

ConNotations

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2008
FREE

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

An Interview with Andrew Stanton by Robert LaPierre

On June 17th, 2008 I sat down with three other reporters in a round table interview of Andrew Stanton. We began the interview with comments about the 120-degree weather and the good fortune he had that he didn't arrive in summer when it is actually hot. A requirement of the interview was that we see *WALL-E* beforehand so there may be minor spoilers in this interview, if you haven't seen the movie I suggest you do so **before** you read this.

Question: Is Auto-Pilot intentionally reminiscent of Hal-9000?
Andrew Stanton: Yes, we didn't like *purposefully* try to do it. I mean when you watch the DVD you will see all the different iterations Auto went through and eventually we ended up with a captain's wheel and when we realized we needed to give it some sort of an eye, because of the circular (nature of the wheel) it just gave us (a) bulls-eye, someone said you know it's like Hal, you know what it's actually helping the cold clinical, he needs to be

the most robotic of the all the robots. We just embraced it and said you know what? It's an homage.

Q: What is a typical day like for you on the set of a movie like *WALL-E*?
A: Well our set is sadly boring, (It is) a lot of offices. But it is very similar to what you would do on a live-action set just kind of spread out over time. I have 200 people ultimately that I work with, 200 artists. I don't talk to computers, I don't direct computers, I direct people. And they all have jobs that are similar to live-action set-up. I've got a cinematog-
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SF Tube Talk

TV News & Previews

By Lee Whiteside

It's the start of the new fall season for the networks in September (barring any delays from a still-possible actors strike) and the end of the summer runs of many of the cable shows.

NBC brings back **Heroes** for its third season, the initial arc of which is titled "Villains", with a two hour season opener on Monday, Sept 22nd. Prior to that, www.NBC.com will be making available a webisode series "Going Postal" that introduce the character of Echo DeMille, a postman who discovers he has a special power that makes him a target. Viewers will be able to see Echo's destiny unfold and help to set up the new season of **Heroes**. In an interview with www.Scifi.com, series creator **Tim Kring** indicated that the third season will take the show's characters into new directions, including learning more about the back story to Heroes universe. According to **Kring**, "You're going to see a lot of bad guys in this one. The idea, also, is we're playing off the idea of our characters as heroes or villains. So it's really the duality of good and evil. ... We're playing off of this duality of good and evil. All of our characters were given these powers and possess these powers, and at some point it becomes sort of free will and human nature as to what you're going to do with that. And all of us are given the choice to make decisions that lead us down very dark paths or towards

heroic ends. And so, literally, every one of our characters gets faced with that dilemma." **Kring** also indicated that Sylar will be a major part of the new season, which is a change from what was originally planned for when it would have been the second half of season two. With the writer's strike shutting down production on the show while **Zachary Quintos** was filming **Star Trek**, he was now available for the arc when he would not have been if there hadn't been a strike. As for the opening episodes of the season, there's not much in the way of story details, but we do know a bit about some new characters and guest stars. **William Katt** (**Greatest American Hero**) will guest star as a reporter who goes after Niki Sanders in the second hour of the new season. **Francis Capra** (Weevil on **Veronica Mars**) will turn up as an evil character named Jesse, **Bruce Boxleitner** will be a recurring character as Senator Robert Malden, and **Brea Grant** will be Joy, a character with a speedy ability, who causes problems for Hiro. Other characters returning at some point include Claire's real mother, **Eriko Tamura** will return as Yaeko, and we will quite likely see return appearances from some characters who have died (or appeared to have died).

Returning to NBC on Monday nights starting Sept 29th will be the second season of **Chuck**, with all three of the spy trio being targeted for elimination. Joining the cast as a new assistant manager at Buy More will be **Tony Hale** and **Nicole Richie** will guest star as Sarah's former high school classmate.

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24 Frames

Movie News

By Lee Whiteside

The summer box office has held up well this summer, with most of the big genre movies doing well, with **Iron Man** and **Indiana Jones** doing over \$300 million domestically. **Wall-E** and **Hancock** opened strong and should easily make it to \$200 million plus. **The Incredible Hulk**, **Wanted**, and **Get Smart** did decent numbers while **Prince Caspian** looks to settle at around \$150 million and **Speed Racer** is a big flop at just under \$45 million. With **The Dark Knight**, **Hellboy 2**, **The X-Files: I Want to Believe** still left to open in July, the summer should stay hot for a while more.

The Hollywood Reporter has indicated that Warner Brothers Pictures Group president **Jeff Robinov** and Warner president **Kevin McCormick** have had meetings with DC Comics executives and writers to discuss future possible projects involving DC comics characters and properties. Seeing how Marvel has been taking more direct control of their film adaptations, it appears Warner Brothers is finally seeing the benefits of taking a similar approach to producing a more unified range of films. If anything, it appears that things may be getting set into place so that something like the **Catwoman** movie won't ever happen again.

Warner Brothers is also working on developing an **Elfquest** movie, based on the comic series by **Richard** and **Wendy**

Pini. Rawson Thurber (**Dodgeball**) has reportedly been lined up to write, direct and produce the film. They have yet to determine its format, though. Probably best to keep it animated in some manner.

Filming is starting this month on **Roland Emmerich's** apocalyptic thriller **2012**, which presumes that the end of the world happens in 2012 when the Mayan calender ends and a massive wave of destruction (volcanoes, tidal waves, typhoons, etc.) canvasses the Earth. **John Cusack** stars as a limo driver who is trying to be a writer and **Amanda Peet** is his ex-wife, newly married. The film will follow their struggle to survive in the wake of the disasters. Also starring in the movie will be **Oliver Platt**, **Chiwetel Ejiofor**, **Han Chin** and **Danny Glover**. **Roland** has co-written the script with **Harald Kloser** and will be directing for Columbia Pictures and Centropolis Entertainment.

In an alternate take on the end of the world, **Seth Rogen** and **Jay Baruchel** will star in **Jay and Seth vs. the Apocalypse**. **Rogen** and **Evan Goldberg** produced a comedy short based on a story by **Goldberg** and **Jason Stone** that was put up for auction to be turned into a movie. The movie will be about two guys dealing with the apocalypse. Maybe if this and **2012** do well, someone might put up the money for **Terry Gilliam** to film **Good Omens**, the **Neil Gaiman/Terry Pratchett** take on the whole thing.

Joss Whedon's **Cabin in the Woods** has been given a green light by MGM. It was co-written with **Drew Goddard** and will also be **Goddard's** directorial debut. **Whedon** has called the film "The horror movie to end all horror movies."

In an interview with MTV, **Goddard** indicated "it's genius, it's funny. It's got a harder and darker edge, but it's also got classic Whedon qualities. It'll rip your heart out and be heartfelt at the same time." **Goddard** was a writer on **Buffy** and **Angel** and also wrote the **Cloverfield** movie.

Disney and Walden Media will move production of the third **Narnia** movie, **Voyage of the Dawn Treader**, to Mexico due to the need for sound stages and a massive water tank for filming a lot of sea based scenes. This installment is being directed by **Michael Apted**. They will be using some of the same facilities that were used for **Titanic** and **Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World**. Filming is expected to start in early 2009 with a likely release in May of 2010. **Will Poulter** has been cast as Eustace Scrubb, cousin to the Pevensie children, for the film.

In classic science fiction film news, a missing 25 minutes of

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SF Tube Talk

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Sarah will also have a new undercover job. Following *Heroes* on Monday's will be *My Own Worst Enemy*, with **Christian Slater** as Henry Spivey, a middle class efficiency expert who has a super spy alter ego of Edward Albright. When the programming that keeps the two separate break down and they learn about each other, life gets much more interesting. Joining the lineup on Wednesday nights will be *Knight Rider*, following on from the TV movie from last season. Starring in the series is **Bruce Davison** as Charles Graiman, **Deanna Russo** as Sarah Graiman, **Justin Bruening** as Mike Traceur, **Sydney Tamiia Poitier** as Carrie Rivai, and **Val Kilmer** as KITT's voice. If you watched the movie, you pretty much know what to expect from the series. Once the nostalgia appeal wears off, the show will need to come up with some original stories to keep KITT from getting recalled.

FOX is bringing back *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles*, airing on Mondays at 8 pm starting September 8th. As a refresher course, look for FOX to air the nine first season episodes for nightly airings starting August 10th. For season two, the main cast is returning with Brian Austin Green (**Derek Reese**) now a regular. New recurring cast members include Garbage lead singer **Shirley Mason** as Catherine Weaver, CEO of Cyberdyne and **Leven Rambin** as Riley, a schoolmate of John Connor. Not much has yet been leaked about the first few episodes at press time. Needless to say, it is likely that Cameron survives the explosion that ended the first season and they will carry on from there.

The big new series for the fall looks to be FOX's *Fringe*, which will debut on September 9th with a two hour premier and will continue weekly in the 9 pm ET/PT slot on Tuesday nights. From **J. J. Abrams** and his cohorts (**Roberto Orci**, **Alex Kurtzman**, **Bryan Burk**, and **Alex Graves**), it follows FBI Special Agent Olivia Dunham (**Anna Torv**) as she learns about strange goings on and a special group that investigate's the Fringe elements. Aside from the pilot, which has leaked online and has also been screened at the San Diego Comic Con, there's not much else known about the show and its weekly episodes. Also starring are **Joshua Jackson** as Peter Bishop, estranged son of institutionalized scientist Walter Bishop (**John Noble**), **Lance Reddick** as Agent Phillip Broyles, **Mark Valley** as Special Agent John Scott, **Jaskia Nicole** as Agent Astrid Farnsworth, and **Kirk Acevedo** as Agent Charlie Francis. Since they promise there is a larger, more shocking truth beyond the events of the pilot, expect lots of teasing as the main characters investigate strange happenings ala *The X-Files*.

ABC has yet to announce their new Page 4

season start dates as of press time. They will be bringing back *Pushing Daisies* and *Eli Stone*, although it is not yet known if it will be in September or early October and so far there's been few details about the new season for either show to report. Debuting this fall on ABC is the US version of *Life on Mars*. With the show being revamped after having the series turned over to new producers (**Josh Appelbaum**, **Andre Nemec** and **Scott Rosenberg**), it is not clear who of the actors in the pilot will be part of the series aside from lead **Jason O'Mara** as Sam Tyler. The only new casting announced is *Sopranos* star **Michael Imperioli** as Ray Carling, a tough-guy detective. With the recasting and likely refilming of the entire pilot, don't look for this until October or later.

CBS is not returning *Ghost Whisper* until Friday October 3rd, so we'll talk about what to expect in the new season next issue and *The Eleventh Hour* isn't scheduled to debut until October 9th.

The CW is bringing back *Smallville* and *Supernatural* this fall, with *Reaper* planned for a midseason return. *Smallville* begins its eighth and final (supposedly) season on October 2nd with the season opener *Odyssey*. Picking up from the last season finale, members of the Justice League including Green Arrow, Black Canary, Aquaman and the Martian Manhunter will turn up to rescue Clark. As for what will be happening this season with little of Lana Lang and none of Lex Luthor, look for more of the Clark/Lois dynamic to be explored, especially when Clark takes a job at the Dailey Planet. New characters for this season will be paramedic Davis Bloome, who "is forced to confront a burgeoning darkness inside of him that just might be a harbinger of doom," and **Cassidy Freeman** as Tess Mercer, who is Lex's hand-picked successor to the LuthorCorp empire. Expect her to be as ruthless as Lex has been, if not more. The fourth season of *Supernatural* (also returning on October 2nd) will open four months after the finale with Dean waking up with no memory of his torment in Hell. Look for the events that transpired over those four months to be told in flashbacks and be a major part of the ongoing storyline for the season.

Stargate Atlantis continues its fifth season on SciFi on Friday nights. After a break to avoid the Summer Olympics opening ceremonies, the show returns mid-August with *Ghost in the Machine* where Atlantis is visited by the disembodied minds of Replicators, led by android Fran (**Michelle Morgan**). In *The Shrine*, Rodney McKay is stricken with a mental affliction that causes him to revert to a childlike state. Producers think this is one of their best scripts and a "tear-jerker", giving **David Hewlett** a chance to really shine as Dr. McKay. In *Whispers*, Carson Beckett returns and is

stranded off-world with another team investigating a Wraith laboratory that holds dozens of humanoid forms in stasis, much like the one Beckett was found in. It is described as an episode with a strong horror element, leaving you wondering who will live and who will die of the guest star team. In *Tracker*, the team responds to aid a village under threat from the Wraith who are on the trail of a runner, Kiryk (**Mike Dopud**). but when Dr. Keller is captured by Kiryk, Ronon and McKay must come to her rescue. **Christopher Heyerdahl** returns as the Wraith Todd, and he enlists the help of the Atlantis team to negotiate with another Wraith hive, with Teyla taking part disguised as a Wraith Queen. To close out the first half of the season, **Michael Shanks** returns as Dr. Daniel Jackson in *First Contact*. Jackson visits Atlantis to research an Ancient scientist, Janus, who once lived there. Jackson and McKay discover the existence of a research laboratory set up by Janus but when they get there they discover they aren't the only ones there. Look for a surprise attack by The Wraith and the return of the Travelers leaving things in a cliff-hanging state by the end of the episode.

Last issue I talked about the new Friday night series *Charlie Jade*. Well, the initial airings didn't draw very well so SciFi has moved it to 3 am early Tuesday/late Monday night with repeats of *Joan of Arcadia* now airing in the 8 pm ET/PT Friday night slot. SciFi does appear to be keeping *Charlie Jade* on the air for the rest of its run, though, so make sure your DVR is set with the correct time if you want to keep up with it. *Doctor Who* finished up its fourth season with a bang, tying up the four years of **Russell T. Davies** tenure as show runner/head writer on the series. The finale drew almost 50% of the viewing audience in the UK when it aired on July 5th and the regeneration cliff-hanger was the talk of the country for the week leading up to it. **Davies** will still oversee production on four one-hour specials to air on the BBC through the end of 2009, the first of which will air over Christmas 2008 and will feature Cybermen in Victorian England. The remaining specials will start filming in early 2009 for airing at Easter and later in the year on the BBC. **Davies** will write two of them and will co-write the other two with an as-yet-unnamed writer. After that, the fifth series will start filming to air in 2010 with **Steven Moffat** taking over as executive producer and head writer on the series. *Torchwood* will also have a limited run in 2009, with a five part story that is planned to air over one week on BBC 1. Clues as to who may be joining the team were evident in the *Doctor Who* season finale, but no official announcement has yet been made. Filming has been going on with *The Sarah Jane Adventures*, and one pair of

episodes will feature The Sontarans as well as an appearance by Sir Alistair Gordon Lethbridge-Stewart, played by **Nicholas Courtney**. The character was referenced in a season four *Doctor Who* episode, leading the way to a return appearance of The Brig with Sarah Jane.

Elsewhere on the BBC, the remake of *Terry Nation's Survivors* has finished filming its first episode and a second block is underway. It will air on BBC One in the UK this fall and it will likely turn up in the US on BBC America. Starring in the series are **Julie Graham**, **Max Beesley**, **Nikki Amuka-Bird**, and **Freema Agyeman**. It is about the survivors of a virus that has wiped out most of the world's population.

For more British science fiction, we've got *Primeval* debuting on BBC America on Saturday, August 9th at 9 pm ET/PT. It is a series produced for ITV about problems that arise when anomalies in time start appearing and creatures from the past (and future) start turning up in the present day. The series was started as a means to showcase in an action drama the digital creatures created by Impossible Pictures for their *Walking with Dinosaurs* and related documentary series. In most cases, their use of prehistoric creatures are scientifically accurate. The series focuses on a core team investigating an increasingly dangerous series of time anomalies for the British Government. Leading the team is senior Home Office official Sir James Peregrine Lester (**Ben Miller**). Also on the team is Professor Nick Cutter (**Douglas Henshall**), a evolutionary scientist whose wife, palaeontologist Helen Cutter (**Juliet Aubrey**), disappeared eight years ago and is presumed dead at the start of the series, zoologist Abby Maitland (**Hannah Spearritt**), lab technician and Cutter's bodyguard Stephen Hart (**James Murray**), dinosaur geek/student Connor Temple (**Andrew-Lee Potts**) and the team's government liaison Claudia Brown (**Lucy Brown**).

In the first episode, a Gorgonopsid from 250 million years ago turns up when a time anomaly opens up in the Forest of Dean, where Helen Cutter disappeared eight years ago. A team is put together to find out what has happened and to get the creature back to its own time. In episode 2, the London Underground has an infestation of giant spiders as well as a dangerous arthropod from the Late Carboniferous period (300 million years ago). Episode 3 sees aquatic Mosasaurs and Hesperomis turn up in swimming pools, reservoirs, and flooded cellars while Professor Cutter realizes his ex-wife may still be alive and hiding in time. In Episode 4, Helen escapes and releases a flock of deadly Dodos that carry parasites harmful to humans. Episode 5 finds a Pteranodon threatening a golf course, but the real killer is something

(Continued on page 5)

SF Tube Talk (Continued from page 4)

more deadly. In Episode 6, the team must track down and stop a highly evolved predatory creature from the future that threatens to change history. Assuming that BBC America goes straight into season 2, the first episode (Episode 7) kicks off with Professor Cutter grappling with the changes to history that happened when he was inside the anomaly at the end of the first season, including the non-existence of Claudia Brown and his new assistant, Oliver Leek (**Karl Theobald**), who may have a sinister agenda. Meanwhile, the team deals with a pack of Deinonychus on the loose in a local shopping mall.

Over on ABC Family, the debut of *The Middleman* got lukewarm ratings and the show has been moved back two hours to 10 pm ET/PT (which is still better than the 3 am time slot to which SciFi banished *Charlie Jade*). It appears that ABC Family is going to keep the show on the air for the planned 13 episodes, though. Unless ratings pick up in the later time slot, it's not likely there will be a second season. I really enjoy its tongue-in-cheek approach to the genre and the fun homages that pepper the show. Upcoming episodes in August and September are *The Ectoplasmic Panhellenic Investigation* in which The Middleman learns of a haunted sorority house and Wendy is sent in undercover to find out what is really going on. Next is *The Obsolescent Cryogenic Meltdown* which has **Kevin Sorbo** guest starring as a former Middleman, Guy Doddard, who was cryogenically frozen in 1969 and is revived to do battle with an old nemesis, who, in actuality is long-dead. When Doddard realizes he's been replaced and is no longer relevant, he puts a dangerous plan into motion and enlists an unknowing Wendy to take part. This episode looks to pay homage to 60's James Bond movies including Wendy in a white bikini ala **Ursula Andress** in "*Dr. No*" (with Goddard in a red wet suit). In *The Vampiric Puppet Lamentation* the Middleman deals with vampiric ventriloquist dummies. After that are three more episodes, for which we have the titles of two of them, *The neClotharian Contamination Protocol* and *The Palindrome Reversal Palindrome*, and very little information since they haven't actually started filming yet. For more on the show, check out www.middlefan.com and the producers blog at themiddleblog.livejournal.com

HBO gets into the genre game with *True Blood*, based on the Southern Vampire novels by **Charlaine Harris**. It will debut on HBO Sunday nights starting September 7th for a 12 episode run. The series is set in Louisiana in a world where vampire have learned to co-exist with humans by drinking synthetic blood called Tru:Blood. **Anna Paquin** stars as

telepathic waitress Sookie Stackhouse, who becomes attracted to vampire Bill Compton (**Stephen Moyer**). Also starring are **Alexander Skarsgard** as Eric Northman, a thousand-year-old vampire Viking, **Ryan Kwanten** as Sookie's brother Jason Stackhouse, **Sam Trammell** as Sam Merlotte, the bar's owner, **Rutina Wesley** as Tara Thornton, Sookie's best friend, and **William Sanderson** as Bud Dearborne. Beyond the pilot episode which sets up the series, there's not much more information about how the weekly series will progress. HBO is doing some associated websites including www.TruBeverage.com and www.BloodCopy.com that will enhance the viewing experience for the series.

American Movie Classics will start dipping their toes into genre programming with a remake of *The Prisoner*, in a co-production with ITV and Granada International. It will be a six hour miniseries that will star **Jim Caviezel** as Number Six with **Ian McKellen** as Number Two. **Bill Gallagher** will serve as the series writer and executive producer with **Jon Jones** directing. According to AMC's general manager **Charlie Collier** at the TV Critics' tour, it will be a reboot of the classic series but it will have elements of *The Village*, spy gadgetry, and the giant white ball, Rover. **Collier** also indicated that AMC is looking to acquire and update other classic science fiction TV and movies and has been doing well with recent genre themed movie packages on the channel.

24 Frames (Continued from page 3)

film from **Fritz Lang's** *Metropolis* has been discovered in Argentina. A 16 mm film reel turned up at the Museo del Cine Pablo C. Ducros Hicken in the Argentine capital of Buenos Aires. The German Murnau Foundation, which holds the film rights to *Metropolis*, plans to incorporate the recovered footage into a new restored version.

In a recent interview while promoting *Hellboy 2*, **Guillermo del Toro** clarified plans for the two *Lords of the Rings* movies he is slated to direct. The first film will be an adaptation of *The Hobbit*, covering the entire story in the one movie. The second film, if actually produced, would serve as a bridge between *The Hobbit* and the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. However, copyrights and licenses only cover the three books and does not include other books written by **Tolkien**, such as *The Silmarillion*. **Del Toro** commented that "utilizing the materials that are available to us, and the discipline has been to try and, from my part, know everything else. Not to know it and use it, but to know it and not step on those things. There is enough ... narrative abridgement and some other pieces of narrative and suggestions and appendix notes and this and that to guide and create something that will not infringe anything else. But it's too early for me to swear by it. I think that that's the real creative endeavor on the second film." In any case, there will definitely be an adaptation of *The Hobbit*, but the makeup of the second film is still very much up in the air.

The independent film production *The Mutant Chronicles* has planned a screening at San Diego Comic-Con to get feedback directly from fans to help determine how to improve the movie. It stars **Ron Perlman** as Brother Samuel,

who leads a monastic cult that foresees the Earth being taken over by mutants and they have control of The Chronicles as a means to save the world. Also starring are **Thomas Jane**, **Anna Walton**, and **John Malkovich**. It was directed by **Simon Hunter** and written by **Phillip Eisner**.

A new *Red Sonja* movie is in the works with **Robert Rodriguez** producing, **Douglas Aarniokoski**, and **Rose McGowan** starring as the red-headed warrior. It will be based in part on the Red Sonya character created by **Robert E. Howard** as well as the *Red Sonja* comics and will be an origin story.

The movie adaptation of local author **Stephenie Meyer's** first novel *Twilight* will be hitting the movie screens in December. **Kristen Stewart** stars as Bella Swan with **Robert Pattinson** as Edward Cullen. It is the story of a high schooler transplanted from Phoenix to a small town in Washington who falls in love with a vampire. The novel series has been very popular with teens and will likely be a popular film series with them as well.

The summer of 2008 winds down with a few more movies released in August and even fewer genre movies in September, with only one (the *Mummy* sequel) likely have any chance at being a blockbuster (although the animated *Clone Wars* should do fairly well, but some fans may wait for the TV series).

The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor (Aug 1) **Brendan Fraser** is back as Rick O'Connell with a new *Mummy* movie, which will likely do better than his other summer movie, the 3D *Journey to the Center of the Earth*. Rick and his family must stop a mummy awoken from a 2,000 year old curse before he sends the world into darkness. China's Dragon Emperor (**Jet Li**) and his 10,000 warriors are accidentally awak-

(Continued on page 6)



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ened by Alex O’Connor (**Luke Ford**), who goes to his parents Rick and Evelyn (**Maria Bello**) to get their help in saving the world.

Fly Me to the Moon (Aug 8) In this animated movie, we get the true story about three houseflies that traveled to the moon on Apollo 11. Next they’ll make a movie about ***Space Chimps...*** Oh wait, that opened in July... Stars the voices of **Christopher Lloyd, Edwin E. Aldrin Jr, Robert Patrick, Nicollette Sheridan, and Tim Curry.**

Mirrors (Aug 15) **Keifer Sutherland** stars as the head of security in this horror thriller about a department store plagued by strange deaths. It seems there was a fire that caused a tragedy and one of the victims has been exacting revenge by returning to the living world through mirrors. Also stars **Paula Patton, Ezra Buzzington, Erica Gluck, and Cameron Boyce.**

Star Wars: Clone Wars (Aug 15) To launch the forthcoming animated TV series ***Star Wars: Clone Wars***, Lucasfilm is releasing the first few episodes as a feature length movie. Set between episodes 2 and 3, the movie features Anakin Skywalker, Obi-Wan Kenobe, and Padme Amidala leading the Jedi Knights against the forces of Count Dooku, General Greivous and Emperor Palpatine.

Death Race (Aug 22) It is 2020 and the overcrowded prison system has been turned over to the Weyland Corporation. They decide a way to cut the prison population and provide entertainment for the masses is to stage a Death Race for a global audience hungry for violence. Former NASCAR champion Jenson Ames (**Jasen Statham**) is forced to participate and becomes the star performer and fights to survive so that he can win his freedom. Also stars **Ian McShane, Joan Allen, Tyrese Gibson and Natalie Martinez.** Directed by **Paul W.S. Anderson** (you have been warned).

Babylon A.D. (Aug 29) **Vin Diesel** stars as a mercenary charged with delivering a young woman from Russia to Canada but he learns that a virus she is infected with could doom the human race. Also stars **Vincent Cassel, Michelle Yeoh, Melanie Thierry, and Gerard Depardieu.**

Ghost Town (Sept 19) **Ricky Gervais** stars as a man who dies for seven minutes and when he is resurrected, he can see ghosts!

Igor (Sep 19) **John Cusack** is the voice of Igor in this Dreamworks animated story of a lowly lab assistant who dreams of becoming a mad scientist and winning the first place prize at the annual Evil Science Fair. Other voices are **Steve Buscemi, John Cleese, Jay Leno, and Jennifer Coolidge.**

rapher, I’ve got an art director, somebody in charge of costumes, in charge of props, I’ve got actors. But I meet with them all sort of separately. So in a sad way it’s a little bit like the game of telephone, and we’re seeing all these things and hoping that when we get all together with the parts of the job we put it all together into one file and show it on the big screen it’s all gonna work. And it never does. So you meet several times over the course of weeks or months per shot just to get these shots right.

But it’s the same idea as if we all got in the same room and said action and cut. We just don’t have that luxury. So it’s like making live-action in slow motion.

Q: You used Fred Willard in live-action spots throughout the movie, should we be expecting more of that from you and by extension Pixar?

A: Out of me? Possibly, because I really enjoyed it, and I definitely have some ideas coming down the pipeline that would involve live-action. And this was a little bit of not only a test to see if it would work for *WALL-E* but what I would think of it. It was pretty easy, pretty much a no-brainer. I mean standing in front of a podium with a prompter kind of thing. Just make sure the cap is not on the lens. But still I enjoyed it; I mean the one thing that doesn’t exist in animation is spontaneity, and to suddenly be in the single set then the same day you’re done. I was just shocked, that is amazing, that is the coolest thing ever. I know it comes with probably way more stress and different challenges than I ever would have experienced yet. Because you definitely get to play god in animation and change things whenever you see something wrong or even change your mind months later and tweak it again. We take advantage of that at Pixar. But I definitely enjoyed it.

Q: I thought *WALL-E*’s design was pretty much perfect. How many concepts and revisions did you go through to finally get him to final (concept)?

A: He came in stages and I’d say the sum total time spent on him was almost a year and a half to get the design just right. When I was just trying to prove in private that this could work I had to draw something we didn’t have a design for - I just had a couple of artists and we were just, in private, putting on what we would call boards or reels, story boards with little sounds, just privately with no pressure. We hadn’t even gotten the green light to make this movie, just see what it might feel like, what was the tone. I had to draw something, so I said let’s make him a box, because he has to cube trash and that is a very sort of masculine looking graphic design. And let’s make *EVE* a circle. We let those be the basic ideas. Then, as we got into the actual

designing of it, I knew I wanted him to box up like a turtle, because it would make him kind of shy. I wanted the engineering to always feel like a machine and like he had a purpose and a function first. But that you could translate into it a character, I kept using *Luxo Jr.* even though you can’t see a direct correlation, as that methodology, because you always saw it as a lamp, the minute it stops and doesn’t move it’s not a character - it’s a lamp. But the minute it moves you see a character in it. That has so much to do with its design and I wanted the same thing with the robot, the big thing that was the missing ingredient was - what is the key to the face?

I was at a baseball game and someone passed me their binoculars because we had seats so far away. I missed an entire inning because I turned the binoculars around and started making them look sad, stern, happy. I remember doing that with my dad’s binoculars. I was like there is so much character in these I don’t need anything else, I don’t need any other information, a nose, a mouth. The hinge really did make a huge (difference) I said that’s like the *Luxo* lamp from the side. You can get all these from the angle and that is just from the side now and also from the front. So that was just this huge two dimensional win.

The biggest thing we spent even more time on was the real engineering of it. I had some really great designers that are practically engineers themselves. I said I wanted the design of this not to be a cheat; I want him built the way he is truly going to move. We’re not going to cheat we’re not going to squash and stretch him. We’re not going to do anything but make him move the exactly by the limitations of how he’s built. It took a long time, was a real sort of *Rubik’s cube* engineering feat. One of the biggest wins for, I think, bringing character to his life was {I think it was Jay Schuster} came up with the idea of giving him zoom lenses inside sort of inner lenses. That was a surrogate for the idea of someone’s pupils moving or their eyebrows to show you that they’re thinking.

When that piece went in we were like “oh my gosh - that is gold” suddenly he truly is alive.

Q: I saw a bits of Chaplin and Buster Keaton in his movements. Did the animators get to watch a lot of silent films?

A: Yes, both the story crew and the animators watched probably one Chaplin and one Keaton film every day for a year and a half. Until we had pretty much seen their entire body of work, features and shorts. It was just to get as much knowledge about the breadth of grammar that is used in silent films. You walk away realizing “what can’t you do, what can’t you convey with just imagery?” Those guys just figured it all out and you realize that something was actually lost with sound, we got lazy and instead of trying

to support it visually we just said it. And in any good film, no matter how much dialogue, you’re trying to always make the visuals be so strong that even if the sound goes out on the projector you would still know what is going on through the acting and the poses and the camera staging. We tried really hard to learn from those guys. I definitely felt it was a little more akin to Keaton in what we had picked for *WALL-E* because of “the great stone face” was what he was called. He never had any emotion and *WALL-E*, technically, has no changes in his face, so that is what I thought was very akin to.

Q: With how long you spend on movies like *WALL-E*, are you nervous when they come out about how they are going to be received?

A: Well I never get nervous until I go to these things. (Ha ha ha) And everybody says “Well... Pixar has had 8 hits in a row” and I’m like not thinking about it when I’m making the movie because you’re spending all that time. It’s like “all hands on deck” for almost three of the four years, ‘cause it usually doesn’t work and it’s not working they way you want it to. So you’re just in this fix-it mode for so long and in repair mode. To be honest, the biggest pressure I feel for most of the four years is the pressure from my peers. I work with the most talented, smartest people that there are and they intimidate me. I don’t feel that smart, I don’t feel that talented when I’m around them. And they’re like a thermometer right in your face; if they don’t think it’s working you can just sense it and if they think it’s working they get excited. And because you spend most of the time not working it is a tremendous amount of restless pressure.

Q: What was the decision behind using *Hello Dolly*?

A: It was an abstract choice I know, as a matter of fact, the minute I decided to do it I said I’m going to be asked this for the rest of my life. But I’m willing to do it because it is the right choice. What happened was that I always had the idea of old fashioned music in front of stars. I just love the future juxtaposed against the past. But that is a lot of options of songs. Then I started trolling through standards, which a lot come from musicals. Started looking at musicals, I did some musical theater in school, I remembered a lot of staple plays that people did when I got to *Hello Dolly* and that first phrase of “Put on Your Sunday Clothes” was “Out there”. Without explanation it just worked, just viscerally it worked so I put it in without being able to justify it. And sort of kept it a private thing so like people are going to just think I’m nuts. But it just kept working and so I finally realized that the reason I liked is because the content of that song is about two guys

Andrew Stanton

(Continued from page 6)

that have never left their small town and they just want to go out for one night, live it up, and kiss a girl. I thought that is *WALL-E*, and so then I looked and said how would he discover that? I said “well, just find an old movie.” I think Jim Reardon, my co-writer, came up with that. So we looked at it and I found the other song “It Only Takes a Moment” and I saw these two lovers holding hands. I was like - that is exactly how I can convey *I love you* without being able to say it. Also, I read in a book about human perceptions and studies of their posturing that holding hands is the most intimate thing you can do in public in any culture. So I just thought that was key. And when you get that much from accidentally stumbling across something, well I thought I’d just put up with answering this question forever. My other thing I’m saying is that it isn’t like it’s my favorite movie or something I’m just saying *WALL-E* has bad taste in musicals. The biggest problem was getting **20th Century Fox** to allow us to use it. *You want it for what?* But they were actually very cooperative and let it go easy.

Q: The design of *WALL-E*, you’ve told us how it came about but, were you aware of how much it looked like #5 from *Short Circuit*?

A: No. Honestly it shocked me, it shocks me to this day. I don’t think it does, I think the only reason is because he’s got stereoscopic eyes. I think that is what everybody is keying into. But honestly I never thought of it. If anything, I told the design crew that there is two ways robots have been made, Tin-Man style (human form), and where you see it as a machine and you put a character into it (R2-D2 style). The machine type is what I was trying for; things that made you see it as an appliance. He came in such stages that it honestly never dawned on me. I’d fess up if I did; I’ve fessed up to everything else so far.

Q: My colleagues insist that I ask about “*John Carter of Mars*”.

A: I can say that is a true rumor. That is what I am doing next, I am writing it this year with Mark Andrews who was the head of story on *Ratatouille* and the *Incredibles*. We have not made any decisions about exactly how it’s going to be executed, how it’s going to be distributed or any of that stuff. All we’ve decided we’re going to do is use the Pixar methodology of story, story, story. So we’re just spending all this year trying to write the best script possible and then we’ll make all the other decisions based on that. So that’s the most that is happening on that.

Thank you for your time. -- Bob LaPierre

The End of an Era: Star Trek: The Experience Beams Out

by Lee Whiteside

A little over ten years ago, a new attraction opened at the Las Vegas Hilton that became the destination of choice for Star Trek and science fiction fans visiting Las Vegas, Star Trek: The Experience. But now, the owners of the attraction (Cedar Faire, who acquired it when Viacom split itself up) and the Las Vegas Hilton have not been able to come to terms to extend the lease for the exhibit and it will be closing down on September 1st. What it will be replaced with is unknown, but it will likely not be anything similar. The Hilton will likely create something entirely new to take advantage of the monorail stop that will generate more income for them than they got by leasing the space The Experience was in.

The Experience was launched during the latter part of the run of Star Trek: Deep Space Nine, the attraction relied heavily on the look of that incarnation of Star Trek for the décor and atmosphere as well as the names for Quark’s Bar, Moogie’s Trading Post, and Garak’s Clothiers. The main attraction was the Klingon Encounter that took fans into the future and onto the bridge of the Enterprise D where you learned that one of that one of your group was an ancestor of Captain Picard and that you needed to be returned to your own time with help from Geordie and Commander Riker. The ride ended with a simulator ride that featured your shuttle being chased down the Las Vegas strip by Klingons. In later years, the ending video sequence became very dated as most of the casinos seen in the sequence were long gone or remodeled and jokes were made that your group had been returned several years early. On your way to the ride, you got to take a look at the History of the Future, featuring many props and costumes from the entire history of Star Trek, which was periodically updated with information and props from the newer versions of Star Trek on TV and in the movies. In 2004, the Borg Invasion 4D was added, which made use of newer high definition video technology to provide an updated ride tied into Star Trek: Voyager. It featured Admiral Janeway, the Emergency Medical Hologram, and The Borg Queen in an adventure on a space station being overrun by The Borg. The ride was an example of what can be done with newer technology, but the simulator part was a bit tame.

The attraction has been a very popular location for weddings and other events, with many couples taking their vows on the bridge of the Enterprise D over the years. Additions of a behind-the-scenes tour and photo opportunities on the

bridge set were also popular with fans. But what kept fans coming back even if they didn’t go on the rides was the Star Trek atmosphere of The Experience. The Quark’s Bar menu features themed dishes (my favorite is the Holy Rings of Betazed for the Onion Rings) and the Warp Core Breach was always a popular drink. The ambassadors (waiters) and the roving aliens (Ferengis, Klingons, and Borgs) were always fun to talk to and usually did not break out of character and some fans more than likely tested their patience at times. The Hilton has also become the site of the annual big Star Trek convention run by Creation and the Experience has always been a focal point of the convention. With the attraction gone, it is unclear if Creation will continue having the events at the Hilton. This year’s convention happening August 6-10 will definitely be a bitter-sweet one for the fans who have considered The Experience part of their annual convention experience.

Over the years, I’ve made many visits and had many dinners at Quarks. Sometimes it was a quick stop while I was in town for the Consumer Electronics Show and other times it was with friends as part of a group trek. The United Federation of Phoenix has made several trips as a group to the Experience which have always been fun outings and they are organizing one last trip the weekend of August 1-3.

I was in Las Vegas for the Westercon 61 convention over July 4th weekend and made sure I went back there for a final dinner at Quark’s and spent some latinum for a few trinkets to remember it by. Saturday night was still pretty busy and they also had a couple of weddings going on, so it was pretty much business as usual. It did appear that a lot of the people there had heard about the closure and the employees were acknowledging it but they were still fairly low-key about it. The waiters and gift shop employees should be able to find similar jobs without too much trouble, I’d think, but I’m not sure what having “Ferengi host at Quark’s”, “Klingon Ambassador”, or “Enterprise-D pilot” on their resumes will do to help them find a similar job.

It was hoped that with the advent of the new Star Trek movie coming in May 2010 The Experience would be kept going for another year, but in the end it was decided to shut it down. Hopefully something new will be created somewhere that can give fans old and new a place to go to experience the Star Trek universe in person. I’ve enjoyed my trips there over the years and will remember Star Trek: The Experience fondly.



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We are a small, friendly group of science fiction/fantasy literature fans who like to get together to talk about our favorite books. We welcome potential new friends.

August 19 - *Storm Front* by Jim Butcher. First of the popular Dresden Files supernatural mysteries. Talk to me nice and I may bring the unabridged version of the TV pilot.

September 16 - *Watchmen* by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons

Regarded by many as one of the best graphic novels ever written. Lets have a look at it before next year's movie.

October 21 - *Here There Be Dragons* by James A Owen.

Fascinating premise, it received a fine review from the Dragon Page folks.

November 18 - *Galactic Patrol* by EE "Doc" Smith

First-published of the Lensman series, which practically invented the larger-than-life space opera.

December 16 - *Roll Your Own*

Think of a book you've read and enjoyed in the past year or so that we haven't discussed yet. Share your thoughts with the rest of the group. This will provide some possibilities for next year's book list.

FURNISHED ROOM FOR RENT

in private house. Fem-fans welcome. House in quiet neighborhood on west side, near two community colleges and shopping center. \$360/month, plus share of housework, covers rent and utilities — including cable TV, phone and Internet connection. Must tolerate cats, smokers, and artists who keep weird hours. Phone Leslie, 623-247-7809, afternoons or evenings.

The Gulliver Travel Research Grant

The Speculative Literature Foundation is accepting proposals for the Gulliver Travel Research Grant from July 1st 2008 until September 30th 2008.

SLF travel grants are awarded to assist writers (speculative fiction, poetry, drama, creative nonfiction) in their research. They are not currently available for academic research. We are currently offering one \$600 travel grant annually, to be used to cover airfare, lodging, and/or other travel expenses.

Our travel grants will be awarded by a committee of SLF staff members on the basis of interest and merit. Factors considered will include:

- a writing sample in the proposed genre (up to 10 pages of poetry, 10 pages of drama, or 5000 words of fiction or creative nonfiction); please note that the writing sample must be a solo work (work completed only by the applicant).

- a bibliography of previously-published work by the author (no more than one page, typed); applicants need not have previous publications to apply.

- a one-page written description of the project in question (maximum 500 words) Think about

- Where you intend to visit (be as specific as you can)

- When you intend to travel (including the completion date)

- What you will gain from field rather than desk research via a library or the internet

If awarded the grant, the recipient agrees to write a brief report of their research experience (500-1000 words) for our files, and for possible public dissemination on our website.

PLEASE NOTE: This grant, as with all SLF grants, is intended to help writers working with speculative literature. If you're not sure what areas that term encompasses, we recommend referencing our FAQ (question #2).

Travel Grant Application Procedures

1. Send the three items listed above to our travel grant administrators, Colin Harvey and Tiffany Jonas, as an attached .doc or .rtf file in one e-mail, to travel@speculativeliterature.org. Include a brief cover letter with your name and contact info (e-mail, phone in case of emergency). If you have questions, direct them to that same address.

2. You may apply for travel to take place at any point in the following year (from October to the following October).

3. Travel may take place from any country to any country, or internally within a country; the grants are unrestricted. Funds will be disbursed in U.S. currency (but can be sent through PayPal if that is more convenient for international recipients).
4. Travel grant applications will be considered from July 1st to September 30th, annually. Applications received outside that period will be discarded unread.

5. The grant recipient will be announced by October 15th, annually. All applicants will be notified of the status of their application by that date.

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUPS

Fantasy/Sci-Fi Discussion Group
 4th 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. - 4th Sunday, 6pm
Borders, Phoenix Camelback

Manga Bookclub
 1st Tuesdays, 7pm
Borders, Chandler

Manga Bookclub
 August 16
 September 20
Barnes & Noble, Goodyear

Graphic Novel Book Club
 2nd Sunday, 8:30pm
Four Peaks Brewery, Tempe

AUTHOR SIGNINGS

Poisoned Pen Bookstore
S.M. Stirling, Sep 7th, 2pm
Alan Dean Foster, Nov 1st, 5:30pm
David Morrell, Dec 3rd 7pm

SPECIAL BOOK RELEASES

This listing is to introduce you to smaller publishing houses that offer exclusive or limited edition books that you aren't able to find at your local chain bookstore.

Borderlands Press
 "The Hunger" by Whitey Stieber. Ltd edition.
 "5 Stories" by Peter Straub.

Cemetery Dance Publications
 "He is Legend" celebrating Richard Matheson and includes the first-ever collaboration between Stephen King and his son, Joe Hill.
 "Road Rage" audio CD includes "Duel" and "Throttle" by Stephen King, Joe Hill and Richard Matheson
 "Stephen King Goes to the Movies" paperback with commentary and introductions.

Conland Press
 "Strange Roads" new chapbook by Peter Beagle
 "The Last Unicorn" by Peter Beagle. Deluxe hardcover w/extras
 "Last Unicorn" concept art ltd edition prints

Subterranean Press
 "What the Mouse Found and other stories" by Charles deLint
 "Worlds of Weber" by David Weber
 "Kilimanjaro" by Mike Resnick
 "Moby Dick" screenplay by Ray Bradbury
 "The Graveyard Book" by Neil Gaiman. Ltd edition and lettered & signed edition.
 "Temeraire" series by Naomi Novik with new covers and interior illustrations.

Traife Buffet
 "Greetings from Lake Wu" a special edition of stories by Jay Lake and art by Frank Wu

Wildside Press
 "Wings in the Night" by Robert E. Howard plus loads of other Howard reprints

Wyrms Publishing
 "Memorare" by Gene Wolfe, Ltd signed, number hardcover
 "Toast" by Charles Stross

GAMING EVENTS

BOOKMANS, CENTRAL
Dungeons & Dragons Night. 1st & 3rd Mondays, 5pm
Street Fighter II Video Game Challenge, Aug 16, 3pm
Harry Potter Magic Show with Jolly Roger, Aug 30, 3pm

DRAWN TO COMICS
Heroclix - Tuesdays 4pm-7pm. Fridays, 8pm-11pm. Saturdays, 3pm-6pm
Star Wars Miniatures - Sundays, 1p-4p
Sit-and-Sketch with local artists - 3rd Saturday 6-8pm

GAME DEPOT
HeroClix & MechWarrior - Wednesdays, 530pm
UFS - Thursdays 6pm-9pm
Magic, The Gathering - Thursdays, 6pm-9pm

IMPERIAL OUTPOST GAMES
Federation Commander - 2nd Saturdays, noon
RPG - 1st & 3rd Sundays
Boardgames & Demo Nite - Thursdays, 6pm

SAMURAI COMICS
 (check website for correct store location)
Heroclix Tournament, Fridays, 6pm
Mechwarrior Tourney, Wednesdays, 6pm
Yugioh Tournament, Sundays, noon
Anime Club, Sundays, noon
Pokemon, Sundays, 2pm

SPAZDOG COMICS
Comic Book Creators Club, Mondays, 6:30pm
Heroclix Tournaments, Fridays, 7pm
Pokemon League, Saturdays, 3pm
MechWarrior, Saturdays, 6pm
Smash Bros Brawl Wii Tournament, Aug 16 & Sep 13, noon, \$5.00 entry
Mario Kart Wii Tournament, Aug 23 & Sep 27, noon, \$5 entry
Midnight Release Party for Stephen King's "The Stand", Sep 10, 12:01am

SCIENCE EVENTS

BOOKMANS, SPEEDWAY, TUCSON
Children's science event "Mad Science." Jun 18, 11am
BOOKMANS, GRANT AVE, TUCSON
Children's science event "Mad Science." Jun 19, 11am

BOOKMANS, MESA
Children's Science event "Mad Science Presents." Jun 11, 130pm

(Continued on page 9)

FYI

(Continued from page 8)

PIMA AIR & SPACE MUSEUM, TUCSON

Titan Missile Museum Tours.

Reservations only

The only publicly accessible Titan II missile site in the nation. Tour the underground missile site. See the 3-ton blast doors, 8' thick silo walls and an actual Titan II missile in the launch duct. Visit the launch control center, experience a simulated launch, and more. Evening tours to beat the heat: Aug 16, Sep 13, Oct 11, 5pm-8pm

CHALLENGER SPACE CENTER, PEORIA

Stargazing. Starlab Planetarium. Check website for dates and times

The Space Place is a 2-hour interactive program for little ones with big imaginations! Designed for children ages 3 through 6, the program features age-appropriate activities designed to teach preschoolers about our planet and solar system. Call for reservations. 3rd

Mondays, 930am-1130am

ASU Meteorite Exhibit

*Olumbia Shuttle Memorial Display
Lowell Observatory Display*

ARIZONA SCIENCE CENTER

The new Dorrance Planetarium is now open.

Materials Science Workshops

These workshops provide fun hands-on experiences to help participants understand how materials scientists manipulate the properties of various materials to create the products that we use in our everyday life.

Check website for dates and topics
Skycycle – experience a physics lesson 15 feet above the floor!

SETI Institute's Weekly Science Radio Program

Mondays, avail as podcast

<http://radio.seti.org>

<http://podcast.seti.org>

MOON SOCIETY MEETING

3 PM at Bookman's, Northwest Corner of Southern and Country Club. The meeting will be in the rear of the store. For more info contact Craig Porterat
porteratcd@msn.com

OTHER GENRE-RELATED EVENTS

ARIZONA SCIENCE CENTER

The Chronicles of Narnia, The Exhibition,
Opens Jun 7

BOOKMANS, FLAGSTAFF

Emerald Witches, open pagan group.
2nd Tuesdays, 7pm

BOOKMANS, MESA

Psychic Saturdays, 12:30pm

BOOKMANS, PHOENIX

Arizona Browncoats Shindig. 1st
Saturday, 7pm

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.. 1st

Saturdays, 130pm-230pm
Across Plus Anime Club. Sundays, 7pm
Bellydance lessons with Morgiana.
Sundays except the 1st Sun, 1pm

BOOKMANS TUCSON - SPEEDWAY

Metaphysics Group

2nd & 4th Mon 7pm

BORDERS AVONDALE

Metaphysical Wednesdays Discussion

Wednesdays, 7pm

BORDERS GLENDALE

Metaphysical Mondays

Discussion

Mondays, 7pm

HBO SPECIAL EVENT

"Trueblood" new series

based on Charlaine

Harris' Sookie

Stackhouse stories.

Airs Sep 7th on HBO. I couldn't find the official airdate on any website but

I got it from Charlaine Harris herself. There's a wonderful website hyping the series that's great fun, lots of videos and merchandise.

www.hbo.com/events/trueblood/

LOFT THEATRE, TUCSON

Free tickets at

Bookmans, Speedway & Grant locations, Tucson

"Reservoir Dogs" Aug 1st & 2nd

"The Monster Squad"

Aug 15th

"Bloody Birthday" Aug 11th

see website for complete listing

Tucson Festival of Books, March 13-15, 2009 at University of

Arizona in Tucson
Here are the expected SF/F authors who will attend:

Emma Bull

Charles deLint

Diana Gabaldon

Father Andrew Greeley

Dennis McKiernan

Yvonne Navarro

Weston Ochse

Jennifer Roberson

James Sallis

Will Shetterly

Janni Lee Simner

S.M. Stirling

Robert Vardeman

John Vornholt

Check the web sites for confirmation, location and more information.

Game Depot, 480-966-4727

<http://www.azchallenger.org>

<http://www.barnesandnoble.com>

<http://www.bookmans.com>

<http://www.borders.com>

<http://www.browncoats.lagemann.org>

<http://www.cemeterydance.com>

<http://www.drawntocomics.com>

<http://www.imperialoutpost.com>

<http://www.library.pima.gov>

<http://www.novaspace.com/Spacefest/>

<http://www.pimaair.org>

<http://www.poisonedpen.com>

<http://www.samuraicomics.com>

<http://www.seti.org>

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

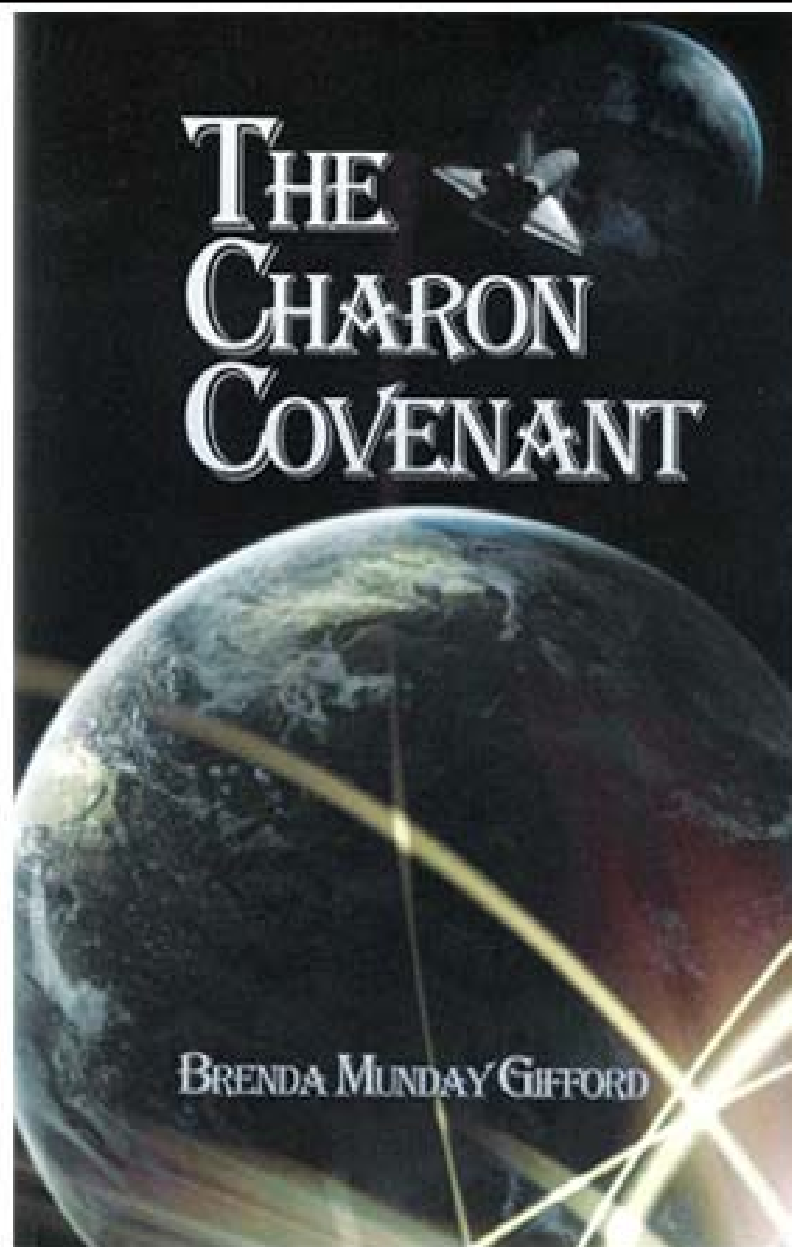
<http://www.subterraneanpress.com/>

<http://www.titanmissilemuseum.org/>

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

<http://wyrmpublishing.com/catalog/>

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



The First In A 3 Book Series.

Wife... mother... warrior... Dara Drew thought she was going to be a simple wife and mother on the moon base colony she called home...but first she will have to save herself and her son and escape from her home planet. There is only one thing that stands between her and freedom...a horde of aliens and their battle drones.

Join her in her Quest to save herself, her son and humanity as she discovers her hidden abilities and makes contact with an alien queen. As Dara and her small battle group launch themselves into space her special senses make her too aware that she has been forever changed.

AVAILABLE AT AMAZON.COM AND BN.COM

Visit <http://www.brendamundaygifford.com/> to review the synopsis and ordering information.

Three *Star Trek* Legends Pass Away By Shane Shellenbarger

The *Star Trek* Universe recently lost three stars.

Alexander Mair Courage Jr.

Composer, Alexander Courage, was born on December 10th, 1919 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. After graduating from the Eastman School of Music in 1941, Courage served as an Army Air Forces bandleader during World War II. Courage began his 54-year career as a composer in 1946 for CBS Radio, moving to MGM as an arranger and orchestrator in 1948. He worked on or orchestrated a string of musicals over the next twelve years including *Annie Get Your Gun*, *The Band Wagon*, *Doctor Dolittle*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Gigi*, *Hello, Dolly!*, *My Fair Lady*, *Show Boat*, and *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*. In the '60s, Courage brought his prodigious talents to 20th Century Fox, and it was in 1959 when he began his work on what would turn out to be over 350 television episodes.

Courage orchestrated films scored by Adolph Deutsch (*Some Like It Hot*), Jerry Goldsmith (*Mulan*), Andre Previn (*My Fair Lady*), and John Williams (*Superman*.) Courage later continued his collaboration during John Williams tenure with the Boston Pops Orchestra.

Despite his work on such films and television series as *Superman*, *Lost in Space*, and *Star Trek*, Courage was not a fan of fantasy and science fiction, telling one interviewer, "I think it's just marvelous malarkey," he said. "So you write some marvelous malarkey music that goes with it."

Best known to the public-at-large for writing the *Star Trek* theme, Courage felt ill used by the series creator, Gene Roddenberry. Courage looked to the song "*Beyond the Blue Horizon*" as a jumping-off-point, working the fast, train-like pulsating rhythm under the soaring melody. He envisioned using a soprano singer (Loulie Jean Norman), an organ, a flute, and even a vibraphone.

Roddenberry wanted to increase the importance of the female voice and the finished product sounded more like a soprano solo. Roddenberry's "help" did not end there. In order to share in the royalties, Roddenberry wrote lyrics that begin: "Beyond the rim of the star-light/ My love is wand'ring in star flight." The only known commercial recording is by Nichelle "Uhura" Nichols and it appears on her 1991 album, "Out of This World."

On May 15, 2008 at the age of 88, Alexander "Sandy" Courage died in the Sunrise Assisted Living facility in Pacific Palisades, California from complications following a stroke

Joseph Pevney

Director, Joseph Pevney, was born on September 15th, 1911 in New York, New York. Pevney began his career as a boy soprano in 1924, growing into acting roles on stage and screen. In 1950, he began his career as a film director with *Shakedown* and *Undercover Girl*. In 1959, Pevney began his television career with the unsold pilot, *Destination Space*.

While his television directing ranged from *Adam-12* to *Wagon Train*, from *Bewitched* to *Little House on the Prairie*, from a *CBS Schoolbreak Special* to *Trapper John, M.D.*, Pevney is best remembered for his work on the series, *Star Trek*. Pevney directed fourteen episodes, tying with Marc Daniels. Among the fan favorites are [Arena](#), [The Devil in the Dark](#), [The City on the Edge of Forever](#), [Amok Time](#), [Journey to Babel](#), [The Deadly Years](#), [Wolf in the Fold](#), and [The Trouble with Tribbles](#). Joseph Pevney died in Palm Desert, California on May 18th, 2008 at the age of 96.

Robert H. Justman

Producer, Robert Justman, was born in New York City on July 13, 1926. His job titles in the film industry included production assistant, assistant director, associate producer, co-producer, supervising producer, production manager, and he acted in *The Outer Limits* episode "A Feasibility Study" as the "Elder of Luminos." His film credits include *Joe Palooka in the Squared Circle* (1950), *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), and *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1962.) The television series on which he worked include *The Adventures of Superman* (1953-1958), *The Outer Limits* (1963-1965), *Star Trek* (1966-1969) *Mission: Impossible* (1966 Pilot), *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (1987-1988.) Justman and Herbert Solow co-wrote *Inside Star Trek: The Real Story*, published by Pocket Books in 1996.

At the time Justman was casting for *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, he saw Patrick Stewart on stage, turned to his wife and said, "I think I've found our new captain." Arranging a meeting between Gene Roddenberry and Stewart, Justman felt that the conversation had gone well when Roddenberry was bidding Stewart goodbye, closed the door, turned to Justman and said, "I won't have him." When questioned, Roddenberry would not say why he felt Stewart was wrong for the part, but Justman had his suspicions: Roddenberry had conceived of Jean-Luc Picard as a masculine, virile Frenchman with a lot of hair. "And Patrick didn't fit that at all. Patrick was not so handsome, he was distinctive, and he was quite bald. Quite bald," said Justman. He would not give up on Stewart, so Justman continued to badger Roddenberry and Roddenberry

continued to say no. A new producer, Rick Berman, came on the scene, saw some film of Stewart, and fell in love with the actors work. Roddenberry still resisted, and eventually Justman realized he needed to approach the problem from a different angle. One day in a meeting, Justman announced that he never wanted to hear the name Patrick Stewart ever again. Whenever someone mentioned Stewart's name, Justman would fain anger, state it was over with Stewart and to move on. One day, the final candidate for the role of Picard came to audition, did his reading, spoke to Roddenberry and Justman, and then left. The room was deadly silent. Roddenberry heaved a great sigh and said, "All right, I'll go with Patrick."

Justman died on May 28th, 2008 in Los Angeles, California from complications of Parkinson's disease.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Pevney
<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0678928/>
http://www.memory-alpha.org/en/wiki/Joseph_Pevney
<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/joseph-pevney-director-of-journeyman-versatility-858292.html>
<http://wcbstv.com/entertainment/star.trek.Joseph.2.735877.html>
<http://trekmovie.com/2008/05/25/tos-director-joseph-pevney-dies-at-96/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Courage
<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0006021/>
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/05/30/AR2008053003013.html>
<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/31/arts/television/31courage-1.html?partner=rssnyt&emc=rss>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vH0aSwFKacw>

<http://www.latimes.com/news/printition/california/la-me-courage30-2008may30.0,5756996.story>
<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/alexander-courage-composer-of-the-star-trek-theme-837440.html>
http://www.filmmusicsociety.org/news_events/features/2008/052808.html#
<http://www.snopes.com/radiotv/tv/trek.asp>
http://www.daisyplanet.com/st/info/Nic_Out.html
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Justman
<http://articles.latimes.com/2008/jun/01/local/me-justman1>
<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0433226/>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cult/st/clips/clip27.shtml>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cult/st/interviews/justman/page6.shtml>
<http://trekmovie.com/2008/05/31/tos-tng-producer-robert-justman-has-passed-away/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cult/st/interviews/justman/index.shtml>
http://www.memory-alpha.org/en/wiki/Robert_Justman
<http://trekmovie.com/2007/03/18/bob-justman-talks-tos-and-tos-r-with-trekmoviecom/>
http://www.trektoday.com/news/010608_01.shtml

An American in Australia Part Four- Exiting Australia (Searching for Jerky, a Beagle Searching for food, and the Word Kangaroo Search) by Jeffrey Lu

A few new friends on the trip told me about some "beef" jerky that's only unique in Australia- crocodile and kangaroo. Curious, I looked all over Australia's grocery stores for this but could not find it. Later, I've been told that I was lucky not to have it in the first place.

The reason was customs. The inspectors have a secret weapon- a beagle. This little dog sniffed briefly at my backpack and found his prize over a deserted bench- an apple. The beagle was awarded a biscuit and happily went to the next baggage. If I had the jerky, I would have had to pay a large fine and/or have an extended stay in Australia.

As I hopped through customs, I remember a story about the word kangaroo. In 19th century, Captain Cook was writing about Australia's animals. He had a prisoner/guide to help him identify some animals near the prison.

"What's that slow-moving animal?" Captain Cook said.

"That's a sloth, sir!" replied the prisoner/guide.

"Very good. Continue on," Captain Cook said.

"What's the small bear with large claws?" Captain Cook said.

"That's a koala bear, sir!" said the prisoner/guide.

"Excellent," Captain Cook answered.

Captain Cook was then introduced to another guide, an Aborigine. Captain Cook wanted a native person to help name the unique animals in Australia.

"What's that large mouse that jumps up and down?" remarked Captain Cook.

"Kangaroo" answered the Aborigine guide.

"Wonderful," Captain Cook smiled.

Ironically, kangaroo in Aborigine means "I don't know."

So, we have a funny large rodent that jumps up and down named in a foreign language, "I don't know."

Kangaroo about petting one but I would like to come back to Australia, one day. Cheers!

**Next: An American in New Zealand
Part One- A Sighting of a Penguin in Dunedin**

Screening Room

The Dark Knight
Mamma Mia!
Hellboy II: The Golden Army
Hancock
Wanted
Wall-E
Get Smart
Kung-Fu Panda

The Dark Knight
Starring: Christian Bale, Heath Ledger, Aaron Eckhart, Michael Caine, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Gary Oldman, Morgan Freeman
Director: Christopher Nolan
Runtime: 152 minutes
Rated: PG-13
Release Date: July 18th, 2008
Reviewed by: Len Berger
(ConNotations Film Editor)

The Dark Knight story begins with Batman AKA Bruce Wayne (played by Christian Bale – The Prestige) working with Lt. Jim Gordon (played by Gary Oldman – Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix) to rid Gotham City of all the crime bosses and their gangs. Gotham's D.A. Harvey Dent (played by Aaron Eckhart – The Core) is in court working his magic to convict the criminals. The plan sounds great but someone has other ideas - enter The Joker (played by Heath Ledger – Brokeback Mountain, Casanova) who just wants to mess things up a tiny bit (well not so tiny).

The Joker's gang starts by breaking into a bank and to steal \$60 million or so from one of the local mob bosses. The Joker's plan includes a unique concept of teamwork and a witness elimination program. Really, The Joker is not a nice guy. Some time later The Joker wants to add a member to his own gang, breaks a pool cue in half, throws the pieces on the floor and declares to the assembled criminals "We are going to have tryouts". The Joker certainly believes in the survival of the fittest.

The Joker's desire is to create as much chaos as he can in Gotham City. He has no rules and no morals to get in his way but pushing our hero to the limit can create unintended consequences.

Batman and Alfred's (played by Michael Caine – The Prestige) lair is not as luxurious as the manor but quite adequate for the job at hand. Alfred provides his usual wisdom and support for Batman with some humor along the way.

Batman's love interest, Rachel Dawes (played by Maggie Gyllenhaal – Stranger than Fiction) is dating Harvey much to the chagrin of our hero. Harvey asks Alfred "Any psychotic x-boyfriends I should know about" to which Alfred responds "You have no idea".

Lucius Fox (played by Morgan

Freeman – Wanted) heads up Wayne Enterprises and provides the budget and high tech gear for Batman and his equipment.

There are some great chase scenes, fights and the usual action but Heath Ledger's portrayal of The Joker was a thrill to watch. Heath turned the comic book character we all love so much into what we would expect from The Joker.

I dedicate this review to Heath Ledger whose acting has provided so much pleasure to his fans and whose life ended far too soon. A posthumous supporting actor nomination is in order.

The Dark Knight is showing on both IMAX and regular screens – choose and enjoy.

I highly recommend the film and rate The Dark Knight an A-.

Mamma Mia!
Universal Pictures
108 Minutes
Rated PG-13
In theaters July 18, 2008

Wow! I didn't expect too much from this movie. I am a fan of ABBA's music but I couldn't see how it would be interesting for anyone not a fan of musicals. I was wrong. This movie had incredible amounts of energy, loads of humor, and an Oscar worthy performance by Meryl Streep. I expected a great singing performance from Christine Baranski because while many people consider themselves a star of the stage, she actually is one. But Streep's performance was enchanting. She looked comfortable and relaxed throughout the film and I believe the claims that she enjoyed doing it. I'm hoping that this might serve as a notice to the studios that you don't need spectacular special effects to have a great movie.

The story begins with Sophie

(Amanda Sefried) sending out three invitations to her wedding in secret. She has apparently found her mother's (Streep) diary and has narrowed the possible names of her dad to those three. She tries to hide them from her mom but of course they are seen and Donna (her mom) goes on a tirade and tries to throw them out. Both women are headstrong, stubborn and love each other very much. The wedding goes into a

spin when she accidentally tells all three potential fathers they can escort her down the aisle. The fathers Sam, Harry, and Bill (Pierce Brosnan, Colin Firth, and Stellan Skarsgard) are about as different as could be, but each seems to have at least one talent in common with Sophie. Initially she believes that all she needs is to meet them and she will know who her father is. To say much more would need a spoiler alert.

There were several good scenes but the two that stand out are incredible. First the scene where Baranski sings "Does Your Mother Know". The other is the two songs performed in full 70s regalia during the end credits.

I will definitely buy it when it comes out on DVD. Five Stars out of Five - **Bob LaPierre**

Hellboy II: The Golden Army
Starring: Ron Perlman, Selma Blair, Doug Jones, Luke Gross, John Alexander
Director: Guillermo Del Toro
Runtime: 115 minutes
Rated: PG-13
Release Date: July 11th, 2008
Reviewed by: Len Berger
(ConNotations Film Editor)

Summer movie releases continue with Hellboy II: The Golden Army. The comic-book Hellboy superhero was created by Mike Mignola. Director Guillermo Del Toro's (Pan's Labyrinth, Blade II) imagination is set loose in the film. Some of the imagery throughout the film is visually stunning. When our heroes are traveling through the Troll Market your eyes will scan the screen from side to side and top to bottom looking at the dizzying array of creatures and images. Welcome to the world of Guillermo Del Toro.

Our story begins with Prince Nuada (played by Luke Gross -Blade II) plotting

to break the long standing truce between mankind and the original sons of earth who live in the underworld. He is so darn upset about our shopping malls! To do so he must control The Golden Army and initiates a mission to do so. Of course our superheros from the super secret (yea right – but what about those pictures of Hellboy on the internet) Bureau for Paranormal Research and Defense (BPRD) are not too keen about this and set forth to stop the Prince.

Back at the BPRD our cigar smoking hero Hellboy or Red (played Ron Perlman - Blade II) is having a bit of a domestic problem with pyrokinetic Liz Sherman (played by Selma Blair - The Alibi, The Fog). Let's just say that a super hero domestic problem is not just about breaking a dinner plate. But when they receive their assignment to save the world they join forces and spring into action. They are joined by our aquatic empath Abe Sapien (played by Doug Jones – F4: Rise of the Silver Surfer) and a disembodied ectoplasmic psychic named Johann Krauss played by John Alexander whose head is an upside down fishbowl.

The film was quite humorous and in one fight scene with Prince Nuada, Red's cigar was smashed and Red declares "it was Cuban, now you pissed me off".

As suggested earlier in this review the film's CGI and special effects are really outstanding. You'll wish you could go home, pop the DVD into the player and watch some of the sequences again.

I recommend the film and rate Hellboy II a B+.

(Continued on page 12)



GAME DEPOT
 "Voted AZ's Best Game Store"
 Complete Selection of Games Workshop®,
 Huge Selection of Role Playing Games
 Collectible Card Games • Miniatures
 Wargames • Board Games • Mahjong • Dice
 Dominoes • Cribbage • Chess • Go

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Screening (Continued from page 11)

Hancock

Starring: Will Smith, Charlize Theron, Jason Bateman
Director: Peter Berg
Running Time: 92 min
Rated: PG-13 for some intense sequences of sci-fi action and violence, and language.
Blue Light
Release Date: July 2nd, 2008

John Hancock (Smith) is the last of his kind, a superhero and very, very alone. I can understand why he would turn to alcohol and become so bitter. While he tries to be helpful his lackadaisical performance causes the populace of LA to hate him. So about the time that people are calling for his head, fate drops him the opportunity to save Ray Embrey (Bateman) from a train. He saves him but causes more destruction than would have occurred had he not saved him.

Ray offers to help Hancock with his image problem and starts on a plan to gain public acceptance. He invites Hancock to his home for dinner and introduces him to his wife, Mary (Theron). While there is no reaction from Hancock the look from Mary speaks volumes. The more Ray's plan works the angrier Mary becomes, something is definitely wrong. During this time you find out that Hancock woke from severe head injuries at a Miami hospital 70+ years ago and had no memory. He doesn't even know what his name is, a nurse told him to sign his "John Hancock" on the forms and so that's what he did.

The movie has some interesting points but I had figured everything out well before anything was revealed. If you want your action without too much thought this movie is for you. I wanted more from it.

Three out of Five stars - **Bob LaPierre**

Wanted

Starring James McAvoy, Angelina Jolie, Morgan Freeman
Directed by Timur Bekmambetov
Running time: 110 minutes
Rated: R
Opened: June 27, 2008

Wanted has the violence of *Fight Club*, the best special effects this side of *The Matrix*, and the psychological knife-edge of both these films – it is a mind-bending messenger that demands something beyond passivity of its audience. Not that all movie-goers will notice or appreciate this, but those who actually discussed the SF themes of *The Matrix* will find speculative fodder here as well, though more in the vein of politics and fantasy than futuristic science.

And where it is derivative, at least it derives from classics. I was on the verge of reciting *Star Wars, Episode V: The*

Empire Strikes Back dialogue on several occasions, because the plots share elements of father-son relationships and revelations. (Actually, a deranged part of my brain coolly observed that *Wanted* has a potential for audience interaction somewhere right of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and left of *Serenity*; loudly reciting *Star Wars* dialogue would be part of it.) Where *Wanted* does not match the quality of its classic predecessors is in logical consistency. There is a break in the film, and the truth of the first part does not entirely lie even with the truth of the second. Whether or not this irritates you depends on your affection for Euclidean rationality. Compensating for this serious flaw is the splendid scripting and direction for undercurrents. I had three Miss Clavel "something is not right" moments, and each one was perfectly justified. That's good movie-making.

The setting is that Wesley Gibson, hyper-tense, apologetic, with a parasitic 'best friend,' a two-timing girlfriend and an obnoxious boss at his McJob, hates his life. He is popping anti-stress pills like M&Ms to keep from going postal. His one solace is listening to the train that rattles through Chicago right past his hole in the wall apartment. For contrast, a professional assassin has just lost a fight for his life to another assassin, so what qualifies as a really bad day depends on your parameters. Wesley scarcely notices the news coverage of the slaughter, until Angelina Jolie, aka Fox, materializes to inform him that the dead man was his father, and the killer is now coming for him. Wesley tries to brush her off, but the rain of bullets that punctuate her explanation are pretty convincing. After their escape, Wesley meets the leader of the brotherhood of assassins, played by Morgan Freeman. Wesley is recruited into this Fraternity, and his training is brutal. This is primal pain, not the Man with No Endorphins First World pain he has known. At the end of Wesley's tempering, Freeman shows him the loom of Fate, a mysterious and autonomous object that names the men and women who need to die. That's all very mystical and fine, but Wesley has qualms. It isn't until Fox explains how she came to join the Fraternity that he commits himself to acting on Freeman's inscrutable directives.

There are fantastic scenes involving trains, enough to make Alfred Hitchcock writhe in posthumous throes of professional jealousy. The FXs are sometimes dreamlike, sometimes nightmarish, sometimes darkly funny. (Viewers who have a problem with rats may need to leave the auditorium for one or two scenes.)

If Angelina Jolie is your sole/soul reason for going, she has great dialogue, and greater silences. She can convey more with body language and a half smile

than most actors can when equipped with award-winning scripts. It is she who has the pivotal decision to make at the end, and her smile is like a zen koan.

Wanted is SF film noir, and you have to know yourself to know whether it is your movie. I loved it - except for that inconsistency glitch. – **Chris Paige**

Wall-E

Pixar Animation
97 Minutes

Rated G

In theaters June 27, 2008

Ok this was a sneak peak that was just for about fifteen people so I cannot give any audience reactions. That said I had a great time and have vigorously recommended it to friends, family, and strangers. It opens with the short film "Presto". A wonderful peek at what happens when a magician doesn't feed his partner. This was very reminiscent of the Daffy Duck/Porky Pig interactions. I'm waiting for the next generation of shorts to come out on DVD.

WALL-E [Waste Allocation Load Lifter – Earth class] is, for lack of a better term, a trash compactor. He is the last of his kind, the rest having apparently long since broken down. In his years of loneliness he has become self aware. He is curious about the things he compacts and has collected a number of "souvenirs" in his existence. His stash includes a spork, a Rubik's cube, a VHS tape of "Hello Dolly", assorted forks and spoons, a ring box (he threw out the ring), and just a lot of bric-a-brac that was among the detritus left when humanity escaped the planet.

WALL-E has a friend or maybe a pet (it isn't obvious which) in a cockroach that follows him around and he feeds him what appear to be Twinkies. *Hmm... 700 year old Twinkies and still as fresh as the day they were created.* His existence changes dramatically when a rocket arrives and deposits a sleek bullet shaped probe robot named EVE [Extra-terrestrial Vegetation Evaluator]. She is on Earth to search out evidence of plant growth. Many of the scenes in the previews are from this period and WALL-E's attempts to get to know his visitor are both hilarious and touching. Prime silent film style courting. When he gives her a gift she goes into directive mode and externally seems mostly inert. WALL-E moves her around by tying a set of holiday lights around her and dragging her to his favorite places.

The plot twists when the rocket returns for EVE and WALL-E hangs on to the outside as it launches. They arrive on the Axiom, a ship that took humanity to the stars, a cleaning robot M-O [Microbe Obliterator] tries (unsuccessfully) to clean 700 years of detritus off WALL-E and EVE is brought to the captain. The captain voiced by Jeff Garlin

of "Curb Your Enthusiasm" is the first human interaction in the movie. Up until that point humans are limited to commercials and the VHS tape. There are only two other interactive humans in the movie John (John Ratzenberger) and Mary (Kathy Najimy), they are the first to notice when things are amiss due to their screens being turned off after "meeting" WALL-E.

Axiom, the ship has two voices, first the general announcement system is voiced by Sigourney Weaver (Ripley in the Alien movies) and the second is Auto the auto-pilot voiced by the program Macin Talk. He is a wonderful homage to the HAL-9000 from 2001 right down to the hidden, secretive directive within his program.

My first impression of the movie through trailers was that it would be a comedy. This impression was mostly right, however it was also one of the most heart wrenching love stories I have ever enjoyed. The movie is a great tribute to silent movies and in particular to Buster Keaton. I agree with Andrew Stanton (writer/director) that this movie proves that something was lost when talking was added to film.

In the final analysis I think the movie succeeds on several levels and will be more popular than Finding Nemo. I will probably see it twice more in the theaters (with my own money) and definitely buy it when it comes out on DVD.

Five Stars out of Five - **Bob LaPierre**

Get Smart

Running time: 110 minutes

Rated: PG-13

Opened: June 20, 2007

I approached this movie with some trepidation since I am a fan of the original Don Adams TV series and, well, let's be frank - many of the recent crop of remakes have been less than enjoyable. I will say right now I was quite pleasantly surprised. Get Smart is a delightful comedy that manages the rare feat of updating a forty-year-old show successfully.

Maxwell Smart (Steve Carrell) is a top-notch analyst who yearns to be a field agent. When Control is compromised Smart gets his wish and is off on assignment with a reluctant Agent 99 (Anne Hathaway). Agent 23 (Dwayne Johnson) complicates matters as he is both Max's friend and Agent 99's ex-boyfriend. Contrary to reports, Chaos is still out to take over the world, this time lead by a wonderfully sinister Terence Stamp as Siegfried who plans to blackmail the world with nuclear devices.

From a James Bond-like exit from an airplane to the final fight on a train, the stunts are spectacular while managing to not interfere with the story of a new agent and the tentative steps taken and retreated

(Continued on page 14)

COPPERCON 28

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AUTHOR GUEST OF HONOR **MARYJANICE DAVIDSON**

Author of the "Undead" (*Betsy the Vampire*), *Wyndham Werewolves*, *Alaskan Royals* and *Fred the Mermaid* series.
Co-Author with her husband Anthony Alongi of the *Jennifer Scales* Series.

MEDIA GUEST OF HONOR **GREG WEISMAN**

Best known as the creator of the Disney series *Gargoyles* and the subsequent comic, Greg's latest project is the CW4kids *The Spectacular Spider-Man Animated Series*.

SPECIAL GUEST **DAVID ALONGI**

Anthony is married to our AGOH MaryJanice Davidson. In addition to co-writing the *Jennifer Scales* novels with his wife he is a contract writer for Hasbro, Inc and has written numerous articles for magicthegathering.com

ARTIST GUEST OF HONOR **DAVID HEDGEcock**

Of Ape Entertainment, David has worked with Greg Weisman as a penciller, inker, letterer and cover artist for the *Gargoyles* Comic. It's being said that issue #9 of the *Gargoyles* Comic will be David's last.

MASQUERADE!

There will be awards for best in show, best novice, best experienced, judges choices, a special award from AniZona for best anime/manga cos-play and a special "Young Fen" non-competitive children's division. Check out the masquerade section of our website for more info and updates.

CHARITY AUCTION

This year's charity auction supports Reading is Fundamental. The auction staff have scoured the multiverse for the finest items for you to bid on, so plan on attending this outstanding auction and supporting Reading is Fundamental.

BREAKING NEWS!!!

Our new **MUSICAL GUEST OF HONOR** will be **STEVEN BRUST!**

Author of the *Taltos* and *Dragaera* series of novels, *To Reign in Hell*, *Gypsy* and a NEW, FREE, online *Firefly* novel, *My Own Kind of Freedom*. Also appearing **JOHN J. MILLER**, Contributing Author to the shared world series *Wild Cards* and author of the *Wild Cards* novel *Death Draws Five*.

LARP

Arizona's own One World by Night Sabbath game, *Swords Of Caine*, is a Vampire the Masquerade game using the Mind's Eye Theatre rules produced by White Wolf. Experienced players bringing their own characters must submit their character for review by the LARP staff at giovanni@giovanni-wod.net by August 15. NPC's will be available for first timers. As always see our website for more details.

QUEST DINNER

Tempus Fugit! If you wish to break bread and rub elbows with our Guests of Honor on Friday then you must get your reservations and payment in by August 10th! Banquet cost is \$45. For reservations or more info contact Stephanie at cu28banker@coppercon.org

FAN TABLES

Promote your group or event! Contact us at cu28fantables@coppercon.org so we can get you on our list.

MEMBERSHIP RATES

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GAMING, GAMING, GAMING!

AmberCon will be at CopperCon this year. Based on Roger Zelazny's *The Chronicles of Amber*, this diceless RPG will be running 24 hours. Come visit the Courts of Chaos or the Golden Circle! GM's are wanted! See our website for more details. Look for console and board games too!

SPECIAL EVENTS

Body Painting demonstration by local Body painting Artist **Mark Greenwalt**. Screenings of the short films, *Pastiche of the Dead* and Edgar Allan Poe's *The Pit and the Pendulum* presented by Ray Harryhausen.

PANELS

See our website www.coppercon.org for a listing of our panel discussions.

HOSPITALITY (CONSUIE)

Promote your group or club by hosting an event in our consuite. For all the details contact Kurt at cu28consuite@coppercon.org

DEALERS

Additional space has become available. Contact Bob at cu28dealer@coppercon.org for details. Also don't forget to patronize our fantastic dealer room!

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Screening (Continued from page 12)

as Max and Agent 99 come to know and trust each other while foiling Chaos' plans to kill the President.

Watch for cameos such as Bill Murray and be sure to enjoy Max's dance scene and the Chief's confrontation with the head of the CIA.

Highly recommended and I can hope that they do a sequel. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Kung Fu Panda

Starring: Jack Black, Dustin Hoffman, Angelina Jolie, Jackie Chan, Seth Rogen, Lucy Liu

Director(s): John Stevenson, Mark Osborne

Distributor: Paramount

Production Company: DreamWorks Animation

MPAA Rating: PG

Runtime: 91 min.

Release Date: June 6th, 2008

Po, a panda bear, dreams to be a great martial artist. Sadly, he is also a family noodle stand seller. Yet, against all odds, he is chosen to be the "Dragon" warrior. He will have not only try to face his fellow idols- the Furious Five: Tigress, Crane, Mantis, Viper and Monkey with Master Shifu as their leader- but also, fight against the village destroyer, Tai Lung.

Enjoyable. Was impressed that this film showed the Chinese culture and humor. Was amused in seeing the villagers portrayed as hares, pigs, and ducks. Thumbs up for the whole family. - **Jeffrey Lu**

PreCon News

CopperCon 28, Aug 29-31, 2008

We've got a pretty good crew to staff CopperCon this year. Gary Swaty is our Chair. We've got MaryJanice Davidson as our Author Guest of Honor. MaryJanice has become extremely popular the past few years with her *Betsy, the Vampire Queen* series and her *Jennifer Scales* young adult series. She and her partner and husband, Anthony Alongi, will provide some very interesting panels, I'm sure. Our other Guests include Greg Weisman, the creator of the animated TV show *Gargoyles*; and David Hedgecock, artist for *Gargoyles*. Together you can be sure we'll have some interesting stories and insights about the world of American animation production. We'll probably also learn about the Spectacular Spider-Man series and maybe even Gargoyle sex....

I did the programming for the last three CopperCons so if you liked the last couple cons, then you don't want to miss

this one. I'm planning on some new children's programming with some enthusiastic helpers. The kids will be able to make a costume, learn how to perform on stage, shoot off some rockets and create original art to hang. I've also confirmed that Mark Greenawalt, our well-known body-painting artist, will be at CopperCon. I don't know exactly what he's planning but it will have something to do with gargoyles.... The Moon Society is with us this year. (And I'm hoping we'll have some folks from UofA with an update on the Phoenix Mars Mission but it's not confirmed yet.) We'll have an exciting LARP run by some very experienced folks. Across Plus, a local Anime club, will be providing Anime programming. I know they've got some new stuff planned. The usual suspects will show up again this year: The United Federation of Phoenix will host their annual SciFi Jeopardy and will also contribute to the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine 15th Anniversary Update*. And, on Sunday morning, you'll have an opportunity to score on some cool movie giveaways when you attend the *Barry Bard Memorial - At the Movies*.

Saturday evening at CopperCon 28 will feature our traditional stage masquerade. The physical setup is like a fashion show. We will provide a stage, a Master of Ceremonies to announce you, a sound system to play the music or narration you provide, and a stage crew to bring it all together. An appreciative audience will provide itself: Your 15 minutes of fame on a silver platter! There will even be prizes! Contact randwhit@casfs.org with questions on how to show a costume or volunteer for the crew. Or check out the Masquerade link on our webpage. There's a possibility of having a Belly Dance Troupe on site. And there will be parties...

There will be Filking; however, due to circumstances beyond anyone's control, our Filk Guest, Tom Smith, has had to cancel. We'll have Regency Dancing. Some interesting.... late-night programming for adults only. And there's sure to be a party or two. Oh, and don't miss the Charity Auction - items are already posted on our webpage.

We'll look forward to seeing old friends and hopefully, lots of new ones. Please buy your membership soon and help out our pre-registration. There will probably be a couple special events on Thursday evening for those who have pre-registered. Keep watching our webpage for updates: <http://www.casfs.org/cucon>

Catherine Book, Program Director

ConClusion

Anime TuCon
July 12-13, 2008

AnimeTuCon was a 24 hour convention held from noon to noon, July 12th and 13th at Tucson's Four Points Sheraton Hotel at Speedway and Campbell. It was a godsend for the Tucson anime fans who are not yet old enough to drive: a convention in their own back yard. It didn't matter that it was small; the con-goers brought all their enthusiasm and spare cash, and if the latter was exhausted by Sunday afternoon, the former was only whetted.

The convention featured opening ceremonies with a kendo demonstration by members of The Dojo, the local martial arts school of Douglas Corlew. Its motto is 'Eastern Arts for Daily Living,' and the instructors and senior students have brought the samurai mentality and movements into the 21st century. Watching the demo reminded me of some of Toshiro Mifune's fights in the *Samurai* trilogy. They fought barefoot, with bamboo practice swords for the most part; but for the finale Douglas Corlew explained how different styles of fighting evolved, and his student drew a steel katana which he fended off with a sai and short sword, and even bare-handed. Then

he showed how a warrior marshals his *chi*, his energy, to strike and break wood boards and concrete blocks. You get to imagine what the same blows would do to bones. During a Q & A panel discussion with the members of The Dojo, I asked if leg strikes were a part of kendo - those bare feet seemed to invite attacks. In competition kendo, they explained, leg strikes and back attacks are not allowed; in a real fight, of course, anything goes. Typically, kendo strikes aim at the head, chest, arms, or, if you are being particularly nasty, the throat. A women's form, however, using a longer weapon like a halberd, does aim for the leg with sweeps and thrusts. Anyone interested in learning more about kendo or The Dojo's schedule of classes can call 520-471-7500, or check the website www.azdojo.com.


The dealer's room saw a lot of action. The most popular items seemed to be *Inuyasha* ears, *Fruits Basket* backpacks, *Naruto* headbands, *Invader Zim* and *Pikachu* hats, and *Ramune* drinks - the sodas in glass bottles that have a marble in the top.

The Gaming Room saw non-stop inter-action at the computers, TV screens, DDR, and band simulations. *Guitar Hero III*, *Puzzle Fighter*, *Tekken*, *Soul Caliber 3*, and *Super Smash Brothers Brawl* were the main features. Out of doors, the

(Continued on page 15)

Paraworld Zero

by Matthew Peterson



"Truly original... Read it. Trust me, you'll have a terrific time." - Douglas Hill
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"Funny and imaginative." - Maria V. Snyder

www.ParaWorlds.com/connotations ISBN: 978-1-59092-491-4

ConClusion (Continued from page 14)

action continued with Anime DodgeBall and a Water Battle Royale.

There were panels for Anime Neophytes, Manga, Cosplay, Lost Treasures, Why Girls Love Sentai, and Your Anime Sucks. Accompanied as I was by a four year old, I did not get to spend as much time at the panel discussions as I would have liked, but that last one certainly generated some heated exchanges.

Anime and manga certainly breathe new life into the Masquerade scene. *Bleach* characters wore white shirts and ties, Kigome and other school girls mingled with Cowboy Bebop wayfarers. I particularly admired an Eve from *Black Cat*, a Kamina, and Chi from *Tsubasa*. So did the Masquerade judges: Chi won first prize.

Since anime shows begin and end with opening and closing credit songs, music was a major theme at AnimeTuCon with Anime Karaoke and a 6 hour bloc of

Anime Music Videos, compiled and presented by Justin Rose. These were awesome, and if you want to see for yourself, Justin recommended www.animemusicvideos.org as the source site. Some of the videos were simply the credit songs, but most were spliced footage from various shows to match lyrics from popular songs. *Golden Boy* got my favorite treatment, momentarily turning an R-rated series into a PG montage.

TAZ, AZ Hobbyists Paradise, and the Otaku Club were some of the prime movers that brought AnimeTuCon together. For more information about this and future AnimeTuCons, contact Amanda.jewell@ymail.com. – **Chris Paige**

Bookman's Anime Fest Report April 19, 2008 by Kevin Williams

Last April, AniZona put on this little Anime Fest at the Bookman's location in Phoenix. I may say 'little', but for a mini event, there were quite a lot of people! By the end they had registered exactly 100 people, and you could tell by how crowded the lanes were in the store.

So who am I exactly? I was the guy sitting at the registration desk taking down all the names! If you were there, just think about the cat-guy with the funny hat. That job kept me mighty busy, but I did get a chance to break away and visit, take some pictures of the different events going on. Actually, many of the events happened right in that room. It was the same room we were selling Pocky and Ramune. The Ramune sold out so fast I didn't actually get any, which made Kevin a very sad catboy. Back to the events, there were 11 different ones to choose from! Actually, you didn't really have to choose too often. There were two rooms, so events in two places at once. Shall I list them all, or just go right into them? How about one at a time!

While I was tucked away in my corner, I had the privilege to witness what I must say was the most amazing Iron Cosplay put on by NyuNyu I'd ever seen. Why you ask? You probably guessed by reading the above paragraph that I have some love for Ramune and Pocky. Well, the two teams created those costumes! The theme was foodstuffs! For those unfamiliar with Iron Cosplay, teams use a limited amount of resources to craft something amazing. Then the judges vote on a winner. I am really proud of this event because I donated a very odd bit for them to use: a styrofoam ball. It ended up being key to completing the Ramune costume!

After and during the Iron Cosplay, I had a chance to get out and see a bit of the fanfiction panel held in the other room. These five ladies from Tucson have been in the fanfiction arena for much longer than I even knew it existed. They managed to keep their audience captivate all the way until 1:30pm. This was such a great idea. Almost every friend I have talks about how much fanfiction they read online, more than manga even!

There were two trivia events that I managed to peek in on. The first was an Anime 20 Questions. It didn't go off exactly as planned, but that didn't stop everyone from having fun. The basic idea was having someone behind a screen acting like the character in question, and the guests asking questions to narrow down who it was. The screen did eventually go up! The second trivia event was the good 'ole Anime Trivia! Jean-Renee, who I will call the Quizmaster (hah!), had everything organized into easy, medium, and difficult categories. The contestants

sat on the couch, signaling when they had an answer.

Then we had a Guitar Hero II tournament! I was busy in the other room for most of this, but did make it out in time to see our Mascot, all decked out in his Jackalope costume! I also got to see the winner of the event, Chad, crush his competition. I will never be that good at Guitar Hero, major props to him. In the other room we attempted to do an anime viewing. This was the one spot in the day we had technical difficulties. The viewing ended up starting waaay late, and had to be cut halfway through to keep to the schedule of events. No one was happy about that.

And it really stinks that I was the one who had to cut it short! It was time to prepare for the first of our two major events of the night: The Masquerade! We had about 30 cosplayers in the prejudging for craftsmanship. Our judges for the evening were Joanne, a fashion designer under the label Envisions, and Randall Whitlock, from the Southwest Costumer's Guild. They were ultimately responsible for deciding all winners. This masquerade had a slightly different format than major conventions: One winner for Craftsmanship, and the other for Presentation. Once the prejudging ended, we invited all the attendees to hoot and holler for their favorite cosplayers as the cosplayers put on a show to impress them. The one who captured the audience won the Presentation award. Aura from Cosplay Zone won the Craftsmanship with her FFVII: Crisis Core Tifa costume. On the presentation side, Cash as Inuyasha and his "SIT!" presentation totally captured the crowd. Both won passes to AniZona and prizes from Samurai Comics and Fetish Falls.

Our last and highlight event was Toybox in concert. Toybox has just returned from a tour in Japan, and agreed to give us a show at our little event. Yay! And I must say, they do put on a great show. Bookman's was definitely an informal affair, so they dropped the stereotype on what to expect at a concert. There was no real stage, and the attendees jumped right in there with them. This could only happen at a 100 attendee event, as anything larger would be a security problem! We'll test that next April at AniZona, where Toybox will be putting on an even more awesome concert for an even larger crowd.

All-in-all, a well organized event with very little drama. I know I had tons of fun. We do need to thank a few people though! It took a few clubs to get this thing organized, so I'd like to thank the PVCC Anime Club, Across Plus and the Otaku Club, all of whom were heavily involved in volunteering. And finally, our wonderful sponsors who gave us prizes, and the one who let us use their store: Bookman's, Samurai Comics, and Fetish Falls.

FiestaCon

(Westercon 62)

July 2-5, 2009

Tempe Mission Palms Hotel, Tempe, Arizona

www.fiestacon.org

FiestaCon Guests of Honor

Artist **Todd Lockwood**

Author **Alan Dean Foster**

Editor **Stanley Schmidt**

Fans **Jim & Doreen Webbert**

Toastmasters Patrick and Teresa Nielsen Hayden

FiestaCon will be the 62nd annual Westercon. We will be at the Tempe Mission Palms in downtown Tempe, Arizona, with a variety of nearby restaurants, nightlife, and shopping with easy access to the Phoenix Light Rail and a great view of the Tempe July 4th Fireworks!

We are planning to have many local and western region artists, authors and other participants on hand for our programming.

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Full attending is \$65 thru 9/30/08,
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See fiestacon.org for info on discounts if
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Gamer's Corner

**Dungeons & Dragons 4.0
Wizards of the Coast
Player's Handbook \$34.95
Dungeon Master's Guide \$34.95
Monster Manual \$34.95**

D&D 4E: I've been hearing credible rumors about it since 2005, but I thought we would have until 2010 before it would appear. GenCon 2007 changed all that. First, let me say that I won't be dealing with ANY rumors. Second, I will be talking about opinions, mine (mostly) and others (a little). Last, I will review the mechanics as they affect play.

A number of players I know and respect have made their opinions known to me. Love it or hate it - most players have a definite opinion. I was very apprehensive about it; while I tried to find good things said about 4E, most of the (unsolicited) advice I received was negative. I won't give details as these comments were all before the release and none were from play-testers. In February, my editor asked if I wanted to review the new edition, I said "yes, of course" and she said she would obtain a set of the books for me.

I am now the proud owner of a slip-cover edition of the three core books. I spent two weeks reading them cover to cover and making characters for practice. Other than the magic item tables moving to the Player's Handbook (PHB), the type of information in the PHB is the same. I appreciate that they wanted to differentiate between combat type spells, available in four flavors: at-will, encounter, daily, and utility, and the non-combat types, called rituals. Purists will have a problem with the fact that wizards now have access to cleric rituals and vice versa. Character creation will take some getting used to; the mechanics are just different enough to create a need to spend time learning before you can do them from memory. Humans and half-elves get enough of a bonus (humans get a third at-will power from their class, half-elves get a third at-will power but it comes from a different class) to make them desirable without making them overpowered. One of my players in my campaign is a half-elf rogue with the twin strike ability from the ranger class.

I tested my group sorely, their first combat was a level 5 encounter and two of the six were absent. The combat was long and drawn out but the PCs were triumphant. I have tried them in combat, set traps, and used terrain rules against them. I strongly believe that once we are used to the new rules we shall speed up the combats and accomplish more. In just three sessions we improved our timing and used the abilities against the monsters better. We have had such fun that we will add 4E to our regular rotation and I get to DM again.

I won't say that it is perfect, but it was nice to see a wizard still casting 20+ rounds into the fight. Blast and burst are similar and easily mistaken for the other. I miss bards, barbarians, monks and gnomes, but they are going to add at

least some of them in the future. The healing surge makes the lack of a cleric considerably less deadly, but it loses some flavor. Over all it will take some adjusting (*what do you mean my wizard needs to hit with his spells?*) but I give it a positive rating.

4 stars out of 5

See you next time. - Bob LaPierre

**Warhammer Forged In Battle
by Justin Hunter
Black Library Publication, \$6.99,**

Sigmund and his Ragged Company will have to battle feral beastmen, chaos worshipers, and mutants in order to save Sigmund's home town Helmstrumburg. Also, there is an ancient prophecy. Can Sigmund unravel this prophecy before he and his men are wiped out?

Good story. The heroes are not perfect. Dark but realistic. Recommended to dark fantasy war readers and Warhammer fans. - **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000 Tales From The
Dark Millennium
edited by Marc Gascoigne & Chritian
Dunn
Black Library Publication, \$7.99,**

A collection of Warhammer 40,000 short stories set in the Pyrus Reach. In the Warhammer 40,000 universe, the Emperor's warriors are fighting the enemies of humankind: Chaos, orcs and eldars.

Each story is unique.

Overall, the tales are interesting. Enjoyable. Recommended to dark sci-fi war readers and Warhammer 40,00 fans. - **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000 Only In Death
by Dan Abnett
Black Library Publications, \$19.99,**

Colonel-Commissar Ibram Gaunt and his Tanith First-and-Only are fighting in a fortress world of Jago. Not only they have to fight the enemy, the Chaos forces, but also something more sinister: their own Ghosts from the dead.

This is the fourth book of The Lost series. Also, this is the 11th book about Gaunt's Ghosts.

Wow. Definitely worth a read. If one reads the whole series up to now, the reader will understand the references to the past history of Gaunt's Ghosts. I really enjoyed it. Highly recommended to dark war sci-fi readers and Warhammer 40,000 fans - **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000 Ravenor Rogue
by Dan Abnett
Black Library Publications, \$19.99,**

Inquisitor Gideon Ravenor and his team have gone rogue in order to pursue a "dead" mass murderer, Zygmunt Moltch. In a twist of fate, they will have to join forces to fight a greater evil to the universe. Is this the end of Ravenor?

This is the third of the series.

Enjoyable. Recommended to dark sci-fi fans and Warhammer 40,000 readers - **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000 Rogue Star
by Andy Hoare
Black Library Publications, \$7.99,**

Lucian Gerrit with his son and daughter are an Imperial trader family. In past generations, they were once powerful and rich. Now, they have to work together in attempt to restore their formal glory with a deal from a distant planet. Little do they know that the deal is with an insane person name Culpepper Luneberg. With this in mind, the Gerrit family will not only have to fight their survival but also have a surprise contact with an alien race, the Tau.

This is the first of the series.

Enjoyable. This is an exciting twist from Imperial war stories. Highly recommended to dark sci-fi readers and Warhammer 40,000 fans. - **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000 Star of Damocles
by Andy Hoare
Black Library Publications, \$7.99, pp.
254.**

Lucian Gerrit and his family are leading an Imperial invasion in the Tau's universe. Yet, they will find out that the Tau are not an easy race to control. Instead, they will know the meaning of being out of their depths.

This is the second of the series.

An Imperial holy war that goes wrong. Enough said. Recommended to dark sci-fi readers and Warhammer 40,000 fans. - **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000 Horus Rising
by Dan Abnett
Black Library Publications, \$7.99, 412
pages.**

This is the beginning story of the Emperor of Man's right hand man, Warmaster Horus. This tale shows how power quietly and silently corrupts not only men but also legions of elite forces.

This is the first book of the Horus Heresy.

Impressive. This is how the Warhammer 40,000 universe began. Highly recommended to dark war sci-fi readers and Warhammer 40,000 fans - **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000 Brothers of the
Snake
by Dan Abnett
Black Library Publications, \$7.99, 414
pages.**

This is a story of a new space marine legion, the Iron Snakes. Sergeant Priad and the Damocles squad are struggling in their battles with not only aliens from dark eldar to orcs but also themselves.

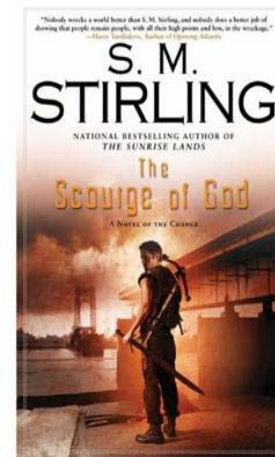
Interesting. This is a new space marine with a few twists. Recommended to dark sci-fi fans and Warhammer 40,000 readers - **Jeffrey Lu**



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Musty Tomes

FIVE VAN VOGT STORIES OF MENTAL POWERS

Slan & Slan Hunter, by A.E. Van Vogt and Kevin J. Anderson
Science Fiction Book Club, 373 pp., 1940 and 2007.

I reread *Slan* to prepare myself for its 67-years later sequel in the same book, *Slan Hunter*. My, how time changes one's perspective. It's still the definitive work on persecution of mutant telepaths, and a tour-de-force of Van Vogt's super-science imagination. It's also obviously a boy's power fantasy, with the main female character nothing but a future wife. The boy exults over how he will be the most powerful man in the world and overthrow the tyrannical one-world government. Not a hack writer, of course Van Vogt did not end the novel that way. One thing you can count on in a Van Vogt novel is that you can't predict what will happen next, and that held on at least my third reading of it. This clued me in to a few scenes in *Slan Hunter* that had to be written by Anderson, because they were clichés even in the 1940s and predictable.

These were slight flaws, and the sequel does end with a couple surprises, which bespeak plotting by Van Vogt. The main story of the sequel picks up on a plot thread left unresolved in the original. A second race of telepaths has developed spaceships and plans on conquering earth from their cities on Mars. Van Vogt never said what happened to that plot in *Slan*. That is the main action of the sequel, providing lots of action with space battles and destruction of earth cities. Anderson did maintain the style of writing, and I tried to distinguish his passages from Van Vogt's. Aside from those clichés, the only clues were a few modern words, book and movie titles worked into the narrative, and a scene redolent of 9-11 Manhattan, which happened after Van Vogt had died.

Anderson also corrects the 1940s gender roles, developing a couple female characters quite along lines Van Vogt would have intended. Word is that about half of *Slan Hunter* was written by Van Vogt in the 1980s, which constrained Anderson to modernize or explain it as best he could. He did a good job, for a story one might consider juvenile. No sex or religion or strong language, open to all ages. And so then, if "fans are slans," then all fans of scifi should read this.

But don't stop there, for we also have the classics:

The World of Null-A, 1945

The Players of Null-A, 1948

Null-A 3, 1985

What an interesting contrast Van Vogt's Null-A novels make to his *Slan* novels. Again, there is no sex or religion or strong language, so the books are open to all ages, but they are far less juvenile than the slans. There is an adult theme here that is the primary plot of the first two novels, and well addressed in the final one, too: if education is finally perfected, how good can government and

society become? For Null-A is the non-Aristotleian General Semantics mental training which exists today. 500 years in the future, society has become a meritocracy, based on Null-A education to think better. The Null-A Games Machine gives exams to all citizens who wish to compete for better social positions, based on how well they have learned their Null-A. This perfect education has not eliminated the problem of bad people who want to cheat and get ahead for money and power. So the villains rig the Games Machine to let them win (*can you say voting machines?*).

The third novel makes too much use of mental teleportation for my taste, but if you suffer through (enjoy?) that long enough then the education theme returns with more excellent attention by Van Vogt. Mental teleportation? Just by thinking, the Null-A hero can teleport somewhere, a power developed at the end of the 1948 sequel. It seems that *Players* was part of the inspiration for the classic 1953 Alfred Bester novel *The Stars My Destination*, with its "jaunting" hero. This is a common notion of magic and wizards, given super-science quantum-level jargon to justify it by Van Vogt. While it moves the action well, fortunately there are other ideas unrelated to it. As for the action, how's about two warring races in another galaxy having their spaceships accidentally teleported to our space? Then they get to interact with all of the characters from the first two novels. And Van Vogt ends it all with a final consideration of how Null-A relates to romantic couplings of men and women. Fun for all ages. - **M.L. FRINGE**

Linnets and Valerians **by Elizabeth Goudge** **first published in 1964** **Puffin Books**

Linnets and Valerians is a work of children's fantasy, in the tradition of *The Secret Garden*, *The Midnight Folk*, or the stories by E. Nesbit. Set in 1912 in Devon, England, it is based on actual memories of the author combined with local folktales and magical imagination.

The 4 Linnet children, Nan, Robert, Timothy, and Betsy have been left in the care of their formidable grandmother, since their own mother has died and their father is an officer in the British Army. They run away from home with the impulsiveness of innocence, and by great good fortune come to the home of their Uncle Ambrose, a vicar and former headmaster, and a firm proponent of classical education. Uncle Ambrose has a manservant named Ezra, whose ears are pointed. Ezra sings wonderful songs and talks to the bees, and he performs charms of healing and protection. Uncle Ambrose, as a vicar of the Church of England, does not believe in magic, but he does recognize will power and malice as forces with which to reckon; and when Timothy sees the great god Pan, Uncle Ambrose realizes he has found a kindred spirit in his youngest nephew.

There is magic at work in this bit of Devon. Their neighbor Emma Cobley has cast spells against the Valerian family after Hugo Valerian married someone else. It falls to the children to undo the harm and help set things right.

This is one for the refreshment of the spirit. If it's not at your local library or bookstore, try Amazon.com - **Chris Paige**.

One for the Morning Glory **By John Barnes** **Tor Books, 319 p.**

"It was an old saying in the Kingdom that 'a child who tastes of the Wine of the Gods too early is only half a person afterwords.'"

So begins one of the finest works of fantasy of this or any age. Dedicated to Kara Dalkey, another SF writer, this masterpiece was published in 1996, several years after Barnes wrote *Orbital Resonance*, one of the great adolescent science fiction stories.

There is nothing like *One for the Morning Glory*; out of the thousands and thousands of fantasy novels that ring changes and variations of the hero's journey, there are some dozens that are distinguished by the author's original voice, or unusual narrative mellifluousness, but only *Morning Glory* presents a coming of age story that tells so well, in one volume, the conflicts, loves, and confrontations that forge a hero from a child and a King from a prince.

Prince Amatus, barely 2 years old, contrives to gulp down a full glass of the Wine of the Gods, and is literally reduced to half a person – the right half. Justice is wonderfully and terribly executed upon the four responsible (or irresponsible) persons who allowed this to happen: the Nursemaid, the Castle Witch, the Royal Alchemist, and the Captain of the Guard. This leaves King Boniface with four crucial vacancies to fill, and messengers are sent throughout the kingdom to solicit applicants. A year and a day go by before four mysterious applicants arrive together: Psyche, Mortis, Golias, and The Twisted Man. Each is superbly qualified for the position he or she seeks to fill. Golias is a blend of Merlin, Burl Ives, and John Steinbeck; Mortis the witch was formerly a queen; The Twisted Man is a brilliant fighter; and Psyche says of herself, in a soft voice, "I have no qualifications except that I know how to do things, I work hard, and I usually like children, though to tell the truth it depends a great deal on the child, for you know they are not all alike." King Boniface is charmed by her honesty and impressed by the others, and all four are hired upon completion of 4 Challenges of their skills. Golias and Mortis must succeed in the difficult business of creating some Wine of the Gods; The Twisted Man must defeat all challengers, and the only difficulty there is to not kill or maim them irreparably. Psyche must get Amatus happily to sleep.

These 4 Companions oversee Amatus' education, and then his adventures begin.

The terrible price of Amatus regaining

parts of his missing self is to lose his Companions, one by one, and his merely human companions, Duke Wassant, Sir John Slitgizzard, and the red-haired princess Calliope cannot entirely occupy the empty spaces.

There are evil goblin hordes, a Riddling Beast, a vampire menace, and war with the tyrant Waldo's army of undead and enchanted men. Amatus must more than once look into the heart of darkness – his own, and horrifically, others. But there are also radiant moments and humor high, low, and reflexive.

One of the most striking aspects of this story is how Barnes plays with words. Mark Twain once deliberately misused a word in an essay to see if anyone was paying attention. In *Morning Glory*, John Barnes makes a game of word substitution. A taboret is a pub, a palanquin is a nine-stringed musical instrument, a pismire is a firearm, an escree is a blade, and a favorite dish is piecemeal boiled into simile. That's just a small sample of the verbal whimsy. There is also a well-endowed bar maid named Pell Grant.

Whether you read this book to yourself, aloud to a beloved child, or with a circle of friends, it is one of the treasures of this genre, one that can be read and reread with folded enjoyment. - **Chris Paige**

An overview of the Taltos books **written by Steven Brust** **by Chris Paige**

Here is an analogy: Steve Brust is to SF literature what *Pulp Fiction* was to movies. It isn't just that the main characters of both his Vlad Taltos series and that film are assassins; that's the least of it. The analogy is based on the time-warping narrative style and casts of characters who are memorable, ambiguous, and capable of extraordinary selfless actions and epiphanies.

Vlad Taltos is a short-lived human in a realm of Dragaerians, or, as his Grandfather calls them - elves. There are 17 Houses of Dragaerians, and while in the distant past mixed marriages across Houses were quite common, it is no longer done. Certain of the Houses are considered 'noble' or aristocratic; others are middle or merchant class, and there are two Houses at the bottom of the totem-pole: the serf House of the Teckla, and the catch-all Jherég, whose House specialty is crime. Vlad Taltos' father had worked all his life to buy a rank in the House of the Jherég, and Vlad grew up working long hours in his father's restaurant, learning magic surreptitiously from his grandfather, and developing survival skills in the streets of Adrilankha. Since it is a whole lot easier to survive if you are the most dangerous *! out there, young Vlad became an assassin.

As a narrator, Vlad is laconic, sarcastic, and self-deprecating. He is also sometimes flat-out wrong in his interpretations of people's motives or feelings.

(Continued on page 18)

In Our Book

The Snow Queen
by Mercedes Lackey
Luna Books, \$24.95, 331pp

This means that you the reader get to appreciate the dramatic irony when Vlad only sees the situational irony. There is a lot of good interplay between Vlad and his familiar, a winged reptile named Loiosh, providing comic relief and revealing the concerns Vlad usually keeps concealed under a shell of cynicism. His evolving friendships with two Dragon lords, Morrolan and Alieria, with the undead Dark Lady of Dzur Mountain, Sethra Lavode, and with one other (saying who would give away the surprise of a later story) are the keystones of the novels and pack the most emotional wallop.

Steven Brust is a godsend to anyone who wishes Roger Zelazny had lived longer and written more. (Brust was one of the contributors to the Zelazny tribute anthology, *Lord of Light*.) Like Zelazny, Brust has clearly envisioned an original world of complex dealings, with misdirection, insults as an art form, occasional puns, deities, romance and sudden violence. The series began as fantasy SF; it has since morphed into hybrid science-fantasy, with genetic manipulation and space/time travel as the basis for the fantastic elements.

The order in which they were written and published does not correspond to chronological order, but you definitely want to start with *Taltos*, *Jherag*, and *Yendi*. These 3 introduce you to all the main characters and establish their relationships and personalities. *Dragon* is actually set in a time between these, and the most recently published *Jhegaala* occurs after *Phoenix* and *Teckla* but before *Athyra*, *Orca*, *Issola* and *Dzur*.

Of his own writing style, Brust recently posted the following on the Tor website:

How to prepare a Vlad Taltos novel By Steven Brust

Crush four cloves of garlic with kosher salt and finely chop two medium onions.

Sauté quickly in rendered goose fat in a cast iron pan.

When the onions become pulpy, add in several large slices of Michael Moorcock tropes. Cook lightly, so they remain recognizable.

Turn up the heat, and gently add in a world created by Fritz Leiber and four tablespoons of Hungarian paprika. Cook until almost blended, then turn down the heat.

While these simmer, in a separate saucepan, pour in Roger Zelazny's aesthetic and lay Raymond Chandler's voice on top. Mix vigorously until it looks original.

Finely chop several Hungarian folktales, add in a smattering of epistemology, and pour into saucepan. Sprinkle with wit, if there's any lying around.

I don't know how many it serves, but when it works, the leftovers are satisfactory.

The newest in the Tales of the 500 Kingdoms, here is a story of hope and love, courage and kindness, with Mercedes' trademark ability to bring together numerous story threads into a coherent and pleasing whole. Aleksia is the Godmother for an extensive region in the northern reaches of the 500 Kingdoms. Her particular responsibility is to take the selfish, arrogant, and clever lads who are turning into Clockwork Artificers and give them exactly what they most want: solitude, supplies, and independence. In utter isolation. No doting parents, no fawning girlfriend to proffer adulation, and Aleksia mirrors their arrogance with a hauteur to humble princes. It's an act, of course, a part she plays in keeping with the *Tradition*, the force that directs energies and lives along familiar pathways. Aleksia is actually trying to protect these youths from two dangers: the Tradition itself, which has no objection to tragic outcomes if they correspond to a story, and the dark magicians who capture budding Protagonists and kill them to siphon the powerful energies that surround them. Currently, Aleksia is playing out the story told by Hans Christian Andersen. Kay is her guest in the Palace of Ever Winter, a prisoner of his own pride; Gerda is slogging a weary and dangerous route to rescue him.

But other stories are intersecting. Far to the north, where fairy godmothers are unknown, a wise woman named Annukka oversees the welfare of the villagers. Her son Veikko has gone on a quest to find a teacher so that he can become a Warrior Mage, leaving behind a fiancée named Kaari. When the magic silver cup Kaari keeps shows that Veikko is in mortal danger, she and Annukka set forth on a quest of their own. Along the way they encounter the hollow-backed, alluring spirits of trees that some readers will recognize from George MacDonald's *Phantastes*, and come across news of a terrible magic turned against mankind.

Aleksia has enjoyed a luxurious but lonely and repetitive tenure as godmother. It is thankless work acting the role of cruel Snow Queen. Only the other godmothers and their allies know her real work. One of these, Elena herself (heroine of the first book in the series), warns Aleksia that there is another Snow Queen, one who is kidnapping handsome young men who are *not* restored to their towns and families. Aleksia resolves to leave the security of the ice palace and find out what is going on. Departing from the Tradition, she comes to places and choices where the Tradition itself has no footing.

In many ways, the most interesting character is Annukka. Mercedes Lackey puts her most careful, thoughtful, and crafted words into describing this wise woman and her actions. And unlike some of the previous *Tales of the 500 Kingdoms*, this one stays out of the boudoir, so it is better suited for gentler readers. It should be a welcome addition to anyone's Lackey collection. – **Chris Paige**

Jhegaala
by Steven Brust
Tor, \$24.95, 300 pp

I don't know why I'm even writing this review, or why you're reading it; if you not familiar with the Vlad Taltos series this is not the place to be jumping in, but if you're a fan just wavering on whether you should spring for the hardcover or wait for the paperback, read on:

Jhegaala falls earlier chronologically than the most recent entries in the series, shortly after the events in *Phoenix*. Fresh from his divorce with Cawti, and on the run from the Organization that wants him really, really dead, Vlad heads East to Fenario and the paper-mill town of Burz, where he may or may not have distant family. To say that he runs afoul of small-town politics would be a gross understatement, and to say anymore would be a spoiler. You're not getting anything out of me.

Suffice to say the story is witty, clever, and gripping, and IMHO the most satisfying of the recent installments in the series. The whodunit, conspiracy-in-a-small-town aspect may remind readers of *Orca*, but with Vlad's personal stake it engages more emotionally. This is a book I was genuinely sorry to finish, because I wanted to keep reading it. Go ahead, buy

(Continued on page 19)



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In Our Book (Continued from page 18)

the hardcover. - **Nancy Louise Freeman**

Jhegaala
by Steven Brust
Tor Books, \$24.95, 300 pp

This, the newest Vlad Taltos tale, is set in the time immediately after *Teckla* and before the misadventures of *Athyra*. Cawti had given Vlad an ultimatum: leave the Jhereg or leave her; and since Vlad does not handle ultimatums well, unless he is issuing them, he has left Cawti, the Jhereg, and Dragaera as well, with a price upon his head and a contract for a morganti killing against him. Having lost the family he knows, he travels in search of the family he doesn't know: his mother's people in Fenario to the East, under a naked sun. He has a name – Meress, and a direction, and some information imparted by his grandfather.

When he arrives in Burz, his inquiries have an unforeseen and terrible consequence. Before he finds them, all seven of the Meress clan are killed in a magical strike. Vlad may have outgrown being an assassin, but that doesn't mean that responsible parties won't pay with their lives.

When Vlad shows up in *Athyra*, he is badly injured. Here's where we find out how that happened, and what he did about it. - **Chris Paige**

The Hazards of Space Travel
By Neil F. Comins, Ph.D.
Random House, \$19.95, 253 pp.

This book is a fascinating compilation of all of the known hazards to manned space travel covering both hazards near Earth and in various space environments around the Solar System. It also covers the suggested remedies for most of them. For example it discusses the hazards of radiation during long space flights and the suggested methods of shielding from them mentioning the water envelope idea, the various hydrogen rich shields and the possibility of active shielding using electro magnetism. ("Shields up, Mr Sulu.")

The book discusses environmental hazards from accidentally exported bacteria, viruses and fungi and the hazards of dust pollution from the visited environments. It covers medical issues and countless other problems. It is an excellently clear non-technical volume.

It is well-organized with clear chapter headings and an index. It provides an almost encyclopedic coverage of the hazards and remedies. I recommend it as appropriate for any space fan who wants to understand the difficulties inherent in Manned Space Travel. It would be a good source book for SF authors also. – **Gary Swaty**

The Automatic Detective
By A. Lee Martinez
Tor [Tom Doherty Associates], \$14.95, 317 pp.

The Hard Boiled Robot Detective has arrived. Mack Megaton inhabits Empire, a Technotopia gone slightly awry. He begins as a Cab Driver with provisional citizenship and through necessity rather than intent becomes a Private Detective.

The family down the hall from his apartment is kidnapped. Nothing is being done. He sets out to help. Along the way he acquires the requisite Sidekick and a Beautiful Wealthy High Society Genius Girl Friend.

His case turns out to involve saving the world from horrible mutagens which would kill hundreds of thousands and alter all of mankind forever.

The gritty background and the various low life characters evoke the wonderful flavor of the traditional hardboiled detective novel. The narrative style is first person and throughout. You see things from the point of view of the evolving Robot Detective. It is a truly wonderful romp set in a truly extraordinary environment. Recommended – **Gary Swaty**

Lirael
by Garth Nix
HarperCollins \$7.99, 705 pp.

Australian author Garth Nix pulls off a formula YA coming-of-age fantasy that strays from formula just often enough to keep you on your toes. The title character, Lirael, has grown up among the Clayr, a monastic order of clairvoyants in the north part of the Old Kingdom. However as the years pass and it becomes apparent that she doesn't have the psychic gift she should by heredity, she feels herself more and more an outsider. Eventually she becomes an assistant librarian, and begins to delve into the magics that inhabit the Clayr's huge and ancient library, including collections where an assistant librarian isn't allowed – and shouldn't be able – to go.

In a parallel plot, the young prince Sameth is studying to become the next Abhorsen – or should be. In the Old Kingdom, there are two kinds of magic; the legal kind, known as Charter magic, and prohibited magic that revolves around necromancy. The Abhorsen is the only person who can legally practice necromancy, to "fight fire with fire". However, a traumatic incident early in the book cripples Sam with a deathly fear of practicing the magic to which he is heir, and a dark power is rising (of course) that increasingly consumes the attention of his mother, the Abhorsen Queen.

Nix's world is a highly original take on the standard medieval fantasy trope, and the sharp-eyed will catch parallels to modern-day Australian politics. Well, except for the zombies. This is the middle

book of a trilogy, as I found out after purchasing the book, but though it ends on a cliffhanger the first and second volumes are independent enough the reader should have no problem jumping in here. (The trilogy consists of *Sabriel*, *Lirael*, and *Abhorsen*.) - **Nancy Louise Freeman**

Wanted
Mark Millar, JG Jones, Paul Mounts
Top Cow Productions, \$19.99; 208 pp.

I read this just hours after watching the movie based on this graphic novel. The movie was ok but the book is fantastic. I would have enjoyed this book as a movie. The book begins similarly with the assassination of Wesley's dad (the circumstances are extremely different) and Wesley feeling sorry for himself. The Fox brings him in to fill his dad's shoes and he shoots the wings off those darn flies. From here on out the stories diverge so greatly as to be two separate stories.

The organization is the name of the supervillians ruling the world. It seems that during the summer of 1986 the super villains teamed up and killed every superhero, it took three months and the death toll was tremendous. They built the Empire State building as a device to warp reality so no-one remembered the heroes and keep the world under their control. The world is divided into domains and there is where the story becomes good.

The ruler of Austrailia leads a coup in the Americas, putting Wesley and the Fox on the wrong side of the fight. Wesley slowly eliminates the leaders of the coup and attempts to retake the Americas. While none of the heroes or villains are identified you can recognize dozens of them.

I really liked it. Go find a copy
4.5 out of 5 stars - **Bob LaPierre**

Secret of the Dragon's Breath
by Derek Hart
iUniverse, \$16.95, 245 pp.

This sequel to *Secret of the Dragon's Eye* finds our teenage protagonists still coping with the rigors of World War II on the coast of Cornwall such as rationing and air raids. This installment in the series introduces new menaces and new friends as Gavin, Emily and Bunty who join Thaddeus, the dragon, in protecting England from Nazi plots.

I read *Secret of the Dragon's Eye* to my nephews and sure enough, as soon as *Secret of the Dragon's Breath* arrived they were champing at the bit for us to sit down to read it. They, and I, were held captive by the story, a masterful mix of historical fiction and fantasy, and they kept begging for "just one more chapter" when it was time to stop for the day. The boys were almost as fascinated with the concepts of WWII Britain's air raids and

food rationing as they were with dragons and magic.

Gavin, Bunty, Emily and Thaddeus are, once again, part of large historical events - such as the sinking of the Bismarck and hidden events such as an attempt to invade Britain by yet another race of creatures from the fantasy realm. We also met new allies in the hidden fantasy war that is part of the overall battle of good vs. evil and Bunty gets a girlfriend

These books are wonderful stories with the extra added attraction of being a painless and entertaining method of teaching a new generation about the past, the value of friendship and sacrifice and that evil and good do exist in the world. I highly recommend these to all parents, to all lovers of dragons and to those who enjoy historical fiction. A third book, *Secret of the Dragon's Claw*, is planned and the boys and I will be sure to read it as soon as it comes out. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Death's Head: Maximum Offense
by David Gunn
Del Rey, \$25.00, 351 pp.

Sven Tveskoeg is back, accompanied by his odd assortment of auxiliary troops to do whatever dirty, underhanded, and violent job needs doing for General Jaxx and Emperor OctoV. So they are sent on a specious rescue assignment that is a cover for an assassination. The cream in their spiked coffee is that General Jaxx's teenage son is their commanding officer.

Most of the main characters get his or her heart's desire at some point, except for Sven, who arguably has no heart; the closest he comes to heart-fulfillment is enjoying unprintable poetic justice and perpetrating mayhem. But Rachel gets her dream sniper rifle, and Haze gets his hands on Sven's AI sidearm.

Author Gunn assumes readers are familiar with his characters; he provides reminders of important history, but not enough background to orient first-comers. Also, the title is more indicative of its rating than the military action. Gunn writes hardcore military SF, and this time, the emphasis is on the *hardcore*. – **Chris Paige**

Twilight Fall: A Novel of the Darkyn
by Lynn Viehl
Onyx books; \$7.99, 326 pp

This is the sixth book in the series Viehl has created about the Darkyn—her take on the romantic vampire.

The plot of this novel centers on Liling Harper a landscaper with a real way with flowers and her current work is for a very private, exclusive medical clinic. The kind-hearted Liling is also able to heal and ease a patient's pain;

In Our Book (Continued from page 19)

which she does surreptitiously. The gentle Liling’s unique talents have made her the focus of the Brethren, a nasty organization with Catholic ties that has been hunting her and others like her. In her childhood, she moved from one orphanage to another, being experimented on with others, including her twin. It was her twin that finally got them out of the clutches of the evil organization and she has been on the run ever since, able to change her identity and leave town quickly.

Liling realizes that the Brethren have found her at her current job and she tries to leave Chicago but suddenly there are no flights available. The mysterious Darkyn lord Valentin Jaus, who has made several visits to a patient that Liling has befriended comes to the landscaper’s rescue and offers her a ride on his private jet, which Liling reluctantly accepts. She does not really want to involve anyone else in her life, but she is utterly drawn to Valentin and his visits to the clinic always spark highly erotic fantasies for her.

The tension cranks up pretty tight as the two discover their mutual passion in a violent storm. And the sex is very hot and heavy. But there’s no time to enjoy their new found attraction because the plane has been hijacked by the Brethren. In the struggle to take over the plane, the pilot and copilot are killed and Liling is shot. Valentin crashlands the plane in a swamp in northern Florida.

A killer hired by the Brethren who has this nifty talent of tracking people by the water they give off—the moisture of their breath is enough, tracks Liling and Valentin to the isolated cabin that the plane crashed close to.

And then all hell breaks loose.

This is a really dramatic and interesting novel. I enjoyed Viehl’s Darkyn—who are fascinating. There is a whole hierarchy of these beings spread out across the world. Undoubtedly in the other novels, other couples have fought the Brethren and won—but at great cost.

There is a bit of “The Da Vinci Code’s” *Opus Dei* to the Brethren. They are a really creepy organization and a worthy opponent to the Darkyn. Viehl handles the intrigue and the sex really well, enough so I will keep an eye out for her other novels. - **Sue Martin**

The Haunted Ballad Quintet by Deborah Grabien St. Martin’s Press

The premise of this extraordinary series is that Penny Wintercraft-Hawkes, a London theatre actress and producer, is a *sensitive*, a sort of ghostbuster. Not only is she aware of ghosts, her presence seems to arouse them. Her significant other is Ringan Laine, lead male singer for Broomfield Hill, a group that performs the traditional ballads of Old

England and Britain. These two knowledgeable, artistic, disciplined and strong-willed mortals act as lightning rods to the denizens of the netherworld: spirits who at last have a chance of being heard, getting noticed, and having their agendas resolved, not dismissed as mere anomalous weather or bad “nerves.” It turns out that some of these ballads Get It Wrong. They are perpetuating a tradition of *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*, the favored tools of the gods of the public schools, and there are some misprisoned souls who cannot rest, but who can cause quite a bit of damage. Each novel is devoted to one such ballad and the hauntings that manifest when Penny appears on the scene. In one horrific case, the manifestation is much worse than ghosts too frightened to pass on, or a spirit in an agony of Catholic Guilt; it is a viciously malevolent incubus from the time of Charles the First.

Each chapter is headed by a verse of the ballad, for the benefit of readers who are unfamiliar with the songs, and there are conversational references between characters to actual recordings. The titles in the series are, first to last, *The Weaver and the Factory Maid*, *The Famous Flower of Serving Men*, *Matty Groves*, *Cruel Sister*, and *New Slain Knight*. Two of the first three are directly named after the ballad under scrutiny; “Cruel Sister” has many variant names, but it always concerns two sisters, both in love with the same man, and a walk alongside a river that ends in murder and drowning. The bones of the drowned sister are found and made into a musical instrument, which when played, tell the story of the murder. Loreena McKennitt recorded the song as “The Swans They Swim So Bonnie-o.” *New Slain Knight* is variant of a song most widely known as “Twa Corbies,” or “Three Ravens;” instead of hungry carrion birds discussing their next meal, *New Slain Knight* is an interrogation song between a young man and young woman concerning the knight’s identity.

The author, Deborah Grabien, now lives in California; but she is from England, and at University she read History, concentrating on the Plantagenet era. She loves music, especially folk and rock fusion, so these books are a labour of love and knowledge, and a passion for setting the record straight. As a result, they are refreshingly free from the anachronistic errors that can bedevil historical fiction. (I have only found one error, and it was not historical. In the third book of the series, she mentions the “poisonous berries” of yew trees. As a forager, I know that it is the seeds which are poisonous, not the tasty berries.) These books are very well-written, gripping, and suspenseful. They are a natural for the filkers in the SF community, but also for everyone who enjoys mystery, history, or the supernatural. – **Chris Paige**

The Sharing Knife: Passage by Lois McMaster Bujold Eos, \$25.95; 437 pp

Passage is the third volume of **The Sharing Knife** series; it is not, as I had expected, the grand finale of a trilogy. There is no conclusive showdown between the immortality-craving blights and the mortal Lakewalkers, nor do Fawn and Dag persuade all famers and Lakewalkers to just get along. But then, Bujold never does take the easy, expected route, does she? Life is complicated; resolutions, if any, come slow, and why should fiction be any different? Instead, *Passage* is the story of Fawn and Dag’s journey by river boat and raft down to the sea. Dad is becoming a healer, and Fawn’s family has more or less accepted their unconventional alliance, but before there can be any radical reordering or unification of farmer and Lakewalker societies, we have to clearly understand the toll levied by ignorance, fear, and anger. Dag and Fawn have broken the ultimate tabu of their respective groups by getting married: Lakewalkers simply *do not* marry farmers. Everybody knows that – it’s axiomatic. Farmers are suspicious of Lakewalkers with some reason: there is a phenomenon called beguilement, whereby Lakewalkers exert their power to lure and seduce farm-bred lovers, who are subsequently abandoned. Conscientious Lakewalkers never do this deliberately; the hell of it is, beguilement sometimes happens despite good intentions, and no one understands how beguilement takes effect, not even the randy young Lakewalkers who haven’t learned Stan Lee’s lesson about power and responsibility. And what becomes of Lakewalkers and farmers who genuinely fall in love, doomed as ever were Romeo and Juliet by the divides of their families? What if they can’t just get over it? And what happens if they do not both obligingly die? An abandoned farm-girl, or farm-boy, is an embarrassment to the family; but a heart-torn Lakewalker is like a downed power-line.

Bujold writes the best foils since Shakespeare – no, she’s better. Hotspur Harry and Price Hal may be the classic example of literary foils, but Bujold blew Shakespeare out of the water with her Miles-Haroche-Illyan study in the uses of power and memory. In *Passage*, Dag comes face to face with his there-but-for-the-grace-of-Fawn-go-I counterpart, an ostracized Lakewalker gone mad with grief and rage, levying a terrible revenge on the river-folk who denied the legitimacy of his love for one of their own.

This is a character-driven story of romance, by at least 3 of C.S. Lewis’ definitions of ‘romance’ (see his essay-intro to *The Pilgrim’s Recess*.) The pacing is as leisurely as river-boat on wide water. Bujold consulted the amiable ghosts of

Mississippi boatmen George Byron Merrick, Charles Edward Russell, David Crockett, and T. C. Collins to write this story, like a modern Odysseus seeking guidance from the shades. A good book for the lazy hours of summer. – **Chris Paige**

The Borderkind by Christopher Golden Bantam Books, \$6.99; 421 pp

The Borderkind continues the adventures and misadventures begun in *The Myth Busters*, being Book 2 of The Veil Trilogy. Christopher Golden is being compared to Stephen King and Neil Gaiman; fans of either writer are likely to find another favorite here. Golden has 12 or 13 published novels to date, so if you are casting about for something horrific to read until the next Gaiman novel sees the light of day, or the dark of night, there is enough reading matter here to keep you busy for a while.

The Veil separates the world of Wonder from the Mundane realm. Only a few creatures – or people – can cross over at will. One family, the Bascombes, have been traditional Guardians of the Veil and of the magical beings. For there are Hunters: men and monsters determined to destroy all magical beings who will not serve them, and most especially the Borderkind, the ones who can cross the Veil. They have an aggressive Mundane Agenda: a world with no Wonder, no Magic, just Power – all of it in their hands. Vicious Control Freaks.

Oliver Bascombe is on the run, blamed for a murder committed by Hunters, trying to find his kidnapped sister, taken as hostage to the other side of the Veil. Oliver’s fiancée, Julianna, is trying to find him, and she is accompanied by Detective Halliwell, who wants to find Oliver for questioning. Oliver is accompanied by several of the Borderkind: a man of ice, a kitsune, and a shapeshifter named Blue Jay. But Oliver has not been adequately prepared or informed to take over the hereditary Bascombe responsibilities, so he stumbles about in a fog of innocence and gullibility. Good people and exquisite creatures die. But if phantasmagoria move your soul, even by their passing, this story with its vivid, full-sense descriptions will satisfy mightily as you share Christopher’s dream/nightmare. - **Chris Paige**

As Fate Decrees by Denyse Bridger Edge Science Fiction and Fantasy Publishing, \$15.95; 253 pp

Denyse Bridger is a prolific writer of erotic romance in many sub-genres. As *Fate Decrees* is quasi-historical fantasy:

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In Our Book (Continued from page 20)

Ares, the Greek god of War, goes in disguise to a slave market (always a good setting for titillation). There he purchases Amarantha, who is beautiful, proud, and spirited, to train as his champion. Ares knows that a no-longer-entirely-mortal woman can go places a god cannot, slipping between the meshes of the web of The Fates like a golden wire woven into the pattern. Amarantha becomes the agent and lover of Ares, trained as a warrior, underestimated by burly opponents. But even as Ares’

possessive hold on her body and mind deepen, her heart is unassuageably inclined to the prince she loved in childhood, Iphicles, now King of Corinth and Pheneus. When Ares himself sends Amarantha to guard and serve Iphicles, she is too distracted by longing to prevent treachery, murder, and war. Ares is furious that Amarantha should prefer a mere mortal, and a married one at that, to his lustrous Self. But even he has to accede to the Fates; and something much worse than a war over a couple of Greek cities is taking shape in the Fates’ tapestry. Amarantha ultimately

fails to save Iphicles; nevertheless, she has passed a test of the Fates. Tempered by the fires of war and sorrow, she is now their tool as well as Ares’ Champion.

The fatal affinity between Amarantha and Iphicles transcends time. Iphicles’ soul is reborn in modern Greece as Nickolas Stephanos, and Amarantha is given the body of Alexandra Christophi to inhabit, when Alexandra is killed in a terrorist attack. The catch is, Alexandra was Nickolas’ fiancée. Over the centuries, Amarantha has become Ares’ lover in heart as well as body, so this proximity to a reborn Iphicles is a double torment. A madman is

on a quest to become immortal, destroying Delphi in his search for a cache of ambrosia, the food of the gods. Amarantha/Alexandra is supposed to thwart him, returning the ambrosia to the gods; but this is a new world for Amarantha, who struggles to make her way in a world of firearms, bombs, computers, and the ruins of temples she knew and loved in their glory. In spite of all her training and will power, passion leads to betrayal, and Amarantha loses Ares’ favor – and protection. When she is thus most vulnerable, she is captured by her enemies and tortured. Yet this very failure accomplishes what strength and skill could not, bringing her within striking reach of her nemesis. The question is, which of them will lay hands on the ambrosia first?

Tales of love between gods and mortals are enduringly popular. Bridger’s style of writing, with the 100 obligatory verbs and adverbs of erotic fiction, has more ripping and rippling than Euripides, but there is a larger market for erotic fiction than for Greek tragedy. This is one for readers who enjoy anguished longing, and a little subdom spice to their story.
- Chris Paige

Heart of Light
by Sarah A Hoyt
Bantam, \$6.99, 502 pp

This book left me with a feeling of profound ambivalence; there’s so much to like, which only makes the clumsy bits more noticeable. Hoyt’s world-building stands out on the plus side: in an alternate British Empire, sorcery is the sole province of the descendants, legitimate and otherwise, of Charlemagne – except in Africa, where some small magical power is accessible to all. After explorer Carew Oldhall disappears in Africa in its pursuit, Her Majesty’s Secret Service send his nebbish brother Nigel and his wife to seek the sorcerous ruby Heart of Light. Things go wrong straight off the bat; a secret society known as the Hyena Men, dedicated to African independence, wants to keep the ruby out of the Queen’s hands, and with good reason: she intends to use it to seize all of the world’s magic for the use of the reigning European monarchs. It also seems that a mysterious third party has been attacking both the Hyena Men and the Secret Service, and an old school friend of Nigel’s conveniently shows up to save the day when everything goes tits-up in Cairo.

Hoyt burns plot like crazy as the motley expedition treks across the continent, are attacked, separated, and question their own motives and loyalties. The author has done her research and gives an authentic portrayal of the politics of the time.

What jars is that the five POV characters – three British aristocrats, a Masai woman and a man from an unnamed African shangri-la – frequently sound and act more like 21st-century North Americans discussing a role-playing campaign than 19th-century people trapped in a hellish journey. YMMV, but it pulled me right out of an otherwise fascinating narrative.

Soul of Fire, the next book in the series, is scheduled for release August 2008. - Nancy Louise Freeman

Swordmasters
by Selina Rosen
Dragon Moon Press, \$19.95, 320pp

Publishers have a tradition of concealing or misrepresenting the race of main characters when they are of anything other than northern European origin. I have spoken with authors and illustrators, and they have told me Ged is not allowed to look Native American on any of the *Earthsea* covers, nor can Hiro Protagonist of *Snow Crash* be shown as Black-Korean, and Emily Devenport’s heroines get bleached. Even though SF readers are arguably the most open-minded population of readers, publishers continue to pander to racists instead of appealing to diverse populations who might actually

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Audio Entertainment changed, right when you were looking at it. Portable Media expanded and exploded before you had fully grasped the meaning of the name.

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What began as The Dragon Page with Michael and Evo has evolved into something greater, reaching farther into the entertainment industry with a broader selection of shows that appeal to a wider variety of tastes and interests, from humor to high quality audio drama productions, and from fiction to the latest news and entertaining interviews, there's something here for everyone.

The New **Cover to Cover** features hosts Michael R. Mennenga and fantasy author Michael A. Stackpole, and has expanded its coverage to include occasional forays into mysteries, thrillers and the writing process, while still highlighting the newest in science fiction and fantasy.

Slice of SciFi is the favorite of SF fans hungry for the latest news and developments in upcoming films and television, featuring interviews with the cast, producers and creators of our favorite shows, films, fan films, comics and more.

Technorama, with hosts Chuck Tomasi and Kreg Steppe, takes a lighthearted look at the world of tech, science, sci-fi and all things geek, spotlighting recent tech and science news, interviews with respected industry leaders, all interspersed with original humor.

Sit back and take a listen to any of our shows. We think you'll enjoy what you hear.

www.farpointmedia.net

In Our Book (Continued from page 21)

buy and read books if they knew were represented in heroic roles. Moon Press has broken with tradition, defying the trend that betrays the intent of the authors and the hopes of marginalized people. The cover art of *Swordmasters* actually depicts the main character accurately! Dark skin, thick dreadlocks, sword, attitude, and ambiguous gender – it’s all there to catch the eye, true to the content of the tale.

The Jethrik people are under recurrent attack by the Amalite hordes, so they train Swordmasters to defend the land. Swordmasters must be honorable and educated in law as well as fighters, for they often serve as arbiters of justice on their tours of duty (sort of like the Heralds of Valdemar without the white horses). Both the Jethriks and the Amalites are fair skinned and fair haired peoples, but there the similarities end. Jethrik culture is tolerant of, if not hugely in favor of, same sex partnering, and there are subcultures, including the shape-shifting Katabulls, that are part of Jethrik society. Jethriks are certainly hierarchical: women are not allowed into the ranks of Swordmasters, nor are the Katabulls, but varieties of religions are recognized and people more or less get along. The Amalites are another matter entirely. Their religion is rabidly binary: if you are not one of them they are under divine ordinance to annihilate you, by indoctrination or, failing that, the sword.

Tarius is from Kartik. The Kartiks are dark-skinned, and while the Amalites will try to recruit the Jethrik, they will only kill Kartiks. Tarius has come to join the Swordmasters seeking revenge against the Amalite army, and as the son of the famous Kartik Swordmaster Jabon the Breaker, Tarius is welcomed into the ranks – enthusiastically by some, reluctantly by others. His ways are strange, but he is a superlative fighter already, and what is more, he is kind. Darian, in charge of training recruits, values Tarius, and comes to hope for an alliance between this outlander and his hoydenish daughter, Jena. She has turned down every offer from eligible and interested Swordmasters.

But Tarius has a secret. Instead of being Jabon’s son, Tarius is Jabon’s *daughter*. Discovery means expulsion from the ranks at the very least. In self-imposed isolation lies her safety. But all Tarius’ plans to keep apart from the others fall apart. She may be the best fighter, but Tarius is illiterate; after failing the first written test she trades sword lessons for tutoring from three people: Tragon, another recruit, Harris, the club-footed boy of all work, and Jena. This proximity proves fatal. Tragon follows Tarius to the forest and learns her secret; meanwhile, Jena is falling in love with Tarius. Fear and ambition silence Tragon,

but Jena just won’t take “No” for an answer, and it isn’t as if Tarius doesn’t find her attractive. Since Tragon wants Jena, this has the makings of a dangerous triangle. Nor does all this byplay go unnoticed. Avron, a senior Swordmaster, is keeping a weather eye on Tarius for several reasons, and becomes the second person to know the truth.

It just gets more complicated. The Jethrik King himself, Persius, chooses Tarius as his champion for a duel to the death with the champion of a barbarian king. Still in her guise as a man, Tarius marries Jena and becomes the leader of King Persius’ army. Persius becomes obsessed with the handsome Swordmaster, and the tensions between Tarius, Jena, Tragon, and Persius erupt in betrayal, tragedy, and death.

Tarius survives, barely, and returns to her own people to raise a Kartik army, in which *anyone* who is willing to face death and mete it out is welcome. Even the Swordmasters who knew her best and loved her join her army as Tarius plots a final solution to the Amalite menace, demonstrating that Rudyard Kipling knew what he was talking about when he wrote, “the female of the species is more deadly than the male.” - **Chris Paige**

**Invincible, Legacy of the Force
by Troy Denning
Del Ray, \$27.00, 299 pp**

Invincible is the continuation of *Star Wars, Legacy of the Force Series*.

It was a long time ago, in a galaxy far away, that most of the rest first met, the Jedi Knights first became our heros de jour, Princess Leia married Han Solo, and gave birth to the twins, and raised a pair of Jedi knights.

The Jedi knights have come together to save the Galaxy. But Jacen Solo has turned to the dark side of the force. Suddenly the empire comes back lead by Jacen who is now Darth Caedus. As the rebel cause is beaten back only Jaina, his twin, can stop him. But can she? And if not, will she turn to the dark side?

Denning writes a good action serial book. It has plenty of action, his characters are believable. And as a bonus you have the whole Solo clan fighting Jacen together including uncle Luke Skywalker. It is a good action/ adventure, a pleasant way to pass an afternoon. Worth the read. - **Pam Allan**

**The Dark Ferryman
by Jenna Rhodes
DAW, \$23.95, 435 pp**

The Dark Ferryman is book 2 of *The Elven Ways*.

Over the centuries, Kerith has had its share of troubles, magic had left with the death of the magi, and the gods turned their backs on the world. Then came the otherworldly spell storm that brought the

Vaeliners, magic wielders, who took control of the land.

Now, the Ways established by Vaelander magic are disintegrating. The Warrior Queen, Lariel, is being challenged, her supporters killed. Rivergrace and Severn are split apart by their destinies as they try to control a demon and a goddess within. What will The Dark Ferryman’s price for his help be? Will it be too high?

Ms. Rhodes continues the epic fantasy begun with *The Four Forges* with engaging characters, fully realized, living in perilous times, dealing with forces they don’t fully understand. The reader becomes involved with the characters and looking for resolution. Though each book can stand alone, each book leads us to the next. Fantasy lovers will have to have the series. - **Pam Allan**

**Future Americas
Edited by John Helfers and Martin Greenberg
Daw, \$7.99, 312 pp**

Seventeen writers have each contributed a story of the future of America

This is not the Star Trek vision where “progress” leads to a better world. Most of the stories reflect an extrapolation of a dark future for the world and for humanity. From an America in which history has become myth in the ruins of a once great land, a world where genetic misfits become Slaves to the Gawders, and a company that clones extinct and endangered species in order to balance the ecosystem again [*nice saber toothed kitty-kitty*]. These are stories to make us think. I for one would not like to see MacBeth played as McBrady [bunch]

The future may look bleak, but the stories are well-written and interesting. This is a book you will want to read. - **Pam Allan**

**Pandemonium
by Daryl Gregory
Del Ray, \$13.00, 288 pp**

This is the debut novel of a Nebula-nominated short story writer.

It is a world like our own except that in the 1950’s, random acts of possession occur. Ordinary people are the targets of entities right out of the collective conscious, Pop culture icons are called demons. Del pierces quest for help to Valis, [formerly Phillip K. Dick] and others who believe that Del is the key to the possessions and the cure. For Del, the cure may be worse than the disease.

There has long been the question of characters from literature, and admiration gain a life of their own in our perception of them. Here they do, and they want out. *Pandemonium* is a complex and intelligent book of human aspiration, well-written and with a hero you care about in a world of shifting realities. The world

we live in suggests it might be now. - **Pam Allan**

**Valor’s Trial
by Tanya Huff
Daw, \$24.95, 389 pp**

Valor’s Trial is the fourth novel of The Confederation series.

Gunnery Sargent Torin Kerr is a Confederation Marine’s marine. She had kept more of her officers and enlisted men alive than anyone in the corps. Coming back from being repaired from her last assignment, she needs R&R. Instead, she is sent to a new war zone with a platoon of the greenest troops in the Corps. When the battle zone is slagged, the Corps decides she is dead. Neither Torin’s father or lover believe it and continue to search. The Corps remains adamant. Meanwhile surviving in tunnels below the slag, Torin has to break up a slave situation run by marine thugs. She takes a few soldiers to explore the tunnels and finds a more benevolent unit who also have lost their will to escape. Is there something in their daily Kibble and water? Picking up two men from the new camp, she looks for a way out. She finds a unit of the enemy and finds they are prisoners as well. They make a pact to cooperate to get out and fight together.

Valor’s Trial is an action adventure that is impossible to put down. Honor Harrington and she may be related somewhere in their gene pool. This is a well-written, fast moving with good characters and plotting. If you read military sci-fi and like Honor Harrington you will want to collect the series. - **Pam Allan**

**Mirrored Heavens
by David J. Williams
Bantam Spectra, \$12.00, 401 pp**

Mirrored Heavens appears to be a debut novel.

In the 21st century, the first wonder of the world is the Phoenix Space Elevator built by the US and the Eurasian Coalition following a second cold war, a grand symbol of the alliance of the super powers. AND IT HAS JUST BEEN DESTROYED. The mysterious insurgent group Autumn Rain claims responsibility.. Enter Claire Haskell and Jason Marlow, US counterintelligence agents, who have a past....or do they? The spymaster programs agents before a job. But what is real? As the agents hunting Autumn Rain, they become the hunted. As the Superpowers reach the brink of war, startling revelations begin to fly. Is anyone who they thought they were?

This month seems to be filled with plausible but dark futures. Here we mix Neuromancer with action adventure. It hits the opening page running and gains speed as it goes. If you like William Gibson, you’ll love this one. - **Pam Allan**

Club Listings

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

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

We are willing to gain any new members out there who are interested. Our members are very friendly, respectful, and fun. We welcome any and all.

For more information, contact Shane Bryner at acrossplus@westernsfa.org

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

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

azlanbashers@earthlink.net Web: www.lanparty.com/all/ VoiceMail: 602-306-9339

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 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 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, 1818 W Montebello in Phoenix, AZ. For information: write PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 or email info@casfs.org Web www.casfs.org

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

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

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

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.

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

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

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

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 or 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.ocsf.org or email info@ocsf.org

PAReX is a non profit organization dedicated to building and promoting Autonomous robotics. The club has been in existance 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

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

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

RAW GAMES (Role-players & Wargamers, Inc.) Role-players & Wargamers, Inc. is the Valley's oldest role-playing and wargaming club. Currently meeting at 8159 W. Weldon in Phoenix every Sunday from 12noon-5pm (except during conventions and other special events). Open to new members - call (623) 849-9515.

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) 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/ or you can sign up for games at www.nyron.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 Web www.atenveldt.com

SOUTHWEST COSTUMER'S GUILD The Southwest Costumers Guild is a loose organization of persons interested in all facets of historical, cultural, science fiction, fantasy, and humor costume. Members are often seen on stage and behind the scenes at local and regional Science Fiction Convention masquerades. They meet on the last Sunday of each month at various members' homes in the greater Phoenix area. For details. Southwest Costumers Guild, PO Box 39504, Phoenix, AZ 85609 or Randall Whitlock at costumers@casfs.org or www.southwestcostumersguild.org

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Club Listings
(Continued from page 23)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WESTERN SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION (WesternSFA) A non-profit corporation that sponsors AniZona, the ConRunners seminars, Across Plus Anime Club and sponsored the 2004 Westercon. Dedicated primarily to educational activities relating to literature, music, and visual and performing arts, especially in the genres of Anime, 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, check our website for meeting location Guests are welcome. For more info contact Craig Dyer at WesternSFA, PO Box 67457, Phoenix AZ 85082 Email: craig@westernsfa.org Webpage: www.westernsfa.org

Convention Listings

DENVENTION / WORLDCON 66 (Aug 6-10 2008) Colorado Convention Center, Denver, Colorado. Guests: Lois McMaster Bujold, Rick Sternbach, Tom Whitmore; TM Wil McCarthy. Rates, accommodations, etc: see website — http://www.denvention3.org/

COPPERCON 28 (Aug 29-31, 2008) Embassy Suites Paradise Valley/Scottsdale, Phoenix, AZ Author GoH MaryJanice Davidson, Media GoH Greg Weisman, Artist GoH David Hedgecock, Special GoH Anthony Alongi, Music GoH Tom Smith. Memberships \$40 thru 07/31/08. \$45 at the door. Info Coppercon 28 PO Box 62613, Phoenix AZ 85082, www.coppercon.org or nfo@coppercon.org

CONJECTURE (Sep 26-28) Crowne Plaza San Diego, San Diego, CA. Author GoH: David Drake, Programming Theme: Military SF. Memberships \$40 through Sep 18; \$50 Sep 19 - at the door; \$20 active duty military & reserves, high school & college faculty/staff, librarians, college students; \$15 high school students. Hotel \$115/night all room types. www.conjecture.org

WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION 2008 (Oct 30-Nov 3 '08) Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Info: website: www.worldfantasy.org

ANIZONA 2009 (April 10-12, 2009) Embassy Suites Paradise Valley/Scottsdale, Phoenix, AZ. Guests Richard Epcar, Ellyn Stern, Trish Ledoux, Toshi Yoshida, Sam Regal, David Vincent, Toybox. Karaoke, Cosplay, game room, viewing room, panels, dance, Artist Alley and much more.Memberships \$35 thru 09/15/2008. For more info - www.anizona.org or info@anizona.org

COPPERCON 29 (May 8-10, 2009) Grace Inn, 10831 S. 51st Street Phoenix AZ 85044. Guests: TBA. Check our website www.coppercon.org starting September 15, 2008.



CASFS Business Report

May.....
*CopperCon 28 will be on Labor day weekend
Friday, Saturday, Sunday, not Monday..
*CopperCon 29 is looking for a hotel site.
*HexaCon 18 hotel search in progress.
*HexaCon 19 hotel contract is under review for the same hotel as CopperCon 28 and is checking dates.
*Quartermaster shed was damaged from an exploded high power transformer. The outside of shed was burnt a bit. No inside damage occurred. Repairs are started. Estimate is to follow.
*Phoenix Book Festival 2009 will happen in April.
*Serenity screening in Candler will receive \$100 donation for their event. We will be able to place CopperCon 28 fliers in their event bags.
*Proposal offered and accepted, due to two major events, Westercon and DiscWorld, CopperCon 29 will occur with a smaller venue in the spring. HexaCon will be suspended for 2008 and 2009, to restart in 2010.

June.....
*CopperCon 28 – Art Show Director quit without providing data. The Art Show is Canceled. Hotel room rentals are less than half the number needed for reduced function space costs. All other preparations are on track.
*CopperCon 29 – Hotel Contract has been submitted to the Board. Date is in May. Mark is working on guests.
*ConNotations June issue was mailed Next issue preparation is on track.
*Quartermaster – Shed roof fire damage repaired. \$125.00 payment approved.
*Elections – New officers: President Mark Boniece, Vice President Gary Swaty, Secretary Gary Swaty, Treasurer Stephanie Bannon, Board Mark Boniece, Kevin McAllonan and Shane Briner. CopperCon 29 Chair Mark Boniece, CopperCon 29 Banker Stephanie L Bannon
*Next Meeting July 25, 2008.

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 1818 W Montebello in Phoenix The meetings begin at 8PM and are held on the last Friday of the month Jan. through Sept. and on the second Friday of the month Oct through Dec. Everyone is invited to attend two meetings as a guest (non-member). Membership rates are \$12/year plus an initial \$3 application fee and rates are pro-rated for the amount of the year remaining. For more info: Webpage: www.casfs.org Email: info@casfs.org

Generic Convention Registration Form
Name:
Badge Name:
Address:
City/State/ZIP:
Phone: Email:
Enclosed is \$ for memberships for convention.
(See individual convention listing for mailing address)
More info on Masquerade Art Show Volunteer Other