

Issue 3

Saturday afternoon

Bozo Bus Tribune

The Official Organ of Minicon 49

"We're all bozos on this bus!"

A rollicking arrival

Janny Wurts didn't just march into Opening Ceremony Friday evening—she bagpiped her way through two cities, out of Bloomington and into Edina. To raucous applause, Janny played three songs—"Scotland the Brave", "Amazing Grace" and one written to honor Princess Diana.

When called on to speak, Janny later explained that she had met all the most important people in her life at science fiction conventions. "Without you people, I wouldn't have a life," she told the audience.

Her piping concert is scheduled for 9 tonight.

Meanwhile, **Toni Brust** made her energetic debut as Subhead of Opening Ceremonies, (which, she vociferously insisted, is *always* plural), and **Catherynne Valente** related what may have been her earliest childhood foray into humor: "Want to hear a dirty joke? A white horse fell in the mud."

Programming review: "The Writer as Actor"

Catherynne Valente consistently demonstrated great insight in this Friday night item, which felt half like a discussion and half like an interview with actor **Heath Miller**. It was essentially an extended analogy between the lives of writers and actors.

On the one hand, Catherynne pointed out, writer's training can help actors flesh out roles because writers are accustomed to developing backgrounds for their characters. On the other hand, acting experience can help writers make their characters behave convincingly.

"Write what you know' is a great rule, said Catherynne, "but you need to know a lot to be a writer, and you need to have kind of the whole of human experience in your toolbox." She suggested that some speculative fiction writers could go even further—for example, by crawling on their stomachs to understand moving like a snake.

Heath led a pair of volunteers in an exercise in blocking, asking them to assume various poses and distances from each other and asking the audience to describe their apparent relationship. The lesson? If physical blocking makes such a difference, think how much information about a relationship a writer can

impart without dialogue.

In improvisation, 'Yes, and...' is an important phrase, and Catherynne holds that it's relevant to writers too, who must accept and build upon the stories that they themselves have crafted. "You are, in fact, doing improv with yourself," she said.

Suds and subplots

Steven Brust will be reviving an old Minicon tradition and will do an author reading at 10p.m. Saturday in the hot tub.

-Emily Stewart

Britcon Bargain

A Minicon exclusive! The chair of Brit Con (May 23 – 25 in St. Louis Park) writes:

"\$10 off all snail mail registrations until April 30. Simply print out the registration form, write "Minicon sent me" at the top, complete the form and mail it with a check for \$35 (instead of \$45). Offer is not valid for Paypal registrations.

"Also, we are taking pre-paid orders for our *FAB* shirt by Fastner & Larson. They will be available in limited quantities at Brit Con because the 9 screen process (Yes, 9 screens!) is very expensive. So, even if you can't make it to Brit Con, but you want the shirt, you can order it.

"Visit <http://www.britconmn.org/> for details."

-Greg Larsen

Wrist modeling, anyone?

Lady Dragon's Treasures, in the Dealers Room, is offering a 10% discount for anyone willing to serve as a wrist model for pictures in her Etsy site.

Amendations

- ◆ The astronomy event **M49 at M49** has been canceled due to poor weather conditions.
- ◆ **Beth Kinderman & the Player Characters** will be performing at 4, while **Wax Chaotic** goes on at 5—rather than the reverse, as printed in the book.

Arrow of Truth

You may not have noticed the giant soma cube in the Garden Court this year, because there isn't one. In its place is a large tape grid of squares filled with arrows! One square on the edge is the starting space; another in the middle is the goal! Could soma-master **Mark Richards** be behind this??

A nearby sheet of paper attached to a balloon gives the instructions. It claims there to be only one solution consisting of 9 steps. However, your editor was able to discover two separate solutions in only 7 moves! A passerby also claimed to have solved it in 7, and yet some anonymous solver has scrawled "We solved it in 6!" on the sailing sign. Did they neglect to count the final move as a 'stop'? Or is there a secret solution yet unseen by the sundry solvers?

Pennies plummeting like faulty airships!

3. *What's yellow on top, wood in the middle, and silver on the bottom?* The Cluemeister isn't quite sure, but it's at the far end of the north tower's atrium, and it used to be in the Link@Sheraton internet center. Swooshy and varnished, it might best be described as an artisanal wall. This medallion was found by one **Jack M.**, who recognized the object from the riddle as he entered the hotel.

4. Birthday boy **Richard T.** was also looking for this mysterious object with wood in the middle! What he found, though, was the bench on the second floor span between the towers, which was actually the home of Medallion 4! The huge wooden plank serving as a bench might bring to mind 'walking the plank', and the 'rigging' for said plank is simply two squares—which are, of course, are this year's Medallion Hunt's secret theme!

6. Then there was **Rob I.**, who also went for the artisan wall, thinking it was the solution to Medallion 6! The penny there was gone by the time he arrived, but on his way back, he happened to notice the rug at the northwest exit with three bisected circles, half brown and half gray! Medallion 6 was under one corner.

MAU. Many visitors to the Bozo Bus Office decided to try the Putty Challenge, in which the Time Traveler Blue putty was rolled and bounced. Everyone who managed this got a burr puzzle as a mini-prize since Medallion TTB was already claimed. But kids will be curious creatures, and they naturally asked about the gold tin of ferrous putty (Magnetic Aurium) beside it. One boy rolled and bounced this ball without realizing that the MAU penny was hidden inside it! MAU eventually went to an observant girl who left amid a crowd of puzzlers before the Cluemeister could get her name. He does recall a badge reading "**Dragon Lady**," however, and the girl who dragged her in thinks her name may have begun with M.

B1: This Black Box mystery was unraveled step by step by avid solvers, each adding to the pool of information and making one guess per hour. **John S.** was first to find the

correct solution, but he had to wait an hour before he could guess it. While he was away, the team of **Lisa F.** and **Chase M.** arrived and gave the puzzle lots of thought despite Lisa's self-admitted blurry state. John eventually showed up, but with under three minutes left, Lisa and Chase managed to solve the puzzle and claim Medallion B1.

EE. It was the Easter challenge! Twelve plastic eggs sat in a carton. To play, visitors would simply pick an egg, hoping to find the EE medallion. They were allowed to handle the eggs first; most solvers shook them, and some held them to the light. Some of the eggs held pennies with labels like NOPE or WRONG. Other had other coins, or stranger things like push pins, tissues, or a stretchy rubber frog. On the fifth-to-last egg, **Lisa F.** found a penny reading NAY wrapped in a tissue. This motivated **Chase M.** to try the last soundless egg, whereupon she found a tissue containing the EE penny!

But all the solvers would have gotten it right with a bit of lateral thinking. The solution to the Easter Challenge was the physically EASTERnmost egg. (That's right: so dumb, it's awesome.)

CLUES: ROUND 3

2. On the baseboard of a huge, huggy yellow chair.

5. Under an eyepatch no one is wearing.

7. In a red egg with the same symbol as the eyepatch. Who knows where Joel put it?

8. The vowels are also red, as is the penny's hiding place whether it's a vowel or not.

15. Arrange the letters in the solution to the crossword in Issue 1 according to the chart in Issue 2. Also heed the shape.

20. In the process of simplifying the Big Kahuna, you will pass by its hiding place.

B2. This puzzle stumped the Cluemeister so badly that he wanted to see how quickly others would solve it.

Hours of Redemption:

Four office hours this time: **2 – 3p.m. Sat. • 5 – 6p.m. Sat. • 10 – 11p.m. Sat. • 11a.m. – Noon Sun.**

Got material for the BBT? Drop it in the Submission Box on the Coat Check near the Normandale Room at the end of the Grand Ballroom Foyer. Pens and paper are provided.

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