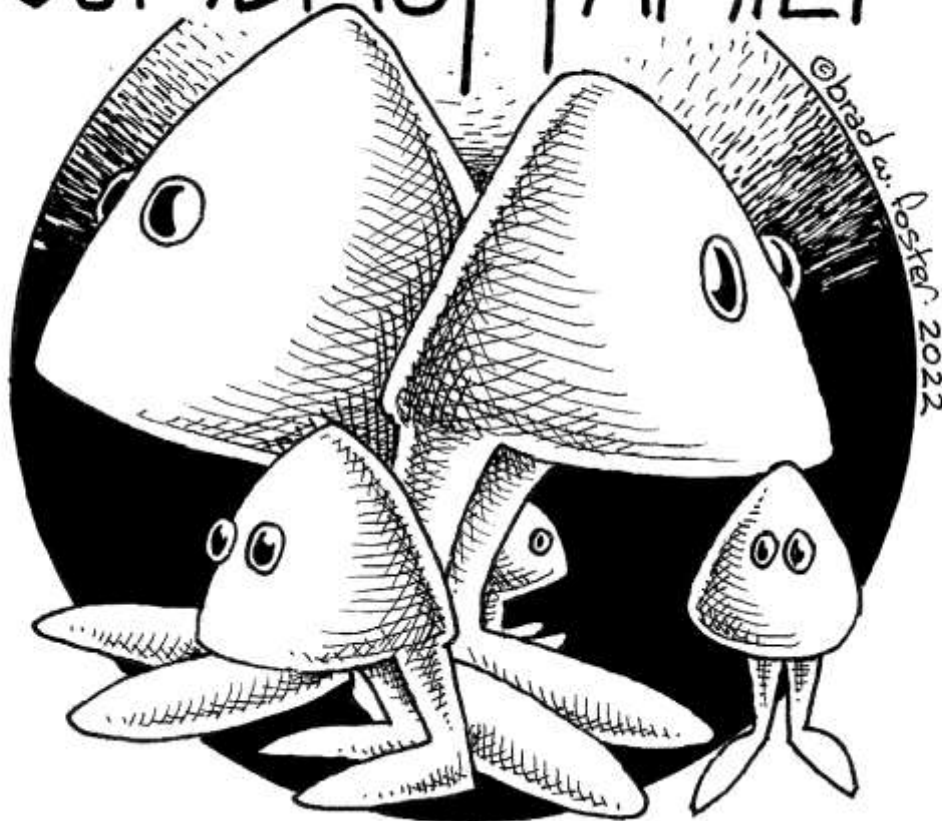


# THE OBDURATE EYE #19

A personalzine from Garth Spencer

August 2022

## GUMDROP-FAMILY



# MASTHEAD

THE OBDURATE EYE #19 (August 2022) is what Garth Spencer does when nobody stops him in time. You can send letters, pictures, trade fanzines, articles, and suggested therapies to him by email to [garth.van.spencer@gmail.com](mailto:garth.van.spencer@gmail.com).

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## Art Credits

Brad Foster, “Gumdrop Family” .....cover

## Notice

I seem to be missing current emails for:

Kevin Welch

Randy Barnhart

# In the Fannish World

## Getting There

“I can’t imagine we will even try to send people to Mars before establishing a permanent network of satellites and relays that would have kept Matt Damon in much closer communication with someone. Just as the pilot had to stay at the controls of the command module in the Apollo missions, I would think multiple ships will be involved in a manned mission to Mars, some remaining in orbit, while others take the white-knuckle ride down to the surface.

“In fact, the fleet of ships that will take us to Mars will need to be built in space, and that will require some people to live in space more or less in perpetuity; and once we actually figure out how to do that, we can probably land on any pretty rock in the system. So, the first humans on Mars will probably be observed by thousands telepresenced through mobile robots ...”

Mailing Comments on Turbo-APA #433, in

*Captain Flashback* #45, August 2022

## Robert Sawyer Online Interview by the Worcester Library SF Book Club

“One of the points the author made repeatedly is that gaining any kind of cognitive intelligence that includes a conceptual grasp of the real world and how to react to it requires years of life experience, and right now there is no way that computers can encompass even a fraction of the information and memory response potential that a human being, or even an animal has.”

Bob Jennings, *FanActivity Gazette* #2:3, August 2022

## And the Awards Went to...

by [Cliff Samuels](#), Aug 14, 2022

“This evening, August 13, 2022, in a live streaming ceremony we announced the finalists for this year’s Aurora Awards. For those that missed it you can still watch it on YouTube, [2022 Aurora Awards Ceremony](#).

“Congratulations to all those taking home a trophy. Below is the listing of the finalists. Here is a link to the [Aurora Results Grid](#) which contains statistics for this year’s awards. It included information on who came in, first, second, and third place and the works that were nominated with at least five nominations.

“The 2022 Aurora Awards went to:

“Best Novel: **Jade Legacy**, Fonda Lee, Orbit

“Best YA Novel: **Walking in Two Worlds**, Wab Kinew, Penguin Teen

“Best Novelette/Novella: **The Annual Migration of Clouds**, Premee Mohamed, ECW Press

“Best Short Story: **“The Mathematics of Fairyland”**, Phoebe Barton, Lightspeed Magazine, Issue 129

“Best Graphic Novel/Comic: **It Never Rains**, Kari Maaren, webcomic

“Best Poem/Song: **“Cat People Café”**, Carolyn Clink, Polar Starlight #3

“Best Related Work: **Alias Space and Other Stories**, Kelly Robson, Subterranean Press

“Best Visual Presentation: **Dune (2021)**, directed by Denis Villeneuve, Legendary Entertainment

“Best Artist: **Samantha M. Beiko**

“Best Fan Writing and Publication: **Polar Borealis**, Issues #17 to #20, edited by R. Graeme Cameron

“Best Fan Organizational: **When Words Collide**, Randy McCharles, chair, online festival

“Best Fan Related Work: **Broadcasts from the Wasteland**, Brandon Crilly and Evan May, Podcast”

Robert Runté was unsatisfied with the absolute numbers of voters.

R. Graeme Cameron faced technical difficulties preventing him from presenting his acceptance speech, which follows:

MY UNHEARD (due to technical difficulties) AURORA AWARD  
ACCEPTANCE SPEECH:

“Wow!

“My retirement hobby is promoting Canadian speculative fiction authors, poets, and artists.

“Publishing *Polar Borealis*, with eight stories and eight poems plus cover art in every issue, is the joyful way I do this.

“In reality, it is the talent, creativity and imagination of the contributors that makes *Polar Borealis* fun and intriguing to read. All I do is put it together.

“In effect, it is the contributors who earned the award. It is the contributors who deserve the award.

“BUT I am more than happy to accept this award on their behalf.

“Thank you!”

“Congratulations to the 2022 CANADIAN SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY ASSOCIATION HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES!!

“**Julie E. Czerneda:** Fantasy and Science Fiction author and editor, and winner of seven Aurora Awards. Since 1997, Julie E. Czerneda has turned her love and knowledge of biology into science fiction novels and short stories that have received international acclaim, multiple awards, and best-selling status.

**Ed Greenwood:** Fantasy author, editor, and creator of the Forgotten Realms game world. In 1979 he began writing articles about it for Dragon magazine and subsequently sold the rights to TSR. He has published over 35 novels for TSR and contributed to over 200 books and game products for other publishers.

**Hayden Trenholm:** Science Fiction writer and editor, winner of five Aurora Awards, and publisher (Bundoran Press). Over the years, Hayden has published 4 novels and more than 30 short stories in the field. Despite his work as an editor (17 novels and 5 anthologies for Bundoran Press plus numerous freelance assignments) he has continued to write and consistently adds to his short fiction tally.”

R. Graeme Cameron, BCSFA Facebook group, Aug. 19, 2022

## Of Possible Interest

On Self-Publishing:

“Little Blue Books were a series of small, staple-bound booklets published from 1919 through 1978 by the Haldeman-Julius Publishing Company of Girard, Kansas. The booklets were extremely popular, and sold 200-500 million copies over the lifetime of the series.

“Emanuel Haldeman-Julius and his author wife, Marcet, set out to publish small low price paperback pocketbooks intended for the working class as well as for the “educated” class. Their goal was to get works of literature, a wide range of ideas, common sense knowledge, and various points of view out to as large an audience as possible. ...”

Jon D. Swartz, *Origin* #54, August 2022

## From the Journal of Hrothgar Weems

I think what became essentially human - when our species first appeared in something like its modern form - was one more species with a unique combination of traits. In European languages and cultures, we draw a great

distinction between our species and all others; other languages and cultures do not. It has been argued that even in Germanic-language cultures, as recently as the pre-Christian era, other species were regarded as parallel, and possibly superior species – wolves, in particular, being better adapted to survive.

### §

In the latest issue of *Christian New Age Quarterly*, editor Catherine Groves considers the difference between our waking and dreaming lives. Considering that people spend about a third of their lifespans asleep, and even people who report having no dreams show all the neurological signs of dreaming sleep, you might well ask what the significance of dreams are in our lives, even though they are largely dismissed.

For my part, I regularly have lucid dreams, in which I make decisions and take an active part and carry on reasoned conversations, or what I consider reasoned speech. Do you have lucid dreams? (Of course, I have to confess that taking an active part disrupts the scenarios and the characters, and usually aborts whatever passes for continuity in my dreams.)

### §

I keep hearing these stories from family, and friends, and correspondents, about their adventures in Doctorland. Most of these stories tend to confirm the biases I am forming about medical industries – namely, that hospitals and clinics are overburdened, doctors are overworked, and the pressure is great to limit treatment to dispensing prescribed medications. (The situation is the same but exacerbated, in Canada and particularly in my province.)

### §

Defining science fiction, or fantasy, has always been difficult. I would merely say that SF – and fantasy, and some kinds of horror – includes any stories in which the world we consider “normal” is changed, either subtly or grossly, slowly or abruptly, by human action or by natural processes. The fact that science fiction seems to have been motivated by the continuing social changes that technological innovations brought about only introduced *one* type of science fiction; we now have several other types involving unforeseen natural disasters, unpredictable mutations and transformations of humanity, interventions by refugee gods, disgruntled parahumans demanding equal welfare rights, robot uprisings, returning intelligent dinosaurs who are just *appalled* at what we’ve done to this nice planet, and aliens trying to sell us on a logical design for living.

### §

How to Human: I well understand that question is getting off on the wrong foot. At least, at my age, I do. Life is a complex chaotic phenomenon and we just have to surf it, as surfers ride their waves. We lend meaning to life by creating musical comedy. Or maybe that’s the purpose of civilization. Whatever.

I mean, the right thing to do when a stranger abruptly attacks you, or approaches you with an opportunity too good to be true, or a woman

becomes exceedingly friendly very quickly, seems to be a different thing, *on every other occasion*. The right plan for a science fiction convention, one year, seems *not* to be a success the next year. And don't get me started on Canadian politics and economics. It is as if the laws of cause and effect keep changing, when people are involved. Should I carry a pair of dice to help me make decisions?

§

One of my persistent intuitions is that both dystopias and utopias kind of *miss the target*. Aside from some countries at any given time, we are usually not headed for disaster and destruction. Neither are we headed for "perfection," if that's even a meaningful word. (And yes, I already know that "utopia" actually meant "nowhere," but it somehow got transmogrified in popular speech to mean "an allegedly perfect society.") In fact I think "perfection" is neither a word capable of being meaningful, nor is perfection by anyone's definition attainable in the real world.

In my terms, even if you could design societies and people's responses to situations, and making needs and resources, situations and responses fit each other, some pieces of the puzzle would always stick out unresolved from one end of the puzzle or another.

Someone should have given Plato a Jenga puzzle.

§

I seem to be entering a stage in which I consider Yiddish the best source for terms to describe personality types. I also come up with weird ideas like, maybe, did Vikings speak Yiddish when no one was listening? Would Yiddish be the best choice for a future worldwide common language?

§

The unceasing changes to popular computer programs strike a friend of mine as "improved beyond all usefulness". I imagine the dirty little secret of this continuing practice is the same as the truth that neither legislators nor lawyers nor officers of the court will admit – programmers have to justify their continuing income, so they keep elaborating programs that already work.

The law community has to justify their continuing income, so they keep the legislatures open and keep cranking out laws and legal frameworks.

I could imagine that historians and pharmaceutical companies are moved by the same motivation, to crank out new histories and new medications beyond all need. Of course, I could be wrong.

# Loc (1)

**George Phillies [phillies@4liberty.net](mailto:phillies@4liberty.net), August 4, 2022**

Garth, Thanks for the zine. Justin E A Busch is now back, at least sort of. As a thought, *Tightbeam* is a reviewzine, a category you may not know.

*We Also Heard From: John Bartley; Guy Lillian; Ashton Green, who reports that Google has decided my emails are suspicious; and Cathy Palmer-Lister*

## Eccentrica

News from the Kingdom of Talossa

A Message from the Government of Talossa - La C'hronică 8.22 via Chancery Communications

(La Chronica is the monthly news summary from the Ministry of Stuff)

57TH COSA SECOND CLARK RESULTS

Budget and creation of two new holidays

pass: <https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1540.0>

WAKING UP WITH "DAYS OF OBSERVANCE"

Second of "Seneschal's Days of Observance" celebrated; Brăneu Excelsio requests dedication to his favorite

beverage: <https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1612.0>

TFA PLAYOFFS BEGIN

L'Aŝociù da Futbol Talossan holds quarterfinals; Atatürk, Cjovaní, M-M, Pêngöpäts

advance: <https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1176.60>

CULTURE NEWS

"This Month in Talossan History" series continues with August video released early: <https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1481.0>

Fora Talossa starts new culinary vlog

series: <https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1620.0>

FT also taking questions for AMA episode with

Seneschal: <https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1639.0>

PERMANENT REPLACEMENT BURGERMEISTER IN THE WORKS

The Finance Ministry is seeking possible candidates to replace Istefan

Perponest as Burgermeister of Inland Revenue. In the interim, Secretary of



State dal Nordselva will

serve: <https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1616.0>

#### IDENTIFICATION CARDS AWARDED BY MINSTUFF

Talossan ID cards are being awarded to those who successfully pass a Civics Test. The first batch has been sent out, with successful deliveries being reported: <https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1461.0>

#### IMMIGRATION NEWS

One new citizen -- Bråneu Excelsio -- was naturalized during July.

New application for Talossan citizenship was received from Hormazd

Dastur: <https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?board=2.0>

#### News from the Universal Life Church

Minister Garth,

This edition of *The Visionary* explores the power of an apology (or lack thereof). We cover an anti-gay politician who is refusing to apologize for his alleged hypocrisy after attending his son's gay wedding, a religious pharmacist who's not backing down after declining to fill a prescription for birth control, and Pope Francis, who embarked on an apology tour in Canada to atone for the Catholic Church's role in the deaths of 6,000 Indigenous children.

*The Visionary*, Universal Life Church, August 17th, 2022

## Zines Received

*Alexiad* #124, vol21 no 4, August 2022, c/o Lisa & Joseph Major eds., 1409 Christy Avenue Louisville, KY 40204-2040 USA [jtmajor@iglou.com](mailto:jtmajor@iglou.com)

*Askance* #53, July 2022, John Purcell ed., 3744 Marielene Circle, College Station, TX 77845-3926 USA

*Captain Flashback* #45, August 2022, Andy Hooper and Carrie Root, residing at 11032 30th Ave. NE Seattle, WA 98125 (for the Turbo-Charged Party-Animal Amateur Press Association). E-mail Andy at [fanmailaph@aol.com](mailto:fanmailaph@aol.com), and you may reach Carrie at [carrieroot49@yahoo.com](mailto:carrieroot49@yahoo.com).

*Christian New Age Quarterly* #25:3, summer 2022, Catherine Groves ed., PO Box 276, Clifton, NJ 07015-0276, USA, [info@christiannewage.com](mailto:info@christiannewage.com)

*Cyber-Cozen* #24:7, July 2022, Leybl Botwinik ed., For free email delivery (PDF format) write to [leybl\\_botwinik@yahoo.com](mailto:leybl_botwinik@yahoo.com)

*FANAC Newsletter* #19, August 15, 2022, from Joe Siclari (<[estern7770@gmail.com](mailto:estern7770@gmail.com)>) and the FANAC Fanhistory Project

*FanActivity Gazette* #2:3, August 2022, George Phillies ed., [phillies@4liberty.net](mailto:phillies@4liberty.net) 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester, MA 01609, USA

*Great Galloping Ghu* #1, R. Graeme Cameron ed., [the.graeme.bcsfazine@gmail.com](mailto:the.graeme.bcsfazine@gmail.com)

*Ionisphere* #36, August 2022, Publication of the National Fantasy Fan Federation Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau, John Thiel (bureau head), 30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, Indiana 47904. Email [kinethiel@mymetronet.net](mailto:kinethiel@mymetronet.net).

*MT Void* (nos. 2232-2236), Co-Editor: Mark Leeper, [mleepер@optonline.net](mailto:mleepер@optonline.net)  
Co-Editor: Evelyn Leeper, [leepер@optonline.net](mailto:leepер@optonline.net)

*The N3F Review of Books*, August 2022, George Phillies ed., [phillies@4liberty.net](mailto:phillies@4liberty.net), 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester, MA 01609, USA

*The National Fantasy Fan* #81:8, August 2022, George Phillies ed., [phillies@4liberty.net](mailto:phillies@4liberty.net), 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester, MA 01609, USA, and Jon Swartz ed., [jon\\_swartz@hotmail.com](mailto:jon_swartz@hotmail.com)

*Origin* #54, August 2022, Journal of the National Fantasy Fan Federation History and Research Bureau, John Thiel ed., 30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, Indiana 47904, email [kinethiel@mymetronet.net](mailto:kinethiel@mymetronet.net)

*Perryscope* #26, September 2022, Perry Middlemiss, 32 Elphin Grove, Hawthorn, Victoria, AUSTRALIA 3122. E: [perry@middlemiss.org](mailto:perry@middlemiss.org)

*This Here* #56, Nic Farey ed., Locs & that to: 2657 Rungsted Street, Las Vegas NV 89142, or Email [fareynic@gmail.com](mailto:fareynic@gmail.com)

*Tightbeam* #335, August 2022, George Phillies ed., [phillies@4liberty.net](mailto:phillies@4liberty.net), 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester, MA 01609, USA, and Jon Swartz ed., [jon\\_swartz@hotmail.com](mailto:jon_swartz@hotmail.com)

*Warp* #112, WARP Editor Danny Sichel ed., [warp@monsffa.ca](mailto:warp@monsffa.ca), produced for MonSFFA, c/o 29 rue Harold Kirkland, Québec H9J 1R7

*The Zine Dump* #55, July-August 2022, Guy Lillian ed., 1390 Holly Ave Merritt Island FL 32952, [GHLIII@yahoo.com](mailto:GHLIII@yahoo.com)