

Meerkat Meade Considered (a production of National Public Correspondence)

Hello, I'm Robert Seagull...And I'm Linda Weisenheimer...

And this is Meerkat Meade Considered for the year 2001. As we revisit the highlights of the year, we'll provide our trademark in-depth reporting, vapid observations, pointless insights, and constant guilt-producing appeals to support your local station.

Mergers were in the news this year. In February, the firms of Thomas G. Atkinson, Unlimited and Don Sakers, Inc. joined under the laws of Vermont, which allows same-gender companies to merge. In the combined company, both divisions will keep their own names and CEOs. Stock in both companies soared after the merger, but then declined later in the year due to the recessionary climate.

Then in May 2001, Renfield joined forces with June Swords, Ltd. The new company, Junefield Corp, slashed expenditures and downsized their workforce in order to concentrate the company's efforts on locating a permanent headquarters location. The tight real estate market and a general decline in stock prices has so far limited the company's ability to move out of their current overcrowded location. But the Vice-President in Charge of Silly Walks, Mr. Daniel Corcoran, said that he was optimistic that something would turn up soon.

This portion of Meerkat Meade Considered was sponsored by Archer-Daniels Midland Corp, the world's largest producer of tax-law loopholes. ADM: Don't you wish you had our lobbyists?

Tragedy struck the Atkinson family again in May 2001. For this story, we take you to a special correspondent: NPC's own Susan Steinberg, who left us years ago in a futile search for a better-paying job, and who now comes slithering back whenever we call, desperate for the pittance which is all we can pay.

Susan Steinberg here. I'm speaking with Thomas Atkinson, whose older brother Bill passed away in May. Thomas, you visited Bill's immediate family in Boston shortly after his death—can you describe their mood? ...Now, Mr. Atkinson, I don't think you need to take that tone...Mr. Atkinson, may I remind you that I am a once-respected and still-beloved journalist, and I represent the right of the public to gawk at anyone's grief, particularly in the most private moments...work with me here, Mr. Atkinson, I need a good emotional story so I can boot Weisenheimer out and get my job back...don't make me beg, Mr. Atkinson...oh, God, I need a job!

Thank you, Susan Steinberg. Obituaries of Macintosh users are sponsored on NPC by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, whose mission is to dominate the world through inferior software.

We take you now to an unusual subculture, that of Science Fiction Fans. Over Labor Day weekend, thousands of fans gathered in Philadelphia for the annual Worldcon Convention. The denizens of Meerkat Meade participated in one of the most sacred rituals, the Masquerade. I'm speaking with an sf fan named Ralph 124C41+. Mr. 124C41+, I understand that the Masquerade is the most popular event of the Worldcon?

That's right, Linda. Thousands of fans come to watch it. And the costumers who participate... they can spend years working on their costumes, all for a two-minute presentation on stage and a chance at a meaningless award.

And why is the Masquerade so popular?

Well, you see, Linda, most of us fans don't have much of what you'd call "a life." And so we like to get together to watch people who have even less of a life than we do.

I'm told that the group from Meerkat Meade was well-received this year.

I'll say! They did a song-and-dance number that paid homage to the old TV show "The Twilight Zone." And the thing was, they did it all in black-and-white. Even their makeup was in shades of grey! Nothing impresses fans more than a colorless tribute to a forgotten TV show. They won "Best in Show."

Thank you, Mr. 124C41+. Science-fiction reporting on NPC is sponsored by the Chubb Group (no comment).

In November, vehicles owned by Meerkat Meade's own Rob Mackin were set on fire and burned to the ground. There were no casualties. Although no specific group has claimed responsibility, government sources suspect that the attack was carried out by IRA agents in retaliation for Palestinian suicide bombers, Israeli helicopter gunship attacks, or the U.S. presence in either Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, or Andorra (sources were unclear on this point). As a precautionary measure, the FBI has arrested everyone with a "w" in their name. Detainees are being held indefinitely without possibility of release.

Terrorism news is sponsored by the Popular People's Front of Judea, practicing the fine art of terror since 25 A.D.

Finally, we visited Meerkat Meade to see if the inhabitants wanted to give any message to our audience. Here is what they said:

Happy Holidays to All,
and donate to your local NPC station!
(Hey, wait, we didn't say that....)