

ConNotations

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August/September
2006

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

A Conversation with Eric Flint

By Catherine Book

I've fallen in love with Eric Flint. Well, his writing, actually. He reinforces my belief that SF/F literature doesn't spawn prima donnas. In all the interviews I've done, I've never met a writer who behaved

like he or she was anything special. They *are*, of course, but they don't *act* like it. And Eric is no exception to this rule; a more



David Drake as the best plotter in the business. *(There didn't seem to be enough time to talk about his collaborations*

down-to-earth guy I've never met. I asked Eric to give me a little of his time during the 2006 Nebula Awards weekend and he generously complied.

Besides his writing, Eric also interests me because of the number of people with whom he collaborates. Eric joked that he works with too many Daves: David Drake, David Weber and Dave Freer. He thinks

two of them should change their names. His relationship with David Drake is of a very particular nature. Dave does all the plotting, and Eric says its very relaxing to just supply all the words. He praises

with the other Daves; I'll have to try to interview him again someday.)

David Drake is the one who co-wrote the Belisarius series. Is it done now? Yes, this story cycle is done; but the back door is still unlocked, he confided. And if they did go back to it, it would not be anytime soon and it would probably be a new

(Continued on page 8)

Featured Inside

Regular Features

SF Tube Talk

All the latest news about Scienc Fiction TV shows
by Lee Whiteside

24 Frames

All the latest Movie News
by Lee Whiteside

Gamers Corner

New and Reviews from
the gaming world

MangaZone

Reviews of Manga and Comics

Videophile

Reviews of genre releases
on DVD

Screening Room

Reviews of current theatrical releases

In Our Book

Reviews of New SF/F Books

Musty Tomes

Reviews of Classic Genre books

Special Features

A Conversation with Eric Flint

by Catherine Book

Podcasts Submitted for your Perusal

by Shane Shellenbarger

An American in England Part 12

by Jeffrey Lu

A Poker Novice to a Friend &

Poker Face ST:TNG

by Jeffrey Lu

Plus

CASFS Business Report

FYI

News and tidbits of interest to fans

Club Listings

Convention List & Generic Registration Form

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07/22/2006

In This Issue

News & Reviews

CASFS Business Report 2
SF Tube Talk 3
24 Frames 3
Screening Room 6
FYI 11
Gamers Corner 11
Videophile 13
In Our Book (Book Reviews) 15
MangaZone 20
Musty Tomes 21

Special Features

A Conversation with Eric Flint.
by Catherine Book 1
Podcasts Submitted for your Perusal
by Shane Shellenbarger 10
An American in England
by Jeffrey Lu 12
A Poker Novice to a Friend
by Jeffrey Lu 13
Poker Face ST:TNG
by Jeffrey Lu 13

Convention & Fandom

Club Listings 22
Convention Listings 23
Convention Registration Form 23

CASFS Business Report

May 2006

* The Quartermaster brought it to our attention that of the 24 keys for the 12 identically-keyed locks we use to double-secure the Dealers Room (and Art Show) at night at conventions held at the Embassy Suites, CASFS has in its possession exactly one. The other 23 keys are not accounted for. Obviously, we can no longer use those locks. We discussed what to do about this. Eventually, the issue was referred to the Board.
* We held nominations for a number of positions.

June 2006

* Our web hosting provider announced that they weren't going to be offering virtual hosts anymore, so we have moved to jaguarpc.com for hosting, where we're getting more space on faster systems with better uptime for less money.
* Redirection.net, which does domain redirection for two CASFS-owned domains, is running a sale. We voted to take advantage of the sale.
* We held elections:
- President -- Mark Boniece
- Vice President -- Gary Swaty (by acclamation)
- Secretary -- Ivan Erickson (by acclamation)
- Treasurer -- Stephanie Bannon (by acclamation)

Who Is Who This Issue

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(Continued on page 3)

SF Tube Talk

TV News & Previews

By Lee Whiteside

We're in the midst of the summer cable season and there's lots of genre shows left to watch in August with a few carrying into September. We've also got a few new genre shows on the broadcast networks as well as the debut of "The CW" network.

First off, SciFi's summer season is well under way with new shows on three nights a week through the end of August. On the drama side, we've got the two *Stargates* as well as the new series *Eureka* for new first run shows. SciFi is also running *Dead Like Me* (in the first broadcast run outside of the show's initial airings on Showtime) on Tuesday nights and *Night Stalker* (ABC's cancelled revival of *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*) on Friday nights. There's also the reality series *Who Wants to be a Superhero?* on Thursday nights as well as the first U.S. airing of British horror spoof *Garth Marenghi's Darkplace*. To top it all off, of course, we've got some new Saturday night movies.

Stargate SG-1 will see the team continuing their search for the Ancient weapon that will help them against the Ori. In *Insider*, Baal turns up informing SG-1 that his clones (seen in last season's *Ex Dues Machina*) are turning against him and he offers SG-1 information in finding the weapon in exchange for help in tracking down his clones. Actor **Cliff Simon** returns as Baal and all 20 of his clones. In *Uninvited*, Teal'c investigates attacks by a mysterious parasite on several worlds that have been visited by SG-1 and must work with the rest of the team to discover the truth behind the threat. August 18th will see the landmark 200th hour of *Stargate SG-1* and will also feature a *SciFi Inside* special to celebrate the achievement. Martin Lloyd returns to SG-1 when his failed TV series (*Wormhole Extreme*) is now being turned into a motion picture. **Richard Dean Anderson** returns as General Jack O'Neill. There will be several vignettes portrayed as each member of SG-1 makes their suggestion for the plot of the movie acting in their capacity as Air Force advisors on the

CASFS Business Report

(Continued from page 2)

- Board -- Ivan Erickson, Mark Boniece, Bill Whitmore
- HexaCon 18 Chair -- no candidates, position defaults to the Chair of the Board of Directors until a Chair can be elected.
- HexaCon 18 Banker -- Stephanie Bannon (by acclamation)
- CopperCon 28 Chair -- Gary Swaty (by acclamation)
- CopperCon 28 Banker -- Stephanie Bannon (by acclamation)

movie which happens to coincide with the 200th trip through the event horizon. It looks to be a lot of fun, much like their 100th episode. In *Counterstrike*, SG-1 gets caught in the middle of a fight between the Jaffa and the Ori when the Jaffa unleashes a genocidal weapon against the Ori followers. This episode sees the debut of **Morena Baccarin** (*Firefly*) as Adria, in a recurring role as the fully grown half-Ori daughter of Vala, who is now the leader of the Ori invasion fleet in our galaxy. *Momento Mori* has Vala stricken with amnesia and on the run. She takes a job as a waitress as she tries to piece together who she is and what happened to her while the SG-1 team try to find out what happened to her. *Company of Thieves* sees Cameron Mitchell go undercover inside the deadly Lucian Alliance to prevent his teammates from becoming casualties of an Alliance civil war. Rounding out the first half of the season is *The Quest Part 1* sees SG-1 going up against Baal in the quest for the Sangraal (aka The Holy Grail), Merlin's anti-Ori weapon. They must decipher ancient clues, overcome the curse, and even join forces with their enemy. Being a mid-season cliffhanger, expect things to be left in a dicey situation until January.

Out in the Pegasus Galaxy, the Atlantis team will continue dealing with The Wraith as well as other difficulties. August kicks off with *Irresistible*, in which Richard Kind plays Lucius Lavin, a very large man who has special pheromones that cause everyone to adore him, men and women alike. The episode will be played very much for comedy, even being filmed in the style of a sitcom. Executive producer **Brad Wright** indicated in an interview with *Gateworld* that he may be a recurring character and that "the character is so fun. How do I put it? He's our Harcourt Fenton Mudd of Atlantis." After the comedic story, things get back to seriousness in *Progeny* that introduces a new threat to the Atlantis team, The Asurans, a civilization that appears to be descendants of the Ancients, but in fact are human looking Replicators that want to destroy Atlantis. In *The Real World*, Dr. Weir wakes up in a Washington D.C. mental institution and is told her hallucinations about Stargates and Atlantis are not real, even being visited by General Jack O'Neill. In reality, she is in a comatose state fighting against Replicator nanites that are trying to take over her mind and body. In *Common Ground*, Sheppard is captured by a Genii commander and is imprisoned with a Wraith. *McKay and Mrs. Miller* sees Rodney McKay reunited with his estranged sister back on Earth, who has given up a brilliant career as a scientist to raise a family. McKay's sister will be played by actress **Kate Hewlett**, **David** (McKay) **Hewlett's** real-life sister. Also look for a

(Continued on page 4)

24 Frames

Movie News

By Lee Whiteside

Things are moving along on the **Neil Gaiman** related movie front. Filming is in progress on a live action adaptation of *Stardust* in England. **Charlie Cox** is Tristian, a young man who makes a promise to his love, Victoria (played by **Sienna Miller**) that he will retrieve a fallen star for her. The star falls on the side of the fantasy world on the other side of the Wall for which his town is named. He finds the star has a name, Yvaine (played by **Claire Danes**), and other people are after it as well for various purposes. The story is his journey to find the star and bring it back to his love and his experiences along the way. **Robert De Niro** is Captain Shakespeare, **Michelle Pfeiffer** is the evil witch Lamia, and **Jason Flemyng** is Primus. Also appearing in smaller roles are other British actors of note such as **Sarah Alexander** (*Coupling*), **Noel Fielding** (*The Mighty Boosh*), **Rupert Everett**, **Ricky Gervais**, and **Peter O'Toole** as the King of Stormhold. **Matthew Vaughn** is directing from his script adapting the **Gaiman** story. **Gaiman** has been very much involved with the movie, visiting the set several times and his daughter is working

on it full time.

In the stop motion animated arena is *Coraline*, which is well into production. **Henry Selick** (*Nightmare Before Christmas*, *James and the Giant Peach*) is directing from his adaptation of the **Neil Gaiman** book. **Dakota Fanning** (*Taken*, *War of the Worlds*) is voicing Coraline, the girl who finds an alternate world behind a mysterious door. **Teri Hatcher** is voicing her mothers (one on each side of the door) and British comedy duo **Dawn French** and **Jennifer Saunders** will be voicing Coraline's neighbors Miss Spink and Miss Forcible. To make the whole thing even cooler, music is being done by **They Might Be Giants**. Also moving along with main photography completed is the **Robert Zemeckis** *Beowulf* movie that was co-scripted by **Gaiman** with **Roger Avary**. If all goes as planned, 2007 will see no less than three movies based on **Gaiman** stories or scripts will hit the screen.

Upcoming Releases for August and September

The Descent (Aug 4th) A group of caver girls meet one year after a tragic accident in a remote area of the Appalachians. When their exit is blocked by a cave-in, they have to go deeper into an unexplored area of the cave. They soon discover they are not alone and are now prey for a race of humanoid creatures that have adapted

(Continued on page 6)

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SF Tube Talk

(Continued from page 3)

cameo by **Amanda Tapping** as Samantha Carter. *Phantoms* has the team under fire and trapped on a world where the Stargate has been sabotaged. On top of all that, everyone starts acting strange. For the mid-season cliffhanger, *The Return Part One* sees General O'Neill (**Richard Dean Anderson**) and Richard Woolsey (**Robert Picardo**) visiting Atlantis when The Asurans invade Atlantis and no one is safe and we'll have to wait until January to find out what happens.

SciFi's latest drama, *Eureka*, debuted in mid-July. It stars **Colin Ferguson** as Jack Carter, who has taken on the job of Sheriff of the town of Eureka which is the home to a secret government research facility, Global Dynamics. Carter must deal with the head of GD, Nathan Stark (**Ed Quinn**), who also happens to be the ex-husband of Allison Blake (**Salli Richardson-Whitfield**) that Carter has taken a liking to. This romantic conflict will play out in the ongoing storylines. Episodes coming up in August are *Before I Forget*, in which Carter works with Jason Anderson (**Andrew Airlie**), a scientist who was an old army buddy of GD's mechanical Wiz Henry Deacon (**Joe Morton**) and who's wife, Kim (**Tamlyn Tomita**) has a history with Henry. When Carter accidentally shoots Deacon but can't remember what happened, they began to suspect Anderson is doing something strange with their memories. In *Alienated*, Deacon's assistant Spencer (**Shayn Solberg**) disappears after a raucous party and is found the next morning huddled inside a crop circle, claiming he had been abducted by aliens. Meanwhile, a visiting congressman (**Garwin Sanford**) is the target of a kidnaping plot. Carter must find out the truth about the "abduction" and also try to prevent the congressman from getting kidnaped. In *Invincible*, researcher Nathan Stark (**Saul Rubinek**) taps into the power of a mysterious artifact as a result of an explosion, giving him the ability to heal quickly and to read minds.

SciFi's latest reality entry is *Who Wants to be a Superhero?* It debuted on July 27th with a show featuring the auditions for the heroes that will compete in the series. Starting out with 11 potential heroes, **Stan Lee** will guide them as the contestants take on the personas of their creations and compete in challenges designed to bring out their true nature. They will be tested for courage, integrity, self-sacrifice, compassion, and resourcefulness to determine which of them is the best superhero. Heroes include Cell Phone Girl, Fat Momma, Creature, The Iron Enforcer, Lemuria, Monkey Woman, and Feedback. Looks to be part silly, but also serious in what really defines a superhero.

SciFi is also running the British horror spoof *Garth Marenghi's Darkplace* on Thursday nights in August. Garth

Marenghi is a creation of **Matthew Holness** (who also plays Garth) and **Richard Ayoade**. It started as a stage show featuring the self-important and egotistical Marenghi, a leading British horrormeister (or so he thinks). The premise of the TV series is that Marenghi created the TV show back in the 1980's but it was never aired because it was too crazy to be screened. It has now been resurrected and is being presented by Garth along with interview cut-ins with the actors from the show. It spoofs horror shows as well as 80's action shows, soap operas and hospital dramas. After introducing the show in the first episode on July 27th, the remaining five episodes on SciFi include *Hell Hath Fury* where inanimate objects come to life, endangering the doctors, *Skipper The Eye Child* where the birth of a giant eyeball brings out the paternal instincts in everyone, before it turns deadly, *The Apes of Wrath*, where the hospital staff starts turning into apes, *Scotch Mist* where an army of undead "Scotchmen" arrive to wreak havoc, and *The Creeping Moss From The Shores Of Shuggoth* which features a cosmic broccoli outbreak that threatens to turn everyone into vegetables. There was only one series made (which may be enough) although Garth Marenghi may live on with a big screen adaptation.

SciFi has replaced the long-running Monday night block of *Stargate SG-1* with a four hour block of *Dark Angel*. Ratings for the first night of this block were good and SciFi looks to have something to boost its ratings overall with **Jessica Alba's** futuristic series from **James Cameron**. Tuesday nights now has repeats of former Showtime series *Dead Like Me*, which may have some language trimmed or altered for the SciFi airings, but is still a series worth catching if you didn't have Showtime or haven't looked at it on DVD. **Ellen Muth** stars as Georgia "George" Lass, a slacker teen who upon taking on her first job is killed by a toilet crashing to earth from the Mir space station. She realizes she's not yet dead and is brought in with a team of "Reapers", led by **Mandy Patinkin's** Rube. They help the victims of a violent death cross over before they are traumatized. It is very much a dark comedy series, with the storyline dealing with George's adapting to this new life, while not completely leaving her family behind. It was created by **Bryan Fuller**, who left the show midway through the first season to create *Wonderfalls*. I think the series suffered from the departure of its creator and it never quite lived up to its potential, but it is still worth checking out. Friday nights will see the airing of the ABC version of *Night Stalker*, starring **Stuart Townshend** that was cancelled after six airings. SciFi will air all ten episodes of the series, the previously unaired episodes should start airing in mid-September (assuming you didn't already catch them

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via iTunes or the DVD release). Taking the show on its own and not comparing it to the original Kolchak series, it stands up fairly well as a dark horror series.

New movies coming up on SciFi Saturday nights include *Savage Planet* (Aug 12) where a team of scientists visit an unknown planet in hopes of finding a new, safe, world. Instead they find a mutated species that turns the expedition deadly. Stars include **Sean Patrick Flannery** and **Reagan Pasternak**. On August 26th is another movie tentatively titled *Dragon Sword* (likely produced with another name that didn't have Dragon as part of it). It will be airing with a batch of their other Dragon movies including the **Dark Kingdom: The Dragon King** miniseries.

In other SciFi Channel related news, the run of the first season of *Doctor Who* finished up with modest ratings, which SciFi touted as an improvement over a year ago (which is very significant since SciFi overall has been down 15 to 20% since last year). SciFi is currently negotiating with the BBC to continue showing *Doctor Who*, but there is no word yet when it may come back. The debut of the *Extreme Championship Wrestling* gave SciFi a boost in the ratings, especially in the younger demographics. We will see if that helps to bring up the ratings on any of their other series as the summer season develops.

Battlestar Galactica's new season will likely begin on October 6th, giving them enough time to run ten weeks of episodes before the Christmas holidays (skipping Thanksgiving for a movie marathon). Look for the webisode series, titled "*Battlestar Galactica: The Resistance*" to debut online shortly before the season picks up. It will reportedly run for ten episodes and will fill in some of the gaps between the end of season two and the start of season three. The season opener picks up with the humans still under Cylon occupation with a resistance movement fighting back, some humans collaborating, and some playing both side. **Lucy Lawless's** Cylon character D'Anna Biers will be a regular over the first ten episodes of the season and she figures prominently in the season opener. Other general notes about the season are that the occupation will be resolved within the first six episodes but that there will be casualties and that there will be a continuing storyline dealing with the Cylons taking place on their homeworld.

SciFi has announced that **Peter Krause** (*Six Feet Under*) will star in *Lost Room* (formerly *Motel Man*) along with **Elle Fanning** as his daughter. SciFi now describes the series as "*The Fugitive* meets *The Twilight Zone* in this contemporary sci-fi thriller. When homicide detective Joe Miller (**Krause**) stumbles

(Continued on page 5)
Volume 16 Issue 4

SF Tube Talk (Continued from page 4)

upon a seemingly innocuous motel room key, he unlocks the door to a world of unimaginable power and becomes the target of those who will stop at nothing to claim it. The motel room is a treasure trove of seemingly mundane objects, each of which actually possesses a unique power. And as Joe soon discovers, the motel room key is the most potent and coveted object of all. Shadowy organizations dedicated to collecting these charmed objects relentlessly pursue him, hoping to claim the key. When his daughter (**Fanning**) vanishes inside the motel room, he also becomes the focus of a heated police investigation. Hunted and alone, Joe becomes the central player in a game to which he doesn't know the rules. The series is planned to air as an eight hour special event in December. Also announced by SciFi is that **Painkiller Jane** has been picked up for a full season of 22 episodes that will debut on SciFi in January and also air in syndication starting in Fall 2007. The press release indicated that casting details were not finalized, so it isn't even sure that **Emmanuelle Vaugier** will return as Jane in the weekly series since she now has a regular role on the sitcom "**Two and a Half Men**". SciFi is also developing a late night talk show with **George Noory**, host of radio talk show **Coast to Coast AM**.

Over on USA, **The 4400** and **The Dead Zone** debuted well when they returned in June. **The 4400** will feature more continuing storylines with the regulars as well as recent additions Kevin Burkoff (**Jeffrey Combs**) and Tes (**Summer Glau**) who will continue to be on the run following Burkoff's experiments on himself. **Billy Campbell** will return as Jason Collier at the end of the season. He had been apparently assassinated at the end of last season and we may find out what really happened. Over on **The Dead Zone**, The fifth season (which is really the second half of a fourth season order) will finish up at the end of August. USA Network has indicated this may be the end of the series, but star **Anthony Michael Hall** has indicated that if the ratings do hold up, USA may order more episodes. The final four episodes include **Vortex** where Johnny infiltrates a cult's compound to save a child but finds it is loaded with explosives and he must work to prevent a confrontation between the cult leader and the FBI that will end with the entire place blowing up. In **Revelations**, Johnny learns of secrets in Purdy's past when a woman shows up claiming to be his long lost daughter. When Johnny has visions of Purdy being harmed by her, he works to prevent it from happening. **Into the Heart of Darkness** sees the return of The Collector who is seeking revenge on Johnny, which may include a newly pregnant Sara. We get back to the Greg Stillson/Armageddon storyline in **The**

Hunting Party where Johnny tries to stop the assassination of the Vice President that is part of Janus' plan to pave the way for Greg Stillson to ascend to the White House.

Spike TV jumped into the original drama arena with **Blade: The Series**, based on the Marvel comic book and movie trilogy. The two hour debut on June 28th set ratings records for the network with a 2.0 household rating with 2.5 million viewers. **Kirk "Sticky" Jones** stars as Blade, the immortal half-man, half-vampire who uses his superhuman powers and skills to fearlessly battle the demonic creatures of the night. **Jill Wagner** also stars as double-agent Krista Starr, **Neil Jackson** is Marcus, Blade's chief nemesis and head of the Chthon House; **Jessica Gower** is Chase, a seductive vampire who is devoted to Marcus; and **Nelson Lee** as Shen, a technology genius and Blade's confidante. With a large regular and recurring cast, the series looks to have a lot of continuing storylines. Writers of note include **Geoff Johns**, who has been writing lots of comics as well as co-writer of the pilot movie, and **Chris Ruppenthal**, writer and producer for **The Outer Limits**, **Lois and Clark**, and **Quantum Leap**. Some of the ongoing storylines for the series that play out over several episodes include ones that deal with Aurora, a drug that can inhibit a vampire's urge to feed, the turning of Krista's mother, who has leukemia, which leaves Krista unavailable. Blade travels to Berlin to rescue a pregnant patient, Vanessa, before Marcus can capture her. It turns out she isn't actually pregnant, but has a deadly virus implanted in her that Marcus plans to use to eliminate the Pure Bloods. In **Hunters**, Blade and Shen learn about the resurgence of the White Prince, an infamous vampire serial killer who they think is working out of a Detroit nightclub.

BBC America is getting a bit more into genre shows of late, starting up **Hex** in June and **Life on Mars** in July. We've got the remainder of the second (and final) season of **Hex** through August and September where the stakes get higher and some of the major players change as others fall. Following the birth of Cassie and Azazel's child, Milachi, a new student Ella

Dee shows up at the school who is really a 445 year old witch that has been tracking Azazel. Ella, Thelma and Leon work together to stop Azazel, Jez and Milachi. Things get pretty nasty as the series progresses to its unresolved conclusion with succubi, more ghosts and Faeries getting involved to the point where you will need a scorecard to keep up with who's being controlled or seduced by who. Starting in late July on BBC America on Monday nights is the recent eight episode BBC series **Life on Mars**. It stars **John Simm** as Sam Tyler, a present day detective in Manchester that when he is hit by a car wakes up in 1973! The series is ambiguous on whether he really has time traveled or is in a coma and is imagining it all. He works to fit in to the police department where the cops are much rougher than he's used to and their investigation methods are archaic. Tyler has realized that murders happening in 1973 have similarities to a case he was investigating in 2006 and he is trying to figure out how to get back to his proper time in order to prevent more murders. As the series progresses, he seems to detect that he is living in both eras, albeit in a coma in the present day. The series was well received in the UK and a second series is in production to debut early next year on the BBC. Producer/writer **David E. Kelley** is developing a U.S. version of the show for ABC. Best to catch the British original before it gets Americanized.

ABC Family is jumping full force into the genre area this summer. The debut of **Kyle XY** in June set records for the channel and repeats on ABC on Friday night did well for the broadcast arena, doubling the numbers of the cable airing. ABC may extend its Friday repeats through the rest of the summer if they continue to do well. Starting August 6th on ABC Family will be **Three Moons**

Over Milford, a series about a small town's reaction to a cosmic explosion that threatens the world's existence. **Elizabeth McGovern** stars as Laura Davis, whose family is split apart by the event. Her husband abandons them to travel the world, her daughter turns to witchcraft, and her son gets involved with the older neighbor next door. She tries to hold her family together as their world may be ending. I wish I had more advance info on the series, but ABC is keeping things pretty close as of press time.

September will see the new seasons of the genre shows returning as well as the debut of the few new ones. The most ambitious show looks to be NBC's **Heroes**, which features a large multiethnic and multinational ensemble cast including **Adrian Pasdar** and **Greg Grunberg**. Following an eclipse, people all over the world are discovering they have special abilities, one can fly, one can read minds, one is invulnerable, one can teleport, one can stop time, and one can draw the future. When several of them come together and find that among the paintings the artist has drawn includes a nuclear bomb detonated in New York, they realize they have a destiny to prevent it from happening. Tying them all together is an Indian professor who has controversial theories on evolution and has been tracking some of these specials. He's hiding undercover in New York and is being followed by a mysterious agent. This looks like it could be the next **Lost** if given a chance, and reviews of the pilot indicate that with the show's main focus on the characters and how they react to their powers, viewers will want to keep tuning in to see what happens to them, not just find out what the next step in the overall storyline is.

Over on CBS we have **Jericho**, which looks at a small town in Western Kansas

(Continued on page 6)



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SF Tube Talk (Continued from page 5)

in the aftermath of a nuclear attack. **Skeet Ulrich** is Jake Green, who is returning home to Jericho for a family reunion following the death of his grandfather. **Gerald McRaney** is his father, who is also Jericho's mayor and in the middle of a re-election. After the reunion turns sour, Jake is getting ready to leave when a mushroom cloud appears over Denver and the town is cut off from the rest of the world. There's lots of various things happening as a result and coinciding with this (a lost bus of school kids, escapees from a prison bus, looting, and car wrecks, all leading to Jake becoming a hero and being placed in the role of helping the town to deal with their situation. The large cast also includes **Ashley Scott** as Jake's ex Emily Sullivan, **Michael Gaston** as the mayor's rival, Gray Anderson, **Pamela Reed** as Jake's mother, and **Kenneth Mitchell** as Jake's brother. Initial reviews have been positive of the pilot and like how the focus is on the characters, but the question is whether the viewing public is willing to get involved on a weekly basis with a show about a post nuclear attack.

With the debut of the new The CW network, there actually hasn't been much changed in the genre field by the merger of The WB and UPN. UPN had pretty much given up on genre shows following the demise of *Enterprise*, and The WB's development of the Aquaman series, *Mercy Reef*, was deep-sixed in favor of the more established shows leaving us with the returning *Smallville* and *Supernatural*, both in the same Thursday night

slots they aired in last year on The WB. *Smallville* will follow on from the season ending cliffhanger with the episode "Zod". Rumors are that the Kryptonians from "Arrival" may re-appear and that all of the main cast will be returning. A new addition to the series will be **Aaron Ashmore** as a young Jimmy Olsen, who will

be a new love interest for Chloe. **Ashmore** was recently seen as Veronica Mars' love interest Troy on last season of *Veronica Mars*. It is unknown if **James Marsters** will be returning as Brainiac to the series and it is rumored that a new villain known from the comics may be making an appearance. In *Supernatural*, the two brothers have survived the season ending cliffhanger and are back on the demon hunting trail. According to a TV Guide online report, a new demon hunting team, a mother and her daughter (who is the same age as the Winchester brothers -

a love triangle maybe?) will be showing up.

On the British front, the second season of the new *Doctor Who* ended with an emotional climax as The Doctor and Rose parted ways for good (or for the time being, at least) in the season finale *Doomsday*. The Doctor will have a new companion in the third series, Martha Jones, played by **Freema Agyeman**. **Agyeman** is best known in the UK for her role as a temptress on the ill-fated prime time soap *Crossroads*. She also appeared in the season two episode *Army of Ghosts* as a Torchwood agent who is taken over by the Cybermen. The BBC has not released much information about the character, only revealing that she will first appear in the first episode of series three and not in the Christmas special. As revealed at the end of *Doomsday*, this year's Christmas special is called *The Runaway Bride* and will feature comedy star **Catherine Tate** as the title character, who mysteriously appears on the TARDIS at the end of *Doomsday*.

The spinoff series *Torchwood* is set to debut sometime in October on the BBC. It appears it will be set following the events of *Doomsday*, with the Torchwood headquarters being relocated to Cardiff, near the rift seen in the first series of *Doctor Who*. Jack Harkness (**John Barrowman**) will be in charge, and also in the main cast are **Eve Myles** as Gwen Cooper, **Naoko Mori** as Toshiko Sato, a character seen in the series one episode *Aliens of London* and the team's expert on computers, surveillance, and technology, and **Burn Gorman** as Owen Harper, the



team's medic. A recent *Doctor Who Confidential* feature on the new *Torchwood* series revealed that Gwen Cooper comes into the show not a part of the Torchwood team, but as a regular Cardiff cop who is investigating the strange goings on around Torchwood and becomes part of the team after finding out the truth. There are a number of writers for the series, including **P.J. Hammond** (*Sapphire & Steel*), **Chris Chibnall**, **Helen Raynor**, **Noel Clarke** (*Doctor Who*'s Mickey Smith), **Toby Whithouse**, **Si Spencer**, and creator **Russell T. Davies**

contributing two scripts, which is much less than he's been doing on *Doctor Who*.

24 Frames (Continued from page 3)

to living in the dark.

Zoom (Aug 11th) **Tim Allen** takes on superheroes in this comedy about a retired superhero who is brought back to teach as a superhero academy. It is based on the "Zoom's Academy for the Super Gifted" comic book by **Jason Lethcoe**. **Tim Allen** is Captain Zoom, who has lost his powers and is put in charge of a group of special students, who see their powers as handicaps, not gifts. Also starring are **Courteney Cox Arquette**, **Chevy Chase**, **Spencer Breslin**, and **Kate Mara**. Fox and Marvel thought they were infringing on their *X-Men* franchise and tried to sue to stop the movie from being made, but were not successful.

Snakes on a Plane (Aug 18th) The movie that will draw people into the theatre just by the buzz on the movie's name alone. **Samuel L. Jackson** stars in this thriller where an assassin releases a crate full of lethal snakes on a passenger plane in order to eliminate a witness in protective custody. Best to avoid this movie if you have Ophidiophobia...

Idocracy (Sep 1st) - **Luke Wilson** is a man who volunteers for a hibernation experiment and wakes up 500 years in the future. He discovers that civilization has deteriorated such that he is now the smartest person in the world. Duh.

The Wicker Man (Sept 1st) Yet another 1970's horror movie gets remade. **Nicolas Cage** investigates the disappearance of a young girl from a mysterious island off the coast of Maine. As he digs deeper he discovers pagan rituals and other strange things going on.

The Covenant (Sept 8th) Four young men with supernatural abilities must band together to fight an evil force that they released into the world years earlier. Stars **Steven Strait**, **Sebastian Stan**, **Toby Hemingway**, **Chace Crawford**, and **Taylor Kitsch**.

Feast (Sep 22) The movie created for the last season of Project Greenlight is finally unleashed on the world. **John Gulager's** attempt at a low budget horror movie is supposedly fairly good considering how it was made.

Children of Men (Sep 29) It is London in the year 2027 and no one has been able to conceive a child for 18 years. When a woman has mysteriously become pregnant, she must be protected as she may be the hope for mankind's survival. Based on the novel by **P.D. James**, directed by **Alfonso Cuaron**, it stars **Clive Owen**, **Julianne Moore**, **Michael Caine**, **Chiwetel Ejiofor**, and **Charlie Hunnam**.

Screening Room

Monster House

A Scanner Darkly

Pirates of the Caribbean

An Inconvenient Truth: Global Warming

The Da Vinci Code

**** **Monster House**

Columbia Pictures

Running Time: 91 minutes

Rated: PG

Voice Actors: Steve Buscemi, Nick Cannon, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Kevin James, Jason Lee, Katherine O'Hara, Katherine Turner, Fred Willard.

Release Date: July 21, 2006

One initial negative in this film was the failure to utilize noticeably the wonderful voice of Kathleen Turner. One hoped for a larger part for her. Another point is the release time. This is a Halloween movie which is being released during the Dog Days of Summer. The ways of marketers are unfathomable.

That being said the film is a delight. The baby sitter and her boy friend lend unfortunate verisimilitude to the back-



© Columbia

drop. The characters of the three children are wonderful. The arrogant precocious Preppie girl is brilliantly played. The two boys, a skinny nerd and his heavy set sidekick, both skating on the edge of puberty, are well executed and believable. The three interacting are awesome. The reclusive frightening owner of the house sets the stage for mayhem when he is taken away to the hospital and the house is left unregulated.

The two idiot policemen who come in answer to the children's summons are wonderful stereotypes owing much to bumbling policeman portrayed in comedy from the Keystone Cops to the present. The house's habit of slurping up toys, children, squad cars et cetera gives the film a pace and tension that carries you along. The scary images make it unsuitable for small children.

I recommend the movie. - **Gary Swaty**

Screening Room

(Continued from page 6)

**** **A Scanner Darkly**

Warner Independent Pictures

Running Time: 100 minutes

Rated: R

Starring Keanu Reeves, Robert Downey Jr., Woody Harrelson, Winona Ryder and Rory Cochrane

From the novel by Philip K. Dick

Release Date: July 7, 2006

Enter the grim near future world of Phillip K. Dick where all movement is monitored by scanners and privacy is non-existent. The mysterious drug, substance D is prevalent throughout the populace. It's source is unknown. Our main characters are narcs and are themselves addicted to substance D. Throughout the movie one wonders how this could be in the face of the constant monitoring of everyone. All is not as it seems.

The authorities suspect that substance D may have an unbelievable source and construct a means of determining this. How can they find out?

The film is grim and dark and as their secondary title says "Everything is Not going to be OK" The movie does surprisingly end on what might be thought of as a note of hope. Just perhaps the villains may get their deserts.

The production method of the film is interesting. They use what is called rotoscope, which essentially is painting animation figures over live action footage. The affect is wonderful and in this case disturbing.

The Film actually carries the flavor of Philip K. Dick through to Film. Recommended. – Gary Swaty

Pirates of the Caribbean:

Dead Man's Chest

Starring: Johnny Depp, Orlando

Bloom, Keira Knightley

Director: Gore Verbinski

Running Time: 150 minutes

Rated: PG-13

Release Date: July 7th, 2006

The second installment of the Pirates of the Caribbean is loaded with some swell special effects but the story is a bit complicated and the film is a bit too long. Jack Sparrow (Johnny Depp) is wonderful and some of his scenes are pretty funny. One scene with a waterwheel that breaks loose is especially funny and it reminded me of something out of an Indiana Jones film.

In this second Pirates film (at least one more to come) we have Jack trying to find the Dead Man's Chest (a really nifty item to own which according to legend allows one to control Davy Jones). Of course Davy Jones (Bill Nighy) has the key to the chest and without the key the chest can't be opened. So first Jack must get onto Davy Jones Flying Dutchman ship (ah... lest we forget the debt Jack owes Davy Jones - a lifetime (or deathtime) of serving on the Dutchman). You will certainly enjoy watching the Dutchman's

crew who, having spent years under the sea, have taken on features of various sea creatures. All of your favorite seafood items are here -- yum, yum. Will Turner (Orlando Bloom) and Elizabeth Swann (Keira Knightley) joined Jack on the quest but had to postpone their wedding, too bad.

The film has a lot of fights including one ala The Good, The Bad and The Ugly with a three way sword fight and several (perhaps too many) fights against the giant octopus whose sole purpose in life seems to be trying to sink ships. While watching please note that Davy Jones acted while wearing a suit with reference marks that were used by Industrial Light and Magic to give us a pretty good looking octopus character.

I rated the film a "B" and would certainly recommend the film but get plenty of sleep the night before.

By the way, No animal was harmed in the making of this film -- just in case you were worried about all those sea creatures. - **Len Berger**, ConNotations Film Editor

**** **An Inconvenient Truth: Global Warming (May 24, 2006)**

starring Al Gore

Running time: 100 minutes

Rated: PG

Space buffs will enjoy the many photos from outer space in this movie: satellite shots, the moon landings, the first earthrise photo from the moon, a Galileo probe image, even a Futurama cartoon. There's lots of real science here for scifi fans to enjoy. In fact, if you read the science articles in scifi magazines, you won't find much new here. You already know what Al Gore does: there is no scientific controversy on this topic. But now, the world of millions of mundanes will know what we do: global warming is real, and humanity is having a strong impact on it. The presentation you might say is unimpeachable, and worth watching by anyone. Most impressive is the chart of 650,000 years' worth of Antarctic ice cores, showing seven ice ages and how human-generated carbon dioxide has way surpassed the natural limits of this cycle. I once heard an oil industry scientist say he doesn't believe in ice cores. Now I know why. There really is no controversy outside of the popular press, generated by political propagandists with an agenda to preserve the status quo. Gore has nice statistics to illustrate that, too. This movie is a combination of his public lectures on global warming, intercut with short biography about him. It is not an ego piece, or really about Al Gore at all. The biography shows why Gore is not an egotist about this -- one of his teachers was a pioneer of the greenhouse theory. Gore is now a man with a mission, the man with the word, and what he's been working on all his life has now become his life's work. He should get a Nobel Prize for this, except there is no such category. At times, I couldn't help but think of Jor-El in the Superman story,

trying to warn Krypton that the planet was going to have some real geologic trouble, and no one would believe him. For a better thought, recall the title of a book by one of Gore's friends, Carl Sagan: Our Demon Haunted World, Science as a Candle in the Darkness. See this candle. - **Mike Griffin**

The Da Vinci Code

Director Ron Howard

Screen Play by Akiva Goldman

From the Novel By Dan Brown

Sony Pictures

From the mind of Dan Brown by way of Director Ron Howard and Screenwriter Akiva Goldman comes the movie version of The Da Vinci Code. The movie is a nearly seamless transfer of the book to the visual medium. Robert Langdon, Professor of Religious Symbology, Harvard University, excellently played by Tom Hanks, finds himself beset from all directions when all he did was come to Paris to give a lecture. Sophie Neveu, a cryptologist, well played by Audrey Tautou loses her grandfather and nearly her life while minding her own business. Two ordinary people driven by necessity to accomplish extraordinary things. (Though Sophie turns out to be not quite ordinary.)

To one with a knowledge of history, the story of Christ and Mary Magdalen as related is clearly a wild surmise unsupported by any verifiable historical

evidence. (But then so is much of what people believe about Religion and History.) However, if one is willing to suspend disbelief for a time, it is a fun wild ride. Science Fiction Fans should have no problem with this concept.

The Professor and the Sophie meet in the Louvre where the Professor has been summoned by the French Police to view the scene of the Sophie's grandfather's murder. The victim is in Cruciform position like a Da Vinci drawing. More it seems that he placed himself in that position as though to leave a message. Unknown to Langdon, he is a suspect as the victim had written *S find Robert Langdon* in his own blood. Sophie, "S", knows he didn't do it and wants him out of there so they can solve the case. Bishop Aringarosa, played by Alfred Molina, a Minion of the evil Opus Dei has misled the chief investigator, Captain Fache, Jean Reno, who is convinced of Langdon's guilt. Sophie and Langdon flee together and a wild chase is on through banks and museums, churches... A Cryptex made up of alphabetic wheels provides the first lead. Puzzles abound throughout.

They find an ally and go to England seeking the Holy Grail; a secret involving descendants of Christ and Mary Magdalen and the Templar treasure. The whole thing is falderal of nonsense, but the watcher is carried along by the excitement which finally ends in Scotland where all is revealed after much danger and travail. The Movie was great fun. – **Gary Swaty**

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Conversation

(Continued from page 1)

story cycle. And then, what about *Crown of Slaves*? He wrote the first one with Dave Weber. Well... Eric's next project is the *1634: Baltic War* (Ring of Fire series), Weber has to finish a project he's working on, then Weber will need to contribute to the *Baltic War*, then... while Eric is finishing up *Baltic War*, Weber will be able to start on *Crown of Slaves*. Then the process reverses and Eric will work on *Crown of Slaves* while Weber goes back to *Baltic War*. They're hoping to have both books done by the end of August, maybe September (2006). (*I feel like I'm watching a tennis match...*) *Baltic War* is scheduled for publication in May 2007 and *Crown* will probably be out a few months after that.

Whew... how does he manage to juggle projects successfully? He explained that he doesn't actually *write* more than one book at a time. He'll write one, pass it to his partner, then begin editing another. He describes himself as a very fast writer, and seems to have the knack of writing a very clean, good first draft. He seldom does rewrites although he will scrap whole chapters if he determines they just aren't working well. He also noted that he has to juggle publishers as well. He writes for both Baen and Del Rey. The man is a workhorse. He chuckled when he described that he spent thirty years in factories (he was a labor organizer) where sixty hours a week was not unusual; so that now, without a boss or time clock, he still works very hard and long but the work is so much more satisfying. I noted that his socialist leanings came out in *1632*. He sat back and commented that he has some strong feeling about writers using a book as a political platform. He feels that it's dishonest to the reader. The reader puts down his money to get a good story and ends up reading a political tract. That's not honest. What he prefers to do is lay out some broad social and ethical values and let the reader decide what political context it might have for her or him. He has some readers with some very conservative political leanings, even military officers, who have indicated that they really enjoyed *1632*. He thinks he has an obligation to write a book that any reader can enjoy even if they don't agree with his politics.

The *Grantville Gazette* is a unique book. For those who aren't familiar with the Ring of Fire series, there has been a web-based discussion going on for seven years in Baen's Bar; at last count some 1000 people have contributed over 200,000 posts. Eric looked at all the fanfic people were contributing; many of whom were writers, and decided to start an e-magazine. It was very experimental and no one was sure if it would fly or not. Eric actually edits the e-magazine and publishes through Baen's website. A reader

can buy one issue or a package of three issues (the first of which is now *free!*). It is not a subscription service. They have a regular readership of about 1500, which is pretty good. It's good enough that Eric can maintain the project and pay the contributors semi-pro rates. Now when it goes to paper, it becomes a Baen book. *Gazette 1* was only published in paperback since they weren't sure it would even sell. Eric wrote one new story for it and there's a funny story behind that. Jim Baen designed the cover – a cheesecake, soft-porn picture that had nothing to do with any of the stories. So Eric decided he needed to write a story to explain the cover art. And he had to do it again with the *Grantville Gazette II* which was published in hardcover. And a third is in the works, with – again – a cover designed by Jim Baen which Eric is going to have to figure out how to explain.

It's an easy series to contribute to. It's all history. Anyone has access to the 'back story.' It's not the same as trying to write in another writer's universe where you would have to refer back to everything written and check with the writer to make sure you can do something. But, if you're going to write in this series, you better check that history. For instance, the 17th century Germans were actually quite literate and the contributing writer better know that. So it's a self-policing universe; since anyone can read the history, older writers check out the new ones and keep the stories honest. I knew I was behind in my reading but I hadn't counted on the *Gazettes*, so now I've really got to get caught up. And that's not helped by the fact that the books are not always published in a logical, chronological fashion. For instance, *1635: The Cannon Law* will be published in October 2006, seven months before *1634: The Baltic War*. But Eric assures me that's not a problem. The stories don't depend on each other. In fact, he says that once you've read *1632*, you can read the rest of them in any order; although Eric does have a 'recommended' order. *I didn't think to ask him what that was exactly and don't see it on his website. Maybe he'll add that in soon....?*

Another of Eric's collaborators is Ryk Spoor. And he had a very interesting story about how that came about. Eric was editing James Schmitz's work in an effort to repopularize his work. Eric decided not to just publish a 'best of' but to republish *everything* Schmitz wrote – and in order. Well...the truth was that the earliest stuff wasn't as good as the later stuff and Eric recognized that he was going to have to edit it pretty severely or new readers weren't going to be impressed and might not stick around long enough to see the really good stuff that Schmitz wrote. This generated a lot of online discussion from disgruntled readers. It brought out the 'purists' who didn't want to see a single word changed. (*The same folks who probably won't watch a colorized*

movie...) And Ryk was the main opponent. But what made Ryk different is that he had actually read all of Schmitz's work, he was honest in his opposition and acknowledged his own errors. After a while, Eric says he came to like the guy; and about a year later Ryk quietly approached him with some stuff he'd written and asked Eric if he'd read it. Eric did and was impressed with it. He encouraged Ryk to rewrite and later recommended it to Baen who eventually published it. Baen has a policy of hooking up a new published writer with an established writer to get his name out there and get more recognizable. Eric started that way with Drake. So, Baen asked Eric to do a book with Ryk. As it happened, Eric had an idea in the back of his mind that was going to require a bit more science than he was willing to research; but, with Ryk's background he thought this would be a good place for both of them. The book was *Boundary*. And two sequels are planned.

I'd read some commentary from Eric about his opinions about internet piracy. So I couldn't resist asking him about it personally. Eric has some very strong ideas about it; so much so that I will have to abbreviate here. Basically, he doesn't think a writer is harmed if someone steals a e-book. He likens it to how it's always been with paper books. A library buys a single copy and loans it out to dozens or hundreds of people. And how many of us loan our books to friends and family? Were those readers 'stealing' the book because they didn't pay for it? Did the writer lose any revenue? Quite possibly – but what did he gain instead? Most probably, he gained new readers. In our world now, where one can walk into a bookstore and be confronted with hundreds of choices, how do you choose what to spend your money on? Eric believes that most readers stick with what they know. And they come to new writers through word-of-mouth from their friends (who loaned them a book to read) or maybe they picked up a new writer at the library. If they like the new writer, then maybe they'll buy the next new book that's published. They probably wouldn't have bought the new book if they hadn't already decided they liked the writer. So, that's a wash. But if they continue to buy books from that writer, then the writer is way ahead of the game. And it's actually even simpler in the e-book environment. In the real world, if someone shoplifts a book from a store, an actual product is taken - that can't be replaced – a definite lost sale. However, in the world of e-books, no physical product is taken – and that lowlife probably wasn't going to spend his money on that book anyway. Hence Eric's opinion that the writer isn't really harmed by the some-time theft on the internet. Long-term? It's still a new venue but Baen, who's been in the forefront, hasn't seen an impact.

One of my favorite questions is to ask if the interviewee thinks a series should go on as long as the fans want it and are willing to spend money on it – or if the writer has an obligation to stop it when she or he no longer has anything new to say. Eric pointed out that the LOTR series isn't really a series – it's just a *really, really* long book that had to be broken up into three volumes. And his *Belisarius* series is like that. It was carefully plotted to be one single story but had to be broken into several books to sell. So it had to stop when the story was over. But some series, he elaborated, center around a certain character and it becomes that character's biography – and it ends when the life ends. *1632*, however, was written as a stand-alone. Who knew? But when he was continually urged to continue the story he had to think about it. Did it have a strong enough premise to sustain more stories without repeating itself? Obviously, the answer was a resounding Yes.

His last words were an observation about the myth of the 'solitary writer.' When all there was at one time was verbal storytelling (bards); collaboration was a natural process. The singer/storyteller changed the story depending on his audience and the changing times. The printing press changed all that; the effort involved in changing a single word became a real challenge. Although, the feedback a writer received from his readers often did influence his future writing. But then, the advent of the computer and internet changed it back again. Now, the ease of changing and rewriting gives the writer a better advantage. It also lends itself naturally to writers collaborating. And, of course, it allows this phenomenon of *1632* to occur. Although Eric maintains a certain amount of control, the fan interaction gives it a life of its own. There is no 'solitary writer' in the Ring of Fire universe; and Eric seems very satisfied and happy with that turn of events.



WWW.COPPERCON.ORG

COPPERCON 26

September 1-4, 2006 - Tempe Mission Palms, Tempe, AZ

A Four Day Convention over LaborDay Weekend

Arizona's Annual Literary Oriented Science Fiction and Fantasy Convention
sponsored by the Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society

Join us and our guests as we celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Star Trek

CopperCon 26 will feature an Art Show and Auction, Gaming, LARPs, Anime Room sponsored by Anizona, Hospitality Suite, Filk, Regency Dance, Charity Auction to benefit Reading is FUNdamental, Masquerade, Dealer's Room, and much more. We will be having special events on Thursday night, Aug 31 featuring some of our guests. Check our web site for more details.

Author Guests of Honor

Diane Duane

Author of the popular *Young Wizards* series, *The Tale of the Five* series, the *Rihannsu* series of Star Trek novels plus other Trek novels such as *Spock's World* and *Dark Mirror*, numerous other novels and television credits.

Peter Morwood

Author of the *Clan Wars* and *Tales of Old Russia* novel series. Co-writer with Diane Duane of the *Dark Kingdom: The Dragon King* TV miniseries.

Marc Scott Zicree

Co-author of the *Magic Time* novel series, author of the *Twilight Zone Companion*, screenwriter for *Sliders*, *Babylon 5*, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, *Forever Knight* and more.

Artist Guest of Honor

Sarah Clemens

Fantasy artist with the popular *Magnus & Loki* series.

Music Guest

Seanan McGuire

(Sponsored by the Phoenix Filk Circle)

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www.missionpalms.com

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\$45 at the door
Kids 7-12 half price*,
Kids 6 & Under Free*
* with Adult membership

Have you a favorite SF or Fantasy character or creature? Have you carefully recreated a historical garment? Do you have a novel idea for future or alternative clothing? Have you a visual joke to tell? Why not share your concept with us?

Enter the Coppercon 26 Masquerade!

The Coppercon 26 Masquerade will be held at 7:30 PM on Saturday, September 2, 2006 at the Tempe Mission Palms Hotel in Tempe, Arizona. For full details on the Masquerade, please visit the CopperCon 26 web site.

Coppercon 26 Art Show Information

Once again, CopperCon will offer fans the best of science fiction and fantasy art. We will be located in Palm B and C of the convention center.

We are proud to announce Sarah Clemens as our Artist Guest of Honor for CopperCon 26. Sarah will be displaying her artwork in the Art Show. We are planning a guided tour of the art show Friday evening around 9 pm hosted by Sarah.

The CopperCon 26 Art Show will feature hundreds of items of science fiction and fantasy art available via bidding and direct sale. If you've never bid on art at a convention before and would like more information, just stop by the desk in the Art Show and ask. Our friendly staff will be happy to explain everything. This year we will be featuring a print shop-an area for artists to sell multiple prints of some of their more popular work. Come in and purchase some of your favorite prints.

The Art Auction will be held at 1 PM on Monday, check the pocket program for location. Pieces with two or more bids will go to the voice auction and buyer pickup will be after the auction.

We will accept Visa and MasterCard as well as cash and checks. Come in early and often to feast your eyes on all the wonderful work presented by our artist friends. We're looking forward to seeing you there!

If you have any questions, or if you are interested in reserving display space, please contact David Gish at 1309 W. Palo Verde Dr, Chandler, AZ 85224 or call 480-963-2067 or via email konrad@cox.net.

Write: CopperCon 26, PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082 Email: cu26@coppercon.org Phone: (480) 949-0415

Podcasts Submitted for your Perusal

By Shane Shellenbarger

From Wikipedia: **Podcasting** is the method of distributing multimedia files, such as audio programs or music videos, over the Internet using either the Rss or Atom syndication formats, for playback on mobile devices and personal computers. I'd define podcasting as the TiVo of Internet Radio, with the ability to time/place shift audio and video files for the convenience of the listener/viewer. I'm going to make a few recommendations of podcasts I've discovered and hope you'll enjoy.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Podcasting>

First off is *Griddlecakes Radio*, a recent discovery of mine, which harkens back to the Golden Age of radio when the likes of Jack Benny, Orson Wells, and Bob Hope ruled the airwaves. Ron and that little voice in his head, The other Ron, present skits, storytelling, and personal insights that are interesting, comforting, and very entertaining. Ron talks about satirist Stan Freberg being an influence and that imprint is evident throughout the show. Like Freberg's comedy pieces, Ron often takes historical events and gives them a modern twist. I highly recommend Griddlecakes and I even make a cameo appearance in episode #30. Shows average 15 minutes in length. Arik Korman, director for the Bob Rivers Radio Show in Seattle, produces quality podcasts chock full of observations, insights, and he looks at life from skewed point-of-view. The 38 episodes vary in length from about 7 minutes to over 78 minutes

www.griddlecakes.com

<http://www.bobriversontheshow.com/ontheshow.asp?cat=14>

Next is *The Daily Giz Wiz* with MAD's maddest writer, Dick DeBartola and Leo Laporte, radio, television, and podcasting personality. Every Monday



through Friday these two wise guys meet on the Internet to, ostensibly, discuss gadgets and gizmos, but among the electronics and Rube Goldbergesque ruminations are stories about *MAD Magazine* and its larger-than-life creator, William M. Gaines. Our congenial hosts have recently passed their 100th podcast together. Episodes typically run under 10 minutes.

<http://www.dailygizwiz.com/>

<http://www.twit.tv/>

www.williammgaines.com/

Another must-listen-to podcast is *This Week In Tech*, aka *TWIT*. Hosted by Leo Laporte, *TWIT* is a round table technology discussion group with a revolving cast of characters, many from the cable television show, *The Screensavers*: John C. Dvorak,



Patrick Norton, David Prager, Bill Machrone, Amber MacArthur, Kevin Rose, Roger Chang, Robert Heron, Chris DiBona, Molly Wood, Jacon McCabe Calacanis, Robert Scoble, Andrew Baron, Kent Nichols, Dave Winer (the father of RSS and podcasting), and the co-founder of Apple Computers, Steve Wozniak. The group can sometimes be loud, often rowdy, and always opinionated. Episodes typically run about 60 minutes.

<http://twit.tv/pilot>

<http://www.twit.tv/>

<http://thisweekintech.com/>

Other podcasts produced by Leo Laporte which I listen to on a regular basis are his KFI 640 AM weekend shows. For three hours on Saturday and three hours on Sunday, Laporte talks tech with listeners around Los Angeles and across the planet. I also follow Laporte's observations on the tech scene when he makes guest appearances on other radio shows, when he speaks at conferences, and when he's interviewed on other podcasts.

<http://www.kfi640.com/main.html>

<http://www.leoville.tv/radio/>

<http://leo.am/podcasts/kfi>

http://www.worldofwarcast.com/archives/2006/07/episode_23_part.html

<http://leo.am/podcasts/tlr>

<http://twit.tv/podcastinfo>

<http://www.odeo.com/audio/411698/view>

Leo Laporte also produces these podcasts which I follow on an infrequent basis: *This WEEK in MEDIA*, *Security Now*, *Inside the Net*, *FLOSS Weekly*, *Futures in Biotech*, and *MacBreak*. *This WEEK in MEDIA* discusses the future of film, television, and broadband from both a technology and a business perspective. The panel includes Alex Lindsay, Emery Wells, Kenji Kato, and other experts in mass media. *Security Now* features



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 **August 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

computer and internet security expert, Steve Gibson, and is hosted by Leo Laporte. The 29 episodes vary in length from 30 minutes to over 1 hour. The 12 episodes average 60 minutes in length. *Inside the Net* with Amber MacArthur and Leo Laporte takes a look at the tools, sites, and innovators making the internet the hotbed of interactivity. The 26 episodes average 40 minutes. *FLOSS Weekly* delves into the world of Free Libre Open Source Software with hosts Chris DiBona and Leo Laporte discussing Linux and other computer operating systems. The 8 episodes average 45 minutes. *Futures in Biotech* episode #1 has hosts Marc Pelletier and Leo Laporte discussing protein folding, evolution, and nanotech structures using prions with MIT biotechnologist, Dr. Susan Lindquist. The pilot episode runs 1 hour and 10 minutes. *MacBreak* is a video podcast dealing with the universe of Apple's Macintosh. Leo Laporte, Amber MacArthur, Emery Wells, and Alex Lindsay discuss hardware, software, applications, tips, and interview the big names close to the Mac. The 14 episodes run from 8 minutes up to 32 minutes.

<http://thisweekinmedia.libsyn.com/rss>
<http://leo.am/podcasts/itn>
<http://leo.am/podcasts/sn>
<http://leo.am/podcasts/floss>
<http://twit.tv/fib1>
http://macbreak.com/index_copeland.php

Staying in the world of technology, I've been known to catch a few of the ancillary cousins of Leo Laporte's podcasts. *Cranky Geeks* is a tech roundtable discussion group anchored by John C. Dvorak (P.C. Magazine) and peopled by tech pundits who try to out crank Dvorak. They are usually unsuccessful. While *Cranky Geeks* is frequently populated with the middle and elderly aged observers of the technology scene, *Diggation* is a show co-hosted by

two under-thirty manboys, Kevin Rose and Alex Albrecht, who read the top stories of the week from *digg.com* and drink beer (in episode #38 the "boys" drink a bit too much hard alcohol and Alex especially pays for the over indulgence.) These guys often make me laugh, in spite of my disapproval of their hedonistic ways. *Cranky Geeks* is up to 17 episodes and *Diggation* has reached episode #53. Both shows produce separate audio and video podcasts.

<http://crankygeeks.com/blogs/crankygeeks/default.aspx>
http://revision3.com/diggation?b_start:int=30

Getting away from technology, I'll listen to *Coverville*, a podcast focusing on the new renditions of previously recorded songs ranging from Abba to Frank Zappa and everybody in-between. The easygoing host, Brian Ibbott, produces the thrice weekly shows from his home in Colorado. The 218 episodes average 30 minutes.

<http://www.coverville.com/>

I also enjoy listening to what happening in the Magic Kingdom. While Podcast Alley lists over 50 Disney related podcasts, I focus on these three: *Mouse Pod*, *Inside the Magic*, and *Disney Insider*. *The Mouse Pod* is the brainchild of Jesse Obstbaum and is divided into two versions, one highlights Disney parks and version 2.0 highlights Disney films, with 17 episodes of the former and 4 of the latter. *Inside the Magic* is an Orlandocentric Disney podcast with occasional journeys to the other parks. Ricky Brigante has produced 65 audio podcasts and 33 video podcasts. *The Disney Insider* is the corporate mouthpiece of Disney which means no dirt, but it also means guests the other podcasts won't get. John Stamos, They Might Be Giants, and Julie Andrews all make appearances. There are 18 episodes of varying lengths.

(Continued on page 11)

Podcasts Submitted

(Continued from page 10)

www.podcastalley.com
www.mousepod.com
www.pocketsymphony.com/mousepod/B520374309/index.html
<http://distantcreations.com/insidethemagic/>
<http://disney.go.com/music/podcasts/today/index.html>

With the anticipation building as we approach the one year countdown for the release of the film, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, and the probable release of the final *Harry Potter* book, what better time to get involved in a couple of podcasts concerning the boy wizard? On *MuggleCast*, Andrew Sims, Ben Schoen, and Kevin Steck exchange views and conduct interviews with the cast and crew of the films, including Warwick Davis (Professor Flitwick) and a Luna Lovegood hopeful who made it to the second round of auditions. They have 46 episodes which average 60 minutes in length. Finally, there's *PotterCast*, a group which prides itself on keeping up on the latest developments and conspiracy theories in the Potter megaverse. Interviews include Bonnie Wright (Ginny Weasley), Matt Lewis (Neville Longbottom), and Arthur Levine, co-editor of the *Harry Potter* books. The 59 episodes average 60 minutes in length.

<http://www.mugglenet.com/mugglecast/>
<http://www.mugglenet.com/mugglecast/episodes.php>
www.the-leaky-cauldron.org/pottercast/
www.the-leaky-cauldron.org/pottercast/?mode=pastepisodes

There you have it, a varied collection for your listening and viewing pleasure. Many of the websites contain their own players and links to aggregators, but I've included some below. Happy podcatching!

<http://juicereceiver.sourceforge.net/>
<http://www.apple.com/itunes/>
http://www.coverville.com/art/subscribe_instr/index.html

Send comments or questions to:
ConNotations.Shane@gmail.com

FYI

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. 19th Ave at 7PM. Email questions to book@casfs.org

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 in Scottsdale

www.poisonedpen.com

Jasper Fforde signing Aug 8th, 7pm
James Sallis signing, September 6
Diana Gabaldon & Sam Barone
Sep 14, 7pm
Terry Brooks & Michael Stackpole
Sep 23, 1pm

Barnes & Noble

www.barnesandnoble.com

Surprise, AZ

Stephenie Meyer, Aug 26, 2pm

Events of Interest

Changing Hands

www.changinghands.com

Sci Fi Book Group
1st Thursdays, 7pm
Graphic Novel group
2nd Sundays

Imperial Outpost Events

www.imperialoutpost.com

HeroClix tournament, Imperial Outpost,
Fridays 7p-11p
VS CCG tournament, Imperial
Outpost, Tuesday,
730pm
Shield of Almor,
Imperial Outpost,
1st & 3rd Sundays

Game Depot Events

Game Night, Game
Depot Mesa, 3rd
Saturdays
Contact: Game
Depot, (480) 966-
4727

Bookmans Events

www.bookmans.com

Tucson Bookmans Events

Dungeons & Dragons night, Bookmans
Tucson-Speedway store, 1st & 3rd Sunday,
6pm

Phoenix Bookmans Events

8034 N. 19th Ave
Phoenix, Az 85021

Phoenix Astronomical Society Telescope
Workshop Oct 1, 4:30pm
Bookmans Creative Writing Circle, every
3rd Sunday, 5-8pm

Mesa Bookmans Events

1056 S. Country Club Dr
Mesa, AZ 85210

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

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 August 20,
September 24, October 29, November 19
and December 17.

There will also be a day long
ConRunners held at the Phoenix Bookmans
located at 8034 N 19th Ave on October 28.
For more information check the web site at
www.westernsfa.org

Gamer's Corner

Not too much again this time, too little
material, too much overtime, and did I
mention too little material?

Children of the Horned Rat Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay \$29.99, Black Industries, 128pp

This is a great sourcebook. First let me
say that there are no such things as
Skaven. The Emperor says so. Second let
me say that the tales and fables collected
in this heretical book are forbidden in the
Empire.

The information contained within this
volume will give you wonderful ideas and
give your players fits. The Skaven are
among the most versatile races in the
Warhammer world. Through the judicious
use of Warpstone they can acquire new
traits and abilities and they have no
penalties using Warpstone tokens in
magic. Though considered craven and
cowardly they often show great feats of
bravery.

This volume fully fleshes out the race
and offers insidious ways to use them
against players or even as allies. I
particularly like the way the possibility of
Warpstone addiction can cause a steady
drain on a party's resources.

I like this volume and await more like
it for other chaos races. Buy this even if
you don't play Warhammer, it could be
used as a variant wererat or other vermin
based race. - **Bob LaPierre**

Liber Necris

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

This sourcebook is the ultimate in-
depth study of undeath. The information
is full of the blackest heresies and magics.

(Continued on page 12)



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Gamers Corner

(Continued from page 11)

It speaks of the creation of the first vampire and the rise and fall and rise again of the original necromancer, Nagash.

The tale of the evolution of human magic and the destruction of the civilization that fathered Nagash is foremost a cautionary tale. However, it gives necessary background to the development of magic within the Empire.

I love this volume and it should be stated that this has wonderful background information; but, the information on the various types of undead and the steps to create each make this a volume to help even the novice story-teller to use undead with cunning. - **Bob LaPierre**

Wonderful to have two such great volumes to review. See you next time.

The Ultramarines Omnibus
by **Graham McNeill**
Black Library, 765 pp, \$10.99

The Ultramarines Omnibus is a compilation of the Novels *Nightbringer*, *Warriors of Ultramar*, and *Dead Sky*, *Black Sun*, plus a connected short story, *Chains of Command*.

The omnibus follows the adventures of the Space Marine Captain Uriel Ventris and the UltraMarines fighting the enemies of mankind. From their home world of Macragge into the Eye of Terror and beyond, the Marines are a byword for loyalty, courage and military prowess second only to the God Emperor.

McNeill's stories are fast paced, full of action and mayhem inherent in war. If this is your literary interest, you might look for eons before finding a better collection. - **Pam Allan**

Warhammer Keepers of The Flame
by **Neil McIntosh**
Black Library Pub., \$7.99, 402 pp

Stefan Kumansky has to take a secret mission that might create a few problems with his friend, Bruno. But if Stefan does not, the city of his beloved Altdorf is doomed. This is the third and final conclusion to Stefan Kumansky trilogy.

Enjoyed this dark fantasy in plot twists and surprises. This book can stand alone. I hope to find the other two to find more about Stefan Kumansky. Recommend for fantasy readers in the Warhammer world. - **Jeffrey Lu**

Daemonifuge: Heretic Saint
by **Kev Walker, Gordon Rennie**
Black Library Publication; \$9.99

This is a Warhammer 40,000 (science fiction) graphic novel about Ephrael Stern, a Sister of Battle, who not only fought demons and also her own.

This book won the graphic novel of the year award from Borders Books. Overall, the stories are dark. Liked the art
Page 12

and stories. Recommended for Warhammer 40,000 fans. - **Jeffrey Lu**

Valnir's Bane
by **Nathan Long**
Black Library Publication; 254 pp., \$6.99

This fantasy book is the beginning of the Black Hearts, a group of schemers, killers, and convicted people for the gallows. Their first mission is to retrieve a holy artifact, Valnir's Bane, from a holy site. When they accomplished this simple task, the Black Hearts will have to fight not only a Chaos army but also their handlers. Definitely entertaining. Recommended for Warhammer fans and dark fantasy readers. - **Jeffrey Lu**

Tainted Blood
by **Nathan Long**
Black Library
Publication; 253 pp., \$7.99

How did the Black Hearts outwit their handler, Count Manfred, from their "tainted" blood after their work as bodyguards? Would having a traitor in their mist, help? Or having a "nice" court intrigue with a scheming Countess.

Enjoyable. Did not expect this person in the Black Hearts to be the traitor. Highly recommend for Warhammer fans and dark fantasy readers. - **Jeffrey Lu**

The Heart of Chaos
by **Gav Thorpe**
Black Library
Publishing; 413 pp., \$7.99

The last fantasy book on the "Slaves to Darkness" trilogy. The adventures of once lovers into fierce rivals- the once knight Kurt Leitzig changed into a Chaos leader and Ursula, a woman with a holy sword, determined to undermine the endless forces of Chaos. Ending was predictable. Okay, overall. Recommend for Warhammer readers. - **Jeffrey Lu**

An American in England Part Twelve: Final Words on England


by Jeffrey Lu

With my old, beaten but comfortable tennis shoes, I walked to the National theatre. I saw a building near there with a sidewalk sign saying "Fish N' Chips" and decided to have lunch there. I ordered the

famous meal. The cook/cashier asked me if I was eating in or taking the meal out. I opted to bring my meal to the theatre.

The cook/cashier promptly gave my bill. I glanced and opened my mouth. "Excuse me," said I. "Yes?" "Why is there a discount of 10% on my bill?" "You're not from here, are you?"

(Continued on page 13)



WILL SHETTERLY
elseWHERE

At TusCon 33!

Where Else!?

TusCon welcomes Will Shetterly and Emma Bull as Author Guests of Honor on November 10-12, 2006 at the InnSuites Hotel in Tucson, AZ.

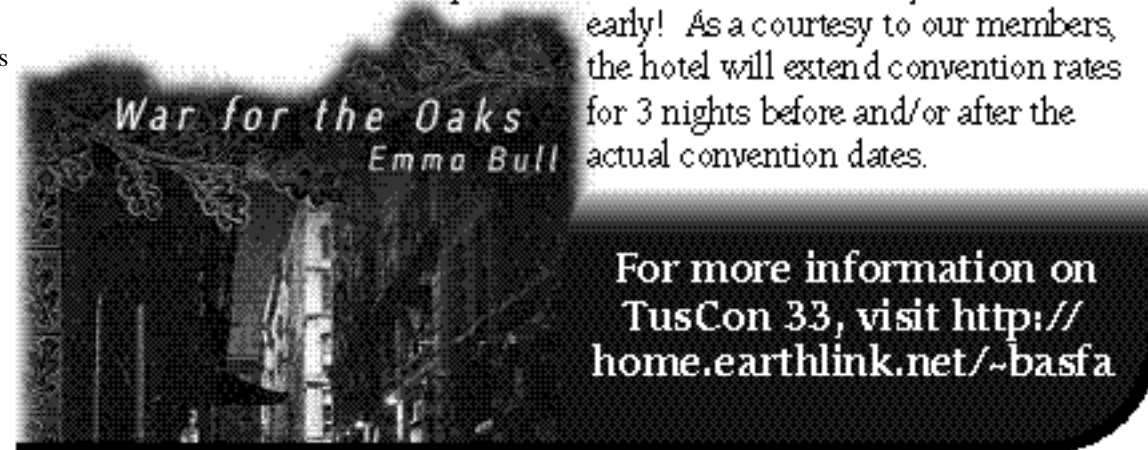
Ed Bryant returns as perennial Toastmaster.

Join Us for the special weekend membership rate of \$40, available through September 4, 2006.

On or after September 5th, weekend membership will be \$45.

Send to TusCon, P.O. Box 2528, Tucson, AZ 85702-2528.

InnSuites Hotel is located at 475 North Granada, Tucson, AZ 85701
Reservations, call 1-877-446-6589 or 520-622-3000
Fax: 520-623-8922, or visit <http://stmarys.innsuites.com>
Per night rates are \$83 (studio room), \$94 (2-room suite) or \$104 (Jacuzzi suite). Be sure to mention "TusCon Science Fiction Convention" to get these rates. Our room block expires on 10/10/2006, so reserve your room early! As a courtesy to our members, the hotel will extend convention rates for 3 nights before and/or after the actual convention dates.



War for the Oaks
Emma Bull

For more information on TusCon 33, visit <http://home.earthlink.net/~basfa>

An American in England

(Continued from page 12)

“Well, I’m from Arizona.”

“Really? How’s the London Bridge?”

“Still at Lake Havasu.”

The cook/cashier grinned.

“Nice. The discount is for only take-out. I won’t have to clean your mess afterwards.”

“Oh.”

He made my lunch in around ten minutes. The cook/cashier continues to smile and said, “Cheers!”

I opened my lunch sack and stared. The cook/cashier laughed.

“What?” I said.

“Just your expression. You look like you seen a ghost.”

“Well, sort of...”

I waved goodbye.

The “ghost” meal was not exactly the typical fish and chips. (Well, American fish and chips.) The chips were not french fries. It was actually fried chips of a potato. Also, the fish was not the two or more battered fried fish. It was a size of a club. The thing was an actually fillet of an entire fried fish in vinegar. Curious in finding these differences between two countries making this same food, I took a bite. The fish and chips were excellent.

After eating, I went to the National Museum bookstore and bought, “History Boys.” I then proceeded to walk the bank of the Thames River, alone.

Looking back, this land of Alan Moore, Neil Gaiman, the Bronte sisters, Beatles, Dickens, Shakespeare, and the rest of the best walked this same beaten path near the waterway. I paused for a minute before the liquid history of the Thames river. I smiled now with love and affection for Earl Grey tea and British fish and chips. Hopefully, one day I will be back.

A new column, next time- An American in Canada

A Poker Novice to a Friend

by Jeffrey Lu

Doctor:

I have something embarrassing to report. Yes, it’s another Chinese Forest Gump moment...

Went on a week’s Star Trek Cruise in Canada. To say the least, went to an unlimited Texas Hold ‘Em poker as a beginning, clueless player. Had no experience in how to play this type of poker (still have no idea...). I usually play video poker and in college, penny and dimes on regular poker. There were fifty players including Wil Weaton. I lucked-out to the last table- the Captain’s Table, the next day. Well, there were ten people. If you can, please look at both PokerStar.com and Wil Wheaton’s website. I think they had actually photographed the CruiseTrek event. I thought I was going to get number 10 and obtain

the prize of a ST:TNG poker cards... Nope.

I thought I was going to get either number 9 to 3 in getting either a poker book or Wil Wheaton’s signed book... Not in the cards. I thought I was bringing home the case of poker chips and one Wil Weaton’s signed books as a second seat winner... I pass. Yes, the true Chinese Forest Gump wins the jersey (like the jacket from the golf’s Masters tour) and learns the fleeting of fame. My eyes still bears the flashes and blinds me to only the jersey and another fun poker game online. Gee, more stress in the next level of poker. Afterwards, I found I’ve been either called Captain (of the Poker Table) or champ (Doctor, I think chump is the actually word for me). I will write the experiences in the future Trading Posts. (United Federation of Phoenix monthly email publication column) Who would have thought a new member from UFP could win the first Star Trek Poker tournament- Unlimited Texas Hold ‘Em? I’m still pinching myself (Vulcan Death Grip) and still have no idea how to play this game.

Poker Face ST:TNG

by Jeffrey Lu

I still have no idea. I only have a baseball red shirt/jersey and a couple of photos that this event happened. I guess my fifteen minutes of fame are up.

This poker tournament started at 10 p.m. at a Star Trek Themed cruise, Cruise Trek. The first-time event was hosted by Wil Wheaton, Wesley Crusher from Star Trek: The Next Generation, and sponsored by Pokerstars.com. The admission was free for the poker players and the Star Trek cruise audience.

All the players present received either a free hat or t-shirt with the logo Pokerstars.com. I took a t-shirt.

On the first day, there were fifty players of 5 tables with ten people each playing Texas Hold ‘EM. I had Wil on my table as a player. I thought this would last till 11 p.m.

After midnight, 25 contestants were gone, the rest received a prize of an additional free hat or t-shirt. I chose and snatched a blue hat. Instead, the first day ended at 3 a.m. in the morning. The plan was to have only nine for the last table, The Captain’s Chair. Only ten survived. Wil lost on my table. Only two from my original table made the final cut. I was and still am clueless at how I was chosen for the Captain’s Table.

The second and final day came at 10 pm sharp. I expected to lose. No way was I going to win. So, like a fool, I decided to be ready for the pajama party afterwards. I dressed up in ST:TNG officer uniform with a rank of lieutenant.

So, Wil was the dealer on the Captain’s Table. I sat and goofed off. I

looked to my friends and waved. I didn’t take this game too seriously. Then, I began to see my fellow players fall. One by one, I began to realize that I must have some Grace from Above and/or Lady Luck at my side. I was still puzzled when the ten chairs became only two- myself included.

With a suicide king and eight, I had my last player put all his chips in. I matched it and expected to lose in the next few rounds. Instead, Wil showed our hands. My opponent had a pair of sixes.

The three cards did not help my hand. Nor did these help my opponent.

The fourth card was an eight. I had a pair that might beat my poker nemesis.

The fifth card told who the winner was. This card benefited neither me nor my rival. I had all the chips.

I was the last person standing. Wil Wheaton helped me wear red baseball jersey. The irony was not lost on me. I was a now a red shirt winner in the first Star Trek Themed Cruise Poker tournament.

Promptly after the contest, I lost \$50 in the cruise casino. I guess I can never win. I can only pinch myself in winning the first Cruise Trek Texas Hold ‘Em poker tournament. This must be a dream.

Videophile

Quatermass Collection
Quatermass Experiment/Quatermass II
Quatermass Experiment (2005)
The Omega Factor
The Stone Tape
Children of the Stones
Chocky - Complete Collection

Last month I got sick, couldn’t really work up the enthusiasm to take care of chores and decided instead to spend almost a week immersed in British science fiction. Some of the DVDs below are out of print. Some are available only in the UK but all are of interest to the science fiction fan and are worth the effort to find. British TV executives seemed to have a higher opinion of their viewers’ intelligence with the result being some really good science fiction.

As is reflected in the reviews below, two days were devoted to various versions of the British cult series, *Quatermass*, created by Nigel Kneale.

Quatermass Collection
BBC, 459 minutes, NR
Region 2 DVD L22.97 (US\$42.53)

This collection covers the three British TV serials from the early 1950’s, *The Quatermass Experiment*, *Quatermass II* and *Quatermass and the Pit*. While I did not see them in their original broadcast I did see parts of the third serial some years ago and have always wanted to see them all.

Only the first two episodes of *The Quatermass Experiment* are still in existence. It was broadcast in 1953 at a time when most studios did not film their live broadcasts and it is a pity the remain-



ing 4 episodes do not exist as these two episodes hooked me totally. While the scripts for the remaining 4 episodes are included as PDFs they are a really poor photocopy of typewritten scripts and almost impossible to decipher. This is the only disappointment in the set.

The Quatermass Experiment can be seen today as the typical “menace from space” storyline but in truth it is one of, if not *the*, first of its kind. A rocket takes off from Earth with three astronauts on board, it goes seriously off course and is believed lost until it crashes in England. But wait - only one of the astronauts is still inside... And there we are left hanging due to the final four episodes being lost *sigh*

Quatermass II finds us some years later with Professor Quatermass working on a new rocket and a plan to colonize the moon and Mars. His daughter’s beau brings a mysterious meteorite for the Professor to examine and we are plunged into a story of alien invasion and government conspiracy.

The final serial of this collection is *Quatermass and the Pit*, possibly the most ambitious of the three serials. While excavating in London, builders stumble across a skull of an “ape man” that is dated at five million years by Dr Matthew Roney, a friend of Professor Quatermass. As Dr. Roney’s team digs further in the excavation they unearth a strange cylinder of an unknown material. Totally uncovered, the cylinder turns out to be a ship with the remains of an insect type being. As Quatermass investigates, the story comes to a thrilling conclusion as the Martian invaders attempt to finalize their colonization of earth - five million years too late!

Nigel Kneale’s story-telling set the standard for many of the basics that science fiction fans take for granted today. These serials are much superior to the Hammer film versions which most fans will be familiar with. The BBC restoration team has done a good job in cleaning up the film and audio though the subtitles are

(Continued on page 14)

Videophile (Continued from page 13) a welcome addition in several scenes. Most highly recommended - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Quatermass Experiment/Quatermass II
DD Home Entertainment,
149 minutes, PG
Region 2 DVD L20.42 (US\$37.81)

This double set is the Hammer film versions of the Quatermass serials reviewed above.

Having watched all three TV serials I tore into this set mostly to see the ending of the *Quatermass Experiment* which is missing in the TV serials. It is obvious that the films were aimed at an American audience with the casting of American actor Brian Donlevy in the part of Professor Quatermass. Director Val Guest also faced the problem of condensing three hours of TV serial into a 90 minute film so there is none of the calm thoughtful deliberation on choices. Instead, Donlevy's Quatermass strides briskly from scene to scene with an assurance that seems arrogant after the Quatermass of the TV serials.

While entertaining enough on their own they do not stack up favorably when compared to the TV versions. Strangely enough, while the TV serial collection included subtitles the movie versions offer neither subtitles or closed captions which would have been helpful in several scenes where the sound is not as clear as it could be.

Recommended for the serious collector. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

The Quatermass Experiment (2005)
DD Home Entertainment,
97 minutes, PG
DVD L12.99 (US \$24.00)

On April 4, 2005, BBC 4 broadcast a live production of the original Quatermass serial. Nigel Kneale was involved in rewriting the script to pare the original 3-hour serial to this 97-minute production. The result is a more faithful reproduction of Kneale's original series than the Hammer films. The on-air bobbles have been edited for the DVD release and I feel it is too bad that the BBC did not include those scenes as out takes. There is also a sort of greenish tinge to the whole film for some strange reason.

This is a welcome addition to my collection. Since this rebroadcast/reproduction follows the TV series script (unlike the Hammer films) it represents a more faithful retelling of the series including the action which took place in the missing episodes. I finally learned what happened between Carroon's wife and Dr Briscoe and the series finale, though taking place in Tate Modern museum instead of Westminster Abbey, is much more satisfying than the "shoot 'em up" ending of the Hammer film. If this

had come in the mail before the Donlevy films I might never have bothered watching them. Running approximately the same length as the Donlevy film, this adaptation shows that it is possible to streamline the series without losing the meat or turning it into a mindless monster chase.

Jason Flemyng (Hyde in *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*) is a good casting choice for Professor Quatermass and there is also the added pleasure of watching David Tennant in a non-*Doctor Who* role as Dr Gordon Briscoe. It would be nice to see the BBC redo the other two Quatermass serials with Flemyng in the Quatermass role.

The DVD includes a 47-minute documentary *Bring Something Back: The Making of The Quatermass Experiment* that is mostly the actors and crew talking about the making of with very little additional info though there are a few funny and interesting anecdotes included. Highly recommended. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

The Omega Factor
Koch Visions, 488 minutes, PG-13
DVD: \$39.98

I ran across this show when I lived overseas and was delighted to find it on DVD from Britain. As of May 2 of this year it is also available on this side of the Atlantic. My first interest in watching the show was the casting of Louise Jameson (Leela on *Doctor Who*) but the show caught my interest all on its own.

The Omega Factor is the story of reporter Tom Crane, a reporter who often covers the supernatural or at least odd ball. While in Edinburgh on a story he is involved in an accident that leaves his wife dead. After her death he finds out the she worked for a secret government agency, Department 7, that investigates all types of psychic phenomena, along with a mutual friend, Dr Anne Reynolds (Louise Jameson). Recruited by Department 7 because of his own psychic powers, Tom begins an investigation into his wife's death that leads him to a vast conspiracy - the Omega group.

Like much British television, this show was written for thinking adults. The paranormal situations were interesting in and of themselves and as the show went on they were shown to be part of an overall conspiracy of possibly international proportions. In many ways, it is the precursor of such shows as *The X-Files* or *Millennium* though much more satisfying than either series.

British television bowed to pressure from a conservative group which objected to the paranormal content and there was never a second series which is truly a shame. It remained in my memory for 25 years and I was quite pleased to stumble across the DVD on Amazon.co.uk, so pleased I snatched it up immediately. The

show measures up to my memories of it; we watched all ten episodes in one sitting. It has just been released in the US and I urge you to go out right now and buy this set if you like intelligent, spooky thrillers. Very highly recommended. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

The Stone Tape
BFI Video Publishing, 89 minutes, PG
DVD L19.99 (US \$36.50)

From the back cover: "Nigel Kneale's classic ghost story *The Stone Tape*, first broadcast by the BBC in 1972 and repeated once only in 1973, represents some of his finest work outside of his justly legendary Quatermass series."

A group of research scientists set up in an old mansion. Their project is to find a new recording medium. On arrival they find that one room has not been finished and it is, unfortunately, a vital room, the storage room for the computer components. As they check it out they discover a ghost presence.

While there is nothing overtly violent in this story, the tale is, nonetheless, creepy and scary. It shows exactly what can be done with good plot and imagination instead of a reliance on flashy special effects. One glaringly obvious indication that this was filmed in the politically incorrect 70s is the repeated reference to the "Japs" as the competitors the group needs to beat to the punch. A lack of either subtitles or closed captions is my major complaint as the sound is somewhat uneven. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Children of the Stones
Second Sight Films, LTD,
187 minutes, PG
DVD L19.99 (US \$36.50)

From the back cover: "What is the powerful force that seems to have taken hold of the village of Millbury? Why are all the people acting so strangely and why do they greet each other with a trancelike 'happy day?'"

These are the questions facing Matthew and his father soon after their arrival. The answers lie in the giant ancient stones that surround the village - a circle from which there may be no escape.

Gareth Thomas (Blake's 7) stars in the cult tale of the supernatural originally broadcast in 1977."

I picked up this DVD for two reasons, first I remember seeing it in the early 80s on PBS and secondly it stars Gareth Thomas from *Blake's 7*. I just love those "If you bought ___ then you might also like ___" recommendations on Amazon's site.

This story held up over the years. I'll admit I started watching it again for the pleasure of watching Thomas in something other than Blake's 7 and then found myself involved in the story. The ending was realistic if not totally "happy ever

after."

Fans of SF, both young and old, should enjoy this set and those fascinated with stone circles will find an interesting explanation in this show. There is plot enough to keep the adults happy and nothing too terrifying for the youngsters.

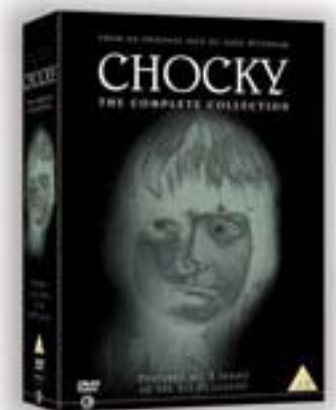
An interesting extra is the interview with Gareth Thomas. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Chocky - The Complete Collection
Second Sight Films LTD,
452 minutes, PG
DVD L24.99 (US \$46.00)

Chocky is based on a John Wyndham novel. While Wyndham is better known for the apocalyptic *The Day of the Triffids* this is a tale of children, aliens and the evil of mankind's greed. This set is comprised of *Chocky*, based on the Wyndham book, and the sequels *Chocky's Children* and *Chocky's Challenge*.

In *Chocky*, Matthew Gore is a typical schoolboy and then, suddenly, his schoolwork drastically improves and he begins showing other, previously unknown talents. When he talks about "Chocky" who is inside his head, his parents at first fear mental illness and then, gradually, Matthew's father comes to recognize that Chocky is real. Unfortunately others believe Chocky is real as well and kidnap Matthew in order to learn about Chocky.

In *Chocky's Children*, Matthew has gone to visit his aunt and meets Albertine, a young math genius. They learn they can communicate with each other via telepathy. Albertine's talents attract the attention of unscrupulous scientists and Chocky must return to help Matthew save Albertine.



In the concluding story, *Chocky's Challenge*, a whole group of children have been brought together to work on a project that will help mankind but the military gets involved and attempts to steal the project and imprison Chocky as well.

While these were obviously done in the 1980s the story is a strong one and holds up well. Wyndham's original is the strongest of the three stories but the other two are good compliments to the original. Recommended. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

In Our Book

Definitely Dead
by **Charlaine Harris**
Ace: \$23.95; 324pp

Oh yeah! Sookie Stackhouse is back wheeling and dealing with the undead and other assorted supernatural critters in the wilds of Bon Temps, Louisiana.

I am sure I am preaching to the converted here when I say how wonderful this whole series of books has been. This is the sixth book and it is just as yummy and engrossing as the last five.

Sookie Stackhouse is a cocktail waitress with telepathic talent at Merlotte's Bar. It's a nice comfortable bar. The current owner, Sam... well he's a mite on the shape-shifting side (usually a collie). Luckily, the town of Bon Temps has a mostly easy peace with those of the supernatural persuasion.

And Sookie, bless her, gets to tangle with all of them.

On this particular outing, Sookie finds that she's inherited from her recently deceased cousin Hadley who was the vampire Queen of Louisiana's consort. And though she doesn't want to, she finds she has to go to New Orleans to claim her inheritance.

And in the meantime, the ghost of Debbie Pelt (a character in the last novel) has come back to haunt Sookie's life. Not literally, funnily enough. But her family is persistent in trying to sort out the circumstances regarding her death and Sookie is reluctant to tell them all.

Ahh, the tale just gets more wonderful as it moves along.

It seems everyone wants ol' Sookie. First, there is Calvin Norris, head of the neighboring clan of were-panthers. Then there is Alcide Herveaux, also a Were, who is still mighty sweet on Sookie. There are also a couple of fairies and some demons and the usual assortment of Weres and vampires. Sookie's friends and potential lovers are just never, well...normal.

Sookie reluctantly goes to New Orleans to sort through Hadley's estate and gets convinced to go to a high-level vampire conference which involves the outrageous court of the vampire Queen of Louisiana and her new King from Arkansas...an uneasy marriage at best, but politically necessary.

Oh, and did I mention? Sookie has a new boyfriend!!!

She completely dumps that sucker Bill. (Okay he really is a sucker, a vampire from the Civil War and Sookie's nearest neighbor). I have to admit, I am sorry she dumped him because he was pretty cool, but he kind of dumped Sookie for another vampire...it's long story...actually, another novel.

But now, Sookie has Quinn, a shapeshifter, whose usual animal form is a were-tiger. I have to admit, based on Ms
Volume 16 Issue 4

Harris' description of Quinn, he ain't my type. He is mostly huge and... bald.

But he is good to Sookie.

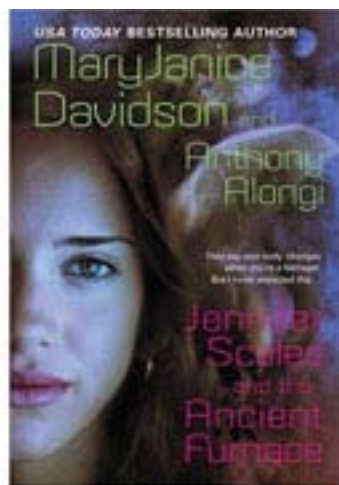
Eric (the gorgeous Viking era vampire), who still wants to jump Sookie's bones and owns Fangtasia (a vampire bar), is back in the story as is Bubba, an undead and very famous performer when alive.

Trust me - this book is full of the scary and heart-pounding escapades that we know and love as Sookie tries to untangle her cousin's legacy and stay alive in vampire-haunted New Orleans. More fun for us! - **Sue Martin**

**Jennifer Scales
and the Ancient Furnace**
by **MaryJanice Davidson
and Anthony Alongi**
Berkley JAM, 259 pp, \$9.99
and

**Jennifer Scales
and the Messenger of Light**
by **MaryJanice Davidson
and Anthony Alongi**
Berkley JAM, 328 pp, \$9.99

Jennifer is a typical teenager, she plays soccer, has just started high school and, oh yes, she's just found out she is a were-dragon. If that isn't enough, she is different from all the other were-dragons. Learning how to handle herself as a



dragon, dealing with ancient enemies and trying to keep her secrets and not lose her friends..... who thought high school could be this hard?

These books are well crafted and are a quick, light read. Ms Davidson and her husband have created a wonderful series for both the young adult fan and the young at heart reader. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

One King, One Soldier
by **Alexander C. Irvine**
\$13.95, Ballantine Books, 337 pp

This is a grail story and a Fisher King story. This is a story of three men seeking the same thing...maybe. George Gibson is a early 20th century ballplayer who has the task of returning the Grail (*yes, the grail of Christian mythology*) to its home in Abyssinia. It wasn't easy trekking across

Africa on foot when part of the journey wasn't even in the real world. At the same time, Arthur Rimbaud is trying to track George and take the Grail since Arthur believes the Grail is for him, the rightful heir. Arthur has a pretty hard time of it as well; as if the Grail was trying not to be found. And, then 50 years later, a young Korean war veteran, Lance Porter, becomes the heir-apparent. Lance only wants to find his girlfriend who is in danger of becoming a commie while attending Berkeley. But he becomes convinced that the Grail is real and that he has an obligation to find it and claim it. He reconciles with his lost brother who was first in line of succession but who renounces the Grail in favor of Lance. He believes that he will be able to reunite with his missing father and save the world with the Grail.

If this all sounds confusing - it's because it is. The author runs the two stories side-by-side in alternating chapters. While this device usually works and makes a simple story more interesting, I only found it a bit tedious. I couldn't figure out, for instance, why he named Arthur so, if he wasn't intended to be the heir. I mean, *Arthur*, for pity's sake. And then to name our eventual hero: Lance. I couldn't figure that one out either. Even the title doesn't seem to have meaning. I actually had a hard time defining why I didn't like this book. The storyline was unnecessarily vague and confusing. Characters were introduced without being fleshed out. While I usually *love* Grail stories, this one gets a big thumbs-down. - **Catherine Book**

Blood Will Tell
by **Jean Lorrach**
Benbella Books, 2001, Trade
Paperback, 278 Pages, \$14.95

Murphy, Kentucky is a town located on the same site as the author's home town of Murray, Kentucky. She says that the police department is based on Kentucky small town police departments but that the characters and events are fictional. The story begins on the campus of Jackson Purchase State University in Murphy. The author, Jean Lorrach, is a professor of English at Murray State University in Murray. She has used what she knows well to build a backdrop for her story. Her references to drug problems in the High School and young women hooking to get money to cover costs show a knowledge of current life and problems in her town. She weaves all of these and many more elements of current small town America into her story.

The dead body of an incredibly elderly man is found in the office of middle-aged Classics Professor, Everett Land. Detective Brandy Mather is called on the case. Who is this man? Where is Professor Land? She is aided by the university's computer scientist, Professor Dan Martin,

in getting information from Professor Land's computer drive which someone had erased incompetently. It turns out to contain part of a document about vampires in an obscure dialect. Brandy's investigation is complicated by her attraction to Dan. To further the mystery, the body of the elderly victim turns out to be that of the 40-something Professor Land. What aged him?

The clues lead Brand to a horrific discovery of a centurie-long project by a Master Vampire who has slain hundreds and will destroy Brandy and those she loves if she can't figure out a way to stop it. Only Dan Martin would believe her because he is himself a vampire - destined to be the victim of the "Harvest" of the Master Vampire.

The novel is well developed and has all the Suspense, Horror and Fear that should be present in a good Horror Novel. I recommend it highly. - **Gary Swaty**

Veniss Underground
by **Jeff Vandermeer**
Bantam Spectra Books, 278 pp, \$14.00

Finally, a Library of Congress cataloging-in-publication of a novel that gets it exactly right! The indicia page nails it perfectly: Civilization. Subterranean. Regression (Civilization). Animal Experimentation. Genetic Engineering. Underground Areas.

(Continued on page 16)

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 59th 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

In Our Book (Continued from page 15)

Let me connect the dots: centuries in our future, government has collapsed, leaving cities like Veniss with their own separate precinct authorities. All the advances in biology have left a menagerie of hybrid animals, including the mistakes that live only to suffer. This creation occurs in the underground levels, true hell on earth. Cities are separated by polluted wildlands of marauding mutants.

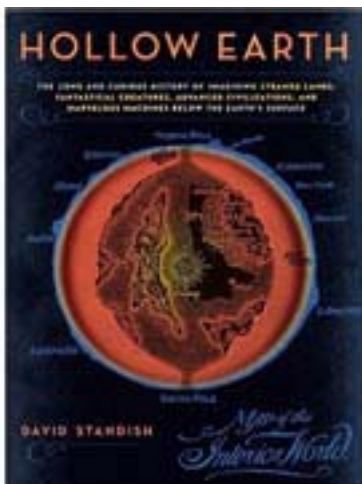
Insert one mythic story of Orpheus' journey into the underworld to rescue his lover Eurydice. The Orpheus is named Shadrach (told in third person), the Eurydice is named Nicola (told in second person), and her twin brother is named Nicholas (told in first person). Shadrach's journey is full of wonders, technological and biological, combining to make a setting that seems almost a fantasy instead of science fiction.

The novel is followed by four stories also set in the Veniss world, which show a progression in time. In the last one, the advanced meercats have organized from servitude to conquest, and are attacking humanity with gigantic dogs. You may never look at dogs and cats in the same way again. And I start to think that maybe the new biology won't solve all of the world's problems after all.

But what a way to come to such questions, in the grip of a mythic story beautifully told. Shadrach's journey to rescue Nicola also resembles the archetypal private eye on a mystery quest into the criminal underworld. Not exactly a mixing of genres, or is it? You can see on Wikipedia that Vandermeer is considered one of the "New Weird" writers, who aspire to the creativity of the old pulp magazines. This confirms it. - **Mike Griffin**

Hollow Earth
by **David Standish**
Perseus Books, 303 pp, \$24.95

From the back cover: "A fascinating and beautifully illustrated cultural history of ideas about what might exist under the Earth's surface-in mythology, religion, science, literature, and plain old crackpottery."



Beliefs in mysterious Underworlds are as old as humanity. From the ancient Sumerians to Incas to modern Christians, nearly every culture has had its special version. However, the idea that the earth has a hollow interior where strange lands, creatures, and civilizations may exist was first proposed as a scientific theory in 1692 by Sir Edmund Halley (of Halley's comet fame). Since then, it has been used as a popular literary motif by writers as varied as Edgar Allen Poe, Jules Verne, Lewis Carroll, L. Frank Baum, and Edgar Rice Burroughs, to name a few.

Hollow Earth traces this notion through the centuries and cultures, exploring how each era's relationship to the notion of a hollow earth reflected its particular hopes, fears, and values. Lavishly illustrated-including Bosch's inspired surreal nightmares of Hell, seventeenth-century maps and diagrams of the interior, illustrations from early Jules Verne editions and other novels, pulp art from World War I through the 1940s, plus movie posters and much more - this unique book will appeal to readers of many sorts: those interested in the history of science, religion, utopian fiction, and real-life experiments; science fiction fans, film buffs, and those intrigued by the remarkable evolution of ideas over centuries."

For a Science Fiction fan, this is a great and well-illustrated book. Being a big fan of Jules Verne and Edgar Rice Burroughs, I enjoyed this book from cover to cover. The first hollow earth book I read was *Tarzan at the Earth's Core* and later the Pellucidar series that Burroughs also wrote. Chapter seven is "Burroughs At the Earth's Core". And Chapter 4 is "Jules Verne: A Journey to the Center of Geology." Both gave me insight to the real lives of both authors.

The end of the book just stops short and leaves you wondering where the last chapter went? Maybe the ninth chapter is up to you to figure out for yourself. The only other thing is I wish *Hollow Earth* was illustrated in color. - **Craig L Dyer**

Sailing the Slipstream:
An Unofficial and Unauthorized Guide to Gene Roddenberry's Andromeda
by **Jill Sherwin**
WriterGroupie Press \$25, 490 pages

The science fiction TV series Gene Roddenberry's *Andromeda* recently completed a five-year run with little fanfare, having fallen off the radar of most genre TV fans even after the fifth and final season was picked up by the SciFi Channel. By the time the series ended, it had about a quarter of the viewers it started with, leaving only the die-hard fans watching the show as it lumbered to a halt. You may ask why we need a comprehensive guide to a series that wasn't as popular as other recent space series. There were some good things done during the

run of the series, and, in some cases, what went on behind the scenes was more interesting than what was produced and put on the screen in the episodes of the series. Jill Sherwin has put together a detailed and extensive guide to *Andromeda*, both on screen and off.

The show started out strong under the guidance of Robert Hewitt Wolfe, who created the *Andromeda* universe from notes and ideas left behind by Gene Roddenberry. But midway through the second season, Wolfe was let go by the producers, derailing any long-term plans Wolfe had for any of the characters or the overall story arc. By the time the series ended, it was a much different show and had gone through many other changes over the five years it was on the air.

In Jill Sherwin's guide to *Andromeda*, she details a lot of the behind-the-scenes action on the series, having interviewed writers and stars of the series for all five seasons. She provides in-depth analysis of each episode; in some cases, detailing changes they went through from the original idea to the finished episode. She points out the high points of the series as well as the low points, discussing what made each episode work (or not) without pulling any punches. Jill was a writer's assistant during the first season of the show and sold a story for the second season, giving her a good look into the

beginnings of the series and insight into what it might have been if Wolfe had been kept on. She talked with the writers who stayed on as well as new writers to give the reader insight into the changes that happened in the later seasons.

The book is well-organized with sections on each episode, as well as season introductions and summaries to give you more information about the big picture within the show as well as what things were going on in the production world to influence the changes. Sherwin has put a lot of work and time into this book and it shows. Details on ordering the book direct from the writer can be found at www.sailingtheslipstream.com - **Lee Whiteside**

Wildwood Road
by **Christopher Golden**
\$12.00, Bantam Books, 311 pp

Christopher Golden does it to me again. He snuck up on me with another drop-dead sneaky bit of horror. This little story is about one of the nicest guys that ever existed in fiction (and certainly doesn't exist in my reality...) Michael is totally in love with his wife, Jillian, who is also such a really sweet, nice person. (Don't you just know something truly awful has to happen to two such unbeliev-

(Continued on page 17)

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In Our Book (Continued from page 16)

ably nice people in a Golden story?) Golden has a talent for putting his innocent protagonists into horrible situations that were truly none of their fault. There are a thousand horror stories about the wannabe wizard/witch/sorcerer who 'unwittingly' unleashes some disgustingly nasty creature on himself. And stories about some unredeemable piece of human trash who gets his/her comeuppance in an awful fashion. Or, even if the good guy is really good and innocent, he does something unbelievably stupid and puts himself or a loved one into a bad situation. But not in a Golden story – his people never do *anything* deserving of what happens to them. It's like having lunch at a MacDonalds and someone you never met before decides to spend their day spraying 9mm bullets all over you and your fellow diners. You just never saw it coming...

For Michael, it started while coming home from a party with his wife. He just happened to be in the wrong place when he almost ran down a little blond-haired girl who was standing on the shoulder after midnight in the middle of nowhere. After a bizarre trip to her house, she left him with the admonition to 'come find me.' And now he has to. He can't sleep or concentrate on work. And he cannot find the house again, no matter how he tries. But the worst is when the deathly, hollow women come to his house to discourage his search. And instead of hurting Michael, they take something invaluable from his beloved wife. Michael's loving, kind wife is now a bitter, angry woman who will strike back at him in every way possible. Now, he has a bigger mission: not just to save the child but to save Jillian and his sanity.

This is such a well-plotted, and well-written story. Golden takes us with Michael every step of the way so that we are there with him. We can understand his desperation and despair that this just might be more than he can deal with. My only criticism – and it is only a matter of taste – is that they continued to be ordinary people in the end when I really wanted them to continue to be heroes and save everyone. - **Catherine Book**

The Thirteenth House by Sharon Shinn Ace Hardcover; \$24.95; 423pp

This is the second book in the "Twelve Houses" series (the first being "Mystic and Rider.") And this is just as entertaining as the first one.

The tale delves deeper into the life of Kirra of House Danalustrous, shapeshifter and healer of the group of mystics and soldiers that were the core of the previous novel. In this tale, we once again go on a journey throughout the land of Gillengaria, to various members of the

Twelve Houses---the upper crust of Gillengarian society. However, Kirra decides to travel in style (unlike her travels in the precious novel), and in disguise this time, hoping that people will be more forthcoming around her sister, Casserah who does not like to travel and whose personality is much more acerbic than Kirra's. Casserah and Kirra's father Malcolm need someone to travel about and get the pulse of the members of the Twelve Houses. Is there a revolt fomenting against the king and his family? And who is trying to kill the man designated as Regent, and should the king die before his daughter and heir reaches her majority?

Kirra's travels are fascinating. And she falls in love with Romar Brendyn, the designated regent. They fall into a passionate affair, which really adds spice to the novel. Of course, there is one itty bitty problem: Romar Brendyn is married. And Kirra actually meets Brendyn's wife and to her chagrin, finds she is a very sweet, even-tempered woman.

So, poor Kirra, swept away by love, constantly fights her overpowering emotions and subsequent guilt (Brendyn doesn't fight his too hard). Their romance takes place during a Royal Progress with the Queen Valri and Princess Amalie as they attend the summer season's round of parties and balls. The Royal Progress is not just a lark by two royal ladies but a much needed show of strength from King Baryn. The Houses need to see his wife and daughter are capable women.

As they go from House to House, Kirra and her companions (Cammon, Justin, Senneth, Tayse and Donal join them to protect the Queen and Princess) find that revolt is still very much in the air. We even run into the nasty Halchon Gisseltess from the previous book, who is the point man in all the unrest. And who still makes no secret of his wanting to marry Senneth after he gets rid of his current wife.

The novel is full of intrigues and battles and interesting characters. We have less of the Daughters of the Pale Mother who had a strong presence in the last book. They are still about, still preaching the evils of believing in the powers of mystics, but their presence is more muted this time out.

But there is still plenty here to keep you interested and anxious for the next book! A great Summer read. ~ Sue Martin

The Science of Sherlock Holmes by E. J. Wagner John Wiley and Sons Hoboken New Jersey 2006 Hard Cover 244 Pages, includes Index and Bibliography

As the Subtitle says "From Baskerville Hall to the Valley of Fear, the Real Forensics behind the Great Detective's Greatest Cases." Doubtless we owe a

great deal to the fact that Conan Doyle was a Medical man first, then an author.

E. J. Wagner has produced a marvelous ramble through the development of Victorian Forensic Medicine and Crime Scene Analysis. Any follower of the current CSI TV shows will appreciate this. It puts crime scene analysis into historical perspective.

The book includes chapters covering autopsies, folk lore and superstition, natural history, poisons, the Victorian crime scene in London, tattoo marks, scars, the Victorian criminal gang scene, ballistics, footprints, fingerprints, Bertillon measurements, handwriting identification, soil identification, hair identification, fiber identification, blood identification and pseudo-science including phrenology and inherited criminal traits.

The book also notes instances where the Great Detective falls prey to the scientific misconceptions of his time paying particular attention to several phrenological references. Wagner quotes Holmes in his own defense from "The Adventure of the Empty House" where he says "that sometimes we come into those realms of conjecture where even the most logical mind may be at fault."

The book is a must have for any murder mystery reader and any history buff; not just the Holmes fans. – Gary Swaty

The Food of the Gods and How it Came to Earth by H.G. Wells Dover, 192 pp, \$6.95

Food of the Gods and How it Came to Earth is one of H.G. Wells' lesser known works, published in 1904.

A pair of scholarly scientists stumble onto a way to make food grow faster and bigger which will help meet the growing needs of society's appetite. But when folks try the new food on children, it is soon apparent that the children are growing bigger and smarter. Soon society is split by food-borne distrust.

Written satirically, the book is entertaining as we deal with social commentary relevant to the current genetic engineering and ethics debate. - Pam Allan

Kitty Goes To Washington by Carrie Vaughn Warner, 342 pp, \$6.99

Kitty, the werewolf heroine of *Kitty and the Midnight Hour*, returns. Having left Colorado and her pack behind, Kitty takes her paranormal radio talk show on the road, broadcasting from a different city each week. She is coming to terms with the death of her friend T.J., her ouster from her pack, and her public 'outing' as a real werewolf. Then she is subpoenaed by Congress to testify at a hearing that is delving into the existence of supernatural beings, werewolves and vampires and...

"oh my!" Throw in a rabid Senator, a shady government researcher, a mysterious old werewolf, a beautiful and powerful vampire and a bounty hunter on top of the usual Washington D.C. politics and Kitty is having a busy week..... there is almost no time for sightseeing.

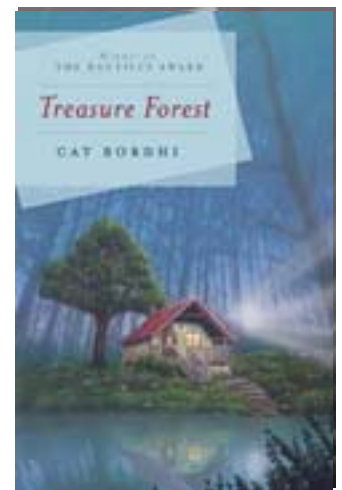
This sequel is fast paced and action packed. I sat down and read it straight through to the end. I can't wait for the next book in the series. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Treasure Forest by Cat Bodhri Ace Books; 288 pp.; \$14

This is a sweet book. Mostly a juvenile, I think. But the most enthusiastic word I can come up with is, well, "like." I liked this book. It is a deep, quiet stream of a tale, very much about maintaining our connection to the natural world around us so we do not lose the essentials of our spirit. A quote from poet Gerald Manley Hopkins, "The dearest freshness deep down in things" is a mantra throughout this book.

The MacLennon family moves to take possession of Grandma Daphne's house in the deep woods after she dies. Lily, Grandma Daphne's daughter, doesn't want to return to her childhood home because of trauma she suffered there while growing up. The husband Peter is a pleasant, confused cipher in this tale and Lily, frankly, is mostly a hysterical, touchy woman. Because of how she is presented, I don't much care what her issues are. Neither parent is fleshed out much. The subsidiary characters in this novel are much more interesting.

The two children, Ben and Sara, are the stars of this tale (along with a few others). It is their journey into their inner selves and how they help their parents gain their equilibrium with the natural



world that is the heart of the matter. I am not real sure of their ages though at the beginning of the book Ben is in seventh grade and Sara is twelve.

The big drama in this novel is that Sara goes missing one afternoon. Of course, after she's been soundly told to

(Continued on page 18)

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In Our Book (Continued from page 17)

not wander off. She goes missing for several days...and eventually the search for her because a bit of a media circus. The scary bit is there is a lone wolf of a man out there in the woods, with a connection to Lily that lives in a burrow in the ground (sort of a rough-edged *smial* like a hobbit). He lives off the land and can "talk" to ravens and coyotes. His name is Daggett and he is the boogie man of the tale. He's moderately creepy and has something to do with Sara's disappearance.

The book is a pretty, moderately interesting journey. There are no real surprises and though there is drama, it is not that compelling. The writing is fine; Bodhri constructs tight little paragraphs and short chapters. Overall, the novel is esoteric and a bit cosmic. Both children learn not only about the well of stillness/wholeness each soul contains, but some practical information as well. This is the start of "The Forest Inside" trilogy. But unless Bodhri does something very unexpected in the next two books, I think I'll pass on them. - Sue Martin

In The Face of Death
by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro
Benbella Books, 2001, Trade
Paperback, 341 Pages, \$14.95

The reason I am belatedly reviewing this 2001 book is the epiphany I came to when I read it this week. Chelsea Quinn Yarbro has written a marvelous Historical novel. It is not Horror in the technical sense. It does not rouse those emotions of terror, fear of the unknown. It does not probe the nameless fears so beloved of Poe, Le Fanu, Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith... Its sole claim on Horror is that the main character is a Vampire.

Madelaine de Montallia, a French Vampire created by Ragozy, Compte de Saint-Germaine a century and a third before, is our protagonist. During her long life, she has developed a scholarly bent and an interest in preserving for posterity the culture and beliefs of the Native

Americans. To this end she travels across the U.S. for eight difficult years ending up in San Francisco in 1855. Here our story truly begins.

She meets William Tecumseh Sherman, a San Francisco Banker and develops a loving Vampire relationship. The novel delves into Sherman's psyche, personality and character. She leaves continuing her studies of Native American culture. Periodically she send her monographs to Saint-Germaine in Amsterdam for publication.

In 1860 she is trapped by the American Civil War and attempts to avoid it by residing in rural Georgia. Here she takes care of orphans and wounded soldiers from both sides and encounters Sherman again.

The contradictions and complexity of Sherman's personality make this an interesting book. The wonderful detail in the research about people and places, culture and mind set, made it difficult to put down. I enjoyed it hugely as an historical novel about a difficult era in our history.

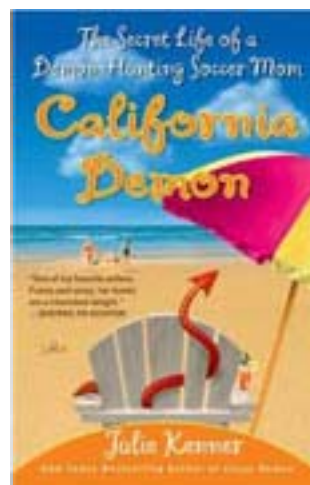
But again it is not Horror. In fact, I would say that most of Chelsea Quinn Yarbro's recent output falls into the historical novel category. She calls this one "An Historical Horror Novel." The woman has been tricking Horror Fans into reading excellent Historical Novels. - Gary Swaty

California Demon
by Julie Kenner
Berkley, 342 pp, \$14.00

Kate Conner is a retired demon hunter living in the suburbs with her second husband and two kids. The events of *Carpe Demon* brought Kate out of retirement. Now she juggles car pools, play dates and political dinners with her secret life as a demon hunter. Toss in Christmas shopping, demonic surfers, a mysterious rogue demon hunter and her daughter's first serious crush and what is a mom to do?

This series is delightful. Often touted

as "what happens if Buffy the Vampire Slayer, grew up, got married and retired to the suburbs," it is developing into much more. Kate balances her two lives deftly, giving up a demon hunt to comfort her



best friend over a cheating husband and mixing a demon hunt with a Christmas shopping stop. Things are becoming more complicated for Kate, there are the questions about her first husband's death, what to tell her 14 year old daughter about her past, not to mention their constant debate about dating, the needs of her current husband's race for political office, her strange attraction to the new teacher at school and oh, it does prove the old adage, "a friend will help you move but a good friend will help you move a body" as Laura helps Kate dispose of a dead demon.

As soon as the book arrived in the mail I opened the package and read it in one sitting. I can hardly wait for the next one. - Stephanie L Bannon

Ghost Hunter
by Jayne Castle [Jane Ann Krentz]
Jove Books New York 2006 [Paperback
340 Pages]

Two hundred years after the collapse of the Inter Stellar Transportation Curtain, the isolated Earth Colony on the planet Harmony has evolved in ways its planners would not have expected. From the amber in Alien structures beneath, they have developed a civilization which utilizes psi energy "as a power source for everything from automobiles to dishwashers."

Elly St. Clair was descended from the founders of the powerful Guild which regulates application of psi energy. Cooper Boone was the head of the Aurora Springs Guild. They were to be married but because of a misunderstanding, Elly flees to Cadence City, a major source for psi materials and research, and opens St. Clair's Herbal Emporium in Old Quarter near "the massive green quartz wall of the dead city."

Six months later Cooper follows her and she immediately drags him into a rescue beneath the city. A friend of hers has discovered a drug lab there and is injured and hiding in the ancient under-

ground passages. To rescue her they must avoid nasty Psi traps and Psychic Ghosts. During this mess, they uncover a plot which endangers the Guild and the safety of all Harmony. They must figure out what is going on and who is responsible before dire things come about. What they don't realize is that they and their relationship are pivotal.

The story has Romance, Excitement and Danger in a very skillfully developed and unusual universe. If you like this, look at *Afterglow* and *Bridal Jitters*, also set on Harmony. - Gary Swaty

Forbidden Cargo
by Rebecca K. Rowe
Edge, 352 pp, \$14.95

Forbidden Cargo is a debut novel. The year is 2110. On Mars, a secret project to create the next step in human evolution. The world has developed the M [molecular] A [advantage] M [machine] a virtual instant access experience to all humanity's Knowledge. Cried Xerkler, it's creator is unwittingly entangled in a plot by the council to prove the existence of an illegally engineered race called Imagofas or nanogens. Revered by many, they're considered by the council to be a dangerous aberration and a threat to mankind..

In their quest to prove this crime against humanity, the Council abducts two Imagofas from Mars and smuggles them to Earth, but the abduction takes an unexpected twist and the Imagofas become fugitives. The Council wants them dead, others want to capitalize on their existence. The Imagofas just want to go home.. To escape, they must rescue Xerkler, with the aid of the Cadet, a hard core gamer, Ochbo, a cleanlife pervert, and Prometheus, an enlightenment seeking MAMintelligence, and get back to Mars.

This is an engrossing book where science and science fiction meet in a complex future that is both incredible and believable and moves with the speed of light. Try and put it down between plot twists. Go ahead. Try.... - Pam Allan

Glasshouse
by Charles Stross
Ace, 335 pp, \$24.95

Glasshouse is a new novel by the author of *Accelerando*. When Robin wakes up in a clinic with most of his memories missing, he finds someone is trying to kill him.

In a 27th century world where teleporting is the transit of choice, and wars are fought by network worms that then edit memories and target historians, Robin has been targeted for the memories he may have once had. Searching for a place to hide, Robin volunteers for a polity that sets up a pre-acceleration society with anonymous identities. But

(Continued on page 19)

In Our Book (Continued from page 18)

once in the escape-proof facilities, Robin will undergo even more radical changes at the mercy of the experimenters and a destiny that none perceived.

Well-written, thought provoking, and action packed, this is not only a good read but you'll want to add it to your library to reread multiple times. - **Pam Allan**

Regeneration by Julie E. Czerneda Daw, 543 pp, \$24.95

Regeneration is volume three of the *Species Imperative* series. Dr. Mackenzie Conner and Dr. Emily Mamani are back from their harrowing experience with the Ro and now must solve the riddle of a species of Alien whose migratory path threatens to annihilate all forms of sentient life. Who are the bad guys, the Ro or the Dhryn? Who is the manipulator and who is the tool? It will take all their strength, skills and courage, as well as a cast of delightful aliens, to solve the puzzle before their part of the galaxy is wiped out.

Czerneda writes an action-packed tale, full of fascinating and fully realized characters and the wackiest bunch of aliens that ever existed in a bureaucratic setting. The author's biological training gives reality to a warning about interfering with environment, evolution, and normal biological cycles. I now want to read the first two volumes but *Regeneration* stands alone quite well. This one is a keeper. - **Pam Allan**

Vellum by Hal Duncan Del Ray Books, 463 pp, \$14.95

Vellum is the start of *The Book of All Hours*. The second volume, *Ink*, is listed as forthcoming.

The year is 2017 and angels and demons walk the earth. Once human, they have been transformed by the ancient machine code that provide the basis for reality itself. The unkin, those who have been transformed, seek the *Book of All Hours*, the mythical blueprint where all of reality is transcribed. But the mythical tome has been lost in the Vellum, where all of eternity is only a scratch on its surface.

The Vellum - where a fallen angel and a renegade devil are about to settle an age old feud, and where past, present, and future will collide with ancient worlds and myths.

Within the constantly changing reality of a war that has raged throughout space and time, it becomes a lingering nightmare in a temporal schizophrenic's mind, in a world where nothing stays the same and characters seem to dance between the pixels of transient realities.

Speculative fiction it definitely is - but seemingly creating its own sub-genre like Vandermeer's *City of Saints and Madmen*. Well-written with quirky characters - stand back: Vellum may burn. - **Pam Allan**.

The Blood Books, Volume 1 by Tanya Huff Daw, 554 pp, \$7.99

The Blood Book, Volume 1 is the first two books of the Vicki Nelson and Henry Fitzroy series. There will be two additional volumes in this series.

In *Blood Price*, Vicki Nelson was a homicide detective - a good one, till vision loss took her job, and she became a private investigator. She becomes enmeshed in a case involving dark magic and to stop the killings, she partners with Henry Fitzroy, a romance writer, who is also the illegitimate son of Henry VIII, and a vampire with knowledge of the occult realms.

In *Blood Trail*, Henry and Vicki must stop an assassin with silver bullets who is decimating a family of werewolves that had peacefully coexisted with their neighbors for centuries.

I look forward to the entire series coming out in doubles. My set of singles had gotten pretty battered in moving. For those who have never read the series, I envy your pleasure in delving into your first adventure in this world of fast moving, memorable characters and humor. If you haven't already got them: Wallets out, Charge. - **Pam Allan**

The Four Forges by Jenna Rhodes Daw, 547 pp, \$23.95

The Four Forges is the first volume of *The Elven Ways*. Kerith is a land without magic. The Magi Wars killed the Magi, and only their Galdarkian warriors created to fight the Magi wars remain. The Galdarkans, the peaceful Dwellers, Kernan tradesmen, and brutish Bolgers had all coexisted after the wars until the arrival of the Vaelinars, who arrived on the winds of a spell storm with no memory of their past. Gradually they pieced together a past and resumed old feuds. They also brought elemental magic with them. Now, years later, the accords that ended the feuding are in danger of being shattered. Illegal arms are being forged. Assassination attempts on the Queen, and numerous attempts to shift the balance of power are rife. There are attacks on the Dwellers, and pollution of the sacred river. Those who would stand against the evils are led by Lariel Anderieon, her brother Jeredon, and the Dweller family, the Farbranches who adopted Rivergrace, a Vaelarian child brought to them as a babe tied to a kindling raft who came with no history and hidden talents of her own. Can this dedicated group find a way to prevent a devastating Civil War?

Rhodes has built a fully realized world with engaging characters with a dangerous manifest destiny. The characters are complex and real in perilous times and leave you waiting anxiously to see what is resolved. A bright beginning for a new light on the fantasy horizon. - **Pam Allan**

The House of Storms by Ian MacLeod Ace Books, 457 pp, \$24.95

Mr. MacLeod is also the author of the *Great Wheel* and *The Light Ages*. Alice Maynell has climbed to the exalted rank of Greatgrandmistress of the Guild of Telegraphers. Her only son, Ralph, is dying of consumption. No medicine will cure him. Alice takes him to Invercombe for the benefits of clean sea air. But she also hopes for healing from the home of the changelings, Einfell.

Now healed, ignorant of how, Ralph finds love in the arms of a servant girl, Marion Price. As they plan for their future, Alice sets events in motion, events that threaten to not only tear lovers apart but also end the Age of Light.

The book features not only perfect world-building (though not a perfect world) and complex plotting, it also features characters that grow before your eyes into complex protagonists. MacLeod leaves no character unfleshed, no matter how minor.

This is a keeper. The language is exquisite, drawing the reader into the story and holding them spellbound. Urban Fantasy at its best - **Pam Allan**

The Lost Fleet: Dauntless by Jack Campbell Ace, 293 pp, \$6.99

The Lost Fleet: Dauntless is a stand-alone but is set to spawn a series. The Alliance has been fighting the Syndics for a century and losing badly. Now the Alliance fleet is crippled and stranded in enemy territory. Their only hope is a man who has been in hibernation for most of that century and has been turned into a heroic legend that never existed. The admiral, commanding the fleet has turned over his command to negotiate with the

(Continued on page 20)

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In Our Book (Continued from page 19)

enemy who then proceeded to destroy them and their staff, Geary has awakened as leader of a fleet about to be destroyed.

Geary must ignore the worship and do his duty, save the fleet and the hypernet key that may be the key to winning the war, and do it despite the rebellious officers under his command. To do it, he will have to become the myth.

Campbell has written a fine volume of military science fiction, an exciting edge of your seat ride with characters that carry you along involved with the action so it is hard to put down. If you have a liking for military science fiction you'll want to join this fleet. - Pam Allan

The Shining City
by Kate Forsythe
Roc, 522 pp, \$ 7.99

The Shining City is book two of *Rhiannon's Ride* which began with *The Tower of Ravens*. Rhiannon is a wild half human, half Satyricorn girl with strong magical talent. Lewen, an apprentice witch, has convinced her to return with him and learn to use those talents. She is also the only witness to the illegal acts of a malevolent Lord-sorcerer who would destroy the Kingdom. Before she can bear

witness, she is imprisoned, Lewen is ensorcelled away, and she is condemned to death. Her nights are haunted by the malevolent ghost of a dead queen who wants her body to live again. Rhiannon vows to escape and win back Lewen with the help of her tamed, black flying horse.

This basic Fantasy with well-drawn characters, good plotting, and enough intrigue to please Machiavelli is an entertaining adventure well worth the read. - Pam Allan

To Serve and Submit
by Susan Wright
Roc, 299 pp. \$14.00

To Serve and Submit is a stand-alone novel. Marja is a girl of the fens, beautiful and capable of communicating with olfs, the ethereal pixie-ish spirits of the land. Her family barely gleans a poor living from the swamps.

When Lexander, the handsome procurer for the Pleasure houses makes an offer - she is sold into slavery to become schooled in seduction and the arts of carnal delight. She discovers she is a true submissive and grows to love her master. When Lexander frees her, she finds few care about the conquered or who oppose them. Caught up in the raging torrent of blood, betrayal, and intrigue, Marja must

accompany a fallen noblewoman on a perilous quest to save their precious land and rejoin Lexander to free the other sex slaves.

Well written, this is essentially a sexual fantasy of dominance and submission with only the olfs and strange background to give it claim to the "fantasy" genre. - Pam Allan

Alphanauts
by J. Brian Clarke
Edge, 325 pp, \$14.95

Alphanauts is the second book by the author of the *Expediter*.

Genser's world is earthlike, a place for mankind to go, but the travelers that found it also found the Earth Allergy. Deep sleep has its long term effects, The Alphanauts will return to Genser's world and prepare for colonists. But when they return, they are shot down by an ancient ship from another space going species.. And there is a ship two from still another entity at war with the first. The humanoid peoples have devolved over the millennia.



But the sentient ships are still aware and smart enough to survive. They also have the Catbirds, a semi-sentient form of flying warm fuzzies full of unconditional love that came with ship one. They love humans too.

As the Alphanauts struggle to form a working gestalt, another ship arrives two years early with a sentient computer at the helm and hitchhikers that were fragmented and sucked in on the new ships trip through alternate time/space. After getting back from reintegrating their unwilling stowaways, they are faced with still more problems. Will they survive and get the colony going with all he parties involved.?

Clarke has written a page turner with scientist-heros as conflicted as any human but with practicality and compassion from the Golden Age of SF. An excellent read that I hope will encourage more books by this author. - Pam Allan

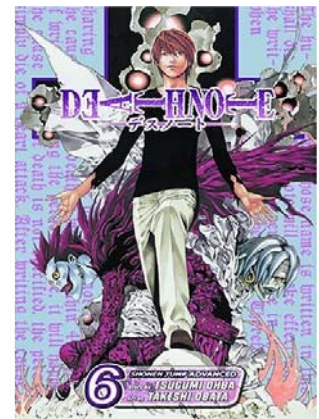
MangaZone

ConNotations introduces a new column this issue - MangaZone will bring you reviews and news of Manga and Comics

DeathNote Volume. 1-6
by Tsugumi Ohba, Takeshi Obata
(Illustrator)
Tokyopop/VIZ Media, 200 to 210 pages,
\$7.99 each

I recently read Deathnote and it was a wonderful twisting mystery. I was drawn into the story instantly.

The story follows a Shinigami (a Japanese death god) named Ryuk, who drops his death note (a notebook carried by Shinigami in which they write the



names of people who die soon after.) A young Japanese high school genius named Light finds it and decides to use it to make the world a better place, by killing off criminals under the name of Kira. Soon an international taskforce of joint nation law enforcement agencies comes together to solve the murders. They call in the master sleuth L to capture Kira. As they start trying to identify each other in a dangerous game of cat and mouse, Light and the real L soon become friends while still trying to keep their identities from each other. As their schemes get closer and closer to each other finding out a fake Kira pops up stating she believes in what the real one is doing and want to help. The 2 Kiras meet and Light gains an ally and an unexpected girlfriend in Miu. L gets closer to discovering the identity of both Kiras but when he is onto them they suddenly get amnesia and soon while they are in custody a third Kira surfaces. Now Light, Miu, and L team up to find and capture the new Kira.

Will they find the new Kira without killing each other and what is the secret behind the Shinigami and the Deathnote?
- NinjaKitty

HELP WANTED

Do you enjoy CopperCon? HexaCon? Any of the other local volunteer, fan-run conventions? CopperCon and HexaCon and the others are staffed completely by unpaid volunteers, from the chair person to the volunteer that helps for only one hour.

If you enjoy our events and want them to continue then please consider helping any or all of Arizona's fan run events.

For information on available CopperCon positions please contact us at cu26@coppercon.org or www.coppercon.org

For information on available HexaCon positions or to volunteer to run a game please contact us at hex16@hexacon.org or www.hexacon.org

Our parent organization, the Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society (CASFS) is also looking for new members. Check our web site at www.casfs.org for information on meetings and upcoming events.

Musty Tomes

Earth Abides
by **George R. Stewart**
first published in 1949, new
introduction by **Connie Willis**,
Ballantine
Del Rey trade paperback, 359 pp.,
\$13.95

I'm very impressed with *Earth Abides*. George R. Stewart was a California historian before he started writing fiction. Having explored in non-fiction the way

that human society adapts (or fails to adapt) to environmental circumstances beyond its control, he wrote two novels in the 1940s on the same theme, *Fire* (about a massive forest fire) and *Storm* (about a blizzard in the Sierras).

I'm enjoying *Earth Abides* not as a sci-fi book but simply as another of his explorations of mankind and society colliding with the laws of nature. Very timely in these days of global warming and bird flu! I especially like the fact that he's writing about worldwide apocalypse and the end of civilization, yet he keeps the story at a very simple human level, and he fills it with finely detailed observa-

tions: the grass starting to grow up through cracks in the sidewalks and streets; the puzzled, hungry dogs that roam the city; the manicured suburban landscapes starting to go wild with weeds; gutters and culverts plugged up (no one left to unplug them) and new patterns of drainage and erosion emerging; roads disappearing under new levels of soil and vegetation; constant unintended forest fires filling the air with smoke; farm fields ripe with corn and wheat standing unharvested until they rot; etc. This type of stuff is far more vivid and powerful, I think, than any mere description of the apocalypse itself could be. He was right to let it happen

“off-stage” and to focus not on the unnamed disease, or how it spread, or what the world was like during those few weeks, but to concentrate on the aftermath and the survivors.

His first notable work, published in 1936, was *Ordeal by Hunger*, the definitive account of the Donner party. Don't think of it as history, think of it as a Shakespearean tragedy with the gods conspiring to put human beings to the ultimate test, and to see just how far they will sink or how high they will rise. The book is filled with heroes and villains, survivors and victims, the helpless and the inexhaustible. If you read it and don't find yourself moved, appalled, and amazed, you ain't human. If nothing else, the account of the Christmas enjoyed by the snow-shoers, crossing the Sierras on foot through a blizzard, will make you appreciate our modern conveniences like never before. - **Tom Wright**

The Skylark of Space
by **Edward E. “Doc” Smith**
Pyramid Books, 159 pp.

Not only did the pulp magazine *Amazing Stories* publish Buck Rogers in 1928, but they also put out this first “Doc” Smith story, launching the space opera genre. This one has a readable style different from his later novels. To convey female characters and love interest, he turned to a neighboring housewife for collaboration. Mrs. Lee Hawkins Garby shared the credits as coauthor in early editions. We get lots of romance, culminating in a grand double wedding on another planet.

Action still abounds. There is scientific discovery of a space drive, abduction of the hero's fiancée, the chase, the rescue, alien treachery, an alliance with the villain from Earth, defeat of the bad aliens, and unfortunate fascist edges that fit the tenor of the times. Upon the defeat of the bad guys, the good aliens make the hero “our overlord, the ultimate authority upon all Osnome,” or in other words a Fuehrer (chap 21). These Osnomians practice Nazi eugenics. “They have no hospitals for the feeble-minded or the feeble-bodied; all such are executed” (chap 19). What a perfect world for a grand wedding. Ultimate escapist power fantasies for girls and boys of 1928.

Such aberrations can be overlooked to enjoy the cosmic battles of good-versus-evil in Smith's later books, but various authors have not let it go. Norman Spinrad satirized nazi sci-fi in ‘The Iron Dream’ and Harry Harrison parodied the opening of ‘Skylark’ in ‘Star Smashers of the Galaxy Rangers’. Enough parodies exist by now that they probably comprise their own genre. To really enjoy them, you have to first read the originals, though, shouldn't you? Only Cervantes got away with helping the reader avoid that. Don Quixote would complain about the feats of his literary heroes, thus informing us of various genre novels. So, DO read Doc Smith before you get into the parodies, and by all means read them too! - **Mike Griffin**

Legends of the Past... Voices of the Future...

You'll find that and much more at

the
Dragon Page



Michael and Evo take science fiction, fantasy, horror, fandom and general geekiness to the next level with *The Dragon Page*, a family of unique, high-energy talk shows that comes to you on the airwaves, on your computer, or wherever you choose to be through the wonders of podcasting.

From the current buzz in comics and gaming, to in-depth conversations with influential people in the sci-fi/fantasy industry, to news of the downright weird, *The Dragon Page with Michael & Evo* offers you up a delectable slice of sci-fi.

“COVER-TO-COVER”



Cover To Cover is a book-focused show airing on XM Satellite and syndicated radio, talking to speculative fiction authors, both new and established



Slice of SciFi turns its attentions to the fantastic realms of TV and film, and the fandoms that keep them alive



Wingin' It is a show about everything and nothing in particular... from beer to gaming to SF conventions, you can find it in this show

Featuring past interviews with authors and actors such as Ray Bradbury, Cory Doctorow, Kevin J. Anderson, Ellen Datlow, Kage Baker, Bruce Campbell, and Wil Wheaton, you wouldn't want to miss a show!

the
Dragon Page
radio talk show



<http://www.dragonpage.com/>

<http://www.sliceofscifi.com/>

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 19th 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

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>, 602-955-9446; or Ron Harvey <rbh1s@yahoo.com>, 480-775-4690 for more info or impromptu juggling sessions.

ARIZONA LANBASHERS LEAGUE A collaboration of computer gaming enthusiasts, the Arizona LANbashers 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 Web: 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 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

*******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

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

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 "T" 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 determined. For more information, write PO Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285; call Mike Willmoth, 480-945-6890, Email mwillmoth@earthlink.net Webpage: 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. 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 or email 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

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.

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

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

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: myrddinal@aol.com Web 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 masquerades. 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 or 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 Web page: 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 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 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 Web www.themonline.org

TUCSON FAN ALLIANCE E-Mail Address is Bkoehler@Juno.com or 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

(Continued on page 23)

Club Listings (Continued from page 22)

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 membership 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

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

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

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 Webpage: www.westernsfa.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

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 Email: info@casfs.org

Convention Listings

BUBONICON 38 (Aug 18-20 '06) Wyndham Airport Hotel, **Albuquerque NM**. GoH: Ben Bova. TMs: Catherine Cogswell, David Mattingly. Guest Artist: Kathleen Lowe. Memb: \$35 to 7/31/06, \$40 at door. Info: NMSF Conference, Box 37257, Albuquerque NM 87176; Craig Chrissinger, (505) 266-8905; email: cwcraig@nmia.com; website: <http://bubonicon.home.att.net>

L.A.CON IV / WORLDCON 64 (Aug 23-27 '06) Hilton Anaheim / Anaheim Marriott / Anaheim Convention Center, **Anaheim CA**. GoH: Connie Willis. AGoH: James Gurney. FGoH: Howard DeVore. Special Guest: Frankie Thomas. Memb: \$175 / C\$210 / 150 / £100 / A\$225 to 7/1/06. Info: L.A.con IV, c/o S.C.I.F.I., Inc., Box 8442, Van Nuys CA 91409. International Agents: Canada: Lloyd & Yvonne Penney, 1706 - 24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON M9C 2B2, Canada (Canadian cheques to Lloyd Penney). UK: John Harold, Robbie Bourget, 8 Warren Close, Langley Slough, Berkshire SL3 7UA, UK (UK / Euro cheques to John Harold); Australia: Edwin Scribner, 12 Richmond St., Cronulla, NSW 2230,

Australia (Australian cheques to Edwin Scribner). Email: info@laconiv.org; website: www.laconiv.org

COPPERCON 26 (Sept 1-4, 2006) **Tempe AZ** 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 Web www.coppercon.org

PHOENIX CACTUS COMICON (September 23-24, 2006) **Mesa AZ** 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/>

SILCON 2006: COMICS ON & OFF THE PAGE (Oct 6-8 '06) DoubleTree Hotel, **San Jose CA**. GoHs: Mark Bode, Steve Englehart. Memb: \$35 to 8/31/06, then \$45. Info: SiliCon 2006, 1009 E. Capitol Expressway #415, San Jose CA 95121-2415; email: chair@siliconventions.com website: www.siliconventions.com

HEXACON 16 (October 13-15, 2006) **Phoenix AZ** 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

WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION 2006: ROBERT E. HOWARD CENTENNIAL (Nov 2-5 '06) Renaissance Hotel, Arboretum, **Austin TX**. GoHs: Glen Cook, Dave Duncan. TM: Bradley Denton. Editor GoH: Glenn Lord. AGoH: John Jude Palencar. Robert E. Howard Artist Guest: Gary Gianni. Memb: \$125 to 7/31/06. Info: FACT, Inc., Box 27277, Austin TX 78755; website: www.worldfantasy.org

TUCSON 33 (Nov 10-12 '06) InnSuites Hotel, **Tucson AZ**. TM: Edward Bryant. GoHs: TBA. Memb: \$35 to 5/8/06, \$40 to

9/5/06, then \$45. Info: TusCon, Box 2528, Tucson AZ 85702-2528; fax: (520) 571-7180; email: basfa@earthlink.net; website: <http://home.earthlink.net/~basfa>

LOSICON 33 (Nov 24-26 '06) Los Angeles Airport Marriott, **Los Angeles CA**. Theme: Exploring the Golden Ages of Science Fiction. GoH: William Tenn. FGoH: Fred Patten. Memb: \$35. Info: Loscon 33, C/O Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, 11513 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood CA 91601; email: info@loscon.org; website: www.loscon.org

SMOFCON 24 (Dec 1-3 '06) Hotel Phillips, **Kansas City MO**. Convention runners con. Info: www.smofcon.org

WORLD HORROR CONVENTION 2007 (Mar 29-Apr 1 '07) Toronto Marriott Downtown Eaton Center, **Toronto, Ontario, Canada**. GoHs: Michael Marshall Smith, Nancy Kilpatrick. AGoH: John Picacio. MC: Sephera Giron. Publisher GoH: Peter Crowther. Editor GoH: Don Hutchison. Info: email: amanda@whc2007.org; website: www.whc2007.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:



**MESA
CONVENTION
CENTER
SEPT. 23 - 24**

ARIZONA'S SIGNATURE POP CULTURE EVENT FOR COMIC BOOKS, ANIME, TOYS & GAMING.

COMICS GUESTS JUST ADDED:



MATT JACOBS



JOSH MIDDLETON



ARMAND VILLAVERT

ALSO ATTENDING:

- TERRY AUSTIN
- JAKE BLACK
- JOSH BLAYLOCK
- BRET BLEVINS
- MIKE BULLOCK
- AMANDA CONNER
- SHANNON DENTON
- RON GARNEY
- JUSTIN GRAY
- RAVEN GREGORY
- MARAT MYCHAELES
- JIMMY PALMIOTTI
- BRIAN PULIDO
- STEVE RUDE
- BILLY TAN

+ MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED!

ANIME GUESTS JUST ADDED:

CHRISTINE AUTEN



Christine has voiced such notable characters as Sakaki in Azumanga Daioh, Izumi Curtis in FullMetal Alchemist, Lady Death in Lady Death, Priss in Bubblegum Crisis: Tokyo 2040, Rigel in Chrono Crusade and many more.

FIREFLY PATH GIRLS



Mary and JoEllen Elam, sisters renown for their cosplay outfits, hope to assist those with their own creations through the commercial showcasing of their costumes and helpful hints.

CHRISTY LIJEWSKI



Creator of the comic series Next Exit (SLG) & the manga Re:Play (TOKYOPOP). Christy also enjoys designing cosplay outfits and is currently obsessed with Bleach.

ALSO ATTENDING:

JOHNNY YONG BOSCH
M. ALICE LEGROW

PANELS / WORKSHOPS / EVENTS
MASQUERADE * MUSIC VIDEO CONTEST
ALL WEEKEND KARAOKE AND CONTESTS
COSPLAY WORKSHOPS * FASHION SHOW

PHOENIX COMICON EXCLUSIVE
WOLVERINE ORIGINS #5
VARIANT COVER BY
JOE QUESADA!
ON SALE @ THE
SAMURAI COMICS BOOTH



**Register online or at
your local comic store**
\$25 till Aug. 31
\$30 till Sept. 15
\$35 @ Door
Info: matt@phoenixcomicon.com
602.697.4007