

SHOOTING MY CUFFS #11, February 2024

Another newsletter about the Canadian Unity Fan Fund

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Lack of response from Canadian conventions, after I asked if they would care to host a fan fund delegate this year, convinces me that CUFF needs to focus on fundraising and popularizing CUFF, as if nobody had ever heard of it before.

Make FANNISH Cool Again!

In fact, recent exchanges on Facebook and by email brought me around to the view that since every other fandom seems to have out-promoted fannish fandom, it's time to promote fannish fandom to keep up. Do you feel like joining in?

As acknowledged in the "Society for the Preservation of Fannish Fandom" page, and in subsequent emails, there are plenty of people who *don't know* what fannish fandom is, or was. Clearly a definition is needed, supported by examples of truly fannish writing and contemporary activities, not just juicy stories from fanhistory.

(I propose to promote a satirical movement with the trappings of a Secret Society, and maybe a Liberal Secular Rational Humanist Cult, while sending up the trappings. Maybe you can gently suggest better ideas.)

Let's brainstorm: garth.van.spencer@gmail.com, or the CUFF Discord channel.

Letters

David Malinski, Jan. 26, 2024

As we studied in the mid-1990s, there was a demographic shift in progress. That shift is not fully completed, though Gen Z are now becoming old enough to take some interest in such things as these fan run events.

Another factor that we were only peripherally aware of in the 1990s, is a generational shift, to a WE mentality.

Some have called it the four-cycle system, with Spring and Summer being the first 4 decades of a generation, and Autumn the critical 2 decades where adulthood and maximum growth and cultural impact happens; then the Winter 20 years of death and endings—giving way to the next generational spring, after 80 years.

I prefer the ME vs WE cycle; and to best understand it, read *Pendulum*, by Williams and Drew. In their presentation the WE cycle has hit its maximum here in 2023—(not a precise year, but pretty close)—and the team efforts are still going to have resonance with Gen Z, while they are going to progressively get tired of the demands of society to conform to the team-only mentality. They understand it at a cellular level (just like the WWII generation did in the 1940s), and they can be influenced by it—AND they will be looking for potential for standing out as individuals within these systems.

So: to your question of what can be done?

Events such as these conventions MUST appeal to the Gen Z crowd as BOTH a team effort at achieving something TOGETHER (the WE component), while also having opportunity for solo recognition.

(I know, I am beating a dead horse with VCON as it was last organized, so I shall not even slightly express what can be done to help that brand.)

The solution will be to have SOMETHING to ACHIEVE, via the convention by doing it TOGETHER. What this something is must be outside of the fannish community that has real impact on the world—this is the expression that gen z is looking for. Whether that is funds for a food bank, or a housing initiative for the homeless or whatever can be put together, then the fun happens while raising these funds (from the event, gaming, costuming, writing performances, etc.—all the stuff that the fan-run conventions are good at) then the funds are put into action in the real world. Thus achieving something together. In this sense the fan-run convention is nothing like a fan-expo or Comic-Con that are the commercial take overs from the things the fans of the 70s-90s did. Gen Z knows that these are meaningless and ultimately navel-gazing events, pure entertainment, and they know they can get that sort of entertainment for much less cost via all sorts of digital media and systems. They also know that there's no reason to waste efforts in coming together unless there is a real gain beyond entertainment.

Ultimately, events like VCON that have shunned having the visual and performance aspects that the millennials like to have in their events, have now set the table for their own winter season. Most have been at this exclusivity for more than 10 years...meaning they have less than 10 years left to exist.

Just my observations.

((The latest news is that WCSFA is getting active again and is planning one-day events, starting with something called Fandom Bazaar in 2024. WCSFA is the overseeing committee that lasts from year to year, and existed to give seed money to VCON committees. WCSFA has a Discord channel.))

Canadian Conventions

The initial reason for this list was to select a convention which a Canadian fan fund delegate – preferably a well-known one – may reasonably attend. I have tried to contact the conventions on the list below, in order to ask which of them might care to host a CUFF delegate. No response has been received. I take it that the concept of fan funds has to be explained in a way that make it worthwhile to them.

How many conventions have I missed?

March 7-10, 2024: [Vancoufur](#), Furry convention, Richmond, BC

March 15-17, 2024: [Toronto Comicon 2024](#), Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, ON

March 22-24, 2024: [Hotlead 2024](#), Best Western Plus The Arden Park Hotel, Stratford, ON

April 6, 2024: [Collingwood ComiCon 2024](#), Royal Canadian Legion Branch 63, Collingwood, ON

April 13, 2024: [Napanee ComiCon 2024](#), Strathcona Paper Centre, Napanee, ON

April 19-21, 2024: [Sci-Fi On the Rock](#), Newfoundland's premiere science fiction & fantasy event., St Johns, NL

April 25-28, 2024: [Calgary Expo 2024](#), Stampede Park, Calgary, AB

May 17-19, 2024: Keycon 40 in Winnipeg, MB (venue TBA), see [keycon.org](#)

May 24-26, 2024: [Anime North 2024](#), Toronto Congress Center / Delta Hotels by Marriott Toronto Airport & Conference Centre, Toronto, ON

June 8, 2024: Fandom Bazaar “will be held at the Sapperton Community Hall in New Westminster [BC]. **Address: 318 Keary Street. Date: June 8th 2024.** Time: From 12:00pm to 6:00pm Admission will be \$5, or free to WCSFA members.” (edited)

July 18-21, 2024: [Fur-Eh!](#), A Uniquely Canadian Celebration of Anthropomorphics, Edmonton, AB

August 16-18, 2024: [When Words Collide 2024](#) in the Delta Calgary South, now to be hosted by the Alexandra Writers Centre; see [www.alexandrawriters.org](#)

August 17, 2024: [Collingwood ComiCon 2024](#), Royal Canadian Legion Branch 63, Collingwood, ON

TBA 2024: [TFcon \(Transformers\)](#), The world's largest fan-run Transformers convention, Toronto, ON

Nov. 1-3, 2024: Can*Con 2024, Ottawa ON: [CAN*CON 2023 – October 13-15 in Ottawa, Canada \(can-con.org\)](#)

Nomination Procedures

Once we have agreed where to send a CUFF delegate, we can accept nominations for the position, preferably at least four months earlier.

CUFF applicants should provide a fannish bio, describe how they hope to make the trip beneficial to the Canadian fan community (and to themselves), and have 3 western supporters and 3 eastern supporters.

In order to be nominated for CUFF, applicants should complete, and submit by deadline, an application form with emails from the six nominators. As well, we ask for a bond of \$20 CAD from each applicant, which will be added to the CUFF funds.

When do we start? Well, I'm waiting for responses from conventions.

For More Information, Link to:

About fan funds — https://fancyclopedia.org/Fan_Funds.

About CUFF — <https://www.facebook.com/groups/6119342503/>.

More of the chronology (and the several delegates' trip reports) can be found at <https://www.cdnsfzinearchive.org/cuff-canadian-unity-fan-fund/cuff-trip-reports/>.

The 2023 CUFF trip report is now posted at [\(1\) Canadian Unity Fan Fund \(CUFF\) | Facebook](#)

The updated, current list of fannish publications for fundraising is also posted at [\(1\) Canadian Unity Fan Fund \(CUFF\) | Facebook](#).

CUFF can accept payments in person, by cheque, or by money order to: Garth Spencer, 6960 Doman Street, Vancouver, BC V5S 3H7, or by e-transfer / Paypal to garth.van.spencer@gmail.com.

For more information about CUFF, follow this link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/6119342503/>.

More of the chronology (and the several delegates' trip reports) can be found at <https://www.cdnsfzinearchive.org/cuff-canadian-unity-fan-fund/cuff-trip-reports/>.

You can also learn about other fan funds at this link: https://fancyclopedia.org/Fan_Funds.

CUFF Order Form

c/o Garth Spencer, 6960 Doman St., Vancouver, BC V5S 3H7

garth.van.spencer@gmail.com

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE CANADIAN UNITY FAN FUND.

To (Name): _____

Address/Email: _____

To select items from the current CUFF catalog, go to [\(1\) Canadian Unity Fan Fund \(CUFF\) | Facebook.](#)

| Item & price | Quantity | Total |
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Do you have any suggestions, or donations, for additional sale items you think should be available to promote CUFF?
