

Issue 1

Friday noon

Bozo Bus Tribune

The Official Organ of Minicon 53

"We're all bozos on this bus!"

New hotel headline

Welcome to Minicon 53! You may have noticed that not everything in your DoubleTree by Hilton is where you left it. Never fear! We have in fact downscaled this year to a more Minicon-sized hotel—or to put it another way, we downscaled our intersectional interstate from 494 to 394. But what's in a digit? Everything Minicon has to offer is still here.

But where is it all? you ask in your italic voice.

Registration: On the 2nd floor overlooking the back end of the pool area. (In fact, most of the con is at the far end of the hotel from the lobby—you may want to park on that side!)

Programming rooms: Just past registration!

Green Room: In 232, across from registration.

Consuite: Take the elevators to the 14th floor and turn left, following the sign.

Parties: The Seamstress Guild and Bar are on the 2nd floor, overlooking the pool; the rest are together on the 3rd floor in a hallway to the right.

Art & Dealers: In the Courtyard Ballrooms on the 1st floor, under the Bar area. Enter at either end. Fan tables will be positioned outside.

Rumpus Room, Science and BBT: In the Seasons rooms under programming—you'll have to walk down a hall. Past the lower atrium. Past the restaurant. Past the ATM. *Then* you walk down the hall. There's also a covert staircase leading down from the programming area.

Is there free wi-fi? Yes! Use either the Attwifi or hhonors network. If you have a room, just enter your room number and last name; otherwise you can use the promo code 'wifi2018'. It should work anywhere in the hotel.

On Featured Artist Jon Arfstrom

Minicon is honored this year to feature the surreal art of Jon Arfstrom. Jon is a Minnesota artist who worked full time as a commercial artist for decades. In his spare time—another six to eight hours every night—he worked on his “real” career as a fine artist. He created gorgeous watercolor landscapes and portraits and kept an intricate sketch diary. But we are featuring his other works, mostly acrylics on hardboard, of fantasy landscapes entirely from his own imagination.

Jon sent ink drawings and paintings to the magazine *Weird Tales* when he was a teenager. This is enough to win the admiration of many pulp and magazine collectors around the world. But they may not know of his unpublished fantasy work, the unsurpassed paintings he called “surreals.”

Jon died in 2015 in Anoka, MN at the age of 87. He left behind rooms stacked with surreal paintings, watercolors, and around 70 diaries. With the help of the Anoka County Historical Society, his family has been collecting and organizing his work.

We are delighted to have his wife, Norma; his daughter Tory Arfstrom-Ferrey; his son Gary; and his son-in-law Mark Ferrey at Minicon. At 10a.m. in the Park 2 room, Mark will talk about his specialty, environmental science, though he also is an artist. This will be followed at 11:30 by a slide show of Jon's work, narrated by Norma and Tory.

The Arfstrom Clan has a table in the Art Show/Dealer's Room. They will be delighted to tell you stories about Jon and his art, including the time when Jon wanted to destroy the painting we used on the cover of the program book. Be sure to admire Norma's badge, featuring a nude drawing Jon did of her sometime in the 50s. They have prints and cards available for sale. And they promised to bring one of the sketch diaries, which they will let you look through if you are very, very careful.

-Lisa Freitag

Fannish Family Feud

Fan **Mike Riley** wants your snap reactions! He's been running room parties in the Chicago area for years, but wanted something more participatory than movie and TV screenings... so he came up with the idea of **Fannish Family Feud**, based on the popular game show and the Geek Out board game. It was a success at Capricon, and now you can play here at Minicon (**8p.m. Saturday, The Bar**). The 25-question survey will be available for those who want to inform his next game (hopefully at Penguicon in May).

The Bozo Bus Tribune salutes modern cofounder **Dave E Romm**, who passed away in September. Together with Sharon Kahn and Jeff Schalles, Dave started putting out BBTs back at Minicon 28, a revival of less formal prior efforts. Why? Perhaps to inform the membership, or perhaps just for a chance to use obscure equipment such as the electrostencil. Dave later assisted Marian Turner and her child news team in putting out the Minicon Howler.

For many more memories of Dave, please attend the **memorial service** immediately following Minicon 53. And for more physical mementos (or just free stuff), you can find boxes of freebies from his estate on the fan tables outside the Dealer's Room.

Programming clarification

Going to the “**EV and Hybrid Vehicles**” event (4p.m. Friday)? Head out the door near the Season Rooms (at the “tail end” of the hotel) to find the right part of the parking lot.

What is that beautiful music?

It may well be the harpist in the Art Show who randomly approached the department head and offered to play Friday night to enhance the mood!

Right hand for pitch, left hand for volume!

What's this? A party review in Issue 1? Thursday night parties at Minicon are a rarity, but your editor was beckoned by the resonant tuba sounding over the atrium. The **Unconventional CONventional Music Room** in room 326 aims to be a place that always sounds weird. Hosts Nico and Terry will be glad to let you fiddle with the modular synthesizers, chord wave station and vocal effects box, or even try out a hundred-year-old tuba... but you'll need a defter hand than this editor's to coax sweet harmony from the theramin.

And speaking of weird instruments...

Are you a musician who would like to help introduce Minicon's younger members to the joys of making music? If so, please bring instruments to share at the **Instrument Petting Zoo!** This hands-on panel in the Orchard Room gives kids (from 4-5 Friday) and teens (from 11:30 am - 12:30 pm Saturday) the chance to test out playing various instruments, from the commonplace to the bizarre. The Instrument Petting Zoo won't work without a wide assortment of instruments to choose from, so bring anything fun you can think of and be sure to tell your friends!

-Beth Kinderman

And on yet another musical note:

Terrace 1 will open for an **Early Music Circle** at 8:30 Friday and Saturday nights. This will include a bit of overlap with concerts. Eventually, musicians may choose to integrate with the main Music Circle in the **Orchard Room**.

What about the Medallion Hunt?

Oh, don't worry, it's coming, though it may be a bit smaller this year. Clues will be in Issue 2.

Have an announcement, a news story, a review, a personal item, or anything else for the BBT? Drop it in the Submission Box outside the BBT Office or write to bbt@minicon53.mnssf.org.

The Bozo Bus Tribune

Volume 53, Issue 1

Editor – Thorin N. Tatge

Printer's Devil – Sharon E. Kahn

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Issue 2

Friday evening

Bozo Bus Tribune

The Official Organ of Minicon 53

"We're all bozos on this bus!"

Is this the pedantic one, or isn't it?

This convention's theme is "The Pedantic One," but your editor has yet to see any real pedantry! (Well, until a discussion of significant digits and tape measures took place as he was writing this piece... but the sentiment still counts.) This must not stand! This publication calls on you to submit your favorite examples of pedantry to the BBT for publication in a future issue. Drown us in pointless corrections and "Well, actually"s!

If you'd like to pay your respects

There will be a **memorial event** for the fen lost over the past year, including Rob Ihinger, Sarah Prince and Marian Turner, in the Consuite at 11p.m. Friday.

Or if you feel less respectful...

From Crystal T. on Facebook: "Totes Innapropes: The Terrible Party in room 329 will have terrible card games (like Joking Hazard), swears, coloring books, and wine." Sounds like a time!

Looking for parking?

According to hotel liaison Aaron Van Der Giessen, there is more available parking on the back side of the hotel, between the building and the strip mall full of restaurants. To get there, head for the lobby, but turn left rather than right to leave the hotel. Also note that the orange cones denote "accessible parking" for those with mobility challenges.

Looking for Magic?

The **Crappy Magic Card Draft** will be held at 8:30 Saturday night—not Friday as listed in the program book.

Looking to eat out?

"Just back from the lunch buffet at Taste of India. It is lovely, with a large variety of flavors, good vegetarian options, and range of spicing. Been going to this restaurant for years and this is better than it has been for a while. A good deal for \$14."

-Lydy Nickerson

John W. adds that while they have many of the expected North Indian dishes, they have a large selection of Indochinese dishes and plan to have more South Indian options tomorrow. Watch out for the level of cardamom in the Chai Masala!

Or if you'd rather eat in...

Brittney Harvin, Communications Coordinator for the DoubleTree, wants to let Minicon know about the weekend lunch and dinner specials available at the hotel's own Dover Restaurant & Bar. With names like "Zeppelins vs. Blimps" and "The Dodo," you can tell they're trying. :-). The menu is available at the restaurant and on the Minicon Facebook group.

And don't forget brunch!

The hotel is offering an **Easter Brunch** in the poolside atrium. The downside? This is what we know as the gaming area, which means gamers will have to move to the overflow mezzanine Sunday morning. The upside is that it's open to the public (\$22 for adults, \$18 seniors, \$15 children 5-12) and it looks delicious! Chicken and waffles... pickled eggs... salted caramel apple bread... omelets made to order... carved prime rib with horseradish and *au jus*? Yeah, maybe worth doing.

It's that time of year again

Tiangong-1 is still aloft, but the International Space Station can be seen flying overhead each night, starting at 10:42 Friday night. Come to the Science Room for the details.

Film Room: *Flora* Star Q&A!



Teresa Marie Doran, an actress born and raised in Saint Paul, has acted in local live theater (Walking Shadow Theatre Company, The Children's Theatre Company, The Public Theater of Minnesota), and plays Ora Blackwood in *Flora*, an independent 2017 movie from Canada. Teresa is attending Minicon 53 and will host a Q&A session following the screening of *Flora*, scheduled for **1:45p.m. Saturday**.

Her character is the botanical illustrator for a scientific expedition in 1929. On track to become the first graduated female botanist in the country, she has a passion for early science fiction, H.G. Wells and Jules Verne. Come say hello to Teresa and view her recent film, which has been garnering awards and nominations at several film festivals.

-Michael Kingsley

Condolences to **Becca Leathers**, who threw out her back yesterday and had to visit the ER. She was unable to play with Riverfolk and may not be able to attend. :-(

Medallion Hunt =TRISKAI=

I continue to be honored to serve as the Cluemeister and welcome you back to the Annual Minicon Medallion Hunt, round 13—as Triskai as I can make it! For those who just boarded the Bozo Bus, the Medallion Hunt is a treasure hunt for shiny 1973 pennies squirreled away throughout the hotel. Once found, please bring your penny to me (J), the Cluemeister, & exchange it for a prize from the BBT Office, located in the Spring Room on the first floor, and a healthy dose of pride with a side order of gloating. The office is open during the day, during Hours of Redemption, (posted in the BBT), and at other times as advertised outside of the BBT Office. As an additional hunting aid, there will be a sign outside the BBT Office tracking the status of the various medallions. You'll also get the saga of your quest published for all to see in the next issue.

The clues can be anything from straightforward obfuscation, to puns, codes or puzzles that involve math, science, pop culture references, or pretty much anything else the Dungeon Master, I mean Game Keeper, uh... Cluemeister contrives.

As in past years, all pennies have been hidden in public places within the hotel, but not within restrooms, shops, or anywhere in the Art/Dealers or Science Room. All pennies

will be generally accessible each day. This year the pennies are unmarked, but all medallions except for #'s 15 & 20 (The Big Kahuna) have a small white paper tag next to them with their number. When found, please bring this tag, but leave at least one of the two pieces of blue tape in place to signal to other seekers that a penny was there. The big Kahuna will earn a prize from a premium set.

Please be respectful and quiet when searching outside of convention space. Take care when searching not to disturb hotel guests or set off any emergency alarms. We're all Bozos on this bus and once you're on you're... "One Of Us"... "One Of Us"... "One Of Us"!

-The Cluemeister

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CLUES: ROUND 1

1. Where the wild things are
2. I lower enthalpy, I'm very American, I give & I give, I get nothing back
3. Many will pass in front of me but none will see me. I witness a lot of busyness but not much labor
4. I'm sitting near-ish to the center of the function space, many will pass me, some won't be able to
5. Many pass by me on their way somewhere or other. Lincoln's getting a head-rush while I hold on tight
6. Something old, something new, something borrowed. You probably won't need me but if you do, you'll be happy I'm here.
7. You can't get in without permission, I can't give you anything unexpected
8. You don't want to hear from me, if you do, there'll be no mistaking it
9. I'm always available. Finding me has more to offer than just a medallion. A toast to your health
10. Cons exist by give & take. Every member contributes, some more than others.
15. Something old, something new, something borrowed. If you use your eyes you'll see I'm not chicken. I've come a long way to meet you and bring you home.
20. It will not be visible. You may have to meet someone new, or someone "new to you." This unique hiding place was chosen to encourage social connection between con members. This location is one: which very little light can reach, it cannot speak nor taste.

Have an announcement, a news story, a review, a personal item, or anything else for the BBT? Drop it in the Submission Box outside the BBT Office or write to bbs@minicon53.mnsth.org.

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Volume 53, Issue 2

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Reporter – Sharon E. Kahn

Cluemeister – J

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Issue 3

Saturday afternoon

Bozo Bus Tribune

The Official Organ of Minicon 53

"We're all bozos on this bus!"

Searching for Chuck Tingle...

Theories were broad, numerous and easily abandoned at the “I am not Chuck Tingle” panel (8:30 Fri). Does or does not Mark Oshiro know? The evidence was weighed. One audience member proposed that Mr. Tingle is someone fandom-adjacent: “I believe all of us are like two or three degrees of separation from—”

"Oh, it's Kevin Bacon," concluded Rachel Swirsky. She later revealed the reason she can't write porn: everything might be going fine and then "Oh no, there's plot, and now everyone's dying and it's just sad."

Rick Snyder suggested that "Chuck Tingle" might be a mantle or title, similar to the Dread Pirate Roberts, an idea which won some acclaim. Will every writer eventually get a turn?

Or could it be George R. R. Martin trolling impatient fans? "The more you demand the next novel... the more I'm gonna get plowed in the butt."

Minicon milestone

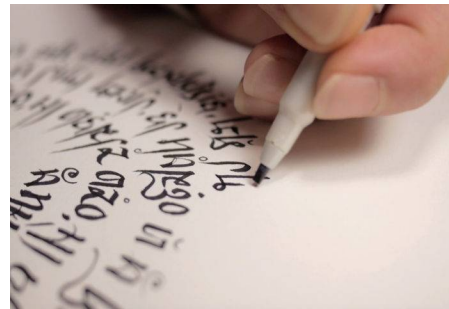
“Insanity. That’s **Bonnie Somdahl’s** secret. The secret to running the Rumpus Room. This year marks Bonnie’s seventh consecutive year in charge of Minicon’s kids’ programming. She’s now the longest serving head of kids’ programming, moving past Marian Turner, who was in charge for six consecutive conventions. So, swing by the Rumpus Room to pay your respects to the Queen of Insanity. You might even join in the fun if you dare to approach the box fort (shield optional, but encouraged), watch a puppet show, or observe one of the many amazing activities offered. Huzzah Bonnie!

“For a blog post about this year's Rumpus Room after the convention, visit RandyHaaland.com.”

-Randy Haaland

Conlanging documentary

With language becoming an important detail in world-building for fantasy, science fiction, and other entertainment genres, the art of language construction is currently undergoing a renaissance in popular culture.



Conlanging:
The Art Of
Crafting
Tongues is
the first
feature

documentary about the global phenomenon of constructed languages and the people who invent them. Such invented languages include Na'vi from the film *Avatar*, Dothraki from *Game of Thrones* and Kryptonian from *Man of Steel*, as well as the elven languages from Tolkien. This documentary is scheduled for **noon Sunday** at Cinema Obscura (Terrace 4).

-Michael Kingsley

It's not a marshmallow world in the winter

"It was too windy and cold to get the marshmallows to burn today. So—**Monster Immolation** is moved to **Sunday at 11:30.**"

-Rumpus Room

Sketch the Con

Explore our new space and the people in it

Saturday, 4pm in the lobby

Art supplies available.

Meet back up at 9pm To share your sketches.

What's your favorite piece of pedantry?

Hybrid teas, meaning roses, are not the same as tea roses! Hybrids are cultivated from both Chinese and European stock and can survive in a harsh winter climate... *unlike* classic tea roses.

"Submission box" should not be capitalized. [Ed: We proper-nouned it! That thing is baptized!]

That's my secret, Cap—I'm ALWAYS pedantic!
-Bill Higgins

A reminder for gamers

Remember—the lower atrium is needed for tomorrow's Brunch! We have to be out of there by 5.a.m. Sunday... but it will be easier if gamers, as they finish their games, **move a few boxes up** the stairs to the overflow gaming mezzanine. Please?

Highlights from Opening Ceremonies

- While there may not currently be 100 people having their own impromptu convention at our old hotel, chair Emily Stewart reports that the Old Dutch chip delivery did originally go there by mistake. "If they can find their way here, so can anyone."
- Lyda Morehouse took a minute to argue with her own alter ego, Tate Hallaway, in puppet form. Lyda may get all the awards, but "You get all the money!" she whinged.

Registration count

As of 10p.m. (close) on Friday, we had 501 pre-registered members, 475 warm bodies, and 540 total memberships.

Krahn/Gahlon Pulse check (may not be 4a.m.)

Bar: 15 Gaming: 6 Roaming ConChair: 1
Seamstress' Guild: 6 Consuite 1 **Total: 24**

Medallion Hunt =TRISKAI=

The next Hour of Redemption will be from 16:15 - 17:15 in the BBT Office. Thereafter I'll be available in either the BBT Office or the Con Bar. More hours of redemption will be posted outside the office later. Please remember to redeem your pennies for prize(s) and credit as well as to get them back to the Cluemeister. Thank You – J

Tales of Redemption

1. Found by The Bar Group on the back of the Rumpus Room sign, after reading the clue referencing "Where The Wild Things Are." Wild Rumpus anyone?
2. Found, not yet redeemed; details to follow.
4. Found by Ian of The Panda Squad who saw it lying on the ground near the stairs to upper gaming.
6. Found, not yet redeemed. Details to follow.
7. Found by John Stanley, hiding on the back of the Amazon Locker. John saw the hotel at the pool party and noticed that the Amazon Locker is new.
8. Found, not yet redeemed. Details to follow.
9. Found by The Panda Squad under the lowest shelf of towels in the fitness center.
10. Found by The Panda Squad hiding on the back edge of the Baron Dave Romm Estate Items for Donation table

CLUES: ROUND 2

3. No one wants to have to do work from their day job at a con, if your boss orders you to, you might find yourself near me
5. As Teal'c once said in Stargate SG-1, "I am hanging loosely, Colonel Mitchell."
15. Come with me and you'll see the perfect vision of a Worldcon. Ironically, this penny is not visible, it's well camouflaged
20. This penny covers a lot of ground but stays within the con. You should seek a new friend or consult with an old one, whom to ask is the question. Seek the one who knows Science, who is a veteran, who is well read & who has 3 "_____" but only uses 1. ** Note: To claim this penny you must name/guess the location of it.

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Czech-style Easter eggs are a hit!

Excited congoers in the Rumpus Room crowded around a table Saturday to craft **Kraslice**, or Czech



Easter eggs, under the instruction of first-time Miniconer Roman Ženka. The eggs are made by painting them with protective hot wax (melted in a cleverly unhinged pie maker), then dyeing them, optionally repeating the process, and finally removing the wax to

reveal a multicolored egg. All three dozen farm-fresh hard-boiled eggs were transformed into objects of beauty, with varying degrees of success. Rumor has it this event will return next year!

Review of Mark Ferrey's "What's in the Water"

"This was a very informative and scary presentation. Ferrey, who works at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, brought lots of information regarding things we humans do that are causing changes to both plant and animal life as well as to the environment in general. It is amazing how small an amount of some substances can wreak havoc on life in the water. From the pharmaceuticals we use to the use of antibiotics in the agricultural sector, changes are happening. Most people are unaware that it's not just where water is treated but in more remote parts of the world.

"Mark's big takeaway is that what goes down your drain matters."

-Scott Lohman

So where do the gamers go?

Since the lower atrium is being brunched in (maybe you should go!), the **Terrace 1** room is being opened up for general gaming. The mostly triangular upper atrium is also still available. The **At Con Post-Mort** scheduled for 2:30 will move from Terrace 1 to Terrace 2.

Items about items

- Any pieces of art bid on but not picked up by the end of the con will be auctioned off at Closing Ceremonies.
- Don't forget to check out the freebie table on the 2nd floor, by registration!

Things we learned from the Pedantry panel:

- When Adam Stemple wants to get rid of someone, his methods are not especially subtle. ("GIF is a peanut butter, you gack-ass!")
- "With all due respect" does not denote any level of respect toward the subject. "Oh bless your heart" denotes even less.
- Those erroneously credited as being their sons' wives cannot directly correct Wikipedia; they are clearly biased and must employ a third party.

Tidbits from "Superheroes on Screen"

"On one side you have the genre of superheroes without tights. On the other side are tights without superhero powers."

"Critics are useful. There is however a difference between being a critic and being a dick."

"The best villains are unfortunately dead."

"Watch Legends of Tomorrow. The time travel is so fast paced, you will no longer care about continuity."

-Roman Ženka

Hugo finalists named!

The finalists for the 2018 Hugo Awards (and the 1943 Retrospective Hugos) have been revealed! As a sample, here are the nominees for Best Novel:

- *The Collapsing Empire*, by John Scalzi (Tor)
- *New York 2140*, by Kim Stanley Robinson (Orbit)
- *Provenance*, by Ann Leckie (Orbit)
- *Raven Stratagem*, by Yoon Ha Lee (Solaris)
- *Six Wakes*, by Mur Lafferty (Orbit)
- *The Stone Sky*, by N.K. Jemisin (Orbit)

To see the rest, visit www.thehugoawards.org!

Overheard in the consuite

"It's not a case of him needing someone to carry the other end... it's more that he needs someone to carry both ends so he can pretend to carry the middle."

And in the science room with regard to global warming:

"This is definitely the *Back to the Future 2* bad timeline."

"The bad Biff timeline."

Music and parties: Rocking too hard?

Music head **Beth Kinderman** failed utterly in her inaugural attempt to schedule a scaled-back, low-key music program. Minicon featured ten awesome concerts this year, plus the instrument petting zoo. For shame! Speaking of tens, we also had ten rocking room parties, thanks to new Party Liaisons **Don & Sharla Stremski**. Hey guys, next time set the bar lower!

Tiangong-1 chooses not to attend Minicon

According to The Aerospace Corporation, the defunct Chinese space station "Tiangong-1 is currently predicted to reenter the Earth's atmosphere around April 2nd, 2018 00:10 UTC \pm 2.5 hours," thus subtly sidestepping any impish newspersons tempted to make an April Fools joke out of it.

Registration count

As of 8p.m. (close) on Saturday, we had 501 pre-registered members, 539 warm bodies, and 566 total memberships.

Krahn/Gahlon 4a.m. Pulse check

Seamstress' Guild: 10 Bar: 9 Railing people: 2 Poker: 6 Roving: 5 Party: 9 **Total: 41**

Pub quiz results

Atomic Statfish came in 2nd with 11 points. But in first place, unseating them from their three year streak as champions, was **Team Kobayashi Maru**, with 11 ½!

Medallion Hunt =TRISKAI=

Many have been within one meter of The Big Kahuna multiple times. Even more people have been within one meter of 15 multiple times! Those who haven't redeemed your medallions yet, please do so! The Cluemeister can be found in "Lady Poetesses from Hell" in the back and from 12:30 – 1 in the BBT Office.

Tales of Redemption

3. Found by **Michael T.** under the lip of the Business Center Desk. After the most recent clue referenced doing work at a con, "business" came to mind.

5. Found by **John S.** underneath the push bar to the double doors leading into the Programming area.

CLUES: ROUND 3

15. Con is almost over. When it ends, I fly the coop.

20. The scientist might be called Albus, but he does science, not magic.

Remember to rarely, if ever, be a dodo. Until next year!

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