

# OPUNTIA 374

Late April 2017

**Opuntia** is published by Dale Speirs, Calgary, Alberta. It is posted on [www.efanzines.com](http://www.efanzines.com) and [www.fanac.org](http://www.fanac.org). My e-mail address is: [opuntia57@hotmail.com](mailto:opuntia57@hotmail.com) When sending me an emailed letter of comment, please include your name and town in the message.

## CALGARY COMIC EXPO PARADE

photos by Dale Speirs

2017-04-28

The 2017 Calgary Comic Expo rolled into town on the last weekend of April, with 80,000 paid attendances. They took over the Stampede grounds but were visible in the adjacent downtown core throughout the weekend. As per annual tradition, there was a parade of costumers on the Friday morning of the convention through the core.

It stopped snowing a few days before and most of it melted away by parade morning. The temperature was about 5°C, so the woman shown at right was one of the few who braved the parade in a skimpy outfit. Capes were very common.





The vanguard of the parade coming down 8 Avenue SW into the core.



Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi was the Honourary Parade Marshall.





I was very surprised to see these re-enactors in the midst of all the other cosplayers. The Battle of Vimy Ridge in 1917 is considered one of the defining moments in Canadian history, and has been commemorated across the country this year. It was the first time that the Canadian Army fought in an overseas war under its own flag and commanding officers, instead of being lumped in with colonial troops under British command. They won that battle.



At right: Lots of young family groups in the parade. More on the next page.









Onward, Christian soldiers ...

The effect was somewhat spoiled by some of the soldiers wearing sneakers and jeans instead of proper leggings and boots.





Another hint to cosplayers: Don't try to skateboard in restrictive clothing, especially on a street with brick rumble strips.





Birds of a feather ...





It's been decades since I watched THE WIZARD OF OZ but I don't recall it quite like this.



Otafest is Calgary's annual anime convention, this year on the Canada Day weekend. They get about 5,000 paid attendance at the downtown convention centre.



Aaah, young love. Heartwarming.













LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

[Editor’s remarks in square brackets. Please include your name and town when sending a comment. Email to opuntia57@hotmail.com]

From: Lloyd Penney  
Etobicoke, Ontario

2017-04-25

OPUNTIA #371: I guess Calgary truly is part of the prairie if there are few trees that can survive. Other than green ash, what other species are thriving?

[Green ash, black ash, Amur cherry, mountain ash, crabapple, Colorado blue spruce, white spruce, American elm, Siberian elm, balsam poplar, cottonwood, Manitoba maple, and bur oak make up 99.9% of Calgary trees. In my 31 years with the Parks Dept., I so rarely came across any other species that I would make a special note of them in my logbook. All trees except along riverbanks survive only in irrigated yards and parks. The western part of the city is up in the Rocky Mountain foothills but those are dry treeless hills in their original state. It isn’t until one reaches the deeper foothills about 10 km further west that forests appear.]

I always wondered how mad (or just slightly perturbed) scientists, who usually spend most of their time in their labs, have absolutely drop-dead gorgeous daughters. The mothers and wives are never mentioned. There must be a book on how to build a mad scientist’s lair, plus potential costs. Labs are expensive enough, but lairs must be terribly expensive. Who funds those lairs, anyway?

My previous letter of comment: Well, the HMV stores are all gone in Toronto, and almost all of them have been filled by Sunrise Records. I think the only one that wasn’t filled was on Yonge Street. You can imagine just how expensive the rent of a store on Yonge Street could be.

[Sunrise Records took over two HMV stores in northeast Calgary where rents are lowest. All else is gone. Another branch of retail killed by the Internet.]

OPUNTIA #372: Great mountainous photos.

I have friends who are experimenting with 3D printers, and I might be talking to them soon to see if they could produce items I might be interested in. In fact,

seeing I have Windows 10 on my computer, I have software that could get me started on 3D printing if I had such a printer on my desk.

OPUNTIA #373: I had read a while ago that collecting of any sort was considered by some as a mild form of mental illness. I don’t think so, and many friends would agree. I have read some steampunk fiction, and admit that I liked the costuming more than the literature. Some do collect with the idea of making money, but any value that might be assigned to a book, or any other collectible, is quite subjective, and will probably never see the light of day, or that assigned value. We did make some money off a collector’s store many years ago, as we first sought to liquidate our collection, but we knew it was a fluke.

The only Olympic pins I have are the ones from the unsuccessful 1998 Toronto bid. I have learned something about the value of such Olympic pins, so I have them tucked away. I might get some \$\$ for them in the future, but I’m not holding my breath.

Interesting to see the article on THE IDLER. I think I remember it. I suspect the next such publication that will shut down because of the lack of sales, is THE WALRUS. I wish it success, but can’t see it succeeding. Jonathan Kay is the editor, and his attitude, as seen on the CBC, pretty well ensures that the magazine will die eventually.

ZINE LISTINGS

[I only list zines I receive from the Papernet. If the zine is posted on [www.efanzines.com](http://www.efanzines.com) or [www.fanac.org](http://www.fanac.org), then I don’t mention it since you can read it directly.]

CHRISTIAN NEW AGE QUARTERLY V23#1 (US\$5 from Catherine Groves, Box 276, Clifton, New Jersey 07015-0276) Nothing in particular stood out for me in this issue. A miscellany with letters of comment.

THE FOSSIL #371 (US\$10 for annual subscription from The Fossils Inc, c/o Tom Parson, 157 South Logan Street, Denver, Colorado 80209) This issue has several biographies of old-time apahacks and publishers. Of particular interest is one about Cassie Symmes, who was the maternal aunt of SF author Frank Belknap Long Jr. She was a society matron who published a travel book, OLD WORLD FOOTPRINTS (1928), for which her nephew arranged to have H.P. Lovecraft write the introduction.