

# The Obdurate Eye #23

December 2022 - January 2023



*Springtime war games in the Valles Marineris*

## Table of Contents

Editorial Maunderings.....	1
Locs .....	2
One Way to Look at It #2 (Garth Spencer).....	6
Big News and Stuph from Fanzines.....	6
Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund News .....	6
If Jesus Was Trans .....	7
Eat the Rich Before They Eat You.....	7
Tell Us Something We Don't Know .....	7
N3F News .....	7
Does Jesus Really Want Your Money? .....	7
Talossan Elections Again .....	7
Fanzines Received .....	9

## MASTHEAD

THE OBDURATE EYE #23 (December 2022 - January 2023) is what Garth Spencer's Christ complex compels him to do. If you want to stop him before he goes further, 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).

## Art Credits

Jose Sanchez (2022) .....	front cover
Brad Foster (2021) .....	p. 1
Felicity Walker .....	p. 2
Mjollnir (clip art) .....	p. 6
Alan White .....	p. 7

## Editorial Maunderings

So, I'm a senior. For some reason I don't see myself as a creaky cotton-top oldfart. And people keep telling me I don't look a day over 55. I keep telling them it's all the preservatives in my diet.

§

The older I get, the more I discover popular misconceptions and delusions, and the more I think I wasted my life on non-issues and neuroses and lies my family and teachers taught me. This, plus the difficulty of focusing the subject matter, mostly accounts for the long delay in drafting "How to Human," the book of advice and life skills for autistics and other fannish types, suggested by a fannish friend.

Above all, what passed for my rearing or socialization seems to amount to diverting and obstructing my potential; convincing me that my true will and passions – and gifts, and talents – mattered not at all, and only someone else's social imperatives mattered.

I still find it curious that the imperatives were never *defined* for me. Now, I think they had to do with finding (or making) a job, and a home, and a mate. Now, I think they were pretty shallow. Now, I wonder why I cared so much.

§

What am I about? Hunting around for neat ideas, like an animal collecting bright coloured objects, and assembling them in coherent (written) constructions, like an animal that builds nests or dams or hives.

Maybe this is worthwhile in itself. Since the constructions I write up are not reliably interesting to others, I should be content to please myself.

§

Taral wrote in the last *Baloobius* about the unconstitutional, and rather preposterous, moves by the current provincial government of Alberta, as if it were a sovereign state rather than a Canadian province.

Of course we know the elements of the story that led to flaky right-wing extremist parties forming some provincial governments. There are even flaky right-wing extremist administrations in some sovereign states, not to name names. We know how irresponsible radio and television hosts have been



encouraging flaky extremist groups, not only on our continent or in English-speaking countries, thus revealing the extraordinary number of people who actually believe bizarre things about COVID-19 or vaccination or airplane contrails, not to mention the 2020 U.S. national election.

So. We have a fair amount of strange and silly political news in Canada these days; maybe that's why I don't follow the news regularly. It's too hard to believe in reality.



Locs

**Taral Wayne, [taral@bell.net](mailto:taral@bell.net), Dec. 15, 2022**

*(In answer to my query last issue)* Jerry Collins is not lost. I think he is still a member of Rowrbrazzle and in touch with Ken Fletcher. I think he still posts at Deviant Art. I don't have an address, however.

**Lyn McConchie [farside1946@yahoo.com](mailto:farside1946@yahoo.com), Dec. 15, 2022**

This (*The Obdurate Eye* #22) arrived just over a week before Christmas and was read on the spot. It's good solid work as usual, and I read it with interest. Nothing in particular to comment on, and sadly I won't be going to any of the cons (I'm 76, and my general health isn't what it was.) But I was really happy to see it. Sigh. But with NZ being hours flying time away from everywhere else, it's too exhausting to go out of the country any longer. All I can do now is read about such cons and thank you for listing them.

*((I actually listed a bunch of local conventions, as I listed more-or-less local fannish news, just to get it on record somewhere – nobody else seemed to be making Northwest con listing available, or regional fannish news generally for that matter. I neither inferred nor implied that anyone outside the area can or must attend.))*

**George Phillies [phillies@4liberty.net](mailto:phillies@4liberty.net), Dec. 15, 2022**

*(After comments on the Chengdu Worldcon)* If Berlin had won the 1940 WorldCon...

Thanks to a war, if you were not a German, an Italian, a Russian, a Swede, or a resident of Eastern Europe, getting to Berlin there would be nearly

impossible. Englishmen and their allies were just out. An Irishman could have flown to Portugal but there is then a war zone in the way. An American could have travelled by neutral ship to neutral Turkey and then taken the rail line to Berlin, ship to Persia and then some rail lines west, ... Ship to Vladivostok and then the trans-Siberian railroad to Moscow and other rail lines to Berlin...all very difficult. Also, an SF con where the con hotel is at some risk of being bombed by the RAF would be...different.

So I would say that a 1940 WorldCon in Berlin would have greatly distressed American fan, much more than Chengdu2023 currently distresses Americans. Don't worry, though. If Beijing invades the Republic of China, there will be a coastal and air blockade of China, and legal restrictions on Americans going to Chengdu, at which point the distress will be equal.

**Lloyd Penney, [penneys@bell.net](mailto:penneys@bell.net), Dec. 18, 2022**

*[Re the cover of OE] 21...I hope you peered through their souls with that look.*

*((You will notice that I bracketed that issue with two of my Obdurate Eye looks, one before and one after. Sardonic, I was.))*

Are we rapidly running out of fan artists? I know of a couple who might do it, but they must be paid handsomely for any artwork that might adorn our ordinary publications."

*((I have a little list of fanartists. Granted, I can't really object if artists want to be paid what they're worth; as musicians and singers say, Jesus doesn't pay my rent.))*

The definition of freedom is a slippery one, one that everyone seems to have their definition of. More and more these days, when I hear of anti-maskers and anti-vaxxers whining about how these mandates have restricted their freedoms, I can only say, yes, we have our freedoms, but we also have our responsibilities towards ourselves, others, and to society at large.

*((Whenever anyone uses an abstract term I suspect they don't know what it means. I thought many people were merely jamtarts, whining about the inconvenience and discomfort of masks, or about their unfounded paranoias around vaccination, so it was amazing to see people in the United States and Canada demonstrating in any numbers against plain and ordinary hygienic measures. You have to wonder how horse sense went out of fashion. -Oh, wait, Coast to Coast AM and Fox News and crap like that, right ...))*

The Winnipeg NASFiC...in some search for inexpensive transportation to Winnipeg from Toronto, we have found that there is no such inexpensive transportation. Any way to get there is at least C\$600 return for one person. Unless Scotty arrives with a transporter pad for cheap, I do not think we will be going. The next year, 2024, may be more affordable, as Buffalo is just down the highway, and I think we can get there.

*((*\*Sigh\** Canadian domestic transportation, as expensive as traveling abroad. 'Twas ever thus.))*

No one should ever be considered illegal, and no government should ever be allowed to even discuss that. In order to get conventions going again, we may have to go back to our roots, and have single-day events in church halls and Legion facilities.

*((This is roughly akin to what Graeme Cameron and the conrunning discussion group at Discord have concluded.))*

My letter...I wanted Hallowe'en to be over so I could take care of Christmas, and now that it is close to Christmas, I want it to be over, too. I am so tired of the horribly-sung Christmas carols on radio and TV, and the fact it does seem to be about grabbing what you can re presents, and maxing out the credit card as a great start to the new year.

*((Not a new message; people have been saying this since before I was born.))*

The red pill of compassion...prescriptions for everyone. Some people need a double dose. A little compassion actually can make you feel better, for you do feel good when you give. I just wish we could all had more money so we could afford to give and feel good.

*((Money is not quite the bullseye in the target, of course. Until this Christmas I have relied on creating something myself, and broadcast-emailing it, as a Christmas gift to everybody present – usually, writing something like Boring Mundane Stories or Things I Found Out While Finding Out Other Things. That is still my fallback.))*

I think the comparison between what you should know about and what the media tell you about is one major reason why I trained to be a journalist, but never did get into the business.

*((Which is where movements like Public Interest Research Groups, alternative news sources such as The Breach, and Wikileaks come from.))*

There seems to be a fine line between journalism and marketing.

*((Which is why I never ventured beyond student journalism, or amateur journalism in fandom.))*

Ah, Corflu Pangloss...so many places I'd like to go, and so little money to get me there, so I've become quite used to Just Not Going. A fair history of Canadian fandom, which never did get together at any point, due to a surfeit of geography. After the 80s, we need to have a little more research.

*((I wasn't sure for a minute whether you meant a Canadian fanhistory volume was never assembled, or whether Canadian fandom never quite united into one fan community. As to a Canadian fanhistory, Taral Wayne put together his several articles in a volume titled The Great White Zine, now archived at eFanzines.com. I am assembling other materials into another volume now. (Title undecided.) As you say, more research after the 80s is needed: a LOT more research, I would say. I am tempted to leave that to a subsequent volume.))*

What Do We Learn From Fanzines? We learn that people find out that to be a part of things, they must participate, and even then, things are not guaranteed. We can contribute, but some may not want what you have to

give. And that while our intentions may be the best, there are some who are eager to be offended. Much of that applies to fandom as a whole, but all we can do is do our best, hope that what we provide is appreciated, and watch out for that eager offence.

*((I became pretty disappointed in fandom – hell, in humanity – and now, I am trying to accept that people are going to be as ignorant and incompetent outside of their paid work, or their usual rounds, as they feel they can afford. Not a conscious decision, just the ordinary habit of aping other people’s ordinary behaviour.))*

[OE] 22...Randy Barnhart is living in Ottawa these days. Let me know if other things you send to him bounce. He sometimes appears on Facebook.

*((I only have an old email for him that doesn’t work. I must pursue the Facebook connection.))*

**AMAZING STORIES** news...I am currently working with Kermit Woodall on seeing where the magazine can go, and I am going through a lot of short-short fiction to see what we might like to buy. Steve stepped away from the publisher’s position, which he gave to Kermit, and I got the position of editor-in-chief, I think, mostly because I was one of the last few left, and I showed some interest in the position. Lots left to do, more stories to read, and I will soon be sending a lot of fiction off to our slush readers, and see what they like.

It is a shame that When Words Collide in Calgary will have its last convention in 2023, but most Canadian conventions like this seem to be going away, through the greying of fandom we all discuss. We need to have a look...when WWC is done, what is left? Keycon and Pemmi-con in Winnipeg, and Can-con in Ottawa...any more?

*((There are many more conventions held right across Canada, going by the online research I sometimes do; but they are overwhelmingly anime conventions, comics conventions, gaming conventions, media gateshows ... you see the trend. This is a twice-told tale.))*

And, I think I am done for the moment. I am trying my best to sharpen my time management skills so I can get done all I need to do for Amazing, and still have the time to write some letters of comment, edit other books I might take on, and get done all the responsibilities I have at home. My various lists of Things To Do serve me well. Thank you for these two issues, and we wish you a wonderful Christmas, and May 2023 be the tonic we need.

*((May the Bloomberg of Happiness be good to us all.))*

**We Also Heard From: Bernie Klassen (“Good ish!”), John Bartley**



## One Way to Look at It #2 (Garth Spencer)

Because I'm a heathen – in fact, I am the Clerk of the British Columbia Heathen Freehold – I receive some eccentric emails. One of the more eccentric things I receive are “Declarations of Deeds,” news that one or another new heathen is an electronic signatory to an anti-racist declaration, specifically of their universalist beliefs, as a worshipper of the pre-Christian Germanic gods.

Why would this declaration be necessary?

Because the revival of this form of paganism originated within pan-Germanic nationalism in the 1930s – at a time, and among people steeped in racism, that's why. And now it seems necessary again.

These emails I receive come in great numbers at unpredictable times. The impression is that a lot of racism is rearing its ugly head again – not just in our nations at large, but in pagan circles specifically.

There are openly racist, white-supremacist heathen organizations. There are also heathen organizations that claim to be “folkish”, that is, they simply think only people of Germanic descent should properly be inspired to join this kind of worship. Then there are universalist groups, such as the one I am in, which assert anyone of any background may be inspired to worship and be true to the Aesir and Vanir.

Of course all of this has to look pretty eccentric, in a rational-materialist time and country, but so do televangelists, and flaky right-wing extremist governments.

## Big News and Stuph from Fanzines

### Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund News

“The two candidates for the 2023 Westbound race are Sandra Bond and Mikolaj Kowalewski ... Voting is open until April 11, which I'm only guessing (since it's a typical timeframe) is the day after next year's Eastercon. Seems like a long time, but then again we have a couple months voting period for the FAAns as well, and I do wonder why since most of the ballots turn up in the 27 minutes before the window slams shut. The ballot, platforms, donation instructions and all that are found at the usual venue: <https://taff.org.uk>.”

Nic Farey, *This Here* #60, Dec. 2022

### If Jesus Was Trans

In a recent sermon, a researcher shocked his audience at the Trinity College chapel by making the case for a transgender Jesus. Congregants reportedly left the Sunday service in tears crying “heresy!”

*The Visionary*, Dec. 2022, Universal Life Church Ministries

### Eat the Rich Before They Eat You

“As people prepare for the holidays, we thought it might be time for some seasonal fun. The Breach presents Billionaire Banquet, our Pac-Man parody in which your mission is to claw back our public wealth and—while you’re at it—eat Canada’s most notorious billionaires.

“From tax evasion to colluding with the right to owning all the newspapers in your province, Canada’s very richest men—and they are all men—will do whatever it takes to amass money and power. At the most recent count, the richest 80 of them owned as much wealth as the bottom 12 million Canadians. Yet when people in Canada think of billionaires, why is it Americans like Jeff Bezos, Bill Gates, and Elon Musk who first come to mind? How many of us can even name a handful of our home-grown uber rich? “

The Breach, [info@breachmedia.ca](mailto:info@breachmedia.ca), Dec. 21, 2022

### Tell Us Something We Don’t Know

Advent is a sacred time of year celebrated by Christians. But did you know many aspects of this celebration are borrowed from ancient pagan traditions? Wreaths, candles, and even Christmas trees (and their decorations!) are all taken (erm, some might say "stolen"), from earlier religions.

*The Visionary*, Dec. 2022, Universal Life Church Ministries

### N3F News

“... we elected our Directorate for next year ... So, [George] Phillies is elected as the N3F 2023 President and [Judy] Carroll, [Becky] Jones, [Heath] Row, [Jefferson] Swycaffer, and [Kevin] Trainor are elected as the 2023 Directorate.”

George Phillies, via email, Jan. 1, 2023

### Does Jesus Really Want Your Money?

During a television fundraiser, evangelical pastor Jesse Duplantis told viewers that Jesus hasn't returned yet because people haven't donated enough money to their churches. His comments sparked some serious debate.

*The Visionary*, Dec. 2022, Universal Life Church Ministries

### Talossan Elections Again

57TH COSA SIXTH CLARK RESULTS Dandelion reform approved; Primary Intelligence Group abolished; more:  
<https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1896.0>

BHAID TO CONDUCT CHARITABLE CAMPAIGN Ministry of Foreign Affairs running donation campaign to Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity (thread to come once donation info is finalized)

EXTRAORDINARY HONOURS ANNOUNCED King John announces investiture of several new knights and Seneschal's Medal recipients; re-activation of several dormant orders:

<https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1942.0>

COSA DISSOLVED Writ of Dissolution from King dissolves Cosa in preparation for new elections:

<https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1941.0>

LIVING COSA HELD The first Living Cosa in 19 years was held on November 20 [2022]: <https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1929.0>

58TH COSA ELECTION PREPERATION BEGINS A reminder to update your [citizenship] info: <https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1855.0>

The info/signup thread has been opened:

<https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1879.0>

CULTURE NEWS "This Month in Talossan History" series continues with December: <https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1945.0>

Ministry of Culture to give Trivia Night another go on December 11:

<https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1961.0>

Carlūs Vilaçafat named Poet Laureate, succeeding Ōin Ursüm:

<https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?topic=1926.0>

IMMIGRATION NEWS No citizens were naturalized during November (Paarth Thakur has had a Citizenship Petition filed in his name, but this is not concluded as of press time). New applications for Talossan citizenship were received from Markus Rachensberger, Philipp Opperman, Paarth Thakur, Orlando Alas, Remy Fenster, Charyle Calvert, Kevin Gallagher, Bayan Peikari, Kenyon Strother, Donald Muniz, Ralph Hansen, Scott Nabors, Kenneth Makuak?ne, Arten Panasiuk, Hilton Chesterfield II, Sandra Orr, and David Wasserman (wow!):

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

*La C'hronică* #12.22, Dec. 6, 2022



## Fanzines Received

*Alexiad* #125, c/o Lisa & Joseph Major, 1409 Christy Avenue, Louisville, KY 40204-2040 USA, [jtmajor@iglou.com](mailto:jtmajor@iglou.com),  
<http://efanzines.com/Alexiad/index.htm>

*Askance* #54, Dec. 2022, John Purcell, 3744 Marielene Circle, College Station, TX 77845-3926 USA, [askance73@gmail.com](mailto:askance73@gmail.com)

*CyberCozen* #34:10, Nov. 2022, E-mail: [leybl\\_botwinik@yahoo.com](mailto:leybl_botwinik@yahoo.com), archived at: <http://fanac.org/fanzines/CyberCozen/> and <http://efanzines.com/CyberCozen/index.htm> .

*FANAC Newsletter* #20, Dec. 11, 2022, Joe Siclari, [estern7770@gmail.com](mailto:estern7770@gmail.com) (an email newsletter).

*FanActivity Gazette*, Volume 2 Number 7, Dec. 2022, News of Fen of Interest to All Fen, Edited by George Phillies, [phillies@4liberty.net](mailto:phillies@4liberty.net) , 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester MA 10609, Appropriate Contributions welcome.

*La C'hronicā* #12.22, Dec. 6, 2022, from the Kingdom of Talossa's Chancery Communications, [Chancerycommunications@outlook.com](mailto:Chancerycommunications@outlook.com). The monthly news summary provided by the Ministry of Stuff, for the enlightenment and interest of Talossan citizens and all other interested parties.

*MT VOID* ##2251-3, Dec. 2022, Co-Editor: Mark Leeper, [mleeper@optonline.net](mailto:mleeper@optonline.net), Co-Editor: Evelyn Leeper, [eleeper@optonline.net](mailto:eleeper@optonline.net), Sending Address: [evelynchimelisleeper@gmail.com](mailto:evelynchimelisleeper@gmail.com), All material is copyrighted by author unless otherwise noted., All comments sent or posted will be assumed authorized for, inclusion unless otherwise noted., To subscribe or unsubscribe, send mail to [eleeper@optonline.net](mailto:eleeper@optonline.net), The latest issue is at <http://www.leepers.us/mtvoid/latest.htm>., An index with links to the issues of the MT VOID since 1986 is at, [http://leepers.us/mtvoid/back\\_issues.htm](http://leepers.us/mtvoid/back_issues.htm).

*Origin* #58, Dec. 2022, Edited by John Thiel, 30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, Indiana 47904, email [kinethiel@mymetronet.net](mailto:kinethiel@mymetronet.net)

*Perryscope* #29, December 2022, is an issue of the personalzine published monthly by **Perry Middlemiss**, 32 Elphin Grove, Hawthorn, Victoria, AUSTRALIA 3122. E: [perry@middlemiss.org](mailto:perry@middlemiss.org)

*SF Commentary* #111, Dec. 2022, edited and published by, Bruce Gillespie, 5 Howard Street, Greensborough, VIC 3088, Australia., Email: [gandc001@bigpond.com](mailto:gandc001@bigpond.com) . For both print (portrait) and landscape (widescreen) editions, go to <https://efanzines.com/SFC/index.html>

*The Baloobius* #10, Taral Wayne, 245 Dunn Ave. Apt. 2111, Toronto, Ontario, M6K 1S6, Canada. Email [Taral@bell.net](mailto:Taral@bell.net) . Taral's personalzine title will change after this issue.

*The National Fantasy Fan* #81:12, Dec. 2022, Editors, TNFF George Phillies [phillies@4liberty.net](mailto:phillies@4liberty.net); Jon Swartz [jon\\_swartz@hotmail.com](mailto:jon_swartz@hotmail.com)

*The Visionary*, Dec. 2022, The Universal Life Church, Universal Life Church Ministries, 2720 1st Ave S, Seattle, WA 98134, [newsletter@themonastery.org](mailto:newsletter@themonastery.org)

*This Here* #60, Nic Farey, is (mostly) written, edited and produced by: **Nic Farey**, published on efanzines.com by the Grace of Burns. Locs & that to: 2657 Rungsted Street, Las Vegas NV 89142, or Email [fareynic@gmail.com](mailto:fareynic@gmail.com)

*Tightbeam* 339, Dec. 2022, , George Phillies [phillies@4liberty.net](mailto:phillies@4liberty.net) 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester, MA 01609. , Jon Swartz [jon\\_swartz@hotmail.com](mailto:jon_swartz@hotmail.com)

*The Zine Dump* #56, Nov. 2022, , Guy H. Lillian III, author and editor, 1390 Holly Avenue, Merritt Island FL 32952, our physical address, [GHLIII@yahoo.com](mailto:GHLIII@yahoo.com)