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to the Newsletter of the Portland
Science Fiction Society*

Issue 296

June 2003

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Cover by Sheryl Birkhead

The Portland Science Fiction Society Pulsar Crew

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Letter from the Editor

Hello there all,

As to the May Pulsar, I want all of you to know that it was all Ed's fault. I should have known something was up when he volunteered to mail the May Pulsar for me after we finished folding and stapling them. Ed usually disappears when work is to be done.

I guarantee you I won't make the mistake of trusting him again. Or the other mistake of letting him near my computer to "Check his Mail" ha! I have his number now! Who knew he was so fast with the delete key.

I am on to you Ed! Your charming ways won't sway me again. I won't be another one of your many conquests. I Have the PorSFis archives now and I see that your name is in several of the Meeting minutes about the annual orgy. I know all your lines now. And I know about Jasmine.

Kris Picio
Pulsar Editor-in-chief
editor@porsfis.org



From the office of the President

By Debra Stansbury
president@porsfis.org

Greetings and welcome to another fun month full of PorSFis!
As opposed to May which was very light on PorSFis. The Editor tells me that Ed volunteered to take the May Pulsar to the post office, but mine never arrived. Darn, and I was looking forward to the exposé “Ed Foster: The Man, The Fan, The Legend!”

Cotton Candy—melts in your mouth, gets all over your hands.

Shava apologizes for not being home when the alt.porsfisers showed up at her house.

From Shava- “First, abject apology for this weekend. I am a jerk -- it just never made it on my calendar. *blush* OMIGHOD. I am so sorry.”

Oops! I’m sure people will understand (something about sin and stones comes to mind....). Next time we’ll do a little tattooing ;-)

Unlimited ride bracelets at a Festival are a good thing ☺ So are games that give you beads just for playing. (2 games, 1 prize, five strands of beads, too many trips on Scrambler and Tilt-a-whirl—it was a good Festival!)

June PorSFis Business Meeting

Enough about me...let's talk about June 14th's PorSFis meeting. Which I will not be at. Sorry, but it's a family thing, and I've known them longer. So, Matt Picio, my Intrepid and Irrepressible Vice President, will be handling the show. Guy Letourneau will be coming and speaking, not on Tesla, but on how to make an Anime Music Video. (I'm sure that if you were to want to make a non-anime music video, that you could use what you learn at the meeting, too.) I am rather bummed at missing this, as I had been really looking forward to it, but that's occasionally what happens when you have family!

Membership Report

We currently have 32 Members! This is a wonderful trend! Let's keep it up! Remember, PorSFis memberships make great gifts! ☺

alt.porsfis

Hope to see you all at Mark and Patty's on the 28th!



New ideas

In January we discussed some fine ideas and concepts and had a lot of positive energy—it's time to start putting our money where our mouths are. I am looking for volunteers who can guarantee follow through to help me with a project or two. I am also looking for an artist to draw up our idea for a tote bag and t-shirt. Please step forward—your Society needs you! ☺

Membership Drive

Have you hinted to your friends that it's time they joined PorSFis? We don't bite much! To help you sell them on the idea, PorSFis is now offering an Introductory Rate. This is \$10 for a year's membership, and is available to new members (and to anyone who has not been a member since before 1997). In order to make this work, these special members will receive their Pulsars via email, rather than through the Postal System. And yes, you can give this Introductory Rate as a gift to your non-PorSFis friends!



Business Meeting Minutes

The regularly scheduled Business meeting minutes have not been turned in...for several months. Ahem!

Says the pot calling the kettle black

*Tic...**TOC**---be the first
one on your block to contribute!*

John Bartley is **GEEKING FOR DOLLARS**
He is offering to perform computer consulting and related services—and to donate the proceeds (when referred by a PorSFIS member) to PorSFIS. TFN, of course. (“Til Further Notice) Phone is 503-BAR-TLEY (503-227-8539) Or email john@503bartley.com

Event Calendar

June 2003

- 1 Birthday of Rene Auberjonois (Odo- ST DS9)
Publication of books "Saturn" by Ben Bova and "Roma Eterna" by Robert Silverberg
- 3 Release on DVD of "Animatrix" - nine animated short films connected to "The Matrix" and season three of Star Trek: Deep Space Nine".
- 7 Birthday of actor Liam Neeson (Deadman/ SW- Episode 1)
- 8 Progress Soyuz launch to International Space Station
Birthday of Oregon based writer Kate Wilhelm (also widow of the late Damon Knight)
- 10 Stop motion animator/director Ray Harryhausen given star on Hollywood Walk of Fame
Release on DVD of Season Four of "Buffy, the Vampire Slayer"
- 13 Premiere of movie "Freddy vs. Jason"
- 14 Birthday of writer Harry Turtledove (aka Eric Iverson)
PorSFis Meeting at Portland State University (two p.m.)
- 17 Release on DVD of "Stargate:SG1", season three
- 20 Premiere of movie "The Hulk" starring Eric Bana. Will Hulk crush bug-man? ARRGH!! 21 Summer solstice - 19:10 UT
Publication of "Harry Potter and the Order of The Phoenix" by J. K. Rowling
- 22 Birthday of writer Octavia Butler
25th anniversary of discovery of Pluto's moon Charon
- 24 Birthday of writer Mercedes Lackey
International UFO Day
Release on DVD of "Hercules: The Legendary Journeys", season one
- 25 Mars Explorer Launch
- 28 AltPorSFis hosted by Marc & Patty Wells**
- 30 95th anniversary of Tunguska explosion in Siberia

July 2003

- 2 Premiere of movies "Sinbad: Legend of the Seven Seas" and "Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines"
- 9 Premiere of movie "Pirates of the Caribbean"
- 11 Premiere of movie "The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen."
- 12 **PorSFis Meeting at Portland State University (two p.m.)**

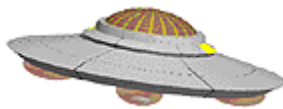
Mike Parker spends his time and energy researching the Event Calendar every month and getting it in on time so that you fine fen will have it all here in one place for your perusal. If you have any events you would like to see added to the calendar please email them to Mike at MIKPAR@prodigy.net or here to me at editor@porsfis.org prior to the submission deadline for inclusion in the Pulsar. Featured Artist

Looking Glass Bookstore

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PorSFis Members receive 10% off



alt.PorSFIS

On the fourth Saturday of the month the Portland Science Fiction Society commits alt.PorSFIS, a social gathering in varying locations. Usually, alt.PorSFIS involves movies, food, drink conversation and relaxation. All are welcome to attend.

Date: June 28th 2003

Time: 6:30...ish

(Note: if you come early you will be put to work on party prep and cleaning.)

Location: Marc and Patty Wells

Check the website at www.porsfis.org to find directions and a map. When it comes to snacks and things, as with most alt.PorSFIS's's's's's's, it's a bring your own and a bit to share kind of thing. If you have any questions feel free to email Debra at president@porsfis.org

So please come join us
At
alt.PorSFIS

alt.PorSFis Location Schedule

Every month Portland Science Fiction Society Members volunteer to host alt.PorSFis at their home. Here is the schedule as of this month.

January – Sue Renhard
February – John Andrews
March – Dave Moreland
April – Matt & Kris Picio
May – Shava Navard
June – Marc & Patty Wells
July – Kier Salmon
August
September
October
November
December

Updates and changes may occur. Check www.porsfis.org for the most up to date information.

If you don't see a month filled you are welcome to volunteer to host alt.PorSFis. Just contact Debra Stansbury at president@porsfis.org

Convention Calendar

WESTERCON 56

Date: July 3-6, 2003

Location: SeaTac Doubletree Hotel
SeaTac, WA

Tel: (206) 246-8600

Fax: (206) 431-8687

Email: info@wester56.org

Website: www.wester56.org

FOOLSCAP V

Date: Sept. 19-21, 2003

Location: Bellevue Hilton
Bellevue, WA

Tel: 425-455-3330

(Call Hotel directly. Mention Little Cap Z & Foolscap for con rate)

Email: info@foolscap.org

Website: www.foolscap.org

ANGLICON XVI

Date: Oct. 3-5, 2003

Location: SeaTac Radisson Hotel
SeaTac, WA.

Theme: British Media

Tel: 206-789-BRIT

Email: anglicon@rocketmail.com

Website: www.anglicon.com

ORYCON 25

Date: Nov, 2003

Location: Double Tree Columbia River
Portland OR

Website: www.orycon.org

WORLDCON 61/TORCON 3

Date: Aug. 28 - Sept. 1, 2003

Location: Metro Toronto Convention Center, Royal York Hotel
Toronto Ontario, Canada.Email: info@torcon3.on.caWebsite: www.torcon3.on.ca**FUTURE CONVENTIONS:**

Worldcon 62/Noreascon 4

When: Sept. 2-6, 2004

Where: Boston MA

Worldcon 63/Interaction

When: Aug. 4-8, 2004

Where: Glasgow, Scotland

John Andrews, that's right the Portland Science Fiction Societies very own Treasurer, puts the Convention Calendar together every month. If you know of a convention coming up but don't see it listed send the information to John at john.c.andrews@att.net or to the editor at editor@porsfis.org for inclusion in the list.

Go forth and recruit! All species, races, creeds, colors,
and planets of origin are welcome 😊
GIFT MEMBERSHIPS AVAILABLE
Memberships are still just \$20 a year, \$30 for the whole
family! What a deal!

Member News

By Roger Wells
rwells@whitties.org

"Congratulations on passing the Foreign Service assessment."

At approximately 20:15 UTC on Wednesday, 12 March 2003, I was lead into an interview room at the Department of State's Assessment Center in Washington DC and told these words. This was the cumulation of eighteen months of introspection, debate, research, and, at times, simply figuring how to work with this particular system.

Our embassies and consulates are staffed with Foreign Service Officers and Foreign Service Specialists, plus nationals of the host country, Foreign Service Nationals. The Officers and Specialists are US Citizens, selected for their ability to live and work abroad and effectively represent the United States as much as for skills in their selected profession. Officers and Specialists are rotated between sites, staying at one embassy or consulate for a tour of two to four years. Thus, it is the Nationals who provide continuity to our embassies and consulates.

I applied for a total of three positions, two in information management and one in technical security. Of these, I received the congratulations and a conditional offer for the Information Management Technical Specialist (IMTS), specializing in telephone installation and maintenance. For this position, if I pass the remaining qualifications, I will be assigned to one of eighteen major embassies, from which I will travel extensively

to support the facilities in the general area.

I still must pass a medical clearance, a background check for a top secret security clearance, and then a final review. I was told to have a retest of part of my medical examination, so there may be a few issues. I will know more in a few weeks. After a very thorough security interview, I do not believe there is anything of concern in my background that is not already known. Nonetheless, it will take between six and eight months to finish the background check.

If this all works out, I will initially be sent to Washington DC for a few weeks of general training that all new Foreign Service employees receive. I will then receive additional training in my field of specialty, in the Washington, DC area. After that, candidates bid for open positions in their specialty, usually for an initial two-year assignment. Frankly, for my first tour, I would be game for most anywhere. I could even imagine being the only one bidding for an assignment that everyone else tries to avoid.

I filled out my initial application in late 2001. This application required a multi-page form plus essays on several technical questions, plus a brief autobiography. That application did not get beyond the initial review. However, I was advised to consider a related position, the IMTS, which ultimately proved successful. At a high-tech career fair, one of the few employers represented was the Department of State, recruiting for Foreign Service positions. I continued to review the Department of State on their web site. In late July, I sent in applications for the IMTS position and one for a technical security position.

I received a phone call about the IMTS position in late fall. On

Thursday, December 19, I received an emailed letter inviting me to an oral assessment for the IMTS position. Because I had changed my address, it took a while for the follow-up paperwork to reach me, but by early January I knew the date and time of the assessment, and had travel arrangements. I made of point of staying within walking distance of the assessment, to keep things simple. Meanwhile, I continued reviewing for the assessment and filled out their form for the security clearance, researching details of my life up to ten years back.

One March 11, I flew to Washington DC. Wednesday, I arrived at the assessment center in plenty of time; there were quite a few candidates in various phases of their respective assessments. I met a fellow candidate for the IMTS position. The first part was a written exercise, where I had to select one of several topics and then write an essay on it. After that, I was interviewed by a team of two examiners, on my ability to live and work overseas and my technical background. Frankly, by the time they were done, I was not expecting to pass, especially as most of the candidates that day apparently were being turned down. Thus those words of congratulations were a very pleasant surprise.

The remaining position was an anti-climax. After hearing absolutely nothing about the other application I had sent at the same time as the IMTS, I received an email inviting me to an assessment, to be held in Los Angeles; for this position, the examiners were traveling to various locations closer to the candidates. They held the assessment in a hotel, the LAX Embassy Suites to be exact--it took me a while to realize how appropriate that name is to the Foreign Service. Although I was more confident and felt I had done a better job with the

questions, this time I was turned down.

While this application process may seem complex, it actually is much simpler than the full application for many of the Foreign Service positions. For most of these, there is a separate, full-day written assessment. The candidates who pass then are invited to a full-day oral assessment. Although my assessment was called an oral assessment, it combined both the written and oral assessments, and each took about an hour rather than a full day.

Many years ago, in an organization that recreates the middle ages, I served as deputy minister of sciences and as a herald. This was the engineering and technology of the period, and the heralds were the ones who moved with diplomatic immunity across frontiers. I recently realized that, after passing the oral assessment, I am well on my way to doing, in real life, the twenty-first century's equivalent.

While at the assessment, I was aware that many of you, across the country and the world, were thinking of me and pulling for me, and that comforting thought made a significant difference. I must still meet rigorous medical standards, which may or may not prove a stumbling block, and a thorough background check as well as a final general assessment. Time will tell. The next few months should prove quite interesting, regardless of the final outcome.



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Ask Ed



Question: What happened to the May Pulsar?
The Editor

Ed's Answer: On the advice of my attorney I refuse to answer on the grounds I may incriminate myself.

Question: Is this the same attorney that tried to serve SFWA's First Fan with a notice of copyright infringement?

The Editor

Ed's Answer:uhm....I suggest Beer. Large Quantities of it.



Next Months Pulsar Topic: **“Topic? We Don't need no Stinking Topic!”**

Portland Science Fiction Society
 PO Box 4602
 Portland, OR 97208

Pulsar, the newsletter of the Portland Science Fiction Society, comes free with membership. It is also available in trade, and can be purchased at Future Dreams/Burnside and Looking Glass Books, both in Portland, Oregon.

The Editor is Kris Picio.

The Deadline for Pulsar contributions is 7 days before the end of every month. Contributions are always welcome, and may be sent to the PO Box above, or to the editor direct at editor@porsfis.org

PorSFis meetings are open to everyone. Check the Calendar of Events for meeting times and places. Membership per year: \$20 individual, \$30 family (1 newsletter per family membership)

Current PorSFis Officers:

President	Debra Stansbury	president@porsfis.org	503-620-3068
Vice President	Matthew Picio	vicepresident@porsfis.org	
Treasurer	John Andrews	john.e.andrews@att.net	503-771-2894
Secretary	Barbara		
Webmaster	Matt Picio	lgapw@porsfis.org	

PORSFIS WEBPAGE: www.porsfis.org

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