

Bozo Bus Tribune

The Official Organ of Minicon 56

"We're all bozos on this bus!"

Sing your heart out for Ben Lessinger

The **Ephemeral Party**, living up to its name, has been canceled. In its place is a last-minute entry (formerly scheduled for function space) about which the pocket program declares only "It's a karaoke party!" So here's a little more information. The **Ben Lessinger Karaoke Party**, in **Room 326**, is a **Saturday-only** memorial party (perhaps the first of several) honoring Ben Lessinger, beloved member of the fannish community who died of natural causes shortly before Minicon last year. Ben was known for running the Karaoke Joe's Café party. This event is brought to us by the **Lessinger family** and **Barb Jensen**, with **Domenic Brack** on equipment.

They could use help of all kinds, whether it's a food or drink donation or technical assistance, since none of your hosts have used the equipment before! Tentative start time will be **7p.m.**

And don't forget to tour the rest of Minicon's party line-up Friday and Saturday nights, all located on the 3rd floor hallway opening onto the Atrium. The pocket program has details!

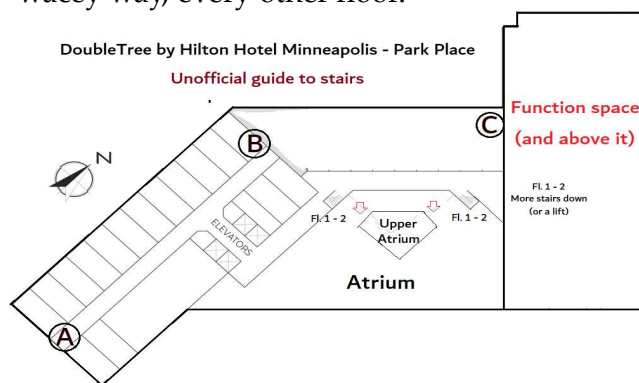
So what's where?

Most things are where they were last year! This year, we welcome back the film room, Cinema Obscura, in **Terrace 4**. The **Spring Room** is now splitting its time as a kids' room by day and a home to the music circle by night. The **Summer Room** (featuring lots of games, two HEPA filters, and tables that are mostly the right size) is our primary gaming space, but gaming is a volatile phenomenon that can erupt in the Lower or Upper Atriums at any time.

(Notes: According to our hotel liaison, the hotel's Easter Brunch will NOT overflow into the Lower Atrium this year. Moreover, do not be dissuaded by the Reserved signs outside the Upper Atrium. It is reserved for us.)

A Stairwell Map of the Doubletree

Want to know which stairs will take you where? Con chair **Matt Strait** has you covered. Check out this map, which depicts the second floor but also, simultaneously in a spacey-wacey way, every other floor.



Stairwell key

Stairs A: Emergency exit. Floors 2–5 currently closed for repairs. 6–13 unlocked. Floors 14 & 15 exit only.

Stairs B: Non-emergency exit. Floor 5 currently closed. 14 & 15 exit only. Other floors unlocked (despite sign on 2)

Stairs C: Non-emergency exit. Floors 3 & 4 only (in short part of hotel).

"How do I get to the Consuite," redux!

- > As with our previous two years at this hotel, the Consuite is on the 14th floor. This entire floor is designated as an Executive Lounge.
- > Last year, there were special hours when it was open. This year, you need a card to get there by elevator: scan it against the box, then push the button.
- > If you have a room key from our block, that should work! (If it doesn't, visit the front desk.)
- > If you don't, you should go to Registration and they'll hook you up. You will go on a list of trusted key-card-havers!

Our COVID policy:

You've probably seen this already while making plans whether to attend the con, but here it is one more time:

Attendees are required to have received a bivalent Covid booster, if eligible. Masks are required in programming (for both panelists and the audience), and for audiences (though not active performers) in concerts and the music circle. They are encouraged but not required elsewhere. N-95 masks are available for free at registration.

Midwestside request

"Friday at 8:30p.m. in the Orchard Room we're showing the 1977 video of Midwest Side Story. We would especially like anybody involved in writing it or in either performance (1977 or 1998) to be there for the discussion afterwards."

—David Dyer-Bennett

Programming Corrections

- **Fan GoH Greg Ketter's** party in Room 323 will be on **Saturday only**, not Friday as stated in the pocket program.
- **Kurt Baty** is ill and will not be on these panels: "How to Host a Room Party," "Genre Bookselling," and "My First Convention." **Alice Ableman** will replace him on "My First Convention."
- **Douglas Van Dyke** will also not be at Minicon and will not appear on the "Author Smorgasboard" or "Genre Bookselling."
- **Troy Benjergdes** will join "Chat GPT Takes the World by Storm."
- "Worldbuilding in Fantasy vs. Science Fiction" will feature **Eleanor Arnason, Lois McMaster Bujold, Becky Heydemann, Danith McPherson, and Martha Wells**. Some copies of the program book included all volunteers for this popular panel. Thanks to all others who volunteered to participate!

On the West End Cub Foods:

"Friday & Saturday (workers are striking), never cross a picket line. Spread the word"

—Brian Lundgren

What does accessibility mean to you?

If you have suggestions for what the new Accessibility head, **Leo Mueller**, should do to make this convention inclusive and enjoyable for everyone, please drop a submission in the box or write him at accessibility@minicon56.mnsthf.org.

Try the Pentomino Challenge!

Last year, the BBT Office challenged con-goers to stack the pieces of a modular Tetris lamp as high as possible. This year, try your hand at a larger class of polyomino! If you can balance the twelve five-cube pieces in your editor's Katamino puzzle set higher than the previous best, you'll win a prize! Challenge height starts at 30 blocks.

"Green" follow-up: Glowing platypuses

On last year's panel "It's not easy being green," your editor omitted to mention that in 2020, the journal *Mammalia* reported that the platypus is one of very few mammals to display biofluorescence, glowing bluish-green under a blacklight. In the opinion of this publication, the duck-billed platypus, despite its visibly brown coat, possesses a green soul, as is reflected by the character Perry from Nickelodeon's *Phineas and Ferb* and by the fact your editor portrayed an anthropomorphic platypus space mercenary online in green-on-brown text and had him always wear a green bomber jacket. This fits well with the "weird but lovable outsider" green archetype. Thank you, science, for telling us what we already knew!

Will J be running a Medallion Hunt?

You know it, you vigilant enigmatists!

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@minicon56.mnsthf.org.

The Bozo Bus Tribune

Volume 56, Issue 1

Editor – Thorin N. Tatge

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Issue 2

Saturday morning

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"We're all bozos on this bus!"

Fans of a timeless story!

Some three dozen con members filled the Orchard Room to capacity last night to watch a 1" reel-to-reel recording of *Midwestside Story*, a fannish parody of the classic musical *West Side Story* performed way back at Minicon 12 and recently edited and captioned by **David Dyer-Bennet**. Despite his disclaimer that the sounds and video were not first rate, the audience stayed for the duration and offered plenty of laughter.

Afterward, those involved in the show's 1977 production came forward to field questions. The ensuing discussion covered such topics as who played whom, how the show was conceived (a participant in the previous year's *The Mimeo Man* got excited), and what was done for the revival at Minicon 33. DD-B has collected a commentary track from Denny Lien and hopes to later record commentaries with the show's other two principal authors.

It's not about Toni

Artist Guest of Honor **Sara Felix** brought her family along to Minicon for a reason: her daughter Erin was turning ten, and Sara wanted Minicon's Opening Ceremony audience to sing her a Happy Birthday. (They happily obliged.) In exchange, the audience was given cake. Candles were provided by Joel Phillips and basically nothing related to Toni Brust occurred.

The building blocks of conventions

The Bar did announce, however, that the Galaxy Explorer **Lego set** people have been enjoying this weekend will be raffled off to a random person who **pre-registers for Minicon 57** at this year's con. Save money and pre-register!

Meet the GoHs! (Klatches happening after all)

Coffee/tea/whiskey klatches **will** be held for Sara Felix and Martha Wells in the Green Room!

Sara's klatch: 11a.m. Saturday

Martha's klatch: 9a.m. Sunday

Sign up at Registration if you want to participate. Limited seating available.



The Happy Beholder beholds you!

Visit it in **Room 327**, roll a giant inflatable D20, and collect libations and loot!

Want more birthday fun?

Not had enough of wishing people a happy birthday? Come to the **Bar** tonight at 7:20 p.m. to wish **J's friend Joondo Chang** a happy birthday over Zoom.

Programming Additions

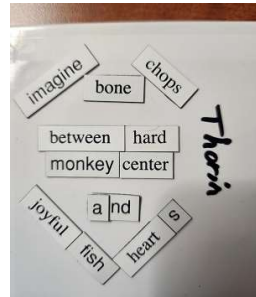
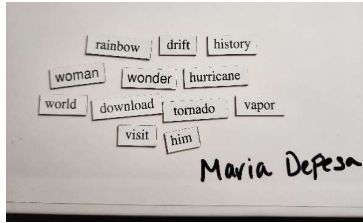
- Author **R. J. Howell** will join the Author Smorgasbord (10a.m. Sat.)
- **Bill Higgins** will join "SF Shows We Think You'd Like" (11:30a.m. Sat.)

Strike that, reverse it

"The Cub strike was averted! Shop there if you please." -*Anonymous*

Friday night poetry from the Glory Scroll

The **Glory Scroll**, a magnetic-poetry-themed party in Room 328, is highlighting winners from each night for your entertainment. Here are tonight's victors, including an entry from your humble editor.



Amusing Friday night chatter

"I have seen some weird crap in this room over the years, but this was tops."

—A Cinema Obscura attendee on Rubber (2011)

"My love language is remembering a single particular word another person says... maybe... sometimes."

—Versatile Fluff

"I hate the fact that this feels like it would actually work."

—Glory Scroll attendee, on the concept of a deck-building game based on Scrabble.

"Being a fan means never having to say 'But where will I wear this?'"

—Beth Friedman, originally attributed to Kathleen Sloan

To Good Home:

Flying Saucer at the Free Will Table

—*Mark Richards*

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16th Annual Minicon Medallion Hunt!

For the rules, look for an upcoming Medallion Hunt Extra! Or find the Gamekeeper and ask for details.

CLUES: ROUND 1

1. I'm on a surface that is easy to clean. I'm near music, challenges and games galore. Wherever I am, I'm not on the floor.
2. Up and down, like chutes and ladders (or at least one of those), I'm on an inclined plane but by passing me, you only gain a small amount of altitude.
3. I'm somewhat sandwiched between 2 hard working surfaces. You might not be likely to pass me often unless you are specifically in my area.
4. I wasn't found last year so I'm back again (though my number is almost certainly different). I am hanging on a flat surface which is a multiple of my shape.

5. See Medallion Hunt Extra for story!
6. I'm buried but not very deeply. It won't cost you much to dig me up.
7. I'm hanging out near a place where people gather to have fun.
8. I sit in a place you wouldn't expect and one in/on which you wouldn't be able to sit.
9. Mickey Mouse, a flammable gas, "Ugly bags of mostly
"
10. I'm in a place not many will venture. All are allowed but almost no one will enter.
15. Many of you will pass right in front of me though I'm rarely in the same place twice. I'm always near someone who works to admit everyone to Minicon
20. I'm on the move too and bouncin' around. Wherever I am, I go, I'm near the ground.
- A. Take a chance on finding me, seek the place where I will be. "Get out of Jail", "Community Chest", if you want to you win, try your best.
- B. I'm hanging around but not in plain sight. In order to find me, try as you might, to check all over, even places you might not need to go but others may.
- C. What do all these things have in common? Coleman, beer, a particular airline, and an Amtrak attendant.
- D. So many will pass right by me at all times of day. When the sun is out, you might not stay.
- E. Mirror, mirror, on the wall, who is the fairest of them all?
- F. Slow and steady wins the race.
- G. I hang here and stare all night and all day, until you find me, here I'll stay.
- H. My area can be loud. If my immediate space stays "quiet" I'll be proud. If I'm disturbed, you will be too. I'd hope the cause of such wouldn't be you... or any of us.
- I. I sit and listen to what people say, I think I'll hang out here all day. Issues of gender, AI and more, I'm chillin' but not on 1st floor.
- J. If "cleanliness is godliness" as some say then come and see me while on your way.
- K. I was here in the past but no one found me. My number and floor were different. I'm hanging out hoping my tape holds. If not, it's the floor for me. I hope someone comes up here and finds me.
- L. If things get hot, you'll want to run right up to me. I may not be of any help, myself but you'll still want to run here.
- π. Once you collect this Medallion, you must recite Pi to as many decimal places as you can when turning it back in to J. (It got knocked loose from its place and will be put back on Saturday.) I'm trying to camouflage myself... I'm not sure how well I'm doing though I will likely not be visible.

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Gamekeeper – J

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Issue 3

Late Saturday night

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"We're all bozos on this bus!"

From "Chat GPT Takes the World by Storm":

Apparently large language models really are the next big something-something, because this panel's feisty audience had no end of things to say. The panel discussed how copyright law applies to programs like ChatGPT and their works, as well as the works they draw from to build their database. Professor **Shaun Jamison** compared it to the litigated case of a monkey who took a selfie, but was found not to own its photographic 'work': "It's kind of out there in the ether."

If he suspected a student of traditional plagiarism, he said, it was possible to check. "With this, if a student's all in with AI-generated answers for a whole semester, it would be hard to tell."

"Can you ask it to give you only true answers?" asked one audience member. A decently profound query.

Poet **F.J. Bergman** rated ChatGPT's poetry skill as competitive on a middle school level, weak for high school, and far from creating anything she might select as an editor. She shared its response to her request for a poem about what lives in a ruined sand castle. It was trite, yes, but one audience member suggested that often people *like* trite and shallow poetry because it gives them comfort. "I tell you, Hallmark's never going to have to pay another person!" declared Bergman.

The panel concluded with a projection of ChatGPT's response to the classic Turing Test question, "Please write me a sonnet on the subject of the Forth Bridge." The piece it produced was surprisingly astute, nearly scanned correctly, and was generally considered much better than Scottish poet William McGonagall and his notorious "The Tay Bridge Disaster."

Message from the chair

"Hi everyone. Nope, I did not manage to write the traditional chair message for the program book, leaving you undistracted to proceed directly to the table of contents. BUT here I am, and I want to belatedly welcome you all to Minicon 56. Now that the con is on, I know more about who I'm welcoming. So many new faces! Welcome welcome to your first Minicon. I hope you enjoy yourselves, learn new things, make new friends, and find a sense of community. Building community and connections is what we're all about. I hope to see you at the next Minicon too and our other events throughout the year."

-Minicon 56 chair Matt Strait

Speaking of poetry...

A pair of haiku inspired by "Gender and AI" (8:30 Fri.):

Pronouns and robots – Constructed identity Can be binary.	Some languages have No "I" that's non-binary – Translated gender.
---	---

-MDG

(Ironically, traditional haiku are not supposed to include personal pronouns. —*Ed.*)

A downright devilish jaunt

The reading of the late **John M. Ford's** "Fellowship of the Woosters" was delayed when both participants expected the other to have brought the precious recovered manuscript. When it was eventually read, the *Jeeves and Wooster/Lord of the Rings* crossover was exquisitely seamless. "Nobody in the universe could have done that except Mike Ford," concluded reader Steve Brust.

~~ Things are getting more revelant,
but less relevant. ~~

"Tales of the Old Gamemasters" featured tales of elaborate player betrayals, years-long derailments, duplicating dodos, inertialess swords, and the acquisition of a "new clear bomb" through skillful use of punning.

"The moral is, don't ask for anything too powerful, or the GM will find some way to **** you over." —Steve again

Music in the Atrium

The Ben Lessinger Memorial Karaoke Party had a late start due to tricky equipment that spent hours "almost working." Eventually it got going and the party's music wafted out over the atrium. Meanwhile, Greg Ketter really did seem to know everyone, since his party was hopping.

Art is plentiful!

The Art Show is full! Go and Quick-Bid on things to take them home!

Music switch-up

Graham Leathers is ill and could not attend. Wish him well! Dave Stagner performed a solo concert in his place, after having originally ceded his spot to the Decadent Dave Clement (2:30 Sun.)

LAST CALL

"...for great free-will donation treasures! Take your deals by 4:00 Sunday, leave your donations. Thanks to Mark Richards for coordinating this fun fundraiser." --Anonymous

Pub Trivia results

1 st place	Allamagoosa	17 points
2 nd place	Sketchy Bag of Celery	14 points
3 rd place	Kobayashi Maru	13 points

In keeping with this con's lack of a theme:

"The Invisible Man was not seen in the Bar last evening. Several patrons reported no sightings."

And less relevant still...

Upcoming choir show

One singer would like you to know that the Twin Cities Women's Choir, an arts non-profit whose mission is to empower the voice of women and girls, is having its 25th anniversary concert on Friday, May 19th at 7p.m. in Roseville Lutheran Church. They will perform a program of multi-genre choral music.

Lots of people came to play Zar with Clay Friday night! Reports rage from three tables to 24 people. That's several times as many as played in the Magic tournament.

The Consuite's bathtub is running low on Dr. Pepper. At least one attendee was concerned that Clay might be upset if we ran out.

"Get well, Gamekeeper!"

"Easter egg hunt underway."

OK, enough of that. Let's finish up with some
Saturday registration totals

At close of reg:

* 470 warm bodies

* 507 total membership!

Watch for another Medallion Hunt Extra!

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Issue 4

Sunday afternoon

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"We're all bozos on this bus!"

Random gaggle of teenagers pulse count

"When no pulse count happened, we decided to take it into our own hands."

Friday night 4a.m. 14 5a.m. 8

Saturday night 3a.m. 25

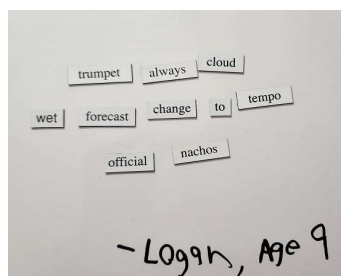
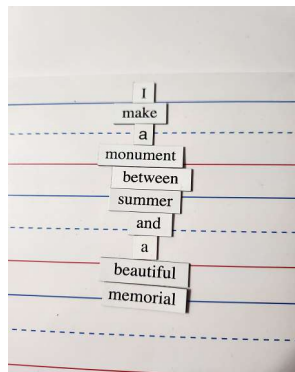
Saturday night Strait-Lam 4a.m. pulse check

"[That other pulse check?] They're evil. We had a duel."

Consuite 2 Bar 16 "Late night fandom!"

** The karaoke party was the last one running, persisting on guitar even after the hotel asked nicely for them to turn off the machine at half past two. "But don't we have sound in our contract?" asked one young musician. **

Saturday night poetry from the Glory Scroll



Thanks to Parties head **Crystal Therese** for coordinating! And for throwing her own nifty party on in there. Also welcome to new Green Room host **Lisa Foley**!

The word on the suite is...

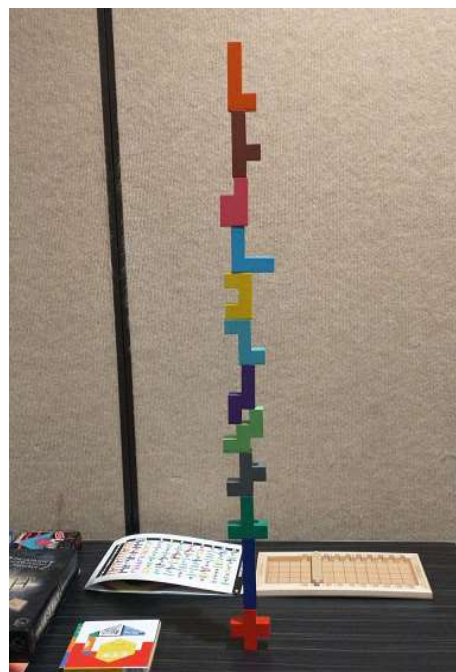
Apparently there are a number of new people at Minicon this year, and they've been comparing our consuite favorably to other consuites.

Klatches klutch

Despite the kaffeeklatches being thrown together at-con this year, Guest Liaison Head **Rick Snyder** reports that both klatches were nearly full, and that they were fun.

Pentomino challenge solution

Some people fit pentominoes into rectangular frames. We stack them. Congrats to the three con-goers who pushed the challenge height up from 30 to 31 to 33 to 37. The maximum height of 40 blocks is shown here.



Got an announcement for Closing Ceremonies?

A/V Head **Phoenix Stremski** will be running Closing Ceremonies this year, replacing Toni Brust—so if you have something to announce, get it to Phoenix!

Bring back balloons!

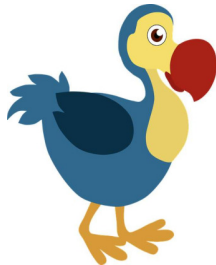
A conflation of balloons has occurred in the Bozo Bus Office. Meet us here at Courtyard 4 at 3:50 to triumphantly bear them into **Closing Ceremonies!**



With a machine, balloons are easy to inflate. Without a string, they're not so easy to carry.

Haven't had enough?

Help use up the leftover food and drink and keep celebrating at the Dead Dodo party Monday night! It's at Dream Park, home of MN-Stf president **Sharon**



Kahn and Old Gamemaster **Richard Tatge**, starting at 7p.m. Celebrate Richard's 80th birthday in advance. Featuring a crate of White Castles! The address is on page 24 of your program book.

For the final state of the Medallion Hunt, see J's recap at 3:30 in Park 2!

See you next year!

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