

# FanActivity Gazette

Volume 3 Number 2

July 2023

News of Fen of Interest to All Fen

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## Editorial

### Welcome to New FanActivity Gazette Editor Mindy Hunt!

I'm pleased to report that the baton is being passed from my Editorship to our new FanActivity Gazette Editor Mindy Hunt. Mindy may be familiar for her details and extensive listing of science fiction conventions and her participation with her husband Jason P. Hunt in their web site SciFi4Me.com.

Articles for the next issue should be sent to the new Editor Mindy Hunt <mindyhunt@scifi4me.com>.

This issue edited by George Phillies, phillies@4liberty.net, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester MA 10609  
Appropriate Contributions welcome.

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Neffers:

Way behind as usual am I. So much happening, so much to do, and not enough sleep. This is usually the case, and increased heat and smoke outside isn't helping. Yet, I want to get caught up with comments on three issues of the FanActivity Gazette, Vol. 2, Nos. 11 and 12, and Vol. 3, No. 1.

V2#11...the anime convention we worked and sold at was a grand success. It enjoyed record attendance, and we enjoyed record sales. I hope to vend there again, but the two of us running that vendors' hall again? Well, we shall see...

Work on Amazing continues apace...I have a number of stories in to Kermit Woodall to keep things going for a couple of months, but I still have a lot of submissions to farm out to our readers.

Romanian friends never mention Dracula, hm... I re-read it a few years ago, and I figure I'd rather have the book to read rather than the plethora of vampire movies out there. What few vampire movies I saw, I yawned.

V2#12...I hope Mindy Hunt is getting lots of listings through the convention list I produce for the greater Toronto area, listing cons in western, southern and eastern Ontario, southern Quebec, western New York and eastern Michigan. This past weekend, we were vendors at the Forest City Comic Con in London, Ontario, and I didn't see that listed.

V3#1...there are times when we are the only ones who think our SFnal history if worth anything, but then, stories like MIT paying to restore MITSFS's flood-damaged library help to change my mind.

After our second honeymoon in Kingston, Ontario, we then ran part of, and vended at, Anime North, our massive local anime convention, with record sales for us, and record attendance (35,141 official, but probably more than 40k warm bodies). We are realizing we may be over-extending ourselves and our finances, and will be able to go to the local parks, but not much more. We will be making some hard decisions.

That's about all for now, see you with the next issues.

Yours, Lloyd Penney

## Fanfaronade

### Related Fanzines by Heath Row

Telegraphs & Tar Pits #71

Fan-Fare Vol. 2 #3 (March 1951) This bimonthly fiction fanzine edited by W. Paul Ganley and R.E. Briney (see above) offers fiction, poetry, and other features. The letter column, "What the Cat Dragged in" includes reader comments on past issues and their stories, including work by Del Close. "Truly, most fan fiction is pretty bad—this was surprisingly good," wrote Mack Reynolds, who was at the time collaborating with Fredric Brown. "In fact I've seen stories no better in pro-magazines."

Eugene DeWeese's "Experiment," the cover story, is relatively well written—to Reynolds's point above—and offers some speculative science that sets up a solid ending. "A Paradox of Dreams" by Tom Covington is less well written and somewhat more dense, providing a wartime tale featuring a sort of BEM. And Toby Duane's "A Sirius Matter" touches on robotics, nuclear physics, and a Sirian invasion.

The "special feature article," Marie-Louise's "It's a Lie!," considers the importance of names. Poetry by Jerry F. Cao, Duane, Helen Louise Soucy, Andrew Duane, and Lee Gann represent a variety of forms, largely well written and interesting. Cao and Andrew Duane's contributions are particularly promising.

There's a book review column commenting on three books by H.P. Lovecraft and Nelson Bond; news items from the United Scientific and Cultural Organization, a school honor society, and the N.T.H.S. News Association; and a fanzine review column titled "Fanimestations," which is a great name.

In some ways, Fan-Fare reminds me of John Thiel's Pablo Lennis, or vice versa. Not many fanzines publish fiction these days, and rather than consider such fanfiction—unless it draws on other literary and media properties—perhaps there's still room for amateur fiction in fandom. If interested, you can read this issue of Fan-Fare yourself at <https://tinyurl.com/Fan-FareV2N3>.

Utopian #11 (November 1952) Edited by R.J. Banks Jr. (see above), this mimeographed fanzine also features a good assortment of fiction. An editorial by Banks discusses the fanzine's publishing frequency and mentions a club in Texas, as well as a forthcoming reviewzine titled Promag Parade. (Though reading the fanzine suggests that that's the title of the prozine review section. See below.) He also teases upcoming stories.

Banks's "The Thing" is a sequel to Bruce Lane's "The Griffin's Report" and focuses on fantastic creatures, a

reinstated monarch, Sinbad the sailor, and King Oberon. It's a bit of a youthful mashup, but the story's enthusiasm and energy is evident. "Planet Undesirable" by Forest de Vane takes place largely in our solar system, involving Mars, Saturn, and beef stew of all things.

Earl Newlin's "The Pool of Thought" considers mechanical men and mind control. "The Child" by Don Howard Donnel is a postapocalyptic piece, and one of the better stories. And "The Last Ride," a poem by Terence Heywood, is quite good.

Apparently, the editor and contributors were associated with the National Fantasy Fan Federation because there's an "N3F Fen Kriss Kross" by Sandy Charnoff, who contributes other crossword puzzles. And Leif Ayen offers a somewhat lengthy and poorly typed biographical sketch of Edgar Allan Poe.

Additional content includes reviews of contemporary prozines, including Famous Fantastic Mysteries. The table of contents on p. 45 indicates that Neffers could subscribe to the fanzine at a discounted rate and that "Promag Parade" was also offered as a standalone supplement.

At 46 pages, this is an impressive fanzine. Clearly oriented toward literary fen, active readers and writers, it's a promising model even for modern fanzines. I appreciated the combination of short stories and poetry, author profiles, and reviews. Those interested can access the issue at <https://tinyurl.com/Utopian11>.

## Conventions for August Mindy Hunt

Each month we will provide a list of conventions from around the world.

This list is constantly being updated throughout the month. You can find our full events list as well as a calendar at <http://scifi4me.com/conventions-events/>.

During the week, we also publish articles with any schedule changes or cancellations. Visit <http://scifi4me.com/> regularly to find these.

We also provide semi-regular updates on our TV channel <http://scifi4me.tv/>

We are always looking to keep the list and calendar as current as possible. If you know of a local event, big or little, send us and email at [events@scifi4me.com](mailto:events@scifi4me.com) so we can add it and make it the most comprehensive conventions list on the internet.

AUG 3-6

VIRTUAL

Gen Con – Indianapolis, IN Aug 3-6

ON-SITE

Gen Con – Indianapolis, IN Aug 3-6

Pulpfest – Pittsburg, PA Aug 3-6

Star Trek Las Vegas – Las Vegas, NV Aug 3-6

AnimagiC – Mannheim, Germany Aug 4-6

ArmadilloCon – Austin, TX Aug 4-6

CanFURence – Ottawa, Ontario, Canada Aug 4-6

Fan Expo Boston – Boston, MA Aug 4-6

GCX– Orlando, FL Aug 4-6

KenTokyoCon – Lexington, KY Aug 4-6  
LeakyCon – Chicago, IL Aug 4-6  
The Highlanders – Birmingham, United Kingdom Aug 4-6  
When Worlds Collide – Calgary, Alberta, Canada Aug 4-6  
Ama-Con – Amarillo, TX Aug 5-6  
Big Lick Comic Con – Roanoke, VA Aug 5-6  
Bowling Green Comic & Anime Show – Bowling Green, KY Aug 5-6  
Bristol Anime & Gaming Con – Bristol, United Kingdom Aug 5-6  
Fountain City Con – New Century, KS Aug 5-6  
Momento Con – Pittsburgh, PA Aug 5-6  
Oddities & Curiosities Expo – Buffalo, NY Aug 5-6  
St Louis Mighty Con – St Louis, MO Aug 5-6  
Surrey Steampunk Convival – New Malden, United Kingdom Aug 5-6  
Animangapop Summer! – Plymouth, United Kingdom Aug 5  
Norwich Brick Festival – Norwich, United Kingdom Aug 5  
London Comic Mart – Toronto, Ontario, Canada Aug 6  
Wayne NJ Toy Show – Wayne, NJ Aug 6

AUG 10-13

VIRTUAL

ON-SITE

Anime Matsuri – Houston, TX Aug 10-13  
Fan Expo Chicago – Chicago, IL Aug 10-13  
QuakeCon – Grapevine, TX Aug 10-13  
Houston Horror Film Fest Horror Convention – Houston, TX Aug 10-13  
Abunai! Convention – Koningshof, Netherlands Aug 11-13  
Anime-Zing! – Davenport, IA Aug 11-13  
Everfree Northwest – Seattle, WA Aug 11-13  
Game On Expo – Phoenix, AZ Aug 11-13  
Long Island Retro Gaming Expo – Garden City, NY Aug 11-13  
Maturicon – Columbus, OH Aug 11-13  
Smoky Mountain Fan Fest – Gatlinburg, TN Aug 11-13  
Station Unity – National Harbor, MD Aug 11-13  
TFNation – Birmingham, United Kingdom Aug 11-13  
FestiGame – Santiago, Chile Aug 12-14  
Ani-Medford – Medford, OR Aug 12-13  
AniBash – Rochester, NY Aug 12-13  
Comic World Taiwan Taipei Show – Taipei City, Taiwan Aug 12-13  
Dublin Comic Con Summer – Dublin, Ireland Aug 12-13  
Elftopia – Ooidonk, Belgium Aug 12-13  
FarleyCon – East Ridge, TN Aug 12-13  
Flame Con – New York City, NY Aug 12-13  
Huntington Comic & Toy Convention – Huntington, WV Aug 12-13  
London Anime & Gaming Con – London, United Kingdom Aug 12-13  
New Orleans Comic Con – New Orleans, LA Aug 12-13  
Oddities & Curiosities Expo – Richmond, VA Aug 12-13  
Creature Con – Concord, CA Aug 12  
Eckman's Card, Comic, and Toy Show – San Antonio, TX Aug 12  
FayettevilleCon – Fayetteville, NC Aug 12

Hull Brick Festival – Kingston upon Hull, United Kingdom Aug 12  
Midwest Comic Book Convention South Bend – South Bend, IN Aug 12  
Sarasotacon – Sarasota, FL Aug 12  
Midwest Comic Book Convention Springfield – Springfield, IL Aug 13

AUG 17-20

VIRTUAL

ON-SITE

Field of Games – Northfields, United Kingdom Aug 17-21  
HistoriKC Fest – Overland Park, KC Aug 17-20  
Nashcon – Franklin, TN Aug 17-20  
NecronomiCon – Indianapolis, IN Aug 18-20  
Anime Magic! – Rosemont, IL Aug 18-20  
Anime Revolution – Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada Aug 18-20  
Creation Charlotte – Charlotte, NC Aug 18-20  
Geek'd Con – Shreveport, LA Aug 18-20  
Long Island Doctor Who Convention – Holtsville, NY Aug 18-20  
SDHist Con East – Newport, RI Aug 18-20  
Witchbomb – London, United Kingdom Aug 18-20  
Epic Nerd Camp – Darlington, MD Aug 19-23  
AnchorCon – Clayton, NY Aug 19-20  
Comic World Taiwan Kaohsiung – Kaohsiung City, Taiwan Aug 19-20  
Eastern Rim Funny Book & Vintage Con – Baytown, TX Aug 19-20  
GeekCraft Expo Madison – Madison, WI Aug 19-20  
The Long Island Tropic Con – Hauppauge, NY Aug 19-20  
Shikkaricon – Philadelphia, PA Aug 19-20  
Soda City Comic Con – Columbia, SC Aug 19-20  
Stars of Time Film & Comic Con – Weston-super-Mare, United Kingdom Aug 19-20  
Collingwood Comicon – Collingwood, Ontario, Canada Aug 19  
Hero Hype Expo Orlando – Orlando, FL Aug 19  
Oddities & Curiosities Expo – Philadelphia, PA Aug 19  
Plastic City Comic Con – Fitchburg, MA Aug 19  
Richmond VA Comic Con – Richmond, VA Aug 19  
The Infinity Toy and Comic Convention – Kissimmee, FL Aug 19  
Vaughan Con – Vaughan, Ontario, Canada Aug 19  
Capital Trade Shows – Ottawa, Ontario, Canada Aug 20  
Raleigh Comic Book Show – Raleigh, NC Aug 20  
San Jose Comic Con – San Jose, CA Aug 20

AUG 24-27

VIRTUAL

ON-SITE

Camp Feral! – Toronto, Ontario, Canada Aug 24-28  
Cologne Gamescon – Cologne, Germany Aug 24-27  
Fan Expo Canada – Toronto, Ontario, Canada Aug 24-27  
TactiCon – Aurora, CO Aug 24-27  
KC Spirit & Paranormal Convention – Overland Park, KS Aug 25-27

The Vampire Diaries/The Originals Official Reunion Convention – New Orleans, LA Aug 25-27  
Colorado Springs Comic Con – Colorado Springs, CO Aug 25-27  
FallCon – Calgary, Alberta, Canada Aug 25-27  
International Kids Film Festival – San Diego, CA Aug 25-27  
Maricopa Con – Phoenix, AZ Aug 25-27  
Planet Funk Con – Davenport, IA Aug 25-27  
PopCon Indy – Indianapolis, IN Aug 25-27  
Tabletop Scotland – Perth, United Kingdom Aug 25-27  
Ultracon of South Florida – West Palm Beach, FL Aug 25-27  
Windblume Festival – Frisco, TX Aug 25-27  
Wizardfest Magic Convention – Anaheim, CA Aug 25-27  
Collect-A-Con Long Beach – Long Beach, CA Aug 26-27  
Comic World Taiwan Taiwan Center – Taichung City, Taiwan Aug 26-27  
Dallas Comic Show – Dallas, TX Aug 26-27  
Fort Collins Comic Con – Fort Collins, CO Aug 26-27  
Harrisburg Comic & Pop Con – Harrisburg, PA Aug 26-27  
Retro World Expo – Hartford, CT Aug 26-27  
Indie Horror Film Festival – Chicago, IL Aug 26  
EtownCon – Elizabethtown, KY Aug 26  
GanBatte – Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada Aug 26  
Oddities & Curiosities Expo – Pittsburgh, PA Aug 26  
TennoCon – London, Ontario, Canada Aug 26

Aug 31-4

## VIRTUAL

### ON-SITE

Dragon Con – Atlanta, GA Aug 31-4  
PAX West – Seattle, WA Sep 1-4  
Fanboy Expo Orlando – Orlando, FL Sep 1-3  
GrandCon – Grand Rapids, MI Sep 1-3  
Meta Con – Minneapolis, MN Sep 1-3  
No Brand Con – Wisconsin Dells, WI Sep 1-3  
SacAnime – Sacramento, CA Sep 1-3  
SaltCON End of Summer – Layton, UT Sep 1-3  
San Japan – San Antonio, TX Sep 1-3  
SCG Con Columbus – Columbus, OH Sep 1-3  
Tucson Comic Con – Tucson, AZ Sep 1-3  
Zolocon – Warminster, PA Sep 1-3  
BrickUniverse Nashville – Nashville, TN Sep 2-3  
Collectormania Film & Comic Con – Birmingham, United Kingdom Sep 2-3  
Long Beach Comic Con – Long Beach, CA Sep 2-3  
NICE – Bedford, United Kingdom Sep 2-3  
Rob-Con – Abingdon, VA Sep 2-3  
Eurofurence – Berlin, Germany Sep 3-7  
Wayne NJ Toy Show – Wayne, NJ Sep 3  
Turlock Toy-Anime-Comic Con – Turlock, CA Sep 4

## Science Fiction Pro and Fan Birthdays Heath Row

This list of fandom-related birthdays was first published by Bruce Pelz in the *Fantasy Amateur Press Association*. Andrew Porter published and updated the list for *Science Fiction Chronicle*. Updates are welcome!

Unless stated otherwise, all birthdays are in the 20th century.

### August

Raymond A. Palmer, 8/1/10; Edd Cartier, 8/1/14; Robert Holdstock, 8/2/48; Joe Siclari, 8/2/49; Hope Leibowitz, 8/2/52; Clifford D. Simak, 8/3/04; Jon De Chancie, 8/3/46; Rick Norwood, 8/4/42; Taras Wolansky, 8/4; Doug Crepeau, 8/5/40; Kathleen Goldin, 8/5/43; Spencer Pinney, 8/5/54; Gerald Kersh, 8/6/11; Piers Anthony, 8/6/34; Eva C. Whitley, 8/6/55; Todd Mason, 8/6/64; Milton Lesser, 8/7/28; Mike Hinge, 8/7/31; Jerry Pournelle, 8/7/33; Terry Garey, 8/7/48

John D. Berry, 8/8/50; Jim Hollander, 8/8/52; Jack Speer, 8/9/20; Daniel Keyes, 8/9/27; John Varley, 8/9/47; Victor Koman, 8/9/54; Tim Merrigan, 8/9/54; Curt Siodmak, 8/10/02; Ward Moore, 8/10/03; Alexis Gilliland, 8/10/31.

Alan Nourse, 8/11/28; Chester D. Anderson, 8/11/32; Bruce Pelz, 8/11/36; Bonnie Goodknight, 8/11/48; Nate Bucklin, 8/11/49; Gerald W. Page, 8/12/39; Ralph Green Jr., 8/12/56; Lee Hoffman, 8/14/32; Alexei Panshin, 8/14/40;

Bjo Trimble, 8/15/33; John R. Palmer, 8/15/58; Hugo Gernsback, 8/16/1884; Walt Lee, 8/16/31; Andrew J. Offutt, 8/16/34; Tim Dumont, 8/16/40; Bruce Newrock, 8/16/41; Edie Stern, 8/16/52; Brian Aldiss, 8/18/25; Sylvia Dees, 8/18/39; Paul Skelton, 8/18/47; D.G. Compton, 8/19/30; Drew Whyte, 8/19/40; Dwain Kaiser, 8/19/47; Austin Wright, 8/20/1883; H.P. Lovecraft, 8/20/1890; Arthur Porges, 8/20/15; Greg Bear, 8/20/51.

Miriam Allen deFord, 8/21/1888; Anthony Boucher, 8/21/11; Gene Roddenberry, 8/21/21; Arthur Thomson, 8/21/27; Ron Dee, 8/21/57; Ray Bradbury, 8/22/20; Susan Wood, 8/22/48; Chuck Rothman, 8/22/52; Gavin Claypool, 8/22/54; Stanton A. Coblenz, 8/24/1896; Rich Wannan, 8/24/46; Jeff Wanshel, 8/24/47; Marilyn "Fuzzy Pink" Niven, 8/25/40; Bob Jennings, 8/25/43; Jeffrey A. Carver, 8/25/49; Paula Marmor, 8/25/50; Chris Barkley, 8/25/56

Otto Binder, 8/26/11; Allan Rothstein, 8/26/41; Sheila Gilbert, Fred Haskell, 8/26/49; T.L. Sherred, 8/27/15; Kelly Freas, 8/27/22; Ken Rudolph, 8/27/41; Robert Lichtman, 8/27/42; Ed Bryant, 8/27/45; Jean Berman, Darrell Schweitzer, 8/27/52; Bob Garcia, 8/27/58; Kevin Standlee, 8/27/65; Jack Vance, 8/28/16; Vonda McIntyre, 8/28/48; Barbara Hambly, 8/28/51; Don Wilcox, 8/29/05; Thomas Scortia, 8/29/26; Virginia Aalko, 8/29/39; Dian Crayne, 8/29/42; Robert Weinberg, 8/29/46; Michael Kube-McDowell, Ellen Green, 8/29/54; Kathryn Arwen Trimble, 8/29/64

Mary Shelley, 8/30/1797; Ray Cummings, 8/30/1887; D. Jeanette Holloman, 8/30/55; Phil Bronson, 8/31/24; Alan J. Lewis, 8/31/42; Robert Adams, 8/31/43.

To update this list, contact Heath Row at [kalel@well.com](mailto:kalel@well.com) via email with the subject "Science Fiction Pro and Fan Birthdays" or something similar.



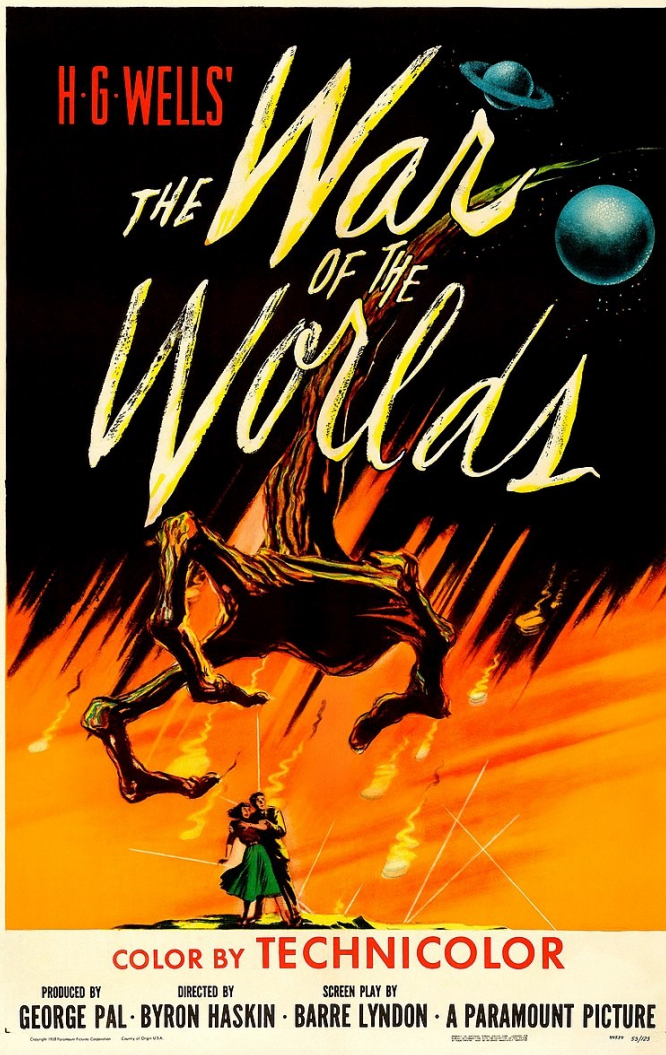
August 2023

In August 1953 Paramount Pictures released “The War of the Worlds”, produced by George Pal. The film was an immediate hit, grossing over two million dollars at the box office and becoming the most successful science fiction film of the decade.

Paramount had originally bought the film rights to the H.G. Wells novel in 1925, but plans for production were interrupted by the stock market crash in 1929. The studio tried to restage the picture in the mid 1930s but the anticipated cost caused the project to be shelved again. Both Alfred Hitchcock and Alexander Korda expressed interest in making the film. Wells himself was consulted, but nothing actually developed until George Pal was assigned the project in 1951.

Pal originally wanted a more faithful adaptation of the story, but studio mavens insisted the locality be changed to southern California, and that a romantic interest be created. In addition, the time line of the Martian invasion and its conclusion was deliberately speeded up to maximize scenes of chaos, panic, and destruction.

In the book the Martians are successful in thwarting all human resistance, but are stopped by bacteria roughly three weeks after they landed on planet Earth. In the film



the Martian invaders face ferocious resistance, including being blasted by an atomic bomb dropped with pinpoint accuracy, but are completely unaffected by anything the humans can come up with, and they expire from bacterial infections after a mere three days. Other major plot changes include creating a heroic religious minister who becomes a martyr, and a strong emphasis on religious faith being more important than scientific ingenuity, something Wells himself, an outspoken skeptic when it came to religion, would never have approved.

The special effects for the movie won an Academy Award, and remain impressive to this day. The pace of the picture accelerates in dynamic fashion after an almost leisurely preamble, with the climax being both startling and awe inspiring even if you already know what is going to happen. Unfortunately when the original 3-strip Technicolor prints were replaced by cheaper Eastman Color copies in the 1960s many of the special effects appear degraded. More recent restorations have returned the film to its original glory, particularly the 4K Dolby Vision shot from the original Technicolor negatives, available on iTunes and DVD/BluRay discs as part of the Criterion Collection. The Criterion edition includes extensive background info and commentary by the surviving stars of the original production.

It is impossible to overstate the influence this film had on science fiction media and on the science fiction literary world itself. This film became a golden standard against which all serious science fiction media thereafter was compared. The style and pacing of the film directly affected the way science fiction stories were told over the twenty years following the movie’s release. The movie was named one of the most influential films ever made and is preserved in the National Film Registry. In 2004 it was awarded a Retro Hugo as the best SF film of 1953. There have been other media versions of H. G. Wells’ monumental novel, but this picture, the 1953 version of “The War of the Worlds” remains the iconic landmark.



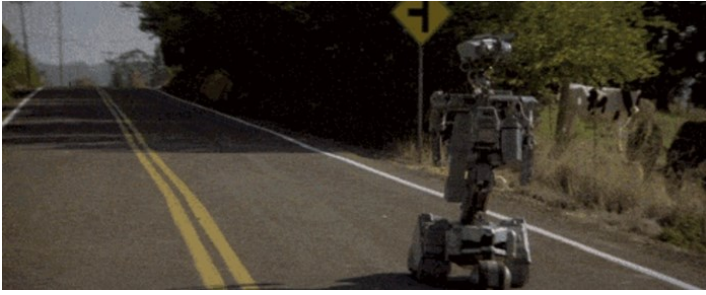
# August 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 National Mahjong Day	2 Find a Four Leaf Clover Day	3 Grab Some Nuts Day	4 National Water Balloon Day	5 National Sandcastle Day
6 National Fresh Breath Day	7 National Lighthouse Day	8 National Sneak Some Zucchini Onto Your Neighbor's Porch Day	9 Book Lover's Day	10 National S'mores Day	11 National Kool Aid Day	12 National Garage Sale Day
13 Left Handers Day	14 National Creamsicle Day	15 National Relaxation Day	16 National Roller Coaster Day	17 National Thriftshop Day	18 National Bad Poetry Day	19 National Potato Day
20 National Radio Day	21 Senior Citizens Day	22 National Tooth Fairy Day	23 Ride the Wind Day	24 Versuvius Day	25 Bob Jennings' Birthday! (He's OLD)	26 National Toilet Paper Day
27 Just Because Day	28 Race Your Mouse Day	29 International Bat Day	30 Frankenstein Day	31 National Trail Mix Day		



## Short Circuit My Heart: Johnny 5 Is Still Alive! Mindy Hunt

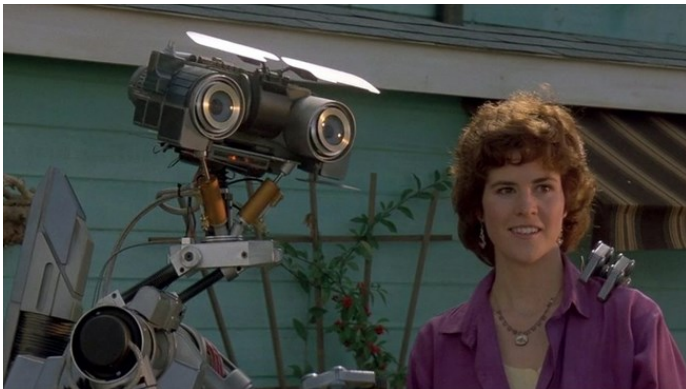
I decided to spend my evening watching a childhood favorite, Short Circuit. As a kid, I remember loving the movie, wanting a million animals like Ally Sheedy's character, some form of a toy with tank-like wheels for myself, and, oh yeah, a robot best friend who does not have a normal robot personality. Re-watching the film as an adult, I was surprised at all the cheesy adult humor I missed as a kid and found myself enjoying the show even more.



NOVA Laboratories develops five prototype robots called Strategic Artificially Intelligent Nuclear Transport's or S.A.I.N.T.'s for the US military. After a presentation, one of the bots, Number 5 (voiced by Tim Blaney), is struck by lightning, ends up reprogrammed, and manages to find himself off the lab's campus. Because of his dangerous nature, a full-blown military style search led by Skroeder (G.W. Bailey) ensues. Al-

so searching for Number 5 are his creators, Newton Crosby (Steve Guttenberg) and Ben Jabituya (Fisher Stevens).

Stephanie Speck (Ally Sheedy) finds Number 5 while he is recharging himself in her food truck and mistakes him for an alien. Number 5 educates himself, satisfying a need of "input," with her books and television. Stephanie attempts to turn him in to NOVA when she realizes he is a military invention, only to discover they want to disassemble him. Number 5 learns to understand the term disassemble when he accidentally kills a grasshopper, and realizes it cannot be reassembled. He tries to flee but is captured by Newton and Ben. Number 5 escapes and returns to Stephanie for protection, sparking interest in his creators because of his unusual "I'm alive" behavior.



Following numerous escapes from the soldiers, Stephanie and Number 5 meet up with Newton and convince him that Number 5 is alive. However, when they are discovered by the soldiers, Number 5 tries to escape and is blown up by a helicopter. This devastates Stephanie and Newton. After they leave the scene, Number 5 reveals himself, having used the spare parts in Newton's work van to create a fake Number 5. Now that he is a free individual, he decides he needs to have a real name. He chooses Johnny 5 based off El DeBarge's song "Who's Johnny?".

Now that I am watching this as adult, I have a little more appreciation for the film. First, I love the relationship between Newton and Ben, two nerd creators whose lives are spent inside their lab.

Their lack of social interaction with the outside world leads to some awkward and hilarious conversations and moments.

Speaking of conversations, here is a list of some quotes that tickled my fancy, some of which I would not have understood as a kid:

Number 5: Hey, laser lips, your mama was a snow blower.

Number 5: [confused when Stephanie is in the bathtub] Stephanie... change color! Attractive! Nice software.

Ben Jabituya: With excitement like this, who is needing enemas?

Ben Jabituya: "As we are fond of saying in my country, market place make dull home for rodents."

Newton Crosby: "Where are you from anyway?"

Ben Jabituya: "Bakersfield originally."

Newton Crosby: "No, I mean your ancestors."

Ben Jabituya: "Oh, them... Pittsburgh."

Ben Jabituya: I am thinking she is a virgin, or at least she used to be.

Ben Jabituya: Newton, you know what is out there in the great outdoors? Girls. Mmmmm! With brassieres and legs – mmm. You have a working knowledge of girls?

Newton Crosby: No, but I read about ‘em.

Ben Jabituya: Oh, then... maybe I can furnish you with some schematic drawings?



Aside from newly appreciated adult humor, the movie does bring up an interesting topic: what happens when a robot is able to think for itself, becoming ‘alive’?

Machines are usually considered intelligent because of the vast knowledge they are programmed with. This movie shows the positive side of when a machine can think for itself. However, what about an angry robot? With the information they have about almost anything and everything, they could be a danger. I guess it would depend on how they received their knowledge. In the instance of Number 5, he gained his "input" through books owned by Stephanie, who is positive and caring (I mean, look at all her animals...)

and television, which includes watching The Three Stooges and Saturday Night Fever (for dancing lessons). Moreover, with the support of Stephanie, he has more of a ‘good’ personality versus the destructiveness usually portrayed by self thinking robots because of their oppression by the human race.

So, like humans, if a robot becomes an ‘alive person,’ will the outcome of their personality and choices be based on nurture over nature?



Or am I thinking too hard for a fun good-natured film? It's quite possible my grown-up brain is trying to get in the way of some simple entertainment. But, now that I have enjoyed it as an adult, I may even dive into the sequel, 1988's Short Circuit 2. I do not remember much of it now, but I am sure I will possibly enjoy the trip down memory road as much as I did re-watching this.

## Mangaverse Calls for Articles (added at the last minute)

Hello and good evening!

Patrick “patokon” Ijima-Washburn here calling fandom friends and artists for stories and art for an upcoming issue of Mangaverse. Mangaverse is a fanzine edited by myself and combines essays and articles from manga/anime fans, scholars, and Japanophiles with art from talented artists from all over the world including many from Japan. Our past issues are distributed for free to members of the National Fantasy Fan Federation (the oldest still-operating non local speculative fiction fan club) and can be found here also for free: <https://tnfff.org/mangaverse/>.

## THEMES

This upcoming issue is split into two main themes:

LEIJI MATSUMOTO and his MULTIVERSE

VIRTUAL ARTIST ALLEY (any kind of fantastic art)

## SUBMISSIONS

We are looking for the following submissions related to 1. above Articles, essays, or FAN ART directly or peripherally related to Leiji Matsumoto the man himself or his manga or anime works Articles, essays, or FAN ART about Japanese culture or pop-culture Articles, essays, or FAN ART about world comics or animation

We are looking for the following submissions related to 2. above YOUR original fantastic ARTWORK If you have any questions or queries regarding article or art ideas, contact me Patrick at [patokon.com@gmail.com](mailto:patokon.com@gmail.com)

## DEADLINES

Deadlines for articles is August 31st, 2023

Deadline for art is September 9th, 2023