

# ConNotations

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2006

The Bi-Monthly Science Fiction, Fantasy & Convention Newszine of the Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society

## A Conversation with Dennis McKiernan

By Catherine Book

I emailed Dennis one day and asked if he'd like to be interviewed for ConNotations. His immediate response was yes. We agreed on a date and then, to my delight, he invited me to his home for lunch. So we sat in his dining room with the Rincon Mountains (east of Tucson) outside the window. It was a thoroughly lovely home, visit and interview. I so enjoyed this interview; I hope Dennis and Martha Lee did, as well.

We started with influences – everyone has 'em. Dennis noted his include Tolkien, Robert E. Howard, Patricia McKillip and Ursula LeGuin. He tries to absorb what makes their stories good. He described how when

he comes across a piece or passage that is really good, he tries to analyze why it's so well-written and incorporate the principle into his own writing. He writes five days a week and takes the weekends off unless he just can't...like when a phase of the story just won't let him go. He usually writes from 10am to 4pm with a short lunch break; unless he's in a flow when he continues to write until it extinguishes itself. His computer room is somewhat isolated in the house and that helps him focus. Has he ever had a writer's block? Dennis says no, it's never happened to him. He has a theory about writer's block – that before the writer got to that deadend, he/she made a wrong turn that led them there. He thinks the way to 'break' the block is for the writer to return to an

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c2006 Catherine Book

Dennis McKiernan

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## CASFS Business Report

### January

\* CopperCon 26 is proud to announce that Sara Clemens will be the Artist Guest of Honor.

\* Our web hosting company had their server farm literally burn down. The site was restored from backups we maintained, though there are still issues with email and FTP access.

\* The group approved AniZona's request to use CASFS equipment and supplies for AniZona 2.

\* The group approved the Dark Ones' request to use CASFS equipment and supplies for DarkCon '07.

\* The group voted to set as a condition of other groups using CASFS equipment and supplies for their conventions that the other groups take some of the old unpopular movie posters and buttons and not bring them back.

\* The group voted to purchase Microsoft Office 2003 to replace our copy of Office 97.

\* The group voted to increase the amount budgeted for getting a booth at the Arizona Book Festival to an amount sufficient to get a corner booth.

\* There was a great deal of discussion about where CASFS's booth should be in relation to LepreCon's, much of it revolving around maintaining our 501(c)3 status and how doing things with other groups affects this. A motion to get a booth adjacent to LepreCon's failed to pass.

\* LepreCon announced that they would be filing a bid for the 2008 Westercon.

### February

\* Sean Martin resigned as Chair of HexaCon 16. Several members of the committee also resigned.

## Who Is Who This Issue

**Managing Editor:** Stephanie Bannon  
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**CN Mascots:** The Four CopperCon Kittens

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# SF Tube Talk

## TV News & Previews

By Lee Whiteside

SciFi Friday went out with a bang in March, leaving all three series with cliffhangers. The biggest groans were likely heard from fans of *Battlestar Galactica* when they learned that the series would not return to SciFi until October. *Stargate* fans will only have to wait until July for their shows to resume. The question now arises as to what will replace *Galactica* on Fridays come July. The most likely show is the previously announced *Eureka*, which has a 13 episode order and has been announced as premiering in July. SciFi should have made an announcement soon, if not already, as part of their cable up-fronts. With the advent of *Doctor Who* in March and *Galactica* moving to October, it appears SciFi is working on expanding their SciFi Friday block to nearly year round first run dramas instead of trying to launch a second night. They will also likely need another show or two to pair up with *Galactica* come October, so expect news about another series soon.

When *SG-1* returns in July, they will follow on with the ongoing struggle with The Ori, including a startling revelation about Vala's child. Look for Daniel and Vala to travel to Atlantis to look for help in the Atlantis library to find one of the Ancient's weapons to use against the Ori. *SG-1* will also reach their 200th episode this season and are planning something "not unlike" their 100th episode "*Wormhole Extreme*".

When it returns, *Stargate Atlantis* will continue to deal with the Wraith threat and **Connor Trinner** will return as the Wraith Michael at the start of Season Three (he was unavailable for the season finale, *Allies*). Following dealing with the Wraith threat, expect to see some character-oriented episodes early on featuring Dr. Beckett (who gets trapped in an asylum the inmates have taken over),

## CASFS Business Report

(Continued from page 2)

\*Gary Swaty was elected as the new HexaCon 16 Chair.

\* The repair work on the art flats damaged at CopperCon was completed. Arrangements were made to return the last un-returned items to the sheds.

\* There was a vote on the two proposed concepts for the CASFS letterhead/logo. "None of the Above" won the vote, so additional entries will be solicited. Design criteria were discussed and agreed on by consensus.

\* Ice Escape held a charity auction with CASFS as one of the beneficiary charities.

\* The group approved the Space Access Society's request to use CASFS equipment and supplies for this year's Space Access conference.

Ronon Dex (who is captured by the Wraith and returned to his homeworld), plus a two-parter that will introduce a new ongoing threat to the Atlantians.

*Galactica* definitely has a lot to bring us when it returns. First of all, dealing with the Cylon occupation of New Caprica and likely giving us a few flashbacks to what happened during the time they skipped over in the finale. According to Executive Producer **Ron Moore** in an interview with [www.NowPlayingMag.com](http://www.NowPlayingMag.com), the occupation may play out in as little as four or five episodes. According to Moore, "season three is going to deal with the Cylon occupation of the Colonials on New Caprica. The sort of archetype that we're talking about is like Vichy France: There's a Colonial government run by President Baltar that is collaborating with the Cylons, while the humans put together an insurgent resistance against the occupation. It's a pretty big twist." Moore adds that "We do eventually plan on getting them back out into space, and also another major thing that's going to happen in the third season is we're going to do an ongoing Cylon story where we're going to be cutting over to the Cylon world for the first time and running a complete arc within the Cylon world." SciFi has announced that **Lucy Lawless** has signed up for ten episodes of the third season and she will likely play a large role in the Cylon arc as well as likely more appearances by **Dean Stockwell**. Once you've been outed as a Cylon, there's plenty of recurring work for an actor.

The first season of the new *Doctor Who* debuted on the SciFi Channel on Friday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, with SciFi showing the first two episodes back to back. Initial ratings reports were very good, with the show getting a 1.6 rating for the two hour block which is comparable to what SciFi's other first run shows have been getting this year. The series will continue on Friday nights on SciFi over the next couple of months. If the ratings hold up, expect SciFi to announce a pickup for more seasons of the show.

The beginning of April sees the conclusion of the *Aliens of London/World War Three* two-parter that introduces the threat of the alien Slitheen Family and their desire to turn the Earth into scrap for resale. Harriet Jones and Mickey Smith play a big role in the conclusion and set up further character development in the series. Next up is *Dalek*, one of the best episodes of the season that has the Doctor confronting a lone Dalek being held captive by Henry van Statten in a secret Geocomtrex facility. *Stargate* fans will recognize **Anna-Louise Plowman** (Dr. Sarah Gardner/Osiris in several *SG-1* episodes) as van Statten assistant Diana Goddard. It shows us that a single Dalek can be a real problem when it is unleashed (and has a good budget). Next up is *The*

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# 24 Frames

## Movie News

By Lee Whiteside

Various news and notes on movies in the works.

On the **Neil Gaiman** movie front, things are definitely moving ahead on a couple of projects. The live action adaptation of *Stardust* is gearing up for filming with **Matthew Vaughn** directing a script he co-wrote with **Jane Goldman**. Stars lined up include **Robert De Niro, Michelle Pfeiffer, Claire Danes, Charlie Cox** and **Sienna Miller**. *Stardust* is about a star-crossed youth from the English village of Wall who tries to win the heart of his true love by searching for a falling star and heading into a magical world where he must deal with a witch and a pirate. It starts filming in the UK soon. **Gaiman** is involved in the movie and commented that some of the actresses being considered for the lead in *Stardust* are also ones he might be considering for the *Death* movie that he is still working on getting off the ground. **Gaiman** and **Robert Avary** are collaborating on another script (they worked together on the *Beowulf* film that is now in post-production), this time for *Black Hole*, an adaptation of a **Charles Burns** novel (and not an update of the Disney movie).

According to **Joss Whedon** at the

premiere of *Slither*, he's only days away from finishing the *Wonder Woman* script. He indicates it will have bullets & bracelets and an invisible jet. As for more *Serenity*, Universal is still waiting to see how the DVD sales stack up before deciding if they want to spend any money on a sequel. **Charisma Carpenter** (Cordelia on *Buffy & Angel*) has indicated in a TV Guide interview that she is still interested in the *Wonder Woman* role and is willing to hold off having a second baby to take on the role.

When *Superman Returns* debuts in June, there will be plenty of hype and related stuff going on. DC Comics will publish a four issue set of comics written by **Bryan Singer, Michael Dougherty** and **Dan Harris** that will bridge the gap between the *Superman II* movie and the events of *Superman Returns*. The movie will have a PG-13 rating according to press reports. Even before it debuts, Warner Bros. is planning a second *Superman* movie, having the cast optioned for three movies total. They will also be proceeding with another *Batman* movie, once again directed by **Christopher Nolan**. Various rumors are abounding about who will be featured with **Hugo Weaving** as the Joker and **Hugh Jackman** or **Jude Law** as Harvey Dent being bandied about.

On the Marvel movie front, there is work going on for a *Wolverine* movie

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## SF Tube Talk

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*Long Game*, guest starring **Simon Pegg** (*Shaun of the Dead*) as The Editor for Satellite Five, a global broadcasting satellite that is being used to influence the population. Continuing on with The Doctor and Rose is Adam (played by **Bruno Langley**), who escapes with them from the Geocomtrex facility and, of course, manages to get himself in trouble.



The Doctor determines that things aren't quite right with the Sat Five setup and sets out to find out what is really going on. In *Father's Day*, Rose asks The Doctor to give her a chance to see her Father and finds out what bad things can happen when you interfere with time. **Shaun Dingwall** guest stars as Rose's dad, Pete. This episode really is very emotional and it would be best to have some tissue handy when watching it. Next up is the standout two parter *The Empty Child/The Doctor Dances*. Written by **Stephen Moffat** (creator of *Coupling*), it provides lots of scares, action, surprises, comedy, and even dancing! The Doctor and Rose track an emergency space craft heading towards Earth at the time of the London Blitz. They come across former Time Agent Captain Jack Harkness (**John Barrowman**), who rescues Rose and joins with her and the Doctor in trying to find out what is turning innocent people into gas mask-wearing zombies. It made "Are You My Mummy?" a new catch phrase to rival "Exterminate!" Likely being the last episode in May (with SciFi doing their usual Memorial Day Weekend movie marathon) is *Boom Town*, which finds the Doctor, Rose, and Captain Jack returning to Cardiff in the present day to make use of the temporal rift from *The Unquiet Dead* to refuel the TARDIS. Rose reunites with Mickey but their plans for a vacation get cut short when they realize that Margaret Blaine, the new Mayor of Cardiff, is a surviving Slitheen. She has an evil scheme to turn a nuclear power plant (named Blaidd Drwg in Welsh, or Bad Wolf in English) into a big blast that would help her to escape the

Earth. Note that there are other references to Bad Wolf through the series that pay off in the two part season finale coming up in June.

Elsewhere on SciFi, they have new episodes of *Ghost Hunters* on Wednesday nights, including one where they visit the Stanley Hotel in Estes Park, Colorado that was the inspiration for *Stephen King's The Shining*. Following *Ghost Hunters* on Wednesday nights through April is *Psychic at Large*, featuring the real life escapades of psychic **Char Margolis**. In the series, "Char will provide impromptu on-the-street readings, giving some unsuspecting folks astounding psychic revelations. She will also be doing home visits, helping people with unresolved issues find closure with lost loved ones." She will also share insights into her unique life, from going on a blind date to appearing on the *Larry King show*.

Also in the works for SciFi are two other reality series. *Who Wants to Be a Superhero*, where **Stan Lee** will oversee a competition to create a new superhero that will give the winner a new comic written by **Stan Lee**. In *The Gift*, SciFi will be looking for real people with extraordinary abilities of the paranormal kind to find the next psychic superstar. Contestants will be guided and tested by "the world's greatest psychics" to find out who has the most metaphysical talent.

Of course, it wouldn't be SciFi without a few more Saturday night SciFi Pictures featuring nature gone wild (or mutated or something along those lines). Coming up on April 22 is *Mammoth*, in which a freak meteor crash manages to bring to life a 40,000 year old Mammoth in the Natural History Museum in Blackwater, Louisiana. In actuality, the meteor is a spaceship containing a shape shifting alien that takes on the form of the first organism it encounters, the mammoth. The movie stars **Vincent Ventresca** (*Invisible Man*) as Frank Abernathy, the museum's curator, **Tom Skerrit** as his father, Frank, and **Summer Glau** (*Firefly/Serenity*) as Frank's daughter.

Dropping a big bombshell on the television industry in late January, Warner Bros. and CBS announced that they were disbanding The WB and the UPN networks and would create a new, stronger, fifth network dubbed The CW C for CBS, W for Warner Bros) that will debut in the fall. In their press releases, they indicated that shows such as *Smallville*, *Supernatural*, and *Veronica Mars* would have a place on the new network. With the announcement of the new network, this left a good number of stations without affiliation, including almost all of the FOX owned and operated stations. FOX later announced they would be forming a new network with their stations as the anchor and called it "My Network". It will feature stripped soap

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opera-ish dramas and reality shows to begin with.

What does this mean for science fiction and fantasy fans? Mainly a few less time slots that could be filled with genre dramas, especially since the My Network doesn't appear to be looking for anything in that area and the new The CW has a good slate of genre shows to start with. The immediate affect is that *The Cult*, a series in development for The WB by **Rockne O'Bannon** (*Farscape*) about a cult based around a cult TV series, was dropped. *The Aquaman* series that was in development for The WB has been moved over to The CW.

The absence of *Charmed* on the press releases for The CW got fans to wonder about the status of that series. As expected, The WB has announced that *Charmed* will end its run this year, going out with a bang with many returning cast members and characters from the series (although not likely an appearance by **Shannen Doherty**). They will continue to deal with the Triad and have a major confrontation with Christy and Billie in order to save Leo and themselves.

We're heading into April and May, which means for season (and some series) finales for a lot of shows on the broadcast networks.

On ABC, *Alias* will end its run after five years, going out with a shortened season that will likely pack a lot of action

and revelations into the last seven episodes starting on Wednesday, April 19th. The 100th episode will feature the return of **Bradley Cooper** as Will Tippin and **Gina Torres** as Anna Espinosa. Also expect a few more surprise returns as well. ABC cut the season order from 22 to 17 episodes, but with enough warning for the producers to hopefully wrap the series up and resolve at least a few of the ongoing issues.

*Invasion* will also return to ABC after a brief hiatus on Wednesday, April 19th. It will continue to unravel more about the ongoing invasion and hopefully will end with some sort of resolution since its ratings are likely not strong enough to cause ABC to order a second season. The show has been struggling to hold on to half of the audience that *Lost* draws in, which ABC would prefer to see a better performance in that time slot. *Lost* has continued to keep its ratings hold on the nation, while slowly giving us more bits and pieces of the overall picture. Expect to see things ramp up as they approach the end of the season, leaving us with something to talk about during the summer.

On the paranormal front, both *Medium* (NBC) and *The Ghost Whisperer* (CBS) are holding their own in the ratings race, with CBS having already green-lighted *The Ghost Whisperer* for a

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## SF Tube Talk (Continued from page 4)

second season. There's not much advance info about either series out there, and I haven't yet developed the psychic abilities (or found the appropriate websites) to be able to tell you much about what's coming up on either series. The producers of *The Ghost Whisper* have promised a "big surprise ending" for this season that will carry over into next season.

Over on the WB, *Supernatural* has moved over to Thursday nights to pair the Winchester Brothers up with Clark Kent and company (which is a likely pairing that may continue on The CW if they play well together). Look for *Supernatural* to up the ante in their ongoing storyline with additional appearances by their dad, Sam Winchester, as they get closer to the truth behind things.

Back in *Smallville* (and Metropolis, occasionally), things are picking up towards a big season finale. **James Marsters** will be back as Milton "Branian" Fine in many of the episodes as he works to free Zod from the Phantom Zone, Lex and Lana's relationship grows closer with Clark getting more upset about it, and Martha Kent taking her husband's place in the Senate. In *Hypnotic*, Lex finds out that Milton Fine is in Honduras and sets out to find him, while Clark falls under the magical spell of a beautiful seductress who wants Lex dead. *Void* has a big void of advance information, but reportedly involves an appearance by

Jonathan Kent of some sort Pa Kent may be making other appearances as well before the season is over. He's still in the opening credits, so might as well make use of him even if he is dead. *Fragile* has Clark and Chloe investigating murders related to a little girl who has some psychic ability, in *Fade*, Clark has troubles with someone who can turn invisible and also deals with one of the people he has saved who want to pay Clark back for saving his life. There's not much advance word on the season finale, but expect it to have many of the ongoing plotlines come to a head leaving us with a big finale to pave the way for the sixth season.

In other cable news, The USA Network has announced that the upcoming fifth season of *The Dead Zone* will be its last. *The Dead Zone* and *The 4400* both return to the USA in June for summer runs, but this will be the last go round for Johnny Smith and company. Spike TV has announced that they have picked up *Blade* for a series order, with 11 episodes being produced to go with the two hour pilot. *Blade* will premiere in June on Spike TV. Showtime has ordered a second series of *Master of Horror* from producer IDT Entertainment. The final episode of the first series, *Imprint*, by Japanese director **Takashi Miike**, was deemed too intense for Showtime and will only be seen when it is released on home video. Look for many of the directors to

return for the second season as well as a few newcomers taking part.

Over on the other side of the pond, the BBC has recently aired a new series, *Life on Mars*, that features a cop show with a time travel twist that has gotten good reviews and ratings and has reportedly been picked up for a second season. No word yet of a US outlet, but there's a good chance it will turn up over here soon. Produced by the same company that makes *MI-5* (*Spooks* in the UK) and *Hustle* (airing on AMC), it is about a present day detective that gets hit by a car. When he wakes up, he's back in the early 1970's and is a police detective there. Of course, the big question for the series is "am I really back in time or in a coma or part of some other thing going on?" Imagine that a cop from a present day *CSI* type show ends up back in time in a *Starsky and Hutch* type cop show. He's got all the knowledge of 30 years of forensic advances but has to deal with the 70's attitudes and environment. It's definitely something to keep an eye out for.

The big BBC show (isn't it strange to say that now?), *Doctor Who*, will return to the UK airwaves in mid-April for its second season. The newly regenerated Doctor (**David Tennant**) and Rose (**Billie Piper**) continue their adventures and will meet up with some old friends as well as some old foes during the new season. First up is *New Earth* that has Rose and

the Doctor going into the far future and investigating a plague farm run by cat people, and discover that Cassandra is still around. In *Tooth and Claw*, they go back in time to protect Queen Victoria from an alien onslaught. *School Reunion* is a literal reunion for The Doctor and prior companions Sarah Jane Smith (**Elisabeth Sladen**) and K9 (**John Leeson**). **Anthony Stewart Head** (of *Buffy* fame) guest stars as Mr. Finch, a school headmaster who is in league with the Krillitanes. *The Girl in the Fireplace* finds the Doctor and Rose in the court of Louis XIV in 18th Century France. After that is the two parter *Rise of the Cybermen/The Age of Steel* that sees an alternate Earth where the Cybermen are in control.

In further news on the *Doctor Who* spin-off series, *Torchwood*, joining the cast as the female lead is **Eve Myles** as Gwen Cooper. **Myles** was seen in the first series of the new Doctor Who in the episode *The Unquiet Dead* as the servant girl Gwenyth. Episodes are currently being written and filming is scheduled to begin in June, which was pushed back for various reasons. The BBC will also continue to produce the *Doctor Who Confidential* series to run concurrently with the second series of *Doctor Who* plus they have also added a weekly series on the Children's BBC (CBBC) aimed towards kids. There are also rumors that the BBC is looking to spin off K9 and

(Continued on page 6)

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## SF Tube Talk

(Continued from page 5)

Sarah Jane Smith into a kid-oriented spin-off series as well.

On the US broadcast networks, there are lots of things in the works as we head towards the May Upfronts where the networks announce their fall schedules for the advertising industry.

ABC and IDT Entertainment have announced that ABC has committed to a minimum of four episodes of *Masters of Science Fiction* (formerly announced as "*Masters of SciFi*"). When IDT originally announced the series last year, they were planning on doing a full series of 13 episodes as they did with *Masters of Horror*. With ABC's involvement, the actual number to be produced is apparently not as certain. According to ABC, they are committed to four episodes at this point, but have the option for more.

Which stories get produced for the initial four episodes isn't entirely clear, but the **Michael Tolkin** directed/adapted story of **Heinlein's** "*Jerry Was a Man*" is likely. The **Harlan Ellison** script for his "*Repent, Harlequin!*" has apparently been dropped for an adaptation of **Ellison's** story "*The Discarded*." **Ray Bradbury** is apparently still on board for adapting his story "*Dark They Were, and Golden-Eyed*". **Michael Cassutt** has been working on story development for them and has also done a script for **John Varley's** "*Persistence of Vision*". Other scripts have been in the works since the project was initially announced last summer by various writers.

It will be interesting to see how things work out with ABC. *The Masters of Horror* series was completely funded and mostly produced before Showtime picked up the series. With ABC's involvement for *Masters of SF*, chances are there will be some higher profile names both in front of and behind the camera and ABC will likely give it a good push when it does air. This does mean there will be higher expectations for ratings when it hits our TV screens. It also means that some people who may have been originally intended to be involved with the production of the series (some guy named **Joe**) may be out of the picture or less involved now. Indications are the series could air as early as this summer if production ramps up right away.

At press time, it was announced that Canadian company Kaleidoscope Entertainment and Chum TV will be producing a series called *Blood Ties* based on **Tanya Huff's** novels about vampire detective Victory Nelson.

Aside from *Masters of Science Fiction*, ABC is playing it a bit safer this year and has only one show with much of a genre element. *60 Minute Man* stars **David James Elliott** as a man who doesn't remember an hour of each day, making him think he's part of some government conspiracy and is having his

mind taken over. From the producers of *Boomtown* and *North Shore*. As more of a thriller show, ABC also has a pilot in the works based on the movie *Mr. and Mrs. Smith*, about the lives of a couple who are competing assassins. That is likely for midseason, not this fall.

CBS is looking at several pilots with genre attachments, the most obvious of which is *Ultra*, based on the Image Comics property about "Pearl Penalosa, a single city-girl superhero balancing the demands of greatness with her love life and social calendar. It stars **Lena Heady** as Pearl, and also stars **Peter Dinklage** (fresh from *Threshold*). **Barbara Hall** (*Joan of Arcadia*) is the executive producer. CBS also has *Jericho*, which is a drama set in the future in a small town in Kansas following the destruction of most of America's cities in a series of nuclear attacks. **Ridley** and **Tony Scott** are behind *Orpheus*, which is about a man (**Nick D'Agosto**) whose girlfriend gets involved in a sophisticated, modern-day cult that tries to draw him in to it. Former *Roswell* star **Jason Behr** has been cast as the lead actor in *The Way*, which is about a powerful New England family that uses witchcraft to further its business enterprises. Other cast members include **Peter Strauss**, **Julia Ormond**, and **Will Patton**.

NBC has two fairly high profile genre pilots in the works. *Seeing Red* stars **Jeff Goldblum** as a brilliant, yet eccentric cop who happens to be able to talk to the dead victims to help him solve cases. **Frank Darabont** and **Graham Yost** are involved behind the camera. Also in the works is *Heroes*, which is a large ensemble drama about a group of everyday people who discover that they have superpowers and how they deal with their newfound gifts and how they are treated by the rest of the world. **Greg Gunberg** (*Alias*) leads the cast.

FOX has one genre entry in *Beyond*, which is set in the near future and follows scientists at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory as they work on a winning the next space race following some a global crisis related to a pathogen brought to Earth by a meteor.

Over on The CW, their one genre entry coming over from The WB is *Mercy Reef*, a *Smallville*-esque take on DC Comics *Aquaman*. It will not be a direct spin-off from the Arthur Curry appearance on *Smallville*, but that likely helped to get this pilot into motion. Previously announced star **Will Toale** was dropped when The CW came into the picture and Arthur will now be played by **Justin Hartley**, a former regular on the daytime soap *Passions*. Joining **Hartley** in the cast will be **Ving Rhames** as Arthur's mentor and lighthouse keeper **McCaffrey**, **Denise Quinones** (from *Smallville* episode *Vengeance*) as Arthur's haunted love interest **Rachel Starling**, and **Lou Diamond Phillips** as

Arthur's adopted father, **Tom Curry**. Like *Smallville*, the show will have an ongoing mystery. Instead of meteor rocks, it will be the Bermuda Triangle playing a major role which is set up in the pilot when people who have long ago disappeared begin re-appearing.

On the animated front, there's not much good news to report. The Cartoon Network has ended both *Teen Titans* and *Justice League Unlimited* (which Cartoon Network has been running late Saturday nights). The final four episodes featuring the culmination of this season's



Legion of Doom storyline are at press time scheduled to air in April (after having been pulled to make way for a run of **Miyazaki** movies). *Teen Titans* does have a feature length movie that has been made that will be aired on Cartoon Network this fall. There is definitely an animated *Legion of Superheroes* that will feature a Superboy (and not Supergirl as set up in the upcoming JLU episode). Cartoon Network has not officially announced it as of press time. There is also a rumored *Doom Patrol* series in the works. It is possible they may debut on The CW's Saturday morning lineup.

On the animated Marvel Universe front, there is a series of direct-to-DVD movies coming out, the first of which, *Ultimate Avengers* has already hit the stores. There will also be an *Ultimate Avengers II*, *Iron Man*, and *Dr. Strange* made, all four of which will eventually be screened on the Cartoon Network. Cartoon Network has announced that they will be airing an animated *Fantastic Four* series that will start airing later in the year. Also in the works are an animated *Wolverine* and the *X-Men* series, however nothing has been announced as to where it will air, either. Also getting into the animated marketplace is *Dark Horse* comics, which is producing a *Hellboy* series which, again, has not had any announcements made as to who will be broadcasting it. They may all end up on Cartoon Network or go straight to DVD. Stay tuned.

For more schedule information, news and links, visit the *Magrathea/SFTV* Pages at [www.sftv.org](http://www.sftv.org) Contact *Lee Whiteside* at [SFTV@casfs.org](mailto:SFTV@casfs.org)

## 24 Frames (Continued from page 3)

with **Hugh Jackman** heavily involved in working with the scriptwriters. There will likely be additional *X-Men* movies, but the new movie is considered the third of a trilogy. Marvel is also working on a script for a *Fantastic Four* sequel. *Spider-Man 3* is still filming and has brought **Cliff Robertson** back for a ghostly appearance in the movie. Spiderman reportedly also wears a black outfit in the movie, possibly representing a more serious tone.

The Jim Henson Co. has announced the go ahead for a sequel to *The Dark Crystal*. They announced that **Genndy Tartakovsky** will direct the *Power of the Dark Crystal* for Henson with a planned release in 2007. **Tartakovsky** is best known for the animated shows *Dexter's Laboratory*, *Samurai Jack*, and *Star Wars: Clone Wars* and this will be his first live action movie, albeit with a lot of animated effects. **Brian Froud** is returning to design the characters for the sequel that will be set hundreds of years after the events of the first movie. The movie will follow the adventures of a mysterious girl made of fire who joins with a Gelfling outcast to steal a shard of the legendary Crystal in an attempt to reignite their planet's dying sun.

For the *James Bond Casino Royale* movie, the Bond girl has finally been revealed as **Eva Green** (*Kingdom of Heaven*) will play *Vesper Lynd* opposite **Daniel Craig's** Bond. **Mads Mikkelsen** will play the villain, *Le Chiffre*, and **Jeffrey Wright** will play CIA agent *Felix Leiter*.

On the remake front, Universal is going ahead with a *Wolf Man* remake. Scripted by **Andrew Kevin Walker**, it will reportedly star **Benicio del Toro** in the tile role.

### Upcoming Movie Previews

*Ice Age 2: The Meltdown* (March 31) In the sequel to the original animated hit, **Manny**, **Sid** and **Diego** discover that the end of the Ice Age and glacial melting means that their valley is about to be flooded. They race against time and flood waters along with a mammoth named **Ellie** and a pair of possums.

*Slither* (March 31) **Nathan Fillion** (*Serenity*) stars as Sheriff **Bill Pardy** in the small town of **Wheely** where some sort of unnatural force is causing people to act strangely. **Pardy** teams up with a group of town folk to uncover what is really happening and realize that if they don't stop it, the entire world may be at risk. Also stars **Elizabeth Banks** and **Michael Rooker**.

*Scary Movie 4* (April 14) - Director **David Zucker** and producer **Bob Weiss** who took over the "*Scary Movie*" franchise with #3 are once again behind the camera with the fourth installment in the series. Expect potshots to be taken at *War of the Worlds*, the *Saw* movies, *The*

(Continued on page 7)

## 24 Frames

(Continued from page 6)

*Village, The Grudge* and other recent popular movies. **Anna Faris** and **Regina Hall** are back as Cindy Campbell and her pal, Brenda Meeks. Joining them are **Craig Berko** as the cute but clueless Tom Ryan as they work together to save the world from an alien invasion.

**Mission Impossible III** (May 5) - **Tom Cruise** and **Ving Rhames** are back for the third installment of the Mission Impossible movie franchise. This time, the movie is in the hands of *Alias* creator **J. J. Abrams**, directing his first feature film. There's not much info about the plot (assuming there is one) but expect lots of action. **Abrams** has also made use of some familiar faces from his TV shows with **Keri Russell** (*Felicity*) and **Greg Grunberg** (*Alias*). **Simon Pegg** (*Shaun of the Dead*), and **Laurence Fishburne** (*The Matrix*) also star. Expect lots of things to blow up.

**Poseidon** (May 12) - The feature remake of *The Poseidon Adventure* (last year's TV remake pretty much was a bomb for NBC) promises to be big. Whether that means a big bomb or big box office isn't clear. It has lots of names (**Kurt Russell**, **Richard Dreyfuss**, **Andre Braugher**, **Mia Maestro**, and more) and is all about the survivors of a capsized cruise ship trying to survive.

**The Da Vinci Code** (May 19) - The movie based on one of the biggest selling books in recent memory not about a young wizard. It stars **Tom Hanks** as Dr. Robert Langdon who races against time and a murderer to solve the mystery of the Da Vinci Code. Also stars **Ian McKellan**, **Jean Reno**, and **Alfred Molina**. Directed by **Ron Howard**. This will likely capsize *Poseidon* in the box office unless a pending lawsuit against the book forces the movie to be put on hold.

**Over the Hedge** (May 19) The comic strip comes to animated life with a scene-stealing performance by **William Shatner**. **Garry Shandling** (Verne) and **Bruce Willis** (RJ) lead a band of woodland creatures as they explore the newly built suburbs that have sprouted up around them.

**X-Men: The Last Stand** (May 26) - Marvel's third time into the X-Men pool has had a difficult route to the screen. With Director **Bryan Singer** jumping ship to take on *Superman Returns*, **Brett Ratner** has ended up being the director and guiding force in this installment. New mutants for this movie include Beast (**Kelsey Grammar**), Juggernaut (**Vinnie Jones**), and Angel (**Ben Foster**). All of the main cast are returning, including **Famke Janssen** as Jean Grey, who is resurrected as Dark Phoenix. Prof. Xavier and his team must contend with Jean's threat to humanity as well as a band of mutants led by Magneto. Amidst all of this, a possible cure is found for all of the mutants.

## SCIFI MOVIES: WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

by M.L. Fringe

They finally arrived, the DVDs of all three Flash Gordon movies and Buck Rogers. I am in bliss. Four cliffhanger serials, 12 or more episodes each, 4x4=16 hours of future wonder.

I may be accused of nothing but wallowing in nostalgia; but I have a view of scifi movies quite contrary to the course of film history. For all of the progress in special effects and other technology of filmmaking, my aesthetics of realism have taken an opposite turn. The old serials of the 1930s now seem to me like the most realistic portrayal of our future.

The awareness began with the retro-homage of 2004, *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow*. Thoughts of peak oil and the decline of civilization tied into the movie. I marveled at its blending of super-technology we don't have now, with older things long gone. Thus, the submarine-capable airplanes, like the P-40 Warhawk that can dive into the ocean. It's more than just wish fulfillment. I thought, "This really is our future," when oil supplies have dwindled so much that gas-guzzling jets aren't viable.

There would be a downsizing of technology, yet continual improvement as research continues. Smaller, more fuel-efficient propeller-driven airplanes would be made of materials able to withstand a crash-dive. Yes, it would take longer to fly to destinations, but such trade-offs would have to be made in a world of dwindling oil supplies. The movie shows transatlantic travel in zeppelins: what's old is new again.

And so to Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers, the 1930s-40s serials starring Buster Crabbe. Seventy years worth of

filmmaking progress have rendered them into quaint relics, charmingly primitive. The acting is geared towards children in movie theaters on weekends. The costumes and sets were leftovers from fairy tales, Roman legion or Robin Hood pics. The spaceships are wingless art deco airplanes with sparklers drooping out of their tails and jerkily moving on hanging wires. And this appears realistic? All yes. In a post-petroleum future, with the world devolved into isolated cultures, one can

expect more variety and functional simplicity of costumes and spaceships.

Strongmen warlords like Killer Kane and Emperor Ming will try to conquer other nations, just as they try today. Unlike today, they will not need elaborate lies to cover up grabs for others' resources. Again, it will be more like prior centuries - naked aggression.

In response to such obvious tyrants, heroes like Flash can act in such

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## SCI FI MOVIES

(Continued from page 7)

unalloyed terms. No elaborate rationalizations of clash of civilizations or war on terrorism will be needed. The villains will be more obvious, and clearly on one side. Life will simplify down to the basics of the early movies.

The romance can, too. Dale was a chemist and pilot, yet she was glad only she could accompany Flash on a mission although the Ice Queen wanted to. But the women's roles need not revert to those of passive damsel in distress, or at most - hero's helper. Those roles will be enhanced, as by the resourceful ass-kicking of Ripley in *Alien*. And that's the only difference I see from the old serials, for our future.

Even the spaceships may fly so strangely as with the sparklers and wire jerks. Who knows what kind of propulsion system they'll have then? Or what new requirements they'll have. Try this one: I heard on the radio that a large sack full of bb's released in orbit would render earth orbit unusable for thousands of years. Moving like bullets, they'd destroy all of our satellites. How many years before an anti-modern group accomplishes this? Not many, I'd guess, but it would not end anyone's space program.

It would merely set us all back for some years to reinvent spaceships. They would have to be impervious to unavoidable space debris. How is this possible? Easily. Just look at old, cheesy movies, or comic strips, or the cover art of Richard Powers. Ships will have to be covered, to look like meteor rocks. Irregular, flying boulders that bullets bounce off of. That's the low-tech near future, before a high-tech propulsion system when armor-plated battleships can fly. Which would also be an image from pulp magazine covers or the cliffhanger movie serials.

As the future unfolds and unravels, life may imitate art. History may become cyclical, with the wheel turned around again. In such circumstances, I take hope rather than nostalgia from Buck Rogers and Flash Gordon. The oily illusions of the 20<sup>th</sup> century will exhaust in the 21<sup>st</sup>, and progress will continue. The future won't be safe and sterile and boring, or deadly and decayed and tragic. It will be amazing and weird and astounding and a thrilling wonder.

## Conversation

(Continued from page 1)

earlier spot in the story when it was working well, and talk their way through the story to the end. For Dennis, what works well for him is that he always knows the end of his story; sort of a target to aim for. He speculates that writers who suffer from that 'block' don't clearly see their target - the end of the story. He likens his writing to writing software. He may know the end of his story but he doesn't know right away what will happen along the way. As software is designed first and then the documentation comes later, so Dennis envisions his story beginning and end. Then as the coding/writing progresses, he'll discover new and interesting things along the way that enter his story. Sometimes he's dragged down a byway, and I asked him how it felt if he wrote a really good or interesting piece that later he discovered just didn't really fit and he had to throw it out. Did that hurt, I wondered? No, he says he either adapts it to work or saves it for another story.

Well, I asked - do outlines work for him? It sounds like he at least has a mental outline. Sometimes he writes down the main thread of the story, and while he's doing it, he might think of a particularly interesting scene so he'll write that in there. Or, maybe just a short passage that he'll expand on later; so the outline ends up as a mish-mash of ideas and scenes. When he wrote 'Caverns of Socrates,' the style of the story was one chapter of science fiction and the next chapter of fantasy; so he had to very carefully outline that story to be sure each chapter was true and interleaved well.

How about multiple projects? He seemed so organized, I supposed he might juggle more than one project at a time. Almost never, he stated flatly. If there are multiple projects, they'd be totally unlike - he might be writing a story, designing a fantasy roleplaying game and working on his house. He feels he gets too immersed in his story to be able to easily leave it and move into a different story. Occasionally, he'll take a break to write a short story for an anthology but never two novels at a time. And keeping track of all those histories? Dennis has several series that he's written and

he admits he does have a lot to keep track of - timelines and characters. He has a couple tricks that he uses - one is a glossary for all his characters. The glossary includes their name and a description. For his timelines, though, he has different tools. He used to use a month-at-a-glance calendar and each day of that month, he would sketch in briefly what events occurred each day so that converging plot lines would end up on the same day. He's also used an almanac to project ahead or behind if he needed an astrological event to support his story.

After lunch, I asked Dennis how much correspondence he receives from his fans. He used to get loads of mail - real mail that was delivered by a postman - but it's dropped off to nothing with the advent of email. He answers every piece of mail he gets; although sometimes it takes a while. He gets email from Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, and Spain but, strangely, he said, nothing from Italy or France. Interestingly, he related that his books are distributed in Sweden, Norway or Denmark in English and never translated. I asked if he'd ever done an international booktour. Not yet, but he thinks he'd like to do one sometime. He commented that his German sales had really shot up since the Lord of the Rings movies.

Ah-hah... I pounced. His books have been compared to Tolkien's epic; sometimes lovingly, sometimes scathingly, I pointed out. What did he say to that? Well... he answered, leaning back a little, remembering. That had a lot to do with why he started writing in the first place. He'd been riding a dirt bike when he got run over and laid up for several months with a shattered femur. He had been very unhappy when Tolkien had passed away and lay in bed thinking of what might have happened when the dwarves retook Moria. So he decided to write a sequel for

his own amusement. The story was titled "The Gimli Path." He wrote flat on his back with a pencil and a legal pad, 12-15 hours a day, seven days a week - just to stay sane while he was recuperating. And he was pretty happy with it when he finished. He sent it to Ballantine since they had published the paperback of *LOTR*; they returned it unread. So he sent it to Houghton Mifflin; they returned it unread. Then it went to England, and came back unread. Persistently, he sent it out again to Doubleday and they actually read it. They liked it and entered into a three-year negotiation with the Tolkien estate to get permission to publish it. However, the estate wasn't ready for someone else to write a sequel, much less an unpublished unknown. Doubleday eventually came back to Dennis and suggested that he make the story his own. So he filed off all the serial numbers. After several months of rewriting, he again submitted it to Doubleday.

He compares the process of manuscript submission with throwing it off the edge of the world... it falls a long time before making a sound. While he was waiting, he decided to write a prequel. He was about half done when Doubleday finally sent him a contract. Well... he told them... there's this prequel that takes place some two hundred years before and you should let me finish it so you can decide if you want to publish it first so they are in order. He chuckled when he remembered how Doubleday told him he was the first author who ever asked *not* to have a story published. So... *Iron Tower* was published first and then *The Silver Call*. Shortly after that, he had the idea for *Dragondoom* and left the Tolkien-esque stories behind. He did want to point out that for those younger readers who just couldn't get through *LOTR*, his *Iron Tower* might have been more palatable - a

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## Conversation

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shorter story with lots more action.

I asked him if he thought a writer should keep a series alive as long as the fans demand it or if the writer has the responsibility to end it when the story is finished. At some point, he said, he'd figured out the entire story arc for Mithgar. And the series was finished when he killed off the main bad guy. Since there were a lot of loose ends, but not enough for another novel, he thought he'd wrap up the series with a collection of short stories in *Red Slippers*. But after he'd done so, he received loads of email from fans who were terribly upset that there would be no more Mithgar stories. He then started a series of five novels set in a faery world, *Once Upon....* And, after that, he wrote a mainstream novel about a haunted house, titled *Jezebel*. (It's been submitted and he's still waiting to hear back on it.) So then he sat back and started thinking about what he wanted to do next. He'd been thinking about one of his characters from Mithgar, an ageless-elf named Aravan. Through the Mithgar series, he'd alluded to adventures that Aravan had and now he wondered if he had enough to make another novel. So, back to the original question: for some people the answer is "I need the money, I need to put bread on the table." For others, the answer is "This is not my artistic bent. Time to end it." Dennis put himself in the latter, even though he admits he might someday return to Mithgar. But not unless he's absolutely sure there is an entire novel to be written. Could be a couple more years before he's sure.

Why does he write what he does? "Write what you love" he quoted to me. Dennis says he writes what he likes to read. He started that way with his fan-fic of Tolkien and he still writes what he wants. He's a lucky man that so many other readers also like what he writes. He likes fantasy adventures with interesting characters with interesting stories – not really different from most authors...except maybe those who write what they think will sell. Dennis emphatically stated that he doesn't write strictly for commercial reasons; despite his successes, he still just writes what he loves.

I met Dennis at SF/F conventions so I wanted to know how he felt about fan conventions. He loves conventions. He usually goes to World Fantasy, sometimes to Bubonicon (New Mexico) and Armadillocon (Texas), and occasionally Westercon, depending on where it is. What really determines him is if he can just jump in a car and drive there easily – except for World Fantasy, obviously. As an Arizonan resident, he really enjoys going to the local cons. World Fantasy was his first convention – in Tucson. He fit right in. Go figure.

Volume 16 Issue 2

# In Memory

**Octavia Butler  
Rufo**

## Octavia Butler dead at Age 58

One of the most innovative and unusual voices in Science Fiction has been stilled. Octavia Butler died on February 24, 2006 at age 58. The WikiPediA calls her "the Outsider who changed Science Fiction." It also says "She described herself as 'comfortably asocial--a hermit in the middle of Seattle--a pessimist if I'm not careful, a feminist, a Black, a former Baptist, an oil-and-water combination of ambition, laziness, insecurity, certainty, and drive.' "

Her books are *Patternmaster* (1976), *Mind of My Mind* (1977), *Survivor* (1978), *Kindred* (1979), *Wild Seed* (1980), *Clay's Ark* (1984), *Dawn* (1987), *Adulthood Rites* (1988), *Imago* (1989), *Parable of the Sower* (1993), *Bloodchild and Other Stories* (1995), *Parable of the Talents* (1998), *Fledgling* (2005).

Her stories were generally a bit on the grim side. She was a true story teller. The story would seize you, hold you prisoner until you finished and never leave you with a bad taste in your mouth. She explored race, gender, social justice, community and the fiber of the human psyche with fire and vigor. Her novels were a mix of Fantasy and Science Fiction. Her last novel, *Fledgling* was an SF vampire novel. Her novelette, "Bloodchild" won both the Hugo and Nebula Award in 1985. – **Gary Swaty**

## Octavia Butler: Sower of the Conscience by Shane Shellenbarger

On February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2006, Octavia Butler was felled by a stroke and died as a result of her injuries. To say that the world of science fiction has lost one of its giants is to belittle the contribution Butler made to literature. She was a sociologist in her writing and yet asocial in her private life. Her books and stories are filled with lively, personable characters, yet she died alone. She gave so much in her writing and her teaching, yet many people who met her didn't feel as if they knew her well.

Butler was born in Pasadena, California on June 22, 1947. An only child, Butler was raised by her mother, Octavia "Guy," after the death of her father, Laurice, who worked as a shoe shiner. Living on the income her mother earned as a maid, dealing with dyslexia, and growing to six feet tall by the age of fifteen, Butler was an unlikely candidate to become a writer. Add in her race and gender and you quickly understand what a nearly insurmountable task she overcame. Educated at Pasadena City College and California State University, she later participated in the Open Door Workshop of the Screenwriters' Guild of America,

West where she met author, Harlan Ellison. Ellison encouraged the shy, socially awkward young writer and arranged an opening for Butler at the Clarion Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers Workshop in 1970. One of her instructors there was Jim Sallis, currently an author and writing instructor in Phoenix.

After her six weeks at Clarion, Butler spent another five years honing her craft and sacrificing before beginning to gain recognition for her work. In addition to a 1984 Hugo for her short story, "Speech Sounds", Butler won a Hugo and Nebula in 1985 for the Novelette, "Bloodchild", and in 2000 she won another Nebula for *Parable of the Talents*. In October 2000, Butler was awarded the lifetime achievement in writing from the PEN American Center. Butler's health and medication requirements had stopped her writing output for seven years, yet she was still able to participate as an instructor at Clarion West in Seattle in 1985 and four more times, the last one in 2005. Her final novel, *Fledgling*, was published in the Fall of 2005. It's been reported elsewhere that she was working on *Parable of the Trickster* at the time of her death.

I had the pleasure of hearing her speak twice, once at a convention in San Diego, the other time at the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts. She was an eloquent and direct speaker who could hold an audience with her easy, conversational style. Her talent will not soon come this way again and we are all the poorer for her death.

[http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/obituaries/2002831388\\_butlerobit27m.html](http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/obituaries/2002831388_butlerobit27m.html)  
[http://seattlepi.nwsources.com/local/6420ap\\_wa\\_obit\\_butler.html](http://seattlepi.nwsources.com/local/6420ap_wa_obit_butler.html)  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/02/27/AR2006022701483.html>  
<http://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/reviews/critics/chic0603040226mar05.1.1729273.story?coll=chic-ent-critics-hed>  
<http://darkkush.blogspot.com/2006/02/octavia-butler-died-saturday.html>  
<http://harlanellison.com/heboard/unca.htm?beg=176&num=25>  
<http://www.calendarlive.com/printedition/calendar/cl-et-butler3mar03.0.2381466.story?coll=cl-calendar>  
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5235453>  
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5243647>  
<http://www.msu.edu/~clarion/>  
<http://www.sfwaweb.org/members/butler/>  
<http://www.sfwaweb.org/members/butler/Autobiography.html>

## Rest In Peace, Rufo

Rufo, Rufe, Rufus T. Maximus, "Big Boy", black and grey Akita with white feet, tailtip, and throat patch, born "Socks" in February 1994, first owned by

someone who left him half-starved to DC Akita Rescue, adopted by Aleta Jackson who gave him his real name and his first good home, then "temporarily taken care of" when impossible circumstances hit Aleta in November 1995 by Henry Vanderbilt (relevant quote a few months later: "I see you two have bonded.") Rufo feared neither man, beast, nor machine - he once threatened to eat a reigning King of Atenveldt (not a post attained without considerable martial skill), he acknowledged no dog in creation as being bigger (despite the facts on occasion being much to the contrary), and he reached the end of his days without his firm position that he was also bigger than any eighteen-wheeler truck ever being disproved (largely due to considerable attention being paid by his human sidekick to avoiding tests of that theory, true.) Bluff aside (in twelve years and one month, he never laid serious tooth to any living being), Rufo was the gentlest, brightest, most amiable eager-to-please, 3/4 inch fang, 110-pound carnivore you



could ever hope to meet, the world's largest fur-covered creampuff where cats, small children, and pretty girls were concerned.

Rufo had been getting gimpy and less outgoing in recent years, chiefly concerned with leisurely walks around the neighborhood and sleeping in the sun, past being up for his youthful regimen of chewing through gates, midnight sprints through the neighborhood, SCA wars and fighter practices, SF conventions, space conferences, and close to 30,000 miles of cross-country car rides (he'd hung his head out in the breeze and startled passersby in at least twenty-five of the fifty states.) He succumbed to advanced stomach cancer, giving little sign of anything at all wrong until just a few days before the end - he was always a stoic, seldom acknowledging any pain short of the overwhelming. He was amiable and affectionate right up to the end. He will be much missed.

If you never knew him, you missed one of the finer dogs that's ever been. If you did know him and have memories of him, please share them in whatever forum you come upon this. To all the people who were kind to him over the years, my heartfelt thanks.

Henry Vanderbilt  
8:08 pm mst  
March 7th, 2006

# FYI

## Diana Gabaldon Appears As Keynote Speaker By Shane Shellenbarger

Arizona author, Diana Gabaldon, best known for her books, *Outlander*, *Dragonfly in Amber*, *The Fiery Cross*, *A Breath of Snow and Ashes*, and *Lord John and the Private Matter*, will appear as the Keynote Speaker for the Phoenix College MicroBurst Writing Conference.

The conference, celebrating the tenth anniversary of the creative writing program at Phoenix College, will be held May 6, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Dome Conference Room 101 located South of Osborn Road, East of 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, near the corner of Flower Street and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The conference is open to the public. To make a reservation call 602-285-7347

<http://www.dianagabaldon.com/>  
<http://cw.phoenixpubliclibrary.org/cgi-bin/cw.cgi?resultsScreen+24080+1+10+1>  
<http://www.pc.maricopa.edu/>  
<http://www.pc.maricopa.edu/map/floorPlans/osbs/>

## CASFS Book Discussion

The CASFS Book Discussions are moving to the third Tuesday of each month and also moving location to the Bookmans in Phoenix at 8034 N. 19<sup>th</sup> Ave at 7PM. Email questions to [book@casfs.org](mailto:book@casfs.org)

**April 18: *Jherig*** by Stephen Brust. First three books collected in *The Book of Jherig*, currently in print. Science fiction/detective story set on a world where humans are second-class citizens.

**May:** no meeting

**June 20: *Crystal Soldier*** by Steve Miller and Sharon Lee. A new Liaden story.

**July 18: *The Book of Night with Moon*** by Diane Duane. The leader of a team of cat-wizards who help maintain the transit portals in New York's Grand Central Station, has to contend with a young feral tom cat, Arhu, just starting his Ordeal to become a wizard.

**August 22: *Coyote Kings of the Space-Age Bachelor Pad*** by Minister Faust. There's something for everyone: African Canadians, Comic-book fans, gamers and sci-fi geeks.

**September 19: *Silverlock*** by John Myers Myers. A fantasy romp in which a dreary young cynic named A. Clarence Shandon is shipwrecked on the shores of the living land of all human imagination, where every character of myth and fiction great enough to be remembered for generations -- is.

**October 17: *Arrows of the Queen*** by Mercedes Lackey. First book of the Valdemar series. And if you don't agree, come argue with us...

**November 21: *Game of Thrones*** by George R.R. Martin. If I have to explain this one, it's already too late for you...

**December 12: *Accidental Goddess*** by Linnea Sinclair. A sexy, out-of-this-world adventure about Gilliane who became a

goddess while she was time-traveling after her ship was attacked.

## Signings

Poisoned Pen, Scottsdale, Sat. April 8:  
**James Sallis** autographing 12 pm

## Events of Interest

**Manga Bookclub**, Barnes & Noble in Goodyear, April 15, 7pm; May 20, 7pm  
**Team Sci-Fi Book Group**, Barnes & Noble in Surprise, March 28th, 7pm; April 25, 7pm; May 30, 7pm

## Tucson Bookmans Events

**Dungeons and Dragons Night**, Bookmans in Tucson East, 1st & 3rd Sundays  
**Free Psychic Readings** with local psychics Rosalie Mashtalier and Lisa Archer, Bookmans - Central Tucson, every 2nd Friday, 7pm

**Phoenix Bookmans Events**  
8034 N. 19th Ave  
Phoenix, Az 85021

**Phoenix Astronomical Society Telescope Workshop**, Bookmans in Phoenix, Apr 9, 4:30pm

**We like Short Shorts Video and Animation Festival** May 20th from 4pm - 10pm Entry forms can be picked up at the PHX store Submission deadline April 17th  
**Phoenix Video Game Competition** June 17th from 1pm to 10pm Registration and pre-competition on June 15th at 1pm

**Mesa Bookmans Events**  
1056 S. Country Club Dr  
Mesa, AZ 85210

**Hero Clix-Super Hero Gaming Night!**, Bookmans in Mesa, Sundays, 6pm  
**Dungeons and Dragons RPG Night!**, Bookmans in Mesa, Mondays, 6pm

**Spring Arts and Crafts Festival** April 22nd 10am - 4pm Entry forms can be picked up at the Mesa store Application deadline March 31st

**Free psychic reading** - come see the talented Patricia for your free reading!, Bookmans in Mesa, May 6, 12:30pm

## The Bent Cover Reopens

The Bent Cover Bookstore at 12428 N. 28th Drive (just off the I17 at Cactus Rd exit in Phoenix) will reopen under new ownership on April 1st. The Bent Cover had been own and run by June Patton for some two decades. June had been a fan and lifelong booklover and was sorely missed when she passed away last year. We're pretty sure that June would be happy with the changes in her store. Gary and Kathy Johnson had been June's customers and after waiting months for someone to reopen his favorite bookstore, Gary decided he'd have to do it. They've put a bit of a new face on the place. There will be a coffee shop in the back. The store will be run by the same policies that made June and The Bent Cover such a favorite. And, Gary intends to reinstate

## We need a logo!

The Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society (CASFS) is looking for a graphic logo to use on letterhead, business cards, web pages, etc.

The logo should:

—Tell the world what we do.

We are a nonprofit organization dedicated to promotion of science fiction and fantasy literature. We host fan-run conventions including the annual CopperCon SF convention and HexaCon gaming convention. We publish the fandom newspaper "ConNotations."

Graphic possibilities include spacecraft, planets, monsters, aliens and other fantastical creatures, books, etc. Our name or initials should be in there somewhere.

—Tell the world we're in Arizona.

Possibilities include the state outline, cactus, roadrunners, etc

—Be scalable.

The logo should look good and be easy to recognize at all sizes, from business cards to posters. Line art is better than anything that depends on colors or gradients. Simple is good.

The winning designer will receive a free membership to any CASFS-sponsored convention and the right to boast "That's my design!"

Send your designs by **May 1, 2006** to:

Attention Logo Contest

Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society

PO Box 62613

Phoenix AZ 85082

or by e-mail to [randwhit@casfs.org](mailto:randwhit@casfs.org)

customers' past trade credit. The phone is still 602-942-5932. April 1st is the Grand Opening and they'll be open from 10am to 8pm

## WesternSFA ConRunners Seminars

WesternSFA is holding a series of "mini" (4 hours) ConRunners seminars at the Bookmans in Mesa located at 1056 S Country Club Dr. Dates are May 14, June 18, July 23, August 20, September 24, October 29, November 19 and December 17.

There will also be two day long ConRunners held at the Phoenix Bookmans located at 8034 N 19<sup>th</sup> Ave on June 24 and October 28.

For more information check the web site at [www.westernsfa.org](http://www.westernsfa.org)

## FREE COMIC BOOK DAY 2006 COUNTDOWN BEGINS!

FREE COMIC BOOK DAY 2006 IS SATURDAY, MAY 6th!

For the fifth consecutive year, comic shops worldwide are joining with publishers to promote the comic medium and stores everywhere by giving away FREE COMICS!

This annual event gives you the perfect opportunity to sample the worlds of wonder available at your local comic book store. From super-heroes to slice-of-life to action/adventure and beyond, Free Comic Book Day has a comic book for everyone!

\*\*\*\*\* FREE? WHAT COMIC BOOKS ARE FREE?

There is a vast array of great comic books this year--something for all tastes and ages! Visit our website at

[www.FreeComicBookDay.com](http://www.FreeComicBookDay.com) to see the complete list of free books offered on May 6th. Make sure that you bookmark the website and check it regularly. In the coming weeks, we'll keep you updated on who is promoting Free Comic Book Day and how.

\*\*\*\*\* SO WHERE DO I GET THESE FREE COMIC BOOKS?

That's a great question with a very simple answer: In April you can find out who the participating comic shops are in your area! To find one, go to the site and click on the "Store Locator" link on the left menu. You can also find the Free Comic Book Day locator directly by going to [http://www.freecomicbookday.com/fcbd\\_locator.asp](http://www.freecomicbookday.com/fcbd_locator.asp).

Enter your zip code, and a list of participating stores will magically appear. Please check out the Free Comic Book Day website regularly for updated information at <http://www.FreeComicBookDay.com> and if you have any questions please feel free to contact [info@freecomicbookday.com](mailto:info@freecomicbookday.com)

## Nebula Nominees

The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America announced the final Nebula Awards ballot in late February. The awards are voted on by members of SFWA and will be presented on Saturday May 6th at the Nebula Awards Banquet in Tempe, Arizona. SFWA will also be honoring Grand Master Harlan Ellison and Author Emeritus William F. Nolan with Connie Willis as the toastmaster. For more details on the Nebula Awards Weekend, visit [www.sfwaworld.com](http://www.sfwaworld.com)

(Continued on page 11)

**NOVEL**

Air, Geoff Ryman (St. Martin's)  
Camouflage, Joe Haldeman (Analog  
Mar, Apr, May 2005; Ace)  
Going Postal, Terry Pratchett  
(HarperCollins)  
Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell,  
Susanna Clarke (Bloomsbury)  
Orphans of Chaos, John C. Wright (Tor)  
Polaris, Jack McDevitt (Ace)

**NOVELLA**

"Clay's Pride", Bud Sparhawk (Analog  
Jul/Aug 2004)  
"Identity Theft", Robert J. Sawyer  
(Down These Dark Spaceways SFBC;  
ed. Mike Resnick)  
"Left of the Dial", Paul Witcover (Sci  
Fiction 09.01.04)  
"Magic for Beginners", Kelly Link  
(Magic for Beginners Small Beer Press;  
F&SF Sep 2005)  
"The Tribes of Bela", Albert E.  
Crowdrey (F&SF Aug 2004)

**NOVELETTE**

"The Faery Handbag", Kelly Link (The  
Faery Handbag Viking; ed. Ellen  
Datlow & Terri Windling)  
"Flat Diane", Daniel Abraham (F&SF  
Oct/Nov 2004)  
"Men Are Trouble", James Patrick Kelly  
(Asimov's Jun 2004)  
"Nirvana High", Eileen Gunn & Leslie  
What (Stable Strategies and Others  
Tachyon Press)  
"The People of Sand and Slag", Paolo  
Bacigalupi (F&SF Feb 2004)

**SHORT STORY**

"Born-Again", K. D. Wentworth (F&SF  
May 2005)  
"The End of the World As We Know It",  
Dale Bailey (F&SF Oct/Nov 2004)  
"I Live With You", Carol Emshwiller  
(F&SF Mar 2005)  
"My Mother, Dancing", Nancy Kress  
(Asimov's Jun 2004)  
"Singing My Sister Down", Margo  
Lanagan (Black Juice Eos)  
"Still Life With Boobs", Anne Harris  
(Taleones Summer 2005)  
"There's a Hole in the City", Richard  
Bowes (Sci Fiction 06.15.05)

**SCRIPT**

Battlestar Galactica: "Act of Contrition/You  
Can't Go Home Again", Carla Robinson,  
Bradley Thompson & David Weddle (two-  
part episode, 28 Jan and 4 Feb 2005)  
Serenity, Joss Whedon

**ANDRE NORTON AWARD**

The Amethyst Road, Louise Spiegler  
(Clarion Books)  
Siberia, Ann Halam (Wendy Lamb Books)  
Stormwitch, Susan Vaught (Bloomsbury)  
Valiant: A Modern Tale of Faerie, Holly  
Black (Simon & Schuster)

**CWSFA ISSUES GRANTS**

At their Annual General Meeting on  
November 19, 2005, the Board of Directors  
of the Canada West Science Fiction Asso-  
ciation approved a series of grants totaling  
CA\$12,050. These grants were funded out  
of surplus operating funds of "Due North,"  
Westercon 58, and are aimed at furthering  
science fiction and fantasy fandom activities  
in Canada in general, to assist future  
Westercons, and to assist in the general  
operations of groups that provided assis-  
tance to Westercon 58.

The detailed list of grants, grouped by  
major category, is as follows. (All amounts  
are in Canadian dollars.)

**Westercon-related Grants**

Chaz Boston-Baden, for operation of  
[www.Westercon.org](http://www.Westercon.org) web site, \$200  
San Diego Science Fiction Conventions,  
Inc. (Conzilla/Westercon 2006), \$900  
Society of the Promotion of Fannish  
Interests, Inc. (Gnomeward Bound/  
Westercon 2007), \$900

**Clubs and Organizations**

ConAdian, \$1,000  
Imaginative Fiction Writers Association  
(IFWA), \$2,100  
San Francisco Science Fiction Conventions,  
Inc. (SFSFC), \$350  
Star Trek Winnipeg, \$500

**Canadian Science Fiction & Fantasy Conventions**

V-Con, \$500  
Con-Version, \$500  
KeyCon, \$500  
Ad Astra, \$500  
Con\*Cept, \$500

**Canadian Fandom Activities and Promotions**

Canadian Unity Fan Fund (CUFF), \$500  
Western Canadian Convention Cross-  
Advisement, \$400  
Canadian Convention Bid Committees  
Montreal Worldcon Bid, \$1,500  
Winnipeg World Horror Convention Bid,  
\$500

**Literary Activities**

Robyn Herrington Short Story Contest  
(Administered by IFWA), \$700

CWSFA also established a "scholar-  
ship" to send promising Calgary-area  
convention runners to attend a conference  
about organizing science fiction conven-  
tions. Details of this scholarship, includ-  
ing the criteria and method for applying,  
will be announced later.

CWSFA also voted to pay small  
honoraria to thirteen people who, before  
Westercon 58, traveled extensively in  
support of the convention's planning and  
promotion, incurring substantial  
unreimbursed out-of-pocket expenses.

San Francisco Science Fiction  
Conventions, Inc., (SFSFC) will act as  
CWSFA's agent to pay grants to US-based  
groups to whom CWSFA made grants.  
SFSFC previously acted as Westercon  
58's agent to pay membership reimburse-  
ments to qualified members resident in the  
USA. CWSFA thanks SFSFC for their  
help and support.

Westercon 58, also known as "Due  
North," was the 2005 West Coast Science  
Fantasy Convention, and was held July 1-  
4 at the Westin Hotel in Calgary, Alberta,  
Canada. 706 people attended, and total  
membership (including supporting  
members and no-shows) was 897.

Westercon is an annual science fiction  
convention held in different cities  
throughout western North American  
(including Hawaii). Each year's conven-  
tion is organized independently by a  
different host committee. "Westercon" is a  
service mark of the Los Angeles Science  
Fantasy Society, Inc. For more informa-  
tion about Westercon, see the Westercon  
web site at <http://www.westercon.org/>.

CWSFA is an Alberta non-profit  
society established principally to organize  
Westercon 58. CWSFA currently plans no  
future activities and is actively working  
toward winding up its activities by the end  
of 2006, after all bills have been paid and

any remaining surplus disbursed as  
grants. For more information about  
CWSFA or Westercon 58, contact:  
[info@calgaryin2005.org](mailto:info@calgaryin2005.org).

**L.A.con IV Announces 2006 Hugo & Campbell Awards Nominations**

Sometimes called the Oscars® of  
the science fiction field, the Hugo  
Awards celebrate the best in science  
fiction writing, art, and entertainment.

They are presented annually at the  
World Science Fiction Convention by  
popular vote of the World Science  
Fiction Society's membership. This  
year's World Science Fiction Con-  
vention will take place in Anaheim,  
California from Wednesday, 22 August,  
through Sunday, 27 August.

**Best Novel**

(430 ballots cast)

Learning the World, Ken MacLeod  
(Orbit; Tor)  
A Feast for Crows, George R.R. Martin  
(Voyager; Bantam Spectra)  
Old Man's War, John Scalzi (Tor)  
Accelerando, Charles Stross (Ace; Orbit)  
Spin, Robert Charles Wilson (Tor)  
Best Novella

(243 ballots cast)

Burn, James Patrick Kelly (Tachyon)  
"Magic for Beginners", Kelly Link  
(Magic for Beginners, Small Beer Press;  
F&SF September 2005)

"The Little Goddess", Ian McDonald  
(Asimov's June 2005)

"Identity Theft", Robert J. Sawyer (Down  
These Dark Spaceways, SFBC)

"Inside Job", Connie Willis (Asimov's  
January 2005)

Best Novelette

(207 ballots cast)

"The Calorie Man", Paolo Bacigalupi  
(F&SF October/November 2005)

"Two Hearts", Peter S. Beagle (F&SF  
October/November 2005)

"TelePresence", Michael A. Burstein  
(Analog July/August 2005)

"I, Robot", Cory Doctorow (The Infinite  
Matrix February 15, 2005)

"The King of Where-I-Go", Howard  
Waldrop (SCI FICTION December 7,  
2005)

Best Short Story

(278 ballots cast)

"Seventy-Five Years", Michael A.  
Burstein (Analog January/February 2005)

"The Clockwork Atom Bomb", Dominic  
Green (Interzone May/June 2005)

"Singing My Sister Down", Margo  
Lanagan (Black Juice, Allen & Unwin;  
Eos)

"Tk'tk'tk", David D. Levine (Asimov's  
March 2005)

"Down Memory Lane", Mike Resnick  
(Asimov's April/May 2005)

Best Related Book

(197 ballots cast)

Transformations: The Story of the  
Science Fiction Magazines from 1950 to  
1970, Mike Ashley (Liverpool)

The SEX Column and Other Misprints,  
David Langford (Cosmos)

Science Fiction Quotations edited, Gary  
Westfahl (Yale)

Storyteller: Writing Lessons and More  
from 27 Years of the Clarion Writers'  
Workshop, Kate Wilhelm (Small Beer  
Press)

Soundings: Reviews 1992-1996, Gary K.  
Wolfe (Becon)

Best Dramatic Presentation, Long Form  
(364 ballots cast)

Batman Begins Story by David S. Goyer.  
Screenplay by Christopher Nolan  
and David S. Goyer. Based on the  
character created by Bob Kane. Directed  
by Christopher Nolan. (Warner Bros.)

The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the  
Witch and the Wardrobe Screenplay  
by Ann Peacock and Andrew Adamson  
and Christopher Markus & Stephen  
McFeely. Based on the novel by C.S.  
Lewis. Directed by Andrew Adamson.  
(Walt Disney Pictures/Walden Media)

(Continued on page 14)



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*phoenix*

# CON ♁ GAMES

*Where will you  
be at this summer?*

**Where: Hilton Phoenix East**  
(Alma School & I-60)

**When: July 27 – 30, 2006**  
(Gaming Starts Thu 09:00)

**Costs: Pre-Register \$30** (4-Days)  
**\$35** (At the door)  
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## 64<sup>th</sup> World Science Fiction Convention



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**Howard DeVore**  
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**Frankie Thomas**  
*Commandant of the Academy*

---

### Class Schedule:

Wednesday August 23<sup>rd</sup> thru  
Sunday August 27, 2006

Classes conveniently scheduled before  
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Installment Plan Available

### Campus Housing:

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[www.laconiv.org](http://www.laconiv.org)

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Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire  
Screenplay by Steven Kloves. Based on the novel by J.K. Rowling. Directed by Mike Newell. (Warner Bros.)  
Serenity Written & Directed by Joss Whedon. (Universal Pictures/Mutant Enemy, Inc.)  
Wallace & Gromit in the Curse of the Were-Rabbit Screenplay by Steve Box & Nick Park and Bob Baker and Mark Burton. Directed by Nick Park & Steve Box. (Dreamworks Animation/Aardman Animation).  
Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form (261 ballots cast)  
Battlestar Galactica "Pegasus" Written by Anne Cofell Saunders. Directed by Michael Rymer. (NBC Universal/British Sky Broadcasting)  
Doctor Who "Dalek" Written by Robert Shearman. Directed by Joe Ahearne. (BBC Wales/BBC1)  
Doctor Who "The Empty Child" & "The Doctor Dances" Written by Steven Moffat. Directed by James Hawes. (BBC Wales/BBC1)  
Doctor Who "Father's Day" Written by Paul Cornell. Directed by Joe Ahearne. (BBC Wales/BBC1)  
Jack-Jack Attack Written & Directed by Brad Bird. (Walt Disney Pictures/Pixar Animation)  
Lucas Back in Anger Written by Phil Raines and Ian Sorensen. Directed by Phil Raines. (Reductio Ad Absurdum Productions)  
Prix Victor Hugo Awards Ceremony (Opening Speech and Framing Sequences).  
Written and performed by Paul McAuley and Kim Newman. Directed by Mike & Debby Moir. (Interaction Events)  
(There are seven nominees due to a tie for fifth place)  
Best Professional Editor (293 ballots cast)  
Ellen Datlow (SCI FICTION and anthologies)  
David G. Hartwell (Tor Books; Year's Best SF)  
Stanley Schmidt (Analog)  
Gordon Van Gelder (F&SF)  
Sheila Williams (Asimov's)  
Best Professional Artist (230 ballots cast)  
Jim Burns  
Bob Eggleton  
Donato Giancola  
Stephan Martiniere  
John Picacio  
Michael Whelan  
(There are six nominees due to a tie for fifth place)  
Best Semiprozine (219 ballots cast)  
Ansible edited by Dave Langford  
Emerald City edited by Cheryl Morgan  
Interzone edited by Andy Cox  
Locus edited by Charles N. Brown, Kirsten Gong-Wong, & Liza Groen Trombi  
The New York Review of Science Fiction edited by Kathryn Cramer by David G. Hartwell & Kevin J. Maroney  
Best Fanzine (176 ballots cast)

Banana Wings edited by Claire Brialey & Mark Plummer  
Challenger edited by Guy H. Lillian III  
Chunga edited by Andy Hooper, Randy Byers & Carl Juarez  
File 770 edited by Mike Glycer  
Plokta edited by Alison Scott, Steve Davies & Mike Scott  
Best Fan Writer (202 ballots cast)  
Claire Brialey  
John Hertz  
Dave Langford  
Cheryl Morgan  
Steven H Silver  
Best Fan Artist (154 ballots cast)  
Brad Foster  
Teddy Harvia  
Sue Mason  
Steve Stiles  
Frank Wu

John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer of 2004 or 2005  
[Not a Hugo Sponsored by Dell Magazines] (186 ballots cast)  
K.J. Bishop (2nd year of eligibility)  
Sarah Monette (2nd year of eligibility)  
Chris Roberson (2nd year of eligibility)  
Brandon Sanderson (1st year of eligibility)  
John Scalzi (1st year of eligibility)  
Steph Swainston (2nd year of eligibility)  
(There are six nominees due to a tie for fifth place)

There were 533 valid nominating ballots received from members of the 2006 World Science Fiction Convention, L.A.con IV, and the 2005 World Science Fiction Convention, Interaction (434 electronically; 99 by mail and fax).

The Best Interactive Video Game category, added to the nominating ballot this year by the L.A.con IV Committee, has been dropped because of a lack of interest (as per Section 3.6 of the WSFS Constitution).

This is the second year of the transition to the new Campbell eligibility rules, where now all professional publications count towards eligibility rather than just those with a print run of over 10,000 copies. During this time, nominees who were eligible either under either the old or the new rules could be placed on the ballot even if they had small press publications prior to 2004. Next year, only writers eligible under the new rules will be allowed on the ballot. (The initial press release listing the 2005 Campbell nominees mistakenly said that K.J. Bishop and Chris Roberson were in their second year of eligibility, when in fact it was their first year.)

The 2006 Hugo Awards Ceremony will take place at L.A.con IV, the 64th World Science Fiction Convention on Saturday, 26 August 2006 in the Arena of the Anaheim Convention Center. The convention will be in the Anaheim Convention Center and Anaheim Hilton Hotel from Wednesday, 23 August, through Sunday, 27 August 2006. For more information, see <http://www.laconiv.org>

[www.coppercon.org](http://www.coppercon.org)  
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**An American in England  
Part Ten: Seeking Salisbury  
and Stonehenge  
by Jeffrey Lu**

What stake do I try? Rare, medium, or well done?

Rare- This may be dry but this is cool to history buffs. Salisbury has the best preserved of the four original Magna Carta. In a black case, the piece of paper showed how history can change by the act of barons. This document was the prelude of the US Declaration of Independence and The Constitution. At the gift shop, I snatched a copy each in Latin and in English. This is a rare find.

Medium- There is a cathedral that has "Europe's oldest working clock (AD1386)" ([www.salisburycathedral.org.uk/history.fact.php](http://www.salisburycathedral.org.uk/history.fact.php)). Also, the cathedral is

huge. Even though this is similar to Westminster Abbey; this place's art and architecture is worth seeing.

Well Done- Thomas Hardy wrote a novel in Salisbury. Also, ten miles from this place is Stonehenge. Stonehenge is filled with different types of rocks. Rumor has it that some of these rocks were from Salisbury. I have no idea if this is true. Next: Entering three WWII museums- Imperial War Museum, Churchill's Underground War Cabinet, and Churchill's Museum

# Playaway Here To Stay?

By Shane Shellenbarger

I was recently in Borders Books and spotted a standee with what appeared to be miniature books. On closer examination, I discovered that the objects were, in fact, standalone MP3 players that contained the content represented by the cover art. Playaway, by Findawayworld, is the first self-playing digital audio book to hit the market. Each audio book ships with ear buds and one or two AAA batteries, dependant on the length of the book. The player has eight buttons, a small LCD display, and an earphone jack. The Volume button has ten levels, the Voice Speed button has three speeds for playback, the Bookmark button will set up to fifty bookmarks, Skip Forward and Skip Back will take you to the next or previous bookmark or chapter break, if you press and hold Reverse the LCD will countdown the time remaining in the chapter while a single press takes you back fifteen seconds, Fast Forward is the mirror of Reverse, and the Playaway button controls four functions: Power On, Play, Pause, and Power Off.

The least expensive titles are \$34.99 (some are abridged), the higher priced tier are \$44.99 (all are unabridged) and the most expensive is \$54.99 (currently only Christopher Paolini's *Eldest*.) The lengths range from *Getting Things Done* by David Allen (abridged) at over 3 hours for \$34.99 to Christopher Paolini's *Eldest* at approx. 23 hours

There are currently thirty-seven titles in the categories of Fiction, Non-fiction, Science Fiction (currently only containing Neil Gaiman's *Anansi Boys*, a fantasy title), History, Instructional, Motivational, Mystery/Suspense, Religious, Romance/Epic, Thriller/Horror, Young Adult (currently only containing Christopher Paolini's *Eldest*.) For some reason that escapes me, *The Chronicles of Narnia - The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory / Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator* are only listed in Fiction. There is no Fantasy or Childrens category.

The question is why has this product come to market? Audio books have been a steady seller for decades. Audio cassettes and CDs are widely available at innumerable outlets: bookstores, convenience stores, libraries, and truck stops. Audible.Com has partnered with Amazon.Com to sell downloadable content over the internet (and unlike iTunes, you can get a replacement copy from Audible if there is a problem.) Is it a matter of convenience, ease of use, features, or price? Playaway describes their product as "six ounces of droppable plastic." There is nothing to download; ear buds, and a battery come in the



package, which make it especially attractive to technophobes. Ease of use would make it a great gift for young and old alike because the learning curve isn't steep. The features address all of the issues usually associated with an audio book: with control of the bookmarks, chapter breaks, fast-forward and reverse, the listener has nearly unlimited movement through the audio book. The main sticking point is the price. Christopher Paolini's *Eldest*: Playaway price is \$54.99, Amazon audio CD price is \$34.65 (\$28.35 for audiocassette), Audible price is \$38.50 (if you become a member at \$9.95 a year it's free.) *Getting Things Done* by David Allen (abridged): Playaway price is \$34.99, Amazon audio CD price is \$16.32 (\$11.70 for audiocassette), Audible price is \$13.60 (if you become a member at \$9.95 a year it's free.)

If the Playaway were sold as a separate player that used a memory card, I'd buy it in a heartbeat. The company could sell players, audio books on memory cards, and even the all-in-one units at price points that make sense to the consumer based on their needs. Let's hope Findawayworld is thinking along those lines. Playaway is available through their website, in participating Borders, Office Max, and Barnes & Noble.

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<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/>  
<http://www.amazon.com>  
<http://www.audible.com>

# Dimension X, X Minus One, and Spaceship Radio

Reviewed by Randall Whitlock

X Minus One was a remarkable radio show that ran on NBC from 1955 to 1958, presenting a half-hour dramatization of a science fiction story each week. X Minus One was a revival of Dimension X, which aired in 1950 and 1951. Almost all of the Dimension X scripts were made into new X Minus One productions, usually with better sound quality and less theremin music. The early episodes of X Minus One were produced in cooperation with Astounding Science Fiction magazine and the later ones with Galaxy Science Fiction. This gave the program access to stories from the greatest masters of SF's golden age of the short story, including Robert Heinlein, Ray Bradbury, Isaac Asimov, Clifford D. Simak, Fred Pohl, and Robert Sheckley in scripts adapted for the radio by Ernest Kinoy or George Lefferts. I was amazed at how many of these stories I had read in anthologies over the years. Stories transcribed include *Requiem*, *Nightfall*, and almost half of the stories from *The Martian Chronicles*.

There were over one hundred X Minus One episodes produced (129 including repeats), featuring a regular cast of voices you will know you've heard before, but won't always remember where. The voice I recognized most easily was Bob Hastings, who used to play Captain Binghamton's sidekick on *McHale's Navy* and more recently provided the voice of Commissioner Gordon on *Batman: The Animated Series* (Can Randall ever write a review without mentioning Batman?)

Since most of these episodes are over fifty years old, they have largely fallen out of copyright. Consequently, you can find them through most old-time radio outlets. I purchased my set from <http://spaceshipradio.com> as MP3 files on CD

for about four bucks. Other online sources can sell you a subscription to download the files directly from their collections. The recording quality and format may vary by source. The copies I purchased had been well cleaned up and included some commercials and public service announcements from the original broadcasts. The Dimension X broadcast of one Heinlein story was interrupted by a news flash announcing the beginning of the Korean War.

To obtain these shows, I would recommend you visit Spaceship Radio at <http://spaceshipradio.com/> This is the home of Andy Doan's weekly podcast celebrating SF audio drama. Mr. Doan sends out episodes of X Minus One and other fantastical radio shows free to his podcast subscribers, along with new productions of his own. The site also features reviews of other audio drama podcast projects, an archive of past podcasts, and an ongoing wiki-based project to create new scripts. There are links to many other interesting podcasts. Ads on the site often point to sources for classic radio show recordings.

With the eruption of the podcast phenomenon over the last couple of years, SF audio drama has found its natural home.



## SORCERESS SEEKS APPRENTICES

Those of you who have caught my act at Pagan Pride Day, or the Witches' Ball, or various local ceremonies, take note: I will teach all my knowledge of Bardic Magick - music, poetry, psionics, and the relationships between them - to any qualified person willing to rent a room in my house in west Phoenix. The house is in a quiet residential neighborhood near 59<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Thomas Road, within walking distance of a shopping center and within easy bus-ride of two community colleges. \$360 per month plus a share of the housework covers rent and utilities, including phone, cable TV and cable Internet connection. Yes, I'm willing to teach complete beginners. Applicants must tolerate cats, smokers, and musicians who keep odd hours. If interested, phone me at 623-247-7809 evenings.  
Leslie the Bard

# Gamer's Corner

Not too much again this time, too little material, too much overtime, and a vacation doing a different kind of gaming. (Vegas Baby!)

## The Sabbat Worlds Crusade Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay \$29.99, Black Industries, 96pp

This is a wonderful look into the background of the war against Chaos. It follows the crusade started by St Sabbat Beati from its hotly contested start (it was one of the most expensive undertakings of mankind) to the current two-front war with the Archon and his rival, Anakwanar Sek. The war has raged for the past twenty years and has killed off many of the empire's best and brightest.

This is excellent source material for fleshing out the backgrounds of characters and/or battalions. The illustrations are fantastic; the information extensive, but while this will help many people it isn't for everybody. Dan Abnett, the author, is coming at this from his comic strips and novels and thus it doesn't have much gaming depth.

As background it is wonderful, as a gaming aid not so great. - **Bob LaPierre**

## Xenology Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay \$29.99, Black Industries, 96pp

This sourcebook gives descriptive and pictorial views of the most common creatures in the Warhammer worlds. It gives the strengths and weaknesses of all the player races and could be used as an aid to combat or to flesh out your description. The illustrations are detailed and annotated.

I found the information useful. I have loaned the volume to a friend who reviews the novels in the Warhammer world so he could see what he had been reading about. I thought the information fitted extremely well with the Old World Bestiary. The background story was very well thought out and gave me insight into the way that the Warhammer world is going. - **Bob LaPierre**

## Warhammer Death's City by Sandy Mitchell Black Library Pub., \$7.99, 398 pp

Rudi and Hanna are hunted down by witchhunters and their men. Rudi and Hanna are tainted with Chaos and must be held prisoners. They are also wanted by Chaos forces. How will these two survive from the witchhunters and the followers of Chaos in a city named Marienburg?

Will Rudi find something in Marienburg that he might regret?

This is the second book in a series.

Enjoyed the story. Lots of surprises. Definitely recommended to fantasy readers of Warhammer. - **Jeffrey Lu**

## Warhammer 40,000 Death or Glory by Sandy Mitchell Black Library Pub., \$7.99, 414 pp

Commissar Cain is again stuck in a war he wants to avoid. Little does he

know that he will win all his battles against his new enemy- the Orks. All he needs is more cannon fodder, fellow imperial troops on the world to unite against the common foe.

This is the fourth book in a series.

This is like science fiction "Forest Gump," "Catch 22," and a little "Star Trek."

Commissar Cain's reflection on the Orks was tongue-in-cheek. He really did not want to play the hero. Yet, his leadership made this imperial ragtag army into an effective fighting force that eliminated the Ork's hold of a world. Recommended for Warhammer 40,000 and war & humor science fiction readers. - **Jeffrey Lu**

## Warhammer Wild Kingdoms by Robert Earl Black Library Publication, \$6.99, 255 pp

Florin and Lorenzo have a mission to find a merchant's daughter, Katerina. The problem is that the girl is held in an orge's city. To make matters worse, Florin and Lorenzo have to join a tribe of orges against the united leader of orges and his army.

This is the second book of the series.

Nice. When things could not get worse, Florin and Lorenzo bounce back with wit and with determination to do good in their own way. This book is definitely for adults in the fantasy Warhammer. - **Jeffrey Lu**

## Warhammer Savage City by Robert Earl Black Library Pub. \$6.99, 253 pp

Katerina's husband is murdered. With honor, Florin and Lorenzo help Katerina with blood and money.

This is the third book in the series.



# Nebula Awards Weekend 2006

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Authors participating in the Friday night signing (which is open to the public) include: Grand Master Harlan Ellison, Author Emeritus William F. Nolan, Toastmaster Connie Willis, Karen Anderson, Robin Bailey, **Holly Black**, **Richard Bowes**, Michael Cassutt, Ellen Datlow, Doranna Durgin, Scott Edelman, Eric Flint, Steven Gould, Cynthia Felice, Sheila Finch, **Eileen Gunn**, **Joe Haldeman**, **Anne Harris**, Peter Heck, Howard V. Hendrix, **Nancy Kress**, **Margo Lanagan**, Lee Martindale, **Jack McDevitt**, Dennis L. McKiernan, Vera Nazarian, Jennifer Roberson, Vanessa Robinson, Kristine Kathryn Rush, **Bud Sparhawk**, Gordon Van Gelder, **Susan Vaught**, Michelle M. Welch, **K.D. Wentworth**, **Paul Witcover**, Laurel Winter, and **John C. Wright** (bold = Nebula or Norton Nominee)

[www.sfwawards.org/awards/2006](http://www.sfwawards.org/awards/2006)

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# Videophile

- \*\* **The Fog**
- \*\*\* **Jules Verne's Mysterious Island**
- \*\*\* **Brothers Grimm**
- \*\*\*\*\* **Doctor Who (2005) Series 1**
- \*\*\*\*\* **Nanny McPhee**
- \*\*\*\*\* **The Day of the Triffids**

\*\***The Fog**  
**Sony, 100 minutes, Unrated**  
**DVD \$28.99**

From the back cover: "From producer John Carpenter comes the all-new retelling of his terror classic, *The Fog*. Tom Welling (TV's *Smallville*), Maggie Grace (TV's *Lost*) and Selma Blair (*Hellboy*) star in this senses-shattering tale of demonic retribution, directed by Rupert Wainwright (Stigmata) and written by Cooper Layne. Trapped within an eerie mist, the residents of Antonio Bay have become the unwitting victims of a horrifying vengeance. One hundred years ago, a ship carrying lepers was purposely lured onto the rocky coastline and sunk, drowning all aboard. Now they're back, long-dead mariners who've waited a century for their revenge. Seeking out the descendents of those responsible for their deaths, they lurk enshrouded within a supernatural fog of terror. Beware, any and all who stand in their way."

If you go into this film with the idea of comparing it to the 1980 John Carpenter version you will be disappointed. If you just go into this looking for some fun you will find it. As horror films go it is not all that scary, I am not sure the "Unrated" version is any more gory than the PG-13. There are a few interesting deaths, Dan the weatherman and Aunt Connie come to mind, little real suspense and some so-so special effects. Hard core Carpenter fans can watch for the in jokes, such as Tom Welling's character, Nick Castle, which is a reference to Carpenter's friend and collaborator (played Michael Myers in Carpenter's *Halloween*, worked as writer on *Escape From New York* and *Escape From LA*) I am told there are other "in" jokes but I am not hard core enough a fan to have noticed them.

Deleted scenes include two that I think should have been left in, an expanded version of Dan the Weatherman's death and a fireball scene in the town museum towards the end. All in all, a fairly enjoyable way to spend an evening relaxing. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

\*\*\***Jules Verne's Mysterious Island**  
**Hallmark, 170 minutes, NR**  
**DVD \$29.99**

From the back cover: "Escaping from a Confederate prison camp by balloon, five survivors land on an uncharted island in the Pacific. Far from a sanctuary, the island is home to carnivorous monsters, bloodthirsty pirates, and the mad genius, Captain Nemo, who inhabits the mysterious island for his own strange ends."

Kyle MacLachlan stars as Cyrus, a Union Captain who along with his slave Neb (Omar Gooding), a nurse (Gabrielle Anwar) and her daughter Helen (Rosanne Calvert), a Confederate officer who is also a prisoner (Jason Burr) and a young Confederate soldier escape from Libby Prison camp in a hot air balloon. The winds carry them far to the west until just short of an island the balloon springs a leak. Cyrus jumps into the sea to lighten the balloon which crashes on the island. While searching for Cyrus they discover the island is inhabited by gigantic creatures with the young soldier meeting a quick end at the hands (pincers?) of a giant preying mantis. Meanwhile Cyrus awakes in the home of Captain Nemo (Patrick Stewart) who attempts to recruit him to assist with his life's work, a bomb meant to put an end to all warfare. Cyrus refuses to help until his friends are found. Once the remaining castaways are in Nemo's compound Cyrus considers Nemo's offer but ultimately declines causing Nemo to throw all of them out of the compound.

The group begins to build a life for themselves. Helen befriends a young pirate, Blake, when he saves her life and they find another castaway who was abandoned by the pirate 8 years earlier. Together the group begins to build a raft. When the pirates return to the island looking for treasure the castaways have to rescue Helen, defeat the pirates and ultimately escape a raging volcano.

The story was interesting, the characters were more well-rounded than the 1961 version though the Ray Harryhausen's effects were surprisingly better. The ending was somewhat disappointing, but overall this was worth the time spent and I am now searching out the book to see which movie version comes closest to Verne's vision. -

**Stephanie L Bannon**

\*\*\***Brothers Grimm**  
**Miramax, 119 minutes, PG-13**  
**DVD \$29.99**

From the back cover: "Matt Damon (*The Bourne Supremacy*, *Ocean's Twelve*) and Heath Ledger (*The Patriot*, *A Knight's Tale*) team up to bring you one of the year's most fantastic adventures in this magical tale based on the lives of the legendary storytellers. Will and Jake

Grimm (Damon and Ledger) dazzle small towns with their imaginative folklore and elaborate illusions, but when the brothers journey into a real enchanted forest they encounter many of the fantastic characters and thrilling situations found in their beloved fairy tales! From the award-winning director of *12 Monkeys*, *Brazil* and *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, this fabulous motion picture is sure to leave you living happily ever after!"

This was a delightful way to spend an afternoon. Will and Jake Grimm are con men. They travel through 19<sup>th</sup> century French occupied Germany staging fake hauntings and then charging the villagers to save them from the monsters. When the authorities catch up with them they are sent to a village where children have been disappearing with orders to expose the fraud there only to find that they are face to face with real magic and enchantments.

While this film didn't do well at the theater I think it was not marketed properly. Despite its PG-13 rating, this is definitely not a children's movie. It is a wonderful dark comedy with spectacular special effects. Part of the fun is guessing which Grimm Fairy Tale is being referenced. Recommended - **Stephanie L Bannon**

\*\*\*\*\***Doctor Who (2005) Series One**  
**BBC, 585 minutes, NR**  
**\$99.99**  
**(release date - July 4, 2006)**

Doctor Who returns to the screen with a slam bang series. All the things we loved with the old Doctor Who coupled with quicker paced stories and better effects. (Though for some reason the



subtitles say "Whoosh" when the TARDIS dematerializes when it is obviously a grinding noise) This five disc set includes all 13 episodes from the first series as well as all the Doctor Who Confidential episodes. We sat down to



watch the first two episodes and ended up running through the entire thirteen episodes and most of the special features in one sitting. Long time Doctor Who fans were pleased and those new to Doctor Who became almost instant converts.

The UK release comes in a collector box shaped like a TARDIS, while the US release is a simple box set. The TARDIS is kind of fun but the box set is probably easier to store.

DVD Features: Commentaries On All 13 Episodes From The Cast And Crew Including Simon Callow, Russell T Davies, Billie Piper, John Barrowman, and Mark Gatiss; On Set With Billie, Making Doctor Who, Waking The Dead, Special Doctor Who Confidential Disc, Destroying The Lair Featurette, Mike

Tuckers Mocks Of Balloons Featurette, Designing Doctor Who Featurette, Laying Ghosts The Origins Of The Unquiet Dead Featurette, Deconstructing Big Ben Featurette, The Adventures Of Captain Jack Featurette, BBC Breakfast Interview With Christopher Eccleston, Trailers, Backstage at Christmas: an exclusive look behind the scenes of Doctor Who Christmas Invasion and Booklet

Highly recommended. A July 4, 2006 release date was just announced - reserve your copy now! - **Stephanie L Bannon**

(Continued on page 18)

We have a Multi-region DVD player and friends in Britain that send us interesting things. I've also become quite fond of Amazon.co.uk though I really wish US studios were ramp up their US release of titles that are available overseas. The two films below are available in the UK but not yet in the USA. Keep an eye out for their US release - you will not be sorry.

\*\*\*\***Nanny McPhee**  
**Universal, 94 minutes, PG**  
**£12.99 (US\$22.00)**

From the back cover: "In this dark and witty fable, Emma Thompson (*Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, *Love Actually*) portrays a person of unsettling appearance and magical powers who enters the household of the recently widowed Mr. Brown (Colin Firth - *Bridget Jones's Diary*, *Girl with a Pearl Earring*) and attempts to tame his seven exceedingly ill-behaved children.

The children have managed to drive away 17 previous nannies but as Nanny McPhee takes control, they begin to notice that their vile behaviour now leads swiftly and magically to rather startling consequences."

I missed this when it was in theaters and I am sorry I did. This is a totally delightful romp, sure to please both children and adults alike. Nanny McPhee appears as the Brown children run off nanny number seventeen and from that moment on, life changes for the whole household as she uses understanding, and a little magic, to teach the children.

Special features include: Casting the Children, Village Life, Nanny McPhee Makeover, Deleted Scenes, Gag Reel, How Nanny McPhee came to be! and two audio commentaries.

*Nanny McPhee* was a delightful evening's entertainment as we watched both the film and the special features. I understand this is loosely based on a series of children's stories so maybe we will see Nanny McPhee help another family. Recommended - **Stephanie L Bannon**

**The Day of the Triffids**  
**BBC, 164 minutes, PG**  
**£12.99 (US\$22.00)**

From the back cover: "The BBC's adaptation of John Wyndham's classic novel has been hailed as an atmospheric, gripping and faithful production. The brainchild of *Blake's 7* producer David Maloney, this post-apocalyptic series was broadcast in 1981, when fears of nuclear Armageddon were at their height. The series generated cult appeal that had the longevity to be considered an influence on



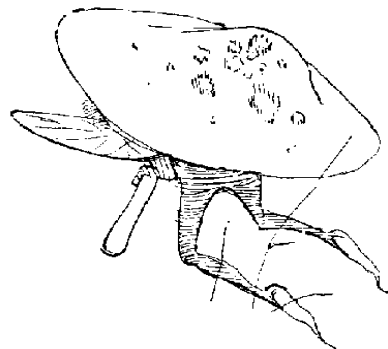
2002's *28 Days Later*.

Following the Earth's close encounter with a comet, a meteor shower strikes Britain's population blind. Bill Masen, recovering in a London hospital from a vicious plant attack, is one of the few to survive with eyesight intact. The world he emerges into has already terrifyingly altered.

The government has collapsed, bands of renegades are thriving in the anarchy - and a hostile, carnivorous form of plant life, the Triffids, have begun to prey on the weakened and vulnerable human population. For Masen, life is now a desperate struggle..."

I read *The Day of the Triffids* in the early 70's (ok - I'm showing my age) and it has remained one of my favorites, I re-read it almost once a year.

In 1981, on a fledgling cable channel, this BBC adaptation of Wyndham's book was broadcast and I have been looking for a copy ever since. Unlike the campy 1962 version with Howard Keel this is a taut drama, more concerned with the characters than the special effects. Twenty-five years later the acting may seem a little dated and the pace is slower than modern productions but it still is a gripping look at how humanity copes in the face of overwhelming disaster, for the most part the Triffids are superfluous to the main theme of survival. Highly recommended - **Stephanie L Bannon**



## In Our Book

**Viriconium**  
**by M. John Harrison**  
**Bantam/Spectra; \$16; 462 pgs.**

As strange and lush and foreign as a twilight stroll through unexpected, undiscovered Mayan ruins seen wrapped in a fog, this collection of tales centers around the far-into-the-future city of Viriconium. Harrison is a master wordsmith; an author of consummate skill.

This is no light trip through a fantasy world. It is a hallucinatory wander through human civilization gone moldy and eccentric, swallowed by rot and decay; thousands and thousands of years into the future. The detritus of what Harrison calls the "Afternoon" Cultures.

Characters have names like Ansel Verdigris, the Grand Cairo, Ogorsby Practal, Gunter Verlac, and Tomb the Dwarf. There are quests and battles; lost technologies and a pale isolated Queen; insectoid invaders aided by the bloated body of an ancient "airboatman" whose collapsed form (still viable) is the incubator for their race. And this is just the tip of the three novels and seven tales contained in this collection.

As an idea, Viriconium has obviously haunted Harrison's mind for sometime. The first entry, "The Pastel City" was written in 1971. But as you go through these tales you can see the attraction, the addiction that Viriconium has for the author.

In the final story "A Young Man's Journey to Viriconium" we are given a hint; a fetid breath, if you will, of Viriconium in our own contemporary world. A curious soul in Huddersfield, England tries to track down a lavatory mirror that will provide ingress to Viriconium (even though, as a destination, Viriconium sounds a bit...*extreme*.)

Harrison is very fond of arcane and creative verbiage. You will not find common variety descriptions or words here: induviate, groughs, a *fohn* wind, bullace, planished, gloottokoma, seracs...I learned a lot of new words (and some of them real).

This is also not a light read over a weekend. It takes time to savor, if you go too quickly you'll miss so much. Harrison's command of imagery is outstanding. Weird; but outstanding. The book, its characters and their environment are completely unique. There are still hints of the world we know: there are streets with names like the Rue Montdampierre and the Rue Sepile. There is a Bistro Californium and Blackpool, Vienna and Venice are mentioned. But Viriconium and the world it inhabits are strange and unusual; a hard place to

categorize.

Let me quote part of a paragraph from "A Storm of Wings." "*The city! Its end is near. It expands and contracts, like a lung. Regular spasms of dissolution shake it like the vomits and distempers of a dying king. It is full of fires, not all of them real; memories of a history never achieved, a future unrealized. Sketchy and counterfeit, the towers of its sister city Viriconium advance and recede through a roseate smoke.*"

Visit. I think you'll discover an amazing new land. - **Sue Martin**

**A Secret Atlas**  
**Book One of**  
**The Age of Discovery series**  
**by Michael A. Stackpole**  
**\$6.99, Bantam Spectra, 604 pp**

The first thing I noticed about this book is that it has a flavor of the European age of discovery but with an overlay of oriental influence. I found the magic and the people's attitudes about it truly believable. There were several different viewpoints and each has its own story line. The story is fast paced and draws you in.

The world was destroyed by war several centuries back. The Empress Cyrsa took her armies to meet the enemy in Ixyll so that the release of magics from the battle would not destroy the world. Before leaving she divided the known world into nine princedoms to prevent anyone else from becoming emperor before her return. Unfortunately the release of magics was enough to cause years of no sun and a time of black ice.

The main story line follows a family of cartographers as they prepare to send out two expeditions, one to explore the Eastern sea, the other to seek out the lost spice route through Ixyll.

Jorim's expedition on the Stormwolf through the Eastern sea is reminiscent of Columbus' voyage to the new world. They are searching for an alternate route for the spice trade, and looking to explore any new lands they come across.

Keles' trip to rediscover the way through Ixyll reads more like typical fantasy, with wild magic, combat, attacks from agents of another prince, and even a love story.

The magic has rules and anyone can use it provided they can become perfect at their craft. I spent the days between the release of this volume and the release of the next (30 days) being impatient and checking the mail daily.

Buy this book, but wait for the third volume to read it else you will go through extreme withdrawal symptoms. - **Bob LaPierre**

## In Our Book

(Continued from page 18)

### Cleopatra 7.2

by Elizabeth Scarborough  
\$23.95, Ace Books, 321 pp

This is a sequel to 'Channeling Cleopatra.' The premise is that Cleopatra's DNA was found and a technology developed to implant the DNA into a living host. This process also implants the DNA donor's memory, personality and awareness into the host. So, of course, Cleopatra lives again - in two women. (Hence, Cleopatra 7.1 and 7.2)

7.1 is a forensic anthropologist, Leda, whose 'blending' was unauthorized and was the subject of the first book. Leda found Cleopatra's tomb and mummy and then apparently faced some conflict and 'blended' with Cleopatra in order to save the DNA from the bad guys. 7.2 is Gabriella, an Egyptologist, and the intended recipient of the DNA. Her intention is to use Cleopatra's memories to do further archaeological research. The title of the book implies this story is Gabriella's but it isn't just hers.

Leda faces repercussions of her unauthorized blending and gets fired from the company who owns the blending process. The circumstances are somewhat mysterious and suspicious. We are introduced to several other 'blended' individuals, some authorized and some not. Gabriella, meanwhile, is in Egypt beginning her research while continuing her life goal of rescuing her countrywomen from untenable situations with their families. Naturally, the menfolk of these families take exception to her 'interference' and her life is threatened. Her life is further complicated by Cleo 7.2's determination to find a suitable host for her beloved Marc Antony's DNA. This is a very difficult decision for Gabriella as she had been mutilated as a child by her father (circumcised) and doesn't believe she'll be able to enjoy a normal sexual relationship - something that Cleopatra desperately longs for.

Leda is unexpectedly enjoying a sexual relationship with the host of Sir Walter Scott. Her life is complicated by the discovery that she, by way of her Cleopatra, can experience traumatic events that Cleo 7.2 experiences. So when Cleo 7.2 gets strangled and kidnapped, Leda's on her way to Egypt with her benefactor, Sir Walter Scott, in tow.

That's when the story starts to get unnecessarily complicated to my mind. We are introduced to a pantheon of players whose agenda seemed a bit vague to this reader. I got the idea that they were, in some way, the reincarnation of various Egyptian gods; although, if they were all 'blends' or something more metaphysical, the author didn't make it very clear. I think they were there to

'save' Egypt but the story didn't flow very well at that point. I had trouble figuring out if Sir Walter Scott was a good guy in the end, or not. I think the biggest problem for me in this book, is the overabundance of dialogue and insufficient explanation from the author as to their intentions and thoughts. It might have helped to have read the first book, I would have, at least, known the main characters better; however, I don't think it would have made up for the weak plotting. -

**Catherine Book**

### Cartomancy Book Two of

The Age of Discovery series  
by Michael A. Stackpole  
\$15.00, Bantam Spectra, 430 pp

This is the second novel in the series and was, despite being shorter, even better than its predecessor. I fully intend to review the third book when it comes out, Michael are you reading this? I will camp out on your doorstep if need be. I repeat my warning to any possible readers, have all three books before you start reading; they are that good.

At the end of book one, Jorim had been told he was the god Tetcomchoa. Throughout this volume he attempts to come to grips with this revelation. The struggle of learning magic and the revelation at the end of the volume are well worth the price of admission and are but a small fraction of the whole book.

Keles was a prisoner of the Desei. He both helps and harms the capital city of Felarati by dint of improvements to the city. He also learns of his growing abilities at the end of the book.

Of the minor characters, one, Ciras, has been assigned to find the Empress. Along the way he discovers what happened to the mages that were with the Empress. Another, Moraven Tolo, learns who he truly is and defeats an army in the process.

I need to get the third book. If I don't find out how everything ends I'll just crack. - **Bob LaPierre**

The Labyrinth Key  
by Howard Hendrix  
Del Rey, 432 pp, \$6.99

Mr. Hendrix's challenging novel runs the gamut from Kabala to quantum foam universes. It's like a big helping each of cyberpunk and DaVinci code, with a sprinkling of Umberto Eco. The characters are a little flat, but this is a book about ideas more than anything else. It was a good read, but it's not going on the "keep" shelf. - **Scott Muir**

A Game of Perfection  
by Elizabeth Vonarburg  
Edge, 333 pp, \$16.95

*A Game of Perfection* is the second book in the *Tyranael* series.

Tyranael is a planet colonized by humans and called Virginia. But another race of humanoids had lived there and gone before the humans came.

The planet has a phenomenon in which the sea withdraws for half the two year cycle and then returns for half a cycle. When it floods in it goes to an altitude of 1000 meters and neutralizes the electricity even higher. The humans ignore the unanswered questions and continue their exploitation of the planet. But people are born with unusual talents, and must hide from the normals. All this has been dreamed by Eilaia; dreamer from the ancients who dreams other universes that may or may not come to pass. She treasures Simon and his brothers who are changed by the planet and who may change the planet and its future.

In typical Vonarburg style, she weaves multiple plot twists with characters we relate to despite an alien quality and visual imagery that has us exploring the nature of reality itself. Now, I have to hunt *Dreams of the Sea*, the first book in the series. Her books are keepers. Gotta have for the library. - **Pam Allan**

Wolf Star  
Tour of the Merrimack #2  
by R. M. Meluch  
DAW, 328 pages, \$23.95

In the far future, Captain Farragut is the commanding officer of one of the two most powerful ships in space, the U.S.S. Merrimack. The USA is locked in a deadly war with its breakaway colonies in the Palatine Empire. A vicious protracted struggle that has been sputtering on and off for over a hundred years.

Suddenly an alien race threatens both sides with extinction. What can they do? Who can they turn to?

I found the *Wolf Star* to be an entertaining novel in the style of the old fashioned space opera. It is a good stand alone story that most fans of that style should like.

**BUT!** After I had finished reading the book I was in a book store and found book #1 of the series on the discount table. I bought it and then took it home to read. Surprise, surprise... Book one totally changes the meaning of everything that happens in book two. I will not spoil the unique plot twist that Ms. Meluch used but I would strongly recommend this series to everyone. - **William B. Whitmore**

(Continued on page 21)

# Phoenix in 2008

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Phoenix in 2008 has filed with the Conzilla committee and will be on the ballot for the Westercon 61 voting at Conzilla (Westercon 59), July 1-4, 2006 in San Diego.

Full voting details will be on our web site when finalized.

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**John Vornholt**

Special Tribute to  
**Ray Gish**

**Special Events at LepreCon 32**

**Heinlein Blood Drive and Body Painting – We will be having a blood drive on Saturday in association with the Heinlein Society. Artist Mark Greenawalt will be doing several special body paintings based on Heinlein cover art.**

**Masquerade Ball – Saturday night will feature a masquerade ball where you are encouraged to wear a mask with your costume. Prizes will be awarded to the best costumes**

**LepreCon 32 Art Show Information**

We are proud to announce Alan M. Clark as our Artist Guest of Honor. Our local Artist Guest of Honor will be Gilead. We are planning a guided tour of the art show Friday evening hosted by Alan M. Clark and Gilead.

Our plan is to offer the best of science fiction and fantasy art to the fans of Phoenix. We are asking that artists planning to hang art limit it to originals and limited run prints. Art show panels (a panel is 4 ft. X 4 ft. flat pegboard) may be reserved for a fee of \$5.00 per panel. 3D artwork can be displayed on 6 ft. X 2.5 ft. tables, for a fee of \$10.00 or \$5.00 for 1/2 table.

The convention will take a 12% commission on these sales. We will also feature a print shop -- an area for artists to sell multiple prints of some of their more popular work, with the convention taking a 15% commission on these sales. There is no fee to display in the print shop.

We are anticipating a great art show this year, so be sure to come down and see the pride of a lot of super artists. If you have any questions, or if you are interested in reserving display space, please contact David Gish or Sylvana Anderson-Gish at 1309 W. Palo Verde Dr. Chandler, AZ 85224, call 480-963-2067 or email at konrad@cox.net or sja657@aol.com. - David Gish

**LepreCon 32 Programming**

The special events planned for the weekend include an Artists' Finger painting Session, Family Finger painting session, Vela Vision's Junk Box Wars, Tithe of Soul's Vampire and Changeling LARPs, Art Show Guided Tour, Filk Concert, Charity Auction, Masquerade Ball (Saturday evening), Regency Dance, Modern Dance (Friday evening), Heinlein Society Blood Drive & Body Painting (based on Heinlein book covers), Gaming, Barry Bard's Memorial Movie Previews, ASFA Regional Meeting, and Art Auction. There will be weekend-long tracks of art demonstrations and workshops including the aforementioned finger painting sessions, a few airbrush demos, comic book design, dragon sketching, modeling and sculpting demos. There will also be a weekend-long track on making a short film including costuming and make-up, storyboarding, scripting, filming, casting, music scores, and editing.

Sylvana Anderson-Gish, Dr. Arizona, Mark Banning, Len Berger, Toni Blair, Tabitha A. Bradley, Greg Brown, Cynthia Bullock, Mike Cassidy, Sarah Clemens, Liz Danforth, Emily Devenport, Craig Dyer, Michele Ellington, Bruce Farr, Maryeileen Flanagan, Joseph Formichella, Hugh S. Gregory, Mark Greenawalt, Bennie Grezlik, Diane Harris, Ernest Hogan, Pamelina H., Nicole Kurtz, Chris LaMont, Jack Mangan, Alice Massoglia, Marty Massoglia, Loretta McKibben, Edouard B. Mesert, Vicki Mieth, Allison Mitchell, Casey Moore, Adam Niswander, Janeen O'Kerry, Carole Parker, Diana L. Paxson, Webb Pickersgill, Ray Poulson, Lauren Raine, Cary Riall, Stan Robinson, Ken St. Andre, Samira, Annette Serton-Ruiz, Scott P. Sullivan, Gary L. Swaty, Evo Terra, Kit Townsend, Larry Vela, Ronald L. Walker, Doreen Webbert, Jim Webbert, Michelle M. Welch, Randall Whitlock, David Williams, and Nola Yergen-Jennings.

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## In Our Book

(Continued from page 19)

**The Secret**  
by Eva Hoffman  
Ballantine, 272 pp, \$12.95

This coming of age / identity crisis novel of a teenage clone is the most intensely introspective book I've ever read. It's written from a first person perspective throughout, with the device of a counselor's occasional comments. The counselor gets forgotten soon enough (by the author) without explanation. The

"secret" is of course obvious from the get-go, thus relieving the reader of any suspense. Think Shelley's *Frankenstein* but without the violence, social ostracism or gothic sense of vengeance. To top it all off, she's beautiful, young and rich. Oh the horror, the horror. - **Scott Muir**

**A Host of Dragons**  
by Alan F. Troop  
Roc, 340 pp, \$7.99

*A Host of Dragons* is the fourth volume of the *Dragon Delasangre* series.

Two years have passed since Peter Delasangre has returned to the Island he shares with his wife and two children. His wife has been jealous since the seduction by the seadragon's daughter that resulted in a child. But his sanctuary is invaded by European dragons who kidnap his daughter, and later his wife because of In-law from Hell. They also attempt to destroy his family fortune.

Peter is not amused.

In the Delasangres, Troop has developed one of the most engaging monsters since Grendal. Each adventure,

filled with angst and eroticism seemed to be happening almost to a 1950's family life with a few added powers like shape changing, man-eating, and flying. They get better with each book, and are downright fun. Enjoy. - **Pam Allan**

**BSI Starside**  
**The Cause of Death**  
by Roger MacBride Allen  
Bantam, 470 pages, \$6.99

The Bureau of Special Investigations Starside is the human agency charged with investigating all crimes committed by humans or against humans in all of known space. A pretty large task for a small underfunded government agency. Especially when most of the elder races that run the galaxy won't even talk to the brash, rude, uncouth young races, like the humans. Needless to say, this makes finding out about problems difficult and solving them . . . . Well, let's just say the dedicated men and women of the BSI try *really* hard.

After a rather lengthy start, this novel becomes a pretty good murder mystery. Sort of, almost, well, depending on which races' definition of murder you are using it could be a murder, or death by premeditated self-defense, or the legally required killing of an overaged male by his son, or a coup attempt, or it just boggles the mind, all the possibilities that Mr. Allen has come up with.

I found this an enjoyable read and look forward to the next book in the series. - **William B. Whitmore**

**Seeker**  
by Jack McDevitt  
Ace, 360 pp, \$24.95

*Seeker* is another adventure with Alex Benedict and his assistant Chase Kolpath, who deals with antiquities thousands of years in the future.

In the twenty seventh century, two ships break away from earth and run for the stars from the theocracy that had taken over North America. The ships were the Bremerhaven, and the Seeker. They established a colony called Margolia and disappeared from history.

Thousands of years later, Alex and Chase come into possession of a cup from the Seeker and, following its record, are lead to the Seeker adrift in orbit near a lifeless planet. Margolia becomes the new Atlantis, bullets fly and people die. With people trying to kill Alex and Chase, they hardly have time to put their Nero Wolfish arrangement into profitable play, and find out what happened to Margolia.

Well written, this is a fun read and a worthwhile volume for your shelves. - **Pam Allan**

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(Continued on page 22)

**In Our Book** (Continued from page 21)  
**With Red Hands**  
by **Stephen Woodworth**  
Dell, 307 pp, \$6.95

*With Red Hands* is the second of the “Violet” novels with two more in the works. Natalie Lindstrom was once of the Violets, an elite group of investigators who allow the victim to testify in court through them. She fled the darkness and the control of the institute, but when a corrupt Violet has given control to a killer, she becomes a target herself. With excellent protagonists and good plotting this is an excellent entry into the genre of Occult or paranormal mysteries. Worth the read. - **Pam Allan**

**Dusk**  
by **Tim Lebbon**  
Bantam Spectra, 386 pp, \$12.00

*Dusk* is the first book of a projected series by an author who has twice been a finalist for the World Fantasy award as well as having won two of the British Fantasy award.

It is the year of the Black 2208. Magic has been dead for 300 years, a result of the Cataclysmic war. Since the warped mages have been gone, society has regressed to more primitive times. But now strange things are happening. Magic is about to be reborn.

Kosar the thief has watched his village destroyed, and he and the one other survivor flee the raging red monks who would prevent any taint of magic from returning. Rafe Baburn is the key, but to what door no-one knows. They join forces with A’meer, a Shantasi warrior, whose people have chosen to safeguard The Return of Magic. A’meer recognizes Rafe as the Awaited One. She and Kosar join with a witch and a librarian to protect the boy and take him to safety. But the dark forces are closing in on them, including the very mages who waged the Cataclysmic War.

Lebbon has written a striking new fantasy where redemption and hope come from the strangest places and even stranger forms. The characters are real, his word building is full-fleshed, and his sense of irony unmatched. Not only would I recommend you purchase it, but I smell a whiff of multiple awards. I can’t wait till 2007 when the sequel is due. - **Pam Allan**

**Traitor to the Blood**  
by **Barb and J.C. Hendee**  
Roc, 355 pp, \$23.95

*Traitor to the Blood* is a novel of the *Noble Dead*.

Leesil is a half-breed elf-human raised in the Warlands as an assassin by his parents who are hostage to the tyrant Lord Darmouth. When revolted by his work, he

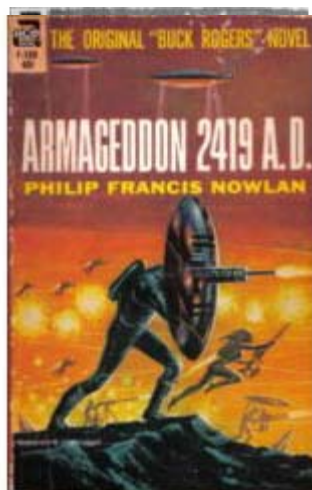
flees; his parents will be killed if they cannot escape. Driven by guilt, seeking revenge, he returns to the Warlands in the company of his lover Magiere, a fey wolf, and a scholar and linguist. All of them are hunted as well by those more powerful than they.

The Hendees have written another complex adventure with plot twists and plenty of action. While using the conventions of vampire fiction, they have turned it by virtue of setting and character into a genre of their own. I await the continuing series with bated breath. - **Pam Allan**

## Musty Tomes

**Armageddon 2419**  
by **Philip Francis Nowlan**  
Ace Books, 1978, 193 pp

You probably know of this novel by its more familiar name: Buck Rogers! This was the fiftieth anniversary publication of the pulp serial that started it all. Yes, there was Poe, Verne, and Wells before; but, how much of science fiction would exist without Buck Rogers? Originally, it was two novelettes



published in *Amazing Stories* in 1928 and 1929. The sequel was titled *The Airlords of Han*. Both novelettes were combined to make this book. As for the writing? Well, it’s godawful - just like pulp writing is supposed to be. There’s virtually no story, except a boringly detailed military campaign in which rustic Americans take back their country from decadent Asian conquerors. No romance: Buck saves Wilma’s life in chapter one, she proposes to him at the end of chapter two, they marry in chapter three. Buck is captured in chapter nine and she rescues him in chapter thirteen. Not that it isn’t worth reading... for the nostalgic thrill if nothing else. The technical inventions are wondrous, like the antigravity packs and flying air ball weapons. This edition was

“revised and updated for the modern reader” by Spider Robinson. To his credit, he only changed a few words here and there, like introducing the words “computer” and “monofilament wire.” He also added a few remarks to spice up the interaction of Buck and Wilma. The ending paragraph he replaced with an open-ended allusion to sequels. I suppose that was OK, given the newspaper and movie serials that followed the original, and the television serial that came along in Spider’s time. - **Mike Griffin**

**Podkayne of Mars**  
by **Robert Heinlein**  
Baen Books; \$10; 216 pp

There are, of course, many printings of this Heinlein semi-juvenile originally written in 1963. This is a 1993 trade paperback from Baen that published both endings to the book: the one originally published and the one Heinlein wanted. (There was also a contest that involved voting for the best ending).

I have fond memories of this novel...so it was very interesting to go back to this.

It is not what I remember, of course.

Podkayne is the typical spunky, no-nonsense Heinlein heroine who, with very few caveats, never saw a situation she couldn’t handle. And she also has a very bright and cynical younger brother Clark who never met a situation he couldn’t profit from.

Because of the time lag between Mars and Earth, I am not really sure how old the two are (I’ll admit; too lazy to do the math). I think Podkayne is about 15 and her brother about 11 or 12. Both are old enough to be dealing with their first real interest in the opposite sex.

These two are leaving the city of Marsopolis on a trip with their jolly, intelligent Uncle Tom, who, as a Martian Senator, is accorded all kinds of niceties and special services. He is (also in typical Heinlein set-up) an older man who is more than he seems. He is also, as is usual for Heinlein, the voice of reason and wisdom, helping Podkayne (and us) understand the universe.

These three are on their way to Earth. It is the two youngsters’ first trip involving space flight, and on their way to Earth they make a stop at the wild, wild, free-for-all that is Venusian society.

The background against which Podkayne and Clark move is all colored by politics: the philosophy, the morals, the organization of and the free-wheeling (as on Venus). And the crux of the matter is a Three-Planets Conference where how the planets (and various moons I believe) politically align with Earth is very critical.

But this tale really centers on the bright-eyed exploration of Podkayne (named after a Martian “saint”) and her maturing outlook on the worlds around her.

The novel is written from Podkayne’s POV, through her personal journal, with a couple of interludes from her sneaky brother, which really gives the story immediacy and flavor. It is a quick read.

We do not find out much about Martians, and Venus is a smoggy frontier planet. There are aliens out there but we don’t see them much except a critter called a “Fairy”; a sort of proto-simian from Venus who has a critical part to play in this tale.

Hindsight being what it is I wished that Podkayne, bright as she is, was brighter than her brother. She comes off very smart, but not *quite* as smart as her younger brother. Her skills, though awesome, are colored (or perhaps, blunted) by the need to nurture and cuddle. And Heinlein’s feelings on men and women are clearly delineated. Women ultimately want to marry and have children, regardless of their careers.



And men, bigger and stronger, though admittedly not always smarter than women, need to be the central power figure in a nuclear family.

Podkayne’s parents are sort of poster children for what is wrong with marriages in the Heinlein universe: a workaholic, brilliant dad and a workaholic, brilliant mom. Both of whom are missing the parenting boat by putting their careers first, even though ostensibly, they are a nice, loving couple. But of course, being the workaholics they are: Why did they complicate their lives with *five* kids? Three of whom are born during the process of this book?

However, the most unusual aspect of this novel for me is the ending. A rare one in anyone’s *oeuvre*...and I am glad that Baen decided to print the original one Heinlein wrote.

But the ending also remains my biggest problem with this book. The novel finishes abruptly, half way through the story, regardless of which ending you read/like. There are so many things we don’t really have closure on, save the fate of Podkayne. And that is also abruptly tied off.

Read this tale and see what you make of it. - **Sue Martin**

# Club Listings

**ACROSS PLUS** - So you live in North Phoenix and are interested in anime? Well there is a club out there available for you people.

Across Plus is a social club that discusses anime, video games, manga, other animation, and the Japanese culture. We meet at Bookman's on 19<sup>th</sup> Ave and Northern On Sundays at 7:00pm until 9:00pm. In general, we explore anime, manga, and other styles of animation, creative educative demonstrations, participate in interactive discussions, attend local Arizona conventions, and make cosplay.

We are willing to gain any new members out there who are interested. Dues are only \$2 per month. Our members are very friendly, respectful, and fun. We welcome any and all. For more information, contact Shane Bryner at [ninjakittyofdoom@gmail.com](mailto:ninjakittyofdoom@gmail.com)

**ADRIAN EMPIRE** A medieval and renaissance recreationist club. Sword-fighting, arts, banquets, masquerades, dances. meets every Wednesday night from 7-10pm at Encanto Park. All are welcome. Free.

**AERIAL MIRAGE JUGGLERS.** Meets Wednesday 7-10pm in Encanto Park, 15th Avenue, south of Encanto. No dues, everyone welcome. All levels skill exchange in many areas of object manipulation Dave Davis <[aerialmirage@gnerds.com](mailto:aerialmirage@gnerds.com)>, 602-955-9446; or Ron Harvey <[rbh1s@yahoo.com](mailto:rbh1s@yahoo.com)>, 480-775-4690 for more info or impromptu juggling sessions.

**ARIZONA LANBASHERS LEAGUE** A collaboration of computer gaming enthusiasts, the Arizona LANbasher's League throws quarterly LANparty events. Between parties, support is given to local groups who wish to advertise their own gatherings. We have no set genre of games and play anything from strategy games to first-person shooters to driving/flying simulations. No annual membership is required and admission to an event ranges from \$5-\$15. See our webpage for current events. Email: [azlanbashers@earthlink.net](mailto:azlanbashers@earthlink.net) Web: [www.lanparty.com/all/](http://www.lanparty.com/all/) VoiceMail: 602-306-9339

**THE AWAY TEAM:** The Away Team, is a general sci-fi appreciation group that meets once a month for discussion of various sci-fi news regarding several mediums to include: television, movies, video, books, comics, magazines, collecting, and so forth. The meetings are comprised of news, review and comment, BBS/computer news and help, meeting new members, video presentations, games, and socializing fun! Food and drinks are provided, via a \$3 munchie fee (per meeting) to compensate the host. (No other fees are involved.) The electronic home of the Away Team, is the Lightspeed Space Station BBS at (520) 325-6674.... Member ages for the group range from 13-40-something with both male and female members. Other activities include null-modem link gamefests, group theater movie viewings, convention trips and more. Have sci-fi fun in a relaxed, low-structure environment. NO RUBBER EARS ALLOWED!! For questions, you can call the BBS, or write to: LSS c/o R. Martin; 2522 N. Sparkman Blvd.; Tucson, AZ 85716

**BASFA** Local Tucson science fiction group that puts on TusCon. Contact us at PO Box 2528, Tucson AZ 85702-2528 or

[basfa@earthlink.net](mailto:basfa@earthlink.net)  
our website at <http://home.earthlink.net/~basfa/>

**CENTRAL ARIZONA SPECULATIVE FICTION SOCIETY, INC. (CASFS)** The non-profit corporation that puts on CopperCon conventions, SmurfCons, HexaCons, occasional regional cons, and publishes Con-Notations. Best described as SF/F generalists with a strong bent towards literary SF/F. Guests welcome - meets at 8pm on the last Friday of each month in January thru September and the second Friday in October, November and December at JB's Restaurant, 2560 W. Indian School in Phoenix, AZ. Write PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 or call Stephanie L. Bannon (602)973-2341 for information. Web [www.casfs.org](http://www.casfs.org)

\*\*\*\*\***C.R.O.F.T.** Celtic Reenactment of Fellowship and Trades is Phoenix based Reenactment group specializing in the western European renaissance. We research lifestyles and trades concurrent with the Celtic Peoples from 400 BC until 1746 AD. We emphasize Scots, Irish or Welsh crafts and do Celtic re-enactment. We open participation to anyone with an interest in period crafting and entertainment. Demonstrations occur at the Highland Games, Scarborough Fair, and the Arizona Renaissance Festival. Web page <http://www.crofters.org> We meet in Tempe at the Pyle Adult Center SW corner of Rural and Southern on the 2nd Saturday of every month, phone number (480)350-5211. The Board meeting will be at 2:00 pm with the General meeting starting at 2:30 pm.

**THE DARK ONES** (Dark-wunz) n. 1) An organization formed for the expression and exploration of various cultural themes including, but not limited to, the Dark Ages and the Renaissance through forms of art including, but not limited to, painting, drawing, writing, photography, spoken word, and acts of characterization. 2) a member of this organization. 3) Information available at [www.darkones.org](http://www.darkones.org)

**THE EMPIRE OF CHIVALRY AND STEEL, INC.** The Empire of Chivalry and Steel specializes in the general recreation of the culture of the Middle Ages including all of the Art Forms, Events (Feasts, Tournaments, Ceremonies and Wars) and Combat Arts covering the years of 800AD up to 1650AD and any location within Europe or its explored territories. For more information contact Leonard Byrd (Tucson) (520)742-2432 Web: [www.galandor.org](http://www.galandor.org)

**THE JEDI KNIGHTS** (Founded 1977) Meetings are the 3rd Sunday of each month. For more information call Carol Alves, Publicity, (760)244-9593 or write Jedi Knights, c/o Carol Alves 8038 "I" Street, Hesperia CA, 92345-7066.

**LEPRECON, INC.** One of the two Phoenix area corporations that put on yearly conventions. Best described as SF/F generalists with a main thrust into SF/F art. Guests are welcome. The meetings are quarterly on the second Saturday of February, May, August & November unless otherwise notified. August is the annual meeting where board positions are deter-mined. For more information, write PO Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285; call Mike Willmoth, 480-945-6890, Email [mwillmoth@earthlink.net](mailto:mwillmoth@earthlink.net) Webpage: [www.leprecon.org](http://www.leprecon.org)

**MIB** The Men in Black is the official global organization of field operatives for Steve Jackson Games. We attend local conventions to demonstrate and promote products of Steve

Jackson Games. We also schedule demos in local gaming stores as well as community service events. If you have a gaming store, convention, or community service that you would like to have official Steve Jackson Games representation at, please contact the MIB Arizona Cell Leader at [MIB.6361@cox.net](mailto:MIB.6361@cox.net). We are also recruiting new MIBs in some areas of Arizona. If you're interested, contact us. You can find additional information about the Arizona MIB at our website <http://members.cox.net/mib.6361/>

**ORANGE COUNTY SCIENCE FICTION CLUB** meets last Wednesday of every month (except Dec.) in Fullerton. The meetings are built around guest speakers. We've had authors such as Octavia Butler and Greg Benford. Non-members are welcome. For details of current events and location see our website [www.ocsf.org](http://www.ocsf.org) or email [info@ocsf.org](mailto:info@ocsf.org)

**PAReX** is a non-profit, just for fun organization dedicated to the proliferation of robotics as a hobby. Monthly meetings will be held and will be announced under the Meeting Information page, <http://www.parex.org/meetinfo.htm>. All interest-ed persons are invited to participate. We are currently in the process of getting organized and becoming an official organization with tax status. Web page: <http://www.parex.org/> E-mail Contact: John Kittelsrud, [johnkit@teamdroid.com](mailto:johnkit@teamdroid.com)

**THE PHOENIX FANTASY FILM SOCIETY** A Phoenix based club interest-ed in the entire realm of SF, Fantasy and Horror film. PFFS has been in existence for 30 years, meeting every 6 weeks in member's homes. Dues are \$10 per year. Membership includes newsletters, an annual film awards and various outings. For information, contact PFFS, P.O. Box 34023, Phoenix, AZ 85067 or call David Storck at (602) 274\_7404, e-mail: [Menzeez@aol.com](mailto:Menzeez@aol.com).

**RAGE ACROSS THE SOUTHWEST** A Live Action Theatre Troupe based out of the ASU campus in Tempe, AZ. It is dedicated to the game Werewolf: The Apocalypse by White Wolf publishing. Contact Mike McLaughlin at (602)461-5842 or write 1730 W Emelita Place #2025, Mesa AZ 85202-3144 or [warlok@aztec.asu.edu](mailto:warlok@aztec.asu.edu)

**RAW GAMES (Role-players & Wargamers, Inc.)** Role-players & Wargamers, Inc. is the Valley's oldest role-playing and wargaming club. Currently meeting at 8159 W. Weldon in Phoenix every Sunday from 3pm-9pm (except during conventions and other special events). Open to new members - call (602) 849-9515. [www.rawgames.org](http://www.rawgames.org)

**THE SOCIETY FOR CREATIVE ANACHRONISM** The kingdom of Atenveldt doth lie in the state of Arizona. Within the fair kingdom can be found six Baronies: Atenveldt, Mons Tonitrus, Twin Moons, SunDragon, Tir Ysgithr and Ered Sul. For more information on any of these or for general information on thy past tomorrows thou mayest contact Mistress Myrddina o Dolwyddelan (Terry Schwartz) PO Box 584, Sonoita AZ 85637 (520)455-5835 Email: [myrddina1@aol.com](mailto:myrddina1@aol.com) Web [www.atenveldt.com](http://www.atenveldt.com)

**SOUTHWEST COSTUMER'S GUILD** The Southwest Costumers Guild is a loose organization of persons interested in all facets of historical, cultural, science fiction, fantasy, and humor costume. Members are often seen on stage and behind the scenes at local and regional Science Fiction Convention masquer-

ades. They meet on the last Sunday of each month at various members' homes in the greater Phoenix area. For details. Southwest Costumers Guild, PO Box 39504, Phoenix, AZ 85609 or Randall Whitlock at [costumers@casfs.org](mailto:costumers@casfs.org) or [www.southwestcostumersguild.org](http://www.southwestcostumersguild.org)

**SPACE ACCESS SOCIETY** Space Access Society's sole purpose is to promote radically cheaper access to space, ASAP. We think it's possible within ten years, with a little luck and a lot of hard work. Join us and help us make it happen! SAS membership is \$30 for one year, which gets you emailed Space Access Updates the instant they pass final edit, plus discounts on our annual conference on the technology, politics, and business of radically cheaper space transportation, featuring leading players in the field. Email us at: [Space.Access@Space-Access.org](mailto:Space.Access@Space-Access.org) Web page: [www.space-access.org/](http://www.space-access.org/)

**SUPERSTITION SPACEMODELING SOCIETY** is Arizona's club for builders of model and high-power rockets and those who love to see them fly. Launches are held on the second Saturday morning of each month in Rainbow Valley. SSS hosts the annual G. Harry Stine Memorial Rocket Launch every October. Visit [www.sssrocketry.org](http://www.sssrocketry.org) for membership information, directions to the launches and meetings, and to read the monthly newsletter, "Newton's Minutes."

**TARDIS** is a Phoenix-based General SF/Fantasy Fan Club, specializing in International media SF/Fantasy since 1983. **TARDIS** meets every two weeks at different locations around the valley. Activities include watching videos, discussions, parties, games, and occasional outings with more to come now that Doctor Who is returning from hiatus. Many members maintain an active presence at conventions. You can contact us at 2243 W Wagon Wheel Dr, Phoenix, AZ 85021, Voice Mail at (602) 864-0901, E-mail [TARDIS-Info@cox.net](mailto:TARDIS-Info@cox.net) or visit us at <http://members.cox.net/tardisaz/tardis.html>

**TEKWAR FAN CLUB** Sanctioned by the series' production companies and the USA Network! It is THE information conduit between the fans and the series! Fan club membership will bring you the following 1) subscription to the info filled Tek Informer newsletter; 2) official TekWar Fan Club membership card and kit. Membership is by regular mail only and the newsletter and materials will not be reproduced electronically. To join the action and initiate your annual membership, make check or money order out for \$12.50 to: Official TekWar Fan Club (Membership section), 2522 N Sparkman Blvd., Tucson AZ 85716-2417

**T.H.E.M.** is ASU's science fiction and fantasy club. Weekly meetings are held on the Arizona State University campus, with dates and places to be announced after the semester starts. For more information, Email [them@themonline.org](mailto:them@themonline.org) Web [www.themonline.org](http://www.themonline.org)

**TUCSON FAN ALLIANCE** E-Mail Address is [Bkoehler@Juno.com](mailto:Bkoehler@Juno.com) or [DMitchell@Juno.com](mailto:DMitchell@Juno.com)

**UNITED FEDERATION OF PHOENIX** A Phoenix area Star Trek and general SciFi fan club. We are a social club that meets every two weeks at various locations around the Phoenix area. The UFP has been meeting for over 30 years of continuous activity. Dues are \$15/per year prorated when you join; no restrictions. Membership includes member-

(Continued on page 24)

## Club Listings (Continued from page 23)

ship roster and monthly newsletter. Come to any two meetings at no obligation. For information, write the UFP at PO Box 37224, Phoenix, AZ 85069, or call Jim Strait at (602) 242-9203. Web page: <http://www.U-F-P.org> or Email to [Info@U-F-P.org](mailto:Info@U-F-P.org)

**USS STORMBRINGER** The Stormbringer is a correspondence Star Trek fan club chapter of Starfleet, Intl. based out of Tucson AZ. The chapter was commissioned as the USS Stormbringer NCC-74213, attached to Division 31, Starfleet Covert Operations, on 10/31/98. As of 11/29/98 there were 32 members. There are no dues other than the \$15 for joining Star-fleet Intl.. Members are scattered world wide but the primary clusters are in Tucson, AZ and Plano, TX. They don't meet on a regular basis since they are a correspondence chapter. Their web site is: <http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Vault/9505/> and their contact/CO is Capt. Dave Pitts, [thepitts52@hotmail.com](mailto:thepitts52@hotmail.com)

**Z-PHILES** are the ariZona x-PHILES. We maintain a mailing list for news and get-togethers of fans of the X-Files living in Arizona. We get together in both the Phoenix and Tucson areas. To subscribe, send an empty message to [z-philes-subscribe@egroups.com](mailto:z-philes-subscribe@egroups.com)

**WESTERN SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION (WesternSFA)** A non-profit corporation that sponsors the ConRunners seminars and sponsored the 2004 Westercon. Dedicated primarily to educational activities relating to literature, music, and visual and performing arts, especially in the genres of science fiction, fantasy, costuming, gaming and science. Applicants for membership in WesternSFA must be sponsored by a current active WesternSFA member. Dues are \$10 yearly plus a \$5 non-refundable application fee. General Meetings are held on the first Friday of February, May, August and November, at the Bookmans located at 19th ave. and Northern in Phoenix. Guests are welcome. For more info contact Craig Dyer at WesternSFA, PO Box 87457, Phoenix AZ 85082, (602) 973-2341, Email: [craig@westernsfa.org](mailto:craig@westernsfa.org) Webpage: [www.westernsfa.org](http://www.westernsfa.org)



**What is CASFS?**  
What is really behind putting on a convention? What are the funds raised by a convention used for? Why not attend a meeting and find out? We're the sponsor of ConNotations, CopperCons, HexaCons, SmerfCons and other conventions. We are a charitable, non-profit organization that exists to further science fiction, fantasy and science fields in Arizona. CASFS currently meets at the JB's Restaurant at 2560 W Indian School Rd in Phoenix (NW corner of I-17 and Indian School). The meetings begin at 8PM and are held on the last Friday of the month Jan. through Sept. and on the second Friday of the month Oct through Dec. Everyone is invited to attend two meetings as a guest (non-member). Membership rates are \$12/year plus an initial \$3 application fee and rates are prorated for the amount of the year remaining. For more info: Webpage: [www.casfs.org](http://www.casfs.org) Email: [info@casfs.org](mailto:info@casfs.org)

## Convention Listings

**AniZona 2** (Phoenix AZ) **April 14-16, 2006** Embassy Suites Phoenix North, Phoenix, AZ Arizona's Own Anime Convention Guests TBA Memberships \$40 at the door Membership limited to 1200. Hotel rates \$99 S/D, \$109 T \$119 Q (plus tax) (602) 375-1777 [www.anizona.org](http://www.anizona.org), Email [chair@anizona.org](mailto:chair@anizona.org)

**Space Access '06** (Phoenix AZ) **April 20 - April 22, 2006** Thursday afternoon through Saturday night as soon as we have a firm hotel contract. Latest word as of 1/04/06: We're a few days away from finalizing the contract and announcing our conference hotel for Space Access '06, just a few miles free hotel-shuttle ride from Phoenix Airport. Space Access '06 Conference memberships are now available at the pre-conference rate of \$100 (It'll be \$120 at the door.) Mail checks to: Space Access Society, 5515 N 7th St #5-348, Phoenix AZ 85014. Be sure to include your name, address, affiliation info for your badge (if desired), and an email address (for Updates) with your Space Access '06 Conference membership. <http://www.space-access.org/>

### Generic Convention Registration Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Badge Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ memberships for \_\_\_\_\_ convention.

(See individual convention listing for mailing address)

More info on  Masquerade  Art Show  Volunteer  Other

**Nebula Award Weekend** (Tempe AZ) **May 5-7, 2006** Tempe Mission Palms Toastmaster: Connie Willis More Guests To Be Announced Membership Full Weekend: \$100 thru 12/31/05, \$110 thru 3/31/06, Panels & Parties \$25 thru 12/31/05, \$35 thru 3/31/06 Hotel Rates \$137 S/D plus tax Tempe Mission Palms, 60 E 5th St, Tempe, AZ 85281 (800) 547-8705 Info: [www.sfwawards.org/awards/2006](http://www.sfwawards.org/awards/2006) Email: [nebulas2006@gmail.com](mailto:nebulas2006@gmail.com)

**LepreCon 32** (Phoenix AZ) **May 5-7, 2006** Embassy Suites Phoenix North, Phoenix, AZ Guests: Artist Guest: Alan M. Clark, Author Guest: John Vornholt, Media Guest: Bill Blair. Memberships \$30 thru 10/31/2005; \$35 thru 1/31/2006. Hotel \$95 S/D, \$105 T (plus tax) Reservations: (602)375-1777 Info LepreCon 32, PO Box 26665, Tempe AZ 85285 Phone (480)945-6890 [lep32@leprecon.org](mailto:lep32@leprecon.org) or [www.leprecon.org/lep32](http://www.leprecon.org/lep32)

**Gilacon 2006** (Phoenix AZ) **May 12-14, 2006** Holiday Inn Phoenix - Midtown 4321 N. Central Ave., Phoenix AZ (602)200-8888 We will be featuring several Nyronid regional scenarios, Living Arcanis, and D&D Minis More info: <http://www.warhorn.net/gilacon/> [Editor's note - we apologize to GilaCon for having the incorrect dates in the last issue]

**Phoenix Con Games** (Mesa AZ) **July 27-20, 2006** at the Hilton Phoenix East. Current Membership Rate: \$25.00 We'll have special events on Thursday night, July 27<sup>st</sup>, for pre-registered members and a prize drawing from among those who both pre-register with the convention and the hotel. Register your membership online today at <http://www.conevents.com/page/p06/main.asp>

**CopperCon 26** (Tempe AZ) **Sept 1-4, 2006** Tempe Mission Palms Guests Authors Marc Zicree; Diane Duane, Peter Moorwood Memberships \$30 thru 3/31/06 Hotel Rates \$91 S/D plus tax Tempe Mission Palms, 60 E 5th St, Tempe, AZ 85281 (800) 547-8705 CopperCon 26, PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082, Phone(480) 949-0415 Email: [cu26@coppercon.org](mailto:cu26@coppercon.org) Web [www.coppercon.org](http://www.coppercon.org)

**Phoenix Cactus Comicon** (Mesa AZ) **September 23-24, 2006.** Saturday and Sunday at the Mesa Convention Center for two days of a comic book cornucopia including dealers, panels, workshops, guests, and contests. Guests Terry Austin, Josh Blaylock, Bret Blevins, Amanda Conner, Ron Garney, Justin Gray, Jimmy Palmiotti, and Devils Due Publishing. Early-bird registration is \$15 for a 2-day pass. Register online today! Kids 10 and under get in for free with paid adult admission. More info at <http://www.phoenixcomicon.com/>

[www.phoenixcomicon.com/](http://www.phoenixcomicon.com/)

**HexaCon 16** (Phoenix AZ) **October 13-15, 2006** Embassy Suites Phoenix North, 2577 W Greenway Rd, Phoenix, AZ Gaming starts on Friday and runs 24 hours until Sunday 4PM. Planned events include RPGA, LARP, LAN Party, CCG, Battletech and much more. Also Anime and a full consuite. \*THURSDAY EVENTS for pre-registered members only include Movie Previews and Giveaways (tentative) Memb: \$20 thru 9/30/06 Hotel: Embassy Suites Phoenix North, 2577 W Greenway - Rooms \$109 S/D. All rooms include breakfast and happy hour. Info: [www.hexacon.org](http://www.hexacon.org)



## Mailing/Subscription Information

ConNotations is sent free of charge to those who have attended a CASFS sponsored convention in the past calendar year (currently 2005). Attendees of CopperCon 25 or HexaCon 15 will receive ConNotations Volume 16 Issues 1 thru 6.

ConNotations updates it's mailing list each December.

Individual subscriptions are available for \$20 for 6 issues beginning January 1, 2006.

Some non-CASFS groups give their membership lists to CASFS and purchase a bulk corporate subscription so their attendees may also receive ConNotations

Currently these groups are: