

# Bozo Bus Tribune

**The Official Organ of Minicon 58**

*"We're all bozos on this bus!"*

## So flows the juice of power...

Hot political scandal: The Con Chair was caught on a hot mic at Opening Ceremonies discussing—plotting, even, one might say—the assassination of the club president.

—*Inside anonymous source*

## ..And the spoor of approval

There is a rumor of general consensus that the **Geek Partnership Society** hosted the best-smelling party at the con! Will another party be able to best them next year?

## Panel Review: "The Intersection of AI and Art"

"Talking about AI is like herding feral cats—cats that are high on catnip. Overall, this knowledgeable panel had many insightful comments—like too many em dashes and using "delve" can flag an article as AI-generated. That crappy AI art and books are a growing dilemma. That plagiarism and deep fakes are a disturbing trend. That Good AI helps with tedious tasks. That Bad AI—fueled by profitability—is a disruptive force.

The top concern was AI's development is racing down a path that resembles Pascal's Wager—those who develop AI will be beneficiaries, and those who don't will be left behind. Believe, or burn in AI Hell. This fear of economic ruin seems to be winning now.

Can AI and humanity enhance each other? Maybe. Are HAL and Skynet inevitable? Maybe not. Is AI good at generating art and books? Not yet. Maybe never. Rachel Reddick's line—quoted loosely here—may best summarize the panel's hope, 'I want AI to help me do my chores so I have more time to do my art. Not vice versa.' More catnip panels delving into this topic please..."

—*Randy Holland [Ed: This review has been flagged as possible AI content due to containing too many em dashes.]*

## In reply to Opening Ceremonies numerology...

"There was also Minicon 10.5. It was a fall when Minneapolis Public Library brought in authors (same as Minicon 12, but a year earlier). Con was (as I remember) at the Dyckman. But I have no physical evidence."

—*Don Nelson*

## Legacy game demo in Dealer's

**Shanti** is running 20-minute demos of his game **Witches' Quarrel**. It's a story of two best friends learning magic by hurling spells in each other's faces. Bring a friend or rival to the dealer's room to try it out before it goes on Kickstarter.

## Not so mundy after all

"Nikki" the bride informs us that her wedding is Sailor Moon-themed and she met the groom at a convention ten years ago... in this very hotel!

## In memoriam:

"Her name was Windolyn Melville, and she was the love of my life. Windolyn was 100% Siberian Husky, 100% sassafras and 100% good girl. She passed away on Christmas Eve due to cancer. She was 12 when she passed and was surrounded by people who loved her.

Last year we took advantage of the pet friendly hotel and she attended her first, and unfortunately only, Minicon.

She had a wonderful time throughout the weekend. She helped people party in the Happy Beholder room party that we co-hosted. She gave gentle kisses to con attendees and gratefully accepted head pats and handshakes from all who offered. I am so grateful that she was able to be part of the Minicon family. She was gifted her own badge which now resides in her memorial shrine.

Windolyn was an intrepid explorer, a welcomed ally, and a wonderful party member. Her kindness and grace, resolution and strength, and occasional goofball antics will live on even though she is gone." —*Jessica Frazier*



## Not done getting your social on?

The **Dessicated Dodo Party** will be at **Scott and Irene's** Monday starting 6p.m. 3928 11th Ave S, Mpls. All Minicon members are welcome.

## "The Orphan" by Stephen Carlson

Written at Guy Stewart's "Learn to Write F/SF Flash Fiction" seminar in the Rumpus Room (1p.m. Saturday)

TARA MADE sure she was the last one into the airlock. Neither of the two ahead of her had their helmets attached to their EVA suits yet. No one was allowed in an airlock unless they had their helmets sealed and visors closed. They had drilled this into Tara during training. They knew better. It was another indication that the people in these suits were no longer who they pretended to be.

"My helmet," Tara said. She had left it on the deck three paces behind her.

"Hurry, get it...dear," the taller one said with effort.

Then without taking her eyes off these two, she stepped backward past the threshold and pressed the CLOSE button on the inner airlock door.

With machine efficiency it slid shut with a click and a hiss, indicating a positive seal. Looking through the small port in the door she could still see them. They had only turned with surprise, not even made a move to grab her or stop the door.

She turned her attention to the panel beside the door and went to work. First, she opened the diagnostic screen for the airlock and began powering down all the sensors as if they were about to be disconnected and replaced. What followed in short order was a series of software disconnects, diagnostic loops, and spoofs that disabled all the safety systems developed over the past one hundred and fifty years and placated the non-sentient agents monitoring these systems.

Tara flicked off the main pressure sensors and then opened and executed a diagnostic macro she had waiting for this.

That's when she heard the first thump on the door.

Tara looked and could see the dull eye of the shorter one trying different angles to see into the corridor. Another thump from a gloved hand, but no yelling, not even that weird mumbling they did.

Tara closed her own eyes for a second, shook her head and then went back to the panel. The diagnostic macro had disconnected the backup pressure sensors from their normal readings and set themselves to zero. Or at least close enough to zero to think it was already in vacuum. Sweat was dripping down the back of her neck. Without looking at the door, she took a breath and pushed the button to do what was supposed to be impossible aboard these water tugs and open the outer door when the airlock was pressurized.

The claxon rang and the lights in the airlock flashed red indicating that the outer airlock door was about to open. She stepped back so she could look through the porthole. She could not see anyone, only the dull gray of the far outer airlock. Then after three seconds the claxon stopped and there was a horrible pop sound as the outer airlock door shifted up to open. It was working.

She got closer to the door and could see the two of them on the inside. They were stepping away from the control panel next to the inner airlock door. Good, they had gone for that first. She had disabled it yesterday. She had looked expecting a horror show. The thrashing and agony of depressurization as nitrogen boiled out of their blood, but no. They were just doing their slow deliberate movements toward the big red panic button beside the outer airlock door. No pain, really, she thought. Tara hoped they still needed oxygen. The panic button had been gummed up with actual chewing gum and some super glue this morning. If that held, this might all work.

As she watched the outer door reached the full open position and started to close. The taller one slapped weakly at the panic button while the shorter one finally reached for her helmet. With one clumsy grab she only managed to knock the helmet on a slow trajectory where it bounced softly off the deck and back towards the control panel.

How long has it been now, she thought. Maybe it had been thirty seconds. She could hold her breath that long. But this wasn't just lack of oxygen, this was hard vacuum.

A second or two later Tara saw a few droplets of blood coming from an ear and their movements changed from clumsy to spastic and then to just

twitches. Tara was holding her breath now to keep from hyperventilating and throwing up at the same time.

A few minutes later when they stopped moving and the outer door had not started to close yet, Tara let out the tears she had held back for days.

"Good bye Mom and Dad," she said, and pushed back from the door.

### Saturday night reg report

496 pre-reg	~70 at the door
474 warm bodies	570 total members

### Solo-Strait 4a.m. pulse check

Karaoke: 13	Bar: 2	Gaming: 4
Costuming: 7	Smoking: 2	Total: 28

### Pub trivia results

"Trivia with Brian happened at exactly 11:59p.m. Saturday night. There were questions, they were difficult. There were teams, some did better than others. But the big winners of the evening were team **Neon Lights** with 16 out of 20 points.

The prize? *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* CD-ROM from 1995! Come back next year to compete for something else full of spiders from Brian's basement." —Susan Philbrook

### Report: "Libraries in the Trump Era"

#### How to Help Librarians:

- Use library services (numbers drive funding)
- Show up at local public meetings (pushback usually defeats minority who would loan)
- Vote! (and read the fine print on bond issues, amendments)
- Join Friends of the Library (or similar groups)
- Donate money or books (ask retention policy for collection or to book sales)
- Read Books!

—Linda Lounsbury

### Tear-down reminder

Minicon doesn't end at Closing Ceremonies. We need your help to clean up and load out. We provide pizza to volunteers! And everyone is invited to the Dead Dog party in the bar (rooms 217 – 218) once cleanup is done.

*Your editor was sick on Thursday/Friday of this year, so one noon issue each day is all you get! Don't be a dodo, people. Stay well.*

### The Bozo Bus Tribune

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