

# ConNotations

Volume 17, Issue 4  
August/September  
2007

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

## A Conversation with Michael Stackpole by Catherine Book

Michael was kind enough to lend me some of his time during the Arizona Book Festival last April 14<sup>th</sup>. Michael has always been fun to talk to and this interview was no different. My first question was to ask him if he had any more books planned in the *Age of Discovery* series. He doesn't have anything at the moment. Is he done with the series then? Not necessarily. He likes the world a lot and still has a lot of ideas but he's done all he wanted. There could be sequels or short stories. He could, as well, put a story up on a podcast. Something that might be an advantage to a writer since hardcover sales seem to be dropping off. Why is that, I wondered? Michael explained his view that the industry is competing for entertainment dollars from the public. A potential customer has to choose between spending his \$25 on cable TV or a new



Left to right: Michael Stackpole, Terry Brooks © Lee Whiteside

game that his family can all enjoy or a hardcover book. And with the plethora of paperback books on the market, he could easily decide to wait a year for the paperback. Another problem is how books are marketed. Michael thinks that books should be marketed in the same fashion as other entertainment. Instead of a simple announcement in print that a new book is out by John Q. Author, it would get more interest if the reader could

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CASFS Business Report

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# SF Tube Talk

## TV News & Previews

### By Lee Whiteside

The summer season is in full gear during August with new episodes all over the place on cable including the debut of a modern take on an old classic in SciFi's ***Flash Gordon***. As we get into September, the broadcast networks will start rolling out their new and returning shows.

SciFi will be debuting their new ***Flash Gordon*** series on Friday, August 10th, with a two hour movie. **Eric Johnson** is Steven "Flash" Gordon in this modern take on the classic comic series. The basic setup is that after the death of his father when he was 13, Flash has developed into a star runner, winning many awards and dedicating them to the memory of his father. He's been watching after his mother's house while she travels and has been rebuilding cars with his friend Nick Gilmore (**Panou**). His ex-girlfriend, Dale Arden (**Gina Holden**) is a TV reporter at the local station and is engaged to police detective Joe Wylee (**Giles Panton**). When a truck driver finds a strange object hovering above a road, Flash takes it to Dale to investigate and things start to happen. When Flash spots a strange man following him in an RV, he tracks him down and discovers that he is Hans Zarkov (**Jody Racicot**), who worked with Flash's father on the Portage Initiative. Zarkov tells Flash that his father didn't die, but disappeared in a trans-dimensional rift and that he has detected a new one like the one Dr. Gordon disappeared into. Appearing through the rift is a biomechanical killer looking for the "Imex" and it's willing to destroy Flash and anyone else who gets in the way.

Flash ends up on Mongo via the trans-dimensional rift and must deal with Ming (**John Ralston**), the manipulative dictator of Mongo. Ming will be portrayed as a more three-dimensional character, with the producers citing Saddam Hussein as a model. Also appearing on the show in a recurring role will be **Karen Cliche** as Baylin, a bounty hunter from Mongo who gets sent to Earth and ends up working with Flash and company. Executive producer **Peter Hume** has indicated that they will be updating the original source material for the present day, eliminating things that seemed OK in the 1930's but wouldn't likely fly in today's environment. To bring forth the different races seen in the original comic strip, the world of Mongo is split up into different tribes, akin to ***Mad Max*** with different tribes scattered about across the planet. It is in bad shape, ecologically, with Ming in control of the only source of good water, which gives him power over the rest of the world. The various tribes we'll see are inspired by the original material (Lion

Men, Hawkmen, etc.), but are not literally brought to life. For example, the Hawkmen will not be men with wings, but will be men that follow the way of The Hawk with a bird emphasis on their way of living with a Prince Vultan as their leader.

Beyond the initial two hour movie, there's not much info about how they will move things along plot-wise aside from Flash finding more about his father and his fate and thwarting Ming's plans to take over the Earth (or whatever he's trying to do). The producers are attempting to get **Sam Jones**, who played Flash in the 1980 movie, to make a guest appearance. The show does have a full 22 episode commitment which includes a weekly syndication run much like the ***Stargates*** have had. Even if it doesn't get the big ratings SciFi is hoping for, it should be around for the full season.

Elsewhere on SciFi, the second season of ***Who Wants to Be a Superhero?*** is in full swing, with a new batch of contestants. Look for a lot of fun and challenging tasks for the superhero wannabees as **Stan Lee** searches for the next superhero. The lineup of contestants includes Basura, who enlists the aid of bugs to turn trash into treasures, The Defuser, who uses non-violent weaponry to disarm villains, Hygena, who fights crime making weapons from household utensils, and Ms. Limelight, who absorbs the powers of action stars in TV and movies. Last year's winner, Feedback (**Matthew Atherton**) may have a role in the new season and the Dark Horse comic about his character has been released. Also look for **Atherton** to appear as Feedback in the upcoming SciFi Saturday movie ***MegaSnake*** at the end of August.

***Painkiller Jane*** is continuing its run on Friday nights, finishing up the final episodes of its 22 episode run. Ratings haven't been very good and aren't likely to improve. The producers feel the show has gotten better as they've progressed through the season and it has apparently done well in overseas sales, so it may come back for a second season.

***Doctor Who*** continues its third season on SciFi with the conclusion of the ***Daleks in Manhattan*** two-parter pitting the Doctor and Martha against the latest breed of Dalek in 1930's New York. After that is 42, where The Doctor and Martha land on a space ship on a collision course with a sun, leading to some nail-biting moments as The Doctor races to save them. Next up is the two parter ***Human Nature/Family of Blood*** that looks to be the favorite story from this season for most of the UK viewers. It is based on the original Doctor Who New Adventures novel by **Paul Cornell** and finds The Doctor having transformed himself into a human in 1913 order to hide from "The Family of Blood", aliens out to capture the Doctor

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# 24 Frames

## Movie News

### By Lee Whiteside

Filming is underway for ***The Dark Knight***, the sequel to ***Batman Begins***. **Christian Bale** returns as Bruce Wayne/Batman while **Maggie Gyllenhaal** takes over the role of Rachel Dawes. The main villain is The Joker with **Heath Ledger** in the role but there are rumors of **Aaron Eckhart** (Harvey Dent) also being seen with the Two Face makeup and **Anthony Michael Hall** making an appearance as Edward Nygma, who is destined to be The Riddler. Also appearing in the movie is **Michael Jai White** as Gamble, one of the Gotham crime bosses trying to carve out his territory.

Promotion is starting to heat up for the mysterious film from **J.J. Abrams** codenamed "***Cloverfield***" that had its initial trailer debut with ***Transformers*** showing an unknown force attacking New York City. The film was made under tight security with no script pages being leaked and agents and actors not getting any real info when casting was done. The cast includes **Michael Stahl-David**, **Odet Jasmín**, **Mike Vogel**, and **Lizzy Kaplan**. **Matt Reeves** directed from a script by **Drew Goddard**. There appears to be various web sites popping up as part of a viral marketing campaign, for which **Abrams** is denying knowledge. It opens Jan 18, 2008.

The **Abrams** directed ***Star Trek*** movie is moving closer to filming and we may have some casting announcements soon, possibly already announced after press time at the San Diego Comic Con. According to **William Shatner**, he recently talked with **Leonard Nimoy** and found out that **Nimoy** had read the script and declared it good. **Shatner** also indicated that **Nimoy** would be in the movie, but that **Shatner** would not.

New films in the works include ***Orbit***, directed by **Tom Bezucha** and based on the novel by **John Nance**. In it, a civilian who wins a trip on the space shuttle awakens to find the crew dead and the ship adrift in space. **John Turner** has done the script for ***Orbit*** and has also turned in a script for an ***X-Men*** spinoff movie featuring Magneto to be directed by **David Goyer**.

**Richard Kelly**'s long delayed ***Southland Tales*** is nearing completion being about halfway through post-production with Sony distributing the movie. Expect a release date and a trailer soon. **Kelly** is gearing up to film ***The Box***, based on a **Richard Matheson** story about a couple who receive a mysterious box that will grant them a wish at the expense of someone's life. According to **Kelly**, **Cameron Diaz** will star in the film. The **Wachowski Brother**'s live action

take on ***Speed Racer*** is currently filming in Berlin. It stars **Emile Hirsch** as Speed with **Richard Roundtree** as racer-turned-commentator Ben Burns with **Matthew Fox**, **Christina Ricci**, **Susan Sarandon** and **John Goodman** also appearing.

***Indiana Jones IV*** has started filming in New Mexico. Joining **Harrison Ford** in the movie are **Shia LeBeouf**, **Jim Broadbent**, **Cate Blanchett** (rumored to be the villain), **John Hurt**, and **Ray Winstone**. Rumors are that there will be a storyline tied into crystal skulls and the theories brought forth in ***Chariots of the Gods*** that aliens provided technology to ancient civilizations. The story reportedly starts out in Area 51, where the Ark of the Covenant was deposited at the end of the first movie, where Indy is confronted by Russian agents.

Genre movies being released during August and September are somewhat sparse, as usual, but there's a couple that should be worth seeing. I'm looking forward to ***Stardust*** the most of this batch while ***Penelope*** looks to be a sleeper.

***Underdog*** (Aug 3) A live action adaptation of of the 60's cartoon ***Underdog***, with **Jason Lee** providing the voice of the title character, an ordinary beagle who gains extraordinary powers when a scientific experiment goes awry. Also starring are **Alex Neuberger** as Jack, **Peter Dinklage** as Simon Bar Sinister, **John Slattery** as The Mayor, and **Patrick Warburton** as Sinister's stooge Cad.

***Stardust*** (Aug 10) **Neil Gaiman** and **Charles Vess**' illustrated novel comes to life in this adaptation directed by **Matthew Vaughn**. **Charlie Cox** is Tristan, who promises Victoria (**Sienna Miller**) that to show his love for her, he will retrieve the falling star that just went across the sky and bring it to her. Tristan leaves his home of Wall and enters the forbidden land beyond The Wall to find the star, but finds out the star is a living being named Yvaine (played by **Claire Danes**) and that there are other denizens of the land trying to catch her as well. **Michelle Pfeiffer** is the evil witch Lilim who wants the star to replenish her and her sister's life force. **Peter O'Toole** is the King of Stormhold, whose death sets off a search for the star by his surviving sons (**Rupert Everett** as Secundus, **Mark Strong** as Septimus, and **Jason Flemyng** as Primus) to determine who will be the new King. **Robert De Niro** is Captain Shakespeare, the captain of a flying sailing ship, **Ricky Gervais** is Ferdy the Fence, and **Ian McKellen** narrates the whole thing. **Gaiman** and **Vess** have had a good deal of involvement in the film and it looks to be a good, fun, fantasy adventure.

***The Invasion*** (Aug 17) **Nicole Kidman** stars in a new take on ***The Invasion of the Body Snatchers***. **Kidman** is Carol, a psychiatrist living in

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## SF Tube Talk

(Continued from page 3)

and The TARDIS. While The Doctor is hiding as Mr. Smith and unaware of his true nature, Martha is keeping watch on him and must take action when the aliens show up in search of the Doctor. Next up is *Blink*, from Hugo winner **Steven Moffat**, which finds The Doctor and Martha separated from the TARDIS in 1969 and having to make use of DVD

Easter eggs and some possibly confusing time paradoxes to enable Sally Sparrow to fix things in the present day to reunite The Doctor and Martha with the TARDIS. In *Utopia*, Jack Harkness finally catches up to The Doctor and travels to the end of time with them where they find a mysterious professor trying to save the last of humanity. For the two part season finale, *The Sound of Drums/Last of the Time Lords*, Harold Saxon is revealed to

be an old foe, and he has put into motion a plan to take over the Earth. When the Doctor is incapacitated, Martha travels the world to set forth a plan to save The Doctor and the Earth.

The last Friday of September sees *Stargate Atlantis* return for its fourth season, its first as a solo series. Joining the cast as a semi regular will be **Amanda Tapping**, bringing her character, Colonel Samantha Carter, over from *Stargate SG-1*. Also joining as a semi regular is **Jewel**

**Staite** as Dr. Kelly. The season opener, *Adrift*, will pick up where the third season left off with Atlantis in a dire predicament. Early in the season, they will be introducing a new alien threat, called The Travelers, who are a nomad race that has been going from planet to planet after their homeworld was decimated by The Wraith. In other *Stargate* news, according to a recent report on Gateworld.net, the release of the two *Stargate SG-1* direct to DVD movies, *The Ark of Truth* and *Continuum*, has been pushed back to early in 2008.

The latest word on *Battlestar Galactica* is that season four, which will start up early in 2008, will be its final season. Producers **Ron Moore** and **David Eick** have decided to end the series after the 22 episode fourth season. To kick things off this fall, SciFi will broadcast a special episode "Razor" on November 24 which will tell the story of Lee Adama's first mission as commander of the Battlestar Pegasus with flashbacks to how Admiral Cain (**Michelle Forbes**) handled the Pegasus during the original decimating Cylon attack on the colonies. As a


precursor to the special, SciFi will also run an eight week series of mini-sodes that will provide a look into the original Cylon war featuring a young William Adama (played by **Nico Cortez**). SciFi will debut the mini-sodes on air and then make them available online. I'll have more next issue on the special and the new season.

At the recent TV Critic Press Tour, SciFi announced that *Farscape* will return as a web series, produced by **Brian Henson** and **Robert Halmi, Jr.** No details were announced as to who will be participating in the series, but it was indicated that some of the original actors will be involved. Expect more news on this next issue. SciFi also announced a miniseries in development with **Ben Browder** and *Farscape* director **Andrew Prowse** taking a modern day approach to the Odyssey. The success of *Ghost Hunters* has spawned a spinoff series with *UFO Hunters*. In the series, New York Strange Phenomena Investigators (NY-SPI), led by co-founders **Oliver Kemenczky** and **Ted Davis**, and supported by researcher/investigator **Dennis Anderson**, will bring to *UFO Hunters* their decades of experience and unquestioned credibility in the UFO community. Look for that series sometime next year, assuming they don't get abducted.

USA Network's *The 4400* and *The Dead Zone* will continue through the rest of the summer, each likely ending their 13 episode run in mid-September. There are not too many details on the upcoming episodes although it's a pretty good bet the promicin conflicts will escalate on *The 4400*. Reports are that the ratings for both series are down, especially for *The Dead Zone*, so a return for a new season isn't guaranteed. USA's development slate seems to be geared more toward the action comedy side of things with a single quirky character as the main emphasis, much like the new series *Burn Notice*, which has done very well in the ratings so far. This means there may not be much of a future on USA for genre-themed series.

Over on BBC America, they are stepping up their Supernatural Saturdays with the debut of *Jekyll*, a six episode drama series, on August 4th. It is a modern take on the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde story, written by **Steven Moffat**. It stars **James Nesbitt** as Dr. Tom Jackmann, who shares his body with his alter-ego, Mr. Hyde, but he's having difficulty keeping Hyde in check. **Gina Bellman** is Jackman's wife, Claire, **Denis Lawson** is Peter Hyme, Tom's best friend and also a geneticist who isn't what he appears to be, **Michelle Ryan** is Katherine Reimer, Tom's assistant who knows about his double life and has been helping him keep them from colliding. **Meera Syal** is Miranda Callendar, a private investigator who uncovers the truth about Tom's

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Volume 17 Issue 4



**join us at tuscon 34**

# Taking Aim at John Ringo!

## Guest of Honor for TusCon 34!

**November 9-11, 2007  
InnSuites Hotel in Tucson**

John Ringo writes military science fiction, which includes "The Legacy of the Aldenata" series and the "Paladin of Shadows" series

Here's what to expect at TusCon - Art Show, Panel Discussions, Videos, Anime, Short Story Contest, Gaming / Computer Gaming, Dealers, Filking, Consuite

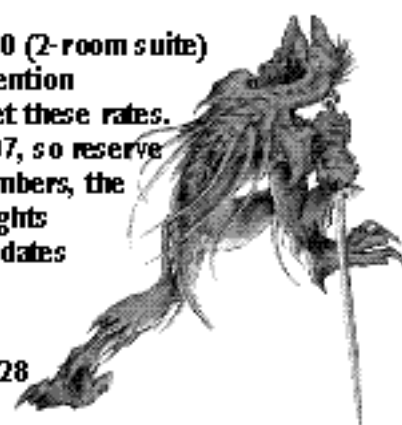
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About the Short Story Writing Contest: we will offer gift certificates for prizes and the word limit will be 5,000 words. So start writing! Submissions must be received by September 10, 2007. (See addresses below)

Also, a Teen Writing Contest is sponsored by Pima County Public Libraries. For further details, please go to our website.

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**E-mail:** [basfa@earthlink.net](mailto:basfa@earthlink.net)



## SF Tube Talk (Continued from page 4)

problem and unearths a conspiracy over a century old tied into it all.

After *Jekyll* is over, BBC America will debut *Torchwood*, the *Doctor Who* spinoff starring **John Barrowman** as Jack Harkness, on Sept 8th at 9 pm ET/PT. Jack is now in charge of the Torchwood branch in Glasgow, having been saved by Rose at the end of the Dalek attack in the first season finale of the new *Doctor Who* series. The series is set after the end of *Doctor Who* series two, when the Torchwood headquarters in London is devastated by the Cyberman attack and the Glasgow branch of Torchwood appears to be the only one left. It is geared towards a more adult audience than *Doctor Who*, so parental guidance is strongly suggested. Jack's team includes Owen Harper (**Burn Gorman**), Toshika Sato (**Naoko Mori**), Ianto Jones (**Gareth David-Lloyd**), and Suzie Costello (**Indira Varma**). The series kicks off with *Everything Changes*, with police constable Gwen Cooper (*Eve Myles*) investigating the mysterious Torchwood organization that has been stepping on the toes of the Glasgow police force. Her investigation of a string of killings leads her to Torchwood and when she finds out the truth, she is asked to join in with them. In *Day One*, Gwen's first day as a member of the team finds her accidentally releasing a sex-addicted alien who leaves a trail of dead bodies in its quest for the ultimate buzz. In *Ghost Machine*, Gwen recovers an alien device that allows the user to see past events, which leads Owen to try to avenge a murder that he experiences through the device. In *Cyberwoman*, we find that Ianto has been keeping his girlfriend hidden in the bowels of the Torchwood headquarters. She was half transformed by the Cybermen and he's trying to find a way to save her. Needless to say, things don't go well when she escapes.

On the broadcast networks, things are a bit slow in August, except for ABC on Saturday nights at 10 pm ET, 9 pm CT, where they will finally be airing four of the six episodes of *Masters of Science Fiction* that they bought last year and have had sitting on the shelf all season. Obviously the time slot is just slightly better than ABC airing them online only, but it does mean that we can finally see what the producers were able to come up with. As originally announced, the series promised to have some of the best science fiction stories adapted by top directors with name stars with **Isaac Asimov**, **Ray Bradbury**, **Harlan Ellison**, and **Robert Heinlein** being touted. It appears that they did deliver on this promise in part (although no **Asimov** or **Bradbury** stories made it into production) and reports from critics who have screened the episodes have been good. Unfortunately, the

producers decision to go with ABC as the primary broadcast outlet pretty much doomed the project from the start.

Hosting the series is **Professor Stephen Hawking**, who will provide opening and closing narration for each episode, bringing "scientific authority, along with a sense of wonder, to the programs." First up on August 4th is *A Clean Escape*, based on a short story by **John Kessel** with **Sam Egan** doing the script and **Mark Rydell** directing. The story is set in a post-apocalyptic near future where **Sam Waterston** is Robert Havelmann, who cannot remember the last 25 years of his life. **Judy Davis** is Dr. Deanna Evans, who has been treating Havelmann and has become obsessed with his problem and soon realizes it is connected to a global crisis. Next up is *The Awakening*, based on a short story by **Howard Fast** and written and directed by **Michael Petroni** with **Terry O'Quinn** and **Elisabeth Rohn** starring. Set in contemporary times in the middle of a firefight near Baghdad where U.S. soldiers discover a body that isn't human. When more of the creatures start showing up and start communicating with each other, the world must choose between peace and destruction. After that is *Jerry Was a Man* based on a **Robert A. Heinlein** short story and written and directed by **Michael Tolkin**. **Malcolm McDowell** and **Anne Heche** star as Mr. and Mrs. Van Vogel, a couple whose life is nothing but pleasure with all of the chores and work done by anthropoids. When an anthropoid named Jerry ignites the compassion of Mrs. Van Vogel, the question arises of just what is a man? For the last ABC broadcast episode, we've got **Harlan Ellison's** *The Discarded*, with a script by **Ellison** and **Josh Olson** and directed by **Jonathan Frakes**. It stars **Brian Dennehy** and **John Hurt** in a story about despised minorities that are adrift in space that are forced to make an ominous pact in the hope that they may find refuge on Earth. Produced but not aired (but likely available on the forthcoming DVD release) are *Watchbird*, based on a **Robert Sheckley** story written by **Sam Egan** and directed by **Harold Becker** with **Sean Astin** and **James Cronwell** starring and *Little Brother*, with **Clifton**

**Collins, Jr.**, and **Kimberly Elise** in a story adapted by **Walter Mosley** and directed by **Darnell Martin**. You can see more info and preview clips for all six episodes at their official web site at [www.mastersofscifi.com](http://www.mastersofscifi.com).

Coming this fall is a new wave of science fiction and fantasy shows on the broadcast networks. Not all debut or return dates have been announced as of press time, but here's what you can look forward to this fall:

NBC - Raising the bar on the genre NBC returns *Heroes* and debuts three new shows with genre elements (with *Medium* waiting in the wings for mid-season as it did this past year). NBC will make a Hero sandwich of sorts on Monday nights, putting two of their new genre shows in the time slots before and after *Heroes* starting Monday September 24th. Starting off Monday nights will be *Chuck*, about Chuck Bartowski (**Zachary Levi**), a Buy More computer repairman (part of the "Nerd Herd"), who inadvertently downloads into his brain the contents of a secret computer, giving him expanded knowledge that the government and other people want to either get ahold of or keep under wraps. Top CIA agent Sarah Walker (**Yvonne Trzechowski**) is assigned to protect Chuck and finds herself attracted to him (or is it all an act?). It looks to be a fun take on a familiar subject (*Jake 2.0*, anyone?) but may have difficulty maintaining ongoing storylines. *Heroes* returns with the next chapter, titled "*Generations*", which will run for part of the season, not the entire season like the first chapter did. We pick up the story about four months after the season finale, catching up with Hiro in medieval Japan and Claire now living in California. They haven't announced much about what or who else we will be seeing, but we will definitely have several new cast members. Announced so far is **Dominic Keating**,

who will play an Irish mobster, **Diana Agron**, who will be playing a cheerleader, **Nick D'Agosto** as West, a hero with special powers who also may be a love interest for Claire, **David Anders** will be Kane, someone who is long-lived, and **Dania Ramirez** and **Shalim Ortiz** play a brother and sister trying to escape their country. Following *Heroes* will be *Journeyman*, a time travel mystery/romance with **Kevin McKidd** as newspaper reporter Dan Vasser who journeys through time in a seemingly random fashion trying to make things turn out for the better.

On Wednesdays on NBC will be *The Bionic Woman*, from *Battlestar Galactica* producer **David Eick** and former *X-Files* producer **Glen Morgan**. **Michelle Ryan** is Jaime Summers, whose boyfriend (**Chris Bowers**) performs surgery on her to save her life after a nasty accident, giving her new limbs and other enhancements. Things get dicey when the government wants her to work for them. **Katie Sackhoff** guest stars as the first attempt at a Bionic Woman. Guest starring in the early episodes will be **Isiah Washington**, recently let go from *Grey's Anatomy* for an on-set incident that led to lots of press attention for the actor which I'm not going to elaborate on here. In any case, NBC appears to be wanting to get a regular series going with him and have added him to *The Bionic Woman* as a means to restart his career. **Washington** will play a mysterious agent with an unclear agenda who is brought in to help Jaime Sommers learn to adjust to her new abilities. Note that the role of Jaime's sister, who was deaf in the pilot, has been recast and the character is no longer deaf. No word on if she has a different disability.

NBC is also planning additional features online to go with their new shows

(Continued on page 6)



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## SF Tube Talk ( Continued from page 5 )

and will be expanding associated online features for *Heroes*. For *Chuck*, users will be able to get inside Chuck’s brain for top-secret government information and bonus video, plus sites will be available for Buy-More.com and NerdHerdHelp.com with a weekly blog by Chuck’s best friend, Morgan. For *The Bionic Woman*, they will have a weekly Anatomy of a Scene feature breaking down one of their big action scenes. For *Journeyman*, users will be able to follow Dan’s journey’s via an interactive video time line with and online pop-culture quiz.

FOX is giving it a go with *New Amsterdam*, starring **Nikolaj Coster Waldau** as John Amsterdam, a New York homicide detective who has been around since 1642, when an Indian spell gives him immortality until he finds his one true love. He uses his multiple lifetimes of experience to solve crimes while he continues to be on the lookout for the woman who will change his life. FOX also has the *Sarah Connor Chronicles* on tap for mid-season on Sundays once the football season is over.

ABC has *Pushing Daisies*, with **Barry Sonnenfeld** teaming up with **Bryan Fuller** to bring us a seemingly whimsical comedy about life and death with **Lee Pace** as Ned, who discovers he has the ability to bring people back to life once they die. The caveat is that if he touches them again, they go back to being dead. He begins to work with a private investigator to help solve murders but things get complicated when he brings his childhood sweetheart (**Anna Friel** as Charlotte “Chuck” Charles) back to life after she is killed in an accident. She encourages him to use his powers to help people and their relationship blossoms even though they can’t touch each other. **Sonnenfeld** expects to direct several episodes. ABC is hoping this type of quirky comedy will catch on, although previous attempts by **Fuller** with *Wonderfalls* and *Dead Like Me* have had mixed results.

CBS takes on the immortal vampire looking for mortal love angle with *Moonlight*, starring **Alex O’Loughlin** as Mick St. John, a vampire for sixty years who is a private investigator. He has fallen in love with internet reporter Beth Turner (**Sophia Myles**) and has to decide if he should reveal his true nature to her and try to live a normal life while fighting crime and the less savory vampires. Also starring is **Jason Dohring** as Josef, a young mischievous hedge-fund trader, and **Shannyn Sossamon** is Coraline, St. John’s wife who turned him into a vampire sixty years ago. Note that the last three were cast after the pilot presentation, replacing the actors who appeared in the pilot with some changes to their characters. Not a good sign if they are

recasting and changing things around from the start.

The CW’s *Reaper* has been getting high points from most of the critics but has also had some recasting. **Bret Harrisons** is Sam, who discovers on his 21st birthday that his parents sold his soul to The Devil (**Ray Wise**) and when The Devil shows up to collect, he makes Sam a bounty hunter for him, catching souls escaped from Hell. **Missy Peregrym** (*Heroes*) joins the cast as Andi, one of Sam’s co-workers that he has a crush on. She replaces **Nikki Reed** from the pilot. Also starring are **Tyler Labine** as Bert and **Rick Gonzalez** as Ben, buddies of Sam who help him out on his catches. **Kevin Smith** directed the pilot and may be involved with the series.

Returning to the CW for its seventh season is *Smallville*, which will add some new cast members at the beginning of the season including a new Daily Planet editor, Grant Gabriel, played by **Michael Cassidy** (most recently seen on The CW’s *Hidden Palms*) and Clark’s cousin, Kara Zor-El, aka Supergirl! Playing Kara will be **Laura Vandervoort**, who’s had various guest star roles and definitely looks the part of the classic Supergirl. Reportedly, it turns out Kara’s father sent her off to Earth as a teenager at the same time Jor-El sent Kal-El, but she got delayed and was in suspended animation so she hasn’t aged while Kal-El has grown up. She has all of his powers and is also able to fly, plus she’s a bit rebellious. Look for her to appear in the first episode of the new season, *Bizarro*, which deals with the season ending cliffhanger and sets the stage for a new mythic turn on the show with Supergirl now in the mix.

*Supernatural* returns for its third season on The CW and it is adding a couple of new demon hunters to the mix, both female. One is Ruby, being played by **Katie Cassidy** (daughter of **Shaun Cassidy**). Ruby is described as callous and somewhat cold, while having some sexual attraction to Sam Winchester. Also in the works is another female demon hunter, Bela, who is supposedly more quirky and fun than Ruby, but no casting has been announced as of press time.

The latest news form across the pond has filming underway for both the fourth season of *Doctor Who* and the second season of *Torchwood*. The big news is that the Doctor’s companion, Martha Jones, will not join him in the TARDIS at least for the first half of the season. First up will be the Christmas special, *Voyage of the Damned*, with **David Tenant** teaming up with singer/actress **Kylie Minogue** for an adventure on The Titanic. According to a BBC press release, **Minogue** will be a waitress on the Titanic named Astrid. Following that, **Catherine Tate** will reprise her role as Donna, from the *Runaway Bride* special, and will join The Doctor for a few adventures in the early part of the season. Over on

*Torchwood*, which will begin airing its second season early in 2008 on BBC2, Martha Jones joins up with Jack Harkness’s crew for a few episodes. Guest starring in the first episode of the season will be **James Marsters**, in a role with a few scenes described as very steamy. Later in the season, **Alan Dale** (*Lost, Ugly Betty*) will guest star as a “baddie”. It looks like the BBC is definitely amping things up with the guest stars for *Torchwood* to help it have more appeal in the rest of the world.

On the animated front, The Cartoon Network brought back the animated *Fantastic Four* series, returning it to Saturday nights near the end of the Toonami block. However, as of late July, the show has been taken off of Toonami and appears to only be airing late on Saturday mornings, which had previously been the slot for a repeat of the previous weeks new episode. On the Kids WB, look for *The Batman* and *Legion of Super Heroes in the 24th Century* to return with new episodes in September. On *The Batman*, the new season will kick off with a two parter featuring Superman with **George Newbern**, **Dana Delaney** and **Clancy Brown** all providing voices for Superman, Lois Lane, and Lex Luthor. Later episodes will introduce other DC heroes including The Flash, Aquaman and likely some of their associated super villains. On *The Legion of Superheroes*, they will bring into play “A daunting new villain — a destroyer of galaxies from the rich annals of DC Comics” and also have a somewhat older, more mature Superman on the team. Expect to see more new faces turning up including “a surprising, new ally from across the space-time continuum to assist in its efforts to rid the universe of this powerful foe.” In the direct to video market, the *Superman/Doomsday* DVD will hit the stores on September 18th. It condenses the big “*Death of Superman*” story from the early 1990’s into a 70-minute video. For this special adaptation, **Adam Baldwin** is voicing Superman, **James Marsters** Lex Luthor, **Anne Heche** Lois Lane. In this adaptation, it is LexCorp that unleashes Doomsday leading to a battle to the death with Superman. As in the comics, he gets better, but the DVD will leave out all the extra stuff that happened in the comics (i.e. Superboy, Cyborg Superman, Steel, Supergirl and such).

## 24 Frames ( Continued from page 3 )

Washington D.C. who realizes that a strange epidemic that has been changing people’s behavior is of extraterrestrial origin and that her son may be the key to stopping it. Also stars **Daniel Craig** as Ben, **Jeremy Northam** as Tucker, and **Jackson Bond** as Carol’s son Oliver.

*Penelope* (Aug 17 - date may change) **Christina Ricci** stars as Penelope, a young woman who has been stricken by a family curse decides to fight it so she can find love and her true self. **Richard E. Grant** and **Catherine O’Hara** are her parents, who are trying to find her the right, true-blood, suitor (i.e. “of her own kind”). Also starring are **James MacAvoy** as Max, **Reese Witherspoon** as Annie, and **Peter Dinklage** as Lemon.

*Halloween* (Aug 31) Horror season starts in August this year with a remake of the horror classic with **Rob Zombie** in the director’s chair. This new chapter in the Michael Myers saga stars **Tyler Mane** as Michael Myers, **Sheri Moon** as Deborah Myers, **Dee Wallace-Stone** as Cynthia Strode, **Scout Taylor-Compton** as Laurie Strode, and **William Forsythe** as Ronnie White. We get flashbacks to a young Michael Myers at age 10. Maybe it can be considered the “*Batman Begins*” take on the series?

*Hatchet* (Sept 7) When a haunted swamp tour finds out one of the local horror legends is true, mayhem and blood spattering ensues. Stars **Kane Hodder**, best known for his role as Jason in many of the Friday the 13th movies. It is presumed his weapon of choice is a hatchet! Also stars **Joel David Moore**, **Tamara Feldman**, **Deon Richmond**, and **Mercedes McNab**.

*Resident Evil: Extinction* (Sept 14) Alice has been captured by the Umbrella Corporation and has been genetically engineered to be stronger and faster and she joins forces with others in the Nevada desert to fight the virus threatening to turn all humans into the undead. **Milla Jovovich** returns to the franchise as Alice with **Oded Fehr** as Carlos, **Mike Epps** as L.J., **Iain Glen** as Dr. Isaacs, **Ali Larter** as Claire, **Ashanti** as Nurse Betty, **Chris Egan** as Mikey, and **Spencer Locke** as K-Mart.



# FYI

## CASFS Book Discussion

The CASFS Book Discussions are at The Bent Cover 12428 N 28th Drive on the third Tuesday of each month at 7PM. If you haven't read the book, stop by anyway. Our discussions are rarely limited to just the book scheduled for that month. Email questions to [book@casfs.org](mailto:book@casfs.org)

**August 21 - *Dead Until Dark*** by Charlaine Harris -. Sookie is a small-time waitress in a small-time Louisiana town. She's quiet, keeps to herself a lot. Not because she's not pretty – she is. It's just that she has this 'disability.' She can read minds and that doesn't make her very dateable. Until the night she meets tall, dark and handsome and can't hear a single thought. Turns out it's because Bill is a vampire – exactly the kind of guy she's waiting for. But Bill has a reputation...and when one of Sookie's coworkers turns up dead, she's worried she'll lose the best boyfriend she's had. Read the book and then meet the author at CopperCon 27 in September.

**September 18 - *Dragonflight*** by Anne McCaffrey - This is the one that started it all... The first novel in the Pern series. The first segment of *Dragonflight* was a Hugo award winning novella (called *Weyr Search*) prior to publication of the entire book.

**October 16 - *When Worlds Collide*** by Philip Wylie & Edwin Balmer - Sven Bronson, a South African astronomer, discovers that a pair of runaway planets, Bronson Alpha and Bronson Beta, will soon enter the solar system. The larger one, Alpha, will pass close enough to cause catastrophic damage. Eight months later, after swinging around the Sun, Alpha will return to pulverize the Earth and leave. It is believed that Bronson Beta will remain and assume a stable orbit. Scientists led by Cole Hendron work desperately to build ships to transport enough people, animals and equipment to Bronson Beta in an attempt to save the human race. {Another film adaptation is scheduled for release in 2008}

**November 20 - *There Will Be Dragons*** by John Ringo - 1st in a series. In the future there is no war, no war, no disease nor ill-timed death. The world is a paradise-and then, in a moment, it ends. The world had been a paradise until the Fall, when the holders of the control codes for the world-spanning program called "Mother" fell out in civil war. Scattered across the face of the earth are communities that have returned to the natural life of soil and small farm. In the village of Raven's Mill, Edmund Talbot, master smith and unassuming historian, finds that all the problems of the world are falling in his lap.

**December 18 - *Mutineer's Moon*** by David Weber. For Lt. Commander Colin MacIntyre, it began as a routine training flight over the Moon. For Dahak, a self-aware Imperial battleship, it began millennia ago when that powerful artificial intelligence underwent a mutiny in the face of the enemy. The mutiny was never resolved-Dahak was forced to maroon not just the mutineers but the entire crew on prehistoric Earth. Dahak has been helplessly waiting as the descendants of the loyal crew regressed while the mutineers maintained control of technology that kept them alive as the millennia passed. But now Dahak's sensors indicate that the enemy that devastated the Imperium so long ago has returned-and Earth is in their path. For the sake of the planet, Dahak must mobilize its defenses. And that it cannot do until the mutineers are put down. So Dahak has picked Colin MacIntyre to be its new captain. Now MacIntyre must mobilize humanity to destroy the mutineers once and for all-or Earth will become a cinder in the path of galactic conquest.

### Book Discussion Groups

Fantasy/Sci-Fi Discussion Group  
4<sup>th</sup> Wed, 7pm  
Borders, Glendale

Path of the Craft Discussion group discusses Neopagan theories inspired by both fiction and non-fiction books about magic, nature, mythology, and spirituality.  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday, 6pm  
Borders, Phoenix Camelback

Sci-Fi Fantasy Book Club  
Aug 9, 7pm  
Changing Hands/Wildflower Bread Company

Manga Bookclub  
1<sup>st</sup> Tuesdays, 7pm  
Borders, Chandler

Manga Bookclub  
Aug 18, 7pm  
Barnes & Noble, Goodyear

Graphic Novel Book Club  
Aug 12, 7:30pm  
Four Peaks Brewery, Tempe

### Author Signings

Sherrilyn Kenyon  
Aug 15, 7pm  
Barnes & Noble, Baseline & Val Vista, Mesa

Stephenie Meyer  
Aug 18, 2pm  
Marcos de Niza High School auditorium, 6000 South Lakeshore Drive in Tempe. Doors open at 1p.m. **COST: \$22 (\$23.48 with tax)**, includes one (1) copy of

*Eclipse* and one (1) admission ticket. Call 480-730-0205 to order your book and ticket

Diana Gabaldon  
August 28, 7pm  
Nov 27

Poisoned Pen bookstore, Scottsdale  
Oct 4  
Changing Hands Bookstore

### Writer Workshop Seminars

Sept 15. Dennis McKiernan, Jennifer Roberson, Jane Lindskold — talking science fiction and fantasy broadly. Miller-Golf Links Branch Library, 9640 E. Golf Links Road, Tucson.

Tim Zahn and John Vornholt — talking media-tie-ins and comics  
Sep 22. Dusenberry-River Branch Library, 5605 E River Road, Tucson.  
Sep 23. Joel D. Valdez Main Library, 101 N. Stone Ave. Tucson.

Oct 13. Lorelei Shannon, Yvonne Navarro, Weston Ochse — talking horror. Valencia Branch Library, 202 W. Valencia Road, Tucson.

### Science Events

Spacefest 2007  
August 17-18-19 at the Mesa Convention Center, sponsored by NOVASPACE and

**THE PLANETARY SOCIETY.** SPACEFEST will cover all facets of space exploration, manned and unmanned programs by way of Astronaut appearances, speakers, space art, exhibits, and vendors.

In 83 BC comet Kiess passed by the Sun, ejecting a cloud of dust particles. On September 1, 2007, Earth will encounter this almost 2000-year-old dust causing a meteor shower known as the Aurigids.

**Phoenix Astronomical Society offers to you, at no cost, a chance to get to know your telescope by daytime. Bring your scope, charts, questions, etc, to Bookman's back room and learn with PAS. An RSVP is required.**

Aug 12, 4:30pm  
Sep 9, 4:30pm  
Bookmans Central  
Challenger Space Center, Peoria  
Stargazing  
Aug 4, 7pm  
Aug 25, 7pm  
Starlab Planetarium  
Aug 4, 1130am and 1230pm

SETI Institute's Weekly Science Radio Program  
Mondays, avail as podcast  
<http://radio.seti.org>

( Continued on page 8 )



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Windermere Real Estate / Central Phoenix

World of Warcraft TCG Tournament  
Sundays, 1pm  
Entry fee \$5 for regular events \$20 for  
Marquee Events  
Samurai Comics, west side store

Hero-Clix-Super Hero Gaming Night!  
Sundays, 6pm  
Bookmans Mesa

Dungeons and Dragons RPG Night!  
Mondays, 6pm  
Bookmans Mesa

Heroclix The Coming Of Galactus  
Tournament  
Aug 4 & Aug 11, noon –2pm  
Drawn to Comics

Heroclix, open play  
Every Tuesday, 4pm-7pm  
Every Saturday, 2pm-5pm  
Drawn to Comics

Name Our SuperHero Contest  
Through end of August  
Vote at Drawn to Comics

Heroclix Tournament  
Every Wednesday, 5:30pm-7pm  
Game Depot

Universal Fighting System Team Champi-  
onship  
Aug 25, 2p-6p  
Game Depot

Warhammer 40,000 Hard Boyz Regional  
Event  
Aug 22, noon-7pm  
Game Depot

Magic Tournament  
Fridays, 6pm, entry fee varies  
Samurai Comics, west side store

Cult Movie Night  
Aug 31<sup>st</sup>, 7p-10p  
Samurai Comics, Phoenix store

Anime party,  
Sep 2<sup>nd</sup>, 11a-6p  
Samurai Comics, west side store

Other Genre-related Events

Psychic Saturday – free psychic readings  
Aug 4, 12:30pm  
Sep 1, 12:30pm  
Oct 6, 12:30pm  
Bookmans - Mesa

Scimitar-Talon is a group of people  
wanting to enjoy recreating portions of  
the middle ages prior to 1600 AD. Classes  
on Medieval Arts and Sciences.  
Aug 4, 1:30-3:30pm  
Bookmans Central

Drum & Dance circle, dancers of all types  
are welcome. This is an ‘exchange of  
energy’ “Cyrclе” so please come & share.  
Hosted by Dave Frankus.  
Aug 1, 7pm  
Oct 3, 7pm  
Bookmans Central

Metaphysical Mondays discussion  
Mondays, 7pm  
Borders, Glendale

Metaphysical Wednesdays discussion  
Wednesdays, 7pm  
Borders, Avondale

Metaphysical Fridays discussion  
Fridays, 7pm  
Borders, Paradise Valley

Check the web sites for confirmation,  
location and more information.  
<http://www.borders.com>  
<http://www.poisonedpen.com>  
<http://www.bookmans.com>  
<http://www.barnesandnoble.com>  
<http://www.changinghands.com>  
<http://browncoats.lagemann.org>  
<http://www.imperialoutpost.com>  
<http://www.azchallenger.org>  
<http://www.samuraicomics.com>  
<http://www.drawntocomics.com>  
Game Depot, 480-966-4727  
<http://www.library.pima.gov>  
<http://www.novaspace.com/Spacefest/>  
<http://www.seti.org>

Conversation ( Continued from page 1 )

‘sample’ it. That is, of course, how  
movies and music are marketed. And  
sampling could be done on a podcast.  
Here is a venue where the writer can read  
his first chapter and the prospective reader  
can sample from these podcasts to decide  
if he wants to read the whole book.  
Authors, Michael maintains, need to do  
more to market *themselves* as entertainers.  
Back to his books – is the *DragonCrown  
War* series finished? Yes; however, there  
was an ancillary story titled “Perchance to  
Dream” and he might do a few more short  
stories in the future. Any new series  
breaking ground in his mind? Oh, yes, he  
answered. One of the fun aspects of this  
job, he explained, was being able to look  
forward to new projects. He finished a  
*Conan* novel last year that is now looking  
for a publisher. He loves writing in a  
young, but ancient world (like Conan) so  
he designed his own and sold a short  
mystery story set in that world to Dana  
Stabenow for an anthology.  
On the how of what Michael does.... How  
did he write? He’s a solitary writer (*isn’t  
everyone?*) and likes to listen to music.  
He’ll pick out certain music to set the  
mood if he’s writing fantasy and a  
different mix if he’s writing science  
fiction. Michael tends to write very  
quickly. Lately he’s been working on a lot  
of screenplays. And those would be? One

is a horror-thriller and another a straight-  
up horror. The horror-thriller one is titled  
“Gone” which won a Grand Prize from  
FADE IN Magazine’s 2006 scriptwriting  
contest. He’s working on the editing for  
that right now.  
And when he writes – what element of the  
story is most important to Michael?  
Characters, most definitely. Characters are  
what a story is all about. The reader lives  
the story though the characters and it is  
through the characters that the reader  
develops an emotional connection.  
Without that connection, you might not  
really engage the reader. We talked a bit  
about plot-driven novels. He  
acknowledges that there is a time and  
place for such novels – younger and less-  
sophisticated readers enjoy plot-driven  
stories. A more sophisticated reader tends  
to be interested in the emotional content  
and cost of life. Some writers, he  
observed, are not sophisticated enough to  
deal with it either. Less experienced  
authors have some trouble with character  
situations and often still deal with it in a  
‘high-school’ fashion.  
Of all his works (and Michael has been  
very prolific), of what is he most proud?  
A tough question, he admitted. He loved  
the Star Wars universe; it was great fun to  
play in and be able to present new ideas to  
fans and to be able to collaborate with  
other writers in that ‘verse. He felt that  
every time a reader had an emotional  
reaction to a character, he was very, very  
proud. And, of course, not every book  
will connect with every reader. And the  
converse is that every book will connect  
with *some* reader.  
And his favorite accomplishment?  
Another real tough question... He  
wouldn’t really answer this one. He talked  
about the connection he felt to his  
characters and the emotional toll it took to  
leave characters he had been with for five  
years. It was sorta sad, he said, to put  
them on the shelf.  
Were there any early influences? Well...  
he was always the kid who wrote longer  
stories in class than anyone else. But,  
maybe it was Edgar Rice Burroughs – the  
man could plot like a genius, according to  
Michael. And, while he felt he could  
never write like ERB, still he could try to  
get as close as possible. His favorite is the  
*Mucker* trilogy. ERB thought of *The  
Mucker* as his best novel.  
What does he read now? Mostly research,  
he admitted; not as much fiction as he’d  
like. If he plans to write a mystery, he’ll  
read mysteries to see what’s on the  
market.  
We didn’t have time for much more, but I  
would like to point out to my readers that  
Michael has a very rich website and you  
should visit it if you want to know the  
man better. New writers can also benefit  
from his guidance on his posts.  
<http://www.michaelastackpole.com/>

# Videophile

**Dork of the Rings  
Ghost Rider - Extended Cut  
Night at the Museum (Two Disc)  
Ghost Story**

**Dork of the Rings  
Richardson Productions LLC.,  
100 min, NR  
DVD \$20**

I first read the Lord of the Rings over  
thirty years ago. I read the spoof Bored of  
the Rings about twenty-five years ago. I  
have been waiting for this kind of video  
ever since. The DVD has all the earmarks  
of a schlock classic, a good story, great  
locations, and unforgettable characters.  
This one also has the weirdest, most  
deranged twist on a classic since  
Spaceballs.  
The story follows Frudo as he is  
tricked into taking the One Ring of  
Circular Credit to Lardor so he can close  
Lord Mauron’s account. He is  
accompanied by Ham, Gimpi the  
(computer geek) Dweeb, Legoblocks the  
(pompodored) Elfis, Randolf the  
(perverted) Wizard, Princess (butch, or is  
that bitch?) Femowen, Arrogant (don’t  
touch the ‘do) the Rangler, and Scrottum  
(don’t ask). He is chased by Nosedrools  
(just like they sound), and Sporks (think  
Orks on a cheap plastic budget).  
Most of the bad guys from the Lord of  
the Rings are represented. But by far the  
most twisted one is Martha the Steward.  
She is the assistant manager at the mall  
but desires to run her own Dorkmart. The  
movie is hilarious and will be shown at  
CopperCon this year.  
This DVD will leave you laughing. Four  
and a half Stars out of Five. - **Bob  
LaPierre**  
**Ghost Rider - Extended Cut  
(Two-Disc Extended Cut)  
Sony, 123 min, Unrated  
DVD \$34.95**  
When we saw *Ghost Rider* in the  
theater my husband really enjoyed it so  
there was no way we could pass up the  
extended version when it came out. Not  
being that much of a Nicholas Cage fan, I  
kept imaging how it would have worked if  
Johnny Depp had played the part as  
originally planned; but, that aside, it was  
an enjoyable 2 hours and the special  
effects were tremendous.  
The basic story follows motorcycle  
riding Johnny Blaze who makes a deal  
with Mephistopheles (wonderfully  
portrayed by Peter Fonda) to save his  
father’s life. As deals with the devil are  
wont to turn out, Johnny’s father dies  
anyway but Johnny still owes his debt and  
thus becomes the Ghost Rider.  
The story is basically the origin story  
( Continued on page 9 )



## Videophile (Continued from page 8)

of the Ghost Rider character, presumably as a first in a series of movies. While the story is somewhat predictable the special effects are fantastic. The extended version has several additional scenes towards the beginning giving us some more character background and, best of all, more of Peter Fonda's Mephistopheles.

Special features include the "Spirit of Vengeance: The Making of Ghost Rider" documentary; "Sin & Salvation" - a featurette on the comic book origins of Ghost Rider; a trio of Ghost Rider animatics; and the usual film commentary with the as well as VFX Supervisor Kevin Mack, and producer Gary Foster. We had the DVD out at open house and the consensus was the extras were fun.

All in all, a worthy addition to our DVD collection. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

### Night at the Museum (Two-Disc Special Edition) 20<sup>th</sup> Century, 105 minutes, PG DVD \$34.98

The premise is simple, at night, after the museum closes, all the exhibits come to life. Enter the new night guard, divorced father Larry Daley (Ben Stiller) who takes the job as a last resort to preserve his relationship with his son. Add in a robbery plot, a mild love interest, the usual father/son need to bond storyline and there you have *Night at the Museum*.

First off, the effects are wonderful, the dinosaur skeleton that plays "fetch" and the Easter Island idol head that chews gum are masterpieces of CGI. That will delight kids and adults alike. Teddy Roosevelt (Robin Williams) with his gruff advice and secret "crush" on Sacajawea (he can see her in her display every night) are a pleasant touch. Dick van Dyke and Mickey Rooney as retiring guards with

more planned for their retirement than sitting on the beach are great casting touches for the adult viewers.

Overall the movie works, though it could likely have done with a few more cuts for a tighter running time. The extras include the obligatory deleted scenes, all of which were a good choice for deletion. The making-of features were OK but nothing to write home about; though watching the actors react to imaginary effects is always amusing.

While not great art, this is a delightful movie that you can watch with the kids and still enjoy yourself. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

### Ghost Story Universal Studios, 111 min, R DVD \$14.99

I saw this film when it was released in 1981 and stumbled across the DVD while surfing amazon.com a few weeks ago. Wondering if it really was a scary as my cousin found it then (dear heavens! 25 years ago) I dumped it in the shopping cart and three days later it appeared on the door step.

The story concerns four old men, members of the Chowder Society, who gather to tell ghost stories. When one man's son is killed in a bizarre accident they start to wonder if the accident has to do with the ghost story they never speak of - the death 50 years earlier if a young woman the four men accidentally killed.

*Ghost Story* is a movie adaptation of the Pete Straub novel, I will admit the novel was spooky as heck. The movie, well, not so much. It is, however, still a fun ghost story good for an evening on the couch with a big bowl of popcorn. -

**Stephanie L Bannon**

## In Memory

William Myge Walker  
Fred Saberhagen

William Myge Walker

On June 9th, William Myge Walker, a long time member of the gaming community, died in his sleep from complications resulting from a long term respiratory ailment. Myge was a roleplayer, a boardgamer, and a mmorpg gamer. He was best known to the Everquest community as Wotann, where he had a reputation for honest game play, courtesy, and generosity. Myge was survived by his mother, Charlotte Walker, his sister, Lisa Walker, his Brother, Jimmie Walker, and his niece, Tara Walker. The funeral services were held on June 16th with family and friends in attendance, in Safford, Arizona. He was laid to rest in the family plot there. He will be missed, he was a fine gamer and a wonderful human being, generous, full of humor, and loving.

Fred Saberhagen  
May 18, 1930 - June 29, 2007

Fred Saberhagen died of cancer on June 29, 2007. He wrote the Berserker series, and Dracula novels. A memorial donation to one of Fred's favorite charities is greatly appreciated by the family Catholic Relief Services - [www.crs.org](http://www.crs.org) Doctors Without Borders - [www.doctorswithoutborders.org](http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org) SFWA Emergency Medical Fund - [www.sfwaweb.org/org/funds.htm](http://www.sfwaweb.org/org/funds.htm) John XXIII Catholic Community - [www.johnxxiiiicc.org](http://www.johnxxiiiicc.org)

## MangaZone

Claymore Vol.1  
Shonen Jump Advanced  
Story and Art by Norihiro Yagi  
VIZ Media LLC, \$7.99, 208 pp

This series is set in a dark Fantasy world where Yoma (Demons) are plentiful and feast on humans. Claymore is an organization made up of women that have given up their souls to become half-Yoma in order to have the strength to fight the Yoma and protect mankind.

We follow the adventures of Clare, a low ranking Claymore, and the boy Raki, who comes to look up to Clare as a



Sister. As they fight the Yoma from village to village, we see how they deal with the human view of the Claymore and why they are feared as much as the Yoma.

This series is great, very bloody and dark. It deals with the inner nature of mankind and the demons that are in all of us. Breathtaking art and a nicely woven story bring Clare and Raki's struggle to life. If you like Berserker you will love Claymore. - **ninjakittyofdoom**

Megatokyo 1  
by Fred Gallagher and Rodney Caston  
Dark Horse Books, \$9.95; 160 pp.

This book is a new trend blend of American Manga and web comics.

This first book contains Piro, an American anime/manga fan, and Largo, a passionate gamer, stuck in Japan. To say the least, there are many cool references to games (Sony & Sega), manga (Chobits), cosplay (Dejiko) and (I kid you not) rent-a-zilla (Godzilla).

This web site comics collection from August 2000 to June 2001 in [www.megatokyo.com](http://www.megatokyo.com) There are commentaries from Piro, Seraphim (Sara), and Dom.

Overall, this is so cool. Recommended to gamers and/or manga/anime lovers in the megatokyo universe - **Jeffrey Lu**



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## Ratatouille Interviews

Today I was given the opportunity to interview Brad Bird, Brad Lewis, Patton Oswalt, and Janeane Garafalo. The interview was given in “round table” style, that is to say there were several interviewers and two interviewees. The first round consisted of the two Brads. Brad Bird (Writer/Director), and Brad Lewis (Producer) talked about the production end of the movie.

They were asked about the choices they made in actors for the voices. Some were in place before Bird came on board but he cast Patton after hearing him on the radio, the part of Anton Ego was written in the hopes of Peter O’Toole voicing the character, never thinking he would actually do it (he did). Two parts were cast in-house simply because when they recorded dialogue tracks for pacing their voices and mannerisms were just what Bird and Lewis envisioned for the part.

They were asked about the size of the production staff involved in the project. There were somewhere between 400 and 500 people. They had the most credits I have seen on any movie, the press release book has 11 ½ pages of credits. Included are almost a ½ page of babies born during the 6 years of production.

The 6 years of production were a driving force in the development of the new animation styles used. The rats required new developments in manipulation (squishiness), facial controls (expressions) and layered skin effects (hair). There were also advances in the way the food was presented (they softened the foods and added more translucency to make the food look more appealing). Brad Bird noted that this was the first time he’d ever seen people leave the theater hungry after seeing an animated movie.

After being asked about the difference between animated and live action movies both indicated that animated has more appeal. They agreed that a major component of the appeal of animated movies is that with live action you look for the closest approximation of what was envisioned. Animated features, however, because of how they are drawn have exactly what the director wants. They suggested that watching the movie multiple times shows things you might miss the first 2 or 3 times.

Later in the afternoon we had another round table with Patton Oswalt (Remy) and Janeane Garafalo (Colette). They talked about the fun and hard work of creating an animated movie for Pixar and the experience of working in the world’s largest daycare for adults. The Pixar Studio building is several acres inside and even larger outside. Animators are encouraged to decorate their own cubicles in whatever format they desire, they have the largest selection of foods in the break

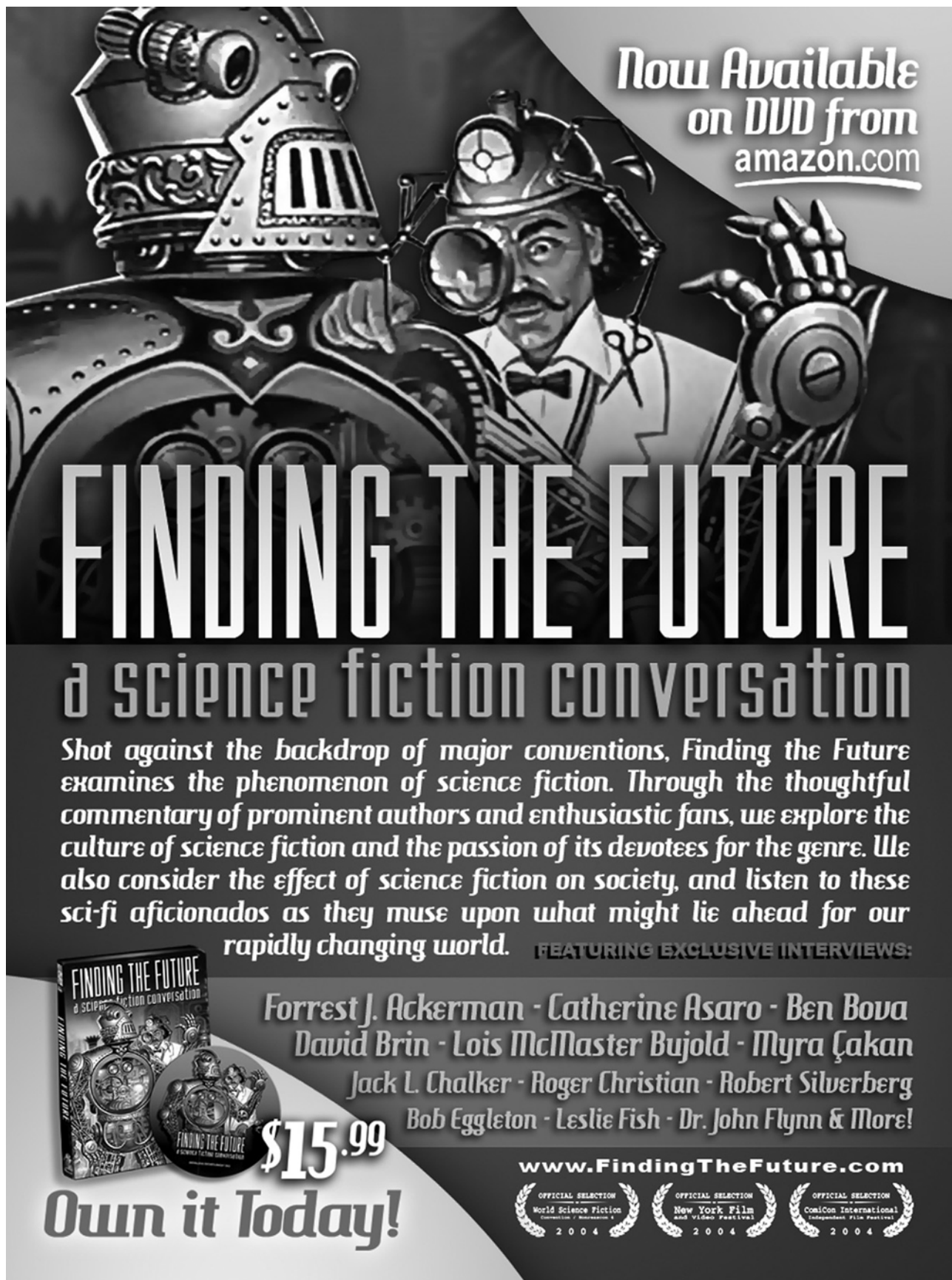
rooms, and are encouraged to learn each other’s jobs. For this project several were sent to take cooking classes and Brad Lewis even worked in the prestigious “French Laundry” restaurant in a total immersion internship in Napa Valley.

Janeane spent months laying down the vocal tracks. She used a French accent she obtained by copying other speakers. During this time she lost her disc with French people speaking English. She next tried to use the speech patterns of a French commentator on CNN International. He was moved to another position. So she finally resorted to repeating one word over and over again to get her mouth around the accent. Patton

quite gleefully noted he didn’t need a French accent.

When asked for their favorite scenes in the movie Patton said that he particularly enjoyed one surprising moment in the latter part of the movie. He refused to elaborate but I think he was talking about the kiss. Janeane enjoyed every scene with Skinner (Ian Holm). His slow sink into madness was one of the best comedic performances ever. I agree, but I believe Colette’s (Janeane) “discussion” with Linguini (Production Designer Lou Romano) about her position in the hierarchy of the kitchen was one of the best examples of her versatility. I believed the speech and think much of the

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# Screening Room

Sunshine  
**Harry Potter & the Order of the Phoenix**  
**Ratatouille**  
**Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer**  
**Shrek the 3rd**

Sunshine  
**Starring: Rose Byrne, Cliff Curtis, Chris Evans, Troy Garity, Cillian Murphy, Hiroyuki Sanada, Benny Wong, Michelle Yeoh**  
**Director: Danny Boyle (28 Days Later)**  
**Runtime: 107 minutes, Rated: R**

Fifty years from now Earth's Sun is dying the Earth is cooling and if this continues life will end. All the countries of the world pool their resources to develop a spaceship capable of reaching the Sun and delivering its payload which is a rather large stellar bomb whose purpose is to reignite the Sun.

Sunshine begins with its crew of eight astronauts on the spaceship Icarus II. Seven years earlier Icarus I was sent out on the same mission but contact was lost several months after the launch. Imagine being on Icarus II and the tremendous pressure of flying in space for months on end with the knowledge that you may be Earth's last hope.

Captain Kaneda (Hiroyuki Sanada) is both Captain of the spaceship and a referee, when needed. Searle (Cliff Curtis) is the ships psychologist and there are times when he sure has his hands full. Mace (Chris Evans – Fantastic 4) is the ships engineer. Corazon (Michelle Yeoh) is the ships botanist whose garden provides both fresh food and oxygen for the crew. Capa (Cillian Murphy) is a physicist and has one of the most important jobs on the ship – blow up the stellar bomb. Cassie (Rose Byrne) is the ships pilot. Harvey (Troy Garity) is the communications officer. And rounding out the crew is Trey (Benny Wong) who is the navigator.

The crew faces life and death situations and has to make decisions that nobody wants to make. Of course, not everything goes quite as smoothly as the crew would like but it's those little bitty problems (well not so little bitty) that bring out their total dedication to the mission.

The actor's performances were outstanding and the interaction between the crew members was wonderful to watch. The film's special effects were nicely done, especially the Sun. Sunshine was a combination of sci-fi and fantasy though 50 years into the future do we really know what to expect.

A personal thought is that I was sorry to assume that the global warming organizations were forced to reprint their

stationary (what the heck, global cooling – yea we can stay in business).

Check out the website <http://www.foxsearchlight.com/sunshine>

The film is rated "R" for some graphic violence and language.

I would recommend the film and rate it a "B+". - **Len Berger**, ConNotations Film Editor

**Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix**  
**Warner Brothers Studios**  
**Running time: 213 minutes**  
**Rated "PG-13"**

When you go to a Harry Potter movie, you simply have to forget the book for the duration, because there is no way any director short of Peter Brooks will do justice to the sheer length required for a faithful adaptation. (To my dying day, I will regret missing Brooks' nine hour stage production of *The Mahabharatta*.) Even the first movie skimmed on details, and that was only for a mere two hundred and some pages. For the films to work, they have to get the characters right, and the visual medium should smoothly and coherently present as much of the story as the writer can cram into the time frame. By that standard, HP #5 does a brilliant job.

Paradoxically, although this is the darkest of all six books to date, in my opinion, it has received the brightest translation. It has much more humor than any of the previous films, excepting perhaps the first, and the sound track plays up to the sense of fun – a sense that was entirely lacking in the book. In Rowling's words, Sirius Black is wretched, and he and Snape carry on a vicious verbal war; in the film, Black, as played by Gary Oldman, is confined, but not crazed by that confinement. He is there for Harry, and his quick winks and wry expressions are masterpieces of non-verbal communication. Harry is tormented by a mental link to Voldemort, and feels abandoned by a Dumbledore who fails to realize that by trying to protect Harry he winds up withholding the very support and information that Harry desperately needs. But in the film, these troubles, and the vindictiveness of the dreadful Miss Umbridge, new instructor for Defense Against the Dark Arts and Inquisitor for the Ministry of Magic, is counter-balanced by friendship, a romance with Cho, and positive feedback from the classmates he trains in secret in practical self-defense against dark magic. Another major difference between book and film is the role of the non-human magical creatures. This is a hugely important element in the book; in the movie, you can scarcely even see the sculpture in the Ministry of Magic that symbolizes the problems of exclusion, arrogance, and enmity that foment between the human and non-human



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groups.

One nice touch: Ginny Weasley has almost no lines in the film, but she is often quietly in the background, watch Harry, reacting to events, and proving her spectacular worth in a fight. Her older brothers are visibly impressed by her magical prowess.

The acting is superb. Imelda Staunton as Miss Umbridge is dream casting; Emma Thompson and Helena Bonham Carter, as Miss Trelawney and the diabolical Bellatrix LeStrange respectively, are respectively comic relief and pure nightmare. (Given that Thompson's marriage to Kenneth Branagh broke up when he had an affair with Carter – which ended badly – it is small wonder that the scene with Branagh's character, Professor Lockheart, was entirely left out.) And I thought the young actress who plays Luna Lovegood was a scene-stealer. Her portrayal was at once dreamy and poignant, without being sentimental. - **Chris Paige**

**Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix**  
**Warner Brothers Studios**  
**Running time: 213 minutes**  
**Rated "PG-13"**

I am an avid fan of the Harry Potter books. I went to this showing hoping to be, as usual, amazed by the spectacle. I wasn't disappointed. There were, as expected, deviations from the book, but the story was followed adequately enough to appease the fans while being short enough to keep viewers from losing interest.

Harry is older and dealing with common teen angst, his first kiss, rebelling against authority, and adjusting to new teachers and classes. This is made much more difficult by the fact that the Ministry of Magic is actively accusing him and Dumbledore of lying about the return of He Who Must Not Be Named. The Daily Prophet writes continuously about the fact that Voldemort has not and will not ever return, calling ridicule upon

Harry and Dumbledore.

Harry is joined by his friends Ron and Hermione, Ginny, Fred, and George Weasley, and Neville Longbottom. He is also joined by Cho Chang, Luna Lovegood, and the members of the D.A. (inaccurately identified as Dumbledore's Army). Harry is convinced to teach them defensive arts because the new Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher refuses to teach magic, instead preferring to teach only theoretical defenses.

The enemies list increases as well, including the Death Eaters, ten new escapees from Azkaban (including Helena Bonham Carter as Bellatrix Lestranger), and the new Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher professor Dolores Umbridge (played to perfection by Imelda Stanton). Umbridge is assigned by the Ministry of Magic to keep the school under observation and to check Dumbledore's power. Both of the latter women play significant parts and cause the most destruction possible. Anyone who has read the books knows what parts they play, anything more would be spoilers.

Harry's growth this year is typical of most teenagers but somehow more poignant by being coupled with his growth as a teacher of the dark arts. I highly recommend this movie. - **Bob LaPierre**

**Ratatouille**  
**Disney/Pixar**  
**Running time: 110 minutes, Rated G**  
**Opened June 29, 2007**

I went to this movie thinking to see a slapstick tour de farce, a children's cartoon, something to waste a couple of hours. I was both right and wrong. It was heavy on the slapstick, and had very lovable characters, but it was also one of the best buddy movies I have ever seen.

First the animation was first rate. I easily believed the characters and locations were animations of real people and places. It was done so seamlessly that the action flowed better than many live action pieces. And the food actually

( Continued on page 13 )

Volume 17 Issue 4

## Screening (Continued from page 12)

looked appetizing. I was watching the cooking and following many of the recipes as though there were real food being cooked on the screen

Second the voices were spot on perfect. You could believe Patton Oswalt was Remy the rat, Janeane was so perfect in her role I called her Colette when introduced for my interview. Linguini was not only voiced by but also influenced by Lou Romano, a production designer from “The Incredibles”. Brad Garret lent his incredibly deep voice for Auguste Gusteau, Remy’s inspiration and a world class chef.

Third the story was well written and had an air of believability about it. I found the writing made the characters real, even the rats.

So on to the movie itself. Remy wants what many of us want, a nice home, family, and a good job. His ideal job would be as a chef. One small thing stands in his way. Remy is a rat, aka *Rattus rattus*. He has been reading a cookbook by Gusteau titled “Anyone can Cook”. He has a very sensitive nose and is used by his father, Django, voiced by Brian Dennehy, to sniff the food they forage for poison.

During an emergency evacuation Remy is separated from his family and finds himself inside of Gusteau’s restaurant. Gusteau’s ghost assists him and serves as a Jiminy Cricket type conscience. Remy soon is caught in the kitchen and Linguini is ordered to drown him. One thing leads to another and soon they are friends. Remy discovers a way to operate Linguini like a puppet and they cook together wonderfully.

Ian Holm voices the manager/chef of the restaurant Skinner. Skinner keeps catching glimpses of Remy and slowly seems to lose his mind. Holm plays him much like Inspector Dreyfus from the Pink Panther movies, he knows something is wrong but he doesn’t know quite what.

There is betrayal, suspicion, love, and most fearsome, a food critic voiced by star of stage and screen Peter O’Toole. I have already seen it twice and will buy the DVD as soon as it is available. Oh yes, it kept the children in the audience entranced and there was only a mild amount of cartoon violence. I give it 5 stars out of 5 and recommend seeing it several times, you see more things you missed the first time. - **Bob LaPierre**

### Rats! I’m Hungry for More: A “Ratatouille” Review

It only takes a (Brad) Bird’s view to enjoy a story of a rat named Remy with a gift of smell and a heart of trying new flavors became the best chef in Paris. With Pixar at his side, Brad made this rat’s tale more amazing not only how realistic the rats move, the French outside

atmosphere in Paris, but also the details of fine cooking.

The movie is given a thumbs up. Even though this is rated G and there might be a “scary” scene with dead rats at a store, “Ratatouille” is enjoyable. Highly recommended. - **Jeffrey Lu**

### Fantastic 4: Rise of the Silver Surfer Starring: Ioan Gruffudd, Jessica Alba, Michael Chiklis. Chris Evans, Julian McMahon

Director: Tim Story  
Running Time: 92 minutes  
Rated: PG

20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, Marvel  
Entertainment  
Release Date: June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007

This movie suffers from having way too much going on. I like the comic and am slightly disappointed at the extreme deviation from the comic books. I think that if they had just stuck to the story line involving the wedding of Reed (Ioan Gruffudd) and Sue (Jessica Alba) and the Silver Surfer coming to Earth it would have been good, but they had to bring Doom in and complicate the plot too much.

The story, as such, was typical comic book fare. Alien menace (Surfer) threatens Earth, disturbs super heroes’ wedding (Reed and Sue), and causes unusual problems with a hero’s powers (Johnny Storm). The movie would have been complete with just that. The inclusion of Doom served only to lengthen the movie and further Julian McMahon’s career. Everything about Doom’s inclusion seemed too contrived and the acting with McMahon was stilted and forced.

I have always loved the Surfer and think his origin in the comics stands as one of the most misunderstood characters who, while trying to destroy Earth, is still seen as remarkably noble. Laurence Fishburne has the perfect voice and impeccable timing with his lines.

The problem with Johnny’s powers was used as remarkable comedy. Simply put, the Surfer scrambled his molecules causing him to involuntarily switch powers with whoever he touches, resulting in the now familiar scene with a naked Sue in public. As seen from the PG rating there is nothing shown it is just implied.

I found it to be cluttered and clunky but still entertaining. Three and a half stars. - **Bob LaPierre**

### Shrek the 3<sup>rd</sup>

Starring: Mike Myers, Cameron Diaz,  
Eddie Murphy, Antonio Banderas,  
Rupert Everett

Director: Chris Miller, Raman Hui  
Running Time: 93 minutes  
Rated: PG

Release Date: May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2007

The title of Shrek 3 is a nice touch in and of itself, with its connotations of royalty and lineage; both of these are central issues in the new storyline. To begin with, the question of succession: who will be ruler of Far Far Away upon the death of Fiona’s father? And will there ever be any ogre babies to keep Donkey and Dragon’s little airborne firebreathers company?

The movie begins with Shrek and Fiona attempting to perform royal duties while her father is ill – “just until he recovers,” Fiona assures Shrek. Soon, they’ll be back in the swamp. “Just the two of us,” Shrek sighs happily at the thought of it, and prepares to snuggle down for the night after a day of humiliating disasters. (Kids will love this part, as oversize and awkward Shrek and Fiona wreak well-intentioned havoc on the court.) Fiona’s question, “What if there were more than the two of us?” is the first clue that life and numbers in the swamp are about to change. Shrek has to have this spelled out for him, and, with Freudian defense mechanism Denial in full operation, Shrek assures Fiona that there will be time for kids later – MUCH later. But the look of Fiona’s face says otherwise. Now Fiona has a dilemma: to tell, or not to tell? And if so, how? When?

Fiona’s father does not get better, however. His passing has the Monty Python touch – which is what you should expect with both John Cleese and Eric Idle on board, and the Shrek tradition of dark humor. If you loved the exploding songbird of the first film, and if you are a fan of classic hard rock, this is your movie, baby. A word here about the soundtrack: this one is edgier than the first two. Instead of “Alleluia” and Smashmouth we get “Live and Let Die” and Led Zeppelin. I thought both selections were brilliantly interpolated, but I suspect that this is not going to be the soundtrack of choice for children.

Back to the plotline: Before – there is no other word for it – croaking – Fiona’s frog father charges Shrek to either be king after him, or find a good replacement. Maybe young Arthur, a distant relative of some unspecified sort, would do. Since all the king’s relatives are amphibious, Arthur is presumably a relation of Queen Lily, but she is oddly silent throughout these discussions. Still, Shrek has enough to go on. Desperate to find somebody, *anybody*, who has a claim to the throne legitimate enough to release him back to

his beloved swamp, he sets out with Donkey and Puss to find a king for Far Far Away. Our three stalwart companions leave all the womenfolk behind; Puss’s farewell to the feline population is hilarious. But just as they are sailing away, Fiona calls out to Shrek to tell him the news: she is pregnant; Shrek is about to become a father. Shrek puts a good face on it for Fiona’s sake, bless his heart, but now he starts having nightmares. Being a father is the one prospect more terrifying than being a king. Donkey tries to reassure Shrek, and talks about how he loves his own brood, but Shrek replies he doesn’t know how to do fatherhood, he had no positive role model. “My dad tried to *eat* me!” he explains. (By the way, by my count, Donkey’s progeny now numbers five, down from the original six, so Shrek’s father may not have been the only parent with magnesium deficiency. Or maybe I missed one in the mix.)

Meanwhile, the Kingdom of FFA is facing a challenge more grave than the presence of two genial ogres in the throne room. Prince Charming, sulky as ever and with as much sense of entitlement, has been acting out his fantasies on stages to unappreciative audiences, who throw tomatoes. But a visit to the Poisoned Apple yields better fruit. After overcoming the initial hostility of the bar’s denizens – Charming may not have smarts or a conscience, but he does have charisma and ersatz leadership – Charming persuades the villains of story to join him in an assault on the Kingdom for a hostile takeover.

So while Shrek, Puss and Donkey have to find Arthur and bring him to his new home and throne, Fiona, Queen Lily, and an assortment of princesses have to fend off Prince Charming, the wicked trees and witches, Hook, and others. Merlin shows up (this is the Eric Idle role) and young Arthur demonstrates a talent for persuasiveness that was entirely lost on his chronological peers. Clearly, Arthur will do better with peers of the realm, if he can survive Charming’s “No Heir Left Behind” policy, and if Fiona and her cadre can survive treachery and escape prison.

This movie is much better than some jaded, dyspeptic critics would have you believe. Snow White’s warcry is the opening shriek of “Immigrant Song,” a classic fatherhood nightmare sequence, and a well-scripted confrontation between Arthur, Prince Charming, and his henchmen. And of course, the graphics are phenomenal. So enjoy the film. - **Chris Paige**



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### An American in Canada Part 6: Halifax Heritage- The Titanic Connection

by Jeffrey Lu

Stranger than fiction. Strange that the  
truth is out there but in Halifax?

That's a Titanic question.

Okay, let me explain. The first  
rescuers to the infamous sinking Titanic

were from Halifax, Nova Scotia. What is  
remarkable is there are three cemeteries.  
One of them has two stories about two  
grave sites- a child's resting place and one  
from the James Cameron's "Titanic."

First, there was plastic toys scattered  
around one site. From the guide, he  
mentioned that everyday there are some  
type of toys guarding this plot of land. He  
did not know who but mentioned there  
still have a warehouse nearby that hold

these gifts in remembrance.

The story was the day after the ship's  
demise. Fishermen and longshoremen  
from Halifax were not exactly friendly in  
those days. But one day, a blond child  
was washed ashore. A fisherman held the  
dead child and wept. Passing by, a  
longshoreman stopped to look at the  
perfect formed angel. He asked to hold  
the baby. The fisherman nodded and gave  
him the body. There was a truce and  
alliance that day. Both the fisherman and

the longshoreman agreed to join forces to  
pay for funereal costs. Other fishermen  
and longshoremen followed suit in  
helping the one life tragedy into a club.  
They held dinners and talk about "their"  
kid. Teddy bears, balls, and many toys  
still graced the grounds of this child.  
Even now.

In contrast, a grave site since 1997 that  
now is competing with the warehouse of  
child's toys: daily flowers. The headstone  
shows a name: Jack. The male tour guide  
told me that this Jack was actually a guy  
who worked shoveling coal into the  
Titanic's furnace. He died from the boiler  
room. Since the movie, ladies still bring  
fauna, daily, to Jack's grave. From the  
guide, he mentions women still thinks that  
actor Leonardo De Caprio lies there.

Strange but sadly true.

Coming Soon in An American in Canada  
Part 7: Prince Rupert Crab Surprise Or  
Sticks of Frozen Minnows Story

## Musical Notes

by Tom Tuerff

Nancy Freeman — "Stardust County"  
Kaleidophone Records KP-0707

Back in 1996, Nancy Freeman wrote a  
song called *Stardust County Line*. It was a  
country-flavored ballad about star-crossed  
lovers named Nigel and Nimue, who are  
separated by circumstance by the end of  
the song.

That was pretty much it until people  
started asking Nancy, "Well? What  
happens next?"

One song led to another, and in a  
couple years' time, Nancy had an entire  
22-song folk opera written. After a  
handful of performances over the past  
seven years or so, the entire, sprawling  
saga of *Stardust County* has arrived on a  
deluxe, 2-CD set, with visual goodies to  
boot.

The storyline of this "futuristic  
werewolf western" (stick with me here, it  
really, really works) follows our two  
heroes as they attempt to outwit a string of  
nefarious characters, who for entirely  
different reasons, would like to see both  
Nigel and Nimue as the next residents of  
Boot Hill.

Will they survive? Will they ever see  
each other again? Will Nigel ever shake  
the werewolf thing? Well, yeah, of course,  
but the fun is in the gettin' there!

I don't think I'm exaggerating when I  
say that *Stardust County* may be the most  
ambitious filk project ever undertaken by  
anybody. What makes me very happy to  
report is that the whole thing holds  
together beautifully.

You only have to know Nancy  
Freeman about five minutes to discover  
that she's a very gifted songwriter. That

(Continued on page 15)



she is able to keep the song quality at a superior level throughout the entire production is truly admirable.

In order to pull it off, she has surrounded herself with some of the more capable talents in filk and folk, starting with producer and guitarist Jeff Bohnhoff. By changing styles and instrumentation, Bohnhoff helps the songs to flow together amazingly well. Highlights include “Rosa Fe” (sung by Maya Bohnhoff, Jeff’s wife), the menacingly scary introduction to the saga’s main villain; “Thunder-Grey Horse” where Nimue (Freeman) explains an awful lot about her character; “Envy the Man” featuring a great vocal from Canadian folk singer Dave Clement; and “Pieces” a personal favorite of mine and a song that’s positively Dylanesque in its composition - and I mean that in a good way.

Other characters are played by a virtual who’s who of West Coast filkers: Lon Austin (whose fine storytelling helps fill in the gaps between songs), Larry Warner, Michelle Dockrey, Forrest and Jennifer Ashley, Tony Fabris and, um, yours truly.

(I appear on two cuts on this CD in the part of “Paul,” Nimue’s ex-boyfriend. And while I will wonder till the day I die why Nancy didn’t find a better singer, I’m honored to be included!)

Now, as if the music wasn’t enough, the second CD of the set is specially enhanced with all kinds of goodies, including a *Stardust County* map, libretto and links to pages on all of the performers.

I’m thinking that if you simply like a good fantasy story, you’re going to like *Stardust County* whether you’re a filk fan or not. And like I said, you’re not likely to come across another project like this for a while.

Hell, music aside, this thing deserves a Pegasus Award for sheer gumption. Nancy’s setting a precedent here, and I wonder if there’s anybody out there even willing to try and match it. Wander into *Stardust County* and see if you don’t agree.

*Tom Tuerff has two CDs out of his own: “Something to Sell at My Gigs” and “But Wait - There’s More!” His recent accomplishments include getting up this morning, as well as airplay on Dr. Demento, NPR’s “Midnight Special,” Radio Free Phoenix and even a rockabilly-themed radio show. Go figure. He recently played a gig buck naked. No, really. Check him out at [www.tomtuerff.com](http://www.tomtuerff.com) or at [www.myspace.com/tomtuerffmusic](http://www.myspace.com/tomtuerffmusic). You can also download his albums at iTunes.com.*

## **The Chaotic Afternoon and Unruly Evening Hanging with Harlan Ellison: Part 2 of 2** **By Shane Shellenbarger**

Correction: The photo used in Part 1 should have been credited to Rick Wyatt ©2007

The clock read 6:15 p.m. and Harlan decided it was time to leave Pink’s Hot Dogs and head to the Writer’s Guild of America Theater for the premier of Erik Nelson’s documentary, *Dreams with Sharp Teeth: a film about Harlan Ellison*. The crowd dispersed to various vehicles and Rick Wyatt (HarlanEllison.Com) rode with me.

The very organized Steve Barber had handed out maps and even so, Rick and I found our way to the parking garage of the theater. Soon, David Loftus and the Richmonds arrived, little knowing that they would be helping Rick and me to schlep the many boxes of books into the theater for the autograph session after the event. I lead the parade of pack mules across the lobby, located Susan Ellison, and asked her where she was setting up. Susan indicated a spot and we all laid our burdens down. After I came out of the event in the theater, I noticed that everything had been moved, presumably to allow more room for the attendees to belly up to the bar. I located some of the people from Pink’s, schmoozed a bit, and then headed into the theater to grab a seat.

I spotted the Richmonds, and accepted Andrea’s kind invitation to join them in the “Friend’s of Harlan Ellison” row. Sitting down, I glanced to my left, noticing a woman five seats away, her eyes narrowing, counting the seats. After deciding I was not sitting on one of her imaginary friends, the woman turned her attention elsewhere. However, her attention returned each time someone stopped to talk to Tim, or Andrea, or Alexia and when the inevitable time came when someone stopped and raised a finger indicating the empty seats between myself and the woman, she called out, “They’re saved!” I shrugged and, dejected, the seat inquirer shambled off. This event seems to repeat itself endlessly. It was just as the lights were going down that the woman’s imaginary friends popped into reality and took their places. I wonder if they ever knew of the valiant battle waged by their friend to safeguard their seats.

I watched the documentary and a series of emotions washed over me. I felt the chagrin I’d felt when I’d been with Harlan and he’d pointed out to someone

that they’d just littered, it was a bad thing, and they shouldn’t do it again. I felt the heart-in-my-throat feeling about my father as I viewed a much older Harlan watching a film-to-tape transfer of a much younger



Harlan as his father put his hand on the boy’s shoulder. I felt a smirk break into a grin as Susan Ellison told the tale of Harlan locking her out of their home, while she was sans clothes. I felt myself smiling as Neil Gaiman, Peter David, Dan Simmons, the irrepressible Robin Williams, and other friends shared their thoughts and feelings on what Ron Moore had called, “...the small parade that is Harlan Ellison.” After watching the documentary I whole-heartedly agree with screenwriter, Josh Olson (*A History of Violence*), when he said to Harlan, “It’s as close to the experience of hanging out with you as I can imagine on film.”

Following the film, Olson attempted to interview Ellison, but it was mostly a lost cause as Ellison spotted old friends in the audience he wanted to talk to, he was

bribed into singing Shel Silverstein’s *You Treat Me Like A D-O-G*, he had stories he wanted to tell which were only tangentially related to the questions posed by Olson, most of which seemed to cause only a slight consternation on the part of Olson and all of which delighted the audience.

The crowd moved to a reception area in the lobby that included a dessert buffet, a no-host bar, and Harlan’s autograph table. I mingled, setting up a late breakfast with the Webderland Irregulars, speaking with Josh Olson, singing a bit of the Mickey Mouse Club theme with Len Wein (*Swamp Thing*), and chatting with Steven Barnes (*Great Sky Woman*). Eventually the crowd dispersed and at 1:00 A.M., the W.G.T. closed its doors and the only ones remaining on the sidewalk were the Ellisons, the Richmonds, Len Wein, Christine Valada, Rick Wyatt, and myself. When the crew and passengers of the S.S. Grey Ghost went down with the ship (see part 1 of this article), six people needed transportation. Wein and Valada were transporting the Ellisons, so I loaded Wyatt and the Richmonds into my Saturn Vue, leaving Beverly Hills behind and headed to Sherman Oaks.

The trip was definitely a group effort, as I’d never been to Ellison Wonderland at night, nor from the South. We made it to the motel where they were staying, but it was only to drop off Wyatt. The Richmonds’ rented car was parked in front of the Ellisons’ home. We pressed on.

Stately Ellison Manor is near the top of a hill, bordering watershed land, with tortuous and winding roads. After nearly twenty minutes of driving back and forth up hairpin turns, we were just around the corner from the house when we spotted it: a deer in a hedge. We looked at the deer, the deer looked at us and then bounded into a lawn, over some shrubbery, and it was gone. I recovered, drove to the Ellisons', said my goodbyes, and followed the Richmonds' car back down the hill, past their motel, on to Laurel Canyon, and eventually back to my hotel and bed.

Four hours of sleep and a half hour of tossing-and-turning later, I gave up and got ready for the day. We'd had a great day with perfect weather, but that was yesterday and today it was raining. I called the Original Pantry Café (where I had arranged to meet the Webderlanders) and got a vague idea of its location from the very busy person who answered the phone. As I was checking out of the Best Western Beverly Pavilion, I asked the reception clerk if she knew where the Pantry Café was located. She looked it up and printed out a map. I was on my way.

I had given myself plenty of time which was fortunate as I had passed the Pantry without knowing it, went down a one-way street that forced you back onto the freeway, ended up parking in a mall a couple of blocks from the Pantry, and getting lost in the rain while on foot. I made it to the Original Pantry Café at 9:55 A.M., bypassed the line of people snaking out the door and down the sidewalk, and checked inside: no Webderlanders. I went back outside, got in line, and waited. The previous night Keith Cramer had asked for my cell number, but I'd forgotten the charger and didn't turn on the phone unless I was making a call. Of course, if I'd gotten his number I could have called and found out that weather and traffic had conspired to delay the group, but I didn't so I left the Original Pantry Café, alone and hungry on a solo journey.

The ride from L.A. to Phoenix was mostly uneventful, with one exception: gasoline. I hadn't been too concerned about fueling up the Vue, so I passed Banning, Palm Springs, Indio, thinking I could make it to Blythe. Nope. So when I saw the "Desert Center: Gas Ahead" sign, I exited I-10, went north on Desert Center Rice Road, spotted the station, and pulled in. The attendant exited the office, unlocked the old gas pump, flipped the crank, and stood by while I pumped gas. I was almost hypnotized as I watched the numbers blur by, the sound coming from the pump reminding me of a one-armed bandit. I released the pump trigger, looked at the cost, and my jaw dropped: \$10.57. I looked at the price-per-gallon and it read \$4.39. Remember, this was on April 20<sup>th</sup> when the average gas price was \$2.97. I did some rough calculations, pulled the

trigger until I was at \$12.23, paid the attendant and headed for Blythe and the relatively cheaper gas of \$3.38 per gallon.

Despite some minor issues, I had a great time, met some new people, reestablished some friendships, and saw a great film. What more could I ask for?

[http://www.creatvdiff.com/harlan\\_ellison.php](http://www.creatvdiff.com/harlan_ellison.php) (Warning: Music starts immediately)  
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1018887/>  
<http://mysite.verizon.net/res7n0zi/id30.html>  
<http://mysite.verizon.net/res7n0zi/id34.html>  
<http://www.aintitcool.com/node/32340>  
<http://www.documentaryfilms.net/index.php/dreams-with-sharp-teeth/>  
<http://www.filmthreat.com/index.php?section=features&Id=1949>  
<http://local.yahoo.com/details?id=24508916>  
<http://www.roadtripamerica.com/eats/pantry.htm>  
<http://abc.go.com/specials/mastersofscifi.html>  
<http://harlanellison.com/heboard/archive/unca20070528.htm>  
<http://0wanderingattention.blogspot.com>

## PreCon News

TusCon 34 is fast approaching: the dates this year are 11/09 – 11/11: the second weekend of November, at InnSuites Hotel, (520-622-3000) 475 N. Granada. TWO IMPORTANT WARNINGS: a sizeable chunk of I-10 will be inaccessible. and un-exitable, at this time, so please ask the hotel for best directions to actually find it; also, the discount convention rate closes on October 9<sup>th</sup>, so get your call in before then, and the magic words are "TusCon Science Fiction Convention."

Big news: the short story writing contests. Check out the regs at the TusCon 34 web page link; here is a short summary: speculative fiction, 5000 words or less, no prior professional publications, multiple submissions allowed, formal hardcopy double-spaced manuscripts ONLY, with cover letter and identifying headers on each page. There is a separate contest for teens of ages 13-17 and another for adults, with 3 awards per age group. You can email questions to [frgross@earthlink.net](mailto:frgross@earthlink.net).

Submissions must be sent to Liz Danforth  
 Adult Coordinator's Office  
 Joel D. Valdez Main Library  
 Pima County Public Library  
 101 N. Stone Ave  
 Tucson, AZ 85701

And she needs then in hand by October 15<sup>th</sup>, so allow for snail mail delivery time frames. Yes, you can hand deliver. This is a great opportunity to get new voices and visions recognized and introduced to the world, so let those creative juices flow.

And the guest of honor is...John Ringo! You know, the guy who writes (or co-authors) the *funny* stories for the Honor Harrington **Worlds of Honor** anthologies. Ringo writes great military sci-fi, so with that draw, and good publicity, we may get some guys from the nearby bases to show up.

Yes, there will be filking. (With any luck, Emma Bull will be there. With even more luck, she and Will Shetterly will have invited Steven Brust down for the weekend.)

Yes, the gamers are the best organized section of attendees so far, with a detailed map and schedule of events already posted. Go, gamers! And YES!!!! A full breakfast is included in the price of your room.

TusCon is a small convention, usually, but that can work to your advantage. Smaller crowds means more time to talk with guests, and fewer rivals to bid up the cost of that artwork or book or trinket you simply HAVE to get at auction. Hope to see you there. – **Chris Paige**

## Jane Yolen for Kids – Really!

If you need a descriptive inoculation for the misery, woes, bad choices and dire consequences of life, a book by Jane Yolen is usually a good choice, right up there with A. E. Houseman's **A Shropshire Lad**.

Not an optimist, our Jane, and humor is conspicuous by its absence. In any anthology I've ever picked up, her contribution is a well-penned downer. Extraordinarily gorgeous illustrations, by **Dennis Nolan** and **Jane Dyer** respectively, have seduced me into reading **Dove Isabeau** and **The Girl in the Golden Bower**, and the former is firmly placed in one of my shelves of all time favorites, even though Dove Isabeau, in dragon form, eats most of her suitors.

And then she goes and writes the most delightful, charming, appealing, and *funny* series of books for small children: **How Do Dinosaurs ...?** There are currently eight books to find and read to your dinosaurophiles, as they snuggle up against you for story time. The big picture books are titled **...Say Goodnight?** **...Get Well Soon?** **...Eat Their Food?** and **...Go to School?**; The board book titles are **...Count to Ten?** **...Learn their Colors?** and **...Clean Their Rooms?** There is also **How Do Dinosaurs Play with Their Friends?** These wonderful books are all lessons in good manners. The question is posed, and then we see both sets of behaviors: the typical, and the greatly to be desired.

Jane Yolen's partner perpetrator of delights is **Mark Teague**; his dinosaurs are masterpieces of anatomically intrigu-

ing and colorful self-expressiveness that children love to examine. I don't know if his colorations are realistic or accurate, but they are much nicer than the drab greys and browns I see in most picture books.

The names of all the guest-staring dinosaurs are considerably provided, and 3 year olds who cannot pronounce their own name clearly will be able to rattle off the polysyllabic names of extinct sauro-pods.

I'm just disappointed that the name on the doctor's door, **In How Do Dinosaurs Get Well Soon?** isn't J. Robinson. Maybe "Dr. Blatsky" is a tribute I simply don't recognize. – **Chris Paige**

## Gamer's Corner

**Tactica Imperialis**  
**A History of the Later Imperial**  
**Crusades**  
**Background Supplement**  
**Dan Abnett and Andy Hoare**  
**\$29.99, Black Library Publishing, 96**  
**pages**

This volume is an historical view of the tactics and weapons used to win key battles during the 41<sup>st</sup> millennium. The maps and diagrams are as realistic as they would be in any history book. I was pleased that they not only show what battles were fought but how they were won and why they were important to the overall strategy of High Command.

The commentaries and conclusions presented at the end of each war are helpful in showing what the Empire wants you to learn from them. I think this will enable those who direct Empirical troops to remember the proud history and have their commands show deference by proudly flying the colors of their forebears.

Good background, wonderful maps and historical documents, I give it 4 out of 5 stars. - **Bob LaPierre**

**The Art of Warhammer**  
**Art Book**  
**Compiled by Marc Gascione**  
**and Nick Kyme**  
**\$50.00, Black Library Publishing,**  
**224 pages**

This volume is a compilation of art from the history of Warhammer. There are pictures from the various editions, White Wolf magazine, and many of the supplements. There are also a few that never made it into publication until now. All the pictures have the name of the piece, the name of the artist, the publication it was in, and the year published. Now, while it is all Warhammer, there are some parts with specific content, the section on maps



## Gamers (Continued from page 16)

includes a beautiful 2-page spread with the whole world.

Some of the pictures are of individual heroes, some of huge battles, but my favorites are of the various novel covers. I like that the art is presented in its original printing type (IE: B&W or Color). I can't abide having colorized B&W or greyscale color. I've wondered when other companies would do something like this. The Art of the Dragon was beautiful and now I have another gorgeous art book for my shelves. Hey Steve! How about the Art of Munchkin?

5 out of 5 stars. - **Bob LaPierre**

**Night's Dark Masters**  
**A Guide to Vampires**  
**\$34.99, Black Library Publishing,**  
**144 pages**

This is the ultimate resource for vampires, both for gamemasters and for players. Yes, I said players. The section on vampires as players is as thorough as anything for normal humans. I think that the careers offered for use in vampire (or other undead) heavy campaigns are among the best of the specialized careers. The beginning chapters have great myths and legends, incredible texts, and even (shhh) the truth!

The middle chapters describe the physical and mental abilities, the types of vampires, and some of the best known legendary blood suckers.

The spells and items are interesting but not always practical. However; the blood feats for vampires make me think heavily about playing one. The random attributes for undead are very cool and add color and verisimilitude to the disgusting creatures.

Overall I liked it. 4 stars out of 5 - **Bob LaPierre**

**Warhammer: A Murder in Maridenburg**  
**by David Bishop**  
**A Black Library Publication, \$7.99; 413 pp.**

The book is about a "promoted" police person named Kurt Schnell. He is to re-open a watch station that had been shut down due to a "haunted" past of the last leader of that place. Kurt will also have to deal with the Maridenburg's underground. And, an army of something evil is coming. If that is not enough, there is a murder of an elf in a city filled with majority of humans. The elfish authorities are ticked off and demanded an investigation from Kurt. If the elders are not happy, hell was coming to Maridenburg through sword and arrows.

Enjoyable. Loved the suspense as Kurt tried and did his best in his new command. See how all these problems strangely fit together.

Highly recommended to Warhammer fans and dark fantasy readers - **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer: Fell Cargo**  
**by Dan Abnett**  
**A Black Library Publication, \$7.99;**  
**254 pp.**

Pirate Captain Luka Silvaro and his allies are in a mission to destroy the hated Butcher Ship. They not only have to face

zombies, vampires, sea monsters, but also dark magic from the Butcher Ship!

Loved it. Good pirate story.

Recommended for Warhammer fans, dark pirate fans, and dark fantasy readers - **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000: Duty Calls**  
**by Sandy Mitchell**  
**A Black Library Publication, \$7.99;**  
**415 pp.**

Continuing adventure of a reluctant hero, Commissar Ciaphas Cain, lands in Periremunda with the usual politics (i.e. backstabbing) and the joy of fighting a chaos cult, aliens, and other dark beings in order to find a certain artifact. Additional to the mix is an Inquisition "welcome"...

This is the fifth book in the series.

Enjoyable. Highly recommended for humor and dark sci-fi readers. - **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000: The Founding**  
**by Dan Abnett**  
**A Black Library Publication, \$11.99;**  
**767 pp.**

This is the beginning of a battle group called Gaunt's Ghosts. Not only these people are fighters but also they have a special ability to be invisible. These are the tales of how these fighting men became literally "ghosts."

This omnibus contains the first three novels- First and Only, Ghostmaker, and

Necropolis. Also, this has a short story named, "In Remembrance."

Excellent. Explains the beginning of a future crusade war in the Sabbat system. Look forward for the next series. Thumbs-up for dark sci-fi readers. - **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000: Ravenor**  
**by Dan Abnett**  
**A Black Library Publication, \$7.99;**  
**412 pp.**

Inquisitor Gideon Ravenor and his team are finding the strange substance named *flect* distributed illegally to different worlds. They will find out how deep these alien "drugs" are "protected."

(Continued on page 18)

# FiestaCon

(Westercon 62)

**July 2-6, 2009**

**Tempe Mission Palms Hotel, Tempe, Arizona**

**[www.fiestacon.org](http://www.fiestacon.org)**

**The Phoenix in 2009 Westercon bid sponsored by Leprecon, inc. won the site selection vote at Westercon 60 and will be known as FiestaCon! We would like to thank all of you who supported us over the last couple of years and look forward to putting on a dynamite Westercon for everyone. If you pre-supported and/or voted for our bid, you do have credit towards a membership.**

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**Author Alan Dean Foster**

**Editor Stanley Schmidt**

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**Toastmasters Patrick and Teresa Nielsen Hayden**

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## Gamers (Continued from page 17)

Interesting. Didn't expect the sealed remains of Ravenor be a golden chair after the infamous parade incident. He used his mind to contact/help others.

Entertaining. Recommended for Warhammer 40,000 and dark fantasy readers - **Jeffrey Lu**

### **Warhammer 40,000: Ravenor Returned** by Dan Abnett A Black Library Publication, \$7.99; 414 pp.

Ravenor and his team are undercover. They are finding more problems in dealing with a cult-controlled Imperial government. Also, another cult predicted an evil power "Slyte" in Ravenor's team - a young boy assistant, Zeal.

This is the second installment.

Twists and turns. Nice surprises. Enjoyed the book immensely! Recommended to dark sci-fi fans and Warhammer 40,000 readers. - **Jeffrey Lu**

## In Our Book

### **Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows** by J.K. Rowling Scholastic, 759 pps. \$34.99

#### **WARNING! Contains Spoilers!**

The seventh and final installment of the Harry Potter saga provides explanations, revelations, showdowns and resolutions; contrary to Rowling's assertions, however, it does leave room for more stories. Not everybody dies.

At the conclusion of the sixth book, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, Albus Dumbledore, before he is killed by Severus Snape, charges Harry to find and destroy all of Voldemort's Horcruxes - magical objects in which He Who Must Not Be Named has stored part of his living essence, so that as long as even one is intact, he cannot be killed.

The only way to destroy Voldemort is to first destroy these artifacts. Dumbledore also told Harry not to try this alone - Ron and Hermione should be told, but no one else. This underscores a fundamental difference between Voldemort and Harry we have seen all along: Voldemort has servants; Harry has allies. But he loses two of them very quickly. When Harry turns 17, the spell of family protection expires, and Voldemort sends his followers to kill Harry at the Dursley's home. Harry and the other members of the Order of the Phoenix take steps to ensure the safety of the Dursleys, but moving Harry himself to a safe haven is dangerous business, and Death Eaters don't bother with spells like *Stupefy* or *Immobilus*. The survivors regroup at the Weasley's home.

At 17, Harry Potter is an adult in the wizarding world. And, true to his word, he does *not* return to Hogwarts School for what would have been his final year, even though many of his friends, including Ginny Weasley, Neville Longbottom, and Luna Lovegood do. Instead, he, Ron, and Hermione embark on their quest to find

and destroy the Horcruxes, so that the Order of the Phoenix will actually have some chance of defeating Voldemort once and for all.

The nature of the Horcruxes invites comparison to other literature in which artifacts play a prominent part, especially Russian fairy tales of the Deathless One, and *The Lord of the Rings*. Ron, Harry, and Hermione all suffer from the baleful influence of one Horcrux, when they make the mistake of wearing it around their necks, just as Frodo and Sam are affected by the one ring. For artifacts aren't easy to destroy. The only reason Harry succeeded in destroying Tom Riddle's diary in *Chamber of Secrets* is because he stabbed it with a basilisk fang. Finding the damn things is hard enough - they quickly figure out that Sirius Black's brother Romulus was the one who replaced one Horcrux with a fake, but when they interrogate the Black household elf, Kreacher, it is only to find out that the real one was stolen by the thievish Mundungus, and sold to the Ministry of Magic. This necessitates a raid in disguise, during which they play a disruptive role in the grand inquisitions presided over by another nemesis of Harry's, Dolores Umbridge herself. Then for months the three of them are porting around the Horcrux that contains Voldemort's heart essence, on the run and in hiding from the Ministry of Magic and the Death Eaters who have suborned the Ministry, trying to figure out some way to unmake the thing. Ron proves the most susceptible to its insidious influence, and there is a horrible falling out. But one of the most wonderful aspects of this book is that Harry has really learned he can't always go it alone, and not only does he not want to be the hero, he has realized that sometimes other people *need* to be heroes. When it comes time to finally destroy the Horcrux that has caused them so much suffering, that task is Ron's. After all, he was its primary victim - he needs to be the one to subdue it.

Throughout the series, naming Voldemort has been problematic for everyone except Harry and Albus Dumbledore. In this book, you find out why. There is also an encounter with a mysterious patronus in the form of a doe, whose origin is revealed near the very end of the book, in the scene that finally answers THE question of the books - whose side is Snape on, and why? This was the part of the book that had me in tears. I had foreseen it, for Rowling was generous with her clues, but it was no less powerful for being anticipated.

Another revelation is the nature of the connection between Harry and Voldemort: why, and how, are they linked? It turns out that when Voldemort tried to kill Harry as a baby Voldemort, inadvertently and *unknowingly*, made Harry his seventh Horcrux.

The real surprise in this book is Dumbledore's past. He did not come to his wisdom and kindly ways easily; he paid a terrible price along the way worthy of its own epic telling. And Rowling continues the tradition of Shakespeare and other writers of the magical, drawing clear parallels between what goes on in the realm of magic and the mundane world. Dumbledore's involvement with a wizard named Grindelwald corresponds to

Britain's war with Germany, culminating in a decisive battle in 1945 and involving an artifact of invincibility.

It turns out that Grindelwald's wand of invincibility, the Elder Wand, is one of the three Deathly Hallows of the title: artifacts associated with three brothers in a wizarding fairy tale. The other two are a stone of resurrection, and... a cloak of invisibility. These three Hallows all come into Harry's hand, and the use he makes of them is vastly different from anything Voldemort would have done - or even Dumbledore.

If Voldemort seems extraordinarily inept to some readers, there is a reason for this. In making the Horcruxes, he actually gave up that part of himself he invested: his heart, his memories, even his wit. All that is left of him is a megalomaniacal determination to conquer and a refusal to die. Harry Potter just wants what Odysseus wanted in *The Republic of Plato*: a quiet life, a family. And if it seemed to you that Harry, Ron, and Hermione spend an inordinate amount of time dithering in hiding, there is a reason for that too, two reasons, actually. One, as anyone who has been in a war can tell you, there are long stretches of tedium and inactivity in any campaign. But more significantly to the story, the time that passes is crucial for something to happen. It allows for a wizard to be born.

What happens to whom? I'm not going to spoil it, but some of my favorites joined Severus and Dumbledore on the other side of the mirror. If it is any consolation, they all die valiantly.

Before I read this book, I, like millions

of readers, entertained myself with speculations. I predicted that Harry would become a Defense Against the Dark Arts instructor at Hogwarts, and eventually Headmaster; Ron would become the Quiddich Captain of his favorite team, and Hermione would become either the Head of Ravenclaw House or in charge of the Ministry of Magic. But Harry already was the *de facto* instructor in the fifth book, and Ron, it seems, outgrows the game - or maybe Rowling just couldn't stand to describe another match, let alone a career in Quiddich. As for Hermione, well, maybe she still ends up in charge of the Ministry. It isn't ruled out. She would certainly be the one, along with help from Harry, to reform relations between wizards, magical creatures and muggles alike. You go, girl! - **Chris Paige**

### **Flesh and Spirit** by Carol Berg Roc; \$15.00, 418 pp.

Abandoned, robbed and left severely injured in a soldier's raid, Valen is found by some kindly monks and given shelter at Gillarine Abbey. A ne'er do-well, a soldier of whim and a nimble thief, Valen finds himself surrounded by the kindness of Karish monks who worship the god Iero and take him in and heal his wounds.

It's the last place the irascible Valen ever expected to find himself.

Valen is a wonderfully layered character. On the outside: brusque and talkative, self-serving, impatient, intelligent and a great teller of tales. Inside, he struggles with his need to

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## In Our Book (Continued from page 18)

divorce himself from his true heritage, that of a diseased, cast-off “pureblood” one his world terms a sorcerer and magic user. In Valen’s specific case it is the ability to find his way anywhere, to read maps (though he cannot read words) and to read the earth, to find paths through untrackable wildernesses. He struggles with an addiction to nivat seeds which turn an unexplained flare-up of pain and agony into pleasure. We don’t know if this addiction is self-inflicted or the result of some kind of genetic problem. He is a loner, ever on the run and leery of everyone’s motives, having escaped an especially brutal, abusive father, a drunken ineffectual mother and indifferent siblings. His full name is quite a mouthful: Magnus Valentinia de Cartamandua-Celestine.

He does not want to be at the abbey but with the onset of a severe winter, it is better than being wounded and on the road facing the nasty factions of an internecine struggle between three brother princes for control of Navronne.

The world surrounding the abbey is an ugly place filled with roving soldiers and an especially nasty horrible sect called Harrowers. Led by a deranged woman, they want the world turned back to virgin forest, river and meadow—and that means destroying villages, towns, pasturage and tilled fields. Anything humankind has made or done to tame and order the earth to their needs must be destroyed. And they revel in torturing and killing people.

The decadent purebloods remain aloof from this growing stain upon the land while war and strife are destroying everything civilized.

It all eventually reaches the pacific confines of Gillarine Abbey.

Valen becomes a pawn amongst the factions because he has a book of maps given to him by his insane grandfather, a legendary map maker, which show a great many places of the world. And only Valen can read the spells that unlock the paths to these sites, particularly those of the Danae who sound as if they are earth spirits/elves of a very fey, wild and remote nature. They can appear and disappear at will, tend to have an unearthly radiance about them, go about unclothed but sporting markings: images of dragons and feathers and such on their pale blue skins.

Unhappy with mankind, the Danae have removed themselves from human affairs. A small group, however, including several of the monks of Gillarine Abbey believe the Danae might be able to stem the tide of destruction. But, so far, the Danae remain angry at humans for some old slight.

Once Valen has healed, circumstances fling him from the abbey and he finds himself in the central city of Palinur where things have come to an erupting head as the city succumbs to chaos.

The purebloods, locked in centuries-old societal rules and protocols, avoid the conflict where they can, the abbey brothers of Gillarine struggle to save civilization as they know it, and the princely brothers fight it out on the streets. All the while the Harrowers add disgusting scenes of nightmare-ish horror as they destroy whatever lies in their paths.

As grim as the story is, it is so saved by Berg’s excellent writing and her ability to really bring forth the nature of the world and the characters that inhabit it. And more importantly, Berg’s terrific imagination and ability to string together seamlessly such diverse ideas.

Make no mistake, this is a miserable novel (miserable in the sense that circumstances and people are miserable), very much in tone of “Doomsday Book” by Connie Willis. A tale almost consumed by utter hopelessness and endless horror.

And there is another book to come.

Though I am not really anxious to slog through the escalating destruction going on throughout this world, I so want to see the come-uppance of a specific character in this novel. An evil duplicitous slime toad that deserves to be staked and flayed and burned very slowly.... Oh, he is *so* hateful.

And just one of the reasons to await the next book “Breath and Bone” coming out in January 2008. - **Sue Martin**

### Rollback

**By Robert J. Sawyer  
TOR, Tom Doherty Associates, New York, 2007. 317 pp. Hardcover \$24.95  
[Note: This review, unlike my usual work, contains spoilers.]**

Dr. Sarah Halifax and her Husband of sixty years, Don were living their declining years in quiet contentment. But it was not to be. In 2009 Sarah had been the SETI researcher who decoded the first ever message from the stars. It was a questionnaire designed to evaluate the moral code of mankind. The senders wanted one thousand randomly selected survey answer sets to be transmitted back to them. Sarah and the SETI team fought for this and the random replies were sent save that Sarah inserted her own reply into the random set. Also at the last moment she modified one of her answers on the fly as the reply was sent. This turns out to be pivotal.

Now in 2048 a reply has been received and it is encrypted. They want Sarah to help. She laughs at them. “I am far too old for this,” she says but they promise her a Rollback, a genetic rejuvenation procedure which will make her young. It is a procedure costing Billions which only a very few can afford. A famous Billionaire and SETI proponent has promised to fund it. Sarah agrees on condition that Don gets the treatment too. They agree. The treatment works for Don but fails on her because of cancer treatment she received years before.

Now Sarah and Don face separation in ways that they never imagine. Don forms a relationship with a young woman, Lenore Darby, but still loves Sarah. Sarah works on the encrypted data, but her health is failing. She does not have long. There must be a clue. The aliens must want their message to be decrypted. Finally Sarah realizes the problem. The message is specifically directed at her and the attempts at decryption failed because of the last minute change she made in her answer which was not in the historical database. She now can decrypt.

What can the aliens be sending that they would send only to a being found to be of good moral character? She decodes the message and proceeds to blackmail the

authorities so that the sacred trust the aliens have given her will be protected. Don agrees to be the guardian of the aliens to be raised from the gene data provided for aliens had sent their children electronically.

The story is presented from Don’s viewpoint with flashbacks to fill in needed background on the fly. The pivotal characters of Don, Sarah, Lenore Darby and Billionaire Cody McGavin are drawn as from life. Sarah could be any of several aging academic females of my acquaintance. Don could be any of several sound engineers I have known. Lenore, the enthusiastic graduate student is just real. Cody McGavin is a believable person with complex motivations. Sarah didn’t quite trust him, but he funded everything.

There was an interesting local reference slipped in. Two sound editing devices mentioned when Don was attempting to get his old job back at National Public Radio were a “Mennenga” and an EvoTerra.” The Dragon Page Lives!

The book is a good read.  
Recommended. – **Gary Swaty**

**Kushiel’s Justice  
by Jacqueline Carey  
\$26.99, Warner Books, 703pp**

Here’s the second of Imriel’s story and it’s just as wonderful as each and every one before it. In fact, I might go so far as to say, it’s the best of Carey’s series.

Imriel is uncertain of his position at court, uncertain of his future, uncertain of his own physical needs and desires, but pretty certain that he detests his cousin, Sidonie, who is first in line for the throne. That lasts until one fateful day when he, unthinkingly, throws himself in harm’s way to save her and they both find their feelings have irrevocably changed. Their attraction keeps growing until both are willing to defy all odds to be together. Sidonie has been raised to rule and, while Imriel has come late to his heritage, both are cognizant of their duty to the realm. They decide that their mutual desire is undesired and, quite possibly, simply infatuation. So, they reluctantly decide to separate – for the space of a year. They believe that if it is only infatuation, then it will fade with time and distance; if it does not... Unfortunately, in their country it is a kind of heresy against their god to deny love and desire. And, in their country, their gods are apt to punish their own for this heresy.

Imriel has accepted an arranged marriage in another country. He tries to do the right thing but spends most of his time obsessing over Sidonie. He realizes that it is unfair to the sweet lady he has married but grows more miserable daily.

Meanwhile, the local powers-that-be have foreseen dire consequences for their country from his marriage. But, instead of simply telling Imriel what they see and work to change the outcome, they try to manipulate him. They find a way to use his desire for Sidonie to control him against his will in order to force him out of their country; so he goes to a local magician for protection against their magic. The protection is a charm that seals off his desire and memories of Sidonie. Without the constant longing for

Sidonie distracting him, Imriel discovers that the woman he married, Dorelei, is quite lovable herself. Their relationship blooms and a child is eventually anticipated. This is the scenario that the dark magicians have foreseen will lead to a child who will murder them off when he is a grown man. Since their efforts are thwarted, they resort to murder – of both Dorelei and the unborn child.

Thus comes Kushiel’s justice – from Imriel’s hands. After he recovers from the brutal attack, he sets himself the task of tracking down the one responsible and bringing his head back to lay at the feet of his wife and son. With no more need to control Imriel, the deed is done; the charm is broken and Imriel’s long-suppressed love and desire for Sidonie is released. But he is much matured and finds he can bear the longing and still pursue his purpose. His pursuit carries him into distant and dangerous lands with a handful of men at his back. But as events progress, these men fall away one by one until Imriel is completely alone in his search for justice...or maybe, just vengeance. He has already angered one god with his denial of his love for Sidonie; if his quest is for vengeance, and not justice, he might just anger another god.

This was such great storytelling, such really good writing, great plotting, superior characterizations, yadda, yadda, yadda... The writing is so good that certain passages actually made me tear up. Carey gives me such satisfaction in these few pages that I more than received value for the cost of the book and my time. - **Catherine Book**

**The Winds of Marble Arch and Other Stories  
by Connie Willis  
700 pages - Subterranean Press (Trade \$40, Limited \$125, Lettered \$250)**

Connie Willis has had a long and successful career to date, having won 9 Hugo awards and 6 Nebula awards so far. She’s had success in short stories, novelettes, and novellas in addition to her award winning novels *Doomsday Book* and *To Say Nothing of the Dog*. There have been a couple of collections of her short stories, *Fire Watch*, *Impossible Things*, and *Miracle and other Christmas Stories*, but with the release of *The Winds of Marble Arch and Other Stories*, we now have a career spanning collection of the short fiction of Connie Willis.

In the 700 pages of the collection, Subterranean Press has collected five of her award winning short fiction pieces. This includes stories such as “Last of the Winnebagos”, a tale about a near future Phoenix when RVs have nearly become an extinct species, “Fire Watch”, one of her first time travel stories and her first Hugo winner, “The Soul Selects Her Own Society...”, which ties two of Emily Dickinson’s poem fragments into the events of H.G. Wells’ *War of the Worlds*, complete with extensive footnotes, and “The Winds of Marble Arch”, which looks at the affects of the London Blitz on the winds and air currents of the London Underground.

The award winners are just the tip of the iceberg, though. Willis returns to the

(Continued on page 20)

## In Our Book (Continued from page 19)

London Blitz with “Jack”, which when you think it might be a time travel story, turns out to be something much different. “Nonstop to Portales” is a loving tribute to Jack Williamson, with a tour bus from the future taking fans around Portales, New Mexico, looking at all of the Jack Williamson sites. “All My Darling Daughters” is just plain creepy. “A Letter From the Clearys” and “Daisy, In the Sun”, give us warnings of a not too pleasant future to heed.

There are several of Willis’ Christmas themed stories, including the previously uncollected “Just Like the Ones We Used to Know”, which was adapted into a CBS TV movie, *Snow Wonder*, and “Newsletter”, in which an alien invasion is thwarted by a holiday newsletter (or something like that). There’s also screwball comedies such as “At the Rialto”, set at a quantum physicists convention and “Blued Moon” about chance and a possible environmental disaster.

Overall, the collection shows the wide range of Willis’ short fiction, from the shocking to the whimsical and all points in between and gives the reader incentive to check out her other collections and start tracking down the stories that haven’t yet been collected.

For those who spring for the limited and lettered additions, you get a couple of bonus short stories, both previously uncollected, as well as a comprehensive bibliography that even includes her “confession” stories written for True Romance and True Confessions magazines in the 1970s. - **Lee Whiteside**

### **Divergence** **by Tony Ballantyne** **Bantam, 389 pp, \$6.99**

*Divergence* is the final volume in a trilogy that began with *Recursion* (2004) and continued with *Capacity* (2005), but according to an interview with Eric Brown, the story arc began with his short story, “The Sixth VNM” (1998). For readers familiar with the first two volumes, this one will satisfactorily bring the series to a close, although there is, of course, leeway for him to continue exploring this universe.

For first time readers, enough background material is provided in the Prologue for them to jump into this the deep end of trilogy, but they will probably be left to scratch their heads over some scenes in which characters from earlier books make brief, significant appearances. However, there is certainly enough here to entertain, beguile, and provoke to thought the casual reader who finds the book on a shelf. Before a resolution can be achieved or even appreciated, there has to be a well-developed conflict, and the worse the conflict, the more satisfying the resolution – if any. *Divergence* starts off with a small group of space faring entrepreneurs whose interpersonal dynamics are so dysfunctional that I wanted to sic a time-traveling version of Isaac Asimov’s wife Janet on them so she could write another volume of *Pshrink*s, *Anonymous* about their therapy sessions. Their snipe fests are hilarious if you can preserve a cool

sense of detachment, excruciating if you feel for them. The situation is so bad that, when they use Fair Exchange software to bargain for much needed system repairs for their vessel, the *Eva Rye*, the first repair is to split the group into two independent groups, each equipped with its own ship. Isn’t systems-theory-directed nanotechnology wonderful? The storyline proceeds to follow the smaller of the two groups: Edward, Maurice, Saskia, and Miss Rose, and the all-important passenger they pick up in a subsequent Fair Exchange.

This passenger, Judy, has unfinished business with two warring AI entities, The Watcher and Chris. A fourth major player is the Fair Exchange software program itself, and then there is the treacherous entity Kevin. Judy has it in for the AI Chris, who murdered her twelve sibling-clones, “just to get her attention,” but she is also wary of the Watcher, the seemingly benign AI that regulates human affairs on Earth and everywhere else it can. The Watcher is in favor of peace, health, understanding, and the greater good, and promotes all of these insidiously; and it doesn’t like rival AIs. It is a jealous Watcher. It also likes to separate the sheep from the goats – humans who are unhealthy, unlovely, or eccentric tend to get shipped off to enclaves. Chris seems to like all the C words: chaos, confusion, competition, cooperation, compensation, even cannibalization (of machines). Chris is also a creation of The Watcher – a son, as it were.

If you haven’t picked up on the theistic and biblical allusions yet, I’ll simply point out that Watcher is a rather good translation of the Greek word for god, θεός.

Then there are the Dark Seeds, and the Dark Plants that grow from them, the enemy of *all* sentient existence: fractal-like, endlessly fascinating, mesmerizing, and deadly.

Judy (Judas?) is being set up for a confrontation between The Watcher and Chris every step of her way, and she knows it. She doesn’t like being manipulated, but each choice is forced. Furthermore, she is haunted by nightmares and waking trances in which she relives parts of the life of the original Eva Rye, who had her own issues with The Watcher.

Judy is steered to Earth for a cataclysmic showdown, and for the answers to her questions. There is a haunting scene of evacuation and sacrifice, and a literally earth-rending finale.

I have only three minor objections to a book I otherwise thoroughly enjoyed. We lose sight of some characters early or abruptly, and I would have liked to know more about their adventures. But perhaps they will get stories of their own someday. Secondly, the arrogance of British colonialism is in evidence in several passages –apparently humanity has become a monoculture in which almost everyone speaks English and follows the Church of England. Mind you, I am quite fond of the English language, and I attend High Episcopalian church services, but monoculture strikes me as dangerous for humans as it is for crops, be it never so convenient for communications and AIs.

Finally, I am neither engineer nor physicist, but I am doubtful that some of the mechanical wonders described are physically possible. I love the imagery – and magery – evoked, but it may be matter for future Phooey Physics panels. – **Chris Paige**

### **Set the Sea on Fire** **by Chris Roberson** **\$15.00 Solaris, pp 312**

Michael Moorcock recommends this author, and *Revolution SF* describes this book as “Horatio Hornblower meets H.P. Lovecraft.” The Lovecraftian elements of madness, monsters, and horrible death only come out of the rocks near the very end, and the source is actually Polynesian legend; but either way, the climax is effective. This novel is an extended and revised version of a print-on-demand publication by the same title. Now it is seeing the light of day in large paperback format, and this is good news for all readers who enjoy blood and thunder naval literature in the tradition of *Master and Commander*.

Set in the years spanning 1792 to 1802, England is at war with Napoleon and France, and is still enemies with Spain, so that Spanish vessels are prizes to be captured by the British navy. Hieronymus Bonaventure is 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant on HMS Fortitude; Captain Ross is greedy for a prize capture, and orders his men to engage a Spanish galleon, heavy with riches. Both ships are severely damaged in the engagement, then blown apart by a storm into uncharted waters. Independently, both captains decide to search for an undiscovered island rather than make a crippled way to known shores for repairs. The crew of HMS Fortitude lands on an island paradise; the Spanish captain and his men discover an island of madness, called by islanders Helekea, or “first volcano,” the permanent abode of evil Tura and his fire wife, parents of storms, sharks, dwellers in darkness, and demons. All but three of the Spaniards succumb to the island’s miasma, and of those three, only one lives to report his misadventures to the English.

The story alternates between Hieronymus’ boyhood training sessions with the swordsman Giles Dulac and his time on ship and land as 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant, doubling back like folds in Japanese steel. The juxtapositions are apt and sometimes subtle, and spiced with Dulac’s history lessons, which are thoroughly enjoyable. What is the history behind the legal age of majority? What was Spadassinicide? How did a king of Burgundy begin the tradition of “might is right,” establishing trial by duel? What does the name ‘Bonaventure’ mean?

As an officer, Hieronymus mediates between captain and crew, between British and Spaniard, between sailors and islanders, the Te’Maroans. He is circumspect, but all his self-restraint is no match for one particular island woman, Pelani, who turns out to be the niece of the islanders’ chief, and daughter of their priest. The islanders’ sense of morality is accommodating, but their sense of place and the fittingness of things eventually spells an end to Hieronymus’ happiness. And Captain Ross is determined to find the Spanish treasure, even if it means

sending his men to brave the horrors of Hell, while he stays safely behind. (REMF.) When the British depart the island, they are accompanied by eight Te’Maroan warriors, who go along not out of gold lust, but to face the challenge of heroes and to act as guides. The leader of the warriors is Hieronymus’ rival for Pelani’s affections, Kane. But these rivals in love are allies in duty: both are the best their cultures have to offer.

I loved the sheer literary quality of this book: ah, King’s English! It is a complete stand alone novel, but it turns out, upon reading the Afterward, that Roberson has written a number of books about the Bonaventure clan. Titles include *End of the Century*; *Paragaea: A Planetary Romance*; and *Here, There, and Everywhere*, and the Dulac family crosses the Bonaventure family more than once in these volumes. So if you enjoy this book, be of good cheer! There is more in the same vein to read. – **Chris Paige**

### **Magic Lost, Trouble Found** **by Lisa Shearin** **Acc Books, 7.99; 345 pp**

A tricky thief and a young woman who has a particular talent for finding things start off this tale set in its own world, full of sorcerers and elves and fire pixies, but Shearin does not use a standard formula for her novel. Her elves *are* gorgeous and tall, but her goblins are very much like elves, also gorgeous but grey-skinned and darker in spirit. Goblins are as attractive to females as elves.

But elves and goblins rarely see eye to eye on things.

And a special item of great power, an amulet called the Saghred which is full of trapped souls and amazing power which everyone wants suddenly reappears on the scene, having been thought hidden for centuries, its magic and power bound and quiescent.

Our heroine, Raine Benares finds out that she is related to the elf that bound and hid the amulet from the world at large and when a sorcerer uncovers it—she is the lucky one sent to seek it out. And finds out to her surprise that the amulet is attuned to her and she can manipulate some of its amazing powers.

So Raine finds herself not only in the midst of a magic power struggle but in a dynastic struggle between goblin princes all abetted by an evil sorcerer with a nasty agenda of his own.

While juggling all this, she comes under the protection of elven Guardian Mychael Eiliesor a handsome hunk of elven knighthood sent from the mysterious magical isle of Mid to protect her and get back the Saghred, before the evil sorcerer does.

And adventures abound: escapes into icky swamps full of testy little fire pixies, goblin battles, magical confrontations, and a very grand party.

This was a load of fun. I wish there had been a bit more romance, but nevertheless the characters were entertaining and compelling, especially as Shearin writes the novel from the first person view point of Raine. Who, as you will discover, is a character and a half. - **Sue Martin**

(Continued on page 21)



**Dragon Temple Saga  
books Two and Three:  
Shadowed by Wings  
Forged by Fire  
by Janine Cross  
\$14.00 Roc, pp 354, pp**

If you like the Dragonriders of Pern books by Anne McCaffrey and Anne Rice writing as Ann Rocquelaire, you will love these books. There is bondage, violence, torture, treachery, and trans-species bonding. Sheri Tepper fans will also like these books, I think; but Marion

Zimmer Bradley would grieve that there is *still* a need for fiction in which a woman must defy tradition to break into a male bastion.

Janine Cross is obviously a graduate of the 'Hook 'em within the first 25 words' school of writing. One page one, we have a naked woman on the verge of being stoned by villagers. She is rescued by a dragon. On page three through six, she is whipped, all so she can enter a dragonmaster apprenticeship program open only to males. She is whipped by the man she most hates: Waikar Re Kratt, he who killed her father and destroyed her mother. She is also addicted to Dragon venom. If this all sounds derivative, it is.

But being derivative doesn't mean it isn't vivid reading.

In the first volume, **Touched by Venom**, our heroine Zarq succeeded in winning the dragonmaster's permission for her to train with the young men at the Dragon Temple. **Shadowed by Wings** sees her entering her training. She craves access to venom, but she also wants to prove that, originally, women were not barred from becoming dragonmasters. But she has more problems than hard training, gender prejudice, her addiction, and the unwelcome attentions of her nemesis. She is also haunted/protected by her mother in the form of a Skykeeper dragon, and she

has some serious issues with her sister Waivia.

In **Forged by Fire**, Zarq starts out one quantum level higher: she is now the first female land-owner. She is also bloody, battle-weary, scarcely able to walk, and fleeing her enemies. When her estate is not secure enough to provide a safe haven for her and her dragons, she travels to the jungles, in search of knowledge that will translate into power; wrestling all the while with her addiction to venom. She also continues her quest for a non-abusive working relationship between dragons and humans, freedom from the influence of her mother's haunt, and revenge. — **Chris Paige**

Seven hundred years before, Adrian and Tain were in Scotland defending a village from an Unseelie horde. The effort was successful but Tain disappeared. Adrian searched in vain but found no sign of his brother except in recurrent dreams where Tain blamed Adrian for not finding him.

The novel begins in the present day with Adrian confronting a Demon after one of his Tain dreams. The Demon is fighting Adrian but stops suddenly as if summoned, dives through a gate and Adrian hears a woman's terrified scream as the gate closes. He cannot follow. He starts tracking the demon.

He tracks him to a Seattle warehouse where he meets the powerful White Witch, Amber, sister of she who screamed and died. Amber is about to experience her sister Susan's fate, but Adrian intervenes and drives of the demon. Amber has been trying to find out why her sister, a White Witch, had been performing Blood Magic. Investigation proves eventually that her sister had been tracking a Blood Magic threat and had only accidentally attracted the Demon. They gather Susan's paper and flee to Adrian's magically fortified mansion in L.A.

Thus they embark on a quest to find Tain, destroy Susan's killer and ultimately to confront an evil which threatens to unmake everything. For allies they have an Septimus, ancient Vampire, Serena, a werewolf neighbor of Amber's, Ferrin, Adrian's Cobra/Sword/Bracelet, Valerian, an ancient were-dragon and Kelly, an actress with a thing for vampires.

Naturally, this being a romance, sparks sizzle between the various couples i.e Adrian and Amber, Serena and Valerian, and Kelly and Septimus.

The story is a fun easy and enjoyable read. If you like it there will be three more of them. Recommended. — **Gary Swaty**

**Immortals: The Calling**  
By Jennifer Ashley  
Love Spell  
[Dorchester Publishing] 2007. Mass  
Market PB, 357  
pages, \$6.99. A Love  
Spell Paranormal  
Romance.

Fans of Romantic Fantasy will love this one. The scenario is fascinating. In the dim dawn of time in Egypt, Isis, a Priestess bore demi-gods by the various Gods. These four Heroes, Adrian, Tain, Hunter and Kalen, were to protect and maintain the balance between White Magic and Blood Magic. If either became ascendant the world would be unmade. Their duties were as assigned by the Goddesses and by earthly summoning. They vanquished demons and slew vampires as needed.

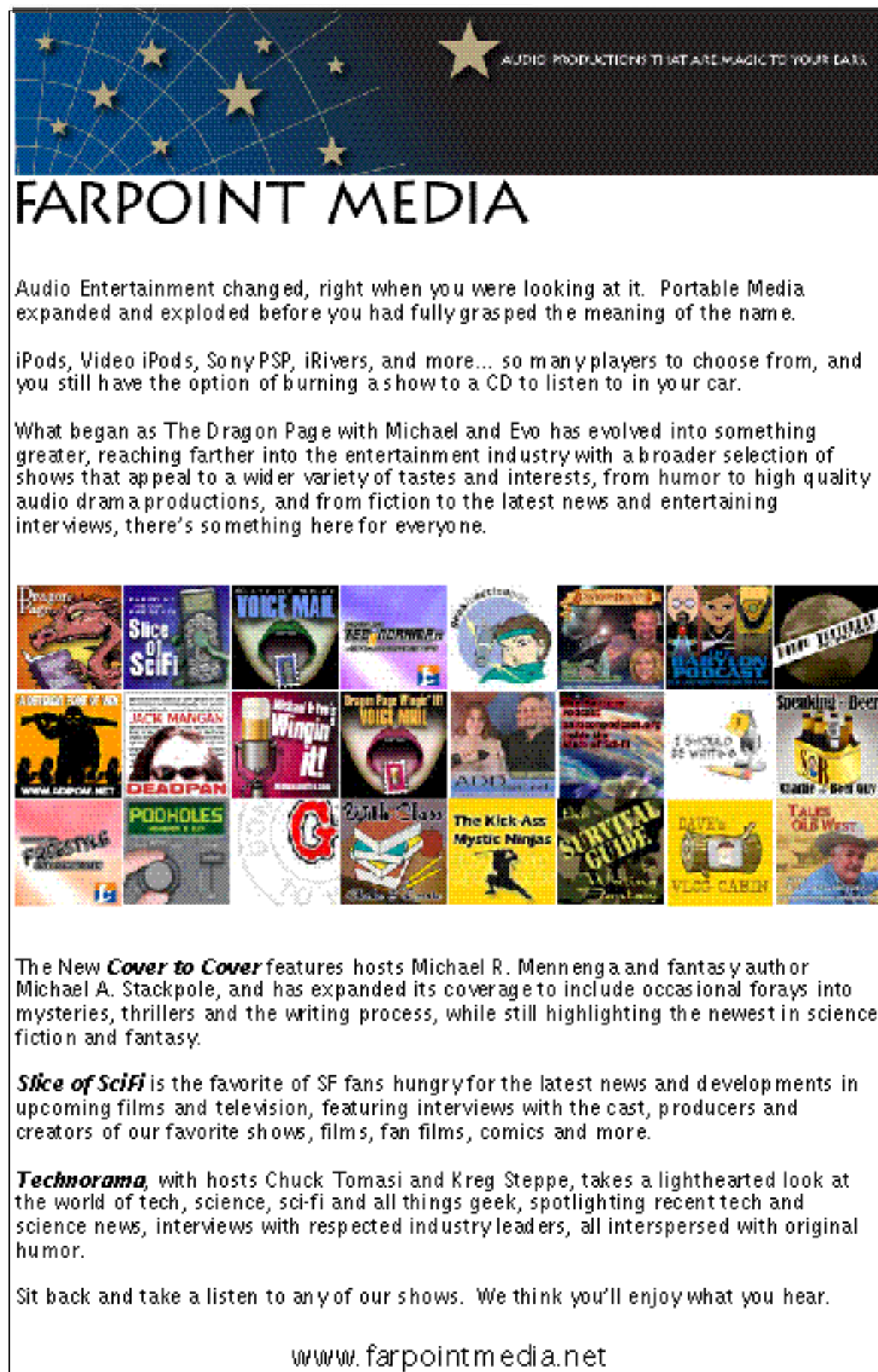
**The Thrall's Tale**  
by Judith Lindbergh  
\$15.00, Plume/Penguin, 446 pp

I'm not sure why this book was sent to us for review; as it isn't really within the genre of science fiction or fantasy. It's a pretty straightforward historical fiction — with a bare suggestion of magic or, perhaps it's really just madness and superstition.

The story is about the first colonization of Greenland by the Norse from Iceland about 1000AD. The story is told from three perspectives. The first is an older woman, Thorbjorg, whose life has been shattered more than once, a woman who may be a sorceress for Odin. She tries to rescue a young slave woman whose life was shattered by a man who sorely abused her. The second perspective is this young woman, Katla, who comes to Thorbjorg's household pregnant from the rape. Katla hates the child she bears and refuses to love it. Thorbjorg takes the baby as her apprentice and tries to give her the love she doesn't have from her mother. The baby, Bibrau, grows into a young woman full of hate and vengeance but highly skilled in the sorcery that Thorbjorg has taught her. This is the third perspective.

The story revolves around the question

(Continued on page 22)



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## In Our Book

( Continued from page 21 )

of Bibrau – is she the sorceress who can save the Norse colony or is she simply mad and homicidal. We are also teased with the question of Thorbjorg’s power – does she really do all that she imagines she does or is it all just superstition. And when will she realize that she’s created a monster? Katla’s story is simply the romantic angle. Will her true love, a freeman, ever rescue her from slavery?

The back of the book promises us that the story is a well-researched cultural saga. There were a couple of historical points that argues that. From my bare understanding of that period of history, it seemed to me that the author compressed several hundred years into fifteen years. But, mostly, it was dry and dull. I didn’t appreciate the first person present voice. It might be better received by a reader who is truly interested in the everyday life of a Norse colony. - **Catherine Book**

### Territory

By Emma Bull

**TOR Books, New York 2007, \$24.95, Hardcover, 318 Pages**

Black Magic holds Tombstone in its tenacious grip, but only Jesse Fox, Chow Lung and Mildred Benjamin can see it. Chow Lung is a Chinese physician and Magical Practitioner. Jesse Fox is a Horse Trainer and untrained Magician whom Chow Lung summoned magically to save Tombstone. Mildred Benjamin is a Jewish Window and romance writer who sets

type at Tombstone’s second newspaper, *the Nugget*.

Jesse is determined to shake the dust of Tombstone off of his clothes and proceed to Mexico where he has a horse training job waiting and can escape the less understood aspects of his existence. But Chow Lung is determined to have him stay and Jesse meets Mildred.

The books has wonderful historical characters such as shy, self-effacing Mattie Earp, wife of Wyatt, Allie Earp, Morgan’s wife and Hattie Earp, the niece who became enamored of Tom McLaury. We see them all come to life along with Wyatt Earp, Morgan Earp, Ike Clanton, Doc Holliday, Kate and many more.

Can a Chinese Physician and two Anglos mitigate the pervasive Evil in Tombstone? Is it entirely evil? And what of the human cost?

Fans of western history will love this story for its rich accurate detail and its truly fantastic take on the lead up to the Battle of the OK Corral. Recommended. – **Gary Swaty**

### Darkness of the Light

by Peter David

**Tor Books, 24.95, 412 pages**

Peter David may be best known for his comics writing and tie-in novels, but he has also had a fair amount of success with his original fiction, primarily in the fantasy genre. With *Darkness of the Light*, David embarks on a new series, *The Hidden Earth*, with a new publisher, Tor, and tries his hand at a story with an epic

fantasy feel, but also with some science fiction elements mixed in.

The story is mainly set in Earth’s future, when the third wave of creatures banished from another dimension have taken over the world and decimated the human population. The first two waves were tests that were responsible for wiping out the dinosaurs in the first wave and creating the human mythological legends with the second. Thus we have Mandraques, Trulls, Oculars, Piri, Markenens, and other creatures that equate to dragons, vampires, trolls, cyclops, and more. Twelve races in all, with the mysterious Overseer and his Travelers to watch over the banished races.

David introduces us to a large cast of characters, from the “Mort” woman, Jepp, the “Bottom Feeder” Karsen Foux, the Ocular King Nagel and his niece Merrih, The Piri “Mistress” Sunara and her daughter, Clarinda, the Trull Queen and her feuding sons, the Firedraque Nicrominus, the Merk lord Ruarc and the Makene Gorkon. All of them have roles to play in the overall story, some with better fates than others.

The various races have always been mostly at odds with each other, but are governed by the Firedraque Treaty that limits their involvement with each other. That, of course, doesn’t mean that there aren’t individuals with plots and other ideas within the different races. When Karsen “salvages” Jepp following a Mandraque battle that leaves most of the participants dead, they become part of a series of events that lead to a surprising realization for the new masters of Earth and how their invasion may be causing their home world to suffer. David mixes humor and drama within the book, resolving a few things along the way while setting the stage for the next book in the series. - Lee Whiteside

### UN Lun Dun

By China Mieville

**Illustrated by China Mieville  
Ballantine Books, New York 2007, 448 pages, \$17.95 Juvenile  
[The last line of this review is the Ultimate Spoiler]**

This is China Mieville’s first venture into Juvenile Fiction and it is extraordinary. It has the grittiness and dark vivid detail of *Perdido Street Station* in new tale of alternate or abcities as he calls them. Each city on Earth has its dark other. London’s is Un Lun Dun or UnLondon.

This is the tale of the Shwazzy or Chosen One and her companion. They are two young girls, Zanna and Deebea. In *The Book held by Propheseers* at the Pons Absconditus in UnLondon it was prophesied that the Chosen One would come in the hour of dire need and save UnLondon from destruction by Smog, a living, animated and truly evil form of pollution. She was to go on a quest with her companions and acquire the UnGun and destroy SMOG with it.

There seem to be four usual ways to get to UnLondon, by turning the Wheel, via the Book Steps, via the sewers and via the elevator in Office of the Secretary of State for the Environment. Zanna turned the Wheel as it was prophesied that the Chosen One would do. Deebea came with

her. They were rescued from animated garbage by a half ghost boy who led them to safety. They boarded an UnLondon Bus and were on their way to the Propheseers at the Pon Absconditus or bridge to everywhere where all would be explained. They have many adventures encountering truly strange creatures. You haven’t met a giraffe until you meet an UnLondon Giraffe. Reaching the Bridge, all is explained, but almost at once the prophecies unravel, nothing goes right and eventually Zanna and Zeeba return to London defeated with Zanna injured by Smog and remembering nothing. In UnLondon, Smog is working from within undermining all using one of the most trusted people in the UnLondon Hierarchy.

Back in London, Zeeba finds out more about the Danger and returns via the Book Steps which may be found in any public library. She decides she must complete the quest, acquire the UnGun and destroy Smog. The Ghost Boy, Conductor Jones and many others join her.

The story has a truly incredible number delightful creatures and characters. There is Curdle, the discarded milk carton who is Zeeba’s pet and valiant defender. There are “Unlondon’s champions. Protectors of Transit, the Sacred Warriors. ... “The Bus Conductor[s].” There is Brokenbroll who converts broken umbrellas arriving from London into shields against Smog. There are the animated dustbins who defend the Pons Absconditus...

In the end it would take the UnChosen wielding the UnLoaded UnGun to save UnLondon. – **Gary Swaty**

### The Alton Gift

By Marion Zimmer Bradley and Deborah Ross

**DAW Books, New York, N.Y., 2007, Hardcover, 480 Pages, \$25.95**

This is the final book of the Exile’s Song/Shadow Matrix/ Traitor’s Sun Sequence. Deborah Ross has used this book to tie up most of Darkover’s loose ends while at the same time producing an excellent story.

Lew Alton comes to terms with his long agonizing history and finds peace. Marguerida Alton finds her place in the scheme of things and comes to a realization of the obligations and responsibilities that come with the Alton Gift. Her son Domenic comes to power in the Comyn at a young age and looks to bring Darkover safely into a new era. A new Laran Tower is opened at Comyn Castle in Thendara. New blood is brought into the Towers and their long decline seems to be at an end.

A lot happens in the book. Darkover fans will not be disappointed. Deborah has contrived to express the rich tapestry of the characters and backdrop of Darkover in a way that would make Marion proud. – **Gary Swaty**

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# 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](mailto:ninjakittyofdoom@gmail.com)

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

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

**ARIZONA LANBASHERS LEAGUE** A collaboration of computer gaming enthusiasts, the Arizona 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](mailto:azlanbashers@earthlink.net) Web: [www.lanparty.com/all/](http://www.lanparty.com/all/) VoiceMail: 602-306-9339

**ARIZONA PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS** We are a highly trained, non-profit paranormal investigation group, registered with the state of Arizona, providing service to Arizona and the Southwest since 1994. Having served the public for 12 years, we are one of the oldest, most respected paranormal investigation groups in Arizona. We are primarily science based and don't go on an investigation looking for ghosts, we go looking for answers. There is never a charge for an investigation. Contact us at by e-mail at [info@arizonaparanormalinvestigations.com](mailto:info@arizonaparanormalinvestigations.com) or visit our website at: <http://www.arizonaparanormalinvestigations.com/>

**THE AWAY TEAM:** The Away Team, is a general sci-fi appreciation group that meets once a month for discussion of various sci-fi news regarding several mediums to include: television, movies, video, books, comics, magazines, collecting, and so forth. The meetings are comprised of news, review and comment, BBS/computer news and help, meeting new members, video presentations, games, and socializing fun! Food and drinks are provided, via a \$3 munchie fee (per meeting) to compensate the host. (No other

fees are involved.) The electronic home of the Away Team, is the Lightspeed Space Station BBS at (520) 325-6674.... Member ages for the group range from 13-40-something with both male and female members. Other activities include null-modem link gamefests, group theater movie viewings, convention trips and more. Have sci-fi fun in a relaxed, low-structure environment. NO RUBBER EARS ALLOWED!! For questions, you can call the BBS, or write to: LSS c/o R. Martin; 2522 N. Sparkman Blvd.; Tucson, AZ 85716

**BASFA** Local Tucson science fiction group that puts on TusCon. Contact us at PO Box 2528, Tucson AZ 85702-2528 or [basfa@earthlink.net](mailto:basfa@earthlink.net) our website at <http://home.earthlink.net/~basfa/>

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

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

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

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

**A GATHERING OF PLAYERS**-Find Your Adventure  
Our club is running into our fourth year. Join us for games and adventure set in the Dungeons and Dragons realm. We offer Living Greyhawk and Xen'drik Expeditions. Visit <http://www.warhorn.net/gathering>, to see what we have coming up. We will have character creation sessions to get you started and answer all questions. Our

group has been together, and growing, for four years. We're a good group of friends that believe in gaming fun first. Our member group's ages range from 13 to 49. We welcome both new and experienced players.  
10:00 a.m. Character Creation - We will have a session to create characters for all of the campaigns we run. AGoP will have all books available for reference. We encourage you to purchase the books if you like the game. All character materials are provided; character sheets, master item logs, adventure records, etc. Dice will be loaned to you if you don't have any yet. In other words, all that is needed for the first day is for you to join us and have fun.  
If you have any questions email us at [agatheringofplayers@gmail.com](mailto:agatheringofplayers@gmail.com).

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

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

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

**MVD GHOSTCHASERS**—The MVD Ghostchasers are a paranormal team established in 1995. This band of ghost hunters conducts regular investigations of haunted, historical locations throughout Arizona. They also research and investigate "house call" hauntings for the public. The MVD Ghostchasers lead Spirit Photo Workshops/Tours to various haunted locations across Arizona. These workshops give ghost hunters, paranormal team members and folks wanting to learn the art of ghost hunting a chance to work and learn techniques together. The MVD Ghostchasers team are guest speakers at many venues and have appeared on TV news reports and the subject of several newspaper stories. For more information contact:  
MVD Ghostchasers—Debe Branning, Director—480-969-4049 Web page: [www.mvdghostchasers.com](http://www.mvdghostchasers.com) or [Nazanaza@aol.com](mailto:Nazanaza@aol.com)

**ORANGE COUNTY SCIENCE FICTION CLUB** meets last Wednesday of every month (except Dec.) in Fullerton. The meetings are built around guest speakers. We've had authors such as Octavia Butler and Greg Benford. Non-members are welcome. For

details of current events and location see our website [www.ocsfc.org](http://www.ocsfc.org) or email [info@ocsfc.org](mailto:info@ocsfc.org)

**PAReX** is a non profit organization dedicated to building and promoting Autonomous robotics. The club has been in existence since 1998. Meetings are currently conducted twice a month at two different Phoenix, Arizona locations., <http://www.parex.org/meetings.shtml>. Club dues are on an annual basis: Regular members \$20 Student members \$15 Of course visitors are always welcome because we know you will eventually become a member anyway Web page: <http://www.parex.org/> E-mail Contact: John Kittelsrud, [parexteam@cox.net](mailto:parexteam@cox.net)

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

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

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

**SHIELD OF ALMOR** The Shield of Almor is a RPGA club located in the greater Phoenix area. If you are interested in Living Greyhawk catch one of our meetings the 1st Sunday of every month at Imperial Outpost Games ([www.imperialoutpost.com](http://www.imperialoutpost.com)) in Glendale. If you are interested in Living Arcanis or Living Spycraft catch us on the 3rd Sunday of every month also at Imperial Outpost Games. The Shield of Almor hosts RPGA events at the local Phoenix conventions. For more information visit us at [games.groups.yahoo.com/group/AZ\\_RPG/](http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/AZ_RPG/) or you can sign up for games at [www.nyronnd.org](http://www.nyronnd.org). Or you can just stop by the 1st Sunday of the month. Meeting starts at 10am. Hope to see you there.

**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 contact the Kingdom Seneschal. Email: [seneschal@atenveldt.com](mailto:seneschal@atenveldt.com) Web [www.atenveldt.com](http://www.atenveldt.com)

**SOUTHWEST COSTUMER'S GUILD** The Southwest Costumers Guild is a loose organization of persons interested in all facets of historical, cultural, science fiction, fantasy, and humor costume. Members are often seen on stage and behind the scenes at local and regional Science Fiction Convention masquerades. They meet on the last Sunday of each month at various members' homes in the

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Club Listings (Continued from page 23 )

greater Phoenix area. For details. Southwest Costumers Guild, PO Box 39504, Phoenix, AZ 85609 or Randall Whitlock at [costumers@casfs.org](mailto:costumers@casfs.org) or [www.southwestcostumersguild.org](http://www.southwestcostumersguild.org)

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

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

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

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

What is CASFS?

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

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

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

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

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

and their contact/CO is Capt. Dave Pitts, [thepitts52@hotmail.com](mailto:thepitts52@hotmail.com)

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

**WESTERN SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION (WesternSFA)** A non-profit corporation that sponsors the ConRunners seminars and sponsored the 2004 Westercon. Dedicated primarily to educational activities relating to literature, music, and visual and performing arts, especially in the genres of science fiction, fantasy, costuming, gaming and science. Applicants for membership in WesternSFA must be sponsored by a current active WesternSFA member. Dues are \$10 yearly plus a \$5 non-refundable application fee. General Meetings are held on the first Friday of February, May, August and November, at the Bookmans located at 19th ave. and Northern in Phoenix. Guests are welcome. For more info contact Craig Dyer at WesternSFA, PO Box 67457, Phoenix AZ 85082, (602) 973-2341, Email: [craig@westernsfa.org](mailto:craig@westernsfa.org) Webpage: [www.westernsfa.org](http://www.westernsfa.org)

Convention Listings

**CopperCon 27** (September 7-9. 2007) **Phoenix, AZ** Embassy Suites North, 2577 W Greenway. Membership: \$40 thru 8/15/2007, \$45 at the door. GoH Charlaine Harris, Local Author Guest: Michael Stackpole, Music GoH Heather Stern & Alison Stern. More info [www.coppercon.org](http://www.coppercon.org)

**TusCon 34** (Nov 9-11, 2007) Inn Suites Hotel, **Tucson, AZ** Author GoH: John Ringo; Toastmaster: Ed Bryant Memberships: \$40 until 9/5, then \$45 after that and at the door. [www.home.earthlink.net/~basfa](http://www.home.earthlink.net/~basfa)

**LOSCON 34** (Nov 23-25 '07) LAX Marriott, **Los Angeles, CA** GoH: Robert J. Sawyer, writer; Theresa Mather, artist; Capt. David West Reynolds, fan; Dr. James Robinson, music. **MEMBERSHIP RATES** Currently \$35 Until May 31st (\$40 until August 31st \$45 until October 31st \$50 at the door) Kids 4-12 are 1/2 Price Website: [www.loscon.org/34/index.html](http://www.loscon.org/34/index.html)

**LepreCon 34** (May 9-11, 2008) Francisco Grande Hotel & Golf Resort, **Casa Grande, AZ** Artist Guest: Howard Tayler; Author Guests: Emily & Ernest Hogan; Local Artist Guest: Liz Danforth; Special FX/Makeup Guest: David Ayres Memberships: \$25 thru 8/31/07, \$30 thru 10/31/07 Info: LepreCon 34 PO Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285 (480) 945-6890 Email: [lep34@leprecon.org](mailto:lep34@leprecon.org) web: <http://www.leprecon.org>

HELP WANTED

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

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

For information on available CopperCon positions please contact us at [cu27@coppercon.org](mailto:cu27@coppercon.org) or [www.coppercon.org](http://www.coppercon.org)

For information on available HexaCon positions or to volunteer to run a game please contact us at [hex17@hexacon.org](mailto:hex17@hexacon.org) or [www.hexacon.org](http://www.hexacon.org)

Our parent organization, the Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society (CASFS) is also looking for new members. Check our web site at [www.casfs.org](http://www.casfs.org) for information on meetings and upcoming events or contact us at [info@casfs.org](mailto:info@casfs.org)

Mailing/Subscription Information

ConNotations is sent free of charge to those who have attended a CASFS sponsored convention in the past calendar year (currently 2006). Attendees of CopperCon 26 or HexaCon 16 will receive ConNotations Volume 17 Issues 1 thru 6.

ConNotations updates it's mailing list each December.

Individual subscriptions are available for \$20 for 6 issues beginning January 1, 2007.

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