

WESTERCON 74

- Who is your point of contact at this convention?
 - Kevin Standlee and Lisa Hayes
- Do you have an email address (and/or other social media or messaging inboxes) to receive questions?
 - Website: <http://westercon74.org/>
 - Email: info@westercon74
 - Twitter: @Tonopah2021
 - Facebook: @WesterconTonopah
- What response time can people expect?
 - We usually respond within one day. If you haven't heard an answer within a week, ask again because it may mean the query went astray.
- What City/Country are you hosting in?
 - Tonopah, Nevada, USA
- What dates is your convention happening?
 - July 2-5, 2021

About Us

- Who is leading your committee?
 - Chair: Kevin Standlee
 - Facilities: Mike Willmoth
 - Treasurer: Bruce Farr
 - Hospitality: Lisa Hayes, Randy Smith, Kevin Roche, Andy Trembley
 - Others: David W. Clark, Linda Deneroff, Sandra Childress, Cheryl Morgan, Sharon Sbarsky. See <http://westercon74.org/about/committee/> for details.
- Tell us about your committee's prior convention experience.
 - Our Chair is a past Worldcon Chair, and we have two other past Worldcon chairs (Kevin Roche, David W. Clark) on our committee. Past Westercon chairs Mike Willmoth and Bruce Farr are in senior leadership roles. (Bruce Farr is also a past NASFiC chair, and Mike Willmoth is a past Worldcon Vice Chair.) Past Worldcon division manager Randy Smith is deputy Hospitality director. Past Worldcon division manager Linda Deneroff is Registrar. CoNZealand division manager Sharon Sbarsky is head of Site Selection.
- Operating a Westercon is a complicated business proposition. What business structure or organization have you formed to support hosting/sponsoring your convention?
 - Westercon 74 is a committee of San Francisco Science Fiction Conventions, Inc (SFSFC), the parent organization of the 1993, 2002, and 2018 Worldcons, the 2000, 2011, and 2013 Westercons, the 1998 and 2009 World Fantasy Conventions, and the 1999, 2010, and 2018 SMOFCons
 - Westercon 74 is taking advantage of SFSFC's shared corporate resources such as a Zoom conferencing account and existing corporate structure (banking, tax reporting, etc.).
 - SFSFC is also running CostumeCon 39 in 2021. The two committees are sharing resources and promoting each other at their various convention appearances.

Location Information

- Is your venue in a city center or a suburban location?
 - Rural: Tonopah, Nevada is a town of about 2500 people in rural Nevada located roughly 200 miles from either Las Vegas or Reno, Nevada.
- Travel to your host city
 - What Airport (or airports) serve your host city?
 - The nearest major airports are Reno (RNO) and Las Vegas (LAS), both of which are roughly 200 miles from Tonopah.
 - Please provide rough estimates of flight costs into your airports.
 - We have not done detailed investigation of flight costs. Las Vegas is a large airport served by many major airlines. Reno is a medium regional airport with a variety of carriers.
 - What other transport options serve your city? Trains? Bus service?
 - There is no scheduled intercity bus or train service to Tonopah. The nearest intercity train station (Amtrak) is Reno (RNO). Intercity bus carriers serve Reno and Las Vegas.
 - The primary means of travel to Tonopah is by private passenger vehicle.
- International attendees
 - Do your airports offer nonstop international flights?
 - Las Vegas McCarran International Airport has direct flights to/from 12 countries outside the USA: Canada, China, France, Germany, Israel, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Panama, South Korea, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.
 - Does your country (at the time of publishing) participate in any visa waiver programs?
 - The USA participates in extensive visa-waiver programs with many countries. Travelers do need to obtain electronic travel authority even if traveling from a visa-waiver partner.
 - Where can international attendees find customs, immigration and/or visa information about coming to your country?
 - Inasmuch as most people attending Westercon come from the USA and Canada, we have not given extensive study to customs/immigration/visa information. In general, travelers to the USA should consult <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel.html>
- Travel in your host city
 - How do attendees get from your airports, train stations and/or bus stops to the convention area?
 - The primary means of travel to Tonopah is by private passenger vehicle.
 - Tonopah is at the junction of US-95 (north-south highway) and US-6 (east-west). Travel from Reno or Las Vegas is mainly via US-95. Travel from the east is via US-6 (or I-80 to US-95). Travel from the Los Angeles area is either via Las Vegas or by US-395 to US-6. Travel from the San

Francisco Bay area is either via I-80 to US-95 or directly from the Bay Area via CA-120 and Yosemite.

- The convention has a Travel coordinator to help members organize shared rides from either gateway airport cities or from major metropolitan areas in the region.
- What mass-transit options are available in your city?
 - There are no mass transit operations in Tonopah. The town is approximately 5 km end to end, and the convention center and downtown hotels would fit into an area approximately the size of the ExCel Convention Centre in London.
- What apps are available for taxi and/or ride-sharing services in your city?
 - Not applicable. There is no taxi service in Tonopah. We are not familiar with ride-sharing services operating in Tonopah.
- For people who have or rent cars, what is your city's parking and traffic situation?
 - All parking is free in Tonopah.
 - There are electric car-charging facilities located downtown and on the south end of town.
 - Traffic is generally light. US-95 is a rural high-speed highway except when it traverses small towns, where the speed limit drops from 65-70 mph to 25-35 mph.
- What accessible transit options exist?
 - There are no public transit operations in Tonopah.
- Weather in your host city
 - What average high and low temperatures can attendees expect (C and F both, please)?
 - July average temperatures: high 91°F/33°C, low 57°F/14°C
 - What average humidity and precipitation chances can attendees expect in your city?
 - Tonopah's humidity is generally very low at all times, with the average chance of any given day being considered muggy estimated at 0% according to weatherspark.com.
 - Chance of precipitation in Tonopah in July is negligible.
 - Is there anything about your weather that would surprise many attendees?
 - Tonopah is located at about 6000 ft / 1850 m
 - Days are warm to hot, but nights can be chilly.
 - Due to the dry, high desert climate, we recommend staying well hydrated and taking precautions against sun exposure.
- Eating and drinking in your host city
 - What is the restaurant scene, particularly surrounding your facilities?
 - There are 11 restaurants listed on the Town of Tonopah's website, including American, Mexican, Chinese, and Italian food, and also including one brewpub (Tonopah Brewing Company).
 - How do restaurants in your area accommodate allergies and dietary restrictions?
 - Unknown.

- What is the nightlife scene, particularly surrounding your facilities?
 - The Mizpah Hotel has an attached casino
 - There are several local bars of note, including the historic Tonopah Liquor Company across the street from the Mizpah Hotel that has been in operation since 1906.
- Tourist attractions in or near your host city
 - Tonopah Historic Mining Park
 - Central Nevada Museum
 - Tonopah Stargazing Park (the town has some of the darkest skies in the USA)
 - Haunted Tonopah walking tours (including the Old Tonopah Cemetery)
 - “Extraterrestrial Highway” (Nevada state route 375)
 - Historic Goldfield, Nevada
 - Multiple ghost towns in the area
 - Otteson Brothers Turquoise Mine Tours
 - We are encouraging people traveling to Tonopah to make driving tours to/from the town to take advantage of other tourism opportunities in Central Nevada and Eastern California.

Convention facilities

- Convention facilities
 - What facilities are you planning to use for convention exhibits, program and events?
 - Tonopah Convention Center
 - Mizpah Hotel/Mizpah Club
 - Old Tonopah Library
 - Has your organization used this space before?
 - No
 - What other conventions similar to your convention in content and/or capacity does your facility host? Have you attended any of them?
 - To our knowledge, the Tonopah Convention Center has never hosted an SF/F genre convention.
 - The building does host movie showings, craft fairs, and other community functions.
 - What spaces are you planning to use for major events (Masquerade)? What is the size, layout and seating capacity?
 - We do not currently anticipate having a Masquerade, although we do have a fixed stage and seating area that could accommodate such an event.
 - The convention center rated capacity is 450 people
 - We are visiting the Convention Center the week after SMOFCon to take detailed measurements of the Convention Center and will publish this information on our website.
 - What spaces are you planning to use for exhibits (Dealers, Art Show, Fixed Exhibits)? What is the size and layout of the spaces?
 - We anticipate having approximately ten tables in a dealer area.
 - We do not currently anticipate having an Art Show.
 - There should be sufficient space to hold at least 10 fan tables.
 - How many rooms do you plan to allocate to programming? What are their capacity ranges?
 - We have 4 rooms planned for programming
 - The largest room (Mizpah Club) has a rated capacity of 150 seats theatre seating.
 - The intermediate seating room (TCC Blue Room) holds around 40; we expect to use this room to host remote programming, with both program participants and non-attending members participating via video conferencing.
 - The smaller rooms hold 10-20 maximum.
 - The convention center Main Hall can hold around 300; however, we intend to use this area, with its attached prep kitchen and bar, for hospitality functions. We will also use it for plenary functions such as the opening and closing ceremony.

- Does your facility provide internet access? Have you reviewed the convention facility's internet services under load?
 - The convention center provides free wi-fi. We have not been able to test the internet under load.
- Does your facility provide gender-neutral toilets (restrooms)?
 - There are currently no pre-designated gender-neutral toilets. There are, however, a pair of single-occupancy restrooms that we intend to designate as gender-neutral.
- Housing facilities
 - What hotels do you currently have under contract?
 - Our headquarters hotel is the Mizpah-Belvada Hotels (which includes the low-price Old Brewery Hostel).
 - We are in negotiation with the Best Western, Jim Butler, Tonopah Station, and Clown Motels.
 - How close are your contracted hotels to your convention center?
 - The Mizpah is 140 m / 450 ft from the Tonopah Convention Center (TCC).
 - The Belvada is diagonally across the street from the TCC.
 - The Old Brewery Hostel is behind the Mizpah Hotel.
 - The Jim Butler is about the same distance as the Mizpah.
 - The Best Western is 450 m / 1475 ft from the TCC.
 - The Tonopah Station Hotel is about 1.6 km / 1 m south of the TCC (it also has an attached RV park).
 - The World Famous Clown Motel is approximately 1 km / 0.6 mi north of the TCC.
 - The Comfort Inn is approximately 3 km / 2 mi north of the TCC.
 - Please provide a breakdown of room block sizes and composition in your contracted hotels.
 - We are still negotiating room blocks with hotels other than the Mizpah-Belvada, which is holding all 80 of their combined rooms for us.
 - What are your hotel rates? Does this include all taxes?
 - Room rates will not include 8% sales tax.
 - Rates are still being negotiated but are expected to range from \$60-\$140/night before tax, depending on hotels.
 - Do your contracted hotels include internet access for guests?
 - All hotels include complimentary wi-fi for guests.
 - Do your contracted hotels include breakfast?
 - The Best Western includes breakfast.
 - Some of the other hotels include coffee/tea and in some cases light pastries.
 - Have you contracted all the sleeping rooms and function space in any of your hotels?
 - We have not concluded all of our negotiations.
 - Are you negotiating with or planning to negotiate with other hotels (you don't have to name them) to increase your room block?

- We continue to negotiate with most of Tonopah’s hotels. The town of Tonopah has approximately 500 hotel rooms, not including a small number of minor properties with which we are not discussing arrangements.
 - Are you required to make a minimum room block, or is your housing “courtesy blocks?” Will people booking outside your blocks harm the convention’s financial stability?
 - All blocks are “courtesy blocks,” and members will book directly with the hotels.
 - The convention’s finances are not dependent upon room bookings.
- Party facilities
 - What space are you planning to make available for parties?
 - We have 24-hour access to the Tonopah Convention Center, which includes a prep kitchen, including refrigerators, warming ovens, microwave ovens, an outdoor barbeque, and industrial-style washing-up facilities.
 - There is a full bar along one wall of the main hall, which groups will be able to use. The kitchen includes a large ice maker.
 - Parties will be in the convention center main hall (which was once a USO Club during the days of the Tonopah Army Air Force Base).
 - Will party hosts have to use caterers authorized by the space? Will party hosts be able to bring in their own food and/or drink?
 - Parties are expected to do their own catering. There is no outside catering service, nor are parties required to use a captive vendor.
 - There is no corkage or forkage.
 - Parties can bring in and serve their own food and/or drink.
 - Parties are expected to comply with the convention’s food-service safety requirements.
 - Are party hosts allowed to serve alcohol? Where can party hosts learn about alcohol service regulations and facilities policies?
 - Parties may serve (but not sell) alcohol and will have use of the convention center bar facilities for serving it.
 - No licenses or corkage is imposed.
 - The legal drinking age in Nevada is 21 years old, and parties are expected to responsibly serve alcohol.
- Accessibility
 - Has your access team reviewed your facilities for mobility device access? For access services for the blind? For access services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing?
 - The Convention Center does not appear to have access services for the blind or deaf/hard of hearing.
 - We would welcome someone prepared to help us make the event more welcoming to people with disabilities.
 - Does your facility provide ramps and/or lifts for event and program stages?

- The Convention Center is mostly ramp-accessible, but the main stage in the main hall does not have an access ramp; consequently, we are not expecting to make extensive use of the main stage.
- Do your facilities host any access-focused events, and, if so, can you tell us about these events and how the space works with them?
 - To our knowledge, our facilities do not host access-focused events.
- How do your hotels accommodate allergies?
 - We have not discussed this subject with our hotels

Our Mission

- In one short paragraph, please explain what your team is attempting to bring to this convention.
 - We are currently planning a relatively light schedule of programming, giving our members an expanded opportunity to socialize and to explore the community. Rather than exhausting the members by rushing from item to item and constantly protesting that they seem to need to be in a dozen places at once, we want our members to enjoy themselves without running themselves ragged.
- How are you fostering member safety?
 - Is your code of conduct and implementation process published?
 - Yes: <http://westercon74.org/about/code-of-conduct-policies/>
- How are you fostering diversity?
 - What is your diversity plan for volunteer recruiting?
 - We welcome anyone prepared to help us make Tonopah a event welcome to all fans.
 - What is your diversity plan for programming?
 - This is pending the recruitment of a head of Programming. We hope to include participants unable to physically attend the convention by doing one track of remote-participation via webinar/video conferencing.
 - Do you have a diversity plan for Guests of Honor?
 - We are not planning on having Guests of Honor
 - Have you looked into your police department's record with minority and marginalized communities?
 - We have not investigated the Nye County Sheriff's Department record.
- How are you fostering accessibility?
 - Does your access team include people who need access services?
 - We do not currently have an Access team, but we would like to have one. Thus far, those people we have asked to do this have declined.
 - Does your committee include people who need access services?
 - Yes. Our Facilities head's spouse has access service needs, and our Facilities negotiation is informed by their requirements.
- How are you engaging your local community?
 - What is your plan for recruiting local volunteers?
 - What is your plan to reach out to local fans and program participants?
 - What local arts, educational and/or charity organizations do you plan to reach out to?
 - For all of the above, we are engaging via Facebook with Tonopah-area community groups, and we intend to increase such engagement as we get closer to the event.
- What are you doing to engage young fans and families with children?
 - What age-related policies and restrictions have you put in place (or are required to put in place) that apply to young fans?

- Minors are prohibited from loitering in casino areas or bars, but this is not expected to have a significant impact on the convention.
 - We have not made any significant plans for restrictions on young fans.
 - What are your plans to handle childcare needs?
 - Due to the small anticipated attendance (200-400 people), we currently do not have any childcare provision plans.
- Are you planning any membership discounts/rates?
 - Young Adults and Children have reduced-price memberships.
 - We anticipate offering a reduced membership rate for “locals” (people living the local area near Tonopah).
- What attendance level are you expecting for your convention? How are you calculating this estimate?
 - We are projecting a membership of between 200-400 people, with a membership cap, if required, of 450 people due to the capacity of the Tonopah Convention Center. As of mid-November 2019, Westercon 74 had 101 attending members.
 - Membership estimates are based on the size of other Westercons held in smaller or out of the way areas. While Tonopah is obviously more remote than places like El Paso or Hawaii, we believe that this is offset by the attraction of low membership rates and low hotel and food costs, with no parking or wi-fi access costs.
 - Many people have said that they want a convention that doesn't nickel-and-dime them with extra charges from hotels and convention centers, that has inexpensive lodging and food choices, that doesn't charge for parking, and that doesn't hem in parties with onerous restrictions like captive vendors, corkage, and forrage charges. We believe that Tonopah gives those people those things.