

# ConNotations

Volume 18, Issue 6  
December / January  
2008 / 2009  
**FREE**

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

## An Interview with Melanie Rawn by Catherine Book

I met Melanie Rawn at a small restaurant in Sedona, a halfway point between her home in Flagstaff and mine in Phoenix. Her smile was like a ray of sunshine. Now, you might say that was too much a cliché; but, you know, clichés had to come from somewhere and that is exactly the right way to describe her. Melanie is such a nice, friendly person; her interview was so fun for me.

I started by asking her how long she'd been writing. Scribbling – her term – since she was five years old, she remembered that she started actually writing when she was 20. She thinks a writer should not set pen to paper until they are certain they know the language they intend to use. By language she means a writer needs to have good grammar and they need to know any terms they might need for their story. If someone asks her how they should start writing, she recommends they take a Grammar 101 course to get the idea of how the English language works. What about plotting, I asked her. Where would a new writer learn plotting? Absolutely no idea, she answered. Probably by reading a lot, she speculated. If you read everything, you'll start to recognize the plotting – what works and what doesn't. A book that grabs



Melanie is one where A) she's not rewriting their stuff in her head, and B) her inner proofreader turns off. She often receives galleys for her review and she won't put her name on a review unless she really loves the book. And it needs to be either something very new or the writing must be very, very good. But what does Melanie like to read? Mysteries, histories and biographies; but she doesn't read in genre while she's writing. If she starts using longer clauses or sentences, you know she's been reading Jane Austen again...

She once wrote a book in 1985, *The Rushden Legacy*, using the pseudonym of Ellen Randolph. I asked her about that.

( Continued on page 7)

## Featured Inside

### Regular Features

**SF Tube Talk**  
All the latest news about  
Scienc Fiction TV shows  
by Lee Whiteside

**24 Frames**  
All the latest Movie News  
by Lee Whiteside

**Gamers Corner**  
New and Reviews from  
the gaming world

**Videophile**  
Reviews of genre releases  
on DVD

**Screening Room**  
Reviews of current theatrical releases

**In Our Book**  
Reviews of New SF/F Books

**Musty Tomes**  
Reviews of Classic Genre books

### Special Features

**An Interview with  
Melanie Rawn**  
by Catherine Book

**Inkheart Screening  
Passes Contest**

**Leo Laporte and his  
Empire of the Net**  
By Shane Shellenbarger

**An American in New Zealand**  
by Jeffrey Lu

**Plus**

**CASFS Business Report**

**FYI**  
News and tidbits of interest to fans

**Club Listings**

**Convention List &  
Generic Registration Form**

**CHECK OUR WEB SITE AT**  
<http://www.casfs.org/ConNotations/>

**FOR UP TO DATE INFO AND MOVIE  
REVIEWS BETWEEN ISSUES**

**ConNotations**  
**Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society**  
**PO Box 62613**  
**Phoenix, AZ 85082**

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit 839  
Phoenix, AZ

Pick up your copy of ConNotations at the following locations

BOOK STORES

**Bent Cover Bookstore**  
12428 N. 28<sup>th</sup> Drive, Phoenix, AZ 85029  
(602) 942-5932

**Book Exchange**  
4320 N. Miller Road #F, Scottsdale, AZ  
85251 (480)990-8380

**Book Gallery**  
3643 E. Indian School Rd, Phoenix AZ  
85018 (602)468-0400  
50 W. Main St, Mesa, AZ 85201  
(480) 835-0757

**Book Krazy**  
1601E Bell #4-5, Phoenix , AZ 85022  
(602)867-1018

**Book Rack**  
3539 W. Bell Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85053  
(602) 843-3026

**Bookmans**  
1056 S. Country Club, Mesa, AZ 85210  
(480) 835-0505  
8034 N. 19<sup>th</sup> Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85021  
(602) 433-0255  
1930 E. Grant Tucson, AZ 85719  
(520) 325-5767  
6230 E. Speedway Tucson, AZ 85712  
(520) 748-9555

**Bookmaster**  
2949 N. Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale, AZ  
85251 (480) 423-0501  
10818 N. Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale, AZ  
85254 (480) 998-0606

**Books**  
9201 N. 7<sup>th</sup> Ave, Phoenix AZ 85021  
(602) 678-4576

**Book Warehouse NEW!!**  
2300 E Tanger Dr #142, Casa Grande,  
AZ 85222 (520)423-0600

**Borders Book Stores**  
2402 E. Camelback, Phoenix, AZ  
(602) 957-6600  
870 N. 54th St, Chandler, AZ  
(480) 961-4915  
4555 E. Cactus Rd., Phoenix, AZ  
(602) 953-9699  
7320 W. Bell Rd., Glendale, AZ  
(623) 487-9110  
699 S. Mill Ave, Tempe, AZ  
(480 ) 921-8631  
US101 & Scottsdale Rd  
10100 W. McDowell Rd. Avondale, AZ  
85323 (623) 478-9880

**Poisoned Pen Bookstore**  
4014 N. Goldwater Blvd, Suite 101,  
Scottsdale AZ 85251 (480) 947-2974

**Red-Tail Books**  
204 N. Florence St, Casa Grande, AZ  
(520) 836-0370

COMIC STORES

**All About Comics**  
5060 N. Central, Phoenix, AZ  
(602) 277-0757

**Ash Avenue Comics & Books**  
810 S. Ash, Tempe, AZ (480) 858-9447

**Atomic Comics**  
1120 S. Country Club, Ste. 105, Mesa, AZ  
85210 (480) 649-0807  
4537 E. Cactus, Phoenix AZ 85032  
(602) 923-0733  
10215 N. 28<sup>th</sup> Dr, #A1, Phoenix, AZ 85051  
(602)395-1066  
3155 W. Chandler Blvd #5, Chandler AZ  
85226 (480)940-6061

**Drawn to Comics**  
5757 W. Glendale, AZ 85301  
(623) 847-9090

**Gregg's Comics** 2722 S. Alma School Rd,  
#8, Mesa, AZ (480) 752-1881

**Hero Comics**  
3405 W. Thunderbird Rd, Phoenix, AZ  
85053 (602) 843-6320

**R-Galaxy NEW!!**  
2420 N Campbell Ave, Tucson AZ 85719  
(520)322-0422

**Samurai Comics**  
5024 N. 7th St, Phoenix AZ (602) 265-8886  
10720 W. Indian School Rd, Phoenix AZ  
(623) 872-8886

**SpazDog Comics**  
21610 N. 35<sup>th</sup> Ave, Ste 162, Glendale, AZ  
85308 (623) 582-3240

**Stalking Moon Comics & Collectibles**  
5930 W. Greenway #23, Glendale, AZ  
85306 (602) 896-9992

GAME STORES

**Game Daze** 2140 E. 5<sup>th</sup> St #11, Tempe AZ  
85281 (480)317-9181

**Game Daze #1:** Paradise Valley Mall, 4550  
E. Cactus Rd, #422, Phoenix AZ 85032  
(602)494-4263

**Game Daze #2** Superstition Springs Center,  
6555 E. Southern Ave #2026, Mesa AZ  
85206 (480)981-4850

**Game Daze #3** Scottsdale Fashion Square,  
7014 E. Camelback Rd #2117, Scottsdale  
AZ 85251 (480) 947-1101

**Game Daze #4** Flagstaff Mall, 4650 N.  
Hwy 89 #B2b, Flagstaff, AZ (520)645-0275

**Game Daze #5** Park Place Mall, 5870 E.  
Broadway Blvd #258, Tucson, AZ 85711  
(520)745-0468

**Game Daze #6** Chandler Fashion Mall,  
3111 W. Chandler Blvd #2416, Chandler,  
AZ 85226 (480)-8997406

**Game Depot** 3136 S. McClintock #11,  
Tempe, AZ 85282 (480) 966-4727

**Game Master Games** 1120 S. Gilbert Rd,  
#114, Gilbert, AZ 85296 (480) 558-0750  
[www.gamemastergames.com](http://www.gamemastergames.com)

**Game Nightz** Metrocenter Mall, Ste. 1190  
(602) 870-8501

**Gamers Inn** 1232 E. Southern Ave, Mesa, AZ

**Imperial Outpost** 4920 W. Thunderbird,  
Glendale, AZ 85306 (602) 978-0467  
[www.imperialoutpost.com](http://www.imperialoutpost.com)

In This Issue

News & Reviews

SF Tube Talk 3  
24 Frames 3  
FYI 8  
Videophile 10  
Screening Room 13  
Gamers Corner 14  
Musty Tomes 16  
In Our Book (Book Reviews) 17  
CASFS Business Report 23

Special Features

An Interview with Melaine Rawn 1  
by Catherine Book  
Leo Laporte and his Empire of the Net 12  
by Shane Shellenbarger  
An American in New Zealand 16  
by Jeffrey Lu

Convention & Fandom

Club Listings 22  
Convention Listings 23  
Convention Registration Form 23

OTHER ESTABLISHMENTS

**All 4 Anime**  
Metrocenter Mall, Ste. 2218, Phoenix  
(602) 997-0895

**All 4 Anime NEW!!**  
Fiesta Mall, 1445 W. Southern Ave. Ste  
2234 Mesa, AZ. (480) 844-5046

**Black Rose Caffe NEW!!**  
1800 N Stone Ave, Tucson AZ 85705  
(520) 777-3079

**Casa Grande Library**  
449 N. Dry Lake St, Casa Grande, 85222  
(520) 421-8710

**Davis-Monthan AFB Library**  
5427 E. Madera St, DMAFB 85707  
(520) 228-4381

**Foothills Branch Library**  
19055 N. 57th Ave., Glendale, AZ 85308  
(623) 930-3830

**Himmel Park Branch Library**  
1035 N. Treat Ave Tucson, AZ  
(520) 791-4468

**McGurkee's Sandwich Shop**  
2822 N. 15th Ave, Phoenix, AZ

**Pop Cultures Paradise**  
707 S. Forest Ave #A, Tempe, AZ 85281  
(480)557-6640

**Pop, The Soda Shop**  
1649 N. 74<sup>th</sup> St, Scottsdale AZ  
(480) 994-4505

**Toy Anxiety**  
13825 N. 32<sup>nd</sup> St, #15, Phoenix AZ 85213  
(602)308-0292

**Trails**  
2501 E. Indian School Rd, Phoenix, AZ  
(602) 957-4587

**Tucson Racquet and Fitness Club**  
4001 N. Country Club Rd. 85716  
(520) 795-6960

**Ultimate Coffee**  
741 E. Glendale Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85020  
(602) 252-1200

**Zia Records**  
2510 W. Thunderbird, Phoenix, AZ  
85023 (602) 866-7867

10/28/08

Who Is Who This Issue

**Managing Editor:** Stephanie Bannon  
**Assistant to the Editor:** Gary Swaty  
**Graphics Editor:** Craig L. Dyer  
**Film & Video Editors:** Len Berger & Craig L Dyer  
**Promotions Directors:** Len Berger, Richard Bolinski, Craig L Dyer  
**Advertising:** Catherine Book  
**Proof Readers:** Catherine Book, Bob LaPierre & Gary Swaty  
**Reporters:** Craig L Dyer, Jeffrey Lu  
**Staff Writers:** Pam Allen, Nadine Armstrong, Stephanie L Bannon, Catherine Book, Shane Bryner, Craig L. Dyer, M.L. Fringe, Michael Griffin, Bob LaPierre, Randy Lindsey, Jeffrey Lu, Christina Paige, Shane Shellenbarger, Gary Swaty, Tom Tuerff, Lee Whiteside, Randall Whitlock

**Contributors:**  
**Layout & Design:** Stephanie L. Bannon  
**Keeper of the Mailing List:** Craig L. Dyer  
**Labeling Crew for Volume 18 Issue 5:** Len Berger, Mark Boniece, Craig L Dyer, Bob LaPierre, Jeffrey Lu, Gary Swaty  
**CN Mascots:** [The Four CopperCon Kittens](#)  
**About ConNotations:** *ConNotations* is the fan published newszine of the Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society (CASFS) an IRS-recognized 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Circulation is estimated at 7,000 readers for this issue, including CASFS members and attendees of recent CASFS conventions.

**Subscriptions:** The newszine is currently sent free of charge to anyone who has attended a CASFS sponsored convention in the last calendar year and to all CASFS members. Subscriptions are available. Cost for a six issue subscription is: USA: \$20/ bulk. Corporate subscriptions are available, email for rates.

**Copyright:** Articles, fiction, photos and artwork in this issue are copyright © of the author/artist and cannot be reproduced in any manner without their written consent. If no author or artist is credited the artwork or article is copyright ©of the Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society.

**Publication:** Publications dates are February, April, June, August, October & December. Publication date of this issue is 11/24/2008; mailing date is 12/08/2008

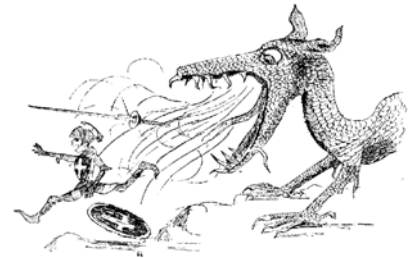
**Advertising:** *ConNotations* reaches approx. 7,000 science fiction, fantasy, gaming and horror fans throughout the Phoenix metro area, the Southwest and nationwide. Our ad rates are: \$175/Back cover, \$120/full page; \$80/two-thirds page; \$60/half page; \$40/one-third page; \$30/one-fourth page; \$20/one-eighth page. More information can be obtained by contacting Advertising, PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 FAX (602) 973-2341; Email: [advertising@casfs.org](mailto:advertising@casfs.org)

**Submission Info:** Writers and artists are encouraged to submit work for publication. While we cannot pay you for your efforts your work will be seen by over 7,000 fans across the Southwest and the country. You will retain the copyright to your work for future publication. To submit your work or for more information please write to: ConNotations; PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 or contact us via Email at [Editors@casfs.org](mailto:Editors@casfs.org)

**Disclaimer:** Acceptance of advertising or listing in club or convention notices or FYI does not imply formal approval or ownership of those events or clubs. In particular, CASFS does not warrant or authorize any club or event not held by CASFS.

**Contact Information:** ConNotations and its contributors can be contacted by mail at PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 or via email at [editors@casfs.org](mailto:editors@casfs.org)

**ConNotations**  
**ISSN:** 1082-7765  
**PUBLISHED:** Six times a year  
**BY:** Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society, PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082  
**ISSUE NUMBER:** Volume 18 Issue 6  
**SUBSCRIPTION:** \$20 for 6 ISSUES





# SF Tube Talk

## TV News & Previews

By Lee Whiteside

This time we've got news on the final episodes of *Stargate Atlantis*, the beginning of the end of *Battlestar Galactica*, the debut of Camelotville (i.e. *Merlin*) on NBC, and of *The Next Doctor* (in more ways than one).

First up, on SciFi, are the final episodes of *Stargate Atlantis*, which is ending after five seasons before graduating to occasional TV movies. The first two weeks of December will see *Infection*, where the Atlantis team investigate an apparently abandoned Wraith vessel that shows up near their base, and *Identity* where a female alien consciousness named Neeva takes over Dr. Keller's body in order to try to acquire advanced technology and Dr. Keller is trapped in Neeva's body on another world and must fight to survive there until she can be back in her own body. After a break for the holidays, Atlantis returns in early January with the penultimate episode *Vegas*, in which we get an alternate universe story where John Sheppard is a Las Vegas detective investigating a string of murders that leads him to a Wraith disguising himself as a human. Ending the regular series will be *Enemy at the Gate* which will see a return of Samantha Carter (**Amanda Tapping**) in an episode that promises "intergalactic fun" and some resolutions of outstanding story threads. According to executive producer **Brad Wright** there is no "fingers dangling on the edge of a cliff" type ending, but more of a "what now?" ending. As with *Stargate SG-1*, MGM plans to continue the Atlantis storyline in direct-to-DVD movies, the first of which is expected to air on SciFi later in 2009.

In other SciFi related *Stargate* news, SciFi has bought the rights to air the two *Stargate SG-1* movies, *The Ark of Truth* and *Continuum*, and is expected to air them in spring 2009. As for the new *Stargate* series, *Stargate Universe*, production is on track for a Summer 2009 debut, with the pilot script nearly finalized and casting underway. Casting sides indicate that the main character of the series will be a 40's male like the Jack O'Neill of ten years ago. Other planned characters include a mid-20's female field medic, a 20ish party girl who is the daughter of a U.S. Senator, a mid-20's male slacker/genius, and mid-20's junior SGC team member (officer material but very green) and a 20-year-old male marine who has a temper problem in non-combat situations. Expect to see some casting announcements early in the new year as they prepare for filming in February.

Continuing on will be *Sanctuary*, which debuted strongly in October (the

best new series debut since *Eureka*) and has continued to do well in the ratings for SciFi on Friday nights. There will be three new episodes over the first three Fridays in December including a mini-marathon on December 19th and it is expected to continue airing on Friday nights, pairing up with *Battlestar Galactica* once *Stargate Atlantis* ends. There's very little advanced information on upcoming episodes, however, so expect to see more encounters with new creatures as Dr. Magnus and her team keep working at providing Sanctuary for them.

Returning to SciFi on Jan 16th is *Battlestar Galactica* for the back half of its fourth and final season which will conclude on March 20th with a multi-hour finale (two hours most likely). Prior to the return of the series on the SciFi Channel, look for some webisodes to turn up online at [www.scifi.com](http://www.scifi.com) which will give viewers some background leading up to the return of the series. In the first new episode, *Sometimes a Great Notion*, the humans and the Cylons deal with their shocking discovery of Earth being a wasteland and start trying to find some answers as to why and how it ties into their past. Next up is *A Disquiet Follows My Soul* where the horrible living conditions on Earth start to take their toll and infighting as to whether to leave the place they had been searching for. January ends with *The Oath*, of which little is known other than the title. Reports are that the Six in Baltar's head does make a return appearance at this time in the series, coming across as more angelic as opposed to the sexy manipulator seen

( Cont'd on page 4 )

# 24 Frames

## Movie News

By Lee Whiteside

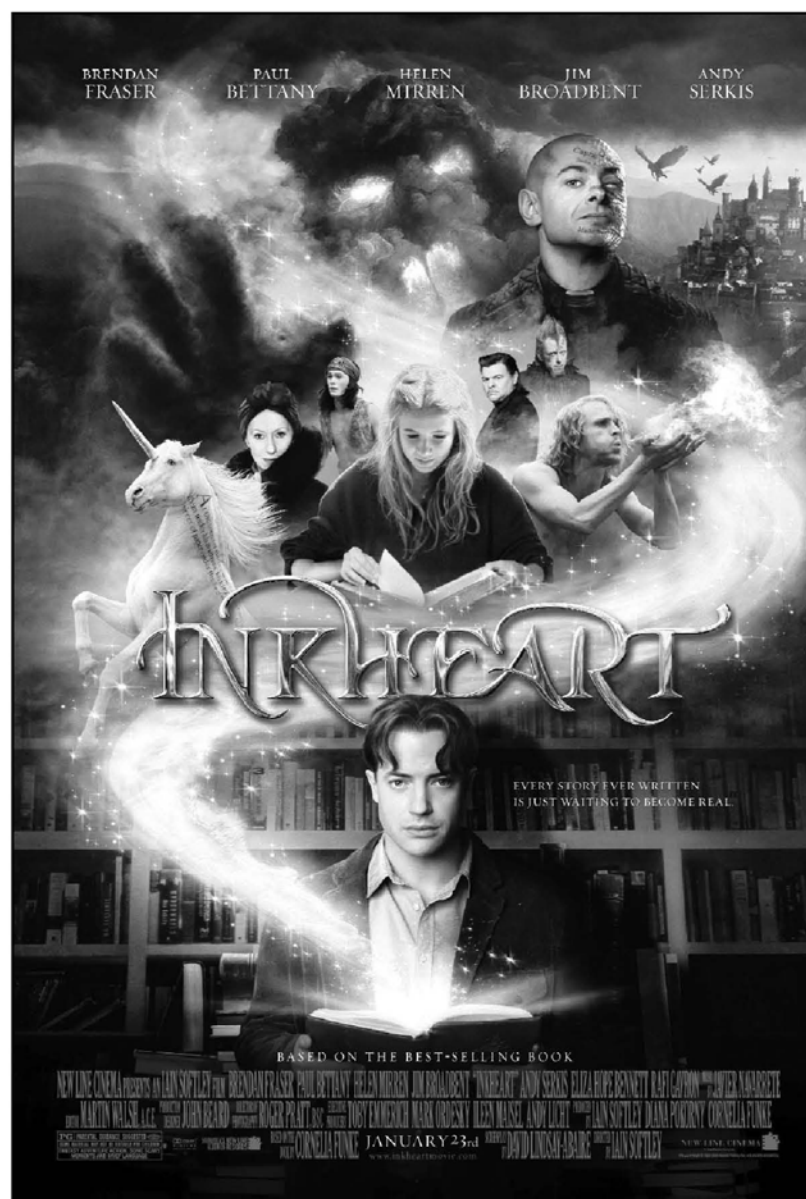
Paramount has finally started the promotion for the new *Star Trek* movie, releasing multiple images of the cast in mid-October and releasing a trailer with the new James Bond movie, *Quantum of*

*Solace*. They will also launch a new comic in January through IDW Publishing that will be a prequel to the *Star Trek* movie, giving the backstory of the Romulan Nero played by **Eric Bana** in the movie.

**J. Michael Straczynski** will be taking on a new project, writing a screenplay for a remake of *Forbidden Planet*. **Joel Silver** will produce with **David Twohy**

( Cont'd on page 6 )

## and ConNotations Invite You to a Special Advance Screening of



To enter, simply e-mail your full name and mailing address to:  
[inkheartentry@cox.net](mailto:inkheartentry@cox.net)

25 winners will be selected at random from all entries. One entry per household.  
All entries must have full information requested to be a winner. Winners will be notified  
|via e-mail with the screening information. Contest ends on January 5, 2009.

**THIS FILM IS RATED PG. PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED. Some Material May Not Be Suitable For Children.**  
**Please note:** Passes received through this promotion do not guarantee you a seat at the theatre. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis, except for members of the reviewing press. Theatre is overbooked to ensure a full house. No admittance once screening has begun. All federal, state and local regulations apply. A recipient of tickets assumes any and all risks related to use of ticket, and accepts any restrictions required by ticket provider. New Line Cinema, ConNotations and their affiliates accept no responsibility or liability in connection with any loss or accident incurred in connection with use of a prize. Tickets cannot be exchanged, transferred or redeemed for cash, in whole or in part. We are not responsible if, for any reason, recipient is unable to use his/her ticket in whole or in part. All federal and local taxes are the responsibility of the winner. Void where prohibited by law. No purchase necessary. Participating sponsors, their employees and family members and their agencies are not eligible. NO PHONE CALLS!

**IN THEATRES JANUARY 23, 2009**

## SF Tube Talk (Cont'd from page 3)

previously.

The final episode of the final season won't be the last we will see of the Galactica universe, though. Filming has already been completed on a two-hour movie tentatively titled *The Plan*, that will span events over the first two seasons and will focus on Tyrol, Cavil, and Anders with the majority of the regular cast also appearing. **Edward James Olmos** is directing and has indicated that the movie deals primarily with the Cylons and how they handled dealing with the survivors of the original devastating attack and how that altered their "Plan." It is expected to air sometime after the end of the series run on SciFi. As for the Galactica prequel series, *Caprica*, Scifi has not yet indicated when it is planning to air the pilot movie and if they are going to give a green light for a weekly series. They have been very quiet of late on the subject of the spinoff series.

Elsewhere on SciFi, their reality lineup led by *Ghost Hunters* has been doing very well. Continuing on in December will be new episodes of *Ghost Hunters* as well as new episodes of *Chase* and *Estate of Panic*. Scifi has announced a pilot for another spinoff of *Ghost Hunters* called *Ghost Hunters: College Edition* which will focus on a group of college students taking part in investigations. They have announced a series pickup for *Warehouse 13*, which stars **Eddie McClintock** and **Joanne Kelley** as a pair of Secret Service agents transferred to Warehouse 13, a secret storage facility in South Dakota which houses all of the supernatural, paranormal, extraterrestrial, or just strange artifacts collected by the U.S. Government. **Saul Rubinek** also stars as the site's caretaker, Artie, who tasks the duo to track down and investigate new objects as well as keep things under control with the existing objects already in the warehouse. Expect to see the series debut next summer.

Coming up on SciFi in the movie department in December are *Cyclops* (Dec 6th), starring **Eric Roberts** as corrupt Emperor Tiberius who forces his best general Marcus (**Kevin Stapleton**) to subdue the monstrous Cyclops that has been devastating the countryside. However, after capturing the Cyclops, Marcus is forced to fight in the gladiator games and he eventually joins forces with the Cyclops and the beautiful barbarian Barbara (**Frida Farrell**) in an effort to defeat Tiberius. Sunday night, December 14th, sees the debut of *Sharks in Venice*. It stars **Stephen Baldwin** and involves killer sharks in the Venice waterways, a lost treasure of the Medici, and a Mafia plot to find the treasure. *Lost Treasure of the Grand Canyon* (Dec 20) sets the action in Arizona's Grand Canyon where a team of Smithsonian researchers

discovered a walled-off ancient Aztec city guarded by evil spirits and a "great flying serpent of death". Susan Jordan (**Shannen Doherty**), the daughter of the expeditions leader, puts together a team (including **Michael Shanks** as Jacob Thain) to rescue her father and his cohorts from the ancient Aztec warriors and their serpent god.

On the broadcast networks, the new fall season has been a mixed bag, with most returning shows being down in the ratings from last year. However, with almost everyone being down, lower ratings do not necessarily mean getting cancelled and several shows that in past years might not have survived have ended up with full season orders.

NBC has the highest number of genre shows on the air and so far none of them have been spectacular standouts. Returning shows *Heroes* and *Chuck* are both down compared to last fall but have been holding steady in the ratings. NBC gave *Chuck* a full season order even before the season started and so far the series has lived up to expectations for the series, but its not been drawing any new viewers to the show. *Heroes* has been down from last season's ratings and has been getting a lot of press on how the show can be fixed or saved. The somewhat confusing time tripping going on with the Villains arc has not drawn in much of the general audience but it has picked up steam as it has gone along and will be building to a big climax in the last three episodes of the arc, *The Eclipse Part 2*, *Our Father*, and *War*, in the first three Mondays in December. Not much is known about these episodes, but expect things to get resolved for the most part in regards to the two factions of the Petrelli family that want to control the destiny of the world. *Heroes* will then go on a hiatus until early next year when it will resume with the next arc, titled "Fugitives." NBC has also given a full series order for *Knight Rider*, which has had consistent ratings on Wednesday. As of press time, there's no indication on how the future looks for *My Own Worst Enemy* and *Crusoe*, neither of which has had great ratings, however *Crusoe* has done well enough to knock out its CBS competition, *The Ex List*, which has been pulled after four episodes.

Come January, NBC is expected to bring back *Medium* on Sunday nights as well as the new series *Merlin*, which is a co-production with the BBC. *Merlin* has debuted strong for the BBC on Saturday nights and has held on to its audience, making it look like the BBC has a new ongoing series to join with *Robin Hood* and *Doctor Who*. How it will fare on NBC is yet to be determined, however. The opening episode, *Dragon's Call*, introduces us to this version of the Arthurian legend, best dubbed Camelotville. In fact, the producers have indicated they wanted to do a reimagining

of the Arthurian legend much like was done with Superman in *Smallville*, and it really shows. We meet the young Merlin (**Colin Morgan**) as he arrives in Camelot to meet up with Camelot's court physician, Gaius (**Richard Wilson**), who takes Merlin on as an apprentice. In this Camelot, King Uther (**Anthony Stewart Head**) has banned the use of magic and Gaius warns Merlin he must not use his magic. Merlin immediately gets on the wrong side of things by insulting Prince Arthur (**Bradley James**) and gets to spend some time in the stocks, where he meets the maid Gwen (**Angel Coulby**). After being released to the care of Gaius, Merlin is drawn to the dungeon of Camelot and discovers the Great Dragon (voice by **John Hurt**), who advises Merlin that his destiny is to protect Prince Arthur. When Merlin ends up saving Arthur's life from an attack by a revengeful sorceress (as well as everyone else's), he's tasked with being Arthur's servant; much to both boys' chagrin. In *Valiant*, an arrogant Knight, Valiant, arranges for a wizard to make him a magic shield with deadly snakes to enable him to win a sword tournament. When Merlin discovers the shield, he must find a way to protect Arthur and stop Valiant. In *The Mark of Nimueh*, **Michelle Ryan** joins the cast as the evil sorceress Nimueh that sets a plague upon Camelot that is blamed on Gwen. Merlin must fight obstacles set upon him by Nimueh to stop the plague and clear Gwen's name before she is executed for witchcraft.

On the CW, both *Smallville* and *Supernatural* have been consistent in the ratings, giving the network a stable night where they've been having problems on other nights. After the big fall finale episode in November, *Smallville* will return sometime in January with the episode *Legion*. As the title might suggest, we will be introduced to the Smallville version of the Legion of Superheroes with **Geoff Johns** writing the episode. Appearing from the future with be Garth (Lightning Lad), Irma (Saturn Girl) and Rokk (Cosmic Boy) who will be helping Clark to free Chloe from Braniac. According to **Johns**, we will also see a well-known Legion villain in the episode. After that, is *Bulletproof* where Clark goes undercover as a cop to investigate a shooting of Detective John Jones. New guest characters from the comics rumored to appear include Dr. Emil Hamilton and Detective Dan Turpin. The CW has given the go ahead to develop a pilot for a series taking on the Batman mythos, titled *The Graysons*, which would delve into Dick Grayson and his family before he became Robin. *Smallville* producers **Brian Peterson** and **Kelly Souders** are developing it with producer **McG**. They haven't yet indicated how they will be changing around the Robin part of the Batman family to make it a series. Unlike Superman, which has had various

incarnations of Clark Kent as a young man, the life of Dick Grayson before he became Robin doesn't apparently lend itself to a large amount of story ideas. Obviously, they will have to do a lot of rejiggering of the Batman/Robin mythos to turn it into a weekly series.

*Supernatural* is expected to return with new episodes in January as well, but so far there's not really any information on where things are headed with the Winchester brothers.

FOX has given *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles* a full season order of 22 episodes. While the ratings have been lower than its debut run, they have been fairly consistent. Where FOX will place the series after the first of the year is unknown, however, and with the return of *24* and *American Idol*, there will be fewer time slots. Their other new genre series, *Dollhouse*, from **Joss Whedon** and starring **Eliza Dushku**, has had some retooling done which includes scrapping the pilot episode. According to **Joss Whedon** in a statement at [www.whedonesque.com](http://www.whedonesque.com) : "yes, we've had to make adjustments. Yes, it's been hard and I've been depressing to be around for awhile. Basically, the Network and I had different ideas about what the tone of the show would be. They bought something somewhat different than what I was selling them, which is not that uncommon in this business." **Whedon** also added that , "we as a staff have gone from blinking like unhoused moles to delving in with the same relish we had when we started. The show is really coming together now, in a way that I believe excites us and satisfies the Network. Of course, I have no idea if anybody else will like it, but I have the same faith in the staff, the crew and the remarkable cast that I always did. More, in fact. Nothing essential has changed about the universe." It appears that the changes have likely made the show better and when it does finally get to air sometime in the spring, it may live up to the high expectations fans had to start with.

CBS has the big hit of the new season in *The Mentalist*, which has done quite well in the overall ratings and holding on to a sizable portion of its lead-in, *NCIS*. Although it doesn't really have any genre elements, it does make use of Patrick Jane's former life as a fake psychic for plot purposes and does have an ongoing serial killer plot. *Eleventh Hour*, the **Jerry Bruckheimer** remake of a UK series, has done OK ratings so far, but is still struggling to hold onto more than 60% of its *CSI* lead-in. CBS appears to be willing to be patient with the show and keep it on the air for now.

ABC's American take on *Life on Mars* debuted with decent numbers but has continued to lose viewers in each subsequent airing. By the time this issue hits print, it may be gone. But as we've

(Cont'd on page 6)



# STAR TREK®

## THE EXHIBITION

IN THE SYBIL B. HARRINGTON GALLERIES



# NOW OPEN!



ARIZONA  
SCIENCE  
CENTER



600 E. WASHINGTON • PHOENIX, AZ 85004 • 602-716-2000 • [AZSCIENCE.ORG](http://AZSCIENCE.ORG)

© & ® 2008 CBS STUDIOS INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. STAR TREK AND RELATED MARKS ARE TRADEMARKS OF CBS STUDIOS INC.

## SF Tube Talk (Cont'd from page 4)

seen with other shows this season, if it stabilizes, ABC may stick with it for the time being or at least through the initial 13 episodes.

Coming up on the BBC in the UK is the new *Doctor Who* Christmas special, *The Next Doctor*, airing on the BBC on Christmas Day. It is set on Christmas Eve in 1951 and features the return of the Cybermen. Guest starring is **David Morrissey** as a character who goes by the name of The Doctor. **Velile Tshabalala** also guests as Rosita, an East Londoner that is a companion to the other Doctor but starts helping out **Tennant's** Doctor. After that will be four more specials, one at Easter 2009, with three more reportedly airing around Christmas 2009 with the last one either around or on New Years. There're lots of rumors about the subject matter for these specials, none of it confirmed by the BBC or anyone official.

The big *Doctor Who* news that is official is that **David Tennant** will step down as The Doctor at the end of the specials, leading to a new Doctor with the start of the fifth season in 2010. **Tennant** announced his departure live on television when he accepted a best drama performer award at the National Television Awards ceremony in October. In his statement, **Tennant** said "I've had the most brilliant, bewildering and life-changing time working on Doctor Who. I have loved every day of it. It would be very easy to cling on to the TARDIS console forever and I fear that if I don't take a deep breath and make the decision to move on now, then I simply never will. You would be prying the TARDIS key out of my cold dead hand. This show has been so special to me, I don't want to outstay my welcome. This is all a long way off, of course. I'm not quitting, I'm back in Cardiff in January to film four special episodes which will take Doctor Who all the way through 2009. I'm still the Doctor all next year but when the time finally comes I'll be honoured to hand on the best job in the world to the next lucky git - whoever that may be."

**Tennant** further added "I'd always thought the time to leave would be in conjunction with **Russell T Davies** and **Julie Gardner** who have been such a huge part of it all for me. **Steven Moffat** is the most brilliant and exciting writer, the only possible successor to Russell and it was sorely tempting to be part of his amazing new plans for the show. I will be there, glued to my TV when his stories begin in 2010. I feel very privileged to have been part of this incredible phenomenon, and whilst I'm looking forward to new challenges I know I'll always be very proud to be the Tenth Doctor."

As of press time at the end of October, various candidates were rumored for the next actor to play the iconic role, with

London bookmakers placing odds on the rumored candidates. These include **David Morrissey** (based on his role in The Next Doctor?), **Patterson Joseph** (the first Black Doctor?), **James McAvoy** (probably too big a name with several movies under his belt), **James Nesbitt** (who starred in **Steven Moffat's** *Jekyll* series), **Catherine Tate** (bringing back the DoctorDonna?) and **Sean Pertwee** (**Jon Pertwee's** son who has indicated he'd love to take on the role). There's been no indication from the BBC how soon they will cast the role and it may be awhile before there is any sort of announcement from the new production team.

The Cartoon Network has had a really big success with *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*, giving the channel some of its highest ratings ever. Look for it to continue for a good while on the Cartoon Network. In mid-November, it was joined by *Batman: The Brave and the Bold*, which features Batman teamed up with a different DC superhero each week. The series harkens back a bit to the 60's live action *Batman* in tone and is definitely geared towards a younger audience. Expect to see lots of heroes on the show including Green Arrow, Plastic Man, Kamandi, Booster Gold, Blue Beetle (recent variety), Red Tornado, and Aquaman as well as a variety of villains including Kanjar Ro, The Gentleman Ghost, Gorilla Grodd, Black Manta, Despero, Kite Man, and others.

## 24 Frames (Cont'd from page 3)

directing. The remake has been bouncing around in development hell for several years but this time it might just happen. According to **Straczynski**, "Joe the Fanboy has been chasing this one assignment for over a decade." **Straczynski** is also adapting **E.E. Doc Smith's** *Lensman* novels for film as well.

Marvel has officially announced that **Robert Downey, Jr.** will reprise his role as Tony Stark in *The Avengers* and *Iron Man 2*. **Jon Favreau** will direct *Iron Man 2* and executive produce *The Avengers*. Marvel also confirmed that **Don Cheadle** will take on the role of Col. James "Rhodey" Rhodes in *Iron Man 2* and *The Avengers*,

dropping **Terrence Howard** from the role. According to Marvel, *Iron Man 2* will be released in May 2010 and *The Avengers*, which will bring together Iron Man, Captain America, Thor, the Hulk and others, will hit the screens in July 2011. No news as of yet who will play Thor, although **Daniel Craig** was offered the role but he turned it down feeling that James Bond was enough.

In other Marvel movie news, *Spider-Man 4* is moving ahead with **Tobey Maguire** back as Peter Parker and **Kirsten Dunst** is expected to return as Mary Jane with **Sam Raimi** directing. Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright **David Lindsay-Abaire** is in negotiations to write a screenplay, possibly dumping a draft already written by **James Vanderbilt**.

**Sam Mendes** is going to direct a film adaptation of the comic series *Preacher*, created by **Garth Ennis** and artist **Steve Dillon**. It is about a preacher in a Texas Town who embarks on a journey across the country when an otherworldly force decimates the town.

In the novel adaption front, we've got a few new ones in development. **Diana Gabaldon's** *Outlander* is in development for a movie from Essential Pictures, which has a script by **Randall Wallace** ready for a director. **Terry Brooks** has indicated that the *Magic Kingdom For Sale: Sold!* movie project may finally happen and development is also continuing on an *Elfstones of Shannara* movie as well. Columbia Pictures has picked up a spec script by **Alex Sabeti** adapting **Katherine Kurtz's** *Deryni Rising*. Fox 2000 has acquired the rights to **Joe Haldeman's** *The Forever War* and **Ridley Scott** is in line to direct it. He had originally wanted to do the movie back in the 1980's, but rights issues kept it from him.

On the remake front, **Marcus Nispel** is directing a remake and reboot of *Friday the 13th* with **Derek Mears** as Jason Voorhees, **Jared Padalecki** as Clay and **Amanda Righetti** as Whitney. It opens on Friday, February 13th, 2009.

**Tim Burton** is at work on a live action/performance capture adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland*, scheduled for 2010. **Christopher Lee** has joined the cast in an undisclosed role while **Alan Rickman** will play the hookah-smoking caterpillar. **Mia Wasikowska** is Alice, **Johnny Depp** is the Mad Hatter, **Anne Hathaway** is the White Queen, **Helena Bonham Carter** is the Red Queen, **Crispin Glover** is the Knave of Hearts, and **Matt Lucas** will play Tweedledee and Tweedledum.

**Ben Stiller** is reprising his role as security guard Larry Daley in *Night at the Museum 2: Battle of the Smithsonian*, which is slated to hit theatres next May. **Stiller** is also developing *Heat Vision and Jack* for a feature film. It was a failed TV Pilot he directed a few years back that has gotten noticed thanks to people posting it on YouTube. It's about an astronaut who got too close to the sun and becomes the smartest person in the world when the sun is up and his teaming up with a friend who was turned into a motorcycle. How much of that will change if the movie happens is unknown.

## Upcoming Movies in December and January

We've got a few big movies in December (but no *Star Trek*, which has been moved back to May) and come January, we've got the usual batch of horror movies that always seem to turn up early in the year, not having been good or ready enough for an October release it seems.

**Punisher: War Zone** (Dec 5) Frank Castle (aka The Punisher) is back, this time

(Cont'd on page 7)



OPEN FRIDAY AND SATURDAY UNTIL MIDNIGHT!

OPEN GAME TABLES ALWAYS AVAILABLE

4920 W. THUNDERBIRD RD. STE. 121  
602-978-0467  
www.imperialoutpost.com

WE CARRY AN EXTENSIVE LINE OF  
**FLAMES OF WAR®**  
PRODUCTS - PLUS HUNDREDS  
OF OTHER BOARD, MINIATURE  
AND CARD GAMES



## 24 Frames (Cont'd from page 6)

played by **Ray Stevenson**. After punishing mob boss Billy Russoti (**Dominic West**), leaving him disfigured, Russoti takes on the alias of Jigsaw and puts together a Punisher Task Force to get revenge on Castle.

**The Day The Earth Stood Still** (Dec 9) Will this be another case of a remake of a classic movie that didn't need a remake or will it be good enough to stand on its own? It stars **Keanu Reeves** as Klaatu, **Jennifer Connelly** as Helen Benson, **Jon Hamm** as Dr. Granier, **John Cleese** as Dr. Barnhardt and **Aaron Douglas** as Sgt. Winter. The Alien Klaatu brings a message of "live in peace or die" is still the main plot, just likely couched in more modern terminology than the original.

**The Curious Case of Benjamin Button** (Dec 19) Adapted from the story by **F. Scott Fitzgerald** published in the 1920s, the movie tells the story of Benjamin Button, who ages backwards from 80 years old starting in 1918 New Orleans and into the early 21st Century. **David Fincher** directs with **Brad Pitt** as Benjamin, **Cate Blanchett** as Daisy, and **Tilda Swinton** as Elizabeth Abbott.

**The Spirit** (Dec 25) **Frank Miller's** take on **Will Eisner's The Spirit** stars **Gabriel Macht** as Denny Colt, who takes on the moniker of The Spirit after faking his death and becoming a mysterious crime

fighter. **Samuel L. Jackson** stars as the Octopus, who kills anyone who sees his face, wants to destroy Central City, and The Spirit sets out to stop him. From the trailers and reports on screenings, expect something more along the lines of **Sin City** than the original comic.

**The Unborn** (Jan 9) Surprisingly, not a remake of the 1981 movie of the same name, but a new movie starring **Odette Yustman** as Casey Bell, who is haunted by a dybbuk (the soul of a dead person barred from heaven) that is trying to possess her. Also stars **Gary Oldman** as Rabbi Sendak with a screenplay by director **David S. Goyer**.

**My Bloody Valentine 3-D** (Jan 16) is a remake (it appears) and it's in 3-D! It's ten years after the Valentine's night massacre and when Tom (**Jensen Ackles**) returns to his hometown, he finds himself suspected of committing them. I'm betting there's some new murders happening as well, otherwise, what's the point? Also stars **Jamie King** as Sarah Palmer.

**Inkheart** (Jan 23) Based on the 2003 novel by **Cornelia Funke**, the film has been pushed back a couple of times from an originally planned late 2007 release. **Brendan Fraser** stars as Mortimer Flochart, who has the ability to make characters from a book come alive when he reads from it. When he discovered his power when reading to his infant daughter, Meggie, he accidentally read his

wife, Theresa (**Sienna Guillory**) into the book *Inkheart*. Meggie (**Eliza Bennett**), now twelve, is kidnapped by Capricorn (**Andy Serkis**), who wants to use her as bait to capture her father in order to make use of his "gift". **Underworld: Rise of the Lycans** (Jan 23) This prequel to **Underworld** traces the origins of the blood feud between the vampires and the Lycans. **Michael Sheen** stars as Lucien, a powerful leader of the Lycans that emerges in the Dark Ages rising up against Viktor (**Bill Nighy**). Also starring is **Rhona Mitra** as Sonja, Lucien's secret lover.

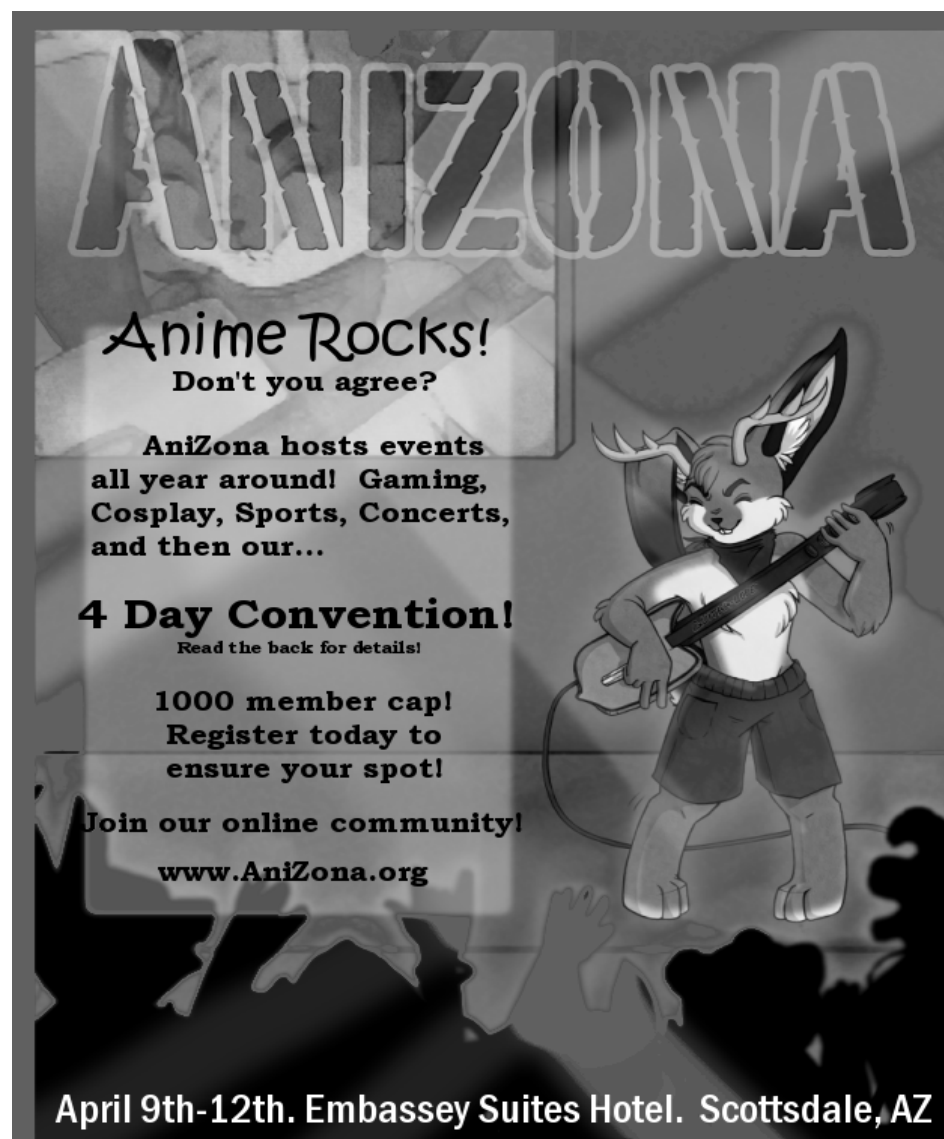
**The Uninvited** (Jan 30) This is a remake of the 2003 South Korean film *A Tale of Two Sisters* in which Anna (**Emily Browning**), who has returned home from a hospital stay after the tragic death of her mother, is visited by the ghost of her mother who warns her that Rachel, her mother's nurse who is now engaged to her father (**David Strathairn**), is not what she seems. Anna and her sister Alex (**Arielle Kebbel**) must fight to save their father in a battle of wills with their soon-to-be stepmother.

## Melanie Rawn (Cont'd from page 1)

It was a Regency Romance and she didn't want that type of story confused with any other types of stories she planned to write. I asked why she didn't write more – there were a couple more stories but right after that she started the *Dragon Prince* series. And she recalled exactly how it started... She'd been reading a non-fiction book titled "The Kingdom: Arabia and the House of Saud" and the book had a description of Arabian princes in flowing robes going out hawking – in jeeps – which intrigued her. A short time later she had five chapters.

She once wrote a Quantum Leap story which I just had to ask her about. She told me she just loved that series and, of course, Scott Bakula (*be still my heart, she said*). She started doodling a 'treatment' for a Quantum Leap episode. She was living in Pasadena at the time, a perfect place to be to sell a TV series episode. But they cancelled the show before she could screw up her courage to ask for a pitch meeting at the studio. Instead, she called her agent and asked her to show it to Ginjer Buchanan at Ace. Happily, Ginjer said she'd love to have Melanie do a novel...so long as it wasn't five thousand pages! She was able to go to a Quantum Leap convention in Pasadena and met Scott Bakula in the Green Room. He was a lot taller than Melanie had believed him to be. She is 5'8" and was wearing 4" heels and he was still a bit

(Cont'd on page 8)



**ANIZONA**

**Anime Rocks!**  
Don't you agree?

AniZona hosts events all year around! Gaming, Cosplay, Sports, Concerts, and then our...

**4 Day Convention!**  
Read the back for details!

1000 member cap!  
Register today to ensure your spot!

Join our online community!  
[www.AniZona.org](http://www.AniZona.org)

April 9th-12th. Embassy Suites Hotel. Scottsdale, AZ

So you want to be a part of our...  
**HUGE ANIME PARTY?**  
1000 people, 4 days

We will have... **Gaming Tournaments**  
**Cosplay Events**  
**Concerts and Dances**  
**Manga, Voice Acting, Movies**  
**Food, Drink, and Karaoke**

**And TONS of ANIME!**  
and fans

You can sign up online or through the mail.  
Kids under 9 are free with an adult (Limited)  
Parents are welcome! Family-Friendly event.

We have tons of other events too!  
Check out our webpage.  
[www.AniZona.org](http://www.AniZona.org)

**Don't wait!**

**Melanie Rawn** (Cont'd from page 7)  
taller than her. (*Be still, my heart!*) She brought the cover of her novel and showed it to him. His comment was "Why am I wearing *chainmail*?" (It's a story about Sam leaping into a Medieval tournament – like SCA.)

She's currently working on a sequel to *Spellbinder*. *Fire Raiser* is the title and due to publish in April 2009 from Tor. She had a big party scene in her mind and when she wrote it she was surprised at some of the characters who showed up. Melanie talked about how her books evolve. Sometimes, she says, she knows the end and just writes her way to it. Other times, she might just have bits and pieces and has to string them together. Her editor once commented that her written voice changes from book to book; she says it's because of the material. Some of her stories require a particular voice or point of view and a different series requires a different approach from her.

I asked her from where her literary influences came. She was reluctant to name names. As she explained, if they're still living and she leaves off someone's name...well, you understand... Okay... then how about genres? Which ones influenced her most? Mostly mysteries, she answered. Then how did she get into speculative fiction/fantasy? Why not write mysteries? Well... with mysteries you have to have it worked out from the first so you know the end. And, don't you know, that bores her. Melanie says she writes for herself as much as the fans; so fantasy writing entertains her while she's working out the ending.

How about those fans? Melanie says she has the nicest fans in the world. She thinks the neatest thing about them is that they help each other and talk to each other online all the time.

Back to her current work: What ever happened to the title "The Capital's Tower?" (That is the correct spelling, BTW, despite what I found on a couple websites) Melanie can't say right now – no plans. What about "The Diviner" due out in Nov 2009 according to one website? She confessed it's only about two-thirds written and she won't, darn her, tell me a thing about it. We'll have to wait for news of that one. Her future includes finishing the current contract for the three *Spellbinder* books. She's very happy with cast she has created; as she puts it – she can take them just about anywhere. The second book includes human cloning, the nature of marriage, human trafficking, and even contemporary politics. The third one will look into hexencraft; a fascinating tradition of witchcraft from Pennsylvania that she thinks maybe no one else has used. And, unfortunately, the Minoan-subject book, titled *Keftiu*, was part of a contract with Avon that Melanie had to let go. So, it will be a while, if ever, before we see that story either. Which is a terrible shame since *Keftiu* is Melanie's 'dream book' – the book that she believes is the book she was put on this Earth to write.

Anyone who's looked at Melanie's bibliography might notice a large gap of about nine years in her bibliography. She's suffered from clinical depression for most of her life but did have a very bad period starting in the late 90's. She's currently feeling much better under medication and is back to writing – which she believes is the reason she's on this Earth taking up space. However, she was quick to point out that if anyone out there is hoping for another Melanie Rawn story such as the books she published years ago – well... they're just out of luck. You see, the Melanie Rawn who wrote those stories isn't around anymore. Of course, that could apply to just about any writer – we all age, she pointed out, none of us are the same as we were. She's described it in her books and she's received messages on her website from people saying thank-you to her for bringing it out in the open. Some of them said they had thought they were alone until they discovered that a successful author could be suffering the same. She was somewhat amused at some fans' reactions to her withdrawal from publishing – some of them thought she'd died.

Melanie is planning to move just as soon as her house sells; 'course in this market that could be a while... She related that her life tends to dramatically change every ten to thirteen years; it's time for another change. Should be interesting to see in what direction this change will send Melanie. Having just met her, I think I already miss her.

## FYI

### CASFS Book Discussion

**Bent Cover Books**  
**12428 N. 28th Drive, Phoenix**  
**3rd Tuesdays, 7pm, in the Coffee Bar**  
**Sponsored by Central Arizona**  
**Speculative Fiction Society (CASFS)**  
email questions to [book@casfs.org](mailto:book@casfs.org)

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.

**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.

### CASFS MEMBER MAKES GOOD AGAIN, V.2

Michael Griffin (not the NASA guy) has his fifth academic paper out in the new issue of the journal *Semiotica*, vol. 171, 2008. The title describes it: 'Looking behind the symbol: Mythic algebra, numbers, and the illusion of linear sequence.' It also has speculation on the prehistoric origins of mathematics. The

sixth paper on mythic algebra will be out in 2010. Look for them in your university library.

### 'STAR TREK® THE EXHIBITION' BEAMS INTO ARIZONA SCIENCE CENTER NOVEMBER 16th

Interactive exhibit lets visitors explore the 'Star Trek' universe hands-on with attractions, sets, costumes and props from all 5 TV series and 10 feature films  
**Phoenix, AZ – Oct. x, 2008** – Premier Exhibitions, Inc. announced today that *STAR TREK THE EXHIBITION* will open November 16<sup>th</sup> in Phoenix. Opening for a limited engagement at Arizona Science Center, this 12,500 square foot touring exhibition contains the world's most comprehensive collection of authentic *Star Trek* ships, re-creations, sets, costumes and props from all 5 series and 10 films over the last 40+ years.

This unparalleled experience enables the public to step inside the *Star Trek* world and become active participants in the legacy that has captivated our imagination for generations. Whether it is sitting one of the *U.S.S. Enterprise* bridges or traveling through space on motion simulators, *STAR TREK THE EXHIBITION* fully immerses visitor in the legendary journey that has become synonymous with scientific innovation

and ingenuity.


Tickets will go on sale Saturday, November 8th for Center members and Saturday, November 15<sup>th</sup> for the public at [azscience.org](http://azscience.org) and the Admissions Counter at Arizona Science Center.

Highlights of *STAR TREK THE EXHIBITION* include:

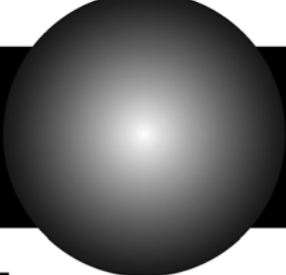
- Once in a lifetime opportunity to become part of the *Enterprise* crew and stand on the Bridge of the Starship Enterprise D. This immersive experience puts you in the legendary command center seen in every episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. You can even sit in Jean-Luc Picard's Captain's Chair.
- A full-scale replica of the Sickbay from *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. The Ship's Sickbay was the setting for many of the show's most important scenes, where Dr. Beverly Crusher served as the Ship's Chief Medical Officer.
- Ride through the Galaxy in a full-motion flight simulator.
- Recreations of the Transporter Room.
- Walk through The History of the Future which timelines the entire *Star Trek* saga and places each series and film into its historical perspective from the present-day International Space Station and NASA's return to the Moon through the future voyages of captains Archer, Kirk, Picard, Sisko, and Janeway.

"STAR TREK THE EXHIBITION is

( Cont'd on page 9 )



# The Stellar Agent




## Bright People Need A Bright REALTOR

Understanding the value of homes and  
The people who live in them


Infinite diversity in infinite combinations

Find the right home (or Buyer) just right for you!



**Frank D. Williams III**  
REALTOR

Call 602-486-4472  
Office 602-424-2800  
[fwilliams@windermere.com](mailto:fwilliams@windermere.com)  
[fdwill3.mywindermere.com](http://fdwill3.mywindermere.com)





# FYI

( Cont'd from page 8 )

the ultimate voyage through a legendary piece of iconic history giving visitors a first hand look at the scientific endeavors of the *Enterprise* crew” states Chevy Humphrey, President and CEO of Arizona Science Center. “We hope that this will inspire the next generation to explore careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and motivate everyone to boldly go where no one has gone before.”

STAR TREK THE EXHIBITION is produced by Premier Exhibitions Inc. (NASDAQ: PRXI). ® & © 2008 CBS Studios Inc. All rights reserved. STAR TREK and related marks are trademarks of CBS Studios Inc.

## CASFS DONATES TICKETS

The Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society (CASFS) has acquired ten tickets to the local Star Trek exhibit and will be donating all tickets to the Children First Academy, formerly known as the Thomas J. Pappas School. The Academy serves the educational needs of the homeless and low-income children of our city.

## 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 longest-running pagan book group in Phoenix. -Jan 24, 6pm  
**Borders, Phoenix Camelback**

**Manga Bookclub**  
1st Tuesdays, 7pm  
**Borders, Chandler**

**Manga Bookclub**  
Dec 20, 7pm  
Jan 17 , 7pm  
**Barnes & Noble, Goodyear**

## SPECIAL BOOK RELEASES

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

### Borderlands Press

“The Hunger by Whitley Streiber, limited edition

“Black Wind” by F. Paul Wilson, signed, limited edition

### Cemetery Dance Publications

“The Vampyricon Trilogy: The Definitive Special edition” by Douglas Clegg, ltd signed

“Halloween: New Poems” by Al Sarrantonio

### Conland Press

“Strange Roads” chapbook by Peter Beagle. Autographed (*companion book to Strange Birds by Gene Wolfe*)

### PS Publishing

“Revolver” by Steve Erikson  
“The Hiss of Escaping Air” by Christopher Golden

### Subterranean Press

“Agent to the Stars” by John Scalzi  
“The Steel Remains” by Richard Morgan  
“A is for Alien” by Caitlin R. Kiernan  
“The Six Directions of Space” by Alastair Reynolds

### Wyrm Publishing

“Toast” by Charles Stross  
“Tides from the New Worlds” by Tobias Buckell

## GAMING EVENTS

### BOOKMANS, MESA

**Dungeons & Dragons Night.** Mondays, 6pm

### DRAWN TO COMICS

**Heroclix.** Tuesdays 4pm-7pm. Fridays, 8pm-11pm. Saturdays, 3pm-6pm  
**Star Wars Miniatures.** Sundays, 1pm – 4pm  
**Sit-and-Sketch** with local artists. 3rd Saturday, 6pm-8pm  
**Holiday Food Drive** – store discounts with food donation

### GAME DEPOT

**HeroClix & MechWarrior** - Wednesdays, 530pm  
**UFS** - Thursdays 6pm-9pm  
**Magic, The Gathering** - Thursdays, 6pm-9pm  
**Monsterpocalypse.** Wednesdays, 5pm  
**Pirates** – collectible cardgame. Fridays, 5pm.

### 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  
**UFS**, Sundays 1pm

## SCIENCE EVENTS

### ASU

Science lectures and news: <http://asunews.asu.edu/news/science>

### ARIZONA SCIENCE CENTER

New exhibit: *Star Trek*, opened Nov 16th  
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

### BEYOND ASU

Origins Symposium “A Brief History of Time”, Stephen Hawking, Richard Dawkins, Briane Greene, Craig Venter, Steven Pinker, April 6

### CHALLENGER SPACE CENTER, PEORIA

Family Fun Day, Dec 26, 9am-4pm  
“Understanding the Nature of Light”,

Fridays, 2pm

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. 3<sup>rd</sup>

Mondays, 930am-1130am

**The Space Place: Martian Madness , Dec 8-9, 930am-1130am**

**ASU Meteorite Exhibit**

**Columbia Shuttle Memorial Display**  
**Iridium Satellite Model**

**Lowell Observatory Display**

**Journey Thru the Space Program**

### MOON SOCIETY MEETING

3 PM at orders Book Store, 1361 S. Alma School Rd. (Alma School and Southern) Mesa. . For more info contact Craig Porterat [portercd@msn.com](mailto:portercd@msn.com)

### PIMA AIR & SPACE MUSEUM, TUCSON

**Breakfast with Santa** - December 6 - 9AM - 11AM - Have breakfast at the Pima Air & Space Museum and welcome

( Cont'd on page 10)



# RandomCon



A NEW Gaming Convention comes to Arizona

## WHERE?

The Grace Inn  
10831 S 51st St  
Phoenix, AZ 85044  
(480) 893-3000  
[www.graceinn.com](http://www.graceinn.com)

Our rates are

\$75 S/D

\$85 T

\$95 Q



## WHEN?

May 8-10, 2009  
Special Events on  
Thursday night, May 7, for  
our Pre-registered  
members ONLY

## WHAT?

### AmberDRPG

Based on the works of Roger Zelazny known to fans worldwide as "The Chronicles of Amber" using a revolutionary system with ranked attributes and no dice are necessary to play!

## HOW MUCH?

\$15 until December 31, 2008  
\$20 Jan 1 to April 30, 2009  
\$25 at the door  
Pay on-line with Paypal

## ALSO

Consuite  
Dealer Room  
Surprises!

## RPGA

Preliminary plans include  
Living Forgotten Realms,  
Arcanis and Pathfinder.

## CONTACT

RandomCon  
PO Box 67457  
Phoenix AZ 85082  
[www.randomcon.org](http://www.randomcon.org)  
[info@randomcon.org](mailto:info@randomcon.org)



## Console Gaming

Preliminary plans include  
Rock Star, DDR and  
Supersmash Brothers

If you are interested in  
running a game check our  
web site for details



## FYI

( Cont'd from page 9 )

Santa to Tucson. Santa will be giving the reindeer some rest before Christmas so he will be arriving at the museum by helicopter. Breakfast starts at 9:00 AM and Santa will arrive at 10:00 AM. Seating will be limited so make your reservations soon. Adults: \$30.00 Children 10 and under: \$25.00  
**New Volunteer Orientation**, Dec 13, 930am

**Volunteer Presentation Series:** Cruise missiles during the Cold War, Dec 20, 10am

**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: Tuesday, December 9, Friday, December 12. 5pm-8pm

**SETI Institute's Weekly Science Radio Program**

Mondays, avail as podcast

<http://radio.seti.org>

<http://podcast.seti.org>

### OTHER GENRE-RELATED EVENTS

**AdventureCon, NEW DATES!!! May 30-31, 2009 University of Phoenix Stadium, Glendale**

Comic artists, dealers, costuming and celebrities including Danielle Harris, David Prowse, Kevin Sorbo, Neil Kaplan, James O'Barr, Arthur Suydam, MarkTexeira

[www.adventurecon.com](http://www.adventurecon.com)

**ARIZONA SCIENCE CENTER**

*The Chronicles of Narnia, The Exhibition*, Opens Jun 7

**BOOKMANS, FLAGSTAFF**

**"The Polar Express"** special event for kids, drawing for tickets to The Polar Express, Grand Canyon Railway

**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

**"The Polar Express"** special event for kids, drawing for tickets to The Polar Express, Grand Canyon Railway

**BORDERS AVONDALE**

**Metaphysical Wednesdays Discussion**  
Wednesdays, 7pm

**BORDERS GLENDALE**

**Metaphysical Mondays Discussion**  
Mondays, 7pm

**LOFT THEATRE, TUCSON**

**Free tickets at Bookmans, Speedway & Grant locations, Tucson**

**"Let the Right One In"** Dec 5th

**"Azur and Asmar: the Princes' Quest"** Jan 30th

see website for complete listing

**ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW**

Showing each Saturday at Midnight.

Chandler Cinemas,

[www.midnitemoviemamacita.com](http://www.midnitemoviemamacita.com)

**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

Liz Danforth

Charles deLint

Diana Gabaldon

Father Andrew Greeley

Jeff Mariotte

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/>

**ALL 4 ANIME**

**Metro Center**  
**602-997-0895**  
**Fiesta Mall**  
**480-844-5046**



Bring this AD and receive **10% off**  
your entire purchase  
limit 1 per customer

Don't photocopy. Exp. 12/20/08 Copies will not be excepted.

## Videophile

**Indiana Jones and the Crystal Skull**  
**Nightmare Before Xmas**  
**Sydney White**  
**The Fall**

**Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skulls**  
**Starring: Harrison Ford, Kate Blanchette, and Shia LaBeouf**

**Director: Steven Spielberg**

**Running Time: 122 min**

**Rated: PG-13 for adventure violence and scary images.**

**Lucas Film**

Well this was a very entertaining movie. Disengage your brain, sit back, and enjoy the ride. I have a problem with calling this an "Indiana Jones" movie. While there is always excitement, always thrills, always a tenacious villain, always intriguing legends even though sometimes obscure, and there is also always at least *plausible* science. The last is where this falls down. I will explain this further on.

It's nineteen fifty-seven and the movie starts with a kidnapped Indy being brought to the warehouse that we last saw at the end of "Raiders of the Lost Ark". The object they want is highly magnetized so Indy uses the iron in the gunpowder from several grenades to find the case. He throws handfuls up and they follow the trail. Given the size of the warehouse and the limited potential for iron in grenades the power levels on the case must be off the scale. When they finally find it, the pull while evident, is so mild as to be negligible to the metal wearing, gun toting soviets. It doesn't even stick to the jeep when it is hit by a truck.

Escaping the soviets is truly a case of out of the frying pan. He finds himself in a strange town with plastic people and no water. Everybody say it... atom bomb testing. Indy survives by locking himself in a refrigerator. As a result of this encounter the FBI (this is during the McCarthy era) makes his life hell and the university puts him on extended leave. While leaving on a train he is both followed and found, the former obviously KGB, the latter "Mutt" (Shia). Mutt has a letter from his mother with a page from Indy's friend with strange writing. Indy

and Mutt follow the clues to Peru and then to Brazil. Along the way they encounter Marion Indy's ex-fiancée from Raiders, oh yeah she is Mutt's mom.

Indy solves the rest of the clues and they save the world. The soviets get the bad end they deserve. Everybody goes home happy.

**Extras**

They consist of the usual making of, stills, trailers, post production, special on props, pre-visualization sequences, and a game. The game (Indiana Jones Legos) is only for the Xbox360. The pre-visualization sequences are pretty neat, kind of like a "Clone Wars" style Indiana Jones short. The Prop special and the Skull special both contain neat info on how the props were made and gives an interesting insight into how they chose each item. Overall kind of fun. We're watching it over the holiday.

Three and one half stars out of five stars.  
- **Bob LaPierre**

**The Nightmare Before Christmas**  
**Touchstone, 76 minutes, PG**  
**DVD \$32.99 Blu-Ray \$39.99**

This film has been a favorite in our house since it was first released. While others may watch *A Christmas Story* each holiday season, in our house the holiday movie is *The Nightmare Before Christmas*.

The new, remastered release is a must for everyone, whether one is new to the experience or is a die-hard fan who has seen the film 100 times. Even without the extras, this is worth every penny. The clarity is wonderful, the sound crystal clear and the Tim Burton story as delightfully dark and humorous as ever.

For those who are unfamiliar with the story, Jack Skellington, the Pumpkin King of Halloween Town, longs to spread the joy of Christmas..... with a Tim Burton/ Halloween twist that is wonderfully macabre.

The extras are the icing on the cake - from Christopher Lee reciting Tim Burton's original poem, the short films Vincent and Frankenweenie, a wonderful "making of" feature that goes behind the scenes to show just how this stop action film was made. Highly recommended. -

**Stephanie L Bannon**

(Cont'd on page 11)



## Videophile (Cont'd from page 10)

**Sydney White**

**Starring Amanda Bynes, Matt Long;  
written by Chad Gomez Creasey  
(Pushing Daisies); dir. by Joe  
Nussbaum  
Sony, 108 minutes, PG-13  
DVD \$19.99**

This 2007 modern retelling of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* is now available on DVD with a good set of extras, including deleted scenes that genuinely contributed to the character development. Amanda Bynes plays Sydney, the daughter of a widowed plumber, who was raised in the company of construction workers after her mother died. (I loved the scene where her father is explaining the anatomy of puberty.) Sydney, who is just heading off for her freshman year at college, dreams of joining her mother's sorority and making friendships that last a lifetime. But Rachel Witchburn, president of Kappa Phi Nu, who checks out her "Hot or Not" rating on her computer every day, is jealous of Sydney's easy popularity with everyone, including Tyler Price of Beta Omega; so she banishes Sydney from the sorority on pledge night. Sydney moves into the Vortex, a ramshackle student housing overflow occupied by seven misfits, aka the dorks. They have the frozen Han Solo propped up against the wall, among other memorabilia, and they play poker for collectibles. These guys are great! Sydney decides to challenge Rachel's political stranglehold on the student council and forms the Freedom to the Seventh Power party, with the brainy Terrence/Doc as contender, who wins over many of the jocks with his ability to predict game outcomes and out-drink the champ at a kegger. As the campaign gains momentum, wicked Witchburn resorts to hacking and poisons Sydney's Macintosh, deleting her term paper the night before the student council debate. The movie is full of charming scenes, such as the serenade with a quartet Tyler arranges for Sydney in her carrel, or the interplay between the kindly Lenny/Sneezy and legacy pledge girl Dinky. All the actors are fine in their parts, including the superlative Danny Strong, who was the diminutive Jonathan on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and here plays Gurkin/Grumpy. He should be cast as Miles Vorkosigan – and I was thinking this even before the scene where he goes over a wall with the ROTC guys. He's got the looks, the height, and the acting chops to bring Miles gloriously and painfully to life. Hellooo, any Hollywood agents paying attention? – **Chris Paige**

### The Fall

**Starring: Lee Pace (Pushing Daisies),  
Catinca Untaru, Justine Waddell;  
Tarsem Singh (The Cell) co-writer/  
director  
Sony, 117 minutes, R  
DVD \$24.99**

At the movie previews last LepreCon, one trailer stood out from the welter. Sure, there were must-see blockbuster previews, but this one was *magic*. *Iron Man* and *The Volume 18 Issue 6*

*Dark Knight* got cheers and whoops; *The Fall*, with gorgeous cinematography shot on location in 18 countries, got gasps of astonishment and drawn out "Aaah!"s. The Taj Mahal was just one setting. Singh even wangled permission to film *inside* the Hagia Sophia mosque in Istanbul!

The plot is simple. A young man who was doing a stunt for a silent "flicker" crippled himself, and the damage may be irreparable. He is recuperating in a hospital where a five-year-old migrant picker is also recovering from a fall; her

arm in a cast. When he learns that her name is Alexandria, he tells her one of the stories about Alexander the Great. She doesn't think much of her namesake, so the ironically named Roy Walker promises to tell her another story, one about bandits. What begins as a pastime to beguile some moments takes on a multi-layered life. Alexandria's interruptions shape the narrative, and she introduces key characters – including herself – into the adventure. But when Roy figures out that he may never walk again, and that his fiancée has abandoned him for the leading man, he tricks Alexandria into stealing morphine, so he can "sleep." He refuses to continue the story unless she does. (The R rating is for the suicide attempt; there is no sex; most of the violence happens at a remove, and what is shown is as stylized as a kabuki performance.) Coyote must be Roy's guardian, for not once, not twice, but three times his efforts are thwarted. But it is Alexandria who ransoms his life the third time, with yet another fall. She endures a nightmare of pain and terror, and Roy is shocked out of his spiraling self-pity.

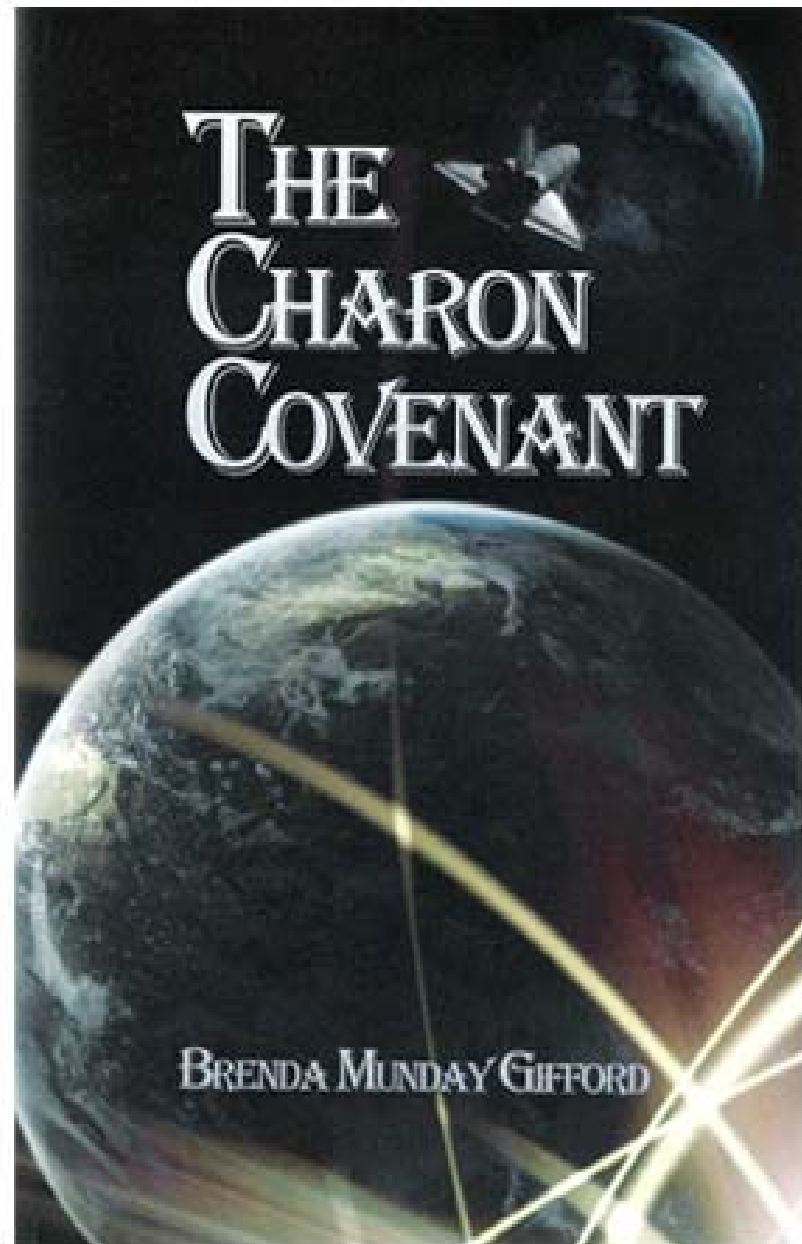
What makes this movie utterly unique is how we see everything through Alexandria's perceptions: the places, people, and events around her, the story of the bandits' quest for vengeance against Governor Odious, her nightmare. It is her imagination and her partial comprehension of adults that we are shown. When Roy describes one bandit as

an Indian married to a beautiful squaw, little Alexandria is visualizing the man and his wife as Hindustani. Her favorite hospital nurse, the fruit picker, the ice man, Roy's friends and enemies all people the story that Roy is telling as it unfolds in her mind. Even the ordinary world is full of frights and wonders for Alexandria; and when Tarsem Singh and the Cray Brothers are directing the visuals, you enter her world, a Dante to her Virgil.

In the midst of the glory and terror, there is humor as well. Bandit Charles

Darwin has a pet monkey named Wallace that has all the good ideas Darwin takes credit for; when Alexandria needs to go to the bathroom, the fair heroine Evelyn starts contorting her legs and hopping up and down; and a distraught Roy resorts to the logic of a five-year-old.

This is a movie to see when the veil between worlds is thin, when you can cross over to wonderland. You have never seen anything like *The Fall*. – **Chris Paige**



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.



# Leo Laporte and his Empire of the Net

by Shane Shellenbarger

If you've heard of Leo Laporte, you're probably a computer geek or a gadget hound. If you haven't heard of Mr. Laporte, well, let's just say you're missing out on a wealth of information and entertainment.

Laporte first became enamored with technology while a student of Chinese history at Yale University. He discovered the student-run radio station and developed a love and passion for mass communications that continues to this day. Spending more time at the radio station and less time on his studies, Laporte dropped out of Yale in 1976, his junior year.

His employment in radio and television has taken him to New Haven, Connecticut and Monterey, San Jose, San Francisco, Los Angeles in the United States as well as Toronto and Vancouver in Canada. He's been a D.J. and talk show host on subjects as varied as real estate, gardening, money, cars, and home improvement. As part of his right-of-passage, Laporte was one of hundreds of radio hosts who were pushed aside by the introduction of Rush Limbaugh to national radio listeners on August 1, 1988. This was a pivotal point in Laporte's life, as it caused him to focus his career choices on technology, a personal passion. His first home computer was an Atari 400 and his first work computer was a NorthStar Advantage with 64k of RAM and a 5-megabyte hard drive. From 1985 to 1988, Laporte was the system operator of MacQueue, one of first Macintosh-exclusive bulletin board systems.

In January of 1991, Laporte created and co-hosted *Dvorak on Computers*, with John C. Dvorak, noted technology writer and curmudgeon. He later hosted *Laporte on Computers*, for KGO Radio and KSFO in San Francisco, *Internet!* on PBS, and *the Personal Computing Show* on CNBC. In 1997, he worked with Soledad O'Brien on *The Site*, an hour-long newsmagazine for MSNBC, a Monday through Saturday daily show. Laporte voiced and performed the real time computer-generated character, Dev Null, who co-hosted with O'Brien. Laporte earned an Emmy for his work on *The Site*.

In 1998, Laporte created and co-hosted *The Screen Savers* and the original *Call for Help*, live cable and satellite shows for ZDTV, which later became TechTV. In 2001, Laporte focused on *The Screen Savers*, leaving *Call for Help* until his return in 2003. In 2004, Laporte left in a dispute over stock ownership with Vulcan Ventures, founded by Microsoft's co-founder, Paul Allen. Laporte's contract expired on March 31<sup>st</sup> and when he didn't appear on the April 1<sup>st</sup> *Screen Savers*, viewers believed it was an April Fools



Day joke. When Comcast bought ZDTV, TechTV was rolled into G4TV (a video gamers cable channel) and 285 employees of the San Francisco-based company were laid off. The final episode aired in the United States on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2004.

With *Call for Help* canceled in the U.S., Laporte returned when Rogers Communications licensed the show from G4 Media and production began in Toronto for G4TechTV Canada (debut on August 16, 2004) and Australia's HOW TO Channel (debut on March 7, 2005). Beginning on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006, episodes became available for purchase on Google Video. Concurrently, Laporte hosted a three-hour technology radio on Saturdays and Sundays for the Los Angeles station, KFI AM 640. Today, his show is carried nationally on XM satellite radio Ch.158 and is syndicated on Premiere Radio Networks. When *Call for Help* was produced in Toronto, Laporte's original co-hosts were Andy Walker and Monica Litonjua. In September 2004, Litonjua left and was replaced by Amber MacArthur. On August 31, 2005, Andy Walker left over a pay cut in his contract renewal and on August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006, Amber MacArthur left to work for the Canadian network, CityTV. Calli Lewis acted as temporary co-host for the remaining episodes. In April 2007, the final episode, #500, aired on the G4techTV channel in Canada and the HOW TO Channel in Australia. On April 23, 2007, *The Lab with Leo Laporte* began production in Vancouver and airing daily. On March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008, Laporte confirmed on his podcast/netcast, net@Nite #46, that *The Lab with Leo Laporte* had been canceled by Rogers Communications.

Amid the tumult of his radio and television careers, Laporte became interested in the burgeoning arena of downloadable audio files, now known as podcasts or netcasts. In January 2005 at the MacWorld Expo, Laporte recorded a roundtable discussion between himself, Kevin Rose, Patrick Norton, Sarah Norton, David Prager, and Roger Chang. Laporte published the audio file to his blog and the response by the public was immediate and overwhelming. With the cast composed of friends from

his TechTV days, the original episodes were entitled, *Revenge of the Screensavers*. When he received a cease and desist from Comcast, the show was temporarily renamed *Return of the (BEEP)*, with *This Week in Geek* suggested by a listener. The eventual name became *This Week in Tech*, aka as *TWiT*. Using plain old telephone or Voice over Internet services such as Skype, Laporte gathered a brain trust of friends/technology experts and began to grow a network of shows that now number at fifteen.

*This Week in Tech* has reached episode #166 and the participants (often including John C. Dvorak and Patrick Norton) continue to discuss the tech news of the week. *MacBreak Weekly* (with Alex Lindsay, Andy Ihnatko, and Scott Bourne) has reached #112 and *Windows Weekly* (with Paul Thurrott) has reached episode #81, each discussing the latest happenings inside and outside of Apple and Microsoft. Security Expert, Steve Gibson, discusses with Laporte the internet spam and spyware issues of the day on *Security Now*, currently at episode #168. In this ever-changing-digital-age in which we live, the 70 episodes of *Jumping Monkeys* with Laporte and Megan Morrone provide answers, tips, and tricks on successfully stewarding children through adolescence into adulthood. On *net@Nite*, Laporte and Amber MacArthur (his co-host from the Canadian version of *Call for Help*), use the 72 episodes to examine new and odd internet sites and viral videos. *Roz Rows* is the 41-episode real-life adventure of Roz Savage as she rows across the Pacific Ocean. With 690 episodes under their belts, Laporte and Mad magazines maddest writer, Dick DeBartolo, continue to speak intelligently five-days-a-week on the *Daily Giz Wiz* about the greatest gadgets of the day. In the 46 episodes of *FLOSS Weekly*, Laporte and Randal Schwartz talk about the people and programs in the Free Libre Open Source

Software community. If you've had a hankering to investigate junk food, the 48 episodes of *Munchcast* with Cammy Blackstone and Laporte may provide answers to the questions posed by your tummy. Inquiring minds can feed their needs by examining genome mapping, protein folding, and related genetics on *Futures in Biotech* with Marc Pelletier and his guests. If breaking issues in technology law interest you, check out the 18 episodes of *This Week in Law* with Denise Howell, Colette Vogeley, Ernie Svenson, and John Palfrey.

The three remaining shows are *The Tech Guy*, the collected 504 radio shows in which Laporte discusses everything from cell phones to over-clocked computers, basically everything with a chip in it. *The Laporte Report* is an incomplete collection of Laporte's appearances on other podcasts, speeches, and radio shows. *Radio Leo* is the whole magilla, a feed for every one of Laporte's shows. His shows are found at <http://twit.tv> and iTunes <http://www.apple.com/itunes/>.

With his broad knowledge base, affable nature, and enthusiasm for conversation, Leo Laporte makes an engaging interviewer and host. With over twenty-five hours of audio and nearly forty hours of video available each week, Leo Laporte is a media mogul you can grow to love, or at least listen to.

<http://leoville.com/>  
<http://techguylabs.com/radio/pmwiki.php>  
<http://twit.tv/>  
<http://live.twit.tv/>  
<http://army.twit.tv/>  
<http://leoville.com/2008/10/01/1826/>  
<http://twit.am/>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leo\\_Laporte](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leo_Laporte)  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Site](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Site)  
<http://www.labwithleo.com/personalities>  
<http://www.labwithleo.com/>  
[http://news.cnet.com/2100-1026\\_3-5207821.html?tag=nefd.top](http://news.cnet.com/2100-1026_3-5207821.html?tag=nefd.top)  
<http://www.examiner.com/x-448-SF-Radio-Examiner~topic24961-leoville>



## 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




(480) 966-4727

3136 S. McClintock Dr. Ste. 11, Tempe, AZ  
 NW Corner Southern & McClintock





# Screening Room

**Bolt**  
**City of Ember**

**Bolt**  
**Starring:** John Travolta, Miley Cyrus,  
Mark Walton, Susie Essman  
**Director:** Chris Williams  
**Runtime:** 96 minutes  
**Rated:** PG  
**Release Date:** November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008  
**Reviewed by:** Len Berger  
(ConNotations Film Editor)

Bolt (voiced by John Travolta) is a dog who stars in a TV show with the same name. Bolt is a super-dog and his many super-powers allow him to constantly save his sidekick Peggy (voiced by Miley Cyrus) from evil. Bolt is also quite effective in catching the bad guys. Week after week Peggy and Bolt fight evil on set but off the set they seldom see each other. Bolt is caged waiting the next days shoot.

In the current episode Peggy is kidnapped and Bolt thinks it's for real. The fun begins when Bolt escapes in order to save Peggy from the evil team that kidnapped her. On his quest Bolt uses his super-powers without much success but his perseverance forces him to continue. Bolt captures a green eyed cat named Mittens (voiced by Susan Essman) believing that this cat is associated with the team that kidnapped Peggy. Mittens is

a self centered, stuck up cat who now must deal with what Mittens believes is a crazy, demented dog. What a team !

Bolt and Mittens run into a hamster named Rhino (voiced by Mark Walton) who is a BIG fan of Bolt's TV show.



Rhino begs to join the quest to save Peggy and with his hamster ball is accepted into the team. On their cross country journey Bolt continues to learn about the real world including the fact that he is starving. Mittens comes to the rescue by teaching Bolt the art of begging for food.

The films animation is pretty good and the voice actors bring the characters to

life. Both adults and children will enjoy the films story, its humor and its action. The film will show in both 2D and 3D versions depending of the capabilities of the theatre. The 3D version would add another dimension (obviously) to the film and 3D is recommended.

The film is rated PG due to some scenes where the characters are in peril.

Bolt is rated "A-".

**City of Ember**  
**Starring:** Bill Murray, Saoirse  
Mayfleet, Harry Treadaway, Tim  
Robbins, Martin Landau  
**Director:** Gil Kenan (Monster House)  
**Runtime:** 95 minutes  
**Rated:** PG  
**Release Date:** October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008  
**Reviewed by:** Len Berger  
(ConNotations Film Editor)

The City of Ember is an underground city that was created by the "builders" to preserve mankind after they realized that the world was going to end. The city is populated with a select group of people and the builder's intention was that the city's population would eventually surface and re-populate the planet. The builders provided a massive "Generator" which powered the city and was built to last 200 years. Instructions on how to leave the city were placed in a small metal box that was to be handed down from mayor to mayor throughout time, until the box automatically opened after 200 years. Unfortunately the box ended up lost in a



closet and was discovered long after the 200-year-life of the Generator had passed.

Doon Harrow (Harry Treadaway), who works in the pipeworks where leaks are aplenty and spare pipe parts are non-existent and Lina Mayfleet (Saoirse Ronan), who is one of many messengers which create the city's communication system team up to figure out the mystery of the contents of the box after it is found. What did the contents mean – where did the box come from? Their dedication to the task is one of the highlights of the film. Mayor Cole (Bill Murray) is a typical politician who appears to be a bit obese in a city with food shortages. The Mayor's solution to the Generator

(Cont'd on page 14 )

## WesternSFA -- Proud Sponsors of

### AcrossPlus

#### Anime Club

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 from 7:00pm until 9:00pm.

In general, we explore Anime, Manga, and other styles of animation, have creative educative demonstrations, participate in interactive discussions, attend local Arizona conventions, and make cosplay.

We welcome any new members out there who are interested. Our members are very friendly, respectful, and fun. Feel free to visit us any Sunday

For more information, contact Shane Bryner at [acrossplus@westernsfa.org](mailto:acrossplus@westernsfa.org) or visit our website at [www.acrossplus.com](http://www.acrossplus.com)

### AniZona

#### Arizona's First Anime Convention

AniZona, the first Anime convention in Arizona joined the WesternSFA family in 2007. Traditionally held on Easter weekend each year, the AniZona convention is four days of fun and activity for the Valley's Anime fans. Smaller one day events are held periodically throughout the year.

Our family friendly events include Anime viewing, AMV contest, Cosplay contest, Artist Alley, Game Room, Karaoke, panels and demos on Manga, Anime and Japanese culture along with special guests and a vendor's room in which to find the perfect Anime items.

For more information on our events or our next convention to be held on April 9-12, 2009 please check our web site at [www.anizona.org](http://www.anizona.org) or contact us at [info@anizona.org](mailto:info@anizona.org)

### ConRunners

#### Convention Running Seminars

The members of WesternSFA are happy to share our hard earned knowledge about fan-run conventions. While most of us are experienced in running Science Fiction, Anime, and Gaming conventions, the basics of a volunteer run convention cross all genres. Three times during the year, usually in February, June and October, we hold day-long seminars covering the various aspects of volunteer events. We are also willing to come talk to your Phoenix metro area group at your invitation.

Additionally our web site holds an ever growing set of convention running files for your use (with credit to WesternSFA).

For more info contact us at [info@conrunners.org](mailto:info@conrunners.org) or check our web site at [www.conrunners.org](http://www.conrunners.org)

### RandomCon

#### A NEW Gaming Convention

WesternSFA is proud to bring a new event to the Phoenix area for the Valley's gamers.

Our initial event will be held May 8-10, 2009 at the Grace Inn. Current plans include AmberDRPG which is based on the works of Roger Zelazny known to fans worldwide as "The Chronicles of Amber" using a revolutionary system with ranked attributes and no dice are necessary to play! The RPGA's preliminary plans include Living Forgotten Realms, Arcanis and Pathfinder. And our Console Gaming room plans include Rock Star, DDR and Supersmash Brothers

We hope to become an annual event to serve the gamers of Arizona. For more information please check our web site at [www.randomcon.org](http://www.randomcon.org) or if you have questions or want to run a game please contact us at [info@randomcon.org](mailto:info@randomcon.org)

### WESTERN SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION (WesternSFA)

A non-profit corporation 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 WesternSFA, PO Box 67457, Phoenix AZ 85082  
Email: [info@westernsfa.org](mailto:info@westernsfa.org) Webpage: [www.westernsfa.org](http://www.westernsfa.org)

Screening ( Cont'd from page 13 )

blackouts is to hold a town hall meeting and declare “I hereby propose a task force to investigate the blackouts.” The crowd cheers! Sul (Martin Landau) is the grouchy chief engineer of the pipeworks and is one of those workers who only cares about his job. Loris Harrow (Tim Robbins) is Doon’s dad and an inventor supreme whose house is filled with a dizzying array of Rube Goldberg-type devices.

The city is visually delightful with a massive lighting system (they are underground after all), cobblestone streets and an underground maze which houses the pipeworks and the Generator. Only the CFL’s were missing. The set was extremely detailed even down to the sewer cover which had the following imprinted on it: “PROPERTY OF CITY OF EMBER”. It was difficult to determine where the set ended and the CG begins.

This is a good family fantasy / sci-fi film and would be a great diversion from the current political issues that are dominating the news. An interesting tidbit is that the main set is located in Ireland in one of the buildings where the Titanic was constructed. The building is now the largest sound stage on earth. The film is based on the 2003 novel written by Jeanne Duprau.

The film is rated PG due to some scary scenes.

City of Ember is rated “B+”.

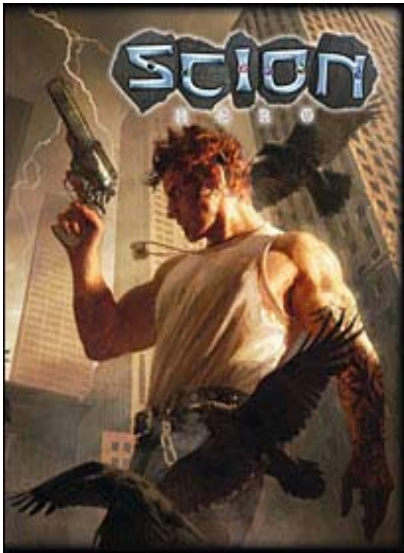
Gamer’s Corner

Scion  
White Wolf  
Hero \$39.99  
Demigod \$39.99  
God \$39.99

Wow! What can I say about this system? I was first introduced to it as a filler to be played when we had nothing else ready. That was eight months ago and now it is our primary game. The premise is simple, you are the children (scions) of the gods and the titans who mean to destroy them are loose. You are not given much time to accept that you are more than mortal (but not quite immortal, yet). The three books are the three tiers of play, and you would do well to decide on how players are going to spend their experience or you could wind up with a very unbalanced party. More on that later.

Hero- here is character creation. In creating yourself you and your GM decide whether or not you know you are an incipient godling. Both choices have good role-playing possibilities and our party was split. Your choice of parent gives you certain potential, attributes, abilities, and boons. Attributes are a measure of your physical, social, and mental state. They can be augmented with epic stats which give you your godly prowess. Abilities are

your trained skills, fighting (brawl, melee, marksman, thrown), driving (car, motorcycle, boat, plane), and science (physics, chemistry, engineering), among others. Finally, boons are otherworldly manifestations based on both what your divine parent knows and what you want to



learn. Boons usually need an item of power to activate them called a birthright. They also need you to know you are a scion to be activated.

Birthrights are given by the scion’s divine parent or a trusted servant generally. I was given my birthrights by an enemy of my father, my father is Loki. Certain divine parents don’t want/like/ care about their offspring. However in the fight against the titans few will be spurned. Your powers are dependant on you legend rating (similar to the Q rating for television stars). You can use experience to increase your attributes, abilities, boons, or legend. Increasing your legend without increasing your other statistics can cause a minor problem, to wit my character. I increased my legend everytime I could and ignored my other stats, this meant I was in the demigod state considerably before everyone else. Which brings us to...

Demigod- becoming a demigod causes certain changes, you add another set of starting points to the ones you already have. This allows you to focus your attributes. Unfortunately this means that if you do as I did, you wind up with someone with who could have an attribute so beyond the other characters that some difficult actions are automatic and if you increase the difficulty or use more powerful adversaries the other characters cannot succeed. The book at this level draws you in to the periphery of the battle between the gods and the titans. You are used as messengers, scouts, and guerrilla combat troops.

God- here you get still another stat bump and you truly get to become a lesser member of the pantheon. You can sire more scions, participate directly in the battle with the titans, and even challenge other members of the pantheon for their portfolio. I haven’t gotten a character this

high (but I am close) however looking through shows the toughest opponents and the most interesting situations I have seen.

I have been thoroughly enjoying this game and I highly recommend it.

5 Stars out of 5 - **Bob LaPierre**

See you next time.

Houses of the Blooded - Game Review  
Wicked Dead Brewing Co.,  
\$45, 300+ pages

Before we go into the game itself, a little background. Approximately a year and a half ago, I was introduced to John Wick at DarkCon ’07. Once I’d inquired, I learned that he was the game designer for *Legend of the Five Rings* and *7th Sea*, with work done for White Wolf, AEG, Upper Deck, NeoPets, as well as a small collection of what he likes to refer to as ‘small games’ published by his own company, Wicked Dead Brewing (co-owned by Jared Sorenson). By ‘small games’, it means things that have enough background, story and mechanics to be played by a group of friends, and if a game master wanted to take it further than that, good on them!

Now, fast-forward to roughly five or so months ago. John began attending Valley by Night, a vampire LARP that’s long been running in Arizona, of which I am a part. He mentioned that he had a new game in the works, called *Houses of the Blooded*. A Big Game. One that he would like to have a cluster of gamers put through the wringer so he could see what would work and what wouldn’t. (And by this point, I believe he’d already had a few other groups testing this out as well.) Those in our game circle that were fans of *L5R* or *7th Sea* were quite enthused.



And me? Honestly, I didn’t pay much attention at first. I was just coming out of a long burnout phase with role-playing in general, but I was happy that my friends had something up and coming that they could look forward to that was new and different.

Until one day when I was at loose

ends on a scheduled game day with John, and moseyed out to sit in on the proceedings. At first I was a little baffled. I’d walked into the middle of dice related conflict resolution and didn’t know the terminology yet. I was hearing words like ‘risks’ and ‘wagers’ and ‘style’ flying about. But, I’ve been immersed into a strange new game before, I could be patient.

Then the coolest thing happened. Part of the conflict resolution took into account what the players wanted to see happen in the story. One sentence worth of narrative control was temporarily ceded to the next player in line, who got to say one thing that happened in the scene. And it wasn’t just group-friendly resolutions, either. Players would say that something bad happened, to the group’s detriment, for the sake of the story!

I wrote my character up the very next game session. Now, let’s get to reviewing.

*Houses of the Blooded* is a fantasy tabletop game with the overriding theme being ‘Tragedy’. Long ago for thousands of years, the sorcerer-kings warred incessantly in a scope that few could imagine. On the brink of destroying the world, they instead destroyed themselves, leaving behind a great deal of ruin and the race that served them - the ven. Forced to rebuild a shattered land, now a series of interconnected islands and archipelagos and filled with wildlife and wild growth that was wildly altered by the magic that the sorcerer-kings unleashed on the land. The ven called this land Shanri. The word means, to them, “The Great Enemy”.

That’s the first indicator of how the characters should be viewing the world around them. Over time and a great deal of strife, the ven were able to rebuild to the point of becoming their own ruling class, the Blooded. They had their vassals, the Unblooded, the *vet*h, meaning ‘dirt’.

The Blooded are divided among six houses, each extolling a separate virtue as their point of power and pride, represented by an animal. Bear is Strength, Elk is Cunning, Falcon has Courage, Fox has Beauty, Serpent has Wisdom and Wolf shows Prowess. This is how the main attributes are represented and every single character has one of those Virtues as a Weakness. No matter what, they will never naturally excel at that weakness. They must strive to overcome it in other ways.

The ven are a people of extremes. They don’t just fall in love, they have Romance. They don’t just get even, they swear Revenge. And their word for both concepts is the same one, just with different emphasis. They don’t just gamble, they have Wagers. They don’t just fail, they have an epically Tragic downfall the likes of which we hope we’ll never see. The rule regarding property is that you own what you can keep. If

( Cont'd on page 15 )



**Gamers** ( Cont'd from page 14 )

someone else can take it from you, then it isn't yours any longer. No ven shall have armies, so naturally everyone has a secret force of armsmen. No ven shall use sorcery, so everyone scrambles to acquire what remnants of the sorcerer-kings magic that they can get. They worship their gods, the *suaven*, fellow ven that have passed onto the next life. When they worship, they abase themselves as devoutly as possible. Weeping and wailing, slashing their palms to give of their blood, in order to receive the *suaven's* blessing.

These are the ven. They aspire to great heights and they'll almost uniformly have a colossally tragic end. And the player gets to control how they meet that end.

The mechanics are fairly simple, if a bit counter-intuitive at first. When you roll for success or failure at anything, (called 'making a Risk'), you assemble the number of dice that your sheet says you'll need. Before you roll, however, you make wagers. These are dice set aside to pad your lead. Rolling is simple: If you roll a 10 or greater, you get to say what the outcome is of the Risk. If you do not, the Narrator gets to state the outcome. If you win the roll, you keep all your Wagers. If you do not, you lose half of them.

The Wager mechanic is what intrigued me the most about the game. After you say what the initial outcome is, you then use one wager to make one narrative statement about the scene, continuing the line of thought you started with the initial roll. For instance, you succeed at searching for a clue to a mystery and say, "I find a letter, hidden under a cloak." Then you spend a Wager to add, "...And, the cloak belongs to Lady Shara." Spend another wager, "Someone else borrowed Lady Shara's cloak last night." And so on, until you run out of wagers. If more than one person rolled, everyone gets to contribute as well. For good or for ill, they all throw together their statements until the scene is built. And with this new information, they now have a direction to go in their search to solve the mystery.

Complimenting the Wager mechanic is the method of player reward, Style Points. While the Narrator is describing the scene or depicting an NPC, a player can spend a Style Point to say one thing about the current events. It can be anything from, "The duke is lying to you," to, "the servants are serving our favorite food." Whatever the players feel will contribute to the story, they can spend a Style Point to make that contribution true. Style is also used to activate certain abilities, blessings or spells.

Skills are depicted via Aspects, found in the FATE system. (*Spirit of the Century* being the most common example). You name the aspect of something you're good at, we'll say 'Swordsman'. Each Aspect has a method for the player to trigger it

(the Invoke), for an opponent to get bonuses (the Tag), and a way for someone to force your character to act, (the Compel) So if you're writing up a swordsman's Aspect, it might look something like this:

Aspect: Swordsman  
Invoke - Stand Your Ground (Activate when defending)  
Tag - Honorable Combat (Cannot take the first swing)  
Compel - Sworn to protect (When those he's chosen to defend are threatened)

The book itself can seem a little intimidating at first, ending at 432 pages. If you pick it up and become alarmed by the walls of text coming at you, don't fear! The writing style is almost conversational, making it seem more like you're having a chat with the author, rather than having a gaggle of new game mechanics lobbed at you. Just about every page of the book has little tidbits of the culture that you're playing with, adding to the immersive writing style. And all throughout the book, it urges the Narrator and the players to make their game a collaborative effort, not to just find the baddie and make the big kill, but to tell a story that everyone can talk about in the inevitable gaming war stories. Just give it a try - if you trust your players and your narrator, you won't be disappointed. - **Jon Kelley** (aka - Snag of the Dark Ones)

**Warhammer The Chronicles of Malus DarkBlade Volume One**  
**by Dan Abnett and Mike Lee**  
**A Black Library Publications, \$11.99, 768 pages.**

In these chronicles, the story of a young evil elfish aristocrat finds an unwanted "guest" for a quest for five artifacts within a year. In these tales, Malus Darkblade will find three are facts against his friends, family, fiends, and feuds.

This tome carries the first three novels, "The Daemon's Curse," "Bloodstorm," and "Reaper of Souls." It also contains a short story, "The Blood Price", and an authors' introduction.

Very dark. Worth the reading for dark fantasy lovers and Warhammer readers - **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000 Hammer of Daemons**  
**by Ben Counter**  
**A Black Library Publications, \$7.99, 405 pages.**

Grey Knight Alaric is captured by Chaos forces. Instead of torture, Alaric is sent to a Chaos world as a gladiator. He will have to battle everything including his own beliefs to survive.

This is the third installment of *The Grey Knights*.

Loved it! Grey Knight is sort of like the medieval paladins in the future.

Highly recommended for dark sci-fi fans and Warhammer 40,000 readers - **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000 Relentless**  
**by Richard Williams**  
**A Black Library Publications, \$7.99, 287 pages.**

Captain Becket has been betrayed by his first officer Ward and his new crew from "Relentless," a navy space battleship. He is considered dead. Instead, he survived and is captured by a "Relentless" press gang. Will Becket get his ship back? Will he live to see the mutiny revenged?

Good story. Dark. Recommended for dark sci-fi fans and Warhammer 40,000 readers - **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000 The Blood Angels Omnibus**  
**by James Swallow**  
**A Black Library Publications, \$11.99, pp. 638.**

Brothers Rafen and Arkio are having a dispute over not only a family matters but also one of them claims to be Sanguinius, the Blood Angels' founder. Both of them will duel to the death for who is right through enemies and friends. Only one will survive.

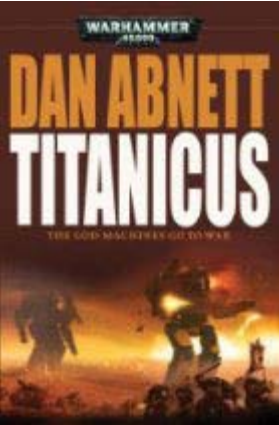
This omnibus contains two novels, "Deus Encarmine" and "Deus

Sanguinius." Also, a short story "Blood Debt" bridges between the novels.

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

**Warhammer 40,000 Titanicus**  
**by Dan Abnett**  
**A Black Library Publications, \$24.99, 400 pages.**

Here is a story of the Imperial defenders of a forged world, Orestes. The world is infected with a legion of giant Chaos war machines, Titans. The Imperial strikes back with their own reliable Titans against these metal hordes. Will they stop the Chaos armies before the world end in blood?



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



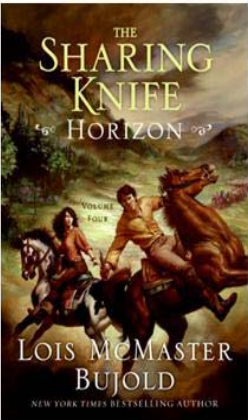
January 30 at 7:00 P.M.

**Lois McMaster Bujold**  
signs  
***The Sharing Knife: Horizon***

**The Poisoned Pen**  
**4014 N Goldwater Blvd. Suite 101**  
**Scottsdale, AZ 85251**

**For more information on this and other upcoming signings with science fiction and fantasy authors at the Poisoned Pen, please visit our web site at [www.poisonedpen.com](http://www.poisonedpen.com) or call 1-888-560-9919**

**In order to participate in the signing, we ask that customers purchase the author's new book at the Poisoned Pen.**



## An American in New Zealand Part Two: “First Blunder- Over a Hill for Lord of the Rings”

by Jeffrey Lu

In early morning, Christchurch, New Zealand, was the place for first of the three Lord of The Rings Movie Tour by Red Carpet. The bus waited for adventurers like me.

I had a backpack with sandals, a towel, and a coat. I remembered why I was on this trip. I wanted to hike Mount Sunday, Middle Earth’s “Edoras.” In Phoenix, I had walked long distances and ran up the stairs for at least a month before I went on this climb. I think I’m ready. I approached and promptly sat in the bus.

Our first stop was at a bakery. I bought a few items for breakfast and lunch. I also snatched two boxes of cookies for the strenuous exercise.

Then, the bus went to Canterbury Plains. The tour guide showed us on the bus’ DVD player “LOTR: The Two Towers.” It was fun to note that there is still a “ring” missing up in those hills. Anyone who finds this “ring” can sell it on eBay if they can get Peter Jackson to confirm it. The “ring” is actually his glasses lost by the winds at Canterbury Plains near Mount Sunday.

As I walked out of the bus, the winds blew someone’s hat away.

I looked at the infinite thorn bushes and cow patties. I felt like a rabbit. I wasn’t prepared for this.

Our group began to walk to the hill known as Mount Sunday. Together, three to eight people crossed three cold streams. No one was lost. Yet, another person’s hat floated away on the rushing water.

My first blunder was to climb the 89-degree slant of Mount Sunday. Others climbed before me did not expect the hard going. One of them cried, “I not going to make it!” Since she was in my path, I told her she’ll be fine. When she finally got up there, she laid down and breathed like a fish out of water. She was fine, later.

The view was breathtaking. Snowy mountains were around the hill. Most of the view was taken for the three LOTR movies. There was one location that had only the concrete setting that once was Edoras, the palace of the horsemen. I glanced around and then noticed my first blunder.

The tour guide forgot to tell us that we didn’t have to climb the 89-degree slant of Mount Sunday. (No, we had to be like Captain Kirk climbing in “Star Trek V.”) We could have walked the other hill in a 30 degree climb to Mount Sunday. Oh, well. What a hobbit I make.  
Next Words- An American in New Zealand Part Three- Picton Place with Wild Dolphins and Tux-Feathered Friends.

## Musty Tomes

**The Time Traveler’s Wife  
by Audrey Niffenegger  
Harcourt, \$14.00, 546 pages**

Sometimes, when you read a book so good—you don’t want it to end.

And not because it is so marvelous (which it is) but because you will be crushed and devastated by the ending. The author has engaged your emotions so thoroughly; you are going to weep like a baby when you finally close the book.

(And also, in my particular case, as a hopeful organizer of words—I will never ever write anything this good.)

The book I am talking about is by Audrey Niffenegger, called “The Time Traveler’s Wife” which was published in 2003.

I found a copy at the Goodwill, (Harvest Books; \$14) because the title was intriguing and I think I read something about it somewhere. Possibly a review in *Locus*.

It is a diary of two people’ lives - Henry DeTamble and Clare Abshire. Henry is a librarian at the prestigious Newbury Library in Chicago and Clare is an artist who makes large constructions using hand-made papers she makes herself.

Henry is a time traveler whose life threads in and out of his past and present and sometimes his future and just as neatly threads in and out of Clare’s past, present and future. Henry can and does meet himself at various time and ages—with no obvious paradox. There is a really clever bit where Henry from the past “fixes” a situation for Henry in the present during a very small window of opportunity.

The novel is set mostly in Chicago; takes in some of current events, but mostly it focuses on Henry and Clare’s life and their love and their families. And Henry’s distressing ability to jump back and forth in time. He cannot control where he goes or when he goes. He cannot take anything with him, meaning he always arrives naked. He teaches himself how to break-and-enter, commit robbery, pick locks with paperclips, run like the dickens. Because not only can he not control his time traveling—he never knows how long he will be trapped in time so he will always need to find clothes and money quickly. He sometimes hides out in the basement of Clare’s home while Clare is growing up. Henry gives her a list of the dates he will appear so Clare always has clothes and food waiting for him when he shows up, which is usually in a meadow behind Clare’s home.

And because he is a moral character—he uses very little of the future to nudge the past. Except when he cannot help

himself. Like the time he finally buys a cheap used TV (he cannot watch TV normally as the flickering can easily set off his time-traveling) because he wants Clare to see them win the Illinois State lottery (\$8 million)—so Clare can finally have the studio she needs for her art. (The only other time they watch the TV is the morning of Tuesday, Sept. 11, 2001.)

Henry finally finds a doctor in his present that he reveals his ability to, a geneticist who eventually discovers why Henry time travels (and the rest of us don’t). Dr. Kendrick comes up with a drug regimen which helps Henry control his time jumping somewhat—and more importantly help he and Clare to have a baby—which they finally do after seven miscarriages.

Her name is Alba and eventually we learn she can time travel, too.

The story is compelling and emotional. The secondary characters are utterly marvelous. The writing is lyrical and precise, gorgeous without overdoing the descriptions or the emotions. The depth and layering of the characters is so wonderful. They are not trite and dry and predictable but full of flavor and eccentricities. So very believable. The construction of the novel is concise journal entries with dates and sometimes time of day and Henry and Clare’s ages, i.e.; Clare is 13; Henry is 35.

This is not a casual read, but one that’s enthralling and will remain with you.

It is one of the most heart-wrenching love stories I have ever read. - **Sue Martin**

**The Torture Trilogy  
It Can’t Happen Here,  
by Sinclair Lewis, 1935  
Darkness at Noon,  
by Arthur Koestler, 1941  
1984, by George Orwell, 1948**

Torture can be portrayed in a positive or negative light in fiction. On the positive side, some derive sexual pleasure from non-injurious forms (porn). In political fiction, some claim that true information can be extracted from terrorists (24). Of course, liars can say, “I guess they changed their plans since you caught me.” And they can always tell the bullies what they want to hear (the real Inquisition).

Which brings us to the negative side, where torture is its own reward, whether for the sexual kinks of the torturer (DeSade’s fiction) or as political policy. During the Inquisition, torture was part of a self-sustaining industry that transferred wealth from scapegoats, thus serving a dual purpose. The Nazis (WWII) did that, too. In modern tyrannies, torture and its obvious false confessions serve to keep populations in fearful obedience. In literature, there are a couple classic works that inspired the world against it, but they

have an antecedent in a cautionary tale of speculation.

‘It Can’t Happen Here’ shows a fascist America. FDR doesn’t win reelection in 1936, but is beaten by Berzelius Windrip, a humble, self-effacing populist with the common touch. He has the support of poor war veterans, and promises pie in the sky for everyone to get America out of the Great Depression. To ram through his economic reforms, he requires power above Congress and the Supreme Court, to override the constitutional balance of powers. When the government balks, Windrip’s private army of bluecoats arrests Congress and the judges. Martial law is then declared, and America quickly slides into a police state, with the population constantly lied to about the what and why of it all.

Opponents are put in concentration camps, and torture is used to try and extract info before putting the victims into camps to serve as examples. The focus of the story is on a newspaper editor who joins the underground resistance, is caught, tortured, and escapes. The ending is unresolved, but half of America has rebelled and seceded into a free zone. The narrative style of this may seem dull by today’s standards, but the unfolding story details are compelling. The scenes of torture are matter-of-fact, and it hurts. You hate the villains, and you wonder if it could happen here, even today. Not a bad writer – he got the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1930

‘Darkness at Noon’ and ‘1984’ could be sequels to Lewis. Both have detailed tortures of the main character. In Koestler it’s aimed at Stalinist Russia, where an aging party member gets a mild treatment since that is argued to be most effective in his case. In Orwell it’s set in a future England where TV screens watch everyone. The world is divided among three superpowers – Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia – which have agreed to permanent low-level war against each other to maintain their tyranny.

While speculative fiction fans all know of ‘1984,’ they may be excused for not reading Koestler or comparable works like Solzhenitsyn. But there really is no excuse for avoiding Lewis, the primal work on torture as political policy in the USA. . You can even find it free on the Internet. This novel was also the basis for the science fiction TV series ‘V.’ Yeah, scifi, tyranny, torture, economic depression. Fiction, right? - **M.L. Fringe**

**Changing Planes  
by Ursula LeGuin  
Harcourt, Inc. 2003; 246 p; \$22.00  
(Also available in paperback)**

This is a collection of “what if” essays which radiate out from the central speculation: what if, while miserably

(Cont’d on page 17)



## Musty Tomes (Cont'd from page 16)

waiting to change planes at an airport, one could change planes to other worlds? Apparently, you can, at least if you are like Ursula LeGuin, who wrote in her author's note, "Error, fear, and suffering are the mothers of invention. The constrained body knows and values the freedom of the mind."

The non-stories are not plot driven; they are reflective, anthropological encounters with aliens who are, sometimes, very like ourselves, or who have boldly gone where we have not yet. What if humans experimented with genetic manipulation and hybridized themselves with animals or plants? What if dreams were communal? (*That's my favorite.*) What if we could breed people who never needed to sleep? (*The shade of Aldous Huxley hovers over this one.*) What if there were people who truly never died? (*Some horror here, plus a touch of Swift satire, complete with references to Gulliver's Travels.*) What if one's interface with virtual reality equipment goes awry, leaving you to encounter a deranged Wonderland? Some essays describe, with the dispassion of a historian, tribal wars over land, or religion. Throughout the book, the humor is wry and dry, like a good vermouth. It is the perfect accompaniment for traveling by plane. If you do a great deal of driving, look for the audio version. — **Chris Paige**

### City of Endless Night

by Milo Hastings

Hyperion paperback, 1974, 346pp

It's easy to write a review of a beloved book that has stood the test of time. It's harder to review one that you've never read before when the concepts, plot and characterizations seem old and tired. The copyright on this story is 1919. It had to have been an extraordinary story in its time. I'm no SF historian but I'd be willing to bet that some of the ideas in this book were brand new in their time, even revolutionary. As the synopsis implies, this book may have influenced other writers such as Aldous Huxley.

The story posits a Germany that withdrew from the rest of the world after beginning yet another war that didn't go well for them. Considering this was written after WWI but before WWII, that alone makes it prophetic. The German scientists cover the city of Berlin with an impenetrable dome and begin burrowing the city down. And generations pass. An accident brings a chemical engineer from the outside into the city where he has to pass himself off as a native while suggesting any one of the city residents would find it impossible to do the same in the outside world. As he stumbles

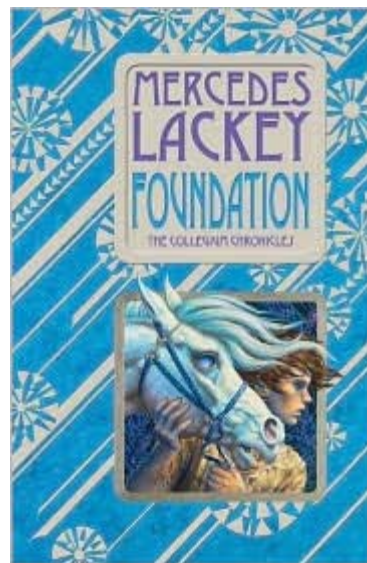
through the strangely evolved culture, the author makes free with much exposition regarding societal and resource pressures in this artificial environment. I would have preferred a bit more "show me" rather than "tell me" but I had to reconsider the generation in which this book was written before I could try to appreciate the revolutionary ideas in this story.

Some of the discussion of how the government controlled their populace through genetics and some through political artifice was actually fun and interesting. The characters were familiar and I wish I could have a better sense of how novel they might have been in 1919. This is definitely a book to read to appreciate our SF roots. *Try it, you may like it.* - **Catherine Book**

## In Our Book

**Foundation**  
by Mercedes Lackey  
Daw Books, \$25.95, 340 pp

*Foundation* is the first volume in a new Valdemar trilogy, designated *The Collegium Chronicles*, which begins approximately 50 years after the passing of Vanyel, the last Herald-Mage. Companions have been choosing new heralds in unprecedented numbers, signifying that 'interesting times' are ahead, and requiring a radical change in the traditional methods of training Heralds. There simply aren't enough senior Heralds to mentor so many trainees, especially when many of them prove to be



illiterate. So the Collegium, which was founded to educate and house Bards and Healers, is now being expanded to accommodate Heralds as well. While some Heralds are flatly opposed to this change, all the active Heralds are under a double strain of maintaining traditions and adapting to the new order.

The central character is Mags (short for Magpie), an orphan who works in a

gemstone mine. The owner of the mine is a thoroughly Dickensian villain; he is paid to care for all the local orphans and unwanted children, then he puts them all to work mining 'sparklies.' The children are starved and neglected, and the ones who run afoul of Cole Pieters or any of his loutish brood end up on the wrong side of a collapsed tunnel. Mags is careful, alert, and kind to the other orphans. At thirteen, his goal is to survive to the age of 16, when Cole Pieters is supposed to release him or hire him as a paid miner. All this changes one day when a Companion comes for Mags. Cole Pieters is furious, and afraid, for the last thing he wants is an investigation into his operations. Mags, who has been his most productive worker, could be his undoing.

Mags is transported to the Collegium. In a progression that could be used as a textbook study of Mazlow's hierarchy of needs, he begins his training as a full Herald, befriend along the way Lena,

daughter of Valdemar's most revered living Bard, and Bear, a young Healer with no Gift, but with a practical working knowledge of herbs. One of the turning points in his life occurs when he interrupts a merchant's embroidered praise of the worth of a topaz ring. Mags knows a thing or two about the quality of gemstones, so he tells the potential buyer the truth. In the wake of this deed, Mags, who is 1) an outsider, 2) observant, and 3) unobtrusive, becomes recruited by the King's Own as a kind of in-house spy.

As the first in a trilogy, many elements are introduced that will not be resolved until book three. *The Collegium Chronicles* looks to be very much in the manner and style of *Queen's Own*, albeit with less tragedy and angst: Lackey has made it very clear that she is drawing water from less bitter wells. Don't expect your heartstrings to be wrung as by

( Cont'd on page 18 )

# 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 62<sup>nd</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> Fireworks!

We will be hosting the 2009 edition of the 1632 MiniCon with Eric Flint. We are also planning to have many local and western region artists, authors and other participants on hand for our programming.

### Tempe Mission Palms

60 E. Fifth St., Tempe, Arizona

Room Rates: \$119.00 per night + tax

800-547-8705 (or 480-894-1400)

Online Group Code 2T80CO

**www.missionpalms.com**

### Membership Rates

Full attending is \$70 thru 12/31/08,

\$75 thru 3/31/09, \$30 Supporting

See **fiestacon.org** for info on discounts if you pre-supported or voted in site-selection.

### FiestaCon Contact Information

**Chairman:** Mike Willmoth

**Mail:** FiestaCon

c/o Leprecon Inc

PO Box 26665

Tempe AZ 85285-6665

**Phone:** 480-945-6890

**Email:** [info@fiestacon.org](mailto:info@fiestacon.org)

Westercon is a registered service mark of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, Inc.

## In Our Book (Cont'd from page 17)

*Arrow's Fall*. But if there is less pity and terror, there is still plenty of good storytelling. There is the mystery of Mags' origins, the dark purpose of the merchant princes and their mercenaries, Bear's unwanted betrothal, Lena's burden of familial expectation, Pieter's revenge, and Mags' nightmares, which are reminiscent of Herald Vanyel's premonitions of doom. One of the best scenes in the book is the Midwinter's Eve celebration. Lackey draws together numerous solstice traditions and faiths, and there is a feeling to the passage that suggests this is very much how she herself has celebrated at least one holiday. If so, I wish there were a guest list for the party, cause if there's another like it I want to go, to quote her own song. Strongly recommended. – **Chris Paige**

### **Ghost Walk** by **Brian Keene** Leisure, \$7.99 275 pages

In "Ghost Walk" Brian Keene weaves a fairly engaging story about a haunted attraction built in an area full of legends of evil. His antagonist is a creature of immortality, drawn on similar lines as Lovecraft's Cthulu Mythos. His (human) characters were believable and easy to like. His main protagonist, Levi Stoltzfus, is an outcast Amish man, who practices a type of magic called "powwow." He does mainly healing magic until the creature is accidentally set free and Levi feels "called by God" to protect mankind. There is a touch of mystery surrounding him and who he really is. Mr. Keene ended the story well, but does leave room for a possible sequel. Overall, I enjoyed this book and do recommend it for fans of the genre. In fact, I liked it well enough that I may even go out and find some of Mr. Keene's other books. - **Nyki**

### **Foundation: The Collegium Chronicles** by **Mercedes Lackey** DAW Books; \$25.95; 340pp

Hot diggity! A new series from Ms. Lackey set in the world of Valdemar.

The basis of this series is the fact that there are not enough Heralds to train new apprentices traditionally one-on-one. The current Heralds of Valdemar are spread thin serving their king. So the solution is to establish a College for Heralds, as they have done for Healers and Bards.

But of course, not everyone is happy with the change.

This novel focus's on the newest Herald apprentice Mags (short for Magpie) and his Companion Dallen (a Companion is a horse who can communicate telepathically to his Herald and who is even more talented than a regular horse).

Mags is discovered working in a mine finding "sparklies" (very fine jewels) for a monster of a mine owner Cole Pieters and his equally repulsive family. Mags is just one of the cast-off orphans in this mine who have been given to the owner and mistreated: barely fed, barely clothed, barely protected against the elements. Mags' dark and miserable life is miraculously changed for the better occurs by the sudden appearance at the mine of a Herald with a Companion, Dallen. The magical stallion is for Mags who is revealed to be one of the Chosen—a Herald-to-be. He is taken from his horrible existence to Haven, the capital of Valdemar for training.

The novel follows Mags' bonding with Dallen, his struggle to fit into a much kinder world and his friendships among the other apprentices, set against political chicanery instigated by a group of foreign "diplomats," who have their own agenda.

This is a delightful read—as are all of Lackey's Valdemar novels.

You just can't go wrong here. - **Sue Martin**

### **The Taint and Other Novellas** **A Cthulhu Mythos Collection** By **Brian Lumley** Solaris Books, \$14.00; 347 pp.

Lumley delivers the closest approximation of Lovecraft's work of anyone, and I include August Derleth in this, that I have read.

This is a first volume. These novellas were all previously published but some are all but impossible to find.

I particularly liked *The Fairground Horror* and *Rising at Surtsey*. Both had the creeping horror and the overwhelming sense of doom that Lovecraft was famous for. I cannot recommend this volume enough. The way he slowly builds up the sense of dread and keeps you reading even though you know the horrors to come, just sends shivers up and down your spine. I can't say much about the stories without giving too much away but... If you ever find a parchment with some unpronounceable syllables on it... DO NOT EVER TRY TO SPEAK THEM! - **Bob LaPierre**

### **Kris Longknife: Intrepid** By **Mike Shepherd** Ace Books, New York 2008 344 pp. Mass Market Paperback \$7.99

*Kris Longknife: Intrepid* is the sixth in the Kris Longknife series. It is excellent imaginative military science fiction. Mike Shepherd truly understands how to write believable characters and complex interlaced situations. He provides a complete story with plenty of loose ends hanging to pave the way for the next novel in the series; but you do not feel that he has fed you just a piece of a huge

super-novel. There are more stories to come, but this one is complete.

Ostensibly, her ship *The Wasp* is on a mission of scientific exploration, but as usual there is more than one agenda. She is on the hunt for pirates preying on the illegal colonies beyond human occupied space. Kris discovers pirate raiders as expected and also a mad plot by fanatics to create an incident which would trigger interstellar war. She must win a war with freebooters and then foil the fanatics' plot.

Kris encounters Victoria Peterwald who tried to kill her in the last book. Victoria held Kris responsible for Victoria's brother's death. Now it turns out that she and Victoria must overcome their antipathy and work together to prevent disaster.

The story abounds with wonderful characters such as Drogo, the colorful merchant Captain who runs *The Wasp*

most of the time, Professor mFumbo the scientist who really did want to research the new fuzzy jump points, Hernando Cortez who just wanted to pillage a planet, Whitebred who funded the pirates and just wanted profit and many more.

I recommend this book highly. – **Gary Swaty**

### **Savvy** by **Ingrid Law** Dial, 352 pages, \$16.99

Mibs Beaumont is about to turn 13, a special birthday for all children but even more so for the Beaumont children. For them, their thirteenth birthday is even more special since that is the day they get their special gift or "savvy." Mibs' older brother Rocket's savvy is controlling electricity, Fish controls the rain and her Mama's gift is to be perfect. Mibs can't

(Cont'd on page 19)



[www.nadwcon.org](http://www.nadwcon.org)

The first North American Discworld™ Convention will be a celebration of Terry Pratchett's Discworld series.

We are planning for panels and presentations with Terry Pratchett and our guests. Events and activities will include a maskerade, exhibit room, hospitality suite, a charity auction to benefit the Orangutan Foundation and Alzheimer's Research, workshops, discussion panels and more. There will also be a banquet for an additional cost (to be announced). Join us for a fun weekend!

**Tempe Mission Palms Hotel**  
60 E. Fifth St., Tempe, Arizona USA

**Room Rates:**  
\$119.00 per night S/D, \$129 T, \$139 Q  
Hospitality Fee of \$9.75 per room per night  
includes airport shuttle, valet parking or self parking, wireless high speed Internet, bell service, etc. All rates are in US dollars and do not include tax.  
Call 800-547-8705 (or 480-894-1400) or visit [missionpalms.com](http://missionpalms.com) for reservations.  
Online booking code is 2TC4Y9

**Membership Rates**  
(all rates good through 3/31/08)

**Full Attending Membership : \$80**  
**Supporting Membership: \$30**  
**Child Membership (ages 6-12): \$40\***  
**Children 5 & under free\***  
**\*with paid adult membership**

Memberships are non-refundable but are transferable

#### Contact Information

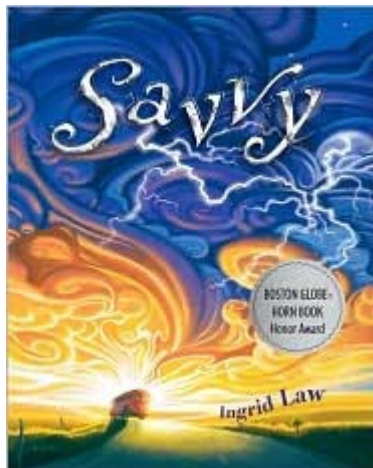
**Write:** North American Discworld Convention, c/o Leprecon, Inc.  
PO Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285  
**Phone:** (480) 945-6890 **Email:** [info@nadwcon.org](mailto:info@nadwcon.org)

Discworld is a trademark of Terry Pratchett



## In Our Book (Cont'd from page 18)

wait for her birthday and her savvy to come.



A few days before her birthday, Mibs' father is injured in an accident and hospitalized far from home. While her mother goes to be with him, the local preacher's wife decides to take care of the children and throw Mibs a birthday party. On the morning of her birthday Mibs wakes up. Sure she knows what her savvy is and is positive she needs to get to Salina to help her father wake up and get well. Through a series of choices, Mibs, her brothers Fish and Samson, the preacher's kids Bobbi and Will set off for Salina in a pink bus with a Bible deliveryman.

This is a delightful adventure for all ages. Once I started the book, I could not put it down. This is a coming of age story with a bit of the fantastic that is sure to become an instant classic. The ending is real and touching and doesn't take the easy way out. I highly recommend this book to everyone, youngsters and adults.  
- **Stephanie. L Bannon**

### **Space Pirates** **edited by David Lee Summers** **Flying Pen Press, 2008; 242 p; \$16.95**

Here is a collection of 15 tales of piracy between the stars. There are ghost pirates, pirates of industry and technology, raiders, swashbucklers, villains, heroes, and buffoons. Danielle Ackley-McPhail's "Carbon Copy" is like an Honor Harrington short story with an Asimovian pun at the end. (*groan!*) "Star Wench," by Daniel M. Hoyt, is light-hearted space opera. (*Space operetta?*) Most of these stories are intended as fast and easy entertainment; the writers had fun writing them and they hope you have fun reading them. A few raise more serious questions of ethics and consequences. "For a Job Well Done," by David Lee Summers, is a romance in which the protagonists have to make hard choices between the profitable and the humane. "Never Lie to Yourself," by Uncle River, is the most realistic of the bunch, and it has a narrative style reminiscent of fireside storytelling. A

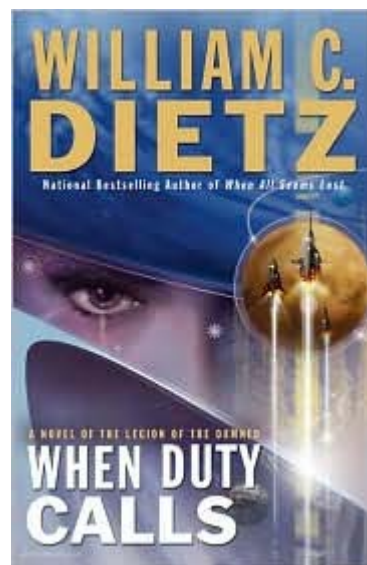
young boy named Jammer is the sole survivor of a failed habitat that gets salvaged by space pirates. Jammer is just part of the haul, a sort of super cargo who becomes the captain's mascot and eventually a pirate himself, of necessity. Jammer accommodates himself to his surroundings, but privately he considers the choices and actions of everyone: the people of the habitat, who were kind and loving, but who stayed on a failing habitat; the pirates who rescued him, but who methodically plunder and even murder. Years later, Jammer is one of a small raiding party that gets captured by privateers, and only the fact that he is still legally a minor at the time of capture saves him from execution. Instead, he is sent to a holding pen/reform school for the other young human flotsam and jetsam of a planet. As he did among the pirates, Jammer survives by lying to others, but not to himself. And eventually he is old enough to leave the school and make the choice that will allow him to return to space with his peculiar integrity intact. "Lunacy" by Anna Paradox is not unlike Heinlein's juvenilia. (*I especially liked Paradox's Lunar slang.*) Corporate Earth has put the squeeze on Lunites with a 300% tax on everything from nitrogen to music downloads. The adults are worried about the nitrogen; four teenagers resolve to illegally tap a satellite to stay current with their favorite recording artists.

With anthologies, one can usually gauge a story by reading the first paragraph. If you are at all intrigued by the theme of this anthology, you will probably find between five and nine stories to your liking. - **Chris Paige**

### **When Duty Calls** **by William C. Dietz** **Ace, 356 pp, \$24.99**

*When Duty Calls* is a new novel of the *Legion of the Damned*.

In the continuing war the Ramanthians, Captain Antonio Santana and his company of cyborgs and bio bots, find themselves surrounded by enemy



forces and facing annihilation. Santana and the legion decide to survive. The other option is unthinkable.

As they struggle to survive, on the home front, Diplomat Christine Vanderveen is coping with shortages, allies that can't be trusted and her own attraction to the newly elected president of the Clone Republic. Her heart finds itself torn between her old love and a new loyalty.

This is classic Dietz. The seventh Legion novel handles brutal military action and diplomatic intrigue with equal aplomb. Want lots of action, good characterizations, and a menacing enemy? Here is one for any lover of Military SF. **Pam Allan**

### **Living with the Dead** **A Women of the Underworld novel** **by Kelley Armstrong** **Bantam Spectra, \$22.00; 372 pp.**

This, the ninth book in the series, is the first volume in which a normal human is the main protagonist. I like Robyn; she went to a high school that interacted with the prep school Hope went to. They became friends and Hope took a temporary assignment in L.A. to keep tabs on her after her husband Damon died.

Robyn is a PR consultant and she becomes involved in the supernatural world when her client is murdered and it looks like she did it. Clairvoyants are involved and as the rarest of the races they are much in demand. When Robyn finds out about the existence of the supernatural world, Hope has to decide whether to follow procedure and eliminate her or not.

Meanwhile, the local police, in the person of Detective John Findlay, are trying to find and arrest Robyn for the murder. Detective Findlay, Finn, has a secret - he can talk to the dead. His family have long had this trait but believed it to be nothing more than a minor gift. Finn usually only sees the victims of murder and then only briefly. He discovers a ghost at the crime scene that offers to help. He becomes very helpful and indeed gathers information otherwise unavailable.

So far this is my favorite in the series. I am, however, looking forward to the next book *The Men of the Underworld*. - **Bob LaPierre**

### **Agent to the Stars** **by John Scalzi** **Tor Books, \$14.95, 365 p.**

John Scalzi's charming 'Author's Note' tells the story of how this little book came to be written as a practice novel, how it was offered as shareware, published as a limited edition by Subterranean Press in 2005, and is now republished for wider distribution. It is a delightfully well-written, laugh-out-loud

story of first contact, Hollywood agents, Hollywood stars, aging retrievers, disastrous losses, and serendipitous associations.

Benign but gelatinous aliens, the Yherajk, want to hire a representative to render them more acceptable and appealing to human sensibilities. Hotshot agent Tom Stein gets the job. He is at a loss how to proceed until he learns more about the Yherajk from his houseguest, the Yherajk ambassador, and from a visit to their mother ship. He is plagued by a sleazy reporter who dogs his movements, misrepresents him in print, and stows away on the spaceship. He has to jettison most of his human clients, and the ones he keeps are stolen from him. To really complicate his life, his one remaining star client, a perky blonde former cheerleader in her early twenties, wants him to land her the coveted role as a middle-aged, Jewish civil rights activist who survived the Holocaust to become a lawyer in the deep South (out of the fire into the frying pan). Tom is resourceful enough to deal with it all. - **Chris Paige**

### **Queen's Bastard** **by C.E. Murphy** **Del Ray, 420 pp, \$14.00**

*Queen's Bastard* starts a new series by the author of *The Walker Papers*.

Belinda Primrose is the queen's unacknowledged daughter trained as a spy/assassin since childhood by her father in an alternate Elizabethan-era world.

Smart and alluring, fluent in languages, and able to assume any persona, Belinda can infiltrate the courts where her mother's enemies plot to take over her mother's country in the name of religion. However, Belinda's spying takes a new turn when her witchlight appears.

Belinda now has powers that her mother can't imagine and anything can be hers including Prince Javier. But Javier is also whichbreed whose ability exceeds her own. Amid court intrigue and magic, loyalty and love can lead to the ultimate aphrodisiac....power.

An exciting new series with a reimagined Renaissance Europe as a world where intrigue, and betrayal are a way of life in the realpolitik. A chess game played with spies, poison and daggers with more than just two sides. *Queen's Bastard* has something for everyone. Can't wait for the next volume.  
- **Pam Allan**

### **Elric: To Rescue Tanelorn** **Chronicles of the** **Last Emperor of Melniboné** **Volume 2** **by Michael Moorcock** **Del Rey, \$15.00; 469 pp.**

This is a second collection of short stories about the Eternal Champion. Most  
(Cont'd on page 20)



## In Our Book (Cont'd from page 19)

of these were written before I was able to recognize what a book was let alone read it. However, I have studiously read all that I could find since discovering *Stormbringer* in high school. However, I hadn't realized until seeing this volume just how much I missed.

In his introduction Moorcock informs us of when and where he wrote these and where they were published. I had read some of the more recent stories but I had missed such gems as *The Last Enchantment* and the titular story. All of them are wonderfully complete and ready to fill your time with anything from twenty minutes to an hour of fantastic reading. - **Bob LaPierre**

### Of Wind and Sand by Sylvie Be'rard Edge, 312 pp, \$19.95

*Of Wind and Sand*, is a combination of sci fi and fantasy told as a memoir.

The ships made an unexpected landfall on a planet they called Mars II. The planet had an indigenous species



who tried to help them. But the new settlers encroached and eventually, the passive species struck back and war ensued.

As dominance switches back and forth, the transferring of minds is learned and walking the mile in their shoes begins to find ways to know the other species. Each transfer is a character-based story of its own and is written so that becomes difficult to put down. It is not until the final chapter the experiment is revealed.

This is a must read for its understanding of culture, and cultural bias while providing an exciting story. Recommended. - **Pam Allan**

### Quofum A Novel of the Commonwealth by Alan Dean Foster Del Rey, \$25.00; 304 pp.

This volume is touted as a tie-in for the final Pip and Flinx novel. I think that this will make for a very interesting denouement to the series.

The planet Quofum is unique, it seems to only exist sometimes. When the commonwealth finally sends an exploratory crew they find three sentient species. There is a spy for the Quarm among the scientists and a rather large surprise for them as well. The planet is a ship/trap/laboratory. What it is for and why it exists are the connection to Flinx.

Enjoy this volume I did. - **Bob LaPierre**

### The Ten Thousand by Paul Kearney Solaris, 465 pp, \$7.99

*The Ten Thousand* stands alone.

On the world of Kuf, the Macht are a mystery, a seldom seen people of disciplined warriors. Their battlefield prowess is legendary. For centuries they have remained in the mountain fastnesses of the Harakush mountains. On the outside, the teeming peoples of Kuf have united within the Asurian Empire. The king's word is law.

But now the Great King's brother means to take the throne by force. He hires ten thousand Macht mercenaries and leads them into the Empire.

The book, showing the influence of the Greek city states, is well-written, grounded in epic fantasy, and carries the reader along. I will be surprised if we don't see the orphaned boy-general again. He has come of age as a warrior. Kearney is a voice to watch for as well as read. -

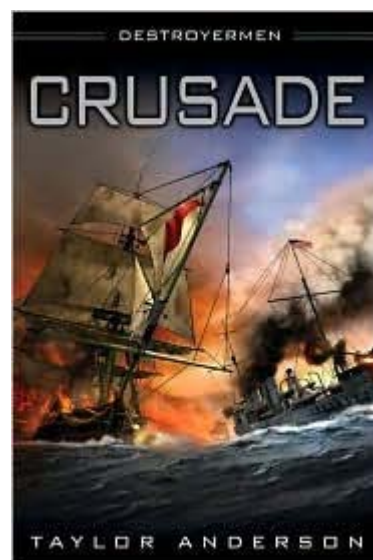
**Pam Allan**

### Crusade by Taylor Anderson Roc, 380 pp, \$23.95

*Crusade* continues the *Destroyerman* series begun with *Destroyermen: Into the Storm*.

The Walker is a World War II destroyer that is transferred through a rift into an alternate universe. Here they have chosen to join forces with the Lemurians in their war to survive extinction at the hands of the reptilian Grik.

The Lemurians are vastly outnumbered



bered and ignorant of warfare. Not even The Walker can turn the tide. But luckily, Captain Reddy finds the other American ship that came through the rift, giving them the firepower to make a difference. However, another ship, the Japanese battle cruiser, the Amagi has also come through and it is bigger, and more heavily armed. They want to destroy the American ships and they have joined the Grik.

The destroyerman series is military SF, that combines history, alternate worlds and plenty of action. The characters are well-drawn, regardless of species or world. The world is fully realized, and the book almost impossible to put down. If you like military SF you will want this book in your library. Don't take just one - grab the series. - **Pam Allan**

### The Pretenders by Lynda Williams Edge, 342 pp, \$20.95

*The Pretenders* is part three of the *Okal Rel* Saga.

Ev'rel is one of the last purebreds. Contracted for ten children with Delm, her villainous brother, who in turn steals her child, frames her for the death of her lover, and has her exiled from the Rel world. Sixteen years later, Amel is found, his mind altered and working as a courtesan, making his succession questionable. Delm is slain. The politics and wars continue. *The Throne Price* will continue the saga.

The *Okal Rel* saga is a complex and meticulously detailed world that still carries you through the intrigues and subtle skirmishes.. Well-worth the read, even though reading the prior two would be advisable. You'll want to collect the series. - **Pam Allan**

### Dead Reign by T. A. Pratt Bantam Spectra, 321 pp, \$6.99

*Dead Reign* continues the Marla Mason series.

Marla Mason is the chief sorcerer of Felport. Things are going pretty well until



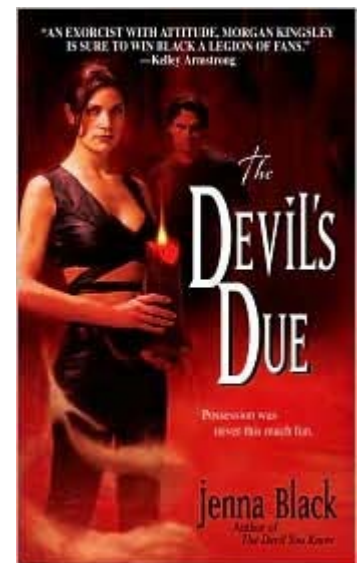
Ayers, a necromancer, is released from the mental hospital. After breaking his parole, he raises a mummy, John Wilkes Booth, in order to raise Death. Death is not quite who he expects. Walking Death has his own agenda. Part of that agenda is reclaiming the chief sorcerer's dagger [of office] which was Death's sword before being lost by an ancestor in a card game. It has to be returned willingly. Marla can't do that. Now the war begins and the Founder's Ball, a five year event, is due.

This is a wild supernatural adventure that has Marla traveling to Hell to reclaim Felport, and her life. The ending has a couple of twists you don't expect, but will love. Marla and her gang are quirky, well-drawn, and fun. This is a series I've enjoyed and this is the best so far. Go get 'em, gang. - **Pam Allan**

### The Devil's Due by Jenna Black Spectra, 317 pp, \$6.99

*The Devil's Due* is the third in the series about Morgan Kingsley, exorcist.

"Trust me or die" is the choice Morgan Kingsley is given by her resident demon. Morgan has dozens of very good reason not to trust anyone, from the violence that torched her family to her



love life. Lugh, demon king, has been prying into everything and won't take no for an answer. Morgan finds herself in a power struggle that could have devastating consequences for both demon and human worlds, and her own survival.

Black has created a world in which human and demons interact. The sassy, kick-ass heroine, good secondary characters including a sexy, if questionable, hero and a nice blend of action, mystery and romance that will keep her growing fandom standing in line for each new volume. - **Pam Allan**



In Our Book (Cont'd from page 20)

Misspent Youth  
by Peter F. Hamilton  
Del Rey, 403 pp, \$26.00

Peter F. Hamilton is also the author of *The Dreaming Void* and *Pandora's Box*, among others.

It is 2040 and it appears that reversing old age is at hand. The first subject is Jeff Baker - inventor of Solid Crystal Memory Storage which, un-patented, wiped out much of the economy at the time. Now a

seventy-eight-year-old senior he jumps at the chance of regaining his youth. His eighteen-year-old son, and his trophy wife await.

When he comes out of the rejuvenation tank he is twenty, with the libido to match. He steals his son's lover and makes her pregnant. As Jeff's life spirals out of control, the European Union dives into meltdown under attack by shadowy Separatist groups. Jeff's rejuvenation turns into a dying parallel to the union.

You don't expect the usual from Hamilton, and *Misspent Youth* is a change

of pace. A profound novel of relationships, and the effect of technology and politics on the world, It remains a fast-paced enjoyable read. Grab this one, you'll enjoy reading what it has to say. - Pam Allan

**Caine Black Knife**  
by Matthew Stover  
Del Ray, 341 pp. \$14.00

*Caine Black Knife* is a continuation of Stover's Caine series.

Caine is a street thug turned superstar in a future where reality shows are taking

place in another dimension, one where magic exists and gods are up close and personal. Caine is an assassin, a living legend born of defeating the Black Knives virtually single-handedly. But the truth of the bloody adventure has not been revealed till now and provides a card to play against the board of directors that control the adventures - and (they think) Caine.

The darkest dreams of Phillip K. Dick are realized. And one can see the current reality shows like *Survivor* expanding to a new genre when the technology becomes available. This said, *Caine* provides enough action to keep the reader involved, with the interesting characterization of Caine. - Pam Allan

**Key to Redemption**  
by Talia Gryphon  
Ace, 298 pp, \$7.99

*Key to Redemption* continues the series including *Key to Conflict*, and *Key to Conspiracy*.

Gillian Key is a fighter and a healer, but now the Marine Corps takes a backseat to Paramortal psychology. As the Vampire wars rage, there are those who need her special touch to make them whole. In Romania, Vampire Lord Aleksei Rachlav has turned his estate into headquarters for those who stand against Dracula's army.

# FARPOINT MEDIA

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.

iPods, Video iPods, Sony PSP, iRivers, and more... so many players to choose from, and you still have the option of burning a show to a CD to listen to in your car.

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.

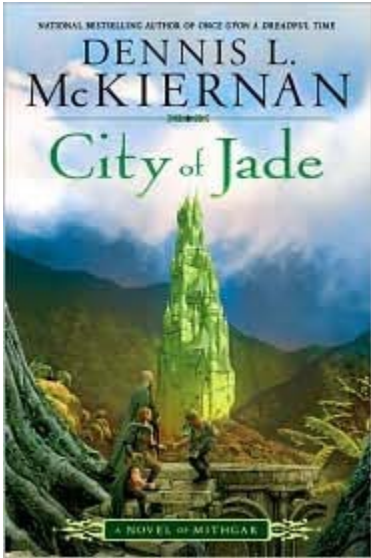
[www.farpointmedia.net](http://www.farpointmedia.net)

City of Jade  
by Dennis L. McKiernan  
Roc. 350 pp, \$23.95

*City of Jade* is a continuation of the Mithgar series.

The myth of a lost city carved of precious jade has called many in Mithgar; but now, Aravan, captain of the Elvenship Eroean has undertaken the quest. Commanding the crew of men and dwarves, and with his love Aylis, the magekind Seer, the Eroean sets out to follow the legend.

The journey is long and perilous.



More awaits them than treasure. They sail into the midst of Dark Sorcery and death.

This is classic Tolkienesque fantasy, well written and engrossing, and full of action, magic and characters you love. And it would appear Aravan will return to tell us what lies at the end of the world and beyond. As he sails off with his restocked crew. I, for one will look forward to it. Mithgar, and this book deserve a place in everyone's fantasy Library. - 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](mailto: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](mailto:aerialmirage@gnersds.com)>, 602-955-9446; or Ron Harvey <[rbh1s@yahoo.com](mailto:rbh1s@yahoo.com)>, 480-775-4690 for more info or impromptu juggling sessions.

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

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

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

call the BBS, or write to: LSS c/o R. Martin; 2522 N. Sparkman Blvd.; Tucson, AZ 85716

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

**CENTRAL ARIZONA SPECULATIVE FICTION SOCIETY, INC. (CASFS)** The non-profit corporation that puts on CopperCon conventions, SmurfCons, HexaCons, occasional regional cons, and publishes Con-Notations. Best described as SF/F generalists with a strong bent towards literary SF/F. Guests welcome - meets at 8pm on the last Friday of each month in January thru September and the second Friday in October, November and December at JB's Restaurant, 1818 W Montebello in Phoenix, AZ. For information: write PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 or email [info@casfs.org](mailto:info@casfs.org) Web [www.casfs.org](http://www.casfs.org)

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

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

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

**A GATHERING OF PLAYERS**-Find Your Adventure Our club is running into our fourth year. Join us for games and adventure set in the Dungeons and Dragons realm. We offer Living Greyhawk and Xen'drik Expeditions. Visit <http://www.warhorn.net/gathering>, to see what we have coming up. We will have character creation sessions to get you started and answer all questions. Our group has been together, and growing, for four years. We're a good group of friends that believe in gaming fun first. Our member group's ages range from 13 to 49. We welcome both new and experienced players. 10:00 a.m. Character Creation - We will have a session to create characters for all of the campaigns we run. AGoP will have all books available for reference. We encourage you to purchase the books if you like the game. All character materials are provided; character sheets, master item logs, adventure records, etc. Dice will be loaned to you if you don't have any yet. In other words, all that is needed for the first day is for you to join us and have fun.

If you have any questions email us at [agatheringofplayers@gmail.com](mailto:agatheringofplayers@gmail.com).

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

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

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

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

**ORANGE COUNTY SCIENCE FICTION CLUB** meets last Wednesday of every month (except Dec.) in Fullerton. The meetings are built around guest speakers. We've had authors such as Octavia Butler and Greg Benford. Non-members are welcome. For details of current events and location see our website [www.ocsf.org](http://www.ocsf.org) or email [info@ocsfc.org](mailto:info@ocsfc.org)

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

**THE PHOENIX FANTASY FILM SOCIETY** A Phoenix based club interest-ed in the entire realm of SF, Fantasy and Horror film. PFFS has been in existence for 30 years, meeting every 6 weeks in member's homes. Dues are \$10 per year. Membership includes newsletters, an annual film awards and

various outings. For information, contact PFFS, P.O. Box 34023, Phoenix, AZ 85067 or call David Storck at (602) 274\_7404, e-mail: [Menzeez@aol.com](mailto:Menzeez@aol.com).

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

**RAW GAMES (Role-players & Wargamers, Inc.)** Role-players & Wargamers, Inc. is the Valley's oldest role-playing and wargaming club. Currently meeting at 8159 W. Weldon in Phoenix every Sunday from 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](http://www.imperialoutpost.com)) in Glendale. If you are interested in Living Arcanis or Living Spycraft catch us on the 3rd Sunday of every month also at Imperial Outpost Games. The Shield of Almor hosts RPGA events at the local Phoenix conventions. For more information visit us at [games.groups.yahoo.com/group/AZ\\_RPG/](http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/AZ_RPG/) or you can sign up for games at [www.nyron.org](http://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](mailto:seneschal@atenveldt.com) Web [www.atenveldt.com](http://www.atenveldt.com)

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

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

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

( Cont'd on page 23 )



Club Listings (Cont'd from page 22)

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

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

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

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

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

**USS LEONIDAS** The Leonidas is a member of Region IV of STARFLEET International. The chapter is an opportunity for those that share a love of Star Trek to have fun and help the community at the same time. The Leonidas stresses uniforms or other costumes to have the ability to participate actively in various events as they present themselves but they are not required. In an effort to expand membership the USS Leonidas has assisted in the formation of a High School Star Trek club called the STARFLEET Science and Tactical Academy. Students participate in a wide range of

activities with the hope that they will become interested in Star Trek and join STARFLEET as officers. The USS Leonidas has a crew of 30. Starfleet Science and Tactical Academy has 52 cadets. Members age from 14-65 years old. Average age is 20-25. Club meeting locations vary due to scheduled away missions and such, but usually meet in a classroom at Apache Junction High School. Membership with Starfleet International is required. [www.sfi.org](http://www.sfi.org) Upon joining STARFLEET a member is a Cadet. Upon passing the Officer's Training School Exam at the Online Academy, the member becomes a Commissioned Officer aboard the Leonidas. The chapter does not have dues as of yet. The dues to be a member of STARFLEET International are \$15 a year. No newsletter, but members do receive an activities E-mail update. No web site yet. Contact : Jonathan Krieger, 480-677-0269, [LAHCommander@mchsi.com](mailto:LAHCommander@mchsi.com)

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

**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](mailto:craig@westernsfa.org) Webpage: [www.westernsfa.org](http://www.westernsfa.org)

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

Convention Listings

**PHOENIX COMICON** (January 23-25, 2009) Mesa Convention Center **Mesa AZ** Expanding our show to a full THREE days (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) with a Thursday Preview Night. Guests include Gil Gerard, Erin Gray, Marina Sirtis, Wil Wheaton, Kevin J Anderson and many more. Events include Art Auction, Masquerade, Zombie Beauty Contest, Film Festival Kids 12 years and younger now get in for free with a paid adult membership. To register or for more information go to the web site at [www.phoenixcomicon.com](http://www.phoenixcomicon.com)

**ANIZONA 2009** (April 10-12, 2009) Embassy Suites Paradise Valley/Scottsdale, **Phoenix, AZ**. Guests Toybox. Karaoke, Cosplay, game room, viewing room, panels, dance, Artist Alley and much more. Memberships \$20 thru 03/31/2009. **MEMBERSHIP CAPPED AT 1000**. For more info - [www.anizona.org](http://www.anizona.org) or [info@anizona.org](mailto:info@anizona.org)

**RandomCon** (May 8-10, 2009) a NEW gaming convention to be held at The Grace Inn, 10831 S 51st St, **Phoenix, AZ** 85044, (480) 893-3000, [www.graceinn.com](http://www.graceinn.com) Our rates are \$75 S/D, \$85 T, \$95/ Q. For our games we plan to have **AmberDRPG** - based on the works of Roger Zelazny known to fans worldwide as "The Chronicles of Amber" **RPGA** - Preliminary plans include Living Forgotten Realms, Arcanis and Pathfinder. **Console Gaming** - Preliminary plans include Rock Star, DDR and Supersmash Brothers. There will be a consuite and a small dealer room. Cost is \$15 until December 31, 2008, \$20 Jan 1 to April 30, 2009 and \$25 at the door. Pay now via Paypal on our web site at [www.randomcon.org](http://www.randomcon.org) or mail check or money order to RandomCon, PO Box 67457, Phoenix AZ 85082. Check our web site for updates or contact us at [info@westernsfa.org](mailto:info@westernsfa.org)

**AdventureCon**, (May 30-31, 2009) University of Phoenix Stadium, **Glendale, AZ** - Comic artists, dealers, costuming and celebrities including Danielle Harris, David Prowse, Kevin Sorbo, Neil Kaplan, James O'Barr, Arthur Suydam, MarkTexeira [www.adventurecon.com](http://www.adventurecon.com)

**FiestaCon (Westercon 62)** ( July 2-5, 2009) Tempe Mission Palms, **Tempe, AZ**. 60 East Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona 85281 Artist GoH: Todd Lockwood, Author GoH: Alan Dean Foster, Editor GoH Stanley Schmidt, Fan GoHs: Jim and Doreen Webbert, Toastmasters: Partick and Teresa Nielsen Hayden. FiestaCon is also hosting the 1632 Minicon with Eric Flint. Memberships \$70 thru 12/31/08, \$75 thru 3/31/09, more later. Phone: 480-945-6890 Write: FiestaCon, c/o Leprecon, Inc., PO Box 26665 Tempe, AZ 85285, Email: [fiestacon@leprecon.org](mailto:fiestacon@leprecon.org) web: [www.fiestacon.org](http://www.fiestacon.org)

**North American Discworld Convention** (Sept 4-7, 2009) Tempe Mission Palms, **Tempe, AZ**. 60 East Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona 85281 Guests: Terry Pratchett, Diane Duane, Peter Morwood, Esther M. Friesner and Bernard Pearson. Memberships \$80 thru 3/31/09, more later. Phone: 480-945-6890 Write: NADWCon, c/o Leprecon, Inc., PO Box 26665 Tempe, AZ 85285, Email: [info@nadwcon.org](mailto:info@nadwcon.org) Web: [www.nadwcon.org](http://www.nadwcon.org)

CASFS Business Report

September  
The sheds were sold to Nola Yergen-Jennings and one of them will be leased back to CASFS for a nominal rent. The sheds have been moved and our stuff resides in the one shed. The materials belonging to LepreCon Inc. will now be stored by them. CopperCon 28 is over and everyone had fun. There were 429 members. Finances are better than anticipated with final figures to be given at the October meeting. There was much discussion on what to do with the Grace Inn contract for 2009 with the final decision being to give the contract to WesternSFA pending approval of the terms by both the hotel and the membership.

October  
CopperCon 28 did better than expected. It had enough room nights to reduce the function space costs to \$3500.00. It managed to pay all of its direct convention expenses and to return half of the seed money. It did not pay its turn back to CASFS Main Account nor can it pay for the pass-thrus to 2010. Nonetheless be assured that CopperCon 2010 will honor the pass-thrus. CASFS voted to approve the agreement between CASFS and WesternSFA to transfer the Grace Inn contract to WesternSFA for new event. WesternSFA will share a percentage of the profits, if any, with CASFS. The CASFS membership voted to adopt an austerity budget in order to give CopperCon 2010 the best chance to succeed. The president created a Steering Committee to figure out what direction CASFS wants to take in the future.

Generic Convention Registration Form

Name:\_\_\_\_\_

Badge Name:\_\_\_\_\_

Address:\_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP:\_\_\_\_\_

Phone:\_\_\_\_\_ Email:\_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ memberships for \_\_\_\_\_ convention.

(See individual convention listing for mailing address)

More info on \_\_ Masquerade \_\_ Art Show \_\_ Volunteer \_\_ Other

What is CASFS?

What is really behind putting on a convention? What are the funds raised by a convention used for? Why not attend a meeting and find out? We're the sponsor of ConNotations, CopperCons, Hexa-Cons, 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](http://www.casfs.org) Email: [info@casfs.org](mailto:info@casfs.org)



# ENTER THE ZONE - THE COMIC ZONE!

VISIT COMIC ZONE, SCOTTSDALE'S NEWEST COMIC BOOK STORE! IN ADDITION TO ALL THE LATEST AND GREATEST COMICS FROM MARVEL, DC, IMAGE, DARK HORSE, AND ALL YOUR FAVORITE PUBLISHERS, WE HAVE THOUSANDS OF BACK ISSUES IN STOCK AND THE FRIENDLIEST STAFF YOU'LL EVER MEET!

JOIN US ON DECEMBER 5TH FOR OUR PREVIEW NIGHT! WE'LL BE CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL DRESS LIKE A NINJA DAY, WITH FREE PIZZA AND SODA FOR EVERYONE! COME DRESSED LIKE A NINJA, AND GET A FREE COMIC!

AND BE SURE TO COME BY FOR OUR GRAND OPENING ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6TH! JEFF MARIOTTE, WRITER OF DESPERADOES, AS WELL AS FORMER EDITOR FOR WILDSTORM AND IDW WILL HAVE A COMIC ZONE-EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW OF HIS NEWEST COMIC, ZOMBIE COP, DUE OUT IN JANUARY! COME GET YOURS EARLY AND GET IT SIGNED!

OPEN DAILY 12 - 8PM  
GRAND OPENING  
DEC. 6TH, 2008

5909 N. GRANITE REEF RD.  
SCOTTSDALE, AZ 85250

480-483-2685

PREVIEW NIGHT  
DEC. 5TH, 2008  
4-8PM

SE CORNER OF MCDONALD &  
GRANITE REEF.  
IN THE BASHA'S MALL

TWO DOORS DOWN FROM CASELLA'S.

# COMIC ZONE

Iron Man is © 2008 Marvel Enterprises, Inc. Used without permission.

