

Father Michael Monahan Murphy is not only an accomplished Garage Kit artist but an enthusiastic convention-attendee. In 2011, Father Murphy organized Vati-CON, the first ever science fiction fan convention held in Vatican City, sponsored by the Catholic Church and blessed by The Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, who is a fan of science fiction films and Clint Eastwood westerns.

He has attended conventions all over the world (e.g., San Diego's Comic-Con, Louisville's WonderFest, New Jersey's Chiller Theatre Convention, Japan's Wonder Festival, Monsterpalooza in California, Minnesota's Nordic-Con, EC-Con in Wisconsin, UKGK in England, JerseyFest, the Berlin Toy Fair, Chicago's G-Fest, New York's Toy Fair and the Moscow Commie-Con). This excerpt is his second contribution to *The Hardcore Modeler's Manual™*.

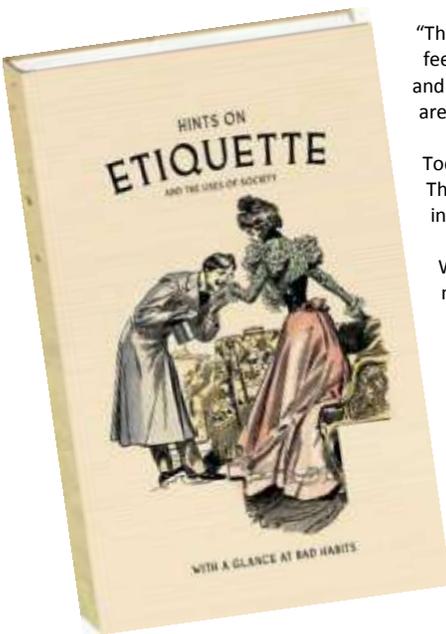


Father Murphy and Writer/Director Frank Darabont at Vati-CON 2011

Father Murphy has become a student of convention behavior among GK collectors all over the world and, in this chapter of *HMM*, he imparts his wisdom on convention etiquette. GK convention season is quickly approaching and this month's excerpt of *The Hardcore Modeler's Manual™: Volume One* will assist convention attendees (vendors, collectors, artists, fans, contest competitors) in making their convention attendance as enjoyable an experience as they could have prayed for.

The Hardcore Modeler's Manual™: Volume One

Chapter 29 (Father Murphy's Laws of Model Convention Etiquette) pp. 220-227



"The 21st century," Father Murphy says, "is a world less well-mannered, less polite and less sensitive to the needs and feelings of others than the world of our parents and grandparents. Our global community is motivated by economic and personal egocentricism, by self-gratification and instant gratification. Common courtesies, good manners, politeness are sorely lacking in all aspects of 21st century life. And the garage kits industry and fan conventions are no exception.

Too frequently we see our GK friends and convention companions exhibiting bad or unfortunate behavior that even The Holy Father could not forgive, behavior that can tarnish the hobby convention experience for themselves and for innocent bystanders.

With convention season upon us, here are some simple rules of etiquette to assist in making hobby/fan conventions more satisfying and rewarding, a nearly religious experience for everyone."

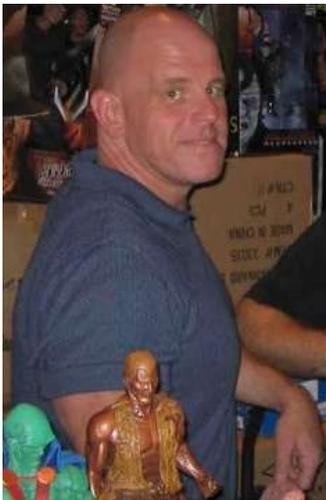


The Holy Father, Pope Benedict the XVI, at Vati-CON's screening of *Cowboys and Aliens*



Convention Attendee Etiquette

- 1) Drinking alcohol in moderation decreases the likelihood of getting into a heated political argument with a zombie, brawling with a Vulcan, and waking up with a xenomorph in your bed.
- 2) Avoid being a convention fanboy who makes obscure kit suggestions to GK company reps and vendors while they are busy answering questions and assisting **paying** customers who are attempting to make purchases.
- 3) Paying a large sum for a garage kit entitles you to be a fanboy who makes obscure kit suggestions to GK reps and vendors while they are busy answering questions and assisting **other** paying customers who are attempting to make purchases.
- 4) Don't ask a garage kit vendor "You mean, this has to be *painted*!!?!?"
- 5) If a GK vendor has a significantly reduced sale price marked for a kit, don't ask him/her to knock a few more bucks off the price of the kit. And if you must ask, and the vendor does agree to knock a few MORE bucks off the kit:
 - a) Don't say "I need to think about it because I want to see if that new 1:1 scale Blob kit by ABC, Inc. is still available."
 - b) Don't pull out a roll of \$50s and \$100s that shows that you can **easily** afford to pay the full retail price for that kit.
- 6) Being less than diplomatic in critiquing the sculpting of certain artists (e.g., Shawn Nagle, Steve Wang, Mike Hill) could be hazardous to your health.



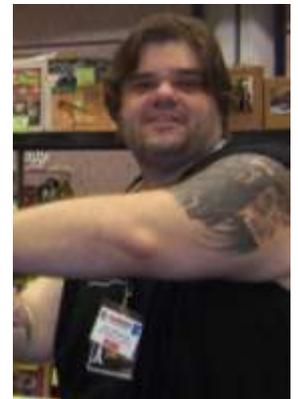
Former Wrestler/Body-BUILDER Nagle



Boxer Hill and Martial Artist Wang

- 7) Being less than diplomatic in critiquing the GK skills of certain modelers (e.g., Kenny Caruso, Tom Bonaldi) could be hazardous to your health.

Tough Guy Reference Librarian Caruso Global Software Brawler Bonaldi



- 8) The scary stuff you see in horror and sci-fi films is not real (except demonic possession). And even if it was real, vendors at GK conventions wouldn't know every single thing there is to know about all that stuff. **So leave 'em the hell alone!**
- 9) Read and heed the signs on a vendor's table, especially those stating "Please Don't Touch Displays".
- 10) See your therapist and financial advisor before attending GK conventions. Wily GK vendors take advantage of a modeler's compulsion to buy expensive model kits and hobby supplies.
- 11) A bit of pre-convention planning for how you will sneak model kit convention purchases into the house without your spouse knowing will help avoid marital strife and will allow you to more thoroughly enjoy your weekend of hobby geekery.



Wily vendors are keenly aware of exploitable buying tendencies



- 12) Respect the fandom of others; some folks don't like the stuff you like either.
- 13) God loves all his creatures, **even George Lucas.**

Convention Costume Etiquette

- 1) Cross-gender costumes work...but sometimes not so much.



- 2) Discuss your convention costume idea with a trusted and reliable friend who is not nearly as enthusiastic about your hobby or conventions or costumes as you are. This makes it less likely that your costume will be an embarrassment to you and those who care about you.
- 3) When in doubt, accessorize your costume with wristbands and cutting-type weapons. A questionable costume always looks better with accessories.
- 4) Remember that digital technology, the world-wide web, and social media make it **less likely** that "what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas". Expect your neighbors, kids, in-laws, and co-workers to see photos of you in costume.
- 5) No matter how good you look in your costume, **PLEASE** leave a little to the imagination.



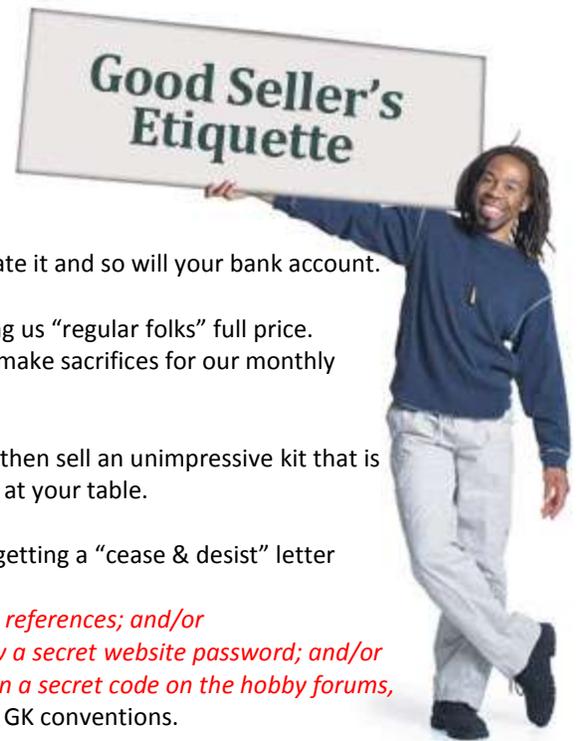
- 6) No matter how cool your costume is, please make sure it allows you to see where you are going and allows other attendees to pass without fear of personal injury from appendages or extensions that are part of your costume.



Accessorize for successful costuming

Vendor Etiquette

- 1) Good stuff sells itself.
- 2) The customer is always right especially if being right puts his/her \$ in your pocket.
- 3) Don't sell recasts. i.e., unauthorized reproductions of others' work.
- 4) Be sure you know where the nearest ATM is. Your customers will appreciate it and so will your bank account.
- 5) Don't give "the deal of the century" to millionaire celebrities while charging us "regular folks" full price. Celebrities have money to burn; most of us "regular folks" work hard and make sacrifices for our monthly garage kit allowance!
- 6) Don't show off a cool, professionally-finished, inspiring display model and then sell an unimpressive kit that is impossible to make look anywhere near as cool as the thing you displayed at your table.



- 7) If, because you are so stressed about getting a "cease & desist" letter for selling an unlicensed kit, you:
 - a) *require potential customers to have references; and/or*
 - b) *require potential customers to know a secret website password; and/or*
 - c) *require potential customers to talk in a secret code on the hobby forums,*you might not want to sell your kits at GK conventions.

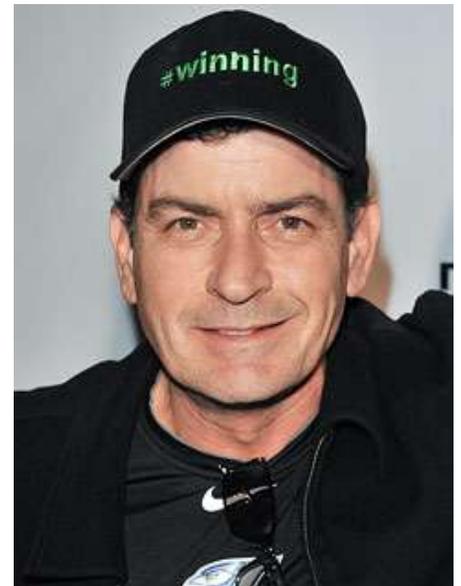
Problem: With all those hoops for your mail order and on-line customers to jump through, conventions are probably the best opportunity you'll have to sell your kits.

Solution: Wear a disguise. The studio informants will never know it's you.

- 8) Get off your stupid cellphone and pay attention to folks who want to give you their money.

Model Contest Etiquette

- 1) If "Winning" is your hobby contest mantra, you're in the wrong contest and at the wrong convention. You'll fit in better hanging with Charlie Sheen at one of the adult entertainment conventions.
- 2) If you are convinced that some wide-ranging, unexplainable, GK politics-related conspiracy is responsible for your model kit not having gotten the award you deserved in the convention contest, please don't enter the model contest next year.
- 3) If you are a "sore loser", the operative word is "*loser*".



- 4) If your response to getting some award other than Gold or a 1st Place award is to toss your award in a garbage can in front of everybody at the convention, ***please don't come to the show next year.***

- 5) Don't demand an explanation from, or argue with, a model contest judge about why your contest entry didn't get the award you feel it deserved.



"Hey, Jerry, if that jerk comes back, you hold him down, I'll pour the tar on him and, Bobby, you cover him with the feathers."

- 6) Thank God for garage kits.

Check back soon for another exclusive excerpt from ***The Hardcore Modeler's Manual™: Volume One.***