

Who's here? It's Dr. Who and his fans

By Sandra Kallio

Feature writer

Who is Who? Who is Doctor Who, as any Whovian would know.

Ask one at Whovent '86 this weekend in Madison.

Whovians are fans of Doctor Who, a BBC production that's the longest running science-fiction television show in the world. The main character is Doctor Who, a renegade time lord who has been regenerated several times during the past 23 years of intergalactic travel on public television stations around the world.

About 110 million viewers watch when he steps into his TARDIS, a Time and Relative Distance in Space machine that looks like a British police call box from the outside but is quite spacious inside.

The doctor plays cosmic troubleshooter, which he does with considerably more humor than displayed by staff of the Spaceship Enterprise and considerably less violence than depicted on shows like "Spenser for Hire," Mickey Spillane's "Mike Hammer" or "The Equalizer."

The fifth of the six actors to play Doctor Who was Peter Davison, who will appear in Madison this weekend (unless the Daleks try to exterminate him on the way to the Sheraton Inn and Wisconsin Union).



Peter Davison

grammer and physical fitness advocate.

Whovent registration will begin at 8 a.m. Saturday and Sunday at the Wisconsin Union. Programs are scheduled from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., when screenings of special episodes will begin. During the day, fans can attend panel discussions, participate in question-and-answer sessions with the celebrities and compete in a trivia contest. They also can shop for unusual items, such as a sonic screwdriver or a TARDIS key.

The cost is \$20 per day or \$30 for both. Children under age 5 are free. A portion of the ticket sales will be donated to Friends of WHA-TV to support continuation of the series, which is aired at 4 p.m. Sundays on Channel 21.

The event is sponsored by Spirit of Light Enterprises of Chicago and television station WHA. The Madison Doctor Who club also is promoting the event.

Anyone welcome

This Whovent is a convention at which fans will gather to see the stars, meet other fans and compete in a costume contest for the best doctor, companion, villain or monster.

Anyone in the galaxy is welcome to join the fun. Promoters expect up to 1,500 people on Saturday and Sunday.

Whovent actually starts with a celebrity reception at 6:30 tonight at the Sheraton Inn, 706 John Nolen Drive. The cost is \$11 at the door. The cost and location will be the same for another reception at 5:30 p.m. Saturday.

A cabaret will follow at 8:00 p.m. Saturday at the Wisconsin Union Theater, 800 Langdon St. The cost is \$12.50.

Besides Davison, the celebrities in town are John Nathan-Turner, producer, and the following actors: Lalla Ward, Romana II; Louise Jameson, Leela; Mark Strickson, Turlough; Sara Sutton, Nyssa; and Bonnie Langford, who will play Melanie, a computer pro-

Social event

Karen Lundquist, president of the 30-member Whovian High Order of Mid-Wisconsin, said, "For a lot of us, it's a social event."

A letter-sorting-machine clerk for the Post Office in Madison, Ms. Lundquist has been a sci-fi fan since grade school and a Whovian since WHA began airing the show in 1982.

"For me, it has a fun attitude," she said.

She jokes about the bad special effects and the props, which move every time the actors bump them.

Another fan and Friend of WHA-TV, Joe Nowick, is equally fond of the scenery, much of which looks suspiciously like gravel pits of southern England.

"The bad special effects actually endear the show to people," he said. "This is not a Steven Spielberg production."