



Westercon 70 **LepreCon 43 | ConAlope**

Progress Report #1.5 **30th June for W69**

This will be our final 'small' progress report, issued for Westercon 69 in Portland. Expect a much more substantial Progress Report 2 in the next month or two as we move from building our infrastructure to building our content.

Our organisational chart is almost complete, populated carefully from across a wide swathe of fandom, but there are a few spots still up for grabs. If you're interested in being part of our staff, please contact the Westercon 70 chair, Dee Astell, at deeastell@gmail.com.

Our biggest news is that we're proud to **announce our Author GoH**. She's SFWA Grand Master **Connie Willis**, who has won a record eleven Hugos and seven Nebulas, among many other awards. She's about as qualified as anyone ever has been to be honoured by Westercon; we're surprised that it hasn't happened before now and we're very happy to make it happen now!

She and our Local Author GoH, Gini Koch, will head up a strong author presence at Westercon 70. LepreCon may be known for its art, and we're not going to skimp on that front, but we want to ensure that our literature content is second to none too.

Connie is best known for her Time Travel series, featuring students at a future Oxford University, which includes novels like *Doomsday Book*, *To Say Nothing of the Dog* and the two parter, *Blackout/All Clear*. Her work is sometimes deadly serious and other times wickedly funny.

We are preparing to launch our new WordPress-based website, which will include the ability to buy memberships and submit vendor applications online. We will be jurying our merchant hall to ensure an appropriate balance.

Our hotel, the Tempe Mission Palms, will be opening up our convention block immediately after Westercon 69 and we'll be adding that onto the website too. Rates are \$109, as they were when we last held Westercon in Tempe in 2009. We have negotiated a discount to the service fee too, which includes everything from in-room WiFi to use of the hotel's gym. Instead of \$16.95, con-goers will only have to pay \$10.

We'll also make our mailing list active over the next week and we'll be reaching out to all our members to help keep you in touch with everything that we set up for Westercon 70 as we do so.

We will be starting to announce participants and content soon, but we expect to include all the events that are traditionally expected of a Westercon, as well as those traditionally expected of a LepreCon.

The former include the usual dances, parties and autograph sessions, as well as a blood drive in conjunction with the Heinlein Society.

The latter include a prominent art gallery; not one but two *At the Movies* presentations by Len Berger, the usual mainstream one and an independent one too; a charity auction led by Cathy Book; a sci-fi mini-film festival set from Hal C. F. Astell of *Apocalypse Later*; and a full gaming event, *Conflagration*, held within the wider convention.

We plan to boost Science as a track at Westercon 70 and are working to secure a prominent Science GoH. We will also have a strong Steampunk track including panels and hands on workshops. The Arizona steampunk community is a vibrant one and we'll have representation from many of the active groups dotted around the state.

If anyone is interested in being part of our programming, whether that be as a panelist with an established panel, an author in our autographing schedule or someone who just has a great idea for an event, please contact the Westercon 70 Chair, Dee Astell, at deeastell@gmail.com.

Please also reach out with any general feedback you may have about what you want to see or what you don't want to see at Westercon 70. We've already had some great feedback and look forward to more over the next year.