

Confluence 2003 First, Last, and Only Progress Report

Confluence 2003 July 25-27, 2003 Four Points Sheraton Pittsburgh Airport, Pittsburgh, PA

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Registration

Registration will open at 3pm on Friday. Bring this Progress Report with you when you come to Confluence—it includes hotel directions and membership confirmation to expedite your registration. If you have any Registration questions, send e-mail or write to Registration c/o the address above.

Adult memberships for the full weekend (Friday through Sunday) are \$40 at the door. Children's memberships (ages 6 - 12) are \$30. Children 5 and under may attend free provided they are accompanied by a responsible adult at all times.

Hotel

Confluence is held at:

The Four Points Sheraton Pittsburgh Airport
One Industry Lane
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15275

The room rate for doubles is \$75 per night (single/double/triple/quad).

The room block closes on July 4, so if you don't yet have a reservation, get it now. The phone number is 724-695-0002.

Mention Confluence when you make your reservation.

There is a free shuttle from the airport to the hotel.

Located six miles from the airport and eighteen miles from downtown Pittsburgh, the hotel is close to everything that the city has to offer. The hotel features a full-service restaurant and lounge, along with health club and outdoor pool. It's also within a mile or so of many restaurants, bookstores, and shopping areas.

Detailed directions

From Pittsburgh and points East/North (heading to the west):

Follow the signs for the **I-279 detour** (West End Bridge).. Stay on this road until it re-merges with I-279 (a mile or so past the West End Bridge). Continue to follow I-279. Its designation changes from **I-279** to **US Route 22/30**, to **PA Route 60**. Just after the road changes into PA 60, you'll start down a long hill and pass an Ikea store on the right. As you near the bottom of the hill, move into the right lane, because you need to take the next exit, **Montour Run Exit #2**. As you curve around on the ramp, be ready to bear right at the Cliff Mine Road sign. This puts you onto a road that crosses under the highway. As you emerge from the underpass, stay to the right and make sure you are in the right lane as you approach the traffic light. Turn left at the light (yes, you can turn left from the right hand lane here).

This will put you onto **Cliff Mine Road**. There is a sign here for the Four Points Sheraton, but it's small and

you'll do well to follow the large blue State Police signs. You'll immediately pass a Marriott on the right, and just ahead there is another traffic light. At this light there are two right turns (this is Pittsburgh, after all). You need to take the second, less sharp right. This will put you on to **RIDC Park West Drive**. Keep following the State Police signs. Go up the hill on this gently curving road, and after 0.4 miles, you'll come to the top of the hill and **Industry Drive**. Make the right turn onto Industry, and you'll stay on this road for a total of 0.7 miles. As you go along the (what else) gently curving road you'll pass the State Police Barracks on the right, and after a bit you'll seem to leave the industrial park. Industry Drive then goes under another road and starts into a broad curve. Along the curve you'll pass a dirt road to the right labeled Enterprise Drive, and a short distance after that you'll come to another road on the right, Industry Lane. Turn right onto **Industry Lane**. The road is hard to miss because there is not only a small directional sign for the hotel, but also a large, and what appears to be lit-up, sign which says: Four Points Sheraton Hotel. Stay on Industry Lane as it goes down a small hill and curves to the right. At the end of the lane is the hotel.

From the airport and Beaver County (heading to the east):

Take State **Route 60** east, and turn off at **Montour Run, exit #2**. Go to light at the bottom of the ramp. Make sure you are in the right lane as you approach the light. Turn right at the light, and you'll be on **Cliff Mine Road**. Continue with the directions above at the second paragraph.

Program

The Program Staff has been busily building one of the best small-con programs in the country. We plan to keep our Guest of Honor, Allen Steele, very busy over the weekend. Other confirmed program participants include local favorites William Tenn, Fruma Klass, Mary Soon Lee, Tim Esaias, and other science fictional folk including David Hartwell, Kathryn Cramer, James Morrow, Lawrence Connolly, Susan Dexter, Sarah Zettel, Hal Clement, John DeChancie, Robert Nansel, Bud Sparhawk, Tamora Pierce, Charles Oberndorf, Diane Turnshek, Wen Spencer, Geoff Landis, Mary Turzillo, Russell Letson and Alexis Gilliland.

We're planning panels on the following: "How Will They Bring Back Spike? A Look at the Series Finale of Buffy and its aftermath," "Do Journalists Cover Science Accurately? -- Tales from the Trenches," "The Politics of the War for the Rings," "Hidden Treasures of the Genre," "Is Science Fiction Subversive?" and "How YA Fantasy Is Breaking Down the Walls of the Publishing Ghetto."

We'll continue to have kaffeeklatsches and literary beers, in which a small group of fans can sign up to have a cup of coffee or tea (or a beer) with one or two of our program participants. Check for the sign-up sheet at Registration.

We'll also again have a trivia event, in which audience members are rewarded with chocolate for answering questions correctly.

The first program item is at 4pm on Friday. The last one ends at 3pm on Sunday.

Book Discussions

We plan to have book discussion on Allen Steele's *Coyote*, David Brin's *Kiln People*, and Stanislaw Lem's *Solaris*. Read the books and come join the discussion.

Filking

Confluence's filk program is as big as ever this year. Our Featured Filk Guest is Arizona's Nancy Louise Freeman, making a rare non-West-Coast appearance.. We have a very full concert schedule, including performances by Mary Crowell, Andrew Eigel, Fianna, The Fibs, Pete Grubbs, ., Maureen O'Brien, and Ookla the Mok. Filk-related panels and events will include a game of "Name That Filk" in the style of "Name That Tune." There will be open filking on Friday and Saturday nights. Confluence has never sounded this good!

The Play

"This year's musical travesty lampoons the story of Isaac Asimov's novel *The Caves of Steel* using the tunes from *The Music Man*. Schedule and luck permitting, accomplished Atlanta filker Mary Crowell will be our accompanist, although her keyboard skills won't always be matched by the players' acting and singing skills. Stop by Saturday night and be entertained by our folly!. Try to guess which costume contains the blinky red lights and just where the Evil Costumer put them...

Video

This year's video program will feature Hong Kong action and fantasy films and Anime.

Con Suite

Confluence continues its tradition of running a great Con Suite. The Con Suite will be running all weekend long and include a great selection of snacks, drinks, and other concoctions.

Dealer's Room

The dealer's room is almost full. We have a couple of tables left. If you are interested, contact us now.

Art Show

There's still some space left for artists to display their work. We don't charge a hanging fee, and charge only a 10% commission on sales. We accept mail-ins. Contact us for more information.

Beer and Wine Tastings

We plan to have our usual beer tasting in the Con Suite. This year, we also hope to have a wine tasting, featuring a handful of interesting red wines. If you have a wine you'd like to share for the tasting, bring along a bottle or two.

Restaurants

There are a number of restaurants in the area. Several are within a mile or so, Quaker Steak and Lube (great wings and burgers), Lonestar Steakhouse, Panera., Don Pablo's, Max and Erma's, and Outback.

There are several very good Italian restaurants, one of the best Chinese restaurants in the area, as well as a good selection of fast food. If you want more, downtown Pittsburgh and the South Side of Pittsburgh are both about a 20 minute drive away.

Dead Dog Dinner

On Sunday night, when the con is packed up and we're ready to go home, many of us go out to one last dinner together. If you are interested in joining us, ask at Registration.