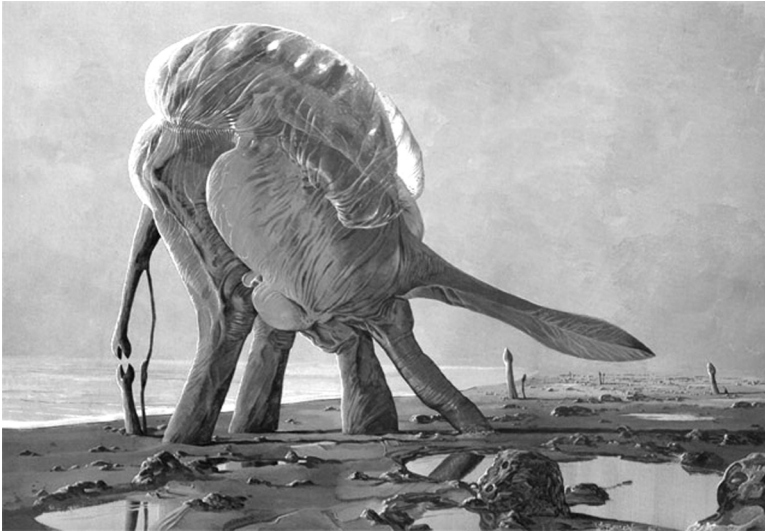


Digging Up the Future

chair@minicon43.mnsth.org

Some sort of future is going to happen. We don't get to chose whether tomorrow is or isn't coming; the universe has already made that decision for us. All we can do is to try to ensure that the shape of tomorrow is more to our liking than the shape of yesterday. Our guests this year – each in their own unique way – embody that most quintessential human process. They craft word and image and song, they bind person to person, and forge concept to page. An archaeologist digs up pottery and bone, and asks “*How do these things extend what we know?*”; our guests dig up ideas and possibilities, and ask the very same question. Anyone can just *ride* through time; heck, a pebble does that quite nicely. We've chosen our guests this year because they aren't content to just ride. Instead, they wield that greatest of all tools – the human imagination – and use it to dig up the shape of new futures.



CONTACTING Us

Fandom is a community. Virtually every weekend, there are SF conventions *somewhere*; most weekends, several *somewheres*. Different conventions cater to different tastes, but in the end, the most valuable service any convention provides is an opportunity for fen to get together. Whoever you are, reading this, you have some unique spark to contribute, and we'd love to hear from you. To help make sure your input reaches the most appropriate parties, we've placed email addresses alongside the titles of each section. Those of us who make up the Minicon convention committee welcome your questions and your input; please don't hesitate to email us.

REGISTRATION

REGISTRATION@MINICON43.MNSTF.ORG

Here's the deal; you pull out the pre-registration form conveniently printed in this progress report, do a bit of scribbling of names and checking of boxes, add a check and a stamp and pop it in the mail on or before February 14th, 2008. In return we'll give you \$10*, four excellent guests of honor, great fun, great music, great art, and the best hospitality suite in fandom.

Granted, there are downsides to registering early. You'll end up with extra money, and you'll miss the excitement that comes of spending the last hour before the post office closes on 2/14 frantically searching around for the registration form you have in your hands right now. Our advice? Register now. After all, you can always take up bungee jumping for the adrenaline.

If you're a bit tight after the holidays, we understand; buy a supporting membership now for only \$15, and convert to a full membership at the door for only \$40.

** Well, okay, we aren't actually going to hand you ten bucks. But you will save that much over the at-the-door rate of \$60, and that amounts to the same thing, don't you think? The at-the-door rate for children 6-12 will be \$20; free for 5 and under.*

Thinking Ahead

Here's another money-saving opportunity! When you come to Minicon, look in your registration packet for the registration form for the next year's Minicon. You'll find pens, envelopes, and a handy drop box right there at the registration table. You'll get the lowest rate that will ever be available on registration, and you'll know you're set for 2009 a whole year ahead.

DECIPHERING YOUR MAILING LABEL

In the upper right corner of the mailing label on this progress report there is a number. This number tells you when you last registered for Minicon. If you see "43", you are registered for this year. Any other number means that we've been missing you, and everyone has been asking where you've been; what are you doing this Easter?

LIVE OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES?

To avoid extra charges and difficulties with currency exchange or international money orders, members living in countries other than the United States may register in advance without enclosing payment. Then, upon arriving at the door at Minicon, they may pay the fee that was current at the time of registration, in U.S. funds. Simply make a note to this effect under the "Registration Instructions" section of your pre-registration form. Note that the fee charged at the door will depend on the date your pre-registration was mailed.

HOTEL

[HOTEL@MINICON43.MNSTF.ORG](mailto:hotel@minicon43.mnstf.org)

Minicon 43 will return to the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel. If you haven't visited the hotel recently, prepare yourself to be impressed. Sheraton has made over the entire building; from the guest rooms to the function space, it looks brand-new.

Room Rates

\$87 Standard Room

\$102 Deluxe Kingsize

\$97 Poolside Cabana

\$289 Suite

Reserve your room quickly and easily using our web link, www.StarwoodMeeting.com/book/minicon43. There, you can also get directions, see photos of the hotel space, and much more. Or, phone 952-835-7800, and be sure to mention Minicon to get our special room rates. These rates are available until February 18th, so don't wait!

FREE PARKING!

There is a great deal to like about the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel. There are several convenient restaurants both within the hotel and in easy walking distance, and perhaps best of all – the parking is both plentiful and free!

ROOM PARTIES

[PARTIES@MINICON43.MNSTF.ORG](mailto:parties@minicon43.mnstf.org)

As always, Minicon welcomes people who would like to throw a room party this year. To reserve a poolside cabana or another room for your party, email us today.



GROUP RATES

[GROUPS@MINICON43.MNSTF.ORG](mailto:groups@minicon43.mnstf.org)

Minicon would like to extend a special invitation to high school and college groups this year. If you, or someone you know, is a student at a school with a science fiction/fantasy/anime/manga/comic book/gaming club, please email the name of the school and the group advisor's name to the address listed above.

WRITER GUEST of HONOR

ALASTAIR REYNOLDS

ALASTAIRREYNOLDS.COM

Although Alastair Reynolds worked as a research astronomer with the European Space Agency from 1991-2004, his early love of writing was revealed when he published his first four short stores while still a graduate student. Alastair is probably best known for his *Revelation Space* series, comprising six novels, two novellas and at least eight short stories. The series covers a span of nearly six centuries beginning in 2150 and is notable for its adherence to hard science; in the *Revelation Space* universe, Einstein rules, and even the fastest ships (known as lighthuggers) travel slower than light. The first book – after which the series is named – appeared in 2000, while the most recent, *The Prefect*, was published in the UK in April 2007.

Published in 2004, *Century Rain* marks a departure not only from the *Revelation Space* universe, but also permits faster-than-light travel via a system of wormholes.

Other works include *Pushing Ice* (2005), which takes place during a much earlier time than Alastair's other works, and his upcoming *House of Suns*, which leaps forward into deep time.

Although *House of Suns* takes place circa one million A.D., galaxy-wide civilizations still inevitably fail because no form of faster-than-light communication is possible. However, one faction seeks another solution; they'll simple reshape the galaxy to make it smaller. This feat – however difficult – is well within the laws of physics. *House of Suns* is expected in April 2008, just a tantalizing few weeks after *Minicon*.



FAN GUEST of HONOR

NATE BUCKLIN

CURIUSMANOR.COM

Nate Bucklin came to the Twin Cities in 1966 to attend college. Minnesota fandom and music would never be the same. A regular gathering of Nate and fannish friends became (somewhat) formalized and the Minnesota Science Fiction Society (Minn-StF) was born. Although Nate is a published writer, was a long time contributor to APAs and a member of the Scribbles, he is more widely known for his music both in and outside the SF community. Combining his early musical influences from Brazil (and later, folk and rock) with finely crafted lyrics from his literary side he has produced a joyful catalogue of songs. His involvement with Minn-StF always has included music, helping to establish a musical tradition unequaled elsewhere in fandom.

ARTIST GUEST OF HONOR

WAYNE BARLOWE

WAYNEBARLOWE.COM

Wayne's work includes *Barlowe's Guide to Extraterrestrials*, *Expedition*, and *The Alien Life of Wayne Barlowe*, each of which strives to illustrate realistic conceptions of alien life forms. Wayne's art has also been displayed in many institutions of fine art, including The Bronx Museum of the Arts, The New Britain Museum of American Art, The Society of Illustrators, The Hayden Planetarium in New York, and The Discovery Museum in Bridgeport, Conn.

Wayne has also contributed to a wide variety of television and movie projects. He designed the artifacts as well as the principal aliens and their homeworld for the two-hour TNT *Babylon 5* movie *Thirdspace*, which aired in the fall of 1998. He also provided alien creatures and character designs for the animated 20th Century Fox release *Titan AE* and designed creatures seen in *Galaxy Quest*. In 2000, Wayne executed preproduction drawings for *Blade 2*, and in 2002, both creature and character designs for *Hellboy*, and in the same year, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. One year later, Wayne contributed concept art to *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*.

Adding to his impressive resume and helping to prove that some folks just have too damn much talent, Wayne's first novel *God's Demon* was recently published by Tor Books and is currently available in hardcover. The stunning cover art for *God's Demon* will be featured on our convention t-shirt this year.

The cover, as well as all interior art used in this publication, is Copyright © Wayne Barlow and used with permission. All rights reserved. The art strips at the edge of each page are small sections taken from Wayne's artworks.



EDITOR GUEST OF HONOR

SHAWNA MCCARTHY

publishersmarketplace.com/members/McCarthy

Shawna Lee McCarthy is well-known both as an editor and as a literary agent. From 1983 through 1985, she edited *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*. While there, Shawna edited four anthologies of stories from the magazine: *Isaac Asimov's Wonders of the World* (1982), *Isaac Asimov's Aliens & Outworlders* (1983), *Isaac Asimov's Space of Her Own* (1984), and *Isaac Asimov's Fantasy!* (1985). In recognition of her talents, Shawna won the 1984 Hugo Award for Best Professional Editor, and has been nominated twice since. After leaving *Asimov's*, Shawna joined Bantam, and during her time there co-edited the first two volumes of *Full Spectrum* with Lou Aronica. Today, Shawna splits her time as an independent literary agent and as editor of *Realms of Fantasy* magazine.



PROGRAMMING

PROGRAMMING@MINICON43.MNSTF.ORG

Programming has always been a big part of Minicon. We have panels, activities for kids of all ages, readings, more panels, interviews, workshops, signings and even more panels. If you'd like to see what we've got cooking so far – or even better, contribute ideas of your own – check out our programming page at mnstf.org/minicon43/programming/

Minicon thrives on the creativity of its members; your idea for that panel you've always wanted to attend – or always wanted to moderate – could be just an email away from becoming a reality.

ART SHOW

ARTSHOW@MINICON43.MNSTF.ORG

Minicon has a long history of featuring fine art and fine artists. In just the past few years, our artist guests have included Fastner & Larson, John Picacio, and Charles Vess. This year, of course, we are featuring the work of Wayne Barlowe. Art is a thread that runs through every part of Minicon, from our publications, through our full-color badges, to our convention t-shirt; even our dealer dollars are often kept as collectors items.

And yet, it gets better. We have a room, at the convention, absolutely filled with great art, both fan and professional. Piece after piece of stunning artwork, some for sale, all for looking. From paintings and photography to jewelry and sculpture, you'll be treated to a great variety of great art all through the convention.

COSTUMES!

Art can be seen, or heard, or at Minicon, even worn. Dress in your finest and make your own parade. To welcome costumers to Minicon, our roving judges will be presenting hall costume awards throughout the convention.

Music

MUSIC@MINICON43.MNSTF.ORG

The long tradition of fine music at Minicon continues once again this year. Top-notch stage acts will play to eager crowds in a music club atmosphere, and for those who like a more intimate experience, open music circles run into the wee hours each night. Music has always been a vital part of the Minicon experience, and this year we are extending that tradition by adding musical themes to our programming, with panels on music-related subjects such as jamming and song writing. Stage concerts, showcase jams, open music circles, and music programming; at Minicon, there is music to be found nearly every minute of every day.

DEALERS' ROOM

dealers@minicon43.mnsth.org

Books, artwork, jewelry, games and gaming supplies, comics, clothing, handcrafts, music, movies, hats, bags, scarves, shawls, creatures, cards, t-shirts, buttons, magazines, toys, figurines, calendars, songbooks, dragons, and poetry; we could go on, but you get the idea. A wide variety of items to suit all tastes can be found in the Minicon Dealers' Room, so be sure to save time to indulge in some browsing.

Dealer tables are available at a rate of \$45 per 2.5 x 6 foot table. This price does not include membership to the convention. Dealers can reserve tables by emailing the address listed above.

HOSPITALITY & CON SUITE

hospitality@minicon43.mnsth.org

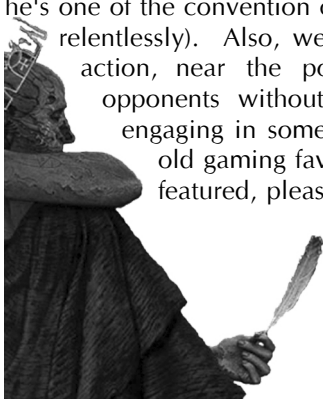
Once again, Minicon will be bringing you some of the best food & drink at any convention, anywhere. Our hospitality suite will be serving a variety of tasty foods (last year, the Tequila Wings, Meatballs in Marinara, and Davanni's pizza were particular favorites). In *THE SINGULARITY*, our convention bar, we serve such quality beers as Guinness, Newcastle Brown Ale, Summit Great Northern Porter, several types of hard cider, as well as a variety of other beers for all tastes. We vary the selection of food & drink from year to year to keep things fresh, but you can always count on the highest quality and know that some of your old favorites will be back again!

The con suite and bar are among the most sought-after volunteer posts at the convention, in part because volunteers eat and drink for free! (Other Minicon guests pay nothing.)

GAMING

gaming@minicon43.mnsth.org

This year, we're making a few changes to our gaming area. First and foremost, we've dumped the lazy slug that used to run gaming for us (now he's one of the convention co-chairs, so it's officially okay for us to tease him relentlessly). Also, we're placing our gaming area in the center of the action, near the poolside. Now you'll be able to crush your opponents without mercy, all while enjoying the goings-on and engaging in some fine conversation. We'll be bringing back some old gaming favorites, but if there are any games you'd like to see featured, please email us your suggestions.



VOLUNTEERING

VOLUNTEERS@MINICON43.MNSTF.ORG

Our need for volunteers comes in all shapes and sizes. If you can set aside some time during the convention, please sign up in advance for volunteer shifts. Badging and registration are great ways to meet people; you get to sit in a comfy chair, and sooner or later, everybody comes by. The consuite is also a great place to help. You can take a shift tending bar or serving food, or even just give us a few minutes' help restocking food. If the con is just too busy for you (we understand, there is a lot to do during the convention), there are opportunities just before and after the con, helping to collate program books, decorate, and to set up and take down the facilities. (These are great times to meet the concom, by the way).

Even if you can only spare a few minutes when you happen to find yourself with a bit of free time, please feel free to drop by registration or one of the hospitality suites; chances are there will be something you can do that will really help us out and take only a few minutes of your time.

Volunteering for Minicon is often its own reward, but as a sign of our appreciation, we will once again be giving out Dealer Dollars worth \$5 in the dealers' room. In addition, we have a few other surprise rewards planned.

