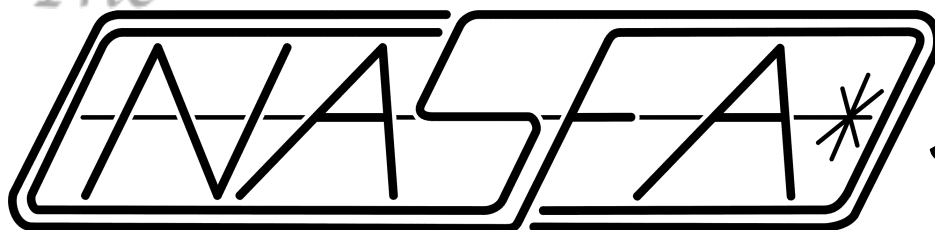


The



Shuttle
August 2010

The Next NASFA Meeting is 21 August 2010 at the Regular Time and Location

Upcoming Con†Stellation XXIX ConCom
Meetings are scheduled for 28 August and 11 & 16
September—see the calendar for details

¡ Oyez, Oyez ¡

The next **NASFA Meeting** is Saturday **21 August 2010** at the **regular time** (6P) and the **regular location**. Meetings are at the Renasant Bank's Community Room, 4245 Balmoral Drive in south Huntsville. Exit the Parkway at Airport Road; head east one short block to the light at Balmoral Drive; turn left (north) for less than a block. The bank is on the right, just past Logan's Roadhouse restaurant. Enter at the front door of the bank; turn right to the end of a short hallway.

AUGUST PROGRAM

The August program will be the more-or-less-annual NASFA Auction. Bring money and donations for the auction. Genre books and DVDs are always popular, of course but most anything that will raise a few bucks is welcome.

ATMMs

The August After-The-Meeting Meeting will be a pool party at Russell McNutt's house—902 Drake Avenue SE in Huntsville. Enter through the garage door (the door will be up and the light on) and straight through to the pool area. *Do not* enter the main house (Russell's parents retire early). The lower level of the house is accessible from the pool area and Russell promises

to have a card table available there "if anyone wants a spades/bridge game."

We need ATMM volunteers for September and all (well, most) months beyond.

CONCOM MEETINGS

The next Con†Stellation XXIX concom meeting will be **Saturday 28 August at 3P**, at the Renasant Bank meeting room. We're getting very close to the con so all department heads and staff/volunteers are strongly encouraged to come to this and all subsequent meetings. There is a full list of meetings in the NASFA Calendar elsewhere in this issue.

SHUTTLE NEWS

The next issue of the *Shuttle* will hopefully carry news of the Worldcon (just as this one does of the NASFiC). Other than the Worldcon converge, the September issue promises to be skimpy as time will be short to complete it while getting ready for Con†Stellation. In particular, we've asked PieEyedDragon to hold on to the next several chapters of *No Need for a Ring* until more time (and possibly space) is available later this year.

NASFA CALENDAR ONLINE

NASFA has an online calendar on Google. Interested parties can check the calendar online, but you can also subscribe to the calendar and have your Outlook, iCal, BlackBerry, or other

Continuing Our 30th Year of Publication!

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Deadline for the September issue of *The NASFA Shuttle* is Friday 3 September 2010

calendar automatically updated as events (Club Meetings, Concom Meetings, local sf/f events) are added or changed.

News & Info

RENOVATION TO INCREASE RATES

As of 1 October 2010 several membership rates for Renovation, the 2011 Worldcon, will increase. The full adult attending rate will go from \$160 to \$180. Similar increases will occur for conversion rates. The family attending rate (2 adults plus 2 or more dependent children) will increase to \$460.

The rate for attending children (0–16) will remain \$75 and that for attending young adults (17–21) will remain \$100. These rates are based on the person's age as of 17 August 2011. Adult Supporting memberships will also remain unchanged at \$50.

All these rates are valid through the end of February 2011.

HUGO AWARD SHOWCASE

Several winners and nominees from the 2009 Hugo Awards have been collected in *Hugo Award Showcase 2010*, to be available from Prime Books <www.prime-books.com>. The volume also features a cover by Hugo winning artist Donato Giancola and is edited by Campbell-winning writer Mary Robinette Kowal.

SEIUN WINNERS

Winners of the Seiun Awards were announced at TOKON 10, this year's Japanese national convention. In the translated categories, the winners are:

Translated Novel *The Last Colony*, John Scalzi
Translated Short Story "Dark Integers," Greg Egan

UC RIVERSIDE ANNOUNCES AWARDS

The University of California, Riverside <www.ucr.edu> has announced the Eaton Awards for Lifetime Achievement for Samuel Delany and Harlan Ellison. The awards are for 2010 and 2011 respectively. Ellison will accept his award at the next Eaton Science Fiction Conference <eatonconference.ucr.edu/2011/frontpage.php>, to be held 11–13 February 2011 at the Mission Inn Hotel & Spa in Riverside.

PROMETHEUS AWARDS

The Libertarian Futurist Society <www.lfs.org> has announced the winners of this year's Prometheus Awards. The awards will be presented at Aussiecon 4, this year's Worldcon. The winners are:

Best Novel *The Unincorporated Man*, Dani Kollin and Eytan Kollin (Tor Books)

Hall of Fame "No Truce with Kings," Poul Anderson

VAN NAME DONATES 100% OF SALES

Author Mark Van Name has pledged to give 100% of his proceeds from hardcover sales of *Children No More* (Baen) to Falling Whistles <www.fallingwhistles.com>, a charity that helps rehabilitate and reintegrate child soldiers in the Congo. The novel's official release date is 3 August 2010.

CAVE TOURS IN SYDNEY

Just in time for fans visiting Australia for Worldcon, the Jenolan Caves (175 kilometers west of Sydney) have added a new language for their tours, Klingon.

Well, they probably don't know anything about Worldcon and if they do it probably didn't bear on their decision, but it's still an odd coincidence. A spokesman for the attraction explained that "In the Star Trek universe, Jenolan Caves was first immortalized in the Next Generation episode 'Relics,' through the naming of a 'Sydney Class' Starship - the USS Jenolan.

"Now, this relationship will be developed further, when Je-

nolan Caves adds the language of Star Trek's great warrior race to a tour of their most popular cave."

IS HUNTSVILLE GEEKY?

OnlineUniversities.com has named Huntsville one of their 10 geekiest cities—number 8 on their list at <tinyurl.com/geek-cities>.

NASFA Calendar

AUGUST

- 05–08 . NASFiC 10/ReConStruction—Raleigh NC.
- 05 Bailey Cove Library Book Discussion: *Canticle for Leibowitz*, Walter M. Miller, Jr; 6P.
- 06–08 CrisisCon—Huntsville AL.
- 07 DayCon—Clarksville TN.
- 08 BD: Jim Woosley.
- 12 BD: Sue Thorn.
- 13–14 Onyx Con—Atlanta GA.
- 13–15 Horror Film Festival—Atlanta GA.
- 14* Con†Stellation concom meeting—3P, at Renasant Bank.
- 14 BD: Edward Kenny.
- 14 Nashville Anime Day—Nashville TN.
- 14 Sukoshicon—Birmingham AL.
- 14–15 Faerie Escape—Atlanta GA.
- 19–22 Game Fest South—Chattanooga TN.
- 21* NASFA Meeting—6P Business, 7P Program, at Renasant Bank. Program: More-or-Less Annual NASFA Auction. ATMM: Russell McNutt's house.
- 21 BD: Deb Denton.
- 27–28 Paranormal Scarefest—Murfreesboro TN.
- 28* Con†Stellation concom meeting—3P, at Renasant Bank.

SEPTEMBER

- 02 Bailey Cove Library Book Discussion: *Foundation*, Isaac Asimov; 6P.
- 02–06 Aussiecon 4/68th World Science Fiction Convention—Melbourne, Australia.
- 03 BD: David K. Robinson.
- 03–05 Mephit Furmeet—Memphis TN.
- 03–06 Dragon*Con—Atlanta GA.
- 06 Labor Day.
- 09 BD: Mike Cothran.
- 10–12 OutsideCon 23—Burns TN.
- 11 BD: Ray Pietruszka.
- 11* Con†Stellation concom meeting—3P, Tentatively at Renasant Bank.
- 12 BD: Pat Butler.
- 12 Grandparents Day.
- 16* Con†Stellation concom meeting—all day, at the convention hotel. **NOTE:** This is the setup meeting Thursday before the con. Also stay tuned for a pre-convention dinner that evening.
- 17–19 Con†Stellation XXIX—Huntsville AL.
- 17 Citizenship Day.
- 25* NASFA Meeting—6P Business, 7P Program, at Renasant Bank. Program: Convention Postmortem. **NOTE:** Date changed due to Con†Stellation.
- 25–26 Comic Con—Nashville TN.
- 26 BD: Jenna Victoria Stone.
- 30–03 SIEGE—Atlanta GA.

OCTOBER

- 01–03 Archon 34—St. Louis MO.
- 01–03 GameCon—Memphis TN.
- 07 Bailey Cove Library Book Discussion: *Replay*, Ken

- 02 Election Day.
04 Bailey Cove Library Book Discussion: *The Fifth Head of Cerberus*, Gene Wolfe, 6P.
05-06 Comic & Fantasy Convention—Memphis TN.
07 Daylight Saving Time ends.
11 Veterans’ Day.
15 BD: Robert Buelow.
20* NASFA Meeting—6P Business, 7P Program, at Re-
nasant Bank. Program: TBD. ATMM: Mike Kennedy’s
house.
22 BD: Nancy Renee Peters.
23 BD: Howard Camp.
23 BD: Mike Kennedy.
25 Thanksgiving Day.
30 BD: Joshua Kennedy.
30 BD: Richard Gilliam.

3

wasn't close to full so she moved and I again had an empty seat for the trip. I'd prepaid for a shuttle bus from the airport to the hotel and—after a slightly-too-long wait for my bag and a slightly-too-long wait for the shuttle to show up—I settled in for the trip into town.

When checking in to the hotel I found out that there was a special rate for in-room internet access; \$25 for the whole stay versus almost \$10 per day. I chafe at paying for hotel internet access when almost every low-to-midrange hotel in the market supplies it free, but I decided to go for it. This turned out to be a questionable decision as (unbeknownst to me) Raleigh's downtown free wi-fi signal was strong enough in my room that I could *usually* glom onto it.

After cooling off in the room and making some safe-arrival emails and calls, I struck out to try to get my bearings around the hotel and RCC—and to scout up some place for dinner.

I'd run into con chair Warren Buff when I arrived at the hotel and ran across him again—this time with an entourage—while checking out the hotel function space off the lobby. Since they were headed to so some schlepping, I let them go to it and continued my tour. I found the indoor connection from the Marriott to the RCC, two escalator rides down from the lobby level.

After the short tour, I plopped down in the hotel lobby to see if any other fannish types showed up. When none did after a short while, I decided to continue the orientation, but outside. I walked north from the hotel a couple of blocks to see what was in the immediate neighborhood. I stumbled across a number of small restaurants and what was to become a recurring haunt—a Krispy Kreme doughnut shop—just steps from the Marriott's front door. I also located the Sheraton, about half a block north.

Though I later had dessert from the KK, dinner that night was at La Volta, an Italian restaurant. I could have spent less on a take-out sandwich but I felt like sitting down. I had an appetizer trio that was on special and chicken parmesan with a side of pasta with marinara. The food was perfectly adequate, even tasty, but no one is going to tie up the chef and torture him until he reveals his secret recipes. The service was very attentive, though, and that made things rather enjoyable.

The rest of the evening was spent with uninspired tasks like unpacking and relaxing. (Oh, and a quick trip out for the aforementioned doughnuts.)

DAY 0, WEDNESDAY THE 4TH—TOURIST DAY

If I was another kind of smart, I would have left the hotel early in the morning while it was still relatively cool. But that's not me. Instead, I took it easy and it was about 10:15A before I set foot outside my room.

You didn't start reading this trip report so you could hear about me playing tourist so I'll try to keep this short but, well, by now you know that's not easy for me.

Downtown Raleigh has a free bus line running a loop through much of the city center, including the convention

HOURS OF OPERATION
Monday - Wednesday
7am - 11pm
Thursday - Saturday
7am - 2:15am
Sunday
1pm - 8pm
For R-Line, call (919) 485-...
www.YouRHere.com

R LINE
A FREE ride through downtown Raleigh.

district, several entertainment districts, and various city/county/state office zones. I jumped on the "R Line" to head over to Moore Square where I found much less shopping than I'd imagined—most of the area is given over to restaurants, bars, clubs, and

such. I did spend time in a cool art joint called Artspace where a number of artists have studios that they open to the public to both show off their craft and sell the results of it. Only a few artists were in while I was there, but most of the closed studios had windows or exhibits in the hallway outside.

My best find in the Moore Square area was Big Ed's City Market Restaurant, a comfort food joint. I had the chicken and dumplings, cabbage, pinto beans, banana pudding, biscuits, and iced tea. The service was fast, friendly, and attentive. The tea glasses were very small, but never stayed empty for more than a handful of seconds. Stay away from the biscuits, though... those were *not* biscuits. Dinner rolls that had once had biscuits described to them, maybe. Everything else ranged from good if uninspired (the pintos) to downright great. They're open for breakfast and lunch (only until noon on Saturday and not at all on Sunday). I recommend them wholeheartedly.

As an aside, ask me some time about the great banana pudding wars. (Theirs was hot, whereas I prefer cold. Theirs had meringue, whereas I'm agnostic on meringue versus whipped cream. Their meringue was delish though, and if all of it was made their way—crunchy top and sticky-sweet insides—I might be persuaded to that way of thinking.)

I made a stop at another square near the R Line loop. I was disappointed in that it had no real shopping at all but the park was very pretty. The next stop on the "R" was far enough along that I chose to walk the 5 hot blocks back to the hotel instead of backtracking or otherwise walking out of my way to get to the bus. I was back in the hotel before 2P.

The rest of the day was spent hanging with friends—in various groupings doing various things. That included schmoozing in the hotel lobby, getting Con+Stellation flyers delivered to the freebie table, being press-ganged into helping collate and staple pocket programs, picking up badges (etc.), going out to dinner, and last but not least playing Killer Cutthroat Spades.

That latter was with Gary Shelton, Marcia Illingworth, and Tish Groller. Gary had the early lead, but after I managed to set him on one hand (and the others conspired to do so on two subsequent hands), he quickly fell back into the pack. Marsha steamrolled ahead then. Toward the end, I managed to pull into a respectable third, at 180 to Marcia's 240. She bid 4 for the win and I bid a nil that should not have made, but did. (My Queen-middle doubleton in spades was covered by a stiff Ace-King in Tish's hand and I skated on a face card in each of two other suits.) Marcia and I both bid 3 on the next hand—I made mine, she didn't. So, even though I didn't *deserve* the win (that nil making was certainly courtesy of a fluke distribution) I'll take it against three good players.

Dinner deserves some mention too, even if it is out of time order. Seven of us (me, Gary, Tish, Kevin "Fritz" Fotovich, Robert G. Kennedy, Martha Knowles, and Ken Roy) went to Hibernian Pub. The food was good, but not really great. (I had the corned beef and cabbage, which also came with mashed potatoes. There were minor-to-moderate issues with each item, any one of which could have been overlooked—but together they added up to a less-than-fully-satisfactory meal. The Guinness chocolate mousse that Martha had did look very good though—if I'd gone back I'd've had to try it even though I'm not a big fan of beer/stout/ale/whatever.)

After spades finished around 11P, it was to my room, to catching up on this trip report for the day, and to bed—after 12:30A. I had promised Mike Rogers I'd lend him a hand around 9A on an as-needed-if-needed basis so the 8A wakeup call threatened to be too early.

DAY 1, THURSDAY THE 5TH—THE CON BEGINS

Which it was. Literally. The call came more than 10 minutes

ahead of the scheduled hour. Sigh.

I was out of the room just before 9A and found Mike waiting for me in the lobby. Since he was staying in the Sheraton, he had to rush back there and drive his car over with the six boxes of Southern Fandom Confederation archives. Within 10–15 minutes a porter was headed to the section of one of the Marriott ballrooms set aside for the fanzine lounge.

While Mike took his car back to the Sheraton, I started the unboxing, in which he joined shortly. It took until almost 10:30A to finish getting the stuff laid out with some vague attempt at organization. (I believe they went back into the boxes, days later, in better order than they came out.)

As I left the Fanzine Lounge, I ran into Gay and Joe Halde- man along with Rusty Hevelin. We caught up for a few minutes; I was happy to see Joe out and about after his health scare earlier this year. Rusty was using a rolling walker but looked to be holding up OK and having a great time.

Having picked up my reg materials the night before, I had a little while to peruse the program and mark a few likely things to attend. Other than helping (for a few minutes) to schlep some stuff up to the ASFA (Association of Science Fiction & Fantasy Artists) suite, my next order of business was going out to get lunch before the con opened programming, the dealers room and art show, the con suite, etc., all at noon.

Gary had mentioned a hole-in-the-wall barbecue joint a block plus up and a block plus over the previous day. I decided to try Cooper's. The day was sweltering and the restaurant—though cooler—wasn't exactly up to my preferred AC standards, so I decided on take out. I got a giant (think family-size) container of Brunswick stew and over a dozen hush puppies for less than \$6. Can't beat that price. Breakfast had been scant (granola bars) and diner was far in the future (about which more later) so "filling" was to prove a Good Thing. I took it back to my room where I could crank down the temperature and cool/dry off from the trip outside. I *barely* made it through the food so you *know* there was a lot of it.

Since the first program item of interest to me was at 2P, I figured I had time for a tour of the dealers room—more than enough time, really, since the odds of me buying anything in any dealers room are slim. (But I do feel it my fannish duty to look.) The dealers and art show shared a space on level one of the RCC, which was below grade. (The third floor is at ground level on the front side; the second floor on the back side.)

I had an eagle's eye view of the room before heading down the escalator at half-past noon. The art show was still hanging art but the dealers were in full swing. I estimated over 50 tables, comprising 16 or more separate dealers. I saw books, books, books, t-shirts, t-shirts, jewelry, jewelry, art of various kinds (carvings and ceramics at least), a games and gaming supplies dealer, filk, and a few stashes of buttons. I didn't see collectables of any kind, weapons, garb, and I'm sure I'm leaving out some other "missing" categories. While there, I ran into several people, including Judy Bemis who made sure I had her contact info so I could call her if another spades game threatened to break out. (Alas for Judy, though I did play several more times during the weekend, it never worked out for



me to call her as we never were lacking a fourth.)

The aforementioned 2P panel was "When I Was First Going To Conventions" featuring two of the main guests (Juanita Coulson, and Toni Weisskopf) plus Huntsville's own Randy Cleary; among others. I was pleased to see a healthy sprinkling of younger people in the audience. Oh, there were lots of us old pharts who are contemporaries of some on the panel, but it was heartwarming to see younger people attentively listening to what must have seemed to them ancient history.

Between short stints in my room catching up on this report, I made my first visit to the con suite. The Marriott had surprised the convention at the last minute with a "no party" rule. Well, sort of. Apparently their idea of a party includes loud music or other things that would disturb guests. So, all the "parties" as well as the "con suite" became "meet and greets" or "so- cials"—both of which are fine with the Marriott management. Can you say "quibbling over semantics?" I knew you could.

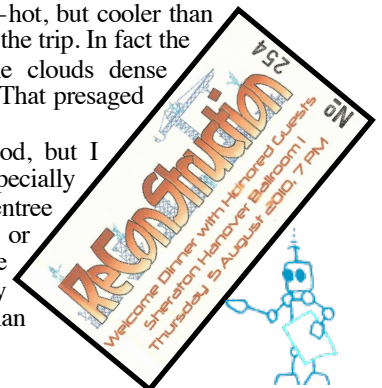
Anyway, the con suite was nice. It would probably not have been big enough had the con been as large as recent NASFiCs (about which, more later) but was adequate for ReConStruc- tion. The parlor was a double-sized room, plus they had the connecting bedroom at either side. One of those was blocked off for storage/prep but one bedroom and the parlor were opened up for attendees. The snacks out in the middle of the afternoon were pretty good and plentiful. They had cookies and other sweets, a variety of salty snacks, and even fruits and veg- gies. Soft drinks were serve-it-yourself from 2-liter bottles; with a good variety. I generally prefer fountain drinks, perhaps supplemented by cans or bottles, but this was probably more economical if potentially messier. They also had bottled water. I noted for future reference the way they used a washcloth to pad the lockbar so it could be used as a quiet stop to keep the door from closing all the way while still satisfying the hotel's insistence on not having open doors for "meet and greets."

The opening ceremony at 5P was my next panel stop. It got started a minute or three late, and ran only about 30 minutes. Toni did an excellent job as Toastmaster, including making a toast—with liquor/liqueur-filled chocolates. She spoke elo- quently about applying the theme of reconstruction to fandom and her introductions of each GoH seemed quite apt. Each of those spoke for a few minutes and were each entertaining. AGoH Brad Foster was visibly nervous but still made a good showing. Michelle Zellich, co-chair of the previous NASFiC (Tuckercon/Archon 31 in 2007), handed over a ceremonial gavel to Warren, who gaveled the con into official existence.

After the opening ceremony, I made the short-ish trek back to my room to "dress for dinner," which just meant putting on a nicer shirt that the convention tee I was wearing. The conven- tion held what was styled a "Guest of Honor Dinner" with tick- ets available for just \$15. (Wow, it's amazing they covered cost at that price, but from what I heard later they indeed did!)

The 7P dinner was at the Sheraton, which meant venturing outside in the heat. Google reported it was 90° out as I was preparing to leave my room—hot, but cooler than it had been back home before the trip. In fact the wind was so strong and the clouds dense enough that it felt in the 80s. That presaged the rain that was to come.

The banquet food was good, but I didn't expect spectacular (especially so cheap) and it wasn't. The entree choice had been vegetarian or meat lasagna. I had chosen the carnivore route, but was happy enough to switch to vegetarian



when it turned out that the Sheraton had overproduced the one and possibly underproduced the other. The meal was not at all elaborate—lasagna, breadsticks, cheesecake, and drinks (water, iced tea, and coffee). The veggie lasagna was quite tasty, if not as hot as it should have been. Tim Illingworth later said that the same was true of the meat lasagna's temp. The iced tea was presweetened but not much; an odd choice. The decaf coffee I had was quite good. The cheesecake was not proper New York style, but neither was it French fluff—nice, but it would have been much better if it was closer to the density of neutronium.

The company at the table was great. I had Juanita Coulson and her daughter to my left and Sue and Steve Francis to my right. I failed to record all the names of my other table mates. In all there were eleven 10-tops and the banquet completely sold out. I'm sure some people would have wanted something more elaborate, but that would have perforce raised the price point to where they might not have sold all tickets.

A storm had blown in during dinner. As the crowd was leaving most were going back to the Marriott and wondering about how to get there without getting soaked. It turned out that there is an underground connection down a somewhat-obscure flight of stairs and through some labyrinth to the Marriott parking garage (and thence into the Marriott itself). Unfortunately, there was no elevator that would stand in for those stairs which was a problem for Marcia in her mobie. She, Tim, and I (mostly Tim) scoped out the best available way, dodging from awning to awning outside, albeit with gaps where one was exposed to the rain.

Arriving in the Marriott wet (Marcia close to soaked since she had to detour out from under cover to go around some stairs) we decided to repair to the bar. We each had our favorite-under-the-circumstances drink and I called Gary to see if he was interested in spades.

The group that night started out as almost a repeat of the previous night, with Martha standing in for Tish. I lost that game so, of course, the details can't be important ;-)

There were kibitzers from time to time, but none who played Killer Cutthroat Spades. One fellow, John Wardale, did seem interested, though. He said he was an experienced bridge player and had played partner spades. I gave up my seat to him for the second game of the evening, but ended up finishing out that game for Martha when Ken came to collect her at 11P. Martha had been drinking a bit and was feeling, shall we say, happy. But, she was also happy to head off to bed as she had the good sense to know that plenty of water and sleep would be necessary to feel even half as happy the next morning.

John won that second game—though Martha left me in a good-enough position that I could challenge a bit at the end. That turned out to be the end of cards for the night as Marsha had to toddle off to bed too. The three remaining card players, myself included, talked for a good while before Gary headed to bed—knowing that Friday was going to be a long day for him. I stayed up later and kept talking to John, but not *that* much later. I detoured quickly by the con suite, but was in my room sometime after 12:30A and to bed something over an hour later. (Hey, if I didn't stay on top of this trip report what would you be reading now?)

Other than the con suite and the ASFA suite, I heard of only one open party on Thurs-

day—but I don't know much about it. (I do know it was the source of the sparkling wine that topped off Martha's imbibing that day and that she brought down some good cheese for us to sample during the first card game.)

So, late to bed with the plan of being late to rise. I had one item tentatively circled on Friday's schedule for 11A, but the earliest "must" attend was not until 1P. I debated briefly about whether to set a wakeup call or not and decided to go for a 10A wakeup call at which time I could flake out longer if I just couldn't make it vertical.

DAY 2, FRIDAY THE 6TH—HITTING MY STRIDE

The wakeup call was predictably early. Probably just as predictably, I didn't want to get up—and indeed didn't for a little while. By the time I arose it was too late to get ready and out the door for the 11A panel without cutting short my morning ablutions.

My first order of business was seeking food, which turned out to be in the company of Gary, Tish, and Fritz. Three of us went to Jimmy John's (a sub/sandwich shop) though Fritz went across the street to a kebob shop. Both are less than 100 yards outside the Marriott's front door and both have only outdoor seating. Fritz brought his food across the street to sit with us.

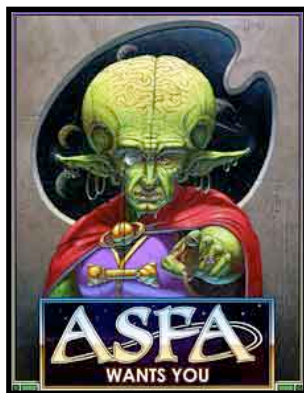
I had a "J.J. Gargantuan"—for Huntsvillian's familiar with Stanlieo's think "Kitchen Sink Sub" with a slightly different mix of meats (and maybe a tiny bit smaller). With chips and a drink it was a little over \$10 and plenty of food. The potato chips turned out to be kettle fried and darn good. The sub was pretty good too, though a little dry because they skimped a bit on the mustard I'd asked for to replace their usual mayo and Italian dressing.

After lunch I had just enough time to squeeze in a quick circuit of the art show before heading off to a 1P panel. It was a small show; I counted the equivalent of about 36 4'x4' panels, a few of them only sparsely covered. There were 5 such panels of print shop material and a further small tabletop display of prints. There were 2-and-a-half 6' tables of 3-D art. (In comments at least twice during the con, Toni said she felt that art shows were seeing a dearth of original art because so much of it is purely digital. Alas the lack of original art seems to me to be carrying over to smaller art shows in general.)

Speaking of Toni, she was the reason I was headed to the aforementioned 1P panel—her TM speech/interview. It turned out she conducted it as a Q&A session with the audience. She put me slightly on the spot by calling on me for the first question. I retaliated by putting her slightly on the spot by getting her to retell her "how I met Harlan Ellison" story. And, if you don't know that one, I suggest you ask Toni the next time you get a chance. So there :-)

That segued straight into the "Baen Traveling Road Show" which filled not only the hour assigned but the hour after it when the room was otherwise to be unused. Toni can talk, but three straight hours would probably have taxed her beyond the pale. Fortunately she had a number of "her" authors—and editors—from Baen to call on to speak about specific books or series. There was a technical glitch with the projector at the beginning which lead her to vamp a while before beginning but that was straightened out without onerous delay.

Heck, I even got a book out of the deal. For those who may not know, Toni gives away books, usually ARCs (advanced reading copies) to people for various reasons including asking an interesting question. In my case, I got one for cracking up when I recognized a speaker's reference to *Tom Swift and His Triphibian Atomicar* and mimed that I own that book. Which I do. I'll let you know later what I think of Mark L. Van Name's *Children No More*.



After three hours of Toni and company, it was awards time. The first set to be presented was the Golden Duck Awards. An unannounced addition to their time slot was the Sidewise Awards. Finally, in a separate time slot, came ASFA's Chesley Awards. Winners for each of these will be in a sidebar.

Two incidents—one solemn and one (fortunately) humorous—bear mentioning from the Chesleys. They opened the awards with a moment of silence for Frank Frazetta, the multi-award winning (at least 3 Chesleys alone) sf/f artist who died earlier this year. On a (again, fortunately) lighter note, I have to tell a story on Warren.

He'd been asked to present one of the awards and was, I'm sure, pleased to do so. After making the announcement and hearing that the winner was not there to accept the award in person, Warren turned to put the award back on the head table for display. Boom!

I pause here to describe the awards. Each was a unique—but each vaguely spherical—sculpture on top of a cubical stone base. Very heavy. (I should know, I helped lift some of them to the stage and a box of 6 had to be between 60 and 100 pounds.)

Well, the glue between the top and the base gave way and the top made an impressive *boom* as it hit the stage—and continued to make noise as it rolled away. Some wit from the audience yelled “Strike!” Could be, but sounded more like a split to me. <badum-ching>

The top missed all toes and other frangible bits and was itself mostly (hopefully completely) undamaged. The ASFA staff on stage promised to make a side trip to the artist who produced the trophies to get that one repaired.

By then I'd been in much the same spot (all the above happened in the same section of ballroom at the RCC) for almost 5 hours and it was past time for a break. I dropped my ARC in my hotel room and hit the con suite for some quick food. ASFA had announced they would have their suite open between the end of their ceremony (around 5:30P) and the art show reception (at 7P) and would be serving dinner, but I felt more comfortable in a less formal environment.

After satisfying my hunger for the moment, I settled into the room for some R&Q (rest and quiet) and to catch up on this con report before the events of the day escaped me. By the time I did that it was within shouting distance, er, in a space-time sort of sense, of parties meet-and-greets starting up. There were many more of those scheduled than the previous night, including three Worldcon bids, two book launches, something that seemed to be themed around 1984, a room meet-and-greet for a new New Orleans con, a gathering for Baen, and of course the ongoing ASFA suite and con suite.

Of those, I made it by the con suite for a good while (I got involved in several overlapping conversations), the Baen soiree, both the Chicago (2012) and London (2014) Worldcon bids, and the New Orleans con—not in that order.

The New Orleans folks gave me a nice shot of hope as they are fans not quite a generation younger than I am starting (in November 2011) a new general-interest sf/f con. Check their website at <www.contraflowscifi.org> for more info.

At the London party bid I threw money at them and would have stayed longer to talk about the bid, but there was always someone at the table doing the same thing and little chance to chat.

I probably spent the longest time in the Chicago, OK, just say it, party. It was more mellow in many ways since they were just there to have a relatively stress-free evening. Being unopposed and the vote being just weeks away, they decided to not sell supporting/friend memberships that evening. After all, all the bids had tables in the dealers room/art show area and they



could always take money from anyone who wanted to give them some later. Every time one group of folks would wander out another would wander in and the conversation would morph to something else that would keep my attention. It was about a quarter before 1A when I finally rose to leave.

I got to bed roughly the same time as the night before, probably a few minutes closer to 2A. I once again set a 10A wakeup call on the premise that I might make an 11A panel. Yeah, that seemed *real* likely. My last thought for the day—or the last one I chose to set in electrons anyway—was that I had violated the 5-2-1 rule by having only one actual meal and way too much con suite/party food in a vain attempt to supply that second meal.

DAY 3, SATURDAY THE 7TH—THE LONG HAUL

On arising I decided that starting off the day with a good breakfast was more important than any program I might attend, so I hopped the “R” to try Big Ed’s breakfast menu. (As an aside, I’ll mention that it was almost exactly an hour from the time I caught the bus at the RCC to the time I arrived back there, at 11:47A.)

I ordered the western omelet which came with grits (or a choice of applesauce or fruit) and biscuits. I was offered toast with the omelet, which I declined, and repeatedly offered more biscuits throughout the meal. Service was again fast and friendly. The omelet itself was tasty with *tons* of filling. They didn’t top it with salsa, as I would have preferred, but offered catsup (yuck!) or Texas Pete brand hot sauce. A modest amount of that almost (but not quite) made up for the missing salsa.

The grits were offered with butter (which I took) or red-eye gravy. The grits needed a little salt (though I expect had I taken the gravy it would have supplied more than enough) and could have been cooked a little longer to develop the creaminess a bit more and get rid of the last few soft lumps. Between my first visit and this return I had talked to several people who had eaten there and they assured me that my experience with their biscuits was better than mine had been. Well, what I had this time was *much* improved, but *still* not at all the right texture and taste for a proper biscuit. They managed to be spongy (like, say, a yeast bread) and tough at the same time. Still, they were good enough that I saved half of one of the two I was served to have with grape jelly as “desert” for my meal.

Once back at the RCC I headed to Eric Flint’s GoH speech at noon in one of the ballroom sections. He spoke for about 10

minutes on his upcoming work for the next 18 months or so, then took questions from the audience for the rest of the hour. Eric is very good at taking a specific question and not only answering it but drawing it out into more general terms. When asked, for instance, on his response to fanfic based on his works, he both touched on his views on intellectual property (which are not the usual) and talked about how the *Grantville Gazette* <www.grantvillegazette.com> is branching out to include fiction not related to his 1632 alternate-history universe. Speaking of the *Gazette*, he also mentioned how it had developed to the point where it was a paying market that now qualifies as a professional sale under the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America <www.sfwaworld.org> rules. That one question got at least a three-fer answer, and all of it relevant.

Eric ran slap up against the end of his hour and I'm sure could have gone longer; but he's a consummate professional and knows that keeping the programming running on time is a Good Thing. Still, between getting around the RCC (to a different floor) and talking to Adrian Washburn who happened to also be at Eric's talk, I was a few minutes late to the 1P program "Butchering the Sacred Cows."

All of the folks on this panel were good in their own way, but the slant taken was not what I was expecting and not, I think, what would have been useful. There are indeed things that cons do—both thinking of individual cons and sf/f/h/whatever cons in general—that Outlive Their Usefulness. That aspect was not addressed at all.

After "Cows" I headed back over to the Marriott. I spent a little time in the Fanzine Lounge and discovered that my meal plans for the day were not likely to synchronize with Mike or with Chris Garcia, both folks I'd thought to ask about going to dinner. I also dropped by the con suite for a quick afternoon nosh and to rehydrate with some Diet Dr. Pepper. Con suite head Gary Robe was taking inventory and deciding what he might have too much of (some soft drinks) and what he might need to stock up on to last through the dead dog party. Finally, I decided to take some time to catch up on this report and to rest an hour or so in preparation for the evening's activities.

Those started with a trip down to the "Fannish Inquisition" at 5P. (Seated Worldcons, Worldcon bids, and others give a presentation and subject themselves to questions.) This was my first programming event in the Marriott so it took only minutes to get there. Unsurprisingly, none of the Aussiecon 4 committee was there to represent this year's Worldcon, so the first presentation fell to the Reno Worldcon (2011). The only things I found that were news to me was that both the Hugos and Masquerade will be in the secondary hotel a kilometer away (I had thought it was only the Masquerade) and that the room rates will be roughly \$150.

The Chicago in 2012 bid (the presumptive winner since they are the only qualified bidder and the vote is very soon) announced their key hotel rate—\$145 flat single through quad. "Junior suites" will start at about \$199. Parking is not locked in to a dollar figure, but will be half of the general charge by the hotel. That would be \$24 (half of \$48) if the con were this year. They are bidding for Labor Day weekend.

The Texas/San Antonio in 2013 bid (so far running unopposed) is also bidding Labor Day weekend. Room rates and such are not yet locked in. The con would be in the Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center and surrounding hotels in the Riverwalk district. That latter, which was already pretty cool, has been expanded since the previous SA Worldcon in 1997.

The London in 2014 bid (also running unopposed so far) has chosen 14–18 August for their dates. They talked about two new hotels planned for the site (including one floating hotel)

which would bring the total number of rooms to around 2300, more than enough to make it the first UK Worldcon to take place in a single concentrated site. On the negative side, none of the hotels has space suitable for parties so those would likely be in the convention center.

No bidders were present for 2015 (and none are rumored to my knowledge) but one exploratory committee for 2016 did present—for Kansas City. They have a single downtown site in mind and they say if they do indeed bid it will be that site—and Labor Day weekend—as the only choice. They expect to be ready to formally launch the bid at the 2012 Worldcon. Later during ReConStruction I heard a rumor from a reliable source that there's another potential bidder for 2016. That same source spoke of a possible second bid for 2017—second to the already-announced Japanese bid which has mooted 2017 as their most likely year.

The Fannish Inquisition closed with a short presentation from next year's DeepSouthCon 49 (in Dallas, in conjunction with FenCon).

I killed some time in the hotel lobby talking to various people and waiting on an appropriate time to walk over to the RCC for the Masquerade. I had heard early on not to expect much but I still wanted to go. Gary, who I'm not sure had been planning to go, decided to go with me.

The Masquerade indeed was short and not particularly impressive. Jan Howard Finder (aka "The Wombat") was the MC. There were about 7 entries. The funniest bit was two entries (separated by several others) who played a time-shifted game of Marco Polo with each other. The best costume, and probably the best presentation, was the only Master Class entry. The whole thing was over in 30 minutes, not counting the judging.



After that I headed over to Jimmy Johns for a second go at the J.J. Gargantuan, asking for extra mustard this time. I took the sandwich back to the con suite and got some veggies and chips to go with it. The extra mustard made a big difference as did the fact that they used more onions this time; all in all a much better sandwich. I also polished off a good bit of Diet DP and took some M&Ms with me for dessert when I went back to the room to once again work on this report.

The social scene for Saturday included parties for Renovation (the 2011 Worldcon), both the Chicago (2012) and London (2014) bids, a SFWA hospitality suite, Capclave, a repeat book-launch party, and the Liaden Lounge <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liaden_universe>—all on top of the ongoing ASFA suite and con suite. I had missed the Texas bid party the previous night and none of the available parties particularly tickled my fancy.

Spades, however, was a possibility. After a number of phone calls—both received and made—and some serendipity the stars aligned, the kittens were herded, and around 10:30P Gary, Marsha, and I sat down to a game. Gary led pretty much from pillar to post and won—though we had a shot at him the last couple of hands. Well, Marsha had a shot at him. I had

maybe one good and a couple of decent hands the entire game and when I went out on a limb, late in the game, it was promptly sawed off at the trunk.

I dropped by the con suite for a while starting not long before midnight and stayed maybe an hour. During that time Teri Sears and Randy Cleary happened to come by. Randy asked an interesting question about the average age at the con. My guess was that it was under 40; he thought noticeably over that. Of course, at the time he was probably the second or third youngest person in the room, only one of whom was under 40. On the way back up to my room the elevator had one other occupant—a fellow who looked to be in his 20s. I asked him that question and his immediate reaction was “35 to 42,” about the same as mine. I can’t say I felt that actually *confirmed* anything, but I did feel just slightly vindicated.

With bedtime earlier than previous nights—maybe 1:15A—and no programs on my wish list before noon on Sunday, I could have gone to bed without setting an alarm. However, I felt it would be useful to start skewing my schedule around more to the normal, so I bit the bullet and went for a 9A alarm.

DAY 4, SUNDAY THE 8TH—CRUISING TO THE END

I did get up at sort-of the planned time but saw no reason to rush much. I even took the time to, *gasp*, read some *science fiction*. I was out of the room, though, in time to go looking for something to do in the 11A time slot.

Which didn’t happen.

In the hotel lobby I ran into Marsha who was down to get an extension on checkout time so I took the opportunity to say bye. I also stopped to say hi to Martha and Ken and find out if they would be around this evening. The answer was not only yes, but I found out about a plan for an early dinner after the closing ceremony. That skewed my priorities a little.

As I was pondering plans, I ran into Toni who was on her way to her kaffee klatch. I walked over to the RCC with her to be sociable (and because, well, hanging around with Toni is fun). We chatted about family (ghods, we can’t be that old, can we?) and how the NASFiC had gone (we agreed everyone seemed to be having a good time) and about DSC 50 in Huntsville (where you just might see the appearance of ceremonial capellets).

I didn’t stay for the kk, though, since she had a full house and since I now wanted to seek breakfast rather than wait for lunch. The first installment turned out to be from a different “KK,” yes, Krispy Kreme. A couple of doughnuts went a long way toward fortifying me, but I also gave in and sought some of the promised breakfast food that the con suite advertised would be available on Sunday. I had a raisin bagel, some miscellaneous sweets, and (most precious of all) some milk. I do miss milk when I haven’t had any for days.

Looking at the program, I decided that the only event of *enough* interest to me to stir my tired old bones to go was going to be the closing ceremony. So, I took some more time off to read for a while, finishing an issue of *Analog* that I’d started on the trip out.

The closing ceremony was at 3P in one of the RCC’s ballroom sections. As TM, Toni made some opening remarks, passing on the gratitude of the GoHs, then introduced Warren. An obviously tired and just as obviously happy-to-be-nearing-the-finishing-line chair was he. He mentioned the dead dog party “meet and greet” to be in the con suite later in the day—then encouraged people to go help with teardown to hasten that time. Warren thanked his committee (claiming to be only a figurehead) calling out key staff persons by name, stumbling only a few times. The whole thing was over in 20 minutes.

My tired old body was not up to helping with anything at

that point. Various parties of the intended dinner group did run off to take care of various things—including Tish going to check on a programing room or three to make sure they were

Awards at NASFiC

A number of awards were announced and/or presented at the NASFiC, in Raleigh NC.

CHESLEY AWARDS

The Chesley Awards, named for astronomical artist Chesley Bonestell, are awarded by the Association of Science Fiction and Fantasy Artists <www.asfa-art.org> to “recognize individual works and achievements during a given year.” The winners are:

- Cover Illustration, Hardcover**Matthew Stewart,
Valley of Shadows
- Cover Illustration, Paperback**Scott Altmann,
The Mysterious Mr. Spines: Flight
- Cover Illustration, Magazine**John Picacio, *Asimov’s*,
September 2009
- Interior Illustration**Gary Lippincott, “On Turtles,
On Hares” from *Come to the Fairies’ Ball*
- Unpublished Color Work**Raoul Vitale, *Unrequited*
- Unpublished Monochrome Work**Justin Gerard,
Steampunk Wizard of Oz
- Three-Dimensional Work**Vincent Villafranca,
The Switching Hour
- Product Illustration**Matthew Stewart,
Battle Under the Mountain
- Gaming-Related Illustration** ..Lucas Graciano, *Silverwing*
- Art Director**Irene Gallo, Tor
- Contribution to ASFA**Ingrid Nielson, for 20+ years
helping with the Chesleys
- Lifetime Artistic Achievement**Greg Hildebrandt

GOLDEN DUCK AWARDS

The Golden Duck Awards <www.goldenduck.org> are given by Super-Con-Duck-Tivity to recognize Excellence in Children’s Science Fiction. The winners are:

- Picture Book Award***Swamps of Sleethe*, Jack
Prelutsky, Jimmy Pickering, illustrator (Knopf)
- Eleanor Cameron Middle Grades Award**Z Rex,
Steve Cole (Penguin)
- Hal Clement Young Adult Award***Catching Fire*,
Suzanne Collins (Scholastic)
- Special Award***You Write It: Science Fiction*,
John Hamilton (Abdo)

SIDEWISE AWARDS

Winners of the Sidewise Awards <www.uchronia.net/sidewise> for Alternate History are:

- Short Form**.....Alastair Reynolds, “The Fixation”,
The Solaris Book of New Science Fiction, Volume 3,
George Mann, ed. (Solaris)
- Long Form**.....Robert Conroy, *1942* (Ballantine)

NASFiC ART SHOW AWARDS Science Fiction

- First Place**Mitch Bentley, *Cold Trail*
- Second Place** ..Brad Foster, *Stars at Night Are Big and Bright*
- Third Place**Mitch Bentley, *Windwatchers*

Fantasy

- First Place**.....Delphyne Woods, *Moonrise*
- Second Place**Mitch Bentley, *Death Metal*
- Third Place**.....Theresa Mather, *Shadow Princess*

Best In Show

Alan F. Beck, *Scandal*

ready to turn back over to the RCC. The new plan, rather than leaving straight from the ceremony, was to meet in the Marriott lobby “in 15 minutes” and depart from there. It turned (unsurprisingly) into another kitten-herding exercise.

We did eventually head up the road seven strong. It was me, Tish, Martha and Ken, Gary, Robert, and Jim Minz (though Jim wasn’t eating since he had a dinner later). The destination was The Big Easy; I’m betting you can guess the cuisine. The red beans and rice (with andouille) was excellent. The only knock against it—and this is being *very* picky—was that the proportion of beans to rice was a little rich.

We were back in the hotel before 5:15P with plans for more spades. However, after kicking around the lobby for some time it proved impossible to get 4 players and cards together at the same time. Some time after 6P I gave up and headed up to my room to pack—hoping that cards might still happen before I needed to crash for the night. On the bad side, that didn’t happen. On the good side it gave me time to catch up on a lot of things that had been delayed earlier in the con.

Eventually I got as far as I could, and it was *certainly* a night for an early bedtime. I phoned in a wakeup call for a little before 6A (sigh!) and toddled off to bed maybe 10 minutes before 10P.

DAY +1, MONDAY THE 9TH—TRAVEL DAY 2

With the bias built in to the Marriott’s wakeup system, the phone rang a quarter before 6A. Blech! Expected, but still, blech!

I’d prepared almost everything the night before so I was ready to leave the room in just over an hour—and completely checked out almost 25 minutes before the Super Shuttle was due to leave the hotel at 7:20A, though we actually left earlier than that. I ended up at the airport way earlier than necessary (as I’d expected). I was inside the RDU security perimeter by a little after 8A, almost 3 hours before my flight. I probably—without any intent to do so—frightened at least one TSA agent since I went through one of the whole-body scan machines rather than a metal detector.

Being so early did give me time to have a leisurely, but forgettable (at least I *hope* I can forget it), breakfast. It also gave me time to continue working on this report (doing some fact checking and polishing) and start another issue of *Analog*. The rigors of the con also led to a 30-minute nap.

Joe and Gay Haldeman happened to be on the same flight as I was and Gay noticed this fact as we were nearing boarding time. While Joe kept their place in line, Gay came over to chat. We passed the few minutes pleasantly talking about the NASFiC and about their recent trip to Spain. She even remembered that Con†Stellation is coming up soon. Remarkable person, she is. (Joe too, of course!)

As non-horrible as the segments up were, the flight from RDU to ATL fully lived down to flying’s current reputation—apart from both leaving and arriving on time. There was not, as far as I could tell, an empty seat on the plane. The seats on that 737 seemed to be designed to torture me. I much preferred the little regional jet on the ATL to HSV leg as the aisle-side armrests are designed to be raised (if you know about the magic button).

I’d arranged to be picked up at HSV by Sue Thorn and she was right on time. I waited perhaps 2 minutes after picking up my baggage only because the flight out of ATL also took off on time which pretty much assured an early arrival at HSV. (It takes maybe 30 minutes in the air; they allow an hour from gate to gate and there’s almost never any delay vectoring into HSV.)

And so, home—intact if very, very tired. The con was so

worth the bother of the actual travel. More people should have made the decision to go.

WRAPUP

Lots of things don’t fit in a chronological trip report, but are worth mentioning anyway.

I’ve talked about the events I went to but that doesn’t give you a feel for the full breadth of programming. My stats herein are from a preliminary version of the program plus there are always changes during a complex con, but they should get the idea across.

In honor of GoH Flint ReConStruction had a special alternate universe/1632 track comprising about 14 items. About 26 items were tagged “Con” and included things like the opening and closing ceremonies, auctions, dances, the masquerade, and a daily feedback session. Around 55 programs were tagged as Literary. 44 Miscellaneous items included Kaffee Klatches, Autographs, and more. They also had double digit numbers of programs on Art, Costuming, Fandom, Filk, and Science. Lesser numbers of items were tagged Children, Gaming, GLBT, and Media. There were well over 200 programming items in all, and that doesn’t count the gaming going on in the Sheraton.

The RCC facilities were very nice but oversized, and would have been even had the con been twice the size. The art show, dealers room, bid tables, etc. were in the smallest of three sections of the Exhibit Hall level but were still swallowed by the space. The two ballroom sections used for the large functions were set with about 500 chairs each and could have held way more. They were never close to full. One of the three ballroom sections wasn’t used at all.

The Marriott was very nice in most ways: well appointed, clean, good AC, no mechanic problems at all. I did see small issues (stains, parted seams, holes) with the bed linens in several rooms (both mine and a couple of parties). The one brush I had with the Sheraton was mostly positive, other than their apparent inability to make the ordered number of servings of each entree at the banquet. Gaming and the banquet took up only a small percentage of the Sheraton.

I’ve tap danced around attendance as long as possible. In planning, Raleigh was said to have hoped for 1500—plus or minus some spread. This is in line with “recent” NASFiCs though since they occur only occasionally and since circumstances vary a lot (one was combined with Dragon*Con back in ’95 and another with Archon in ’07, but most are stand-alone cons) it’s hard to draw much from historical evidence. I haven’t seen any official membership count for ReConStruction and estimates vary widely. I’m going to pull a number out of the air (“averaging” various guesses I heard) and say they were around 750 total members with some non-trivial number (up to maybe 100) no-shows from among the preregistered. Other than the con suite, all convention facilities would have been sufficient—or could have easily been expanded to be so—for 1500 and *well* beyond. Expanding the con suite to handle double or triple the traffic it had would have been more difficult but I can think of several mitigation strategies they could have tried and there are probably quite a few that are not as obvious.

The con did have some issues. There was essentially no signage at the start of the con and only minimal such by the end. The low attendance caused a tight budget. Though I have significant hope they end up in the black, that was partly achieved by axing some areas, including Handicapped Access. It also appeared that staffing was thin in some areas, but they mostly made do and it’s hard to complain about a lack of staff since I didn’t volunteer.

The lower-than-desired attendance probably contributed to

an apparent dearth of art show bids which in turn caused the art auction to be canceled. Too, they may have shot themselves in the foot by requiring too many bids to go to auction. I'd guess the low attendance also contributed greatly to the small and somewhat disappointing masquerade. I don't know if other factors may have played in to that.

With the 2011 Worldcon in North America (Reno), there will be no NASFiC. Though technically not decided yet, the 2012 Worldcon will certainly be in Chicago while 2013 is less certain, but is highly likely to be in San Antonio—so no NASFiCs those years either. Pulling out my crystal ball, I'll predict that the currently-unopposed London in 2014 Worldcon bid will win and that therefore there could be a 2014 NASFiC. Under current rules (about which I have strong opinions should you care to ask) that site would be selected at the 2013 Worldcon. As yet no rumors of interested parties have reach the *Shuttle*.

If you want to know more about ReConStruction, you should come to Con†Stellation <www.con-stellation.org> (17–19 September, here in Huntsville) where Warren will be our FGoH.

Letters of Comment

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

Lloyd Penney
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21 July 2010

I've got the July *Shuttle* here, and I have a little time. Guess what I'm going to do, commit a little writing, that's what. Here goes...

Hope all enjoyed the musical *Buffy* episode. It's the only episode of *Buffy* I ever saw. Let's just get *Buffy* into these *Twilight* movies, and they'll end real fast...

The Hugo voting period ends the end of the month, and I still have some hopes, especially from those who have said I'll get their vote. Hoping for some good news from Melbourne!

A loc from Sheryl Birkhead... nothing is guaranteed, but we may have played our hand for TAFF a little early. I am certain there will be plenty of folks who would like to go to London for the 2014 Worldcon, should they get it. Still, I think we will go for it, and see what we need to do to carry off this fan fund the way it should be done.

Nothing from PieEyed? Missing it, I am. More next time, I hope...

My loc... nothing has really changed since my loc on the June *Shuttle* was sent out on July 4. I think Fred Pohl will do well on the ballot because he's Fred Pohl, and I am still hoping that enough members read fanzines with my letters in them. No matter; it is a true honour to be nominated, and I shall enjoy that honour as much as my fellow fans will let me. Also, this past weekend was Polaris 24, the annual fan-run media SF convention, which this time had some steampunk programming and a big steampunk party, at which we won some fabulous prizes. We figured this was the first time we'd won prizes for costuming since the 80s. We also had a dealer's table, and sales were good. We've got two tables for next year.

I figure I am done... I'll be eagerly looking for the August *Shuttle* real soon.

[As you will have noticed, the majority of this issue is taken up

by my trip report for ReConStruction, the NASFiC. Unfortunately, that squeezed out any room that might have been available for running the next chapter of *No Need for a Ring*. Next month doesn't look promising in that respect, either. I'll be squeezed for *time* and wanting to keep the issue as short as possible, while simultaneously having at least a little hot news to run from Worldcon. Who knows, that might even include some good news for you, Lloyd. Everyone seemed to enjoy the *Buffy* episode. I was never much of a fan of the TV show, but I did like the quirky humor in the *Buffy* movie. -ED]

LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC

Sheryl Birkhead
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8 August 2010

Well, I think the Wallstreet [Mac PowerBook G3] may have to be retired. After the repairs (which included replacing the connector for the charger) I *can't* get the plug to work. So the rechargeable (well, it *was*) battery died... That means, fixed or not... Oh well, back to writing *all* the time. ((Uh—saving for a new portable Mac has to take up residence behind car repairs and dental work, so I figure oh, about 2015 or so I can start with the piggy bank—we'll see.))

This is the NASFiC weekend so perhaps some of your readers got the chance to attend. I know there has been some concern over their possible membership numbers. With any luck the poor economy won't throw them into the red. I went to their "Googled" site but was lost since it doesn't seem to be "live"—dates are not current. Either they are not doing live 'casts or I'm just in the wrong place. Oh well—I tried.

I did get my Hugo ballot filed in time, but never got to read beyond the short stories. I revisited the zine *Sofa* but still came away with (as in the *E-Velo*...) no way to "read"/listen to a sample (also didn't see "locs" listed in their contents so wonder about response/interaction)—never got a chance to evaluate it, but I tried.

I hadn't thought to take a thumb drive to the library and save the Hugo packet for future reading. [Indecipherable] recently mentioned that the cost of that packet *alone* justified a supporting membership. Ah. Of course, when I went back the packet had been removed since it was after July 31. Sigh. Maybe next year.

About site voting—I know Chicago was the only one who filed (etc.). Bur, for a write-in does a possible site have to meet any criteria? Just wondered.

LibertyCon—sounds as if you had a fine time—what membership numbers?

I've never gone to the Baen Book website—now I see a reason to do so. I'd like to read firsts from new "bests."

I have not heard anything more about the deployed soldier's dog—leaving me to believe/hope a suitable long term foster situation was found.

Experienced the local earthquake, woke at 5 AM—looked at the clock—5:04 and felt the rumble... and figured someone had slammed into something somewhere. It felt like an explosion, but the electricity stayed on. There were no overt signs—so I went and looked outside (to check for fire, etc.)—nope. Went back to sleep. The next morning I used the internet to check DC news—ah, so *that* is what it was... an earthquake.

Such fun—thanks for thish!

[LibertyCon has an official limit on paid attendees of 450, but I
(continued on back cover)



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don't think they quite make it to that number as I've been able to join at the door every year that I've tried to do so. There are a significant number of guests comped on top of the paid number, of course. The qualifications for a write-in for Worldcon site selection are the same as for a bid listed on the ballot, only the deadline is different. To be on the ballot, a bid has to file paperwork 180 days out. To be a qualified write-in, the deadline is the close of voting. Ineligible sites (those that haven't filed the paperwork or are within the 500 mile exclusion zone) are counted in the first round but "If no eligible bid achieves a majority on the first round of tallying, then on the second round all

ballots for ineligible bids shall be redistributed to their first eligible choices." The apparent purpose of this rule is to allow hoax bids to be counted without punishing serious sites. I think of it as a special case of the Roger Rabbit Rule ("Only when it's funny"). NASFiC attendance was down from what they had hoped going in, but initial evidence is that they will be in the black, if only slightly. (I could be wrong about that, of course.) You can see lots more about that con elsewhere in this issue. I don't know which Raleigh website you were viewing—the bid site stayed up (but wasn't updated) even after the convention site was launched when they won the vote last year. I've noted others being confused by the two sites. -ED]