



WINDYCON 50

Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations

November 8 - 10, 2024 at the DoubleTree By Hilton Hotel Chicago - Oak Brook

A Message from Our Chairs

We made it! Windycon 50!

We wonder if any of the people who got together and created Windycon could have guessed that we'd be gathered together to celebrate Windycon 50 a little over half a century later. We know that there were times when we were wondering... COVID caught all of us by surprise, and those of us in charge of Windycon were equally caught flat-footed.

But we made it. We've migrated through a few hotels, our concom and our board has certainly turned over more than a few times, for which we are very grateful. "Zombies" was a wonderful theme (Windycon 39), but we'd hate for it to be the ongoing theme of the convention leadership.

As it was in the beginning, this con is still completely fan-run. As the co-chairs, both of us are incredibly grateful for the time and efforts of every single one of the volunteers, both those who give their time throughout the year and at the convention itself. To be quite frank, the chairs are probably the least important members of the con. Those who volunteer year after year are the people who make this convention shine, and we are grateful for every single one of you.

Neither one of us expected to chair this year. But coming up on the convention, we're glad we did. Seeing the enthusiasm, knowing that we'll be with family and friends again for a wonderful weekend together, makes every bit of the effort worth it. Every single one of you is worth it.

This year has been a year of loss for Windycon as well. We have lost beloved members of our family and they are sorely missed. We wish they could be with us as we celebrate our 50th year.

We chose our theme for this year very deliberately. Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations. We are all unique. We all have value. Each of us brings something special to the table. The first fifty years of Windycon has been a journey to truly value diversity. And the next fifty years will continue that journey. Every day, we need to listen more than we talk. We need to value other as much as we value ourselves. We need to stand against hatred and bigotry and dismissal of the different. We need to keep building the future we want for everyone. This convention and every one that comes after it must offer a warm and safe place by the fire for all of us who have been forced to stand alone in the cold.

Windycon is our family by choice.

Welcome to our family.

Welcome to Windycon 50.

Vlad Stockman, Chair

Daniel Gunderson, Chair

Star DeMichael, Vice-Chair

Austin Regan, Vice-Chair

In Memoriam

The following is a list of the members of our community who have passed away during the last year. We will miss them.

- John Matthews, Author (a.k.a. DJ Brick) died in early November.
- Michael Bishop, Author (b.1945) died on November 13.
- Weston Ochse, Author (b.1965) died on November 18.
- Charlie Bernstein died on November 25.
- Jim Hosek, Author (b.1964) died on December 3.
- Fuzzy Pink Niven (b.Marilyn Wisowaty, 1940) died on December 3.
- David Drake, Author (b.1945) died on December 10.
- Bob Granstaff (a.k.a. Dancing Bob) died on December 20.
- Brian Lumley, Author (b.1937) died on January 2.
- Darrah Chavey (b.1954) died on January 6.
- Terry Bisson, Author (b.1942) died on January 10.
- Jennell Jaquays, Artist (b.1956) died on January 10.
- Joan Bledig (a.k.a. J the V) died on January 18.
- Steve Miller, Author (b.1950) died on February 20.
- Brian M. Stableford, Author (b.1948) died on February 24.
- Jon Stopa (b.1935) died on March 4.
- James M. Ward, Game Designer (b.1951) died on March 18.
- Vernor Vinge, Author (b.1944) died on March 20. Windycon GoH
- Deb Geisler (b.1957) died on March 23.
- Caitlin Thomas (b.2002) died on April 17.
- Leane Verhulst (b.1969) died on April 20.
- Jack Clemons, Author (b.1943) died on May 29.
- Karol Brown (b.1957) died on June 1.
- MaryAnn Harris (b.1953) died on June 3. -
- Pat Sims (b.1937) died on June 9.
- Priscilla Olson, Windycon GoH (b.1951) died on June 14.
- Dave Ihnat (b.1953) died on June 17.
- Jenna Murphy (b.1983) died July 10 Janet Morris (b.1946) died on August 10.
- Holly Lisle, Author (b.1960) died on August 27.
- Ward Christensen (b.1945) was found dead on October 12.

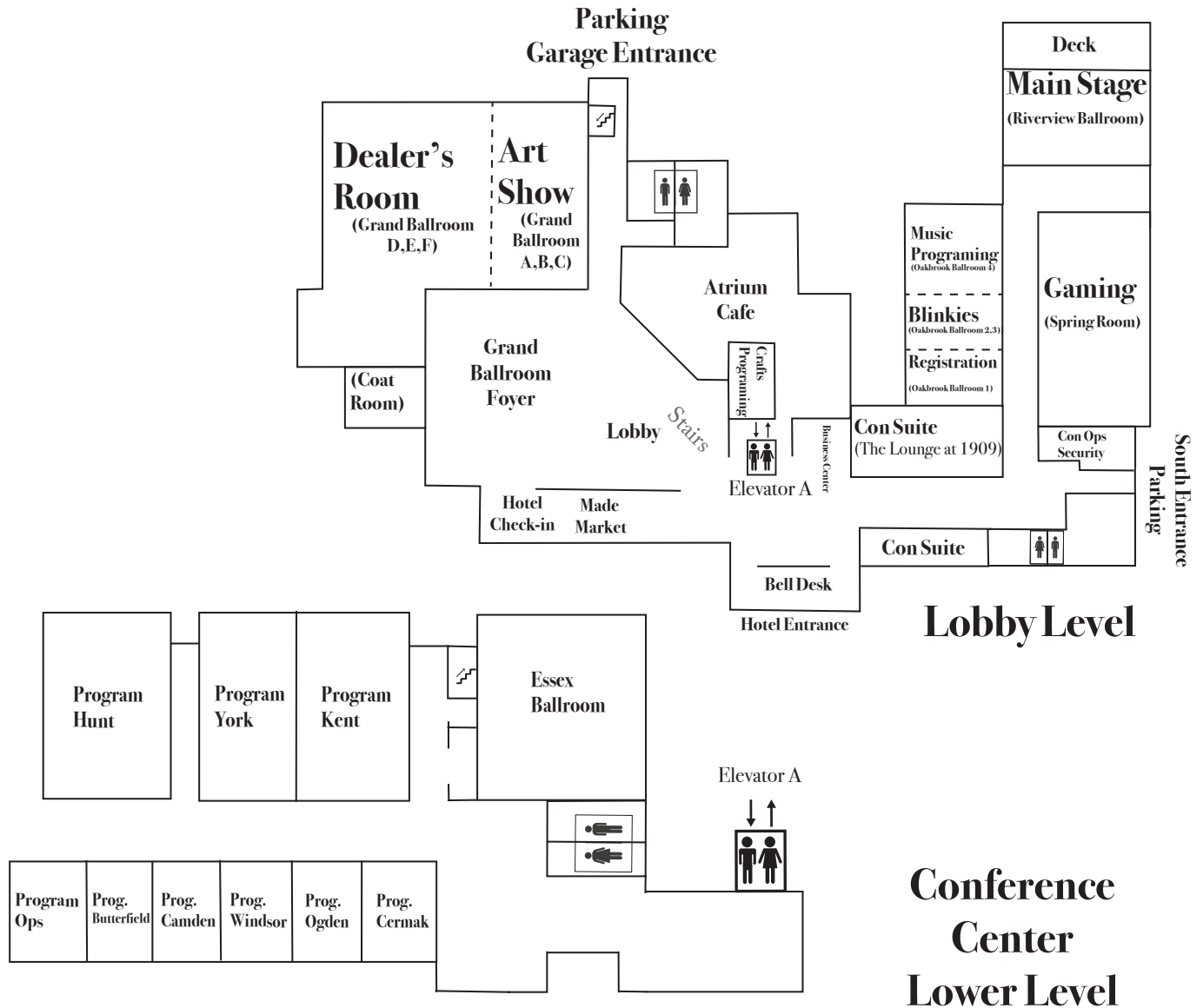
Welcome to Windycon 50!

Infinite Diversity in Infinite₁Combinations

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Map and Hours



Vendor Hall

| | | | |
|----------|------------|---|-----------|
| Friday | 3:00 p.m. | - | 7:00 p.m. |
| Saturday | 10:00 a.m. | - | 6:00 p.m. |
| Sunday | 11:00 a.m. | - | 3:00 p.m. |

Gaming

| | | | |
|--------|-----------|---|------------------|
| Friday | 4:00 p.m. | - | Sunday 3:00 p.m. |
|--------|-----------|---|------------------|

Con Suite

| | | | |
|----------|------------|---|-----------|
| Friday | 2:00 p.m. | - | 1:30 p.m. |
| Saturday | 9:00 a.m. | - | 1:30 a.m. |
| Sunday. | 10:00 a.m. | - | 4:30 p.m. |

Art Show

| | | | | |
|----------|------------|---|-----------|-------------------|
| Friday | 1:00 p.m. | - | 4:00 p.m. | Artist setup only |
| | 4:00 p.m. | - | 9:00 p.m. | Open to Members |
| Saturday | 10:00 a.m. | - | 6:00 p.m. | Open to Members |
| | 8:00 p.m. | - | ???? | Art Auction |
| Sunday | 10:00 a.m. | - | 2:00 p.m. | Art pickup |
| | | | | Artist checkout |
| | | | | Print Shop Open |

Convention Rules

Remember to be nice to others and treat everyone as you would like to be treated. The convention reserves the right to revoke your membership with no refund for disrupting the convention or breaking any rules as well as causing trouble of any sort. If it's illegal in Illinois or Oak Brook it is illegal at the convention.

These rules are specific to Windycon, and are in addition to all of the policies set forth by ISFiC, including but not limited to the ISFiC Code of Conduct.

Here are a few rules you need to be aware of:

- You must have your badge with you at all times in order to enter or stay in any convention function.
- You must present your badge to any member of the staff, including our door guards, who request it.
- A lost badge may be replaced at Registration for the cost of an at-the-door badge.
- No real weapons or anything that can be mistaken for one can be carried on premises. Costume and prop weapons must be approved by Operations and Convention Security and, if necessary, be peace bonded.
- Any weapons purchased in the Dealers' Room, real or not, must be taken from the dealers room to your room or to Operations for approval if you wish to carry it.
- No projectile instruments of any kind. Not real, not Nerf, nothing.
- No live steel, period.
- All bladed weapons must remain sheathed at all times except for a presentation during the masquerade.
- If you wish to use a weapon in the masquerade you must clear it with the masquerade director and transport it directly to the event and then directly back to your room afterwards
- Anything used as a weapon in any threatening manner, whether real, real looking, prop, toy, or otherwise, will result in its confiscation and possibly the revocation of your membership without refund.
- If you damage the hotel you will pay to fix it.
- We want to leave the hotel in as good, or better, condition than as we found it. They like us and we like them and we want them to invite us back.

Service Animals

- Windycon abides by the service animal requirements set out by the ADA.
- Windycon observes the Federal ADA's definition of service animal. For their definition please use the following link. <https://www.ada.gov/resources/service-animals-2010-requirements/>
- All service animals must be registered with Windycon. When you arrive at the convention, head to Operations and inform them that you have a service animal. After your service animal is verified, as outlined below, it will be issued a Service Animal Badge at no cost.
- If you have any questions about service animals at Windycon, please contact hotel@windycon.org.
- All service animals must be registered with Windycon and have their service animal badge visible at all times.
- Only dogs or miniature horses will be recognized as service animals.
- Service animals are required to be leashed or harnessed except when performing work or tasks where such restriction would interfere with the animal's ability to perform their work or tasks.
- An animal whose sole function is the provision of emotional support, comfort, well-being, or companionship are not considered service animals under the ADA. The ADA clearly defines that a service animal for neurological and psychiatric disorders must be trained to do work and perform tasks. The use of service dogs or miniature horses for psychiatric and neurological disabilities is explicitly protected under the ADA.

**The ISFiC Harassment Policy
can be found on Page 9.**

Please read it and follow it.

Code of Conduct

ISFiC Code of Conduct

Adopted by the ISFiC Board 2020-09-16

1. Introduction

1.1 ISFiC is committed to fostering an environment of comfort and safety for everyone. To achieve this, attendees should refrain from actions that a reasonable person would feel would limit, or threaten to limit, the safe enjoyment of the convention by another person.

1.2 ISFiC will not tolerate any form of misconduct toward convention participants.

1.3 Violations of this policy can be reported to any on-duty Operations staff member. How to report and how we handle reports is spelled out on the reporting page. If the violation is by a Board Member of ISFiC or by someone in Operations then someone from the Independent Incident Response Team (IRT) will be handling the report. Please use the link below for more information.

1.4 The Windycon Chair or their designated representative may choose to immediately impose penalties for violations of this Code of Conduct for the safety and well-being of our members. Such penalties may include, but are not limited to, a one-time warning, restricted access to convention activities, and immediate expulsion from the convention with or without a membership refund. In accordance with State and Local laws, Windycon may contact local law enforcement to report unlawful activity. All participants are expected to follow all local, municipal, state, and federal laws and ordinances while attending any ISFiC, Inc. event. If it's illegal OUTSIDE the con, it's illegal AT the con.

1.5 Some incidents which appear to violate the Code of Conduct may occur due to legitimate misunderstandings and, if they can be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, ISFiC considers that to be a good outcome. Repeated violations of the Code of Conduct, especially those involving interactions with the same parties, will be regarded as intentional behavior and handled as explained in this Code of Conduct.

1.6 All reports of violations of the Code of Conduct will be referred to the Independent Incident Response Team for their review and recommendations. Additional penalties may be imposed, including a ban from ISFiC events for a minimum period of time.

1.7 Individuals who have been banned from ISFiC events are not automatically readmitted after the minimum period of the ban, but must petition the ISFiC Board to be allowed to return. The Board will consult with the IRT and any persons involved in making the original complaint before reaching a decision. ISFiC believes that there can be a path back to community involvement, but the safety of our members will always come first.

2. Hate Speech

Hate speech is not permitted at ISFiC events or on ISFiC forums. Hate speech is defined as abusive or threatening speech or writing that expresses prejudice against a particular group, especially on the basis of gender, sexuality, relationship status, political status, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, national origin, or religion.

3. Code of Conduct

3.1 WHAT IS MISCONDUCT?

Misconduct means different things to different people. Each complaint will be adjudicated by the IRT based on the facts of the complaint. Misconduct may include any of the following, although it is not limited to this list below: Preventing any attendee from entering or participating in con events (except in accordance with con policies). Sustained disruption of talks or other events. Showing sexual images or conducting discussion about sexual topics in public spaces when the images or discussions do not allow attendees the opportunity to leave beforehand or are not presented in a respectful manner. Any activity which may endanger the event or individual attendees, regardless of intent. Intimidating, stalking, or following. Uninvited physical contact. Uninvited sexual attention. Pressuring or deceiving a person to consume any substance they do not desire. Deliberate misgendering. Making an individual the focal subject of a photograph or recording, against their consent.

(Windycon considers recording and photography of group activities to be part of the purpose for which we have come together to enjoy activities in public. There is a reasonable expectation at cons that public photos are being taken by the attendees in the public spaces of the convention. This can include panels rooms and the Con Suite.)

When photographing or videotaping individuals or costumes, use common courtesy and ask before photographing them. Respect their rights if they do not wish to be photographed or videotaped. If someone asks or otherwise indicates that they do not wish to be photographed, do not photograph them! Advocating for, threatening, or encouraging, any of the above behavior.

3.2 WHAT IS HARASSMENT?

3.2.1 Harassment is a category of misconduct, defined as "a pattern of misconduct toward a target over time."

3.2.2 Making repeated disrespectful and unwelcome verbal, written, or social media comments may be considered harassment.

3.2.3 Windycon's Board (ISFiC) tracks reports of misconduct over multiple years, and takes patterns of misconduct into consideration for multi-year disciplinary action. We need your help to identify whether the incident you experienced was part of a pattern you might not know about. Isolated single incidents of misconduct can sometimes receive a multi-year disciplinary action, based on the best judgement of ISFiC.

3.2.4 Harassment applies to electronic communication as well as physical. Participants must not engage in misconduct at any convention venues or convention-related social events, not just during the Windycon weekend. Participants asked by the Board, Chair, Convention Committee, or Staff to stop misconduct are expected to stop immediately, or it may rise to the level of harassment.

3.3 WHAT SHOULD I DO IN CASE OF MISCONDUCT AND/OR HARASSMENT?

3.3.1 If you feel uncomfortable trying to handle a situation yourself, report the incident to the Windycon Operations office. If you feel comfortable trying to de-escalate the situation on your own, please feel free to do so in a responsible manner. We would appreciate it if Operations was still informed to help us identify any repeat offenders. If you feel threatened or unsafe, or if your attempts to resolve the situation yourself are unsuccessful, please seek help immediately.

3.3.2 If you are in a confrontation, or notice someone else in a confrontation, go to Operations for help. Operations will help participants contact venue security or law enforcement, provide escorts, or otherwise assist in creating a positive space for the duration of the con. Windycon encourages participants to consider the possibility of reporting any rape, assault, or other unlawful activity to law enforcement. We ask that all attendees try to foster an environment where speaking out is fully supported. Retaliating against a person who reports or complains about misconduct will not be tolerated.

3.4 SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

3.4.1. People commonly wear costumes at conventions. Please be respectful by not touching a person or their costume without a clear invitation. Silence does not imply consent.

3.4.2. Please keep your public displays of affection rated PG-13.

3.5 ATTIRE

Please conform to the Windycon Dress Code. Our current venue requires that all attendees must wear footwear on the main floor at all times. Failure to be properly attired could mean immediate removal from the premises by the hotel without refund.

3.6 MINORS & PARENTAL CONCERNS

3.6.1 Children ages 17 and under (hereby referred to as “minors”) are welcome at the convention.

3.6.2 Minors require a badge, either a full badge, a children’s badge, or Kid-in-Tow badge. Minors twelve or under must have a parent or guardian on the premises. Holders of Kid-in-Tow badges must be accompanied by a badged guardian at all times.

3.6.3 Anyone under the age of 18 must carry contact information for a parent or legal guardian at all times.

3.6.4 Please also consider that some convention topics may not be appropriate for young children, and that some evening and night convention functions may involve attendee costume and activities possibly inappropriate for children. Windycon cannot be held responsible for any unaccompanied minors.

3.6.5 This code of conduct shall not apply to otherwise legal interactions between a parent and/or legal guardian and their minor children in their custody, e.g. disciplinary actions that fall within the bounds of municipal, state, and federal law.

4. Convention Rules

4.1 BADGES

4.1.1. All Windycon attendees must purchase a Windycon badge and wear that badge at all times when attending Windycon events or using convention event spaces.

4.1.2. Forging, duplicating, or sharing Windycon badges is not permitted and is grounds for removal from the convention without refund

4.2 ALCOHOL & MARIJUANA

4.2.1 Windycon recognizes that the use of alcoholic beverages by those of legal age is a matter of personal choice. Windycon requires that those who choose to drink during Windycon weekend and at other ISFiC sponsored events abide by state law and the ISFiC Code of Conduct. We expect such individuals will conduct themselves responsibly and respectfully in regard to others and to their environment, including the physical property of the host location.

4.2.2 As part of our hospitality, Windycon may serve alcoholic

beverages in the hospitality suites. There may also be other events that will do so. We require that everyone observe the law and follow these rules:

4.2.3 Windycon will be checking IDs before serving any alcoholic beverages. You must be 21 or over in order to drink in Illinois. Proof of age will be required to be served alcohol at the point of service, not during registration. In other words, you must bring your ID to the Con Suite in order to drink. Con badges will NOT be accepted as proof of age. Acceptable forms of ID are drivers’ licenses, state issued picture IDs, military IDs, and passports. Violations of state drinking laws will not be tolerated.

4.2.4 Each room party will need to decide how to handle appropriate alcohol management. Windycon asks only that everyone comply with hotel rules and requires that all parties follow state drinking laws. We hope that everyone has a safe and wonderful time!

4.2.5 Please follow the law and hotel rules in regards to open containers of alcohol. Do not take open alcoholic beverages out of the hospitality suites or private rooms where they are served.

4.2.6 Our venue does not permit the use of recreational marijuana on the premises. Please respect the rules of the venue.

4.3 PROPS AND WEAPONS

Windycon has a specific set of rules addressing Props and Weapons.

4.4 SWIMMING POOL

4.4.1 Pool hours will be posted, please pay attention to them!

4.4.2 Sleeping rooms are located near the pool and consideration should be given regarding noise.

4.4.3 If you have children, please supervise them.

4.4.4 Don’t drink and swim.

4.4.5 Be courteous to other users of the area.

4.4.6 Keep your swim attire on.

4.4.7 Be safe.

4.5 GAME ROOM

4.5.1 Eating and drinking are allowed in gaming, but please take extra care not to spill and please properly dispose of all empty containers and waste materials.

4.5.2 Anyone under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Gaming staff will ask anyone who is unwilling to comply to leave.

4.5.3 Please respect the staff in the game room and comply with any requests or you will be asked to leave.

4.5.4 Please be very careful with our game library.

4.5.5 Win or lose, please play fair and have fun.

4.6 CON SUITE

4.6.1 Shoes and shirts are required for entry.

4.6.2 Please do not sleep in the Con Suite.

4.6.3 Dispose of any cans in the recycle bins and your trash in trash cans. We need your help to keep the Con Suite clean for everyone.

4.6.4 Alcohol may not leave the Con Suite’s doors. Period. Even if you carry it into the Con Suite, once it is in our Con Suite you must consume it, or dispose of it prior to departure, no exceptions.

Reporting Infractions

Adopted by the ISFiC Board 2020-09-16

What is the Independent Incident Response Team (IRT)?

The IRT is not part of ISFiC but has the authority to carry out actions concerning attendees, convention staff, and board members. The IRT was instituted by ISFiC so that everyone involved with ISFiC and by extension Windycon are held to the same standard of conduct and all incidents can be addressed. The IRT is staffed by persons in the community who are not on the ISFiC Board and not on Windycon's staff.

There is a Problem at the Convention, What Should You Do?

Should you choose to report misconduct, you can expect a member of the event Operations Staff or IRT to be called in to provide support, investigate, and take the necessary actions to ensure that the situation is handled with the utmost care and concern with clear and concise actions. ISFiC reserves the right to remove attendees from any ISFiC event and/or ban future attendance if conduct and safety guidelines are not followed. Operations and the IRT will maintain a record of active misconduct reports, while permanent records of resolved incidents will be maintained by the ISFiC Board.

In either case, we will make a written report, and ask you for the details needed to understand and resolve the problem or prevent further harm. If you give us your name and contact information, we will follow up with you as needed, but we also will accept anonymous reports.

We will tell you what our next steps will be and further action(s) to be taken, if any. If you request, we will follow up with you and let you know the outcome of our actions. We will endeavor to remain in contact, as per your choice, at least every 2 weeks until the matter has reached resolution.

If other people are named in the incident, they will be told that there is an incident against them, but if the reporter wishes to remain anonymous, the identity of the person making the report will not be named.

For Incidents Outside of Windycon (Delayed Reporting or Involving Other Sanctioned ISFiC Events)

Issues may be reported throughout the year, not just during Windycon, Picnic, or any other ISFiC event. If you need to report an issue outside of Windycon or do not feel comfortable discussing the matter with the Operations Staff, you may contact the Independent Incident Response Team (IRT) directly at irt@isfic.org and someone will be in touch with you within 24 hours.

If the incident involves one or more Board members, IRT will handle the incident

If the incident involves a previous or current Chair or Vice-Chair, IRT will handle the incident

Otherwise, the incident is forwarded to the Board, who will either investigate it themselves, assign it to the previous or current Chair if appropriate, or request IRT to handle the incident if most appropriate

For All Windycon Staff and ISFiC Board members

As a staff member you are an important part of assuring our attendees are safe and happy. Our problem resolution process is designed to help accomplish this.

If someone approaches you with a problem that is either too complicated for you to solve or appears to be a Code of Conduct

violation, stay with the person and help find a member of Operations or the Incident Response Team as appropriate. If there is an immediately dangerous situation, do not hesitate to call 911 first.

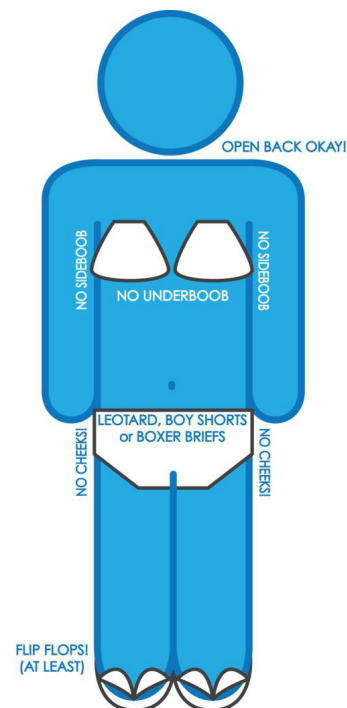
Please notify Operations after calling 911 so that convention leadership can stay in the loop.

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Dress Code

Adopted by the ISFiC Board 2020-09-16

1. The Windycon Dress Code tries to reach a balance between freedom of expression, the sensitivities of all our attendees, and the requirements of the venue.
2. It is applicable to all genders and in all convention spaces.
3. Windycon does not permit clothing that contains hate speech or explicit sexual content.
4. Bare feet are not allowed. Sandals are acceptable, but being barefoot or using footpads is not acceptable.
5. No roller-wear is allowed in convention areas including but not limited to Heelys, rollerblades/skates, and skateboards.
6. Please use the diagram on this page for a reference for the minimal coverage to be compliant with this policy. Thanks to Colorado Anime Fest for the diagram.
7. The Con Chair always has the final word on what is and is not acceptable attire in convention spaces.



Props and Weapons Policy

Adopted by the ISFiC Board 2020-09-16

1. Overview

1.1 This document is an extension of the ISFiC Code of Conduct.

1.2 As with all of our policies, the ISFiC Board has crafted this policy to try to strike a balance between the needs of our events, and the needs of our attendees. Any feedback you may have can be sent directly to board@isfic.org.

1.3 Violations of this policy can be reported to any on-duty Operations staff member per the Reporting Problems page. If the violation is by an ISFiC Board Member, Senior Convention Staff, or by someone in Operations then the Independent Incident Response Team (IRT) may handle the report.

1.4 The Windycon Chair or their designated representative may choose to immediately impose penalties for violations of this policy for the safety and well-being of our members. Such penalties may include, but are not limited to, a one-time warning, restricted access to convention activities, and immediate expulsion from the convention with or without a membership refund. Violators may also be referred to local law enforcement should that be deemed appropriate.

1.5 No prop shall be used in a dangerous or threatening manner. Do not draw blades. Do not point projectile weapons. Anything used as a weapon will be treated as a weapon.

1.6 Any item designed or created with the intent to cause injury or death to any person or property, as well as any item that is illegal in the state of Illinois and/or the Village of Oak Brook is not allowed.

1.7 Exceptions can be made to many of these policies for programming events and photography sessions. These exceptions must be made in advance with the appropriate Convention Staff and may be declined if the safety of other attendees is called into question. The Convention Chair always has final authority in these decisions.

2. Weapons

2.1 Firearms and Replica Firearms

2.1.1. Real firearms are not props and are prohibited from all ISFiC events, Windycon included.

2.1.2. Realistic gun props, including antique and replica firearms, are not allowed. This is for the safety of you and fellow attendees as Convention Security and local law enforcement cannot easily identify if these are props or live weapons.

2.1.3. All other firearm props must be taken to Operations and peace bonded. This will take the form of a zip tie indicating that the item is a prop and that any triggering mechanism has been disabled. Operations will also note your compliance so that any later inquiries can be quickly answered.

2.2 Ammunition

2.2.1. No live ammunition for any projectile weapon may be carried in convention space. No bullets or cartridges, no darts, no NERF, no arrows or bolts. Nothing that can be fired or launched.

2.2.2. If you have costume pieces with fixed, non-live ammunition, take it to Operations to be noted and zip tied.

2.3 Knives and Edged Weapons

Any material which can be given and maintain a cutting edge is covered by this policy. We know many of our attendees participate in other activities where knives, swords, and axes play an important part and we have tried to balance this policy accordingly.

2.3.1. All live edges must be fully sheathed and peace bonded. Bring all such items to Operations to be approved and zip tied.

2.3.2. An exception exists for items being displayed in the Dealers' Room. Vendors will package any purchases for transportation to your room or vehicle. If you wish to carry or wear your new purchase, take it to Operations.

2.3.3. Non-edged blades can be worn and carried, but please be patient and respectful when approached by any Convention Staff and asked to verify the state of the item.

2.3.4. Utility blades, such as pocket knives, may be used in convention space. It is the responsibility of the user to ensure the safety of everyone around them using such tools.

2.4 Polearms and Mass Weapons

2.4.1. Spikes and blades on weapons places the entire weapon under the Knives and Edged Weapons rules as stated above.

2.4.2. Foam, rattan, and "boffer" weapons need to be handled on a case-by-case basis. Take any such props in question to Operations for review.

2.4.3. As with any other prop or costume element, if it may potentially cause issue for those around you, please consider leaving it in your room. You are always responsible for any damage done to the hotel or others by what you wear and what you carry.

3. Props and Special Effects

3.1 This should go without saying, but no open flames are allowed in convention space. This means no props or costumes that produce fire or flames in any form are allowed.

3.2 Strobe-lighting effects can trigger a form of epilepsy (known as photo-sensitive epilepsy, PSE, or light-sensitive epilepsy) if the flash frequency is broadly in the range 16–25 flashes per second (some people experience PSE at lower or higher frequencies). If you have any props or costuming elements that produce lighting effects, please be considerate of those around you.

3.3 Lasers, including laser pointers, are not permitted to be used in convention space. Exceptions may be made for specific presentations and convention programming.

3.4 Smoke effects of any type are prohibited from the convention space. Exceptions for the Masquerade must be obtained from the Masquerade Staff in advance.

3.5 Liquids and gels should not be used as a prop or as part of a costume unless they are appropriately sealed and will not transfer to another person or property.

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Windycon and COVID-19

Windycon and ISFiC are committed to the health and safety of our fannish family, and that will always be our first priority. As we continue to plan the 2024 convention, we find ourselves making many decisions that try to balance that priority against providing all those elements that make a Windycon, well, Windycon.

The ISFiC Board has met and decided on the following Covid-19 Policy for Windycon 50. This policy is current as of September 19, 2024. Any changes to this policy will be posted here and via our Social Media outlets.

Bottom Line Up Front

- Masks are welcome, but not required.
- Neither proof of vaccination or proof of a negative Covid-19 test will be required.

Masks are Welcome.

Harrassment is Not.

Some folks will mask-up to one degree or another. Others will not. Those are individual decisions made for personal reasons. We may not all agree with the reasoning on any side, but we remind all attendees to be respectful of the opinion of others.

Illness Pre-Convention

If you should fall ill before the event and become unable to attend, let us know by sending an e-mail to registration@windycon.org. Windycon will roll-over your membership in full to 2025 and work with you and the hotel in canceling your hotel reservation up to the day of check-in.

If you had Covid recently and have recovered, we ask that you consult the CDC Guidelines before deciding to attend Windycon.

Illness At Convention

If you should fall ill at the event, you are asked to remove yourself from the convention area. If you do so voluntarily, Windycon will roll-over your membership in full to 2025 and work with you and the hotel if you need to vacate early.

Failing to remove yourself voluntarily or when asked by Convention Staff will be considered a violation of our Code of Conduct and any necessary action will be taken to protect the remaining attendees.

If you have any questions about this policy, please email registration@windycon.org.

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ISFiC Harassment Policy

Harassment of any kind is not tolerated. If someone tells you “no” or asks you to leave them alone, your business with them is done.

Your right not to be harassed is not a right not to be offended. All of us have different things that we find offensive. If you are offended, the best solution may be for you to walk away from the person who offends you. Should that person pursue you and continue to offend you, that could be harassment.

Unwanted physical contact is also not tolerated at Windycon. We understand that many fans view Windycon and other conventions as a safe space and enjoy greeting their friends with a hug, but please be aware that some people do not enjoy physical contact and if there is any question, please refrain from initiating physical contact with an individual. Similarly, a costume is not an invitation for physical contact.

If you feel that you are being harassed, or if you notice someone behaving inappropriately (such as violating hotel or convention policies), we respectfully suggest the following:

- If you feel comfortable doing so, point out the inappropriate behavior to the person(s) involved. Often this will solve the problem immediately.
- If you do not feel comfortable talking with the person(s) involved, or if talking to them does not resolve the issue, please report the situation immediately to any ISFiC/Windycon event coordinator (i.e., Windycon Operations, Security, the Windycon Chair, Vice-chair, Members of the ISFiC Board, Con Ombudsman, or to harassment@isfic.org).

It would be extremely helpful if you could provide a name, badge name/number, and/or physical description of the person(s) involved. We know reporting these issues is difficult. Please understand we cannot address issues if we do not know about them. While it is easier for us to investigate and address problems at the convention, it is more important that we know that something happened. If you need time before talking to us, take the time. But please talk to us when you are ready.

Windycon and ISFiC reserve the right to revoke the membership of anyone failing to conform to the letter and spirit of these policies, those of our hotel, and the laws of the Village of Oakbrook and the State of Illinois.

What's an ISFiC?

“What’s an ISFiC?” may not be the most popular party question at Windycon, but it does make for an excellent trivia question. Most fans, even in Chicago, are only vaguely aware that ISFiC exists.

ISFiC is Illinois Science Fiction in Chicago and is best known in its role as the parent body of Windycon. But there’s more to ISFiC than that. ISFiC was formed in the early 1970s—a period of great change in convention running in SF fandom. The number of regional conventions was exploding, and it seemed every couple of months a new city would announce that henceforth they would be hosting an annual regional convention. In the course of about five years, the number of SF cons more than tripled.

Windycon was one of the conventions that led this surge. In 1973, Chicago fans felt frustrated at being in the second largest city in the country, right in the center of the Heartland, and nothing resembling a regional con existed nearer than Minneapolis. Since the Chicon III Worldcon in the early sixties, Chicago fandom had splintered, and there wasn’t really a strong local club to serve as a focal point for a con committee, as was the case in Boston, Los Angeles, and other cities.

The Chicago fans then hit upon an idea—if a coalition of people from the various factions and clubs could work together on a local con, then a single large local club wouldn’t be needed. Thus was born Windycon. ISFiC was created as part of this process, to provide continuity in leadership and overall guidance.

But the vision for ISFiC and Chicago fandom went far beyond creating a regional con. Though the initial thoughts were vague, the idea was that ISFiC would act as a sort of clearing house organization for fan activities in Illinois, and do things to support fandom in general.

As with many fannish actions, there was also an ulterior motive. ISFiC’s founders, notably Larry Propp, Mark and Lynne Aronson, and Ann Cass, very carefully crafted things as a staging ground to prepare for a WorldCon bid. Their idea was to have Windycon not only publicize Chicago’s name, but also to act as a training ground for local fans in preparation for a Worldcon bid. The other ISFiC founders, including Jon and Joni Stopa and Mike and Carol Resnick supported the idea. Chicon IV, the 1982 World Science Fiction Convention, came to fruition as a result of this—although subsequent Chicons have been separately incorporated and were not directly affiliated with ISFiC. The early Windycons

grew rapidly under such chairmen as Mark and Lynne Aronson, Larry Propp, Doug Rice, and Midge Reitan. Most of the Windycon staff worked on Chicon IV, and learned even more from that.

After Chicon IV, there was a lot of reassessment of both Windycon and ISFiC. Having built an ongoing committee that could run Windycon from year to year (at least, as much as any local group can be said to do that), ISFiC looked for other ways to promote Windycon and science fiction in general. As a 501(c)(3) corporation, ISFiC has sponsored a number of activities, including loans and grants to other local science-fiction conventions, its own small press, ISFiC Press, and even an annual summer picnic, Picnicon, where fans gather to enjoy—with any reasonable luck!—some of Chicago’s fine summer weather in the great outdoors. (Picnicon has been sadly suspended due to COVID the last few years, but has resumed as of 2024)

As a member of Windycon, you are a member of ISFiC. The ISFiC Board of Directors meets every year at Windycon (and usually at Capricon) and everyone is welcome to attend the meeting, although if you’re not reading this until the con, you may need a time machine, as the meeting was on Thursday night, because so many of the Board members are busy working the convention. Our Board has nine members, three of whom are elected each year to a three year term by a vote of the sitting Board. Any Illinois fan is eligible to be elected—our current longest serving member of the Board was elected to the Board when he walked into his first meeting to see what ISFiC was all about.

So come by and see what it’s all about. You never know what will happen!

(The original article “What’s an ISFiC?” was written by the late Ross Pavitt some 20+ years ago. This version was lightly edited by Bill Roper to bring it up to date. Thanks, Ross. I wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for you.)

Mike Brotherton

Guest of Honor



25 Things You Don't Know About Me

1. My first exposure to science fiction was Star Trek at age six. My parents sat me in front of the TV and said that there was something coming on that they thought I'd like. It was a repeat of "Tomorrow is Yesterday." I did indeed like it.
2. I prefer Spock over Kirk. I share a birthday with Leonard Nimoy.
3. I collect comic books. The first comic I ever bought was issue 27 of Werewolf by Night. I sold many including *X-Men* #1 and *Hulk* #181 in 1994 to help pay to attend the writing workshop Clarion West. Clarion West was a great experience, but I wish I still had those comics.
4. My favorite soft drink is Diet Mt. Dew.
5. In first grade I took a book from the school library, *THE MYSTERY OF THE GREEN GHOST*, part of the Three Investigators series. When I returned it, the librarian stared at me and flatly asserted, "You didn't read this." Well of course I had, but she denied it to my face and told me to stick to the little kid books. What librarian behaves like this?
6. In third grade a friend bought me *A PRIVATE COSMOS* by Philip Jose Farmer, my first adult SF, for my birthday. I loved it.
7. In 5th grade I made three detective kits based on one my parents had bought me. It had a flashlight, tape for lifting finger prints, that sort of thing. Anyway, I gave the kits to three girls who then became "Mike's Angels."

8. I have prepared and eaten rattlesnake chili. It was ok.
9. At various times in my life I have wanted to be a paleontologist, an astronomer, a science fiction writer, a computer programmer, a herpetologist, a comic book artist, and an electrical engineer.
10. As a kid, I mowed yards to earn money. I saved up for an Apple II+ computer. My favorite games to play were Wizardry and Ultima II.
11. When I was 17, I was blessed to spend a summer on a small yacht cruising Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. I got to see a spectacular aurora with shimmering green curtains of light. May everyone get to see such a thing.
12. I studied chess long enough to know I'd never be great at it. Still, I have a few nice memories. In college, for instance, I got a draw against Boris Spassky in a simultaneous exhibition. He was kind while thinning the field of 50.
13. My first Worldcon was in 1988 in New Orleans, and I saw David Brin win the Hugo for best novel for *THE UPLIFT WAR*. Fifteen years later, he blurbed my first novel *SPIDER STAR*. That was pretty special to me.
14. I once listened to Iron Butterfly's In-Gadda-Da-Vida on repeat for most of three days while writing a take-home exam for my Stellar Structure and Interiors course. I like classic rock and astronomy.
15. I drove a Pontiac Aztek for 15 years. Many people think Aztecs are ugly, but they remind me of a Star Trek shuttle and I like them.
16. My favorite recent science fiction novel is Andy Weir's *PROJECT HAIL MARY*.
17. I dress up for Halloween or other appropriate occasions. I often dress as superheroes, including Cyclops from the X-men, Dr. Strange, Kick-Ass, Batman, Redneck Thor, Doctor Manhattan, and Rorschach.
18. I got married on Halloween dressed as a vampire.
19. I have observed at Paranal Observatory in Chile where I was able to see the zodiacal light. This location was featured in the James Bond movie Quantum of Solace.
20. My original working name for the Launch Pad Astronomy Workshop was Fast Forward, in part a tribute to the physicist and science fiction author Robert L. Forward.
21. I have walked in a dish of the Very Large Array radio telescope in New Mexico while wearing a Carl Sagan t-shirt. *CONTACT* is one of my favorite books/movies.
22. I generally ignore Sportsball, but do watch the NBA. Not sure why.
23. I no longer look like a runner, but I have survived two marathons.
24. My second novel *SPIDER STAR* was a Science Fiction Book Club featured alternate. I was once a member and it was cool to see my book in their catalog.
25. I am open minded about the nature of UFOs, I mean, UAPs!

Rick Heinz

Special Guest



What else can be said about this person that hasn't already been uttered in hushed murmurs from within hidden shadows by Eldritch Beings commiserating on how to remove the pesky thorn in their sides known only as... "Rick"?

For starters, I can say Rick Heinz is a damn fine storyteller, friend, and all-around human being. We'll get to the storytelling and writing credentials in a moment, but let's focus on Rick the human. In my personal experience with Rick, he has shown himself to be a truly genuine person who just wants everyone around him to be happy and successful. Don't let the gothy exterior fool you, Rick is a golden retriever in the skin of a human (he's going to be so annoyed with me for saying that, but I'm keeping it in).

When it comes to collaborating with Rick, the first thing you will notice is the guy is an absolute workhorse. If he tells you he's going to write 5,000 words by Thursday, expect to get 5,0001 words by Wednesday. The second thing is, he looks out for his people. I've personally witnessed him fall on his metaphorical sword more than once to protect people on his team. Another example of this mentality was on full display during our crowdfunding campaign for *The Black Ballad*:

Rick built in multiple stretch goals that only existed to give raises to our freelance collaborators. That was it. Nothing for us or for the studio. It was purely a small pay bump for the team. At Storytellers Forge, we want to make sure everyone else: the customers, the community members, and the professional collaborators get taken care of first whether it be due compensation or owed content. Them first, us last. Because there is no Storytellers Forge without those people. I give Rick the lion's share of credit for setting that tone.

Speaking of work, let's talk about Rick's contributions to the creative world. We have to begin with *The Seventh Age* novel series, because really that was the vehicle in which Rick really entered the professional writing space. It was also part of how he and I connected in the first place, as both our debut novels came out from the same publisher relatively close to one another, which led to us meeting at a book signing. So for that alone, *The Seventh Age* will always be one of my favorite series. So far, Rick has released *The Seventh Age: Dawn* and *The Seventh Age: Dystopia*. And for those of you reading this who are already fans, I've got a scoop for you... come closer... Book 3, also known as *The Seventh Age: Decay* has been written and is currently in the beta reading phase (Shhhhh, you didn't hear it from me). This series is a veritable smorgasbord of urban punk fantasy delights.

Then of course we have Rick's prolific work in the Tabletop Gaming universe. He has written dozens of articles on a wide array of TTRPG-related topics for numerous institutions including Nerdist and Geek & Sundry. He has worked as a professional Game Master for events like *RPG in a Castle*. Rick has co-authored multiple epic TTRPG campaign books such as *The Red Opera*, *The Black Ballad*, and the currently in-production *Festival of the Forgotten*.

Rick has also written the official TTRPG adaptations of major franchise properties such as *The Crow* and *Universal Soldier*. And, with the launch of *The ST Forge* podcast, we can add "podcast host" to Rick's list of roles and responsibilities.

I wish I could spill the tea on all the incredible projects Rick Heinz has in store for the future. But I won't. I've already said too much. You're just going to have to stick around and enjoy the ride. I know I am.

Pat Edwards, Co-Founder of Storytellers Forge

Christian Ready

Guest of Honor



By Rob Staeger

It's sometime in the early 90s, and Christian Ready is walking out of the Claridge Casino & Hotel in Atlantic City, New Jersey. After spending some time at the blackjack tables, he has a little extra money in his pocket, and a little extra spring in his step. He makes his way through the lobby, and he's jostled by an older gentleman coming in off the street. Chris takes a moment to collect himself, then looks him in the eye and says, "Wrong pocket, friend." And like magic, the would-be pickpocket vanishes as quickly as he appeared, making an about-face and discreetly hauling ass down Indiana Avenue.

That's the kind of confidence my friend Chris is known for. That's the kind of calm he projects. He was being robbed—on a day when he'd just had a windfall, in a year when neither of us had too many spare nickels to rub together—and he just dismisses the guy. You lose. Better luck next time, friend.

I've known Chris since middle school, and I can tell you this: Things did not come easy for him. Some kids are prodigies in school, somehow instinctively mastering math and science like they were cribbing notes from Pythagoras. That wasn't Chris. Chris has talent and smarts out the wazoo—I'm assured that is the proper medical term—but it all came from study and effort. The mastery of the facts that he presents in

his classes at Towson University and his terrific Launch Pad Astronomy videos comes from a genuine interest and love for the material. Like a black hole, it pulled him in.

This is the point where Chris would politely tell me that my metaphor vastly oversimplifies the effects of a black hole. Likely, he'd use the resources of the Towson University Planetarium in his explanation; Chris has been the planetarium director there since , hosting classes for students and regular open events for the Baltimore-area public. And chances are, in his explanation he'd give me a detail that would make my metaphor even better and wiser. But I'm writing this without his input, so I'm at sea without a sextant here. Bear with me.

What I'm trying to say is, it's all the effort Chris put forth to learn—the struggles with math, and, frankly, the indifferent shrugs of some of his instructors—that makes him such a great teacher. Some people take a rocket ship to understanding. Chris walked until he could run, and ran until he could fly. So he knows every step of the way, and he has the patience to point out all the landmarks as you go—whether that's in a classroom, a public outreach effort, or under the dazzling projection of the planetarium's dome.

And speaking of those public outreach efforts—I'd be remiss if I didn't mention the Launch Pad Astronomy Workshops held yearly in Laramie, Wyoming. Chris joins founder Mike Brotherton and a handful of like-minded instructors in teaching a collection of writers, editors, teachers, and creative professionals about modern science, so that actual scientific knowledge comes through in what they write. Who knows how many readers and students have become better informed, thanks to the work Chris and Mike do there each year?

The magician Penn Jillette once said (and I'm paraphrasing here) that the secret to a successful magic trick is to devote so much more time, money, and practice to doing it than anyone sane could even imagine. It's a herculean effort that creates the illusion of effortlessness.

Maybe that's just the nature of all knowledge. It's certainly that way with astronomy, a field that has wrestled against instinct from day one. (And a good thing, too, or else we'd never have gotten past the whole Flat Earth thing.)

But there's one more thing you should know about my friend Chris. He's calmly, confidently funny as hell. This is easy to miss.

Okay, maybe that doesn't sound like a compliment, but I mean it as one. Chris's wit is saltine-dry. He witnesses absurdity, and, as if it were a casino pickpocket, he gives it the barest tilt of the head—just enough to lampshade it and make you burst out laughing. For those paying attention, he's Spock's arched eyebrow.

And if Chris is talking, it's always worth paying attention. The dude knows a lot.

Rob Staeger (@robstaeger.bsky.social) is a writer and editor who lives and works in New Jersey.

Megen Leigh

Artist Guest of Honor



Over the last several years I've been on a journey of self discovery through art. I have experimented with a variety of styles and mediums trying to find that one thing that defines me as an artist. I've come to the conclusion that I'm never going to stop evolving and experimenting. The journey is what keeps me going. Watercolor painting was my nemesis. I was used to pen and ink sketching which can be very tight and controlled. Exploring watercolor has been an exercise in letting go of some of that control. I can just play, let the colors flow and blend, let things take shape organically. I've since come back to ink, and find myself trying to bring the flow and freedom of watercolor with me, which has been fueling my abstract work. My pieces range from realistic to whimsical to abstract but all with an eye towards what's hidden in the world around us. One thing all of them have in common is that they all started out from that mindset of experimentation, imagination and spontaneity. My mood, my thoughts, my surroundings all inform what I lean into and what I leave alone. I use bold bright colors and imaginative scenes that evoke fairytale-like wonder, while creatures and monsters often appear within the scenery I create organically. I enjoy hiding small details and hints of stories throughout

my pieces, so often the closer you look the more you see.

As the daughter of a science fiction writer, I grew up in the science fiction and fantasy community. This community has been the village that helped raise me and heavily informed the kind of person I've become. I also grew up always being encouraged to explore my creativity and express myself through art. I found myself constantly drawing fantasy creatures and characters, doodling dragons in the margins of all my textbooks, and creating characters for stories I was writing in my head. As I got older, I got into theatre and sports, but kept drawing. I always had a pen or pencil on me and a sketchbook close at hand. At some point I convinced myself that I didn't want to make art my career because I didn't want to take the fun out of it for myself. I got more concerned about what other people might think about my sketches and stopped showing people what I did. Imposter syndrome is real and can be crippling. I stopped practicing, stopped sketching, threw myself into trying to be an "adult". I stopped creating, and though I didn't realize it for a while, I had closed off a big piece of myself.

I graduated college with a Bachelor's of Philosophy. This doesn't exactly immediately illuminate a career path and I was burnt out on academia so going for an advanced degree was off the table. The daily grind of the retail world took a toll on my self worth and confidence. Something big needed to change. My wife convinced me that I needed to find a creative outlet and challenged me to start drawing regularly again. Shortly after, I started volunteering as an artist mentor with a group of artists with various developmental disabilities and discovered a passion for working with this population. Being in a space regularly with a whole bunch of other people making art, especially a space where reactions are genuine and without judgement, pushed me to create more myself and find my voice. Since then, I've had my work in several exhibitions around Columbus, OH, including a solo exhibition titled Deconstructing Nature at the the German Village Society. I've participated in a number of juried arts festivals, including the Columbus Arts Festival and earned an Artist in Residency spot at High Road Gallery and Studios in Worthington, OH. While I still feel like a newcomer to the professional art world, I'm excited to be here sharing my work, my process, and myself with all of you.

This weekend at Windycon, I'll be hosting a fun painting party (come get creative with us), doing a live painting demo (with audience participation encouraged) and participating in panels around queer representation.

Papa Bear Studios

Cosplay Guest of Honor



Award winning cosplayer, craftsman, and DnD enthusiast with a mission to spread positivity within the cosplay community. Fueled by a passion for helping others Papa Bear volunteers at charity events, hosts free cosplay workshops, and has been judging worldwide cosplay competitions for over a decade.



Ben Riggs

Gaming Guest of Honor



Ben Riggs by Rob Wieland

Ben Riggs is defined by two unshakeable characteristics in the 45 years he's been on the planet. The first is an insatiable curiosity. Ben wants to know more about everything and once he gets the itch he can't scratch it until he's dug his teeth into the truth. The other is a sense of adventure. Learning about the world is rarely satisfying when it's done from the safety of a laptop and a Wikipedia dive. It's better to go out in the world and see it first hand.

That's what first pulled him out of the Midwest. He left scenic Milwaukee, WI for Boston where he rubbed elbows with future creatives and scholars at Boston University. His experiences on the East Coast opened his eyes to more opportunities to learn around the world. He taught in Japan, Egypt and China where he learned multiple languages while still craving burritos back home. The more he traveled, the more he realized education was a calling that he had to answer.

That led him to a life as a teacher using the Montessori method. Formal education is still a relatively young discipline and Ben explores the tools that work best with kids growing up in our worlds today. It's not just simple reading assignments and book reports. Ben encourages his students to engage with the world just like he did, including playing Dungeons & Dragons with peers and teachers.

Ben played tabletop RPGs for 30 years. Dungeons & Dragons is the one the rest orbit around and a few years ago he found an opportunity to explore the history of this new media in an unexpected way. What began as a short set of articles for a website turned into his first foray into the publishing world. *Slaying The Dragon* is the product of many late nights, angry doors slammed in his face and moments where everything seemed to lead to a dead end. Ben rose to the challenge and put together a tantalizing history of something that far too many people brush off as a mere game.

Dungeons & Dragons matters to a lot of people.. It's kicked off the careers of thousands of creatives in TV, movies and other industries. It's become a gateway to parents connecting with their kids. It's a social activity for schools, libraries and other institutions just as vital as sports or clubs. It's become the bedrock of actual play, a new form of media that's being born right now with all the glories and growing pains of a newborn child.

Ben couldn't be more excited to watch these changes from his vantage point. He's the first to tell you that understanding the history of a thing is vital to understanding the present. Much of D&D's first era was shrouded in mystery, hearsay and rumor that only now is being cleared up by people like him. To understand where these games are going, you have to understand where they came from. You have to understand who made them, why they made them and why they made the decisions they did. That's not an easy thing to do after 50 years of buried feelings and bad memories.

Ben continues to teach and shape young minds everyday. He's also fighting to make sure that the history unfolding right now around games isn't quietly buried under press releases and public relations moves. He's showing his kids how to be curious. He leads by example in working on his next book, playing games, podcasting about D&D and speaking at conventions about his writing.

His next adventure has only just begun.

The Faithful Sidekicks

Music Guest of Honor



Faithful Sidekicks by Rand and Erin Bellavia of Via Bella.

If you're familiar with The Faithful Sidekicks, then you're in luck. They're the Music Guests of Honor at this year's Windycon! If you're not familiar with the Faithful Sidekicks, then you're in luck. They're the Music Guests of Honor at this year's Windycon! If you're reading this after the con, you may be out of luck.

The Faithful Sidekicks are Eric and Jen Distad. They describe their music as "acoustic geek comedy rock," but you'd need at least three more words to come even close to capturing their concert vibe. Eric plays guitar and sings most of the lead vocals, Jen plays bass, sings harmony (and occasional lead) vocals, and provides glorious color commentary. They've been performing together for over a decade, and in that time they've won two Pegasus Awards (including Best Performer) and have been inducted into the Filk Hall of Fame! (Told you you were lucky.)

Of course, even the best performers need good material, and fortunately they've got that to spare. Their debut album **. * and Other Star Things* was released in 2016. They successfully avoided the sophomore slump with 2018's *Achievement Unlocked*, and went on to release *TWO* albums in 2021 (*Our Kind of Strange* in January and *Sales of Interest* in August) and *Dark Side of the Meep* in 2022. This

year they released a Holiday themed EP called *Santa is A Redshirt* and a four song EP called *The Booster Pack* which features their mental health anthem *Brain Weasel Smacking Time*.

Their songs are nerdy and funny and serious and clever and heartfelt and -- perhaps most importantly -- well-written. But hey Windycon, we understand if you're not sure if their stuff is for you, so try these titles on for size:

- *Han Solo for President*
- *I Read the Comments*
- *Spoons*
- *Meeple Love*
- *Iocaine*
- *Fandoms Assemble*

Is now a good time to mention that we both sang on their recording of "Fandoms Assemble"? No? Maybe later? Too late? Okay.

Eric is a founding member of FAWM (February Album Writing Month), where members are challenged to write 14 songs in 28 days. So if you've always wanted to finish that rock opera, make sure to chat Eric up. If gaming is more your thing, you should know that Jen records a regular "Jen Talks Games" segment on the Faithful Sidekicks' YouTube channel.

Because he clearly has too much free time* Eric just released a solo album called *The Other Side*, and will be performing selections from that album at a special concert. He'll be joined on stage by Jen Midkiff, Lauren Oxford, Summer Russell, and Sunnie Larsen, all of whom contributed to the album and half of whom were Music Guests of Honor at previous Windycons!

We hope you get to see Eric and Jen in concert this weekend, and walk away with an album or two. We also hope you take the opportunity to meet and spend time with them because they are the sort of smart, kind, and good-hearted people that make you proud to be a part of fandom. We think you'll find them to be exactly your kind of strange, and that's pretty lucky.

— Rand and Erin Bellavia (aka Via Bella and one-half of Ookla the Mok, but we're not telling you which one or what half)

** Eric does not, in fact, have too much free time. That was sarcasm.*

Tom Smith

Musician Special Guest



A Depreciation of Tom Smith

Robert L. Rede

Tom Smith learned his craft at the knee of Lefty Wilson, a one armed filker who was so-fast he could play all the difficult bits. After besting Wilson in underwater filk composition, Tom left his apprenticeship (without killing a single youngling) and took his rightful place as a Master Filker. Tom immediately had a guitar grafted to his body and bionic fingers implanted, gaining him the title of the “World’s Fastest Filker.”

In 1986, Tom took Larry Niven’s essay “Man of Steel, Woman of Kleenex” to heart and composed the song “Superman Sex Life Boogie” at Ohio Valley Filk Fest (OVFF). It won him his first Pegasus Award. It was only the first of many. Fourteen at last count, including three in 1991.

Tom is a fan. He shows his fannish love by writing songs about the works that speak to him. You can catch up on all of Babylon 5 by listening to “Five Years” or learn the cast of Firefly with “I’m on Firefly.” If you share his love of old films, there’s “When I Grow Up, I Want to Be Peter Lorre” (another Pegasus winner). Of course, who can forget “The Ballad of Jedi Clampett.”

Although Tom, or, as I like to call him, Tom, is known for his humorous songs that use pop culture as a starting point and tack on an almost Dalíesque sense of the surreal, he has also written masterpieces such as “A Boy and a Frog” and “Honey

Baked Ham,” which will leave even the most rock-hearted listeners broken down. He can write love songs such as “Rich Fantasy Lives” and “The Ballad of Rupert.”

You can often find Tom at conventions, not just in the Midwest, but throughout the country. A mainstay at Windycon, he has also attended Capricons, He can also be found at OVFF, Dragon Con, various Worldcons, and numerous other conventions. In 2015, he was one of the guests of honor at Sasquan, the 73rd World Science Fiction Convention.

Challenging himself, he decided to take suggestions of comic book style titles to create a filk opera, The Last Hero on Earth in twenty-four hours. He asked for suggestions, chose twenty of them including “Behold the Crossing Guard,” “Romance of George and Al,” and “Mad Scientists United” to create a rock opera with a plot. Someday, someone should create animation to go along with the album.

Tom has also written holiday standards, including the official song for “Talk Like a Pirate Day,” the Thanksgiving anthem “So, Thanks,” and the Christmas carol classics “Ultimate Ultimate Christmas” and “We Need A Little Krampus.” In the tradition of musical satirists, he often unleashes his frustration with the political world with songs that skewer the hypocrisy, greed, and dishonesty of politicians and pundits.

By this time, you’re asking yourself where you can hear these and other songs. Since you’re at Windycon, you can go to Tom’s concerts and the open filk. When he isn’t playing, he’ll have a big stack of CDs you can buy (because Tom understands that some of us love our old physical media). However, since in all probability you’re not reading this until after the con is over, you can also head over to Bandcamp (<https://tomsmith.bandcamp.com/>) and buy his music at your convenience.

Bill Fawcett

Special Guest



Bill Fawcett by Jody Lynn Nye

It was on a Saturday night at a long-ago CapriCon when he walked into my life. Fair-haired and blue-eyed, he had a twinkle about him that I couldn't resist. He asked for my phone number. I gave him my office line. You can't be too careful about the people you meet at a science fiction convention in the middle of the night. But it only got better after that. We started dating a few days later, and have hardly been apart from one another since then. He's kind, funny, generous, and is always trying to make our lives better.

Smart chicks dig smart guys, and Bill is one of the most intelligent people I know. I love being able to ask him weird questions and get useful answers. (Take that, Google.) Before I knew him, he had been a teacher, a college dean, an insurance agent trainer, and the founder of a game shop which is still operating today. As a gamer myself, I knew I had found a kindred spirit. At the time we met, he was one of the partners running Mayfair Games. They were notable for a number of products, including an award-winning train game that he had designed, *Empire Builder*, card games like *Family Business*, and role-play-modules-suitable-for-playing-with-Advanced-Dungeons-&-Dragons™ known as *Role-Aids*. As a lover of D&D and puns, that only fired my ardor further. He wooed me with nice dinners out, evenings at jazz piano bars, and about a gallon or so of crystal dice. No gamer could resist that.

He is also a writer. When we met, he had written a series

of fantasy choose-your-own-adventures (remember those?) for Ace Books, and was working on a number of nonfiction books about mistakes in history. He had a number of other books in progress. He's also an editor. He wanted to work with other writers and promote young authors in the field. With David Drake, he created one of the most notable shared-world anthology series in *The Fleet*, which featured such authors as Poul Anderson, Gordon R. Dickson, Anne McCaffrey, and Gary Gygax. Bill has also edited dozens of themed anthologies that were published by Ace, DAW, TOR Books, and Baen Books. One of the most interesting facets of these collections is that they always featured a young writer who had not yet been professionally published elsewhere.

But Bill makes no small plans. He's what's known in the industry as a book packager (or a book facilitator, if you ask the Executive VP at Harper Collins). For Ace and TOR, Bill created series of choose-your-own-adventures that were based in known SF and fantasy worlds, such as Anne McCaffrey's *Pern*, Piers Anthony's *Xanth*, Roger Zelazny's *Amber*, and so on. The writers he chose were largely newcomers, and had to know game mechanics as well as good writing. The series lasted until the coming of Nintendo, alas. That was fine. Bill moved on from there to create gazetteers of known SF and fantasy worlds. The first of those was *The Visual Guide to Castle Amber* written by Neil Randall and illustrated by Todd Cameron Hamilton. He also created illustrated guides for *Xanth*, *The Wheel of Time*, and *Pern*. His next big project was teaming well-known authors with young writers to help expand established series that the authors had no time to do on their own. Bill worked with David Drake, CJ Cherryh, Anne McCaffrey, and a number of others, and their protégés, including Elizabeth Moon, SM Stirling, Mercedes Lackey, and me. Later, he created the *Star Line* for Baen Books that paired actors from SF or fantasy television series with writers to pen books that were good yarns but could also become vehicles for those actors to star in. Armin Shimerman so enjoyed his *Merchant Prince* series with Irish writer Michael Scott that he started writing his own books, and has become a successful author on his own.

Bill has a deep interest in military history, particularly Napoleonic. He has worked with the Navy SEALs, helping to document their history and recording the experiences of many in the corps, from its foundation in the 1960s forward. *The History of the Navy SEALs*, written by Kevin Dockery, which Bill facilitated, has become their official textbook in their training regimen.

When not promoting other writers and penning his own books (*Never Again* came out recently from Chris Kennedy Books!), Bill plays a lot of online MMORPGs, participates in a weekly online D&D game, travels, reads a ton of books, and generally enjoys what he calls "retirement." Like me, he spends a good deal of his time catering to our three feline overlords. Chat with him if you get a chance this weekend. He has a wealth of good stories to tell.

Kristin Looney

Special Guest



Kristin Looney by Jeanne

Kristin Looney likely doesn't match your mental image of a CEO. Instead of the suit you might expect in a boardroom, her standard uniform consists of a tie-dyed t-shirt, black slacks, and a colorful bandana over her long gray hair. But don't judge this book by its cover! As CEO of Looney Labs, she has led her small business from the first version of Fluxx published nearly 30 years ago to the 50+ titles in their catalog today.

While she has many passions, from teaching others how to solve Rubik's cubes to dancing to music with a great beat, her enthusiasm for growing Looney Labs and bringing joy to game players of all stripes exceeds all the rest. I could certainly fill this bio with a shiny list of accomplishments. Instead, I would like to share with you a list of things I love and admire about Kristin Looney. Things that will likely become immediately obvious to you, too, if you get the opportunity to spend some time with her.

1. **Ambition and Confidence:** These two attributes have served Kristin exceedingly well. Most of us wouldn't see past the safety and stability of a job in the field we studied in college to imagine building a brand new company from scratch! Kristin took that leap - and we are all the better for having the games that Looney Labs publishes in our lives. Her ambition continues to drive her to identify the best of Andy's fountain of new game ideas to bring to market and identify how to grow awareness and appreciation for Looney

Labs in new communities. Her confidence is the engine that opens the doors she needs to grow her business.

2. **A Solver of Puzzles:** A bio of Kristin really can't be complete if it doesn't mention her amazing capacity to solve Rubik's cubes, but her love for puzzles certainly doesn't end there. She appreciates puzzles of all kinds - from standard jigsaw puzzles to games with puzzle-solving components. She even has her own method that she teaches to others for solving Rubik's cubes. If you're lucky, you might get a chance to attend Kristin's Cube Academy!

3. **Creativity:** Kristin loves hands-on creative projects. Anyone who has received one of her trademark bananas over the years knows her tie-dye skills are excellent. But she is just as happy spending an hour making a custom card to send to a friend or making a collage.

4. **Extrovert:** What a great characteristic for a convention guest! Kristin's own energy is replenished when she gets to spend time with people. She'd love to play a game with you!

5. **Contagious Smile and Enthusiasm:** An extension of her joy as an extrovert, Kristin's smile and enthusiasm are contagious. She loves engaging with and learning about her fans.

6. **Values Fun:** Kristin embraces opportunities to have fun, as well as make products that will help others have fun. Part of her great passion for games boils down to valuing fun as a universal good. She wants people to have more joy in their lives, and games can be such an easy way to achieve that.

7. **Social Equality and Caring for the Environment:** Underlying all the rest of the items above is Kristin's commitment to social equality and the environment. She will be the first to tell you she is a hippie at heart. A portion of Looney Labs' proceeds goes to environmental charities. When producing their games, they make the best choices they can to leave the lightest environmental footprint - while still publishing affordable games.

I've had the pleasure of knowing Kristin for over a decade. I know you will leave smiling if you spend some time with her, and that that will make her day as well. Go find her! Say hello! Yes, she would love to play a game with you this weekend.

Jody Lynn Nye

Special Guest



Jody Lynn Nye by Bill Fawcett

Glimpses and Moments

How to describe Jody Lynn Nye in a few hundred words. That has several challenges. Beyond still being married to her after she reads this, the real one is that Jody has so many sides and sometimes real contrasts. So, I am attempting here to give you glimpses of Jody as she lives and writes.

The first image is a young Jody who has been introduced to a new type of game, Dungeons and Dragons. Not long after that she begins dating the Brian, the president of TSR. While the romance didn't endure, it had one lasting effect. That summer TSR needed someone to type up, and maybe clean up a little, their next products from Gary Gygax's hand written notes. So, Jody spent her summer typing up the original DMG, Monster Manual, and Player's Guide.

The next glimpse of an early Jody Nye is when she began writing. This was in fanzines (pre internet) and for years, before ever trying to sell her writings, Jody contributed to fanzines, including Star Trek, Star Wars, and Doctor Who. It was a creative community with writers supporting each other and holding conventions for the more popular zines. A surprising number of future SF and romance authors got their start in the 80s doing fanzines. Neither forgotten nor gone, as there is still a box full in our basement.

I met Jody at a Chicago SF Con at 1 am. At dinner the next week, we found we had much in common. She was just

beginning to think about writing professionally and was the technical operations manager of a local TV station based in the Hancock Building. Before it went on the air, she had apprenticed with the chief engineer and helped build the station's the broadcast equipment. On some cold nights, she could be found on a top floor, over 90 stories up, trying to keep the water cooling the Klystron tube from freezing over and staying away from the windows as the building swayed in the wind. Yep, Jody was a techie and good at it. In our almost 40 years together since, I have never had to hook up a VHS, then DVD, or TV.

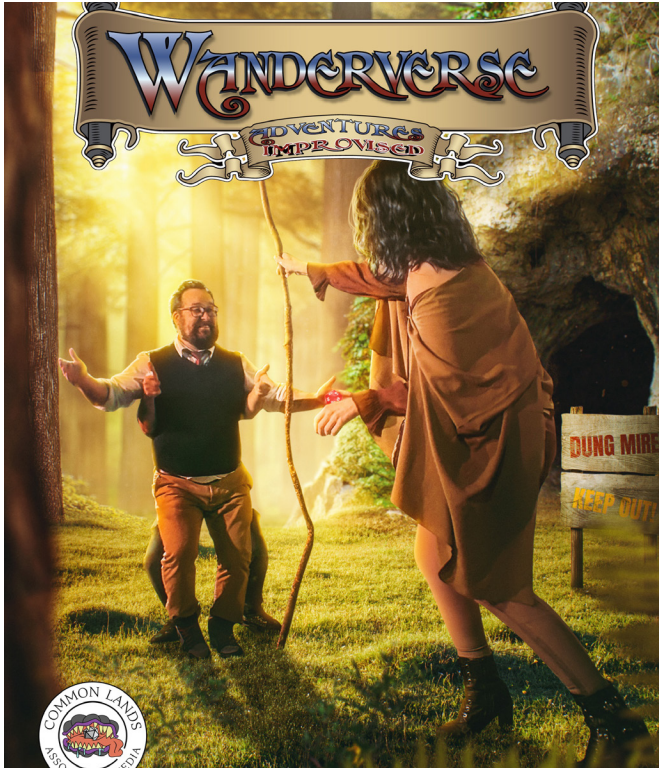
For the last four decades Jody has been writing full time. Beyond just being a writer, she often states how she enjoys her commute. This has never been more than thirty feet. After spending years driving into and out of Chicago every day, she watches traffic reports and then thanks the gods, mostly Bast, for working at home.

For almost all of her career Jody preferred to write on her laptop, normally curled up on a chair or couch. The intensity is there, and the concentration, but not the formal posture. Because she is often writing where I can hear her comments, I have learned a few things about how she thinks when she writes. A major revelation is that her characters tend to develop even off camera. Somewhere in her mind, they are evolving until they are ready for their next scene. It is certainly is not a conscious process. I remember occasion when she burst out with a (mild) profanity. I hurried in to see her smiling. She explained that they are getting married? Who, she explained, were two of her minor characters. She hadn't planned it, but as she wrote, it was suddenly was wedding time. It was better for the plot and characterizations as well, but even to her unexpected. She also tends to skip around in a book when writing it. Everything is in its place in her head, but she has the unique ability to write on a romantic complication in the morning in chapter 11 and that afternoon wrap the fight scene in chapter 18. I have also often heard her say that she was drying up on a book, only to have her seeming start fresh on a short story a few hours later. Once I derail my train of thought like that, it's a train wreck, but she bounces between scenes and stories regularly. This may relate how she seems to have the flow of the entire book in her head when she starts.

Finally, there is the most central element the life of Jody Lynn Nye. No, not me, silly. Her cats. When she writes they tend sprawl around whatever room they are in. No matter the hour, an off-key meow and she is up at any hour checking on them. Our present three feline overlords have seven scratching poles, two tall cat environments, uncountable toys, treats on demand, and often claim an entire couch to rest nearby on. It is amazing how a 14-pound cat can lie in such a way that no one else fits on a five or, even eight foot couch. When we get a check for an advance or royalties, Jody often does the math and describes it stating how many cans of premium cat food it would buy. It says it best that many of Jody's friends have stated that they hope to reincarnated as one of her cat companions.

Wanderverse

Guest Performer



Come see the greatest fantasy tabletop RPG improv sketch comedy PowerPoint show there is!

Welcome to a one-of-a-kind experience that blends the thrilling elements of tabletop role-playing games (RPGs), improv comedy, sketch performances, and multimedia interaction all into one unforgettable show. Whether you're a seasoned RPG player, a fan of live comedy, or completely new to both, WANDERVERSE - Adventures Improvised promises to be an exhilarating ride filled with laughter, adventure, and endless surprises.

At its core, WANDERVERSE is a live-action improvisational comedy show unlike any other. The cast of talented improvisers and comedians take the audience on an epic journey through the mystical realms of the Common Lands. Each show is a completely original and unscripted adventure, where the story unfolds based on audience input and the quick-witted performances of our cast. Imagine the energy and unpredictability of a live improv show combined with the deep lore and world-building of a tabletop RPG—this is the heart of what makes WANDERVERSE so unique.

But that's just the beginning. As a member of our audience, you don't just watch the show—you become an essential part of it! Each audience member assumes the role of a non-playable character (NPC) in the story, influencing the decisions of our heroes and guiding their fate. From the moment you enter the theater, you're a part of the action.

You'll provide key suggestions that help shape the storyline, determine the obstacles our heroes face, and even influence how they achieve victory—or meet their hilarious downfall.

Our Interactive Twist

In addition to live improv, WANDERVERSE takes audience participation to the next level with our custom-built Digital Participation Software (DPS). Imagine this: while our cast is performing on stage, you, the audience, are actively shaping the course of their journey. Using your smartphone or device, you'll dive into our original animated storybook and cast your votes for key plot decisions in real time. Want to send our heroes into a dragon's lair? Maybe you'd prefer to pit them against a team of rival adventurers in a chaotic tournament? With DPS, the choice is yours.

Throughout the show, you'll be able to trigger surprises, cast magical spells, or even summon creatures to either aid or hinder our adventurers—all from your device. You have the power to drastically alter the storyline, and because each show is completely improvised, no two performances are ever the same. Every performance is a fresh adventure, making each show a must-see, even for returning fans.

Join the Adventure and Shape the Fate of the Common Lands!

In the world of WANDERVERSE, the Common Lands is a vast and fantastical realm filled with diverse regions, strange creatures, and powerful magic. Every performance explores a different corner of this rich world, offering a new story that is created live, right before your eyes.

The cast of WANDERVERSE—playing a group of adventurers known as the Wanderers—are tasked with completing quests, navigating treacherous dungeons, and facing a wide variety of foes. Their success hinges on their own quick thinking and, of course, your input as an audience member. Will you guide them toward triumph, or will they stumble into disaster? That's for you to decide.

And don't worry if you've never played a tabletop RPG before. Our friendly cast and crew will guide you through the process, making sure everyone can participate, whether you're an experienced gamer or a total beginner. The emphasis is always on fun, spontaneity, and hilarity, so there's no wrong way to play!

Our History

WANDERVERSE originally started as a tabletop roleplaying game set in, "The Common Lands," an ever-expanding Cosmos filled with uncharted lands, planets (called Realms), arcane mysteries, and whimsical wonders. The Common Lands can be described as a blend of sword-and-sorcery fantasy with a touch of sci-fi and modernity. What started as a small, private game quickly grew into a larger community as more and more people were drawn to its blend of storytelling, creativity, and collaboration in the Chicagoland and Indianapolis gaming communities. The game was designed to be accessible to players of all experience levels, with simplified rules and an emphasis on

storytelling and character story development.

In 2022, the Laugh Out Loud theater in the Chicagoland area took notice and contracted the creators - Common Lands Associated Media to take their flagship game - WANDERVERSE - and draft a comedy show based on their original game world - The Common Lands.

What Makes WANDERVERSE Special?

Wanderverse - Adventures Improvised offers a one-of-a-kind experience that blends the thrilling elements of tabletop role-playing games (RPGs), improv comedy, sketch performances, and multimedia interaction all into one unforgettable show.

Whether you're a seasoned RPG player, a fan of live comedy, someone who just likes dressing up like an elf, or completely new to the world of the Common Lands, WANDERVERSE Adventures Improvised promises something for everyone with an exhilarating ride filled with laughter, adventure, and endless surprises.

Brave Space Alliance

About Brave Space Alliance

Brave Space Alliance is the first Black-led, trans-led LGBTQ+ Center located on the South Side of Chicago, dedicated to creating and providing affirming, culturally competent, for-us by-us resources, programming, and services for LGBTQ+ individuals on the South and West sides of the city. We strive to empower, embolden, and educate each other through mutual aid, knowledge-sharing, and the creation of community-sourced resources as we build toward the liberation of all oppressed peoples.

Mission

Brave Space Alliance is the first Black-led, trans-led LGBTQ+ Center located on the South Side of Chicago, dedicated to creating and providing affirming, culturally competent, for-us by-us resources, programming, and services for LGBTQ+ individuals on the South and West sides of the city. We strive to empower, embolden, and educate each other through mutual aid, knowledge-sharing, and the creation of community-sourced resources as we build toward the liberation of all oppressed peoples.

Dignity First Approach

Dignity is a fundamental human right that should be afforded to all members of the LGBTQ+ community, without exception. Unfortunately, LGBTQ+ individuals have historically faced significant levels of discrimination and marginalization in society, leading to negative impacts on their mental health and well-being. It is crucial to promote respect, acceptance, and inclusion for all members of the LGBTQ+ community, in order to build a more equitable and just society.

Four Pillars of Dignity

Health, Housing, Food, Identity.

Programs

Jasmine Alexander Housing Building, Southside neighborhood

Community Pantry

The community pantry serves the TLBG+ community & is a critical resource for ALL Chicagoans who are facing systemic discrimination and marginalization. Our pantry helps to address the issue of food insecurity, which is a significant concern for many TLBG+ individuals who may experience homelessness, poverty, or other forms of economic hardship. Being specifically designed to serve the TLBG+ community can help to ensure that everyone has access to the resources they need to thrive. that can help individuals in need.

The Pantry is open Monday-Thursday 10:00 am – 4:00 pm and Fridays, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Please contact our Coordinator, José with any questions. joser@bravespacealliance.org.

Identity Enrichment Services

The Brave trifecta states that when you look good, you feel good, when you feel good, you do good. We prioritize self-care and view it as a necessary part of our community's holistic health.

Barbershop

Nail salon

Hair services

Facials

Massages

Dignity Suit

The Brave Space Alliance walk-in closet provides free, gender-affirming clothing, and other products that are meant to foster dignified access to what makes our clients feel good.

STI/HIV testing

Brave Space offers on-site HIV and STI testing that is rooted in compassion and education. Our tester prioritizes concern for our client's overall sexual health and fosters opportunities to educate about safety and harm reduction. At-home tests are also available.

Our testing services are not limited to our center. We believe in meeting our clients where they are, which is why our testing services collaborate with community and night-live events to provide testing all around the city.

Please contact Chrissy with any questions at chrish@bravespacealliance.org.

Bheer Suite, Con Suite, & Atrium Cafe

The Con Suite will be providing coffee, tea, soda, and snacks to our members. We have a comfortable lounge area — The Con Suite Annex — across from the Con Suite for you to meet up and hang out with your friends. Beer and cider will not be in the Con Suite this year, but rest assured, we'll still have beer and cider for you; they will be in their own Bheer Suite, subject to rules below.

Bheer Suite

Room 655

Beer & Cider Rules

1. Red Cups Do Not Leave The Bheer Suite. Ever. All red cups, which are to be exclusive vessels for beer, are prohibited to be removed from the Bheer Suite
2. You Must Show ID and Badge. Those who wish to imbibe any alcoholic concoctions will be required to show the Bheer Gods your convention badge, and you must also have your genuine government issued Driver's License or State ID. This is to confirm that you are indeed, the actual person identified on the back of your convention badge, as well as at least 21 years of age.
3. Our Bheer Gods may request to see your government issued Driver's License or State ID at any time.
4. The Bheer Gods are only allowed to dispense alcohol in the Bheer Suite, as per our Hotel contract.
5. Anyone caught serving their own alcohol will be asked to leave.

The Con Suite will be providing coffee, tea, soda, and snacks.

The Atrium Cafe has a all-you-can-eat buffet available for purchase per day/time.

Each day/time is a separate purchase.

Parties

Midwest Creatives Networking (21+)

Room 646

Barfleet (21+)

abandon.barfleet.org

Room 755

GT (All Ages Welcome)

Friends, food, conversation

Room 654

The Royal Manticoran Navy (All Ages Welcome)

TRMN will be rolling pods again at Windycon 50!

trmn.org

Room 710

Elvin Toast (All Ages Welcome, Friday only)

Join us to help toast the Elvin gods and goddesses. We meet to drink and toast, going around the room so everyone can participate. Please bring your own drink for toasting.

Room 743

Minneapolis in '73 (All Ages Welcome)

2073 is just around the corner and there's no better time to put in your bid. Come join us for drinks, Rock Band, and other fun stuff!

Room 642

Box Fort (All Ages Welcome, Saturday Only)

Let your flag fly! Come join Box Fort and Capricon on Saturday night and make your mark on the fort! We'll have drinks, charcuterie, doodles, and all the whimsy of a box fort!

Room 639

Montreal 2027 (All Ages Welcome, Saturday Only)

Canadian bid party, Montréal in 2027: A bid for the 85th World Science Fiction Convention. Come and explore our city as we highlight culture and diversity from September 2nd - 6th, 2027 at the Palais des Congrès de Montréal, between the amazing Old Port and Chinatown.

Room 641

Parties

Parties

We all love a party, and we'd like to thank all of the groups throwing parties here at Windycon. Of course, there are:

Rules

- The legal drinking age in Illinois is 21 and the parties will be checking IDs at the door, so please be sure to have your ID on you at all times.
- Be respectful of the hotel and the others around you.
- The Double-Tree is a NON-smoking hotel. If you wish to smoke or vape you must go outside.
- Please dispose of all trash in trashcans.
- Keep the parties in the party rooms not the hallways.
- REMEMBER! If it illegal in the non-convention world, it is illegal in the convention world too.

Awards

These are this year's party awards: Be sure to vote for your favorites!

- Best Party
- Best Alcoholic Drink
- Best Non-Alcoholic Drink
- Best Food/Snacks

There will be QR codes on every party floor to scan. Scan the code with your smartphone camera to vote for your favorites.. Winners announced at closing ceremonies!

Alcohol will not be served without ID, but you can still join in on the fun and party games.

Ratings

Ratings help communicate what each party has to offer. Be on the lookout for these symbols on party fliers, the party listing in the main lobby, and on each party floor.



Everyone is welcome.



Mature 18+ content. Enter, but be aware of content..



Adults only 21+. Be prepared to show ID to enter



Alcohol is served. Be prepared to show ID to be served.

Special Events

All of the programming at Windycon is special, but there are a lot of things going on over at the Main Stage that we'd like to make sure that you know about.

On Friday at 7:00 PM, we start off with our Opening Ceremonies. This is a great chance to meet the Chairs, meet our great guests, and hear a bit about our plans for the weekend. Right after that at 8:00 PM, we're looking forward to Mike Brotherton and Christian Ready's slide show with the latest from the Webb Space Telescope which we expect to be amazing, because the data that's coming in is something to be seen. At 9:00 PM, Moebius Theatre returns to the Windycon stage with the world premiere of a new play by Charles W. Ott III, *Nowheresville*. It's a romantic comedy set...somewhere. This is the first new play from Moebius in some time and we're looking forward to it!

The Main Stage is packed full on Saturday. Among the many things going on there, you'll want to see Mike Brotherton's presentation on the Dark Side of Astronomy, where he discusses the things that astronomers don't get to see directly. Later in the afternoon, we'll have concerts by returning Windycon favorite, Tom Smith (the world's fastest filker), and music guests, The Faithful Sidekicks. We're delighted to have Eric and Jen Distad as our guests this year as they bring us their original approach to (mostly) humorous geek comedy rock. If you haven't seen them before, you're in for a treat.

But we don't stop when we break for dinner! At 7:00 PM on Saturday, we'll have the first of two shows from the Wanderverse, a live-

action improvisational sketch comedy RPG where you are an essential NPC. (That's non-player character, if you're not familiar with the abbreviation. The "essential" part means that the adventurers should not kill you if they'd like to succeed.) As audience members, you get to interact with their Digital Participation Software to directly influence the outcome of the heroes' journey. And following that show, at 9:00 PM, the Klingon Pop Warrior will host our foray into Klingon Karaoke. Come on down and sing!

Don't drink too much on Saturday night, because you'll want to wake up in the morning on Sunday to catch Christian Ready's updated tour of the universe at 11:00 AM. There's so much going on here, we've programmed him for 90 minutes instead of the usual hour. But the universe is big. Really big.

And at 1:00 PM, we'll have the second show from the Wanderverse, which—being improvisational—will be entirely different from the first. Except for the cast. They keep the cast...

All good things must come to an end, so at 3:00 PM, it'll be time for Closing Ceremonies. There will be one last chance to see our guests, the presentation of awards, and some information on the plans for Windycon 51 from our incoming Chair.

We'll look forward to seeing you!

Special Events

Build-A-Blinkie

Build-A-Blinkie's mission is as a 501©3 organization dedicated to the teaching of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics). We currently run many learn-how-to solder events in the Great Lakes area and are involved in numerous maker events, maker spaces, trade schools, libraries, universities, and area conventions.

The Fused Glass Workshop will be in the Build-A-Blinkie room.

Build-A-Blinkie Soldering Workshop with Dwayne Forsyth, Dale Sulak

Fri 5:00 PM-8:00 PM

Sat 10:00 AM-8:00 PM

Sun 10:00 AM-2:00 PM

If you have never soldered before, this is the place to learn. You get a kit with the parts, and then at the soldering station, you build it. We will give you as much or as little assistance as you like - we never judge because we remember when we first learned to solder and we want this to be a fun and rewarding experience! You then get to show it off and take it home. If you have soldered before, this is the place to hone your skills with our more challenging kits.

Fee for materials.

Fused Glass Workshop with Teri Prah

Fri 5:00 PM-8:00 PM

Sat 10:00 AM-8:00 PM

Create your own pendant, ornament, or mini paperweight, and then fuse it by placing it in the kiln for overnight firing. The number of participants is limited by space in the kiln, so stop in the Build-A-Blinkie room to sign up and schedule a time to coordinate/create with Teri. The Friday and Saturday cutoff is 8pm, as the kiln must run overnight (12 hours).

Fee for materials.

Why Build-a-Blinkie?

A number of us have successful careers in software and electrical engineering and we noticed it was getting harder and harder to do home projects. We also noticed the kits and parts market we used in our youth was gone.

At some point the general public's view of soldering shifted to something too dangerous. Kids can bicycle, ski, or toboggan, but don't use that soldering iron. It's too dangerous. The era of build and repair it yourself was dying and companies like Heathkit and Radio Shack have faded into the sunset. Even today with the new emphasis on STEM education, we still hit multiple obstacles. Many events have to clear our appearance with the fire marshal and have to run it past the legal department. We are working to prove soldering is easy, and not a deadly activity.

www.build-a-blinkie.org

www.linkedin.com/company/build-a-blinkie

Music Programming

You'll find our big list of concerts in the pocket program and in the program listing a few pages ahead. And, of course, there will be open music circles and a dead dog circle on Sunday. Most of our music programming will be in the Cypress room.

Our Open Music Circles and Dead Dog Circle welcome everyone who has something to share—accompanied songs, a cappella singing, instrumental music, and dramatic spoken word or poetry. Of course, listeners are welcome, too! We ask that performers seat themselves closer to the center of the room and that listeners/crafters hold down the perimeter.

We tend to follow Polite Midwest Chaos in our circles, which means no designated direction or “turns” around the room but fairness in giving all performers equal opportunity to share BUT we are happy to be flexible, so the designated Music Anchor will gladly change the flow of the circle if you ask. At Windycon there is often an unspoken invitation for other musicians or vocalists to join in with each other on familiar songs, but it is absolutely okay to request that no one else play or sing along with you.

Photo Studio

Come join Bruce Medic Photo at the amazing Windycon Photo Studio shoot on Saturday from 6:00 to 9:00 PM! Have your photo taken (costumes are great, but not required) and your photos will be available within two weeks at:

<https://www.brucemedicphoto.com/conventions>

There's no charge for having your photo taken and no charge to download the images! Everyone's favorite word—*free!* Come join us..

Art Show

The Art Show will run a silent auction on Friday and Saturday until the Art Show will close to set up for the Art Auction. Pieces with 1 or 2 bids are sold to the high bidder on the sheet. Pieces with 3 or more bids will go to the Art Auction. All charity pieces will be treated just like any other art. They will not go to auction automatically.

Fan Choice awards will be given to the artists who receive the most votes, so please, look around, find the artwork you like the best, and vote! Awards will be given for both 2-D and 3-D artwork, so make sure you look at everything.

The Art Auction will be at 8:00 p.m. Our illustrious auctioneers and their crew provide some of the best entertainment at the convention, so come to watch, come to bid, come to have fun, and don't forget your wallet. You never know when something will strike your fancy... or when you will find that perfect gift for someone.

While the Print Shop will be open on Sunday, the Art Show will only be open to allow for art pickup and for artist checkout.

Print Shop

If you are looking for art at a fixed price, check out the Print Shop inside the Art Show. We have a wide selection of artwork from a variety of talented artists available at prices that won't break the bank.

The Print Shop carries more than just prints, so make sure to stop in and look at the calendars, mouse pads, bookmarks, and other wonderful works for sale.

If you find you have money left after the Art Show closes, pieces in the Print Shop are available for purchase at a fixed price during art pickup, so you are welcome to keep shopping right up until we close at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday.

Amateur Radio

Did you know that there is a hobby out there that allows you to build your own radios and use them to talk to amazing people from around the world by bouncing signals off of the sky? With the right equipment, you can even talk with astronauts on the International Space Station and reflect signals off the moon! Amateur ("ham") radio opens up a whole world of wonder for both the aspiring physicist and the budding electronics engineer alike! Come see Windycon's special event ham radio station on the 7th floor, and see demonstrations of amazing machines from ham radio's past such as a 100-year old teletype, and demos of the cutting edge digital modes that are ham radio's future! Don't have an amateur radio license? No problem! The station's operators will happily show you how to use the station's equipment and make your first contact! Already a ham? Great! We'd love for you to visit the station for an in-person ragchew, and if you contact W9W on the air you can be sent an attractive certificate

Cosplay

Windycon has long been a proud supporter of the vibrant and creative world of cosplay. Whether you're here to showcase your latest creation, meet other like-minded fans, or simply enjoy the artistry on display, our convention is the place to be for cosplay enthusiasts. We celebrate all forms of cosplay—from intricately detailed costumes to fun, casual interpretations—and encourage everyone to embrace their fandom through self-expression.

This year, we are thrilled to welcome Papa Bear Studios as our Cosplay Guest of Honor. Known for their amazing work in the cosplay community, Papa Bear Studios has been a key player in creating some of the most impressive costumes and props, helping bring fan creations to life with their expert craftsmanship. Fans of all ages will have the opportunity to meet Papa Bear Studios at their panels throughout the convention, where you can learn more about their work, ask questions, and get inspired for your own cosplay projects.

Social Media

Windycon's Social Media team welcomes you to this year's con. We will be wandering around taking photos to post on Windycon's social media platforms. If you do not want to be photographed please place a fluorescent green sticker on your badge in the upper right corner. These stickers will be available at registration and are removable so they will not damage the badges. Thank you and we look forward to a great con!

Gaming

Charity TKO Boxing Tournament

Saturday

Located in Spring Room (Programming)

2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Instead of arguing if Superman could lift Thor's Hammer, fight about it! Sign up for the TKO boxing game tournament, outsmart your opponent, and go home a champion! The game will be taught at the start of the tournament, with rounds expected to be fifteen minutes or less.

Minimum Donation: \$5.00

Prizes: All participants will receive a pin. First, second, and third place will receive additional prize.

Sparks

Sparks is an ongoing Star Wars roleplaying campaign based on the West End Games D6 system and sponsored by Game Base 7. The group, which has been running since GenCon 1995, has around 100 members from many U.S. states, but the majority are living in Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin. As of 2011, over 160 modules have been written by our members, and about 10 new modules are added per year. We run Sparks modules at least once per month at local conventions (mostly in Illinois and Wisconsin) and always have a very large presence at Origins and GenCon, where we run multiple tables in every slot. We are always open to new members!

Gaming Special Events

Gaming is going in the new, larger space in Spring Room, a.k.a. Gaming Hall. There's lots of entertaining things planned, so drop in and check the schedule listed below and at the con! Cont'd on following page.

Friday

63 Hunters Hunted

Spring Room

7:00 PM - 11:00 PM

Saturday

48 Pirate's Bounty

Cermak

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Overflow Session

Cermak

2:00 PM - 6:00 PM

61 Wrench in the Works

Cermak

2:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Overflow Session

Spring

7:00 PM - 11:00 PM

93 Where Are We Now?

Spring

7:00 PM - 11:00 PM

Sunday

Overflow Session

Cermak

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

184 Garrison of Alderann

Cermak

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

49 The Iskallon Conundrum

Cermak

1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Windycon Presents L.A.R.P Interactive D&D

Come one! Come all! Enjoy a live action role play in a Dungeons and Dragons style. Combat, puzzles, and shenanigans galore lie in wait for you and your friends! Sign up at the LARP table outside the dealers room for your Wylde adventure!

The LARP will run on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to Noon, 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., and 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m., and Sunday from 10:00 a.m. – Noon and 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. To ensure you can participate, please plan on signing up at least one hour before you would like to join

Windycon Presents Blood on the Clock Tower

Cermak

Friday 9:00 PM-12:00 AM

Saturday 12:00 AM-3:00 AM

Saturday 9:00 PM - 12:00 AM

Saturday 12:00 AM - 3:00 AM

ON THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT...

During a hellish thunderstorm, a scream echoes through the sleepy town of Ravenswood Bluff. The townsfolk rush to investigate and find the beloved local storyteller has been murdered, their body hanging limp from the clocktower. As blood drips onto the cobblestones below, a realization slowly dawns... a demon has been unleashed, killing by night and taking on human form by day.

Can good find the demon in time? Or will evil overrun this once peaceful town?

Blood on the Clocktower is a bluffing game enjoyed by 5 to 20 players on opposing teams of Good and Evil, overseen by a Storyteller player who conducts the action and makes crucial decisions. The goal of the game is to successfully deduce and execute the demons before they outnumber the townfolk. During a 'day' phase players socialize openly and whisper privately to trade knowledge or spread lies, culminating in a player's execution if a majority suspects them of being Evil. Of a 'night' time, players close their eyes and are woken one at a time by the Storyteller to gather information, spread mischief, or kill.

The Storyteller uses the game's intricate playing pieces to guide each game, leaving others free to play without a table or board. Players stay in the thick of the action to the very end even if their characters are killed, haunting Ravenswood Bluff as ghosts trying to win from beyond the grave.

If you arrive late to a game, you can enter after it's started as a powerful Traveller character with unusual talents and questionable allegiances (Traveler spots are limited). Each character comes with their own special ability and no two players in a game are ever the same character.

Dealers'

The Windycon Dealers' Room is located in the Grand Ballroom on the main level of the hotel, to the left of the main lobby. There you will find a horde of eager merchants willing and able to trade you treasures for your money. Remember that the holiday season is fast approaching, and that it's never too early to begin shopping for your fannish family and friends, or even just to treat yourself!

The public is prohibited from bringing food or drink into the Dealers' Room. A room guide and map will be near the entrance of the Dealers' Room.

This list of dealers may change due to cancellations or further additions. We will have a room layout and Dealer location guide available just inside the Dealer Room entrance, near the Dealer Control Table.

Our list of vendors as of this date are listed below.

List of Dealers

Alexis D. Craig Books
Amber Hammer Creations
Author E. S. Fein
Barbara Gregorich, Writer
The Black Sheep's Friend
Brendan Noble Author (eight-one-five publishing)
Charles Ott
Danger Laser
Dice Divas
Dodeka Records
DreamHaven Books
DVD World Books and Toys
Goshdarned Good Writers
Hedwig's Corner
Horizon Music, Inc.
The Horny Wench
HyperaCoven
Larry Smith Book Seller
Lost in the Maille
M. Benson Creations
Mastafran Comics
Mobile Stress Relief Unit
Mystik Waboose
Mythic Arts
Mythica Gaming
The Ornament Ladies
Phylos World Building
The Pugling hoard
The Random Cafe
Rcades
Rick Heinz
SF&F Media Toys and LEGO Dennis
Sorcerer's Safari LLC
Stormsister Designs
SunStones
Super Secret Project X, Llc
Wanderverse



Scan me for the
schedule!



<https://windycon50.sched.com/>

Staff List

Chairs & Vice-Chairs

Daniel Gunderson (Chair)
Vlad Stockman (Chair)
Dana "Star" DeMichael (Vice-Chair)
Austin Regan (Vice-Chair)

Secretary

Cassy Beach

Treasurer

Kerry Kuhn

Art Show

Richard France
Yoel Attiya
Greg Jurkovic
Ashley Nicole
Tavis Potter
Renee Scheeler
Cheryl Storm
James Young
Veronica Zimowsk

Awards

James Brown
Ken Beach

Bheer

Joshua Dante Damico (DH)
Rachel "Mab" Landmann (ADH)
Sean Shroom Ihnat
Casey Christie
Geoffery Kазzy Kазcmarek
Tifa Zaragoza

Charity Liaison

Ashton "Quinn" Peterson

Con Suite

Dee "coddle me" Collins (DH)
Jaime Giggles Bergan (ADH)
Dan Nolan (ADH)
Patrick Blum
Tom Jordan
Sherri Sanders
Marie Silver
Melanie Silver
Scott Street

Content Manager

Steven H Silver
Cosplay
Alex "Hotrod" DeMichael

Dealers' Room

Bill Jorns (DH)
Brendan Lonehawk (ADH)
Barbara Darrow
Daniel Darrow
Jordan Enda
Lauren Enda

Events

Bill Roper (DH)
Gretchen Roper

Fan Tables

Scott Schultz

Gaming

Robert Wadowski (DH)
Tiffany Voltz (ADH)
Brian Jackman
Kevin Krieger
John McCash
Mike Resenblum
Gen Con Library
Jacob Ange
Daniel Bacerra
Marissa Maile
Heather Marlow

Ann Spires

Brittney Swisher

Green Room

Steve Ignots (DH)
Michael Stern (ADH)

Guest Liaison

Erika Donat

Hotel Liaison

Scott Schultz

Information Desk

John Donat (DH)
Michelle Donat (ADH)
David Hoshko

Information Technology

Ken Beach (DH)
Phread (ADH)

LARP

Andrew Thompson (DH)
Issac Thompson (ADH)
Emilyn Cabalfin
Jose Cabalfin
Ryan Gilbert
Ben Schuetze

Ajay Singh

Saran Singh

Joshua Thompson

Anthony Valle

Bianca Valle

Kevin Thompson

Logistics Team

Kristina "Gummi" Maki (DH)
Joshua "Dante" D'Amico (ADH)
Joey "Tsunami" Pfeifer (ADH)
Matt "Dr. Morgan" Clark Teresa Clark

Jason "Dio" Greening Geoffrey

"Kазzy" Kaczmarek Andrea

"Storm Bringer" Sullivan

Nichelle "Kibbles" Wrenn

Music

Programming

Luke Bretscher

Operations

Paul Lawniczak (DH)
Julie Wasberg (DH)

Erik Burch

Marrissa Robertcop

Parties

Alyson Petroski

Scott Schultz

Photo Studio

Bruce Medic

Program Ops

Brenda Fruhauf (DH)
Bill Cohn (ADH) **Programming**
Louisa Feimster (DH)
Sam Meyer (ADH) **Publications**
Betsy "Bootz" Franczyk

Registration

Vlad Stockman (DH)
Susette France (ADH)
John Higgins (ADH)
Krist Cobb
David Oliver Kling
Erin Morrow
Jan Skaggs

Security

Clint Andrae
Stephen Baker
Greg Jurkovic
Jordan Lewis
Miguel Lopez
Michael Peckat
Alan Quogana
Matthew Salutric
Liam Thomson
Lane Wendt
Nichelle Wrenn
Social Media
Virginia Massetti
Aston "Quinn" Peterson

Tech Services

David Ifversen (DH)
Angela Karash (ADH)
Brice Beutin
Chris Hollaway
Michael Lundy
Peter Richardson
James Richardson

Website

Vlad Stockman
W9W(Whiskey-Nine-Whiskey)
Daniel Keller

Writers' Workshop

Rich Chwedyk
Tim Akers
Sue Burke
Chris Gerrib
KM Herkes
R. J. Howell
Mark Huston
Tina Jens
Oleg Kazantsev
Malda Marlys
Mary Mascari
Jody Lynn Nye
Angeli Primlani
Natalie Silk
Gracie York

ISFiC Board

Stephen "Fluffy" Baker
Ken Beach, *Treasurer*
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Daniel Gunderson, *Secretary*
David Ifversen, *President*
Kristina "Gummi" Maki
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Let Your Geek Flag Fly!



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February 6-9, 2025

Sheraton Grand Chicago Riverwalk

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Windycon
will return in 2025!
What's happening?
Come to Closing
Ceremonies
and find out!