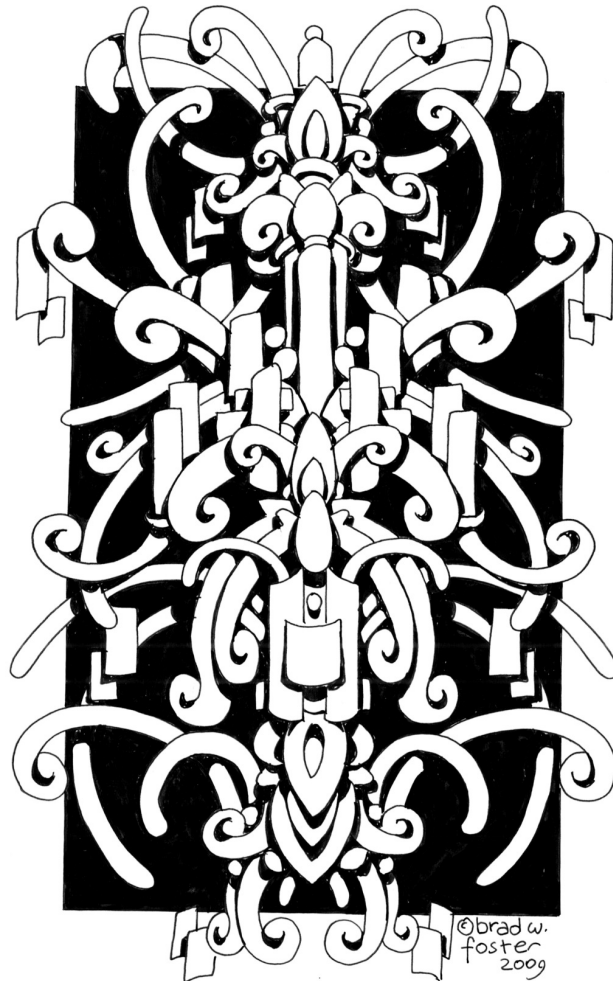


The Southern Fandom Confederation

Update



March 2009

Volume 1, Issue 3

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A Few Words From The Editor

Well, it's been a busy month for me. I earned my four-in-a-row merit badge by attending What-The-Hell?!Con, Boskone, ConNooga, and ConCave this February. I'm glad I get a weekend of downtime now, before I jump into running StellarCon. That's already becoming a headache or three, though. But it looks like it's actually going to happen, and with a minimum of pitchforks and torches.

In other news, the NASFiC bid is going well, and we now have a few benchmarks. For one, we crossed 100 Pre-supporters. For another, we've finally got t-shirts. I'll include the design we used for them in this ish. \$20 each, pretty large range of sizes available. J. Andrew World created this image, which you'll find at the end of the zine. Speaking of art credits, check out the Brad Foster illo on the cover!

I've been running around like mad, so I haven't had time to solicit any articles for this issue, and as a consequence of that, it's all me, save for the letters. I've got some stuff in the back room that I intend to pull out at a later date, but this month will be a little light. This time, we'll see the usual convention previews, a conreport and some thoughts on Chattanooga, and the letter column. I've decided to name that "Rebel Yells", which hopefully won't be stealing some other Southern faned's great idea from decades before my time. It probably is, so someone should write in and scold me for it, and help enlighten me and my younger readers as to what's come before in Southern Fandom.

I got in a few great games of Hearts up at ConCave, by the way, and the wins were split between the Guests of Honor, Tim and Marcia Illingworth. Marcia will be one to watch out for at DSC, as she won her game with a grand total of only four points. Tim and I were batting somewhere around twenty that game, and poor Judy Bemis got carpet bombed with Queens. But this time, I was glad to not be the one to go out in either game, which made my play a little better than at the previous two DSCs. Too bad DSC will be before LibertyCon, so I'll have precious little opportunity to practice. I'd love to see someone who's been around a bit longer than I have write up the rules so it's a bit more authoritative, as there was some argument about who leads each hand (I had to call on an authority in the first game to convince them it was the dealer's left). But hey, if you find me at a con, I'm likely to have a couple of decks on me, and I'm usually up for a game if you can find us a foursome.

What's Up In March?

Kicking the month off, we have the Starfleet Region 2 Summit in Jackson, MS, March 6-8. This is kind of a big deal for Starfleet types, and it's good to see a fannish event down in Jackson.

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The next weekend, I'll be busy. I'm running StellarCon 33, in High Point, NC on the weekend of March 13-15. Our Guests of Honor are Sharon Lee and Steve Miller (literary), William Stout (art), John Wick (gaming), and Uncle Timmy Bolgeo (fan). We'll also have Vic Mignogna, an anime voice actor, and the NC Webcomics Coffee Clatch. As a student-run con, StellarCon winds up covering a broad range of interests. Another student-run con, Madicon 18, will be in Harrisonburg, VA that weekend. They've got a good spread of guests, including L.E. Modesitt, Jr., Alan Pollock, and Jennie Breeden. Oh, and they've got cut-rate prices – only \$20 at the door. Up in Cave City, KY, Daigacon should have plenty to appeal to the anime aficionado, with both Josh Grelle and Chris Ayres in attendance. And down in the far corner of the South, Anime Express XI, in Daytona Beach, FL, presents a very fannish approach to anime – most of their guests appear to be folks who've taken their passion for the form to feverish fits of fanac. Okay, Stan Lee's alliteration it ain't. But wait, there's yet another far corner of Southern Fandom having a convention this weekend! Down in Houston, Texas, you can check out Revelcon, which centers around the very form of fanac you're participating in right now: zines! Seriously, if you're in the neighborhood, check them out!

Next comes the busiest weekend so far this year. On March 18-22, IAFA 30 will be held in Orlando, FL. Guests of honor are Robert Charles Wilson, Guy Gavriel Kay, Maria Nikolajeva, and Brian Aldiss. The IAFA's conference is a much more literary affair than most conventions, featuring the presentation of research papers. If you're in the mood for sercon discussions this side of the Mason-Dixon line, this is the event for you. Not quite as long an event, but still a big one, on March 19-22, Furry Weekend Atlanta will be held in Atlanta, GA. They've recently moved to a larger space. It sounds like there's plenty to attract the anthropomorphic fan to Atlanta for the weekend. And then we get down to the stuff that's *just* three days long. On March 20-22, FantaSciCon will be held in Chattanooga, TN. They've got a selection of artists, authors, editors, and comics folks. Features a solid track of films, this year centered around aliens and knights. MidSouthCon will return to Memphis, TN for their 27th year featuring Mike Resnick, Vincent di Fate, Jolly Blackburn, and a host of other big names. Seriously, it's an unfathomably good guest list. CoastCon will be in Biloxi, MS, and will feature Virginia Hey (media), David Weber, Michael Moorcock (authors), John Picacio (artist), Larry Brom (gaming), and AJ Brockway (fan). And if you're looking for something a little different up in Timonium, MD, check out Enlightenment XII, a highly specialized gaming event centered around *Age of Renaissance* and *Manifest Destiny*.

And, to close out the month, March 27-29 brings us Naruto Star Trek in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. This curious little con seems to have learned from events like TimeGate (a Dr. Who/Stargate mash-up), featuring voice actors Maile Flanagan, Yuri Lowenthal, and Kate Higgins, the voices of Naruto, Sasuke, and Sakura, respectively (exhausting my knowledge of the show), as well as several other voice actors from the series. On the Star Trek side of things, they have Walter

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Koenig, James Cawley, Barbara Luna, and Morgan Sheppard. It looks to be a good event for folks with an interest in either series (or those truly fannish types who love both). I'm all for any con which can bring together different generational elements to have a good time in the same place. Also consider Econocon in Atlanta, GA a gaming con featuring lots of living campaigns. And in Birmingham, AL, check out Imagicon which promises a great mix of guests from literature, comics, art, music, film, and science. For those looking to have fun with the college crowd, you might want to consider Technicon in Blacksburg, VA, with guests of honor Kathleen Goonan (author), Dean Jones (media), White Plectrum (filk), Bonnie Bennett (fan). But wait, that's not all the college convention action in store for you this weekend! Aggiecon, the oldest college convention (and by extension, one of the oldest cons in the South), will be running a full four days, March 26-29, in College Station, TX. For guests of honor, they're pulling in Todd McCaffrey (author), Kristen Perry (artist), and Jennifer Rhodes (media). So seriously, there's cons all over this weekend. Go have some fun!

An Unfortunate Con Report

I hate to ever write an unfavorable con report. Even the cons I've attended where I've been bored, or lonely, or uncomfortable for part of the time, I had a good time generally. So it's with great regret that I report that I did not have a good time at ConNooga, for which I had rather high hopes.

Let me emphasize that the problem was *not*, as some other smofs would tend to conclude, a consequence of ConNooga's heavy focus on media and anime. The people there were fans, attending to interact with other fans. They were just, in many cases, denied the chance to do so. There was no consuite. In the Chattanooga Choo Choo hotel, that's a mistake. I wouldn't have even minded if the consuite were actually one of the hotel's bars, with a charge for the snacks. I could have afforded some snacks that weekend, and would have simply written it off as a hotel issue. But at least I would have had somewhere to go, sit down, and meet other fans looking to take a break. Because of the lack of a consuite, this had to wait until the evening, when fan-run parties were in full swing – and that was really the only thing I enjoyed at the con.

The programming was there, and was diverse enough to be really exciting, but I got the feeling they just didn't make good enough use of the guests they had, and the program suffered for it. Several major items were in unfortunate time slots, including putting the charity auction on Friday night (and combining it with the slave auction), and the masquerade at four in the afternoon on Saturday. The sword demo they had (which I would have loved to attend) was at nine in the morning, when I was crashed out hard from the night before. It had potential, but it was unrealized.

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The last straw for me, and the reason I will not be returning in the near future, was the overly aggressive use of convention security. They shut down the parties far too early on Saturday night, apparently on their own initiative, and in that, I felt they overstepped their authority. Just when folks were really starting to have a good time, security (and from what I've been told, the con chair himself) intervened.

I've heard that some folks had a really good time, and for them, I'm happy. But I was unimpressed. If ConNooga returns, I encourage them to seek to improve. Oh, and so that there's a positive note, their registration team was wonderful, and Chattacon would do well to emulate them.

On a More Positive Note, Chattanooga is Awesome

When the con's not enough to keep me on site, I get to explore the city. Since the previous Chattanooga conventions I'd been to were just too awesome to leave, I'd never really gotten a feel for the city beyond the interstate.

Glug and I hopped onto the free electric shuttle and explored. We found a pub a friend had recommended from a previous year (The Pickle Barrel), which had awesome sandwiches and cheap beer. Going further, we realized that all of the main hotels have stops on the shuttle, as does the convention center. The shuttle runs every five minutes, all day (not sure how late into the night, though). But it made me seriously consider Uncle Timmy's claim that Chattanooga has the space for a Worldcon. I think it's a few hundred hotel rooms short, but if Worldcon stays smallish, it could work.

At the end of the line, we found an Imax theater and a Mongolian grill (Genghis Grill), which was also tasty. The city seemed quite friendly to pedestrians, though, at least in February, rather cold.

Rebel Yells

To kick off this month's loc col, we heard from Joy Smith:

Warren,

Thanks for the convention round-up. I'm glad to see that Alan Tudyk (Wash from Firefly) is out and about at Farpoint. I wonder what he thinks of Joss Whedon killing him off in *Serenity*. I was irked!

Sherlock's Book Emporium and Curiosities sounds like a fantastic bookstore. Sorry it's not closer to Florida. And I enjoyed the zine and con reports and news about TAFF and DUFF.

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Interesting and thorough background on Red Sonya/Sonja. I didn't know she'd been around in comics so long; and I liked the description of her outfit--portable coin collection! I have *The Shadow of the Vulture* by Robert E. Howard in *Echoes of Valor III* (edited by Karl Edward Wagner; Tor, 1991). And I enjoyed the lemmings in space cartoon.

Appreciatively,
Joy V. Smith

Always glad to do the convention roundup. This ish, I even remembered that Texas is a Southern state, and hunted down info on their fannish goings on. I still need to get on top of Southern club activities, but that'll have to wait until I get that motivated.

Next, Jeff Thompson was glad to hear from us, and we're glad to hear from him!

Hello, Warren! I was overjoyed to see my "Red-Hot Sonja" article (as well as my Letter of Comment) in your latest e-zine. Thank you so much for sharing my article (and information about Sherlock's Books) with your readers! Click on the hyperlink below for information about my new book from McFarland. Have a good weekend and a happy Valentine's Day, Warren, and keep in touch!
F.I.A.W.O.L.

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I've seen McFarland Publishing around some of the local NC conventions, and they seem like a really cool business. The combination of fannish material and academic research seems right up your alley! Glad to hear they published your book.

Next, we heard from John Purcell:

Okay, Warren. I think the zine's name, while descriptive, takes up way too much space in the subject line. The things I gotta do to keep track of my loccing these days...

Anywho, it was really a nice treat to see this posted and I enjoyed reading it. This particular issue is highlighted by that fine article on Red Sonja by Jeff Thompson.

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Many moons ago when I collected comics, the Conan, Kull, and Red Sonja books were among the regular lines I acquired. Those days are sadly long gone, but I recall them with great affection. Man, I sure wish I still had those first ten issues of *Savage Sword of Conan*. The stories and artwork were fantastic, and it is doubtful that work of that caliber will ever be seen again. Sure, there are some mighty fine graphic novels and comics being produced today, but back when I collected these items (mid to late 1970s), they were something else to behold. If anything, Jeff brought back some great memories. An excellent article!

Yeah, the convention season is about to kick off into high gear in Texas, too, although it never really does cool off - con-wise that is - in these here parts. If you're wanting info about cons coming up in my neck of the woods, the next biggie is ConDFW, over the Feb. 20-22, 2009 weekend. I have two professional conferences that same weekend, one in San Antonio (the 19th-21st), then in College Station on the 22nd to 24th. Should keep me off the streets.

Since you're asking for con info, some of the guest line-up for the next Aggiecon has been now set. The Writer Guest of Honor is Todd McCaffrey, the Artist Guest of Honor is Kristen Perry, and other guests include Steven Brust, Martin Whitmore, Marc Gunn, and quite a few others already committed. Go to <http://aggiecon.tamu.edu/?q=aggiecon> for the con's homepage and peruse away. Aggiecon 40 will be held on March 26-29, 2009 in the Memorial Student Center on the Texas A&M Campus. Lots of gaming is included, and the costuming - Anime, Cosplay, and others - is usually quite good. Maybe I will see some folks there.

Later on this year comes Apollocon (June 26-28, 2009) in Houston. Go to <http://www.apollocon.org/> for all the poop that's good to scoop. Hmm... that doesn't sound too good, does it? Oh, well. Armadillocon 31 is August 14-16, 2009 in Austin; go see <http://www.armadillocon.org/index.html> for more info. Those are the next biggies that are foreseeable in my future. On September 18-20 there is Fencon VI up in Dallas, TX, but I suspect you might know something about that con, don't you? Still, for folks who desire the info, here's their website: <http://www.fencon.org/> If anything, Warren, I will see you there.

That's about it for now. Many thanks for the zine, and I look forward to doing some con attending this year.

All the best,
John Purcell

Fencon, much to my surprise, invited me to be their Fan GOH, which will be something of a new experience for me. I was rather surprised, but I'm excited. In the meantime, I'm gonna keep pubbing my ish – gotta feel like I've earned it, after all.

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And, yes, we do have a Lloyd Penney LOC:

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February 17, 2009

Dear Warren:

I've got the second issue of the SFC Update, and while I've got some spare time, I'll write up some comments on the contents.

It's always good to know what cons are coming up. Because of our weather, conventions here are relatively seasonal, with a few exceptions. At the end of March is our own local litcon, Ad Astra, and it will be the best cure for cabin fever this spring.

There's a general science fiction/comics/gaming store on the northern edge of Toronto called SciFi World...it also used to have a little restaurant next door, and the food was okay...guess our own local fanboys are a little picky; the restaurant is gone, but that's allowed management to improve the store itself. I haven't been in there in a couple of years, but I should have a look some time soon.

I'm hoping for more issues of the reborn Critical Wave RSN, but I guess Steve Green is steeling himself for a transAtlantic trip soon. We are happy to be two of Steve's TAFF nominators, and we hope to see him in Montreal in some months. I know that DUFF candidates are lining up to compete for a trip to the Worldcon, and we should see a DUFF ballot soon.

My loc...Seattle has been forced to withdraw its bid for 2011, so Reno is now the single Worldcon candidate for that year, and we're thinking about it. I've been on the Reno site earlier today, with other Reno-based sites, and the convention centre is a short taxi ride away from the airport, and the hotels look pretty good. So, we're thinking of pre-supporting...the vote will be in Montreal. Dragon*con doesn't appeal to me much, with Worldcon being much more to my liking, but there's a number of folks who I wish were going to Anticipation. I know they'd have a good time, but as always, the money only goes so far.

I look forward to seeing you in the fanzine lounge...like to take a shift or two hosting the room? Chris Garcia and his crew from the BArea will be taking on the room at some point...I need hosts, and zines to give away or sell, or simply have in a library for people to read and/or take away. I hope there will be a fanzine auction, to raise some money for the fan funds.

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I was never into barbarian fantasy comics or novels, like Conan and his like, so I never got into Red Sonia, either. I remember reading discussions, though...because of his origins and her, um, activities, should she look like Wonder Woman, slender yet strong, or should she look more muscular like a female bodybuilder? Of course, the discussion got into areas so esoteric, I gave up on it. Sometimes, I'm just not much of a fanboy.

I'll wrap it up here, and say my thanks. Take care, see you next issue, and see you for real in August.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

Seattle withdrawing at the very last minute before the filing deadline was definitely the fannish news of the month. Speaking of which, I still wanted to run that interview piece, but haven't really gotten but one question from y'all. So here's the deal – I don't want to run a bum piece, so it doesn't fly if I don't get more questions. I just can't fill it up with softballs, y'know?

*We also heard from: Ned Brooks, who didn't like the header; Nurit; Uncle Timmy, who thought the **Update** is a great first step; David Schlosser; Tom Feller; Steve and Sue Francis, who noted that it's not their DUFF report I'll be printing, but a Worldcon trip report; and Sue Phillips.*

As promised, here's the t-shirt design. This will appear on a black background, with the dates and web address added to it.

