

ConNotations

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

A Conversation with Forrest J. Ackerman

By Catherine Book

I was at Comic-Con 2005 when I lucked into an opportunity to interview the most celebrated fan – Forrest J. Ackerman. For our younger fen who might not recognize the name – Forry started out in life with a great love and fascination for all things fantastical and horrific, reading *Amazing Stories* in 1926, back when the genre was known as Scientifiction. He was a literary agent and personal friend for Ray Bradbury; and, he coined the often-still controversial term *Sci-Fi* way back in 1954. He’s been known as Mr. Science

C2005 photo by Shane Shellenbarger



memorabilia. He had magazines, movie props, costumes and masks. He had the Bela Legosi cape and Lon Chaney cape from the Phantom of the Opera. He gave tours of his amazing collection every Saturday. Forry was a delightful gentleman although he’d probably laugh at me if he’d heard that. I am intensely grateful for the opportunity to have spent a little private time with him. He considers himself a repository of science fiction history and loves to relate stories. For me, he will forevermore be the name

Fiction and it was he who created the sexy Vampirella. Until recently, Forry lived in an 18-room mansion filled with the most incredible collection of horror and sci-fi

on the cover of all those Perry Rhodan books I read so long ago. (I thought, for a short time, that Forrest J. Ackerman

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SF Tube Talk

TV News & Previews

By Lee Whiteside

It's the end of the year, which means most of the network shows are in repeats but we've got new episodes of most everything on the horizon for January. December isn't completely barren, since we've got SciFi's annual early December big event, the six hour miniseries **The Triangle**, Christmas episodes of **Smallville** and **The Dead Zone**, and over in the U.K. and on Canadian screens, there's the highly anticipated **Doctor Who** special episode, *The Christmas Invasion*. This fall season on the broadcast networks saw the biggest number of new science fiction/fantasy shows to debut in the same year in quite a while. And at press time, all six of the new shows are still on the air with four of them having gotten full season orders before the start of November sweeps. First to debut was **Supernatural** on The WB, which had a strong debut and has held up well so far and was the first to get picked up for a full season of 22 episodes. The three alien (or whatever they are) invasion shows had also done well overall. **Surface** has helped NBC to get some momentum going on Monday nights and got a full season order. **Invasion** has drawn a good sized audience on Wednesday nights with some help from its lead-in **Lost**. However, not all of the **Lost** viewers are sticking around to watch **Invasion**, but it has been doing well enough to be competitive in the time slot and ABC has given it a full season order. **Threshold** has done decent ratings for CBS on Friday night, and as of press time CBS has ordered three more scripts, which is a good sign of further episodes being ordered. CBS has also started making current episodes of **Threshold** available online in an attempt to boost awareness of the series. The biggest surprise has been **The Ghost Whisperer**, which has done very well opening up Friday nights for CBS and it has gotten a full season pick up as well. Last, and least, is **Night Stalker** on ABC. It was the last of the new genre shows to debut and ratings have been fair. Both **Night Stalker** and **Alias** have not been giving ABC much in the way of viewers on Thursday night and rumors are that both shows may be headed to hiatus soon. ABC has been doing well on other nights, especially with some of their other new shows such as **Commander in Chief**, so **Night Stalker** may be given a chance to hang around a bit longer, but don't be surprised if it is gone by the time you read this. SciFi's big event this year is the six hour miniseries **The Triangle**. It boasts a few names familiar to science fiction fans, with Executive producers **Dean Devlin** (*Independence Day*), **Bryan Singer** (*X-Men*, *Superman Returns*), and **Rocke S. O'Bannon** (*Farscape*). O'Bannon wrote the script based on a story by **Devlin** and **Singer**. It will air over three nights, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, December 5, 6 & 7, with an encore of all three parts on Sunday, December 11th. As you might guess, it deals with the strange events connected with the Bermuda Triangle. **Sam Neill** is billionaire Eric Benirall, who has been losing his cargo ships and their crews in The Triangle and he wants to find out why. He puts together a team of experts to investigate including **Eric Stoltz** as tabloid journalist/skeptic Howard Thomas, **Catherine Bell** is ocean resource engineer Emily Patterson, **Michael Rodgers** is scientist/adventurer Gruce Gellar, and **Bruce Davison** is psychic Stan Latham. **Lou Diamond Phillips** plays Meeno Paloma, a boat pilot who experienced The Triangle when on a Greenpeace expedition and has not been the same since. Benirall promises them unlimited funding for their research and a nice paycheck when they solve the mysteries. Things pick up when a jetliner disappears over The Triangle, and each member of the team is affected by bizarre and unexplainable occurrences and the government starts to take an interest in their project, making things take a dangerous turn. Look for lots of promotion for it by SciFi (and via the other NBC/Universal outlets) which will likely make this as big a ratings winner as the **Taken** miniseries event was a couple of years ago. That's not all that SciFi has in store for us in December. Saturday, Dec 10th will see the debut of **Painkiller Jane**, a pilot for a possible series if it gets a good response. It is based on a comic series created by **Jimmy Palmiotti** and **Joe Quesada** and published by Event Comics in the mid 90's. The original comic didn't fare very well and attempts to raise the character's profile with crossovers with The Punisher, Hellboy, Darkness, and Vampirella didn't seem to do much for the character, either. But MGM Television picked up the rights and it has made it to the pilot stage. Starring in the title role is **Emmanuelle Vaugier** as Jane Browning, who is a young Marine officer that gains rapid self-healing powers

Another **Philip K. Dick** story is getting the big screen treatment. His story, "*The Golden Man*", is being adapted as the movie **Next**. **Nicolas Cage** stars as a man who can see the future and change it. **Julianne Moore** is a federal agent who is trying to find him in order to prevent a terrorist attack. Look for it sometime in 2007. Another adaptation is **Children of Men**, based on a **P.D. James** novel. It will star **Chiwetel Ejiofor** (the Operative in **Serenity**) as the leader of a political faction that wants to control the future of the human race. **Michael Caine**, **Clive Owen**, and **Julianne Moore** also star with **Alfonso Cuaron** directing. **Neil Gaiman's Stardust** looks to be heading towards the big screen as well. **Matthew Vaughn** is in final negotiations to direct and produce the movie, using a script that he and writing partner **Jane Goldman** produced. In other **Neil Gaiman** movie news, **Dakota Fanning** has been signed to provide the voice for Coraline in the stop motion verison of the award winning children's book by **Gaiman**. **Henry Selick** is writing and directing. **Jon Favreau** is the latest director to get involved with the long in gestation adaptation of **Edgar Rice Burrough's John Carter of Mars**. Writer **Ehren Kruger** is taking a stab at a screenplay adaptation for **Favreau** to work with.

The next 007 movie, **Casino Royale**, is moving ahead, having named English actor **Daniel Craig** (*Layer Cake*) as the new James Bond. This will be the 21st official Bond film and **Craig** will be the sixth actor in the role. Filming starts in January.

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24 Frames

Movie News

By Lee Whiteside

Joss Whedon's Serenity opened with a not very impressive \$10 million opening weekend and was pretty much gone from the theatres within a month. That doesn't bode well for a followup movie, but once the DVD sales are tallied, there is a chance that there will be more for fans of the series. **Whedon** is now at work on the script for **Wonder Woman** and has also sold a script to Universal for **Goners**, a supernatural thriller that **Whedon** described as "the story of a young woman's journey that involves a great deal of horror and some heroics." **Whedon** will also direct the movie. Director **Uwe Boll** is continuing to mine computer game adaption with **Bloodrayne** scheduled for a January release. He's been busy working on **In the Name of the King: A Dungeon Siege Tale**. **Boll** was considering releasing the movie in two parts, like **Quentin Tarantino** did with **Kill Bill**, but he's decided to put out a 2 hour, 40 minute version when it is released later in 2006, with the DVD release likely being even longer. It stars **Jason Statham**, **Ron Perlman**, **John Rhys Davies**, **Ray Liotta**, **Leelee Sobieski**, **Burt Reynolds** and **Kristanna Loken** (who also stars in **Bloodrayne**). **Statham** sets out to rescue his kidnaped wife and avenge the death of his son, taking on the animal warrior Krugs that are controlled by the evil Gallian (**Liotta**).

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SF Tube Talk (Cont'd from page 3)

after being exposed to a biochemical weapon. She becomes an ultra-covert agent fighting crime while struggling to remain free from those who would now use her gifts for sinister purposes. Also starring are **Tate Donovan**, **Richard Roundtree**, and **Eric Dane**. SciFi will likely have another movie or two on Saturdays in January, but as of press time have not announced which ones will air. SciFi Pictures reportedly in the can include **Black Hole Terror**, **Caved In**, **Fire Alien** and **Magma**.

SciFi has also announced that they have picked up **Eureka** for a thirteen episode series to debut next summer, adding eleven episodes to the original pilot order. The quirky series about a secret think tank in the Pacific Northwest stars **Colin Ferguson** as U.S. Marshal Jack Carter who becomes stranded in Eureka and discovers there are strange things going on. Also starring are **Greg Germann**, **Joe Morton**, **Maury Chykin**, **Erica Cerra** and **Matt Frewer**. SciFi has also ordered a two hour pilot of **The Dresden Files** from **Nicolas Cage's** production company, Saturn Films, and Lions Gate Television. It is based on the novel series by **Jim Butcher** about Harry Dresden, a wizard/detective in a modern day Chicago where the supernatural is commonplace. The pilot was written by **Hans Beimler** and **Robert Hewitt Wolfe**, who have a good

track record with various incarnations of **Star Trek**, **The 4400** and **Andromeda** (the early years) between them. I'd peg this as a good bet to make it to series as long as SciFi doesn't meddle with it too much. Harry Dresden would be played by **Paul Blackthorne**, best know as Stephen Saunders on the third season of **24**. Directing the pilot will be **David Carson**, who has directed successful pilots such as **Deep Space Nine** and **The Dead Zone** as well as the **Star Trek Generations** movie. SciFi has also picked up the German production **Ring of the Nibelungs**, which will air next spring titled **Dark Kingdom: The Dragon King**. It is an English language production filmed in Germany with a script written by **Diane Duane** and **Peter Moorwood**. Its loosely based on the Germanic myth about the magic ring of the Nibelungs and the Nordic Volsunga Saga. It stars **Benno Furmann**, **Alicia Witt**, **Max Von Sydow**, **Raf Moler**, **Julian Sands**, and **Otto West**. It was directed by **Uli Edel**, who directed **The Mists of Avalon**, **King of Texas** and **Purgatory**, all mini-series on TNT among many other TV series including **Twin Peaks** and **Oz**.

SciFi has also announced an official renewal for both **Stargate SG-1** (a record tenth season) and **Stargate Atlantis**. Negotiations are in progress with the actors, however, so its not yet clear if all of the regular cast will return for either

show. As for **Battlestar Galactica**, rumors are that an official pickup for a third season will be announced soon. Of course, all three series return in January for the second half of their current seasons. If you need to catch up on **Battlestar Galactica**, there will be a DVD release in December of the first ten episodes of the season. New episodes of **Ghost Hunters** will reportedly also start airing in January as well, which night is still unknown.

Stargate SG-1 will conclude the *Fourth Horseman* two parter, with SG-1 working to find a cure for the plague that the Ori have unleashed on Earth. After solving that predicament, in *Collateral Damage*, SG-1 establishes diplomatic relations with a moderately advanced civilization that has enjoyed generations of peace under Asgard protection. One of their technologies is a Goa'uld memory device that is used to frame Colonel Mitchell for murder, including giving him the memories of the murder. After that is *The Ripple Effect*, for which not much is known other than it may feature the return of a beloved character and a new Asgard character named Kvasir. It may also be a very confusing episode. Ending things in January will likely be *Ethon*, which sees Daniel Jackson get into trouble, and when the team tries to help out, they get into their own bit of trouble.

Stargate Atlantis will continue with *The Hive*, concluding the mid-season cliff-hanger. Colonel Sheppard finds himself a prisoner of the Wraith following Ford's attempted suicide attack on a hive ship. In *Epiphany*, Sheppard finds himself on a planet where time passes more rapidly, with no way to contact his team or return to Atlantis. *Epiphany* was also written by **Joe Flanigan**, the actor who plays Colonel Sheppard. In *Critical Mass*, a beacon is set off that alerts The Wraith to the Stargate team still on Atlantis, and they must race against time to prepare for a Wraith attack and find out who set off the beacon. In *Grace Under Pressure*, Rodney McKay is trapped in a sinking puddle jumper and a hallucination of Amanda Carter is his ticket to surviving. **Battlestar Galactica** continues the storyline of the Pegasus when it returns in January. Episodes include one where Adama learns of a pacifist movement within the fleet that is advocating peace with the Cylons. In *Black Market*, Lee Adama becomes entangled with a mafia-like group of criminals when he investigates the murder of a Colonial officer -- and is reunited with a former lover. *Sacrifice* sees a woman who lost her husband to the Cylons take the Cloud Nine lounge hostage, demanding that Adama hand over the Cylon Sharon so that she can exact revenge. And in *The Captain's Hand*, Lee Adama works alongside the increasingly unstable new commander of the Pegasus when a Raptor scouting party goes missing.

Over on the USA Network, there's a **A Very Dead Zone Christmas** on Sunday, December 4th, in which female psychic Alex Sinclair (**Jennifer Finnigan**) pays Johnny a surprise Christmas visit and the two work together to solve the mystery of one very lost and confused Santa. This leads them to a group of street kids who are also lost with it all ending up at Johnny's house for the strangest Christmas he's ever had.

The WB will have a Christmas episode of **Smallville** as well on December 8th, called *Lexmas*. In it, Clark and Chloe have encounters with "Santa", who may or may not be the real thing, and Lex is undergoing emergency surgery and is near death in the hospital. Coming up in January will be *Fanatic*, where Lex Luthor and Jonathan Kent are running against each other in an election for Senator, and Lex discovers one of his student supporters is a bit fanatical about him. In *Closer*, the election campaign is heating up when Lex gets a bomb threat at his mansion. In actuality, it's a pair of bad cops looking to get ahold of the Kryptonian space ship Lex has hidden in a warehouse. Look for some big episodes in February where a major death or two has been promised by the **Smallville** producers in the 100th episode and subsequent episodes will deal with that aftermath.

Doctor Who gets into the Christmas Spirit with *The Christmas Invasion*, which will be the first full episode to feature **David Tennant** as The Doctor. It is expected to air on the BBC on Christmas Day and in Canada either the same day or on Boxing Day. In the special, The Doctor and Rose are on the Earth in the near future where they have to deal with the evil Sycorax, who are using robot Santas as part of their evil scheme. Guest starring are **Andy Garcia** and **Penelope Wilton** (Prime Minister Harriet Jones). This will not be the first story for **Tennant** as The Doctor, though. There is reportedly a short adventure in the works to be broadcast on the BBC in late November as part of a Children in Need telethon.

Doctor Who recently took the major awards at the National Television Awards show in the U.K., getting awards for Most Popular Drama, Most Popular Actor in a Drama (for **Christopher Eccleston**) and Most Popular Actress in a Drama (**Billie Piper**). Needless to say, the BBC was pleased to have their show take those awards instead of a competitor.

The big news about **Doctor Who** is that they are planning a new spinoff series to debut in 2006 called **Torchwood**. It will be designed to air later in the evening and thus able to have more adult content. It will feature **John Barrowman** as Captain Jack Harkness. According to creator **Russell T. Davies**, "**Torchwood** will be a dark, clever, wild, sexy, British crime/sci-fi paranoid thriller cop show with a sense

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SF Tube Talk (Continued from page 4)

of humour - the *X Files* meets *This Life*.” He will lead a team of renegade investigators searching for alien technology that



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has come to Earth. The seeds for the 13 episode series will be set in early episodes of the second series of *Doctor Who*, but will not directly cross-over. It is planned to air on BBC3 between seasons of *Doctor Who*, likely starting in mid-summer and running into the fall. Where it falls in Captain Jack’s time line is unknown.

Showtime has started airing the anthology series *Masters of Horror*, airing a new episode each weekend with a showing on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday night. Kicking off December is *Homecoming*, which is directed by **Joe Dante** and stars **Robert Picardo** and **Jon Tenney**. It is based on short story “*Death & Suffrage*” by **Dale Bailey** in which the Presidential Election is swayed by Zombies. Next up is *The Deer Woman*, directed by **John Landis** and starring **Brian BenBen** as a detective investigating a bizarre series of murders that leads him to believe a mythological Native American creature is behind it all. In *Cigarette Burns*, **John Carpenter** tells the tale of a film collector attempting to recombine a cursed film that caused it’s only audience to go into a murderous frenzy. After taking a break over Christmas and New Years weekend, it should return with the remainder of the 13 episodes in January. Those include **William Malone’s** *Fair Haired Child*, about a 13 year old outcast kidnaped by strange couple, **Larry Cohen’s** *Pick Me Up* in which two Urban Legends collide, a serial killer who kills hitchhiker’s, and a hitchhiker who kills people who pick him up. **John McNaughton** directs *Haeckel’s Tale*, based on a **Clive Barker** short story that is a “sexually charged campfire story with a terrifying twist.” **Takishi Miike** directs *Imprint*, based on a Japanese horror novel with an American journalist in 19th century Japan on a dark island. Finally, **Lucky McKee** directs *Sick Girl*,

which is described in press materials as a “genre-bending lesbian love story about two women and the bug that got between them.” I’m not sure that I can add anything to that description. Indications are that the producers of *Masters of Horror* are already looking at doing a second series of 13 episodes as well as a *Masters of SciFi* series, adapting stories by authors such as **Harlan Ellison**, **Ray Bradbury**, **Robert A. Heinlein**, **Isaac Asimov**, **H.G. Wells**, and **Stanislaw Lem**. **Ellison** and **Bradbury** will be adapting their own stories, writer **Michael Tolkien** will be adapting and directing **Heinlein’s** “*Jerry Was a Man*.” An announcement for a series go-ahead is expected soon and don’t be surprised if it has **J. Michael Straczynski** on board as a producer/showrunner for the series. He’s recently indicated he has accepted a showrunning gig for a “companion series” if it gets the go-ahead and indications are that it is indeed *Masters of SciFi*.

Whether it will air on Showtime or SciFi will likely depend on how well the ratings hold up for *Masters of Horror*. In any case, as done with the *Masters of Horror* series, *Masters of SciFi* will be a co-production with Anchor Bay, who will release it on DVD.

With the *Babylon 5* feature movie failing to happen, there doesn’t appear to be any new *Babylon 5* productions in the works. However, there is something new for *Babylon 5* fans to look forward to. **J. Michael Straczynski** has over the years made a handful of his *Babylon 5* scripts available. Some fans have gone about collecting them from charity auctions and other means. **Straczynski** has decided to make his entire run of *Babylon 5* scripts

available through a special publishing effort via the website www.babylon5scripts.com and CafePress.com. He’s planning on putting out a total of 15 volumes, collecting all 91 scripts he wrote for the series. In addition to the scripts, he’s also writing an introduction and comments for each episode, including memos and other documents relating to the production of the series as well as rare photos from his personal archives. This will be a pretty extensive look at the entire series and hasn’t been done to this extent previously. The first volume is around 450 pages and will include the original unfiled script for the

pilot episode, *The Gathering*, which was changed substantially when it got the go ahead for production. A few quick production notes: Spike TV has announced that rapper/actor **Kirk Jones**, aka Sticky Fingaz, will star in the upcoming *Blade* TV series. **Jones** was a regular on the just canceled FX series, *Over There*. **David Goyer** is producing *Blade* and co-writing the pilot episode with comic & TV writer **Geoff Johns**. Also starring are **Jill Wagner**, **Neil Jackson**, **Jessica Gower** and **Nelson Lee**. The series is expecting to debut next June on Spike TV. The FOX network and Warner Bros. Television are developing a series based on the *Terminator* movies. It would tell the tales of Sarah Connor and her son, John, following the events of *Terminator 2*. Lifetime has given the go-ahead for a pilot for *Scarlett*, about a New Orleans horror writer that discovers what she is writing about it real. It was scheduled to start filming the Monday that Hurricane Katrina hit, so it got delayed. Filming of the pilot did happen at the end of October in Natchitoches in north central Louisiana. The delay did not lose any cast members. **Rebecca Gayheart** (*Dead Like Me*) stars as Paula Sackett, pen name “Scarlett”, a successful young horror novelist who buys an old French Quarter mansion in New Orleans. Also starring are **Kristen Dalton** (*The Dead Zone*), **Lyndsy Fonseca**, and **Michael Duvert**. According to producer/writer **Robert Hewitt Wolfe**, Lifetime is really behind this series, and worked to help with the production delays caused by the hurricane to make sure it still happens.

24 Frames (Continued from page 3)

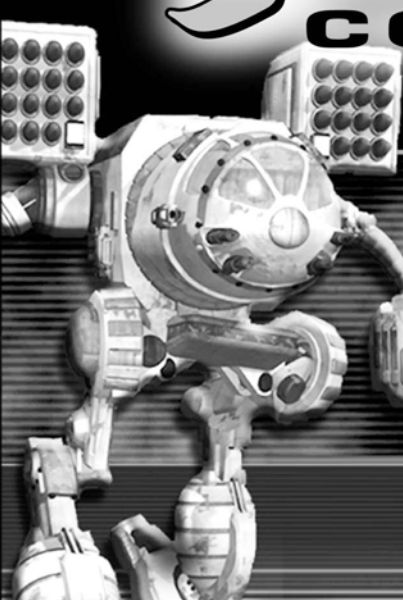
Richard Kelly (*Donnie Darko*) is directing *Southland Tales*, a science fiction apocalypse movie set in the near future in Los Angeles on the eve of the end of the world. **Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson** stars as Boxer Santaros, an action movie star with amnesia who joins up with **Seann William Scott** (a policeman and a mysterious twin brother) and **Sarah Michelle Gellar** (porn star Krysta Now) in a momentous day in 2008. **Kelly** is developing web sites and graphic novels to tell some of the back story and expand it beyond the movie (and to help build anticipation for the movie). It is also hard to describe with **Kelly** indicating it is a comedy, but also that “we wanted to try to make a film that’s sort of conveying the feeling of frustration and unease, I guess, that a lot of my friends are feeling about a lot of things that are happening right now in the world and to sort of tell it in the most entertaining, fun way possible.” It looks to be a pretty ambitious project and worth keeping an eye on. **Kelly** has also obtained the rights to the unpublished **Richard Matheson** story, *The Box*, which was adapted into the *Twilight Zone* episode *Button, Button* in the 1980’s version. In it, a couple is offered \$200,000 if they push a button on a box that will cause someone they don’t know to die.

Movie Previews for December & January

The holiday movie season is in full swing with *Zathura* and *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* already in the theatres.

(Continued on page 6)

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24 Frames (Continued from page 5)

Dec 2 **Aeon Flux** - **Charlize Theron** brings to life the acrobatic assassin, Aeon Flux. It was originally a series of short films on MTV back in the 80's that left most viewers trying to figure out what was going on. **Frances McDormand** also stars as Aeon's handler, and likely delivering some exposition to explain things. After a virus has decimated humanity and the remaining humans are all living in one city, Aeon is brought in to help settle the political conflicts by assassinating the current government leader. Look for lots of action and skin tight outfits.

Dec 9 - **The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe** - Disney takes a stab at live action (with lots of CGI) fantasy with a big budget adaptation of **C. S. Lewis'** second Narnia book, *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe*. It tells the story of four kids during World War II who are sent to the country to get away from the bombings of London. They discover a magical wardrobe that takes them to Narnia where they get in the middle of a conflict between the evil White Witch and the Lion Aslan. Visual effects are handled by Weta, who did **The Lord of the Rings** trilogy, and it was filmed in New Zealand, so it should look very good.

Dec 14 - **King Kong** - Following the enormous success of **The Lord of the Rings**, **Peter Jackson** wanted to make his dream project, a big budget remake of **King Kong**. He's turned the original 1930's movie that ran 100 minutes into a 3 hour blockbuster extravaganza. **Jack Black** is Carl Denham, **Naomi Watts** is Ann Darrow, and **Andy Serkis** provides the motion capture reference for the big ape as he did for Gollum in the LOTR movies. Unlike the 1970's remake, **Jackson** has set the movie in the 1930's, hoping to recreate the atmosphere of the original movie. It looks to be the big hit of the holiday season.

Jan 6 -**Bloodrayne** - Based on a computer game, it is set in the 18th century in Romania and tells the tale of Rayne, whose father was a vampire and her mother was human. Needless to say, she has superhuman powers and when she sets out to find her father, Kagan, she discovers that he is looking for three Talismans that will give him enough power to throw the Earth into darkness and he will rule the world. **Kristanna Loken** (*Terminator 3*) stars as Rayne, with **Ben Kingsley**, **Meat Loaf**, **Billy Zane**, **Udo Kier**, **Michael Madsen** and **Michael Pare** also starring. It is directed by Uwe Boll and according to him, the movie is a prequel to the game, giving Rayne's origin.

Jan 20 -*Underworld: Evolution* - If you haven't gotten enough vampires for one month, there's the sequel to **Underworld** with **Kate Beckinsdale** and **Scott Speedman** returning as the vampire and werewolf lovers to take part in the big battle between the vampires and lycans. We also learn about what started the age-old feud giving **Bill Nighy** a chance to reprise his role as Viktor from the original. If you liked the first one, you should be able to sink your teeth into the sequel with no problems.

Conversation (Continued from page 1)

was the writer...{grin})
Forry started the conversation with an invitation to visit him any Saturday from 11am to noon in Hollywood at 4511 Russell Ave. Even if the collection isn't what it used to be, there's still Forry. He's been visited by people from around the world - including two sisters from Transylvania, fans from Japan and China, and one from Tibet. By his exact count, Forry has seen the film "Metropolis" one hundred and two times. At one time he employed two young technicians to spend 18 months and 600 hours and reconstruct the Metropolis robot for him. Forry said he's tempted to take it with him to his crypt but instead that he would probably donate it to the Seattle Science Fiction Museum. They already have over 100 pieces from Forry's personal collection; one of the pieces he gave them was the original manuscript of a story that actually went into space "Skylark of Space." At one time, long, long ago - there were little stickers made that said "Science Fiction League" that were used to publicize science fiction books. Forry had the last ones on earth and donated them also to the Museum. In Germany, in a science fiction film museum are twenty-five more of Forry's collection. At one time, Forry's collection numbered 50,000 books, and 200 sets of science fiction magazines. I could tell it broke his heart to have his collection broken up.

He told me a story about a small amateur magazine published by a young science fiction fan. Hugo Gernsback, editor and publisher of the world's first science fiction magazine "Amazing Stories," noticed the little publication and was impressed by it. He invited the young editor to his office and was astounded to find the man was only a young boy of about 16; but he really knew his stuff. Gernsback offered him a job as assistant editor. Charlie Horning and Forry had been corresponding (back when that meant hand-written letters) and Charlie told Forry - "Imagine, Forry! I'm the managing editor of Wonder Stories!" 'Course, Charlie had to first go home and ask his parents if they would let him.

Forry has always been very interested in the universal language of Esperanto. He's fond of telling anyone about the

importance of Esperanto. For those who don't know: Esperanto is an artificially created language. A language that is simplistic and easy to learn, a language that has no national identity and that could enable anyone from any nationality to speak to one another. A vehicle for world peace—or so its creator, Dr. Ludwig Zamenhof of Warsaw, Poland who invented the language in 1897, hoped. Forry's website mentions quite a few SF authors who have had an interest in the language. He spoke a few words to me and explained that he was afraid it was too late for the language. I didn't ask him for an explanation, I felt he meant it was too late for the world to embrace the language. He did mention that he had the opportunity to instruct some half dozen interested souls in speaking it.

I turned the conversation to the first WorldCon - July 4th, 1939. Forry's younger friend, Ray Bradbury, was dying to attend this first World Science Fiction Convention. Forry loaned him the money to ride the Greyhound Bus for 3-1/2 days and nights to get to the convention. There were 135 attendees but only 28 of them could afford to attend the banquet - at \$1.00 a plate! And one was expected to tip 10 cents. Forry reminisced a moment about the 2cent stamp that was on the mail that arrived at his home every morning at 11am ...and again at 2pm... every day! Sunday delivery cost an extra 10cents.

Forry was, of course, the originator of the term SciFi. And while I'm sure most people who know Forry also know the story - I'm going to repeat it here for any new fen who might not know it. He relates that he was driving his car in 1954 and listening to the radio. A mention was made about HiFi (an antique sound system) and since the term science fiction had been on the tip of Forry's tongue since 1929...well, Forry looked up in the rearview mirror and stuck out his tongue. And there, on the tip of his tongue, were tattooed the words "scifi." His wife looked over at him and told him "Forget it, Forry. It'll never catch on." And, of course, today we have the SciFi Channel... Harlan Ellison apparently hated the term immediately. He ranted about it and at one time, told a captive audience that they should never use such a heinous term... one that sounded like two crickets screwing. Forry laughed and told me that Harlan must've had his head in the dirt to be able to hear two crickets screwing. Later that year, Forry was at a WorldCon in Australia. This comment was repeated (probably in their program book) and was defined as the sound of two crickets mating. A young Australian fan came up to Forry with a button that he had made and proudly presented it. It said "I love copulating crickets."

I asked Forry what was the first instance of its usage. He related that the term turned up three times on the cover of Playboy describing a story within the

covers. Then, the first time the term was used in a film was for "The Day the Earth Caught Fire." Forry wrote a column for a magazine called "Imagi-Nation" and used the term generously in his articles. It's too late, he says, to try to eradicate the term. It's a household word now. It was even used to describe the great Heinlein and Asimov when they passed away.

I've always wished I could've been around when fandom started. Forry was there. He related that when Charlie Horning was managing Wonder Stories, he asked Gernsback to sponsor something called "The Science Fiction League" and Forry was Honorary Member #1. Back then, fans wrote to the magazine to comment on the previous issue. These letters were published with their addresses. Pretty soon after that, fans started corresponding with each other. The first fan who ever wrote to Forry was Linus Hogenmiller from Farmington, Missouri. Forry remembers that he was so excited about it, that he immediately wrote three letters in response. Later in the conversation, Forry mentioned that Clifford Simak had told him that the first fan letter **he'd** ever gotten was from...Forry.

Forry left me with the story that he's currently taking a daily tablet and that the manufacturers guarantee that he will live to be 125. They can't yet point to someone who's succeeded in doing so but Forry's decided to check 'em out. He stated that if it didn't work out, he's going to demand his money back.

SORCERESS
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APPRENTICES

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

Leslie the Bard

In Memory

Barry Lee Bard
February 6, 1954 - October 7, 2005

Barry Lee Bard, 51 years old, of Phoenix, died October 7, 2005 after a short illness. Barry was born February 6, 1954, in Phoenix. He was owner of the company Fantasy Past, Present, and Future.

He is survived by his two sisters, Edythe Higgins(Bill) and Francine, his brother Norman(Helene), nephew Seth and niece Sarah. He will be sorely missed by Arizona Fandom.

Memorial contributions can be made in Barry's memory to Hospice of the Valley, 1510 E. Flower St., Phx., Az 85014.

Barry Bard

I hardly know what to say about Barry's passing. We've all known he was ill with pancreatic cancer since LepreCon.

He shared a room with Greg Brown and I at TusCon last year - when he knew things were not right but had not yet been diagnosed.

Barry was one of the first people I met in fandom here in Arizona, and there were times when he and I were pretty close because we were both book dealers. He did a lot to show me the ropes, to introduce me around, to help me get involved with fandom.

We had really met for the first time at CopperCon 6 in 1986.

I remember going to Universe 87 at the LA Airport Hilton and having a dealers table right in front of Barry's - back in the days when his mother attended the conventions with him.

As most of you may know, I am neither shy nor reticent. But the first panel I ever did at a convention was a panel on collecting books, and my fellow panelists were Barry Bard and Bruce Farr. I remember it very well because it was a panel on which I could not get a word in edgewise.

Through all the years I owned Adam's Bookstore, first on Cave Creek Road, and then down at Tower Plaza Mall, Barry was one of my key book suppliers.

But, in fairness, Barry was not an especially close friend - any more or less than he was the friend of thousands of other people in fandom.

We didn't call each other when we had flat tires. We didn't go out to bars together. We didn't double date.

Barry couldn't have spent that kind of time with me.

Barry had a lot of friends, and he spent a bit of time with all of us.

But I always enjoyed Barry. I identified with Barry. I was always

pleased to see him and to have a moment to talk with him. But even when we had a little time to just sit and chat, his mind was busy with a thousand other tasks.

Barry had cornered the market on energy. The man was a dynamo, a brash, humorous, caring, responsible, intelligent bundle of everything good in fandom.

I will never - for the rest of my days - attend a convention without thinking fondly of Barry.

And conventions in general - let alone our local conventions - will be less rich, less memorable without him.

I know that there are those who will step in to fill the gap - to try to honor his memory by helping to fill the empty place and do what they can. The task is a big one.

When I look around my house, I see little reminders of Barry everywhere - a pin, a button, a ballcap, a tee shirt, a gigaw promoting something or other.

I collect original art and books, so the one thing I didn't ever have much interest in was movie posters - not that they aren't cool, but because there is no wall space in my house. But I don't think I will ever see a movie poster without thinking of Barry. I shudder to think of how many tons of oversized paper the man hauled across the country.

Locals who did not know him well probably have no idea how his passing impacts conventions from coast to coast. He was, it seemed, everywhere - from DragonCon to World Fantasy to World Horror to ComicCon. He was not just our procurer - he was The Procurer.

I called him right after LepreCon when I first heard how serious his illness was.

I sat with him briefly at Breakfast at CopperCon just last month.

No matter his diagnosis, he remained Barry, coping with adversity, undaunted by seemingly hopeless odds. His only concession was admitting that CopperCon would probably be his last con actively in the dealers room.

I miss him. I know his pain is ended.

All I can do is offer my prayer that he has graduated from this life into another challenging realm where his boundlessly energetic spirit will have worthwhile and meaningful new tasks to perform and where even angels will be impressed.

There could be only one. Adam Niswander Phoenix, Arizona October 7th 2005

Barry Bard

The last gift that Barry gave me was a pass for two for "The Corpse Bride." He was a giving-type guy. Famous for his "Barry Bard at the Movies," I was always there in LepreCon and CopperCon picking up free a t-shirt or hat and stuff.

Also, he was cool with sometimes dark humor.

Another, Barry loved books and sometimes we'll talk shop on when so-and-so bookstore is having a sale. I usually end up purchasing his "how-did-you-get-that?" books at the local conventions. Barry always amazed me in his knowledge of history, computers, and life. I'll miss him as a friend and fellow book buyer.

Jeffrey Lu



© Sherlock

"A Bard from Home"
by Jeffrey Lu
(In memory of Barry Bard...salute!)

Bearded one with salt and pepper
Lifts the lights after the showings of movies.
A crowd appears and listens for notes
Of his voice crying out a number
That he took out from a baseball cap.
One by one, each person walks
Toward the front table
And chooses a free gift-
A video, DVD, hat, t-shirt, poster or whatever.
The contented crowd is now gone.
One man packs up his goods- previews and other leftovers
And walks away lighter than before.
He looks back for a brief moment—
And smiles.
Then, Barry Bard departed into the sunrise.

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ConClusion

Comic-Con International:
The Greatest Show On Earth
By Shane Shellenbarger

I've annually commented on Comic-Con International (or The San Diego Comic-Con, as I've called it since my first trip in 1973), detailing the number of attendees (over 104,000 in 2005), the square footage of the Exhibit Hall (re: A Dealers Room of over 460,000 sq. ft), and tracks of programming (17 when all rooms were in use). If you haven't been to the convention since it moved to the new Convention Center on Harbor Drive you couldn't imagine how it's grown. I've seen the convention move from Harbor Island to the El Cortes Hotel to the old Convention Center near City Hall and my mind still boggles at the enormity of how the convention has grown. Can you say GIANORMUS? I knew that you could.

Now that we've established that the Comic-Con isn't size-shy, let's look at some factors to consider before you make your journey to the holy land in 2006.

Planes, Trains, and Automobiles:

Give me a ticket for an airplane; I ain't got time to take a fast train, so the song goes. You might want to give serious consideration to the pros and cons of these modes of transportation. San Diego is known for its morning fog and in 2005 my plane circled the airport for over an hour waiting for the ceiling to raise enough to prevent us from plowing into the side of a tall building. Trains can be a fun diversion, a tedious monotony, or a prohibitive waste of money, depending on where in the country you're coming from. I rode the 357 miles from San Diego to Phoenix with a friend in about 8 hours, with a couple of breaks thrown in. One year I rode the 120 miles from San Diego to Los Angeles on the Sunday evening of the convention and it took us over 5 hours. I've never ridden a Greyhound or Trailways bus, but if it is anything like my high school senior class trip to Disneyland, I don't recommend the bus.

Hotels: Room rates have gone up and room rate gouging was the talk of the town in 2004, with room rates increasing 3-5 times their highest rack rate. Be smart, shop around, and don't wait to the last minute. Comic-Con negotiates rates and hotel information will become available in January. Go to WWW.Comic-Con.Org and look for the hotel link for more info.

Transportation In Town: If you are staying at a hotel along the Comic-Cons free shuttle route, remember that you may be competing with everyone in your hotel for a seat. Don't expect to walk out of your hotel and onto a shuttle. The closer you get to the time the Exhibit Hall opens at 10:00 A.M., the longer you'll have to wait for a shuttle. When the Hall closes for the evening, there is a flood of

humanity jockeying for position. Plan accordingly.

If your placement along the shuttle route puts you in the unenviable position of watching as full bus after full bus drives by, you might want to consider a city bus or trolley pass for the week.

Trying to get to the Convention Center by car can be problematic. Traffic around the area gets worse as the day wears on (automotive, pedal-cab, and pedestrian) and once you get there you might not find a parking spot, especially during Padres game days at Petco Park. Using the Park-N-Ride spots near the trolley lines may be your best bet.

Food: While there are concession areas in the Exhibit Hall, I wouldn't consider those a healthy choice. Depending on your specific dietary needs, I'd recommend a balanced breakfast, a lite snack at the convention, and a fine dinner as far away from the Convention Center as you can get. If you choose to ignore my advice and load up on junk food while wearing an "I Live To Eat" t-shirt, don't come whining to me that you missed that must-see programming event because you were becoming familiar with the Convention Center plumbing. You've been warned!

What To Wear: Be comfortable. Wear comfortable shoes and be mindful that it is often warm outside of the Center and cold inside the Center. If you want to walk around in your Vampirella costume, great (that doesn't apply to you, Comic Book Guy) consider checking a change of clothes at the Bag Check.

Recuperation: Do your best to get enough rest. Sleep deprivation doesn't enhance the convention going experience, it dulls it. Consider taking an extra day off between the time you return from the con and going back to school or work.

Have fun.

Inflation Strikes CN

ConNotations is reluctantly making some policy changes due to the unfortunate reality of inflation. While our costs have increased dramatically over the last 8 years our funding has not kept pace so effective with Volume 16 Issue 1 ConNotations policy will be:

ConNotations will be sent, free of charge, to anyone who attended a CASFS sponsored event in the past calendar year and to all CASFS members.

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Gamer's Corner

Somebody up there really likes me. This time I get to review part 2 of the "Paths of the Damned" and a source book for the Empire.

Spires of Altdorf
Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay
\$24.99, Black Industries, 95pp

This is the second part of the "Paths of the Damned" series. Set oddly enough in Altdorf, this adventure introduces the history of the "largest city of the old realm". The first read through gave me pause, I have to agree with the note that this is not meant for novice gamemasters. There are three story lines and incredible amounts of role-play.

I found the complexity of the story lines caused me to have to reread the book several times. The adventure requires the players to find the second artefact that contains the essence of the Daemon Xathrodox, find out how to destroy it, and do so.

The complexity makes this difficult to play but the rewards are great. Five stars out of five - **Bob LaPierre**

Sigmar's Heirs
Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay
\$29.99, Black Industries, 127pp

Subtitled a guidebook to the empire, This volume contains new careers, a history of the empire, laws, religions, cults, and descriptions of every important city in the empire. Throughout the volume there are small sections with local sayings and other flavor pieces.

I found the information to be presented in a usable format, organized by region and city. I had a hard time putting it down as I enjoy learning about the world I play in. I'm looking forward to anything else they put out. This volume should go a long way toward helping gamemasters create adventures for players playing everything from first careers to extremely powerful adventurers. This is extremely well thought out and should be among the best gaming books of the year. Five stars out of five. - **Bob LaPierre**

Sorry for the short column this month but I missed my chance to learn how to play "Pirates of the Seven Seas". I hope to rectify that before next time. Have fun and play well.

Bob

Warhammer 20,000
Blood Angels DEUS ENCARMINE
by James Swallow
Black Library, 2004 \$6.99, 251 pp.

Rafen and Arkio are Space Marines Blood Angels. They are a rare battle pair of brothers. Yet, things like an enemy

invasion, revenge, honor, insults, rivalry, plots, being in a team to retake two planets, and only one controls an artifact made their family relationship a bit difficult.

This book is the first of the *Blood Angels* series.

Even though I am not familiar with Warhammer 40,000 game, I enjoyed the complex twists and turns of this tale between two brothers. Recommended to space war gamers in a bleak science fiction future. - **Jeffrey Lu**

Warhammer 20,000- "Fifteen Hours"
by Mitchel Scanlon
Black Library, Great Britain 2005,
\$6.99; 254 pp

This is Mitchel Scanlon's first novel. His writing is about one of the dark future wars of Warhammer 40,000.

To sum up this book is a mixture between "Catch 22" and "On The Western Front."

The title summarizes the life expectancy average time of a new recruit of the Imperial Guard in battle. This is the life of one raw recruit named Arwin Larn. The alien enemy he fight will be the Orks. (Somewhat similar to the fantasy, Orcs, but with modern tactics and weapons.)

Overall, a good read for gamers of Warhammer 40,000 or future war game(s). - **Jeffrey Lu**

An American in England
Part Eight: The British
Museum
by Jeffrey Lu

Entering this place, I feel like a modern Indiana Jones. In the Ancient section, the great stone heads of Egypt, two giant Assyrian's sphynx, and the Rosetta Stone await visitors like me to behold. The Classical section of Greek vases to Roman's coins awoke the adventurer in me. More artifacts like a Viking helmet, exhibits of a Bog man, and the mummies on display are the tip of the iceberg of archaeology in this place.

I've been told by a British guide that there was nothing British in the British Museum. I beg to differ. The only thing British I have observed is the donation booths filled with British pounds.

The admission to this place is free. Yet, for some special exhibits, like the Jade Exhibit, admission costs a few pounds. Also, there are always donation booths to help fund this public area. Another but very smart way is the multiple gifts shops near the ground level.

In one gift shop, I found my miniature Rosetta Stone paper weight. Paying in pounds, I grabbed my shiny rock and ran outside. Luckily, no traps or giant boulder...

Next: Shaking a spear at Stratford Upon Avon.

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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:

December 14: (moved up a week to keep it away from Christmas) *Dragonflight* by Anne McCaffrey. Currently in print in paperback.

January 18: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis. The second book in the Narnia series. Collected in paperback in *Chronicles of Narnia*, currently in print.

February 15: *Alas Babylon* by Pat Frank. My all-time favorite post-nuclear-war book from 1960. Back in print in paperback.

March 15: *Carpe Demon* by Julie Kenner. Adventures of a Demon-Hunting Soccer Mom – nuff said!

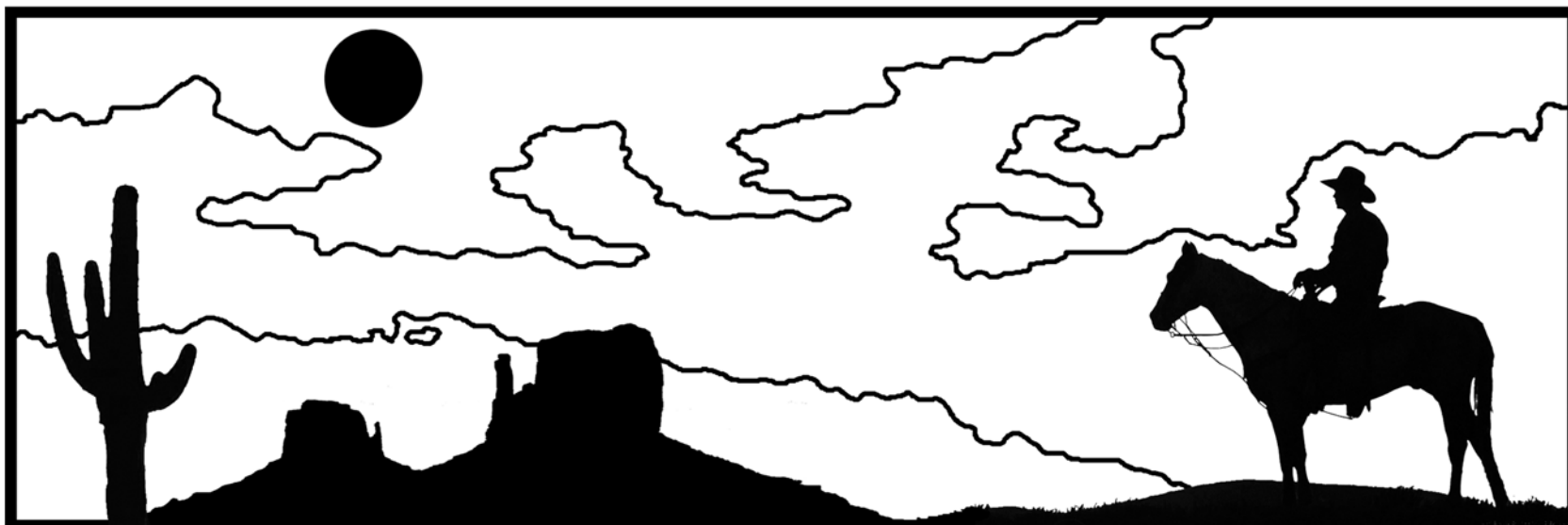
April 19: *Jherog* by Stephen Brust. First three books collected in *The Book of Jherog*, currently in print. Science fiction/detective story set on a world where humans are second-class citizens.

May 17: *Crystal Soldier* by Steve Miller and Sharon Lee. A new Liaden story. For more information contact Catherine <books@casfs.org>



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Videophile

American Gothic

Batman Begins

The Crow - Wicked Prayer

Dark Shadows The Revival

The Grudge

Quatermass

The Story of Star Wars

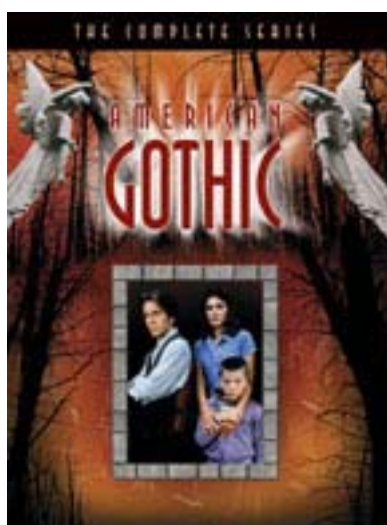
War of the Worlds - The Complete

First Season

American Gothic - Complete Series
Universal, 1002 minutes, NR
DVD \$49.99

From the back cover: "Finally, the complete cult hit series *American Gothic*, produced by Sam Raimi and created by Shaun Cassidy, comes to DVD for the first time ever!

Visit Trinity, South Carolina, a small town with more chills than charm. Sheriff Lucas Buck (Gary Cole) won't let



anyone- including local doctor Matt Crower (Jake Weber) or the determined Gail Emory (Paige Turco) - stand in the way of his evil plans.

Marking the tenth anniversary of its broadcast debut and packed with all 22

episodes, including four "lost" ones never broadcast on network television, *American Gothic's* eerie storylines of intrigue and suspense are sure to hold you captive!"

Includes 15 deleted and extended scenes and four episodes that never aired on network TV.

I only caught a few episodes when this was on TV and was disappointed that I didn't get the chance to see them all. My disappointment is over.

In the town of Trinity the Sheriff is truly the devil in disguise. Lucas Buck rules his town with a morbid playfulness, setting up moral dilemmas for the inhabitants and punishing those who fail and those punishments can be a killer, literally.

Also in Trinity is a 12 year old Caleb, who may or may not be Buck's son. Buck wants Caleb to join him, Caleb's dead sister wants Caleb to resist (she visits him regularly) and the town is caught in the struggle between the two.

The writing is superb, as is the acting, directing and filming. The disc sometimes skip, it would appear that Universal didn't expend as much care as they could have in producing this set, but I still recommend this as a wonderful, quirky series that didn't get the chance it deserved 10 years ago. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Batman Begins
Two Disc Deluxe Edition
Warner Bros., 140 minutes, PG-13
DVD \$29.95

From the back cover: "In *Batman Begins*, acclaimed director Christopher Nolan explores the origins of the legendary Dark Knight. In the wake of his parents' murder, disillusioned heir Bruce Wayne (Christian Bale) travels the world seeking the means to fight injustice and turn fear against those who prey on the fearful. With the help of his trusted butler

Alfred (Michael Caine), detective Jim Gordon (Gary Oldham) and his ally Lucius Fox (Morgan Freeman), Wayne returns to Gotham City and unleashes his alter ego: Batman, a masked crusader who uses strength, intellect and an array of high-tech weaponry to fight the sinister forces that threaten the city."

The first disc hold the film, the theatrical trailer and the *Batman Begins* spoof from the MTV Movie Awards. The second disc consists of eight featurettes that cover such things as the creation of the Batcave and the Batmobile. According to several friends there are Easter Eggs as well but I am woefully unskilled at finding them.

This is the best of the Batman movies and will hopefully revitalize the franchise. The extras are entertaining and well worth the extra bucks for the deluxe edition. Very highly recommended - **Stephanie L Bannon**

The Crow - Wicked Prayer
Buena Vista, 99 minutes, R
DVD \$29.99

From the back cover: "Tara Reid (*American Pie*, *My Boss's Daughter*), David Boreanaz (TV's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Angel*), and Edward Furlong (*Terminator 2: Judgment Day*, *American History X*) star in the latest chilling chapter of *the Crow: Wicked Prayer* -- an epic tale of death, revenge, and redemption. Just as ex-con Jimmy Cuervo (Furlong) tries to straighten out his life, he and his girlfriend Lily are brutally murdered in a satanic ritual by a renegade biker gang. But payback is at hand when Cuervo rises from the dead -- with the power of *The Crow* -- to avenge Lily's death and reunite with her in the afterlife! Also starring Dennis Hopper (*True Romance*), Danny Trejo (*From Dusk Til Dawn*), and recording star Macy Gray!"

Yet another entry in the Crow series. I loved the first one and have had high hopes for all three sequels only to be disappointed. This entry features the worst plot and the worst acting of the lot. Not particularly recommended. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Dark Shadows The Revival
Columbia, 595 minutes, NR
DVD \$39.95

From the back cover: "Passions run red in this timeless horror soap opera about a beautiful governess, Victoria Winters (Joanna Going), who arrives at the isolated, coastal mansion of Collinwood to tutor a disturbed child for an accursed family. When she falls in love with Barnabas Collins (Ben Cross), a handsome and mysterious heir from England, a series of horrific and inexplicable attacks grips the town of Collinsport.

Step inside the romantic but deadly world of *Dark Shadows* where love devours its victims and age-old secrets live to haunt eternity. A complete season of twelve heart-pounding episodes of witchcraft, seduction and revenge will have you thirsting for more... with every bite."



When I was a kid I rushed home from school so I wouldn't miss an episode of the original *Dark Shadows*. I watched the two movies and collected the books, And then came 1991 and a new *Dark Shadows*, an hour long weekly show, produced by Dan Curtis who brought us the beloved original.

For the entire 12 episodes that the new series I made sure to be home to watch and I fired up the trusty VCR so we could watch the episodes again.... we wore those poor tapes out and were vastly disappointed that the show was canceled. So imagine my delight when this series was released on DVD.

For fans of the original, this is a must have for your collection. For those who are unfamiliar with the *Dark Shadows* universe, this is a good place to start. Very highly recommended. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

The Grudge
Columbia, 92 minutes, PG-13
DVD: \$19.99

From the back cover: "When someone dies in the grip of a powerful rage a curse is left behind - it never forgives, it never forgets.

From filmmaker Sam Raimi (*Spider-Man*, *Army of Darkness*) and acclaimed Japanese director Takashi Shimizu comes a terrifying tale of horror in the tradition of *The Ring* and *28 Days Later*.

Sarah Michelle Gellar (TV's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*) stars as an American nurse who has come to work in Tokyo. Following a series of horrifying and mysterious deaths, she encounters the vengeful spirit that possesses its victims, claims their souls, then passes its curse to another person in a spreading chain of horror. Now, she must find a way to break

(Continued on page 13)

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Videophile (Continued from page 12)

this supernatural spell or become the next victim of an ancient evil that never dies, but forever lives to kill."

I picked this up because the name Sam Raimi was on it and I am quite pleased I did so. This is the kind of horror I enjoy - creepy and scary without graphic gore.

I recommend watching the extras first for an appreciation of the way in which the film was made. For instance, there is a very limited use of CGI - the hand coming out of the back of Gellar's head is not CGI, neither is the ghost that crawls down the stairs.

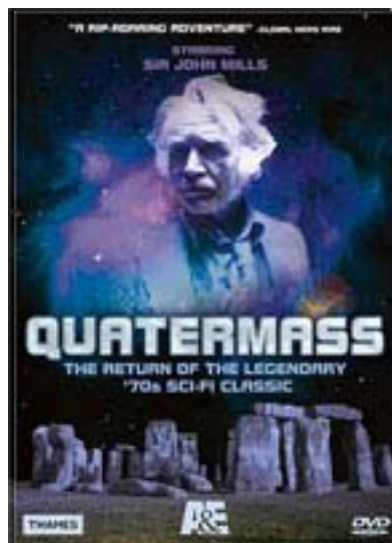
Pop a big bowl of popcorn, watch the extras and then sit back and enjoy the film. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Quatermass

**A&E Home Video, 208 minutes, NR
DVD \$39.95**

From the back cover: "As the millennium draws to a close, civilization is on the verge of collapse. Gangs rule the streets. Books are burned for fuel. And a monstrous force from outer space is destroying the world's youth. Planet Earth is in dire need of a hero.

Enter the world's greatest rocket scientist--Professor Bernard Quatermass. Fresh out of retirement, the aging Quatermass is as brilliant and plucky as ever. While London crumbles under anarchy, the professor uses his powerful intellect to marshal assistance from American and Russian quarters and combat what could be the planet's final enemy. Along the way, he hopes to be reunited with his missing 16-year-old granddaughter.



One of sci-fi's most original creations, inspiring favorites like The X-Files, this classic 1970s production of *Quatermass* stars Academy Award®-winner Sir John Mills (Ryan's Daughter, Gandhi) and features all four episodes, plus the rarely-seen theatrical version, on DVD for the first time ever.

DVD Features: *the Quatermass Conclusion*--The Rare, Feature-Length Theatrical Version; "Enduring Mystery of

Stonehenge" episode from The History Channel®'s award-winning series *In Search of History*; Interactive Menus; Scene Selection"

I first ran across the *Quatermass* film, *Quatermass and the Pit*, when I lived overseas. After some digging I found out that the *Quatermass* films actually began with 1955's *The Quatermass Xperiment* (also known as *The Creeping Unknown*) followed in 1958 by *Quatermass 2: The Enemy from Space* and then the 1978 "miniseries" *Quatermass* which is the topic of this review.

Quatermass' premise has to do with an alien force that manifests as a beam of light coming from some distant part of the universe. Thousands of years ago these aliens visited earth terrifying humanity in the process. To mark the places where the aliens landed and left beacons those early humans megaliths were built (Stonehenge, etc).

When this film begins we find the world is in decline. Young people are looking for a way out and many are joining the Planet People in the belief they will be taken to another, better, planet. As they mass at various locations a beam comes from the sky and when it is gone, so are all the people - nothing but charred dust is left behind... they have been harvested by the aliens.

As Professor Quatermass, wonderfully portrayed by Sir John Mills, searches for his runaway 16 year old granddaughter who has joined the Planet People he learns the truth and sets out to find her and stop the aliens

I truly enjoy British science fiction. The British, unlike most American producers, assume their audience in intelligent and thus they create films that are intelligent and though provoking with well rounded characters.

This set includes both the theatrical release, *Quatermass Conclusion* and the four hour miniseries. I recommend the miniseries for its expansion of several of the subplots. I highly recommend this set and hope to add the rest of the *Quatermass* films to my collection soon. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

The Story of Star Wars LucasFilm Ltd./Fox Studios \$Free with purchase of Star Wars III

Ok let's put that free notion to bed. The addition of the "bonus DVD" adds about \$6.00 to the cost of the movie. Now let's see, cute robots that have been over-used in everything outside the movies? Check. Clips from movies 1,2,4,5,6? Yup!

Extras on the DVD? Hmmm. Ah-hem, I said extras on the DVD? ...Oops guess some one forgot.

I got this because I thought there would be something like some back-story about the characters. Or maybe commentary about how the various parts of the storyline fit in with the basic myths Lucas worked with. Hell I would even have

(Continued on page 14)

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Registration

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Videophile (Continued from page 13)

dealt with descriptions of the macramé the crew worked on while doing the movie. Nothing, nada, zip, zilch.

If you wanted (or needed) synopses of the five movies they are handled by the ‘droids as stories. The basic set up is simple, choose Anakin or Luke’s story and the ‘droids introduce clips and offer small (very small) anecdotes about each set of movies.

I should note that the last clip from Luke’s story is the shot with Yoda, Obie-Wan, and Anakin. The shot is the one from the video not from the DVD. Sigh. For what it is it mostly succeeds, for what it could have been,...

I can’t recommend this for any but the most fanatical, and/or the least knowledgeable fans. I didn’t find it worth the extra six bucks. -

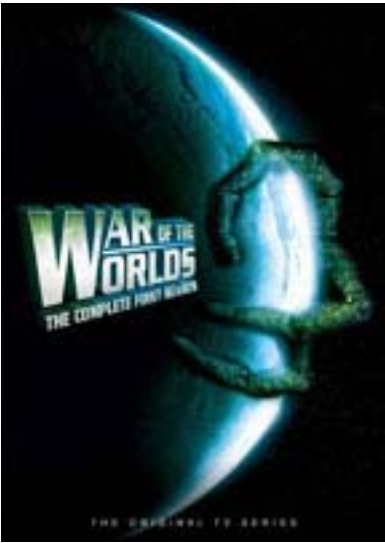
Bob LaPierre

**War of the Worlds
The Complete First Season
Paramount, 1086 minutes, NR
DVD \$39.98**

From the back cover: “In 1953, the war began: Martian invaders, bent on the conquest of Earth, destroy human civilization and leave death and panic in their wake. If not for our planet’s tiniest bacteria, they would have wiped human existence from the Earth.

Captured and quarantined, the aliens’ threats are all but forgotten: their insidious plans lay dormant for decades.

But now, freed from captivity, revived and resuscitated, they vow to not repeat their mistakes. And if not for a small band of human resistance fighters, they may yet get the chance to finish what they started.



Here, for the first time on DVD, *War of the Worlds: The Complete First Season* continues the story of alien attack, human defiance and interplanetary war in this six-disc boxed set. Let the battle begin.”

When this series was first broadcast in 1988 it was one of my favorites. The first episode sets up the premise quite neatly, “first contact” between the Earth

and the planet Mortax had occurred in 1938 and then 15 years later, in 1953, the Mortaxians had been defeated by Earth in an interplanetary war, both dates neatly tying in with Orson Welles’ 1938 radio broadcast and the 1953 George Pal film. The series then resumes the story 35 years later. The alien survivors from the 1953 war were preserved in huge storage drums at various nuclear waste disposal sites alongside the storage drums of real nuclear waste. As time passed the bacteria that had stopped the aliens in 1953 have been killed off and now the aliens are beginning to revive and escape. They meet up with their leaders and plot to finish conquering the earth. In the series the aliens have the ability take on their appearances of humans by absorbing their bodies. They are indistinguishable from real humans until they start to sort become deformed before they melt into a puddle of goo.

Our heroes are Dr. Harrison Blackwood (Jared Martin), a research scientist that was the first person to believe the aliens were still alive. He is joined by microbiologist Suzanne McCullough (Lynda Mason Green), paraplegic computer expert Norton Drake (Philip Akin), and a Native American military officer Col. Paul Ironhorse (Richard Chaves), the team sets up headquarters at a secret military base and set out to save mankind.

The second, and final, season wasn’t as good but the first season is as enjoyable as I remembered. This is a highly entertaining, intelligent series that combined good plot lines with adventure and character development. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

In Our Book

**A Breath of Snow and Ashes
by Diana Gabaldon
Delacorte Press, \$28; 992 pp.**

Surely this can’t be the first time you have picked up a novel by Diana Gabaldon, writer of the hugely popular “*Outlander*” series? A vast romantic tale dealing with the trials and tribulations of a British nurse-turned-doctor Claire Randall, who in 1945, finds herself tossed into 18th Century Scotland (1743) through the mysterious power of a stone circle?

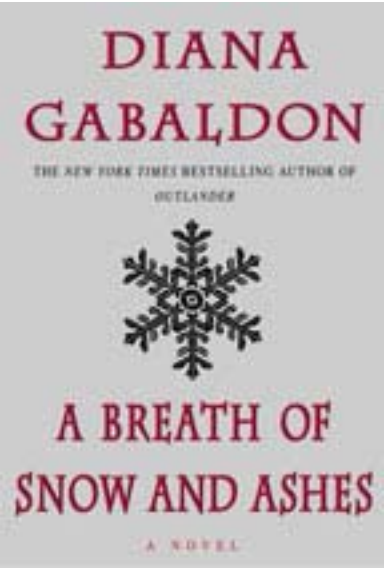
Are you living in a cave?

Ahh—lassie (or lad) you are missing a huge treat. Meeting the feisty, no non-sense Claire; a woman who takes on all comers and problems with passion and spirit. And making the acquaintance of the wonderful engrossing, dare I say, yummy Jamie Fraser (the love of Claire’s life).

This is the sixth novel in Gabaldon’s series. The Frasers and extended family and assorted others still live in the American Colonies at Fraser’s Ridge in

North Carolina.

The Revolution is upon them. And Claire has not hesitated to inform Jamie of



King George’s upcoming loss of the Colonies and the major events that bring it all about.

With the Revolution in foment as exciting background, we learn several things:

The fate of the nasty Stephen Bonnet. Aunt Jocasta’s ongoing, fascinating family secrets.

Ian Murray’s life among the Mohawk. Brianna and Roger’s burgeoning family.

Time-travelers are *not* as rare as the ivory-billed woodpecker.

Jamie and Claire’s death.

Really.

And heck, there are also a few heart-stopping, last-minute rescues that are sure to make your hair stand up and fling you from your comfy reading chair.

We also continue to get the intriguing daily ins-and-outs of life on Fraser’s Ridge, which provides the very delicious meat of this almost 1000 page novel. I especially enjoy the details of the 20th Century Claire doctoring (and attempting surgery with volatile homemade ether) with 18th Century herbs and devices.

There is so much drama and humor and terror. And sometimes, all in one day!

More than any of the other books, this book and the previous one “*The Fiery Cross*” are much in the other’s pocket: they cover much the same characters and landscape. Nevertheless, it is still a compelling page-turner.

In the end, I suspect, I am preaching to the converted here. But, if you have never read a novel by Ms. Gabaldon, well, actually DON’T start here (unless you must of course!). Go find a copy of “*Outlander*” and discover who these characters are, what an accomplished and literate writer Gabaldon is and what the heck the entire hubbub is about.

You won’t be sorry. - **Sue Martin**

Carpe Demon: Adventures of a Demon Hunting Soccer Mom

By Julie Kenner

Berkley Books, \$12.95. 360 pages

Somewhere hidden in the Vatican is the headquarters of the Forza, the arm of the Holy Church which trains and sends out the Hunters. The Hunters are assigned to dispatch Demons, vampires and other escapees from the depths of Hell. Each Hunter is assigned an Alimentatore as advisor and henchman.

Most Hunters die young, but a few survive to retirement. One such, Kate Connor, survived and retired into domesticity with one of her fellow Hunters. We find her some years later still wallowing in domesticity, having lost her first husband. She has remarried to Stuart Connor, an up and coming lawyer who wants to be County Attorney. They are a family of four including her daughter, Allie, 14, from her first marriage and their two-year-old son Timmie.

Into this blissful scene come demons and no Hunter but Kate is available. Demons have intruded into the heretofore demon-free San Diablo even into the sacred precincts of the Petfood aisle of the San Diablo Wal-Mart. There are demons in her kitchen, in her backyard, in the local retirement home where an elderly Hunter has mysteriously appeared.

Can Kate trust her strange Alimentatore? Can she figure out what the chief demon, Goramesh, is after? Can she do this without ruining her husband’s career and losing her place in local society. Perhaps she can, given the help of one good friend, her daughter and others.

The activities of this over-the-hill Demon Hunter/Soccer Mom are a delightful blend of off the wall humor and serious drama. Recommended. – **Gary Swaty**

(The CASFS Book Discussion group will discuss this book on March 15, 2006)

**King’s Blood
by Judith Tarr
ROC books; \$16; 376 pp.**

Judith Tarr continues her alternative history/fantasy tales of early English sovereigns with this rip-roaring story of William the Conqueror’s successors, his two sons William Rufus and Henry.

William Rufus, though knowing magic is an integral part of his being King of England, decides he wants nothing to do with the old magic of the land and sea.

And because he does willfully eschew the magic, that which makes England *England* begins to fade and go dark and twisted. Among the evils loosed is the spectral Hunt, led by the Horned King which becomes a more vicious and visible element in the countryside.

Once again, the magical Guardians of

(Continued on page 15)

In Our Book (Continued from page 14)

the land knowing William Rufus is ignoring his heritage must manipulate events, seeking alternatives. And that would be William the Conqueror's younger son, Henry.

But getting William Rufus, the rightful King of England, out of the picture and putting in Henry takes quite some maneuvering. And of course, the love (and her magical abilities) of a good woman (Edith) helps tip the scales back into balance and start the healing process.

Once again, I really enjoyed this story and Tarr's wonderful writing.

My only caveat, is that I wish she would move on to some other construction base for her books. I enjoy the way she puts a magical spin on the facts of history and her characters are really meaty and delightful. I am just wondering if she is going to go all through British history this way. The novels are becoming a bit predictable and too similar.

A change in direction, a novel about totally made-up characters would be welcome. (She has done it before with the *Avaryan Rising* books). - Sue Martin

Chris Longknife: Mutineer

By Mike Shepherd

Ace Books, New York, 2004, Paperback, 389 Pages

She was one of those Longknives. Her family was an albatross around her neck. Her father, the Prime Minister of Wardhaven, her mother the political hostess and her military hero grandparents and great grandparents were a constant problem. She escaped into the Navy and became an Ensign on her own merits. On her first assignment she was supposed to lead a group Marines dropping on a mission to rescue a child. She was supposed to die, but survived through luck and natural leadership skills. But why were the kidnappers equipped with top secret high tech mines and electronics

that hadn't even been issued to the military yet? Also the value of that materiel far exceeded any possible ransom. Something else was going on. She couldn't quite believe that the whole episode was created to kill her.

On her second mission, an ill organized mercy and relief effort, she was dropped into chaos and again rose to the occasion bringing out the best in her commander and the ill trained troops. She inspired the locals to overcome total anarchy and rise to face the necessities of survival. Here, too, she was supposed to die. She also suspects that unknown forces created the Eco disaster that made the mission necessary. Deep interstellar skullduggery seems likely, but what can a mere Ensign do?

On her third mission Kris must face the Moral dilemma of when is it proper to use her name and leadership skills to oppose a dangerous Commander whose actions could bring chaos and war to hundreds of worlds. What is right? What does she want? Is she willing to endanger her career and life? If she did nothing, likely no blame would attach to her after all she is a mere Ensign.

Kris is a complex and very real character with many strengths and weaknesses. She had an early brush with alcohol and tranquilizers and has self doubts as a result. She suffers survivors guilt since losing her little brother to kidnappers. She has issues with her famous relatives. The other characters are equally well developed. I recommend this book highly.

The next two are also in print, *Kris Longknife: Defiant* and *Kris Longknife: Deserter*. - Gary Swaty

Lint

by Steve Aylett

Thunder's Mouth Press/Avalon Publishing Group, \$14.95, 225 pp.

A satirical delight for any science fiction fan, especially fans of Philip K.

Dick. This purports to be a critical biography of the life of pulp writer Jeff Lint, who supposedly lived from 1928 to 1994. He graduated from the pulps to hang out with the Beats, then to crank out scifi novels for the big publishers like Ace, then became popular with the 60's acid rock crowd, then had unhappy flirtations with Hollywood, including the cartoon series *Catty and the Major*. His comic book series *The Caterer* destroyed a publisher. He failed writing a *Star Trek* script and the screenplay *Kiss Me Mr. Patton*, which was later filmed as the war story *Patton*. Returning to New Mexico and remarrying a young wife, he became a cult figure while writing his more mature works like the *Arkwitch* trilogy, acclaimed yet incoherent garbage. Some scifi reviewers have been put off by this book, and wonder about the author's motives. I think it's a love-hate affair. Consider that the cover is printed upside down, which literally stands the genre upon its head. If you know the life of P.K. Dick you will get a lot of in-joke references, but the style is hilarious regardless. Every single page made me smile, and most made me laugh at least once, which hasn't happened for too long. - Mike Griffin

Deep Simplicity

By John Gribbin

Random House, \$24.95, 275 Pages.

I had not read 40 pages into this wonderful explication of mathematical chaos and complexity when John Keats' song of joy to Chapman popped into my mind. Keats could not read Greek and yet he loved the classics. He had previously only read Dryden's stilted Rhyming couplet version. When he read Chapman's version he was overjoyed and wrote a sonnet about it. I have sort of borrowed his words to express my appreciation of Gribbin's work. The overview he provided caused my earlier studies of the topic to leap into much clearer focus. I recommend it to all aspiring and recreational mathematicians. My joy is

expressed below. (Please note that in the original poem Cortez discovered the Pacific)

Upon First Looking into Gribbin's
Deep Simplicity
(With Apologies to John Keats)

Much have I wander'd in the
chaos realms,
And many Numerical models
seen;

Round many stately attractors
have I been
Which sages in fealty to great
Poincare hold.

Oft on one wide expanse had I
been told
That deep-brow'd r Lorentz ruled
as his fortress;

Yet did I never breathe its pure clearness
Till I heard Gribbin speak out loud and
bold:

"Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;"
Or like stout Maxwell with clear eyes
As he found true Relativity - and Scien-
tists

Look'd at each other with a wild surmise -
Silent, waiting for the all new Physics. -

Gary Swaty

The Magical Worlds of Narnia:

A Treasury of Myths, Legends and
Fascinating Facts

By David Colbert

Berkley Books, New York 2005, Trade
Paperback, 186 Pages, \$14.00

This book styles itself as "A Treasury of Myths..." I suppose it is, but it fails in several important ways. It has no organization and no theme. It is an hodgepodge of essays in MLA [Modern Language Association] format. It has a bibliography and footnotes in the back of the book. It has no index. The only hope of locating an item of interest is the table of contents which is not always descriptive.

That being said the essays are a well written series of short snippets in a vaguely chronological order. They are interesting and fun to read. They explore the development of the series and major symbols used. They delve into Lewis's life and show how events therein influenced Narnia at various stages of its development.

While little new ground is broken, the author presents the material clearly and with a fresh and somewhat different viewpoint. His suggestions for additional reading on the points he explores give the reader guidance should he or she wish to delve deeper. Lovers of Narnia will appreciate this. - Gary Swaty

Troll Fell.

by Katherine Langrish

EOS, 355 pp, \$5.99

Troll Fell is the authors debut, and stands alone.

Peer Ulfsson is virtually enslaved by his uncles who take his inheritance for themselves.

When he discovers his uncles will steal human children and sell them to the trolls in order to get there hands on the Trolls treasure, he must enter the trolls kingdom under the mountain to save them with only his bravery, wits, and two diverse allies, a neighbors daughter, and an unhappy house spirit.

Full of Scandinavian folklore, quirky characters, and fast paced action, this book will keep readers glued till the final page. It will make a great Christmas gift for a young adult reader in the household...specially if you can borrow it. - Pam Allan

(Continued on page 16)



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In Our Book (Continued from page 15)

The Meq
by Steve Cash
Ballantine, 404 pp, \$13.95

The Meq is a stand alone beginning to a series.

On May first, 1881, Zianno Zezen turns twelve and his life is forever changed.. His parents are killed in a train crash and he finds out he is not human, but Meq. His parents, in dying,. gasp out a few instructions, protect the stones and find a name he doesn't know.. He is rescued by a mysterious trader in a long black coat who takes him on his trading trip, and back to St. Louis where they move into a boarding house. - **Pam Allan**

The Chernagor Pirates
by Dan Chernenko
Roc, 442 pp, \$14.95

The Chernagor Pirates is book two of *The Scepter of Mercy*.

Young King Lanius dreams of being more than a figurehead. Fellow sovereign, King Grus is defending Avornis from the Banished One's plots to take control of the mortal world., and the forays of the Chernagor pirates. Grus takes his army to the land of the Chernagors, hoping to form an alliance, avoiding a protracted war.

If they cannot form an alliance, which may be a trap,, they must strike soon or lose to the Mentashe and lose the Scepter of Mercy forever.

The book is an action packed and full of interesting characters. [Of course, I'm fond of Pouncer and the other moncats.].... Worth the read. - **Pam Allan**

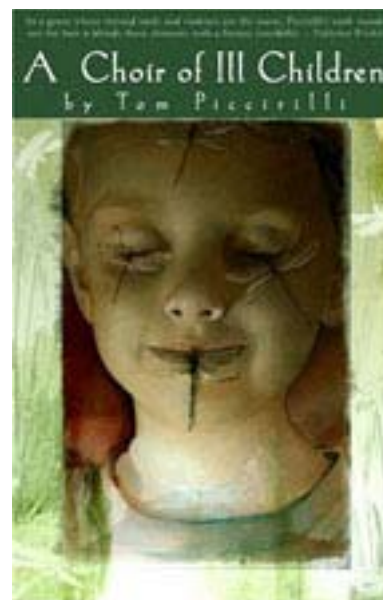
A Choir of Ill Children
by Tom Piccirilli
Bantam Spectra, \$5.99

This Is Horror.

Kingdom Come is a decaying swamp backwater that draws the lost, the ill-fated and the damned..

Since his mothers disappearance and his fathers bizarre suicide, Thomas has cared for his brothers, conjoined triplets sharing a single brain. In addition he has inherited the town's only industry, the Mill. Torn by rage and responsibility, Thomas must face his tormented past as well as the mysterious forces surging against their future.

This is defiantly literate Horror, with characters that ring true, regardless of their twisted natures. The author writes



beautifully in the Southern Gothic style. He makes it his own. - **Pam Allan**.

Acts Of God
by James Beauseigneur
Warner Books, 510 pp, \$6.99

Acts Of God is the third volume of *The Christ Clone Trilogy*.

At the dawn of a new age, mankind is at the brink of a different world. A third of the population is dead. The Pacific Ocean is dead . Mankind must now chose between the new Messiah, Christopher Goodman, and the old view of a God that brought the disaster upon the planet. Christopher has brought world peace, offered an end to disease and shown the way to eternal youth and godlike powers. The religious zealots still rebel, bringing on a bloody tribulation and Armageddon.

Combining intrigue, scientific accuracy, and action, it rivets the reader to the authors vision of the apocalypse, making one wonder at our present course. Definitely worth the read. - **Pam Allan**

Firethorn
by Sarah Micklem
Bantam Spectra, 383 pp, \$14.00

In this debut novel, the foundling called Luck was destined for a life of a drudge. When her mistress dies, She flees to the forest and lives off the land. There, eating the berries of the firethorn tree, she falls into a fever and emerges with a new name and strange talents she doesn't understand.

Coming back to the unchanged world she left, a chance coupling during the upside down days brings her to Sire Galen. a highborn warrior and she becomes his camp follower. There is no place in the world of caste and war for a woman. She is faced with a series of tormenting challenges to survive as she begins to learn about the gifts the gods have given her.

One could call this a feminist fantasy, but the great characterization,, and engrossing, suspenseful and uncompromising writing make this not only a "keeper, but a voice to look forward to reading with her next book. - **Pam Allan**

Hammerjack
by Marc D. Giller
Bantam Spectra, 355 pp, \$12.00

Hammerjack is the beginning novel of a series. Its sequel is due out in the summer of 2006.

Hammerjacks are the superhackers of the future. They ride virtual waves of code and pirate high tech secrets and sell them to the highest bidder. They are faster and smarter than any security and the rush of their actions are even better than the money. If they get caught, they are turned into corporate spooks tracking down the Information traffickers.

But there is something else out there..a biological supercomputer that threatens to alter the balance between man and machine, between the corporate collective and the rest.

Aiden Cray is a hammerjack caught, and working for the collective. Can he catch and destroy the new god man has made?

This is cyberpunk at its best, with action, characterization, and a dark look at the future. Move over Gibson and Sterling, the competition has arrived. - **Pam Allan**

To Crush The Moon
by Wil McCarthy
Bantam Spectra, 352 pp [plus addendums] \$6.99

To Crush The Moon is a continuation of the *Queendom Of Sol* series

The *Queendom of Sol* is the high point of technological civilization, but it is being buried by a population that doesn't know death. On the brink of revolution, a

(Continued on page 17)

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In Our Book (Continued from page 16)
new necro cult is reviving death on their terms. Now the King and Conrad Mursk must crush the moon and terraform it to make space for the population. But still another failed colony returns to bring the dark ages back to Sol.

What can you say about Wil McCarthy? He takes plausible science and social development into a possible future, throws in conflict and change to create a believable world and tells the story with panache and humor that holds you to the printed page while taking your mind into

the world of possibilities and their side effects. Maximum stars on this one as I rush out to find the others in the series. This is a must have for your SF library. - **Pam Allan**

Freedom's Apprentice
by Naomi Kritzer
Bantam Spectra, 354 pp, \$6.99

Freedom's Apprentice is book two of the dead rivers trilogy.

Once the trusted aide [and daughter] of the powerful Kyros, Lauria has turned

against the slave holding world to which she was born. Sent to the Alashi as a spy, she found her loyalties shifted. But a slave, she had once hunted down ,revealed her identity and she was cast out. Lauria and her blood-sister, Tamar, set out to free all those who she had returned to slavery.

Desperate for a spell chain to free a mine slave, she apprentices to a sorceress. Learning to harness magic comes at a price that she may not wish to pay.

This book carries Lauria's story and leaves us with a segue into the next but it

can be read alone.

Full of action, characters you like , and well plotted, it makes a good fit for pocket or purse. I'll be waiting for book three. Enjoy. - **Pam Allan**

Iron Sunrise
by Charles Straus
Ace, 355 pp, \$23.95

Iron Sunrise is a stand alone novel by the author of *Singularity Sky*.

A G2 star does not explode without warning, without outside interference. The survivors of the planet Moscow have launched a counterattack at New Dresden, the most likely culprit. New Dresden is not guilty and as the missiles approach, Rachel Mansour scramble to prevent the catastrophe. However, one by one, those with the recall code. One person knows where the evidence is hidden. Moscow survivor , a troubled teenager, Self named Wednesday Shadowmist has an imaginary friend, actually a super cyber-entity, the Eschaton who coaches her after her parents are murdered and she must flee for her life. He sends her to Rachel, and her husband Martin both agents for the good guys. Can Wednesday Rachel, and Martin stay alive long enough to solve the mystery , and save the universe and get it done before New Dresden joins Moscow and sets up the universe to be re-mastered.

Sound like a space opera? It is a page turner with enough action and plot complications to hold you glued. It is also filled with well drawn characters and crackling ideas. This is a must have for your library. 5 solar systems. - **Pam Allan**

Lords of Grass and Thunder
by Curt Benjamin
Daw, 532 pp, \$ 24.95

Lords of Grass and Thunder is a continuation of the Seven Brothers trilogy.

Prince Tayy is returning, the hero of the War of Gods and Demons and heir to the Khan of the clans. But Things are more dangerous now than on the battlefield. His parents have been slain by a demon who appears as a deadly bamboo snake and as a beautiful woman. Mergen-Khan, currently Khan is only holding office till Tayy is ready to assume the role. Mergen-khan's son is easy prey for the demon who will trade his heart's desire for Tayy's life. Those with dark powers are determined he will not survive. However, Tay has defenders, his loyal guards, his grandmother , and the shaman Bolghai.

But perhaps the key defender is Eluneke, apprentice shaman, daughter of Mergen-Khan, and gifted with powers from the gods. All she has to do is survive the tests thrown at her by the gods.

Set in a fantasy universe of medieval
(Continued on page 18)

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CONTINUING TO ROLL THE BONES

In Our Book (Continued from page 17)

china, The Qubal clans are the Mongols of the era.. The tapestry is rich in detail, plots, and interesting characters. If you liked the Seven Brothers trilogy, you love this one. - Pam Allan

Mercury
by Ben Bova
Tor , 319 pp., \$24.95

Mercury is hard Science fiction in full Bova tradition.

Saito Yamagata believes that Mercury is the key to the stars. Fresh from a lamasery where he has been revived from his cryonic coffin, He hires Dante Alexios to make his dreams come true.. Victor Molina is an astrobiologist who hopes to step out of the academic shadow in discovering life on Mercury. But unknown to anyone but Dante is the shared tragic history that burns for revenge. How many people must die before his thirst is quenched.

The book combines hard Science fiction with a mystery/revenge plot that holds your interest . I read it straight through. The complex character of Alexios/Bracknell is more sympathetic than the other principals and make this well worth reading. One of Bova's best. 3 and ½ stars. - Pam Allan

Metal Sky
by Jay Caselberg
Roc, 307 pp, \$6.99

Metal Sky is a continuation of the world of *Wyrmling* but can stand alone.

Jack Stein, Psychic Investigator, has set up shop in Yorkstone, a place as clean and shiny as the Locality. It's a nice place to raise his enigmatic fourteen going on forty ward, but hard to make a living in Jack's line of work. He is worried about finances until Bridget Farrell drops in with the job of reclaiming a valuable artifact her antique dealing acquaintance made off with, Of course, nothing is as stated, so Jack and Billie find themselves in the middle of murder, double cross and touching the theft of a proscribed artifact by a huge and questionable inter system conglomerate. As usual, he needs to keep he and Billie alive while solving it all.

We have here a fun and fast paced sci-fi mystery that lovers of mysteries and science fiction will enjoy curling up with on a hot afternoon. I expect there to more volumes coming. - Pam Allan

Children of the Serpent Gate
by Sarah Ash
Bantam Spectra, 496 pp, \$23.00

Children Of The Serpent Gate is book three of the *Tears Of Artamon*.

In the novel, one man struggles to rebuild a nation under his control. His lust

for power has lead to the release of five Drakhaouls, dragon-demons from another dimension. One of them lives within him. And requires the blood of innocents for its power. But even as he struggles to control the demon within, his empire is crumbling and a rival nation seeks to repair a totem capable of banishing the dragon-demons... wielded by an innocent. But where in the world can one be found? And how high is



the price?

Here we have a fully realized world, rich in detail, action, and characters that hold your interest. What more can a fantasy lover ask.? - Pam Allan

Metallic Love
by Tanith Lee
Bantam Spectra, 301 pp, \$6.99

Metallic Love is a sequel to *the Silver Metal Lover*, but stands alone.

Growing up as an orphan in abusive circumstance, Loren read and re-read her secret copy of Jane's story. When she runs away and finds a new life, she believes that she is too street-smart to ever be stirred by a robot. When META Corporation brings back updated versions of these robots, loren has to see silver. But Silver is now Verlis and he is new and improved. But he is also more human than his creators. Loren finds herself following her lover into a battle to control his own destiny and finds a secret about herself that may be the strangest thing of all.

Tanith Lee continues her tradition of writing novels you can't put down with great plotting and characters. There is plenty of action to keep the reader involved as the characters and plot unfolds. It's in paperback so why haven't you bought it yet. - Pam Allan

One for Sorrow ,Two for Joy
by Clive Woodall
Ace, 312 pp, \$19.95

One for Sorrow, Two for Joy is an independent story in the style of *Watership Down*. The robins, and other small birds have

almost been eradicated by vicious covens of magpies headed by Slyekin and his right hand bird, Traska. Their goal is clear the sky of all birddom, except the magpies under their control. The Council of Owls has not met Since Slyekin humiliated their leader . But now, Kerrick has agreed th carry the messages, and plans to save Birddom on three long quests to gather forces to defeat the growing evil, and reinstate the Council. Kerrick, as one of the last robins, and his new found mate must overcome impossible odds while being hunted by Traska. Can they survive much less save the avian world.

The Lord of the Rings has no truer heros than Kerrick, Portia, and the wise owl Tomar. It has no more dastardly villains than Slyekin and Traska . It is destined to join *Lord of the Rings*, *Narnia*, and *Watership Down* as a classic for all ages. - Pam Allan.

The Carpet Makers
by Andreas Eschbach
Tor, 300 pp, \$24.95

The Carpet Makers is an independent by acclaimed and award winning German Author Eschbach in a rich and evocative translation by Doryl Jensen

Throughout known history, the carpet makers have labored making carpets from the hair of their wives and daughters for the Emperor. Carpets so intricate and fine



that a carpet maker can only make one carpet in a lifetime Its price feeds a family for another generation. The art is also an article of faith in a world ruled by an immortal emperor. The planet knows they are the only people that can do this.

Then one day, the empire vanishes, and strangers com from the stars following the hair carpets. What they find is beyond belief for both sides.

This is not an epic though it spans millennia. It is a book about people, faith, and history and shattering change. It is hard to lump in a catagorize this as only one thing. Its tapestry is rich and deeply satisfying and a must read for any thoughtful reader. - Pam Allan

Club Listings

ACROSS PLUS - So you live in North Phoenix and are interested in anime? Well there is a club out there available for you people. Across Plus is a social club that discusses anime, video games, manga, other animation, and the Japanese culture. We meet at Bookman's on 19th Ave and Northern On Sundays at 7:00pm until 9:00pm. In general, we explore anime, manga, and other styles of animation, creative educative demonstrations, participate in interactive discussions, attend local Arizona conventions, and make cosplay. We are willing to gain any new members out there who are interested. Dues are only \$2 per month. Our members are very friendly, respectful, and fun. We welcome any and all. For more information, contact Shane Bryner at ninjakittyofdoom@gmail.com

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

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

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

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

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

basfa@earthlink.net
our website at <http://home.earthlink.net/~basfa/>

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

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

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

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

THE JEDI KNIGHTS (Founded 1977) Meetings are the 3rd Sunday of each month. For more information call Carol Alves, Publicity, (760)244-9593 or write Jedi Knights, c/o Carol Alves 8038 "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@yahooogroups.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: myrddinal1@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

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Club Listings (Continued from page 19)

TUCSON FAN ALLIANCE E-Mail Address is Bkoehler@Juno.com or DMitchell1@Juno.com

UNITED FEDERATION OF PHOENIX A Phoenix area Star Trek and general SciFi fan club. We are a social club that meets every two weeks at various locations around the Phoenix area. The UFP has been meeting for over 30 years of continuous activity. Dues are \$15/per year prorated when you join; no restrictions. Membership includes membership roster and monthly newsletter. Come to any two meetings at no obligation. For information, write the UFP at PO Box 37224, Phoenix, AZ 85069, or call Jim Strait at (602) 242-9203. Web page: <http://www.U-F-P.org> or Email to Info@U-F-P.org

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

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

WESTERN SCIENCE FICTION 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, at the Bookmans located at 19th ave. and Northern in Phoenix Guests are welcome. For more info contact Craig Dyer at WesternSFA, PO Box 87457, Phoenix AZ 85082, (602) 973-2341, Email: craig@westernsfa.org Webpage: www.westernsfa.org

What is CASFS?
What is really behind putting on a convention? What are the funds raised by a convention used for? Why not attend a meeting and find out? We're the sponsor of ConNotations, CopperCons, HexaCons, SmerfCons and other conventions. We are a charitable, non-profit organization that exists to further science fiction, fantasy and science fields in Arizona. CASFS currently meets at the JB's Restaurant at 2560 W Indian School Rd in Phoenix (NW corner of I-17 and Indian School). The meetings begin at 8PM and are held on the last Friday of the month Jan. through Sept. and on the second Friday of the month Oct through Dec. Everyone is invited to attend two meetings as a guest (non-member). Membership rates are \$12/year plus an initial \$3 application fee and rates are prorated for the amount of the year remaining. For more info Call: Stephanie L. Bannon (602)973-2341 Webpage: www.casfs.org email: casfs@casfs.org

Convention Listings

Gilacon 2006 (Phoenix AZ) **March 31 - April 2, 2006** Holiday Inn Phoenix - Midtown 4321 N. Central Ave., Phoenix AZ (602)200-8888 We will be featuring several Nyrond regional scenarios, Living Arcanis, and D&D Minis

AniZona 2 (Phoenix AZ) **April 14-16, 2006** Embassy Suites Phoenix North, Phoenix, AZ Arizona's Own Anime Convention Guests TBA Memberships \$35 until 03/31/06, \$40 at the door Membership limited to 1200. Hotel rates \$99 S/D, \$109 T \$119 Q (plus tax) (602) 375-1777 www.anizona.org, Email chair@anizona.org

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

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

HexaCon 16 (Phoenix AZ) **October 13-15, 2006** Embassy Suites Phoenix North, 2577 W Greenway Rd, Phoenix, AZ Gaming starts on Friday and runs 24 hours until Sunday 4PM. Planned events include RPGA, LARP, LAN Party, CCG, Battletech and much more. Also Anime and a full consuite. *THURSDAY EVENTS for pre-registered members only include Barry Bard's Movie Previews and Giveaways. Memb: \$15 thru 1/31/06; \$20 thru 9/30/06 Hotel: Embassy Suites Phoenix North, 2577 W Greenway - Rooms \$109 S/D. All rooms include breakfast and happy hour. Info: www.hexacon.org

CopperCon 26 (Tempe AZ) **Sept 1-4, 2006** Tempe Mission Palms Guests Authors Marc Zicree; Diane Duane, Peter Moorwood Memberships \$25 thru 12/31/05, \$30 thru 3/31/06 Hotel Rates \$91 S/D/ T/Q plus tax Tempe Mission Palms, 60 E 5th St, Tempe, AZ 85281 (800) 547-8705 CopperCon 26, PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082, Phone(480) 949-0415 EmailCu26@coppercon.org,Web www.coppercon.org

Musty Tomes

Out of Their Minds
by Clifford Simak
175 pp., 1970

First of all, thanks to the book discussion group for putting me on to this, even though I can't attend. My take on this gem: such an original scientific premise from a pastoral science fiction writer. A next level of evolution has occurred, as unforeseeable as any level would be to a dweller below. The mental energy of the human collective unconscious has generated a new dimension of reality, wherein all the creatures of fantasy live: myths, monsters, heroes, story characters, et al. You may have seen this result before, as in Silverlocke, Riverworld, Mythago Wood, Roger Rabbit, or at least one episode of every Star Trek series. While he preceded most of these, Simak was not the first, just one of the best at it.
The tale: a homecoming journalist and young schoolmarm fall in love while trying to survive the perils of this new dimension. An imp is trying to kill them, while the Devil wants the man for ambassador to the real world. The focus is on the man's adventures, with the schoolmarm in the background, so female

readers won't find any inspiring role models here. But the tale is a fine trip through the Land of Imagination, including a couple chapters on the battle of Gettysburg.
Simak did miss one scientific detail, although he described it with telling accuracy. The Devil enchants the real world to disable electricity, and scientists declare it impossible. Yet it seems identical to the effects of a nuclear bomb's electromagnetic pulse, although Simak didn't realize it. His description of the looming social breakdown is an excellent quick read on the subject.
Why did the Devil do it? He demands that we cease creating cartoon characters, for we are ruining his dimension with them. His confrontation with the President and Cabinet in the White House made me laugh. More surprises delight the reader. Don Quixote turns up as a major player, putting Simak on the coattails of what is considered the first modern novel, now celebrating its 400th anniversary. His could be considered the last of a Quixote trilogy, right after Man of La Mancha, which debuted on stage 5 years before Simak's novel. Cervantes' Don Quixote is about a thousand pages long, whereas some fault Simak for coming to an abrupt ending. It worked for me. - **Mike Griffin**

Mailing/Subscription Information

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

ConNotations updates it's mailing list each December.

Individual subscriptions are available for \$15 for 6 issues if paid by December 31, 2005, \$20 for 6 issues beginning January 1, 2006.

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

Currently these groups are:

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