

Issue 4

Sunday noon

Bozo Bus Tribune

The Official Organ of Minicon 48

"We're all bozos on this bus!"

Minneapolis Dungeon rears its random head

Last night before a modest audience, **Richard Tatge** brought two teams of six brave players back to his fabled Minneapolis Dungeon, which for two decades had lain dormant. Each party member was given a pre-generated character and allowed to choose a single unique power to enhance it. One player reported that the dungeon was cool, but didn't give the impression of being in danger—rather, it was “like a tour through things that wouldn't hurt us if we left them alone.”

The team made its way past a radioactive, tentacle-filled pit and a mysterious prairie-dog-supported object before reaching the dungeon proper, in which they battled a giant weasel and the Wee Free Men. The only PC death was due to a genie summoning a giant nutcracker, which accepted a set of proffered walnuts and subsequently cracked its benefactor in the nuts, with fatal results. The unfortunate's body was later used as a tether for another character cursed to tread the ceilings with anti-gravity.

Can he be beaten?

As of press time, Richard had played his own games 49 times and been beaten 7 times, twice by the same player. Will **Joe P.** take the prize? Come to Closing Ceremonies and find out.

Penny FAR your thoughts

Director **Brian James Crewe** gave the promised Q&A following the noon screening of his short science fiction film *FAR*. He answered about a dozen questions for an audience of around thirty, revealing among other things that despite the film's deliberately gappy narrative, very little was shot that wasn't used; that he had a voice cameo as the angry restaurant manager; and that the script was written by the actor who played Hannah, **Marion Kerr**. Crewe is currently working on a short film set in World War II Paris and planning another short he describes as *Die Hard* with time travel. More information can be found at www.farshort.com.

Added panelists

John Till and **Martin Schafer** have been added to “Twin Cities Ties to Gaming” (2:30 Sunday, Veranda 5/6.)

Julie's Gems

The Bozo Bus Tribune apologizes for providing so little coverage of Author GoH **Julie Czerneda**, but it can report that Minicon members consider her a barrel of fun and a mature panelist with wonderful marketing and storytelling skills. Attendees appreciated her tantalizing book teasers and audience gifts. Her scientific background shone through in her descriptions of communication based on scent, touch, and alternate visual spectra in “Communicating with the Animals... and Aliens”, and her Guest of Honor Interview revealed the origin and necessity of a certain troublesome bureaucrat from her works, as well as the significance of teleportation.

Costume contest results

This year's costume contest was sparsely entered, with no one claiming the titles of Professional or Novice. The Home-Sewn category was won by +***Ann Nielsen's** entry, “Dark Faerie”. In Youth, first prize went to **Leo M.** (winner for three years running now) and his sister, attired as knight and priestess. 2nd place went to **Cecilia L., Avery W-S.** and **Thea W-S.**, while 3rd place went to **Roanna's** bandit.

Reg Record 'Recked!

As of press time, Minicon 48 has reached a total of 515 registrations and 505 warm bodies. We haven't broken 500 since Minicon 41.

Haggle Game Update

The Great Minicon 48 Haggle Game is now closed! A total of 28 submissions were turned in—a perfect number which happens to be the number on the Cluemeister's badge. What a lucky omen! One brazen alliance reportedly made eight submissions, and there's even an entry from **Julie** and **Roger!** Come to Closing Ceremonies to learn the results.

Haggle Art Credits

Who created the vivid artwork that helped make our Haggle game so compelling? Now that you've probably seen all ten types of cards, it's safe to say.

Beanie, Ducky, Saucer, Spaceman: Richard Tatge

BEM, Dodo, Zeppelin: Laramie Sasseville

Robot, Rocket: Original line drawings by Alec Phillips, finished art by Richard Tatge

Raygun: Delia Ihinger

Card backs: One of Richard's old light show slides

Layout: Laramie Sasseville

Krahn-Gahlon 4a.m. pulse check

Consuite: 4 Games: 4 Bar: 7 Stairs: 1 Seamstress' Guild: 19 Elevator lobby: 3 Music party: 12 Counters: 2 Plus: 1
Total: 53

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Medallion Hunt results!

3. Richard may have reported Friday that his favorite game is now Pattern Master, but before that it was Cosmic Encounter. His favorite cone, therefore, ought to be the hyperspace cone used for attacking in Cosmic Encounter's unique central mechanism. **John S.** found the penny in Gaming's Cosmic Encounter set and tried to release it back to the wild, but as Gaming was locked up for the night immediately afterwards, he has no choice but to accept his three Dealer Dollars.

5. When you leave the veil of ambiguity behind, reality's bite is at its sharpest. Your Cluemeister was going to throw his blue plastic egg containing Medallion 5 into the pool at 9:45 last night, but when he arrived, the pool turned out to be closed! No doubt at that point the throngs of penny hunters waiting by the poolside assumed some deep hijinks were afoot and vacated the premises *en masse*, vigorously debating how such concepts as 'pool' and '9:45' could be taken metaphorically. In any case, the Cluemeister dropped the egg into the fully occupied hot tub, waited for exactly five minutes while nobody but a toddler showed the slightest interest, politely asked for it back, and wandered off to watch *Zathura* in the Marscon party. The party turned out to be so hospitable that the Cluemeister gave the egg and prize to host **Jan S.** and called it a night.

7. The whirlpool was a Whirlpool washing machine, and the electric 'fields' were two more of those gray signs—on the doors adjoining the laundry area, both marked ELECTRICAL. This last point was overlooked by the hard-working team of **Stephanie B., Andra S., Jason M., Kyle M.** and **Diane K.** (hereby arbitrarily dubbed Team Cheesehead). **Lady Dragon** was proud to have deciphered the whole clue, but was a day too late.

8. 'Yanadick' and 'metherabum' are words from a method used by North Englanders (with this specific version, folks from Teesdale or Tong) for counting sheep as they pass a gate. They correspond to the numbers 11 and 19, which when multiplied yield 209. This room belongs to the NASFiC in Phoenix 2014 bid. The penny was attached to the bed in the place indicated by the second clue, and was found by **Team Cheesehead**.

10. This was another two-step decryption. The strings of numbers, hyphens and pluses were broken up by semicolons, denoting separate letters, and periods, denoting separate words. The stars and pound sign may have been the best clue as to what was going on. Start with a standard telephone pad, with the numbers arranged in a 3x4 grid. Draw lines from one number to the next so long as you have hyphens, and start an additional line when you reach a plus sign. Each string thus gives you an image, as so:

Fish; Arrow; Kite; Envelope. Box; Lightning; Umbrella; Easel. Flower; Ice cream; Rake; Escalator. Taking the initials of these strings and separating the words yields FAKE BLUE FIRE. The penny was stuck just beneath the new display of fake blue embers on the far wall of what used to be the Concierge Lounge. Sadly, it was missing in action at press time.

20. The Big Kahuna's first clue featured a grid with various gray cells, while the second clue told us to think thematically. This year's theme is "The Game of Life". Get it now? There's a famous "cellular automation" or "zero-player game" called Conway's Game of Life. In that system, a given arrangement of living cells repeatedly transforms into a new arrangement according to this rule: Living cells survive if exactly two or three of their eight neighbors are living, while dead cells come to life only if exactly three of their neighbors are living.

Applying this rule once to the given grid generates a figure in the shape of a hollow octagon. Look around the hotel a bit and you'll find a rug printed with hollow octagons on the floor of the north tower's court. As the second clue suggests, the medallion was hidden underneath its southwest corner. The reference to negative space might lead some to reverse the roles of living and dead cells in the original grid, but actually just refers to the hollow octagons on the rug being light, not dark, in color.

Being walked upon apparently took a toll on the Big Kahuna, however, because by the time it was discovered by intrepid **Team Cheesehead**, the penny's beautiful minion-generated line art had degenerated to the point that they didn't realize what they'd found. They'd been searching (in the wrong place entirely) for penny 12! This marks the first time the Big Kahuna has gone to finders not looking for it—but the Cluemeister isn't bitter. He knows that at least **Andy E.** and **Joe P.** managed to get as far as the octagons.

FINAL CLUE:

12. Numerically, 'quincunx' is a Roman word for the fraction five twelfths. The number's representation keeps getting additions. Focus on the base of a focal point.

Don't Ever Be a Dodo! (Did we hear something rumbling?) In any case, see you next year!

**The Bozo Bus
Tribune**

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