

ConNotations

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FREE

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

A Conversation with Paul Cornell

by Lee Whiteside

This issue, we're talking with Paul Cornell, writer of the *Doctor Who* episodes *Father's Day*, *Human Nature*, and *The Family of Blood*, recent novel "British Summertime" and writer for several current and upcoming series for Marvel Comics.

Lee: Some people may see you as an overnight sensation, you've gotten a lot of acclaim for the *Captain Britain* comic and your *Doctor Who* episodes have been well received. You've actually been writing TV and novels for how many years now?

Paul: Let's see, I think 1990, was my first professional sale, so we're coming up on 20 years.

L: What was your first sale?

P: I won a BBC writing competition and got a short science fiction play on BBC 2 just about the same time I started writing short comedy sketches and just about the same time I got the commission to write *Timewyrm: Revelation*. [One of the first *Doctor Who* New Adventures novels] Those three things were spread out about a year.

L: You sold a number of *Doctor Who* novels for the Virgin New Adventure line.



P: I think it was seven across the New and Missing line. That was a very wonderful time; actually, I still look back at the New Adventures with great fondness.

L: As part of that, you created a new companion for the Doctor...

P: Yes, Bernice Summerfield, whose

(Continued on page 4)

Featured Inside

Regular Features

SF Tube Talk

All the latest news about
Science Fiction TV shows
by Lee Whiteside

Gamers Corner

New and Reviews from
the gaming world

Videophile & Around the Dial

Reviews of genre releases
on DVD and current TV shows

Screening Room

Reviews of current theatrical releases

Musical Notes

The latest news of Filk and Filkers

Pre-Con News

Tidbits about upcoming conventions

ConClusion

News and Reviews
of Genre conventions

In Our Book

Reviews of New SF/F Books

Musty Tomes

Reviews of Classic Genre books

Special Features

An Conversation with Paul Cornell

by Lee Whiteside

Hokey Smoke!
It's the very nearly 50th
Anniversary of **Rocky the Flying
Squirrel and Bullwinkle J. Moose**
By Shane Shellenbarger

An American in New Zealand
by Jeffrey Lu

**Kinuko C. Craft –
An Appreciation of Cover Art**
by Chris Paige

Plus

CASFS Business Report

FYI

News and tidbits of interest to fans

Club Listings

Convention List & Generic Registration Form

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In This Issue
News & Reviews

SF Tube Talk 3
Pre-Con News 6
Musical Notes 6
ConClusion 7
FYI 8
Screening Room 9
Videophile 11
Gamers Corner 11
Musty Tomes 12
In Our Book (Book Reviews) 14
CASFS Business Report 23

Special Features

A Conversation with Paul Cornell 1
by Lee Whiteside
An American in New Zealand 6
by Jeffrey Lu
Kinuko C Craft: An Apprciation
of Cover Art 7
by Chris Paige
Hokey Smoke! 10
by Shane Shellenbarger

Convention & Fandom

Club Listings 22
Convention Listings 23
Convention Registration Form 23

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SF Tube Talk

TV News & Previews

By Lee Whiteside

We're entering the end of summer and the beginning of fall with the remaining summer runs still ongoing and the new fall season about to be launched in September. Here's a rundown of what's new and returning over the next couple of months as well as a few bits of news farther down the road.

For the new fall season, NBC kicks things off with the return of **Heroes** on September 21, now in the first hour of prime time. The next volume is titled "**Redemption**" and will follow all of the characters as they attempt to return to a normal life. According to **Tim Kring** "One of the big issues we'll be exploring is how should a person with abilities live his or her life. Should they try to assimilate by hiding their abilities, or should they live more honestly, exposing their powers to the world?" The season opens with Claire in college, Peter is working to save people one at a time, and "Nathan" is learning more about himself every day. Matt will attempt to live a normal life with the guilt of what he did to Sylar, and Noah will work with Angela Petrelli and other to create a new Company that will be about people, and also figuring out who this new organization is that is recruiting those with abilities for more nefarious uses. New cast members include **Robert Knepper** as the season's new main villain, Samuel, who is described as a "Jim Jones" type, **Madeline Zima** as Claire's edgy college roommate, and **Ray Park** appearing in a multiple episode arc. And that's all we'll have from NBC this fall as **Chuck** will return sometime in mid-season and **Medium** has moved to NBC. For the rest of the summer, NBC will continue airing **Merlin** on Sunday nights and **The Listener** on Thursday nights.

ABC will have two new genre shows this fall, **Flash Forward**, and **Eastwick**.

Flash Forward, based on the **Robert J. Sawyer** novel, debuts on Thursday Sept 24th. When everyone in the world blacks out and sees an event from their future, the stage is set for an ongoing drama about people trying to either make that future happen or prevent it. The series is produced by **David S. Goyer** and **Brannon Braga** and will star **Brian O'Byrne** (Aaron Stark), **Christine Woods** (Janis Hawk), **John Cho** (Demetri Noh), **Jack Davenport** (Lloyd Simcoe) and **Zachary Knighton** as Bryce Varley. Airing on Wednesdays this fall will be **Eastwick**, based on *The Witches of Eastwick* novel by **John Updike** with **Rebecca Romijn** as Roxie Torcoletti, **Lindsay Price** as Joanna Frankel, **Jamie Ray Newman** as Kat Gardener, and **Paul Gross** as Darryl Van

Horne. Also announced by ABC for mid-season is a new series remake with "**V**", taking the story of a subtle alien invasion and updating it for the 21st century.

Morena Baccarin is Anna, the leader of the Visitors, while **Elizabeth Mitchell** is Erica Evans, **Morris Chestnut** is Ryan Nichols, **Joel Gretsch** is Father Jack Landry, **Lourdes Benedicto** is Valerie Stevens, **Logan Huffman** is Tyler Evans, **Laura Vandervoort** is Lisa, and **Scott Wolf** is Chad Decker.

CBS doesn't have any new genre shows in its lineup, however it has picked up **Medium** after NBC dropped it and will air it on Friday nights between **Ghost Whisperer** and **Numb3rs**, all three of which return on September 25th.

FOX has surprised most everyone by renewing **Dollhouse** for a second season and it will return to its second hour of prime time slot on Friday nights beginning September 25th. **Fringe** has also been picked up and will take over the second hour slot on Thursdays beginning September 17th. New on FOX in mid-season will be **Human Target**, the second series to be based on the DC comics property about a private security agent, Christopher Chance, who hires himself out as protection for those in danger, making himself the target. **Mark Valley** is Chance, **Chi McBride** is his business partner, Winston, and **Jackie Earle Haley** is Chance's hired gun, Guerrero. The CW is attempting to jump on the **Twilight** bandwagon with **The Vampire Diaries**, which will pair up with **Supernatural** on Thursday nights, moving **Smallville** to Friday nights. **Vampire Diaries** is based on a series of books by **L.J. Smith** and features **Nina Dobrev** as Elena Gilbert, **Paul Wesley** as the ageless vampire Stefan Salvatore, **Ian Somerhalder** as Stefan's evil vampire brother Damon, and **Steven R. McQueen** as Elena's brother, Jeremy. **Smallville**, while moving to Friday nights, will continue to slowly document Clark's turning into Superman. New villains appearing this season include John Corben/Metallo (**Brian Austin Green**), and Kryptonian Zod (**Blue Callum**). Rumors are that the ninth season of **Smallville** will be the last, with it leading into something new with the big red "S" very prominent.

SciFi made the transition to SyFy in early July, debuting **Warehouse 13** to strong numbers for the debut episode. The series looks to be a good place for other SyFy and former SciFi actors to guest star. Coming up on the show will be **Joe Flanigan** as the wealthy Jeff Weaver, who is involved with the disappearance of a mysterious sculpture, **Erica Cerra** and **Niall Matter** who play Jillian and Gary Whitman, a couple whose luck turns to the better after they find a luck-inducing artifact, **Joe Morton** will be John Hill, a charismatic prison inmate

and extremist religious leader, **Michael Hogan** is Myka Bering's father, Warren, who receives a dangerous object in the mail, and **Mark Sheppard** is Mr. Valda, the representative of The Regents, who oversee the warehouse.

SyFy has announced casting for their upcoming miniseries. **Alice**, a reimagining of *Alice in Wonderland*, will star **Kathy Bates** as the Queen of Hearts, **Tim Curry** as Dodo, with **Caterina Scorsone** as Alice, **Colm Meany** as the King of Hearts, **Matt Frewer** as the White Knight and **Zak Santiago** as 10 of Clubs. According to SyFy, the movie focuses on Alice Hamilton, an independent twentysomething who finds herself on the other side of a looking glass. She is trapped in an outlandish city of towers and casinos built out of playing cards under the rule of a Queen who isn't happy to see Alice turn up. For the **Riverworld** miniseries, **Tahmoh Penikett** stars as Matt Eelman, an American war correspondent who wakes up on the Riverworld. He was killed with his fiancé, Jessie (**Laura Vandervoort**), and he attempts to reunite with her as he travels the river. Also starring are **Jeananne Goossen** as a female samurai warrior Tomoe, **Mark Deklin** as Samuel Clemens, and **Alan Cumming** as the mysterious Caretaker. SyFy has also announced they are developing a new **Alien Nation** series with **Tim Minnear**


working on the pilot script.

True Blood continues to do well on HBO and we've got information on the five episodes airing in August. First up is *Release Me*, where Sam is in an unenviable predicament courtesy of Maryann and her minions while Sookie is imprisoned with Hugo in the Fellowship of the Sun church and reaches out to Bill (who is being obsessively detained by Lorena) for help. In *Timebomb*, Eric visits the captive Sookie to do his master's bidding while Sam makes a gruesome discovery at Merlotte's and finds himself in hot water. In *I Will Rise Up*, a wounded Eric plays Sookie for a sucker and ends up getting inside her head, Sam has been jailed and is looking for a way to escape and avoid capture by Maryann while Sookie and Jason bond over their recent adventures. *New World in My View* sees Sookie, Bill and Jason finally return to Bon Temps and find it turned upside down by Maryann, who Bill finds is immune to traditional vampire techniques. With all hell breaking loose, Jason rescues Sam, for the moment... In *Frenzy*, as the crisis in Bon Temps is careening out of control, Bill seeks out the advice of Sophie-Anne, the Vampire Queen of Louisiana, but must exercise patience before she gives him critical information. Meanwhile, Sookie and Lafayette find that protecting Tara from

(Cont'd on page 4)

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SF Tube Talk (Cont'd from page 3)

herself is more difficult than they anticipated; a desperate Sam turns to an unlikely source for assistance; and Jessica tests Hoyt's allegiance to Maxine. After that is the season finale which promises lots of action as well as setting things in motion for a third season.

The big news that came out after deadline last issue is that BBC America now has the rights to *Doctor Who* (at least for the remaining specials with **David Tennant**). They aired specials *The Next Doctor* and *Planet of the Dead* in June and July and are planning to screen the remaining episodes shortly after they air on the BBC in the UK. Next up for The Doctor is *Waters of Mars*, likely airing sometime in the Fall. The story is set on Mars (duh!) and will feature **Lindsay Duncan** as the guest star, playing Adelaide, who is in charge of the Mars base. Following that will be two more specials, airing around Christmas and New Years in the UK that will be the end of the **David Tennant** era and the end of the **Russell T. Davies** era. **Bernard Cribbins** will be along for the ride as Wilfred Mott, Donna Noble's grandfather as well as **Jacqueline King**, Donna's mother Sylvia as well as **Catherine Tate** as Donna. Various other guest stars have been rumored as well, but not officially announced. Those that have been spotted during filming include **John Barrowman**, **John Simms**, **Elisabeth Sladen**, **Billie Piper**, and **Camille Coduri**. Following that will be the dawn of the **Steven Moffat** era with **Matt Smith** as The Doctor and Scottish actress **Karen Gillan** will be the new companion for Smith's Doctor. Karen previously appeared on *Doctor Who* as the Soothsayer in *The Fires of Pompeii* and she indicated "'I am absolutely over the moon at being chosen to play the Doctor's new companion. The show is such a massive phenomenon that I can't quite believe I am going to be a part of it.'" According to producer **Steven Moffat** "'We saw some amazing actresses for this part, but when Karen came through the door the game was up. Funny, and clever, and gorgeous, and sexy. Or Scottish, which is the quick way of saying it. A generation of little girls will want to be her. And a generation of little boys will want them to be her too.'" BBC America screened the *Torchwood Children of Earth* series at the end of July and may have repeats of it soon. New on the channel is *Being Human*, which stars **Russell Tovey** as George (a werewolf), **Aidan Turner** as Michael (a vampire) and **Lenora Crichlow** as Annie (a ghost). All three of them share a house. George and Michael work as hospital porters and work to overcome their respective life issues while Annie longs for her fiancé (who owns the house) and resolution to her murder. Along the way, they also have to deal with vampire and werewolf

social problems including a threatened revolution of the vampire underworld as well as being exposed for what they are. The six episode first series is currently airing on BBC America on Saturday nights and the BBC has picked it up for a second series.

The Mob (film producers, not gangsters) have started filming the next *Discworld* miniseries, *Going Postal*, to air in the UK on Sky TV next Easter. **Richard Coyle** (Best known as Jeff on *Coupling*) leads the cast as Moist Von Lipwig, a con man rescued from execution by Lord Vetinari (**Charles Dance**) and put in charge of the Ankh-Morpork postal service. Also starring are **David Suchet** as Reacher Gilt, **Claire Foy** as Golem-Rights Activist Adora Belle Dearheart, **Steve Pemberton** as Drumknott, **Andrew Sachs** as "Junior" Postman Groat and **Tamsin Greig** as Miss Cripslock. Filming is taking place in Budapest, Hungary, where arrangements have been made for any Discworld fans who can make their way there to possibly appear as extras (which was much easier to do in the first two miniseries, which were filmed in the UK). **Jon Jones** will be directing from a script by **Bev Doyle** and **Richard Kurti** based on the **Terry Pratchett** novel. While the novel the miniseries is based on came much further along in the Discworld series, it is much more of a stand-alone novel and producers feel it is more accessible to a general audience.

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A Conversation (Cont'd from page 1)

adventures continue to this very day. She's taken on an entire life of her own, which was an unexpected and wonderful thing.

L: Do you feel sad that you haven't been able to do much with the character lately.
P: She's been in great hands and I've been getting involved with her now and again. I've been recently talking with John Ainsworth about the range and we may get back to me putting in some more content soon, and he's very open to that. It's a very lovely hands-on, hands-off approach and I feel I've got the best of both worlds with it.

L: With TV, you first got involved with writing the medical drama *Casualty*.
P: I wrote something like six *Casualty* episodes and I look back on them with great fondness. We had a lot of budget back in those days to tell proper paramedic stories. That was great fun and I met a good group of folk back then, many of whom I'm still in touch with writing-wise. It was a real education in television.

L: You've been writing short stories and novels for a while now.

P: At the moment, I'm very pleased to

have a short story in every ongoing non-theme anthology series. All three of them. That's something I'm really getting into. Especially since two of them are in a series and I love SF short story series. Back in the day when you'd go from collection to collection and magazine to magazine and you'd find something by Poul Anderson or by Heinlein that was in the same world. That's something I'm really keen on doing. I'm in the midst of a new novel and I do generally regard myself as a novelist who has really lucked out in comics and is really enjoying it there and who sometimes sticks his toe into TV and does *Doctor Who* whenever he's asked. He's always available for selection.

L: When *Doctor Who* came back, before you got involved, what were your feelings about how it would work out?

P: The way it was announced to me was the way in which I was kind of recruited. It was Russell calling me up and saying "We're bringing *Doctor Who* back!" So there was only a millisecond between knowing about it and being on it. Bless Him. Of course I was ecstatic. Of course, it was the measure of the man that his call to me to say that he was terribly sorry that there wouldn't be any more Richard E. Grant animations happening. He thinks of other people a lot and he

thought of my feelings first. It was very, very sweet of him. Not that I was anything but ecstatic when I heard the news that they were bringing back *Doctor Who*.

L: You wrote the online animated 9th Doctor story "Scream of the Shalka".

P: *Who* was canonical, not that there was any such thing as canon in *Doctor Who*, for about a minute.

L: You then got to do the *Doctor Who* episodes, starting with Father's Day and then Human Nature, which was based on one of your novels, turning the 7th Doctor into the 10th Doctor and Ace into Martha. How difficult was it to go back to the original material and adapt for the new series?

P: Originally I started out much further from the source material in that I felt we'd done the romance with the 10th Doctor with The Girl in the Fireplace. So I started originally with a pitch that began with John Smith married to Joan Redfern and unraveled it from there. But Russell kept saying "get back to the novel, we want to adapt the novel." So what we ended up with was a fairly straight adaptation of the book, which I'm quite pleased with. I'm very pleased with how well it was received.

(Cont'd on page 5)

RandomCon 2010



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Check our web site at www.randomcon.org for updates.

A Conversation (Cont'd from page 4)

L: With the new regime coming in, do you have any ideas ready to write for the new Doctor coming up.

P: I'm always available for selection with *Doctor Who* and I just hope I get to play.

L: You've recently started doing some comics for Marvel, starting with the *Wisdom* miniseries.

P: I'm really pleased with working for Marvel. They're a tremendously satisfying company to be a part of. It's another of these childhood dreams come true for me. I wanted to do *Doctor Who* and I wanted to write for Marvel Comics. At the moment, *Captain Britain* is a source of tremendous joy for me. I've having to deliver a script every four weeks and I'm getting these tremendous pages of Leonard Kirk artwork in my inbox. It's sort of the backbone of my writing life now; which is a terrific discipline and a terrific thing to be doing. We've had our moments of infamy as with the Gordon Brown appearance, which I was very pleased with, it got an enormous amount of media attention in Great Britain. The title continues to sell very well in Britain and moderately well in the States. We keep going and we're having a fabulous time. We've got this wonderful unit of me, the editor Nick Lowe, and the artist, Leonard Kirk, who make decisions really quickly and can turn things around incredibly swiftly. Assuming you want to zoom off in another direction, you'll have an answer within a day. Which, compared to the way television works, is really satisfying.

L: Aside from when you started *Captain Britain* in the middle of the Skrull Invasion...

P: The Skrull Invasion was my own stuff. I was delighted to be part of Secret Invasion. The sales boost it gave us, the fact that it gave us a solid **raison d'être** for the team at the start. You really want an editor to come along and say "here is a big ingredient that everyone else is doing that will bring attention to your book and that you can use to form the story around." That's really useful, because otherwise the blank sheet of paper is sometimes terrifying. Marvel editorial have been nothing but supportive and wonderful.

L: You also did a short *Fantastic Four* miniseries, *True Story*, where they went into the Land of Fiction.

P: I'm very pleased with that. That was just out of editor Tom Brevold asking me if I had any *Fantastic Four* ideas. I had a mad *Fantastic Four* idea and he went with it, which was absolutely wonderful. It's the *Fantastic Four* journey into the Land of Fiction where Ben Grimm encounters the sisters from *Sense and Sensibility*, and *Ivanhoe* and various other

fictional characters. It was just a joy to write that and do a self aware FF book and find an area where they hadn't been before. My favorite *Fantastic Four* is them as explorers and this gave them a whole new thing to explore.

L: With *Captain Britain* you've been bringing back characters that have been dormant for a time. You've bought Blade in and now have him in a relationship with Spitfire.

P: I really like the ability to bring back old Marvel U.K. characters that people forgot in tiny cameos. Certainly my core cast I'm incredibly invested in. I'm very attached to all of these people which doesn't mean I won't hurt them terribly, because that's my job.

L: You're also starting up another Marvel Series..

P: Which is the *Young Avengers: Dark Reign*, which is following on from Alan Heinberg's wonderful *Young Avengers* series. We'll be doing five issues of that. It's confronting the *Young Avengers* with another group of young - are they heroes, are they villains - group of young heroes which perhaps haven't gotten the wonderful commitment and discipline that the *Young Avengers* brought to their roles. So are they mentors, are they gonna fight, are they gonna get involved with these guys? It's kind of showing our heroes that things could have been a lot worse for them. That's been really exciting to do. I love Mark Brooks' artwork and it's a pleasure to work with him again.

L: You've got a really good working relationship with Marvel and have other things in the works.

P: We've got three really nice things I can't tell anybody about at the moment.

L: Back to TV, you recently did a *Primeval* episode and you've got your own show in development.

P: It's a BBC three horror show. I've got a creator's credit. James Moran is writing the second script and I've got the pilot script. We're with one of the major indies and we're going to see if BBC 3 wants to buy it. They've been making good signs about it. If that goes, I'll be providing plots for the season I'm really looking forward to it. It's going to be a really good show. It's called *Pulse*. I do think in talking about shows that may or may not happen, there seems to be something supernaturally wrong about doing so.

P: I'm in the middle of a novel, my third novel. Which is called, at the moment, "Cops and

Monsters." It's The Sweeny do Buffy the Vampire Slayer. That's very satisfying. Really, at the moment I'm really managing to do it all and I'm having the most tremendous creative time right now. I'm just finding my way through all sorts of things all which I want to do. There are worse problems in the world. I can't be too upset with where I am right now.

L: Through all this you've been meeting and working with some of the people you were fans of.

P: It's been a pleasure to meet people like Alan Moore and Neil Gaiman. The wonderful thing about this business, especially about this genre, is that the Old Guard, generally, are only to pleased to shake hands with people who appreciate their work, who enjoyed what they did back in the day. Although I think Alan or Neil wouldn't enjoy being referred to as the Old Guard. It's just joy after joy for me at the moment, I couldn't be happier.

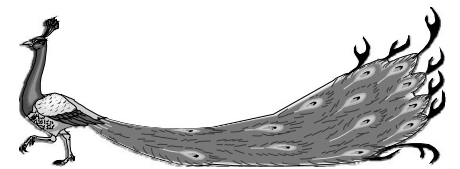
L: Is there anything you'd like to do that you haven't done yet.

P: I'd like to just get to the end of my list of current things without having to put anything aside or drop anything. Once I've done that, I'm sure I'll find something to do next. I feel I'm on my way to a body of work, then. At the moment, I think my body of work is unfocused and this year, hopefully, I'll put a signature on what I do.

Since the interview, Marvel has decided to end *Captain Britain* and *MI13*, but Paul is currently working on three different comics (which haven't been announced at press time) and had this to say when the cancellation was announced on his blog:

"I've enjoyed writing a monthly comic more than almost anything else I've done as a writer. I've enjoyed collaborating with all these talented people. I've particularly enjoyed becoming one of the gang at Marvel. Please don't desert us as we approach our ending. I see it as the last three episodes of our last season. So tell your friends, see if they want to catch up, and please join us for an ending where, as I think you saw last issue, literally anything can happen."

Paul posts regularly on his blog at www.paulcornell.com and will be attending WorldCon, FenCon in Dallas in September, and Gallfirey One in Los Angeles next February. Marvel Comics has trade collections for the *Wisdom* miniseries and two volumes so far of *Captain Britain* and *MI13*.



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Pre-Con News

North American Discworld Convention Pre-Con News

The North American Discworld Convention is almost upon us and we've got a lot of stuff planned and in the works for members. It is looking likely that we will reach our planned membership cap of 900 before the convention, so we are not planning to have memberships available at the door. The convention is taking place Friday, September 4th through Monday, September 7th at the Tempe Mission Palms Hotel in downtown Tempe, Arizona. Our Guest of Honor is Sir Terry Pratchett, creator and writer of the Discworld series of novels. Our Toastmistress is Esther M. Friesner, who is best known for the humorous anthologies she has edited, such as *Chicks in Chain Mail* and the recently released *Witch Way to the Mall?* Other guests include Diane Duane (author of the Young Wizards series of novels as well as many Star Trek novels), Peter Morwood (writer of *The Horse Lords* series and other novels), Bernard Pearson (the Discworld Cunning Artificer), Terry's UK agent Colin Smythe, plus Terry's U.S. editors Jennifer Brehl and Anne Hoppe. We're expecting some other authors to take part, including Sarah A. Hoyt, Daniel M. Hoyt, and some of our local authors as well.

Events planned for the convention will, of course, center around the Discworld and Terry Pratchett. Terry will take part in several panels, will do several autographing sessions (there will be limitations on the number of signatures with no personalization), a reading, and several kaffeeklatches. Programming will start around noon on Friday, September 4th and continue until Closing Ceremonies in the late afternoon on Monday, September 7th. Events and activities will include Opening Ceremonies, a Seamstress Guild Party, the Maskerade, a Charity Auction to benefit The Alzheimer's Research Trust and the Orangutan Foundation, a game of Holy Wood Squares, a Bande With Rocks In challenge, the Gala Banquet (the theme of which is "A Night at the Rhoxie"), a modern dance, and regency dancing. Discussion panels will cover Discworld specific topics as well as general discussion panels on writing and editing including a writing workshop/seminar with Diane Duane and Peter Morwood. We will be screening the recent BBC Documentary "Terry Pratchett: Living with Alzheimer's" and the Discworld TV adaptations: animated Wyrd Sisters and Soul Music, and the live action Hogfather and The Colour of Magic and may have a preview of the next miniseries, Going Postal. We're looking to have some gaming going on with the Discworld

RPG from Steve Jackson Games as well as the Thud! board game. We'll have a dealers room with books, jewelry, costumes and more, an art show with a variety of science fiction and fantasy art, a hospitality suite where members can hang out during the convention, and a Costume Dungeon where fans can get help from members of the Southwest Costumer's Guild with their costumes. Don't forget to check out www.nadwcon.org for more details, including how to register for the convention, reserve banquet tickets, and get your very own official North American Discworld Convention merchandise.

LepreCon 35 Pre-Con News

This year, Leprecon, Inc. is hosting two big events this year, Westercon 62 (aka FiestaCon) and the North American Discworld Convention. With those two events happening, it was decided not to hold a regular LepreCon convention this year and do it as a fan gathering/relaxacon in the fall. It will be held the weekend of October 2-4, 2009 at the Phoenix Marriott Mesa in Mesa, Arizona. The plan is to have a fun and relaxing weekend with a small amount of programming during the day and maybe some in the evening. We'll be set up for the weekend in the Sedona Suite with snacks and sodas where people can hang out. We've got a \$99 per night (plus tax) rate for the weekend at the hotel if you want to hang out at the hotel all weekend.

An American in New Zealand

Part 6: Bay of Plenty

by Jeffrey Lu

The Bay of Plenty was the original stopping point for Captain Cook, an English explorer of New Zealand, and his crew to replenish supplies. When I was there, I was walking through a park. There were monuments dedicated to Captain Cook's visit as well a park for visitors like me.

I looked at one statue of Captain Cook and saw Latin words ascribed. Someone told me that it was something about him traveling around the world.

Taking my time, I trod a trail through a plush forest and saw plenty of wildlife especially birds. I sat at a Maori made "picnic" table.

There were plenty of thoughts as I look out the bay.

*Who would have thought that the Polynesians in New Zealand differ from Polynesians in Hawaii?

*Why would Captain Cook be killed in Hawaii and not at here at Bay of Plenty?

*What is the Polynesian's culture? How did they survive on these islands?

*Who and/or what is Maori?

*Who is Captain Cook?

*Where is a place that serves Maori food?

*Why is there no gift shop at this park?

As I left, I knew I wanted to come back. I came to this place with more questions than answers to the Bay of Plenty.

Next: Part 7-Third Blunder in three sections: Section One- Climbing Hobbit Town's LOTR Bilbo Baggin's Birthday Tree

Musical Notes

Filk.com – Online Radio

Filk.com is an online radio program that plays filk music 24-7. It contains a Filk History and Commentary page with contributions from professional musicians and filkers; there's website history, contact information, and links to purchase MP3 downloads or CDs when available.

This web radio program can be listened to for free, if you can tolerate the frequent commercial interruptions, or you can subscribe for uninterrupted play. The site was created and is run by Eric Gerds under his company of DAG Productions. When the home page pops up, click on the **Filk Radio** option on the right, third from the top to activate actual airplay.

Eric typically programs a 25 hour-plus sequence which changes each week, with the more popular songs getting more frequent air time. One neat feature is the option for subscribers to vote on songs, giving either a Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down for each track. His programming includes mini-themes and featured artists, such as LA Filkharmonics, Blake Hodgetts, or Echo's Children. Leslie Fish is so prolific, that some of her songs are always in play. Prior to the opening of the new *Star Trek* film, Eric Gerds lined up a truly remarkable collection of Trek songs. This was followed by a week of tech humor that had me in hysterics, with songs by Tom Smith ("Tech Support for Dad,") and The Arrogant Worms, among others. That same week, another feature was *Fellowship! The Musical*, a cheerfully irreverent tribute to *The Lord of the Rings*. My favorite song from that cycle was the one where Boromir and Frodo become dueling counter-tenors. For Memorial

(Cont'd on page 7)



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Musical

(Cont'd from page 6)

Day, Gerds selected songs about war, warriors, loss, and family, including the haunting “Valkerie” from the CD *Sirens* by S.J. Tucker. The following week the themes were Pirates and Harry Potter. Muppet songs, Heather Alexander’s “YO HO,” S.J. Tucker’s fantastic “Wendy trilogy,” “Hey There, Hermione” by Insane Ian, the pun-laden “You’ve Got Hogwarts” by Robert Lund, “Just a Boy Named Harry,” by Dave Weingart, Duane Elms’ “Dawson’s Christian” and “Dawson’s Concom” by Jordin Kare were just a few of the offerings aired that week. He even located several songs about Blake’s Seven. You rule, Eric!

Gerds provides a fine mix of new, out of print, rare, and familiar filk, leavened with songs from folk music and parody. The sound quality is good, and he’s usually adroit at balancing the moods, so that neither one nor any one theme or performer overwhelms.

I have been able to hear tracks from tapes I lost decades ago and never hoped to enjoy again.

The only problem is that, if you are supposed to be working while you listen, productivity may be adversely affected. – **Chris Paige**

Phoenix Filk Circle

Radio Shows Made at FiestaCon can be heard at

www.phoenixfilkcircle.org

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Kinuko C. Craft – An Appreciation of Cover Art

“Her beauty makes the heart ache so strangely that it cannot stand to be cured of its pain.” – Ray Aldridge, “The Beauty Addict”

For about 30 years now, one of the absolutely great cover artists of fantasy literature has been Kinuko Y. Craft. Sheri Tepper fans know her artwork from Tepper’s earlier work: the Marianne trilogy; *The Revenants*, with its flying sphinx, veiled Bedouin, griffin and weaver; and the *Mavin Manyshaped* trilogy, part of the nine books of the True Game world. SF writers whose books have borne Craft book jackets include Isaac Asimov, Stephen King, Orson Scott Card, C. S. Lewis, Glenn Cook, Ursula LeGuin, Guy Gavriel Kay, Robin McKinley, Brian Aldiss, Katherine Kurtz, Tanith Lee, Andre Norton, and Marion Zimmer Bradley.

Craft’s style is reminiscent of the Pre-Raphaelites crossed with Leonardo DaVinci and the great cover artist of Ballantine Books’ heyday: Gervasio

Gallardo, who did the cover art for fantasy by Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, Lord Dunsany, and Peter S. Beagle.

More recently, Craft has illustrated children’s books, including the exquisite *Cupid & Psyche*, 1996; *Pegasus*, 1998; and *Baba Yaga and Vasilisa the Brave*, 1994; all by Morrow Junior Books; and anything written by Patricia A. McKillip. Odds are, if you ever bought a fantasy book just for the cover any time in the last 20 years, it was a Craft illustration. *Women of Enchantment* is a 2009 calendar of her prints. I hope that there will be a 2010 calendar offering as well.

In 2008, Kinuko Craft was elected into the Society of Illustrators’ Hall of Fame. Previously she had won numerous awards, from the Society of Illustrators, Spectrum, The ASFA Chesley Awards, and other organizations. However, she has not yet won a Hugo, and I am wondering, for heaven’s sake, why not? Just look at *The Queen of Icemark*, with its red-gold haired heroine holding helmet and sword, cast into relief by a snow leopard and black stallion, with a fantastic army of beasts in the background; or *The Transformation of Angarred*, the jaguar-maiden drinking from a pool of water; or McKillip’s *Od Magic*, with its gypsy caravan, goddess of animals, and unmasked heroine cradled by a crescent moon; or *Winter Rose*, with fell nightriders under a blazing comet, an intricate border of rose vines and ivy, and a crowned princess, her face offset by a snowy owl and a red rose shedding its petals. Juliet Marillier’s young adult fantasy novels, *Wildwood Dancing*, 2007, and *Cybele’s Secret*, 2008, are two of Craft’s newer works. I looked up the Hugo winners for 2005, the year *Od Magic* was published, and for 2007. Jim Burns does close-ups of chesty, wasp-waisted females in hard, bright colors; Donato Giancola actually did fine work, especially for *Name of the Winds*, but I consider it a discredit to fandom that Craft didn’t even make the five nominee cutoff for either 2007 or 2008.

What can you do if you wish to see original works? FenCon VI, which will be held in Dallas, September 18-20, 2009, has a powerful draw with GoH Lois McMaster Bujold. Coincidentally, 4th Wall Gallery is hosting a Kinuko Y. Craft Retrospective that same month. Now that’s my idea of a working example of serendipity. So if you wish to see beauty up close and in the paint, you have an extraordinary opportunity this year. True art transforms the viewer, and original paintings carry something of the essence of the maker and of the Muse.

I voted for the Hugos this year, in part because I take my SF seriously, and in part because I want to be able to make nominations for the 2009 awards. Guess who will be my Pro Artist pick. – **Chris Paige**



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ENTERTAINMENT TREASURES

ConClusion

FiestaCon Notes

This year’s Westercon in Tempe was well attended, both with respect to quantity and quality. Working as a dealer limited my roaming; to thoroughly appreciate the event, I would have had to pull a bit of Monkey King magic and transform strands of hair into alternative selves.

The Starfleet fan base made a good showing, with a party Saturday night and donations of vintage Trek posters to the Barry Bard Memorial Previews. I also got a chance to see some of the Star Trek New Voyages: “World Enough and Time” starring George Takei and “Of Gods and Men” in which Uhuru finally gets her own storyline. I’m sorry I missed “To Serve Al My Days” with Walter Koenig. Not only did I always like the Chekov character, he was wonderful on *Babylon Five* as Bester of PsiCorps.

Fans of the 1632 Universe were in luck. Not only were Eric Flint (the tale-spinner) and Virginia deMarce (the historian) on numerous panels discussing all things 1632-ish, Rick Boatright hosted a panel on Weird Tech – how the enterprising Down-timers will be able to run computers and air conditioners using water and steam. These panels were well-

attended and showed how advantageous good programming can be.

The Hugo Awards were a theme of numerous panels as well. Nominated editor Stanley Schmidt hosted “Authors Vs. Editors;” John Hertz of Los Angeles, also nominated, had fanzines on display, lead panels on Hugo nomination categories, and directed the Regency Dancing. Ladies, if ever you have the opportunity to dance with Mr. Hertz, avail yourselves of it. He makes a remarkable partner.

Gary Swaty was in charge of filk panels, thematic circles, and concerts. Mark Horning’s debut CD, *Space and Freedom*, arrived just in time. Joe Bethancourt filled the room to overflowing. Other performers present were Tom Tuerff, Wyllow Ravenscroft, Marilyn Miller, and Lynn Gold. One of my favorite panels was the “Filk As a Pressure Valve.” I’d like to see this one offered again, for while examples of strong emotion were discussed and sung, we didn’t directly address the need for intellect to have expression too, to celebrate knowledge, to be whimsical or eccentric. I consider Nancy Louise Freeman’s song “Leather Pants of Evil” a prime example of intelligent playfulness.

Friday morning I noticed fen working out in the athletic room and joined their conversation. Two of them turned out to be the authors of *The Unincorporated*

(Cont'd on page 8)

ConClusion (Cont'd from page 7)

Man, reviewed in an earlier issue of *ConNotations*, Dani and Eytan Kollin. The brothers are a study in contrast united by consanguinity. Any convention scheduling an “Evolution, Creative Design, and Noodletarianism” type panel should recruit these guys. One is an agnostic and the other abides by his tradition of faith, and both have the strongest respect for civil conduct. So they play well with others, and they know each other so well that they improvise beautifully off each other’s verbal riffs.

The Masquerade had only seven entries, but the displays were exquisite, and people appreciative of costumes and needlework crowded around the contestants after the show.

FiestaCon put together a very strong program for young fen, with a playroom, costuming and piratical panels, and a rockets workshop. The Gaming Room was also a kid-friendly place, and Mario Super Smash Brothers, or whatever it’s called, was popular with every kid who wields a toggle-stick.

I didn’t get to as many of the science panels as I intended, but “Tesla: The Real Man” by Gilbert Rau was a fascinating presentation, and it put me in a position to appreciate *Warehouse 13* when it debuted.

Saturday night almost everyone gathered by the poolside or flocked to windows with a good view to watch the fireworks display. It turns out that Tempe is famous for its fireworks, and justly so. Dazzling fountains of silver, gold, red, blue, white and green, spears and spheres and concentric rings of light kept us entranced for the better part of an hour.

There was so very, very much more, but I will end by saying that all back issues of *ConNotations* were snatched up appreciatively by out of town fen. – **Chris Paige**

FYI

CASFS Book Discussion

Bent Cover Books
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Come do some face-to-face interaction with your fellow readers and SF/Fantasy fans! Haven’t read the book? Don’t worry, there’s no quiz or anything. You can use the rest of us as your personal book reviewers to see if it’s something you’d like. We start out with the book discussion, but the conversation can go anywhere. The get-together is held in the coffee shop of Bent Cover Books near 28th Drive and Cactus Road in Phoenix. We welcome potential new friends.

Page 8

August 18, 2009 - *The Furies of Calderon* by Jim Butcher
September 15, 2009 - *Too Many Magicians* by Randall Garrett
October 20, 2009 - *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman
November 17, 2009 - *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan
December 15, 2009 - *Quarter Share* by Nathan Lowell

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.
4th Saturday of the month at 6pm
Borders, Phoenix Camelback

Manga Bookclub
1st Tuesdays, 7pm
Borders, Chandler

Web of Avalon discussion group
Aug 3, 2pm
Barnes & Noble, Desert Ridge

AUTHOR SIGNINGS

Poisoned Pen Bookstore
Diana Gabaldon, Sep 22, 6pm
Brandon Sanderson, Nov 16, 7pm

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 Vampire Trilogy” by Whitley Strieber

Cemetery Dance Publications
“Halloweenland” by Al Sarrantonio
“The Girl on the Glider” by Brian Keene

PS Publishing
“Val/Orson” by Marly Youmans
“The Babylonian Trilogy” by Sebastien Doubinsky
“Starfall” by Stephen Baxter

PYR Publishing
“The Blade Itself” by Joe Abercrombie
“The Crown Rose” by Fiona Avery
Genetopia” by Keith Brooke

Subterranean Press
“Songs of the Dying Earth” stories in honor of Jack Vance: Dan Simmons, Neil Gaiman, Robert Silverberg, Mike Resnick, Kage Baker, et al.
“The Onion Girl” by Charles de Lint

“Hazards” by Mike Resnick
“In Between” by R.A. MacAvoy
And too many more to mention....

Wildside Press
“The Labyrinth” by Catherynne M. Valente
“Circus of the Grand Design” by Robert Freeman
“Beyond the Black River” by Robert E. Howard
“Harp, Pipe and Symphony” by Paul DiFilippo

GAMING EVENTS

DRAWN TO COMICS
Heroclix.
Tuesdays 4pm-7pm. Saturdays, 3pm-6pm
Star Wars Miniatures.
Fridays 7:30pm-11pm, Sundays, 1 – 4pm

GAME DEPOT
HeroClix & MechWarrior -
Wednesdays, 530pm
Magic, The Gathering -
Thursdays, 6pm-9pm
Monsterpocalypse.
Wednesdays, 5pm
Flames of War Fridays, 10am-8pm

IMPERIAL OUTPOST GAMES
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Thursdays, 6pm
Federation Commander -
2nd Saturdays, noon
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SAMURAI COMICS
(check website for correct store location)
Yugioh Tournament, Sundays, noon
(Phx), Sat, noon (west valley)
Anime Club, Sundays, noon
Magic, The Gathering, Friday, 6p at both locations, & Tues, 6pm (west valley)
Pokemon, Saturday, 2pm (Phx), Sundays, 2pm (west valley)

SPAZDOG COMICS
Star Wars Miniatures. Thursdays, 5pm
Heroclix Tournaments, Fridays, 7pm
Pokemon League, Saturdays, 3pm
Magic, The Gathering. Saturdays, 4pm
Marvel Comics 70th Anniversary Party,
Aug 11, 6pm-10pm

SCIENCE EVENTS

ASU

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

ARIZONA SCIENCE CENTER

Saturday Science Classes for ages 6-10 begins on Aug 29 with the principle of catapults. Check website for dates and topics.
Lego Castle Adventure Exhibit, May 24-Sep 7

New Rock Wall opened Feb 16th, climbers aged 8 and above
“U2: A Digital Dome Experience” show times on website.
Girls aged 11-17 can learn math and science in a series of workshops.
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.
Human Computer Interface-History and Future,” Aug

“Mars, What’s New” (part II), Aug 15
“Illusions and Illusionists” Sep 4
“Ending age-related disease”, Sep 18

CHALLENGER SPACE CENTER, PEORIA

Stargazing. Starlab Planetarium.
Check website for dates and times
The Space Place is a 2-hour interactive program for little ones with big imaginations! Designed for children ages 3 through 6, the program features age-appropriate activities designed to teach preschoolers about our planet and solar system. Call for reservations. *Neptune*: Apr 13-14, 930am-1130am. *Pluto*: May 11-12, 930am-1130am.
ASU Meteorite Exhibit
Columbia Shuttle Memorial Display
Iridium Satellite Model
Lowell Observatory Display
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Atlantis Space Shuttle Model

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

PIMA AIR & SPACE MUSEUM, TUCSON

New Volunteer Orientation. Jun 13, July 11, 930am
Night Wings. One Saturday a month, the center is open in the evening. Aug 29, 5pm-9pm
Science Sundays: how to build and fly rockets, Aug 30, 11am-3pm
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(Cont'd on page 9)

SETI Institute's Weekly

Science Radio Program

Mondays, avail as podcast

<http://radio.seti.org><http://podcast.seti.org>

OTHER GENRE-RELATED EVENTS

BARNES & NOBLE, DESERT RIDGE

Lego Star Wars: The Visual Dictionary,
Author Event, Oct 10, 2pm

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, 6pm

BOOKMANS, GRANT RD, TUCSON

Free Tarot Readings with Pandora,
Wednesdays, 6pm

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Metaphysical Wednesdays Discussion
Wednesdays, 7pm

BORDERS, PARADISE VALLEY

Metaphysical Fridays, 7pm

CAN'T STOP THE SERENITY
(see website list below)Showing in Tucson on Sep 17, 630pm at
The Loft CinemaShowing in Phoenix on Sep 19, 1pm at
MADCAP Theatres in Tempe

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Screening Room

G-Force

Harry Potter and the Half Blood
Prince

G-Force

Starring: Bill Nighy, Will Arnett, Zach
Galifianakis

Director: Hoyt Yeatman

Running Time: 89 minutes

Rated: PG

Produced by Jerry Bruckheimer

Films, Walt Disney Pictures

Distributed by: Walt Disney Studios

Motion Pictures

Release Date: July 24th, 2009

In Disney Digital 3D

Our story begins with an upcoming inspection of a top secret FBI laboratory. Ben (Zach Galifianakis) is worried that



without results his research will be shut down. So he sends his team into action. Team leader Darwin the Guinea Pig

(voiced by Sam Rockwell) infiltrates billionaire Sabre's (Bill Nighy) home looking for information on his secret plans to conquer the world [Sabrestorm]. After several close calls he and his team [Guniea Pigs Juarez (Penelope Cruz) and Blaster (Tracy Morgan), Mole Speckles (Nicolas Cage), and Fly Mooch (Dee Bradley Baker)] escape with the files.

The inspection goes terribly wrong when the files recovered are not what they needed. The lab is shut down and the team is trapped in a pet shop. They all manage to escape in one way or another with one taking

the ultimate hit for the team, fake death plus garbage truck equals tragedy. The ending looks like it could be from Danger Mouse vs the Transformers.

The movie is cute, entertaining, and ultimately life affirming. The 3D is great and the Disney method eliminates the headaches I used to get from the glasses. I really liked this and will spend my own money to see it again!

Five stars out of five ~~ Bob LaPierre

Harry Potter and the Half Blood
PrinceStarring: Daniel Radcliff, Michael
Gambon, Emma Watson, Rupert
Grint, Alan Richman, Tom Fenton

Director: David Yates

Runtime: 153 minutes

Rated: PG

Release Date: July 15th, 2009

Reviewed by: Len Berger
(ConNotations Film Editor)

Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince opens with evil lurking in the clouds of a thunderstorm. Death Eaters descend onto Diagon Alley and kidnap the wand maker. The wand maker's shop is destroyed. For good measure they cause a bridge to collapse as they leave – darn, those Death Eaters just need a bit of love.

Professor Dumbledore (played by Michael Gambon) requests Harry Potters help in finding material that might assist in winning the war against Lord Voldemort. Harry Potter (played by Daniel Radcliff) does his usual best at portraying “the chosen one.” Drago Malvoy (played by Tom Fenton) is quite distant from reality throughout the film. He was chosen for a dastardly deed but appears to have some trouble dealing with it. On the other hand Professor Snape (played by Alan Rickman) is on the dark side and swears an oath to protect Mr. Malvoy at all costs.

Ron Weasley (played by Rupert Grint) gets his share of the ladies, perhaps due to a love potion. Harry Potter's lady interests are on a lower key than Ron's.

We are also shown several more memories involving Tom Riddle which



are quite revealing and play an important part to understanding Lord Voldemort's longevity.

This installment is somewhat short on the action sequences that we have come to expect in any Harry Potter film (yes there is a Quidditch match – what would a Harry Potter film be without one?). Character development becomes more important as we near the end of the series.

The film is a bit slow and covers the love interests of the characters a bit too much. However, *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* is still a film worth seeing.

The film is rated PG for some violence and dark scenes.

Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince is rated “B”.



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Hey, Rocky, watch me pull a rabbit outta my hat!"
It's the very nearly
50th Anniversary of Rocky the
Flying Squirrel and
Bullwinkle J. Moose, Pt. 2
By Shane Shellenbarger

As you recall from last time our intrepid heroes, Jay Ward and Bill Scott, had begun the storyboards for *Rocky the Flying Squirrel* and by Christmas 1957, they were complete. With the above-the-line work moving along, Jay Ward turned to his old college chum, Leonard Key, to sell the pilot. In addition to role as pitchman for the series, Key turned his attention the economics of affordable animation. He gathered information on "Runaway" or animation creation outside the United States. The two cheapest locals were Mexico and Japan. Key and a partner were able to broker a deal with Tokyo-based Tojo Studios in which the below-the-line budget would allow them to create four-minute cartoons for \$800 per. Writing, storyboards, layouts, model sheets, and sound tracks would be handled Stateside. Supervision would consist of a U.S. director, a couple animators, and layout artists who would fly to Japan. Ward began gathering writers and voice talent.

The first vocalists were June Foray, Paul Frees, William Conrad, and Bill Scott.

Later to join the team were Edward Everett Horton, Hans Conried, Charlie Ruggles, Walter Tetley, and the legendary Daws Butler. Of his fellow actor, Daws Butler said this, "To me, Bill Scott was one of the most talented actors in town.



His dialects, his characters, the top of his voice, the bottom of his voice . . . I had tremendous respect for him as an actor, and we loved to work together. I'd like to give him credit as a person, as well as being a terrific actor, comedian, and writer. He had it all."

Len Key recommended artists Al Shean and Fred Charrow to Ward for the supervisory work in Japan, but it was too

late, animation had already begun. On the recommendation of Bill Scott, Ward gave all of the artwork to Hollywood artists, Sam Clayberger and Roy Morita. The two UPA designers along with editor Skip Craig worked on the Rocky pilot in their spare time, with Craig dubbing the finished film at TV Recorders. Key turned his attention to lining up sponsors for the boy scout-in-squirrels clothing and his muddled moose companion. Canada Dry ginger ale company show early interest. In addition to *Rocky*, Ward began work on marionette show named "Carrots and the King" about the adventures of a red-headed eight-year-old boy and Mr. Waldo Wadsworth, an unemployed ham actor who pronounces himself a king after he discovers the deed to a lost mine. Unfortunately, nothing ever came of the project.

By the end of March 1958, *Rocky the Flying Squirrel* was an officially completed pilot and both Canada Dry and another sponsor, Cocoa Marsh (a chocolate marshmallow drink) had seen the film and loved it. Several deals were proposed one of which was an outright buy of sixty-five episode at \$3500 per, but Ward wanted a percentage ownership. By this time, a second film pilot had been completed: *Jam Session*, which showcased jazz artists of the day. In late June, Ward headed to New York with a print. The plan was for Len Kay and Ward to sell the series based on the pilot. After

about a week, Ward's health took a turn for the worse and he charged Kay with selling the series on his own. The flight encountered terrible weather; Ward became so nervous his life flashed before his eyes three times, and the plane made an emergency landing in Salt Lake City. Ramona Ward drove from Berkeley to bring her husband home. Ward was hospitalized for a month, he became agoraphobic, his food had to be brought to his apartment, and he only left his home at night to retrieve his mail. It took him years to recover from what was later discovered to be a nervous breakdown, he never fully regained his health, and he had many relapses to the day he died. Ward, Kay, and Scott wouldn't realize for some time that Ward's health was the least of their worries.

Comeback next time for the episode entitled "Tokyo Tojo Tragedy" or "Mexico City Morass."

This is the end of Part 2. Part 3 will continue in the next ConNotations.



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Videophile & Around the Dial

Warehouse 13
Being Human
Doctor Who: The Rescue / The Romans
The Tale of the Mighty Knights

Warehouse 13
(Tuesdays on SyFy)

The Sci-Fi Channel’s new series is tailor-made for those of us who: 1) loved the *X-Files* when it was a funny show, and 2) can’t get enough *Eureka* episodes.

Warehouse 13 is the place you see at the end of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. It’s the place where all government-acquired artifacts wind up. But they first have to be acquired, and that can be dangerous work. Two FBI agents are assigned to the South Dakota location to be the new procurers.

In the oft’ imitated tradition of male-female professional pairings started by *The X-Files*, the male is: 1) dark-haired, 2) eccentric, and 3) out of favor with the powers that be; while the female is: 1) a gorgeous red-head, 2) logical, and 3) by the book. There is a formidable director of the clandestine department – Mrs. Frederick – and a curator of the mysteries, Artie Nielsen, wonderfully played by Saul Rubinek, like a Yiddish Willy Wonka. An old photograph shows the ageless Mrs. Frederick and a young Artie, who glosses over his own presence in the picture. This and a few other expressions hint at tragedies and disappointments in his past that I hope future shows reveal. Of course, the artifacts are the real stars of the show. The 2 hour pilot contains the electric car designed by Edison for Henry Ford, who refused to market it; Pandora’s Box; a teleporting tea-kettle that either grants your wish or gives you a ferret if your wish is impossible; Tesla’s stun gun; Farnsworth’s communicators; a football that travels around the world; Flight 22 from the Bermuda Triangle; Houdini’s wallet; and – Spoiler Alert! – by the end of the episode, a portrait of Lucretia Borgia and the hair comb that channels her personality.

This pilot was full of imagination, great writing, and zinger-laced dialogue that advanced character development. When Artie is trying to get his new agents to feel welcome he says, “I made cookies,” to which Pete replies, “Oooh!” while Micah says, “I don’t eat sugar.” But every time she gets profoundly upset, she gulps down sweets.

One of the best features of the show is open acknowledgement of the validity of hunches and intuition. All the main characters have some form of extra-sensory perception. Pete is the intuitive of the field team, but observant, detail-

Volume 19 Issue 4

oriented Micah has a dream conversation with her dead lover. The innkeeper, who may be related to Mrs. Robinson (just a hunch), reads auras.

There was also a nifty incidental soundtrack, with “Disturbia” and Eric Satie piano music. I give the show top ratings. May it air long, and prosper. – **Chris Paige**

Being Human - Complete Series 1
2 Entertain, 345 minutes, TV-14
L24.99 (US\$40.80)
or Saturdays on BBC America starting
July 25

Being Human is a delightful drama-comedy from the BBC. While I purchased this DVD from the UK it is worth noting that BBC America began airing this series on July 25 and there will probably be a US DVD release later in the year.

The series takes us into the lives of Mitchell and George, two hospital porters who decide to share a flat. This seems all rather humdrum and normal until you take into account the fact that Mitchell is a vampire and George is a werewolf and what they both really want is to live normal human lives. This becomes even more complicated when they learn the house they have rented is haunted by Annie, the ghost of the landlord’s girlfriend. Complicating matters are such things as a vampire conspiracy to turn the whole world into vampires, the return of George’s “maker” and his attempts to have a girlfriend and, of yes, Annie’s discovery that she was murdered. Things wrap up neatly in the last episode with just enough questions left that there is room for a second series, which the BBC has already commissioned.

The DVD unfortunately does not include the pilot episode, which had some casting differences and was a somewhat more gothic feel. The series can be enjoyed without that but it will be interesting to see if BBC America starts with the pilot or ignores it. - Recommended ~~ **Stephanie L Bannon**

Doctor Who: The Rescue / The Romans
BBC Warner, 146 minutes, NR
DVD \$34.98

These episodes, numbers 11 and 12, feature the original Doctor, William Hartnell.

The Rescue finds our travelers arriving on the planet Dido in the late 25th Century. They find a crashed spaceship from Earth whose occupants are living in fear of a creature called Koquillion. This is a two-part story mainly used to introduce the new companion, Vicki, who replaced the Doctor’s granddaughter Susan who left at the end of the previous season.

The next episode is *The Romans* in which our time travelers go on holiday in

Rome, albeit the Rome of 64 AD which means they get caught up in the intrigues of Nero’s court.

DVD Special Features include commentaries with cast and crew, “The making of” featurette for “The Rescue and The Romans” and assorted other little tidbits.

While much is made of the current incarnation of the Doctor, it is entertaining to go back and see where it all started. Highly recommended ~~ **Stephanie L Bannon**

The Tale of the Mighty Knights
(A Star Trek Funk Musical)
Nickelodeon, 97 minutes, NR
DVD \$16.99

One of the new *Backyardigans* DVDs is a collection of three shows called *The Tale of the Mighty Knights*. The series, which plays on Noggin or the Nickelodeon channels, is about five colorful animal-neighbors who use their imagination to have musical adventures in their shared backyard, until hunger drives them indoors for a snack. The title episode is a rock-opera with Uniqua and Tyrone as knights set to guard a hatching egg. The storyline is one that has been used over and over in *Dora the Explorer* and (shudder!) *Barney* books, but humor, Austin as the Grabbing Goblin, and Tasha as the Flighty Fairy help redeem the predictable plot. One of the songs is clearly influenced by Queen’s “Bohemian Rhapsody,” and there is a lot of electric guitar, as well as eggy puns. Much more original is the second episode, “Blazing Paddles,” with lyrics and music by Rodney Stringfellow and Douglas Wieselmann. Pablo the Ping Pong Bandit had captured all the paddles in Ping Pong Mesa, and even Sheriff Uniqua is no match for him until she goes into the desert, finds a paddle-shaped cactus pad, and practices in the midst of a hail storm. The score is set to raj music (think Bollywood), and the musical numbers are delightful.

Then there’s “Garbage Trek,” with sound effects from the original *Star Trek* and 70s funk music for the songs and dances. Yes, the Enterprise is now a garbage scow – sorry, Scotty. When the imagination sequence began I burst out laughing, remembering “The Trouble with Tribbles” and how Scotty threw the first punch when his honor, his *izzat*, was offended. I hope the shades of James Doohan and Gene Roddenberry get a smile out of this one. ~~ **Chris Paige**

Gamer’s Corner

My Monster - John Wick
Publisher: John Wick Presents!
\$5.00

Every child worries about monsters at some point. Under the bed, in the closet, behind the curtains, you name it. That’s because they have fears that they can only name by calling them ‘monsters’. One of the best ways to exorcize those demons is to make the child feel unafraid of the monsters. That’s where *My Monster* comes in.

My Monster is best described as a child’s first role-playing game. Designed for the 5 - 10 age bracket, it takes conventional role-playing systems and cheerfully tosses them out the window. For character creation, there are no dice to roll, nor points to allocate. The method is simple: In the first four pages of the book, the child draws and colors their monster, picking what prominent monster features it has, such as claws, fur, tentacles, as well as various aspects of its imaginary life. Then the rest of the rules require one, maybe two six-sided dice.

The last two pages are designed for the parents, of course. It outlines how best to run a game such as this for children, emphasizing that there’s no need to fuss over continuity. If the children are on the high seas with their kids and attendant monsters one minute, and on the moon the next, that’s okay, so long as they’re having fun.

Finally, it discusses the topic of ‘bad monsters’. Monsters turn bad when they don’t get enough snuggles and they cause trouble. If, as a parent, one is concerned with the kids deciding to let the monster do ‘bad’ things, then you use the monster as a lesson-giver, explaining that doing that would make them a Bad Monster and they don’t want to become that.

And should the child decide that certain facets of their monster have changed, or they wish to make a second monster, all the parent will need to do is go to the link provided in the grown-up section and download the blank page so that the child can add to it, no need for additional purchases.

So for those that want to introduce their children to role-playing, this is a quick, simple and most importantly, fun method to do that, for both child and grown-up. Once your little monster has a monster of their own, the path to role-playing has begun!

-Jon Kelley
Snag of the Dark Ones

Sacred
Gold Edition
Ascaron Entertainment
\$9.99

The second version of Sacred just came out so the first edition was made available in a jewel box. The game is a lot of fun, if fairly simple. There isn’t much chance to advance your magic items, the quests are straightforward, and the side quests are simple and occasionally advance your character without direct changes. I particularly like having prices lowered after doing some of the side quests.

Deaths return you to the location of your last completed major quest so you might want to remember to save often. I save every quest completion, major or minor, and whenever I arrive in a new town. Choosing your class also chooses your race, and that is important as you are limited to items compatible with your race and sometimes with your class. So far I’ve only played six of the possible nine classes/races. Each has pluses and minuses and so far, I like the various options and am looking forward to the Dwarven weaponry for my next play through.

The experience system runs fairly simple, you need about a hundred monster kills for your first increase and by twentieth level and thereafter you need about one thousand per level. You have certain items and they offer the chance to have resistance to differing types of damage. From what I’ve seen, your priorities should be first - physical, second - poison, third - fire.

I’m enjoying it enough that I am playing as soon as I turn this article in, and I will buy the Sacred II as soon as I can.

4 Stars out of 5

See you next time.
Bob LaPierre

Warhammer 40,000 Horus Heresy
False Gods
by Graham McNeill
Black Library Publication, \$7.99, 406
pages.

Horus, the Warmaster, is critically injured. He is near death. His loyal forces are aiding him into an alien culture that might save him. Yet, Horus will have to battle visions that might influence his destiny with the Emperor of Mankind. Will he be turned by Chaos? By his own pride? Or something more sinister?

This is the second book of the Horus Heresy series.

Definitely worth reading. This book explained one of the beginnings of Warhammer 40,000 universe at its core. Recommended for Warhammer 40,000

readers and dark sci-fi war readers. ~~
Jeffrey Lu

Warhammer 40,000 Horus Heresy
Galaxy In Flames
by Graham Ben Counter
Black Library Publication, \$7.99, 407
pages.

Warmaster Horus commands different legions of Space Marines to land on a rebellious world, Isstvan III. They will successfully defeat the enemy. Yet, Horus’s hand in betrayal is shown as he ordered virus bombs on his own men. Little will Horus knows that his plan for destroying all legions loyal to the Emperor will go awry.

This is the third book of the Horus Heresy series.

Scary. Realistic when plans go south. Good reading. Recommended for Warhammer 40,000 readers and dark sci-fi war readers. ~~ Jeffrey Lu

Warhammer 40,000 Horus Heresy The Flight of The Eisenstein
by James Swallow
Black Library Publication, \$7.99, 407
pages.

Death Guard Space Marine Captain Garro witnessed Horus’s betrayal of some of Emperor’s Legions at Isstvan III. He will command and seize a ship to bring news of Horus being a traitor to the Emperor. Garro will face not only Horus’s battle forces but also the problems of traveling through the “warp.” He will also have to meet and convince Horus’s equal, Rogal Dorn, leader of the Space Marine Imperial Fists about Horus’s sudden change. Will Garro get his message to the Emperor in time?

This is the fourth book of the Horus Heresy series.

Great hardships. Liked it. Recommended for Warhammer 40,000 readers and dark sci-fi war readers. ~~ Jeffrey Lu

Musty Tomes

MASTER OF THE TALL-TALE APOCALYPSE:
R.A. LAFFERTY
Fourth Mansions, 1969, Ace Books
Arrive at Easterwine, 1971, Ballantine
Books
The Devil is Dead, 1971, Avon Books
And Walk Now Gently Through the Fire and Other Science Fiction Stories, edited by Roger Elwood, 1972, Chilton
Apocalypses, 1977, Pinnacle Books
Annals of Klepsis, 1983, Ace Books

In one sense, you can consider science fiction as the reducto ad absurdum of the belief in endless progress. Sometimes that reduction comes to glory, or sometimes it comes to disaster. What made Lafferty such a unique writer, apart from his tall-

tale style, was that he was embraced into the fold while neither a cheerleader or doomsayer or critic - at least, not an *obvious* critic or doomsayer. A devout Catholic, he often wrote of how the apocalypse on Earth could come to pass, with the religion aside.

In ‘Fourth Mansions,’ newspaperman Freddy Foley has a hunch that a reclusive rich man is a secret immortal. The investigation uncovers a society of returnees whose spirits reclaim bodies, to wreak suffering upon the world. They are gearing up for their grand finale, to plunge the world into total chaos. They do this periodically, to keep civilizations from progressing to higher levels, the spiritual fourth mansions and beyond. Now a secret society of watchers drafts Foley into the fight against them. Foley maintains telepathic contact with some allies, and also has precognition, giving this novel somewhat of a science fiction basis. The other novels in this review have similar psi threads to keep them on the sci-fi-almost-religious-fantasy borders.

‘Arrive at Easterwine’ is subtitled, ‘The Autobiography of a Ktistec Machine.’ The Ktistec is a sentient computer named Epikt, created by a team of eccentrics working for a private foundation, the Institute for Impure Science. Two of their great projects have already failed: Thin Water and the Love Essence. Now, a third and ultimate project of the team is to find the shape of the universe and set up a liaison with it. Epikt succeeds, Easterwine is arrived at, and the project is another failure. Given all that is found out, does it matter by then?

‘The Devil is Dead’ is a widely rambling tale of Finnegan versus Papadiabolous. Fantastic things sometimes occur, though it’s set in the mundane modern world. Halfway through, the story seems to reach a climax and then change course. Finnegan had been sailing on a yacht with Papa Devil and his cohorts, and then they try to overthrow a third world nation. Finnegan steals their money and spends the second half of the novel fleeing, enjoying himself, or occasionally attacking those cohorts. It seems to ramble, bringing in hints of plots to destroy humanity, recessive Neanderthal bloodlines, and a final confrontation at the end. True to his trickster name, Finnegan is about to give us a final ending but we’ll never know. If the world didn’t end then, I guess he won that round. No he didn’t; it was the poem Miss Doll threw into the crack in the ground on the last page. Makes sense? Read it to enjoy it, not for any linear plot. The most colorful characters you will never meet put in the briefest of cameos, walking out of the folk motif catalog and mixing in traces of the most mythic story sidelines. The constant decoration of these characters and unfollowed plots gives an exotic sense to it all.

Speaking of exotic: ‘Annals of Klepsis’ is about a planet ruled by “pirate royalty.” All current fans of pirates should enjoy this, although there are no cutlass battles aboard sailing ships (there is a teleporting sailing ship). Klepsis is the pirate planet of the four suns and seventeen planets with humans on them. Apocalypse approaches according to the machinations of the Doomsday Equation. In the meantime, a visiting historian marries a princess, goes to a barbecued whale festival, gets caught in a popular rebellion and palace coup. And there’re pirate ghosts who ring bells in their towers of the old castle. Yarrrr.

‘And Walk Now Gently Through the Fire’ is exceptional since it is post-apocalyptic. Civilization wound down not with a bang but a drug-addled whimper, and the world has depopulated. On the Dakota plains, Judy Thatcher and her two kids wander, in psychic contact with their herd of feral cattle. She is one of ‘The Twelve’ leaders of the dispersed Christian churches. The word “Christian” never appears in this story but the intent is clear: the people are called “Queer Fish.” Lafferty’s point is that even if the world “ends”, religion will survive and renew the world. This is a 31-page story in an anthology on the theme of biology and religion. Of course some of Lafferty’s people have a few psi powers to cope with the world. This story isn’t tall-tale humor, but it’s as lyrical.

‘Apocalypses’ consists of two unrelated novelettes. ‘Where Have You Been, Sandaliotis?’ is about a new landmass that appears off the coast of Corsica, triggering a frenzy of real estate speculation in the world economy. When the land proves illusive and vanishes, the residents must scramble for safety. Not to mention the economic consequences, but how believable is it that the world’s economy could be wrecked by real estate speculation? Maybe Lafferty was just too silly to be indulged sometimes, and that was just a side issue. The main storyline is about secret agent-detective Constantine Quiche trying to save the world from a 300-mile long antimatter bomb in the sky, possibly connected to Sandaliotis. James Bond on Atlantis?

The other novelette is ‘The Three Armageddons of Enniscorthy Sweeny.’ It is about a man whose darkest operas become the tragedies of world history. He caused both world wars and the Great Depression. Will his unfinished work cause World War Three? Mathematician Elton Quartermass is trying to stop him. Again, maybe this story is just too silly. Who could believe that opera would have an influence towards world war?

Both stories cite Fortean paranormal effects and eccentric mathematics, in Lafferty’s mix of power-beyond-mundane science. Such traits kept him in the science fiction fold while making his

(Cont’d on page 13)

Musty

(Cont'd from page 12)

analogies of the spiritual crises in the world. What is apocalypse but the ultimate spiritual crisis? In the real world, it has a physical expression too. Lafferty was a master at showing both sides of the crisis, in a charming and often humorous style, yet with the deadliest purpose. ~~ **M.L. Fringe**

A Time of Changes
Robert Silverberg
Orb Trade Paperback, \$14.95; 304 pp.

This is a re-release of Silverberg's attempt at writing about a society that has attempted to remove all thoughts of self. People were not supposed to think or speak of the first person and indeed to use the words I or me was foulness in the extreme. While he was largely successful, I found much to be implausible. If you were to remove the self as an acceptable topic/subject then substituting the use of "one" should be just as objectionable.

The story is a bit dry and while some exposition about the character is necessary, I think telling his life story was a little too much. I had to start this book seven times before I could finally get through it. He has written better stuff and should have had them reprint one of them.

I cannot recommend reading this unless you are one of his most die-hard fans (and maybe not even then).

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

Spindoc
by Steve Perry
Ace, \$4.99, 262pp

Silk is a spindoc. It's his job to take unfavorable events related to the Port of Maui and spin it in a way to make his employer look good, or at least not responsible for any tragedy that develops in their area of responsibility. We call them lawyers and politicians, but apparently in the future it represents a respectable job.

Depard King is a freelance agent. He is older and used to work for Terran Security; at least, until he was fired. Now he is pursuing something that will allow him to retire in style.

Zia Re'lanj is an off-worlder spy. She is looking to intercept a package. In this case the package is another off-worlder that has fled to Earth. His home planet wants him back. She is to find him and return him to E2 alive, or kill him and hide the body where no one can find it again.

The vast majority of the story takes place on Earth in the year 2118. It is considered overpopulated with six and a half billion residents. A previous plague has wiped out a large number of the animal species. The toxic atmosphere of the past has created a more environmen-

tally conscious society. There is also a planet-wide weapons ban in place.

Silk's idyllic tropic island existence is disrupted when his "contracted", the futuristic term for a spouse, is killed. Working for Off-world Quarantine, which holds visitors to Earth until they can be declared plague-free, she is killed by Depard King when she refuses to give him what he wants.

And what is it that Depard wants? We don't know and don't really find out until almost the end of the book. However, it entails chasing Silk around in the hopes of getting it.

Perry relies heavily on futuristic slang to establish the setting. If you like the language to put you in the proper mood, then this will appeal to you. He is also good at providing visuals for his scenes. His writing is mentally graphic; making it easy to picture what is going on.

If there is a theme for this story it would have to be: Sex Conquers All. There appears to be no motivation and no frame of mind which will allow the characters of this story to resist an invitation for sex. The only character not primarily driven by, or at least easily distracted by, sex is Depard and he substitutes it with violent urges for revenge.

I thought the book had a few weak points, but none of them may affect your ability to enjoy reading Spindoc. The first of these being Silk as the main character. Although I didn't do a word count, it seemed as if he receives the least amount of page time in the story. Which may be for the best as he has no real goal or motivation in the story; he is mainly there to be acted upon by the other two characters in the story.

Secondly, it felt as if Perry had half a story here. The first half of the book spins its wheels without getting very far. There are plenty of scenes with the characters moving around and giving us their inner monologue, but precious little interaction. The story didn't really start moving until nearly half-way through when Depard's and Zia's goals collide. It wasn't until then that the story grabbed my attention.

Then there is the matter of the title and this is a minor point, to be sure. When I read the back cover I expected our illustrious spindoc to be using his media skills to some great effect against the forces of evil. But alas, he did not. For all the difference it made to the story he could have been a cleaning technician. But who's going to buy a sci-fi book called Janitor?

On the plus side, the book has an exciting finish. I enjoyed the two spies trying to outwit one another and all of the action that ensues as a result of it.

Perry is the author of fifty plus books, including two Aliens books which I thoroughly enjoyed. He also has an impressive amount of writing credits in graphic novels, television, and screen-

plays. So feel free to disagree my impression of this book. ~~ **Randy Lindsay**

Warbots
By G. Harry Stine
Pinnacle Books, \$4.50, 476pp

Warbots takes a hard look at the future of warfare, namely the increasing use of drones on the battlefield. The use of man-guided machines to take the fight to the enemy without exposing our own troops to weapons fire is examined in this piece of fiction. Can the soldier's presence ever really be removed out of harm's way? And if you read this book you can find out what Mr. Stine thought about it.

Orient Express Flight Seven is hijacked by terrorists out of Iran. One-hundred and seventy hostages are held in an undisclosed location for an exorbitant ransom of \$10 million dollars each. The Imam has threatened to torture a hostage to death each day that his demands are not met. And to show that he's serious he starts with victim number one.

Captain Curt Carson leads the robot infantry company of Carson's Companions. This branch of the military link into the futuristic war-machines and direct them in battle conditions. Being able to instantly switch between units allows them to control multiple combat robots at once. Even though this advanced technology has taken them physically off the battlefield, it has not removed soldiers from the possibility of death. Having a robot destroyed out from under you creates enough system shock to kill a person. Even worse, it leaves some in a permanent vegetative state.

Carson's Companions are in the middle of military training exercises when the call comes in for them to assemble. This provides us an opportunity to see them at work under ideal conditions and against other robotic units. I really enjoyed this part of the book.

However, their situation will be far from ideal. Their regiment, the Washing-

ton Grays, will be conducting the rescue operation in the Zahedan section of Iran. With little intelligence on what they will be facing they rush forward to rescue the hostages before too many more of the hostages can be tortured to death. This hurried approach results in all of the expected problems developing during the mission: not enough troops, not enough equipment, and component failure of the equipment they do have. All of it adds up to a mission that will test Capt. Carson's leadership skills to the limit.

Interestingly, the Zahedan troops have a religious intolerance of technology, with most of them relying on bows and swords for their weaponry. This, in a way, sets up a man vs. machine scenario, or at least a match against high-tech and low-tech approaches to war. You'll have to read the book if you want to find out how those match ups turn out.

Overall, I enjoyed seeing the robotic infantry in action and Stine work with the themes he has chosen. My only complaint is that I didn't feel that there was a real resolution with the villains of the story, who are free to plan their evil plans in future books. But then, that could be a good thing too; how good would Star Wars have been if they got rid of Vader in the first film?

G. Harry Stine is known as the father of model rocketry. He founded the NAR. There are several books in the Warbot series, and he also wrote Science Fiction under the pseudonym of Lee Correy. Under his own name he wrote a regular science column for Astounding / Analog.
~~ **Randy Lindsay**

In Our Book

Darkborn
by Alison Sinclair
ROC, \$15, 348pp

This is refreshingly different.
And I so didn't expect it. From the cover I thought the novel was going to deal with creatures of the night: vampires, werewolves, what-have-you.

So wrong.
In the world Sinclair has created (called Imogene's Land) there are two kinds of people: those that can tolerate daylight, the Lightborn and those that can only tolerate the night, the Darkborn. They were once the same people but 500 or so years previously there was this outrageous mage war—and the survivors were Cursed. So half the people can only come out at night and the other half can only tolerate daylight. If either goes out when they shouldn't; they are reduced to ash. And this includes mingling inside buildings lighted or not.

Both have eyes. But one set of people have an extra bundle of nerves around their (sightless) eyes that allow them to "sonn" (a kind of very refined sonar, I assume).

And the twain don't meet. They live side-by-side (uneasily) and even have

careful precautions in place when they might have to intermingle (disasters, emergencies, etc.)

But of course, this is a tale about when something changes. There is actually a third set of life forms that remain from the hellacious mage war and they are called the Shadowborn who are *usually* deformed misanthropes. And who are *usually* contained by the Borders.

This arrangement is all beginning to fall apart.

Sinclair's tale starts when a kind-hearted Darkborn physician Dr. Balthasar Hearne takes in a high-class woman about to give birth. She is affianced to a high born lord—and these children (twins) are not his.

And the story really gets rolling when a couple of days later the doctor is beaten to within an inch of his life by thugs who are looking for the babies—children Balthasar thinks are Sighted—and able to live in a Darkborn world. The mother drugged him and disappeared. The babies, according to his plan, were taken by Balthasar's sister (also a physician) and hidden.

Balthasar's wife Telmaine (who was out in the country with their two daughters) comes home just as the assailants are leaving. And one of their daughters is kidnapped to be used as leverage against Balthasar.

Of course there is more to the kidnapping than just political maneuvering or simple blackmail. The novel escalates in a compelling manner as it rushes to the end (there will be two more books of course). I didn't want to put it down. The setting is fascinating—a mixture of Victorian-flavored fantasy with a little soupcon of steampunk. There is elegance and parties and people who lead double lives. Besides Balthasar, Telmaine Hearne and the intriguing Baron Ishmael di Studier (a man working for the reigning Darkborn Duke in charge of a sort of secret service) develop into complex, intense characters.

This tale is well-written and clever and more than worth the price. My only caveat is it took me quite a number of pages to pick up the rhythm of the story and I was confused at first by the "sonning" the characters did.

Now I am just sorry I have to wait until 2010 to read the next book. ~~ Sue Martin

Enclave
by Kit Reed
Tor Books, \$25.95, 366 pp

What begins as a ferocious satire becomes a tribute to resiliency and the spirit of *Semper Fi*. Sargent Whitmore is a marine veteran of numerous wars in a time when many people truly believe it's the end of days. Part guardian, part con man, and in search of personal redemption, Sarge has started a school for the notorious children of the rich and famous. Ostensibly, this isolated enclave on Mount Clothos will be a Noah's Ark to keep these precious darlings safe through the world's death throes; but Sarge knows that some parents will pay any price to get certain embarrassing offspring out of the public eye. "Killer" Stade a 12-year-old hacker who used explosives to off one of his teachers – he never told anyone that the creep was a pederast. Teddy's a younger-son European prince who has grand mal seizures that cast a dangerous shadow on the royal blood. Zander/Alexandra Birch is an unhappy trannie. Sylvie and her posse are the girls who are famous for being infamous, and with references to hotel fortunes, movie roles, scandals, multiple marriages and shaved heads, it's fairly obvious who served as inspiration for these characters. 100 kids are herded onto a mountaintop into a fortified former monastery, with no access to the internet, or outside communications of any kind.

Except Killer figures Sarge has to have a private link to the outside world, and he is determined to find it; and the last Benedictine resident on the mountain never mentions what killed all the former monks; and Sarge recruited all his permanent staff from the ranks of the desperate, and not all of them are reliable.

Killer and Teddy inadvertently let a

monster virus infect the computer base, just as a plague is carried up from the catacombs. Now they are truly isolated, unless Killer can turn his skills to practical use against a binary enemy; and they'll die in droves unless the alcoholic doctor climbs out of his bottle.

The huge surprise of *Enclave* is the author. Kit Reed is not the 26-year-old marine I expected to see after reading five chapters and flipping to the bio-pic on the dust jacket, but a New England lady with parchment skin and eyes that are a Venn diagram of *sharp* and *wise*. She must have picked up her street slang from her students. She has previously been nominated for both the World Fantasy Award and the James Tiptree Award. ~~ Chris Paige.

The Spy Who Haunted Me
by Simon R. Green
Penguin, \$24.95, 400 pp

This is the third book in the *Secret History* series of novels that follow the adventures of Eddie Drood, aka Shaman Bond. Eddie is a member of the Drood family, which is more an agency than a family. The family takes care of threats that can potentially harm humans and are hated by the underworld. .

Eddie was a field agent in London who is now in charge of the entire Drood family.

In this installment, the greatest spy in the world is dying and has set up a contest to see who will become heir to all his secrets. Eddie is one of six contestants chosen by Alexander King to solve the greatest mysteries of the world, from the Loch Ness monster to Roswell, and he is playing to learn a very important secret... the identity of the traitor in the Drood family.

This book stands alone well but I will be looking for the first two in the series. And yes, this title and the others, are a parody of James Bond titles. ~~ Stephanie L Bannon

Storm From The Shadows
by David Weber
Baen Books, \$27.00, 755 pp

This monstrous creation partially overlaps the action in *At All Costs* and fills in some things not described in that book. The reader who has read that book needs to be aware of this or confusion will ensue. Readers of the series will find the new volume of considerable interest. New readers who have not been over-exposed to Weber will enjoy it hugely.

Michelle Henke, newly returned from being prisoner of war in the *Republic of Haven*, is assigned to command the Manticoran forces in the Talbott Cluster which is now part of the newly created *Star Empire of Manticore*. The story covers in excruciating complex detail

(Cont'd on page 15)

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In Our Book (Cont'd from page 14)

how Henke acts to prevent the Solarians from expanding their influence in the cluster. The story is quite gripping, the characters well-developed and interesting. Reviewing it well was difficult because of the number of characters and the complexity of the action. Suffice to say that readers who have enjoyed watching Weber steal from history and borrow the names of authors and fans for characters will love this book. Recommended. ~~ **Gary L. Swaty**

Angels' Blood
by **Nalini Singh**
Penguin, \$7.99, 368 pp

Ms. Singh has what seems to be a completely new theory on the creation of Vampires. She puts a fresh idea out into a market which is sadly in need of new ideas. This said, I have to go on to say that at first it seemed as if this were going to be just another story about a vampire-hunting, tuffer-than-nails woman who can take on the world with only a small blade in hand and win. However, the story eventually "got" me, so instead of tossing the book in disgust, I finished it. I'm glad I did. Now, if you are married to the idea that Angels are ethereal creatures full of grace and above worldly concerns, this is NOT the book for you. These Angels have Substance. There were some expected plot twists, but the ending took a turn that I was not expecting, which is always nice. I do appreciate a book I am not able to completely predict. All-in-all, this book gets high recommendations from both myself and my Mother. ~~ **Nyki Robertson**

Moon Burn
by **Alisa Sheckley**
Ballantine Books, \$15.00, 358 pp

Witty, funny, and sexy, *Moon Burn* is a winning, arrr-rousing example of furry fantasy. It's a sequel to *The better to Hold You*, but unlike some sequels, it never leaves you at a loss, because the author gives a good précis in the first chapter or so, before digging deeply into the new story.

Abra Barrow is a veterinarian and a recently turned lycanthrope, living in Northside, a small town outlying New York City. Northside is a good place for a lycanthrope; it is situated on a supernatural fault line, so the inhabitants don't turn a hair at shape-shifters or other uncanny manifestations. On the other hand, they do get upset when their prize dogs breed with wolves – or worse, coyotes. So there's enough work to keep an animal doctor very busy.

Whereas Abra's transformations are controlled by phases of the moon, her lover Red Mallin is a true shape-shifter, able to morph into a wolf more or less at

will. He is another caretaker of animals, dealing with the wild ones while Abra tends to the domesticated. Red also monitors the supernatural boundaries, so when a Bear Spirit gets disturbed by a new upscale housing development, Red is the first to notice – but by no means the last. Abra has her own run-ins with Bruin, and it nearly costs her life.

But Bruin is pleasant and civil compared to Abra's not-quite-ex husband Hunter and his paramour, Magda. Both are werewolves – Hunter had turned Abra after being turned and claimed by Magda. They are mean and manipulative, and go to extreme lengths to sabotage Abra's relationship with Red. The fact that Abra is going into heat for the first time since her changeover makes her very susceptible. It also makes her irresistible to most males – and a few females. She makes an ill-timed visit to Manhattan to confer with a friend and starts a full-scale pheromone-driven riot.

Abra is trying to sort through her ambivalent relationships with her lover, her husband, and her boss while the Manitou spirits are reclaiming their old territory. Townsfolk who used to worry about mongrel pups now find their ornamental lap dogs evolving into full-throated wolves, while housecats are becoming cougars and pumas. It comes to a showdown between the arcane powers of the Manitou and the mere weirdness of shapechangers, an empath, the three grey sisters of Greek mythology, and a sheriff with a significant tattoo on his forehead who likes to impersonate John Wayne.

Action-packed as this book is, primarily it is a story about Changes. Abra is a very different person by the end of the book. That in itself makes this an uncommonly satisfying, gratifying book to read. I also liked that so many of the secondary characters, including Abra's mother and her friend Lilliana, are fully as interesting as the protagonists.

The reader learns a wealth of information about wolves in the course of reading this adventuresome romp, as well as a thing or two about entities most of us only encounter in fairy tales. Sheckley's skill as a writer is such that you wonder if maybe they are more than merely fictional... Strongly recommended. ~~ **Chris Paige**

Blue Diablo
By **Ann Aguirre**
Roc, \$6.99, 316 pp

Ann Aguirre, author of *Grimspace*, has ventured into new territory. I would call it a novel of magic and the occult involving as it does spells, curses, Finding, out of body experiences etc. Corinne Solomon is a Finder. Given an object she can experience traumatic events associated with them. Her Ex-Lover, Chance, had exploited this talent

in spite of the pain it brought Corinne. She left him and was running an antique shop in Mexico City. Chance comes to her and asks her to help find his mother who has been taken away by persons unknown. Corrine agrees because she knows and loves his Korean mother, Yi Min-chin. The hunt begins with Corinne's handling of Min's pewter pocket Buddha which she left behind at the scene of her disappearance.

The story is rich with many interesting characters. The mad fanatical murderer who Chance and Corinne had sent to prison arrived to help saying he had been sent by God to aid them in destroying great evil. Chuch, a retired Arms dealer, and Eva his wife help them. Soldana, a local Loreda cop joins their group. An aristocratic British psychic based in London does out-of-body scouting for them.

First they take out an enemy sorcerer who ensorcells Eva and Chuch and the

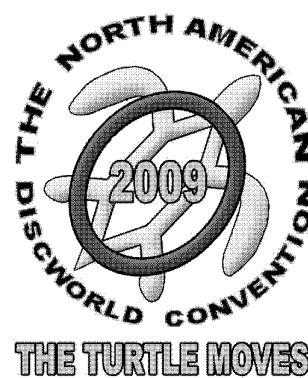
group locates Montoya, drug cartel man who is behind it all. Even Soldana joins their vigilante expedition into Mexico.

The story is well-paced and holds your attention from beginning to end. Recommended. I hope she writes more with this character. She has another Sirantha Jax/Grimspace novel coming out in October. ~~ **Gary L. Swaty**

Deathwish
by **Rob Thurman**
Roc, \$7.99, 336 pp

The previous books in this series are *Nightlife*, *Moonshine*, and *Madhouse*, but don't let not having read them stop you from picking up *Deathwish*. Thurman does a fine job of bringing a new reader up to speed and or into the know/now. This was my first Thurman novel; it won't be my last. Everything from the Dedication to the About the Author got a

(Cont'd on page 16)



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Discworld is a trademark of Terry Pratchett

firm grip on my attention.

Cal and Nikos Leandros are half-brothers who run a detective and body-guard agency in Manhattan, where vampires, werewolves, ratmen, peris and pucks are commonplace. Their best friend is none other than Robin Goodfellow, who considers it a lucrative art form to teach humans to not be gullible in matters of used car sales or games of poker. Niko's girlfriend is a vampire named Promise; Cal has broken up with his girlfriend Georgina, partly because he hopes the separation will protect her, partly because a psychic girlfriend can be disconcerting; but he has a friends-with-benefits relationship with Delilah, a werewolf who works as a bouncer.

Cal is only half-human, the result of a breeding experiment on the part of the monstrous Auphe, who are like the creatures out of *Alien* with the ability to gate between worlds, intent on making Earth their buffet table. Unfortunately for Cal, nobody, not even the werewolf mafia, likes the Auphe, and a half-Auphe is about as popular as a carrier of Ebola. Unfortunately for the Auphe, Cal and Niko are very good at taking out monsters, so good in fact that the Auphe are on the verge of extinction. The remaining Auphe now have a double-agenda: claim Cal as one of their own, and destroy all his ties to the human world by killing anyone close to him.

But even when you are fighting for your life, you still need to eat and pay the rent.

What starts out as a simple bodyguard job turns into a deadly triangle, like a classic *film noir*. Promise got them the job, but she and the artist they are guarding, a vampire named Seamus, have a history; and while for Promise that history is firmly in the past tense, Seamus sees it as progressive, and Niko as an obstacle. Now Cal wants to protect his brother from more than just murderous Auphe, and which is the worse threat, Seamus or Promise: violence or betrayal?

There's lots more, including a guardian of the Amazon forests who shows up in Manhattan, but I really don't want to spoil the surprises. I strongly recommend *Deathwish*, for its blend of snarky dialogue, martial arts, complex plotting, and supernatural cast of characters. The action is told from two perspectives, as Cal and Niko alternate narratives. They have very different viewpoints and voices, and there are things that one brother either *cannot* or *will* not say, but the other does. My only complaint is that Thurman's narrative voice is occasionally repetitive.

The author brings the story arc to a thoroughly satisfying conclusion, whether this means an end to the series or simply a hiatus; either way, the next Thurman

fantasy will have a new protagonist and setting: a Las Vegas bar owner named Trixa Iktomi. *Trick of the Light* looks to be a good mix of Trickster and apocalyptic storytelling, from this trickster-author. With luck, we'll get to review it in the next issue. ~~ **Chris Paige**

**Flight into Darkness:
Book Two of the Alchymist's Legacy
by Sarah Ash
Bantam Spectra, \$24, 432 pp**

A riveting, full-bodied end to a tale really begun four books ago in the first book of the Tears of Artamon trilogy, "Lord of Snow and Shadow." This was, as they say, a rousing finish, a compelling string of increasingly intense events that lead to a very satisfying finish. And actually, a really charming romance.

The novel focuses on singer Celestine de Joyeuse and her companion/accompanist Jagu de Rustephan who are secretly agents of the Commanderie of Francia. Caught up in the machinations of empires and plans of their own, their story starts as these two go all the way to the far north of the Rossiyan Empire to retrieve the staff of St. Sergius in hopes it will prevent the Drakhaouls (demons in dragon form who can hosted by humans strong enough) from sweeping out the Realm of Shadows and destroying both the world of the living and the dead.

It's a big order and just the beginning of tons of treachery and deception, horror and finally hope in their struggles and travels to fix what went so horribly wrong in the Tears of Artamon trilogy.

Ash's writing is so vivid and strong and I love her characters. We really get to know Celestine and Jagu—and discover the depths of their personalities. Loads of secrets and surprising connections between disparate people are revealed. And what I liked best of all is that the conclusion is gratifying after having read the four other books.

This was a great series. I am hoping the author will find more stories to tell us about this fascinating world. ~~ **Sue Martin**

**Countdown
by Greg Cox
Ace Trade Paperback, \$15.00, 336 pp**

Well, first I'd like to say I mostly enjoyed the book, that said - I did find a number of problems that made it hard for me to completely immerse myself in it. The first was time, maybe I missed the day when DC explained how people could fly at multiples of the speed of light off Earth but be limited to below the speed of sound on Earth. And time in another manner, how come we can have a novelization of a movie that comes out simultaneously with the movie but we have to wait almost a year for the

novelization of a comic event?

The book has adequately captured the flavor of the comics but it serves to point out the flaws in the comic as well. From the minor a "cop killer" from Gotham not being arrested when she asked for assistance from the authorities in Metropolis, to the major, a costumed superhero flying to the other side of the universe in days/hours (it doesn't really say). I don't mind setting aside my disbelief for a good story but there are limits, I expect the story to follow its own rules and not ignore them when they are inconvenient.

I was glad to see some of the minor characters get more attention and some better fleshing out. However, I think the handling of Mary Marvel borders on overkill. There seemed to be a point made with all the class of toilet humor in church. Yes in reality power corrupts, but in the DC universe it has been shown repeatedly that that isn't true there. Mary Marvel didn't need to be so abused by the writers.

1.5 out of 5 stars ~~ **Bob LaPierre**

**Skinwalker
by Faith Hunter
Roc, \$7.99, 320 pp**

Jane Yellowrock hunts rogue vampires for a living. She has been hired by Katherine Fonteneau, madam of Katie's Ladies and one of the oldest vampires in New Orleans, to hunt down the rogue vampire that has been terrorizing New Orleans by eating and killing tourists, cops and vampires. Jane has a secret of her own - she is a skinwalker with the ability to change into any animal she wants she uses her talents as a skinwalker to track the vampires. But her past is a mystery to her as she remembers little of her life before she walked out of the mountains at age 12, naked and unable to speak or understand English. New Orleans will be a revelation to Jane as she learns that not all vampires are bad and finds clues to her past.

This was a good quick read. The characters are interesting, even the peripheral ones such as Tom, Katie's blood servant and Leo, the blood master of New Orleans. They are fully-fleshed characters with hints of mysteries in all their pasts. I look forward to the next installment in the series in which we will, hopefully, learn more about Jane, Katie and Molly, Jane's witch friend as well as vampire and other supernatural creatures and their origins. Recommended ~~ **Stephanie L Bannon**

**The Turning Tide:
A Novel of Crosspointe
By Diana Pharaoh Francis
Roc, \$7.99, 399 pp**

This is the third novel of Crosspointe. In this, we find Crosspointe threatened more by misguided skulduggery from within. King William, in an effort to counter the very real external threats, makes Machiavellian decisions which divide Prince Ryland and Shaye who have always supported the monarchy. Additionally, Shaye's Uncle Nicholas and the King's Chancellor are plotting to overthrow the King and place the Chancellor on the thrown.

This novel has Romance (Shaye and Fairlie: Captain Plusby and Nia) and Evil Skulduggery with the King's effort to transform Fairlie into that rarest of Magical Workers, the Magical-Compass Maker. This involves exposing her to dangerous magical forces which more often than not turn a person into a mindless monster.

The assignment goes to Ryland who agrees to obey the King's command in spite of his lifelong friendship with Fairlie and Shaye. The Fat is in the Fire. The deed is done and Shaye rebels and escapes the King's Magical containment and seeks Fairlie. Before it is over, the Magicars' fortress is destroyed, the King is dead and much work must be done to save the Kingdom. Recommended. ~~ **Gary L. Swaty**

**MythOS
by Kelly McCullough
Ace Books, \$7.99, 304 pp**

If you are tired of vampires, werewolves, and empowered females behaving badly in pseudo-historical settings, you might be pleasantly surprised, delighted even, by *MythOS*, a hacker's take on Greek and Norse mythology. This is one for the gamers, computer nerds, and mythology fen. And that's all of us, isn't it? One way or another?

The protagonist, Ravirn, usually inhabits and hacks in a universe where the Greek myths are the One True Reality – in fact, he is a descendant of Lachesis, one of the three Fates. For reasons that remain inscrutable, the goddess Necessity, who the Greeks, by the way, referred to as 'harsh necessity' (*αναγκη* shares a root with *anguish* and *angst*), has sent Ravirn to an alternate Norse reality. Seeing how several Greek deities want Ravirn dead, Necessity might be doing him a favor. On the other hand, she may be throwing him to the wolves. Or, possibly, she sent him to disrupt the predeterminism of Norse mythology with its inevitable progression to Ragnarok, the last battle in which the gods them-

In Our Book (Cont'd from page 16)

selves, and all their champions, (living, dead, and undead), *everybody* dies a final time. In any case, Ravirn finds himself petitioned by both opposing sides, by Odin *and* by Loki, Order and Chaos personified, to do something to avert their doom.

Ravirn had slept through most of his mythology classes, so he is at a loss until he realizes that these deities have their counterparts in the familiar ones of home. At the same time, he is perceptive enough to realize that the differences may be even more significant than the similarities between, say, Zeus and Thor, or Ares and Tyr. Ravirn is especially intrigued by local differences in primal chaos, the stuff from which all existence derives, and the programming languages of computer networks that the Aesir employ. Chaos is the direct source of his power, as well as his regenerative abilities, and Ravirn finds himself much more vulnerable in this new reality. Then the operating system poses a serious challenge to his hacking skills. The most important variable is that in his world, AIs give computer systems a soul, complete with personality, while the MimirNet is the sole – and soulless – functioning system in the nine worlds of Norse reality.

The supporting cast of characters is fantastic. The Fury Tisiphone accompanies Ravirn, and his sidekick is a net-goblin named Melchior. Like Ravirn, both Tisiphone and Melchior find their powers are muted in the Norse alternate reality, where they meet the aforementioned gods, plus Loki's sons: the Fenris wolf and the Midgard Serpent, and Odin's ravens, Thought and Memory – Ravirn's counterparts. McCullough has a fresh take on all the gods and 'monsters.' Additionally, he brings Tyr's severed hand to life *a la* Thing from *The Addams Family*.

Can Ravirn the Trickster introduce an element of Lucretian swerve to the Norse myths, or will he get devoured by the Midgard Serpent, killed by Tyr, caught by Odin's Wild Hunt, or die in a systems crash while he's hacking the net?

I enjoyed this book so much; I promptly bought its predecessors: *WebMage*, *Cybermancy*, and *CodeSpell*, which explain how Ravirn got to be so very unpopular with his home gods. ~~
Chris Paige



Bring Down the Sun by Judith Tarr TOR Books, \$14.95, 220pp

This semi-historical fantasy from Ms. Tarr deals with the mother of Alexander the Great.

A young, high-ranking priestess from Epiros follows her destiny and after a dance full of symbolism and ritual, marries Philip of Macedon (becoming one of several wives—history said she was his fourth wife). And she is no ordinary woman, but one with great inherent energy/powers. Powers she has only been roughly trained to use for a Goddess who is vaguely named the Mother in a landscape that is faintly Greek. Two snakes are her constant companions, yet they do little except symbolize the goddess' favor. This woman also goes through three names: Polyxena, Myrtale and finally, Olympias.

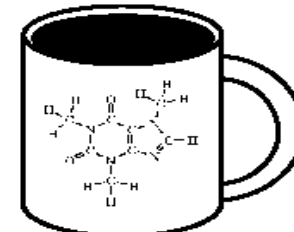
The tale is thin and full of generalities. I am a huge fan of Tarr's novels and was disappointed with this compact story. She tells us a lot but with not enough detail. Even the book's big confrontation at the end with the witches of Thessaly had only moderate tension. I hate saying this but this was a bland, uninteresting book and I was grateful it was short. ~~
Sue Martin

In The Stormy Red Sky By David Drake Baen Books, \$25.00, 378 pp

This is the seventh book in the Lieutenant Leary series. Leary has been given command of the misconfigured cruiser Milton and sent on a milk run delivering an ambassador to the friendly government of The Hedgemony in the Veil Cluster. But a change of government is in effect and the new government is not friendly. Major skullduggery is afoot. The Hedgemony is in bed with Cinnabars main foe, The Alliance. Leary must act fast on several fronts to avert the destruction of his beloved Republic of Cinnabar.

The formulaic pattern of this series could cause it to be dull reading were it not for the complex characters developed for the stories and the excellent writing. Chief among the characters are Daniel Leary himself and his Signals Officer, Adele Mundy. So instead of just having an excellent fun adventure story, you get wonderful character interaction as well.

Leary ends up righting wrongs done on a secret colony and in the process acquiring the troops he needs to foil the Alliance Forces. The story is a quick fun read. I recommend it highly. ~~
Gary L. Swaty



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A Grey Moon Over China by Thomas A. Day Tor Books, \$24.95, 411 pp

This is a tough but ultimately very rewarding blend of dystopic vision, hard (technological) and soft (psychological) SF, apocalyptic quotations, and innovative ways for things to go wrong, wrong, wrong.

Mr. Day has an extraordinary background; according to his bioblurb he's been a night cargo pilot, a senior manager in aerospace industry, and a software developer for artificial intelligence. It takes at least three of his main characters to represent the range of his experiences. His writing style is a bit like Heinlein at his darkest (think *Farnham's Freehold* without the weird Freudian stuff); while his recourse to depth psychology is reminiscent of Ursula LeGuin. Not a bad combination.

The protagonist is Eduardo Torres, who in 2027 is an 18-year-old warrant officer, conscripted at age 14 by what's left of the United States and trained in the Technical Warfare School for dirty ops. China is the dominant world power. Earth is a place of desertification, drought, famine, wars, and floods, and a population of 7 billion. During a sweep and seize mission on an island in the Pacific, Torres finds and steals an invention, a battery that can run for decades and power vehicles, planes, hospitals,

computer systems - or starships. Torres wants out, bad. Trouble is, while a torus has been built in the vicinity of Venus that could theoretically propel a spaceship across light-years in hours, the project was left unfinished, owing to lack of just about every essential resource. So there's no exit torus, and no destination.

Torres shares his find first with fellow Tech cadre, and then, carefully, with world powers in exchange for materials to build exploration drones, an exit torus, and other equipment. Mutual betrayal is the name of the game. The body count is in the tens of thousands before Torres' team and an uneasy consortium of colonists blast off for the Holtzein system. One of the few people Torres truly respects, Patel Madhu, tries to warn him that they will be taking with them the very horrors Torres hopes to escape. The last transmission they hear from Earth is by the BBC, informing them of the total destruction of the Amazon basin by fire and the projected collapse of a self-sustaining atmosphere. The announcer goes on to say, "We look upon the departing Enterprise spacecraft and the regional fleets in their wake, ... and understand that they may carry with them not only humankind's great dream of adventure, but our very seed as well. It is for that reason alone, and for none other, that I now wish them Godspeed."

This one has the potential for broad base appeal. There's lots of technology

In Our Book (Cont'd from page 17) and speculative science, including self-modifying intelligent machines that were *not* programmed with Asimov's Laws of Robotics, plenty of military action, rival planetary colonies, suspense, sabotage, well-plotted character conflicts and evolutions, and hope that transcends despair.

In the back of my mind, I kept contrasting this book with its antipodal opposite number, *Escape Velocity* by Christopher Stasheff. In both stories, a splinter group colonizes a distant system in defiance of global resistance. But whereas Stasheff's colonists are cheerful SCA members and fen, Day's characters are borderline psychopaths or desperate people with PTSD. And yet, some of these complex survivors find, or make, a better world than the one they escape, with the help, not of a *deus ex machina*, but *machinae ex deus*. When you're ready to put aside childish things, pick up *A Grey Moon Over China*. ~~ **Chris Paige**

Terribly Twisted Tales
Edited by Jean Rabe
and Martin H. Greenberg
Daw Fantasy, \$7.99, 303pp

Eighteen short stories, eighteen twists on traditional fairy tales, and for the first time in reviewing I can say honestly there isn't a dud in the bunch. Some few are difficult to recognize immediately, others are minor twists on very well-known tales. My absolute favorite is the final story, inserting Sherlock Holmes into the story of Red Riding Hood.

They are truly tales, most of them around ten or so pages, the longest about thirty. The writers have taken the time to make you think, the results are often unexpected, frequently sad but, never wrong. The endings fit these new versions of beloved tales, and I, for one, am glad they were written. The only problem with their brevity is you cannot really speak of the individual stories without giving away the premise.

Suffice it to say, I liked the takes on, the Little Match Girl, Pinocchio, Androcles and the Lion, and of course, Little Red Riding Hood.

5 out of 5 stars ~~ **Bob LaPierre**

The Enchantment Emporium
by Tanya Huff
Penguin, \$24.99, 368 pp

Alysha Gale has just been laid off from her museum job when she learns she has inherited her grandmother's junk store in Calgary. It seems straightforward enough until you factor in her unusual family - the women could best be called witches, the men have some unusual powers and the aunties oversee the entire family; so, with that in mind, it is hardly surprising her grandmother's junk shop

has some unusual clientele as well as some really special merchandise. Throw in a renegade sorcerer, some dragons on the hunt, a leprechaun shop assistant and the everyday entanglements of love, relationships and family squabbles and you have a delightful mix that will keep you turning page after page, eager to see what happens next. While this is listed as a standalone novel I can only hope Ms Huff relents and brings us more adventures with Alysha and her family. Highly recommended ~~ **Stephanie L Bannon**

Truancy Origins
by Isamu Fukui
Tor Books, \$17.95, 375 pp

The author, Isamu Fukui, is an 18-year-old senior at Stuyvesant High in NYC; already he is a better writer than many professionals two and three times his age. *Truancy Origins* is the prequel for Fukui's first book, *Truancy*, which he wrote when he himself was 15. His books are a revenge commentary on plutocracies, school systems and teenage existence.

Illegitimate twin boys, Umasi and Zen, are deposited on the figurative doorstep of the Mayor of Education City by their half-sister, who hates the very fact of their existence. The Mayor is paid off to raise them as his own, keep them out of the way, and out of trouble. But trouble just won't leave the brothers alone and they respond in kind.

At age 15, Umasi is the bookworm whom bullies love to corner and fellow-students despise as a "suck-up." Zen is his opposite: popular, charismatic, a dangerous fighter and indifferent student. The turning point comes in Chapter 6, when Umasi challenges their teacher's pronouncements in class, after she informs her students that albino children are unsuited for academics, and therefore unfit to live. By his defiance, Umasi gains unlooked-for status with his classmates, and he begins to realize the depths of his fury with the system and the lengths he will go to in order to effect a change.

Both brothers end up in full-throttle rebellion, but in opposite ways, and violence flares throughout Education City as Truant students and adult Enforcers fight turf wars to control minds and hearts. ~~ **Chris Paige**.

Secondhand Spirits
by Juliet Blackwell
Penguin, \$6.99, 313 pp

Lily Ivory is a natural witch who is uncomfortable with her power and thus has spent most of her life moving from place to place, never putting down roots or getting close to people until one day in a bar in Hong Kong a parrot named Barnabas told her to move to San Francisco. Lily goes to San Francisco and opens a vintage clothing store in the

Haight Ashbury district and begins to slowly put down roots; but someone with her power cannot go unnoticed. First Aidan Rhodes, male witch, shows up in her shop and gifts her with a familiar, Oscar (not a cat - this witch is allergic to cats). Then, on a visit to purchase some vintage clothing Lily and her client both hear the demon, La Llorona, a child disappears, a handsome reporter, Max Carmichael, shows up looking to debunk all things magical only to run smack dab into real magic, there is a murder, inheritance, suspicious police officers, voodoo, ghosts, brides, an attempt to save the missing child and vanquish the demon and, oh yes, learning to make friends and making sure her business is successful.

Ms Blackwell has presented a wonderful start to what is obviously going to be a series. I sat down to read a few chapters while dinner cooked and read the book in one sitting. The characters, even the supporting cast, are all interesting and while the story stands well on its own there are secrets hinted at concerning Lily, Aidan and Max that I hope we will learn more about in the next book, *A Cast Off Covenant*. I can only hope that it is published sooner than its June 2010 proposed date. Highly recommended ~~ **Stephanie L Bannon**

Faery Moon
by P.R. Frost
Daw, \$24.95, 353pp

Faery Moon is a continuation of the Tess Noncoire series of urban fantasies.

Tess Noncoire is a bestselling writer and a Celestial Blade Warrior guarding our world from demons from other dimensions. Her readers don't know her adventures are biographically based. Her partner in the fight to save humankind is a strange, gay, cigar-smoking rude, crude and cunning imp named Scrap who is devoted to Tess., and turns into the celestial blade as needed to save the world.

Tess is at a writers' conference in Las Vegas. She talks mom into coming along to help getting over the shock of finding her new husband [now deceased] was a Demon with a capitol D.

In Vegas they find the big show in town stars fairies - real ones enslaved and dying. Unless they can be returned to their homeland , their homeland may die as well. Meanwhile, the energy leaking from Faerie is unbalancing the other dimensions. Oh well, fighting demons and vampires beats writers block on most days

Tess' world is fun, full of action and conflicts. And highly addictive. I love my urban fantasy and this one will have me tracking the rest to fill out my collection. If you like Mercedes Lackey and Ann McCaffrey, here is an author you will want to collect.. See ya at the bookstore. ~~ **Pam Allan**

1942
by Robert Conroy
Ballantine Books, \$15.00, 358 pp

Alternative history usually diverges at a set point and keeps diverging, becoming more and more unlike our timeline. In *1942*, Conroy posits that Admiral Nagumo follows up the original air strike on Pearl Harbor with a raid that takes out the U.S. planes and oil storage tanks – as Yamamoto indeed ordered. The Japanese fleet, with its carriers, planes, and pilots, proceed to conquer the Hawaiian islands. But then our 'actual' timeline, or perhaps the author's patriotism, at once determined and determining, reasserts itself and orchestrates a return to historical homeostasis and an American victory in the Pacific.

Several factors sabotage the initial triumph of the Japanese military force. The historically accurate ones include the code of *bushido*, a kind of hubristic honor, that lead the highly trained and *irreplaceable* pilots to die with their planes because they refused to wear parachutes – even in defiance of direct orders. On the fictional side, a heroic army captain named Jake Novacek leads a guerilla resistance force of military irregulars, Hawaiian natives and Japanese Americans. He contrives to communicate with US forces on the mainland, arranging for supplies and personnel, eventually staging a multi-pronged uprising that reverses the fortunes of war. His work is made easier in several ways: the governing Japanese quickly lapse into self-indulgent behavior; and the more brutal ones, who clearly never read Machiavelli, arouse the hatred of the entire native population, provoking them to rebellion.

Along with all the action, there is an emerging love story between Jake and a young widow. Her harrowing experiences show the face of that war from the woman's perspective. Another love story happens on the mainland between a young officer, Jamie Priest, the sole survivor of the battleship *Pennsylvania*, and Sue Dunnigan, part of the San Diego team who monitors the Japanese coded transmissions. There is also a despicable traitor, a supply sergeant who had been embezzling funds before the war, and who the Japanese suborn as a double-agent. In fiction, at least, poetic justice is possible. In real life, this type of guy too often becomes a Pentagon fixture, a lobbyist, or a CEO.

As with any really good alternative history, actual historical personages and events are scattered throughout, and actual political pressures are described. One of the mini-storylines is Roosevelt's failing health, and the genuine horror his military advisors feel at the prospect of him dying and leaving vice-president Henry A. Wallace in charge. They may not like their Democratic president much, (Cont'd on page 19)

In Our Book (Cont'd from page 18)

but Wallace, who admires Stalin, would be their worst nightmare. Another story thread details an investigation into the failure of the Mark 14 torpedoes to detonate. Thousands of navy personnel, and millions of dollars' worth of submarines and destroyers were lost because they did not perform as advertised. Some nice detective and scientific work happens here.

Most WWII fiction focuses on the Atlantic front. Conroy has done an excellent bit of work presenting the Pacific side. ~ Chris Paige

Storm Front (Dresden Files Series #1)
by Jim Butcher, Ardian Syaf (Illustrator), Mark Powers (Adapted by)
Del Rey, \$22.95, 122pp

This is a beautiful illustrated graphic novel of the first story in the *Dresden Files* series by Jim Butcher. For those unfamiliar with the series, Harry Dresden is a wizard that the cops sometimes call on when a crime seems to involve magic. In *Storm Front*, Harry has been called upon to help investigate a brutal double murder that could only have been accomplished using black magic. He also takes a private case looking for a missing husband. As these two seemingly unrelated cases are investigated we learn more about Harry, magic, the supernatural universe and the depths that people will sink to in order to get what they want.

This is a wonderful, hardcover graphic novel in what I hope will become an adaptation of the entire Dresden Files series. It as if Ardian Syaf, the illustrator, looked into my mind and made real the visions I had while reading the book. I highly recommend the series by Jim Butcher and this wonderful illustrated adaptation. ~ Stephanie L Bannon

The Red Wolf Conspiracy
by Robert V.S. Redick
Del Rey, \$26.00. 445 pp

The Red Wolf Conspiracy is a debut novel and book one of the *Chathrand Trilogy*.

The Imperial Merchant Ship Chathrand is the last of her kind, the secrets of her construction long forgotten. Its vital mission to seal a peace between Arqual and its mortal enemy, the Mzithrin Empire. The offering of Thasha, the Ambassador's daughter in marriage seals the treaty. Thasha has no plans to wed. The true mission is a war that will unleash an all-consuming evil.

As the dark conspiracy unfurls, a lowly tarboy with an uncanny gift finds himself as an ally of Thasha and her protectors against the captain, the Emperor's assassin, and the enigmatic Dr. Chadfellow.. To complete the mission will take everything they have including a

most unusual heroic rat as the navigate the treacherous waters of intrigue,

Here we have Epic Fantasy. With Lilipution warriors, sentient rats, and archetypal Evil on a seven deck floating palace. It is an entertaining fast-paced high-seas adventure, part fantasy, part political intrigue, with a smattering of coming-of-age tale. What more can you ask from an adventure that brings back the classic to an innovative fantasy? I scent award nominations and a new stat on the fantasy horizon. Love that rat..... ~ Pam Allan.

Phantasm
by Phaedra Weldon
Ace Books, \$15.00,
360 pp

Phantasm is not so much a novel as an installment. It opens with the resolution of one cliff-hanger and ends with a new one, with a great deal of supernatural activity in between.

Zoe Martinique can travel across the planes when she goes out-of-body as a Wraith. Just when she needs her powers the most, she has lost them, and only a traumatic experience, like, say, dying, will bring her powers back. Zoe is willing to endure almost anything to save her mother from the Abysmal Plane, so she plays an existential game of dodge and attack with various entities and agencies who take an unhealthy interest in her. But it is hard to avoid or get a grip on the enemy within, when a disembodied enemy takes up residence in her. As for her own dark side, well, that's a whole other order of confrontation.

Phaedra Weldon is a young author, raised in the time of sound bytes, texting, and twitter. Her writing style is a product of these influences. So much is going on, so many characters are introduced on the fly, and so many explanations are imbedded in

dialogue interrupted by action, that the book is like a Buffy episode on speed. Readers need to be comfortable with a data blitzkrieg. ~ Chris Paige

Dragons Prefer Blondes:
A Caruthers Sisters Novel
by Candace Havens; Berkeley; \$14;
306pp

This is one in a series of novels about the demon-kicking Caruthers sisters. As the first sentence of the Prologue says: "Guardians protect earth from other

worlds." And the Caruthers sisters are Guardians (natch) who frequently take on dragons with attitudes. And of course these particular dragons morph into handsome, sleek human males.

"Dragons Prefer Blondes" focuses on one sister, Alex, an A Class party planner and world-wide night club owner. She's hounded by the paparazzi because of her wealth, popularity and front-page-hugging ability. And she's a high fashion babe, too. (There is plenty of brand-name dropping throughout the book). One of

(Cont'd on page 20)



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In Our Book (Cont'd from page 19)

the sub plots involves her helping a “poor little rich girl” with a heart of gold (of course) plan the wedding of the decade to the awesome Lord Huffington. The ups and downs with the changes of plans are rather fun.

But the heart of the story is Alex (and her sisters) trying to stop a flood of nasty dragons from another dimension taking over the earth. And to complicate things, a dragon lord (met in another novel) named Ginjin has decided that Alex will make him a perfect wife.

So fighting an influx of what could technically be her in-laws *could* make things a bit touchy.

Action is everywhere peppered with fun and snarky dialogue. Locales and fashion change with lightning speed. And Alex gets in trouble a lot. There is romance for our heroine in the heart of this tale—Alex falls for the gorgeous, buff Jake. He’s in charge of the Caruthers security team and worries about her safety constantly—with good reason.

I enjoyed this enough to keep an eye out for the rest of the books. This one was tasty and swift. ~~ Sue Martin

Winter Duty by E.E. Knight Roc, \$24.92, 352 pages

Winter Duty is the latest installment in the *Vampire Earth* series.

It is the year 2076 and earth is under the control of the Kurians, an alien race of vampires that came to earth over 50 years earlier. Some pockets of humans resist the invasion and these novels are the tale of their resistance.

Major David Valentine, our hero, is having a bad time of it right now. Winter is raging, allies are pulling out of the freedom struggle and as his forces retreat from a disastrous defeat he has to contend with both the Kurians decision to exterminate the entire region and the headhunters that kidnap entire villages to sell to the Kurians.

This is not a cheerful series but it is a compelling look at a bleak future and the various, very human ways, in which humanity deals with its fate. The characters are interesting and you end each novel with a desire to know “What happens next?” Recommended ~~ Stephanie L Bannon

The Strain by Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan William Morrow, \$26.99, 401 pp

The Strain is a collaboration between Film Director del Toro [*Pan's Labyrinth*] and Chuck Hogan, author of *the Prince of Thieves*. It is the first book of a projected trilogy.

A Boeing 777 lands on a runway at JFK, and stops dead on the Tarmac. The shades are down and communication can't be established. With the entire crew and passengers dead or nearly so, The CDC gets an immediate call. Quarantine is established. But only an aged pawnbroker in Spanish Harlem knows the answer to the threat to mankind; if anyone will believe him Eventually Dr. Eph Goodwinter does but the battle is on.

A top of the line thriller you won't want to put down, and by the end, sleeping may not be an option. But if you like vampires deadly and powerful, you will love this one. Get the plastic [and Garlic] out. Looks like an epic and movies await. ~~ Pam Allan

The Comet's Curse by Dom Testa Tor Books, \$16.95, 236 pp

With *The Comet's Curse*, Dom Testa has started a series aimed at adolescents, complete with a website www.ClubGalahad.com (He also initiated The Big Brain Club, “which encourages kids to overcome the peer pressure to dumb down.”) The premise of the Galahad books is that the tail of Comet Bhaktul interpenetrates Earth's atmosphere and infects the human population with a wasting, debilitating, and 100% fatal disease. However, it only infects adults.

Many people react badly; many resign themselves to death and extinction; Dr. Wallace Zimmer proposes a dual solution. Continue trying to find a cure for Bhaktul's Disease, but simultaneously design and equip a spaceship as a lifeboat for humanity, to send away 250 teenagers to colonize a new world.

Enough scientists, world leaders, and families agree with Zimmer to launch Project Galahad, but opposition persists, lead by Zimmer's colleague Tyler Scofield. Even so, a world-wide selection process gathers hundreds of pre-teens for an intense educational program. By the time the spaceship is ready for departure, the teenagers have the equivalent of advanced degrees in almost every subject under the sun. After much debate, it is resolved to let an AI computer see to the actual running of the spaceship. This decision is made to free up time for the busy colonists, and to take off some of the strain of responsibility; but it creates an opportunity for sabotage, and the project has implacable, bitter foes.

By the time the threat is discovered, the ship has launched and the teens are on their own. Triana Martell, Gap, Bon, Lita, and Channy have to save their ship, their AI program, and each other.

But what of the saboteur left undiscovered, and nasty surprises behind? That is only one of several questions that go unanswered – for now. A preview of the sequel is included, along with a Reader's

Guide that includes research activities and discussion questions. It's good to see science fiction juvenilia on the market again. – Chris Paige

The Hidden City by Michelle West Daw, \$8.99, 754 pp

The Hidden City is the first novel of *The House Wars*, by the author of the *Sun Sword* and *Sacred Hunt* series.

We begin the story of the battle for control of the most powerful ruling house in the Essalieyan Empire, House Terafin and with the introduction of a remarkable young girl Jay Markers. Jay is an orphan living under a bridge when she is rescued from this existence by reclusive Rate. Nursed back to health, Jay attaches herself to Rate till she can pay her debt. Driven by visions she can't control, she begins to rescue other children, forming a den in Rate's home. Rate walks a more dangerous path. The demons that once brought down the empire are stirring again, targeting any who might warn against them. Rate, who treads the hidden ways beneath the city, and Jay whose talent as a seer without training become the target, and the only hope, for the Empire.

Wow! This is a well written, tightly-plotted, character-driven book. The world is so clearly drawn, the reader becomes part of it, and you can't put it down. This is a must-have for lovers of fantasy. This critic will be watching for succeeding volumes to snatch. This is deserving of a World Fantasy nomination. Go get it, you'll get more than your money's worth ~~ Pam Allan

Burning Skies by David J. Williams Ballantine, \$15.00, 398 pp,

Burning Skies is the Sequel to *The Mirrored Heavens*.

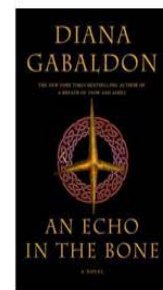
Her life as a US counterintelligence agent is in tatters, her mission betrayed, her memories suspect. The Autumn Rain insurgency is not defeated. They are out to rule all humanity. Now it's up to her to jack into the systems of the enemy to win this impossible war. Claire Haskell must be ready for the Rain's next move, but the true enemy is one step ahead.

This is hard Science Fiction, a wild cyberthriller that is fast-paced action personified. It is also one of the scariest noir look at the future I've read made more so by its inherent plausibility. For hard SF lovers it is a must, and for horror

(Cont'd on page 21)



Sept 22 - Diana Gabaldon signs
An Echo in the Bone
National Book Launch Party,
6 pm at the Arizona Biltmore



Nov 17 - Brandon Sanderson signs
The Gathering Storm,
Book 12 in The Wheel of Time



The Poisoned Pen
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In Our Book (Cont'd from page 20)

lovers worth the read despite the lack of the supernatural horrors. Man can do it by himself to himself. Enjoy ~~ **Pam Allan**

Sins and Shadows by Lyn Benedict Ace, \$7.99, 357pp

Sins and Shadows is a *Shadows Inquiries* novel.

Sylvie Lightner lives in a world where magic and hell are just around the corner. As a P.I., she specializes in the weird and unbelievable.

When one of her employees is murdered in front of her, she has had enough. When she goes to close the shop, she finds that wanting and doing are different things, and when a god wants to hire you, "no" is not an option

Tracked by government agents, her enemies, and the Furies, she must dig deeper into the labyrinth of evil deeds and immortal powers to save the world as she knows it.

Benedict has another twist on the dark supernatural thriller. Interesting characters, engrossing magic where even the gods get involved and some interesting plot twists that makes for a fast-paced read. Enjoy a fun read from a writer worth watching. ~~ **Pam Allan**

House of Suns by Alastair Reynolds Ace, \$26.95, 473pp

This is the tenth novel by the author of *The Perfect*.

Six million years ago, Abigal Genetian created 1000 clones of herself called shatterlings and sent them out into the galaxy to observe and record the rise and fall of civilizations. The clones gather every two thousand years to exchange news and memories.

Two of the clones have fallen in love as forbidden to the shatterlings and have been reluctant to attend the thirty-second reunion for fear of censure.

They discover the bulk of their line has been wiped out by a massive attack, and as they gather the few survivors, they must find out who and why the enemy is for the remainder to survive.

This redefines the epic novel by scope into a mind-boggling thriller. Inventive, vibrant and fascinating, it is also a gripping, thoughtful intelligent drama the reader can't put down. The world of the future is fully drawn with believable characters you can relate to and care about. This is Reynolds best novel to date. You are going to have to have it for your library ...Enjoy ~~ **Pam Allan**

Kethani by Eric Brown Solaris, \$7.99, 427 pp

Kethani is by the Author of *Necropath* and *Xenopath*.

When a mysterious alien race makes contact with the human race, they bring the gift of eternal life. The gift will change the course of humanity forever, and the lives of a small village are a microcosm of the earth. Do the Kethani have a hidden agenda? Will the human race choose to evolve or turn in on itself in the face of the gift?

This is not an action thriller, but a superb introspective novel that examines the consequences of first contact, and the choices mankind might face meeting an alien race. This may well be a literary classic with a Science Fiction bent. I expect to see it on college reading list, in more than one major. A must for a thoughtful fan's library. ~~ **Pam Allan**

Norse Code by Greg van Eekhout Ballantine, \$7.99, 292pp

Norse Code is a debut novel by a published short story author.

The NorseCode genome project was designed to identify descendants of Odin. One person they found was Kathy Castillo, a murdered MBA student brought back from the dead to be a valkyrie in the Norse gods Army. Given a sword, and a new name, she was given the job to recruit soldiers for the war between the gods at the end of the world....and to kill those who refused to fight.

Mist has other plans, saving her murdered sister from Helheim (Hell for the Norse.). She needs the help of Hermod, a Norse god with troubles of his own. They find themselves drafted into another cause, saving the world of man or Midgard. And they said it couldn't be done. As Ragnarok descends, the world in its death throes, monsters rising, the valkyrie and the god go forth with swords swinging. Van Eekhout combines myth, gods and monsters with the chills of endless winter. Mad Max meets the ice age

Or is it California? What it is, is a wildly inventive fascinating modern/mythic fantasy you won't want to put down. ENJOY, I did. ~~ **Pam Allan**

City of Souls by Vicki Pettersson EOS, \$7.99m 352pp

City of Souls is the fourth "sign of the zodiac."

Warrior, avenger, superhero, Joanna Archer has found her place among the agents battling the Shadow as she struggles to conquer the darkness within.

A war is raging for Las Vegas, one

that catapults her into a world hidden from mortals where the lines between good and evil blur, and the cost of saving sin city may be her soul.

City Of Souls is a non-stop action/paranormal romance kick-ass continuation of a series hot as Midhaven. It will keep you up past your bedtime just watching the imaginative ways the character changes. If you are into the sub-genre, grab your wallet. You'll have to have it. ~~ **Pam Allan**

Dragonseed by James Maxey Solaris, \$7.99, 549pp

Dragonseed is a novel of *The Dragon Age*. Following their victory against the Ragnar's army, is now arming for the counter attack. Trouble lays ready as the young human woman, Jandra finds herself under the control of Jazz. And a face from the past makes an unwelcome return. Here is another book you can't put down. Characters, both human and dragon and porcine are fully drawn in a war of intrigue and danger with a charismatic religious leader of convert or die. Spirituality, poetic dragons, and magic.

Want action, magic, character-driven plotting that carries you deep into the events? This is fantasy at its best. The book is a got-to-have-it. Go for it. ~~ **Pam Allan**

Wireless by Charles Stross Ace, \$24.95, 352pp

Wireless is a book of short stories by the Hugo award winning Author of ground breaking novels *Accelarando*, *Halting State*, and *Saturn's Children*.

Rather than write a synopsis of each story, I will simply say there is something for everyone in every story from the innovative and exciting mind of Stross.

Science Fiction Revue says he may be the most exciting writer of Science fiction today. That is an understatement. He fires well-drawn characters into fusion with ideas that won't let you put his story down. Get the cards out. The future of science of Science fiction has been sighted. ~~ **Pam Allan**

I WANT YOU



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JOIN NOW!

GO TO WWW.CASFS.ORG
FOR MEETING DATES AND TIME

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 Todd Miles at acrossplus@westernsfa.org

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

AERIAL MIRAGE JUGGLERS. Meets Wednesday 7-10pm in Encanto Park, 15th Avenue, south of Encanto. No dues, everyone welcome. All levels skill exchange in many areas of object manipulation Dave Davis <aerialmirage@gnerds.com>, 602-955-9446; or Ron Harvey <rhh1s@yahoo.com>, 480-775-4690 for more info or impromptu juggling sessions.

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

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

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

AZCorsairs "Founded in 1971, as a branch of the Society for Creative Anachronisms, or SCA, our primary focus is 16th – 18th century European culture and the pirate lifestyle of the time. The Corsairs will extend pirate portrayals as far back as Phoenician, Roman Era or to future Space, Science Fiction genre, and more publicly recognizable Hollywood styled pirate. Corsair membership is largely volunteer-oriented, gathered together for fun and while helping others out.

Members of the Arizona Corsairs are, much like their historical counterparts, masters of their own destiny. Creation of characters, complete with backstory with correlation to history, period costume, and emulation of pirate traditions and arts, rests on each performer, creating varied storylines and deep, interesting characters. For more information, please contact Captain Max - Ambassador, AZCorsairs cptmax@myway.com 602-799-6184"

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

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

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

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

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

A GATHERING OF PLAYERS- Find Your Adventure Our club is running into our sixth year. Join us for games and adventure set in the Dungeons and Dragons realm. We offer Living Forgotten Realms and Pathfinder Society. We welcome both new and experi-

enced players. Visit <http://www.warhorn.net/> gathering, to see what we have coming up. If you have any questions email us at agatheringofplayers@gmail.com

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE SOCIETY FOR CREATIVE ANACHRONISM The kingdom of Atenveldt doth lie in the state of Arizona. Within the fair kingdom can be found six Baronies: Atenveldt, Mons Tonitrus, Twin Moons, SunDragon, Tir Ysgithr and Ered Sul. For more information on any of these or for general information on contact the Kingdom Seneschal. Email: seneschal@atenveldt.com Web www.atenveldt.com

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

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

SUPERSTITION SPACEMODELING SOCIETY is Arizona's club for builders of model and high-power rockets and those who love to see them fly. Launches are held on the second Saturday morning of each month in Rainbow Valley. SSS hosts the annual G

(Cont'd on page 23)
Volume 19 Issue 4

Club Listings
(Cont'd from page 22)

Harry Stine Memorial Rocket Launch every October. Visit www.sssrocketry.org for membership information, directions to the launches and meetings, and to read the monthly newsletter, "Newton's Minutes."

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

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

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

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

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

USS 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 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

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

WESTERN SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION (WesternSFA) A non-profit corporation that sponsors AniZona, the ConRunners seminars, Across Plus Anime Club and sponsored the 2004 Westercon. Dedicated primarily to educational activities relating to literature, music, and visual and performing arts, especially in the genres of Anime, science fiction, fantasy, costuming, gaming and science. Applicants for membership in WesternSFA must be sponsored by a current active WesternSFA member. Dues are \$10 yearly plus a \$5 non-refundable application fee. General Meetings are held on the first Friday of February, May, August and November, check our website for meeting location Guests are welcome. For more info contact Craig Dyer at WesternSFA, PO Box 67457, Phoenix AZ 85082 Email: craig@westernsfa.org Webpage: www.westernsfa.org

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

Convention Listings

Bubonicon 41 (August 28-30, 2009) **Albuquerque NM** at the Albuquerque Grand Airport Hotel (formerly the Wyndham), 2910 Yale Blvd SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106. Guests Michael Cassutt, Carrie Vaughn, Patti Peri Charlifu. 2009 Membership Rates: \$36 through August 8, 2009, and then \$41.00 At the Door for adults (do not mail any memberships after August 8, please). Youths 14-17 Years of Age \$18.00 for the Whole Weekend Address all mail & memberships to: NMSF Conference, PO Box 37257, Albuquerque, NM 87176 <http://bubonicon.com/>

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 Web: www.nadwcon.org

FenCon VI (Sep 18-20 2009) Crowne Plaza **North Dallas, Addison TX.** Guests: Lois McMaster Bujold, Carla Ulbrich, Keith R.A. DeCandido, Kurt Miller; Toastmaster: Paul Cornell. Website: <http://www.fencon.org/>

World Fantasy Convention (Oct 29 - Nov 1 '09) The Fairmont Hotel, **San Jose, CA.** Guests to be announced. Website: <http://www.worldfantasy2009.org/>

Saboten-Con (Oct 30-Nov 1, 2009) Hilton Phoenix East/Mesa, 1011 West Holmes Avenue, **Mesa, AZ** 85210. The special Saboten-Con room rate is \$109 for a single/double or junior suite. Guests: Vic Mignogna with more to come. Tickets: \$35 **Membership capped at 1500.** For more info www.sabotencon.com

TusCon 36 (November 13-15, 2009) Hotel Tucson City Center, **Tucson, AZ.** GoH: Weston Ochse; Toastmaster Ed Bryant. Website: <http://home.earthlink.net/~basfa/> .



CASFS Business Report

CopperCon 30/2010: Chairman Mark Boniece –A Media Con is planned. Looking for hotel and guests. First committee meeting scheduled for July 19th.

CASFS Shed inventory – Completed on June 17th. Now we know what we have and will have an accurate list for use by our event departments.

CASFS Book Social -- Discussed *Tarzan Of the Apes* by Edgar Rice Burroughs in May and *Wyrd Sisters* by Terry Pratchett in June. We will discuss *The Legion of Space* by Jack Williamson July 26th at the Bent Cover. Be There!

Financial Planning Committee – Much progress has been made in revising the Financial Procedures. Two or three meetings needed to finish refinements and make the binding policies clear, consistent and understandable.

Minutes Backlog – Susan Uttke has turned over her minutes from last year in both paper and electronic format [July 2007 to June 2008]. Gary Swaty's minutes are current. Gary's task now is to open *The Big Scary Box* and check the minutes of past secretaries and see where we stand there.

RandomCon – CASFS's involvement with RandomCon is complete. We provided the hotel contract for their convention. RandomCon lost money as expected for a first year convention. It will recur on July 8-11, 2010. The WesternSFA donated \$100.00 to CASFS in thanks despite the loss. Donations were also made to other groups who helped.

Elections -- Mark Boniece was elected President of CASFS; Gary Swaty, Vice President; Gary Swaty, Secretary, Stephanie Bannon Treasurer. Elected to the Board were Kevin McAllonan, Nyki Robertson and Bob LaPierre. Elected to fill the last six months of the resigning Michael Contos' Board Seat was Mark Boniece. (Continuing Board Members are Randall Whitlock and Susan Uttke). Nyki Robertson was elected as Chairperson of CopperCon 31/2011. Stephanie Bannon is her Banker.

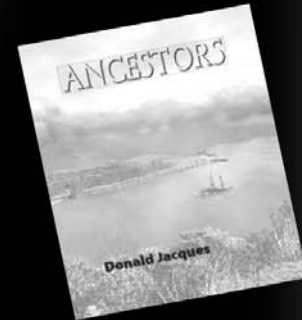
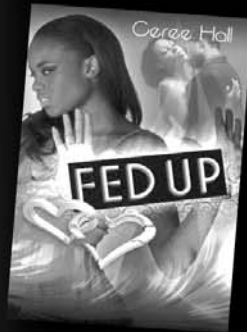
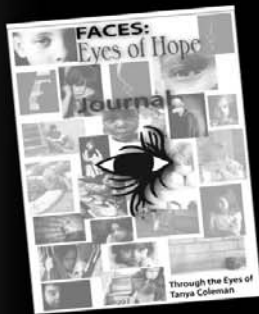
What is CASFS?

What is really behind putting on a convention? What are the funds raised by a convention used for? Why not attend a meeting and find out? We're the sponsor of ConNotations, CopperCons, HexaCons, SmerfCons and other conventions. We are a charitable, non-profit organization that exists to further science fiction, fantasy and science fields in Arizona. CASFS currently meets at the JB's Restaurant at 1818 W Montebello in Phoenix The meetings begin at 8PM and are held on the last Friday of the month Jan. through Sept. and on the second Friday of the month Oct through Dec. Everyone is invited to attend two meetings as a guest (non-member). Membership rates are \$12/year plus an initial \$3 application fee and rates are prorated for the amount of the year remaining. For more info: Webpage: www.casfs.org Email: info@casfs.org

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