

CONvergence 1999 POST MORTEM REPORT

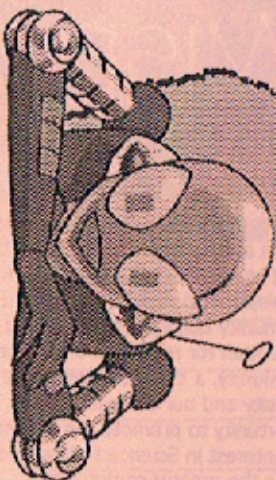
and CONvergence 2000 Preview



Connie Mark II



Connie Mark I



CONvergence

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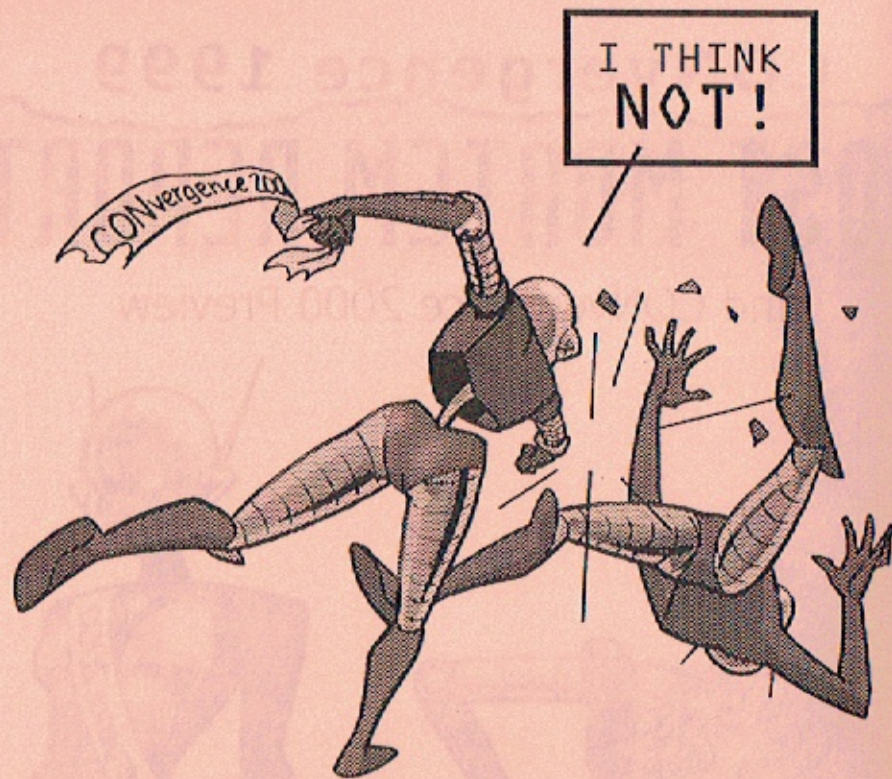
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CONvergence is imminent.



CONvergence 1999 Post-Mortem Report

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CONvergence 1999 Post-Mortem Report was designed by Christopher Jones for CONvergence Publications. Cover artwork and all interior artwork by Christopher Jones. Special thanks (as always) go to our proofreaders.

The purpose of this publication is to provide a general review of the 1999 CONvergence convention. We invite further feedback and commentary, and ask that it be directed to the channels at right.

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Introduction

Welcome to the *CONvergence 1999 Post-Mortem Report*. The purpose of this publication is to share information about how CONvergence 1999 was planned and executed, as well as our understanding after the fact of what the convention's successes and challenges were. We hope to publish a report similar to this one after each year's convention, so we would appreciate your feedback on what you might like to see in next year's Post-Mortem Report.

If after reading this report you still want more information on CONvergence, feel free to contact us through any of the channels listed on the inside front cover of this report, or check out our web site at <http://www.convergence-con.org>. The site has information on both this and next year's conventions as well as a Frequently Asked Questions list.

CONvergence is a presentation of MISFITS (The Minnesota Society for Interest in Science Fiction and Fantasy), our non-profit parent organization. MISFITS sponsors many clubs and events in addition to CONvergence. For more information on MISFITS, refer to the inside back cover of this report.

"Thank You"s

Let us again thank our guests – **Forrest J Ackerman, Gary Russell, Harry Knowles, Jay Knowles, Pam Keese, and Gordon Purcell**. Their extraordinary level of participation in the convention and their accessibility to convention members were a big part of what made CONvergence 1999 a success. In addition to all those we thanked in our Souvenir Program Book, we would like to thank the following individuals:

- **Aimee Kuzenski** for stepping in as Masquerade Emcee.
- **Jody Wurl and Cynthia Ahlquist** for judging the MISFITS writing contest, and everyone who entered.
- **Soylent Theater, Physics Force, Passage, Lojo Russo & Funks Grove** and **All the Pretty Horses** for their main stage performances, and all the bands that performed at COF₂E₂.
- **Artifacts** by **J. Henderson** for the COF₂E₂ mugs, and the **Sponsors** who donated to COF₂E₂.
- **The Teamsters** for their hard work all weekend at the convention.
- The **MarsCon** folks who helped the Teamsters get things in place in time for Sunday check-out.
- **Mn-Stf** for use of their art show panels.
- **Liquid Adrenaline** for their assistance with the Phule's Club smart bar.
- **Richard Elfman** for letting us premiere his film *Modern Vampires*.
- **Aaron Vanek**, director of the movie *Return to Innsmouth*, for allowing us the opportunity to screen his film at the convention, although circumstances kept us from showing it.
- **Art Johnson** for giving us permission to use the name "Fan Faire" for our fan group networking session. (See, doesn't "Fan Faire" sound better than "fan group networking session"?)
- **Bill Keller, Chris Mortika and Dave Rust** for their last minute help with gaming.
- **Gypsy** for his help with acquiring tech equipment for the weekend.
- **Cathy Sullivan**.
- **Charis Haire** for the Cinema Rex banner and signage.
- **Steve and Terri Erickson** for running the MISFITS Chocolate Room. They did an awesome job.
- **Everyone** who threw a room party.
- The **Xenaversity** for getting CONvergence mentioned in the Pioneer Press.
- **Everyone who volunteered** by sitting a panel, badging the art show, filling trays at ConSuite or doing any one of the dozens of other thankless jobs at the con.
- **Every single one** of our 1,500 members for making us the largest first year general science fiction convention of our kind ever.
- A final *thank you* for **Derrick Dasenbrock, Bethany Davidson and Kat Pepmiller** as they depart their Officer/Board positions.

And thank you to **DeForest Kelley, Clifford D. Simak, and Stanley Kubrick** who we lost this year, for their contributions to the universe of Science Fiction and Fantasy.

CONvergence 1999

Convention Committee

This is a final listing of the Convention Committee for CONvergence 1999, as it existed the weekend of the convention. See the CONvergence 2000 section later in this report for information on open positions and getting involved in the CVG 2000 effort.

Administration Division

Derrick Dasenbrock.. Director

Marketing Division

Jeremy Stomberg Director

Donna Cunningham..... Art Show
Michael Fanslow..... Concessions
Renee Balazs Dealers' Room
Perrin Klumpp Fundraising

Events Division

Tim Wick Director

Diana Steben Support
Ron Patire..... Anime Room
Michael Huyck..... Art Programming
T.J. Starbuck..... Children's Prog.
John Grams Cinema Rex
Eric Knight..... Cinema Rex
Zvie Razieli Cinema Rex
Judy Byers..... COF₂E₂ Sub-Head
Jody Wurl COF₂E₂, Lit.
Nick Post Comics Prog.
Shannon Leslie..... Consuite
Gypsy Consuite Sub-Head
Richard Caylor Gadget Master
Chris Mortika Gaming
Bill Keller Gaming
Dave Rust..... Gaming
Kevin McColl Gaming Prog.
Sherry Roth Green Room Mgr.
Matthew Gress..... Hard Science Prog.
Erik Pakieser Hard Sci. Sub-Head
Bill Lochen Mainstage
Peter Verrant Mainstage Tech
Kat Pepmiller Masquerade
Aimee Kuzenski..... Masquerade MC
Tim Uren Movies Prog.
Dayna Wolter..... Music, TV Prog.
T.J. Starbuck..... Parties
Michelle Clark..... Parties Sub-Head
Linda Petersen Parties Sub-Head
Perrin Klumpp..... Phule's Club
Stephanie Lindorff..... Programming
Anna Bliss..... Programming
Mat Brener..... Teen Room

Financial Division

Pat Wick Director

Sheree Rumbaks Support
Bruce Yoder Support

Facilities Division

Ishmael Williams..... Director

Leslie Powell Support
Laura Lochen Engineering
Co-Head
Loren Botner Eng. Co-Head
Nadim Khalidi..... Eng. Co-Head
Wayne Grimmer Eng. Sub-Head
Samantha Kopp..... Facilities Support
Ishmael Williams Hotel Dept. Head
Rhonda Danielson Hotel
Michael Alexander Hotel Sub-Head
Linda Paul..... Hotel Sub-Head
Jules Raberding..... Hotel Support
Ted Meisner..... Hotel Support
Jolene Geise..... Hotel Support
Charles Piehl Hotel Support
Bryan Eckstrom..... Teamsters

Publications Division

Christopher Jones..... Director

George Richard Advertising
Yuk Ki Lau Print Media/Web Site
Paul Comeau..... Web Site
John Dassow..... Web Site
Elliott Proofing

Communications Division

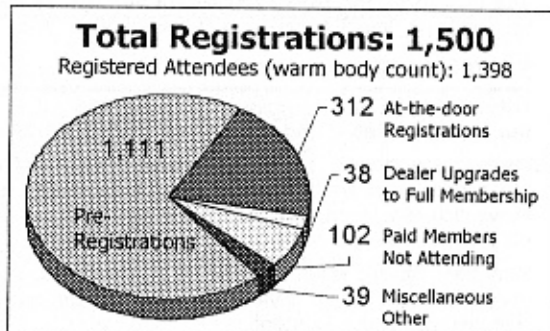
Windy Merrill Director

Kelly Pope..... Support
Mark Rumbaks Support
Kelvin Hatle Fan Liaison
Cindy Barwin..... Information
Tim Uren Media Liaison
Ryan Alexander Registration
Rob Withoff Video
Charles Piehl..... Volunteers

CONvergence 1999 Registration and Attendance

When we first began planning CONvergence 1999, we started with an attendance goal of 500. After taking over 400 pre-registrations at our Minicon 33 room party, we revised that goal upwards.

CONvergence 1999 was budgeted to break even at an attendance of 1,000. Thanks to the overwhelmingly positive response from the fan community, we exceeded even that goal in spectacular fashion.



Budget and Financials

Here is a brief overview of the financials for CVG 1999. If you would like more detailed information, please contact us to the attention of the Finance Division.

Monies Spent

Consuite & COF ₂ E ₂	\$8,050
Hotel, Engineering & Security	\$13,750
Guests of Honor	\$4,400
Publications, Postage & Misc. Communications ...	\$4,200
Cinema Rex.....	\$1,150
Main Stage.....	\$1,050
Masquerade	\$200
All other Expenses	\$13,900
Total CONvergence 1999 Budget.....	\$45,700

Monies In

Registrations	\$35,100
Dealer Tables	\$2,700
Concessions	\$3,800
Advertisement	\$1,150
Art Show Fees	\$600
Misc. Income	\$6,900
Total of "Money In"	\$50,250

The upshot of all this is that CONvergence and its parent organization MISFITS are well in the black. Budgeting is currently underway for both CONvergence 2000 and the upcoming year's operating expenses for the other aspects of MISFITS.



The MISFITS Board of Directors as they appeared at CONvergence 1999 Opening Ceremonies.

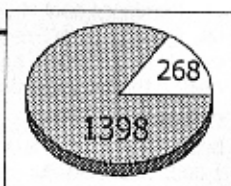
From left to right: (standing) Pat Wick, Derrick Dasenbrock, Christopher Jones, Tim Wick, Jeremy Stomberg, Ishmael Williams, and (sitting) Windy Merrill.

CONvergence 1999 Convention Survey Results

The CONvergence 1999 Convention Survey was compiled by Cindy Barwin (Information Services) and Derrick Dasenbrock (Administrative Division Director).

SAMPLE SIZE

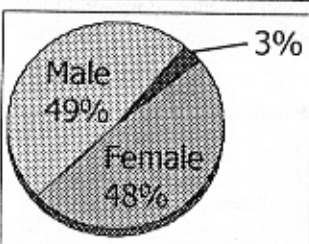
Total Convention Attendance: 1398
Surveys Completed and Turned In: 268 (19.1%)



Based on the sampling practice and study size, the findings of each convention survey are believed to be representative of the convention population, with some likely under-representation of very old and very young members.

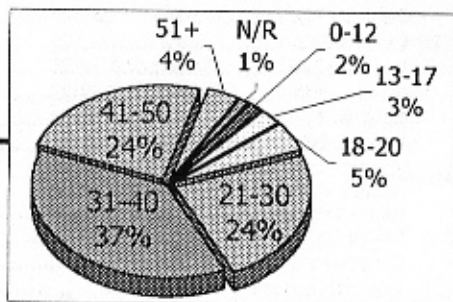
Significant skewing is not expected, as the sample size is large enough to cover statistical variations caused by deviations from true "random" population sampling.

GENDER



Note that the "undetermined" 3% includes "entities," "no-response," "other," "can't tell," "don't wish to indicate," and "non-humanoid life forms," "previously one now the other," and certain other groups indicated to our survey staff (but not recorded) at time of survey submittal.

AGE



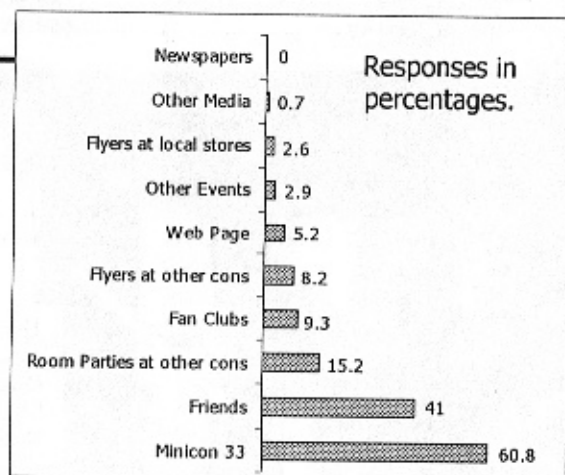
"N/R" equals "no response" to the age question on the survey.

Note that the 31-40 age group accounts for nearly 40% of the convention population with another 48% divided evenly to the age groups on either side.

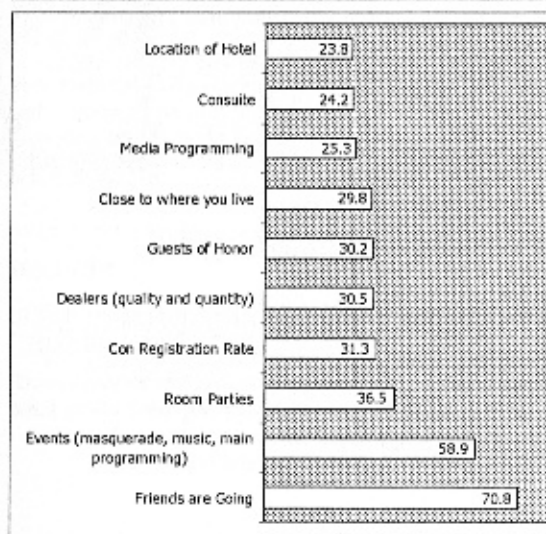
How did you find out about us?

Note that the 145.9% total indicates that respondents, on average, picked just under 1.5 answers. The majority of the membership picked one answer (presumably, how they *first* heard about CONvergence).

It would appear that the bulk of the membership was recruited at Minicon 33 or through friends, with all other membership efforts being comparatively less significant.



What are the 5 main things you look at when deciding to attend a general sci-fi con?



The Top 10 reasons for attendance are listed by percentage at left. Percentages indicate the number of survey respondents who indicated a particular item as one of their top five determining factors in selecting a general science fiction/fantasy convention.

Below are the remaining items and percentages in which they were indicated by attendees, including a few "write in" votes that were not present on the survey form.

"Write in" items may be under-represented in the above table, since they were not given as options to the remaining survey participants.

Reason	%	Reason	%
Fan Panels	23.1	Access to Restaurants	4.1
Video/Movie Room	19.4	Internet Room	2.2
Size of the Convention	19.4	General Programming (Write-in)	1.4
Art Show (quality and quantity)	16.4	Science Programming (Write-in)	1.4
Literary Programming	14.9	Connie Mascot (Write-in)	0.7
Gaming	9.3	Anime Room (Write-in)	0.3
Guest of Honor Programming	8.2	Multiple Other	0.3
Parking Fees	6.7	Transit Access	0.3
Quality of Publications	5.5	Drum Jam (Write-in)	0.3
Art Programming	4.1		

CVG 1999 Survey General Comments:

- "Thank you!" it stays big and continues to grow!
 Thanks — it was a blast!"
- "Incredible rocking con. Wonderful time, great people. CAN'T WAIT 'TIL NEXT YEAR!" "Comment I heard most throughout the weekend: it just felt right."
- "I had a wonderful time at my first con ever! I look forward to CONvergence 2000!" "You did a great job. It was wonderful to feel welcome by the con."
- "I think this is the best con I have ever been to." "Really appreciate being together for a good and memorable time with like-minded folks — like the family you may/may not have. It's also nice to be appreciated for your interest in sci-fi — I costume and I feel I can freely share my work. Thank you!"
- "I liked the broad range of things to do and see, the diversity of the programming and functions. Good job!"
- "I am soooo happy you all created this con!!! ... Will come forever as long as

"Great job you guys — especially for a first year."

"Just remember this was your first year and it was very successful. Like marriage, problems occur after 3-5 years that will make this year nostalgic."

This is only a representative sampling of the many comments we received on CONvergence 1999, and more comments follow. The response overall was overwhelmingly positive, which was really great to hear. There were, of course, a number of suggestions and criticisms made, some of which are printed here. If you sent us a comment via survey, e-mail or other means and don't see it printed here, rest assured that ALL comments were read, and we are doing our best to address the concerns of our membership.

CVG 1999 Overview: Successes and Challenges

Anime Room

"The Anime Room was fabulous (much better than trying to stuff it into a cabana!)."

— CVG 1999 Survey Comment

The Anime Room at CONvergence proved popular with Anime fans, showing both Anime films and episodes from popular Anime series. CONvergence would like to thank the **Twin Cities Anime And Manga Society** (TCAAMS) for organizing and running the Anime Room.

Art Show & Auction

"What was with the art show? Lots of blank panels, missing many major artists that typically have work at midwest cons (Daniels [and 2 other names that may or may not be Libor and Nerle], etc...), and why did it take five bids to go to auction?"

— CVG 1999 Survey Comment

We were actually quite pleased with the number of submission to our art show in our first year. We extended invitations to a number of regional and national artists, and not all of them chose to submit something this year. We strongly suspect that a number of them were waiting to hear how our first year went to see if we were a convention they felt it worth their while to send something to. If you want to see the work of particular artists represented in our art show, please encourage them to send us something!

Cinema Rex



"Loved Cinema Rex, the couches, lamps, FRESH POPCORN, and candy were wonderful very honey & cozy."

— CVG 1999 Survey Comment

"The Cinema Rex room was great!!! I especially enjoyed the sofas & popcorn/munchies."

— CVG 1999 Survey Comment

"Loved Cinema Rex — loved the comfy chairs."

— CVG 1999 Survey Comment

One of the greatest successes of CONvergence 1999 was the launch of **Cinema Rex**. Named for the T-Rex mascot known from his "Rex Room" days, Cinema Rex showed a wide variety of crowd-pleasing SF and fantasy films on a 10-foot screen, most in a widescreen format.

One of the features shown in Cinema Rex was **Modern Vampires**, a new film by director **Richard Elfman** not yet in release. The Friday 10:00pm showing of **Modern Vampires** wasn't just standing room only, the crowd was actually backed out into the hall. Thanks again to Richard Elfman for letting us show his film, and thanks to the **Cinema Rex crew** for doing such an outstanding job.

COF₂E₂



COF₂E₂'s biggest challenge this year was volunteers. We had plenty of people looking for caffeine, but we didn't always have the people to serve them. If you are one of those people that enjoy the chance to have free espresso, please take some time to help us out next year.

Music at "F2-E2" (as many have taken to calling it) was a mixed bag. We do appreciate all the musicians and bands that performed, but it was clear that the venue was not the best for full bands. Traffic was blocked to the espresso bar and the sound spilled more than we had planned. We are

looking at different ways to handle the music venue in future years as we definitely want to keep it, but we clearly need to reconsider how it is organized.

ConSuite

The ConSuite was a busy center of activity throughout the convention. Special appreciation was heaped upon the ConSuite staff for the inclusion of real food including a sandwich bar on Friday and Saturday and a late night soup bar. We would also like to thank **Papa John's** and **Davanni's** for the donation of pizza, and we look forward to getting donations from other area restaurants next year.

"People appreciated that ConSuite had real food — the sandwiches and soups."

— At-Con Post Mortem Meeting Minutes

"PLEASE improve the quality and quantity of non-snack food."

— CVG 1999 Survey Comment

"We missed having alcohol at the con suite, but definitely enjoyed the food. Great job! More of everything!!!"

— CVG 1999 Survey Comment

We will not be able to post a schedule with the times "real" food will be available because we simply don't know when that will be. It is dependent on when the restaurants providing the food deliver it, when we have sufficient volunteers to set things up and when we think it's time to put something "new" out. The "real" food was a success and we plan to continue to offer it, but we can't promise what will be available, or when it will be there.

"Better description of what will be available in the con suite & when, i.e., breakfast stuff when, pizza stuff when. Also, milk would be great."

— CVG 1999 Survey Comment

We had several comments regarding a desire for milk in the ConSuite. Budget restrictions prevented having it this year, but we do hope to add milk in the future.

"I don't mind a "dry" con at all if that's what it takes to keep things under control."

— CVG 1999 Survey Comment

"I was disappointed to see that you had no beer in the consuite. Are you planning on adding that later?"

— Frequently Asked Question

We chose to go with a "dry" ConSuite for several reasons, but the most important was the huge amount of liability we took on if we chose to serve alcohol. Quite simply, one lawsuit could wipe out the convention. Another advantage to having a dry ConSuite this year was its impact on the traffic flow. ConSuite was much less congested, as those who wanted alcohol got out and circulated through the many parties.

However, we don't consider CONvergence a "dry con". We have no objections to alcohol and we allow room parties to serve liquor at their discretion. However, our policy as a convention will be to keep our ConSuite dry.

Dealers' Room



"The dealers room was sparse – I particularly missed used books. Only one bookseller with a relatively small presence at a con this size?"

– CVG 1999 Survey Comment

"Next year . . . larger dealers room!"

– CVG 1999 Survey Comment

"More book dealers in dealer room would be a very good thing."

– CVG 1999 Survey Comment

The dealers as a group seemed happy and had a successful weekend, and many went out of their way to express an interest in coming back. Many dealers upgraded to full memberships so that they could join in the fun at the rest of the convention, and many were hurrying to pack up after the Dealers' Room closed on Sunday so they could attend closing ceremonies.

One of the few criticisms of the Dealers' Room was that weren't enough booksellers. The only reason we didn't have more this year was our inability to interest any booksellers in committing to taking table space before all our space was full. We hope to attract more booksellers and have a greater variety of dealers in general next year.

Engineering

Engineering was the nerve center of CONvergence and did a tremendous job keeping the convention running smoothly. Almost any problem could be solved by going to The Bridge, and if the people there couldn't help you, they would find the people who could. (Why "Engineering" is operated from "The Bridge" remains something of a mystery. Perhaps Geordi transferred Engineering control there...)

Gadgeteers' Petting Zoo / Science Display Area

"I also go to conventions for science programming. I loved the gadgeteer's room."

– CVG 1999 Survey Comment

The Gadgeteers' Petting Zoo was a good start on what we hope will be an ongoing tradition at CONvergence, but one thing it lacked was gadgets. The **Minnesota Space Frontier Society**, the **Minnesota Astronomical Society**, the **University of Minnesota Geology Department**, the **Minneapolis Planetarium**, and **Jeff Claussen** did a great job of filling out the room, but we need more gadgets next year.

Gadgetmaster **Richard Caylor** provided a few gadgets of his own, but he needs help. If you are interested in seeing this unique offering continue, please help us by providing your own gadgets.

Gaming

"I would like to see more games run, AD&D or White Wolf please. I would also like it to last til Saturday night for games if possible."

– CVG 1999 Survey Comment

Unfortunately, the game room at CONvergence this year was something of a disappointment to us and to the gamers at our convention. We can't make excuses for this. The preparations we thought had been made were not. Although several people stepped in to make the game room happen, it was not what we pictured or what our members expected. We have already spoken to several people who want to help us make the game room work next year. If you were unhappy with our gaming room, you had every right to be. We expect to do better next year! Thanks to **Chris Mortika**, **Bill Keller**, and **Dave Rust** for helping out on short notice.

Due to some last minute changes, the Live Action Role-Playing game **Renewal** was moved and unable to round up enough players. We hope that next year, Darrell Hardy will have better luck finding players, as the concept for his game was truly interesting.

Wyrd Images' **Society in Shadow** Live Action Role-Playing game had over 40 participants and was well received by all. They have already expressed interest in returning for CONvergence 2000. Look for more information as it becomes available.

Guests



Doctor Who producer **Gary Russell** sports CONvergence fashions.

All of our guests proved to be wonderful and had a good time themselves over the weekend. In addition to his many panels, **Harry Knowles** of **Ain't It Cool News** spent much of the weekend along with his father, **Jay "Father Geek" Knowles** holding court with fans in his poolside cabana.

Doctor Who writer/producer **Gary Russell** spent much of his weekend outside of panels in the Minnesota Dr. Who Viewing Society's (MNDWVS) poolside cabana, joining in their Men Behaving Badly party. He spent part of Saturday night playing guest DJ, spinning many 80's favorites.

Forrest J Ackerman was as charming and fascinating to listen to as ever, doing many panels and readings, attending the Masquerade and making his presence felt at the convention. Thirteen CONvergence members were drawn randomly at Opening Ceremonies from those who had signed up, and these "Lucky 13" had the opportunity to sit down with Forry Saturday morning for an intimate chat, and were given autographed certificates as souvenirs of their weekend.

Author **Pamela Keesey** and Comics Artist **Gordon Purcell** also sat panels and talked to fans over the weekend.

CONvergence thanks all of our 1999 guests for being so generous with their time and sharing themselves with our membership. We hope they can all return to participate in future CONvergences.

Hotel

"Great con! Wish I could have stayed in the same hotel as the con. Best wishes for next year, I'll see you at the con!"

– CVG 1999 Survey Comment

"Don't like con doing all hotel reservations. I understand you need a block for parties & for the con "important people" but the rest should be available first-come first-serve for us to reserve ourselves."

– CVG 1999 Survey Comment

The hotels housing CONvergence have asked us to handle the room reservations, mainly because they feel CONvergence can do a better job of servicing the membership needs, like allocating room blocks for fan groups that wish to stay together.

In order to reserve a room, a room request form will need to be submitted to the CONvergence hotel committee. Hotels make specific blocks of rooms available for our convention, and will only honor the convention rate for those reservations submitted by CONvergence. This means that you can reserve a room on your own without going through the convention, but there are advantages to letting us do it for you.

By controlling our room blocks at the hotels, we can ensure that we create things such as "quiet floors", and "noisy floors". We can better ensure that families attending our convention get the connecting rooms they need, and we ensure that the convention's Guests of Honor are treated appropriately upon their arrival at the hotel.

Mainstage

Those that managed to stumble out of bed to catch the **Physics Force** 11:00am Main Stage show on Sunday got quite a treat. The climax of their show included the rapid compression of a 50-gallon steel drum. You had to see it to believe it! They had a great time and hope to return next year.

With a terrific performance at Masquerade halftime and a great Main Stage show Sunday, **Soylent Theater** showed why they will be a mainstay at CONvergence for as long as they want to come back. Thanks to **Tim Uren, Kelvin Hatle, Joe Scrimshaw** and **Josh Scrimshaw** for their terrific "geek chic" comedy.

The Masquerade

"The masquerade was great. Delightful set-ups of the entrants (the hostess was great at ad libs). Not too many entrants (a masquerade that runs 3-4 hours is way too long) so it was kept short and sweet."

- CVG 1999 Survey Comment

"I was at Minicon 33 and I felt really bad about the masquerade. It was one of my favorite things and I'm glad it's found a home. I really appreciate all the hard work that goes into it. I think it's great to give the different fans a venue."

- CVG 1999 Survey Comment

The Masquerade, produced by **Kat Pepmiller** and Emceed by **Aimee Kuzenski**, was a grand success with over 21 entries in our first year. Performance Judges were **Windy Merrill, Kitty Gamarra**, and **Rex** (With help from **John Grams**). Workmanship Judges were **Diana Steben** and **Berniece Krafft**.

Masquerade Winners:

For Excellence in Workmanship:	Dark Dreams Mistress, Partyzone, Salem, Lizard Striptease, Deep Impact Warrior
Best Workmanship:	Dance of the Cobras
Judges' Awards for Performance:	Aries: God of War, Alien Encounters of the Best Kind, Dark Dreams Mistress, Lizard Striptease
Young Fan:	Mortal Mess-Up
Novice:	Connie's Cheesecake
Journeyman:	Ariel, the Little Mermaid
Master:	Dance of the Cobras
Best Performance:	Deep Impact Warrior
Best in Show:	Samples from the 2399 Sylvan Dior Spring-Summer Collection



Opening and Closing Ceremonies

Both Opening and Closing ceremonies were VERY well attended, each drawing nearly a full house. Opening Ceremonies highlights included an introductory skit featuring the six of the members of the Board of Directors (clothed in Jedi Robes) turning on the seventh (who showed up in Star Fleet garb).

Closing ceremonies were a little long, but no one seemed to mind. The weekend had been so much fun, none of us wanted it to end. The looks on the faces of the Board when the attendance numbers were read were worth waiting for all on their own.

Parties

"The parties were still going on at 5 am [this morning]; still heard disco music at that time."
- At-Con Post-Mortem Meeting Minutes

"Room parties were great. May have greatly contributed to relatively fewer people in consuite area."
- At-Con Post-Mortem Meeting Minutes

The parties at CONvergence were nothing short of spectacular. Though all the parties were fantastic, we would especially like to thank **Eric Heidemann** for bringing **Kruschenko's** to CONvergence and running his room party into Sunday night (where you could find **Forry Ackerman** and **Pam Keesey**). Also, special thanks must go to **Mat Brener** for running the teen room, a unique offering at CONvergence. In future years, we hope this room will become a great place for younger members to gather.

The "Three Fates of the Parties" went around and gifted each party they especially enjoyed with a scarf. This is why some parties had one, two, and a few even had three scarves hanging from their signs. Parties of special note included the **Club Adventure Speakeasy**, **Club Neo-Tokyo**, **R.O.G.**, **Talon's Portal**, **The RakeHell**, and the **Xenaversity**.

Phule's Club

Phule's Club went well and was popular, but we don't feel it lived up to its potential. We will be considering ways of improving its visibility for CVG 2000.

Programming

"Scheduling panels with 1/2 hour downtime in between is great! This was wonderful. Thanks. CONVERGENCE ROCKS!!"
- CVG 1999 Survey Comment

"I really, really liked the 1/2 hour in between panels."
- CVG 1999 Survey Comment

"I liked the break between programs and the different tracks."
- CVG 1999 Survey Comment

"Liked programming w/different tracks & time between panels."
- CVG 1999 Survey Comment

"It would have been nice to have something going on between 3 & 4 Sunday afternoon while waiting for closing ceremonies. Having breaks between tracks was an interesting idea but perhaps a little over done. Maybe have a break between every other track instead."

- CVG 1999 Survey Comment

"Would like to see more hard science programming: computer tech, NASA, industry, maybe a scientist GOH."
- CVG 1999 Survey Comment

"The T-Rex theater, the Anime room are great, the only weakness I see in this con is the literary programming."
- CVG 1999 Survey Comment

Thanks to a great coordinating job by **Stephanie Lindorff** and **Anna Bliss**, programming at CONvergence was diverse and interesting. We wanted more than anything to make sure there was as broad a spectrum of panels as possible. As a result, we had hard science panels,

but not as many as some might want. We also had literature panels, but not as many as one would find at a convention devoted to Science Fiction literature.

More to the point, we can only offer panels that our membership suggests and is willing to participate in. If you are not seeing the types of panels you want, please take the initiative and offer to produce them!

Programming Guide

"The pocket program was fantastic – great content, well laid out and organized. I particularly liked that programming was referenced by time, track, and GOH, and that room parties were listed and described."

– CVG 1999 Survey Comment

A lot of thought was put into creating a Programming Guide that would provide a lot of information on what was happening at the convention in clear, easy-to-reference detail. It wasn't perfect, but we feel it was overall very successful. We welcome specific feedback and suggestions on how to make it even better for next year.

"Unfortunately, we rely on the program guide to plan our weekend. There were too many errors in the grid. I know it's extremely difficult, but it has to be more correct."

– CVG 1999 Survey Comment

The schedule of panels and other events published in the Programming Guide represented the programming schedule as it existed about a week and a half before the convention (when the program guide went to press). Last-minute changes to that schedule are inevitable, and we tried to compensate for that by updating the signage outside the programming rooms, and with errata sheets available at both the bridge and the information desk. We will be working to make those updates more visible and more widely available next year.

"More scheduling info on web site would be nice – and of course more work for an already overworked staff – so you can be forgiven..."

– CVG 1999 Survey Comment

Having a programming schedule on our web site in advance of the convention was another goal for this year that just proved unattainable as we were trying to shake out all of the first-year complications of organizing the convention. We hope to have more information available ahead of time on the web site next year, but any advance information will be just as subject to change as the information in the on-site programming guide.

Signage

Flyers featuring pictures of the CONvergence Guests of Honor and their panel schedules proved effective and popular, and will definitely be used again next year. 11"x17" maps of the CONvergence event space and other signage proved largely effective, but some still found registration, the volunteers desk and other important locations difficult to find. We plan next year to include large banners and other tools to make CONvergence 2000 even easier to navigate.

Fans of course brought their own flyers to post on the walls, either to promote room parties or just for fun; the Xenaversity party had an especially elaborate and fun flyer campaign, but they were not alone! The restrictions on where signage could be posted at CVG1999 were especially tight since other groups shared the hotel. Most fans respected the guidelines described both in the pocket guide and on the posted Event Space maps, and those who put flyers up in "No-Post Zones" were understanding about the flyers needing to be taken down.

Thanks again to everyone who helped us maintain our good relationship with the Radisson Hotel by treating the hotel respectfully.

Silent Auction

The Silent Auction was a great success, raising over \$1,000 for the **Minnesota Society for Interest in Science Fiction and Fantasy (MISFITS)**! We plan on making this an annual fundraiser for MISFITS and we are already looking for donations to our auction for next year. Please contact us if you have something that you would like to donate.

Volunteers

"Notification of volunteers – registration did not respond to my request to volunteer until the week of the con. A simple acknowledgment earlier would have been nice."

– CVG 1999 Survey Comment

"I volunteered to help long before the con and no one ever contacted me, why not?"

– Frequently Asked Question

We had high hopes when we started that we would not hear questions like this. We said that we would make sure to contact those people who said they would volunteer in advance of the con weekend so they would know we needed them and were hoping they would help out. That didn't happen. We hope to do better next year. Bear with us, we are still learning how to do this. We hope to make many improvements to our volunteers system next year.

Responses to Frequently Asked Questions

"July 4th is a bad weekend for me. Why didn't you chose a better weekend?"

– Frequently Asked Question

We spent a long time trying to decide which weekend to hold our convention over. We wanted to make sure that our convention was not in conflict with any other major regional conventions (**Minicon**, **MarsCon**, **Demicon**, **Wiscon**, **Windycon** or **Icon** just to name a few), and wanted to avoid the possibility of having a blizzard effectively shut down the con.

The convention also couldn't conflict with the **Minnesota Renaissance Festival** because a large percentage of our ConCom and membership works there.

Finally, we wanted to pick a holiday weekend because they are easier to remember and people often get a day off, meaning they don't have to take vacation time to enjoy the convention.

Once we looked at all those parameters, July 4th weekend was clearly the best choice for us. We know it is not the best choice for everyone and we do truly regret that. We wish there were a weekend that would work for everyone, but that is not possible. Our convention will not always fall on the 4th, but it will always be one of the weekends closest to it.

"I had a lot of trouble locating things at the con because they weren't where I expected them to be."

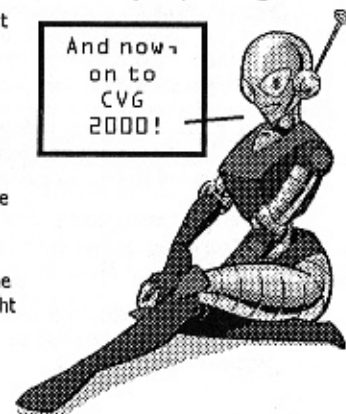
– Frequently Asked Question

We know that being a Science Fiction convention in a hotel that has hosted other Science Fiction conventions leads to certain expectations about where features of the convention will be. However, we are a first year con and we wanted to create our own traditions.

We posted maps and signs throughout the convention to make everything easier to find, but we understand that the maps tended to get lost amongst the other signage placed around the convention by both the con staff and fans.

We are going to try harder next year. But don't "expect" anything to be in a certain place just because it was there in the past. If we come up with a reason to move something, we might just do it.

And now
on to
CVG
2000!



CONvergence 2000: A look ahead

CONvergence 2000 will be held July 7-9, 2000 at the St. Paul Radisson, in downtown St. Paul, Minnesota, and will again be built around the same 10-track programming model as CVG 1999. We will also feature The Masquerade, the Cinema Rex movie room, the Anime Room, the Art Show and Auction, the COF₂E₂ free coffee shop, Dealers' Room, Gaming, Live Music, and Phule's Club. Not to mention the fabulous poolside cabana room parties Friday and Saturday nights. We hope that CONvergence 2000 will be even better than CVG 1999, so you won't want to miss it!

Scheduled Guests of Honor

Neil Gaiman, Creator of "The Sandman", "Neverwhere" and more.
Ruth Thompson, Renowned fantasy artist.

More guests to be announced soon!

Registration Rates and Deadlines

ADULT MEMBERSHIPS

July 5 - December 31, 1999\$25
January 1 - May 15, 2000\$35
At the Door\$50
Supporting Membership\$15 (+\$20 at the Door)

KIDS AGES 6-12

July 5 - May 15 \$15

CHILDREN 5 AND UNDER are FREE.

CVG 2000 Hotel

As happy as we were with the Radisson Hotel South in Bloomington for our 1999 convention, that space was committed to other groups and was unavailable for any viable weekend for CONvergence in 2000. As an alternative, CONvergence 2000 will be held at the St. Paul Radisson in downtown St. Paul, Minnesota.

The St. Paul Radisson is different in a number of ways from the Radisson South in Bloomington, but it does have a similar arrangement of poolside cabanas, which we think contributed greatly to the enjoyable party atmosphere found at CVG 1999.

We are currently in the process of making space allocation decisions regarding our use of the St. Paul Radisson's event space for the various CONvergence features. A space allocation map will appear in CVG 2000 Progress Report 1 in November.

We are currently finalizing the details of our contract with the St. Paul Radisson. As soon as we have a signed, solid agreement with the hotel, we will make the room request forms with room rates available on our web site and in future progress reports.

We will make an announcement to all pre-registered attendees of CONvergence when this happens, as well as a snail-mail announcement to those who did not give us their e-mail addresses. Approximately 10 weeks after we announce that we have a signed contract, we will begin accepting room requests.

One of the advantages of the CVG 2000 hotel arrangements is that we have virtually the entire hotel to ourselves. Hopefully this means that all CONvergence members should have the option of staying in the convention hotel.

We are not anticipating needing an overflow hotel for CONvergence in 2000. However, the St. Paul Radisson has indicated that should more rooms become necessary, they will make their companion hotel, the Radisson St. Paul Inn, available to us.

We are researching information on parking and restaurant availability in the area of the convention hotel, and will be making that information available on our web site and in our progress reports as well.



CVG 2000 Open Positions

The following CONvergence 2000 Convention Committee positions are open at press time: COF₂E₂ Head, Music Head, Phule's Club Head, Main Stage Head, Main Stage Technicians, and Programming Sub-heads (including sub-heads for the Comics and Movies programming tracks).

If you would be interested in one of these positions or in helping out with any aspect of the convention, please contact us through the channels listed on the inside front cover.

CVG 2000 Publications

Oct 15, 1999: Advertising / Submissions Deadline for **PR1**
Nov 14, 1999: **CVG 2000 Progress Report 1** Distributed

Feb 27, 2000: Advertising / Submissions Deadline for **PR2**
Mar 28, 2000: **CVG 2000 Progress Report 2** Distributed

May 15, 2000: Advertising / Submissions Deadline for
Souvenir Book and **Programming Guide**

July 7-9, 2000: **CONvergence 2000!**
Souvenir Book and **Programming Guide** Distributed

Advertising Rates

CONvergence is currently accepting advertising for our CVG 2000 Souvenir Book as well as for our Progress Reports. Advertising rates and deadlines are listed below.

This year CONvergence will publish two Progress Reports (PRs) that will give updates on our progress in putting together CONvergence 2000. Please note, we have both PRO rates and FAN rates. PRO rates apply to any for-profit business or money-making venture. FAN rates apply to fan groups and individuals who are *not* advertising for business purposes.

PROGRESS REPORTS (See above for deadlines and distribution dates)

Ad Size	Width	Height	Pro Rate	Fan Rate
Full Page	4.75"	7.25"	\$50	\$25
Half Page	4.75"	3.5"	\$30	\$15
"Business Card"	3.5"	2"	\$20	\$10

PROGRAM BOOK (Distributed at the convention) - Ad deadline is June 4, 1999

Ad Size	Width	Height	Pro Rate	Fan Rate
Full Page	7.5"	10"	\$200	\$100
Half Page	7.5"	4.75"	\$120	\$60
Quarter Page	3.5"	4.75"	\$70	\$35
"Business Card"	3.5"	2"	\$30	\$15
Inside Back Cover	7.5"	10"	\$250	\$250 (first come, first served)
Back Cover	7.5"	10"	\$300	\$300 (first come, first served)

CONvergence 2000 is expected to have an attendance of over 1,500, and every one of them will receive a Souvenir Book. Copies of our Post-Mortem and Progress Reports will be sent to every one of the 1,500 people who registered for CONvergence 1999 and others who are on our mailing list. Extra copies of these reports will also be available at all MISFITS events and will be distributed to Twin Cities area SF book stores, gaming stores and comics shops.

Don't miss this opportunity to reach this very specific audience with your advertising!

If you would like copies of these reports or want to be placed on our mailing list, please send an e-mail to info@convergence-con.org.

please print clearly • one pre-registration per form • please feel free to make photocopy duplicates of this form

A convention for fans of Science Fiction and Fantasy in all media.
At the Saint Paul Radisson in St. Paul, Minnesota

pre-registration form

Complete this form and send it (with check or money order, US funds only) to:
CONvergence, P.O. Box 13208, Dinkytown Station, Minneapolis, MN 55414

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

Registration Rates for CONvergence 2000

Until Dec 31, 1999	\$25
January 1 - May 15, 2000	\$35
Supporting Membership until May 15, 2000 (\$15 now plus \$20 at the door)	\$15 / \$20
Kids Age 6-12 (Pre-reg ends May 15)	\$15
At the Door July 7-9, 2000	\$50
Kids 3 & under	Free

Make checks or money orders payable to **CONvergence**.

↑ 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) _____

Check Adult Badge (21 & over)
One: Non-Adult Badge (under 21)

You must specify Adult or Non-Adult status. People wishing adult badges will be asked to show a picture ID showing that they are at least 21 years old at the time they pick up their badge. That means that if you're not 21 now but will be by the time the convention is held, you can still request an adult badge.

I would be interested in information on: (check all that apply)

Dealers' Room Tables
 Masquerade Entry
 Art Show / Auction
 Advertising
 Programming
 Working with MISFITS

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

Phule's Club
 Publications
 Engineering
 Mainstage
 Masquerade
 Put me wherever I am needed (our favorite kind).

Badgers/Gophers
 Registration
 Art Show Staff
 Programming Staff
 Programming Panelist

ConSuite
 COF₂E₂

I would be interested in volunteering... (check all that apply)

During the year
 Convention set-up
 During the convention
 Convention tear-down

Do you have any other ideas, skills or resources that you would like to lend the use of to CONvergence? If so, please explain on the back of this form.

Thank you for your interest in and support of **CONvergence**, brought to you by the Minnesota Society for Interest in Science Fiction and Fantasy (MISFITS).

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 we 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 below.



US Mail: P.O. Box 13208, Dinkytown Station
Minneapolis, MN 55414
Phone: (612) 996-9224 (24-hour hotline)
E-Mail: info@convergence-con.org
Web: www.convergence-con.org

CONvergence is imminent.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR SUPPORT, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AT THE CON!



The Minnesota Society for Interest in Science Fiction and Fantasy

PO Box 2879, Loop Station
Minneapolis, MN 55402-0879

MISFITSNP@aol.com

http://www.misfit.org

A word about MISFITS...

The Minnesota Society for Interest in Science Fiction and Fantasy (MISFITS) is the non-profit parent organization of CONvergence. Its mission includes education, literacy and community building. MISFITS is a forum and foundation for members of the fan community, a chance to celebrate our diversity and our common bonds, and an opportunity to promote the appreciation of and interest in Science Fiction and Fantasy within the greater community.

In addition to sponsoring CONvergence as both a fundraiser and community-building event, MISFITS has sponsored many other fun events including karaoke nights and trivia contests.

MISFITS also sponsors many ongoing clubs, events and programs including:

MISFITS Movie Night

On the third weekend of each month, MISFITS is pleased to host **MISFITS Science Fiction Movie Night** in partnership with Nathan Block of the Plaza Maplewood Theater (1847 East Carpenter Ave., Maplewood). This is a monthly showcase of Science Fiction and Fantasy classics on the big screen is shown **Friday and Saturday** nights on the third weekend of each month. **Tickets are \$4** and showings are at **11:30pm**.

Past films have included *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*, *Buckaroo Banzai*, *The Princess Bride*, *Army of Darkness*. Upcoming films include *Ladyhawke*, *Robocop* and *Young Frankenstein*.

If you need directions, call the **Plaza Maplewood Theater** at (651) 770-7969. To take a shortcut to the MISFITS Movie Night Menu, hit "4".

Writer's Group and Writing Workshop

The **MISFITS Writer's Block** meets the first Monday of every month at 7:00pm. The **MISFITS Writer's Block** is a place where you can share your writing, receiving feedback

and constructive criticism of your work, interact with other writers and, hopefully, improve your writing.

The **MISFITS Writing Workshop** meets the third Wednesday of every month at 7:00pm. Meetings are based on a review and discussion of a writing exercise assigned from the previous meeting.

MISFITS Writing Contest

Entries for the **MISFITS Writing Contest** must be unpublished, short works of science fiction, fantasy, horror or supernatural fiction of less than 2,500 words. The winning authors in both the Open and Youth (16 and under) divisions will receive prizes and have their stories published. See the MISFITS web page <http://www.misfit.org> for more details.

Read the Book / See the Movie Club

The **MISFITS Read The Book/See The Movie Club** is designed for people who wish to stretch their critical thinking muscles. We will be reading the source material for movies, or the novelizations of movies, and then watching the films together.

Project Happy Holidays

MISFITS has started a yearly project called **Happy Holidays**. Each year we will choose a family in need from our community and try to make their holidays a little brighter. Nominations for the next family will begin in October.

Other MISFITS events have included karaoke nights, picnics, a trivia contest, and room parties at various regional conventions. Check our web site for listings of upcoming events.

We want you to be a part of MISFITS and we need your input. If you have ideas for activities that you would like MISFITS to sponsor, if you would like to volunteer, or if you would like to help us with our special events and fundraising activities, please contact us through the channels listed above or attend a MISFITS open meeting.