

PR1
Progress
Report
One

CONvergence
*
JULY
2-3-4-5
2009

*This CON goes to eleven.

CELEBRATION of the
WIIY SIDE
Action Fantasy.



FOUR
DAYS!

(Details on page 12)



The "Connie Argonath" flanking MainStage at CONvergence 2008, design by Frost Simula, and constructed by Frost and his build team.
Photo by Peter Verrant



The Connie Head facade at the entrance to MainStage, which features projected images of CONvergence artwork. Also by Frost & Company.
Photo by Peter Verrant

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This report was designed by *Christopher Jones* for CONvergence Publications. All artwork is by *Christopher Jones* unless otherwise indicated. Thank you to *Windy Bowlsby, Erica Lewerenz, Michelle Los, Peter Verrant, Ellie Younger* and other staff members for their help with proofreading. Any remaining errors are most likely not their fault. We always welcome feedback and suggestions, and ask that any comments be directed to the channels listed at left.

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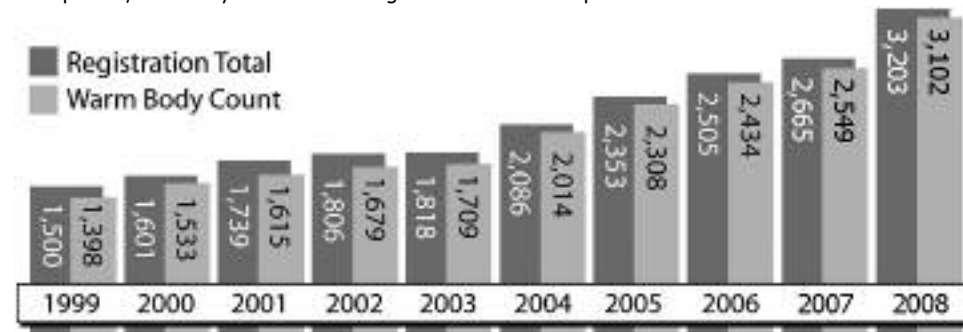
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Attendance

As expected, our 4-day Year 10 extravaganza resulted in a spike in attendance.



Here's a more detailed breakdown, showing trends over the past five conventions:

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Total Registrations:	2,086	2,353	2,505	2,665	3,203*	
Pre-registrations:	1,525	1,647	1,791	1,889	2,173	1,200+
At-the-door:	561	706	714	776	940	
Warm Body Count:	2,014	2,308	2,434	2,549	3,102	

* (Includes 3,107 Total Paid Registrations, 96 Comps and Special Rates (Guests of Honor/Professionals//Dealer Upgrades, etc.)

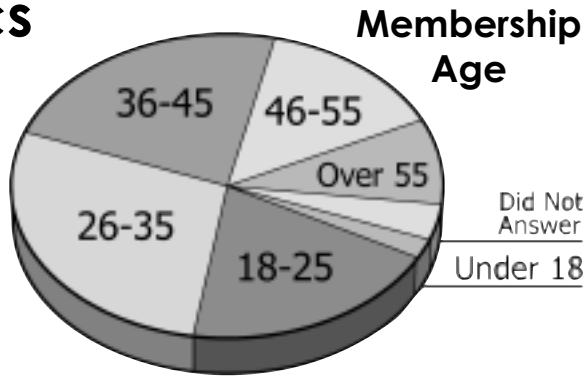
Our pre-registrations are 1,200+ at this time for CONvergence 2009. That's over two hundred pre-registrations ahead of this time last year (1,009 in 2007, 840 in 2006). Does this mean we are going to continue with our growth, or will we see a drop off of At-the-Door registrations? Time will tell...

Demographics

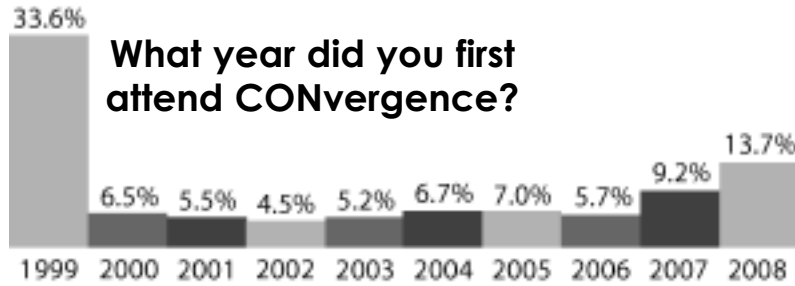
We had 402 Convention Surveys filled out this year. It is always important to remember that any demographic profiles drawn from those surveys reflects the demographic breakdown of those who actually filled out surveys, and is not necessarily a fully accurate depiction of the larger convention membership.

Gender 45.8% Male
53.5% Female

Age (See Chart at Right)



We asked our members "What year did you first attend CONvergence?" According to the chart below, we've seen a fairly steady influx of new attendees each year since our first year in 1999, with a bit of a spike in those numbers in 2008, no doubt representing the added draw of our Year 10, 4-day extravaganza. 13.7% of those who filled out surveys had attended CONvergence only once (so 2008 was their first), 36.1% had attended between 2-5 times, 25.1% had attended between 6-9 times, and 23.9% had attended all ten.



We asked our members what other conventions they attend. Of those who filled out surveys, 14.7% say they attend Minicon, 19.7% say they attend Marscon, 10.7% say they attend Anime Detour, and 31.1% say they attend no other conventions. Dozens of other conventions were mentioned from across the country in smaller numbers.

Hotel Occupancy

From most perspectives, our occupancy of the Sheraton for our 10th anniversary convention was a huge success. The Sheraton folks are extremely happy with CONvergence and see 2008 as a bright spot in our association. They had as much fun as we did!

We took up good space in the hotel, which also makes everyone happy. Our 2008 occupancy numbers were:

- Tuesday, July 1 12 Rooms
- Wednesday, July 2 142 Rooms
- Thursday, July 3 472 Rooms**
- Friday, July 4 512 Rooms**
- Saturday, July 5 511 Rooms**
- Sunday, July 6 149 Rooms**
- Monday, July 7 20 Rooms
- TOTAL 1,806 Rooms**

Our overall totals exceeded 2007 by about 350 room nights, making it a very successful year for everyone.



Members of the 2008 Move In / Move Out crew take a moment to pose for the camera in front of the 3 storage "pods" emptied and refilled at every CONvergence.

Photo by Peter Verrant

Money In/Money Out

Here is a breakdown of where money comes in at CONvergence and what it is spent on. We're proud to say that the convention has run in the black every year since its inception, and this year was no exception. Budgets were higher across the board this year, in some cases due to rising costs, an extra day of convention, and our higher number of Guests of Honor. "Money Out" includes the operating budget for our parent organization, The Minnesota Society for Interest in Science Fiction and Fantasy and the programs and events carried out under the banner of MISFITS.

Money In

Registrations	\$148,000
Advertisements	\$1,300
Art Show	\$1,900
Dealers Room	\$5,800
Concessions (net)	\$3,100
Other Income	\$1,100
Total Income	\$161,200

Money Out

Hotel, Operations, Insurance & Storage	\$20,400
Office, Phone & Fees	\$11,100
Guests	\$30,200
Publications, Postage & Misc. Communications	\$21,100
MainStage & Masquerade	\$11,700
Programming	\$800
Consuite, COF2E2, & Connie's Space Lounge	\$34,600
Cinema Rex & Theatre Nippon	\$5,800
Capital Expenditures	\$6,000
MISFITS Annual Operating Budget	\$15,000
Total Money Out	\$156,700



Left to Right Standing: *Andrew Probert, Trace Beaulieu, Larry Dixon, Daren Dochterman, Dr. James Kakalios, Robert Meyer Burnett, David Weber, John Kovalic, Len Wein, Christian Colquhoun, Jay “Father Geek” Knowles, Mark Evanier, Marv Wolfman, Wally Wingert, Peter Mayhew, Vincent Truitner*

Left to Right Kneeling or Sitting: *Crist Ballas, Greg Weisman, Eric Flint, Bridget Landry, Harry Knowles, Kenneth Hite*

Lying at the feet of Harry Knowles: *Mercedes Lackey*

Photo by Peter Verrant, with compositing by Sharon Stelzig Snyder

To celebrate Ten Years of CONvergence, we invited an unprecedented number of Guests of Honor from past years to join us again in 2008. Twenty-one past Guests of Honor were able to join us, in addition to our two new Guests of Honor **Mark Evanier** and **Trace Beaulieu**. This remarkable photo was taken after the Opening Ceremony in the MainStage Green Room. Two of our **twenty-three Guests of Honor** could not be there, and we had to resort to some Photoshop trickery to add the final two to our 2008 Guest of Honor portrait. Can you spot the two late-comers? See below for the answer. One scheduled Guest of Honor, Bernie Wrightson, was unable to attend due to a personal emergency.

We would like to thank all of our wonderful Guests of Honor for helping make CONvergence 2008 as special as it was.

Kenneth Hite and Bridget Landry were not originally part of this photo shoot, and were added to the portrait later.

Convention Feedback

“The hotel is getting less friendly”

“Staff & volunteers & hotel were unfailingly polite & cheerful.”

— *Survey Comments*

Different people have wildly different individual experiences. We look through all the feedback we get from Convention Surveys, the At-Con Post Mortem, the Convention Committee Post-Mortem, and other sources and try to find patterns and trends to address.

The following comments represent specific issues we wished to address, as well as questions and comments that seemed to be of general interest.

Art Show

“Could the clearly adult art be in, say, a corner of the art show – not intermixed with the all-ages art?”

— *Survey Comment*

Please know that we respect the choices of parents, but we do not segregate works that feature nudes, any more than your local art institute or museum does. We also don't believe we'd be able to guess the sensibilities of one art patron vs. another, around what is or is not appropriate for viewing, nor by what age groups. We are very pleased with the quality of work presented, and promise to give patrons a world-class art show. With that as our first goal, we must say “no” to requests like these.

Badging and Volunteering

“It's not necessary to badge inside the rave @ 4:30 A.M., esp. not rudely.”

— *Survey Comment*

The convention does not become an open event simply because it is late at night. The convention pays for the space, pays for the performers, arranges for the equipment to be there – and does all this for the benefit of the paid membership. If you have a badge, wear it visibly (even late at night). If you do not have a badge, you should purchase a membership.

And obviously, we don't want our volunteer badgers to be rude. Most of them do their job well and courteously. If you have an issue with a specific badger, please report it promptly to the Volunteers Table in CONvergence Central so we have the opportunity to address it.

“Let people buy tix/passes for music events. Lots want to come just for the band & DJ's in Space Lounge/Main Stage.”

— *Survey Comment*

We do not want to sell the convention piece-meal and have people pay a smaller amount to attend only a part of the convention. We want a convention that feels like a community, and want to minimize the “convention tourists”. The name of the convention is CONvergence, not DIVergence, after all! Pre-registration rates are quite reasonable if you register early.

“Add extra row to top/bottom of grid to plan volunteer hours.”

— *Survey Comment*

Great idea! Look for it next year!

“21+ badges.”

— *Survey Comment*

The reason our badges are 18+ and not 21+ is that you already have a 21+ identifier: Your state-issued ID. We do not want the convention badge to replace the need for an official ID to be checked when serving alcohol. The state-issued photo ID is more reliable than a convention badge that may or may not be yours. Checking your state-issued ID when serving alcohol is essential for legal liability issues.



Black light mini-golf in Connie's Space Lounge. A black and white photo doesn't do it justice...
Photo by Peter Verrant

Cinema Rex

“Release movie schedule before the con starts (like you do with the panels)”

— *Survey Comment*

We are unable to announce the full schedules for both the Cinema Rex Movie Room and the Theater Nippon Anime Room prior to the convention due to licensing agreements for many of the films and programs featured.

ConSuite

“Better this year but keep working on improving consuite”

— *Survey Comment*

Thanks! We will.

“Bring in some rented ice machines.”

— *Survey Comment*

That's an interesting idea. We're going to look into that!

CVG-TV

“I loved seeing MainStage events on the hotel TV– please keep doing it!”

— *Survey Comment*

We plan to! This was our first year broadcasting MainStage events and footage from past year's conventions on the hotel television. We've branded these broadcasts as CVG-TV. We hope to offer more new and archival programming in 2009.

Dealers Room

“Longer dealers room hours.”

— *Survey Comment*

We're investigating the possibilities of varying Dealers Room hours next year, and we will be talking to dealers to see what can work best for both them and CONvergence members.

Hotel & Facilities

“Re: Recycling – Yay!”

— *Survey Comment*

Spearheaded by dedicated volunteers, we collected more than 15 bags of recycled cans, which were in turn donated to a local, non-profit bicycle group. In fact that group did the pick-up from the Sheraton for us.

As it was our first, focused attempt, we focused solely on can recycling. We want to be certain our systems are in place and functioning smoothly before we expand the program to include bottles. Connie extends her thanks to the volunteers who gave their time to help ensure a successful launch.

“Put _____ in a bigger space”

— *Distilled from SEVERAL Survey Comments*

We have a finite amount of space at the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel, and try to place events and features of the convention in the best space available depending on the anticipated popularity and specific needs of those events. When and if the Sheraton decides to build an additional wing of function space for the hotel, we'll eagerly look to expand into that space. However, there do not seem to be any such plans on the horizon...

“[Put a] Map on website of alternative parking locations, if that happens again.”

— *Survey Comment*

Great idea. As overflow parking becomes more of a necessity, we're looking for additional ways to best accommodate our members' needs.

“To save the sanity of the sleeping airport staff, see if you can coordinate with the hotel to put them on the 20th floor instead of just below gaming.”

— *Survey Comments*

We're going to do that. Thanks for the idea!

Programming

“I would like to see more academic panels”

“More science presentations.”

“2 panels on young adult literature – one for new books, one older books”

“Even more Dr. Who. Yes even more.”

“More comics/writing panels”

— *Survey Comments*

Our programming schedule is set up based on what the convention membership would like to see and what the membership is interested in running. If you've got a programming idea for 2009, especially if you can help us put it together, contact the programming department at programming@convergence-con.org, or attend the **Programming Brainstorming** session on **November 15, 2008** at 2:00pm at the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel.

We try to balance the wide variety of interests of our membership as well, so we want a large variety of subjects and not duplicate things too many times. In general, if we're going to have multiple panels on similar topics, each panel needs to be different.

“Panels at odd hours. Like 1:30am Saturday. We can run them!”

“I loved the late night programming. LOVED it! Did I mention the late night panels?”

That I LOVED them?! Not all of us want crowded parties.

It was great to have something of substance to DO after 7pm”

— *Survey Comments*

We like late night panels as well and plan to continue to have them. If you've got an idea that you think that would be good for late night and are willing to run it, we'd certainly consider it. Contact programming!

“Assigned moderators on the panels”

“Moderators for panels!”

— *Survey Comments*

Panelists are *encouraged* to choose moderators for their panels, and we're going to be looking at more ways to add more moderators to panels in 2009.

“Provide time turners so more than one program can be attended during the same time slot.”

— *Survey Comment*

Come on – you guys remember that they all got broken in the Ministry of Magic in “Order of the Phoenix”!!

“ASL interpreting – please keep!”

— *Survey Comment*

American Sign Language interpretation for select panels and events was new this year. Our thanks go out to our volunteer interpreters for making it such a great success. A number of Deaf and hearing impaired members of the convention expressed their appreciation for being able to enjoy aspects of the convention for the first time! We plan to offer select ASL interpretation next year and hope make the system work even better.

General

“Make Connie's pupils on the big cutout more visible.

They were creepy. Can't sleep – Connie'll eat ya.”

— *Survey Comment*

One unexpected feature of the giant Connie's flanking MainStage (they've been called the “Connie Argonath”) is that as the MainStage lighting rotated through a variety of color schemes, Connie's rectangular pupils would disappear against the background color of her eyes, making them look eerily blank. We'll see if there's a way to fix this odd feature...

“Let the restaurants in the area know the event is happening.”

— *Survey Comment*

We *try* to. There was some miscommunication this year. In putting the annual restaurant guide together, we try to reach all the area restaurants to verify their hours for the weekend, and make them aware of the convention. That does not mean that those holiday hours might not change at the last minute, or that the representative from the restaurant we speak to communicates to their staff about the large convention coming their way.

Four Days!

“Make it a four day con! The extra day was great! I got to do all the fun things I wanted to and still have time to kick back and relax when it was all over with. FOUR DAY CON!!! Please!”

“Four days, every year” / “Liked the ‘4 day con’” / “Four days every year!” / “Always have it last for 4 days!” / “Continue with 4-day con.” / “Keep it at 4 days – I finally had time to enjoy myself” — *Survey Comments*

Well...okay! (See page 12 for details!)

“5 days!” — *Survey Comment*

No.

“365 days!” — *Survey Comment*

Cute. But *NO*.



Christian Colquhoun's back.
Photo by Peter Verrant

Art Show Awards

The CONvergence Art Show would like to thank all the artists who submitted works to the 2008 Art Show, and to those who supported them by bidding on artwork.

Visitors to the art show were invited to vote and awards were given a variety of categories. The 2008 Art Show awards were given as follows:

Best Amateur Artist: Christin "LeXi" Davies

Best Professional Artist: Gordon Smuder

Best Amateur Piece: Elizabeth Sloan's *Robin and Lady Amethyst*

Best Professional Piece: Stella Brown's *Fairy Ecology Specimen Box*

Best In Show: John Garner's *Spawning Grounds*



The winners of the **Mark Time Awards** for Best Science Fiction Audio Production and the **Ogle Audio Awards** for Best Fantasy Audio Production are announced each year at CONvergence, and are awarded a wood and brass plaque with the image of Mark Time or Charles Ogle. The 2008 awards are presented for works produced during the 2007 production year.

Gold: **Space Casey** Written & Produced by Christiana Ellis / www.spacecasey.com

Silver: **Androids and You** By Bill Stuart / Adapted & Produced by David Hinde Chapman / Rattenfanger Radio / members.shaw.ca/ratten

Honorable Mention: **Mission Control** by Cynthia McGean
Produced by Sam A. Mowry / Willamette Radio Workshop / www.radiowork.com

Ogle Awards

Gold: **The Stuff of Myth** Produced and Written by Roger Gregg
Crazy Dog Audio Theatre / www.crazydogaudiotheatre.com

Silver: **The Dead Girl** by Kyle Hatley
Produced by Robert Arnold / Chatterbox Audio Theater / www.chatterboxtheater.org

Something Wicked This Way Comes by Ray Bradbury
Produced by Chris Snyder, Mark Vanderberg, Jerry Robbins / Colonial Radio Theatre / www.colonialradio.com

Honorable Mention: **Afterhell, Volume 3**
Produced by Joseph Medina and Jamie Lawson / Ollin Productions / www.afterhell.com

For more information on the Mark Time Awards and Ogle Awards, visit <http://www.greatnorthernradio.com/MarkTime/MarkTime.html>.

MISFITS Team Trivia Challenge

Our Tenth Annual Team Trivia Challenge was held April 12, 2008, where **Team Cinema Rex** reclaimed the title as MISFITS Team Trivia Champions. If you would like to compete in next year's Trivia Challenge, we'd love to hear from you. Our thanks go out to everyone who came out to compete, and everyone who helped make this event happen. www.misfit.org/trivia/index.htm

Masquerade

The CONvergence 2008 Masquerade was produced and directed by **Erin Kasper**, with **Gordon Smuder** as Master of Ceremonies.

Best Recreation:

Zelda & Gannon: The Game - Vanessa Krake

Best Prop: **The Truth** - Windy Bowlsby

Best Make-up: **Zelda & Gannon: The Game** - Vanessa Krake

Best Young Fan: **GF Trooper** - Ian Honse

Best Workmanship Honorable Mention:

Bridal Party - Amada Marquez

Paper Princess #3M - Elspeth Steinke

Best Workmanship:

Dinner and a Dance - Rae Lundquist

Best Performance Honorable Mention:

Amazonia - Angelique Montag

Best Performance: **Furniture Warriors** - Jo O'Hanley

Best Novice: **Raziel** - Ansley Zampino

Best Journeyman: **Thor** - Damon Thrift

Best Master: **Asuka Langley Soryhu** - Tara Reich

Best in Show: **Last Dance** - Kat Pempiller

"Last Dance" at the
2008 Masquerade.
Photo by Peter Verrant



MISFITS Writing Contest

Thanks to all the participants who sent in entries - keep them coming! And mucho thanks to our judges **Joel Arnold**, **Charlotte Nickerson** and **Jody Wurl** and to proofreaders **Ginger Bock**, **Adam Rautio** and **Sharon Snyder** for helping Writing Contest Coordinator **Jodie Gustofson** with the book of winning entries, which this year featured winning entries from all ten years of the contest!

Open Division Awards

Scott Imes Award: *A Preponderance of Time* by Ethan Krueger

1st Place: *Dicentra* by Erica Thornhill

2nd Place: *Eight Minutes* by Lisa Gilbert

3rd Place: *No Man's Land* by Joan Bedinger

Poetry Division Awards

1st Place: *Subterranean Sestina* by Thorin N. Tatge

2nd Place: *Lost* by May Lee-Yang

3rd Place: *Promise Us* by Joan Bedinger

Youth Division Awards

Division 1: Ages 10 and Under

1st Place: *Titanic Concession* by Arel Peckler

2nd Place: *The Magic Snowflake* by Victoria V. Bayer

Division 2: Ages 11-13

1st Place: *The Day the Earth Got Angry* by Cassandra Lottman

2nd Place: *Vitnaxk* by Jeremy A. Green

3rd Place: *Shut-Eye* by Tia Simoens

Division 3: Ages 14-16

1st Place: *Obstreperous* by Joseph J. Gallegos

2nd Place: *I Don't Place Nice with Knives* by Jourdan Rodammer

3rd Place: *The Moon is Rising* by Chris Dinkel

CONvergence 2009

*This CON goes to eleven.

JULY 2-3-4-5

Four Days!

When we decided to make CONvergence 2008 four days long to celebrate our tenth year, we never imagined that we wouldn't return to a 3-day convention in 2009. But after a great deal of positive experiences at the convention and soliciting feedback from ever-widening circles over recent months, the decision has been made to make the move to four days a *permanent* one.

We know that this decision instantly raises many questions and concerns, so we'd like to address a number of them here. We think the benefits and opportunities of a 4-day structure will serve the convention better in the future, and that the majority of the potential downsides of a 4-day convention can be mitigated or negated altogether with careful planning in the coming months.

So without further ado, may we present the *4-Day FAQ!*

Q: Why do you want to go to Four Days?

A: The reaction to our 4-day convention was so positive, not just among attendees but also our convention staff, that we decided to investigate the advantages of moving to a 4-day model permanently. As CONvergence has grown, we have found that it is impossible for us to expand in space (the hotel ain't gettin' any bigger), but we can expand in time. In fact, conversations with other 4-day conventions gave us some interesting perspective. As one convention chair said (to paraphrase), "Once you pass 3,000 attendees, your choices are four days or death."

Q: How would a 4-day CONvergence 2009 be different than 2008?

A: There will be many differences between our 4-day 2008 convention and any ongoing 4-day model. We plan to make adjustments to Programming Schedules and hours for many of the CONvergence venues and events to optimize them for a 4-day convention. We're looking at ideas from Dealers, Volunteers, Party Organizers and Convention Committee members to make a 4-day convention successful and enjoyable for everyone.

Q: I've already registered for a 3-day con. What do I do?

A. *Nothing.* Your registration is now for a 4-day con.

Going forward, our Registration Rates will be the same as they were in 2008, plus an extra \$5 at the door to make our At-the-Door rate **\$70**. This was NOT done out of necessity to cover the cost of the extra day, but rather is an attempt to drive more people to pre-register. The number of At-the-Door registrations have been skyrocketing in recent years with nearly a thousand in 2008. As the convention gets larger it is more and more critical for us to be able to plan for our membership size, which is increasingly difficult with higher numbers of At-the-Door registrations.

With that said, we wanted to make the transition to a 4-day model as easy for our membership as possible, so we will honor the **\$35 Pre-registration rate** announced at the con until **December 31**, even though this was for the expected

3-day convention. On January 1 the rate goes to **\$50** until pre-registration ends on **May 15**. And the At-the-Door rate is **\$70**. Again, if you have ALREADY pre-registered for CONvergence 2009, you don't need to do *ANYTHING*. Your registration is now for a 4-day con.

Q: I've already requested a hotel room - what do I do?

A: Don't worry - we'll be doing all the work. Our fabulous hotel team will be contacting each and every person who has turned in a hotel room reservation form and asking them if and how they want to change their room reservation. In essence, if you've already sent in a form, you'll be contacted by us so that we can ask, "Hey, did you want your room for Thursday night too?" And if you don't want the extra night, there will be *no penalty*.

Q: Will it affect how room reservations are handled?

A: *No*. Rooms are always assigned, as much as is possible, on a first-come, first-served basis. Of course we are dealing with finite resources and a large demand—often it is not possible to meet every exact need. But a person requesting a room early gets what they want, whether for a 3-day convention or a 4-day convention (meaning that even if you only want two nights of a 4-day convention, as long as the rooms are available, your request will be honored).

Of course, the Sheraton and the CONvergence hotel department *do* reserve the right to make last minute changes as needs dictate. But the process will still remain the same.

The following questions can also be found in our FAQ on the website:

Q: Are there other changes to hotel room assignments or reservations as a result of the 4-day convention?

Q: Will a 4-day convention be more expensive to CONvergence in hotel charges?

Q: I can't afford 4 days!

Q: What about the room parties?

Q: What about the Dealers?

Q: Why rush to make this change for 2009?

Q: Why not alternate?

Q: Can CONvergence/MISFITS afford it?

Q: Won't it be more work? Will people burn out?

Q: So does this mean there'll be 25 Guests roaming around every year?

Q: What if it doesn't work?

The answers to those questions are at www.convergence-con.org/faqs/FAQ4daycon.php. After reading the FAQ, if you have additional questions, concerns, or ideas on how to make the new 4-day CONvergence an even greater success, please direct your comments to info@convergence-con.org.



The cast of THACK0 on MainStage at CONvergence 2008.
Photo by Peter Verrant

Annual Theme

“But... invader’s blood marches through my veins, like giant radioactive rubber pants! The pants command me. *Do not deny my veins!*”
— Zim, *Invader Zim*

In the wake of this huge change, one might almost forget that we will again this year have a convention theme! The CONvergence 2009 theme will be **COMEDY AND HUMOR** in Science Fiction and Fantasy. This covers everything from the comic relief of Artoo and Threepio to the outright farce of *Spaceballs*. From the works of Douglas Adams and Robert Asprin to Peter David and Keith Giffen. *Invader Zim! Red Dwarf! Ghostbusters! Addams Family! Buckaroo Banzai! Earth Girls are Easy! Galaxy Quest! Mars Attacks! Men in Black! Time Bandits! Repo Man! Adam West Batman! Young Frankenstein! Real Genius! Freakazoid! Inspector Gadget! Coneheads! I Dream of Jeannie!* From those Disney movies with Kurt Russell to the craziest of Anime, it’s all fair game! We can’t wait to see how it all plays out in the panels, parties, and costumes at CONvergence 2009!

2009 Guests of Honor

“I don’t want to be an inventor. I want to be something useful like a teacher’s aide or a prison guard or a science fiction cartoon writer.”
— Professor Farnsworth, *Futurama* (1999)

Guests of Honor (scheduled to appear):

Dwayne McDuffie

www.dwaynemcduffie.com



A native of Detroit, Michigan, Dwayne studied physics, attended film school, co-hosted a radio comedy program, wrote for stand-up comedians and worked as a copy-editor for a financial magazine, before becoming an assistant editor at Marvel Comics, where he wrote his first comics series *Damage Control*. Dwayne has since written comics for Marvel, DC, and even Harvey and Archie comics including a run on Marvel’s flagship title *Fantastic Four*.

Wanting to express a multi-cultural sensibility that he felt was missing in comic books, Dwayne acted as co-founder and editor-in-chief of **Milestone Media**. Dwayne created or co-created many characters there, including Static who would be developed into the animated series *Static Shock*, for which Dwayne wrote and story-edited. Dwayne and co-writer Alan Burnett won the Humanitas Prize in Children’s Animation for the *Static Shock* episode “Jimmy.”

Dwayne also wrote for and served as story editor and producer for fan-favorite *Justice League Unlimited*.

Dwayne currently story-edits and writes for the Cartoon Network animated series *Ben 10: Alien Force*, and is the writer for DC Comics’ *Justice League of America*.

Kelly McCullough

www.kellymccullough.com

Kelly is the author of the critically acclaimed *WebMage* (2006), followed by *Cybermancy* (2007) and *CodeSpell* (2008). His fourth published novel, *MythOS* is expected to be available in the summer of 2009. Some of his 20 published short stories include *The Uncola* and *When Jabberwocks Attack*. He also has written a number of poems, including *The Bees: An Edgar Allan Pooh Poem*. His non-fiction work includes the *Interactions in Physical Science Curriculum*, an illustrated collection that is part of a robust middle school physical science curriculum and was funded by the National Science Foundation and has been adopted by several state boards of education.

Before succeeding as a published author, Kelly acted in the Minnesota Renaissance Festival, the Colorado Renaissance Festival, and the Arizona Renaissance Festival. He lives with his wife, Laura, and a number of cats in Menomonie, Wisconsin. Kelly is a winner of the 2000 “**Writers of the Future**” award, an international competition begun by L. Ron Hubbard.



Patrick Rothfuss

www.patrickrothfuss.com

Patrick Rothfuss describes himself as having had “the good fortune to be born in Wisconsin where long winters and lack of cable television brought about a love of reading and writing.”

After several years in college studying chemical engineering, clinical psychology, philosophy, medieval history, eastern theater, anthropology and sociology, Patrick finally completed a degree in English and decided to pursue writing. Patrick wrote poetry for a local literary series, a satirical advice column for the local paper, and scripts for a radio comedy show.

In 2002 a piece of Patrick’s novel, cleverly disguised as a short story, won first place in the *Writers of the Future* contest. Patrick’s story, *The Road to Levinshir*, was published in Volume 18 of their anthology, and they flew him out to their writers workshop in LA. It was at that workshop that Pat met Kevin Anderson and his agent, Matt Bialer. Matt introduced Patrick in contact with his current, beloved editor, Betsy Wollheim, president of Daw Books, where Patrick would publish his novel *The Name of the Wind*.



Brian Keene

www.briankeene.com

Returning Guest of Honor (2007) Brian Keene is a Bram Stoker Award winning horror author, first in 2001 for his non-fiction work *Jobs In Hell* and then again in 2003 for his debut novel, the post-apocalyptic zombie tale *The Rising*. Several of his books and stories are slated for film, video game and comic book adaptations.

Brian’s novels include *No Rest For The Wicked* (2001), *Fear Of Gravity* (2004), *City Of The Dead* (2005), *Earthworm Gods* (2005), *The Rutting Season* (2006), and *The Conqueror Worms* (2006).

Brian has also edited a number of anthologies including *Best of Horrorfind I & II* (2001/2003), and *In Delirium* (2006), and is assistant editor of *Grave Tales* magazine from Cemetery Dance Publications.

Since visiting us in 2007, Brian has written the miniseries *Dead of Night: Devil Slayer* for Marvel Comics, adapted his story *Terminal* into a play with Roy C. Booth, and is hard at work on his next novel *Castaways*.





2008 Guest of Honor **Len Wein** poses with his copy of *Cineplexity* from fellow guest **John Kovalic's** Out of the Box Games. Photo by Peter Verrant

Registration

Orderly: "Who are you today, Doc? Einstein?"
Lord John Whorfin: "Lord John Worfin. If there's one thing I hate, it's to be mistaken for somebody else."
— *The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai Across the Eighth Dimension (1984)*

Every year, there are lots of great reasons for you to save money by pre-registering early. This year you have one more. We will be honoring our previously-announced pre-registration rate through the end of the year. Then our revised rates for the 4-day CONvergence 2009 will kick in, affecting both our pre-registration rates from January 1 to May 15, and our At-the-Door rates. But until January 1, you can pre-register for four days of CONvergence at 3-day prices. So save that money and register *NOW* by turning to the back of this booklet and completing the form OR by visiting www.convergence-con.org. Clicking on Hospitality and then Registration will bring up links to the PDF registration form or online registration. It's as easy as that!

Adult Memberships (Including ages 13-17)

\$35 Until December 31, 2008
\$50 Until May 15, 2009
\$70 At-the-door

Supporting Memberships

\$30 Before May 15, 2009 + \$20 At-the-door=\$50 total

Kids Memberships

\$25 Kids Ages 6-12 Until May 15, 2009
\$30 Kids Ages 6-12 At-the-door

Kids under 5 may attend for free.

Hotel Reservations

For 2009 we will be following the same model regarding room reservations as we have in the past. By the end of December we will have contacted everyone who has submitted a request to advise that we have it. Then in January we begin submitting those requests to the Sheraton. Those people who have submitted requests by Nov. 30 should receive a Sheraton confirmation, via email, by February 13, 2008. Please feel free to contact the CONvergence hotel department at hotel@convergence-con.org with any questions regarding your request.

Panels & Programming

"He's in a terrible state. He's looking so geeky, I don't think he could even get into a science-fiction convention."
— *Ace Rimmer, Red Dwarf (1988)*

Programming 2009 will definitely be in need of sub-heads, panelists, staff, and other volunteers. If you are interested in learning more about the Programming Department and would like to participate in our annual **Brainstorming Meeting** (where we come up with the majority of panel and programming ideas for next year's convention), please join us on **Saturday, November 15** at

2:00pm at the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel (7800 Normandale Blvd., Bloomington, MN). If you stick around, later than evening will be a *Cinema Rex Movie Night* in the same hotel. Keep an eye on the MISFITS web site (www.misfit.org) for more details on that event.

If you'd like to contribute ideas or get involved, please attend the meeting, or send an email to programming@convergence-con.org.

Art Contest

For the first time ever, CONvergence is having an art contest! Cash awards will be given in two categories, and the winner in each will receive a cash prize of \$50! The two categories are:

Best Connie Artwork

Artwork that features the CONvergence mascot Connie.

Best CONvergence Theme

Artwork that captures the spirit of CONvergence and/or this year's CONvergence theme.

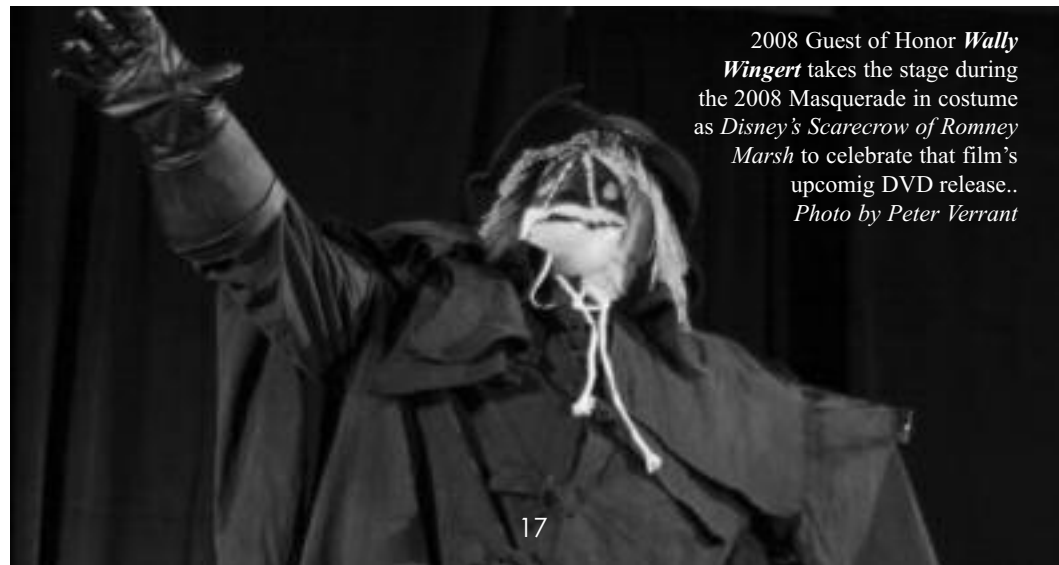
Artwork should be sent in the form of a graphics file (TIFF, Photoshop or Illustrator file), and should be at least 300dpi. The winning entries will appear in CONvergence 2009 at-con publications, and CONvergence reserves the right to publish all entries received.

Keep an eye on the CONvergence website for details on how to enter.

Deadlines

Here are some important deadlines to be aware of for the upcoming convention cycle.

- Nov. 15 **Programming Brainstorming Meeting** (2:00pm, Sheraton Bloomington Hotel)
- Feb. 28 **Dealers Forms Due** (for consideration for Dealers Room Space)
- April 1 **Art Show Letters mailed** (contacting past Artists about our 2009 Art Show)
- May 15 **Pre-Registration Cut-off** (After this, you must register At-the-Door at a higher rate)
Publications Deadline (Content for Souvenir Book and Programming Guide)
Advertising Deadline (For both payment and ad artwork)
Dealers Cancellation Deadline (Last chance for Dealers to cancel reservations)
- August 4 **Art Show checks mailed** (To participating artists owed money)



2008 Guest of Honor **Wally Wingert** takes the stage during the 2008 Masquerade in costume as *Disney's Scarecrow of Romney Marsh* to celebrate that film's upcoming DVD release.. Photo by Peter Verrant

MISFITS News

CONvergence is a presentation of the **Minnesota Society for Interest in Science Fiction and Fantasy**. While CONvergence is the biggest event we produce, The Society also sponsors and organizes many other clubs, activities and events throughout the year under the banner of **MISFITS**.

Elections

Elections will be held soon for several seats on the **Society Board of Regents**, a body which governs the whole of the Society organization, with individuals taking responsibility of different divisions of MISFITS and CONvergence. To learn more about who's running, and what it takes to be a voting member of MISFITS, visit <http://www.misfit.org/election/candidates.htm>.

MISFITS in the Schools

MISFITS continues to bring authors, herpetologists, robotic experts, and presentations from the University of Minnesota Raptor Center to schools in the Twin Cities area. If you'd like to bring the MISFITS In The Schools program to YOUR school or local library, visit the web page for more information. <http://www.misfit.org/schools/index.htm>

Upcoming MISFITS Events

Geeks Read Open House — November 11, 6:30pm

Our November book selection is *Dead Until Dark* by Charlaine Harris. Feel free to come if you have not read the book. Also feel free to bring a friend. A light (taco bar) dinner will be provided. Upcoming books include *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens (December) and *The Dark is Rising* by Susan Cooper (January). The book for February will be chosen at the November meeting.

Please email geeksread@misfit.org for location info.

CSI & SMM

After the success of our group outing to the Science Museum of Minnesota to see the *Star Wars* exhibit, we are looking into setting up the same kind of GOT Edutainment event for the upcoming

CSI: The Experience exhibit. A specific date has not yet been chosen but will probably happen either late November or early December. We need a group of at least 15 people to get discount tickets. If you have interest in this outing please contact Dave Benhart at events@misfit.org.

Save the Dates for these other Events:

November 15 **Cinema Rex Movie Night** (at the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel)
April 18 **Team Trivia Challenge**
May 16 **Geek Prom**

These events will all be held at the Sheraton Bloomington. The details will be posted on our web site when they have been finalized.

Calendar

Check out the new calendar on our web site <http://misfit.org/calendar.htm>. Use this nifty Google Calendar widget to keep up on all the latest MISFITS activities including events and club gatherings as well as useful CONvergence dates and deadlines.

Until Next Time...

"I'll get you next time, Gadget. *Next time!*"
— *Dr. Claw, Inspector Gadget (1983)*

We'll have more to say about plans for CONvergence 2009 in *Progress Report 2* in the Spring. Until then, if you are looking more information on the convention you can visit our web site at www.CONvergence-con.org, or make sure to be signed up for our monthly e-mail updates. You can be added (or removed) from our publications and e-mail distribution lists by contacting us at info@convergence-con.org. You can also email us there to ask questions or to be directed to the relevant department or individual for any other convention business. Visit www.misfit.org for more information about the CONvergence parent organization and everything else it does, or send an email to info@misfit.org.

The geek chic meet to eat at the 2008 MISFITS Ice Cream Social. Photo by Peter Verrant



HOTEL ROOM Request Form



Room Requirements:

(Please note: The Entire Sheraton Bloomington Hotel is now Smoke-Free.)

Check One: 1 King Bed
2 Double Bed
Don't Care

Check any room requirements that apply:

Rollaway Crib
Low Floor Wheelchair Access

Number of People in Room: _____

Other Responsible Party: _____

Check-in Date: 07/ /2009

Check-out Date: 07/ /2009

CONVERGENCE WEEKEND 2009

WED JULY 01	THR JULY 02	FRI JULY 03	SAT JULY 04	SUN JULY 05	MON JULY 06
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Once received, your form will be processed and you will be assigned a room in the Sheraton Bloomington as they are available.

Room Rates:

Standard Room (\$104 per night)
Cabana Room (\$129 per night) *

If you plan to hold a room party in this room, check the Room Party box below, and complete and attach the CONvergence Parties Form. Then submit both forms to the Parties Department.

This room is for a Room Party.

* Cabana Rooms are ONLY available for Room Parties.

Please fill out the following contact info:

↑ Full Name _____

↑ Email Address _____

↑ Street Address _____

↑ City, State, ZIP Code, Country (if not USA) _____

↑ Home Phone Number _____ ↑ Work Phone Number _____

Important Hotel Information (Please Read):

- CONvergence assigns all rooms, cabanas, and other hospitality areas.
- If you want to host a room party (regardless of location), you must also fill out the **Room Party Request Form**.
- Please note that we will only accept *TWO* CONvergence room request forms from any one person. A separate form must be submitted for each room requested.
- CONvergence will return unprocessed any form considered illegible or incomplete.
- Please inquire about exact check-in/check-out times when confirming your reservation.
- If you would like your room to be near a particular group or person, indicate name here: _____
- We will accommodate as many people as possible, but not all requests can be fulfilled. CONvergence and the convention hotel reserve the right to make last minute changes.
- Check-out time is 12 noon unless otherwise specified.
- **All information provided will remain proprietary of CONvergence and will not be shared.**

For more general information on CONvergence, visit our web site or contact us through the channels listed below. Direct all inquiries to the address below or send E-mail directly to hotel@convergence-con.org.

This form is for reservation purposes only. SEND NO MONEY with this form. Payment for your room is arranged between you and the hotel.

CONvergence c/o The Society
1437 Marshall Avenue, Suite 203, St. Paul, MN 55104
651-MISFITS (651-647-3487) – 24-hour voicemail

<http://www.convergence-con.org>

PRE-REGISTRATION FORM



July 2-5 2009
Sheraton Bloomington South, MN
A Convention for Fans of Science Fiction and Fantasy

Check the box that will apply on the dates of the convention:

- Adult Badge (18 & over)
 13 – 17 Years Old
 6 – 12 Years Old
 5 and Under

You must specify one of the age levels above.

People wishing adult badges will be asked to show a picture ID showing that they are at least 18 years old at the time they pick up their badge. That means that if you're not 18 now but will be by the time the convention is held, you can still request an adult badge.

Required – These fields MUST be filled out for us to process your registration.

↑ Full Name _____

↑ Street Address _____

↑ City, State, ZIP Code, Country (if not USA) _____

↑ Phone (Home and/or Work) – at least one is required _____

NOT Required – An e-mail address is NOT required but will speed up the process of confirming your registration and providing you with information about the convention. Badge names are also not required.

↑ E-mail address _____

↑ Badge Name (If different from Full Name) _____

Registration Rates

Adult Membership until Dec. 31, 2008	\$35
Adult Membership until May 15, 2009	\$50
Adult Membership At the Door	\$70
Supporting Membership until May 15, 2009 (\$25 now plus \$20 at the door)	\$30 + \$20
Kids Age 6–12 until May 15, 2009	\$20
Kids Age 6–12 At the Door	\$30
Kids 5 & under	Free

I am interested in volunteering in the following areas: (check all that apply)

Art Show	Gaming	Programming Panelist
Badgers/Gophers	Harmonic CONvergence	Programming Staff
CoF2E2 Free Coffee	Move in/Move out Crew	Science Room
ConSuite	Operations	Silent Auction
Connie's Space Lounge	Registration	Volunteers

I would like to volunteer wherever I am needed

I would like information about entering the Art Show

You may like to know that I'm a professional in the field of:

Complete this form and send it (with check or money order, US funds only) to:
CONvergence
1437 Marshall Ave, Suite 203
St. Paul, MN 55104
Make checks or money orders payable to **CONvergence**.

I'd like more information about American Sign Language (ASL) translation service at the convention.

Thank you for your interest in and support of **CONvergence**, brought to you by the Minnesota Society for Interest in Science Fiction and Fantasy. If you provide us with an e-mail address, your registration confirmation will be sent to you via e-mail as soon as it is entered into our database. If you do not have your e-mail address, confirmation will be sent upon our next scheduled US Mailing cycle. Any confirmation given is pending the clearing of payment. Please note that we keep our information private and will not share your personal information with anyone. If you have questions or need to contact us for any reason, please use the contact information at right.
Information provided is proprietary to CONvergence/MISFITS.

US Mail: 1437 Marshall Ave, Suite 203
St. Paul, MN 55104
Phone: 651-647-3487 / 651-MISFITS
(24-hour voicemail)
E-Mail: info@convergence-con.org
Web: www.convergence-con.org



**A CELEBRATION of the
FUNNY SIDE
of Science Fiction and Fantasy.**

c/o The Minnesota Society for Interest
in Science Fiction and Fantasy
1437 Marshall Ave, Suite 203 St. Paul, MN 55104

If the ® symbol appears on your mailing
label, you are listed in our database as
pre-registered for CONvergence 2009.

<http://www.convergence-con.org>