

looking askance at Europe



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ROTTERDAM

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Edited & published by John Purcell, 3744 Marielene Circle, College Station, TX 77845-3926 USA

Proof reading on this issue courtesy of our cats Inga, Eyegore, and Froderick. If there are typos anywhere in this issue, these are the responsible parties. Good help is so hard to find these days.

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What you have here in your hands (or on screen) is another Mythical Publication. Copies of this fine, back on a quarterly schedule fanzine can be had for The Usual, which means expressed interest, submission and eventual inclusion of articles and artwork, letters of comment, and cold hard cash in the amount of \$3.00 USD if you want a printed copy mailed to you. Bribes are also accepted. Of course, if you send in locs, articles, and artwork, you just earned a lifetime free subscription. Consider yourself lucky, indeed.

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Plunk your magic twanger, Froggie!

Nostalgia is a wonderful thing. You tend to remember stuff that gives you warm fuzzy feelings inside your tummy as you remember this and that from your college years, grade school, high school marching band in the rain (okay, not so fuzzy warm: just glad you graduated and got the hell out of there), playing little league baseball on warm summer days, ice skating in the dead of winter, looking up at a cold, cloudless, night-time winter sky, watching a meteor streak across the heavens, or remembering the craziest things at the oddest times.



Memories – come to think of it – are just as bad, perhaps crazier. Just the other day I wandered out into the living room where Valerie was deeply involved with lesson preparation for her 10th grade English classes at Bryan High School (yes, she started a full-time job there this past August), and I blurted out, for no earthly reason whatsoever, “Plunk your magic twanger, Froggie!” and kept walking towards the kitchen in search of ice cream.

Valerie stared at me. “What?” she deadpanned.

“I said,” I said, “plunk your magic twanger, Froggie! That’s what Andy Devine used to say whenever it was time for Froggie to appear and banter with Andy.” I don’t think my explanation resonated with her, judging by the vacant look on Valerie’s face.

“And this concerns me how?”

“Well... I guess it doesn’t,” I conceded, then added, “It’s from a kid’s show way back when. You know: in the 1950’s.”

“Oh, yeah. Before I was born. You were probably married to your first wife then.”

“Har-dee-har-har,” I said in my best Jackie Gleason impersonation. “You’re a laugh riot, that’s what you are.” Wagging my finger like Ralph Kramden did a prior lifetime ago, I continued, “One of these days: Bang! Zoom!”

Valerie sadly wagged her head. “Oh, shut up!”

I never knew she had ever watched *The Honeymooners*. Alice Kramden would have been proud of that line’s perfect delivery.

TAFFish Thoughts

We can't help keep talking about our trip last year to Europe. Being inveterate (as opposed to invertebrate, which physically describes us, but that's not important right now) news watchers on our satellite dish television service, we catch ourselves pointing at the screen and saying, "We were there" when we recognize a building or scenery on the program. It really is quite amazing to think that Valerie and I traipsed around a good chunk of Europe, stressful situations and all, and survived to tell the tale. It really was an incredible experience, and I recommend any and all science fiction fans to stand for a fan fund in any direction. Next year's Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund destination is Dublin, Ireland, for the 77th World Science Fiction Convention. In 2020 the Worldcon will be in New Zealand, so that's the Down Under Fan Fund Destination. Both years are Get Up and over Fan Fund objectives. These are fantastic places to go and meet friends from around the world, but don't forget to plan in a few extra weeks of travel time to see the sights and enjoy yourselves. It is definitely worth the effort.

Speaking of TAFF, the official nomination period began on October 1st, so if anybody reading this is planning on standing for this particular race to Dublin, get your name in by November 22, 2018 to either me or Johan Anglemark, the new European TAFF Administrator, along with the names of your five nominators (three from North America, two from Europe). Each nominator must likewise contact either one of us stating that they are behind your candidacy, and the candidate himself or herself must submit a 101-word platform statement and send that to either Johan or I, along with a \$20 USD or £20 Sterling bond payment as a sign of your intent to make the trip should you win. Full information regarding the procedure is at <https://taff.org.uk/>, so don't be shy: stand for TAFF in 2019. Hie thee to Dublin Towne to hobnob and gather with thine fine fannish friends over a pint of bitters, and kiss the Blarney Stone.

But avoid kissing the porcelain throne. I doth not recommend that!

Holy Sasquatch, Batman!

Well here I am, at the start of the 45th issue of this fanzine, and realizing that I am starting to stare down the barrel of a 50th issue arriving at the end of calendar year 2019. Whenever that fact pops into my head I begin to wonder if I should stop pubbing *Askance* at that juncture or keep it going. Whatever I decide, this has definitely been a fun ride, and so for now I am going to concentrate on getting the next five issues completed – I really want to get the 46th issue out as close to the next New Year's opening salvo as possible – so that I don't have to worry about what to do for when the Big 5-0 hits.

In light of the theme of the 46th iteration of *Askance* – Steampunk in its various guises, meaning books, movies, music, costuming, and artwork – one thought that has crossed my mind is to morph *Askance* into a dominantly Steampunk fanzine, or just end it at 50 and start up a new zine devoted to the Steampunk genre. This is a very tempting thought. I most certainly enjoy fanzines – this is probably my favorite aspect of the science fiction community – so cogitating on a specific sub-genre zine is attractive.

But like I said, I really don't plan on doing this immediately, yet the idea has begun nibbling in the deepest recesses of my brain.

I am surprised the idea hasn't died from malnutrition.

Who's in this issue

Some new faces are involved this time around, and this is a wonderful thing. Allow me to introduce this issue's cast of characters.

Teddy Harvia

Seriously: I really should not have to introduce this multi-Hugo winning fan artist and all around nice guy. Sometimes I consider Teddy – and his alter ego David Thayer – a Texas landmark, much like the Sul Ross statue on the Texas A&M University campus, but fortunately Teddy is not a target for pigeons and other birds that strafe the Sul Ross statue. Teddy has graciously provided yet another installment of “Chat: the 4th Fannish Ghod” for this fanzine.

Sam Long

Getting a collection of song and poem parodies from Sam was a special treat. Over the course of the next few issues I will be publishing some of these in future issues. A bit of literary background will probably aid in your enjoyment of these.

Ian Millsted

While the train Valerie and I were on was passing Bristol, England, we waved in the general direction of that city because that is where Ian lives. He was kind enough to share some thoughts about Cambridge University for *Askance* after I asked, and I didn't have to break out the new set of thumbscrews I ordered from Amazon.

Karl-Johan Norén

This was an unexpected yet delightful contribution that Karl-Johan posted on Facebook this past August in honour of 2018 TAFF Delegate Johan Anglemark visiting Texas as part of this year's sojourn out to the San Jose Worldcon. If you go to the Internet it is easy enough to find an audio rendition of the song upon which this filk song “Anglemark at TAFF” is based. The subject matter of this song actually sang the original tune for me so I could match up the words to the melody.

Kevin Still

This is one of my colleagues at Blinn College here in Bryan, Texas. Kevin is a big fan of horror literature and movies, with additional interests in the local music scene, particularly the hard-rock, grunge indie bands that play in the area. Along with Kelly Minnit, Kevin also puts out the monthly fanzine *Represent979* which not only promotes the local artistic scene, but also offers opinion pieces, movie, book, and beer reviews. This book review first appeared in a recent edition of Kevin's zine.



ARMADILLOCON 40: BOOKS, BEERS, AND SQUIRREL NUTS

BY JOHN PURCELL



Granted, ArmadilloCon 40 was held well over three months ago – the weekend of August 3 – 5, 2018 in Austin , Texas – and with the chilly breath of mid-November breathing down the back of my neck, it is definitely time to put pixelated words on virtual paper and get this convention report done once and for all.

Aa part of the deal of our hosting 2018 Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund winner Johan Anglemark on his whirlwind trek across North America during the summer of this year, I arranged for all of us to attend ArmadilloCon 40 over in Austin, Texas. Frankly, I am surprised that I have never attended this convention before since Austin is barely a two-hour drive west of College Station, making it practically a short Texas day trip. (Valerie and I live slightly off-center in a metropolitan triangle formed by the cities of Houston, San Antonio, Austin, and Dallas/Forth Worth. Draw a straight line down from DFW to



Houston and the city of Waco is included as well.) Besides procuring his membership, Johan was set up in the convention hotel, the Omni Southpark (no Kyle, Kenny, or other foul-mouthed animated children were there; just foul-mouthed, non-animated adults) while my room (Valerie could not attend because she was preparing for her newly acquired teaching position) was a short block away at the Quality Suites. In fact, only one large office building with its adjacent parking garage and lot stood in the way, so getting from place to place was only a few minutes' walk. No

problem.

Overall, ArmadilloCon 40 was a very pleasant surprise for me, and Johan seemed to enjoy himself immensely. He marveled at the dead armadillo on the side of the road (see photo above right), which I assured him was that animal's natural state in Texas, and enjoyed meeting a lot of old fannish friends and making a whole bunch more. I was astonished to see Carolina Gomez Lagerlof at ArmadilloCon: she is a prominent Swedish fan, the recipient of the Big Heart Award at Worldcon 75 the previous year in Helsinki. That was a heck of a beginning to what would turn out to be a good weekend for meeting fans and writers. As it turned out, there were many people at this convention that I last saw in Helsinki. Who knew? This just shows to Goya how intertwined the sf community is, geography be damned, and all that.

The focus of ArmadilloCon has always been literary. Over the years it has earned a reputation as being a solid traditionally fan-run science fiction convention, and now that I have had a few months to digest the experience, I can see why. The overall attendance was in the 350-375 range, which is a nice moderate sized convention in my book. That gave Johan and I a very good chance at meeting a lot of people and wandering around the dealer's room, which had a lot of books. Yes, Virginia: real, paper-product, hold-it-in-your-hand books! Nearly every single dealer had them for sale. Even Brad and Cindy Foster (here on the right) had his art books on display.



Surprisingly enough, I did not buy a lot of books, although the temptation was extraordinarily strong.

I only purchased two that served the purpose of filling holes in my collection, so that made me happy. Joe Lansdale – one of my favorite authors these days – signed and donated a first edition copy of his book *A Fine Dark Line* for TAFF auctioning. **[Unabashed Sales Plug:** If anybody reading this issue is interested in making a bid on that book, the minimum bid is \$20 (cover price): email me if you are.] William Ledbetter was likewise in attendance, and he thanked me for being one of his beta readers for his Nebula Award winning novelette “The Long Fall Up.” He chuckled at my suggestion of scratching my name into the award base before saying, “That is highly doubtful.” Bill’s a good guy.



Other people I was surprised to see in Austin were Randall Shepard, Ben Yalow, and Robert Sawyer, and very surprised that Pat Virzi was not in attendance. Bummer. I was really hoping she would be there so that we could talk about the possibility of bringing Corflu back to Texas in a few years.

As for programming, I was able to get to quite a few items, notably the memorial panel on prominent Texas fan Bill Crider, legendary author and rapscallion Harlan

Ellison, and others. The readings by Lansdale and Ledbetter were very enjoyable, however the convention suite was not the center of attention after hours as I anticipated. The lobby bar in the Omni Hotel certainly was, featuring a wide assortment of local beers. Johan and I ran a very successful TAFF Auction on Saturday afternoon, and my noon Sunday “Busking for TAFF” concert (very loose definition there) garnered even more dollars and donated items, which included three Steampunk watch bands. [Any takers?] The overall amount raised for the TAFF coffers was \$247,



which was way more than I expected. The generosity of fans – and the ArmadilloCon 40 committee, which likewise donated to the cause – is astonishing, and we thank everyone for making our effort so successful.



Randall Shepard and Ben Yalow chatting away at the Dublin in 2019 table in the dealer's room.

A few words about “Busking for TAFF” are needed. My original plan was to give a concert of a dozen original and cover songs that I have developed over the past few years of performing at open mic nights at the Village Inn in Bryan, Texas. It was scheduled for Sunday at noon in an auditorium-style large conference room, but nobody showed up except Johan and I. So we went outside the room and set up in the hallway, seeding the TAFF pot with a bit of loose change and a dollar bill. A couple fans walking by plunked in some money, but since we were a bit off the beaten track, I had the bright idea of just walking around the venue while playing my guitar, Johan beside me, carrying the coffee can while clapping along. He’s quite talented, you see. Up and down the main hallway outside the meeting rooms we went, gathering money along

the way. Then we entered the dealer’s room and enjoyed much success. I kept playing old rock and roll songs, some blues, some jazz, and a bit of country-rock while walking around. This was so much fun and successful that I decided then and there to do this “Busking for TAFF” thing at other conventions I attend between now and the Dublin Worldcon. Hey, if it works...

Later that Sunday afternoon, a group of 21 people went out to the County Line BBQ restaurant, roughly a 15 minute drive from the Omni Hotel, for an all-you-can-eat meal of – you guessed it – barbecued beef, pork, sausage, and chicken, with all the sides you care to jam into your belly. It was a lot of food, and nobody left hungry. For most of the meal I was involved in a conversation group with Carolina Gomez Lagerlof, Ben Yalow, Robert Sawyer, and David Pomerico, which was mostly an enlightening discussion of the publishing industry, with a few side topics tossed in for additional flavor.

The next day Johan and I returned to College Station, briefly stopping at a family run gift shop and pecan store just east of Austin. You can’t miss it. Just look for the 20-foot tall wooden squirrel sculpture on the north side of Texas Highway 70.

Yep. ArmadilloCon 40 was a success. Johan and I both enjoyed the company, the food, and the local IPA beers. Sounds like a return trip next year is required.



Joe Lansdale and I. How can such a nice guy write such whacked out, gory fiction?

Anglemark at TAFF (to the tune of "Rosa på Bal")

By Karl-Johan Norén

Think doing fanac with John Purcell,
Little me, little me, with John Purcell,
Think being together with such a
popular trufan!
See all the wonderful fanzines you've made,
Tell me how it's being TAFF delegate?
Letters, Askance, and fanac to prep
Can I now follow your steps?

Sure you will do Johan Anglemark
Here is a bucket for you!
Showing the road on Jophan's arc
Soon all the fanac you'll do.
You are a trufan from Sweden's shores,
O tallish Swede now taking your tours
Your tables of books of uncertain worth
Can bring us around the earth!

Think to inspire mister John Purcell,
Little me, inspire mister John Purcell,
Maybe you'll teach me inspiring fen
With a nice stroke from your pen?
A fannish essay or a new song to sing
Or just perhaps a new bucket to bring?
When is it finished, mister Purcell tell
The journey you know so well?

Your journey Johan Anglemark
Soon reaches its level up,
At San Jose you'll jump the shark
And drink from the fannish cup!
When you return as my fannish brother,
Pay it forward and find me another!
Sell your books at the best possible rate,
Now you're the TAFF delegate!



Johan Anglemark and friend.

**Overheard in the Hallways of Academia Dept. #1:
"A person can only sit on a gallon of milk for so long."**

Orbiting Cambridge



I won't go into a list of science fiction connections relating to Cambridge I wrote in a previous letter column. John invited at least a mention of Douglas Adams. Somewhere between the two lies the following. I don't have an exhaustive list of sf/f folk from Cambridge and it would probably be out of date as soon as this is printed anyway.

I was in Cambridge earlier this summer for a family wedding at a hotel on the bank of the river that runs through it. Over the years, despite not being a Cambridge man, I do seem to have skirted the atmosphere a fair few times. One of my sisters lived there in the 1990s when her husband was studying for the Anglican ministry at Ridley College (and completing his PhD). He was attached to one of the churches, which was visited on several occasions by Stephen Hawking who, despite being an atheist, was interested in some of the concepts being talked about, or so I was told. Later my other sister lived near Cambridge and taught in the town. Her children all had part of their education there as well (for their years 16 to 18). One nephew worked for a legal company there for a while (hence the recent wedding). For myself, I did a five-week stint as a Teacher Fellow at Corpus Christi College, which I mentioned in that previous LoC.

Corpus Christi is probably a good place to start as the Elizabethan playwright Christopher Marlowe studied there. Among his friends was Robert Greene (at St John's College). Both Marlowe and Greene were happy to include the fantastical in their works and some name Greene as one of the first professional writers in England. Greene also obtained qualifications at Oxford University.

The famous rivalry between the two ancient universities of England might apply to the realm of sf as well. If so, it is reasonable to suggest that Oxford University has the greater tradition of science fiction and fantasy writers, from Tolkien and the Inklings in the 30s to the clutch of writers who studied there in the 70s (Dave Langford, Mike Scott Rohan, etc). However, Cambridge has not been without its champions.

John was quite right to mention Douglas Adams, who was very definitely a Cambridge man. Adams was at St John's College from 1971 to 1974 during which time he was himself more in the tradition of performers, especially comedy performers, for which Cambridge has a strong lineage. The university certainly seems to have left a strong impression on Adams who used the place as a setting for two of his works, the *Doctor Who* story 'Shada' and the novel *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency*. 'Shada' was, famously, never finished due to industrial action. It would have been broadcast in 1980 if it had been completed. What was filmed were the location scenes comprising most of the parts of the story set in Cambridge. As filmed, and presumably as scripted, they are almost a love letter to the place of Adam's studies. There are lots of shots of Tom Baker and Lalla Ward punting along the river, of Baker cycling through the streets past notable landmarks and of undergraduates singing on street corners. One of the main guest characters is an eccentric professor who is also an alien Time Lord and possibly based on Adams view of his lecturers from undergraduate days. Given that for many years it seemed unlikely that the unfinished parts of 'Shada' would ever be generally seen Adams must have felt safe, and justified, in re-using much of the plot for his *Dirk Gently* novel.

Adams wasn't the only *Doctor Who* writer to have studied at Cambridge. Terrance Dicks was at Downing College in the 1950s. Dicks was a script editor on *Doctor Who* from 1969 to 1974 and also wrote a number of individual stories up to 1983. However, for a couple of generations of British children he is best known for writing about sixty *Doctor Who* novelisations.

Not everyone seems to have flourished at the university. J.G. Ballard dropped out in 1951 after completing just two years, but having just sold his first short story. For others, Cambridge University could be a place where they might live nearly a whole professional life. The noted ghost story writer, M.R. James, went from being an undergraduate to academic staff member to Provost, all at King's College before finally moving on in 1918. C.S. Lewis, remembered for having a similar career at Oxford, actually lectured at Cambridge from 1954 to 1963. Someone who served a shorter period as a lecturer was Michael Crichton who worked there for some months in 1965, teaching anthropology. He had probably left before a young Salman Rushdie arrived as an undergraduate in the same year (Rushdie's first novel counts as sf by most standards).

Of current sf/f writers mention should be given to Richard Morgan who studied history at Queen's College in the mid-1980s and Susannah Clarke who worked for a publishing company based in Cambridge for a number of years.

Friends of mine are in contact with sf fandom in Cambridge but I have no direct knowledge of any groups there myself. During those few weeks at Corpus Christi I did consider trying to make contact but never found the time.

As I write this a number of students at the school where I teach have just got their exam results confirming places for some of them to go to Cambridge. I don't know if any will go on to write science fiction but I wish them all well anyway.

- Ian Millsted





COLD IN JULY

by Joe R. Lansdale

Reviewed by Kevin Still

One of the most unnerving qualities about Texas writer Joe R. Lansdale is how, in most photos, he's smiling as wide as a tinsel-toothed child counting Halloween candy. That wholesome, unabashed grin feels odd when one considers that Lansdale has made a career writing the kinds of stories - breathing life into the kinds of characters - readers need Pentecostal church and scalding showers to exorcise. How can such a twisted mind wear such a gleeful visage?

Then again, perhaps Lansdale appears so giddy because, after penning enough titles to make Stephen King look slothful, he's still winning over readers . . . and winning back some of those (ahem, right here) who've sworn him off but just can't seem to stay

away. He's too good to stay away. As a friend and fellow fan recently said, "If you're picking up a Lansdale you're bound to have fun." True, and it's the question of what else Lansdale binds to the mind that makes that Cheshire grin of his so peculiar.

With the talent and confidence to write (masterfully) across more genres than most chain booksellers have labels, Lansdale, a native Texan now residing in Nacogoches, presents an image of the Lone Star State any local Chamber of Commerce would quickly disavow. In Lansdale's Texas, monsters become heroes, cowboys can also be samurais, Drive-In theaters consume their patrons, VHS snuff films are as common as dollar matinees, dead nuns still get horny, and John F. Kennedy just might join Elvis Presley in a trailer park to pitch war against an Egyptian mummy. Sure, why not? It's the kind of Texas where the heat molds the air into something so thick even the birds lose their inspiration:

"It was a hot Sunday with a hot wind blowing through the pines like a diseased cough, carrying a hint of dead fish from Lake LaBorde. The birds were making small talk in the trees like it was more of an obligation than a desire; they sounded like they needed air-conditioning" (From *Cold In July*).

But Lansdale's Texas is also the kind of place where serendipity is bound to happen. It's a tepid place full of raw and ill-tempered people hellbent on either expiring quickly or finding a reason to grasp endurance. All that deep need for relief from the elements, from one another, often leaves characters in a Lansdale story ready for adventure, which can just as often lead to redemption as to being chained to the bumper of a El Camino that's being tossed off a cliff.

Cold In July (1989) is a Lansdale novel that straddles the adventure fence. While the story pops like a frightened pistol on page one, it works towards a redemption that is both satisfying and authentic. Of course, redemption is never possible without sacrifice, and a redemption that is both satisfying and authentic requires a sacrifice bordering the divine. This is precisely how Lansdale manages to win back readers who've sworn him off after one too many snuff film scenes.

Then again, the climax in *Cold In July* hinges on a snuff film, as well. More snuff and the author's still has the audacity to grin like Arthur Miller snagging Marilyn Monroe in the bio pic.

The story here is simple: Richard Dane kills an intruder who cops congratulate him for nabbing. Dane took down a terrifically terrible bad guy. High fives all around and don't worry none about even seeing a court date, Mr. Dane. It all seems a little too tidy. Until the father of the terrifically terrible bad guy steps out of a Huntsville prison and learns that his son, who he hasn't seen in 20 years, has just been killed by Richard Dane. Well, in that case, there's only one thing to do when a man kills your son, and that's kill the man - and hopefully his son to boot. If any of this sounds especially unredemptive, just remember that we're still in the first third of the novel and we're also talking about an East Texas town where the run-of-the-mill religion looks something like that displayed at the intruder's funeral:

"When they had the coffin in the hole they waved the preacher over, and the preacher stood by the grave and cracked his Bible and started reading. When he finished, he said a few words, and damn few at that, and wrapped it up with an 'amen'. The whole thing had all the conviction of a hooker's lovemaking. The preacher checked his watch and made for the Buick, cranked it, and he was out of there. Probably had a late free lunch somewhere" (from *Cold In July*).

But Lansdale does not seem interested in the act-right-fire-insurance of old timey religion, which is evident in his description of the preacher above. Instead, he's after something much more divine. In *Cold In July*, Lansdale is about restoring the fathers to the sons, even if it means one father helping another father sacrifice his son for the better of the world. And, in this case, it is.

That's the beauty of *Cold In July*: on the surface of these grand themes of redemption, Lansdale presents a page-burning sweaty Texas crime noir with enough nastiness and snuff to make the novel difficult to recommend around the office water-cooler. Richard Dane has killed the son of Ben Russell, until they discover that maybe he didn't. So where is Russell's son? And why are the police glad to misidentify the man Dane killed in own living room? To help answer these questions and find his son, Russell hires PI Jim Bob Luke, a big-mouth, big-hat, big-car, big-appetite Texan that at first feels a bit cartoony, until one realizes all that swagger-swinging is a front Luke uses to hide his Boba Fett bounty-hunting skills. In a scene between Richard Dane and Jim Bob Luke, Luke reveals his reasons for joining the current mission, that perhaps it's not about the money after all:

"You're a lucky man, Dane. Got a family. Someone to care about you. I got what I do and the Red Bitch - and she's got a dent in it."

"You got pigs."

"Yeah, but every now and then I eat them, so it's hard to form any kind of relationship. I don't think they trust me." (from *Cold In July*)

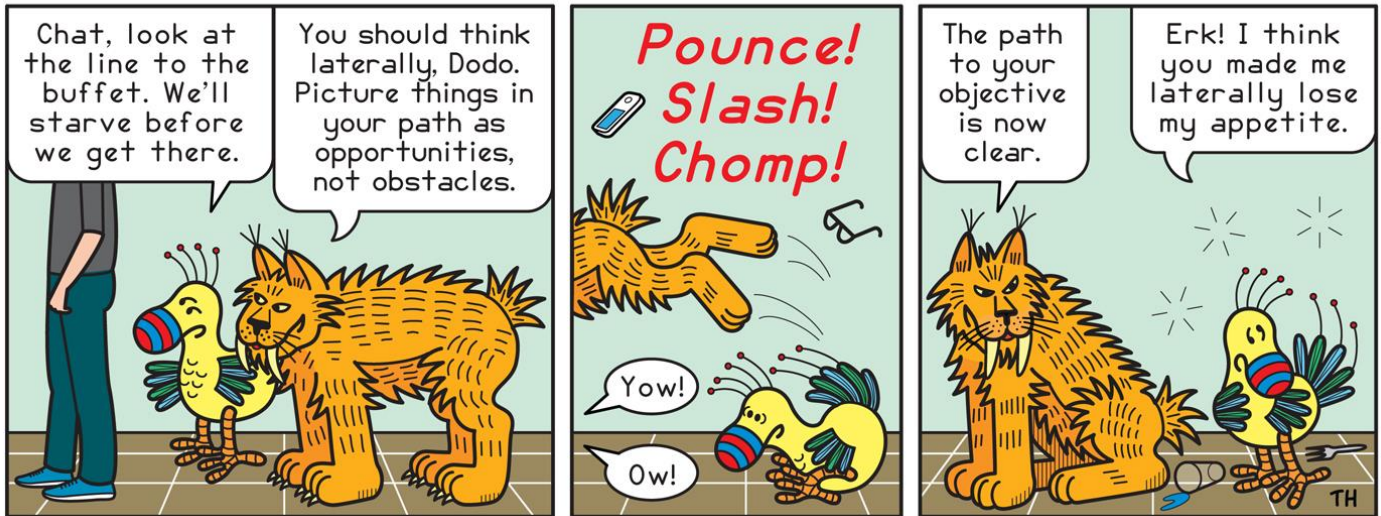
These notions of trust and of nobility, of exalting the family above all else, of reckoning with what one has brought into the world - perhaps with what one is also called to take out of it - makes *Cold In July*

the rare crime novel that'll stick to your ribs after the story's played out. Back in 2014, filmmaker Jim Mickle made a film version of *Cold In July* starring Michael C. Hall, Sam Shepard, and Don Johnson, but that hardly seems necessary. Lansdale's novel was already perfect. The pages burned and the characters did too and the reader couldn't help but get caught in all that smoke rising up and around them. It was a tune that simply didn't need to be covered or made more cinematically palatable.

Then again, that's probably why Joe R. Lansdale grins as wide as the grill on Jim Bob Luke's Red Bitch Cadillac. The novel he birthed in 1989 is given a new day, a fresh chance to be read and discussed and debated against Mickle's film. And, considering that this resurgence of Lansdale's buried gem may invite some readers (ahem, right here) to rediscover their old trusty friend, that old tale-spinning snuff-maker that's bound to be fun, that in itself is its own form of redemption. For Lansdale and for the reader.

- Kevin Still

CHAT, the 4th Fannish Ghod by Teddy Harvia



Sadly, it appears that one of the long-running features of this fanzine may have come to an end. Bill Fischer, my long-time friend in Minneapolis, is recovering from a second heart attack, and may not draw any more episodes of "Figby," the comic strip series that Bill and I began while working on our undergraduate degrees at the University of Minnesota back in 1975. He assures me that he is feeling pretty good for being 70 years old now, but just wants to take it easy for a while. I told him to stop watching Minnesota Viking games and stay away from political news stories on television and the Internet. He doesn't need that kind of idiotic stress, especially the Vikings.

We can hope that Bill continues his recuperation and can resume producing "Figby" strips in 2019. With the 50th issue on the distant horizon, I personally would love to have "Figby" return for that. In the meantime, I have plans to collect all of the "Figby" strips available and publish them as a book. I have told Bill of this, and he approves. Ponder if you will such a tome...

fanzines are your friends

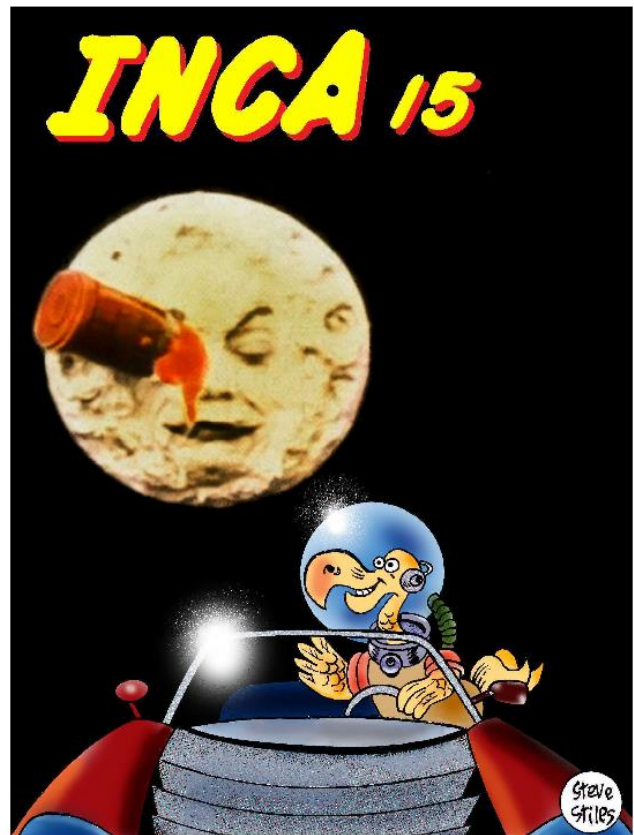
Remember that. Especially if you yourself produce one of these beasts.

Since I have been producing, writing for, and responding to fanzines for over forty years now, I believe that I have formulated some ideas about what constitutes a decent fanzine – in general, that is – and what sorts of things I enjoy about fanzines.

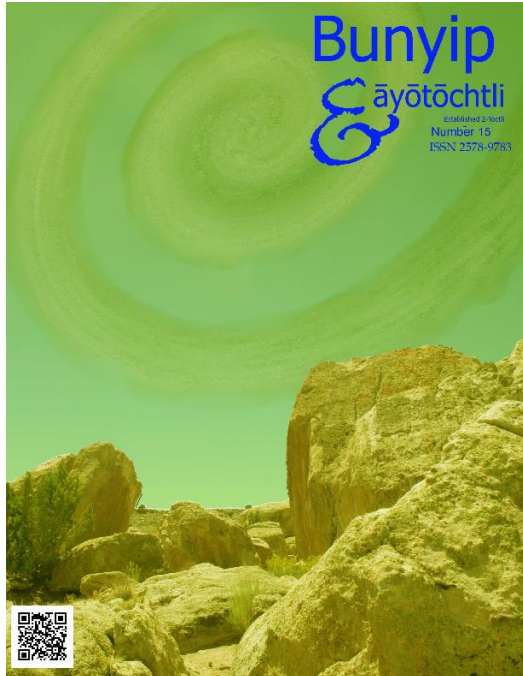
Perhaps the biggest aspect of science fiction fanzines that affects me the most is the simplest and most obvious item: people produce these things. That is pretty easy to understand. Even I can handle that. As a result, there is a wealth of variety of fanzines because everybody has different ideas, perspectives, senses of humor, interests, and so on, and all of these topics can be found in fanzines. The old fannish dictum of “All Knowledge is Contained in Fanzines” is undoubtedly true: reading a fanzine like, say, *Banana Wings*, teaches me about esoteric topics like train schedules in the British Isles, running conventions, the nuances of the art of brewing beer, running in a marathon, campaigning for a Parliamentary candidate, art museums, European taxation laws, and do sheep fart, just to name a handful of topics I recall from the past few years’ worth of issues. (In truth, I am not sure about that sheep farting article, but I know I read it in somebody’s fanzine.) The bottom line here is that any topic is worth writing about in a science fiction fanzine so long as a fan is writing it and the resultant article is (a) informative, (b) entertaining, (c) thought-provoking, and (d) generates letters of comment. Oh, heck: I might as well add (e) all of the above because they are all totally true.

Illustrating the above statement is easily done by looking at fanzines. Therefore, here are some fanzines of relatively recent vintage that I feel motivated enough to comment upon.

On the top right corner of this page is the latest issue of Rob Jackson’s genzine – the portmanteau for a general interest fanzine – *Inca*, which I always find to be entertaining and enlightening, and sometimes disoriented. That last adjective is because Rob is a member of a listserv group called In The Bar, and from time to time he culls articles from discussions in that listserv and I have nary a clue about what



they are nattering on. (For what it's worth, I am a member of In The Bar, too.) As with many fanzines these days, *Inca* is available for downloading from the wonderful website efanazines.com, which is a massive repository of old and new fanzines. In the fifteenth issue are articles from Taral Wayne (his interest in model cars that to a career as a car cartoonist) and Jim Barker (a medical story about his



recent liver ailments and surgery), plus a trio of trip/convention reports by the editor, Rob Jackson. A lengthy lettercolumn likewise inhabits *Inca*, and is always fun to read. If you have been active in fandom for a few decades and traveled to England for a few conventions as well, *Inca* is good reading.

The fanzine to the left here comes from Robert Hole, Jr., and is a good example of fannish eclecticism. The links to *Bunyip* are provided on efanazines.com, and its contents run the gamut from book and movie reviews, to the occasional story reprint (issue #15 here contains a Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., tale, "2 B R O 2 B"), word search games, one letter of comment, a coloring page, a science article by Sharon Fernandez on Membrane Theory, and artwork by Jose Sanchez and Bob Hole himself. All in all, this zine is interesting, yet different. And that is okay.

A few months ago Joe and Lisa Major published the 100th issue of their general interest fanzine, *Alexiad*, which is a milestone worth celebrating. *Alexiad* is definitely a fanzine for a very genre-interested science fiction fan. Each issue is packed with book reviews, obituaries of significant writers and others, convention reports and sf awards, a solid lettercolumn, plus small filler illustrations from Alexis Gilliland and Marc Schirmeister break up the print. Congratulations are in order for Joe and Lisa for maintaining this general interest fanzine for so long. Near as I can figure it, *Alexiad* is now in its 18th year of continuous publication. That's damned impressive. Not many genzines make it that long.

Pablo Lennis, from John Thiel, has enjoyed an incredibly long run, too. This zine also falls into the general interest fanzine category, although it does feature a lot of short fiction – some of which are very, very short- and poetry, with some editorial natter from John. Usually there are brief opinion pieces about science, philosophy, and even science fiction. Who knew, eh? It is not for everybody's taste, but that's fine. The fact that John Thiel has produced 372 issues so far (that's the most recent issue I have on hand) is a testament to how much he enjoys doing this.

And that, my friends, is why fanzines are produced in the first place. ' Nuff said,

All of these fanzines – except *Pablo Lennis* – are available on efanazines.com, thanks to the efforts of Bill Burns, whom I plan on nominating him for knighthood Real Soon Now.



Even though this issue is a couple months past due, no fanzine is complete without letters of comment. Not surprisingly, one of fanzine fandom's prolific loc-writers leads things off. So let's get this letter column started with our Northern friend, Lloyd Penney.



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

August 31, 2018

It is the end of the month, and for many, the end of the summer. There's a big different between August 31 and September 1. I guess you are prepping for your new school year, and I have been at home, once again job hunting. If I had \$5 for every resume I've sent out, I wouldn't need to send out resumes. Anyway, I have *Askance 44* here at the top of a big stack of zines, and I should get with it.

My own activities have kept me busy, and kept dementia away (I hope)...this summer has been spent making jewelry, finding new venues and markets to sell to, thinking of new products to make, travelling around our part of the province, and hoisting our various boxes, tables, gazebo tent, etc. So, I am kept mentally busy in the making process, and physically busy lifting and loading. (Call it the Twilight Zone years all you like, as long as our old friend Rod doesn't show up...)

Yvonne is indeed retired, but...we have decided we want to return to England. I can't contribute much, but Yvonne is set, so she has taken a job at a casino just to the north of us, and she will be working in their accounting department. A short-term assignment may turn out to be one of the busiest and most

important jobs she's ever had, and she is looking forward to it. The money she gets from this job will mostly go into the London in 2019 fund.

This aging thing...all the things we used to joke about, like getting enough fiber, getting to bed early, dressing warmly enough, drinking enough water, etc., well, they're no jokes now. I have never smoked, Yvonne's quit for a long time now, and we rarely drink, although a cold hard cider on a hot day has been very refreshing. I hope this will mean benefits and longer life along the way.

When we do go to England, we do hope to meet up with the local fanzine fans in the area, and go for a First Thursday pub night. This summer, we met up with Londoners Jared and Marian Foley, who came to Toronto for a vacation, and met up with the local steampunks, including us. We hope to return the favour. And, there is so much we didn't see the first time, and some things we'd like to see again.

The Ex Taral writes about is the Canadian National Exhibition, which is on right now, as I write. (I can hear jets streaking overhead; the airshow is getting ready for the weekend.) I am reading the article carefully, because it has probably been over 20 years since we've been at one. For us, there's usually too many people, and not enough to attract us. I have been in the CNE grounds working on registration for various trade shows and conferences, so I know the Enercare Centre well. For the record, I haven't had a Leafs sweater in a very long time.

IIRC, I placed fourth for Best Letterhack for the FAAn Awards, not bad. The N3F didn't bloc vote per se, but they were encouraged to participate via their publications (of which I do get and respond to some), and the members did. And now, it's our turn, to participate more.

My "Tale from the Convention!"...we still get the odd reminder of our Winnipeg and Montreal fanzine lounges, and there is still the odd scrap of egoboo to come from them. Our days of doing that are done, mostly because, I doubt there will ever be another Canadian Worldcon.

My loc...when we do return to England, we will not be going to the 2019 Asylum, as much as we enjoyed it in 2016. That means a lot less expense right there. And, we learned so much about being a smart traveler then, and we are learning even more now. I am sure we will have enough money for the whole stay (now looking to be three weeks), and maybe some for any future travelling we might do, too. Penney's Steampunk General Store has had five successful shows so far this summer (including the annual anime convention, one of our best three-day events ever), and we have five more to go to, right up to the beginning of December.

We hope you enjoy the Steampunk November. Our annual big event, the Grand Canadian Steampunk Exposition, has been unfortunately postponed (not cancelled) to an as-yet unannounced date, but other events do spring up here and there, so we will stay busy.

I believe I am done for the moment, and I hope this can get in before the next issue. Enjoy the Labour Day weekend, and happy school afterwards. See you with that next issue.

Lloyd

Sadly, we couldn't make it to Steampunk November: too busy with schoolwork and real world invasion things (grading, family: you know the drill). However, Valerie are planning to go to the Texas

Renaissance Festival over Thanksgiving weekend, which is the last weekend of this 10 week long affair. Besides being a grand way to end the season, Sunday November 25, 2018 is our 29th wedding anniversary, so celebrating that in our Elizabethan costumes would be a bit of fun.



Steve Jeffery
44 White Way
Kidlington, Oxfordshire
United Kingdom OX5 2XA

August 19, 2018

Taral never did mention whether he finally found the full size butter sculpture of Red Skelton alongside those of Justin Trudeau and his companion capybara, various raccoons, squirrels and a gorilla in a clown suit. Unless Red was disguised as a gorilla and then further dressed up as a clown in case anyone saw through the original disguise.

It sounds a fascinating event. I can't think where else you expect to buy Fraggie Rock plush dolls, a samurai sword, or a replica Kalashnikov while looking at assorted exotic fauna rendered in creamy dairy produce (you really have to ask why here) and eating jerk chicken and deep fried Mars Bars. I'm a bit astonished these latter have caught on outside the UK. Even the thought is quite revolting. And then I see a notice in the window of our local fish shop that proclaims they also do deep fried Creme Eggs. Oh come on. Creme Eggs have to be among the mostly sickly confections already, and this is definitely over-egging, never mind over-battering, the pudding.

I haven't conducted a thorough analysis, or any sort of analysis, of the voting figures in Nic's *Incomplete Register* but I see from Rob Jackson's *Inca* that you may have revised your ideas over the idea of a slate voting bloc on behalf of N3F titles. I see one of Nic's suggestions is that voting for yourself immediately disqualifies your vote, and while I don't think this is rife (or probably even happens) in the FAANs, it is understandable that a group of people who produce a number of different zines may well vote for each other's zines. And, when you extend this out wider, isn't this just what the FAANS are: people voting for other people's fanzines, usually those by friends or people they have something in common with, even if only in terms of fannish outlook and interests.

I suspect that one of the problems is that, like the Novas, the voting figures are sometimes so low in different categories that the difference in one or two votes, as well as the way votes are tallied, can appear overly significant on the final results.

Steve

I think a lot of Nic Farey's ideas about the FAAn voting procedures were fair and reasonable. Like you intimate – and Nic has said before – it is all about the egoboo. As for the Nova Awards go, it appears they are now almost gone, if I recall correctly. The voting numbers have been practically nonexistent these past few years, and Claire Brialey, Mark Plummer, Graham Charnock, Rob Jackson, and other British fans have proffered their opinions on the fate of the Novas – a British fanzine/fandom award

presented at the annual fall NovaCon – in their own fanzines. I hate to see such a long-standing honour vanishing, but as the science fiction fanzine group dwindles in size, perhaps this is not an unforeseen nor unavoidable event.



Ian Millsted

Bristol, England

July 13, 2018

Thanks for the copy of *Askance 44*.

Your introductory piece about, essentially, work/life balance resonated. For the last couple of years my job has been local enough to allow me to walk in. A fair hike to be fair but I've benefited from the exercise. From September I start a new job which is better paid but will involve a drive rather than a walk. I'll need to find the time and opportunity to get in shape some other way. Before then I aim to get a fanzine completed and sent out. Like you, keeping up such engagement helps to keep one mentally positive. I'm further off from retirement than you and suspect it will actually be more of a gradual transition over some years rather than just stopping at a particular time.

The write up of your time in Paris shadows some of my own experiences in that city. So much that is brilliant and fascinating and yet not always a pleasant place to just 'be'. I've enjoyed travelling in other parts of France more.

Good stuff from Taral and Lloyd as well.

Ian

*Paris was fun once we had switched hotels and plunked ourselves down in the First Arrondissement. One of these years Valerie and I would love to visit other parts of France, in addition to Spain, Portugal, and Italy. We **really** want to return to Prague. Walking around all those cities during my TAFF trip was an exercise regimen that I did not mind at all. As for my retirement musings, I'm thinking of doing that once I hit the 20 year mark at Blinn College: this projects out at 2026, or when I'm 72 years old. That's not too many. The way I feel and act – don't smoke, don't drink that often at all, stay physically and mentally active, etc. – this seems very doable. We shall see.*

THE RITUAL "ALSO HEARD FROM" LIST:

Fred Lerner. Andrew I. Porter, Joe Siclari – promoting the FANAC History Project – and Taral Wayne.

Regional Convention Calendar

Well, there is always something sf-related going on in Texas and its immediate environs. While you feast your eyes on the lovely scenery outside Austin, Texas – the is dockside at the County Line BBQ restaurant, where 21 ArmadilloCon 40 attendees feasted after the convention was over - check out the assorted goings-on in my neck of the woods



[Dickens on the Strand](#)

Galveston's World Famous Victorian Holiday Festival
WEAR A VICTORIAN COSTUME FOR 1/2 PRICE ADMISSION!
(Presumably December 2018)
Strand National Historic Landmark District
Strand & Mechanic Streets between 20th & 25th
Galveston, Texas

The annual holiday street festival, based on 19th-century Victorian London, features parades, non-stop entertainment on six stages, strolling carolers, roving musicians, bagpipers, jugglers and a host of other entertainers. Costumed vendors peddle their wares from street stalls and rolling carts laden with holiday food and drink, Victorian-inspired crafts, clothing, jewelry, holiday decorations and gift items. Continuous entertainment on several stages, over 150 craft and food vendors, children activities abound at Piccadilly Circus, 3 grand parades, Victorian Bed Races, London Wharf and the Official Tall Ship of Texas ELISSA, GHF Member Club, Costume Contests, Scrooge Scavenger Hunt and wonderful special events throughout the weekend.

[BrazCon: Brazoria County Teen Comic Convention](#)

(Presumably February 2019 one-day from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.)
Shadow Creek High School
11850 Broadway
Pearland TX

(Greater Houston, TX area)

ESPECIALLY FOR KIDS AGES 10-18, BUT ALL ARE WELCOME!

Doors open at 8:45 for registration and freebies!

Sessions and activities based on comic books, graphic novels, manga, anime and popular fiction:

Marvel, DC, Harry Potter, Percy Jackson, Dr. Who, Star Wars, and more!

Brought to you by Brazoria County Library System, Alvin ISD, Brazoria County Communities in Schools and other School Systems

ConDFW XVIII

A Science Fiction & Fantasy Literary Event

February 15-17, 2019

Radisson Hotel Fort Worth Fossil Creek

2540 Meacham Blvd

Fort Worth, TX 76106

(DFW Metroplex area)

GOH: Charlaine Harris

GOH: Yoon Ha Lee

Literary science fiction & fantasy convention featuring writing/publishing based programming, science programming, an excellent collection of guests, art show, a charity book swap and auction, & a slew of non-traditional activities such as the Sci-Fi Spelling Bee, Celebrity Artemis, and a Poetry Slam.

Brought to you by the Texas Speculative Fiction Association, a 501(c)(3) organization. 100% volunteer-run.

Cyber City Con

"The Ultimate Robot Experience"

(Presumably February 2019)

SAT 9 AM - 6 PM

SUN 9 AM - 6 PM

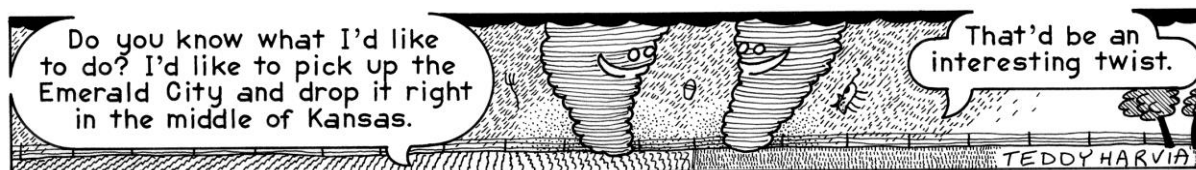
Greater San Antonio, TX area

Texas's largest convention celebrating Transformers, Gundam, and other robot franchises! Includes artists, celebrities, panels, & more!

Gundam Model / Gunpla Contest 18 February, 2018. What's Gunpla, some of you ask? Well, it's the construction, painting, and enjoyment of Gundam Model Kits, that's what!

Transformers Art Contest 18 February 2018.

Alamo City Toy Show joins 2nd Annual Cyber City Con for the future home of both events.



Owl Con LII

Gaming, Fantasy, & Science Fiction Convention

(Presumably February 2019)

RMC/Ley Student Center

Rice University

Houston, TX

OwlCon is an annual gaming convention at Rice University, Houston, TX, dating back to 1980. We feature table top and live action role playing games, miniatures games and events, historical miniatures, board games, card games, a dealers room, and more.

OwlCon 32 gaming events will include RPGA and PFS events and specials, official tournaments for Warhammer 40k and Warhammer Fantasy, many tabletop games, several LARPS including Vampire and Call of Cthulhu, and many other games with prizes galore! OwlCon will once again be swarming with official demo folks for various game systems to give you a chance to try some of their great games. We will also have an anime room and a Dealers room.

All-Con XV

Multi-format convention featuring autographs, gaming, comics, & a burlesque show.

March 14-17, 2019

Crowne Plaza North Dallas

14315 Midway Road

Addison, Texas 75001

(DFW Metroplex area)

For three days All-Con provides an umbrella of content supporting fans of Science Fiction, Fantasy, Renaissance, Anime, Costuming, Theater / Performing Arts, Mystery, Art, Crafts, Collecting, and Film Making. To help 'give back' there are several charity events at the convention every year.

All-Con is fan organized and built on community participation. We offer a track dedicated entirely to cross promoting clubs, conventions, and events. The best part is you may cross promote as a panelist for FREE as long as we have space and your content is appropriate. Don't forget to bring flyers for the flyer table.



Hill Country Comicon

Comic convention

March 16, 2019 10 AM-7 PM

March 17, 2019 10 AM-5 PM

New Braunfels Civic & Convention Center

375 S Castell Ave

New Braunfels, TX 78130

Greater San Antonio / Hill Country area

Here to promote FUN, ART, LITERACY, & IMAGINATION through comics and pop culture.

Embrace your nerdiness at a family-friendly, comic convention. Comic books, toys, cards, games, artwork, cosplay, apparel, guest creators, celebrity . Break out your capes, helmets, light sabers, and wands as we gather for a fun weekend in the lovely Hill Country

AggieCon 49

Anime, gaming, & cosplay con.

March 22-24, 2019

Hilton College Station & Conference Center

801 University Dr E.

College Station, TX 77840

Bryan/College Station, TX area

We are excited about the return of AggieCon classics such as the 24-hour tabletop, anime, and video gaming rooms. As we get closer to Con we will be releasing more information. Hope to see all of you there! [Note: as of November 14, 2017, on [Facebook page.](#)]

We cater to all fandoms, including Sci-Fi, Fantasy, Gaming, Horror, Anime, and many more.

See also [AggieCon Facebook page](#)

Brought to you by [Cepheid Variable](#)

RevelCon 30

March 22-24, 2019

Houston, Texas area

RevelCon is THE only fan-run relax-a-con/zinefest in the Southwest US. It's a fab weekend of vids, panels, art, zines, merchandise, food and frolic! [Note - Revelcon is an adults-only/18-and-over con.]

Overheard in the Hallways of Academia, Dept. #2:

“I must go and assess!”

Teen Book Con: The Greater Houston Teen Book Convention

Mission: To celebrate and promote reading by connecting teens with authors.

March 30, 2019 Doors open at 9 a.m.

Clear Springs High School

501 Palomino Lane

League City, TX 77573

Greater Houston, TX area

NOTE: TeenBookCon is open to everyone (and FREE thanks to our generous Sponsors). Priority seating will be given to teens at all sessions.

Q: How does TeenBookCon work?

A: Part 1: The Keynote Address begins at 10 a.m. in the Theater. The doors will open at 9 a.m. for book sales and entertainment. We will have booths set up with fun activities leading up to the Keynote Address. Everyone will want to make their way to the theater by 10 a.m. for author introductions and the Keynote Address.

A: Part 2: After the Keynote Address, authors will head to their panel rooms and teens will choose from different panels to attend. Panels are listed here. All authors will speak on their panels multiple times. You choose which panels you would like to attend. The authors will stay in their rooms and **teens will move from room to room to attend the different panel discussions** (kind of like classes during the day in high school, only WAY more fun)!

A: Part 3: After the Panel Sessions, we reconvene in the Theater for the Closing Speech!

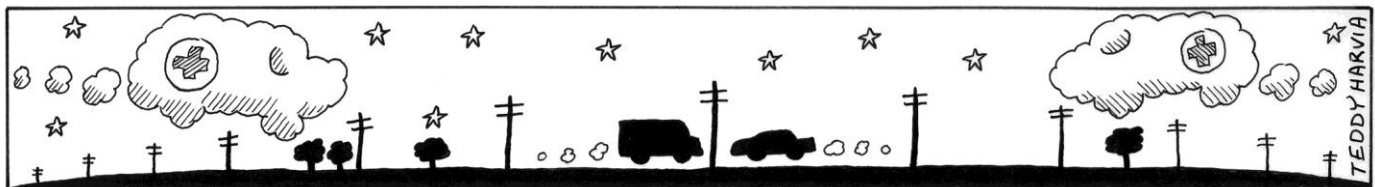
A: Part 4: At the end of the day, there will be an **autographing session with all TeenBookCon authors**. Books will be available for purchase throughout the day at TeenBookCon thanks to our partner, Blue Willow Bookshop. The full schedule is posted on the TeenBookCon website.

NOTE: There are **25+ authors at TeenBookCon**. You will be choosing from multiple panel sessions throughout the day.

Q: I'm not a teen, can I still come to TeenBookCon?

A: **Yes, TeenBookCon welcomes all fans of YA literature**. Please keep in mind that TeenBookCon is first and foremost an event for teens so we ask that in all panel sessions, teens should be given first priority in seating and be given the chance to ask questions of our authors first and also, as we mentioned earlier, if a panel session becomes full, any seated adult will be asked to give up their seat to make room for teens!

Please see our [full list of sponsors!](#)



[FanExpo Dallas](#)

Comics, Sci Fi, Horror, Anime, Gaming.

(Presumably April 2019)

(downtown Dallas, TX)

Comics, Celebrity Guests, Artist Alley, Panel discussions, Cosplay/Masquerade, Movies, Comics, Toys, Video Gaming, Games, TV, Horror, Original Art, Collectibles, Anime, Manga & More! Over 60,000 fans in over 600,000 square feet. Presented by Dallas Comic Con.

[CyPhaCon](#)

Southwest Louisiana premier Anime, Gaming and Scifi convention, brought to you by CYPHA LLC.

April 12-14, 2019

Lake Charles Civic Center

900 Lakeshore Dr.

Lake Charles, LA 70601

Lake Charles, Louisiana area

Anime Industry Panels, Anime Screenings, Artist Alley, Board Games, Charity Auction, Cosplay Events With Prizes, Dealer Room, General Cosplay All Over, Guest Panels, Live Action Role Playing, Role Playing Games, Video Gaming, Workshops.

Sponsored by the non-profit Future Possibilities Foundation.

[ComicPalooza: Texas' Largest Comic and Pop Culture Event](#)

Comics & gaming con

May 10-12, 2019

George R. Brown Convention Center

1001 Avenida de las Americas

Houston, TX 77010

Two host hotels:

Hilton Americas–Houston

1600 Lamar

Houston, Texas 77010

Hyatt Regency Houston

1200 Louisiana Street

Houston, TX 77002

(downtown Houston, TX)

ComicPalooza's mission is to provide the best and biggest annual multi-format pop culture convention in the southwest region of the United States, serving not only the fans of comics, science fiction, fantasy, video and table top gaming, anime, music and film, but also as a trade show and showcase for the studios, publishers, and manufacturers in those industries.

Largest comic con in Texas. Over 40,000 attendance. Live Art Event, Comicpalooza Film Festival, industry panel discussions, roller derby games, quidditch matches, live music, dancers, circus performers, and much more. Comicpalooza is also one of the largest art events in Houston, featuring scores of artists as well as numerous writers, celebrities, and performers, and much, much more!

[SoonerCon 28](#)

Oklahoma's Greatest Pop Culture Experience
Science Fiction, Fantasy, Gaming Con
June 7–9, 2019
Embassy Suites by Hilton Norman Hotel & Conference Center
2501 Conference Drive
Norman, OK, 73069
Oklahoma City, OK area

This incarnation of SoonerCon is deliberately designed to celebrate all aspects of fandom. We do not intend to have a solely "books" or "TV" or "art" emphasis. The emphasis is on FUN. Events include: Film Festival, Art Show, Gaming, Cosplay and Masquerade. Charity. Panel and Workshops. Video Rooms. We are very happy to announce the creation of the **Oklahoma Speculative Fiction Hall of Fame**. Beginning in 2013, SoonerCon will induct members into the Hall of Fame, and present them with the newly created "**Nucleon Award**". Members of the Hall of Fame will be Oklahomans (and those originally from Oklahoma) who have contributed significantly to the development of pop culture and speculative fiction in both Oklahoma and the world.

[Greater Austin Comic Con](#)

Where weird, wacky, and geeky is kew!
(Presumably June 2019)
Greater Austin, TX area

"Celebration that brings all things pop culture together from comics, cosplay, manga/anime, movies, video games, and a super hero theme car show. Showcasing the exceptional works of talented writers, artists, illustrators, game developers, and creators of all types of pop cultures. Greater Austin Comic Con packs in two fun filled days of entertainment that the whole family can enjoy from exciting panels, action packed exhibit floor with artists, retailers, meet & greets, celebrity signings, cosplay contest, kids entertainment, and much much more!"

Overheard in the Hallways of Academia Dept. #3:

“Once more into the breeches we go!”

*NASFiC 2019 in conjunction with Westercon 72 [the *North American Science Fiction Convention] AND 1632 Minicon

July 4-7, 2019

Davis Conference Center

1651 North 700 West

Layton, Utah 84041

Hilton Garden Inn Hotel

762 West Heritage Park Blvd

Layton, Utah 84041

Salt Lake City, UT area

Literary GOH: Jim Butcher

Literary GOH: David Weber

Artist GOH: Vincent Villafranca

Cosplay GOH: Kitty Krell

Fan GOH Trio: Kevin Standlee, Lisa Hayes & Kuma Bear

Special Guest: Eric Flint

Gaming GOH: The GM Tim

Four days of programming on hundreds of topics from books to media, from art to costuming, from movies to television to anime, from science fiction to science fact, as well as an art show, masquerades, the Hugo Awards ceremony, dealer's rooms, and much more!

ONLY IN ENGLAND -



I can definitely guarantee that the next issue will not be out during the upcoming Holiday Season. With luck, this will happen before the New Year kicks in so that the 46th issue will be dated December 2018, instead of something like mid-February some year into the future. Well, Steve Miller did warn us that time keeps on slipping, slipping, slipping, into the future.

My plans for that issue are to focus on the Steampunk genre: literature, artwork, costuming, music, and conventions/events. It should be a fun issue to put together

I have asked Lloyd Penney to write about his and wife Yvonne's craft endeavours at assorted Steampunk events in Toronto and environs, and hopefully he will be sending along some photographs as well. If he doesn't I shall shamelessly pilfer them off his Facebook page.

So saying, here goes the call for any articles, reviews, interviews with Steampunk authors, costuming tips, and so forth, for the next issue of *Askance*. Since the 46th issue is probably going to appear in March next year – at least I hope so; the danged thing seems to have adopted a “whenever it's done” publishing schedule – the deadline for submissions will be the end of February or first week of March 2019. After all, there is this little think called the TAFF 2019 race to administrate, and the voting deadline for that is April 22, 2019. That's smack at the end of Easter Weekend next year, so I hope to have the time to pub my ish and still tally the votes to see who is going to be the North American Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund Delegate to the Dublin, Ireland World Science Fiction Convention next summer. With four people in the race (which is how it is looking just before the nomination cut-off date of Thanksgiving Holiday in America), this race should be a lot of fun.

W
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Poetry corner

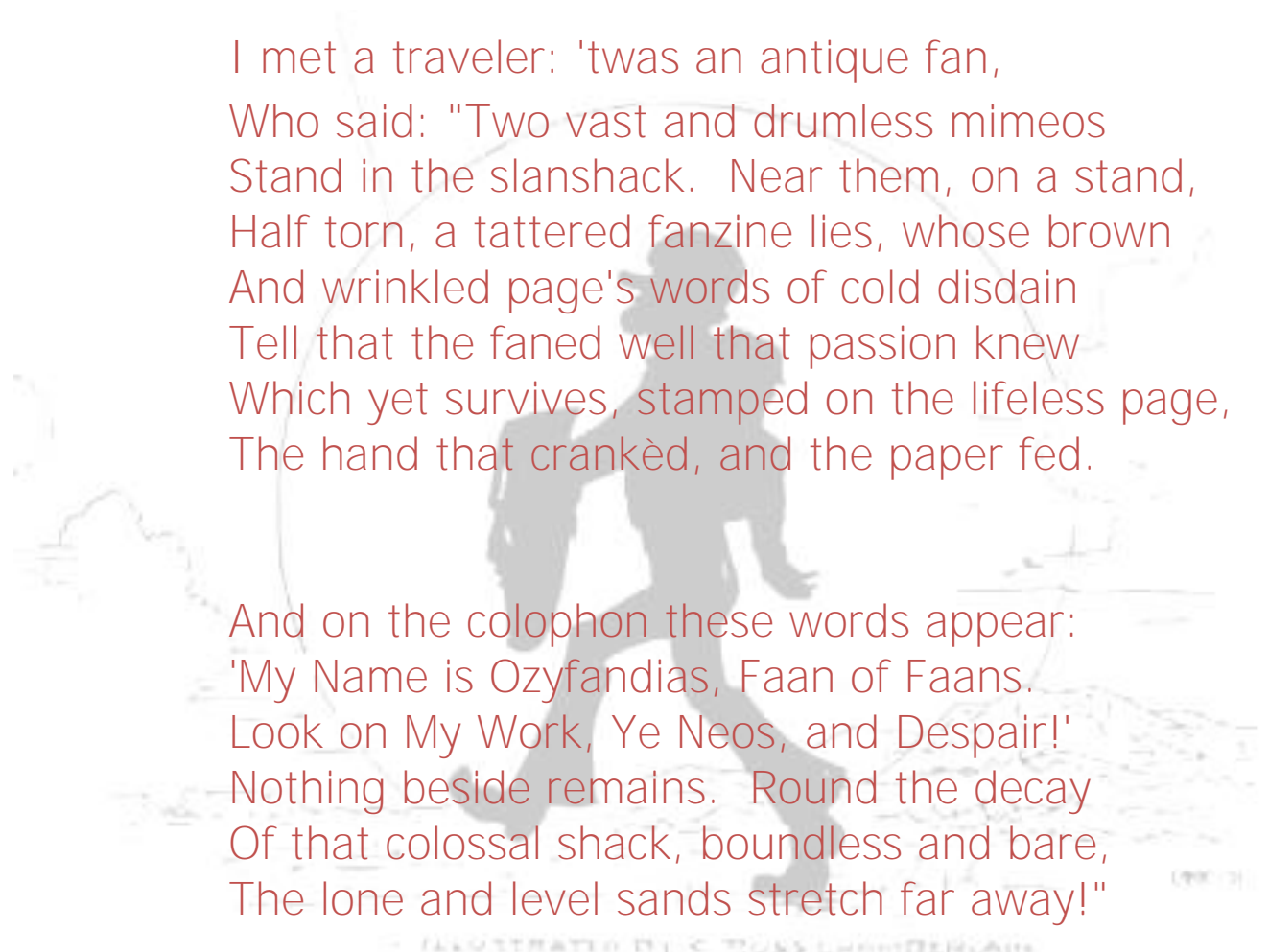
A few weeks ago Sam Long sent me a PDF of his filk song and poetry compilation **PARODIES LOST & PARODIES REGAINED**, and it is truly a wonderful selection of what fannish minds are capable of when inspired by the lunacy that passes for normal behavior in science fiction fandom. I am naturally extremely grateful that Sam did this, and with his blessing – if that's an appropriate word to use for these things – the back cover of this fanzine is devoted to one of Sam's poetry parodies. Based on Percy Bysshe Shelley's poem “Ozymandias” (1818), this is not meant to be sung, but to be dramatically recited at a fannish gathering, most likely late in the evening – preferably 2 AM or later – after a Dead Dog Party at a world convention. For what it's worth, here it is, with what I hope is a proper illustrative background nicked from the Internet via a past issue of *Beam*, drawn by Ross Chamberlain. It felt appropriate to me.

See you folks in the New Year. Don't forget to send in Steampunk articles, etc., and letters of comment.

John Purcell

OZYFANDIAS

After Shelley, originally ca 1975
(no tune; to be recited)



I met a traveler: 'twas an antique fan,
Who said: "Two vast and drumless mimeos
Stand in the slanshack. Near them, on a stand,
Half torn, a tattered fanzine lies, whose brown
And wrinkled page's words of cold disdain
Tell that the faned well that passion knew
Which yet survives, stamped on the lifeless page,
The hand that crankèd, and the paper fed.

And on the colophon these words appear:
'My Name is Ozyfandias, Faan of Faans.
Look on My Work, Ye Neos, and Despair!
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal shack, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away!"

Poem by Sam Long

Artwork by Ross Chamberlain