



# THE DRINK TANK ISSUE 55

## YET ANOTHER FASTER THAN EXPECTED ISSUE

GARCIA@COMPUTERHISTORY.ORG



IT'S THE SECOND MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR...FOLLOWING WRESTLEMANIA SEASON!

That's Right, it's the Holidays, when Jew, Gentile, Muslim, and even Buddhists have something to celebrate. While Christmas songs drive me nuts and there are all those annoying specials interrupting Prime Time's Great shows, it's still fun to watch the Christmas hustle going on all around and the fun that kids have playing with toys after they've unwrapped them and before they've broken them in half. Plus, there are Holiday parties where the lasses dress much like the one off to the right and there's always mistletoe to be found hanging from the ceiling. God Bless It!

My Holiday Season started with a trip to Perris, a city which was once largely agriculture and is now a breeding ground for planned communities and WalMart-type stores. It's also where



my Uncle Wayne lives with Shadow, the aging Dog. We drove down on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, missing almost all of the traffic that would come just a day later. Once we

were there, we saw that Shadow had a little nook of her own. You see, she'd just had surgery to repair one of her hips and she couldn't walk much, so Wayne made the front door into a home for her, covered it in blankets and put water and food within easy reach. She didn't like it much, but when we came, after having not seen either of us for ages, she was very perky.

On Wednesday, we went to Palm Springs. You may have read my issue about Half Moon Bay, well, in many ways, Palm Springs is a Desert HMB. It's not a bad place, it's kinda hot...actually it's VERY hot, but they've got a nice museum and Sonny Bono is treated like a god, so there's one thing it's got going for it. We had a quick bite and took a look at the Palm Springs Museum of Art, which is pretty nice. A lot of great MesoAmerican artefacts and a fair modernist collection.

Mom and Wayne had decided that we'd be going to see a show on Wednesday. I had no idea what

the show was, other than it was called the Palm Springs Follies.

Now, the Ziegfeld Follies were the most awesome spectacular in the



history of New York Theatre. There were songs, there was dancing, there were comedians and trained dog acts. Well, Palm Springs is a city...well, village actually, filled with people of an age that would easily be able to remember the Follies, so they have their own...completely performed by those folks of a certain age.

That's right, the Follies are performed entirely by performers over the age of 55. Now, I'm not against...too much, but this just creeped me out. You see, most of the women in the show were in the 65-75 range, and yeah, they can still belt a hard hitting tune and dance a tap dance that'll knock you over, but there's the fundamental problem that they have. You see, they do a couple of numbers in short skirts and at least one or two in Vegas Showgirl-y outfits. I should not have to say how much this disturbed me from beginning to end.

That's not to say that the show isn't entertaining, no. It's old-fashioned and that left me high and dry at parts, but there were some highlights. Like the Dog Act. There's nothing like a good dog act. And there was the singer Anacani, who sang some lovely Latin numbers. The impressionist chick wasn't half-bad, though she only really hit the impressions solid when she was doing

Hepburn and Bette Davis. It was quite funny at those points.

The only thing I can say was a home run had to be the founder/MC. He was hilarious, very Catskills 1970s. He worked a little blue (probably a 5 on a scale of Bambi to The Aristocrats) and had the audience laughing a lot. I really thought he was the best thing I saw in Palm Springs. I shook his hand after and told him that his sets killed. He said that I should come back when I'm older. Agreed.

The whole thing ended with a Patriotic send-off that I thought was well-done, but really, it came off a little forced. Go figure.

After the show, which lasted, I kid you not, THREE complete hours, we headed over to a place called Rubies, a 50s dinner with pretty decent food. I liked the Chicken Tenders.

Back in Perris, Mom broke the news that we'd not be doing Thanksgiving at the house, but at an Indian Casino in Temecula. I had no objections, since there's nothing better than gambling and a buffet. The line was long, but the food was good and different.

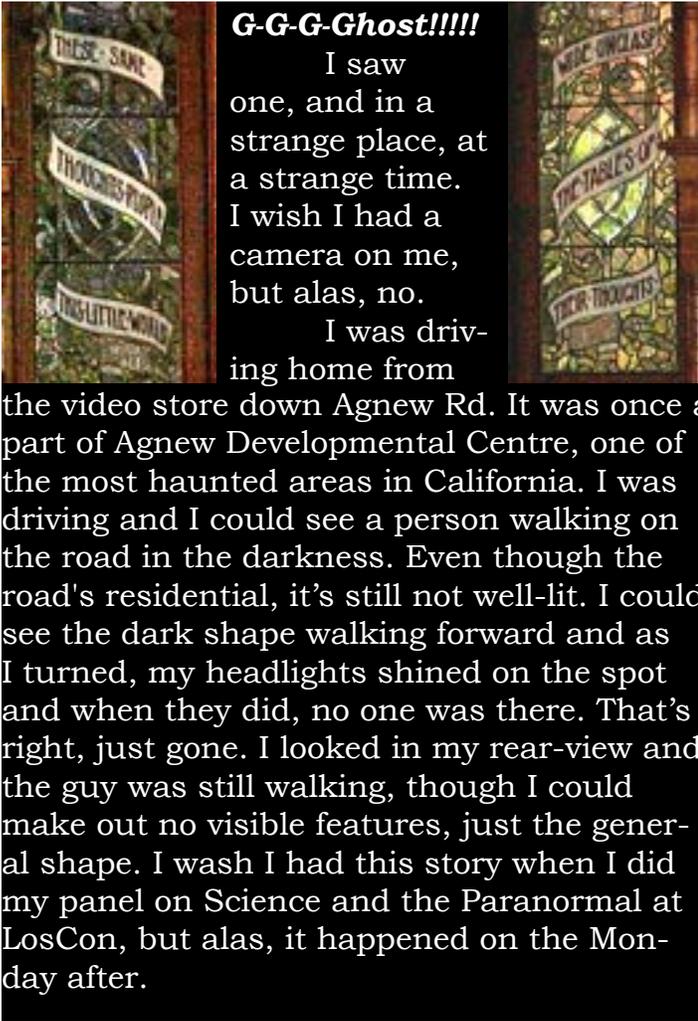
They didn't have mashed potatoes. They had mashed sweet potatoes. There was rabbit, buffalo ribs (which were amazing!),

tamales, heaping piles of corn mushes, elk, venison, and wild turkey and boar. It was a dream, and the fry bread was equally terrific.

After that, I gambled. California doesn't allow dice games in casinos, and my favourite game is craps, but they do play it by using the cards Ace through 6. I won a fair amount, and then it drained away. I then went over to Blackjack and on less than ten hands, made up for all but five dollars of my losses. That was a solid.

Thanksgiving ended with me heading up to LAX for LosCon. You can read about LosCon in SF/SF and Vegas Fandom Weekly, and I'll run a review in here at some point, but let me say I dug it the most!





**G-G-G-Ghost!!!!**

I saw one, and in a strange place, at a strange time. I wish I had a camera on me, but alas, no.

I was driving home from

the video store down Agnew Rd. It was once a part of Agnew Developmental Centre, one of the most haunted areas in California. I was driving and I could see a person walking on the road in the darkness. Even though the road's residential, it's still not well-lit. I could see the dark shape walking forward and as I turned, my headlights shined on the spot and when they did, no one was there. That's right, just gone. I looked in my rear-view and the guy was still walking, though I could make out no visible features, just the general shape. I wish I had this story when I did my panel on Science and the Paranormal at LosCon, but alas, it happened on the Monday after.

I haven't heard from M and Jay since the last email that I turned (mostly) into the article in the last issue. I always worry about those two, but sometimes I'm right. I did get an email from SaBean (who we all worry about) saying that she had a plan to go and visit them ahead of their wedding. Good for her, though since they decided to get married in California (mostly so I wouldn't have to fly) she could have waited.

Why am I writing this? SaBean told me the wonderful news, and the probably the reason that they wanted to get married in the States, is that M is in fact, two and a half months pregnant! Yay!

I sent them an email, but as I said I haven't heard back. Long ago, when the crust was still warm on friendship the three of us have toiled through, we agreed that the first kid born to one of us would be Christopher, and if they don't make good, I swear I'll take my revenge.

More as it becomes available.

**A Letter from John Purcell**

Hello, Chris!

I just read your 54th issue - the special 70's ish - on efanazines.com, and thoroughly enjoyed it. At the time you were born, I was one year into fandom and rapidly getting sucked down the vortex of fanac. It was a blast! Yeah, I loved the 70's too, but that was a long time ago. Thanks for the trip down leisure suit memory lane.

**Ah, the one thing I love that has never returned is the leisure suit. I have photos of me as a four and five year old in one and I look great. Of course, at that point, I also had straight hair.**

My minor in college was Russian Studies, which included three years of learning the language, of which I still remember bits and pieces. Way out of practice, I am, but that's okay. I still have a lot of dictionaries and phrase books on the shelf, and occasionally run into a grad student at TAMU who's from Russia, the Ukraine, or some other former Soviet republic so I can speak what little I remember. I still would love to travel to St. Petersburg, Kiev, or Odessa. Moscow would be fun, but I have an affinity for Ukraine; it just looks like a beautiful country.

**I took a little Russian (not to be confused with Lubov who IS a little Russian) when I was in High School. Jay speaks it pretty well. I wouldn't mind making a trip to Moscow myself, but with my flying fear, it's doubtful for anytime soon.**

Hmm...Sex in space... How well I remember howling at Jane Fonda's zero gee striptease at the beginning of Barbarella; every move she made should have resulted in her spinning off in an opposite direction. Methinks they forgot how Newton's laws operated. Science fiction space porn is definitely a special interest sub-genre if there ever was one. Maybe M. should write a thesis on this; seems to me it would be published somewhere. Imagine the PowerPoint Presentation that could be made at the annual convention of the Modern Language Association or the National Council of Teachers of English. Boggles the

mind to think of it.

***I'm fairly certain that M or SaBean could easily write a thesis from memory on SF porn. I know they've both watched enough of it over the years, and at the PPP parties in the mid-90s, M would usually have one in the VCR, though most of us were far too busy playing cards to pay any attention.***

I used to like REM until they became too commercial and Michael Stipe wound up being a perpetual mourner of Kurt Cobain. Loved their early stuff.

***They did manage one really good album after 1992, but only one. They were so great when they were the darlings of College Radio.***

Pastafanarianism: now here's a religion I could sink my teeth into! I like this idea a lot; a faith that comes complete with your choice of sauce. But I foresee a problem: some day a split will emerge between the red saucites and the alfredoites, and the fight that would ensue would be messy. I certainly hope they take steps to avoid such a conflict.

***First off, that was a terrible pun. In BASFA, that would cost you 25 cents. The Alfredoites would have a certain disadvantage, as the Reds act more like a community than the white sauce folks. The Reds are always sharing and giving speeches and rallies...***

Thanks again for an enjoyable zine. I'll be looking forward to the next installment. Speaking of which, attached is my latest IN A PRIOR LIFETIME.

***Fantastic! Always good to get another zine!***

All the best,  
John Purcell

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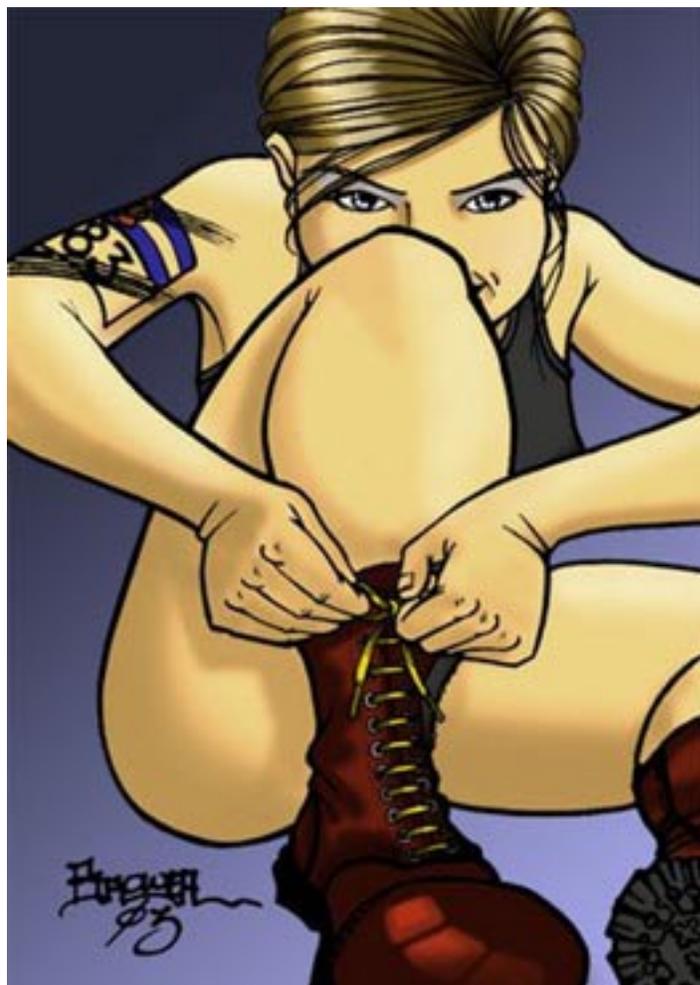
**100 WORD ARTICLES**

The Issue that I'm focusing a bit on right now is the issue I'm calling '100'. It'll be all 100 word articles (save for two introductions). It won't be out until January, and it'll be one of the print + web versions that I do

once in a while.

I'm hoping to get 100 articles, and I currently have about 25 or so from the usual suspects (that is Frank Wu, Kelly Green, Myself, M, Jay and the like) and a few folks who I'm very glad have said they'd look into writing one or two (Jay Lake, Carlos Moreno, Diana Sherman, Sue Hutchinson). And I still need more. The only requirement is that it be 100 words exactly. If I get 103 words, the last three will be lopped. 97 words, and I've got a plan to pad it out. I'm excited as the stuff I've already got ranges from truly depressing and impactful (SaBean's pieces) to very funny (a thing called Never Sicker) and a few fun ones from other folks. 100 word reviews would be nice, and I've got a promise of one, and a couple of strange recipes have already floated by that fit the bill. Odd stuff indeed.

Anyone else wanting to contribute, I'd like to have things in hand by the first of the year (except for a few that I know have to wait, like Kevin Roche's FurCon review!)





## Introducing The HorrorPops!!!

I have a long tradition of loving strange, strange music. There's my love of Science Fiction Surf Rock, or horror-stained ska, of all sorts of weirdness music like BloodHag and GhoulTown and The Aquabats. Well, here's another one for the books: The Horrorpops.

The HorrorPops are a band with an incredibly hot lead singer. There's no way around it, they've made themselves into a band that uses the sex appeal of the lead singer/upright bassist (the hottest possible combination) to get folks listening. It worked with me, as soon as I saw the album cover (which is up top to the right) I bought the CD, headed home with it in my car stereo and did the requisite Googling on the name.

It came up with their delightfully wicked and well-covered with photos site, [www.horrorpops.com](http://www.horrorpops.com).

The lead singer, Patricia, is lovely, and she's got that Rockabilly, 'she might just bite your head off if you give her the chance' look down cold.

When I started looking at the other members of the band, and that took a little time since there were a lot of photos of Patricia around) I realised that this was a band with a stronger psychobilly-otic line-up.

The guitarist, who also spends a little time on Bass, is called Kim Nekroman. He's better known as the bassist for the band The Nekromantix, the loudest psychobilly band and the one that has the coffin-shaped bass. The HorrorPops came together when Patricia's former band, Peanut Pump Gun, opened for the Nekromantix and the two of them traded the secrets of the guitar box (Patricia to Kim) for the secrets of the big standee bottom (Kim to Patricia). This all happened in Collonge, Germany, by the



way, as the HorrorPops are actually a Danish band. They must have been some lessons as the two of them eventually got hitched.

The band started playing as a real band in 1998, with Kim, Patricia and Neidermeyer on Drums. The set-up

worked, but they needed a stage show, so Patricia got two of the girls who worked at the piercing shop she worked at to become their go-go dancers. This was a good thing as it really helped liven up the stage performance, as well as up the sexy factor a notch or two.

The HorrorPops became big in Europe and when you're big in Europe, American acts who tour will hear your CD and bring you to the USA. This is what happened with our good friend Tim of Rancid. Lars saw them and asked them to tour with Rancid on one of their last tours. The HorrorPops did so well that they got interviewed by Vogue and did a fine interview that was very memorable. They did so well, and the Nekromantix were getting such a great US response, that they relocated to the US. They had brought on a guy named Karsten to play backing guitar, but he ended up leaving the band and being replaced by the husband of one of the Go-Go dancers. Go figure.

The first album, Hell Yeah, is a great little Psychobilly/pop album. Not nearly as fast and abrasive as The Nekromantix or someone like the Phenomenauts, they are solid with catchy songs that range from 1950s rockabilly (a song



like Cool Cool Flattop) to good old-fashioned ska (Girl in a Cage) to flat-out psychobilly (Ghouls) and they are all played with Patricia's beautiful growl in the front. The guitar work is very strong, as is the bass work. For a girl who wasn't a bassist before she started with the band, she's come a long way and at times seems to be as strong as the best, including Jimbo from The Reverend Horton Heat. The album, released in 2004, flows well and even has an instrumental track to showcase Nekromantix's guitar. The drumming is competent and the entire effect is something that a new comer to Psychobilly would find more palatable than most of the bands that are out there.

The stage show they put on should be seen. The music actually suffers a bit live, which isn't that unusual, but add in the dancing and the way Kim and Patricia rock off each other and the crowd and you get an amazing experience.

The HorrorPops have a second album, released in September, that I haven't heard yet. The cover has Patricia standing with her bass that she seems to have gone all Pete Townsend on. It's a great photo, but if they really hurt that marvelous bass, there should be a giant funeral!

### **A Letter from Ed Meskys!**

Peter Sullivan sent me another DT, the first in a few weeks. We can't keep up with your frequency. He says that I should try opening a newer ish as Acrobat seems to work better now at converting pdf to text. I am working on my next Entropy but when I can take a bit of time off I will try another ish. Today I saw the announcement that #54 is ready.

**Yeah, I get that a lot. I've slowed down a bit, I mean it's more than a week since I last put one out! Can't wait to read the next Entropy.**

Tube poker sounds like an amusing pastime while riding on a train. Of course to play I would need sighted help.

I was an enthusiast of rapid transit even when I was sighted and could drive. I grew up in NY City which has one of the most extensive systems.

**Yeah, I've gotten word that there are a few people who play on NYC Subways, but there are few 5-across seats.**

When I lived in the BArea BART wasn't yet built and the trains which used to use the lower lever of the Bay Bridge were long gone. I did rely heavily on the SF Muni and AC Transit, and used Greyhound to travel between Livermore and SF/Oakland, and Peerless Transit between Hayward and Palo Alto. (It crossed the Dumbarton Bridge.) I have returned to the BArea and have ridden the Muni Metro and BART. Oh, I had occasionally taken the train between SF and Palo Alto, where my co-editor of NIEKAS lived.

**Ah, Shallow Alto. Lovely city, though massively over-priced, though in those days it wasn't so bad. You know, I've lived here all my life and I had no idea that trains ever ran on the Bay Bridge. I was also shocked when I learned that you had worked at Livermore Labs. The museum has most of Livermore's old computers, so I've visited the lab more than a few times.**

I have ridden the subways in Chicago, Philadelphia, DC, and Atlanta oh, and in Baltimore. (Both the real subway and

the light rail.) I rode the short Newark NJ subway, and the new light rail from Hoboken to Bayonne. Would the Hudson Tubes/PATH between NY and Newark count as a subway?

**Hmmm...I don't know. I've never ridden the Hudson Tubes. I guess it would depend on whether or not they actually went underground.**

In Europe I rode the subways in Glasgow (a simple circle) and London, open cut commuter lines in Copenhagen, elevated trains in Hamburg, and the subways in Paris, including the line with rubber tired trains. Oh, and back in North America the subway in Toronto. I have never visited Montreal, but if it wins the 09 worldcon I will get to try their line.

When I was in Frankfurt in 1965 the subway, or U-Bahn, was under construction and no part was open.

**Montreal is my favourite Subway system. No question. Clean and fast and with every station in a useful location. It's one of the reasons I'm so much behind the Montreal bid (that and the access to Spruce Beer and Ice Cider)**

A good friend is a wrestling fan and I have forwarded him your zine.

**Thanks much! Always glad to have more 'rasslin' fans readin'**

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### **Some Notes on eMail.**

I've now had Garcia@computerhistory.org for more than 7 years. It's a fine address and one that I plan on keeping for a long time. I hadn't done a check in a long time, but I looked into how many emails I've received over the last 7 years. Now, the furthest back I could go was 4 years (for some reason the rest are gone daddy gone) but even in that amount of time I've got 128,693 emails and sent 12,039 emails myself. That's a lot, about 6 a day on average, it would seem.

I wonder what would happen if I were to lose the address altogether. Would I still get such huge amounts of mail? Would I still be able to count on getting Gevalia ads every day? I would miss them so...

## ***I've been reading.***

I picked up a couple of issues of The Alien Critic the other day (and the design of this issue is inspired by it just a little) and I was very happy to get to read one of those fanzines that got a lot of attention. I'd say Dick Geis' best work was slightly earlier, but The Alien Critic was a great read, especially the issue with an essay on the ways in which Theodore Sturgeon basically sabotaged his own career by writing about matters of significance. I couldn't agree more.

Now, Dick Geis is one of the all-time greats, and a wonderful writer, but the thing that stuck out at me the most was Tim Kirk's artwork. I met Tim at LosCon and he was a really nice guy. I've seen his work for years, and he won 5 consecutive Hugos for best fan artist, and I am sad that we don't get to see much of his stuff anymore. I may have to try and change that...

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## **THE UNUSUAL DATING HISTORY OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE REV. DR. MICHAEL P.S. SWAN: 1999-2004**



muddied heart.

Shit, I'm even talking like a broken-hearted chick now.

The first girl was Cassie, though I always called her Savage. That was her last name after a brief marriage that left her wandering and trying to pick up tiny pieces with less-than-nimble fingers. I found her staggering at a show one night, early 1999.

Recent History says that I'm unlucky in love. That is not actually the case if you are looking at numbers instead of heart-smashing experience. I've dated women, in the last five years more than a dozen, but there were a few who drove over me heavy, leaving deep tracks in my

She came to my place and I didn't touch her, I swear. We had a good time the next few months, but we broke up for some reason involving the second woman on the list.

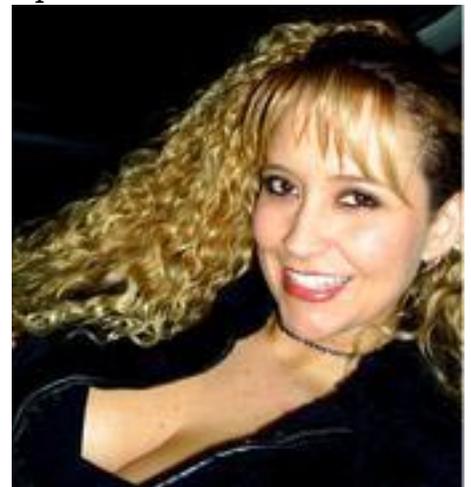
Jessie was foreign. She was stacked. She was richer than I was because she came over for a job in the wild world of art acquisition. We went on four dates before Cassie found out. I said she meant nothing, which she did. Cassie said she didn't care, which she did. We broke shortly after Jessie and I went to Washington and ended up naked on the couch after watching a rerun of LA Law. I'm still not sure how that happened. I confessed and Cassie and I ended while Jessie and I lasted another couple of months. She was good.

What her name meant, I'll guess later, but she called herself Perfidia (***I think that's Treachery in Love, though I could be wrong- cg***) and she was pretty and goth and sexual to a fault. We only went out a couple of times.

No girl compares to Laura. She had it all. Sadly, she also had something else, a bun in the oven, that prevented our relationship of going any further than the two dates I arranged.

Marcy. Oh, Marcy.

She had something about her that I really enjoyed. I'm guessing it was that mouth, but I could be wrong. She and I met on New Year's Eve, right as the odometer on the Christian era rolled over to 2 thousand-zero-zero. She was much older than her face



told me she was, and if she were as young as she looked...well, let's just say that 15'll get ya twenty, if you know what I mean.

When looks come around in the conversation of my perfect woman, Marie comes up in my mind.

She was both wicked and beautiful, a daring combination. I gave her a birthday present and she gave me a year and a half. I'm not sure who made out better on the deal, since I dropped two bills on her corset and she made me move out of the apartment I'd had since the middle of college. The sex, while wonderful, was also frequently withheld as a means of negotiation.

Someone needs to tell me if Jenn is

coming up behind me. More than likely she'd stab first and never bother asking questions.



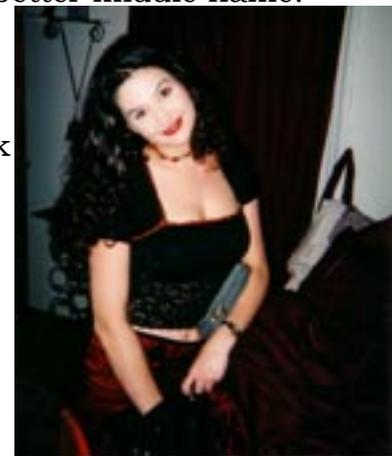
dealt with a bunch of issues before we parted again.



Too often I'm a sucker for a pretty face. 2002 showed me that I am truly. Her name was Tabitha, though I discovered that she was just another

Jenn, both in attitude and in reality, only with a much better middle name.

Another Jenn, though this one was much kinder. If you'd ask me why we broke up, I'm not sure I could answer you any better than 'we just had other things on our minds, I guess. That's a cop out, but it's also the truth.



Finally, a girl I could sink my teeth into and she'd enjoy it. Lisa, FINALLY a Lisa, and she's been around ever since that day

we met in the cliched laundry station. She needed soap, I needed her phone number. How does a line like that work?

**- Note: This was another article that was going to go into Stacked Decks, but since we've decided to not do the beast again, I'm running it here.**

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### **A letter from Peter Sullivan of the UK**

I appear to have gotten way behind with my Drink Tank loc-cing, so I guess there's nothing for it but a Lloyd Penney-style hunk letter to catch up. I guess that, in my head, I'd given myself November off



Never say never because Cassie and I came back together. Funny, she was so sure she never wanted to see me again, but that was a different mil-lenium. She stayed a few weeks, wrecked she had been by me and another follow-on fellow, and we

for Drink Tank loc-cing, only to be fooled by the fact that you'd cleared your NaNoWriMo entry inside three days. Incidentally, will the PDF of this be available anywhere, or do you have to wait until the contest formally closes before distributing it? (Sort of like the normal APA code of "APA first, outside distribution later.")

***I'll be recovering it shortly (I am lucky that I got it submitted for verification before I had a tragic slip that I've only now started to fix.) I'll send it around in PDF probably early next year.***

The idea of an Elvish lending library at Rivendell in the early part of the Fourth Age is a fun one. I would guess that most of the writers and historians would have been Elves. Writing a definitive 10,000-year history must certainly be easier if you can just refer to your own personal diary for the whole period. Bilbo and Frodo are obviously significant primary historians for the Hobbits. But, reading between the lines, based on the excessive reverence that seems to be paid to the Red Book of the Westmarch in the Fourth Age, it looks like they were pretty much the only ones. (Actually, didn't Pippin or Merry write a historical treatise on pipeweed at some point?) And I can see the Dwarves being good at leather bindings. For books, that is – or for anything else that needs leather bindings, come to that. I think I'd better stop here before this starts to turn into LotR slash.

***Yes, you'd better stop before this turns into LotR slash (though it would probably increase my hit count...) Hobbit Historians must be entertaining. I mean, real historians all tend to look like Hobbits in bow-ties.***

Tube Poker sounds fun – definitely in the category of "things that ought to exist even if they don't." Playing during the rush hour is probably right out, as the overcrowding means you probably can't even see your hand most of the time. (Is this what they mean by a "big blind"?)

***Again, BASFA pun tax rule may have to be installed in The Drink Tank. If London Rush Hour is bad, what would it***

***be like in Tokyo?***

You say of your latest film script "The story is pretty simple: Boy meets girl, Boy loses Girl, Girl comes back in unexpected form." Look, you can 'fess up to us, your loyal Drink Tank readership. It's another zombie movie, isn't it?

***Damn! You got me. Actually, there's a plan for a zombie Slide Show (it's one-part movie and one part performance piece) but that'll have to wait for early next year too.***

Yay for the Flying Spaghetti Monster! I was under the impression that most of the letters that Bobby Henderson got back from the Kansas Board of Education were actually from the minority opposing the teaching of Intelligent Design as science, most of whom seemed to appreciate it for the satire it was. As you say, we just have to hope that no-one starts to take it too seriously, and it ends up as the new Scientology.

***You may be right, as I see there are reports of just that happening. One did certainly take it too seriously.***

Oh, and we Brits don't have a bank holiday coming up – there's a huge vastness of non bank-holiday-ness from the Late Summer Bank Holiday on the last Monday of August through to Christmas Day. No Labor Day (with or without a u), no Columbus Day, no Thanksgiving, no nutthin'. There's been an increasing groundswell of support for Trafalgar Day as an extra Bank Holiday, but even with the 200th anniversary this year, nothing much seems to be happening on this. The campaign seems to be mainly lead by right-wing newspapers and other people who want to annoy the French. Which I don't, in principle, object to, but which doesn't seem the most robust justification for an extra day off work. But then we managed to wind some of the French up anyway by having the main Eurostar Terminal for Channel Tunnel trains at London "Waterloo" station.

***Hey, Annoying the French will soon be an Olympic Sport!***

--

Peter Sullivan <peter@burdonvale.co.uk>

# LosCon impressions

By Kelly Green (that's Green like the color)

LosCon. Proud tradition of the Los Angeles area for more years than even I've been going to conventions. This is the second year of this iteration at the LAX Marriott.

Okay, enough with the facts. Facts are always with us and really shed no true light. Impressions feed the world.

Thursday afternoon. I arrived late. Con suite, not so well-stocked but the company is fine and the view is excellent. Watching the planes land is a great time-waster between panels and while drinking a soda and waiting for a seat to open up somewhere. Many people (me included) grab a piece of carpet and stretch out there



instead of hoping for one of those uncomfortable stiff-backed seats. Where are the couches and comfy chairs from last year? (17<sup>th</sup> floor, the Writers of the Future suite. Darn it.)

Goodbye, we miss you. Michael Mason passed away earlier this year and his photo was prominently displayed in the consuite. Also missing this year is Helen Oxford, who passed away Monday before Thanksgiving.

In my foray through the dealer's room I finally succumbed to Cal the leather goods merchant and acquired the cat o nine minks. Green and purple leather, mink fur handle and tails. V. nice. All males knew my wrath this weekend.

And they liked it.

The A-List group (FW, CG, DS, her bf Andy, Star & Dave, Mr. Dave Clark, Jim, Kelly, Steph, Sean) dined at Encounters, the over-priced but extremely ambient restaurant at the top of the LAX spider-tower. The brushed aluminum anti-fountain



sculpture in the downstairs lobby stopped us all and we read the inscriptions around the outer edge and enjoyed the shadow-cast words reflected onto the shiny surface. An 'ooo awwww' moment. The lobby was 60s kitsch, the elevators allowed a mere 5 adults per trip, so the eleven of us went up in three groups.

We could have filmed an Austin Powers sequel here. The bathroom dichromatic glass and amoeba like mirrors. The sculpted plastic seating and counters. The silly spacy theme reflected in the menu. Oh the menu. Don't bother with the drinks, they aren't impressive. However the dishes, salad, entrée, dessert, were perhaps worth the multi-star listing. I ate an endive and pear salad, excellent, and wild mushroom ravioli, even better. Portions were large enough for fen.

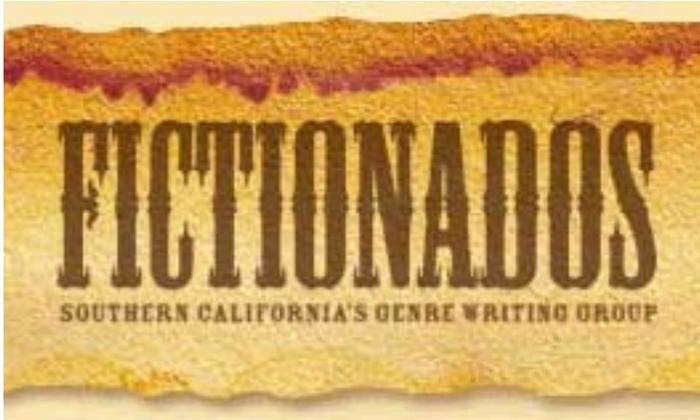
Hundreds of dollars later we returned to the hotel through the sudden downpour. Rain? NOOOOOO!!! I'm melting, melting!!

Do we all know about Fluxx? Yes, this is a word I can use in polite company. Fluxx is a marvelous card game where the rules and objects change with each card played. Fizzbinn is the nearest card-game cousin. I lost several hands before 2am rolled around and we deserted the lobby for bed.

Saturday morning. Oh god. My mornings always come early and I always use the pool/Jacuzzi given half a chance.

Lovely hot bubbling water. Soothing deep swimming pool. Dated but still fun 60s free-form architecture. Company provided by Mary, who is running the Denver 2008 worldcon bid, and Tony, random fan. (The other 2008 worldcon bids are Chicago and Columbus; 2009's bids are Kansas City and someplace else.)

Back inside I sipped Starbuck's coffee's best-kept secret: the red eye, a wonderful venti cup o'coffee larded with three shots of espresso. Heaven. After the creaming and sugaring ceremony I sat in the lobby and watched fen go by. Perhaps I'm getting old; perhaps fandom is getting old; still I'm amazed at how many fen were up so early, up and much more functional than I.



My first panel of the convention was also the first panel of the day, the Fictionados reading. Readings are a learned skill, not something just jumped into. Readers need to use high-impact material, read slowly, avoid dialog. An hour and a half can seem quite a bit longer despite the excellence of the material read.

Several of the readers managed high-impact, funny material. Good times were had by all.

I had to scurry off and organize my son's birthday party. Tim increments in age each Thanksgiving weekend and has celebrated a majority of them at LosCon; sometimes with fanfare, sometimes without. This was a 'with fanfare' year. I'd obtained earlier permission from Beckie Barber the consuite



goddess to bring in cake and whatever and disrupt whatever might otherwise be happening. So, two half-sheet cakes and nine pizzas (plus two boxes of hot wings and two boxes of que poppas, very good snacking!) plus a bottle of fizzy pomegranate sham-pagne, 23 black candles (yeah, yeah, I know I kept saying he was 22; I blame hysterical amnesia) and FIRE! Plus a KNIFE!! Um, yeah, well, consuites frequently burst into choruses of the Klingon Birthday song, don't they? And I always find it amazing how fast nine pizzas can disappear in a crowd of fen.

You might have seen my son, Tim, slightly older, wearing his authentic Munich lederhosen teeshirt. You might also have plucked out your eyeballs.

Parties were on the 17<sup>th</sup> floor soon after the masquerade. I understand the masquerade was good; I didn't go. I never go unless dragged. Don't know why you think I would. Oh um. Yeah. Parties. The Writers of the Future suite held outstanding conversation with Jason Stoddard (up and coming writer), Pieter the Galaxy Press publisher, David Moore of Orange County fandom, Steve Libis (aka Chrome Oxide) music collector and recordist. The party served ice cream cones!

I could list them all with a little research but I won't bore you. Suffice it to say, toga! Toga! Toga! (and half-naked men!) I received many stickers for my badge, hugged many people, kinked Tad Daley's bunny ears (he doesn't necessarily need additional kinkage but it looked good.)

Bill Taylor (occasional panelist) and I went dancing at the evening's pop dance.

The music, nicely 80s and nostalgic. He pushed me around the dance floor and I not only had a laughing great time, I looked good.

Did anyone else notice the small hard-rock dance just down the hall from the usual dance? Someone played good hard tunes; someone else blew a sax



better than Lisa. Coolio. Unattended. Hot and sweaty back to the room and to bed.

Sunday morning. No time for the pool, since I was up late, so I headed for the consuite and the company there. From there to the dealer's room again, then the art show, then lunch at Champions (much improved from last year; actual service now, and portions that contained food, what a concept.) The highlight of the day was the performance art/reading by Frank Wu (Hugo-award winning Dr. Frank Wu, artist and writer!) with the assistance of many henchmen (Diana Sherman, Chris Garcia, Jim Terman) and the whackiest script in the army. Flying super diakaiju? Women who aren't because they're giant triceratops? Spaceships and escape pods and extremely sketchy physics (Guidolonium Oxide (GoO, heaven help us.) The epic was filmed by Tadao Tomomatsu (who also handed out his 'Shake Hands Man' ribbons) and photographed by those members of the relatively-packed audience who weren't laughing hysterically. Over an hour of dramatic script-reading and the audience was still in stitches. Our Heroes earned and deserved the standing O at the end.

Another snack at Champions (mmm, hot wings!) then time to collect the girl and her boyfriend and head home. Except I was waylaid in the lobby and spent some enjoyable moments (minutes? A couple hours, tops) flirting with a cute guy, who ended up giving us a ride home (though I almost ended up walking after voicing unkind comments about 'Serenity.') That was perhaps the most controversy this weekend: people's feelings about Serenity. I find it disturbing that fen didn't really know about sci.fiction's demise, and the book selection in the dealer's room was quite sparse (still looking for that issue of Polyphony 5, not to mention TEL: Stories); the art show was good, richer than usual, with wood carvings I hadn't seen before. I didn't manage to see many panels (not my thing anyway) and I missed the ice cream social and LUX Theatre presentation when we went to the restaurant at the end of the runway.

All in all, good comfy convention. Let's do it again.

