

ENTERTAINMENT

Technique • Friday, September 9, 2005

PHANTOM FRENZY

Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Phantom of the Opera* has come to Atlanta. Is it worth your time? **Page 23**

THEY PLAY IT IN HEAVEN

Rugby started their season with a win. Find out more about the Tech team and this interesting game. **Page 31**

Freaks, geeks, friends flock to Dragon*Con

Two 'Nique writers tell stories from this year's con to end all cons

By Hillary Lipko
Senior Staff Writer

At some point in recent history, it became cool to be a nerd. I'm not quite sure when that happened, since I've been a nerd since before it was the "in" thing. However, despite my deep-seated nerdiness, I've never been to a convention where so many like-minded "social outcasts" like to congregate. I guess you could have called me a Dragon*Con virgin. Not knowing quite what to expect, I headed out with my friend Andrew to commune with thousands of our geek and nerd brethren.

Generally, I'm not a fan of crowds. I don't care for people. However, this crowd wasn't all people. There were fairies, orcs, aliens and a few other things decidedly not human; so I guess I was cool with them. They were pretty impressive anyway, and I couldn't quite be sure what they'd do to me if I crossed them, especially the Klingons. Sitting and observing them, occasionally requesting to take pictures of the more interesting ones, was pretty much the safest bet.

But Dragon*Con is much more than an early Halloween for those of the geeky persuasion. It is also a wonderful opportunity for learning about and discussing topics of interest. From science fiction to science fact, from anime to fantasy

in all media, there was something for everyone.

Beyond the conference rooms there were dealers' and exhibitors' rooms, an art show and celebrity appearances. In the dealer and exhibition halls, all sorts of weapons of geekiness were for sale. Whether you needed that last touch for next year's costume, another DVD for your anime collection, or better characters for your favorite *Dungeons & Dragons*-style game, you can probably find what you're looking for and more.

"Whether you needed that last touch for next year's costume, another DVD for your anime collection, or better characters for your favorite *Dungeons & Dragons*-style game, you can probably find what you're looking for and more."

The celebrities in attendance ranged from those with cult following (like the guys from *Red vs. Blue* and those from *Homestar Runner*) to those who are incredibly well-known (like LeVar Burton and Marina Sirtis, of *Star Trek* fame). I also heard that the Phelps twins (Fred and George Weasley in the *Harry Potter* films) were in attendance, but they must have come as Loch Ness monsters as I only saw a picture that my friend took and caught a brief glimpse of one of them. And of course when I went looking for them, they were nowhere to be found.

Also, if that still wasn't enough, the coordinators for various tracks cut loose a little more in the evening, cleared out the chairs in the meeting

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By Andrew Saulters / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Nerds in their natural habitat: as the culmination of countless hours of work, costumed enthusiasts prepare for Dragon*Con's Saturday parade down the most famous of Atlanta's Peachtree Streets.

Panels, vendors, talks abound, celebrities not worth trouble

By Andrew Guyton
Contributing Writer

In every nerd's life, there comes a time when one must make a pilgrimage, where one must share what they believe in and express their beliefs.

This journey took a form in my life recently, when I had a chance to attend Dragon*Con 2005 with my friend, Hillary. This was our first time at a general-purpose convention, so it was a new experience for both of us.

Dragon*Con lasted from Friday afternoon until Monday afternoon, with the most fun occurring on Saturday and Sunday.

If, in the future, you ever have trouble finding the con, just find and follow the Stormtroopers; or take MARTA, as the hotels hosting the con are connected directly to Peachtree Station.

One of my favorite panels discussed the sixth *Harry Potter* book. Sure, there was one very vocal woman in the front, who certainly had her opinions about the book, but overall, it was a spirited and enjoyable debate with very interesting and humorous panelists.

An equally intense debate could be found in the panel about the future of the *Star Trek* franchise. Apparently, intense debates require at least one person who must share every opinion that pops into their head, because there sure was one sitting behind us in this panel. Mr. Worf, please remove her from the bridge, err, the con.

Not all of the panels were that intense, though. The panels hosted by the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) were on a more serious

set of subjects, and were every bit as important to me. They focused on issues such as peer to peer, the DMCA (the proposed fix for the DMCA), blogging and many other digital and technology rights issues. If you have ever shared a file, typed a sentence on anything connected to the Internet or programmed, the EFF is an organization you should be aware of. For example, Hillary and I attended the panel about the

figurines on a magnetic "dungeon" game stage.

While the game was fun, possibly the coolest thing about it were the magnetic tiles that built the dungeon. Not only do they make the game play a little more interesting than playing on a paper map, but they're just fun to play with on their own.

Other popular names there were *Red vs. Blue* and *Homestar Runner*.

Various actors and adult enter-

"Apparently, intense debates require at least one person who must share every opinion that pops into their head, because there sure was one sitting behind us in this panel. Mr. Worf, please remove her from the bridge, err, the con."

future of peer to peer on Saturday. It was hosted by the EFF's policy analyst, who detailed how fair use is being restricted by DRM, and how big media and the DMCA are restricting our rights.

Panels aren't everything Dragon*Con has to offer, though. You can buy a ton of fun things there. For example, there was a vendor that sold nothing but dice of various shapes, sizes, and colors! There were also vendors selling mainstream and hard-to-find DVDs.

I picked up a copy of *Grenadier*, something I've been looking for for a while. One of the most interesting vendors was Adiken, a game company which makes a fun *Dungeons & Dragons*-style game called *Nin-Gonost*.

The game play is pretty standard. It is turn-based using dice and character cards with corresponding

tainment stars came to the con to meet fans and sell autographs. Personally, I didn't feel it was worth it to pay \$20 for an autograph, although I was tempted to get one from LeVar Burton, who played Geordi La Forge on *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

At some point, the actors who played the Weasley twins in the *Harry Potter* movies were there, but we didn't catch them. I was planning on thoroughly taunting my friends if I had gotten their autographs.

One of my newest hobbies is photography, and there were hundreds of fascinating costumes worn there. Any popular character you can think of was probably walking around Dragon*Con, making it one of the greatest photo opportunities for any aspiring photographer.

Unfortunately, I didn't have a

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By Andrew Saulters / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Floyd Grimm, dressed in the unlikely costume of Stormtrooper cum Red Cross, mills about with his fellow troopers Saturday.

THEME CROSSWORD: CRIME SCENE

ACROSS

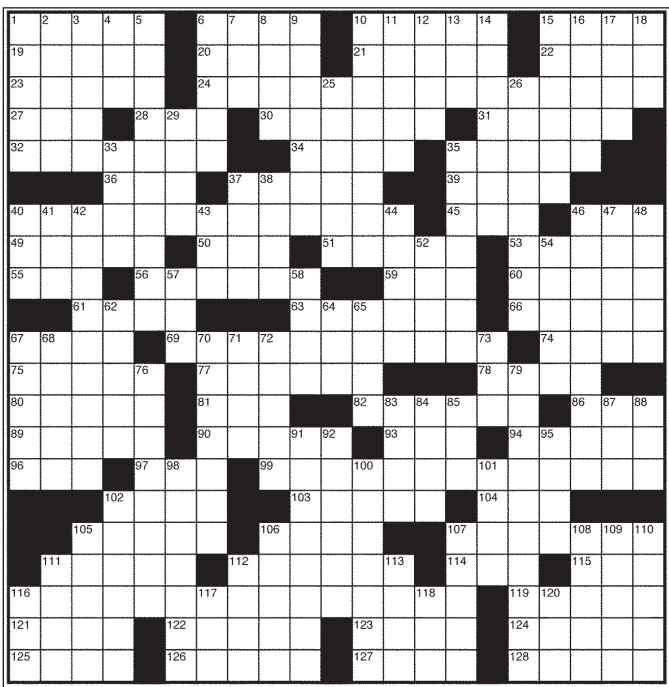
1. Bring forth
6. Attention-getter
10. Sidestep
15. Urban renewal target
19. Molokai neighbor
20. Speck in the air
21. Saltpeter
22. Abbr. in bus.
23. Employing
24. Start of a quip by Rodney Dangerfield: 5 wds.
27. Jet letters
28. Magician's prop
30. Monotony
31. Dipsomaniac
32. Fit
34. Rock's — Lofgren
35. Hirsute
36. "Born in the —"
37. Priest's garment
39. Desire personified
40. Part 2 of quip: 2 wds.
45. Fragrant necklace
46. AMA cousin
49. Lost: 2 wds.
50. Luau fare
51. Of the kidney
53. Jutlanders
55. Start for physics
56. Tyrant
59. Dernier —
60. — -garde

DOWN

61. Belongs
63. Command formally
66. Roper's rope
67. Scheme
69. Part 3 of quip: 4 wds.
74. Ending for mob or pun
75. Metric unit
77. Kind of ticket
78. Blues great — James
80. In flames
81. Last: abbr.
82. Old Greek bowl
86. A pronoun
89. Campers' quarters
90. Baldwin and Guinness
93. Nest egg letters
94. Easterner
96. Cousin to an assoc.
97. — Aviv
99. Part 4 of quip: 3 wds.
102. Gloomy atmosphere
103. Slangy denials
104. — — rule
105. Drew or Mariah
106. Maori amulet
107. Military unit
111. Site of 2002's Asian Games
112. Kind of belt
114. Parts of ft.
115. — Cruces
116. End of the quip: 3 wds.
119. Bone in a joint
121. Organic compound

ACROSS

122. — — two (a few)
123. Gen. Robert — —
124. Of sheep
125. Scraggy
126. Hawsters
127. Spreads to dry
128. Harangues
DOWN
1. Watery snow
2. Old-hat
3. Loos or Bryant
4. Pallid
5. Plant also called belladonna
6. Friendliness
7. Ad —
8. Coup d' —
9. Keepsake
10. Military gunfire
11. PC problem
12. Corpuscle
13. Certain voter: abbr.
14. A rubbing out
15. Scrubs
16. Really bad
17. Press
18. Speed limit abbr.
25. Publishing VIP
26. Doughnut-shaped
29. The Pequod's captain
33. Sled
35. "Amarcord" director
37. Field yield
38. The Buckeye State
40. Pest
41. After printemps
42. Setting apart
43. Harvest deity
44. Quechua
46. Daughter of Nicholas II
47. Stupid
48. John Jacob —
52. Saharan



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54. "Stop!", at sea
57. Psychic's gift: abbr.
58. Stocking stuffers
62. Sluggish
64. Greek letter
65. Wet
67. Classical thinker
68. Permanent prisoner
70. Most often
71. Reveal
72. British buddies
73. Wedding announcement word
76. Stopping place: 2 wds.
79. Electronic device
83. Paddy
84. Son of Zeus and Hera
85. Cap
87. Chinese dynasty

88. Final state
91. Pines and firs
92. Men-only party
95. Deer
98. FDR's first lady
100. Sobriquet
101. Merit
102. To some extent
105. Punctuation mark
106. Lake out west
107. Stays: arch.
108. "— — the Family"
109. Intimidate
110. Letters
111. Bingo-like game
112. Pace
113. Lock maker
116. Cal. abbr.
117. Yoko —
118. Beatty or Rorem
120. Actress — Gardner

3 Doors Down plays the HiFi

Tomorrow night, 3 Doors Down, those guys that brought you that Superman song from that time, will be playing a show at Hi Fi Buys Amphitheatre. The music begins at 6:30 p.m. Supporting artists include Staind, Alter Bridge and No Address. Ticket prices range from \$25.50 to \$57.50, depending on seat location.

Girls seen playing in park

Everyone's favorite folk-rock girl duo the Indigo Girls will be playing at the Chastain Park Amphitheatre with openers Magnapop tomorrow night. Tickets cost between \$28.50 and \$38.50. The show gets started at 8 p.m. Be there or continue your being-square lifestyle.

At least these trains run on time

Through October 29, Atlanta Botanical Garden presents Locomotion in the Garden: Trains Across Georgia. The event features seven different model trains, all replicas of some that have run on Georgia's real railroads over the years, travelling among the garden's plant life. The exhibit's hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and admission is \$7 for students, \$9 for seniors and \$12 for everyone else. Children under three are admitted for free.

2046 shows up in U.S. theaters late, still great

By Michael Ng
Contributing Writer

To say that the film *2046* has been delayed in the United States would be an understatement. Amidst difficulties with script rewrites, re-shoots, re-edits and set-reconstruction (a hotel scene was rebuilt after a tabloid photographer found his way onto the set), it seemed that film goers would never be able to experience Wong Kar-Wai's latest meditation on love and desire as he envisioned it. Hong Kong director Wong initially debuted an edited version of the film at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival to mixed reviews. He subsequently skipped over the New York Film Festival and the Edinburgh Film Festival, where it was slated as the closing movie of the competition, to continue working on the film.

With over a year's worth of edits

and finishing in place, *2046* has finally been released stateside, and it stands as one of the most ambitious

“With over a year’s worth of edits and finishing in place, *2046* has finally been released stateside, and it stands as one of the most ambitious...movies of the year.”

and stylistic movies of the year. Nominally, *2046* concerns the tortured memories of Chow (Tony

Leung), a pulp-romance writer in search of love. In his latest vignette, people board futuristic trains to the year 2046 to recapture lost memories. Rumors abound that nothing ever changes in 2046, but no one knows if that is true, because no one has ever come back. When Chow relocates from Singapore to Hong Kong, the woman he loves, Su Lizhen (Gong Li), refuses to go with him. Over the years Chow becomes involved with many women: Lulu (Carina Lau), a cabaret dancer; Wang Jing Wen (Faye Wong), a hotel owner's daughter; and Bai Ling (Zhang Ziyi), a stunningly beautiful prostitute. Although his readers may think Chow is writing about love in the future, he alone knows that it is about his own loves in the past.

See **2046**, page 26



Photo courtesy Sony Pictures Classics

Actor Tony Leung, as Chow, broods for his lost loves and turns his pain into art in director Wong Kar-Wai's beautiful opus, *2046*.

sliver
www.nique.net/sliver

Dear tech fans, if you're going to an away game leave your dorkiness at home wear yellow to away games, jerks. If you want to sit close in the student section, get there early I hope that tree fort party is worth all the ridicule. The Ewok tower was great this year guys. To you stupid GDIs trying to move into our block at auburn, you and your 5 friends vs. 30? get real. Burgerbowl! Bagpipe Dude: You rock! Go Jackets! Way to take it to that Auburn team! This upcoming season should be great! amrita is the best wlc chair ever! :) what happened to the shoe tree? It's 2:27 am, and I am still here seriously, you nerds stay the hell out of my management building. You do realize there is life outside of academia? The CS, Phsyics, and engineering departments should mandate classes on developing personality. you fairies get your flag football practice off our rugby field. "whats the good word?" is a 'tech tradition' that only faset leaders and former faset leaders take part in. if you don't like the smell of bourbon, I suggest moving your football tickets away from me. yes I am an elitist, but it really isn't my fault I'm better than you. Just as you've come to grips with being a nerd, I've come to grips with being a jerk. since you make no effort to fix your nerd situation, I make none to fix my jerk situation. i love nick the editor

Phantom terrorizes terrifically at Fabulous Fox Theatre

By Beth Daihl
Contributing Writer

The Phantom of the Opera opened at the Fabulous Fox Theatre last weekend to a great success. The combination of talented actors, amazing set design, detailed costumes, the ambiance of the Fox itself and the excitement brought on by the work itself makes this show an opportunity not to be missed.

Although the recent film version of *Phantom* was well done, there is a certain enchantment when seeing the performance live on stage. Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Phantom of the Opera* is the second-longest running Broadway musical in the world and may become the longest running this coming January. After witnessing the rendition at the Fox Theatre it is not

“The Phantom, Gary Mauer, is superb and elicits pity and loathing from the audience at the same time.”

hard to see why *Phantom* has lasted so long. There is a little something for everyone; drama, romance, action, music, dance and pathos.

For those who have not had the opportunity to see *The Phantom of the Opera*, the story is one of love, music, passion, and death. Set in 1911 Paris at the Paris Opera House the show follows the drama behind the curtain of the Opéra Populaire which is haunted by the Opera Ghost. Hiding from the world below, the



Photo courtesy Clear Channel Entertainment

The players of the fictional Opéra Populaire rehearse for a production of *Hannibal* in Andrew Lloyd Webber's interpretation of the classic novel, *The Phantom of the Opera*.

Opera Ghost is the titular Phantom of the Opera, a deformed genius who believes the Opera is his. When the new owners, Monsieur Firmin and Monsieur André, take over, the Phantom makes many demands as to how his theatre is to be run with dangerous consequences.

After the Prima Donna Carlotta storms out of the Opera, Christine Daaé, the talented, orphaned daughter of a famous violinist takes her place.

Later in the play, Christine's childhood friend and the Opera's financial backing, Raoul enters the picture to create a classic love triangle.

When the Phantom's demands are not met and Christine declares her love for Raoul, the Phantom strikes back at the entire Opera.

The cast successfully lives up to all the expectations demanded of a Phantom performance. The Phantom, Gary Mauer, is superb and elicits pity and loathing from the audience at the same time. Mauer's extensive portfolio includes *Les Misérables*, *Show Boat* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Marie Danvers plays the confused Christine Daaé and is well able to deliver the level of performance expected of any Christine.

Michael Shawn Lewis plays Raoul and his vast experience as this part shows. Lewis has played Raoul on Broadway and overseas in Belgium and Germany.

Adding a lighter element to the show are the supporting characters Monsieur Firmin, Monsieur André, Carlotta and Piangi, all of whom were excellent. David Cryer, who plays Monsieur Firmin, has played in this role over 5,000 times and keeps the rest of the company serious about the performance while making the audience laugh at all the right moments. The rest of the cast performed superbly as well and

drew the audience into the chaotic world of *The Phantom of the Opera* together.

Great accolades also go to the set design and crew. Right from the beginning the set draws the audience in and is most impressive.

The ornate decoration of the Opéra Populaire is hidden beneath tarps and rubble at the rise of the curtain, but once the chandelier is revealed time is reversed and the glory of the Opera is brought back to life. The tarps are drawn away as the chandelier rises to the top of the ceiling revealing the stage of the Opéra Populaire and a rehearsal for *Hannibal*.

Perhaps the most impressive set is the Phantom's pit of despair and the initial trip down to it. The Phantom leads Christine down underneath the Opera on a moving ramp creating the illusion of traveling down to the Paris sewers. The floor of the stage is covered in a low misty fog that envelopes the tiny boat the Phantom is poling across the lake. The illusion is perfect.

The only downside of going to see the Phantom is the price. Like any other popular show the prices can run pretty high. Tickets in the orchestra run at about \$60 a seat. If you are looking to take home a souvenir be prepared to dig a little deeper. Unlike almost any Tech activity, the shirts at Phantom are not free, far from it, they are around \$30.

However, walking over to the Fox saves you \$7 to \$12 on parking so maybe these purchases can be justified. Regardless of whether or not you take home a little reminder you will not forget the performance and will be sure to get your money's worth.

Two Bits

Two Bits Man leaves country, makes poor ambassador, fails to provide correct change

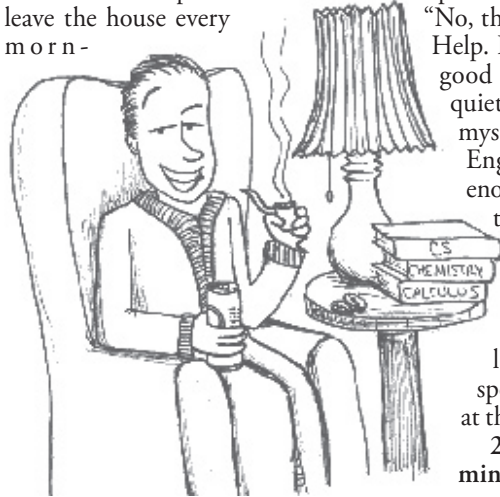
I am a citizen of the world. I have seen the lights of Paris, looked out on the Swiss Alps and ridden in a gondola on the canals of Venice. Consequently, I have also smelled the canals (read: open sewer system) of Venice, frozen my ass off several thousand feet above sea level surrounded by very noncommittal people and dealt with the French for an extended period of time.

Wherever you travel, certain things are going to suck. Now, sometimes it's a very region specific kind of suck, like how the British make no distinction between the concepts of "cooking" and "boiling" or how the Germans have the unnerving tendency to try to take over the world every few years or so. However, in my travels, I have discovered a few universal constants

of suckage, and I would like to share them with you today.

1) My tenuous, at best, grasp of the language.

It is most unpleasant to leave the house every morn-



ing hoping to God that the need does not arise to communicate any idea more complex than "That one, please." I mean, what if I have to explain something complex like, "No, the other one," or, "Help. Help. I've been shot." Like any good American, however, I quiet these worries by telling myself that if I only scream English loudly and slowly enough, someone is bound to both understand me and bow to my whims. Because when you're dealing with someone who doesn't speak your language, the best response is always to scream at them.

2) Unfamiliarity with the minutiae of local custom.

Basically, I just want to be able to blow my nose in public without wondering if I'm committing a fairly epic faux pas. That's all I'm saying.

3) The nagging feeling that I look too American.

Like I should, by any right, give a crap whether or not my nationality shines through. So long as I don't look like I came to their country looking like I would when I go out to mow the lawn, who the hell has any business caring, right? Well, tell that to my

irrational fear of being accosted by strangers who would like to have a word with me about current U.S. foreign policy, possibly in their native tongue (see no. 1).

4) Having to have correct change.

(Ok a y, strictly speaking, this one only applies to Europe, but it's still annoying enough to make the list.)

I don't know what crawled up the asses of all the cashiers on the

"Well, tell that to my irrational fear of being accosted by strangers who would like to have a word with me about current U.S. foreign policy...."

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2046 from page 22

Instead of adhering to a linear plot, *2046* plays out in a series of fractured sketches that jumps from 2046 to the 1960s, from Hong to Singapore, and to all the memories in-between.

Because of the rich sensory experience of the film, the plot becomes secondary to its aesthetic beauty.

Wong possesses all the stylistic vigor of auteurs like Quentin

Tarantino, John Woo and David Lynch, but without the subversive violence.

In place of empty flashiness, Wang builds an incredible atmosphere with extravagant period pieces, vibrant colors, sensual textures, deliberated camera work and a keen sense of how to put together a scene.

Even something as simple as smoking a cigarette exudes an erotic elegance under Wong's direction. Taken as a whole, the film becomes a hallucinatory dream of mood and

ambience.

2046 may seem like a science fiction film, but the fantastical premise and retro-futuristic style belie its romantic core.

Much like its prequel, *In the Mood for Love*, *2046* concerns the pain and persistence of memory.

Whereas *In the Mood for Love* bubbled on the surface with straightforward, amorous tension, *2046* explodes with sexual energy and raw passion. It is definitely a film worth seeing.

Two Bits from page 25

European continent, but despite what they may have read in *Snooty Jackass Weekly* it is a fairly significant part of their jobs to make change. Sometimes I don't have €1.67 down to the penny. Sorry. That's no reason to look at me like I've unreasonably forced upon them some epic burden.

I don't want to hear one more word about boorish Americans until

they get a cashier population that can treat their fellow human beings with some modicum of respect, even if said humans fail to carry sufficient small denomination coinage.

Now, this should not be taken as any sort of indictment of traveling abroad or of dirty foreigners in general. I hate all of humanity with strict egalitarianism. You're all unwashed savages, perpetually stewing in your own filth, as far as I'm concerned. Thanks for understanding, and I'm not just saying that.

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keep your submis-
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otherwise only you
and the sliver girl
will be reading
them.

Con

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rooms, and held themed parties. It came as a surprise to even me that the liveliest of these parties was thrown by Trek Trak and was appropriately billed as "Happy Hour at Ten Forward." While there was a conspicuous absence of Romulan Ale, it was still the best place to find free food on Sunday night. (Sure, there was the con suite, but since everyone knew about that, there was hardly ever much food there.)

After four days of schlepping over to the Marriott and the Hyatt via MARTA, and after four days straight of walking around the huge convention, going

to panels and admiring costumes, I was pretty worn out. Though Dragon*Con is exciting and a lot of fun, it's a good thing it's not any longer because we'd either need a small army to cover it or I'd need a lot more caffeine.

Though it was my first time experiencing Dragon*Con, I have learned from those who have gone for many years in the past that it only gets better every year. That said, I'll have to go back next September and try to catch all of the things

I couldn't catch this year—like the parade. Not to mention, I still need to get my picture taken with a Klingon.

"It came as a surprise to even me that the liveliest of the parties was thrown by Trek Trak and was appropriately billed as "Happy Hour at Ten Forward."



By Andrew Saulters / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Two anime fans appear at the Saturday costume parade dressed as Speed and Trixie from the perennial animated favorite, *Speed Racer*, complete with a real life Mach V in which to cruise around.

Panels

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costume for this year, but ideally, I plan on having one ready for next year.

Based on my experience this year at Dragon*Con, I plan on return-

"Based on my experience this year at Dragon*Con, I plan on returning every year that I can, hopefully costumed."

ing every year that I can, hopefully costumed.

Anyone interested in at least one of the subjects we've written about should come and partake in all of them, because Dragon*Con offers all that and more.

technique
making friday lectures more interesting