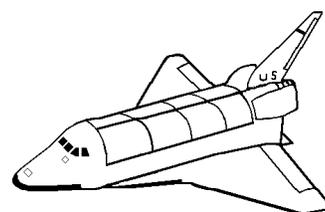


The



SHUTTLE
April 2004

*The Next NASFA Meeting will be 17 April
2004 at the Regular Time and Location*

ConCom Meeting 2P, 2 May 2004 at Mike Kennedy's House

🔔 Oyez, Oyez 🔔

The next NASFA meeting will be **17 April 2004** at the **regular time** (6P) and the **regular location**. Call BookMark at 256-881-3910 if you need directions.

The **April program** will be a talk by Marcia Lindstrom of the U. S. Space & Rocket Center Foundation on the Saturn V Restoration Project. The Saturn V located in Huntsville is one of only three still extant.

The April **after-the-meeting meeting** will be at Tracey and Jim Kennedy's house — 107 Madison Pointe Place, Madison AL 35758-1047. There will be directions available at the April meeting. We need volunteers for future ATMMs.

The next Con+Stellation XXIII: Delphinus **concom meeting** will be Sunday 2 May 2004 (2P, Mike Kennedy's house). Future concom meetings are tentatively scheduled for the Sunday after the first Saturday each month.

Local Activities in April

Mike Stone informs us that the Arab Musical Theatre is staging a production of *The Wizard of Oz*. By the time this issue sees print, the first weekend will have passed, but performances will still be available 15–17 April. The production includes scenes that were cut from the MGM movie version, such as the Jitterbug scene. Mike's daughter Jenna is one of the Munchkins. More information can be found at <arabmusicaltheatre.org> or by calling 256-931-AMTI (2684).

The Flying Monkey Arts Center <flyingmonkeyarts.org>, 1230 Putman Drive, Huntsville, will be the venue for a screening of indie sf film *The American Astronaut* on Thursday 15 April at 7P. The film will be followed by the band The Billy Nayer Show at approximately 9P. Cory McAbee, who wrote, directed, and starred in *The American Astronaut* is one of the

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Deadline for the May 2004 issue of *The NASFA Shuttle* is Friday, 30 April 2004.

(Local Activities — continued from page 1)
principles in The Billy Nayer Show. Admission is only \$5.

Many local *Shuttle* readers will recall that there was a first-time anime convention in Madison around this time last year. Well, they're back, albeit under a different name. PersaCon will be 30 April–2 May 2004 at the Ramada Inn on Madison Boulevard. More information can be found on line at <www.persacon.com>.

The Road to Damascus

a Book Review
by Kevin Pulliam

The Road to Damascus, by John Ringo and Linda Evans, Baen Books, March 2004, hardback, ISBN 0-7434-7187-3, 688pp, \$25.00

The Road to Damascus is a book set in the shared Bolo universe created by Keith Laumer. For those of you unfamiliar with the Bolo setting, a Bolo is an intelligent Tank (notice the capital T, think 3–5 stories tall, with a track-print the size of a fast food parking lot) created by humanity to help wage wars and defend against alien invaders. Enough said... If intelligent tanks aren't your thing — read on anyway. They aren't my thing either. In fact, I hadn't planned on buying and reading this book until it came out in paperback, but when the opportunity presented itself, I jumped.

The book begins with an unhappy Bolo, *Sonny* in a state of disrepair, slowly advancing through a deserted war zone. Unlike some books, the cover actually depicts a scene that occurs in the book. Early on, *Sonny* comes face to face with a young boy wielding a toy popgun. Faced with a need to complete his mission, he decides that the boy must be sacrificed and attempts to move forward anyway only to find that he can't move. Try as he might, *Sonny* cannot move forward. Backwards is ok, and turned to one side is ok as well, until the boy interjects himself again, and *Sonny* is again stymied. Faced with an apparent crisis of programming consciousness, *Sonny* delves back into his past to examine the strange mess that has become his programming. Yes, I admit that it is an obvious flashback setup, and yes it felt clumsy, but from here on out the book got much better.

20 years ago — *Sonny* and his commander Simon Khrustinov arrive on the planet Jefferson to begin their new posting together (and Simon's sunset command). They have been dispatched to a relative backwater planet, as a thin line of defense against a galactic menace the *Deng* — for more details, you'll just have to read the book.

This book is also more than just your basic military science fiction romp through a battlefield of googlewatt lasers, limited nuclear exchanges, and devastation galore. There is a decent love and family theme, with a variety of heartbreak and personal pain that isn't so far fetched. There is also a distinct political debate. (Can you call a war a debate with *really loud* people debating?) If you politically lean to the right, you will probably enjoy this book, as it has a definite libertarian, or at least personal freedom feel to it. If you politically lean to the left, you may not like this book for the same reasons. Regardless of which way you lean left, right, or fluttering in the breeze, this book will remind you or cause you to think about some of the many things we take for granted everyday. Love your children, protect your family, and above all: Think for yourself.

Deep Mid Upper South Con

a Convention Review
by Mike Kennedy

DeepSouthCon holds a special place in my heart. The first significant sf con I attended was (if I have my dates straight) DSC 16 in Atlanta (1978). Over the years since then, I've made many wonderful memories at DSCs.

A fair amount of my personal fannish history is also wrapped up with the MidSouthCon name. In 1980 Andy Purcell brought a convention by that name to Huntsville and it was at that con that a sign-up sheet was posted that eventually led to the founding of NASFA (and later Con†Stellation). It's my understanding that the MSC name currently in use in Memphis traces to this Huntsville con, more than to what was retroactively named DSC 1 — but was called MidSouthCon when it took place in 1963 (also in Huntsville).

Thus it made a *lot* of sense for me to attend DSC 42 at the Holiday Inn Select Airport in Memphis (26–28 March 2004) which was being held in conjunction with MidSouthCon 22. Invited guests included David Brin (GoH, unable to attend due to illness), Todd Lockwood (AGoH), David Williams (Gaming GoH), Dragon Dronet (Media GoH), Cullen Johnson (FGoH), and Michael Sheard (TM). A large number of other luminaries in sf/fantasy/horror/science/et cetera were also in attendance; over 30 were listed in the program book.

My understanding is that MSC has been growing at a significant pace the last few years and that their attendance this year (announced as 1032 late during the con) set a new record for them. Growth is generally a good thing, but can come with it's own set of problems and I'll address a couple of those in this review. Overall, though, the con came off very well and I certainly enjoyed myself.

The hotel consists of two separate 5-story buildings, each with an atrium configuration. Because I wanted a king room, I ended up in the second building, which had only sleeping rooms and the fitness

center (which was in a glass "greenhouse" on the floor of that atrium). The multi-part ballroom took up a bit over half of the atrium floor space in the main building and rose nearly two stories. The hotel registration area sat on top of the ballrooms, several steps down from the third floor of rooms. A number of smaller function rooms, and a few sleeping rooms, went around three sides of the first floor of the main building. The part of the atrium not taken up by the ballroom, elevators, etc. was open the entire five story height and was used by the con for gaming.



Generally the hotel was up to handling a 1000+ person convention. However, the only open area available for convention registration — at least the only one on the same floor as the convention functions — was undersized and underventilated. This was exacerbated by recurring problems the convention had with their registration process. To a casual observer it appeared that they had not successfully scaled up their registration system to handle their new size. (Corner me some time and ask me about my theories on size breakpoints for cons.) To be sure, the problems the con had at registration (which took well over an hour for many people) were exacerbated by

several equipment (computer and printer) problems, but the system should have allowed for some level of breakdowns.

The sometimes agonizing lines at registration were made worse by the heat. There were two huge electric fans set up in the registration area that at least kept the air moving, but the combination of too many bodies, the unseasonably hot weather, and underperforming hotel air conditioning made the experience rather uncomfortable. At some point after I registered (and I had it relatively good, being preregistered) the con gave up on trying to print and laminate actual badges and started using the handwritten address cards as temporaries. It was amusing to see people gong around the con with a 4x6 inch note card stamped "paid" with a red rubber stamp. Most of those disappeared over the course of the convention as people turned them in for "real" badges but at least one couple decided to keep the temp badges as something likely to be unique among convention souvenirs.

After arriving at the con and registering, I spent some time making arrangements for a Con†Stellation room party. With all the king rooms out of the main building, I was not wild about the idea of trying to entice people to a party there. Fortunately, Sam and Judy let themselves be talked into having the party in their room which was located quite close to the elevators in the main building. We decided to start it fairly early so I had only a modest amount time to check out the con before the Opening Ceremony at 8P, spending time setting up the party instead. MSC/DSC's OC consisted of a overlong, disorganized, and nearly inaudible SCA-based skit followed by introduction of the invited guests. It was announced that Mr. Brin would be participating in his scheduled panels via telephone (albeit not necessarily for the entire length of each); this had also been noted in a sign at convention registration. The stage used for this ceremony was high enough to make it easy to see from anywhere in the ballroom, but the stairs in use were scary — they were only half as high as needed and they rocked and flexed when used. Fortunately they were replaced by much better stairs before the Masquerade Saturday night.

Since our party started at 9:30P (only a half hour after the scheduled end of the Opening Ceremony) I went directly to that. We actually opened early due to having done most of the setup in the afternoon. I spent the rest of Friday evening in our party, not leaving until well after midnight with the basic cleanup done. There were several other parties scheduled for Friday, but the one I wanted to go to (a DUFF party sponsored by Guy and Rosy Lillian) had closed. I did run into a killer cutthroat spades game in the lobby, so it was after 2A before I finally got to my room and nearly 3A before I got to bed.

Unsurprisingly, it was not exactly early by the time I made it out of my room Saturday. The one panel I particularly wanted to go to ("SF Fandom Outside North America") was fortunately scheduled for 2P so I did have some time to just bum around the con. There was gaming everywhere. In addition to the aforementioned atrium area (which held a couple of dozen tables) at least 4–5 small-to-medium function rooms were dedicated to one type of gaming or another, and one of the smaller ballroom segments was dedicated to a computer gaming "LAN Party." Nevertheless, I heard one person announce that they though gaming was down this year over last. I have a hard time believing that but would be open to more informed opinions by those who regularly go to MSC.

I also noted, with some pleasure, that hall costumes were quite in evidence. Many of them were Star Wars or other media recreations, but furry, anime, goth, fetish, and more general sf/f costumes were also in evidence. Of course, the average age of the attendee was younger than at many "general interest" sf

cons I normally attend (in this immediate area think Con†Stellation, LibertyCon, etc.) and the energy of youth probably had something to do with that. However, the place was *not* overrun with teen and early-20's "kids" — there was a good mix of people from that (and some actual kids) all the way through old farts like myself and even some older :-)

I made it by the Con Suite several times during the con. In addition to Registration, this was the area that most showed the strain of the convention's growth. The main part of the suite was a fair-sized function room, one of the largest outside of the ballroom. Additionally, the convention had been forced at the last minute to add an adjacent sleeping room (which I was given to understand had been reserved for the con chair) — supposedly due to a requirement by the fire marshal. That extra room was used for the premium beers that were available to con members who paid an extra fee with their registration. Over the course of the con there were always soft drinks and munchies available and often more (sandwich fixings for instance). At most hours the place was overcrowded, as was the narrow hallway outside the room. Part of that, in my opinion, was the instance by the staff of handing out every soft drink individually to those requesting it. (I circumvented that a time or two, long arms do come in handy.) Part of it may also have been due to filling up most of the room with tables, both those used by the staff to fence off a prep/storage area and those for fans to sit at and drink/eat. While I have no specific recommendations, I do believe that the MSC staff should look at both the Con Suite and Registration as strongly in need of reorganization. One can't always continue do things the same way when attendance grows greatly. Things do not scale linearly.

The "SF Fandom Outside North America" panel did prove to be interesting. Panelists included Vince Docherty, Grant Kruger, Janice Gelb, Pat Molloy, and Naomi Fisher. I see from the program book that Cullen Johnson was also scheduled to be on the panel, but my notes don't indicate he was there. The panelists knew their stuff. Docherty is Scottish, the chair of next year's Worldcon (Glasgow), and currently residing in the Netherlands. Kruger is South African, currently residing in Mississippi, and still active in absentia in South African fandom. All the other panelists reside in the US (though Gelb helped found the Israel SF Association while living there in the late 70's) but have traveled widely and were all three winners of the Down Under Fan Fund. I'm not sure I learned *all that* much I didn't already know, but the stories and comparisons were entertaining.

MSC holds a banquet and this year decided to present the various DeepSouthCon related awards at that function. I'd probably have gone anyway (even given the early start at 5P), but a little birdy had whispered in my ear as part of a conspiracy to make sure Sue Thorn was in attendance. Nothing was explicitly said about why, but the conclusion seemed obvious. Sure enough the highlight of the banquet, for me, was when Sue was awarded one of two Rebel Awards after the meal. For those of you who might not be familiar, the Rebel is an award for service to southern fandom by a fan. Sue has been active in southern fandom for many years and has helped many cons (including Con†Stellation) over the years, especially in the area of masquerades. A posthumous Rebel was awarded to Dalvan (Dal) Coger, a midwest/midsouth fan who was a special friend to Memphis fandom. It was accepted by Dal's widow. The corresponding service award for professionals, the Phoenix Award, was awarded to Dr. Gregory Benford. He had been scheduled to attend the con but was unable to come due to personal commitments. The award was accepted by Naomi Fisher. All of the awards included Tom Foster art

engraved on a glass block with a base to illuminate the artwork.

While the Phoenix and Rebel Awards are given to persons for what they have done for southern fandom, the Rubble Award is given to persons who have done the most to southern fandom. The Rubble is not an official DSC award but is a tradition most people (including the recipient sometimes) look forward to. This year the Rubble went to the Charlotte NASFiC bid committee, more specifically to a group of 8 members of that committee who did not vote in the NASFiC site selection which was administered at the Toronto Worldcon this past summer. The story is that the persons in question chose to go to Dragon*Con rather than Torcon. Since the bid lost (to Seattle) by only 6 votes, the Rubble seemed well deserved.



Though I had tried to get by the Art Show, I just missed their open hours on Saturday. I did go to the Art Auction where I saw what must have been a significant percentage of the items from the show. But then, a number of the items auctioned were to raise money for charity, so the sell-through percentage might not have been as high as it seemed. I did pick up one piece, a framed Theresa Mather piece (acrylic on jade) titled *Eastern Dragon*. I'm not wild about a lot of green in my house, but the piece was on the small side, gorgeous, and just selling too cheap to pass up.

After the Art Auction, I hung around a bit then attended the Masquerade which started at 10P. Well, an interminable skit featuring members of the concom and some of the guests started at about that time. What is it with MSC and skits? I was in nearly the back of the room and with one microphone (which was foolishly eschewed by many of the participants) could hear blessedly little of it. There were 15–20 entries in the masquerade itself; most of very high quality. Like the hall costumes, many were media recreations (lots of Star Wars but I also recall one Predator costume). One of the more notable entries was a Beetlejuice, Ghostbusters, Blues Brothers crossover. The SRO crowd of around 250 people seemed to enjoy the masquerade, as did I. However, I decided not to wait for the judging.

The social scene was as active Saturday night as it had been Friday. (Sam mentioned later that one person *complained* there were too many parties at the con. It appears that many of the parties both nights were in some way related to this being a DeepSouthCon and that MSC has relative few parties.) I made it to three parties, including one for Xanadu (which will host next year's DSC in Nashville) and one for the Glasgow

Worldcon. The latter doubled as a bid party for Trinoc*coN (Durham NC) to host the 2006 DSC. At the later party I had a nice long discussion with Grant Kruger. The third party, which I visited only briefly, was a (presumably hoax) bid party for the 2007 DSC in South Point HI.

My main order of, er, business on Sunday was to attend the Southern Fandom Confederation and DeepSouthCon business meetings. The SFC meeting was mostly unexceptional — for instance, all the officers stood for reelection and were unopposed. Expenses continue to rise so there is some feeling that SFC dues may have to go up in the near future. I'd encourage all southern fans who are not members of SFC to join. The several yearly issues of the *SFC Bulletin* are a great way to keep in touch with what's going on in southern fandom.

Annually the main agenda item at the DSC business meeting is the selection of the site for the DSC two years hence. For the second year in a row no committee had filed paperwork by the deadline. The well-received Trinoc*coN bid mentioned earlier was a last minute entry as Judy Bemis (who is on their committee) found out there were no bids and contacted other members of the Trinoc*coN to get permission to put on a bid. Unsurprisingly, they won. You can get information about this year's Trinoc*coN at <www.trinoc-con.org>.

Two other items of business were taken care of at this year's DSC business meeting. A committee had been appointed at last year's DSC to clean up a couple of items in the DSC Bylaws. Two proposals were presented and passed at this year's meeting. They will have to be ratified at the next DSC before taking effect. The first clarifies the wording on what sites are eligible to bid for DSC by listing the states rather than listing the border states and "all states both south and east of any of these." While this should have no substantive effect, it would remove the ambiguity by which it could be argued (for instance) that Hawaii is an eligible state. (Remember, east doesn't stop.) The second adds a new section of the Bylaws covering the Rebel and Phoenix Awards. These traditional awards had never been codified before and the proposed rules do seem to carefully embody the tradition while placing a minimum of constraints on future DSC committees. Technically a committee would not even be required to present the awards, though it seems unlikely that any would not.

After the meetings I hung around in the dealers room until I could get up a group to go to lunch. Several of us ended up at a local pizza restaurant where I had my second real meal of the convention. (I had been eating a breakfast of granola bars and otherwise nibbling here and there.) After that, it was back to the hotel for relatively brief goodbyes. I did get a chance to look at the hangings used in the Art Show, at least the ones toward the front of the room. Each had a frame made of square tubular steel with a large sheet of pegboard (mounted with the long dimension horizontal) at a convenient height for hanging art. The steel frames were wheeled, making them easy to arrange once each was assembled. It looked like a very sturdy setup, but the wheel assemblies were something of a trip hazard and the whole show must weigh a ton or more and be a bear to move into and out of storage.

Unfortunately there are only so many vacation days and so many dollars to go around, so I don't know if I'll make it back to Memphis for another MSC anytime soon. Certainly I had a good time this year and hope to be able to add it to my repertoire on at least a part-time basis. I will definitely be in Nashville next year for their DSC and plan to make it to Durham in 2006 for North Carolina's first DSC. Hopefully I'll see some of you readers at some or all of those cons.

CostumeCon 22

a Convention Review
by Mike Kennedy

Though I'm not a costumer, I do admire what they do and had sometimes considered going to CostumeCon — the annual convention for sf/fantasy and recreation costuming. When I realized that the 2004 event was in Atlanta and on a weekend I could at least theoretically attend, I started looking into it. Thus I found myself at the Decatur GA (an inner Atlanta suburb) Holiday Inn Select 2–5 April 2004 for CostumeCon 22, along with several other folks from the Huntsville area.

Since official convention activities started early in the day Friday the 2nd, I decided to drive over after work Thursday. Doug Lampert rode with me while Nancy Cucci, Mary Ortwerth, and Robin Ray left earlier that day to participate in a semi-official pre-con shopping trip. (As it turned out, they missed that trip due to traffic and construction along their route. The whole group of us did manage to go to a late supper Thursday night after Doug and I arrived.)

FRIDAY

When I finally decided I could indeed go — about 2–3 weeks before the con — I exchanged a couple of emails with one of the con co-chairs to volunteer to work. I figured that while my evenings and some other hours would be spoken for, I'd have a good bit of free time during the day. After breakfast at the hotel buffet Friday morning (with all the Huntsville crowd except Robin) we drifted along to convention registration, which was hopping. After registering, I found the volunteer sheet and was writing down my name and hotel room when it became evident that they were semi-desperate for someone to work registration so one of the committee members could attend to other duties.

As it turned out, I ended up at registration for about 6 hours, with a couple of 10-minute breaks. For a fair amount of that time I was alone, though there were staff members around doing other things (such as masquerade registration). By the time I left, there were just under 200 people total registered, though there were around 50 pre-reg members that had not yet picked up their badges. Working registration does have some benefits. For instance, old friends Irv Koch and Jeff and Susan Stringer registered while I was there.

After leaving registration, I went by the hotel's business center to check my email, something I did a number of times over the weekend. I also dropped in at the costume exhibits room to check it out, but many of the displays were still being set up. Anticipating a reception scheduled for 8P that evening, I decided to have a late lunch/early dinner in my room from food I brought, rather than going out for a large meal.

The Friday night social was in the main ballroom and was styled as "Halloween at Hogwarts." Many of the people attending came in costume of course, most suitable to either Halloween, Hogwarts, or both. I took a liter container of my favorite libation (fuzzy navels), something I repeated each evening. The room was a bit late opening but I passed the time talking to people, including Irv. It was nice to catch up with him — and nice as well to find out a little about what plans he might have for cons in the future.

Once the reception opened the crowd moved quickly into the room. The Hogwarts theme was well carried out as far as I could tell, but I'm hardly an expert since I've never read the Potter books and have only seen part of one of the movies. The beverages were limited to a fruit punch and a cash bar. No problem for me, since I had my own ;-). The food spread was

nice, including some tasty hot foods (the meatballs were quite nice) as well as fruit, veggies, cheese, and such. There was canned music playing when we entered, but later in the evening a live Celtic fusion band played a couple of sets. Loud, but nice. Sometime in the evening I managed to track down Nancy Cucci and Susan and Jeff Stringer at the same time so I could use the carefully planned line "This woman wants to talk to you about her antlers." (Nancy spent much of the con picking people's brains over a set of antlers she wants to make for the local Huntsville production of *Nutcracker*.)

SATURDAY

Having forgotten to leave a wake up call, I slept in a bit on Saturday. I still managed to make it to the hotel buffet breakfast which was much busier than on Friday. Doug and Mary were almost finished when I got there. I had not noticed in preparing for this trip that the hotel provided a free breakfast buffet for Priority Club members (Holiday Inn's "frequent guest" program). As a result I took rather more food with me than I needed to. In particular, the milk I had taken for breakfast ended up being drunk at other meals and the granola bars ignored completely.

After breakfast I ran into Nancy who had fled from the "Hunting for Materials" panel after finding out that it involved animal skins — they really *meant* hunting. As in with a gun. She was still milking that story days later.

I had hoped that there might be some programming on the "tech" side (lighting, sound, etc.) of masquerades, but there was none to be found. I thought about volunteering to help with tech setup of the Saturday evening sf/f masquerade but decided that my knees wouldn't like that. So I picked my first panel of the con more or less at random: "Headdresses" at 11A. Nancy was there talking about her antlers. Afterwards I made my first visit to the Con Suite, which was on 5th (top) floor of atrium hotel. (All other functions are on 1st floor.) I also made it to a 1P panel on "Costume Special Effects" which covered some electrical effects, but also mechanical ones. I noted that even when the material being presented isn't directly interesting to me, the enthusiasm of these people is contagious. They *do* love their hobby.

Since the next thing of interest was the 8P sf/f masquerade, I spent some down time in my room, including watching a good movie (*Memphis Belle*) on HBO, doing some people watching in the hotel lobby, and watching Robin pick out beads in the dealers room. Watching Robin shop for craft materials can be an awesome sight. All that still left over 90 minutes to the start of the masquerade but I decided to have a snack rather than a full meal, and to plan on going for dinner afterwards.

I drifted down to the masquerade a bit early and found the doors closed. Quickly, however, several other people I know showed up so we chatted until the room opened. This masquerade (CostumeCon has several) had 20 entries. In my opinion 3 of these were top notch and 3–4 others just a couple of steps behind. I know that doesn't sound too high given the big expectations at a CostumeCon, but I do have high standards (jaded I guess) and that's as many absolute numbers as I'd likely see at a Worldcon with twice as many entries or more. One of my top 3 did win Best In Show — a "recreation" of the M51 whirlpool galaxy. It featured beautiful dye work, a very nice fiber optic lighted headdress, and a nice presentation (though that did go on just a touch too long).

The judges took a good while, but more than half the time was filled up by the entries coming back on stage one at a time for photography. Announcements plus a good job by the MC filled the rest of the time. By the time all the official (and unofficial) awards were presented it was about 10P. All the

Huntsville crowd (excepting Nancy) decided to go out for dinner; we ended up closing down the Ruby Tuesday a couple of blocks from the hotel. Because daylight savings time began that night, I decided to call it a night instead of going to the Con Suite for what was likely to be an ongoing party.

SUNDAY

I had breakfast at the hotel buffet again, which included strangely pasty sausage gravy today instead of the strangely greasy corned beef hash that had previously been on the buffet.

I attended the 11A panel on “Electrical Effects” for costumes. Some of the same material had been covered Saturday in “Costume Special Effects” but was covered in more detail at this panel. Afterwards I went up to the Con Suite for a bit of conversation, a drink, and a nibble. A “photo” display of Evil Geniuses was still posted from the CostumeCon bid that sponsored the con suite Saturday night. CostumeCons, it seems, do not have a tradition of open room parties. Rather, organizations sponsor events in the Con Suite.

At 2P the second masquerade of the con took place, featuring costumes from the “Future Fashion Folio” competition and “Single Pattern Contest.” There were about 15–20 entries between the two. The FFF itself is a collection of designs by attendees and is published well before the convention. Anyone attending the convention may then use one of those designs to create a costume for this Sunday afternoon event. Awards are given separately to the designs and to the better costumes that use them. The “single” in SPC is somewhat misleading, in that two patterns are designated not just one. As I understand it, the entrants must then choose one of those and design a costume using that *single* pattern as inspiration. This is probably the competition where I disagreed the most with some of the judge’s choices of winners. I suspect that I don’t understand the criteria used in these competitions.

After this masquerade I went back to the room for a long nap after which I ate dinner in my room and wandered down toward the 8P Historical Masquerade about 30 minutes early. This event is judged with same novice, journeyman, master class system as the sf/f masquerade. This system should be familiar to most people who have attended masquerades at Worldcons or other large regional sf conventions. Additionally, divisions are made for recreation versus interpretation. There were a total of 19 entries, some of which had many participants. Though I lack the background to fully appreciate the historical aspects of the costumes, it was clear to even this naive observer that there were many beautiful entries. There were also some funny ones, and even a few that managed to be both. Best In Show Recreation went to a true novice; it was her first ever masquerade as I understand it.

The audience may have been slightly bigger than at the sf/f masquerade, but even so the room was 2–3 times larger than needed. Total registration (which included some day memberships) for the con was about 250 people, which I am led to believe is somewhat smaller than west and east coast CostumeCons. Still, it was about what the committee hoped for. The oversized ballroom was basically just an effect of the available space. The con could have made do with a good bit less space than they used (for instance, many programs had half-empty rooms) but the *number* of rooms is driven by the number of program tracks and other space users. The hotel was a pretty good fit in that respect, with only one function room that was unused most of the time.

Again fan photography took quite a while after the masquerade, perhaps more that after the sf/f event the previous night. (At least part of the reason for that was the large number of participants in some of the entries, which made for many

combinations of people to be photographed.) Following that, a live entertainment was presented by the Atlanta Radio Theatre Company.

ARTC, which is in it’s twentieth year, presents live audio dramatizations in the style of old-time radio drama. This night they presented an original melodrama, “Kissed by a Stranger.” It lasted perhaps 45 minutes and the audience loved it. Later that evening I heard a well-known elder of the costuming community (who I will not name here) complaining bitterly about how this held up the announcement of the winners. While he has something of a point, I think he overstated the case at the very least. The masquerade is indeed for the costumers (as he pointed out) but unlike what he seems to think it is not *only* for them. The CostumeCon community includes lots of people who aren’t on stage any given year, if ever. Also, at any given con there are people (like me) attending the event who are not part of the ongoing community.

The Huntsvillians stayed around the ballroom chatting while crowd the thinned out at the elevators. Once I left, I dropped my stuff at room and went to Con Suite for a little while. (Or, as it was also known the Costumer’s Suite.) It was *very* crowded; by the time I left even the overflow in the hallway was crowded. The Con Suite was in fact in a two room suite. There was a connecting door into what was probably an additional adjoining bedroom. While not needed during the day, having that additional space would have helped *alot* in the evenings. To be fair, of course, the committee had no way to know ahead of time exactly how many people would show up and whether they would need that space *or* have the money to pay for it. Running a one-off convention has it’s own set of problems like this.

MONDAY

While there is some programming Monday morning and early afternoon, for the majority of people Monday seems to be “get away day.” In fact, for the first time this year the annual meeting of the International Costumer’s Guild was moved to the first day of the con rather than the last because so many people have flights to catch and such. For me, the first order of business after breakfast was to finish packing, load the car, and otherwise get ready for the trip back to Huntsville.

I waited around a bit for Nancy because she wanted me to take some of her luggage back to balance the new stuff that the three amigos bought (well, mostly Robin). She got out of a “Reworking Hats” panel at 11A and went off to get the luggage. After that was loaded up I looked up some con members to see if they needed any help for a few hours. Doug and I ended up babysitting the costume exhibits for a little while when the person in charge of that room needed to run some errands, and helping break down the exhibits — well most of the help came from Doug. Many of those left at the con were going on a mass shopping trip (fabric) sometime after 1P. We were invited to stay for the dead dog party, but there was really no way either of us could stay over another day.

Other than a minor traffic jam, the trip back was basically uneventful. I got back in time to get my dog out of hock from the vet and managed to stay reasonably *compos mentis* until Nancy came by to get her luggage. I spent the rest of the evening recuperating and gratefully went to bed a little earlier than usual.

WRAPUP

I certainly enjoyed the experience and am quite glad I decided to go. Would I go to a CostumeCon again? There’s no way it would ever be an annual event for me, but if there’s another one as convenient as Atlanta and if I can get away from work that weekend there’s a good chance I would. I certainly

won't be going to Ogden Utah next year (29 April–2 May 2005) or to Des Moines the year after (26–29 May 2006). No doubt will be pressure to go to newly-selected CostumeCon 25 in St. Louis in 2007 since Mary hails from that area. At this point, who knows... but you just may be reading another CostumeCon report from me in three year's time.

Hugo and Retro Hugo Nominees

Noreascon Four <www.noreascon.org>, this year's Worldcon, has announced the nominees for the 2004 Hugo Awards (for work done in 2003) and the 1954 Retrospective Hugo Awards (for work done in 1953). Final voting for the Hugo and Retrospective Hugo Awards will begin in May. Supporting and attending members of Noreascon Four may vote on the Hugo and Retrospective Hugo Awards. Physical ballots will be included in Progress Report 6, due to be mailed in late April. Online voting will be available to all eligible voters, and printable versions of the ballot will also be included on the Noreascon Four web site. Winners will be announced at the 62nd World Science Fiction Convention in Boston MA, 2–6 September 2004.

HUGO AWARD NOMINATIONS

Best Novel (462 ballots)

Paladin of Souls by Lois McMaster Bujold (Eos)
Humans by Robert Sawyer (Tor Books)
Ilium by Dan Simmons (Eos)
Singularity Sky by Charles Stross (Ace Books)
Blind Lake by Robert Charles Wilson (Tor Books)

Best Novella (215 ballots)

“Walk in Silence” by Catherine Asaro (*Analog*, April 2003)
 “Empress of Mars” by Kage Baker (*Asimov's*, July 2003)
 “The Green Leopard Plague” by Walter Jon Williams (*Asimov's*, October–November 2003)
 “Just Like the Ones We Used to Know” by Connie Willis (*Asimov's*, December 2003)
 “The Cookie Monster” by Vernor Vinge (*Analog*, October 2003)

Best Novelette (243 ballots)

“Empire of Ice Cream” by Jeffrey Ford (*Sci Fiction*, <scifi.com>, February 2003)
 “Bernardo's House” by James Patrick Kelly (*Asimov's*, June 2003)
 “Into the Gardens of Sweet Night” by Jay Lake (*Writers of the Future XIX*, Bridge, 2003)
 “Hexagons” by Robert Reed (*Asimov's*, July 2003)
 “Nightfall” by Charles Stross (*Asimov's*, April 2003)
 “Legions in Time” by Michael Swanwick (*Asimov's*, April 2003)

Best Short Story (310 ballots)

“Paying It Forward” by Michael A. Burstein (*Analog*, September 2003)
 “A Study in Emerald” by Neil Gaiman (*Shadows over Baker Street*, Del Rey, 2003)
 “Four Short Novels” by Joe Haldeman (*Fantasy & Science Fiction*, November 2003)
 “The Tale of the Golden Eagle” by David D. Levine (*Fantasy & Science Fiction*, June 2003)
 “Robots Don't Cry” by Mike Resnick (*Asimov's*, July 2003)

Best Related Book (243 ballots)

Scores: Reviews 1993–2003 by John Clute (Becon Publica-

tions, 2003)

Spectrum 10: The Best in Fantastic Contemporary Art by Cathy and Arnie Fenner (Underwood Books, 2003)

The Chesley Awards for SF & Fantasy Art: A Retrospective by John Grant, Elizabeth L. Humphrey, and Pamela D. Scoville (Artist's & Photographer's Press Ltd., 2003)

Dreamer of Dune: The Biography of Frank Herbert by Brian Herbert (Tor Books, 2003)

The Thackery T. Lambshead Guide to Eccentric & Discredited Diseases by Jeff Vandermeer and Mark Roberts (Night Shade Books, 2003)

Master Storyteller: An Illustrated Tour of the Fiction of L. Ron Hubbard by William J. Widder (Bridge, 2003)

Best Dramatic Presentation

Long Form (363 ballots)

28 Days Later (DNA Films/Fox Searchlight); directed by Danny Boyle; written by Alex Garland
Finding Nemo (Pixar/Walt Disney Pictures); directed by Andrew Stanton and Lee Unkrich; screenplay by Andrew Stanton, Bob Peterson, and David Reynolds; story by Andrew Stanton

The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (New Line Cinema); directed by Peter Jackson; screenplay by Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens, and Peter Jackson; based on the novel by J. R. R. Tolkien

Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl (Walt Disney Pictures); directed by Gore Verbinski; screenplay by Ted Elliott and Terry Rossio; screen story by Ted Elliott, Terry Rossio, Stuart Beattie, and Jay Wolpert

X2: X-Men United (20th Century Fox/Marvel); directed by Bryan Singer; screenplay by Michael Dougherty, Dan Harris, and David Hayter; story by Zak Penn, David Hayter, and Bryan Singer

Best Dramatic Presentation

Short Form (212 ballots)

“Chosen” *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (Mutant Enemy Inc./20th Century Fox); written and directed by Joss Whedon

“Gollum's Acceptance Speech at the 2003 MTV Movie Awards” (Wingnut Films/New Line Cinema); written and directed by Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens, and Peter Jackson

“Heart of Gold” *Firefly* (Mutant Enemy Inc./20th Century Fox); directed by Thomas J. Wright; written by Brett Matthews

“Message” *Firefly* (Mutant Enemy Inc./20th Century Fox); directed by Tim Minear; written by Joss Whedon and Tim Minear

“Rosetta” *Smallville* (Tollin/Robbins Productions/Warner Bros); directed by James Marshall; written by Al Gough and Miles Millar

Best Professional Editor (319 ballots)

Ellen Datlow Gardner Dozois David Hartwell
 Stanley Schmidt Gordon Van Gelder

Best Professional Artist (241 ballots)

Jim Burns Bob Eggleton Frank Frazetta
 Frank Kelly Freas Donato Giancola

Best Semi-Prozine (199 ballots)

Ansible, ed. Dave Langford

Interzone, ed. David Pringle

Locus, ed. Charles N. Brown, Jennifer A. Hall, and Kirsten Gong-Wong

The New York Review of Science Fiction, ed. Kathryn Cramer, David G. Hartwell, and Kevin Maroney

Third Alternative, ed. Andy Cox

Best Fanzine (211 ballots)

Challenger, ed. Guy H. Lillian III
Emerald City, ed. Cheryl Morgan
File 770, ed. Mike Glyer
Mimosa, ed. Rich and Nicki Lynch
Plokta, ed. Alison Scott, Steve Davies, and Mike Scott

Best Fan Writer (260 ballots)

Jeff Berkwitz Bob Devney John L. Flynn
Dave Langford Cheryl Morgan

Best Fan Artist (190 ballots)

Brad Foster Teddy Harvia Sue Mason
Steve Stiles Frank Wu

**The John W. Campbell Award
for Best New Writer** (192 ballots)

Not a Hugo; sponsored by Dell Magazines

Jay Lake (second year of eligibility)

David D. Levine (second year of eligibility)

Karin Lowachee (second year of eligibility)

Chris Moriarty (first year of eligibility)

Tim Pratt (second year of eligibility)

**RETROSPECTIVE HUGO AWARDS
FOR WORK DONE IN 1953**

Three categories were dropped for insufficient nominees:
Best Dramatic Presentation — Long Form, Best Semi-Prozine, and Best Fan Artist.

Best Novel of 1953 (113 ballots)

The Caves of Steel by Isaac Asimov (*Galaxy*,
October–December 1953)

Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury (Ballantine)

Childhood's End by Arthur C. Clarke (Ballantine)

Mission of Gravity by Hal Clement (*Astounding*, February–July
1953)

More than Human by Theodore Sturgeon (Ballantine)

Best Novella of 1953 (67 ballots)

“Un-Man” by Poul Anderson (*Astounding*, January 1953)

“A Case of Conscience” by James Blish (*If*, September 1953)

“The Rose” by Charles L. Harness (*Authentic Science Fiction
Monthly*, March 1953)

“Daughters of Earth” by Judith Merrill (*The Petrified Planet*,
Twayne, 1953)

“...And My Fear Is Great...” by Theodore Sturgeon (*Beyond
Fantasy Fiction*, July 1953)

Best Novelette of 1953 (66 ballots)

“Sam Hall” by Poul Anderson (*Astounding*, August 1953)

“The Adventure of the Misplaced Hound” by Poul Anderson
and Gordon R. Dickson (*Universe*, December 1953)

“Earthman, Come Home” by James Blish (*Astounding*,
November 1953)

“The Wall Around the World” by Theodore Cogswell
(*Beyond Fantasy Fiction*, September 1953)

“Second Variety” by Philip K. Dick (*Space Science Fiction*,
May 1953)

Best Short Story of 1953 (96 ballots)

“Star Light, Star Bright” by Alfred Bester (*Fantasy &
Science Fiction*, July 1953)

“It's a Good Life” by Jerome Bixby (*Star Science Fiction
Stories* #2, Ballantine)

“The Nine Billion Names of God” by Arthur C. Clarke (*Star
Science Fiction Stories* #1, Ballantine)

“Seventh Victim” by Robert Sheckley (*Galaxy*, April 1953)

“A Saucer of Loneliness” by Theodore Sturgeon (*Galaxy*,
February 1953)

Best Related Book of 1953 (21 ballots)

Conquest of the Moon by Wernher von Braun, Fred L.
Whipple, and Willy Ley (Viking Press)

Modern Science Fiction: Its Making and Future by Reginald

Bretnor (Coward-McCann)

Science-Fiction Handbook by L. Sprague de Camp (Hermit-
age)

**Best Dramatic Presentation,
Short Form, of 1953** (96 ballots)

The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms (Mutual Pictures/Warner
Brothers); directed by Eugene Lourie; screenplay by Louis
Morheim and Fred Freiberger; based on the story by Ray
Bradbury

Duck Dodgers in the 24¹/₂th Century (Warner Brothers);
directed by Chuck Jones; written by Michael Maltese

Invaders from Mars (National Pictures/20th Century Fox);
directed by William Cameron Menzies; screenplay by
Richard Blake; story by John Tucker Battle

It Came from Outer Space (Universal); directed by Jack
Arnold; screenplay by Harry Essex; story by Ray Bradbury

The War of the Worlds (Paramount Pictures); directed by
Byron Haskin; screenplay by Barre Lyndon; based on the
novel by H. G. Wells

Best Professional Editor of 1953 (49 ballots)

Anthony Boucher John W. Campbell, Jr.
H. L. Gold Donald A. Wollheim Frederik Pohl

Best Professional Artist of 1953 (68 ballots)

Chesley Bonestell Ed Emshwiller
Virgil Finlay Richard Powers Frank Kelly Freas

Best Fanzine of 1953 (36 ballots)

Hyphen, ed. Chuck Harris and Walt Willis

Quandry, ed. Lee Hoffman

Science Fiction Newsletter, ed. Bob Tucker

Sky Hook, ed. Redd Boggs

Slant, ed. Walter Willis; art editor James White

Best Fan Writer of 1953 (38 ballots)

Redd Boggs Lee Hoffman Bob Tucker
James White Walter A. Willis

Letters of Comment

POC-POC-POC-POC-POC-POC-POC-POC-POC

Sheryl Birkhead
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1 April 2004

Sheesh — you know the adage — *do as I say and not as
I do*. Well, after procrastinating almost right up to the Hugo
nominating deadline I finally went on line and filled out the
forms — a done deal at the click of a mouse.

I was waiting to see how PED dealt with migraines... but
he didn't.

I need to find some research time and hit the library —
want to do a take off on “The Noreascon 4” either as 4
characters *or* 4 symbols of SF (raygun, propeller beanie,
UFO... hmmm need one more — hence the need for research).

Eventually I will need to look at zines on line — but still
have not... yeah RSN.

(By the way, I'm now “arguing” with the basement repair
company — since it takes *two* to argue and they refuse to
respond... waiting to see if the complaint to the BBB gets *any*
response, but I doubt it and I will have to pay to repair what they
botched.)

[If all goes as planned, you'll find a list of the Hugo and Retro
Hugo nominations in this issue, Sheryl. -ED]



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EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC

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9 April 2004

I have the March *Shuttle* with me, and as usual, I've lost all track of time. It's a week past the contrib deadline, but at least this time, I have an excuse... I finally found some work. I'm now a customer service rep for a publication fulfillment service. Yeah, I'm not quite sure, either. I've been on the new job exactly one day, so there's still a lot to learn. Time for a loc on a Good Friday...

There's my birthday listed... I shudder to think that I shall be 45 on my next birthday. I'm told I don't look my age... part

of that is that I don't act it.

Hello, PieEyed... I like bird peppers too, usually in the form of hot sauces. I have a fair collection, and getting popular brands like Mike's and Blair's is now fairly easy.

Hugo nominations... we should find out in a few days who got the nominations. A further note to David Miller... the name of Toronto's mayor is the same as yours. In my own loc, I did not get that advertising job, but I am looking at the one I just got as a stepping stone to something more in line with my career path.

Another short loc... nevertheless, I hope it fills the gap in the upcoming issue. See you then.

[Well, Lloyd, as long as I'm around you shouldn't complain too loudly about your age, since I have half a decade on you. Meanwhile, congrats on achieving jobhood. -ED]