



## ***Tardum Flumen #7 — Dead Dog***

### **And How Was Your Westercon?**

Throughout the convention, I've been writing about my experiences as a panelist. My motivation was partially selfish: as a first-time panelist I wanted to "process," but I also wanted to share my perspectives as the new guy in the firm. Overall, I had a blast. Not only did I expand my knowledge by preparing for these talks, but, what I learned from my co-panelists and audiences defines the immeasurable. Tom, Randy, and Al, my companions on the road toward the Buckeye News-Hawk Award, thanks to you as well. But enough about myself. For my final article, I wanted to know how the event went for others, specifically for a few I've never met. I know how it went for staff and guests, but how about for the attendees, the heart of any such endeavor, because, hey, they pay to play!

First I spoke with the Carter family. Gary and Diana, a brother and sister, brought Gary's 27-year old son, Garrick, to this, his first Westercon. Gary and Diana regularly attended conventions in the 1970s and early 1980s, but drifted away only to return when they wanted to get Garrick interested in participating. Diana sees herself as primarily interested in costuming, having competed in various masquerades, and now Garrick is continuing the tradition. You may have seen him here with his group, all dressed in "Wrath of Khan" era Star Trek uniforms with Garrick as the good captain! Diana loved the Westercon 66 masquerade, adding that the costumes were of high quality. She said the same about the dealer's room. If Garrick could change anything, he'd place panel tables on a dais so that panelists could be better seen by the whole room. Finally, Gary enjoyed the panel about how to take photos of costumes.

Rich McAllister thought that the overall convention was "pretty cool." The programming was pretty high-quality, but he'd like to see a wider variety of panels so that attendees weren't seeing the same folks behind the table all the time. His friend who wished to remain anonymous felt that as a long-time conventioneer, the details tend to blend together, and although she had a good time has difficulty identifying a high point. Planners, this person added, should remain mindful of accessibility issues, as the aisles in the art show and registration were too narrow. Both, however, highly praised the parties, especially the one for Kansas City with the party theme matched their convention theme. To put it simply, "The party was everything a party should be."

Last but not least, I chatted with two women who have been attending conventions since the 1970s, but prefer to enjoy fandom from the outer sphere. One likes to sit in the back row of panels and stitch while observing the discussion. The other filks, embroiders, and visits panels that have to do with costuming, since, you know, embroidering. Both see conventions as "playgrounds for adults," and praised this one specifically for having an overall family friendly atmosphere. To Kevin and Andy they'd say, "Thank you for always smiling, and we were happy to see you having a good time too, guys!"

In all, the people I interviewed had constructive criticisms that they plan to share on the evaluation form. None of these, however, impeded their enjoyment of Westercon 66, and they were glad they came. I'm glad that I'm here too. Thanks to my interview victims for speaking so openly with me, and I wish you all happy times at conventions in the future!

*Chuck Serface*

### Why Westercon?

John Hertz had been attending Westercon regularly since the 1970s. I asked him why, and here's what he said:

"Westercon is bigger in scope than a local convention and smaller than a continental or national. That's nourishing for me.

To me Westercon is 2500 people, but that was the '80s. However, it's interesting that the people coming to these 600, 800, 900 person Westercons are the knowledgeable fans. These are people who go to Worldcon. They're very involved. A lot of bidders come to Westercon because there is an unusual proportion of Worldcon voters here.

There's also something that a general interest convention has to offer that a specialist convention doesn't, and that's cross-fertilization. At a general interest convention you can meet the people you didn't know you wanted to meet, and your chances are better at a regional than at a local. That's what Westercon has to offer that we've been neglecting.

"Better to promote the good than rail against the ill." That's Tennyson, the poet fellow. Another way to put that is a version of the 80-20 rule. We should put 80% of our resources — time, money, energy, creativity — into strengthening what's going right, as far as the person looking at the situation is concerned. 20% to curing what we think is going wrong. There's plenty of diversity because you and I will have different ideas about the things that need strengthening.

That's one reason I do these classics of science fiction talks. Not that we should write these books now. We're not living back then. But I think we should stand on their shoulders. We should try to do as well in our own way as they did in theirs, if you can spot what that is and turn it to our own purposes."

Randy

### Quotes

"Hot glue is glue of the gods... But the gods can be angered..." — *from the Shoes panel*

"We didn't expect you guys to be OCD on the details" — *David Gerrold*

"Before I saw Kevin's space cowboy costume, I never thought I might be that interested in chaps."

"Don't cross Andy; he has a bodyguard of 300 Spartans." — "Actually they're Trojans. We have a big box in the consuite."



John Hertz — by Randy Byers

Lobby, 4 a.m. / Getting the last ten pages  
Rather read than sleep — *John Hertz*

### Secret Agent Fan

In a world permeated with sci-fi media and tropes, we don't need fandom anymore to find science fiction. And yet, here we are. Fandom is a secret community with publicized gatherings open to all. And we are all secret agents hiding in plain sight.

I'd like to thank all of you for making this such a great convention. Special thanks to the newszine staff, for their diverse interests, and for making the zine so fannish and fun — I couldn't have done it without you. Thanks to Kevin and Andy — I wouldn't have done it without you. And thanks to all my friends who were here, old ones and new ones I just met. Take care, and see you on the funway!

*Tom Becker*

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