

Lethbridge Entertainment Expo celebrates pop culture

Thursday, 21 November 2013 12:35 Richard Amery

The Lethbridge Entertainment Expo will be a pop culture nut's Mecca, Nov 23-24 at Exhibition Park.

"It is everything that just celebrates the joys of pop culture," said a frazzled Matthew Odland, who is single handedly organizing the event.

"It's a lot to do but I'm still really, really enjoying everything," he said adding the event is coming together. Vendors have been lined up. Some already booked next year.

In addition to approximately a hundred vendors and displays featuring everything from comic books, local film makers to Hatrix Theatre's spring production of Spamalot, there will be lots of special guests like Star Trek's Marina Sirtis, Battlestar Galactica's Aaron Douglas and World Champion Curler/ Olympic bronze medalist and two time Brier winner turned science fiction author Ed Lukowich, who has just released his debut novel The Trillionist under the nomme de plume Sagan Jeffries.

"I'm excited about the Lethbridge Entertainment Expo. And I met Marina Sertis at one in Calgary, though I don't think she'll remember me," said Lukowich, who has attended similar cons, but making his debut as a presenter at Lethbridge Entertainment Expo.

"I always loved Star Trek from Captain Kirk to Picard to Voyager," he said. In addition to Carl Sagan, he is a big fan of Isaac Asimov and Arthur C Clarke

"So congratulations to the organizer for doing this. It's a job well done," he said.

He is best known for writing four best selling books about curling including The Curling Book in 1980, Curling to Win in 1986, the Joy of Curling in 1989 and Power Curling in 1990, the last three through McGraw Hill Publishing. He wanted to keep his two careers separate, so gave himself the pen name Sagan (named after scientist/ author/ TV show host Carl Sagan and two cousins who are both named Jeff.

He decided to change direction and write his first science fiction novel, "The Trillionist," published through EDGE Science Fiction and Fantasy publishing.

The Trillionist which is named after a word he made up which he defined as "something which has been in existence for a trillion years."

The story is about a human who is not born naked and already born with all the knowledge of the universe of having been around for a trillion years. As a result there are challenges. He tries to make changes which don't go as planned, then must go back and fix them. While Lukowich doesn't delve much into the religious/ spiritual

implications of a trillion year old universe, there is a “grand artisan” who has designed everything.

“ I never intended to make a lot of money doing this, though nobody chases that away. I just wanted to get my message out there and maybe make people think. Our main goal on Planet Earth is to figure out what the hell we are doing here. And the first step is to figure out how the house is built,” he continued.

He will be hanging out all weekend, will arrive in Lethbridge on Friday and will be taking part in two panels — at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday and 3:30 p.m. on Sunday.

“ Lethbridge deserves an event like this where you don’t have to drive outside the city for this sort of thing,” said organizer Matthew Odland.

The event runs at Exhibition Park South Pavilion from 10 a.m.- 7 p.m., Nov. 23 and 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Nov. 24.

Featured guests including Marina Sirtis who played Deanna Troi on the entire TV series as well as the seven motion pictures of “Star Trek The Next Generation”, Aaron Douglas who played Chief Galen Tyrol in SyFy's 2004 remake “Battlestar Galactica” as well as key rolls in Netflix's “Hemlock Grove” and AMC's “The Killing” and New York Times Bestselling Author and creator of “Dragonlance” Tracy Hickman and his wife Laura.

Local media guests include extreme sports enthusiast Johnny Korthuis and UFC, MMA fighter Jordan Mein. Tickets are \$15 per day or \$25 for a weekend pass and children 10 years and under get in free with paid admission.

With over 60 vendors from local artisans and businesses to exhibitors from as far away as Montreal and the West Coast there will plenty of things in the world of pop culture to experience and purchase for that someone special in your life.

There will be an after party on Saturday at Scores at 7 p.m.

— *By Richard Amery, L.A. Beat Editor*