts of Cherus evolve? A well-constructed map will tell you a huge amount of information about the setting and draw you in. Of course, a poorly-constructed map can conceal or obfuscate things that it shouldn't, but that's more a matter of quality of execution than anything innate to maps themselves.

Another major use is for the person viewing the map (reader, player, or author) to orient themselves. If you're describing where Semelt is in relation to the cities of the Jade Road, it can be really confusing to keep three or four different locations straight in your head. If the specific orientation doesn't matter, that's fine; but if the orientation is an important part of what's happening, using prose only is a disservice to all concerned. I remember reading *Downbelow Station* by C. J. Cherryh and being thankful many times for the station diagrams at the beginning of the book; I would've been quite confused without them. And the same goes for the maps in the Middle Earth books, and the map in *The Name of the Rose* for that matter. And while I was reading *Against a Dark Background*, I ended up drawing the Thrial system for myself, because I needed a map to keep it all straight. (Iain Banks was a great author, but his descriptions of location often confuse me.)

Of course, it's possible for a map to be an unnecessary distraction, geek self-loathing aside. If the movement of the story doesn't actually require a map, there's no particular need for one. If the characters themselves are disoriented, it can be counter-immersive to present a detailed map. Eleanor Arnason noted here that, in *Woman of the Iron People*, she deliberately used a map that is completely useless — it gives no location names, and doesn't really help the reader

orient themselves at all. I laughed out loud at this. While reading the book, I've frequently found myself saying "Why is this map here? Is this a Daoist map?"

A large part of the panel's time was devoted to the ways in which maps can help authors keep a story oriented, and make sure the worldbuilding makes sense. This is of course huge. If you give the characters a carefree journey down the river from Semelt to Cherus, but later on you state that the river is controlled by the evil Lord Brocos, a map could help prevent that kind of inconsistency.

Maps can backfire, too. As the panel noted, you might state that it takes three days to get from Semelt to Cherus by horseback, only to have your audience check your map and notice that the two places are only five miles apart. Your map has then caused you some trouble — though it's perhaps arguable that your worldbuilding is where the fault actually lies, and the map has just revealed an underlying problem.

And using a map to achieve consistency and believability requires some basic geographic knowledge, regardless of who's using it. Ruth Berman described a story she'd seen in which two characters valiantly go over a waterfall... while going upstream, away from the coast. D'oh!

The panel went into a lot of other fun topics, and I found myself alternately laughing at the humor and marveling at the insight. I wish my recording had worked; I could relay even more cool stuff. But in case, it was a great panel.

* * *

I didn't do a whole lot of gaming at Mini-con 49. A hoped-for game of Star Traders didn't pan out. But I played a bit of Zar; played a couple rounds of Moneyduck (our

*boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/30618/eat-poop-you-cat

local variant of EPYC*) as well as taking part in the final Mega-Moneyduck reveal; ran the previously mentioned Build a World!; and had some nice chats about gaming and RPGs. And I think I might've played some other games that are just not registering in my mind right now.

SKJAM!

This past weekend, I went to Minicon 49 at the RadiShTree Hotel in Bloomington. It's a book-oriented science fiction convention with an older-skewing crowd, running around 500 people. So it's not overcrowded and a good place to talk to your once-a-year friends.

This year's theme was "Pirates and Airships" largely because the artist guest of honor was Don Maitz, who people who are not SF fans may know best from the Captain Morgan rum bottles. (Fun information: Mr. Maitz's first draft of the Captain Morgan painting had the pirate in period-correct clothing, but he decided that the anachronistic outfit looked more "piratey.") Also on the guest of honor list were Janny Wurtz (the Mistwraith series, and Mr. Maitz's wife) and Catherynne M. Valente (the Fairyland series.)

Minicon 49 was listed as three and a half days, with some activities starting on Thursday, but I arrived Friday. I attended the "Fandom or Fandoms?" panel, which discussed generational differences in how speculative fiction fandom is approached. I stayed for the "Healthy Online Gaming: Just One More Turn" panel, which talked about online gaming addiction, how to prevent it, how to deal with it and how to spot if you have it.

Opening Ceremony ("ceremonies!") were fun as always, with a rousing beginning, Janny Wurtz marching in playing the bagpipes. I was saddened

Overall, Minicon 49 was pretty dang good. There were some scheduling hiccups, but other than that, it went really well. Lots of great conversations, some excellent programming, good food, a great atmosphere and good gaming. As always, well worth the effort.

to learn that Blue Petal (a long time fannish personality who once played in a convention RPG I ran) had passed away.

After that, I went to the "Navigating the World of Small Press Publishing" panel, with several authors and publishers discussed the joys and pitfalls of working with small presses. One of the panelists didn't make it as he was so busy selling his book that he lost track of time. (Also because last minute mixups meant that panelists weren't named in the programs.)

Late night was party time (I especially enjoyed the Helsinki Worldcon bid party) and Moneyduck. For those of you who have not heard of the latter, Moneyduck is a game where you write a word or phrase on a piece of paper and pass it to the next person. That person draws a picture of the words. They then conceal the original phrase and pass it to the next person, who writes words based on the pictures. Repeat until the paper has gone all the way around the table.

On Saturday morning, I went to the Catherynne Valente reading, where she gave us a snippet from her upcoming Fairyland book. Should be interesting.

That afternoon, I moderated the "Anime for Speculative Fiction Fans" panel. There was a young woman in the front row who wanted to study moderation as she will be doing that for a Hetalia panel at Convergence; that inspired me to do a good job, and I am told it showed.

Later that afternoon, I also participated

on the “Page 117” panel. The idea was to pick a random page from a book, in this case the hundred and seventeenth, and read it aloud. The panelists and audience then discussed whether they’d continue reading based on that page. As it turns out, some good books have boring 117s. One particular volume had a page that was so over the top macho action that it set me to giggles, even more when it was revealed that the protagonist was a woman. All my entries were from books I was donating to the freebie table; they were all gone by the end of the day, and I hope the new owners enjoy them.

I wrapped up my panels for the day with “The Year in SF” by which was meant primarily SF books. There’s a few I am looking forward to seeing. The parties I spent the most time at were the Ethel Romm Meet & Greet, and the Livejournal Party.

Sunday morning, I went to the film room’s presentation of “Wolf Children,” an anime movie about a widow who has to raise her kids/cubs alone in a world that hates and fears wolves. It’s a bit melancholy. After that was done, I stopped by the end of the Janny Wurtz interview.

Ozgur Safin

I would like to draw attention to the moderator (Michael Kingsley) who ran the Terra Incognita panel and the Page 117 panel. He is a model of a moderator, and it made both panels much more enjoyable. Also Sherry L. M. Merriam did a great job as a moderator/panelist for the Healthy Online Gaming panel. Some of the other panels had some lackluster moderation and there were some scheduling hiccups I’d like to see ironed out.

As a panelist, those were my main issues. I’d personally like to see a microphone for each panelist, but I don’t know how possible that is. Moderation is important

My main panel for the day was “Mae-nads, Oracles and Madwomen”, which turned out to be mostly about Baba Yaga and how she is a liminal figure. (One of the panelists mentioned how nice it was to be around a group of people who used the word “liminal” in conversation.) After that, it was time for the “Mega Moneyduck Reveal” event. A roll of paper had been set up by the consuite, and the game had been played all weekend. What started as the phrase “silent and very fast” wound up being something about birthday cake. There were some hilarious segues.

Closing ceremonies were also fun. Catherynne Valente mentioned that she’d been nominated for a Hugo award; we’ll see how she does. The ceremony culminated in the usual assassination of the MnStf president, and then it was time to go home.

The book I was reading for most of the weekend was “The Why of Things”, about causality. It sparked several interesting conversations. I’ll have a review of it up in a few days. I also got to see pieces of three Syfy Original Movies, which all appeared to be parodies of giant monster flicks.

for when things get way off topic or when some panelists are not being heard vs. other panelists monopolizing the stage. It is also vital for keeping the topic fresh, giving audience members a chance to interject (but not take over or steer too much), and taking care of any logistical issues. Scheduling was confusing and the understanding of who was on what panels was somewhat decentralized and fractured (Terra Incognita was one example of this).

However, programming staff were friendly and helpful, and stepped up to fix any problems. Resolution of issues, where possible, was painless and fast.

The theme of “Pirates and Airships” did not appear to have much buy-in internally, and beyond the badges and monitor screensavers, there was very little in programming or atmosphere that reflected the theme. I don’t know the level of impact that themes usually have, since this was my first Minicon, and I understand that panel (and other) programming is dictated by volunteer participation, but to a casual observer I think having that buy-in would make a big difference just in a “goal stated and achieved” kind of way.

I would like to see more programming during the early con days (Thursday night, Friday) or have a clear window of time when programming will happen. I have a day job (like most of you) and many commitments to cover with vacation time, so it is very useful to know ahead of time what time I need to take off work. As someone who had never been to Minicon, I was confused by the start time of 7pm Thursday when there was pretty much nothing going on that day,

Laramie Sasseville

I enjoyed seeing and talking with old friends and playing a few games. Especially a new one, “Iota” which is like the next level of “Quirkle,” adding another characteristic to the mix (shape, color, and now numbers too!). I did not get a chance to play the BiZar variant of Zar, although I carried my deck with me every day.

We had a short, but satisfying filk circle on Saturday evening: half a dozen participants, all reasonably good singers. Only myself as an instrumentalist, alas, but Thorin did admirably improvising a percussion section from a batch of Legos. I never got the chance to stay for any of the later night music. Sigh.

A couple of my greeting cards sold in the art show, recouping me about half the

and opening ceremonies taking place the next evening. Many of these things are an outsider’s perspective. I realize a strong core of people attend year after year, so hopefully my feedback will help with the newbies.

All in all, I had a good time. The consuite was a good environment and always had something to eat or drink, and this was invaluable on Saturday when I had 5 nearly back-to-back panels from 11:30 to 6:30. The panel topics were good and there was good participation. The ability to roam around and stop in at parties or the music room led to much fun — kudos to the people who hosted, decorated, and catered the room parties! Registration was super easy and reasonably priced right through March. People were welcoming, talkative, and accommodating, and there was generally something interesting or fun to do. I do think an entire day could have been lopped off of the front end of the con to ratchet up the density of the festivities, but y’all have been doing this much longer than I have. :)

cost of my hanging fees. I did get to show off samplers of my older work and some lovely elastic book garters, and convey to Thorin a print he’d ordered around X-mas that I wasn’t able to locate at the time.

I participated in two panel discussions. “Local References in Urban Fantasy” and “Romance is not Porn: Relationships in F/SF.” Both were very enjoyable and led to interesting discussions. I said a few things worth saying and enjoyed the larger discussions, and meeting fellow panelists. I also attended a panel on small press publishing and said a thing or two to contribute from the audience, based in my experience working with two small digital-first publishers, one of which has gone on to become the digital-first imprint of a larger publisher.

The local references panel reminded me of how nice it would be to have my middle grade story, “The Winter Knife” out there — as a locally-set fantasy that actually deals with Minnesota’s winter.

I brought poems with me to the convention, but totally missed the open mike for poetry. I also had to miss the Money Duck reveal, due to a scheduling conflict.

Despite the few frustrations, I’d call this year’s Minicon a good time. The consuite

and green room were both well staffed and offered good company. I found hard cider in the bar, I played games, sang songs, talked with friends, noshed, laughed at opening and closing ceremonies and even lent a hand here and there. And, by the time we headed home, the world had warmed up to the point that it was enjoyable to be outside without a jacket! The sun shone, the grass is clearly turning green and the buds on some of these trees will be popping any day now.



Minn-stf Board Minutes

Sept 21, 2013

Taken by Kevin G. Austin, Recording Secretary. Location: Home of Scott & Irene Raun 3928 11th Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN. Meeting began at 3:13pm.

In attendance: Hershey Lima, Dean Gahlon, Kevin G. Austin, Beth Friedman, Scott Raun, Irene Raun, Paris Raun (dog), Ziggy Raun (dog), Matt Strait, Laura Krentz.

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Minicon 48-50: Matt gave us a Minicon 48 financial report. Not yet final. Matt gave financial projections for Minicon 49. There was some discussion about Minicon 50 finances.

Minn-STF web account move: DreamHost has acknowledged DD-B as an official representative of MnStf and he is moving forward with the move. He has created discussion and announce lists for information pertaining to the move. Scott will monitor progress.

Annual Checklist: Beth has completed it

October 19, 2013

Taken by Kevin G. Austin, Recording Secretary. Location: METHOD Con. Meeting started at 12:13 pm.

In attendance: Hershey Lima, Dean Gahlon, Kevin G. Austin, Beth Friedman, Scott Raun, Irene Raun, Matt Strait

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved with amendments.

ASCAP: Scott needs to set up an ASCAP web account and get the information for it to Becca Leathers.

By-Law Amendments: Matt needs to get the text of the amendments so he can publish them in Rune. Scott emailed an ODT document with the final wording to the board-chat list and Matt. When the

and put it out on the MnStf wiki.

2012 Minutes: No progress yet. Kevin will bug Emily if there isn't anything by the end of the month.

Treasurer's Report: Dean emailed check register report. Dean will look for the summary report.

Harassment Policy: We discussed the By-Law changes. Change made to the amendment to By-Law VI. "Each convention to be held, as defined above," The amendments will be displayed with the sign in book for the next two months of meetings. The Minicon 49 convention policy will be created by Matt and presented to the board before Progress Report 2. The board will be creating the non-convention harassment policy.

Meeting exclusion policy: We discussed a policy for hosts not allowing people into meetings being run in the hosts home.

Next meeting: October 19th, 2013 at 12pm at METHOD Con.

amendments are official Kevin will post an announcement to Natter and the Mnstf LiveJournal.

Minicon 48: Beth will poke Carol to deposit the last M48 check.

Minicon 49 & 50: Finances were discussed including a possible change to the at-the-door rate.

RUNE: The Rune budget, as proposed by Matt, was approved.

Dreamhost Account for MnStf: No progress.

2012 Minutes: Nothing yet.

Treasurer's Report: Nothing yet. Dean will look again.

Exclusion Policy: Beth will come up with

the initial wording and Scott will take it from there.

Sales Tax Exemption Cards: Beth will get state sales tax exemption cards for

December 21, 2013

Taken by Kevin G. Austin, Recording Secretary. Home of Scott and Irene Raun. Meeting started at 3:26 pm.

In attendance: Scott Raun, Irene Raun, Paris Raun (canine), Ziggy Raun (canine), Dean Gahlon, Beth Friedman, Lydy Nickerson, Kevin Austin.

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

ASCAP: No progress. Scott still needs to get an online account set up.

Minicon 48: Previous check deposited according to Carol Kennedy via Beth, but there is now a new check to be deposited. Beth wants it to be known that this is not her fault.

MnStf Web Account: The wiki is not working. Kevin would like a password so that he can upload the board meeting minutes to the web site. There are questions about whether or not the email archives have been transferred.

2012 Minutes: Nothing from Emily.

Treasurer's Report: Nothing new. Dean

January 25, 2014

Taken by Kevin G. Austin, Recording Secretary. Home of Beth Friedman. Meeting started at 1:26 pm.

In attendance: Dean Gahlon, Kevin Austin, Beth Friedman, Scott Raun, Morwen T. Cat.

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

ASCAP: We got a new licensing agreement which the board signed and returned to ASCAP. Board approves the \$120 annual licensing fee. Scott still needs to get an

Minicon to Matt.

Next Meeting: November 23th, 2013 at 1pm at Beth Friedman's house.

will look for report and send it to Kevin once he's found it.

Meeting Exclusion Policy: Will be announced at business meeting.

Harassment Policy: Nothing yet.

Razoo Foundation: We received a Give to the Max Day donation of \$9.61 via the Razoo Foundation. Scott will set up an account with Razoo for MnStf and will get a check to Carol for the amount.

Lydy's Letter: We decide we will ban Louie Bucklin from meetings for three months based on her recent behaviour at a MnStf meeting. Hosts must agree with the ban or they won't be chosen to host. The President will be the one to get the hosts agreement. Lydy will talk to the President (Patricia Zetelumen) about this. Beth will send a registered letter to Louie notifying her that she is banned.

Next meeting was going to be January 18th until Beth realized she'd be in China then. Moved to January 25th 1pm at Beth's.

online account set up.

Minicon 48: Beth will ask Carol if the final, final, final Minicon 48 check has been deposited.

MnStf Web Account: The wiki is now working. Kevin would like a password so that he can upload the board meeting minutes to the web site. Scott will talk to DD-B about getting him a password. The Natter archives have been transferred, but the board-chat archives were not. Kevin will see if he can access the board-chat archives

and get them transferred over. Dean will talk to DD-B about sending a reminded email to former Natter subscribers who didn't sign up for the list on the new server.

2012 Minutes: Nothing from Emily.

Treasurer's Report: Nothing new. Dean will look for the summary report and send it to Kevin once he's found it. (really, truly this time)

Harassment Policy for Minicon: The board approves the policy proposed by the chairs of Minicon. Kevin will let them know that their policy has been approved.

Harassment Policy for MnStf: No progress. Scott will get the ball rolling but has not promised to write a draft proposal. Scott promises to do his part by the next MnStf meeting if someone promises to remind him at the next MnStf meeting.

Razoo Foundation: Scott set up an account with Razoo for MnStf and got a check to Carol for the amount donated to us. We can't find out who donated money to us because they don't keep that information for more than 30 days.

Temporary Ban on Louie: We have confirmation that Louie received the registered letter.

Minneapolis in 2073: The board received the following financial report: "In 2013, we took in \$87.14 and a Euro cent in member-

February 22, 2014

Taken by Kevin G. Austin, Recording Secretary. Home of Beth Friedman. Meeting started at 1:37pm.

In attendance: Dean Gahlon, Kevin Austin, Beth Friedman, Hershey Lima, Morwen T. Cat.

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

ASCAP: Scott got the paperwork mailed and is waiting on a response from ASCAP so that he can get the online account working.

ships, \$52.81 in party tips and other donations, and \$67.50 in ribbon sales for a gross income of \$207.45 and 0.01 Euros. We spent \$58.09 on printing and mailing and \$60.17 on parties, for total expenses of \$118.26. Our net income for 2013 was therefore \$89.19 and 0.01 Euro. The Minneapolis in 2073 treasury currently contains \$95.68, a Euro cent, 8.02 Israeli Shekels, tuppence, 25 Iraqi Dinars, a Taiwanese dollar, a gram of silver and a French Franc, plus other less fungible items."

MnStf Picnic: Board officially approves the expenditure that Bill Christ requested.

Sales Tax Exempt Status: Beth has the application for nonprofit exempt tax status and is preparing to submit the request. She might need a Minnesota State sales tax ID number. She does need a signed copy of the by-laws, a copy of a brochure describing our organization, and income and accounting statements for the organization. The board signed a copy of the by-laws and Kevin sent the URL for the most recent version of the clubs tri-fold brochure to Beth. Beth will get the income and accounting statements from Carol. If she does need a sales tax ID number for the paperwork Beth will get one for MnStf if we don't already have one.

Next meeting February 22nd, 2014, 1pm at Beth's.

Minicon 48: Beth called and left a message for Carol about the final, final, final, Minicon 48 check, but hasn't heard back yet as to whether or not it's been deposited.

MnStf Web Account: Kevin will ask DD-B if he has any ideas about recovering the board-chat archives. Kevin now has a password to the MnStf account and has uploaded the October and December minutes to the web site.

2012 Minutes: No progress. We're giving

up on asking for them.

Treasurer's Report: A new report was generated and is now up on the web.

Harassment Policy for Mnstf: Scott reports that he has enlisted help on this.

Sales Tax Exempt Status: Beth has col-

March 28, 2014

Minn-stf board meeting at Beth Friedman's house, 28 March 2014, scheduled to start at 7:30pm.

Attendance: Beth Friedman, Matt Strait connecting by phone, Dean Gahlon, Scott Raun, Lydy Nickerson.

Officers

President: Some suggestions floated. Beth will communicate with the suggested people. An attempt was made to do this during the meeting, but the candidate didn't answer the phone.

VP: Lydy agrees to continue.

Treasurer: Dean will confirm with Carol Kennedy whether she will continue. No actually, Beth is doing it right now and has left a message for Carol. [After the meeting, Carol replied that she would continue as treasurer.]

Correspondence Secretary: Hershey Lima will take over from Clay.

Membership Secretary: Laura Krentz will continue.

Recording Secretary: Matt Strait will allow himself to be labeled as such, since he's taking minutes and that's what it means. Beth will back him up.

Inblatt: Scott will continue.

Rune: Matt S will continue, but will probably not do it for more than another year.

Webmaster: Eric Forste believes that DD-B might be willing. Lydy is calling DD-B. DD-B says: What does it mean to be webmaster? We reply that minimally it means that he has to keep the front page

lected all five things needed for the form. She will mail it on Monday. Beth has notified Matt Strait.

Next meeting March 15th, 2014, after the election at Dreampark.

up to date with the upcoming meetings and such. Will he have to do the fallcon webpage? No, Matt S is doing that. DD-B says yes. Lydy promised dancing boys.

Archivist: Matt S will continue.

No new officer positions are needed, as far as we can think of.

Harassment policy/code of conduct/or whatever we will call it.

We will mull over it more. It is easier to discuss by e-mail, since it involves a lot of text. We have a goal of getting it together for the next meeting. Many thanks to Lydy for putting together a working draft.

Should it be longer or shorter?

Lydy will fix an inaccuracy in the summary statement — the host of a meeting at which there is a problem should be a first contact.

Should the exclusion policy be part of the HP/CoC/WWWCi? Opinion is no, they should be separate policies, since one is about hosts' control of their own space and the other is about people's behavior. And the two policies have opposite effects as far as whether a person can sign into a meeting. Banning someone from Minn-stf is totally different from a host banning someone from their house. And Minn-stf's policy on hosts' exclusion is to make it not a Minn-stf issue by letting hosts exclude people but still letting the excluded people sign in.

On the exclusion policy, Dean says that if someone hasn't shown up to a meeting in decades does not need to be told that they are excluded. How long someone has to be

not present before this kicks in, we don't know, but decades is enough. We don't need to think of a number, but can do this on a case by case basis.

Minicon 48

Yes, the final final final Minicon 48 check was deposited. The Minicon 48 books are closed. For sure, definitely, certainly, without a doubt, most likely.

Minicon 49

It is now only about \$1800 over budget, since we have 324 room nights booked already, as compared to last year's 274. Matt suspects that this is due to us claiming that the con starts on Thursday now. If so, he's brilliant and didn't know it, since booking more rooms wasn't the idea. (The idea was (a) to recognize that the con has started on Thursday for some time now and (b) to ramp up to Minicon 50 being 4 days.) Anyway, making 300 room-nights saves us \$1500. The reason that we are still \$1800 over budget is because, as we have known since shortly after Minicon 48, the hotel costs about this much more than we thought it did.

Minicon 50

Minicon 50 has neither taken nor spent any money. However, Matt has been updating its budget with better estimates based on M49 experiences. It is now expected to hit its profit target of \$-1800 just about exactly, given the new expectation of getting over 300 room-nights.

Beth has a Minicon item: The green room would like \$300 instead of \$200. Matt

April 25, 2014

Meeting scheduled for 7pm. Beth Friedman's house. Minutes taken by Matt Strait.

Attending: Beth Friedman, Dean Gahlon, Lydy Nickerson, Scott Raun, and

says ok and shrugs. Matt will let Karen know this. [Matt has done this.]

Fallcon

There is a weekend and a plan, but maybe not a contract. We officially approved Patricia to run the fallcon, but there is not yet officially a name, a date or a hotel. Nevertheless, the fallcon committee is free to move all wheels, such as putting up a webpage or sending out flyers, with Patricia's approval of course.

ASCAP

We are converting to an annual payment. Previously Minicon paid a per-event fee. Scott is working on it. What will be covered? Action item for Scott: find that information. Why did we start this process, Matt asks? Because ASCAP changed their rules. ASCAP no longer wants to deal with events, but rather with years. So from now on the board will pay ASCAP, not Minicon. Scott will find out when the first payment will be.

Kevin's quest to recover the board-chat archives

No information. Matt asks how much we care. Beth would like to get this done. Scott will ask him. It may not be possible, but Dean and Scott may be able to come up with something. Dean may reconstruct it out of his personal mail folders.

Status of sales tax exemption

Beth mailed the application. It will be up to 90 days. We expect it to be approved. We should get 3 or so cards with the approval.

Next meeting: April 25 at 7pm [where?]

Matt Strait by phone (audio) and Skype (video).

Harassment policies

Minnstf policy: Discussion ensued. Matt fiddled with his AV setup for a long time. At 7:27 he became happyish with it.

Expression that we need to be sure to say that we are not setting up a legal system — no depositions, no trials.

Dean prefers a colloquial style for the policy. Scott agrees and says that this helps with the previous point: standard conversational English emphasises that we aren't setting up a legal system. Beth says that, however, we can be colloquial without being overly wordy.

Should we keep “brains are squishy”, which is part of the language in the current draft? Spirited debate on this point. Dean can take it or leave it.

Agreement that we should have a short version and a long version. Dean says that the current short version is too short.

Something happens with fur in front of the camera. Matt tries to figure out what's going on. Carding fleece from a sheep, Beth says.

Dean points out that we shouldn't ban people from board meetings but also tell people they can contest their ban at board meetings. Lydy says that the ban should specify which things they are banned from, and we might include banning someone from board meetings if they are sufficiently bad, or to only allow them to a specific board meeting to discuss their case.

Matt says that we should say “concom meetings” and not “Minicon concom meetings”. Or, to use the language from the bylaws, “general convention committee meetings”.

Lydy would like to keep language about “lack of consent” that Beth has deleted in her version. First sentence of third paragraph. Beth and Lydy discuss. Lydy: We need to define harassment, and this was the core of

the definition.

We're going to work on this more by e-mail. Beth will make a new draft of the short version to circulate. Lydy will write a long version once the short version exists. The long version can have “squishy brains” in it. Lydy says that the short version must specify what a person desiring immediate action and long-term action is supposed to do.

We don't want to answer the question of whether a board member is an officer (technically not, as it turns out). We'll just say both.

Minicon 49 policy: Was agreed upon by e-mail prior to Minicon 49. Matt demands that procedure demands that we ratify e-mail decisions at a meeting, even if they are for things that happened in the past. The ayes have it.

Past conventions

METHOD Con 1: Matt has asked Patricia to send in the profit of \$203.35. We suspect that this hasn't happened yet. We'll push this onto the list of things to ask Carol about.

M49 very preliminary financial report: Matt reports that because we got more members than expected, the outlook is now better and the best guess is that we'll come in \$1000 short of the target of \$4100, returning about \$3100 to Minn-stf. The reason for the shortfall remains the same, which is that we planned for a hotel bill of about \$1500, but then learned that we should expect more like \$3300. Since the first report that we were probably not going to make our target, some things have turned out to cost more and others less, with a net positive effect on the projection. However, we have not yet seen the actual costs for the big ticket items: the hotel bill, and the consuite. So the estimate of returning \$3100 is still very rough. Going into the con, we had considerably over 300

room-nights booked, that being the highest bar set by the hotel. We are hoping to use this as leverage for reducing our costs, but it may well not work.

Future conventions

METHOD Con 2: We agree to \$-200 as a profit target, and we should say to her “if you make money instead of losing it, that is nice. But the goal is to put on a good convention, not to make money.” Matt will do this. Patricia may ask for seed money if the hotel wants payment prior to the con. We should receive a proposal from Patricia and post it to mnstf.org/records when approved.

M50 report: We don't know how many memberships were taken yet at M49 since they weren't counted at the Dessicated Dodo as is sometimes traditional. Matt's financial projection remains that it will just about meet its profit target of \$-1700.

M51 discussion: There are no candidates at the moment. We should announce somehow — here and on natter and etc other places. And at business meetings. Scott will take care of Einblatt, natter and LJs. We will note that the current co-chairs are planning to take a year off and this is not just a pro forma notice.

Memorials policy

To clarify previous minutes, our policy is that the person in charge of memorials is authorized to spend \$50 plus shipping

on flowers or something else suitable. The reason for “plus shipping” is that we want to send the same quality thing regardless of how far away the family/friends of the deceased is. The choice of “something else suitable” is left to the discretion of the person in charge. Donation to a charity of the family's choice is noted as a possibility.

Later amended by e-mail to \$60 plus shipping due to actual cost of flower arrangements. Matt will remind us to ratify this at our next meeting.

Tax-free status

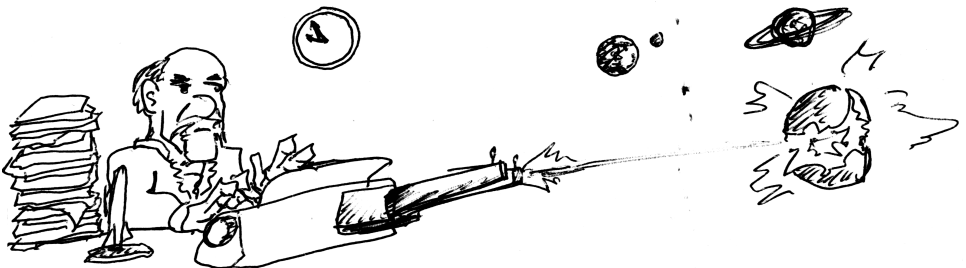
We were turned down for getting MN sales tax exemption because we are not an exclusively educational organization. Is there any hope of appeal? No. We are just the wrong kind of organization. We will archive the document saying so so that we can possibly avoid going through this again. It will go along with our other official papers from the state in the archives.

Minn-stf finances

Matt would like to see recent statements showing our balances in savings and checking. No one on the board has seen any lately. This goes on the list for Carol.

ASCAP

We will authorize Carol to write a check for this. The rules are easier now. As long as we are under 1500 people, that's all we have to tell them.



Minneapolis in 2073 Worldcon Bid Progress Report #7

As you may know, the Minnesota Science Fiction Society is bidding to hold the 2073 World Science Fiction Convention in Minneapolis. The year was chosen as the 100th anniversary of Minn-stf's original 1973 bid.

Since Progress Report #6 in May 2013, we have continued to publicise and promote the bid. We had a party at Windycon, and we gave out ribbons and took memberships at Diversicon, Convergence, LoneStarCon 3, Capricon, Oddcon and Minicon. We also mailed out flyers to about 40 other conventions.

For the next year, we intend to ramp up our partying again (the bid chair's children are now old enough to not be quite so needy and occasionally even helpful!). We're going to start with NASFiC, a.k.a. Detcon 1, which is July 17–20 in Detroit (see detcon1.org). Our party will be Saturday night in the Governor's Suite. We have no detailed plans yet, but we like to open our parties early and close them late!

* * *

Lest anyone think that fandom is the only community that tries to schedule events far in the future, I'd like to point out that Zurich has been bidding since at least 2008 to hold the physics conference known as "Neutrino" in 2030. That's also motivated by a 100th anniversary, in this case of Pauli's proposal of the neutrino to solve the problem of beta decay. Well, ok, that's only 22 years in advance, but still.

Join Us!

Would you like to see a Worldcon in Minneapolis? Or, in the near term, would you like to see more bid parties? Pre-support

Minneapolis in 2073 today, using the form on page 28! And please consider *upgrading* your membership if you have already pre-supported.

You'll be in good company. We now have 615 pre-supporting members, of whom 2 are Peeps, 21 are Bloggers, 358 are standard presupports, and 234 are Dodos. They hail from at least 20 states*, Washington DC, 5 Canadian provinces†, Germany, Norway and the UK. Since many members only give us an e-mail address, this list is probably incomplete. Are you a pre-supporter from elsewhere? Let us know!

Option on Future T-shirt

What the heck does "option on future t-shirt" mean? Let's find out. We would like to create a Minneapolis in 2073 t-shirt with some original art. It can include zero or more of the following elements:

- A Minneapolis landmark (fannish or not)
- Blog (the drink, or... a pun on weblogs?)
- Zeppelins
- Peeps
- Dodos

A space zeppelin cruising over Bloomington of the 2070s? Peeps ruling the enslaved population? Citizens walking their genetically enhanced dodos down Nicollet Mall? Something not at all like those? It's up to you. Send your art in to mpls2073@mnnstf.org or to our PO box.

Bloggers and Peeps have an option on a future t-shirt, as the reg form says. They can vote on the t-shirt design, in the inevitable case that we receive piles of excellent candidate artwork, and they will get a discount off the normal price.

*AZ, CA, FL, IA, IL, IN, MA, MI, MN, MO, NC, NJ, NV, NY, OH, PA, TX, VA, WA, WI

†AB, MB, NB, ON, QC

Minneapolis in 2073 all-in-one registration/upgrade form

Choose your membership level. To *upgrade* your membership, simply pay the difference of rates (but keep your ribbon). You can help us by *partially upgrading* if a full upgrade is too expensive. Just send any amount along with the form, and we will upgrade you when your summed payments have reached the necessary level.

- Dodo: –1 ribbon (we give you a ribbon)
- Standard pre-supporting: \$2.073 (fudge it), 50 mg gold, or 3 g silver – you also get a ribbon
- Blogger: \$20.73, 0.5 g gold, or 30 g silver – as above + option on future t-shirts
- Peep: \$207.3, 5 g gold, or 0.3 kg silver – as above + converts to attending membership when Minneapolis is selected



Name

Most useful address(es) (physical/electronic/other); We will send progress reports here.

Return to a mpls2073 representative, or Minneapolis in 2073, PO Box 8297, Minneapolis MN 55408, USA, Earth. Make checks to the Minnesota Science Fiction Society. Dodos: if you'd like a ribbon by mail, please provide a SASE.

New Members

Welcome to our new members since PR6!

Blogger

Pat Lilja

Standard pre-supporters

Aimee Kuzenski	David Herrington	Kevin Lowell
Alice Ableman	Denise Leigh	Mark Crist
Barry W Haldiman	Duk	Michael T. Sherman
Britta Gnd	Elijah Itah	Patrick J. Ralph
Carol Kennedy	Griffin parkes Hailman	Ryan Guggenheim
Chris Gerrib	Jason Spitzer	Vicki Ortega
Curtis S Gibson	Jessica Douglas	
David Bowne	Jonathan Stoltze	

Dodos

Brian Lundgren	Daniel Kromke	Geana Kristina
Candace Paden	David Robins	Gina M. Charlton
Damian	Dexter Fabi	Gina Suszko
Dan Berger	Evan Milz	Jatel Bntz (Joel Battung)
Dan Hunt	Felicia Herman	Joe Wren

John Hacewiler
 John Paul Kroschel
 Julie Hurenel
 Julio Kroschel
 Kari Askeland

Kenneth Koski
 Lesley Carhart
 Megen Leigh
 Nichole Stevens
 Paul Brooks

Stephanie King
 Susan Philbrook
 Tami Murck

Financial Report

Bid Revenue	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Memberships	\$312.00*	\$443.46†	\$340.01‡	\$490.74§	\$87.14	\$58.16
Donations	\$0.00	\$39.95	\$149.45	\$165.46	\$52.81	\$13.75
Ribbon Sales	\$0.00	\$36.50	\$47.00	\$52.50	\$67.50	\$36.50
Expenditures						
Parties	\$0.00	\$400.09	\$320.96	\$355.15	\$35.84	\$0.00
Printing/mailing	\$1.36	\$55.99	\$77.93	\$401.06	\$62.53	\$17.15
Ribbons	\$110.00	\$130.00	\$120.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$120.00
Misc	\$0.00	\$21.38	\$46.28	\$30.00	\$0.00	\$3.00

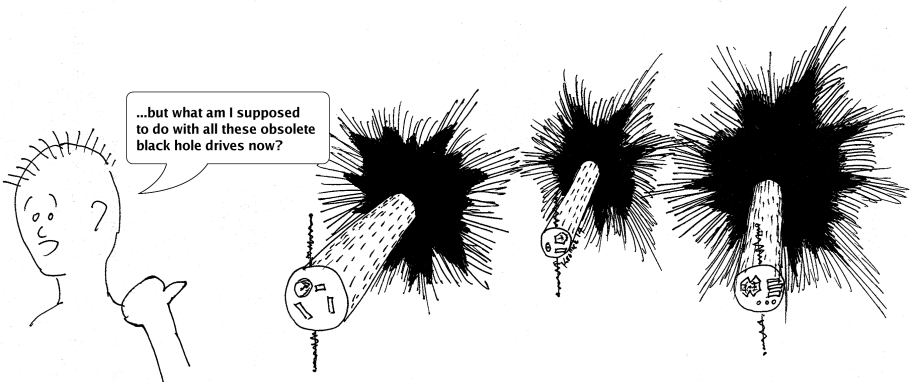
*Also a French Franc, a small rock, coupons with cash value 0.3 cents, 2 half dollar chocolate coins, an uncashable check for exactly \$2.073, and tuppence.

†Also a very short story on a business card, a peanut M+M, a Taiwanese dollar, a penny cut in rough thirds, and a gram of silver.

‡And \$ $\frac{7}{13}$ (we are *still still* holding \$6/13 in escrow for the next 6 people who need \$1/13 to complete \$2.073), and 25 Iraqi Dinars.

§Plus 8.02 Israeli Shekels, 2 Pfennig, a button, and a rock from the southernmost point of Canada.

||Plus 0.01€ (making slightly over \$2.073 when combined with \$2.06) and a Luna City medalion.



Comparative Con Finances

by Matt Strait

My previous article about the costs of conventions (in RUNE #88) pointed out the perplexing fact that larger conventions ought to be cheaper, since they spread their fixed costs out over more people, yet there doesn't seem to be any such trend. To explain this, I guessed that perhaps con runners just set their rates near what other cons are charging and then find ways to spend whatever money they end up with. Or with the same symptoms but different motives, perhaps larger cons feel obligated to have more features to fit into their role as larger cons, and the costs of these cancel out the savings from being bigger.

When I wrote that, it was all speculation. Hard data is nice. So I have gathered some by asking con runners for information about their budgets. Naturally, not every con will open their books at the drop of a hat, but I have gotten information from the very kind folk at Diversicon, Wiscon and Convergence. (Convergence, in fact, has lots of its financial information publicly available online*, which is pretty awesome.) These run the gamut of sizes, from Diversicon — about 100 members — to Convergence's 7000. Minicon (500) and Wiscon (1000) are in the middle. The two larger cons are 4 days, while the smaller are 3.

I have condensed and standardized the information from each in order to render them comparable. The results are the pie charts on page 32. This process naturally glosses over many details, and I apologize in advance for the lost nuances. The major points of standardization are:

1. Costs are given in terms of dollars per typical membership. For Minicon, the typical membership is a \$40 pre-reg.

For Diversicon, Wiscon, and Convergence, it is \$30, \$50, and \$60, respectively. I chose this metric because it answers the question “what are they spending my money on?” Another method would be to give the amount spent per member. Fortunately, for those who would prefer that, they're pretty close, since each con gets the vast majority of its income from memberships, and the typical membership rate is close to the average amount paid.

2. To avoid making it look like the cons are spending more than they really are, I exclude money spent to buy t-shirts which are then sold, recouping the costs. For Wiscon, I used the same logic for the dessert function.
3. As Minicon aficionados know, our storage locker is treated as a MnStf expense, and does in fact hold a small amount of non-Minicon stuff. However, for this comparison, I've put it under “storage/moving”. (If the other cons have strange technicalities, I hope I have gotten them right...)

The cost per member for the hotel does tend to go down as the size of the con goes up, as expected. The cost per member for GoH generally drops as the con gets larger, but note that Convergence's \$4.80 represents about *ten times* the total expense of Minicon or Wiscon's GoH budget. For comparison, Convergence had 9 GoH in the year used for this pie chart, Wiscon had 2, Minicon had 2, and Diversicon had 1. (Convergence's GoH costs for 2014 will probably be lower since the year shown here was heavy on international GoH. However, with 10 GoH,

*convergenceevents.org/financial-reports-and-forms/budgets-and-reports

they will still be spending much more than the other cons.) The fraction of all expenses represented by things other than hotel, logistics/storage/moving, food/drink and GoH is quite small for Diversicon and much larger for Wiscon and Convergence than for Minicon.

Minicon uses some of its income to run Minn-stf for the year, and likewise, Convergence donates a large portion of its income to fund GPS and other groups. Another large expense of Convergence's is savings, with the goal of having enough money on hand to survive a con that makes no money at all. Since Convergence keeps getting bigger, they have to keep adding to their savings. It's worth noting that Minnstf also has a policy of keeping enough money that it can survive a Minicon that makes no money, but we have already have this much in the bank, and Minicon isn't growing fast enough to require putting more away at this time.

While an exercise fraught with ambiguity, it is illuminating to try to construct what the membership rate at each con would be if they did about what Minicon does:

Diversicon would have to double its GoH pie wedge and its food/drink wedge, plus add the wedges for nice badges, some size wedge for "misc" and keep \$4/member for use by a parent organization. This would put its membership rates at about \$50, a substantial increase.

Wiscon would have to drop some of its nice publications, its affordability, events, childcare and access wedges and some of "misc", but add supporting a parent organization. Its membership rates would end up at about \$30. Keeping in mind that Wiscon is 4 days, this is right about on my idealized cost curve from RUNE #88.

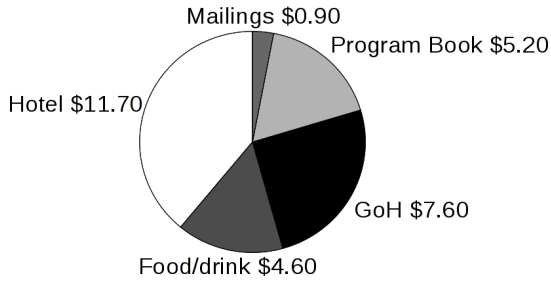
Convergence would drop most of its GoH wedge, plus the wedges for events, volunteer perks, and some of "misc". I'm

not sure how to treat the savings wedge in this exercise, so I'll take away half. The resulting rate is about \$35. This is about the same as I got for Wiscon. The lack of a continued trend towards cheapness (in this exercise) probably means that once a con goes over a few thousand people, the "fixed" costs start going up substantially and you probably cannot run a 4-day con with modern Minicon-level features for less than around \$30 per member no matter its size.

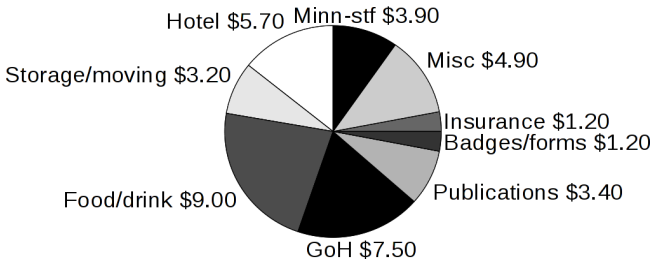
Overall, the data seems to support my guess that all cons cost about the same per member because larger ones choose to spend money on more things. I still don't know which way the causality goes. Are cons spending whatever they get for \$50/member, or are they making a list of what they want to do, budgeting, and arriving at \$50/member? I'm sure its some of each, but I would guess it skews towards the former at many cons (clearly the sample presented here is biased towards cons that keep good budgets!).

I urge my fellow con runners to be introspective about these issues before they set next year's rates. Does it actually make sense to budget \$500 for that zombie party (perhaps \$1/member and attended by under 10% of your membership)? Or could you be more frugal, drop your rates by \$5, and still keep everything that most of your members come for? But of course, I don't mean to imply that the goal should be to drive down pre-reg rates at any cost. For one thing, while Wiscon could make itself \$6 cheaper by cutting its affordability programs, that clearly doesn't make any sense, since it would go against one of the convention's core goals. In fact, I would love to see more cons *raise* their rates a little to cover programs that allow less well-off people to attend. In Minicon-land, we are making baby steps towards this. I hope to report some success by this time next year.

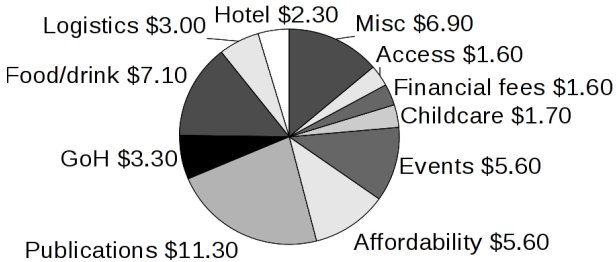
Diversicon



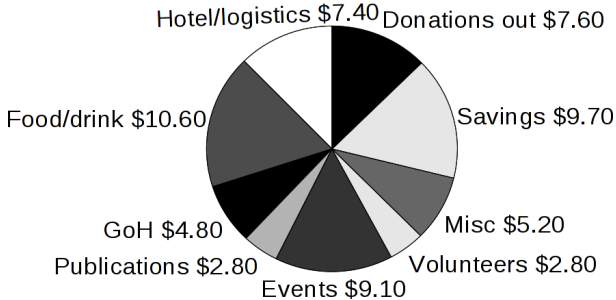
Minicon



Wiscon



Convergence



METHOD Con 2

October 10-12, 2014

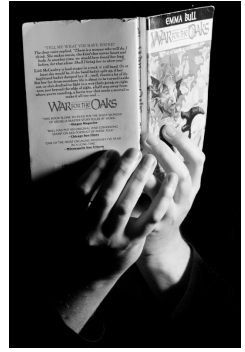
~~MNStf's Excuse To Have October Diversions~~

Minn-stf's Excuse To Hear Oaks Dispute...??

Theme: MNStf (Re)Visits "War for the Oaks"

Featured Artist: Tim Cooper

Featured Authors: Emma Bull & Will Shetterly



© Tim Cooper

Where is it?

The Ramada at the Mall of America, 2300 E American Blvd, Bloomington, MN. Rates are \$109/night for a standard room if booked by Sept 20. Call 952-854-3411 or 800-272-6232 and mention METHOD Con, or see mnstf.org/methodcon2 to book online.

What should I expect at METHOD Con 2?

METHOD Con 2 is based on previous Minn-stf fallcons. You can expect pretty much what has happened at previous fallcons. This year's inspiration is drawn from Tim Cooper's new book, "The Reader: War for the Oaks" with its lovely photos of fans reading "War for the Oaks" at settings from the book! Nifty, huh?

Laura Krentz, our inestimable program head, has let me glimpse some of the War for the Oaks themed plans that are swirling about in her fantastic imagination: a small tour, a group dramatic reading from the screenplay, and a showing of the movie trailer.

You should also expect the usual food, gaming, music, conversation, relaxing, and having fun. For more information, see mnstf.org/methodcon2.

How much is it?

Pre-registration is \$40 per person through 9/20/2014. Afterwards, pre-reg or at the door, it's \$45. Day memberships are \$25 and can only be purchased at-the-door. They cover the day you purchase them until 7 AM the following day. Weekend memberships for Teens (11–16) are \$20. Kids 10 and under, and under parental control, are FREE.

How do I join?

Send this along with a check made to "METHOD Con" to Patricia Zetelumen in person or at 3229 Elliot Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55407. Mailed memberships should be postmarked by the Sept 20 deadline and must be received by 9/30/14.

Name: _____

E-mail address: _____

Street address: _____

Phone number: _____

MINICON 50

April 2-5, 2015 (four days)

Author GoH: Jane Yolen, Larry Niven, Brandon Sanderson

Musician Guest of Honor: Adam Stemple

Artist Guest of Honor: Michael Whelan

Publisher Guest of Honor: Tom Doherty

Mini•con (mĭn'ē-kŏn') *n.* A general-purpose SF con of about 500 fans with a focus on pretty good diverse programming and above average food+drink. Also features readings, signings, costuming, films, gaming, art, dealers, kids' programming, a teen lounge and teen programming, a science room, music, room parties, the Medallion Hunt, and other special events. [MINI(ATURE)/MINN(EAPOLIS) + CON(VENTION).]

We're at the DoubleTree, 7800 Normandale, Bloomington MN. Reservations: See mnstf.org/minicon50/ or call 800-222-8733. As of this writing, the block is not yet open. Check future publications or the web for details.

Become a member of Minicon 50! Postmarked by March 5, 2015:

- Adult \$40 Student (13-20) \$20 Supporting \$15 (convert to
- Kid (6-12) \$10 Child (0-5) free attending for +\$40)

Can you help us with a \$10 additional donation?

Make checks to: Minicon 50, Lake Street Station, PO Box 8297, Minneapolis, MN 55408-0297 or register at mnstf.org/minicon50

At the door: \$70 adult membership; \$25 student, \$15 kid, \$0 child.

Do not list me as a member on the web or in print publications

Please contact me, because I want to:

- Volunteer Be on panels/share ideas Throw a party Hear about kids activities



First Name Middle Last

Badge Name (if left blank, we will use your full name)

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City State/Province Postal Code

Country (if not USA) Phone Number(s)

Email Address(es)

Birthdate*: **Year** month day Sex* When was your 1st Minicon?*

* Optional: For demographics; can also help plan kids programming.

Please take our registration survey: mnstf.org/minicon50/regsurvey.php



Rune
c/o Matthew Strait
1228 E 54th St #1E
Chicago IL 60615

