

ConNotations

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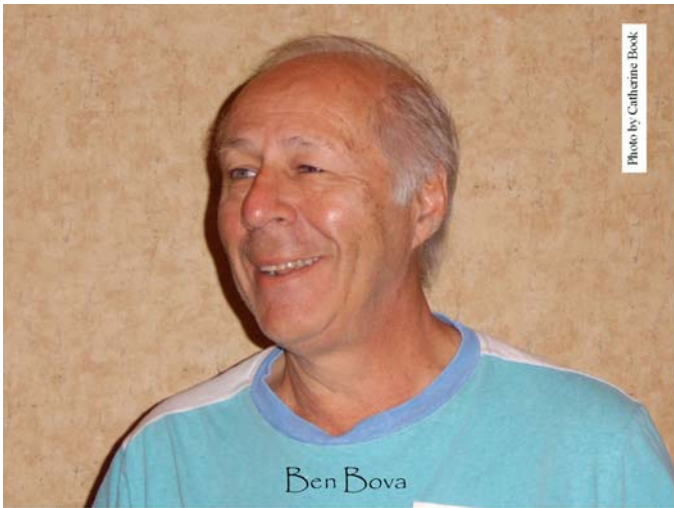
The Bi-Monthly Science Fiction, Fantasy & Convention Newszine of the Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society

A Conversation with Ben Bova

By Catherine Book

Ben was scheduled to appear at a local writers' conference in Tempe when I emailed him just days before he was scheduled to leave. He replied almost immediately that he would be happy to

still come out in May 2005? Yep, he said, still on target (already published in the UK); and he's wrapping up *Titan* which will probably publish next year. Ben will be doing a signing in Tucson in



meet with me. How gracious is that?! The man is a real gentleman. It was a real honor and pleasure to spend time with him; the half hour I promised stretched into nearly an hour. If I'd known how fun it was going to be, I'd begged for an hour and stretched it into two hours.

I thought I'd start with something easy: will *Mercury* (his next published book)

early May. (Keep watch on our website {www.casfs.com} and we'll try to keep you posted on time and location.)

I'd read on his website (www.benbova.net) that he was President Emeritus of the National Space Society. Since I had no idea what that really meant, I asked what his duties were and

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SF Tube Talk

TV News & Previews

By Lee Whiteside

With the pending end of **Star Trek Enterprise**, there's been lots of activity by fans attempting to keep it going, even raising commitments for over \$3 million to pay for new episodes. There's been lots of interviews in various outlets with producers and actors on the ending of the series. Some blame the loss of viewership and the cancellation on "**Trek** fatigue" while others place the blame on **Rick Berman** and **Brannon Braga**, who only this season really let someone else (producer **Manny Coto**) take the reins of the show and infuse some life into the series. However, as of press time, all indications are that Paramount is not interested in keeping the series going, although reports are that the sets have not yet been dismantled, but will be put into storage. SciFi Channel has indicated they aren't interested (their Friday night lineup drawing more viewers than **Trek** was probably the final nail in the coffin) while Spike TV, the cable home of the other modern **Trek** series, has indicated they might be interested, but hadn't been contacted by Paramount about it. If anything, Paramount will be bringing out all four seasons of **Enterprise** this year, leaving only the Animated series left in the archives yet to be released on DVD.

There will be some new **Star Trek** being produced, however, with another movie in the works (see 24 Frames for details) and an ongoing fan production of **Star Trek: The New Voyages**. They've already produced two episodes featuring the original series characters and with their next two episodes will be enlisting the aid of writers **D.C. Fontana**, from the original series writing staff, and the duo of **Jack Trevino** and **Ethan Calk**, who wrote for **Deep Space Nine** to create the scripts, and they will also have the original Chekov, **Walter Koenig**, reprises his role of Chekov. Look for updates and more info on the www.newvoyages.com website.

Getting back to **Enterprise**, there's still six episodes left before the series finale on May 13th. Following a run of the top three fan favorite episodes in late March and early April, new episodes will resume on April 15th. Producer **Manny Coto** continues his associating storylines with the original series in **Bound**, which sees Archer receive a gift of three Orion slave girls after a successful negotiation with the Orion syndicate. Next up is the two part episode, **In a Mirror, Darkly**, which shows us how the Mirror Universe first seen in the original series diverged from our time line. According to **Coto** "we're really excited about that one. It'll be as if you changed the channel to Enterprise and you get the mirror universe

version of the show. We're even going to change the title sequence. People will be wondering, what show is this?" Instead of our characters traveling to the Mirror Universe, the USS Defiant, the vanishing ship from the original series episode **The Tholian Web**, ends up going back in time and into the Mirror Universe, bringing advanced technology to their world. We'll then return back to the regular **Trek** universe with a three part storyline to end the series. In **Demons** we find that one of the major hurdles to founding the Federation is not any alien race, but our own people on Earth. Enterprise returns to Earth and finds that a xenophobic faction of humanity threatens to undermine talks to form a new coalition of planets. Leading this faction is John Frederick Paxton, played by **Peter Weller (Buckaroo Banzai, Robocop, and Odyssey 5)**, who is inspired by Colonel Green (shown in the original series episode **The Savage Curtain**). There's also rumors of a half human/half Vulcan baby being raised in a secret lab on Earth. Airing as a two hour finale on May 13th will be **Terra Prime**, where the anti-alien protests threaten the conference being held with ambassadors from the various worlds and Trip has infiltrated a group of humans working to bring down Starfleet. Concluding the series will be the episode "**These are the Voyages**" which is rumored to in part be a holodeck simulation of events being watched by Commander Riker and Deanna Troi. It appears Riker used the holodeck to relive historic moments in his spare time on the Enterprise-D. Sets for Ten-Forward, Troi's quarters and the holodeck were created for the episode.

There will also be a crowd scene where many of the show's behind the scenes personnel will appear on screen. **Rick Berman** has indicated that the finale (which he co-wrote with **Brannon Braga**) is a "valentine for the fans", but following **Jolene Blaylock's** comments in an interview that she found the finale to be "appalling", some fans are expecting it to not be a satisfying conclusion to the modern era of Star Trek.

I think that if the series has started out more like it has been this season, with nods and tie-ins more to the original series, the series might have kept the initial audience. But by the time producer **Manny Coto** brought

(Continued on page 4)

24 Frames

Movie News

By Lee Whiteside

No B5 Movie B4 It's Time

I've been following the development of the Babylon 5 movie for the last year here and I'm sorry to report that it isn't going to be happening after all. In the following posting by **J. Michael Straczynski**, he broke the news and explained in part why it didn't happen.

From: J. Michael Straczynski
Subject: additional from jms
To: rec.arts.sf.tv.babylon5.moderated
Date: 2/25/2005 6:10:37 PM

The rule of thumb in Hollywood is that for every thousand scripts that get written, only a few dozen get into development, and out of those, only one will ever get made...if that.

A little over a year ago, I was approached by a company that wanted to make a Babylon 5 movie. They optioned the rights, and commissioned a script. (It's worth mentioning that I, not WB, own the rights to a B5 movie. When we were negotiating the original B5 deal -- by whose terms I will never see a dime in profit -- the one thing they did let me have were the movie rights, figuring they'd never be worth anything in the long run.)

Anyway...on December 27th of 2003, the script for "The Memory of Shadows" was

turned in, and the process began of trying to make the deal work with all the various forces involved. It is, to say the least, a very difficult process on any movie where the studio does not directly take the financial reins. In terms of B5, Warner's position was essentially, "We only do big-budget movies with big names, so you're on your own." If there were big-name movie actors in the film, they'd get behind it; without that, things become very problematic, especially as far as the financing was concerned. You much have to put together a consortium of international interests and business plans rivaled in complexity only by the Allied invasion of Normandy Beach.

Nonetheless, every attempt was made by the people involved to get this deal in place. This was not being done by Doug or myself, but rather by the company/individuals who approached us and optioned the rights. At times, it seemed we were inches away from a deal...stages were reserved at Elstree, actors were contacted, a director was in place, the script went through many revisions, a few key staff were hired, again not by me...it was really a year-long roller coaster ride. During that time, the people involved, with every good intention, tried very hard to pull the necessary pieces together on the deal. The option expired in late December 2004, but I renewed it without cost, to give those involved more time to try and make things work.

In the end, however, the deal could not be put together, and it did not look as if that

(Continued on page 6)



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SF Tube Talk (Cont'd from page 3)

his ideas into the mix, UPN was pretty much done with the series (season four only happened due to Paramount dropping UPN's license fee) and with the show still being an expensive production, Paramount just couldn't keep producing it without getting an immediate return. Although they have been successful in selling repeats of the series nationwide for this fall and likely will do well with the DVD releases. The bottom line is that the studio and network isn't as interested in the show right now, but once it has been off the air for a while, Paramount may be able to bring in some new producers with a new vision that will bring back **Star Trek** to the masses and start a new run comparable to the last 18 years of continuous **Star Trek** we've had.

Smallville will be back in mid-April with the final six episodes of its current season. We'll continue the Lana tattoo storyline (which reached a low with the Crouching Lana episode) as well as see more developments with Lex, Lionel and Lois. The first new episode, *Oynx*, Lex is conducting an meteor rock experiment with a Dr. Sinclair, and when an explosion happens and the rock turns black, we end up with two Lexes, one good and one bad. We'll get to really see the dark side of Lex in this episode. In *Spirit*, the central plot revolves around the Smallville High Prom and school spirit with a prom queen wannabe who has the power to possess other people and takes over most of the supporting cast at some point in the episode. In *Blank Kevin* Grady has the power to erase people's memories and robs the Talon in plain sight, but makes people forget about it. Clark and company attempt to find out what's really happening with Kevin and why he got this way, possibly due to some experimentation with him at Summerholt hospital. In *Ageless*, a girl who gets pregnant gives birth the next day (dying in the process) to a baby that has super accelerated growth as well as other powers that threaten everyone as he gets older. Meanwhile, Lionel confronts Lana about the artifact she brought back from China. For the final two episodes, no real advance info is know, but expect it to resolve some of the ongoing storylines with Lana's tattoo, Clark's college choices and relationship with Lois, Chloe and Lana, and his "*Destiny*".

Charmed returns in April with six episodes which may or may not be the final season for this long running series. *Scry Hard*, where Zankou has teamed up with a tribe of demons to help him get the Charmed Ones out of the Manor. They escape, but Leo is injured and he and Piper are trapped in a doll house version of the manor. In *Little Box of Horrors*, The Charmed Ones helps a young Guardian keep Pandora's Box out of the hands of a wicked demon named Katya, who plans on opening it and unleashing its powers onto an unsuspecting mankind. *Freaky Phoebe* sees a demon named

Imara switches bodies with Phoebe in order to get the Charmed Ones to go after Zankou and his men and vanquish them so she can take control of the underground. In *Imaginary Friends* the demon Vicus tries to destroy the Charmed Ones by luring Baby Wyatt to the dark side. In an attempt to counter the attack, the sisters happen to summon Wyatt from the future into the present. In the two part season finale, *22nd Centaury Witches*, the sisters are seeking more power after a run in with a uber demon named Vaikern and fearing for her unborn baby Phoebe visits the Avatars. They agree to give her the power to destroy the entire demon race so that the sisters can live normal lives. Meanwhile an unknowing Paige interviews new teachers for Magic school while Piper hires a gardener to create a "sanctuary". When Phoebe confronts Vaikern he backfires her power and sends the sisters hurtling into the future, where their magic powers don't work and they must summon their powers from the past to set things right.

NBC has a surprise hit on their hands with **Medium**, based on the life of a Phoenix based psychic. NBC has liked it so well, they ordered additional episodes for the current season and have already given it the go ahead for season two. As for getting much advance info on the series, other than consulting a psychic myself, there hasn't been much available beyond the upcoming TV listings. NBC in May will have the **Hercules** miniseries, the latest effort from Hallmark and **Robert Halmi**. However, NBC appears to be not quite as high on its capability to draw big ratings and has trimmed one hour off of the four hour miniseries and will air it on one night, Monday May 23rd. **Paul Telfer** stars as Hercules, with names such as **Timothy Dalton** (Amphitryon), **Sean Astin** (Linus), **Kim Coates** (Tiresias), and **Elizabeth Perkins** (Alcmene) taking part. Expect a more serious take on the subject matter than the **Kevin Sorbo** series.

NBC will also finally be debuting their mid-season series **Revelations** on April 13th, only producing six episodes. From an NBC Press Release it is described thusly: **Bill Pullman** ("**Independence Day**") stars as a scientist faced with the toughest personal, professional and philosophical challenges of his life. Dr. Richard Massey is searching for reasonable explanations -- to explain signs that seem to indicate the apocalyptic end as foretold in Scriptures is in motion. To save humanity, Massey will have to let go of scientific facts and embrace faith. His first step in his quest to conquer the impending evil is to align himself with a nun (**Natascha McElhone**, "**Solaris**") whose devout beliefs are unshakeable. Despite many obstacles, including their own fears and doubts, the two remain determined to prove that Man can regain control of fate. Time is literally running out in their thrilling, fast-paced race around the globe to thwart Armageddon -- and restore hope. **Michael Massee**

("Se7en"), newcomers **Chelsea** and **Britney Coyle** and **Tobin Bell** ("**The Road to El Dorado**") also star.

We're also in the middle of pilot season, with only a few genre shows being looked at by the broadcast networks and we'll find out which ones get picked up in mid-May. They will be fighting for time slots against more procedural dramas about FBI agents, Pentagon employees, and various ensemble shows featuring desperate housewives of varying degrees as well as the newest ideas for reality series. Most notable is a **Frank Spotnitz** (**The X-Files**) produced revival of **Kolchak: The Night Stalker** for ABC starring **Stuart Townsend** (Lestat in **Queen of the Damned**) and **Gabrielle Union**. Also in the works for ABC is **Invasion** from **Shaun Cassidy** (**American Gothic**) which deals with what happens in the aftermath of a hurricane in a small Florida town that may also be the starting point for an alien invasion. CBS is looking into getting onto the psychic bandwagon with **The Ghost Whisperer**, a series developed with psychic **James van Praagh** starring **Jennifer Love Hewitt** as a young newlywed who talks to the dead and **Aisha Tyler** as her best friend. In the alien invasion category, CBS has **Threshold**, produced by **David Goyer**, **David Heyman**, and **Brannon Braga** about a female government contingency analyst (**Carla Gugino**) who leads a team of scientists and military personnel to respond to the threat of a mysterious alien life form. Also starring are **Charles S. Dutton** and **Brent Spiner**. NBC hasn't taken notice of the ratings drop for **Joan of Arcadia** this season and has ordered a pilot for **Book of Daniel**, where an Episcopalian reverend finds himself talking to Jesus on a regular basis who helps him deal with family issues and other plot elements that arise. Also attempting to come up with its own **Lost**, NBC has **Fathom**, which follows the lives of naval officers in the South Antarctic Sea, a family in San Diego, the oceanographic institute in Monterey, and fishermen in the Gulf of Mexico who are all affected by the discovery of a mysterious new form of sea life. Is it alien, or something else? FOX has one genre entry in development, **Briar and Graves**, about a hard-living priest (**Charles Measure**) who partners with a female doctor (**Elizabeth Rohm**) to investigate unexplained religious phenomena. Also involved is **Colm Meany**. Following the DOA arrival of **Point Pleasant**, I'd be surprised if FOX picked this one up. UPN's lone genre entry is **Triangle**, about a young doctor's (**Ivan Sergei**) investigation of his wife's mysterious disappearance during their Caribbean honeymoon. The WB's lone genre pilot is for **Supernatural**, described as a cross between "**The X-Files**" and "**Route 66**" in which Sam, a recent Stanford graduate, who along with his estranged older brother Dean encounter unusual ghosts and local creatures straight out of American folk lore and urban legends during a road trip

from San Francisco back home to Los Angeles. **Jared Padalecki** and **Jensen Ackles** star as the two brothers. Which one is which is not known, but does it really matter?

SciFi's addition of **Battlestar Galactica** to their Friday night lineup has given them their highest ratings ever for a regular series, drawing more viewers for the trio than UPN has been for **Enterprise**. Needless to say, SciFi has elected to keep their SciFi Friday intact and ordered a full 20 episode season of **Battlestar Galactica**, which will debut in July along with the new seasons of **Stargate SG-1** and **Stargate Atlantis**. Apparently giving up on Thursdays for their alternative programming, Scifi has also announced that Wednesdays in July will see a new season of **Tripping the Rift** (with Six now voiced by **Carmen Electra**), a new season of **Ghost Hunters**, and the new series **Master Blasters**, which is described by SciFi as a show that "pits teams of amateur rocket scientists against each other in a race to design, build and launch some very bizarre things into orbit. From rocket-bolstered La-Z-Boys to fuel injected Mini-Coopers, "one small step for man" becomes one giant leap for mad science!" Also in the works for SciFi in the pilot stage is **Eureka**, which SciFi describes as "a newly hired sheriff reports for duty in the small, bucolic Pacific North-west town of Eureka and soon discovers that things are not what they seem. For years, the government has been relocating the world's geniuses (and their families) to Eureka, creating the ultimate think tank community. At times strange, amazing, and bizarre, the community's quirky inhabitants unleash scientific and technological creations still unknown by the outside world." Also announced for a pilot movie is **Painkiller Jane**, which stars **Emmanuelle Vaugier** (Luther's short time wife on **Smallville**) as a young Marine officer exposed to a biochemical weapon that endows her with self-healing powers. Also starring in the pilot are **Tate Donovan**, **Richard Roundtree**, and **Eric Dane**. It is based on the *Events Comics* series.

As the seasons for all the SciFi Friday shows just ended, and with **Stargate Atlantis** and **Battlestar Galactica** ending things with cliffhangers, there's a bit of news on what to expect when they return in July. The biggest change will be seen on **Stargate SG-1**, which will begin its ninth season with several additions to the cast, and a few noticeable absences. **Richard Dean Anderson's** participation in the new season is still up in the air, even as they have already started filming, and **Amanda Tapping** will be absent for at least the first five episodes due to her new baby that is due as this issue goes to press. Joining the show as a regular cast member will be **Ben Browder** (**Farscape's** John Crichton) as Lieutenant Colonel Cameron Mitchell, who we find out was involved with prior events in the Stargate Universe and is assigned to SG-1

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SF Tube Talk (Cont' from page 4)

as a reward for his prior service. Pairing up with former *Farscape* castmate **Browder** will be **Claudia Black**, returning as alien bounty hunter Vala for a five episode run at the beginning of the season. **Beau Bridges** will join SG-1 as Gen. Hank Landry, the new head of Stargate Command, when Jack O'Neill is promoted to oversee Homeworld Security. He'll also likely appear in *Stargate Atlantis* once communications is reestablished. Joining the series as the Chief Medical Officer for Stargate Command will be **Lexa Doig** (*Andromeda's* Andromeda), as Carolyn Lam who is also the daughter of General Landry. **Doig** is also married to SG-1 star **Michael Shanks**, who claims he had nothing to do with getting her hired for SG-1. Also joining the cast of SG-1 is **Lou Gossett, Jr.** in a recurring role as a Jaffa leader who vies with Teal'c for political control of the new Jaffa nation.

Over on *Atlantis*, joining their team will be **Mitch Pileggi** (*The X-Files* Walter Skinner) as a hard-nosed colonel who butts heads with Dr. Weir and Maj. Sheppard. Also joining the series will be **Jason Momoa**, as Ronon Dex, a Pegasus Galaxy human who has been on the run from the Wraith for years as part of a hunting game that the Atlantis teams discovers. **Paul McGillion**, Doctor Carson Beckett will be upgraded to series regular status while **Rainbow Sun Franks** will be relegated to a recurring role when his Aiden Ford character embarks on an interesting character arc.

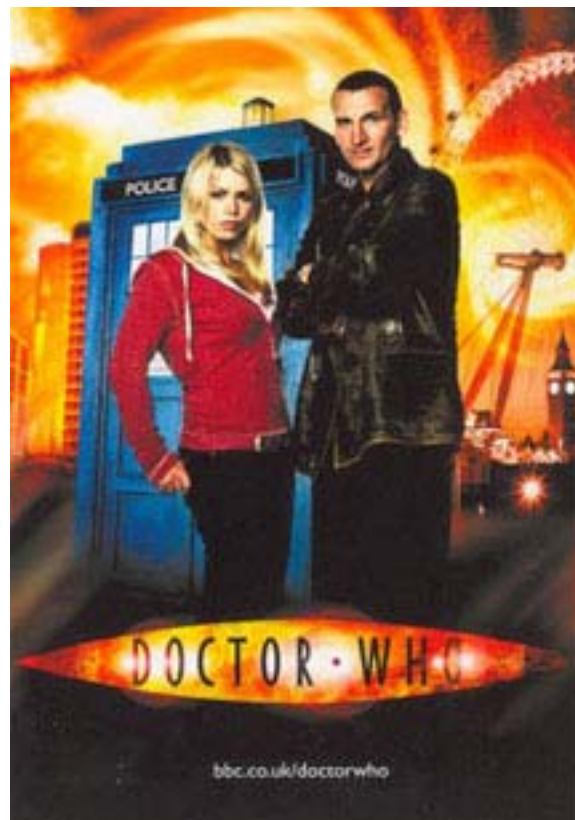
What would SciFi be without their Saturday night movies and April and May are no exception. *The Snake King* (April 9) Deep in the heart of the South American jungle, two scientists find the fabled fountain of youth -- only to learn that it's guarded by a deadly, five-headed serpent. **Stephen Baldwin** and **Jayne Heitmeyer** star. *Man-Thing* (April 30) Agents of an oil tycoon vanish while exploring a swamp marked for drilling. The local sheriff investigates and faces a Seminole legend come to life: Man-Thing, a shambling swamp-monster whose touch burns those who feel fear. **Jack Thompson** stars. *The Fallen Ones* (May 7) An archaeologist unearths the mummified remains of a giant humanoid. Soon, more evidence is uncovered that reveals the creature to be the offspring of a human woman and a fallen angel -- the beginning of a lineage whose terror is about to be reborn into the modern world. **Casper Van Dien** and **Robert Wagner** star in this supernatural mystery-thriller. *Descent* (May 21) When rapidly worsening volcanic eruptions and earthquakes threaten to obliterate the Pacific Rim and plunge the world into ecological chaos, a team of scientists embarks on a daring mission into the Earth's molten core to avert the looming disaster. **Luke Perry** and **Michael Dorn** star in this fast-paced underground adventure.

Elsewhere in the cable realm, there's

not much else new for the next couple of months. Expect things to pick up this summer, though, when new seasons of *The Dead Zone* and *The 4400* start up on USA Network and maybe we'll see that new British show, *Doctor Who*, turn up somewhere...

Speaking of which, over on the other side of the Atlantic, the new series of *Doctor Who* debuted on the BBC over Easter weekend. As of press time, there is no firm news of the series having a home in the US, although there is a rumor of some sort of announcement that may be happening soon. It will begin airing on CBC in Canada in early April so US fans near the Canadian border may have access to the new series. With the leak of the first episode, *Rose*, to the Internet three weeks early that got a lot of press coverage (and mostly favorable reviews), fans all over the world got to preview the series and will likely continue to do so as the series airs. The BBC will have thirteen episodes in this series and will broadcast them on Saturday nights. BB3 will also air a weekly documentary series, *Doctor Who Confidential*, which will also be made available on the BBC's website at www.bbc.co.uk/doctorwho. Reports from the official BBC Press Launch have garnered the series favorable reviews, indicating it maintains the spirit of the original series but also make it more in tune with the 21st Century. It is still being made for a family audience, so it's modernization is not to the extent of something like *Battlestar Galactica's* much more adult tone. Speaking to the press following the official screening, former *Doctor Who* writer **Terrence Dicks** said "They've kept the feeling of the show. It's still *Doctor Who* and I think **Christopher Eccleston** is very good, I'm so pleased. The last Who, I hated it. It was aimed at the mid-Atlantic; I've always said it should be made in England. They've kept the feeling of the show. I think **Christopher Eccleston** is very good. There's a gap in the market for something both good and popular. There's stuff that's critically acclaimed and stuff that's popular, like reality TV. But this does both." Former producer **Barry Letts** expressed his approval as well, "I was desperate for it to work and it has. **Russell T Davies** said what he was doing was carrying on the torch from our time. He's a big fan. It's a relay race, you stagger on for so many years, then pass the baton on when you're exhausted. They've managed to give a few nods to the past, which the old *Doctor Who* fans will appreciate, without making it confusing for anybody coming to it fresh. They've done a brilliant job of updating it." From having talked recently with both Dicks and Letts at the recent Gallifrey One convention, I think having their endorsement of the new series speaks volumes.

The first episode of the new series is *Rose*, which introduces the new incarnation of The Doctor, played by **Christopher Eccleston**, and Rose Tyler (**Billie Piper**) who joins him on his adventures.



We run into The Autons, first seen in the **Jon Pertwee** era, which are automations powered by an alien intelligence. Other episodes feature new aliens such as Jabe, a plant being played by **Yasmin Bannerman**, The Moxx of Balhoon, Alien Monks, the Face of Poe, and, of course, the return of The Daleks.

The Cartoon Network has given additional season orders for *Teen Titans*, *Justice League Unlimited* and *Duck Dodgers*, so there will be more of all three shows in the coming year. Also joining Cartoon Network (airing after it's been on Kids WB) will be *The Batman*, making for a 90 minute Superheros block on Saturday nights with *Teen Titans*, *The Batman* and *Justice League Unlimited* all airing back to back. *Duck Dodgers* appears to be a fixture on Cartoon Network's Friday's lineup (at least when they have a new episode to air) and has already started its third season. Starting up in early April on weekday mornings as part of a new pre-school block will be *Krypto the Superdog*, featuring the adventures of Krypto.

Justice League Unlimited will continue building on some of the ongoing storylines with a growing threat from Cadmus that will ultimately lead to a multiple episode arc at the end of the current season. Coming up in April (or possibly not until May) are *Double Date* where Green Arrow and Black Canary race to stop The Question and Huntress from killing organized crime lord, Tobias Whale, *Hunter's Moon* (or *Mystery in Space*) where Shayera leads her reluctant teammates Vigilante and Vixen into a deadly trap when responding to a deep space distress call, *The Balance* that sees Wonder Woman and Hawkgirl go to the depths of Tartarus when the evil sorcerer Felix Faust establishes dominion over Hades, and *Clash* where the world's mightiest mortal, Captain Marvel (voiced

by **Jerry O'Connell**), joins the Justice League but even his power may not be enough to foil Lex Luthor's latest plot. In the *Teen Titan's* universe, we're likely to see some more new episodes in April or May as well. With the re-appearance of Slade, he will be the subject of several upcoming episodes including a three part season (but not series) finale. Upcoming soon are *TROQ* where a brave hero from outer space called Val-Yor comes to Earth, and asks for the Titans help in defeating an otherworldly menace known as The Locrix, *The Prophecy* continues the Slade arc where the Titans learn why he came back and how it ties into Raven, in *Stranded*, an exciting battle on a distant space station ends with a tremendous explosion that blows the Titan's spaceship apart -- and sends them flying

off in five different directions to crash-land on a strange alien world, and in *Overdrive*, Cyborg goes up against his match in the duplicitous Billy Numerous.

As noted, *Krypto the Supedog* will be geared towards younger viewers, but looks to be a fun take on the DC Universe from the Super Pet point of view. Krypto was Kal-El's (Superman) pet dog that was launched from Krypton in a test rocket that eventually made it's way to Earth as well. Instead of teaming up with Superman, Krypto lands in the backyard of 9 year old boy Kevin Whitney, who's just moved to Metropolis and becomes Krypto's best friend (apparently all without the knowledge of Superman). Kevin is able to converse with Krypto with a special communications device. There will also be other super-pets in the show, including Ace the Bat-hound, complete with a grim and serious demeanor and a collar with all the functionality of Batman's utility belt. There's also Streaky, the pampered cat of Kevin's neighbor Andrea, who also gets super powered and helps out Krypto (Streaky, of course, was Supergirl's pet cat that was part of the Legion of Super Pets back in the 1960's). Krypto also gets involved with the Dog Star Patrol, a group of super canines from all over the galaxy lead by Brainy Barks. There's also villains such as Mechanikat and Ignatius that are constant thorns in Krypto's side (not to mention the Kryptonian flea) and there seems to be a fair number of Red Kryptonite scenarios. Other appearances include Catwoman's cat Isis, a Robot Dog from Krypton, the Penguin's penguin waddles, and even an appearance by Robin in a Bat-Hound episode.

For more schedule information, news and links, visit the Magrathea/SFTV Pages at www.sftv.org Contact Lee Whiteside at SFTV@casfs.org

24 Frames (Continued from page 3)

was going to change at any point in the foreseeable future. So the option has reverted, and to all intents and purposes, the project has dead ended. Nor do I think this particular incarnation will arise again at any point in the future, though prognostication has always been a tricky art, especially if you have to do it without the benefit of hindsight.

This was not the first time someone’s taken a run at a B5 feature film, and it will not be the last. Eventually it will happen, because such things are simply inevitable. If they can do a Brady Bunch movie, you can be sure that sooner or later, somebody’s going to do a B5 movie. The only thing I can say without equivocation is that when that day comes, as the rights-holder, I will make darned sure that it’s done right, because I’d rather have no B5 movie than one that doesn’t live up to what fans and I myself would want to see.

To that end...I can wait.

Anyway, just thought you should know the story. - jms
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And now, on to the latest movie news and rumors...

The *Superman Returns* movie is taking flight in Australia with filming beginning in late March. Casting has pretty much been finalized with relative unknown **Brandon Routh** playing Clark Kent & Superman, **Kate Bosworth** will be Lois Lane, **Kevin Spacey** will be Lex Luthor, **Hugh Laurie** takes on the role of Perry White, **James Marsden** is Perry’s son, Richard, **Sam Huntington** will be Jimmy Olsen, and **Eva Marie Saint** will play Martha Kent. There have been various names bandied about for playing the role of Superman’s father, Jor-El, but the latest word is that director **Bryan Singer** is looking into making use of unused footage of **Marlon Brando** from *Superman II*. When the original movie was filmed, they filmed additional footage for the second movie. In the final movie, **Brando** didn’t appear and **Susannah York** instead appeared as his mother, Lara. **Singer** apparently thinks the unused footage of **Brando** will work with the new movie and provided things can be worked out with **Brando’s** heirs, the original Jor-El will be back for this movie.

With the pending end of the modern era of *Star Trek* on TV and with the lackluster performance of the last two *Star Trek* movies featuring the *Next Generation* crew, you’d think that Paramount would be planning to let the franchise rest for a bit. They have given

the go-ahead for a script for a new movie that will not feature any previous *Star Trek* crew by **Erik Jendresen**, who hasn’t really written any science fiction before and is best known for producing and writing on the HBO *Band of Brothers* series. In an interview with the SyFyPortal web site, Jendresen indicated that the story of the movie takes place approximable 80 years before the Captain Kirk era of Star Trek, which puts it after the events of Enterprise. “There is a lot of misinformation out there, negative speculation and ill-will,” **Jendresen** told SyFyPortal. “Everybody just needs to just take a Romulan chill pill and have some faith. Everything that has gone down over the last few years has not been lost on the gentlemen involved in this effort. I think it would be wonderful to bring a whole new generation into this world.” Whether the Romulans will figure in the story or not is unknown, but Jendresen’s mention of them might be a hint... Don’t expect to see the movie on screen before 2007, though.

Big Movies get even Bigger - This summer will see a couple of the bigger movies turn up on IMAX screens concurrently with their regular theatrical release in selected IMAX theaters. Already this year, we’ve seen FOX’s *Robots* get the IMAX treatment. Coming up this summer will be *Batman Begins* (June 17) and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (July 15). Unfortunately, for those of us in the Phoenix area, with the IMAX theater being located right next to a regular movie theater, the same day openings have not been happening, although they have generally made their IMAX debut a few weeks after the theatrical debut. For those elsewhere in the country where exclusivity doesn’t enter into the equation, catching a movie on the really big screen is usually worth the extra cost.

In their latest quarterly financial report, Marvel updated their list of movies in development and planned release dates. Of course, the remaining Marvel movie left for this year, *Fantastic Four*, is scheduled for a release on July 8th. Marvel’s **Avi Arad** indicated that there will be a lot of promotion for this movie, on a par with the *Spiderman* promotional efforts and will definitely have a trailer attached to *Star Wars Episode III*. On the horizon for 2006 is *X-Men 3* in the early Summer, with **Patrick Stewart**, **Hugh Jackman** and **Ian McKellan** all returning, *Ghost Rider* (starring **Nicholas Cage** and **Sam Elliott**) in mid-summer, and *Iron Man*, *Deathlok*, *Luke Cage*, and *Punisher 2* all targeted for 2006 releases. For 2007 they’ve got *Spiderman 3* already staking a claim for May, with *Namor*, *Hulk 2* and *Wolverine* all in development for that year.

MOVIE PREVIEWS FOR APRIL AND MAY

Sin City - is a violent city where the police department is as corrupt as the streets are

deadly. In this movie, we follow three stories, the central of which is Marv (**Mickey Rourke**), a tough-as-nails and nearly impossible to kill street fighter who goes on a rampage of vengeance when a beautiful woman, Goldie (**Jamie King**), he sleeps with for only one night is killed while lying in bed with him. Also includes **Elijah Wood**, **Bruce Willis**, **Jessica Alba**, and **Josh Hartnett**. Based on three stories from the graphic novel series by **Frank Miller**, who co-directs with **Robert Rodriguez**. Reportedly done filmed mostly against a blue-screen so that the CGI created backgrounds and sets will have the original comic atmosphere. *The Cave* - A rescue team is sent down into the world’s largest cave system to try to find the spelunkers who first explored its depths. But when the group’s escape route is cut off, they are hunted by the monstrous creatures that live down below. Stars **Morris Chestnut**, **Eddie Cibrian**, **Cole Hauser**, **Piper Perabo**, and **Lena Headey**.

The Amityville Horror - On November 14, 1974, police received a frantic phone call that led them to a nightmarish crime scene at the Defeo residence in Amityville, Long Island - an entire family had been slaughtered in their beds. In the days that followed, Ronald Defeo confessed to methodically shooting his parents and four siblings while they slept, claiming “voices” in the house drove him to commit the grisly murders. One year later, George and Kathy Lutz and their three children moved into the house thinking it would be their dream home. But shortly after settling in, bizarre and unexplainable events began to occur to the family as George was plagued by nightmarish visions and haunting voices from the evil presence still lurking within the residence. 28 days after moving in, the Lutzes abandoned the home - lucky to escape with their lives. Haven’t we seen this before, several times? Starring **Ryan Reynolds**, **Melissa George**, **Jimmy Bennett**, **Jesse James**, and **Rachel Nichols**.

Valiant - During World War II, England communicated with the French Resistance and Allied troops in Europe using the Royal Pigeon Service, carrier pigeons that went through a rigorous training regimen. This is the story of Valiant (**Ewan McGregor**), a comically clumsy misfit of a (wood) pigeon who sneaks his way into the Royal Pigeon Service, eager to contribute his efforts to the needs of his country, even though he is vastly unqualified to do so. Immediately given an assignment, Valiant’s job turns out to be one of the most important of the war... carrying essential messages from the French to the Allied forces who are about to storm the beaches of Normandy on D-Day. CGI Animation from Vanguard Animation, created by one of the producers of *Shrek*, and distributed by Disney. Other voice talent includes **Jim**

Broadbent, **John Cleese**, **Tim Curry**, **John Hurt**, **Hugh Laurie**, and **Rupert Everett**.

Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy - Earthman Arthur Dent is having a very bad day. His house is about to be bulldozed, he discovers that his best friend is an alien and to top things off, Planet Earth is about to be demolished to make way for a hyperspace bypass. Arthur’s only chance for survival: hitch a ride on a passing spacecraft. For the novice space traveler, the most astonishing adventure in the universe begins when the world ends. Arthur sets out on a journey in which he finds that nothing is as it seems: he learns that a towel is just the most useful thing in the universe, finds the meaning of life, and discovers that everything he needs to know can be found in one book: The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy. Yes, it is the long awaited (or feared) feature adaptation of **Douglas Adam’s Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy**. Using a script done initially by **Adams**, the movie mostly follows the first book and radio series but also throws in some new bits and extra stuff (no version of the story has ever been exactly the same). Early screening reports indicated that **Martin Freeman** is a good Arthur Dent, **Mos Def** is definitely a different Ford Prefect, **Bill Nighy** is a great Slartibartfast, **Stephen Fry** does well as the voice of The Guide, **Alan Rickman** does a good Marvin voice (with **Warwick Davis** inside the suit), **John Malkovich** is the new character (Humma Kavula) created by **Adams** for the movie, and **Sam Rockwell** and **Zooey Deschanel** are ok as Zaphod and Trillian, respectively.

XXX: State of the Union - Darius Stone (**Ice Cube**), a new agent in the XXX program, is sent to Washington, DC to diffuse a power struggle amongst national leaders. **Samuel L. Jackson** and **William Defoe** also star. With no **Vin Diesel** around which drove the original movie, this sequel may run out of steam at the box office pretty quick.

House of Wax - A. group of friends on their way to a college football game falls prey to a pair of murderous brothers in an abandoned small town. They discover that the brothers have expanded upon the area’s main attraction - the House of Wax - and created an entire town filled with the wax-coated corpses of unlucky visitors. Now the group must find a way out before they too become permanent exhibits in the House of Wax. Stars **Elisa Cuthbert** and **Paris Hilton**. A remake of the 1953 **Vincent Price** classic and with a first time director in **Jaume Collet-Serra**, prospects are not very good that this will compare well with the **Price** version.

Unleashed - This is the story of Danny (**Jet Li**), a slave who has lived his whole life without any sort of normal human education, with the mind and personality of a young child, with only one lesson

(Continued on page 8)



May 6-8, 2005

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Artist Guest of Honor

Dave Dorman

Author Guest of Honor

Kevin J. Anderson

Special Artist Guest
Bear Burge

Local Artist Guest of Honor
Sarah Clemens

Music Guest
Mitchell Burnside Clapp
(Sponsored by the Phoenix Filk Circle)

LepreCon 31 Art Show Information

We are proud to announce Dave Dorman as our Artist Guest of Honor. Our local Artist Guest of Honor will be Sarah Clemens. We are planning a guided tour of the art show Friday evening hosted by Dave Dorman and Sarah Clemens.

Artists that have reserved space in the LepreCon 31 Art Show include: Dave Dorman, Sarah Clemens, Ruth Thompson, Larry Vela, Theresa Mather, Betsy Mott, L. A. Williams, Gus Talbott, Sylvana Anderson-Gish, R. Merrill Bollerud, Ralph J. Ryan, Monika Livingstone, Michele Ellington, Ellisa Mitchell, Nancy Strowger, Quynh Mai Nguyen, John Kaufmann, Kiona, Mary Hanson-Roberts, Deborah Woods, Daniel Cortopassi, Charlene Taylor D'Alessio, Lela Dowling, Dr. Susan "Arizona" Gleason, Lew Hartman, Meredith A. Martini, Rachael M. Mayo, Abranda Sisson, Cassandra L. Sweep and many more favorites.

New artists that have reserved space include: Lisa Albinger, Mark J. Ferrari, Justin Miller, Nicole Pellegrini, Lauren Raine, Liza Hoffheims & Bridget E. Wilde.

Our plan is to offer the best of science fiction and fantasy art to the fans of Phoenix. We are asking that artists planning to hang art limit it to originals and limited run prints. Art show panels (a panel is 4 ft. X 4 ft. flat brown pegboard) may be reserved for a fee of \$5.00 per panel. 3D artwork can be displayed on 6 ft. X 2.5 ft. tables, for a fee of \$10.00 or \$5.00 for 1/2 table. The convention will take a 12% commission on these sales. We will feature a print shop – an area for artists to sell multiple prints of some of their more popular work, with the convention taking 15% commission on these sales.

There is no fee to display in the print shop.

We are anticipating a great art show this year, so be sure to come down and see the pride of a lot of super artists. If you have any questions, or if you are interested in reserving display space, please contact Ray Gish at 2527 N. Silverado, Mesa, AZ 85215 or call 480-641-3997 or email at RGASAS@aol.com.

LepreCon 31 features the Largest Science Fiction and Fantasy Art Show in the Southwest with 40+ nationally known artists participating in a weekend-long track of art demonstrations including a finger-painting session with the artist participants, a few airbrush demos, a pencil demo, comic book design, dragon sketching, performance dance, jewelry design and fabrication, modeling and sculpting demos, and three linked body casting demos. There will be a weekend-long track of panels on making a short film including costuming and SFX make-up, storyboarding, scripting, filming, casting, music scores, promotions, and editing. Other events and activities include the LepreCon 31 Film Festival, Panel Discussions and Presentations with Authors & Scientists, Dealer's Room, Gaming, LARP, Masquerade, Modern Dance, Elevator Bob, Hospitality Suite, Charity Auction to benefit ASFA and the Thomas J. Pappas School Art Department, and a presentation by the CEO of Pioneer Rocketplane.

Participants include Rebecca Moesta Anderson, Sylvana Anderson-Gish, Cariglia, Alan M. Clark, Richard Coyle, Leslie D'Allesandro Hawes, Liz Danforth, David Ayres, Sue Dawe, Deb Dedon, Mark Ferrari, Jan Howard Finder, Joe Formichella, Dana Ginsburg, Mark Greenawalt, Alan Gutierrez, Emily Hogan, Ernest Hogan, Pamela Hovnatian, Todd Lockwood, Teresa Mathers, Robert McCall, Casey Moore, Monte M. Moore, Michaela Nastasia, Yvonne Navamo, Ingrid Neilson, Adam Niswander, Janeen O'Kerry, Robert Peacock, James Reade, Robert Ross, Jannie Shea, Lisa Shellings-Clark, Mike Stackpole, Vicki Visconti-Tilley, John Vornholt, Dr. David Williams, Cathy Yankovich, and representatives from the AZ 501st Star Wars Group.

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24 Frames (Continued from page 6)

learned: how to fight. Treated like a dog by his owner/boss, Bart (**Bob Hoskins**) which includes having to wear a collar, Danny has been raised to be a lethal fighting machine who fights in illegal gladiator-style fight clubs, where he earns lots of money for Bart as the undisputed champion. After a car accident that lands Bart in a coma, however, Danny meets a kind elderly blind piano tuner (**Morgan Freeman**) on the run because he knows secrets some bad guys don't want known, who uses music to teach Danny some things about the world and about being human... Set in Scotland and written by **Luc Besson** and **Robert Mark Kamen** (writers of *The Fifth Element* and *Kiss of the Dragon*) and directed by **Louis Leterrier**.

Madagascar - This movie focuses on four



© Dreamworks

residents and "stars" of the Central Park Zoo in New York City who are also best friends: a lion (**Ben Stiller**), a zebra (**Chris Rock**), a giraffe (**David Schwimmer**) and a pregnant hippo (**Jada Pinkett-Smith**). When one of them goes missing, the other three break out of the zoo looking for him, and eventually all four are captured and put in boxes to ship them back to the continent their species are originally from: Africa. An accident at sea, however, strands them on the shore of Madagascar. Having had humans take care of them their entire life, the four know nothing of surviving in the wild, or that one of them, the lion, is genetically predisposed to eat his three best friends. Exploring their surroundings, the four friends soon meet the Malagasy locals (a type of lemur given to having loud "rave-like" dance parties) and their carnivorous enemies, the fousas. As the two sides try to use these four new, strange (and large) friends to their benefit, our heroes are also confronted with the reality of their predestined roles in nature. This is Dreamwork's latest CGI movie and one they hope will do box office somewhere in the neighborhood of the *Shrek* movies. **Mindhunters** - On a remote island, the FBI has a training program for their psychological profiling division, called "Mindhunters", used to track down serial

killers. The training goes horribly wrong, however, when a group of seven young agents discover that one of them is a serial killer, and is setting about slaying the others. Can the few that are left figure out who the killer is in time? Stars **Val Kilmer**, **L. L. Cool J**, and **Christian Slater**. It's also had more release dates than any movie in recent history (originally announced to be released in April 2003!) and may finally get released this time (or not).

Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith - The third and final installment in the *Star Wars* prequel trilogy - the sixth *Star Wars* movie overall. Anakin Skywalker's turn to the Dark Side of the Force, the continuing Clone Wars and the fate of all the other Jedis (bar Obiwan) will be revealed. Look for the new villain, General Greivous, to be the big hit of this

movie, although some guy named Darth Vader may have something to do with it. Even with the campaign by **George Lucas** to promote digital projection in theaters, here in the Phoenix area, the only theater likely to have it in digital will be the Harkins Arrowhead theater.

Conversation (Continued from page 1)

how the association affected his writing. Turns out that it's really just an honorary title although Ben is still on the Board of Directors. And he explained that the association afforded him the opportunity

to educate and inform the other members. The National Space Society is really still a grass-roots organization without 'official' status. Their goal is to promote space to the general public. (www.nss.org) Well, I asked, what would it take to get the public interested in space again; to get us back to where we were in the 1960's? What

we're lacking now, that the sixties had, he pointed out, was the great competition (with the USSR.) But what we have **now** is commercial opportunity. Ben believes we'll soon see a tourism industry, solar-powered satellites bringing energy back to Earth, commercial mining and industrial development on the moon and the asteroids - all motivated by profit. And in my lifetime - within thirty years! He pointed out the recent success of Burt Rutan's X-Prize flight as an example. This, he said, will generate interest in designing and building vehicles that will fly into space profitably and make money; vehicles that will be safe and powerful, but designed to sell tickets, not to do scientific exploration. The government will still be interested in scientific exploration but the public's imagination will be caught by these commercial enterprises.

I turned the subject back to his writings. I wanted to know if his years of experience meant he was now writing for personal pleasure or if he was still subject to what the publishers think will sell. The publisher accepts his idea or premise before they give him a contract but he pretty much writes what *he* thinks will sell. His objective is to reach as broad an audience as possible. His latest book, *Powersat*, which just came out this month, is really more of a high-tech thriller than SF. It's about the first man who builds a solar-powered satellite and the bad guys who try to stop him. Editors, he told me, treat him pretty lightly. But editors are not the same breed as they were decades ago. Ben started writing back when editors actually took an interest in improving a writer's prose. Editors in New York publishing houses today are essentially production assistants. There are copy editors who check your grammar and tenses but creative editing is a thing of the past. Editors today, he explained,

just don't have the time or the experience. These editors have two main functions: one is to acquire new properties and the other is to shepherd them through the production process. And they don't buy new properties until they are ready to be published. So, where, I asked, do new writers get that kind of mentoring? They're really out there on their own, he answered. There are, of course, writing workshops but the new writer has to persevere and be willing to learn from mistakes.

How did he feel about the plethora of long-running series that we see on all the bookstore shelves these days? They are, he answered, the result of publishers looking on books as any other marketable merchandise. When a book sells, find another of the same 'brand' since that's what the public wants. (And haven't we seen how well Hollywood has done with *that* attitude!) Quality, I pointed out, doesn't seem to be part of their plan. He explained that publishers encourage writers to turn out the same type of book; it's easier to market a new story if you can tie it to a previous success. In the SF field we do prize new ideas; but even there, the writer is pressured to continue a success. He pointed to his own stories as an example. Having written one good story about Mars - why not write another about a different planet? Before you know it, you've got a series - a Grand Tour- of books. Even though each of his novels is different from the others, they fit into a broad category and the sales force loves it because they're easy to sell. Ben had one suggestion that he thinks may help improve the quality of the market: put everyone on commission. Since the writer has to do his best or he won't get paid; make *everyone's* job dependent on commission. Somehow I doubt New York is listening...

(Continued on page 9)

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Conversation (Cont'd from page 8)

From there, I wondered what he thought of the future of short story venues such as Analog. Still struggling, he replied, as always. Circulation will continue to decrease as cover prices increase. He thinks that sooner or later these magazines will be entirely electronic. The problem, as with all e-publishing, is with copyright protection. Until someone finally figures out a way to protect these properties, e-publishing won't really be viable.

Science fiction has more visibility in the general public than ever before because of Hollywood. Did Ben think the momentum can keep going and do we need Hollywood to do it? Hollywood, Ben answered, has caused more harm than good. He sees much of their effort as really comic books or a "wagon train to the stars." But, I questioned, isn't Hollywood contributing to the increased shelf space at the bookstores? True, he admitted. Star Wars did us a huge service; however, science fiction – wherein science is integral to the story – is still in short supply. Both Hollywood and the bookstore shelves are full of fantasy – mostly because it's easier to write. Will SF go in any new directions soon? No, he says, because SF has *always* gone in all directions at once; what is significant

today is that science fiction ideas have penetrated other forms of literature; for example, high-tech thrillers and romance time-travel stories.

Oftentimes, SF has predated actual technology. Did he think our fiction could still contribute? Or is technology moving too fast? Some of his early stories were twenty years ahead of the game; today, he says, he's happy if he's twenty weeks ahead of it. Science fiction isn't here to predict the future, he says, it's here to show us all the possibilities. What's important is that SF is continuing to prepare its readers for the fact that the world is always changing. The future will be dangerous and challenging but many of the changes will be wonderful opportunities. We live in a science-fiction world today, he points out. Many of the things we take for granted were plot devices fifty years ago.

So what did Ben think will be the best new energy technology? Thermonuclear fusion, he answers, is the ultimate. Is it reachable, I asked, in my lifetime? While it's true, he explains, that the plasmas are currently smarter than our physicists; eventually, successful fusion generators will be made. When that happens, when fusion is practical, our civilization will change. That technology will be as big a step for mankind as was taming fire. At that point, we'll have energy to do anything we want – including going to the stars. Somewhat closer to realization, are solar-powered

satellites. All we need are four things: solar cells, microwave generators, people to go into space to assemble them and money. We have three out of four. What is difficult to get is the capital to build the potentially enormous satellite. But it will happen, as soon as someone sees the profit in it.

It's always been my belief that education is key to our progress off this planet. What did Ben think of our educational system? Are we teaching our children what they need for their future? The problem that Ben sees is that our education system is nothing more than a monopoly; one that has no real competitor and holds our children and our future hostage. And this monopoly sets its own price and takes it out of our tax dollars. We spend more on education than the defense budget, he says, to less effect. What do we do, I asked? Ben thinks that perhaps we should use an old Roman idea: take every tenth bureaucrat in the education system – and kill them. The survivors will eventually figure it out... An extremely difficult proposition – to remove an entrenched bureaucracy – no easy answers.

Leaving that depressing subject – I asked about Ben's relationship with fandom. He thinks fandom is wonderful: a solid core of readers who want to know what Ben Bova is doing... I wanted to know how he saw the changes over the last fifty years. Ben didn't actually know about organized fandom until 1956 while he was working on the Vanguard booster rockets. A mutual friend of his and David Kyle suggested he come out to a Worldcon in NY and talk about science. David asked Ben to come out with a couple of the engineers from the Vanguard project to talk about the first concrete step into space. When the elevator opened to the convention floor and the first thing they saw was a seven foot tall monster poster and Forrest Ackerman, the grey flannel suits were all about leaving. Ben persuaded them to stay and they found themselves on a panel with Arthur C. Clarke and Willie Ley. The grey flannel-suited engineers were starry-eyed and suitably impressed. Oh, I sighed, how extraordinary it must've been back then. It was a very different world, he agreed. And the biggest difference, I asked? Well, fewer and fewer of them read anything today; there's more interest in movies and gaming. But even back then, he said, the cons were about socializing. Funny enough, Ben doesn't actually consider himself a fan. Fandom is a way of life, we agreed; and while Ben enjoys being a Guest of Honor, he isn't interested in the organized fan way of life. That's okay; it's because of writers like him, that fandom even exists. Thank you, Ben.

An American in England Part Three: Wandering in Westminster Abbey by Jeffrey Lu.

My Shakespeare study group went to the entrance way of Westminster Abbey. Between us was a courtyard out of *Harry Potter*. We entered.

There were many corners from scientist, poets, kings and queens, to politicians.

I stopped at the scientist corner. With my mouth opened wide, I saw red velvet ropes over the grave of Isaac Newton. There were stars of other scientists like Faraday around the polished floor of Newton. With reverence, I stood in silence to reflect his achievements like calculus, optics, gravity...

"Jeff, you're standing on someone's grave!" said a friend.

Startled, I glanced downward. Low and behold, I did not take a double take but a triple. I was standing on *Charles Darwin's grave*.

Hmm...father of evolution. I really haven't evolved much, have I? I really didn't expect to do this in a million years. Without thinking, I actually walked over his grave. Sheepishly, I moved away with a question how did Darwin lie in this abbey? In other words, Darwin's grave is in a church? Ironic, isn't it? Oh, never mind.

Next, I followed the group from the Kings and Queens Corner to the last stop, the politician's corner. In the middle of this corner was the most holy site of the abbey, the Unknown Soldier. Standing again with head bow in respect, I reflect on how wars change...

"Jeff, you're on someone's grave, again!" said another friend.

Unlucky, I quickly retreated to a safe distance at the walkway. I looked and found myself staring at the words, "*David Lloyd George*." This time I knew I was standing over the prime minister of World War I.

Humbled twice, I exited without a word.

Next issue, An American in England Part Five: Blenheim Palace.

NOTICE
Due to a
computer
malfunction the
Calendar
Feature will not
appear in this
issue

In Memoriam

**F.M. Busby
Jack Chalker
Andre Norton**

Memories of Jack Chalker & Andre Norton

**by Adam Niswander
Who Put the Grin on Mr. Alfred E. Neuman?
(In Memory of Frank Kelly Freas)
by Jeffrey Lu**

**F.M “Buz” Busby
1921-2005**

F. M. “Buz” Busby, the award-winning publisher and author of more than 20 novels and collections, died Feb. 17 at Health and Rehabilitation of Seattle, where he was moved following several weeks of surgery and treatment at Swedish Hospital of Seattle. He was 83.

Francis Marion Busby was born in 1921. As F. M. Busby he published over 20 novels and collections, including his most prominent works *The Singularity Project*, *Cage a Man* and the Rissa Kerguelen series.

Along with his wife, and others, he published the fanzine, *Cry of the Nameless*, which won the Best Fanzine Hugo Award in 1960. Other fanzines titles included *Cry* and *Polarity*.

Buz chaired Westercon 12 in 1959 and was a Guest of Honor or special guest at many conventions. He was Toastmaster of IguanaCon II, the 1978 World Science Fiction Convention. From 1974-1976 he was Vice President of Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA).

Busby survived by his wife, Eleanor Busby.

**Jack L. Chalker
1944-2005**

Jack L. Chalker passed away peacefully at 11:12AM EST on February 11, 2005.

Jack was hospitalized for congested heart failure on December 6. Although there were ups and downs, his condition had been poor during the intervening two months and his kidneys and lungs had failed near the end. He was receiving care in the ICU at Bon Secours in Baltimore, MD.

Biography condensed from jackchalker.com:

Jack Lawrence Chalker was born December 17, 1944 in Baltimore, Maryland. He grew up in Baltimore and received a Bachelor of Science degree from Towson State College (Towson University) and graduate degrees from Johns Hopkins University. He taught history on the high school and college levels, and was a lecturer at the Smithsonian, The National Institutes of



© Pat Larson

Health, and numerous colleges and universities, mostly on science fiction and technology subjects.

He had a varied career which included being a professional typesetter, a sound engineer for outdoor rock concerts, an audio and computer reviewer, free-lance editor, a publisher (founder and owner of The Mirage Press, Ltd.), a book packager, an Air National Guard Information Director, new and used book dealer, and teacher as mentioned above. He was a special forces Air Commando during the Vietnam war, stationed in the United States.

Since 1978 he made his living solely by writing and published over 60 science fiction or fantasy novels and anthologies. During their years of publication, Jack wrote a regular column on SF/fantasy small press for Fantasy Review and continued the column on an irregular basis in Pulphouse magazine.

A long time science fiction fan, he attended hundreds of conventions. As a SF professional, he stayed very accessible to fans. He was Toastmaster at the 1983 WorldCon, and co-chaired the 1974 WorldCon, Discon II. He was a 3-term treasurer of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA).

His awards included the Dedalus Award (1983), The Gold Medal of the West Coast Review of Books (1984), Skylark Award (1985), and Hamilton-Brackett Memorial Award (1979).

Jack married Eva C. Whitley in 1978 and they have 2 sons, David Whitley Chalker, and Steven Lloyd Chalker. Cards and letters may be sent c/o The Mirage Press, P.O. Box 1689, Westminster, MD USA 21158-1689. Donations to the Chalker Family Emergency Fund may be made via Paypal at www.evawhitley.net

**Some Brief Thoughts on the Passing
of Jack L(awrence) Chalker
by Adam Niswander**

December 17, 1944 - February 2005
Born in Baltimore, Maryland.
Married to Eva C. Whitley in 1978. Two sons: David Whitley Chalker, 1981. Steven Lloyd Chalker, 1991. Founder of Mirage Press.

It is with sadness I note the passing of Jack L. Chalker.

Though I had the pleasure of meeting Jack several times, I can't say I really knew him well. He and I were both attending conventions at the time and our schedules always seemed at odds, but we did address each other by first names. And his first name was actually Jack, not something else with Jack as a nick-name.

I do not recall ever being on a panel with Jack, but I do remember joining him at a table in a hotel bar on more than one convention.

I wish I had gotten to know him better. He always seemed a knowledgeable, hardworking pro, and he seemed to know how to have a good time.

My condolences go out to his family.

He was kind enough to give me a favorable review of my first book - though he took exception to the G. Harry Stine quote on the cover of *The Charm*, "In the great tradition of Heinlein, Williamson and van Vogt . . ." because it failed to specify that *The Charm* was compared to *Glory Road*, *Darker Than You Think*, and *Voyage of the Space Beagle* - works more identified with fantasy than hard SF. Nonetheless, I was jazzed that he liked the book.

My favorites of his books were the those in the *Well of Souls* series, though I thought his non-fiction book about the

U.S.S. Indianapolis, titled *The Devil's Voyage*, was an exceptional book.

But he gave us a great deal more. I will include a check list of his books in a moment.

As Co-founder of Mirage Press, he was part of contributing a plethora of wonderful academic titles which I will not even attempt to list here, but which I consider essential to a solid understanding of some key genre work. Though opened in partnership, he was the sole owner of Mirage at the time of his death.

The following bibliography is my checklist of Jack's work, taken mostly from Jack's own website at <http://www.jackchalker.com/>

And the Devil Will Drag You UnderThe
Changewinds series:When the
Changewinds BlowRiders of the
WindsWar of the MaelstromDance Band
On the Titanic (short stories)Dancers In
the AfterglowThe Devil's Voyage (Non-
Fiction - the story of the
Indianapolis)Downtiming the Night
SideThe G.O.D., Inc. seriesThe Labyrinth
of DreamsThe Shadow DancersThe Maze
In the MirrorHotel Andromeda (Edited by
Chalker)The Identity MatrixA Jungle of
StarsThe Four Lord's of the Diamond
series:Lilith: A Snake In gthe Grass
Cerebrus: A Wolf In the Fold Charon: A

(Continued on page 11)

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In Memoriam (Cont'd from page 10)

Dragon At the Gate
Medusa: A Tiger By the Tail
The Quintara Marathon
The Demons At Rainbow Bridge
The Run To Chaos Keep The Ninety Trillion
Fausts
The Dancing Gods series:
The River of the Dancing Gods
Demons of the Dancing Gods
Vengeance of the Dancing Gods
Songs of the Dancing Gods
Horror of the Dancing Gods
The Flux and Anchor series:
The Birth of Flux and Anchor (Prequel)
Spirits of Flux and Anchor
Empress of Flux and Anchor
Masters of Flux and Anchor
Children of Flux and Anchor
The Messiah Choice
The Moreau Factor
Priam's Lens
The Red Tape War (with Mike Resnick and George Alec Effinger)
The Rings of the Master Series:
Lords of the Middle Dark
Pirates of the Thunder
Warriors of the Storm
Masks of the Martyrs
Tales of the Three Kings:
Balshazzar's Serpent
Melchior's Fire
Kaspar's Box
The Well of Souls series:
Midnight At the Well of Souls
Quest For the Well of Souls
Exiles At the Well of Souls
Twilight At the Well of Souls
The Return of Nathan Brazil
Watchers At the Well series:
Echoes of the Well of Souls
Shadow of the Well of Souls
Gods of the Well of Souls
The Two-volume Well of Souls novel :
The Sea Is Full of Stars
Ghosts of the Well of Souls
A War of Shadows
The Web of the Chosen
The Wonderland Gambit:
The Cybernetic Walrus
The March Hare Network
The Hot-Wired Dodo

Andre Norton
1912 - 2005

"As for courage and will—we cannot measure how much of each lies within us, we can only trust there will be sufficient to carry us through trials which may lie ahead." – Andre Norton

Andre Norton, 93, the "Grand Dame of Science Fiction and Fantasy," author, poet, editor, whose published works span seven decades, died of congestive heart failure in her Murfreesboro, Tennessee home, early Thursday morning, March 17th.

Andre Norton was born Alice Mary



© Sue Stewart

Norton on February 17, 1912, in Cleveland Ohio. She wrote more than 130 novels, nearly one hundred short stories, and edited numerous anthologies in the science-fiction, fantasy, mystery, and western genres. She was the first woman to win the Gandalf Grand Master of Fantasy award and the Nebula Grand Master award. She also received Skylark, Balrog, and World Fantasy awards.

Her love of books began at the age of two, when her mother started reading and reciting poetry to her. While attending Collingwood High School, Ms. Norton edited a fiction page for the school newspaper, *The Collingwood Spotlight*, and started her first novel, *Ralestone Luck*, which became her second published book. She attended the Flora Stone Mather College of Western Reserve University, studying to be a history teacher. However, financial pressures forced her to quit after her freshman year. She went to work to help support her family during the hard times of the Great Depression. Still, she managed to take night courses in English and journalism offered by Cleveland College, and she continued to write. She held several jobs in the literary field, including working for the Library of Congress during WWII. She also briefly owned a book store. Most importantly, she worked at the Cleveland Public Library in the children's section. During her stint with the library, she worked in thirty-eight of the forty branches.

The Prince Commands, a historical fantasy, was Ms. Norton's first published novel. It was released in 1934, when she was only twenty-two. She began using the name Andre that year, after publishers told her that a masculine name

would help sell to her target audience of boys. By 1950, at age 38, she had nine novels to her credit. That year she left the Cleveland Public Library to take a job as a reader at Gnome Press. By the time she left Gnome Press eight years later, she had twenty-three novels and several short stories published.

In 1958 she struck out to become a full-time writer. Over the next twenty years she wrote nearly seventy novels, two dozen short stories, and edited several

anthologies. One of her most beloved series, *Witch World*—a wondrous planet reachable through metaphysical gateways—started with a single novel in 1963. More than thirty *Witch World* titles followed. In 1966 she moved to Florida, and later moved to Murfreesboro, Tennessee, where in 1999 she opened "High Hallack," a retreat and research library for writers. She closed the library in 2004.

(Continued on page 12)

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COPPERCON 25

September 9-11, 2005

Embassy Suites Phoenix North, Phoenix, AZ

Author Guests of Honor

GREG KEYES & ROBERT J. SAWYER

Greg Keyes is the renowned Fantasy Author of The Briar King, The Chamel Prince, The Winterflame, The Age of Ureanon series, and the Star Wars novels Edge of Victory & The Final Prophecy

Robert J. Sawyer is the Hugo award winning author of the Neanderthal Parallax Trilogy (Homelands, Humans and Hybrids) plus Calculating God, Flash Forward and more.

Ghost of Honor: G. HARRY STINE

An engineer, science writer, and science fiction author (aka Lee Correy). Stine also designed and built as well as taught people how to fly model rockets. We will be remembering him with special panels at this year's convention.

Special Guests: Paranormal Investigator DEBE BRANNING

Director of the paranormal team—The MVD Ghostchasers—since 1995. She investigates haunted historical locations in Arizona.

Special Guest: Phoenix Lights Author LYNEE KITEI, M.D.

A key witness to the still unexplained mass UFO sighting on March 13, 1997, she will be presenting startling photographic evidence and personal anecdotes relating to the Phoenix Lights event & more.

Music Guests: ESCAPE KEY

Featuring Michelle and Matthew Dockrey. (sponsored by the Phoenix Filk Circle)

Special Guest: Star Trek Expert LARRY NEMECEK

Larry is editor of the Star Trek Communicator Magazine and author of the Star Trek: TNG Companion. (sponsored by the United Federation of Phoenix)

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Phone: (480) 945-6890 Email: cu25@coppercon.org

In Memoriam (Cont'd from page 11)
Through the years, she edited several anthologies for Martin Greenberg's Tekno Books company, including the long-running *Cat Fantastic* series, which began in 1989, and *Renaissance Faire*, which was published by DAW Books in early February of 2005.

Her last complete novel, *Three Hands for Scorpio*, is set to be released in early April from Tor Books. It is the last manuscript she penned alone, and she was especially proud of it. *Return to Quag Keep*, a sequel to her *Quag Keep* from 1979, will be released as a collaboration in January, 2006.

She surrounded herself with books and cats, ending each evening reading in bed with a favorite cat curled next to her. She incorporated her love of both in the many cat anthologies she edited, and in numerous short stories. Her latest published short story, "Faire Likeness" in *Renaissance Faire*, features a cat she adopted. When her health began to decline in 2004, she parted with a few of her cats. However, she continued to keep the oldest-RT-by her side until the end, and she managed to feed the stray cats that frequently visited her yard.

She was quick to recommend good books to friends, and to offer advice to new authors, helping to pave the way for several people to be published. She also

instructed hobbyists in the art of making jewelry. Crafting necklaces, bracelets, and earrings became a passion in the last two years of her life when she found it increasingly difficult to write at a keyboard. Jewelry she fashioned continues to be featured at her Ebay Store.

Her novels are too numerous to list in full here. However, among her many credits are several series: *Witch World* and *Witch World: The Turning*, *High Hallack*, *Beast Master*, *Secret of the Lost Race*, and *Estcarp*. Some of her stand-alone novels include: *Star Guard* (1955), *Sargasso of Space* (1955 as Andrew North), *The Time Traders* (1958), *Catseye* (1961), *Steel Magic* (1965), *Operation Time Search* (1967), *Fur Magic* (1968), *Exiles of the Stars* (1971), *High Sorcery* (1984), *Dragon Magic* (1985), *Shadowhawk* (1987), *Dare to Go A-Hunting* (1990), *Golden Trillium* (1993), *Mirror of Destiny* (1995), and *The Solar Queen* (2003).

She allowed several authors and editors to collaborate with her. Among them: Robert Adams, Alicia Austin, Robert Bloch, Marion Zimmer Bradley, A.C. Crispin, Rosemary Edghill, Martin H. Greenberg, P.M. Griffin, Grace Allen Hogarth, John Kaufman, Mercedes Lackey, Dorothy Madlee, Patricia Matthews, Julian May, Lyn McConchie, Phyllis Miller, Sasha Miller, Jean Rabe, Mary Schaub, Susan Shwartz, Sherwood

Smith, and Ingrid Zierhut.

The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA) has announced the formation of the Andre Norton Award for young adult novels. She approved this before her death, and suggested several titles for consideration. The awards will be announced along with the Nebulas, with the first award being presented in 2006. The award will be selected following the same procedure as the Nebulas.

At her direction, there will be no service. She requested memorials to be made in her honor to St. Jude's Children's Hospital and Veterinary Services (c/o the Noah Fund) P.O. Box 10128, Murfreesboro, TN 37129.

She is survived by her close friends and caretakers Sue and Ollie Stewart, her cat RT., and her family of fans throughout the world.

"A superb storyteller with a narrative pace all her own." --*The New York Times*

"I've seen a complete collection of Andre Norton's books and it haunts me to this day, sort of like the sight of an unscalable Everest." --C.J. Cherryh

Memories of Andre Norton
by Adam Niswander

The death of a legend is a big thing, and the death of Andre Norton is one of the most difficult.

I never had the honor of meeting the lady, but I have entered her mind and imagination so many times that it feels like home. Not that her imagination ever became predictable or that I took it for granted. But I had not met her, was not an insider in her life, and therefore cannot share personal recollections of interactions with her. She was an inspiration, but there is nothing simple about that.

Over the last few years, as her health declined, I have responded to each health crisis, urging those who have grown up with her as I did to pay attention and to actively wish her well, and almost begging those who had not discovered her to take the time and do it while she lived - because we do not often lose someone of such giant stature and we should be awed by it when it happens.

And, wonder of wonders, each time - with the support of a cadre of friends and supporters - that grand lady of science fiction recovered somehow, and continued on - a poignant reminder each time that she possessed an indomitable spirit. But

(Continued on page 13)

COPPERCON 24 wants to say THANK YOU!!!

To our hard-working volunteers who made this convention better. We are pleased to give the following people complimentary memberships to CopperCon 25, September 9th-11th, 2005.

If you do not see your name on this list, and feel that it should be, please contact us:
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Pass-thru memberships are neither transferable nor refundable and are only available for CopperCon 25 in 2005.

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Jeff Richards
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Walter Sanville
Gary Swaty
Gus Talbott
J B Talbot
Melissa Tribble
Susan Uttke
Larry Vela
Jim Webbert
Lee Whiteside
Randall Whitlock
William B. Whitmore
Mike Willmoth

In Memoriam (Cont'd from page 12)
this time, she did not recover.

The friends who have sacrificed so much to care for her and help her could finally not do any more than say goodbye for all of us and watch with loving eyes as she moved on to pioneer some new adventure, to discover some new task worthy of her. Alice Mary Norton began selling her work during a time when it was difficult for a woman to break into the field of science fiction.

In 1934, she legally changed her name to Andre Norton. She sometimes used the pseudonym Andrew North, but I suspect it was, as often as not, because her work already made up the bulk of a particular magazine issue and the editor wanted to have people at least think the magazine could find other writers just as talented. But not many were.

I have read her work since my childhood and I frequently reread it now. I can never seem to get enough of it because it is so rich, so full of zest and wonder, so original, so well-executed, so entertaining . . . so near-perfect as to be amazing. If Robert Heinlein was the writer I most admired in my life, Andre Norton was at least close behind, sometimes crowding him for the lead.

She was born in 1912, which is really all the more remarkable when you think of it. Wilbur and Orville Wright made their first airplane flight in 1903, only nine years earlier. But Andre Norton would become famous for writing about adventures on worlds circling suns other than our own.

Book after book, decade after decade, she continually astounded readers with her consistency and inventiveness, and with the magic of her prose.

The lady set the standards high for any who wished to follow in her footsteps. Now she is gone.

But she has left us with great wealth, with unmatched treasures, with literally shelves of books that will likely be entertaining our great-great-grandchildren when we are dust.

She can't be replaced.

But she did pave the way and inspire those who follow her - C. J. Cherryh, Lois McMaster Bujold, Ann McCaffrey, Ann Rice and other brilliant writers who happen to be women. And her work inspired many of us who just happen to be men.

Others shared the hard work earlier - woman writers who broke down gender bias like Judith Merril, Evangeline Walton, Leigh Brackett, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Miriam deFord, Zenna Henderson, Ursula LeGuin, Catherine Lucille Moore, Joanna Russ, Catherine Crook de Camp, Karen Anderson, Margaret St. Clair and Alice Sheldon.

Andre Norton will always be one of the golden pillars of speculative fiction, one who contributed seminal work in both science fiction and fantasy. She will remain a part of the fabric of our literature as long as people read and seek escape through adventure.

We can only offer tribute in the wake

of her passing, but we can sense that there is a sudden void in the heart of our universe, a place where, just yesterday, a star burned with brilliance, and now there is darkness.

We will adjust to the dark, and new stars will be born to light the firmament, but this moment must be marked.

For now, in homage and respect, let us raise our glasses and toast the Grande Dame of our field.

Thank you, Andre. Thank you for what you've given us. We send our love with you on your journey.

Adam Niswander
Phoenix, AZ

**Who put the grin on
Mr. Alfred E. Neuman?
(In Memory of Frank Kelly Freas)
By Jeffrey Lu**

Who put the grin on Mr. Alfred E.
Neuman?

Who made the Green Men from Mars
more insane human?

Who design the Skylab patch without a
sole scratch?

Who mastered art to Asimov, Clarke and
Heinlein?

Frank Kelly Freas.

Who am I but a member in LepreCon 9
To meet a man of warmth, humor, and
kindness

Pass away a generation of sci-fi art
To the last WesternCon in Arizona?

Frank Kelly Freas.

This man who is he called?
This artist who is he now?
His way
Ended this day.

Frank Kelly Freas.

**Musical Notes
by Tom Tuerff**

Joe Bethancourt — “Who Fears the Devil?” (The Songs of Silver John) Deluxe CD Edition ****

Previously available only on cassette, “Who Fears the Devil” makes a grand entrance into the digital age.

A concept album of sorts, “Devil” is based on the stories of **Manly Wade Wellman**, who wrote genuinely frightening tales based on Appalachian folk legends. One of the characters he invented, “Silver John” was a traveling musician who played a silver-stringed guitar and served as a narrator to the stories.

It is this persona that **Joe Bethancourt** assumes as he leads the listener into the Appalachian foothills of his own youth. As a child, **Bethancourt** read the **Wellman** stories and immediately recognized many of the songs sung by Silver John, as well as the tunes **Wellman** clearly based other songs upon.

There's a goodly number of creepy characters in these songs. Appalachian tunes, by their very nature, tend to be about tougher ne'er-do-wells, and the impending doom awaiting those who deal with them. “Little Black Train” (about a man facing death right in the face) and “Old Devlins” are perfect examples.

There's even a bad woman on this CD — poor old “Becky Til Hoppard,” who, at the start of the song, is already hanged, dead and buried. (Since they didn't hang women all that often, she must have been one tough customer.)

Perhaps the moodiest song on the CD is “Hark Mountain,” which **Bethancourt** performs with all the loneliness of the character it describes. You can damn near see what this guy looks like.

The CD version of “Who Fears the Devil” has been nicely cleaned up for the digital age and sounds better than the cassette ever did. And, since this the 21st Century, the CD comes with extras: An entire BOOK called “The Long Lost Friend” by **John George Hohman** (which **Wellman** mentions a lot in the Silver John Stories) and a **Wellman** Short Story, “Shiver in the Pines,” which will send a shiver up your spine. Or your pine. And that's fine.

Oh, it pretty much goes without saying that from a performance standpoint, this is prime **Joe Bethancourt**. He clearly loves these songs and plays his ass off performing them. There are moments of banjo playing on this album that are truly breathtaking, on a “how the heck is he doing that?” scale.

Definitely pick this up.

OTHER FILK NEWS: I haven't had a column for a while because hey, if nobody sends me anything, there's nothing to review! However, quite a few of us have projects in the works:

Joe Bethancourt told me that he's literally moments from releasing his next CD, “The Great Big Way Out There,” which will be mostly songs about space travel and colonization. **Nancy Freeman** is orchestrating her folk/filk/werewolf-meets-girl in a very new “Old West” opera “Stardust County” for recording later this year. The **Duras Sisters** should have their third CD, “Harmony Heifers,” out on the filk tables by the time you read this. And yours truly is trying very hard to finish my second CD, which I think will be titled “But Wait! There's More” and hopefully will be done by Labor Day when I think I'm playing at Dragoncon in Atlanta (that will be firmed up soon).

In the meantime, if you have a filk CD you just put out and you want the world to know about it, send it to ConNotations or get ahold of me at ttuerff@aol.com and I'll make sure people find out!

Tom Tuerff is a local musician and advertising guru who writes filk reviews for ConNotations. His album, “Something To Sell At My Gigs” is sold out, save a few copies at www.cdbaby.com/tuerff. He owns a corgi named Dweezil who has an unnatural fear of big bamboo sticks when they're laying on the ground. He also owns an iguana who, after more than eight years, still has no grip on the concept of “glass.” Tom is also the host of Zappa Universe, which airs at 6 p.m. MST on Sundays at www.radiofreephoenix.com.

**SORCERESS SEEKS
APPRENTICES**

Greetings again, fellow-fen. First, my thanks to all of you who responded to my “Houston, We Have A Problem” plea in last CONNOTATIONS. Special thanks to Tina, for helping me clean out the Augean Stables, to Don, for replacing the security-door and the gate, and Dave, for throwing out the deadbeats. General thanks to everybody else who chipped in time and work. My gratitude to all of you.

So now I have a pretty-much cleaned and repaired house, and need it filled. I've got three furnished rooms for rent, and seriously want friends from the fandom community to take them. Is there anybody out there hoping to put together a Slan-shack? (Ten points if you recognize that one!)

Advantages: the rent-plus-utilities is only \$360 per month. Utilities include power, water, gas, evaporative cooler, phone, cable-TV and cable-modem (capable of handling up to seven computers, with sufficient line-splitters). The TV-cable extends to not only the living-room but one of the bedrooms, and can be extended further. The house is close to three major bus-routes and two community-colleges, and within walking distance of a sizable shopping-plaza. There's on-street parking, and the neighbors are nice. Pets are welcome, as long as they don't eat other pets.

Disadvantages: you have to do a share of the housework and repairs, and right now the computer-room floor needs re-tiling – which will mean moving the furniture. There will also be some serious yard-work a few months down the line (we've got to do something about the back-yard fence). And there are already half-a-dozen cats here. And you'll have to put up with at least one smoker. And no, there's no swimming-pool.

To add a bit of sweetening to the pot, I'm willing to teach anyone who joins me all I know about music, writing, and psionics. Uhuh. If you know me, or have read my published work, or heard any of my albums, or have caught my regular act at Pagan Pride Day, you can guess how much that is.

So, is anybody out there interested?

If so, contact me:
lesliefish@cox.net
or 623-247-7809

--Leslie <:)))><

Pointless Meanderings by Brandon Huigens

I've been now self-publishing comics for two years, almost exactly, and I've learned a few things. Following are a few basic tips:

1) Make a mini comic. I've found this more effective than submitting any sort of portfolio. Handing an editor or portfolio reviewer a copy of your work can be more beneficial than the portfolio - it can break up the monotony of the reviewer's workload. Grab your dusty old portfolio and twenty bucks and head down to a Kinko's. Ask one of the staff members to show you how to use the copy machine (do not ask them to put it together for you - that's not cheap). They can quickly show you how to lay your booklet out, and get to work. Using Photoshop and other digital pre press can come later - do it this way to avoid complication in the beginning.

2) Draw. Learn to draw, or pick up a pencil and start scribbling. One thing I constantly hear from people is "I can't draw, so I need an artist for my comic, and I can't find one." If you're lucky enough to find a collaborator that will work for free, be reasonably prolific, and not try to rearrange your entire story, then more power to you. You're lucky. For the rest of you, drawing is a learned motor skill. A monkey can learn how to draw. If you want to make comics bad enough - if you've got something you NEED to say with sequential art - take a life drawing class. Or dive in, head-first. The only thing holding you back on this one is you. Your art might not be top-notch, but if you're heart's in it, you can succeed. Pick up a copy of Exploring Drawing for Animation by Steve Missal and Kevin Hedgpeth. I had Mr. Missal for a Life Drawing class here at Phoenix College - he's an amazing instructor.

3) Expect to lose money. I've been pretty successful thus far in my venture as a cartoonist - I've been featured in the Arizona Republic and other local magazines, had work published alongside an interview with Stan Lee in a major literary magazine, and become well-acquainted with several creators and publishers. Why? I hand a lot of books out. When I mean a lot, I mean more than half your print run. Networking is the name of the game, my friend. Get out and talk to people, and hand them your work while asking politely for critiques and opinions. Put your e-mail address in the back of your comic, and give your books out at comics conventions, bars, concerts, restrooms, tattoo/piercing shops, skate parks, record stores, art galleries. Be creative with where you put your comics - someone could pick it up and turn things around for you. You can even mail your mini comics out to comic stores all over the world. Find addresses at: www.comicshoplocator.com.

4) It's like my friend Ryan McKee (stand up comedian and publisher of Modest Proposal magazine) said: be nice to everyone, so even if they hate your work, they'll stick around if you're nice to 'em.

Don't burn any bridges in case it takes you awhile to get good (I'm still not all that good).

5) Cut something useless out of your life. I quit watching TV and sold my video game system. Drastic? Not really. Necessary? Definitely. Use your free time drawing. Making comics, as you'll find out, will suck hours out of the day faster than a giant leech at a blood bank.

6) Give your comics out on Saturday May 7 - Free Comic Book day. Talk to your local shop about putting some of your books out on the freebie rack. See if you can't do some sketches and hand books out for awhile... most places are happy to host a local creator, and new comics readers don't know you from Brian Michael Bendis.

7) Participate in National 24 Hour Comic Day at Samurai Comics starting Saturday April 23 at 10am and going until Sunday April 24 at 10am. Never made a comic before? Here's your chance - all you gotta do is stay up for 24 straight and the rest takes care of itself. Seriously - once you do one, you won't be able to stop. Details on 24 Hour Comic Day: www.24hourcomics.com and www.samuraicomics.com.

8) Don't use a Sharpie for comics. Ever.

9) Get online. Go to www.myspace.com, where networking is life. Meet people, introduce them to your work and build up a rapport with people there. You can do the same on www.livejournal.com. You don't need to know crap about building a webpage, and both sites are FREE! Don't start talking about your comic until it's done, though. That's annoying.

10) Get reference material. Here are the text essentials:

Digital Pre Press For Comics
True Facts by Larry Young
Come In Alone by Warren Ellis
Panel One: Comic Book Scripts By Top Writers
Comics & Sequential Art by Will Eisner
Understanding Comics by Scott McCloud
<http://jameshudnall.com/>

toc.htm is an AWESOME website with tons of great information.

That should be plenty to get you started. Once you've done these things, get in touch with me: email brandon.huigens@gmail.com and brandon@samuraicomics.com and I'll help you along further. Plus, I know a place that'll carry your mini comic.

And, in closing, off topic, I'd like to share a memory.

Will Eisner.

It was just last year at the San Diego Comic Con.

As per tradition, I was sitting in a restaurant with friends, drawing jam comics and drinking beer. It was late in the evening, but none of us wanted to head back to our hotels - it isn't often that comic nerds feel like they're "in their element".

(Continued on page 15)



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Despite the lateness, the sidewalks outside, visible through large windows, were packed with people that seemed happy simply to be there. From time to time, I'd glance up from my sketchbook and look into the crowd outside, my mind wandering.

He walked by, and I recognized him immediately. I jumped up from my seat and ran towards the front door of the restaurant right in time to see him pass by. I didn't want to chase him, so I watched him walk away, his coffee-cream brown suit coat almost gleaming in the lamplight. I walked back inside, wondering if I'd come to regret not saying knowing how to say hello. I'd wanted to let him get some rest.

That was the first and last time I saw him.

Will Eisner: originator, master, and genius of sequential art. 1917-2005.

FYI

CASFS Book Discussions

The CASFS Book Discussion is held monthly at the Barnes & Noble bookstore at Metrocenter, 10235 N. Metro Parkway East. We will be meeting on the third Wednesday of each month at 7PM

Books scheduled for discussion are:

April 20th is *The Eyre Affair* by **Jasper Fforde**. I'm really excited about this one:*England, circa 1985, where time travel is routine, cloning is a reality and literature is taken very, very seriously. England is a virtual police state where an aunt can get lost (literally) in wordsworth poems, militant Baconians roam freely spreading the gospel that Bacon, not Shakespeare, penned those immortal works. And forging Byronic verse is a punishable offense. This is all business as usual for brainy, bookish (and heat-packing) Thursday Next, a renowned Special Operative in literary detection - that is, until someone begins murdering characters from works of literature. When this madman plucks Jane Eyre from the pages of Bronte's novel, Thursday faces the challenge of her career. Aided and abetted by characters that include her time-traveling father, an executive of the all-powerful Goliath Corporation, and Edward Rochester himself, Thursday must track down the world's Third Most Wanted criminal and enter the novel herself to avert a heinous act of literary homicide.*Here is my completely abitrary schedule based loosely on the responses I actually got and several rolls of the dice. To the best of my knowledge, all of these are available in paperback.**May 18:** *Hitchhiker's Guide* by **Douglas Adams**. The movie is due out April 29th.**June 22:**

Fairy Godmother by **Mercedes Lackey**. A fun, earthy take on Cinderella who had no Prince Charming to complete her story so she became a Fairy Godmother instead.**July 20:** *Hominids* by **Robert Sawyer**. An engrossing story encompassing science of alternate universes, evolution and sexual identity.**August 17:** *Newton's Cannon* by **Greg Keyes**. *In 1681, Sir Isaac Newton discovers the key to manipulating physical matter. Thus starts the age of miracles...***September 21:** *Out of Their Minds* by **Clifford Simak**. Wonderful classic by the master - *a nightmare world where goblins and demons hobnob with Dagwood Bumstead and Don Quixote - world which seems whimsical but presents mankind with a real and terrible menace.***October 19:** *Kushiel's Dart* by **Jacqueline Carey**. I think it's about a homicidal, masochistic courtesan. My kind of heroine!!**November 16:** *DaVinci Code* by **Dan Brown**. Paperback not due out until October. Loads of stuff to bash about, great fun!**December 14:** (moved up a week to keep it away from Christmas) *Dragonflight* by **Anne McCaffrey**. Please join us. For more information contact Catherine <books@casfs.org>

Signings

Sharyn McCrumb (she of the *“Bimbos of the Death Sun”* and *“Zombies of the Gene Pool”* fame) at Poisoned Pen in Phoenix on April 21st, time TBA

Eoin Colfer Discussion & Signing *The Opal Deception* on Tuesday, April 26th at 7pm 480-730-0205, www.changinghand.com You will need to get a ticket for the book signing. The author also wrote *Artemis Fowl*.

Charlaine Harris at Poisoned Pen in Scottsdale on May 11th at 7pm.

Goodnight, Carson By Jeffrey Lu

Goodnight, Carson.
You once held the world at stage
With your nightly jokes, jabs, and jubilees.
You acted in many roles to play the fool
For laughs in the nightlght.

Goodnight, Carson.
You helped Dave, Jay, Joan
And others to be a clown of the night.
You made us, king of the easy chair,
cry in laughter.
Now, in tears.

Goodnight, Johnny
Dream.

Writing the Great American Novel in Thirty Days By Shane Shellenbarger

We've all heard about "The Great American Novel" and some of us have even attempted to write one, but when you're trying to compete with such novels as *The Great Gatsby*, *Catcher in the Rye*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *A Farewell to Arms*, you have to ask yourself, "Do I have what it takes?" It may be better to set your sights a bit lower, it may be more reasonable to set a goal that can be accomplished in a shorter period of time then the years it would probably take to write "The Great American Novel." How about a novel written in a month? No, not "T.G.A.N", but 50,000 words in 30 days. You may scoff, but it has been done and I'll tell you how.

In 1999, Chris Baty was a writer working in the San Francisco Bay area, experiencing the dot-com boom with no bust in sight. As bizarre as that time was, Baty decided to write a book and to make it interesting he was going to write his first novel in one month. He spread the idea around and two weeks later on July 1st, 1999, twenty-one people began the 1st Annual National Novel Writing Month. Of those twenty-one, six finished and the remaining fifteen wrote everywhere from 500 to 49,000 words. If you are wondering why Baty chose 50,000 words the answer is simple, he grabbed the shortest novel on his bookshelf, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, did a rough count and went with that figure. Other novels of a similar length include, *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, *Generation X: Tales of an Accelerated Culture* by Douglas Coupland, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain, and *The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy* by Douglas Adams.

After experiencing that month, Baty came to the conclusion that the thing that most separates people from their desires isn't a lack of talent, but a lack of a deadline. Goals without the essential evil of a deadline allow people to put off until tomorrow what they should (or could) do today. He also realizes the task of writing a brilliant novel in the time span of a month is unrealistic for most people, but the goal of writing 50,000 words is within the realm of possibility with these three elements: A Herculean task, a supportive network of family and friends, and a definite deadline. If those rules are the foundation of writing a novel in a month, the following elements are the framework:

1. Low Expectations = High Yields. Your goal isn't to write a brilliant first draft, your goal is to write 50,000 words. Let's assume that you want to write more than just the same word 50,000 times.
2. Write In Packs. Misery loves company, so if you can find some kindred souls who want to write a novel in a month gather them and their writing instruments together at a commonly

agreeable venue (the local coffee shop, perhaps) and get to work. "Company" can also be friends and family who are willing to check on your progress throughout the month.

3. Activating Your Deadline. You need to decide what month out of the year will provide you with your greatest chance at success. Short months, gift-giving months, vacation months away from your writing instrument of choice tend to provide built-in failure. Months with three-day weekends, horrible weather, or when distracting housemates won't be around can provide long stretches of uninterrupted writing.

4. The Month-Long Novelist Agreement And Statement Of Understanding. This is a pledge and contract with yourself of your intent to write a 50,000 word novel, ignoring notions of "craft" or even "competency" until they are needed **AFTER** the thirty day period for editing purposes. You agree to shackle your inner editor, ignoring its piteous cries, wails, and moaning. You agree that nothing will stand in the way of completing your goal, neither Hell nor high water will stop you, and that the deadline is absolute, unchangeable, and inevitable. After your goal has been completed within the allotted time you will be permitted to gloat, do a gleeful jig, and collapse from exhaustion until such time that you have sufficiently recovered enough to unshackle your editor and begin the process of detail work on the sculpture which is your novel.

In his book, "No Plot? No Problem!: A Low-Stress, High-Velocity Guide To Writing A Novel In 30 Days.", Baty dispenses writing advice with a mixture of humor and practicality. A sampling of chapter titles includes: Ch. 2 Time-Finding, News-Breaking, and a Step-by-Step Guide to Transforming Loved Ones into Effective Agents of Guilt and Terror, Ch. 4 Cruising for Characters, Panning for Plots, and the First Exciting Glimpses of the Book Within, and the final chapter, Ch. 9 I Wrote A Novel, Now What?

I highly recommend that you find out more about Chris Baty's trials, tribulations, and triumphs. Baty writes in an easygoing, friendly manner that makes his book a quick read and it can be used as reference afterward if you are convinced to take the plunge and write your own novel. As you may have guessed, the book runs about 50,000 words.

<http://www.nanowrimo.org/>
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=835782>
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4184192>
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<http://www.4hb.com/communicate/0250jcgreatamericannovl.html>
http://www.everything2.com/index.pl?node_id=1030797

Videophile

Wonderfalls
Neverwhere
Charmed: The Complete First Season
Shark Tale
The Village

Wonderfalls
Fox, 566 mins, NR
DVD \$39.98

When *Wonderfalls* debuted it was hailed as the greatest new show of the year, so of course, FOX canceled the show after four episodes. Thankfully the show has been released on DVD, it contains the four episodes that were shown on TV plus an additional nine episodes that never aired.

From the back cover: "Although a recent graduate of Brown University, Jaye Tyler decides to ignore her degree, live in a trailer and work at a tourist gift shop in Niagara Falls called Wonderfalls-much to the despair of her well-to-do family. But Jaye's aimless life takes a startling turn after a lion figurine begins talking to her. Her family calls it an "episode," but Jaye knows better. Fearing for her sanity, Jaye nevertheless starts doing exactly what an increasing number of inanimate objects tell her to do and is amazed when her outrageous actions begin changing people's lives in unexpected ways."

This is a delightful show.. The dialogue is witty, the premise is quirky and fun, FOX should be ashamed of themselves for canceling it. The set contains 13 episodes on three discs and while the special features are limited to commentary this is a wonderful program that is destined to be a cult classic. Definitely highly recommended. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Neverwhere
A&E, 180 min, NR
DVD \$39.98

From the Back Cover: "Beneath the familiar streets of London lies another world, and Richard Mayhew is about to be plunged into a dark odyssey through London Below. On his way to dinner with his fiancée, he sees a wounded girl on the sidewalk, and his efforts to help her end the life he knows. The next morning, he is a cipher, erased from existence and consigned to a subterranean world of danger and shadows... One of the most acclaimed fantasy novels in recent years, *Neverwhere* was originally a six-part BBC television series. Rarely seen since its initial broadcast, the visionary tale was the first story written directly for the screen by Neil Gaiman, the prolific genius behind the DC Comics The Sandman

series and the best-selling novel *American Gods*. Now, *Neverwhere* comes to DVD with this mesmerizing collection, which includes audio commentary by Gaiman as well as a vintage interview with him. DVD Features: Commentary with Creator Neil Gaiman; The Original BBC Neil Gaiman Interview; Photo Gallery; Character Descriptions; Neil Gaiman Biography; Interactive Menus; Scene Selection"

Neil Gaiman's *Neverwhere* was released in the UK in 1996 but the BBC waited until 2003 to release this wonderful dark fantasy on DVD. The extra features include the original BBC Interview with Gaiman as well as a commentary track on which Gaiman relays trivia as well as the trials and tribulations of the making of and which characters worked and which didn't. This is definitely a wonderful addition to anyone's DVD collection and a must have for the Gaiman fan. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Charmed: Complete First Season
Paramount, min, NR
DVD \$49.99

From the cover: "The discovery that they are descendants of a long line of witches finds three sisters battling demons and warlocks - occasionally each other.

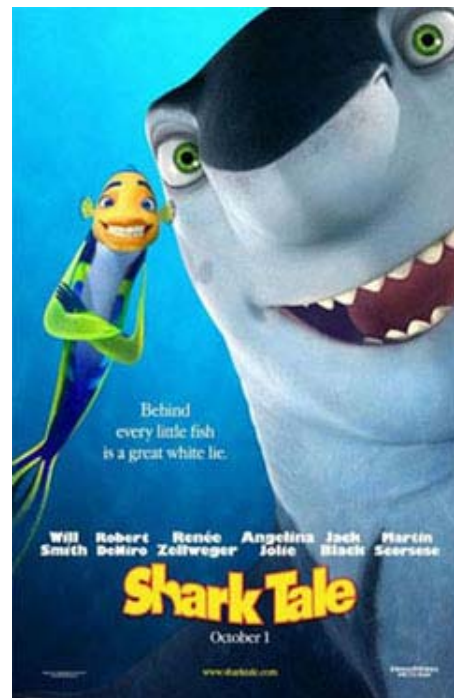
When the beautiful Halliwell sisters inherit a house from their grandmother and discover a secret "Book of Shadows" they learn that they each have a unique power. The strong-willed Prue (Shannen Doherty) can move objects, reserved Piper (Holly Marie Combs) is able to freeze time, and the uninhibited Phoebe (Alyssa Milano) sees the future. Individually, each is strong, but it is only by putting aside their differences and banding together as the "Power of Three" that they will be able to protect the innocent and vanquish evil. Each exciting episode in this richly layered series is a supernatural adventure brewing with suspense and humor."

Premiering in 1998 and still going strong after seven seasons I am surprised that they waited so long to release the series on DVD. The first season is wonderful, starting with the premiere episode when the three sisters are reunited and find their powers to the ending with an episode that sees one character die and the sisters learn that their powers can't always fix everything.

This is a wonderful series and hopefully Paramount will now start releasing subsequent seasons quickly after the long delay in releasing season one. Highly recommended. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Shark Tale
Dreamworks. 92 min, PG
DVD \$29.99

From the back cover: "Oscar (Will Smith), a lowly tongue-scrubber at the local Whale Wash, becomes an



improbable hero when he tells a great white lie. To keep his secret, Oscar teams up with an outcast vegetarian shark, Lenny (Jack Black), and the two become the most unlikely of friends. When his lie begins to unravel, it's up to Oscar's loyal

friend Angie (Renée Zellweger) and Lenny to help him stand up to the most feared shark in the water (Robert De Niro) and find his true place in the reef."

This is yet another Disney animated film that will appeal as much to the adults as to the kids. There are many references that the kids will miss that will tickle the funny bone of the adult viewer yet this is also a wonderful story for the kids who will see that telling lies doesn't work. Highly recommended. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

The Village
Buena Vista, min, PG-13
DVD \$29.99

M. Night Shyamalan's latest film is as stylish as his others, the sense of uneasiness builds nicely, yet the ending is obvious from early in the film. While this film isn't as creative as his earlier works this doesn't stop it from being an enjoyable romp.

The story is set in an 19th century village surrounded by Covington Woods. The villagers are happy in their isolated village yet they do not venture into the woods, said to be inhabited by mythical creatures. When it becomes necessary to travel through the woods to get medical help the "surprise" ending isn't that much of a surprise but it is still well crafted. Good for an afternoon's diversion. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

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In Our Book

The Child Goddess
by Louise Marley
Ace Hardcover; 324pp.; \$23.95

I don't know what was wrong with me; I let this book sit for a month or two before I picked it up. But once I did, I could not put it down. It is the best of what science fiction is all about for me: a wide reaching problem and resolution based on a really *great* idea, supported by characters and subplots you really feel and (in my case) actually weep for.

In this future, Earthlings have traveled out into space and founded colonies on several planets.

One planet is Virimund. First Contact is made by the ExtraSolar Corporation (ESC) that decides that the mostly ocean covered planet is perfect for mining/ harvesting hydrogen, which is used to propel the space ships. But while they are doing their initial surveys, they very unexpectedly discover a ragged bunch of human children living on one of the equatorial islands that make up the only landmasses on Virimund. There are children but no adults. It is determined that they are "lost" Earth emigrants who left the planet 300 years ago in a UN sponsored exodus from Africa and are mostly Sikassa from the nation of Mali.

Unfortunately, the First Contact is marred by fear and stupidity and one Earthman is killed, as is one child. And one child is badly injured.

This badly injured child is taken off planet to deal with her wounds and the physician treating her discovers something very unusual about the young girl who looks to be about 10. Her name is Oa (oh ah).

Oa is the very heart of this fascinating, emotional tale. Oa is kept in strict quarantine by the ESC doctor, Dr. Paolo Adetti, who took care of her injuries. Instead of being returned to her island, the doctor decides she is too important to him and ESC, so she is taken back to Earth. On the journey back, the doctor is constantly monitoring her biological functions by putting her under a machine called the medicator, which has tubes and wires that dangle down like spiders legs from the ceiling. Oa is terrified by this machine because she is subjected to its prodding's and prickings almost every day on the fourteen month trip back to Earth when she was actually supposed to be put into something called "twilight sleep" to ease the long months of space travel. Dr. Adetti is a cold clinical fish with an agenda of his own.

Once she reaches Earth however, an organization called World Health and Welfare steps in to confront the company's bad handling of the First Contact and its reprehensible handling of the child. World Health and Welfare enlists the help of a medical anthropolo-

gist, a woman named Isabel Burke, to look into the background and culture of Oa. Isabel Burke, who is bald-headed by choice, is a priest in a recognized Catholic order named the Priestly Order of Mary Magdalene. Mother Burke, as she is known in her order, is made the guardian of Oa.

The story then unrolls as Mother Burke struggles to keep the child from the clutches of the ExtraSolar Corporation. The head of ExtraSolar Corp wants to not only mine the planet Virimund for hydrogen, but also discover what makes Oa so unique. (I, of course, am not going to tell you what it is about Oa that has everyone in an uproar). ExtraSolar Corp. will do whatever it can to keep Oa away from the World Health and Welfare Organization. The ESC also cannot wait to return to Virimund and test the other children.

And if things were not complicated enough, Mother Burke is teamed up with a high mucky-muck at World Health and Welfare, a physician named Dr. Simon Edwards with whom Mother Burke has a Romantic Past (And yes, yes, she is supposed to be celibate). The two of them return to Virimund with Oa and representatives of the ESC to uncover just what makes Oa and the other children unique and what it might mean for the rest of humanity.

Heartache and tragedy abound in this tale and I can't imagine anyone unmoved by the ending.

And an extra delight for me regarding this book is that I read it shortly after I finished Dan Brown's "The DaVinci Code." And if you have read "The DaVinci Code" and you read this marvelous book, you will know these two novels are sisters under the covers. - **Sue Martin**

Alien in a Bottle
by Kathy Mackel
Harper Collins, \$15.99, 194 pp

This is an amusing juvenile, suitable for the 8 to 12-year-old group. Sean Winger, a typical adolescent whose parents don't understand him, aspires to become a true artist – a glassblower. Olivia, lost inside a big family with too many siblings, spends time staring at the stars wishing to meet an alien. It probably should have been her that found the bottle on the beach but it wasn't, it was Sean. At first, Sean thought he'd found a genie and when the creature promised him three wishes, he was sure of it. But the bottle was really a spaceship (space inside is relative, too) harboring two travelers who had crashed on Earth. One of them is a trader, Tagg Orion, who thinks he's found the mother lode – he had never seen a mall! So, Sean and Olivia agree to help repair the ship and in exchange, Sean is allowed to use the ship as a glass-blowing studio. Of course, using extraterrestrial materials was bound to get him in

trouble... but that comes later. Olivia starts to daydream about hitching a ride and actually traveling to the stars. Then they discover that Tagg is being hunted by a very unhappy, and nasty customer, Dinn Tauro, who wants to return. So, between Sean trying to create the perfect piece of glass art to win a scholarship to a special art school without his father finding out, and trying to keep Dinn from destroying the Earth while he's trying to destroy Tagg, there is a story about friendship, values and ethics. I thought it was cute and exciting... but then I'm not 12 anymore... – **Catherine Book**

Heat Stroke
by Rachel Caine
ROC Books, 336 pp., \$6.99

Book Two of the Weather Warden series, with the prior book titled 'Ill Wind.' The main character is Joanne Baldwin, formerly a weather witch who could control winds. She was killed in book one, and has now returned as a Djinn. Her powers are augmented now, and so is her mission to protect the world's weather. As a human, she was part of the Warden's Association and hunted down as a rogue. Now a free agent, she has to save the world and avoid becoming the property of any human who tries to claim her, ala genie in the bottle. Written in a saucy, amusing style. It looks like she'll need a new fast car to go forward into Book Three. - **Mike Griffin**

The Iron Grail
by Robert Holdstock
TOR Books, 301 pp., \$24.95

Book Two of the Merlin Codex, the first book was titled 'Celtika' and the next one is 'The Broken Kings.' I suppose you could call this series another spin on the Arthurian legend. In this case, it's probably the most historically based one of all time (notwithstanding that recent movie). Yet it mixes in a goodly amount of unrelated myth, like Jason and the Argonauts, a Greek tale of the golden fleece. To begin: set in the Isle of Alba, territory of the Cornovidi, circa 272 BC. As you can gather from the series title, the central character is Merlin, but there is no Camelot. Instead, there is the empty fortress Taurovinda and King Urtha coming to reclaim it. The story is based on the transitional period of ancient Celtic fortresses, when matriarchy gave way to patriarchal kings, with little evidence beyond surviving epic poems. See what a World Fantasy Award winner can do with such scant material. - **Mike Griffin**

Smallville: Silence
by Nancy Holder
Aspect/Warner Books, 304 pp., \$5.99

Yes, of course there are tie-in novelizations to the popular TV show about teenaged Superman, Clark Kent. In fact, there are two series of novels. For
(Continued on page 18)

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In Our Book (Continued from page 17)

younger readers, there is a numbered series (title, Smallville #). This book is part of the unnumbered series for older readers. In this one, Smallville is threatened by flesh-eating zombies. Really, no kidding! And there is a connection to the secret activities of the evil LuthorCorp. Really, not for little kids! - **Mike Griffin**

Batman: Rise of Sin Tzu by Devin Grayson and Flint Dille Aspect/Warner Books, 289 pp., \$5.99

Based on the video game by Ubisoft, this novel is co-written by the game's author. Sin Tzu is a new character, a nearly immortal oriental who can manipulate the minds of people. He frees all of the criminal convicts of Gotham City, putting the city into chaos. Batman, Robin, Nightwing, and Batgirl must try to

recapture all of the criminals, including Bane, Clayface, and the Scarecrow. For any age level that likes a violent video game. - **Mike Griffin**

Black Juice by Margo Lanagan \$15.95, HarperCollins, 208 pp

This collection of short stories is remarkable for several reasons. To begin with Ms Lanagan crafts her worlds by

Industrial Magic by Kelley Armstrong \$6.99, Bantam Spectra, 528 pp

In this, the second "witch" book in the "Women of the Otherworld Series", Paige Winterbourne is trying to start her own coven. However things seem to interfere with her plans and soon enough she is helping to investigate the murder of several teenage members of the most influential cabals.

The world is believable, and current with ours (there is an interesting CSI reference in the prologue). I was intrigued by the notion of the supernatural world existing with ours, I have seen it done before but seldom as well as here.

The story crosses over into the Otherworld and gives a glimpse of the afterlife. The interaction between Paige and her paramour Lucas, heir to the extremely powerful Cortez family cabal, is what fleshes out this story. The supernatural aspects are handled in a manner that makes them more of a condition of the world than a separate add-on.

The plot is a standard of supernatural thrillers. The bad guy is striving for immortality and killing people of power gives a way to access it. However Kelley makes it seem shiny and if not new, then at least rejuvenated. I enjoyed this book and am now, along with the editor of this newsletter, attempting to find the three other books in the series. The first two are about a female werewolf, Elena Micaela. The third is about Paige. - **Bob LaPierre**

The Skystone by Jack Whyte Tor, 494 pp, Special \$3.99 edition

The Skystone begins a series set in ancient Briton as the Roman Empire slides into decline. It begins Arthur's genealogy with his grandfather.

Before the time of Camelot, Britain was a dark and deadly place filled with warring Picts and Celts, and of course, the invading Norse. The Romans, who had lived there for generations, guarding the fragile administration, are given the choice of leaving Britain to bolster the corrupt remains of the Roman Empire, or staying with their homes and facing the world left by the departing legions.

For two Romans, Publius Vagus and his former commander, Canus Britannicus, the choice is to stay and create a new way of life from the wreckage; if they can survive the enmity of a generational vendetta.

There is plenty of plot and action, enough for any David Weber fan, with well drawn characters in a perfectly drawn world.

This is a keeper, and I can't wait for The Lance Thrower to follow. One of the few books set in the time period worth reading, and rereadingfour stars worth. - **Pam Allan**

the Dragon Page radio talk show

Literary Concepts in Fantasy and Sci-Fi



Mike and Evo take science fiction, fantasy, horror and overall geekiness to the next level with *The Dragon Page*, a unique, high-energy talk show that comes to you in two formats, Cover to Cover and Live Fire. From the strange news of sci-fi, to in-depth conversations with the most influential people in the sci-fi/fantasy industry, *The Dragon Page* offers you up an interesting and intriguing slice of sci-fi.

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the Dragon Page
radio talk show

Literary Concepts in Fantasy and Sci-Fi

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Remember...
Tuesday is
Soylent Green Day.

Club Listings

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 "I" Street, Hesperia CA, 92345-7066.

LEPRECON, INC. One of the two Phoenix area corporations that put on yearly conventions. Best described as SF/F generalists with a main thrust into SF/F art. Guests are welcome. The meetings are quarterly on the second Saturday of February, May, August & November unless otherwise notified. August is the annual meeting where board positions are deter-mined. For more information, write PO Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285; call Mike Willmoth, 480-945-6890, Email mwillmoth@earthlink.net 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.) We frequently have author guest speakers. You're all welcome to come if you're in the area. We meet in Fullerton,

about 5 miles north of Disney-land. For more details ph. Greg at [949] 552-4925 or send a message to our listserve OCSF@yahoogroups.com

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

SAMURAI OTAKU ANIME CLUB The Samurai Otaku is a group of fans of anime, manga, and Japanese pop culture. Meetings are held every Saturday night at 6pm at Samurai Comics, 5024 N. 7th St.. Members discuss anime and manga, work on a web comic, discuss fund raisers, and schedule club events. After each meeting the club views selected anime DVD's and plays games. Open to new members. Contact Moryha Banks— (602)265-8886, Email: moryha@samuraicomics.com

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

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 DMitchel1@Juno.com

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

(Continued on page 20)

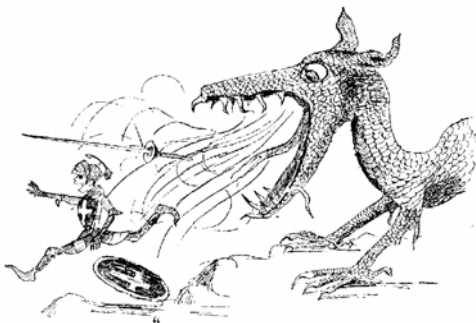
Club Listings
(Cont'd from page 19)

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

UNITED FEDERATION OF PHOENIX A Phoenix area Star Trek and general SciFi fan club. We are a social club that meets every two weeks at various locations around the Phoenix area. The UFP has been meeting for over 25 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

WESTERN SCIENCE FICTION ASSO-CIATION (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, usually at the home of a member. 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



What is CASFS?
What is really behind putting on a convention? What 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 pro-rated for the amount of the year remaining. For more info Call: Stephanie L. Bannon (602)973-2341 Webpage: www.casfs.org email: casfs@casfs.org

Convention Listings

Phoenix*Cactus ComiCon 2005 (Glendale AZ) **April 10, 2005** will be Sunday, April 10th at Glendale Civic Center, 5750 W. Glenn Drive, 4 miles west of I-17, 1 block north of Glendale Ave and 57th Drive, 9am-3pm, Admission- \$6, 10 years and under get in free, Art-on-the-Spot Contest (enter by 12:30pm), Costume contest (enter by 2pm), Panel Discussions & Workshops, Speakers: Marv Wolfman, Todd Nauck, Marie Croall, Brian Pulido, Steve Rude, and more to be announced. Info at www.phoenixcomicon.com

Space Access '05 Conference, (Phoenix AZ) **April 28-30, 2005**, Phoenix Arizona at the Four Points Sheraton, 10220 N Metro Parkway East, Phoenix Arizona 85051, 602 997-5900 for reservations, mention "Space Access" for our \$79 conference room rate (\$109 for cabana suite), rate good for up to two days before and after our conference dates. The conference gets underway 2 pm Thursday and runs through Saturday night. This year's theme is "Still A Long Hard Road Ahead"; we plan a session on the process

of turning the new Commercial Space Transportation law into practical regulations, and we're looking at a session on the new spaceports coming onto the scene. Along, of course, with the usual wide variety of progress reports, technical backgrounders, viewpoints, and new ideas from various players in this burgeoning field. Space Access '05 registration once again holds steady at \$100 in advance, \$120 at the door, \$10 off for SAS members. \$30 Student rate, no member discount. Day rates available at the door only. One year's SAS membership is \$30, please include your email address for Updates.Mail checks (sorry, no credit cards) to: Space Access Society, 5515 N 7th St #5-348, Phoenix AZ 85014

LepreCon 31 (Carefree AZ) **May 6-8, 2005** - Carefree Resort, Carefree, AZ Science Fiction and Fantasy Convention with an emphasis on art Artist GoH Dave Dorman; Author GoH Kevin J. Anderson; Special Artist Guest Bear Burge; Music GoH Mitchell Burnside-Clapp. Local Artist GoH Sarah Clemens; Room Rates\$89 S/D, \$99 T, \$109 Q (plus tax and \$9 resort fee per room) (480) 488-5300 or (888) 488-9034 Memberships are \$30 thru 12/31/04; \$35 thru 04/15/05 ; Kids 7-12 half price, Kids 6 & Under Free (with Adult membership) Write LepreCon 31, PO Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285, Phone (480) 945-6890, Emaillep31@leprecon.org Web www.leprecon.org/lep31

ConRunners 11 (Phoenix AZ) **June 11, 2005** - At the Embassy Suites Phoenix North, 2577 W Greenway Rd, Room 3005. Registration opens at 8:30AM - Morning Session 9AM-1PM: We will play "If I Ran The Z/o/o Con" a con running choose your own path adventure game. Membership \$15. For more info Stephanie <conrunners@westernsfa.org> Or our web site www.westernsfa.org

Phoenix ConGames (Phoenix AZ) **July 21-24, 2005** Hilton Phoenix East. For more info www.iceescape.com

HexaCon 15 (Tempe, AZ) **August 507, 2005** Tempe Mission Palms, Tempe, 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 Barry Bard's Movie Previews and Giveaways. Memb: \$15 thru 12/31/04; \$20 thru 6/30/05, Hotel: Tempe Mission Palms, Tempe, AZ (800) 547-8705 Room Rates: \$91 S/D/T/Q, Info: www.hexacon.org or 623-773-1816

CopperCon 25 (Phoenix AZ) **Sept 9-11, 2005** Embassy Suites Phoenix North, Phoenix, AZ Guests Authors Greg Keyes, Robert J. Sawyer; Ghost GoH. Harry

Stine; Music Escape Key Memberships \$25 thru 12/31/04, \$30 thru 5/30/05 Hotel rates \$89 S/D, \$99 T/ \$109 Q (plus tax) (602) 375-1777 CopperCon 25, PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082, Phone(480) 945-6890 EmailCu25@coppercon.org, Web www.coppercon.org

AniZona 2(Phoenix AZ) **April 14-16, 2006** Embassy Suites Phoenix North, Phoenix, AZ Arizona's Own Anime Convention Guests TBA Memberships \$25 until 07/30/05, \$40 at the door Membership limited to 850. Hotel rates \$99 S/D, \$109 T/ \$119 Q (plus tax) (602) 375-1777 www.anizona.org, Email agrutta@anizona.org



Mailing/Subscription Information

ConNotations is sent free of charge to those who have attended a CASFS sponsored convention in the past two years (currently 2003/2004). Attendees of CopperCon 23, CopperCon 24, HexaCon 13 and HexaCon 14 will receive ConNotations Volume 15 Issues 1 thru 6.

ConNotations updates it's mailing list each December.

Individual subscriptions are available for \$15 for 6 issues.

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: **WesternSFA** - If you attended Westercon 57 you will receive Volume 15 Issues 1 thru 6

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