



Taffluorescence! tenth issue



It is the end of October 2025, and the end of an era. Yes, TAFF administration in Europe is passing from the exhausted hands of *Sandra Bond*, 1B Chestnut House, Mucklestone Rd, Loggerheads, Market Drayton TF9 1DA, UK to the mitts of *Mikołaj Kowalewski*, Nørre Farimagsgade 68, st. tv, 1364, Copenhagen, Denmark North American admin remains *Sarah Gulde*, 3244 SE 153rd Ave, Portland, OR 97236, USA
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EU TAFF PayPal: EUTaff@gmail.com ~~ NA TAFF PayPal: SarahMiyoko@gmail.com
TAFF website, with a medley of extemporanea: taff.org.uk
Rotsler for TAFF cartoons from 1970 (hitherto unseen) from Bill Mallardi via Dave Langford



Yippee I'm free... And from the moment you read this, all (all? ALL) communications regarding EU TAFF should go to Mikołaj and not to me. I mean, I can forward things to him, but I think I've earned the rest, don't you? In this issue, you'll find pieces signed "(shb)" or "(mk)", depending on the author thereof.

TAFF itself never rests; TAFF goes on apace. And it's time to think about 2026 and the details of a TAFF election for next year. This would be an eastbound race, North America to Europe.

We would like to open nominations soon, but before we do, here are a few questions for fandom-at-large to ponder, debate, and generally kick around:

- 1) Is there to be an eastbound TAFF race in 2026?
- 2) What is the destination convention to be?
- 3) What dates and deadlines will apply to the campaign?

Here are my own thoughts on those. And remember, they are no more valid than yours, because I gave up being a TAFF admin half a page ago. Mikołaj also has some comments, which follow later...

- 1) Every now and again TAFF skips a year, but only when there is good reason. I see no such good reason prevailing at the current moment, so I think there should be a TAFF race in 2026.
- 2) This is a more interesting question, because it has been mooted that TAFF 2026 should take as its target convention Eurocon (Berlin, 2-5 July 2026) rather than Eastercon (Birmingham, 3-6 April 2026). Now, on the one hand, TAFF has (in years without a European Worldcon) always been to Eastercon; on the other hand... well, TAFF has always been to Eastercon. On the one hand, an arrangement that has worked well for decades might seem inadvisable to change; on the other hand, perhaps it's ripe for TAFF to consider global fandom as it now is, and make the leap of changing the destination. This needs debate, and what's more –
- 3) – the debate needs to happen straight away, because if the consensus is that TAFF should continue to send a North American fan to Eastercon, then the campaign needs to get started with as little delay as possible. If the choice of fandom is that the NA delegate should go to Eurocon, that gives us more time to play with; but I don't think that alone should influence the decision of destination.

So there we have it. May I urge everyone with an interest in TAFF to amplify this debate so that those in charge can get a real picture of what fandom as a whole thinks? Obviously, if nobody responds, the admins will have to work it out themselves... but if nobody responds, it surely bodes ill for TAFF. Which would be a pity. I *believe* in TAFF with all my little fannish heart. Don't let me down. Let's have this public discussion.

As an addendum to this, I should mention that Iridescence, the 2026 Eastercon, has already offered a lot of support for fan funds including an auction and tables. That's not dependent on a TAFF winner attending, and we'll need to make direct arrangements with the destination con to support our delegate. (shb)

Now, here is your eager, energetic new EU admin, *Mikołaj Kowalewski*:

STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND: an introduction to a TAFF report by Mikołaj Kowalewski

I am barely starting to write this report, but I am already struggling with finding the right way to talk about things. I want to accurately show my experience, but I don't want to be too critical and grumble about the events organization, even if Sandra before me showed that it is perfectly legal and fine. I also don't want to make political journalism about the current US, but the US itself, together with programme participants and Hugo winners, makes it hard to avoid this topic. I expect from myself to be very bipolar and frantically jumping in between topics, and I beg for forgiveness for that. I was in the US for 42 days, thanks to the fact that I am an unemployed person who just finished being a student (if you know someone who is looking for an environmental economist, sustainability analyst, or any other thing that sounds similar let me know), which makes it easier to go for long trips without being worried about your vacation days. I attended 3 conventions (Worldcon, Dragoncon, Albacon; 13 days in total), attended the IgNobel ceremony, saw 6 Nobel Laureates and 4 concerts, visited Yosemite National Park (2 days) and 7 cities (Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, Atlanta, Chicago, New York, Boston), staying in 4 hotels, one tent, and 5 guest rooms. Inspired by Geri's beer chapter, I drank 77 different beers during the trip, and ate one hot dog too many in Chicago. I have also met many more people than I have drunk beers. Thanks to all the people who helped me plan all that, who met and spoke with me, who shared a car or a hotel room with me, or who let me stay in their houses and drink milk from their fridges. It will not be forgotten (I hope so at least; Alzheimer's is a thing).

And now, let me explain the Starbucks breakfast mistake you will see in the following expenses summary, as an opening to my experience in the US, and to not leave you hanging. I arrived in Seattle on 10th August, a few days before Worldcon. After arrival, customs took approximately 90 minutes, including a very long queue and 5 minutes of answering weird questions like "How do you know these people you are staying with?" My answer of "I don't really know all of them" might have not been the best, but it worked. I stayed in the Sheraton Grand Hotel, in a room paid for by Worldcon (thanks a lot for that). At the airport I met my friend, Matylda Naczyńska, first European Fan Fund delegate back in 2023. We are members of the same SF club, Avangarda Association in Warsaw, Poland. She received a Worldcon Community fund scholarship, and after exchanging a few emails we managed to have her booked into my room as well. From the beginning, I had a room with two double beds, which is much more than one person needs, but the Sheraton booking system wasn't allowing me to add her to the booking myself. After we got to the hotel, around 4pm, we got our keys and we found information, later confirmed by the man at the information desk in the hotel, that room included \$20 a day to spend in Starbucks in Foyer, which we did for the duration of our stay, to later be charged for that when leaving the hotel. I asked about it once again, why we were paying since we had \$20 per day to spend there, and I was told that that offer is only for basic rooms in the hotel, and we were staying in a suite (Thanks Worldcon even more!) to which this offer does not apply. Therefore the big Starbucks mistake was eating shitty Starbucks food – and even worse coffee – because it was supposed to be free, instead of going for another breakfast, which ended up being both bad and expensive.

More, hopefully less dramatic stories from Seattle, including one Worldcon and 2 concerts, incoming hopefully soon (unless I find a job that leaves no time to write such things!) (mk)

I don't know whether Mikołaj intends, like me, to split his eventual report between chapters in different fanzines or forums, or whether he plans to issue it in one big lump. Either way, on this evidence, it should be worth waiting for, I reckon.

This issue of Taffluorescence should be out a week or two before Novacon (the con at which I was talked into standing for TAFF, back in 2022... ah me). I don't think Mikołaj will be there; but if anyone who wishes to let me have verbal comments upon any of the issues we have raised, I'm happy to summarize them in print after the con and pass them on to the current administrators. I may even be organised enough to jot them down in my little notebook... (shb)



Still with Mikolaj, his thoughts upon the question I raised on page 1 about where a 2025 TAFF delegate should be sent follow:

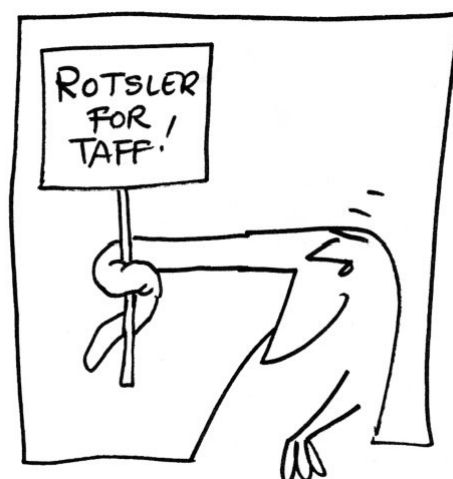
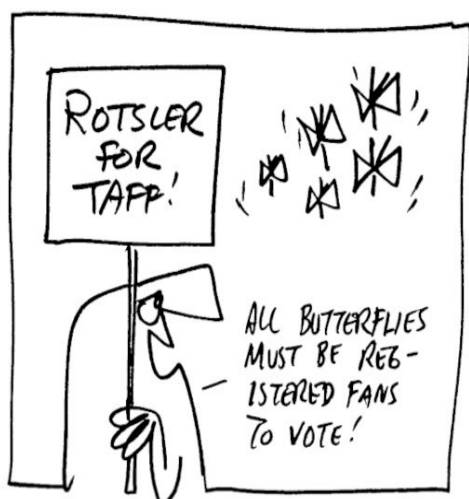
Me talking about why I put an idea of trying to get TAFF to Eurocon: I am a fairly young newcomer to the fandom, going to cons since 2015. I have never been to Eastercon. I have been to 4 conventions in the UK (Discworldcon 2018 and 2016, both in Warwick; Titancon (Belfast Eurocon) 2019; Glasgow Worldcon 2024), so I obviously can't speak about Eastercon from experience. But during this 10 years of my fandom life we had 6 TAFF delegates from Europe, and only two of them were UK based. There was an Austrian delegate, two Swedes, and a Pole living in Denmark (Two Swedes and a Pole enter a bar joke incoming somewhere in the future).



But TAFF still insists, for understandable historical reasons and sentiment, on sending delegates to Eastercon. However tempting it is to make an American delegate to go to the national convention of the current Administrator, it is also a very messy and problematic idea. Eurocon seems a little less messy and more accessible, showcasing a bigger part of European Fandom. TAFF, at least by the name, is transatlantic, not UK-US only, and global fandom is more and more open to people from non-English speaking countries (despite the problems for Hugo people to pronounce some names). Additionally, my other point I would like to raise is the calendar and other convention opportunities. During my trip I visited 3 conventions, which made it more "fandom oriented". Going for Eastercon most likely will make it an Eastercon experience only; there are few other events in this time. If we send the next delegate to Eurocon (first weekend of July, Berlin) they will be able to attend Finncon, the national Finnish convention, a week later; a bunch of major Polish events in the weeks before and after the Eurocon; Fantasticon, the national Danish convention; and a myriad of other things happening during summer that I am not aware of. I am not saying they have to, but they will have the opportunity to explore a much bigger section of European fandom than by going to Eastercon alone. I think it may also be an opportunity for TAFF itself to be seen by more people and hopefully get more fans interested in it (and donate money to feed the account I was spending some money from to buy beer). I am excited to discuss that idea, and have the next race start soon. (mk)

There you have it. I reiterate that we want to get TAFF 2025 started soon, soon, soon!; so let's start that debate-ball rolling now. I fully expect half of fandom to have an opinion on this; don't be shy to voice yours (keeping things courteous, of course). Let's see if we can find a happy consensus.

Thanks to Mikolaj for providing me with just sufficient content for this issue of Taffluorescence to allow me to fill up spaces with the whole remaining stock of 1970 Rotsler-for-TAFF cartoons. No space left wasted, no Rotsler cartoons left orphaned. (shb)



(shb) Let's turn to money once again. We gave you details of the European treasury in issue 9 of this very bulletin, and a more detailed snapshot thereof will be available within a few days; to complete the picture, we can advise that the North American coffers contain the sum of **\$7369.48** – a decent sum, sure, but more is always sought, because sending people round the planet isn't cheap. As proof of this, here is a slightly rounded list of expenditure while on his trip which Mikołaj has compiled:

*Flights: \$2130... Baggage fees: \$140... Hotels: \$860... Public transport: \$200... Uber: \$65... Food, drink, alcohol: \$2600 (includes "Starbucks breakfasts in Seattle hotel. Big mistake"; see above)... Tourism, museums, etc: \$300... Paid to Dragoncon to sign up as volunteer: \$20... Sundries, including medicaments (beware of Chicago hot dogs!): \$185. **Total: \$6500.***

You will readily see that if fundraising ceased, TAFF itself would also have to cease within a couple of years. Isn't it lucky that we have no plans for fundraising to cease?

On a final financial note, both for convenience and because she's done such a damn fine job of it for so long, it has been agreed that the European fund's financial comptroller will continue to be the very wonderful *Claire Brialey*, who (unlike EU TAFF's other saintly long term helper, Dave Langford) has never even won TAFF and so acts from nowt but the goodness of her heart. Thanks again, Claire – and Dave – for everything.



Moving on once again, let's round up the remaining bits of TAFF news.

As you'll have seen above, Mikołaj has already begun to write a report of his travels, the eager young whippersnapper. Put me to shame, would you? Grumble, mutter. I have no more segments of my own report to boast about; the best I can do is say that Dan Steffan has the chapter on Chicago, and I am in the middle of writing for Nic Farey and Ulrika O'Brien my chapter on Madison and Minneapolis, and both Dan (*Boonfark*) and Nicrika (*Beam*) hope to publish before the end of this year. Now I'm free of admin responsibilities, I mean to put some serious work into finishing my report; other than the above, I have half a chapter on Drumheller and Calgary to do, plus full chapters on Vegas, Seattle, California, and Washington DC. Anyone who fancies a chapter for their fanzine has only to ask me.

Chapter 6 remains available in my booklet *Good Books Gone Worse*, of which three copies remain. One can be yours for a flat £5 anywhere in the world. But hurry; I'll be taking them to Novacon to flog... (shb)



And with that, I leap overboard from the good ship Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund, and leave the capable Mikołaj at the helm. Thank you, *thank* you, to everyone who made it possible for me to experience the incredible experience that is TAFF. -- S&ra

