

# IONISPHERE 11 June 2018



The publication of the National Fantasy Fan Federation  
Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau

Published by John Thiel, 30 N. 19<sup>th</sup> Street, Lafayette,  
Indiana 47904. Email [kinethiel@comcast.net](mailto:kinethiel@comcast.net) . Bimonthly.

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Bureau Personnel

Head of Bureau: John Thiel

**Pro Contacts: Jefferson Swycaffer** [abontides@gmail.com](mailto:abontides@gmail.com) Post office box  
15373, San Diego, California 92175-5373

**Fan Contacts: Jon Swartz** [jon\\_swartz@hotmail.com](mailto:jon_swartz@hotmail.com) 12115 Missel Thrush Court,  
Austin, Texas 78750

**Publicity: Jeffrey Redmond** [redmondjeff@hotmail.com](mailto:redmondjeff@hotmail.com) 1335 Beachwood NE,  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49505-3830

**Ground Adjutant: John Polseli** 2801 Mayfair Avenue, Henderson, Nevada  
89074

Ionisphere is the bi-monthly journal of the National Fantasy Fan Federation's Fan-Pro Coordinating Committee, the function of which is to keep readers of science fiction and writers of it in good contact and familiar terms, especially where fandom is concerned. We also work to facilitate understanding between science fiction's organizational leaders and the members, and we augment editorial awareness of the doings of fans. You'll say, "Nice work; and do you practice any of it with your own organization, or would a look here find things in disarray?" The answer is that we do that, paying particular attention to interrelationships within our own organization. If there is disarray, we are looking into it.

# Editorial



## WE GOT WHISKITS, NOT BISCUITS

That's a rather poor name for an editorial, but I am trying to bring down the mood I may have originally been creating in my editorial writing for Ionisphere, that being a kind of stuffy formality as I floundered around trying to get things in order, and was laying down this and that as policy. These editorials were stressing how things should apparently be done, and what we were trying to do, while I was ignoring the basic premise of interpersonal talk which underlies a bureau which is trying to accomplish good public relations and communications among people.

So, after nearly two years of this bureau, people might ask what we think we have accomplished. These are hard times, it is my belief, and getting things accomplished is a difficult matter; however, the Fan-Pro Bureau has had a certain amount of success, and I'd like to answer this question by saying what we have achieved, working from the elements. First, we have defined the objective of our, so to speak, undertaking, and gotten up some interest (as people have expressed to me in correspondence) in what we're doing. Our statement is that there is a need for better fan-pro relations. This need was met in the form of interviews with some noted authors, as well as fans, and two editors, Steve Davidson and Sheila Williams. We have not as yet gotten up a very large quantity of comment from N3F members, but I doubt if many of them will take us to task for this, as they would thereby be criticizing us for not stirring themselves up into activity. So the criticism of this point would likelier come from other people having official function in the N3F. All I can say on this point is that we're still trying, and we have, in fact, gotten some correspondence here which is significant, although not arriving in very large quantities. I suppose there might be a lack in Io of things to talk about, but I'm starting now to give the membership more to write in about—

discussions, perhaps. I'd ask these questions as openers for discussion:

a) Do you think these are, in fact, hard times for science fiction? Why or why not? What positive and what negative things do you see in science fiction's general outlay? What do you think might improve fandom, if it needs improvement?

b) Are there any writers you would like to know more about, or with whom you would like to talk if you got the chance?

c) What would you like to see in fandom that fandom does not presently have. Also, what would you like to see in the N3F that you think might be beneficial to its membership?

d) What does fandom mean to you?

e) What would you like best to see in science fiction? (Some authors might be interested.)

There you have some possibilities for interchange with us—and I might add one question to it: if you are not interested in writing to us and to Ionisphere, why not? We might just take some steps to be more interesting to you.

Sometimes editorial writers and columnists start an enumerated list and don't have a second point after stating their first point. That won't be me. Our second accomplishment is to have constantly built up the bureau and kept its purpose before its members. We defined the department, and then worked up a better department (including getting people other than myself onto its staff, so that there are now four besides myself, and they're all doing just fine), being active and dynamic in the process of doing that. Third, we've made general fandom aware of our existence, and established contacts with writers and editors. And, fourth, Ionisphere has attracted notice, and is becoming a focal point of the activity we recommend. Lastly, we have remained in existence for two years, perpetuating our department and its Ionispheric outlet. That's ongoing success, and we are wanting to keep it up.

As for what we're going for, we've had some of that what with the interviews, but as I say, we'd like to have visible activity within our organization, and the more notice the membership takes of us, the more we will be fulfilling our objective of fandom activity. Our conception has taken hold, and should now be in business—similarly to what's been true of the N3F over the years. A history of the N3F's projects would show considerable benefits to fandom. We hope this will continue to be true of the N3F, and also of our bureau.

## Into the Past

Here I return to you with more historical notations concerning the fanzine Ionisphere, the journal of the Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau. As you recall, it had its existence in the early 1980s and then ran its course and was put aside by N3F politicking. But it is still much the same journal now that it and its bureau have been resurrected. I've covered most of the issues since its first one, and now am referencing its final six.

August 1982, #16, has a complaint in it that I was unable to get the issue with the interview with Kurt Vonnegut to him. I'd tried the address he gave me, then his publishers, then three more outfits that had published his books, and there was a note on the mailing wrapper that the issue had an interview with him in it. There's a report on a speech given at Purdue by astronaut James Lovell. There's another complaint about the N3F fanzine clearing house not sending me fanzines in return for the money I sent them, and a complaint about writing to SAPS twice about joining them and receiving no reply. N'APA is highlighted, including a letter from Tom McGovern. There are four pages of fanzine addresses and some material relating to the Rigveda.

#17. Cover by Allen Koszowski, cartoons by Charles Wagner, the addresses of 62 pro writers and 43 fans and fan societies, long letter column, nothing very quotable.

#18 announces a new bureau member, Jim Allen, is being put in charge of contacts. Allen contributes also "A Short, Quick Interview with Isaac Asimov". Some art gotten from the N3F art bureau is also in the issue. Jim does an introductory bio and I added two pages of fan and pro addresses. Jim's 51 now; he was sixteen back then. I haven't heard from him since the middle of the year following the year I quit the N3F. There's an interview by me with Daniel Keyes, author of "Flowers for Algernon". I asked him what he thought of the film made of his story, and what other sf he had done. He was presently working as a psychiatric researcher. He had a new book out, THE MINDS OF BILLY MILLIGAN.

#19 has material on BATTLEFIELD EARTH, and Jim takes over his department. He had some fan and pro addresses, and I put them together with some more of mine. He offers advice on writing to the pros. There's some reprinted material in the issue, and I happen to know that some fans were trying to get me on copyright violation, but there's no violation when it's printed in a fanzine with a circulation of under 500 and not sold in public places. This went on to maintaining that it was a corporate publication, so that would make me liable to a suit, but it may be that what they were trying to say was that

if I sought employment with a corporation I would have to have a suit and necktie and my shoes shined. Corporate doesn't work either. This was probably what resulted in Io being attacked and my being ordered to cease calling it a N3F publication. There are notes on Ben Bova's career, an article on sf fan personality improvement, an interview with fantasy cartoonist Gahan Wilson, a satire about the making of Space: 1999, a LoC from John Andrews which is highly complimentary and also highly critical, and the commencement of a column by myself called "Adventures in the APAs".

#20 was an exemplary issue, with former N3F President Art Rapp writing about the current science fiction writers and comparing them to the past, and about the decline of fandom, "News from the Ackermansion" by Ackerman, an interview with Harry Bates (writer of "The Day the Earth Stood Still" under the title "Farewell to the Master", notes on George Lucas, maker of STAR WARS, "Scientology Guru Pens 1.5 Million Word SF Novel" by Robert Jennings, notes on L. Ron Hubbard, short piece by me on Walt Disney seen as an sf film-maker, letter from the National Space Institute, a trace being run on Irvin Koch, the establisher of the Fan-Pro Bureau but now N3F Ex-President, whose address had been the Chattanooga Bank Building, and my finding was it still was, a new department of the bureau called Organizational Fandom which Bill and Andre Bridget were supposed to run, more of Adventures in the APAs, and an interview with Somtow Sucharitkul by Jim Allen. The editorial is called YOU GO, and I'll quote some of it:

"Here I am, with the issue all done (not that it's any trouble, really, to do it, except for the pressures that surround me from other matters) and a whole page to fill with anything I choose, including an editorial.

"I have had a lot of trouble on my N3F activity. As I have already sometimes suggested, most of the people who have been on my activity, in spite of their superior respectability, have dropped out of the N3F, even without any warning. Not in the N3F any more are Anita Cole, Mark Hall, Vern Clarke, Herb Summerlin, and Eddie Anderson, all of them with the Fan-Pro Activity at one time. Certain others who said they would be on my activity were told not to, and then declined, neutralizing earlier letters to me. One of these was Laurraine Tutihasi. I was very surprised at her non-commentary way of disappearing. Her letter of declining was the exact opposite of her letter of accepting the position, no explanation given." I suspected that this letter was not by Laurraine, and never did find out anything one way or the other. "So if you think committee work is easier and less fraught with trouble and peril than it has been in the past, I would say that it is tougher, in spite of there being less work to do.

“On the other hand, Bill Bridget has certainly lasted a long time, and Jim Allen gives every evidence of staying a long time, based on a good start. So I would say that however nefarious the N3F gets, they have still not wiped out my Fan-Pro Activity.

“I have solidified things well enough for me and people I do know to work with them, so I’m leaving that muddy stuff I was doing earlier when I first joined the N3F behind.”

#21—Note that I was making optimistic statements in the 20<sup>th</sup> issue, but I was already receiving notices from some of the N3F officers that they were not liking Ionisphere. I wondered what they did like. This is the last issue; the incoming president was taking me off the Fan-Pro Activity, and turning it over to Jim Allen. I decided if the new president was going to do that, I would quit the N3F. The correspondence involved is printed in the issue: “This is to request your resignation as head of the Fan/Pro Relations Bureau. In view of the regular results you have supplied, I hope that you’ll remain a member of the bureau, but I would rather work with someone else as its head. I will respect your recommendation as to who your successor should be. Also, IO is no longer to be considered any sort of N3F publication.” From Jim Allen: “Just thought I’d write and let you know what’s happening here. I received a postcard from the president today which stated that he would like me to take over the Fan/Pro Bureau. In light of this, I’d like you to stay on as my right-hand man, hopefully with no bad feelings toward me. I know it sounds like I’m groveling, I just feel that this isn’t exactly ‘right’.”

The issue has in it a speech made by Gordon R. Dickson at the 4<sup>th</sup> Windycon called “How To Build a Story—A few tips about professional writing”. There are some news notes about comics and nostalgic radio series by Robert Jennings, regarding his enterprise Fabulous Fiction Book Store. There’s an article by me about the Rosicrucians, pointing out that they still exist; there’s quotes from some of their send-outs. Flint Mitchell writes about Lost In Space Fandom, there’s an article on the Fortean Society, part III of Adventures in the APAs, an interview with Timothy Leary reprinted from a news service, William Rotsler’s speech at the Windycon 4. The letter column has discussions of Owen Laurion’s transfer.

That wraps up the history of the IONISPHERE of the 80s; as you can see it did not have the full respect of the N3F, some of which I relate to its poor distribution; I had to send it to a new bunch of members each month in addition to the regulars, and rotate it around, as I could not afford doing it for the full membership. The net has made an almost full distribution possible with the new Ionisphere.

**Douglas Adams: Life in the Universe**  
**St. John's College New Library**  
**Saturday 24 March**

**By Cardinal Cox**



For years it felt like Douglas Adams was always on the edge of our lives. For me personally it was listening to the radio series back in 1978 (on the first repeat; I doubt I heard it on the original broadcast). Then my eldest brother got Douglas to do a signing in his shop on the promotion tour for LIFE, THE UNIVERSE, AND EVERYTHING in 1982. A friend knew the actor who was the body of Marvin in the TV series (and who'd kept a spare head). M.J. Simpson, who wrote a biography of Adams, was always at cons. Another friend worked with one of Adams' exes. And so it went, until he went.

So when I saw that St. John's College in Cambridge were to mount an exhibition of Adams' life and works I knew I had to go. Previously they had arranged displays on Sir Fred Hoyle (astronomer and sf writer) so I expected a curious eclectic quality.

The exhibition began with Douglas' early life in Cambridge and then his schooldays, including a poem he wrote (Tramps Eye View) inspired by a character he played in The Brothers Capek play THE INSECTS. Also in this part were two letters he had had published in **The Eagle** (and the appropriate Dan Dare emblazoned covers) in 1965 when he was 12.

Material from his student days at St. John's College included his Student Union card (who'd keep something so ephemeral, ok, a hoarder like myself), essays, scripts and posters from his time in the Union Debating Society and the Footlights.

Next were pieces from his contribution to the last season of MONTY PYTHON and then his work with Graham Chapman on the series OUT OF THE TREES.

Obviously most people visiting the exhibition in the Hogwartian New Library (built in the earliest part of the seventeenth century) is THE HITCH-HIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY, so the material from that was the focus for most visitors. As well as a script from Fit Five of the original radio show there was an extract from a letter during the development of the show (from Andrew Marshall who later wrote the comedy TV series 2POINT4CHILDREN—which included its own genre references, and was apparently the inspiration for Marvin) recommending a couple of Robert Sheckley books.

The radio show touched some element of the British psyche and spun out into many other forms. From the TV series there were design models of the Babel Fish and the Armeglian Mega Cow (and predating that a script for an advert featuring a couple of his characters for Laservision). From the computer game a scribbled diagram of the narrative map.

From his outline for the DR. WHO arc of the KEYS TO TIME, one of the keys was originally to have been Africa! Index cards for the definitions for the LIFF book. An envelope on which was scribbled an idea that found its way into DIRK GENTLY. Cassette tapes of animals from LAST CHANCE TO SEE. Reference notes for STARSHIP TITANIC. The script he co-wrote for an amusement park ride. The draft outline (from 1996) of an sf series. THE SECRET EMPIRE in which each series was to be set in a separate future century and each episode would have been a self-contained story.

But it is HITCH-HIKER'S GUIDE that Douglas Adams will always be remembered for. As I was departing through the Jacobite splendor of the outer court an elderly woman entering remarked that she should have brought her towel. Her son (thirties?) asked her why...Youth of today...



# Fan Interview with Ray Nelson

by Jon Swartz

*The perpetually young prototypical fan Ray Nelson gives answers*

Ray Nelson was born on October 3, 1931 in Schenectady, New York, the son of Walter Hughes Nelson and Marie Reed Nelson. He married Kirsten Enge in 1957 in Paris, France, where their son, Walter Trygve Nelson, was born in 1958. Ray was an early science fiction fan, originally from Michigan, who later became a professional author and published a dozen science fiction books, including *THE GANYMEDE TAKEOVER* in 1967 (co-authored with Philip K. Dick). Other Nelson SF novels are *THE ECOLOG* and *THEN BEGGARS COULD RIDE*. He also wrote an historical mystery, *DOG-HEADED DEATH*. In addition, he wrote four “sex” novels under a pseudonym.

Ray once belonged to several genre organizations, including the N3F, the Golden Gate Futurians, the Detroit S-Fantasy League, SAPS, Little Men, ISSFS, and he believes he is the last surviving member of Claude Degler’s famed Cosmic Circle. He published the fanzines **Universe** and **Stupefying Stories** and wrote and did cartoons for many other zines. He is credited in fandom with originating the beanie with a propeller on top as a fan symbol. He is a member of First Fandom and CAPA, and in 2006 he rejoined the N3F.

A fan of the Golden Age comic book hero Dr. Fate, he sometimes illustrates his pages in 5x5 (CAPA fanzine) with images of the Mystic Mage. His son Walter, a professional web designer, has created a website on the Internet that describes his father and his work. Ray’s SF novel *TIMEQUEST*, featuring a time-traveling

William Blake and his wife, is excellent and should be required reading for all SF fans.

He has used several pseudonyms in his work, including R. Faraday Nelson, Ray Faraday Nelson, Frank Armitage, Jeffrey Lord, R.F. Nelson, California Ray, and the Old Beatnik.

**IO:** Some personal statistics, please.

**RN:** Weight 160 lbs., waist 34 inches, height 5 ft. 9 inches, eyes brown, hair white (very long). Almost always wears a black French beret.

**IO:** How did you get involved in SF and SF fandom?

**RN:** In the 30s I collected newspaper strips and comic books from a neighbor's trash bin, favoring science fiction themes, and began drawing SF comic books for classmates. At the 1939 New York World's Fair I really got hooked by a huge robot who blew smoke rings. Much later I became aware of fandom by way of prozine letter columns, wrote to Ben Singer, and the rest is history.

**IO:** Tell us how you came to invent the propeller beanie as a fan symbol.

**RN:** At a small local con in Cadillac, Michigan, my friends and I were taking joke snapshots on SF themes, but lacked some kind of hat for our SF hero. At a nearby five and ten I bought some odds and ends which, together with some model airplane parts, I had in my room. I stapled together the first (I thought) beanie copter only minutes before the sun went down, and took the pictures we wanted, based on Buck Rogers. Decades later I learned that the movie FLYING DOWN TO RIO seconds of showgirls in beanie copters!

**IO:** What are some of your current fan activities?

**RN:** I still write fantasy fiction which appears in fanzines and Little Reviews, but mainly write poems I enter in poetry contests, and read aloud at Open Mike events. I also lecture on science fiction at my church, the Unitarian-Universal Church of Berkeley, and write to various pen-pals, of which I have many.

**IO:** What was fandom like in France when you were there?

**RN:** In the late fifties the Big Name Fan in Paris was Boris Vian, a translator of American science fiction novels, among his many other talents. When Jean Paul Sartre quit existentialism, Boris took over his former role, though the rest of the existentialists stayed on. Meetings were informal, usually held in Left Bank sidewalk cafes, and I fit in perfectly. Most of the gang spoke English, many spoke German. Simone de Beauvoir and I were very close because we both loved to take long walks.

**IO:** What are some of your current professional activities?

**RN:** I try to avoid professional activities.

**IO:** Is there anything else you'd like to tell our readers?

**RN:** Overseas science fiction and fantasy are taken much more seriously than stateside. We are a real literary movement in Paris, not "crazy Buck Rogers stuff".

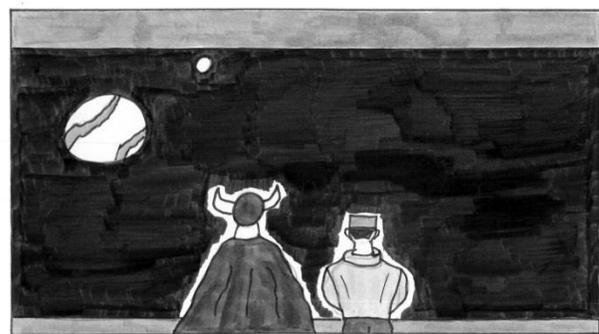
**IO:** Thank you, Ray, for participating in this interview.

**RN:** Thank you for asking!!

*SPACE IS THE PLACE*



*DANIEL SLATEN*



## Anime Cons



For fans of sci fi anime, and there are many of us, several upcoming events this year guarantee to be among the best.

1. Anime-zing! 2018 is an anime, sci fi, and comic convention held in 2018. The event is located in Davenport. This is a small and fun convention in Iowa for anime fans from Iowa. The convention organizers are really passionate about building a fun local event. Anime-zing! is a three day convention celebrating Japanese arts and the communities that surround anime fandom. This Iowa anime convention includes dozens of anime screenings, a plethora of discussions, autograph signings, a dealers hall, and group meetups for fandoms including several anime, BJDs, Homestuck, Lolita fashion, MLP, science fiction, and video games. They're not just about anime—they are everything Otaku.

2. Anime Midwest 2018, an anime, scifi, and comic convention, is held July 6-8, 2018, and the event will happen in Chicago. One of the largest and most beloved anime conventions in the United States, Anime Midwest returns to the Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Rosemont, Illinois. This three day event has a huge focus on connecting anime fans with Japanese companies and with voice actors, video game companies, and more. Organizers spend

months working with Japan to connect with Japanese companies and put on the most authentic anime convention possible.

3. Liberty City Anime Con 2018 is an anime, sci fi, and comic con held on August 17-19, 2018. The convention happens in New York City. Liberty City Anime Con is the largest anime convention in New York City, and is run by fans and for fans. Run by dedicated Anime fans, our aim is to offer you the largest, most memorable event to ever hit the Big Apple. First held in 2015, LCAC has grown spectacularly every year, and is now the biggest and best convention for anime fans in New York. Anime fans in New York City have needed an anime convention to return to their city for a long time, and Liberty City does so in a huge way. No other event compares as an event for anime fans to come cosplay and enjoy themselves.

4. Meta Con is without a doubt a very fun convention, however it really focuses on the anime and a little bit on comic books/internet, while not featuring nearly enough of the sci fi audience. The convention ran perfectly smoothly, and the panels that happened were entertaining and fun. The hosts of all the major events knew what they were talking about, and the only thing that was lacking was some variety for a convention of its size. It's a great size and always fun.

5. Meta Con 2018, an anime, sci fi, and comic convention, is held in 2018, and the con will take place in Minneapolis. MetaCon is a three-day comic and sci fi convention that includes every aspect of geek culture and nerd life. We encourage creativity, diversity, and, most importantly of all, fun. The convention will bring together hundreds of people from all fandoms to one of the biggest festivals ever seen. They have hundreds of wonderful events and dozens of fantastic guests. MetaCon is both a Minneapolis Comic Convention and Minneapolis Sci Di Convention all rolled into one, with huge helpings of other fandoms such as anime and music mixed in. They feature special TV stars, anime convention guests, sci

fi stars, and comic artists. Their events list is complete with autograph signings, a dealers room, video gaming, and beyond.

Contact all four at their websites for more info. Attend and enjoy!



**FINI**