

OB DURATE EYE #18

July 2022



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MASTHEAD

THE OBDURATE EYE #18 (July 2022) is what Garth Spencer does when he doesn't know any better. You can send letters, pictures, trade fanzines, articles, and suggested therapies to him by email to garth.van.spencer@gmail.com.

Art

Jose Sanchez (crablike humanoid alien)	cover
Facebook (Giant Mechanical Chicken)	p. 7
Brad Foster (Big Slice).....	p. 8

“My completed illustration is based on a highly unusual cryptid sighting that was caught at night on a CCTV security camera in Costa Rica in April of 2021. In it, you can see a strange "crablike humanoid" walk out from an opening in the back walls and is then chased down by two angry dogs that bark and growl at it ferociously, following it for a few minutes. One of them, even getting close up to it and then temporarily confused in response to its odd behaviour, as it just walks past it and towards the camera with a weird wobbly gait. As it moves across the back alleyway, you can see that it has the torso of a crab but no head and four strangely bent limbs or "human like arms" that it uses to quickly scurry across the pavement.”

Jose Sanchez, email, July 28, 2022

News Items and Ideas to Remember

Christian New Age Quarterly has been looking for a new Project Assistant and a new Christian Focus Book Reviewer.

Catherine Groves, in *Christian New Age Quarterly* 25:3

“... Compared with the present fanzines, we are definitely more active here at *Origin*, and in the N3F in general, than is found in most present-day fanzines. I would almost describe the N3F as “where it’s at” in the science fiction fandom of the present. It is where the most activity is going on.

“There is much to be said for doing things. What may be said against it is that it is a waste of time since nobody shows any appreciation of things being done, and that it goes nowhere as things are in a state of stagnation, and that it earns no pay ...”

John Thiel, in *Origin* #53

“... two or three years ago, John A. McDonald¹ was suddenly branded as genocidal. Public schools named after him were renamed, libraries also, and his name removed for every other public building. Statues were knocked over. His image, which had been on Canadian currency since the 1970s, was removed from the \$10 bill where it had been for so long. Remember... he had been commemorated by the mint as recently as 2017! Now he was a genocide! What was found maddening is that I’m not at all clear how much was John McDonald’s doing. He was only prime minister for a certain number of years, and the government’s policies were religiously followed for decades. Also, what about the other fathers of Canadian Confederation? How about Wilfred Laurier, who is on our \$5 bill, and at 7th. Prime minister is certainly as complicit in the residential school scandal as John A. McDonald. But nobody seems to care... Sacrificial blood was drawn, so I guess the mob is satiated for now.”

Tara Wayne, in *Askew* #37

“They² overturned *Roe v. Wade*. In doing so, they gutted the idea that a woman has legal equality under American law to a man. Worse, as I wrote two issues ago, and that diseased fraud Clarence Thomas gloated in his concurrence, they opened the juridical door to overturning other rights. Anything covered under the general blanket of the right to privacy is on the block: gay marriage, contraception, an endless slew of other privacies Americans have taken for granted, and should.

“The decision is called *Dobbs*. Remember it. It will go down in history with *Dred Scott*, *Korematsu* (Okaying the Japanese-American internments during World War II) and *Plessy v. Ferguson* (upholding racial discrimination). But this decision is far more insidious and reprehensible than those monumental mistakes of judgment. This decision

¹ The 19th-century premier of Upper Canada, who persuaded other British North American dominions to confederate.

² The United States Supreme Court in 2022.

is an overt move of political and cultural conspiracy. It's the culmination – worse, the *beginning* of the culmination – of a radical effort to reverse the course of American civilization, as shown through decisions of the American courts.”

Guy Lillian, in *Spartacus* 57

On the art of writing:

“PROBLEM #5: But everything about the methodology of writing a novel is so complicated and self-sabotaging.

“SOLUTION #5: Not if you don't think about it. The trick is to keep things simple. I sit down. I type a sentence. I stare at it. Eventually another sentence suggests itself. I repeat the process. Eventually I visualize it as a scene unfolding before my mind's eye. At that point I simply describe what I see. But not too much description. That's the sort of thing readers skip past. So, I keep my paragraphs short, and rely on dialogue and inner monologue to carry the story. Readers pay more attention to those things. Easier to relate to, maybe. Makes for a fast-paced, easy-to-read novel.”

R. Graeme Cameron, in *Great Galloping Ghu!* #1

“Fanzines used to be the backbone of fandom, but now we see little of them - not counting these pages... Sverifandom has only one being published on paper and E-fanzines haven't shown to be much of a saviour. There are only about two Swedish PDFzines, and while one is excellent and fulfills your wettest wishes (this one!) we used to have hundreds when the mimeo ruled and rolled in the 1980s. It has also showed to be very difficult to recruit new zines to APAs. (The normal edition of this zine goes to some outsiders, but usually also through two APAs - EAPA and N'APA - and I stubbornly repeat: please join! Ask me for into. You must do a fanzine - making PSDs is easy --so you have something to put Kremlin under fanzine blockade with...)

“So I suggest we form the National Mimeographic Society to promote the idea of the mimeo and fanzines. Of course, few have mimeos left and you can't get consumables like stencils and ink anymore, but we could try to keep the sweet memory of mimeographs alive! And we should support initiatives like eFanzines.com, Fanac.org, Iowa University's Hevelin collection, Swefan Tomas Cronholm and others who scan and make old mimeo fanzine gems available.

“Everyone who has ever published a mimeo'd fanzine is automatically members [*sic*] ...”

Ahrvid Engholm, in *Intermission* #

Fan News

GREAT MYSTERIES OF VCON REVEALED AT LAST!!

Chris Sturges³ has posted the following:

³ The chair of VCON (Vancouver, BC) in 2021 and 2022.

“Here are the details you have been waiting for! VCON 2022 is October 13th through 16th 2022 at the Hilton Hotel Metrotown. The website will be up and have ticket links within the next day or so. Full weekend memberships are currently \$60.

“In the meantime, we have this info:

“We will have all the regular things, Hospitality, Dealer’s Rooms, Art Show, Dance, Costume Contest, Tabletop Gaming etc. We will have a VIP Meet and Greet Thursday evening, Oct 13th. The Book Launch is back, Friday Oct 14th. Saturday night will see our Convention-style Dinner Theatre⁴ make a return, and there will be the dance and an expanded Costume Contest as well. New(ish) this year is the Sunday Brunch, a full buffet brunch to hang out with friends and maybe feed your hangover. The VIP Meet ‘n Greet, the Book Launch, the Dinner Theatre, and the Buffet are separately ticketed [*sic*] events.

“The hotel room link is: rebrand.ly/22VCON. That’s the only way to book your hotel rooms at our preferred rate, plus there is a promo code available for people who have booked rooms to give you a membership discount of up to \$45 off your VCON membership!

“The Guest announcements are coming, we are still waiting on confirmations due to work commitments right at this moment.

“If you suspect you already have a membership from a previous VCON purchase, please email registration@vcon.ca to confirm it. All previous memberships will be honoured.

For more info on specific topics:

(Art Show) artshow@vcon.ca

(Costumes) costumes@vcon.ca

(General information) info@vcon.ca

(Organizations) orgs@vcon.ca

(Programming) programming@vcon.ca

(Registration) registration@vcon.ca

(Vendors) vendors@vcon.ca

(Volunteers) volunteers@vcon.ca

“See you there!”

Chris Sturges, on Facebook, via R. Graeme Cameron, July 26, 2022

GREAT MYSTERIES OF CORFLU

Nic Farey had to point out recently that the FAAn Awards are not, in fact, run by Corflu:

⁴ Was this a regular feature of Conventions? I miss so much.

The actual management of the process, though, including publicity and awareness efforts, is down to the admin and their attitude toward involvement (which crucially includes who they think “deserves” to be involved), which is how you can end up with, for example, a mere 19 ballots returned in 2020 and 66 this year. It’s worth noting yet again that, historically, Corflu members have not voted in the awards in significant numbers (at least since the days when attendees could be badgered into voting on the Saturday night of the event itself) – the last time I looked at this in detail the uptake was around 20% of convention membership, though I suspect that the UK-based Corflus might provide higher numbers. This does seem odd, given that the core constituency for FAAn award voting should be represented by Corflu members, yet the majority of ballots (on my watch) arrive from outside its confines.

This clearly implies that there’s an interest in the awards beyond Corflu, which of itself could indicate that there’s enough separation between the convention and the awards to engage the fanzine Faniverse. Just not some of its more recalcitrant inhabitants...

Nic Farey, in *This Here* 55

GREAT MYSTERIES OF THE NFFF

I regret to report that Justin E. A. Busch apologizes for being unable to complete an issue of *Fanfaronade*. He does not know when he will be able to resume writing.

George Phillies, *Fan Activity Gazette* 2:2

CANADIAN SF & FANTASY ASSOCIATION⁵: 2022 AGM SUMMARY

... Our thanks to everyone who voted in and/or attended the AGM in June! We appreciate your participation. Twenty-eight members of CSFFA approved all of the motions presented for approval in advance of the 2022 CSFFA annual general meeting.

AGM attendees via Zoom on June 4 were first to learn details of CSFFA’s new grant available to CSFFA-member writers and artists. Details will be published soon.

Work on the website to replace the current website is on track. The goal is for the new website to be online before 2023 begins.

VCON’s bid to host the 2024 Aurora Awards was accepted.

CSFFA Board of Directors

⁵ The group of fans who administer the Aurora Awards, a.k.a. the Canadian SF & Fantasy Awards.



If I had a car, this might be it

Garth: The Continuing Adventures

It finally occurs to me now that life is a chaotic complex system, like an SF convention. This makes nonsense of the concepts “success” and “failure.” And here I was raised to think you could deal with life successfully by learning a number of arbitrary and inconsistent rules, the way we learn English. No wonder I spent decades trying to work out what the system was and why I kept failing to learn what everyone else does; some people raised me like a mushroom, and the rest never acknowledged or understood my questions.

Very tiresome, that.

The Flaccid Tissues of Long-Dead Issues

I keep thinking of new creative exciting ideas for content here, but then I take a second look at my ideas, and they get sick and die. Below are the kinds of things that keep occurring to me. What else would you look for in a personalzine? Personal journalism? Trip reports? Field reports from battling the evil and weirdness represented by Belgium? The continuing adventures of the Royal Swiss Navy against the worldwide Trilateral Ku Klux Bilderberg Neoconservative Davos movement? Or more tips on baking and gardening?

- Aurora Award winners, when they're announced
- Issues in serving a heathen kindred, and building a regular practice of learning runes and runecraft
- Complexity in modern life, overwhelmed people, and overwhelmed medical and other institutions
- Modern cults to watch out for
- Why my fact and fiction writing is stalled
- Canadian Fanhistory excerpts
- Is my "How to Human" book project sort of beside the point, for many 20-somethings?
- Current Public Interest research movements on the Internet
- Issues in serving a low-cost housing society



LoCs

Note: I seem to be missing current emails for Randy Barnhart and Kevin Welch.

John Hertz⁶, 236 S. Coronado St. #409, Los Angeles, CA 90057, USA, May 18, 2022

You remind Heath Row that our trouble is the *loss* of shared understanding and common knowledge.

Wandering into something one hasn't done before, not bothering to look around, blundering, being told "Ow! That's my foot you stepped on," and deciding to rebel against such wicked gatekeepers, is as old as Time. We've been facing it, or failing to face it, in fandom for a while now.

Actually, the understanding and knowledge are still present.

However, I'm a devoted cup-is-half-full man.

((I think we're talking about different things.))

Lloyd & Yvonne Penney⁷ <penneys@bell.net>, June 28, 2022

Hello!, and many thanks for the latest issue of The Obdurate Eye, issue 17. Lots to say in this issue, just have to stream it through the fingertips as I type it up.

In my own experience, by the time you truly figure out what you want or need to do to satisfy yourself in your own life, it may be too late to do some or all of those things, which is frustrating for late bloomers like myself. I have also found the wanting of a goal can be as good as the attainment of that goal. (Why does that sound like a line from an episode of Star Trek?) There are people set as examples, sometimes by themselves, of how to successfully live a life, but that success is so subjective. Goals you set for yourself may be determined by how empathetic you are to others. Fulfil yourself by what you do for yourself, or by helping others; again, it's all subjective.

School has to change...there is so much we need that we are not getting from school or our parents. Let's see...lessons in critical thinking, logic, home economics (both genders), basic consumer law (how to sign a contract and make sure you're not getting ripped off), basic personal accounting, how to cook basic meals, etc. All of this training could come in a restored Grade 13.

⁶ The most classically-educated fan I know, at least among LASFS members.

⁷ Well known for writing letters of comment to practically all existing fanzines; therefore rumoured to be the secret love child of Gina Ellis and the late Harry Warner Jr.

Setting goals in life could be part of that, too. My parents disagreed with every suggestion I ever made of what I wanted to do in my life (and never made any alternate suggestions themselves), and when I finally decided on journalism, they promised me I would not receive a cent of financial support. My choice was ultimately not the best, but where I grew up, Orillia, Ontario, the choice of careers was limited to warehouses and foundries, both of which died out in Orillia many years ago. Any guide on how to set your goals should be part of grade school curricula, perhaps the aforementioned restored Grade 13, before they release you into a world changing at an accelerating rate.

I haven't voted in the Auroras in a long time...I am totally uninformed. Given how literary cons have basically died, with few exceptions, in Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto (Ad Astra's comeback is the sponsor a toy convention, already postponed once to August), I suspect CanVentions and Auroras will be a Western Canadian phenomenon from now on, and that's okay. The pandemic has changed so much, and semi-retirement for me has ensured the cash to travel or purchase things we'd like is not there, unless we have done some extensive saving over those pandemic years, so our Fanac has had to change. We're just local now, and we are vendors and costumers, and we are enjoying simpler pleasures, like staycations, picnics in some local parks, and long walks.

My loc...the freelance work continues, and I also have a major SF history book to work on. I still keep my eyes open for other paying gigs, as full-time jobs continue to elude me. The organizers of the truck convoy are threatening to return, but I have some confidence that the Ottawa police, the OPP and RCMP won't let that happen. I hope the carillon bells of the Peace Tower can be heard over the blaring of any truck horns.

Re post-pandemic fandom...we spent this past Saturday as vendors at the Forest City Comicon in London, Ontario, and there were close to 2000 people there, in my own estimation. Some conventions are resuming, while others are still postponing, or going virtual via Zoom. So many people need the reminder that this pandemic is still on. Yvonne and I are also still selling tables for Anime North, our big local anime convention, but we are finding out just how many vendors are not reading what we are sending them, not even the contracts they sign. We have said from the beginning that the convention centre the convention is being held in, the Toronto Congress Centre, demands that all who enter are vaccinated against COVID-19, at least two shots. Four vendors have raged at us over this, and some claim they knew nothing about this. They also proudly claim they are not vaccinated at all. All we can do is roll our eyes and issue rollovers to next year, or complete refunds. The con is in just over two weeks, so it will be interesting to see that the ultimate convention will look like.

Lots to say indeed. Hope this helps to fill the issue. Just been watching the newest hearings into the Trump stupidity...I can hardly wait until he has to

wear an orange jumpsuit, it'll look good on him. Take care, and keep the issues coming.

Fanzines Received (Not All N3F Zines, I Promise)

Askew #37, July 2022 (a personal/genzine), John Purcell, 3744 Marielene Circle, College Station, TX 77845, USA, e-mail: askance73@gmail.com

Christian New Age Quarterly 25:3, spring 2022, PO Box 276, Clifton, NJ 07015-0276, USA, info@christiannewage.com

FanActivity Gazette, Volume 2 Number 2 July 2022 - News of Fen of Interest to All Fen – George Phillies ed., 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester, MA 01609, USA, phillies@4liberty.net

Far Journeys 3:2 /May 1, 2022 (a sercon fanzine published five times a year), Justin A. Busch ed., 308 Prince St., #422, St. Paul, MN 55101, USA

GREAT GALLOPING GHU! #1 – June 2022 – A personalzine by R. Graeme Cameron. “Write to me at the.graeme.bcsfazine@gmail.com and tell me what you think.”

Intermission 122.5, late July 2022, Ahrvid Engholm ed., ahrvid@hotmail.com

Mangaverse 6.1, July 2022, Editor: Patrick Ijima-Washburn, patokon.com@gmail.com

N3F Review of Books, July 2022, George Phillies - phillies@4liberty.net. “*The N3F Review of Books Incorporating Prose Bono is published by the National Fantasy Fan Federation, PO Box 143, Tonopah NV 89049 and is distributed for free to N3F Members and archival sites. Editor: George Phillies, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester MA 01609, phillies@4liberty.net. In most issues superb proofreading support was provided by Jean Lamb. Most of our lead reviewers have blogs or web sites. Some of them link from their reviews on the internet to Amazon. ...*”

N'APA July 2022, the Amateur Press Alliance for members of the National Fantasy Fan Federation (N3F). The official collator is George Phillies - phillies@4liberty.net. The official preparer is Jefferson P. Swycaffer - abontides@gmail.com (the person to contribute to).

Origin 53 (an N3F genzine), Edited by John Thiel, residing at 30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, Indiana 47904. Email kinethiel@mymetronet.net

Pablo Lennis (a fiction and poetry zine), May & July 2022, John Thiel ed., 30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, IN 47904, kinethiel@mymetronet.net

Perryscope 24, July 2022 “is an issue of a personalzine, published monthly, by Perry Middlemiss, 32 Elphin Grove, Hawthorn, Victoria, AUSTRALIA 3122. E: perry@middlemiss.org.”

Spartacus 57, A zine of opinion by Guy Lillian III, 1390 Holly Ave., Merritt Island FL 32952-5883, USA, GHLIII@yahoo.com

The Baloobius 8 (a personalzine), Taral Wayne, 245 Dunn Ave. Apt. 2111, Toronto, Ontario, CANADA M6K 1S6, Taral@bell.net.

The National Fantasy Fan 81:7, July 2022 (a newsletter), George Phillies ed., phillies@4liberty.net

This Here #55, Nic Farey, 2657 Rungsted St., Las Vegas, NV 89142, USA, fareynic@gmail.com

Tightbeam 334 July 2022 (a newsletter), edited by George Phillies, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester, MA 01609, USA, phillies@4liberty.net, and Jon Swartz, jon_swartz@hotmail.com.

Vanamonde (a weekly apazine for APA-L), nos. 1494 – 1504 / April 11 – June 20, 2022, John Hertz, 236 S. Coronado St. No. 409, Los Angeles, CA 90057, USA.