

# ConNotations

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April / May 2010  
FREE

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

## A Conversation with Diane Duane & Peter Moorwood by Nadine Armstrong

During the North American Discworld Convention, I had the chance to share dinner and drinks with married writers (and sometime collaborators) Peter Moorwood and Diane Duane. Together they've written over twenty novels, as well as short stories, and several screenplays. They make



Peter Moorwood and Diane Duane

their home in Ireland with several cats. Online, Diane's on Facebook and on Twitter as @dduane. Peter can be found on livejournal at petermoorwood.livejournal.com. Together, they run the European Cuisines website at www.europeancuisines.com. Our rambling conversation follows.

Diane, when you first started publishing the Young Wizards novels, did you dream the series would continue as long as it has?

**DD:** No, not at all. It's been very gratifying, and I've had the chance to do a lot of things with the series that's really

been a lot of fun. The next book in the series will be out next year, and it's called *A Wizard of Mars*. Basically, they find out something's gone really wrong on Mars, and they go there to investigate it.

Given the title, was Burroughs' Mars an influence?

**DD:** Oh, yes. It was great fun getting to play with that Mars - I mean, one of the first things that happens to Kit is that a girl in a fur bikini runs past him.

And I hear you've actually set a book here in Tempe?

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News and tidbits of interest to fans

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# SF Tube Talk

## TV News & Previews By Lee Whiteside

On the networks we've got several shows returning following absences of various lengths plus a new Doctor takes over the TARDIS for the BBC.

On ABC, *V* plans to pack a lot into the remaining eight episodes of the first season, with each episode having two or three reveals at least according to producer **Scott Rosenbaum**. There will also be a showdown between Erica and Anna, which **Rosenbaum** describes as "Ripley versus the alien mother." They also plan more references/homages back to the original miniseries as well. *Flash Forward* has had its episode order trimmed and returned in late March. The producers have promised to reveal more about the flashforwards that we may have only seen part of, who Suspect Zero is, whether Dimitri can avert his death, and the possibility of another flashforward event. *Fringe* on FOX promises to delve more in the the alternate realities and should have some sort of showdown between William Bell (**Leonard Nimoy**) and Walter Bishop (**John Noble**) as the season concludes with a two-part event episode that will likely set things up for the recently confirmed third season of the show.

*Smallville* will see some more comics-inspired characters beginning with the Silver Banshee in *Escape*, with **Odessa Rae** guest starring as Siobhan McDougal aka The Silver Banshee, the vengeful spirit of a fallen Gaelic heroine who takes out her vengeance on a bed and breakfast where Clark and Lois are staying. *Checkmate* will ramp up the Amanda Waller related storyline with **Pam Grier** returning as Checkmate head Amanda Waller and having some sort of showdown with Phil Morris' Martian Manhunter. *Upgrade* brings back Brian Ausin Green as John Corben/Metallo and may also have some Red Kryptonite, *Charade* guest stars **Gil Bellows** as Maxwell Lord, who, in the comics, brought together the Justice League International before turning bad and having his neck broken by Wonder Woman. There's not much leaked about the final episodes, but rumors are that **Annete O'Toole** will be back as Martha Kent, **Michael McKean** as Perry White with other regulars such as Justin Hartely's Green Arrow being heavily involved. The CW has officially picked up *Smallville* for a 10th season, so don't expect everything to be tied up in a nice bow at the end of this season. *Vampire Diaries* sees **David Anders** (*Alias*, *Heroes*) guest starring in a multiple episode run as Elena and Jeremy's uncle. Also joining the series for several episodes is **Stephen Martines** as a vampire named Frederick who was thought to be in Katherine's tomb. *Supernatural* is heading towards the Apocalypse, having shown us two of the

four horsemen, we'll meet Pestilence, played by **Matt Frewer**, who brings disease to the Winchester brothers world. But there is life after the Apocalypse, since The CW has renewed *Supernatural* as well as *The Vampire Diaries* for next season.

Pilots in the works that may or may not get picked up for the fall season include *No Ordinary Family*, a drama for ABC with **Michael Chiklis** and **Julie Benz** as the parents of a typical American

family that all develop special powers including mom gaining super speed. *Terra Nova* for FOX, about a family from 100 years in the future who travel 150 million years back in time to live in the prehistoric era. It's from **Steven Spielberg** and looks to be expensive enough that it will either be picked up as a series or not at all. Also for FOX is an US based take on *Torchwood* from creator **Russel T. Davies**. No word as to how it will tie in to the existing series, or not. It likely would still have **John Barrowman** involved and might even have **James Marsters**. NBC is developing *The Cape*, about a former cop framed for crime he didn't commit that becomes The Cape to clear his name and take on bad guys. Stars **David Lyons** as the ex-cop, Vince Faraday. Several others for NBC include *The Event* starring **Jason Ritter** as a normal guy who gets involved in a big "Event" that draws him into a larger conspiracy, *Nine Lives*, a series about life after death originally developed by **Leslie Bohem** and **Steven Spielberg** for SciFi that has now come back to life at NBC. **J. J. Abrams** is developing *Undercovers* for NBC, a spy series about "a domesticated husband and wife return from years in retirement and are re-activated as CIA agents. As they work together for the first time on new cases, they discover new aspects from their past—even

as they re-ignite their passion for each other." The CW has *Betwixt*, based on the novel by **Tara Bray Smith** about "three teenagers who discover their lineage has granted them special abilities, which they use to fight evil", and *Nikita*, a CW take on *Le Femme Nikita*. On the cable front, HBO has green lit a 10-episode series for *A Game of Thrones* based on the **George R. R. Martin** novel series. Actors on board that have filmed the pilot include **Lena Heade**, **Nikolaj Coster-Waldau**,

**Peter Dinklage**, **Sean Bean** and **Jason Momoa**. Over on TNT, they have green-lit a new **Steven Spielberg** *Alien Invasion* series starring **Noah Wylie** as a college professor who becomes the reluctant leader of "a rag-tag group of soldiers and civilians as they struggle against an occupying alien force." It also stars **Moon Bloodgood**, **Drew Roy**, **Maxim Knight**, **Jessy Schram** and **Seychelle Gabriel**.

( Cont'd on page 4 )



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**SF Tube Talk** (Cont'd from page 3 )  
AMC is developing a series based on the comic ***The Walking Dead***, about the survivors of a Zombie apocalypse being produced by **Frank Darabont, Gale Anne Hurd** and **David Alpert**. It stands a good chance of getting picked up as well.

***Doctor Who*** returns to the BBC and BBC America in April with the new series featuring a new production team, a new Doctor and a new companion. **Steven Moffat**, winner of four straight Hugo awards for his ***Doctor Who*** episodes in the first four series of the show, is now the executive producer and head writer. The Doctor is now being played by **Matt Smith** and joining him will be **Karen Gillan** as Amy Pond. Also recurring is **Arthur Darvill** as Rory Williams, likely Amy's fiance or boyfriend. As **Moffat** indicated in his last two-parter, *Silence In the Library/Forest of the Dead*, he really hates "spoilers" and has been doing a good job of keeping detailed information about the new series out of the press and the fan websites. Most of what is known officially is very minimal and most information that has gotten out is due to fans observing location filming and comments from guest stars about their roles. The new series starts on the BBC in the UK on April 3rd with BBC American starting the new episodes two weeks later on April 17th.

Here's what has been found out about the initial batch of episodes... There is an overall arc to the season, some of which will be introduced in each episode, although it may not be easy to catch. Also, each episode may end with a cliffhanger leading into the next episode, even for the single episode stories. Kicking off the new series is *The Eleventh Hour*, written by **Moffat**, which follows on from the regeneration sequence at the end of *The End of Time Part 2* where the 11th Doctor is attempting to guide the damaged TARDIS to Earth. Reportedly, the TARDIS crashes into the back yard of a young Amelia Pond, making an impression on her before returning years later when she has grown into a young woman. The aliens are reportedly called the Atraxi and they are looking for a "Prisoner 0" and threaten to destroy the Earth if the prisoner is not turned over to them. Expect lots of stuff with the Doctor having post regeneration issues as well as problems with the TARDIS itself. Next up is another **Moffat**-penned story with *The Beast Below* where The Doctor and Amy end up on a spaceship with dubious looking monks (or something along those lines - not many spoilers for this one). Third in the series is *Victory of the Daleks* by **Mark Gatiss**, where the Doctor and Amy end up in World War II where a British scientist has developed the perfect weapon to help Winston Churchill defeat the Nazis - a Dalek! Next up is a **Moffat**-penned two-parter, *The Time of Angels/ Flesh and Stone*, which features the return

of **Alex Kingston** as River Song as well as a return of the Weeping Angels from *Blink*. This appears to be related to the River Song journal entry "The Crash of the Byzantium" briefly glimpsed during River's previous appearance. According to **Moffat** in *Doctor Who Magazine #417* "Ahh, you think you know the Weeping Angels ... Well, think again! That lot in *Blink* were just scavengers, survivors hiding out on Earth. What might an Angel achieve at the height of its powers? And do you really think you're safe just because you don't blink...?" After that is *Vampires of Venice* by **Toby Whithouse** where The Doctor and Amy visit Venice, Italy in the late 1500's and discover an alien threat appearing to be vampires. The two-parter, *The Ground Beneath Their Feet/Cold Blood*, by **Chris Chibnall** reportedly brings back the Silurians, or a variation thereof and deals with Global Warming 15 years into the future. Expect to see several types of Silurians and a reference back to the Third Doctor episodes with them. Other episodes on tap are *Vincent and the Doctor* written by **Richard Curtis** and dealing with Vincent Van Gogh in 1880's Paris, with **Bill Nighy** guest starring as Dr. Black, the Curator of the Musee D'Orsay. Rounding out the series will be a **Moffat**-penned two-parter dealing with The Pandorica, the return of River Song, some return visits by various foes, and a visit to Stonehenge.

Elsewhere in the Whoniverse, ***The Sarah Jane Adventures*** has been commissioned for a fourth series which has just started filming and recently got the go-ahead for a fifth series. Still no word yet on when it will turn up in the US on BBC America. ***Torchwood*** is still somewhat in limbo. **Russell T. Davies** has a pilot script in the works with FOX for a US produced version but there's been no real details leaked about it or a new series on the BBC. The Australian-produced ***Adventures of K9*** series will air in the US this summer on Disney XD. K9 co-creator **Bob Baker** has been working on the series and previewed it recently at the Gallifrey One convention in Los Angeles. We'll have more details next time on this new series.

Syfy in April sees the return of ***Stargate Universe*** for the back half of its first season. It kicks off with *Space*, where a piece of alien technology sends Colonel Young to an alien vessel, provoking the crew's first extra-terrestrial encounter. According to producer **Brad Wright**, these new aliens are "the coolest aliens we've ever had on Stargate. They're a very advanced, not very friendly, space-faring race." Next up is *Divided* where the division among the crew threaten their existence. Can they resolve their differences before it is too late? *Faith* will focus on T.J. Johanson and deal with issues of faith, both religious and alien. *Human* will deal some with Dr. Rush's backstory and will feature a

guest appearance by **Michael Shanks** as Daniel Jackson. You didn't think Rush would stay stranded forever, did you? In *Sabotage* the Stargate Universe crew calls upon a brilliant mind from Earth to help in a crisis -- a quadriplegic scientist who temporarily takes over Wray's body and also experiences certain feelings for the first time. The original casting call for the scientist drew some negative press and producers have indicated the casting information was inaccurate and premature. I expect there may still be some controversy when it actually airs. Actress **Ming-Na** has commented "that was all misconstrued and I think once they see the episode, they will have a completely different response to it. It was extremely emotional on many levels for me to play as an actress, playing a quadriplegic. It really makes you appreciate ... I mean, I always appreciate health anyway."

Also joining the weekly lineup on Syfy is ***Merlin***, the BBC produced series that saw a summer run of its first season on NBC this summer with Syfy picking up for the second and likely any subsequent series. Syfy is having a couple of marathons of ***Merlin*** season one in the week leading up to the debut of season two that you may be able to catch to bring you up-to-speed if you hadn't already seen it. While the first season focused primarily on Arthur and Merlin, the second season expands that to focus more on the supporting characters. Opening the season is *The Curse of Cornelius Sigan* which guest stars **Mackenzie Crook** as Cedric, who tries to take the job of Arthur's manservant away from Merlin while he's really trying to use that position to obtain a jewel from the recently discovered tomb of Cornelius Sigan, a powerful sorcerer who vowed he would return and destroy Camelot. *The Once and Future Queen* sees Arthur participate in the Camelot Jousting Tournament in disguise, wanting to have a real competition where in the past his competitors have let him win. However, the assassin Myror (**Adrian Lester**) has arrived in Camelot with the assignment of killing Arthur. *The Nightmare Begins* sees Morgana beginning to worry about the dreams she's been having, which makes her convinced she has magical powers. While Gaius insists she has nothing to fear, Merlin tries to help her by sending her to the Druids, who the King believes has kidnapped her so he sends Arthur to rescue her and kill the Druids. *Lancelot and Guinevere* sees the return of **Santiago Cabrera** as Lancelot when Gwen is kidnapped by the savage outlaw Hengist, who was trying to kidnap Morgana. When the King refuses to pay a ransom, Arthur heads out to rescue her and finds that Lancelot is also on the hunt. In the two-part *Beauty and the Beast*, Uther becomes enamored of Lady Catrina (**Sarah Parish**) and takes her as his Queen, however Merlin discovers she's really a Troll in disguise

and after she accuses him of stealing, he goes into hiding to try to figure out a way to expose her true form. *The Witchfinder* sees **Charles Dance** guest star as Aredian, the most dreaded witchfinder in the land, whom King Uther brings in to wipe out all magic in Camelot. Morgana, Gaius and Merlin are all in danger of being discovered and Merlin has to figure out how to protect all of them without being burned at the stake himself. In *The Sins of the Father*, Arthur is challenged in a duel by a mysterious warrior and he and Merlin also find themselves on a strange quest for the beautiful Morgause (**Emilia Fox**) where they discover a secret that could be Camelot's downfall.

Syfy will also debut the new ***Riverworld*** miniseries in April, airing all four hours on Sunday, April 17th. This new miniseries is based on the **Philip Jose Farmer** *Riverworld* series of novels, and as with the two-hour movie pilot from several years ago, the main characters will be contemporary characters with the historical characters in supporting roles. **Tahmoh Penikett** (***Battlestar Galactica, Dollhouse***) stars as Matt Ellman, an American war zone reporter. When a suicide bomber kills both Matt and his fiancée, Jessie (**Laura Vandervoort**), they awaken separated in a mysterious world where everyone who has ever lived on Earth seems to have been "reborn" along the banks of a seemingly endless river. Wanting to be reunited with Jessie, Matt joins forces with a 13th-century female samurai warrior named Tomoe (**Jeananne Goossen**) and American novelist Sam "Mark Twain" Clemens (**Mark Deklin**). Also starring are **Alan Cummings** as the mysterious Caretaker and **Peter Wingfield** as Sir Richard Francis Burton, the British explorer who was the viewpoint character in the first *Riverworld* novel. **Robert H. Wolfe** wrote the original script as a freelancer but was not involved with the actual production. He was tasked with making the viewpoint character a contemporary American, but set out to try to keep as much of the ideas and pieces of the books as he could and he hopes that "the spiritual and philosophical nature of the *Riverworld* books will come through in the miniseries." Although upon hearing the news of the broadcast, **Wolfe** admitted "I still have no idea whether the final product bears any resemblance at all to what I wrote. I guess I'll find out when everyone else does." So, it may end up being something worth watching or it may be that once the producers started filming it, all the good stuff went out the window. I guess we'll all find out on April 17th.



## A Conversation Cont'd from page 1 )

**DD:** Yes. When we were here for CopperCon in 2006, I thought at the time it would be a perfect setting for this story about a gaming company I had in mind. It's called *Omnitopia Dawn*; it's set in the future and is coming out from DAW books sometime in 2010.

**PM:** There's a short story I wrote years ago that I really like. The anthology's out-of-print now, but here's the beginning of it: I wanted to be a fireman like my father, but I did find in the work I was doing at the university, that all the stuff they were telling me about was true in that I had friends in certain branches of the civil service who were able to check documents that don't exist for me. The smoke in Belfast didn't get him, but the smoke from the bloody cigarettes did so now I'm a history professor and I study the secret histories of the second world war and I collect toy fire trucks. There's a space in my collection, I know the one I'm looking for. I haven't found it yet, but when I do find it... It's a ghost story, what I'm toying with is the notion of doing it as a TV drama. I can bounce it off of BBC Northern Ireland as a Christmas ghost story. I'm very proud of it. I sent it off to mum, and when I next went up to visit her. She had it in her drawer by the TV. She pulled it out and said "I've shown this to everyone. I don't know about those books of yours with the swords and knights in armor and things, but this was very good. Your father would have liked it."

**DD:** This is the same woman who, when The Dragon King came out, had all the neighbors over for tea and cookies and they would play the credits up until they saw our names and then they'd turn the TV off and go back to what they were doing.

Writing any more collaborative novels?

**DD:** It depends on what it might be.

**PM:** We have done more than just the Star Trek novel. We did *Keeper of the City*. The novelization for the pilot for SeaQuest DSV, that was no fun at all. They kept changing it. Every time the FAX would go off we'd just twitch.

**DD:** Then we'd get yet another image of the submarine and it would still be too black. Finally I just said it looks like a squid and wrote "the sub looks like a squid."

**PM:** We did three Space Cops novels which are now being looked at with an eye for TV. Because it was a licensed product for someone else, we just kissed it off. Now they're suddenly interested in doing something with it. Our crazy guy said to us "did you notice there are no science fiction procedurals?"

Do you have radically different writing processes?

**DD:** He works at night, I work in the daytime.

Do you revise as you go or are you a first drafter?

**DD:** There are times I'd like to write a draft from beginning to end, but it just doesn't happen that way. There will be times when I write the middle first.

**PM:** What I'm in favor of doing is handwriting stuff. I want the whole thing to be complete. The problem with a

computer is it is too easy to fiddle with it. Be it handwriting or a typewriter, you can't go back and backspace, you have to keep on going. The only way to cut and paste with handwritten or typewritten material is with a pair of scissors and a glue pot. It's a lot less straightforward than using a computer. There's also software that forces you to keep going forward and another that starts playing annoying noises at you if you stop and stare at the screen for too long. I think that's pushing a little too hard. I think that popped up during the national novel writing competition. I don't find it useful.

**DD:** He will futz around with a chapter or five pages of a chapter until I come in and forcibly whack him on the head with something. And even then he'll try and futz around some more.

**PM:** I'll try fitting half a dozen different words using the dreaded Thesaurus. Or Thesauritis I should say. You know more or less what it's going to sound like. For example: He was not amused. He was less than amused. He found it far from funny. It all says basically the same thing.

**PM:** There's the joke I told in the writing seminar about a friend of James Joyce who comes in and finds him lying in an attitude of despair across his writing desk. The friend says "what's wrong Jimmy, haven't you written anything today?" And Joyce said "No, I have, I have." The friend says "How many words?" "3", says Joyce. There's a small silence and the friend says "That's all right Jim, that's good for you. What's the problem?" "I don't know what order they should be in!"

**DD:** I liked his earlier stuff maybe better than his later, but at the same time, the genius is always there.

**PM:** One thing I've been working on is The Prisoner of Zenda. There hasn't been movie based on it since 1952. Not a good one. I've actually gone back to the book. The 1952 movie was based on the 1937 movie which was based on the 1898 play. As I've said, Hollywood's research of Roman history isn't based on the actual history, but is based on watching the previous two movies. You go back to the book and you find its much edgier and much more questioning of the status quo and much more adult and grown up. I ended up transcribing both movies since you can't find a screenplay for them.

Do you find there's much difference

between Hollywood and German film producers?

**DD:** It's much more personal. The American companies are relentlessly chasing the dollar and the result of the dollar. What's the next big thing. Whereas with the Germans it's more relationship-based and that's European film generally. If you worked with them once, ideally they would like to work with you again on something else. The companies we've been working with have been started by individuals and have been running them as little hotbeds of creativity. The relationships are very much between people, not corporate.

Peter, you're mainly known for your fantasy work, but you've also got a space opera novel you've been working on.

**PM:** After 67,000 words, I'd rather finish it than just abandon it. I've written a whole slew of space opera short stories that Diane and I wrote together. I did most of the Bang Bang noises and she did what minimum science the stories called for and it was one of those weird situations where even I, who loves bang bang whoosh whoosh got fed up because that's all they wanted. The last story in that series I wrote myself and I took the character from a particularly demented series of children's books, *The Complete Molesworth* by Geoffrey Willans. Track it down. Find it. What I did was to take the dramatic characters from this kids book series and put them into the space opera series. They behaved exactly as they did in the school stories, but now they have nuclear arms, and then I let them run with it. They weren't particularly successful in the US, but in the UK, I had people coming up to me at cons and saying "How the hell did you get away with that one?" My reply was "I think somebody blinked and missed it."

**PM:** As for the space opera stuff, it doesn't have the need to know a lot of high science. It's basically the situation that for plot purposes, hyperspace works. So the action can get from point A to B. I have my token gestures, artificial gravity and all of that kind of stuff. But for the rest of it, Star Trek was Hornblower in space, so what I'm doing with Deep Fleet is "Biggles in Space." Concentrating on one particular fighter pilot on a carrier. He's got all sorts of interesting problems because he's the only child of a rich family who didn't want him to do something as demeaning as joining the military and when he reached the age of consent and actually did it, his father used his influence to make life for the young Nick Hudson as wretched as possible. Hudson actually turned out to be especially good at it and he surmounted these challenges and Bingo! off he goes. There are a lot of other little trails running through it. He ends up on a first contact mission that goes not horribly wrong, not initially, but becomes slightly skewed. The first contact is with two races, one is avian and the other is reptilian. Since one of the contact group is an avian from another of the planets in that part of the galaxy, they assume the avian race is the most advanced on the planet. This turns out to be not the case at all. We've also got the Deep Fleet's old enemy, essentially genetically enhanced mandril monkeys, the blue ox baboon that's eight feet tall with giant fangs with jump capacity and

beam weapons. What I need to do with this one is finish it, and get it back out there. I sent it out about five years ago and one side said "I like the action scenes, but the politics are too complicated". Whereas another responded "the action scenes are good, but you need to make the politics more complicated." So it went on the back burner, since I had other things more pressing that were more immediate money than something I hadn't sold yet. It will get completed. Something at 67,000 words is more than halfway there already.

Historical Rome project?

**PM:** The Rome project is historical. Many years ago, we were meeting for lunch with a friend of a friend, who was at the time a vice-president for Paramount. We were just talking and he asked us what we write, what we read, what we were interested in. I said I'm interested in history. He asked "any particular period?" and I said anything from ancient Greece, through Rome, through the middle ages up to about the point where guns came in and it started to get noisier and less interesting. He went "Greece and Rome? That's interesting, because I think the sword and sandal genre are about due for a resurgence." That was about six years before Gladiator. "Assuming you were interested in doing something like this, what would be your take on it?" I said that there're the Roman games, because everyone thinks they know about gladiators and chariot races, and surprisingly a large amount of it is wrong. That's when I told him about the "Three men enter, one man leaves" - Not actually. If you want a fight to the death, you're going to have to pay for it. It's gonna cost a stonking amount of money because well-trained gladiators are an expensive quantity.

**DD:** Logistically, it was a huge thing. There was an entire industry created to ship animals from Africa to the Italian peninsula, all up and down the coast and for the giant arenas in central Rome.

*A Wizard of Mars* will be out in April, 2010, and *Omnitopia Dawn* will be out in August. Diane is also making available some out of print works as ebooks on her website at [www.dianeduan.com](http://www.dianeduan.com) Peter has started putting some of his books back into print as well, starting with *Clan Wars 1: Greylady*. Details at [www.petermorwood.com](http://www.petermorwood.com). You can also read Peter's analysis of the two Prisoner of Zenda movies there as well. .



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# “The Moose & Squirrel Take The Country By Storm Or There’s A Dark Cloud On the Horizon.” It’s the 50th Anniversary of Rocky the Flying Squirrel and Bullwinkle J. Moose, Pt. 6 By Shane Shellenbarger

As you recall from last time, General Mills was ecstatic about the finished shows. The budget was to be increased greatly. However, Jay Ward made the budgetary compromise that all shows following #4 onward would be edited and dubbed in Mexico. The quality sound work of Skip Craig was a sharp contrast to the horrendous distortion and ridiculous sound effects which followed for the next year. In addition, Gordon Johnson had lifted the production freeze on the Hollywood studio. *Rocky and His Friends* had a final airdate of November 19th, 1959.

Not content to keeping all of his eggs in the Squirrel and Moose basket, Ward continued his attempts to expand. He finalized plans for a second half-hour cartoon show of 52 episodes, a half-hour satirical puppet show called *The Watts Gnu Show*, another puppet show for a younger audience, *Carrots and the King*. He was also working on *The World of Winnie the Pooh*, as a Christmas release and there was talk about a feature-length adaptation of *Mad* magazine. Ward had many irons in the fire and he was certainly hedging his bets.

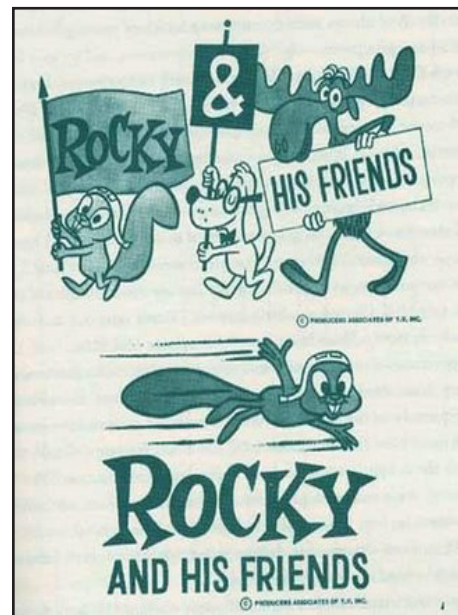
Ward poured most of his effort into *The Watts Gnu Show*. Beginning in mid-1959, the economic elements all looked good. Production costs were lower than animation. Staffing would be about fifteen people as compared to the one hundred or more employed on *Rocky*. Delivery for the puppets would be around two months while animation took five months at six times the budget. Ward conceived of the show as a comedy-variety show along the lines of *The Steve Allen Show*. Bill Scott called it “Hellzapuppets!”

By August 1959, songs and a script had been completed, the puppets had been built, and sets were being constructed. A pilot was made in October 1959. The advertising agencies who saw it were ecstatic. *The Watts Gnu Show* very nearly sold, but after three years it came to naught. Jay Ward was not destined to be the Jim Henson of the late ‘50’s.

Trouble was coming to a boil with the completion of the fifth episode of *Rocky*. The sound quality coming out of the Mexico studio was distorted, the dialogue muffled, and the sound effects tended to drown out the voices. many of these problems continued for three years.

The visuals weren’t faring any better. Spots and scratches marred the cels. The poses were awkward, the mouth-sync was off, and the camera work was shoddy, at best. Despite these issues, *Rocky and His Friends* had achieved its final airdate of November 19th, 1959 as part of a late-afternoon lineup of *Rin Tin Tin* and *My Friend Flicka* reruns. The lead-in was the highly popular, *American Bandstand*. The American viewing audience was in for a big surprise.

The plot of the first episode (“Jet Fuel Formula / Bullwinkle’s Ride or Goodbye Dollink”) began at the Slick Observatory, manned by “An international group of scientists, eggheads, and double-domes” who were using a huge new telescope when they spotted a moose and squirrel returning from Earth’s Moon. The audience soon discovered that these two residents of Frostbite Falls, Minnesota had been hurled to Earth’s nearest natural satellite when they had made substitutions



to a quick-rising cake recipe. The mix exploded, sending moose, squirrel, and stove skyward. Soon our boys were up to their necks in the staples of the show: pontificating politicians, grumbling government agents, simpleton spies, and cold war chaos.

This series of forty episodes was the longest in the shows history. It crammed in the U.S.- Soviet space race, the hunt for the Mooseberry rocket fuel, trips to Las Vegas, Bloney Island, Washington, Pottsylvania, Minnesota, an unusual ocean liner cruise, and a frantic canoe ride down the Potomac. For the first time we meet Boris Badenov, Natasha Fatale, Fearless Leader, moon men Cloyd and Gidney, Mr. Big, Captain Peter “Wrongway” Peachfuzz, not to mention Rocky and Bullwinkle. The viewing public soon took notice. The industry bible, *Variety*, had this to say: “*Rocky and his friends* are the kind of cartoon characters that should win a place in the heart of the moppet audience and a sigh of relief from parents. The approach to kids humor is intelligent . . . a thankful departure from the violent slapstick that makes up the

bulk of tele cartoon fare.” After two years of hard work by Jay Ward, Bill Scott, and hundreds of other employees, our boys were on their way to making animated cartoon history.

While some of the issues and references explored in *Rocky and his friends* may seem dated by today’s standards, they were sharp, smart, satirical examinations of the post- World War II, Cold War, Nuclear-fear world in which children were growing up. The show thumbed its nose at the status quo of the establishment. It had “tude.” Despite its convoluted and meandering digressions, (or, perhaps, because of them) the plots held the interest of young and old alike.

Join us again next time when we ask the question, “Is that an antler on your head, or are you just a Moosekateer?”

For more info go to :  
<http://tinyurl.com/Shane-Info-Blog>

## Screening Room

**How To Train Your Dragon**  
**Hot Tub Time Machine**

**How To Train Your Dragon**  
**Starring:** Jay Baruchel (Hiccup),  
Gerald Butler (Stoick), American  
Ferrera (Astrid)  
**Director:** Dean DeBlois, Chris Sanders  
**Runtime:** 90 minutes  
**Rated:** PG  
**Release Date:** March 26th, 2010  
**Reviewed by:** Len Berger  
(ConNotations Film Editor)

*How to Train Your Dragon* is a delightful story about a band of Vikings living on the island of Berk. Generally they have a peaceful life except for those darn pests. No, they are not pigeons; noN they are not rodents; but what they do have is a dizzying array of flying fire-breathing dragons of every shape and color. And when the dragons are hungry you had better watch out.

Hiccup (voiced by Jay Baruchel) is a young Viking who doesn’t quite fit the Viking mold. Hiccup is a scrawny little kid who really wants to become a Viking warrior. Stoick (voiced by Gerald Butler) his father has all but given up on Hiccup. The other children in the town mock him. One night when Berk is under attack, Hiccup leaves his home to prove to the town he’s a warrior. He wants to capture and kill his first dragon using a device he built. That night he aims his device, fires, and believes he hit a dragon. When daylight arrives the next day, Hiccup ventures out to determine if the device worked and he stumbles across a captured Night Fury, the most vicious of all dragons. Hiccup looks at the captured Night Fury and the Night Fury looks at Hiccup. Unable to slay the dragon, Hiccup releases the Night Fury and eventually befriends the most vicious of all dragons.

Meanwhile back at Berk the children must be trained to be dragon slayers. Hiccup and the rest of the children are placed into a large cage. Day after day

one type of dragon or another is released into the cage with the children. One child asks the elder teacher about lessons before being thrown into the cage with the dragon to which the teacher replies that this is the lesson.

And any good story has a love interest and this story is no different. Hiccup notices Astrid (voiced by American Ferrera) but she will have nothing to do with him.

The film is based on the book of the same name by Cressida Cowell.

*How to Train Your Dragon* is highly recommended. It’s a story about conflict, understanding and a bit of love. The 3D version is wonderful and is the best way to view the film but given the strong story the movie would be enjoyable in 2D as well. Just sit back, forget your troubles and enjoy your travel adventure to the island of Berk.

Rated PG for some scary and intense action sequences.

*How to Train Your Dragon* is rated A.

**Hot Tub Time Machine**  
**Starring:** John Cusack, Rob Corrdry,  
Craig Robinson, Clark Duke  
**Director:** Steve Pink  
**Runtime:** 98 minutes  
**Rated:** R  
**Release Date:** March 26th, 2010  
**Reviewed by:** Len Berger  
(ConNotations Film Editor)

Please do not confuse *Hot Tub Time Machine* with a sci-fi film that must be seen by sci-fi aficionados. The film is a good comedy about four friends that take a road trip back to a ski resort that they often visited in their early years. They all had been having trouble with their lives and the road trip would be a short escape from the reality of the real world. The resort is not exactly as they pictured it but they try to make the best of it anyway. Their room is a mess but then they spot the hot tub outside. Well, as drunk as they are they decide to give it a try.

Adam (played by John Cusack), Lou (played by Rob Corrdry), Nick (played by Craig Robinson) and Jacob (played by Clark Duke) get more than they bargained for. The tub goes wild and they wake up with their hangovers in the year 1986. What a hoot – they get a chance to relive some of their past with memories of the future. Their adventure continues and there are plenty of laughs throughout the film. Of course living in the past is not their desire so they spend some time trying to figure out how to reverse the time travel.

Hot Tub Time Machine is not for the faint-hearted. Practically every other line has an obscenity. The film is recommended for those who like this type of humor but don’t bring the children.

The film is rated R for language, sex, drinking and some nudity. Well - that sure sounds like a lot of fun.

*Hot Tub Time Machine* is rated B.



## CASFS BOOK DISCUSSION

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

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.

**April 20, 2010 - THE EMPRESS OF MARS** by Kage Baker

**May 18, 2010 - THE HUMANOIDS** by Jack Williamson

**June 21, 2010 - THE HITCH-HIKERS**  
**GUIDE TO THE GALAXY** by Douglas Adams

## BOOK DISCUSSION GROUPS

Borders, Camelback  
Path of the Craft book club, 4th Sat, 6pm

Barnes & Noble, Eastside Tucson  
SF/F Book group, 2nd Tuesday, 730pm

## 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.

## Cemetery Dance Publications

"The Exorcist and Legion" (special edition) by William Peter Blatty  
"Four Ghosts: Straub, Hill, Garton and Burke

## Edge SF &amp; F Publishing/Tesseract Books

"Evolve" ed by Nancy Kilpatrick  
"Hell Can Wait" by Theodore Judson

## PS Publishing

"Night Cache" by Andy Duncan  
"Reunion" by Rick Hautala  
"Viator Plus" by Lucius Shepard  
"Timeswitch" by John Gribbin  
"Crack'd Pot Trail" by Steven Erikson  
"Shaka II" by Mike Resnick

## PYR Publishing

"Ares Express" by Ian McDonald  
"City without End" by Kay Kenyon  
"Empire in Black and Gold" by Adrian Tchaikovsky  
"Ghosts of Manhattan" by George Mann

## Subterranean Press

"Clementine" by Cherie Priest  
"Mirror Kingdoms" the Best of Peter Beagle  
"The Happiest Days of Our Lives" by Wil Wheaton  
"Not Less Than Gods" by Kage Baker  
"Where Everything Ends" by Ray Bradbury  
And too many more to mention....

## Wildside Press

"Gothic Grotesques" by Brian Stableford

## GAMING EVENTS

## DRAWN TO COMICS

5th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION, May all month long.  
STAR WARS MINIATURES. Fridays 730p-11pm, Sundays, 1pm-4pm  
SIT-AND-SKETCH with local artists. Saturdays, 4pm-8pm  
HEROCLIX. Sat 2pm  
Check FaceBook for other events

## GAME DEPOT

BATTLETECH. May 22, noon.  
MAGIC, THE GATHERING PRE-RELEASE. Apr 17, 11am.  
HEROCLIX. Wed, 530pm-8pm  
MALIFAUX. Fri, 4pm-7pm

## GAMER'S INN

WAR MACHINE/HORDES NIGHTFALL LEAGUE. Apr 4 3 weeks  
\$100 40K TOURNAMENT. Apr 10, 10am.  
MAGIC, THE GATHERING, RISE OF ELDRAZI PRE-RELEASE EVENT. Apr 17-23  
\$100 WARHAMMER FANTASY TOURNAMENT, May 1, 10am.  
MAGIC, THE GATHERING, RISE OF ELDRAZI GAME DAY. May 22, 6pm  
FLAMES OF WAR, SHIFTING SANDS. May 22-23, 10am

## IMPERIAL OUTPOST GAMES

FEDERATION COMMANDER. 2nd Saturdays, noon  
RPG. 1st & 3rd Sundays  
BOARDGAMES & DEMO NITE. Mondays & Thursdays, 6pm.  
MAGIC BOOSTER DRAFTS. Fridays, 7pm  
WAR MACHINE. Wednesdays, 4pm

## SAMURAI COMICS

(check website for correct store location)

YUGIOH TOURNAMENT. Sundays, noon (Phx) & Sat, noon (west valley)  
ANIME CLUB. Sundays, noon (west valley)  
POKEMON. Sundays, 2pm (west valley)  
MAGIC, THE GATHERING. Friday, 6p at both locations, & Tues, 6pm (west valley) & Sat 1pm (Phx)

## SCIENCE EVENTS

## ARIZONA SCIENCE CENTER

GOOSE BUMPS! THE SCIENCE OF FEAR. Opened Jan 31, 2010  
JUNIOR WEATHER FORECASTERS program. Apr 7, May 5  
SCIENCE FOR GIRLS. Apr 3: Small Scale, Big Ideas workshop. Jun 20: Summer Solstice  
Slumber Party. Jul 18: Red, White & Blue workshop.  
SATURDAY SCIENCE CLASSES FOR AGES 6-10. Check website for dates and topics. Apr 10: Oh, The Pressure! Apr 24: What a Team! (about flight) May 8: Shake, Rattle and Roll (earthquakes)  
FAMILY-FRIENDLY TALKS ABOUT BIOLOGY TOPICS. Apr 17 "Allergies & Your Immune System, May 15 "A Day in the Life of a Scientist", and Jun 5 TBA.  
Ongoing Exhibits:  
DORRANCE PLANETARIUM  
EVANS FAMILY SKYCYCLE  
MY DIGITAL WORLDS

FORCES OF NATURE  
NEW ROCK WALL for climbers aged 8 and above  
ADULTS NIGHT OUT, 1st Fridays, check website for topics & time

## ASU

SCIENCE LECTURES AND NEWS: <http://asunews.asu.edu/news/science>  
SHOEMAKER MEMORIAL LECTURE, pioneers in the field of asteroid and comet impacts. Spring, TBA

## CHALLENGER SPACE CENTER, PEORIA

STARGAZING. Starlab Planetarium. Check website for dates and times  
"Spring Break" classes for kids. Check website for topics and dates. Coming up: Radical Rockets, Heat Shield Challenge and Liquids, Gases and Solids.  
FAMILY FUN DAYS. Apr 24, 10am. Kids activities, games, tours, space-themed videos, science & physics demos, and more.  
NATIONAL ASTRONOMY DAY. Apr 24, 10am-4pm. Stargazing party begins at 730pm.  
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 19  
& 20, 930am. Pluto: May 17 & 18, 930am.  
ASU METEORITE EXHIBIT  
COLUMBIA SHUTTLE MEMORIAL DISPLAY  
IRIDIUM SATELLITE MODEL  
LOWELL OBSERVATORY DISPLAY  
JOURNEY THRU THE SPACE PROGRAM  
ATLANTIS SPACE SHUTTLE MODEL

## MOON SOCIETY MEETING

3:00 PM on the third Saturday at Denny's on the Southeast corner of US60 and Rural Road. For more info contact Craig Porter at [portercd@msn.com](mailto:portercd@msn.com)

## PIMA AIR &amp; SPACE MUSEUM, TUCSON

VOLUNTEER PRESENTATION SERIES. Apr 17, 10a-11am  
2010 ARIZONA AVIATION HALL OF FAME INDUCTION CEREMONY. Apr 17, 530pm  
B-36 PEACEMAKER SYMPOSIUM. Apr 23, 1pm and Apr 24, 10am  
SPACE DAY. May 7, 1pm  
SPACE GALLERY EXHIBIT. See an Apollo space capsule, moon rock, Phoenix Mars Mission.

## SETI Institute's Weekly

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## OTHER GENRE-RELATED EVENTS

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ACROSS+ ANIME CLUB meeting, Sundays, 6pm  
N.E.R.D.S. MEETUP. Gamers, Browncoats, Otaku, Trekkies, Computer Geeks and just plain Nerds just for fun.  
BROWNCOATS SHINDIG, first Sat, 7pm  
PHOENIX ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY Free Telescope Training Workshop, Apr 3, 7pm. Apr 18, 330pm. May 2, 330pm. May 23.  
HOW TO DISPLAY A COSPLAY COSTUME, Apr 4, 630pm

## BOOKMANS, MESA

COMIC CREATE COSTUME PARTY, Apr 17, 1pm

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# Gamers Corner

**Pathfinder  
Paizo Publishing,  
Core Rule Book, \$49.99, 576 pp**

This is D&D 3.5 updated with most of the bugs worked out. The process of fixing the bugs has made for some minor changes but this is definitely recognizable as D&D. The character creation with its incredible amounts of choices and endlessly customizable characters has become the only sticking point for me. The choices mean that you will always have skills that you never become even adequate at, or that you will always be mediocre at everything.

What I have seen about the system seems to have fixed the problems of unbalanced characters vs. monsters at mid levels, However, since all the play I have seen is through the Pathfinder Society (more on that later) I do not know how the higher levels play out. To play you only need the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook. GMs may also want the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary. There are a number of additional supplements and adventures but none of them are necessary, although they do enrich the playing experience.

The Pathfinder Society is the Paizo version of the various RPGA “Living” campaigns. They don’t use experience directly; instead they advance you a level after each third module. It simplifies tracking but you never get the flattening effect seen in other systems where you can “catch-up” with friends who started earlier. The society requires players to keep track of their characters online so as to know where the majority of players are at any time and this allows them to provide products in line with the character levels.

For those who liked D&D 3 and 3.5 this is the perfect revision, it fixes most problems and allows you to play without changing to the new system. Most of the revisions I’ve seen were things many of us were using in our campaigns as house rules.

4.5 Stars out of 5

See you next time.  
**Bob LaPierre**

As an ending note I have been asked to take a look at Evony next column. So we shall see how good this juggernaut of the free RPGs is.

**Warhammer 40,000  
The Soul Drinkers Omnibus  
by Ben Counter  
Black Library, \$10.99, 750 pp**

Here are the stories of a space marine chapter, Soul Drinkers. These fighters are neither Chaos nor Imperium. They are independently run by the new leader

Sarpedon. These are their stories of survival among aliens, Chaos forces, Imperium forces, and themselves. The Soul Drinkers try to be independent and free in doing the Emperor’s work.

This omnibus contained three novels: “Soul Drinker,” “The Bleeding Chalice,” and “Crimson Tears.”

Different. I did not expect an elite Space Marines to rebel from their own Imperium. Nor did I expect them to still fight Chaos forces. Thought they would become Chaos marines instead. They did not. I liked it. Recommended for dark sci-fi and Warhammer 40,000 readers. ~ **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000 Chapter War  
by Ben Counter  
Black Library Pub, \$7.99, 413 pp**

The Soul Drinkers are fighting their own civil war. One side wants to fight the Imperium. The other by Sarpedon does not. This is a 2nd chapter war among the Soul Drinkers, a space marine chapter. Will the Soul Drinkers survive before their common enemy shows up?

This is the fourth book of the Soul Drinkers series.

Interesting way to end a civil war. Dark. Recommended for dark sci-fi readers and Warhammer 40,000 readers. ~ **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000 Hellforged  
by Ben Counter  
Black Library Pub, \$7.99, 409 pp**

The unified Soul Drinkers, an elite space marine group, will have to go against an alien/robot army, the Necrons. Unexpectedly, they will have to make a temporary truce with the Imperium forces. Will the Soul Drinkers survive against the alien hordes? Will they survive their alliance with the Imperium?

This is the fifth book of the Soul Drinker series.

Enjoyable. Did not expect this ending. Recommended for dark sci-fi readers and Warhammer 40,000 readers. ~ **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000 Blood Pact  
by Dan Abnett  
Black Library Pub, \$21.00, 316 pp**

Gaunt has recovered from being tortured from his Chaos enemy, The Blood Pact. He is literally a new man. He and his Tanith First-And-Only are waiting for deployment. They have been restless for two years of rest and relaxation. Little does Gaunt know that he will be asked to meet a V.I.P. prisoner that could change the war. He will find out he cannot trust his contacts. But what will he have to do to keep the prisoner alive?

This is the twelve book of Gaunt’s Ghost series.

Loved it. The characters are complex but realistic. I enjoyed it. Highly recommended to dark sci-fi and Warhammer 40,000 fans. ~ **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer 40,000  
Scourge The Heretic  
by Sandy Mitchell  
Black Library Pub, \$7.99, 413 pp**

This tale is about a group of Ordo Hereticus specialists who are caught up in a human smuggling ring and finding a conspiracy among the elite. What they will find is something more than just sending serfs to other worlds -something sinister.

This book is the first of the series, Dark Heresy.

Interesting concept. This Inquisition’s team of experts is different from other novels. They are independent from their Inquisition patron. Liked it. Recommend it for dark sci-fi and Warhammer 40,000 readers. ~ **Jeffrey Lu**

**Warhammer Reiksguard  
by Richard Williams  
Black Library Pub, \$7.99, 410 pp**

In this novel, the Reiksguard Knights are battling an army commanded by a goblin warlord and an ogre tyrant. A young knight, Delmar von Reinhardt, will find deadly secrets within his order and the sad politics of neighboring kingdoms against this mighty monster army. Will the Empire fall due to division, destruction, and/or devious plans of the enemy or by themselves?

This is the first book of the series, An Empire Army Novel.

Liked it. Very complex but interesting. Recommended to dark war fantasy readers or Warhammer fans. ~ **Jeffrey Lu**

(Cont’d on page 9 )



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## Gamers (Cont'd from page 8 )

**Warhammer Iron Company**  
**by Chris Wraight**  
**Black Library Pub, \$7.99, 413 pp**

Engineer Magnus Ironblood is hired by Imperialist royalty to help put down the secessionist forces. He will be in charge of a dangerous and unpredictable company that deals with explosives, cannons, and rockets. Will he repeat his secret shame of an invention gone wrong? Or will he finally revenge himself of an old enemy by taking his company with him?

This is the second book of the series, An Empire Army Novel.

Loved it. Liked the concept of an engineer fighting in the world of magic and mayhem. Recommended for fantasy war readers and Warhammer readers. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer 40,000**  
**Innocence Proves Nothing**  
**by Sandy Mitchell**  
**Black Library, \$7.99, 414 pp**

A problem with heretics is what a team of Inquisition are trying to counter. They will realize they are fighting not only heretics but also within the Inquisition-who is friend/foe?

This is the second book in a Dark Heresy series.

Enjoyable. Recommended for dark sci-fi readers and Warhammer 40,000 readers. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer Death's Messenger**  
**by Sandy Mitchell**  
**Black Library Pub, \$7.99, 395 pp**

Rudi, a tracker and hunter, and his lady friend, Hanna, a healer, are driven away from their homes due to a witchhunter and his men. They are trying to get to Marienburg, a large city, in order to find an old friend. Little do they know that both of them will have many perils on the road before they end their quest.

This is the first book of Blood of the Reik series.

Interesting. Recommended for dark fantasy and Warhammer readers. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer 40,000 Gunheads**  
**by Steve Parker**  
**Black Library Pub, \$7.99, 414 pp**

Sergeant White and his tank company, Gunheads, are given a mission to find a relic. They will find how difficult the enemy, the orks, can be. Will they finish their mission or be destroyed?

Good. Overall, liked the story of a tank commander and his men against the odds. Recommended for dark sci-fi

war and Warhammer 40,000 readers. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer Death's Legacy**  
**by Sandy Mitchell**  
**Black Library Publication, \$7.99, 409 pp**

Rudi will have a destiny with not only with his friend Hanna but also with witch hunters, mutants, heretics and beastmen. He will have to choose a walk a hard path or an easy route to destruction.

This is the third book of the Blood on the Reik series.

Tough choice for Rudi. Everything began to make sense after reading the other two books in series. Enjoyable. Recommended for dark fantasy readers and Warhammer fans. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer 40,000 Cadian Blood**  
**by Aaron Dembski-Bowden**  
**Black Library Pub, \$7.99, 347 pp**

The Cadian Guardsmen are battling the diseased Chaos forces at the Imperial shrine world of Kathur. There is more at stake than the unit being assigned a commissar and an inquisitor. Something very sinister is about to appear.

Surprised at the complex story. Liked it. Definitely recommended to dark sci-fi readers and Warhammer 40,000 fans. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer Vermintide**  
**by Bruno Lee**  
**Black Library Pub, \$7.99, 252 pp**

In this book, Heiko Geissner is trying to solve the missing museum pieces. He will find out that he will be branded a heretic because he fought the elusive and "imaginary" enemy of mankind, the "rat-men." With nowhere to go, Heiko will attempt to find help from the dwarves. But will the dwarfs listen to this "insane" human?

Liked it. Enjoyable. Recommend to dark fantasy readers and Warhammer fans. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer 40,000 Titanicus**  
**by Dan Abnett**  
**Black Library Pub, \$8.99, 602 pp**

In this novel, Titan Legio Invicat, a war machine, is at the forge world of Orestes to hunt the Chaos Titans.

Loved it. I can see why Dan Abnett is top of his game. Recommended to dark sci-fi war readers and Warhammer 40,000 fans. ~ Jeffrey Lu

(Cont'd on page 10 )

**Westercon 63 and ConChord 23 have partnered to bring you:**

# WesterChord

**Thursday, July 1 through Sunday, July 4, 2010**

**With our honored guests:**

**Writer Guest of Honor: Rudy Rucker / Fan Guest of Honor: John D. Berry**

**Artist Guest of Honor: Marc Schirmeister / Toastmaster: Paul Kwinn**

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Since 1948 the Westercon has been the floating social feast where fans gather annually to celebrate Science Fiction & Fantasy this side of the Rockies. Join us in 2010 to reunite with old friends, meet new friends, and share in our corner of fandom. We've partnered with ConChord 23, Southern California's home filk convention, to infuse a musical balloon that will lift the weekend. ConChord's distinctive features include musical performances, one of which is the infamous Totally Tacky and Tasteless Revue, at which musicians perform songs they would not normally perform on stage.

WesterChord will be held at the **Pasadena Hilton**, 168 S. Los Robles Ave, Pasadena, CA 91101. The room rate is \$129 a night for s/d/t/q occupancy and valet parking is \$15 a day. Call (626) 584-3112 and tell them the convention code: WESTER to receive the reduced rate.

Attending Membership for all 4 days is \$60 (it goes up after June 1).

For more information or to register view our websites: [www.westercon63.org](http://www.westercon63.org) , [www.conchord.org](http://www.conchord.org) or email: [info@westercon63.org](mailto:info@westercon63.org).



**Gamers** (Cont’d from page 9 )  
**Warhammer The Chronicles of Malus Darkblade Volume Two**  
**by Dan Abnett and Mike Lee**  
**Black Library, \$13.99, 718 pp**

Here is the volume 2 of Malus Darkblade. The dark elf Malus Darkblade is alive and well. He is trying to counter a curse by attempting to find five artifacts before one year or he loses everything. So far, Malus has three items. He needs to find two more. Will he remove this curse or will he inherit something more?

This tome contains Warpsword, Lord of Ruin, and a Darkblade comic strip.

One mean evil character who has the will and intellect to survive. Very dark. Recommended for dark fantasy or Warhammer readers. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer**  
**The Cold Hand of Betrayal**  
**edited by Marc Gascoigne and Christian Dunn**  
**Black Library, \$7.99, 252 pp**

Here are nine short stories of betrayal in the fantasy world of Warhammer. They varied from Elvish brothers to Chaos warriors.

Interesting. Dark deeds. Some had surprise endings. Recommended for dark fantasy or Warhammer readers. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer 40,000 Dark Apostle**  
**by Anthony Reynolds**  
**Black Library, \$7.99, 415 pp**

Dark Apostle Jarulek and his Chaos Space Marines, Word Bearers, are invading an Imperial world. They are trying to find an artifact that may help their cause against their hated enemy- The Imperial. What they will realize is that there is another enemy lurking around. Will the quest to find this artifact be too high?

This is the first book of the World Bearers Series.

Interesting. Surprised at who survived. Dark. Recommended to dark sci-fi readers or Warhammer 40,000 fans. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer 40,000 Dark Disciple**  
**by Anthony Reynolds**  
**Black Library, \$7.99, 413 pp**

Marduk is now the new Dark Apostle of the Word Bearers Chaos Space Marine Legion. He will continue the quest for the solution to a mysterious alien artifact. Little will they know, Marduk and his Chaos Space Marines will have to fight not only Imperial forces and aliens but also among themselves.

This is the second book of the World Bearers Series.

Riveting. A point of view I have not

considered. Enjoyed it even though it is dark. Recommended to dark sci-fi readers or Warhammer 40,000 fans. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer 40,000 Rynn’s World**  
**by Steve Parker**  
**Black Library, \$13.00, 536 pp**

Rynn’s World is where resides a major Space Marine chapter, the Crimson Fist. Unfortunately, they will have to face a major ork invasion after a man-made disaster. Will the Crimson Fist survive against these alien hordes or cease to exist due to the sheer numbers of the hated enemy?

This is the first of a series, A Space Marine Battles Novel.

Liked it. Dark but hopeful. Lot of realistic ends of heroes. Disappointed but see reason why the major enemy was not killed. Smell sequel. Recommended to dark sci-fic and Warhammer 40,000 fans. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer 40,000 Dark Creed**  
**by Anthony Reynolds**  
**Black Library, \$7.99, 413 pp**

Dark Apostle Marduk and his Word Bearer chapter are joining forces with other Word Bearers to invade and crush an Imperial sector. He has an alien device called Nexus Arrangement that could help his side win. This is one of the Word Bearers Dark crusade against the Imperial armies including the great White Consuls Space Marine Chapter. Yet, things change for the worse when the same alien artifact goes horribly wrong- it summons an old enemy to the mix. To make it worse, Dark Apostle Marduk will have to deal enemies within.

This is the third book in the Word Bearer series.

Interesting, indeed. Dark. I liked it. Recommended for dark sci-fi and Warhammer 40,000 readers. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer Call to Arms**  
**by Mitchel Scanlon**  
**Black Library, \$8.99, 316 pp**

Dieter Lanz joins the Hochland Swordsmen known as ‘the Scarlets.’ He will fight battles with his unit against the orc/goblin army in order to stay alive. He will change from being a beginner to a veteran. War is hell.

This is the third book of the series, An Empire Army Novel. This book can stand alone.

Realistic. Imperial general big mistake. Dark and deadly. Recommended to dark fantasy and Warhammer fans. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer 40,000 Grey Knights**  
**by Ben Counter**  
**Black Library, \$7.99, 412 pp**

The Grey Knights are daemon hunters/ space marines. In this story, Justicar Alaric is leading a team of Grey Knights to counter an old prophecy of a great enemy’s return. Will he and his group be there in time to stop this great evil?

This is the first book of the Grey Knight Series.

Enjoyed it. Dark. These Grey Knights are the only space marines to never go to the dark side. Surprised at a solution of one Grey Knight. Recommended to dark sci-fi readers and fans of Warhammer 40,000. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer 40,000 Dark Adeptus**  
**by Ben Counter**  
**Black Library, \$7.99, 401pp**

This time, Alaric and his loyal Grey Knights are to investigate a planet that vanished a hundred years ago and suddenly appeared out of nowhere. They will ally themselves with a team from Mars, the Mechanicus. Little will they both know that there is something darker. Something in the planet is trying to help their common enemy, the Chaos forces.

This is the second book of the Grey Knight Series.

Interesting. Dark. This is filled with a couple of surprises. Liked it. Recommended to dark sci-fi readers and fans of Warhammer 40,000. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Warhammer 40,000 Soul Hunter**  
**by Aaron Dembski-Bowden**  
**Black Library, \$8.99, 413 pp**

Space Marine Talos is known as an independent pure heart killer, “Soul Hunter.” He is having currently visions of what dangers his fellow heretic Space Marines will have in the future. Unfortunately, his chapter has depleted men and resources since their rebellion to the Emperor. Yet, they have not turned to the dark Chaotic gods. Their evil “allies” invited them for a Black Crusade against the Emperor’s forces. Little will they know there are more at stake than winning.

This is a Night Lords novel. Different is good. Enjoyable. Recommended to dark war sci-fi and Warhammer 40,000 readers. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Musty Tomes**  
**A Zen Science Fiction Series by Dennis Schmidt**  
**Way-Farer, Ace Books, 277 pp, 1978**  
**Kensho, Ace Books, 314 pp, 1979**  
**Satori, Ace Books, 293 pp, 1981**  
**Wanderer, Ace Books, 202 pp, 1985**

You might think that nothing could be more inimical to science fiction than Zen Buddhism. After all, in essence it is profoundly anti-intellectual, instead devoted to a state of mind beyond words and opposed to any rational analysis. Its enlightenment is to be found in the here-and-now, an emptying of the mind rather than an attainment of a mystical state. This makes it the perfect defense against alien energy beings that feed upon human emotion, driving people insane to build up the feast.

*Way-Farer* opens on the planet Kensho, where people live in fear of the floating, invisible aliens, called mushin. The humans are descendants of Earth colonists who were almost wiped out by the mushin. A Japanese admiral of the colony ship established the Way of Zen to allow a few to survive, at a preindustrial level. Generations later, this planet has many ways, including the Way of the Sword. While knowledge is not the goal, Zen certainly has helped in the honing of martial arts like karate and swordfighting. The first two parts of this novel were published in *Galaxy* magazine in 1976 and 1977, so the author, an advertising executive, earned his credentials within the scifi genre. Schmidt was good at getting in a character’s mind, in this first novel the mind of a young man who discovers a new way to oppose the mushin, the Way of No Sword.

*Kensho* occurs centuries later, when humans have expanded a bit over the planet, and have controlled the mushin more. We now hear that the admiral’s Way was indeed based on Zen, and Schmidt indulges in the scifi genre technique of having characters lecture each other about important ideas – in this case Zen mindlessness and philosophy. Think of Obi Wan or Yoda talking to Luke. Not a problem – loved it. The problem on the planet now is that an entrenched priesthood and ambitious country warlord are only too eager to go to war against each other. Since most technology of the colony ship was lost, that will involve lots of blades. And one young swordsman wants to use the mushin to prevent the war ...

Flash forward more centuries, and the new problem in *Satori* is a warship from Earth. The religious tyranny of Earth is seeking out its lost colonies, to give them an option to submit or die. Schmidt puts us in the minds of a bishop

( Cont’d on page 12 )



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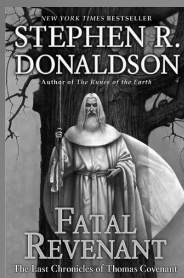
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**Musty Tomes** ( Cont'd from page 10 )

and admiral on the ship, representing the barely cooperating power centers of Earth. The new religion is called the Power, basically devoted to controlling people and stopping progress. The two greatest foes of the Power, aside from the military, were scientists and “Zenists.” The bishop is not pleased to discover remaining Zenists on Kensho. He sends an assassin down to explore and kill the head of the Zens, called the Wayfarer. His crew also kidnaps a female subject from the planet, for study. They didn’t figure on her being -- well, one of those Zenists.

*Wanderer* occurs only seven years later, when an Earth fleet has arrived to find out why the previous warship failed. The same characters are now involved to stop the fleet. The reformed assassin goes on a wilderness hike and is joined by a ronin, one of the band of rogue crazies who are bonded to the mushin. They meet another wilderness wanderer, a young woman who left the Zen ways herself. Meanwhile, the Zenists are trying to develop new weapons and options to stop the fleet: rayguns, the old colony ship, their own psi powers of teleportation? In the end, the bad guys win. They consider the planet too dangerous and nuke it into a cinder. And yet, and yet ... oh, I don’t want to spoil a very satisfying ending. ~ **M.L. Fringe**

**Coraline**  
**by Neil Gaiman**  
**Scholastic Inc., \$7.99, 162 pp**

After seeing the movie, I decided to read the book, a copy of which came as a Christmas present. Much as I liked the film, the book is still better. It has the ring of truth in it as few books do. One striking scene, for example, occurs when Coraline recollects a time when her will to explore led to danger, and her father’s courage, his bravery saved her from harm. She proceeds to emulate him.

The plot, interspersed with significant poetry and horrific components, is this: a rather lonely girl discovers a passage that leads to an alternate *here* presided over by an ‘other mother’ where she is offered everything she wants, from attention to living toys to her favorite meals, and she can stay forever and ever. All she has to do is give up her eyes in exchange for a pair of black buttons. The buttons, plus the black thread and a silver needle to sew them in place, are one of the first things Coraline sees in the other world. Coraline refuses, but when she gets back to our world, she discovers that her parents are missing, taken hostage by the creature that has shaped the other world. So back she *has* to go, to rescue them. She is helped by a black cat, a stone with a hole in it given to her by two ladies who live in an adjacent flat and read tea leaves quite accurately, and three ghosts who are also

in need of rescuing. One of these ghosts is other than human.

I hope Mr. Gaiman won’t mind if I compare his writing here to that of C.S. Lewis’; it is more than the British-isms and the clarity of language; certain remarks, like the cat’s comment, ““You people are all over the place. Cats, on the other hand, keep ourselves together.”” strike the same sort of note as “for nothing spoils the taste of good, ordinary food half so much as the memory of bad, magic food” from *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. And look! Both stories have a witch, and a wardrobe – or at least the mirror from one with a wardrobe space behind it – and the cat in *Coraline* is at one point the size of a lion, and Aslan occasionally presents as a cat. Ha! And I bet that wasn’t even an intentional correlation on Gaiman’s part. Certain archetypes are simply more likely to show up in England’s literature. Gaiman also has a similar understanding of the nature of evil entities: they can distort, but not create; and they lie.

It seems to me there are different classes of horror, and some are much more unpleasant than others. I don’t mind magical soul-eating spiders with sharp teeth anywhere near as much as I mind human-perpetuated cruelties. So this book goes on my shelf of best children’s literature that is touched by magic, alongside *The Midnight Folk*, *The Secret Garden*, and *Harding’s Luck*.

*Coraline* is popular with children because it contains humor, wisdom, and arcane elements like singing rats and a talking cat. It is the sort of book teachers and parents love because there is (ta-da!) *character development*. By the story’s end, Coraline has decided that getting everything she wants is not essential to happiness, and she is so glad to have her father back she starts to eat the weird ‘recipe’ meals he loves to make but which she used to distain. Young readers may or may not notice these adult-pleasing details, but this is one of those books that acts on its readers like the philosopher’s stone. ~~~ **Chris Paige**

**Dragons & Dwarves: Novels of the Cleveland Portal**  
**by S. Andrew Swann**  
**DAW Books, \$7.99, 442 Pages**

*Dragon & Dwarves* is a compendium of the two novels *Dragons of the Cuyahoga* and *The Dwarves of Whiskey Island* originally published seperately in 1996 and 1997.

*Dragons* begins ten years after a portal to another dimension opened in Cleveland on the Steelers’ 45 yard line during a game with the Browns. Refugees poured out. They are Dwarves, Elves, Dragons, Griffins and many more. Cleveland won a court case against the Federal government retaining control of this potential gold mine. But the affects were many.

Electronic devices malfunction in the area. Magic spells worked. The city formed alliances with some of the refugees. Most of the refugees depend on magic to live and are thus confined to a thirty mile radius of The Portal.

Our story begins with death of an important Dragon, Aloeus, who died when all of the magic disappeared from his area of the sky while he was flying. Without the magic he dies. Kline Maxwell, a news reporter comes to suspect that the magic was deliberately siphoned off and the Aloeus’s death was no accident. The chase on leading to encounter with evil human magicians, corrupt officials, interfering police...

The story has wonderful characters. Aloeus, whom we meet in flashbacks and Baldassare, his lawyer, The two were corporate entrepreneurs. Maelgwyn Caledvwlch, an elf in the Cleveland Police Department’s Paranormal enforcement unit is a wonderfully complex individual sometimes seeming morally ambivalent but ultimately proving to be on the side of light. Mayor Rayburn, the corrupt City Boss is sleazy and two-faced, a villain you love to hate but not The Villain.

*Dragons* carries through to its satisfactory end. Then comes *Dwarves* where we learn of Cleveland’s hand in overthrowing a government on the other side of the Portal resulting the entry of Ultimate Evil into Cleveland. This Evil, aided and abetted by the *Dwarves of Whiskey Island* and their hidden reservoir of Magic, endangers our entire dimension and all of the universes - not just Cleveland. Read on to find out how Kline and Maelgwin deal with it. Learn also how Cleveland copes with the federal seizure of the Portal.

I recommend these books. ~ **Gary L. Swaty**

**Once Upon a Winter’s Night**  
**by Dennis McKiernan**  
**Roc, \$7.99, 380 pp**

Meeting Dennis McKiernan was one of the high points of attending TusCon this year. He is kind, wise, and funny; my favorite character scheme. In the wake of some fairly intense discussions of fairy-tale motifs, he was so generous as to give me signed copies of several of his *Once Upon a...* titles, including this one.

Anyone who loves the lyricism of Tolkien and read fairy-tales instead of doing their homework should love this book, which is an extended version of “East of the Sun, West of the Moon,” full of character development, rich descriptions, riddles, romance, and embellishments.

Camille and her family live in a cottage near a boundary with faerie. One winter’s night, a great white Bear comes with a message: the mysterious Prince of Summerwood wishes to make her his bride. Camille is eventually persuaded

to accept this offer, and travels with the bear through realms of wonder and enchantment to the prince’s demesne. Although he goes masked, and is always absent by day, Camille gradually comes to trust and then love Price Alain. But inadvertently she triggers a terrible curse that carries away Prince Alain and all the household, to be prisoners in the dreadful keep of the fell wizard Orbane. Camille has exactly a year and a day to rescue them, or Alain will be wedded to the troll princess Dre’ela. And so she wanders, on an almost hopeless quest to find the keep that is “east of the sun and west of the moon.” Along the way she is aided by many, including a unicorn, a dragon, an elf-price, and the three Fates themselves in quite their best literary incarnation.

This is by far the most satisfying retelling I have ever read. The language is evocative of faerie; and there are scenes of such beauty, passages of such luminous insight, that I was transfigured as I read. There have been many novelizations of fairy tales in the past 30 years. Some of the most noteworthy are *Beauty*, *Deerskin*, and *Spindle’s End*, all by Robin McKinley; and the Tor Fairy Tales Series that included *Snow White and Rose Red* by Patricia Wrede, *Thomas the Rhymer* by Ellen Kushner, and *Tam Lin* by Pamela Dean. I love all of these, but none of them so completely transport the reader as does *Once Upon a Winter’s Night*.

Fairy tales are for the Jung at heart. No matter how old you are, you will probably feel like a teen-ager again as you read this – in a good way. ~ **Chris Paige**

**Musical Notes**

**Smoked Fish**  
**Songs by Leslie Fish and Others**

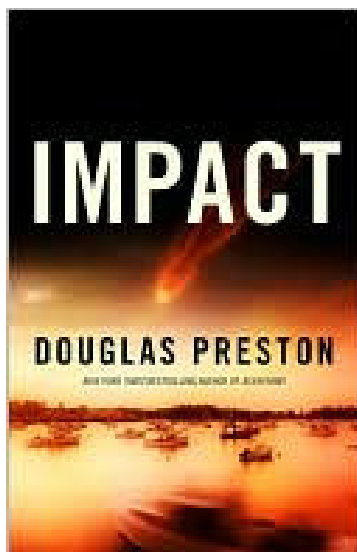
If you have lost your old tape of *It’s Sister Jenny’s Turn to Throw the Bomb* to time or mischance you can replace at least a few of those songs with this CD. “Bella Ciao” and “Trinity” are among the reprised vintage Leslie. Along with these are a Jack the Ripper song, a lament for the lost space program, an ode to space colony pioneers to be, a haunting version of “Beacon Hill” by Joe Bethancourt, a group-sing of “Transport 18,” a post-Kipling commentary on Bush era politics called “Lock and Load,” one of Kipling’s own poems from *Rewards and Fairies* set to quick music, and, of course, fantastic picking and strumming on the twelve-string Monster. To *X-Files* fans I particularly recommend track # 11. 19 songs in all, representing the many moods and voices of Leslie Fish. Smoke-ravaged her voice may be at moments, but the sureness of her expression is worth more than a thousand sweetly-voiced vapid pop songs. You don’t have to be Libertarian to love this collection, but it sure doesn’t hurt. Strongly recommended. - **Chris Paige**



# In Our Book

**Impact**  
by Douglas Preston  
\$25.99, Tom Doherty, 364 pp

The story follows a young woman, Abbey, living in a fishing town in Maine who sees financial possibilities in finding a meteorite that apparently splashed into the ocean nearby. But she's pretty sure it didn't hit the water but an island instead. So, with her intrepid best friend, lots of food, booze and pot, they borrow her father's boat and start looking. Abbey is pretty sure she can turn a buck on eBay with a genuine meteorite. Unfortunately, she and her friend, Jackie, are targets of the town's bad boy. Hyped up on meth, he has convinced himself that the two women have found a legendary treasure and he wants it. He also wants to affect a little vengeance on both women...in the usual way from those kind of men. Oh yes, we also have to throw in a nasty Atlantic



Ocean storm.

The parallel story follows an ex-CIA operative who freelances. Wyman Ford has been recruited to investigate the report of a mine in southeast Asia where a local warlord is enslaving villagers to mine a radioactive stone that is being sold in the US as a precious gem. What he finds, in addition to the nasty business of slavery and lots of people dying of radiation poisoning, is pretty astonishing.

And, on the sidelines, is the scientist who discovers something amazing and terrifying hiding in a crater on a moon around Mars. He is more concerned about saving his job than realizing that his information means a lot more to other people who don't care much about his job...or his life.

But it takes our resourceful and more-than-a-bit brilliant young woman in a backwoods town, to understand and interpret what experienced and trained scientists, ex-CIA agents, and politicians cannot. Okay, so when did a politician

ever figure something out that wasn't political....?

If all that sounds familiar and trite, it's because it is. This story had no challenges or suspense for me. In fact, I'll probably sell the book on eBay. While Douglas Preston is perfectly capable of generating an interesting and even suspenseful story, this one isn't one of them. The sci-fi element was mildly interesting and, taken alone, would probably make a decent sci-fi movie starring Bruce Willis. ~ Catherine Book

**Pride Mates: Shifters Unbound**  
by Jennifer Ashley  
Leisure Books; \$7.99; 304pp

This is the start of a new series from local Phoenix author Ashley and it's a hot, compelling set-up to a world with all kinds of yummy potential.

The story centers on Shifters: Irish Fae-created beings that can morph back and forth from animal to human form. They are as powerful, intense and sexy as any creation that currently stalks the paranormal genre.

Kim Fraser is a San Antonio DA who's been assigned to defend a shifter in a human murder case. She's determined to ferret out the truth, even though shifters are generally shunned by humans. To throw more on the fire, a shifter murderer is supposedly impossible because of the magical "Collars" fused tightly to their necks. All shifters are required to wear the necklace to control their animal natures so they can't bust loose in an adrenaline-fueled frenzy of any kind. (The Collars are made by a Fae who really dislikes shifters and was happy to provide humans with a way to control them). If a shifter loses control and gets all fired up—the Collar exacts a very painful, debilitating backlash to the wearer. Bound by inimical magic and living on the fringes of human society, shifters are given limited access to schools and technology. Barely tolerated, they are not allowed to live outside their ghettos.

So, to build her defense, Fraser has

to go to Shiftertown on the edges of San Antonio to get to the heart of the matter. Here she meets a feline shifter bar manager, the hand-wringingly gorgeous Liam Morrissey. With just barely a how-de-do, Fraser is pulled into a world she knows nothing about. A place where the males are very, very alpha and the women no-nonsense. And of course, where we all learn nothing is as it seems. What is commonly known about shifters is way off the mark and could do the backstroke in a bottle cap.

Trust me - this is a really fast read if you love paranormals. The action and sex are very intense, tactile and graphic.

Really fun stuff. Hope we don't have to wait too long for another in the series! ~ Sue Martin

**Red Inferno: 1945**  
by Robert Conroy  
Ballantine Books, \$15.00, 353pp

This is Pat Conroy's fifth alternative history, the third about WWII, and like his 1942, intriguingly close, a near miss. It also brings to light Joe Stalin, the man who authorized more deaths than the entire Third Reich accomplished. Conroy reminds us there was a reason behind the hyperventilating, anti-communist witch hunts of the late forties and fifties. Like any other Big Lie, it needed a seed of truth on which to batten. Stalin was an insane tyrant, and he and his party were bent on world domination. So, *what if* Stalin had looked for an excuse to declare hot blazing war on Russia's erstwhile ally, the United States, while both armies advanced on Berlin? And *what if* a power-hungry American officer gave Stalin just the excuse he needed, and lied about who fired first? And then, *what if* both countries deemed themselves perfectly justified in pursuing all-out war because the other side "started it"?

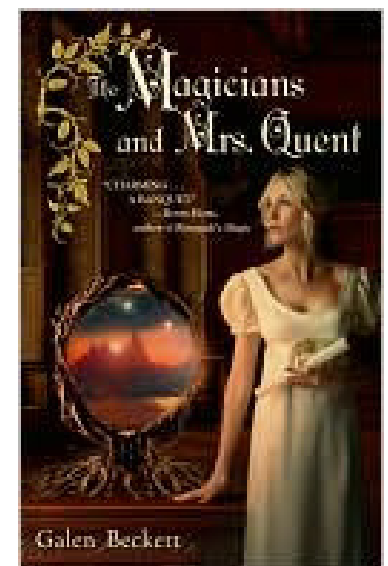
What follows is taut, character-driven action, fought in and about the rubble of Berlin, with side actions on political terrain in DC and Moscow.

Truman, Patton and Bradley are among the historical politicians who decorate the pages. The fictional characters, the soldiers in tanks and planes and crossing the Elbe, the staffers who work in the grey areas between embassies, these personify the choices and experiences lived by many of our grandparents, and others who never lived to have children.

With a background in economic history, Conroy manages to do what most text-books completely fail to do: bring history to breathing life. As a public service to the readers who love truth, he might consider including a bibliography and notes in future publications to explain the factual bases of his alternate histories. ~ Chris Paige

**The Magicians and Mrs Quent**  
by Galen Beckett  
Spectra, \$15.00, 498 pp

A debut novel that combines fantasy with elements of a comedy of manners and a good old fashioned Gothic romance.



Ivy is the eldest of the three Lockwood sisters who live in genteel poverty with their parents. Mr Lockwood is locked in a silent world of his own, according to society he is a victim of his magickal studies. Ivy is sure the answer lies within

( Cont'd on page 14 )



## In Our Book ( Cont'd from page 13 )

the riddle her father hide for her, if only she can solve it. When her mother passes away it means great changes for the family. Their cousin, Mr Wyble, will take their home and they must move soon to a smaller, older home that belongs to their invalid father. To make ends meet, Ivy takes a job as governess for a Mr Quent who resides in an isolated mansion. Once there, she will learn more about magick and the forces that are attempting to bring about change.

The story is set in the world of Altania which is intriguingly different from earth with its days and nights of varying hours, political intrigue, stands of old trees that can move and kill, and, of course, magick. The story takes several unrelated characters - Ivy and her sisters, Lord Rafferty, the only son of a wealthy land owner with secrets, his friend Eldyn Garrit, an impoverished student in search of a fortune so he can support his sister and Mr Quent, who fights against those who would plot treason against the crown - and weaves them into an intertwined tale of intrigue, romance, magick and mystery.

Highly recommended. And I intend to be on the look-out for the sequel, *The House on Durrow Street*, due out this September. ~ **Stephanie L Bannon**

### **Fragile Things** **by Neil Gaiman** **Harper Luxe, \$7.99; 364 pp**

This volume is a paperback printing of the 2006 book of the same name.

The short stories contained within this volume span the gamut of Neil's career. He has included stories from the beginning of his career to an excerpt from *Anasazi Boys*. However, the prize of this volume isn't fiction at all, it is the introduction where Neil explains not only why each story was written but also where his head was at while writing it. This glimpse into his thought processes is invaluable in understanding how he became one of the most popular writers of our age.

While I tend to not review or give my preferences of individual short stories, I have to say that my personal favorite story in this book is the first one. "A Study in Emerald" is a Sherlock Holmes story set in Lovecraft's world of the "Old Ones." I had to be told to "shut the book and get the hell off the plane." Just a fascinating look into the ultimate use of logic in a world of chaos.

Very highly recommended. ~ **Bob LaPierre**

### **Changing the World:** **All-New Tales of Valdemar** **edited by Mercedes Lackey** **DAW Books; \$7.99; 343 pp**

This is a collection of sixteen short stories set in Mercedes Lackey's Kingdom of Valdemar. Almost all of them involve Heralds and their Companions. (Heralds are kingdom peacekeepers and their Companions are magical white horses who can speak to them telepathically and show strengths and intelligence beyond a normal horse.)

Like any short story collection the authors' abilities vary from adequate to exceptional. What is really charming is that most of the stories are written very much in Lackey's style which makes the collection a smooth read. There is, of course, a short story from Ms. Lackey to head off the sixteen tales, "The One Left Behind," about the weaver Marya who really, really dislikes Heralds (usually well-thought of and helpful) but is convinced to help two Heralds who come to her village to track down a thief—who turns out to be impersonating a Herald and was a particular friend of Marya's. I thought the story was going to be rather a rather unhappy tale, but it turned out to be funny.

Some of the standout stories are Elizabeth A. Vaughn's "Softly Falling Snow" a very short tale about an old love and Brenda Cooper's "The Last Part of the Day," a melancholy tale about dealing with tragedy and moving on. Excellent. There are two stories using the same characters Jem and Ree and their grandpa that are very compelling. One is "Defending the Heart" by Kate Paulk and the other, "Matters of the Heart" by Sarah A Hoyt. These tales do not have Heralds in them but are about the close friendship of a young human man Jem and Ree—who was caught in a Magic storm and is part cat, rat and human.

The other authors in this collection are: Rosemary Edghill and Denise McCune, Mickey Zucker Reichert, Elizabeth Waters, Kristin Schwengel, Stephanie D. Shaver, Micahel Z. Williamson, Tanya Huff, Fiona Patton, Judith Tarr, Nancy Asire and Ben Ohlander. Ohlander's tale, set in the contemporary world, is a hoot. ~ **Sue Martin**

### **Jack: Secret Circles** **by F. Paul Wilson** **Tor Books, HB \$15.99, 282 pp**

Here's how you can tell that the Repairman Jack series is actually good, not merely popular: you almost never find copies in used bookstores - the owners hang on to them with tenacity. About the only time you find a Repairman Jack volume on the shelves at Bookmans is when someone has upgraded to authorized revised editions and the shelver's body warmth still lingers on the cover.

The eponymous Jack of the series is a dispenser of poetic social justice. Where the policeman will not or cannot go, Jack moves amongst the shadows, encountering supernatural dangers and mysteries, some of which presage an end of sorts of the world. Jack is quietly heroic, and as long as you have no unreasonable objections to vigilante tendencies, he is about the most admirable fictional character in print, the guy you really want as a friend and neighbor. And he keeps good company, too.



But before Jack realized that sometimes justice must be made, not begged, before he became a figurative repairman, he was a teenage kid riding his bike and exploring the Pine Barrens of New Jersey. Even then, it turns out, he was a magnet for supernatural outbreaks.

When five-year-old Cody goes missing, Jack and his best friend Louise involve themselves in the search, only to find much, much more than they sought. There's the obsidian-dark broken pyramid in the Barrens, for starters; and the secretive Mr. Drexler, actuator for the Ancient Septimus Fraternal Order; odd townsfolk who hold old magic in their hands; and a situation that needs the special attention of an emergent Repairman.

Wilson does a great job of hinting at futures and connecting this story to the network of his other fiction. And while it follows close on the heels of its predecessor, *Jack: Secret Histories*, it stands on its own legs. If you have a young reader in mind, this can be a gift on its own merits. But you had best be prepared for urgent requests for... more, more, MORE!!! ~ **Chris Paige**

### **Timeshares** **Edited by: Jean Rabe and Martin H. Greenberg** **Daw Fantasy, \$7.99; 306 pp**

Nineteen short stories about taking a vacation in a true timeshare. The amazing takes on how it would work and what we would do if it was possible were

incredibly fun. Using Gutenberg's press to make brochures for Timeshares was a tasty bit of genius. Discrediting Jesus was incredible.

I like to think that someone would do what was done in the final story, but I know human nature too well. The stories are well-written, and short enough to read in a single sitting (mostly). Some of them read a little slower but I didn't find a clunker in the bunch.

Highly recommended. ~ **Bob LaPierre**

### **Cosmopath: A Bengal Station Novel** **By Eric Brown** **Solaris, \$7.99., 414 pp**

Eric Brown has produced another Novel set against the crowded, gritty and complex backdrop of Bengal Station. His character, Jeff Vaughn has been married to Sukara for five years and they are raising the orphan they adopted and have one small daughter. He is working as a telepathic investigator and no longer a Necropath (One who reads the minds of the newly dead.) Complex events intervene in his life causing him to agree to take up Necropathy and travel to a distant planet to find out what happened to the expedition there.

The story abounds with international intrigue, involving Chandraskar, a ruthless entrepreneur, India, China, North America and two separate Alien races. The interactions of the rich and varied group of individuals from all sides make the story flow well. Chandraskar is the rich and ruthless business who owns a big stake in Bengal Station, an independant orbital of his own and a huge trading empire. What he seeks on Delta Cephei VII Vaughn does not know except that it is not what says it is. Parveen Das is Chandrasakar's lover who has been invited along on the voyage on the Starship *Revenge of Kali*. Does the Indian Magnate have some other motive for including his pet Xenologist on the trip to a supposedly uninhabited planet? Does Chandraskar know she is an agent of the Communist government of India? Why is an obviously suspect American geologist included in the voyage? What happened to the first exploratory vessel and why was it sent? Vaughn does not know. He doesn't want to know. He doesn't want to go, but must as his daughter needs expensive medical care. Also a problem is the rash of attempted assassinations of top telepaths around India. Can it be related? (Both Vaughn and Das were attacked.) There is not enough information to tie it all together. Vaughn must proceed to Delta Cepha VII and read the mind of the dead engineer to find out what happened and, maybe, tie it all together.

On the planet the plot thickens with the discovery of vast underground habitats and a colony of terrestrial origin.

( Cont'd on page 15 )



## In Our Book (Cont'd from page 14)

The book proceeds to an unexpected conclusion leaving the reader a bit surprised. I recommend it. ~ Gary L. Swaty

### **Blood Cross** by Faith Hunter Roc, \$7.99, 321 pp

*Blood Cross* is the second book in the Jane Yellowrock series, following *Skinwalker*. It follows almost immediately upon the events of the first book.

To recap, Jane is a skinwalker with the ability to turn into any animal she chooses but her preference is to turn into a mountain lion. She shares her body... her soul... her being with Beast, in a complicated relationship that was partly explained in the first book but still hold mysteries for both Jane and us, the reader.

A rogue vampire is still loose in New Orleans, turning new vampires and letting them run loose to kill and maim at will. The vampire council has hired Jane to track and kill the rogue but the job soon becomes entangled with vampire politics



as well as old and new cases of missing witch-children. The case takes a personal turn when Jane's house is attacked by a powerful vampire and the young children of her witch friend are kidnapped to be used in a black magic vampire ritual.

Along with the serious problems of the case, Jane deals with the two men she is attracted to, the almost insane vendetta that Leo, Blood Master of New Orleans, has sworn against her and attempts to learn even more about her mysterious past.

Highly recommended. I cannot wait for the next one in the series! ~ Stephanie L Bannon

### **The Dragon Book** **Magical Tales from the Modern** **Masters of Fantasy** Edited by Jack Dann and Gardner Dozois Ace, \$24.95; 436 pp

Short stories about dragons; seems like there are always some such stories around. These stories, however, are some of the best, by some of the best. None of these have been published anywhere before this volume.

The list of authors reads like a Who's Who of fantasy authors: Naomi Novik, Tamora Pierce, Kage Baker, Tad Williams, and Harry Turtledove to name but a few of the better known authors. And, as with all dragon stories, some are from the point of view of the dragon slayer and some are from the view of the dragon; but more importantly, some are from the point of view of a third party. These are often the best stories as you see it from the viewpoint you would have if you were there.

The worlds and dragons are as varied as the writers. I found myself rereading several of the stories to fully understand the implications and nuances imparted. Some of these were my first encounter with the author, but definitely not my last. Find this volume, read it at the library if you must, but read it.

Very highly recommended. ~ Bob LaPierre

### **Three Days to Dead** by Kelly Meding Dell, \$7.99, 405 pp

This is a debut with the next due out summer of 2010.

Evangeline Stone was a star bounty hunter till she and the other two members of her triad were murdered. When she woke up in a new body she had no memory of what or why. Now she has three days to solve her murder and prevent a war. She then becomes irretrievably dead. But she is still being hunted so dead is still an option.

This is an interesting supernatural mystery with plenty of action, a tad of romance and very edgy. This is a new author worth reading and following. ~ Pam Allan

### **Iron Man: Virus** by Alex Irvine Del Rey, \$7.99, 283 pp

Tony Stark, a.k.a. Iron Man, becomes more of a hermit as he perfects his obsession of total control in his new up-to-date high-tech armor. Little does he know that his friends from S.H.I.E.L.D. and Stark Industries will try to get him out of his shell, literally. Also, HYDRA leadership is disrupted by a new mad scientist/leader, Armin Zola. He tries to get Tony Stark's new technology.

To complicate things, there is a virus within the new metal suit from one mad scientist's clone.

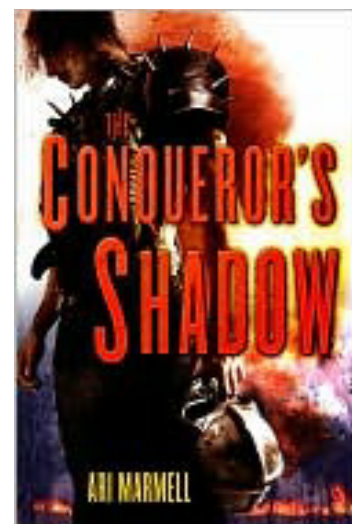
Two problems with this book. If one is not familiar with Marvel Comics on Iron Man, this book would be rather confusing especially to the fans of the Iron Man movie. Another is a constant repeat of dry brief patents from Stark Industries and HYDRA speeches. Reading these can put one to sleep.

Liked the book despite its flaws. Recommended to Marvel Comics Iron Man fans. ~ Jeffrey Lu

### **Conqueror's Shadow** by Ari Marmell Spectra, \$26.00; 436 pp

This is Marmell's first wholly original novel. He brings a very dark sarcastic wit to this book. His foray into dark fantasy is a potent one. He starts with a ruler who, while ruling, has little or no control over the men who operate in his name (sound like current events?) and shortly moves to the leader out-of-power and trying to lead a peaceful life.

I would like to say his return to power is brought about by a desire to help his fellow man, but the truth is his daughter is assaulted and that awakens the most primal response common to all men. His difficulties reassembling his former comrades in arms and his worries about



whether he will revert to his former ways makes for compelling reading.

Marmell takes some easy outs but does them in such a way that they work and don't seem so tired. I am looking forward to his next novel and hoping he continues to get better.

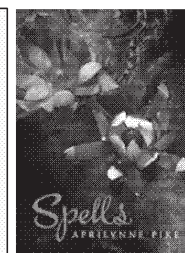
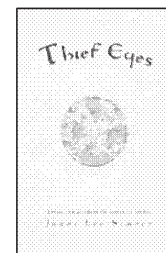
Recommended ~ Bob LaPierre

### **Astonishing X-Men Volume 1-3** by Josh Whedon Marvel Comics Graphic Novels, hb \$29.95, pb \$19.95

'bout time...

It took 30 years, but someone finally succeeded in bringing Kitty Pride and

(Cont'd on page 16)



### Upcoming SF/F Signings at The Poisoned Pen

- May 5** Janni Lee Simner Signs *Thief Eyes* - 7 pm
- June 8** Aprilynne Pike signs *Spells* - 7 pm
- Date TBA** Join us for a release party for the first novel by Sam Sykes - *Tome of the Undergates*

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



**In Our Book** (Cont'd from page 15 ) Peter Rasputin satisfactorily together, and yes, that *is* the main point of this storyline as far as many readers are concerned. The rest is splendid, like a 7-course banquet; but the consummation of the most frustrated romance in all of comicdom is the centerpiece.

For 25 episodes, Whedon transformed this series into the ultimate race car, navigating twists and dizzying curves with dexterity, style, wit, and humor, taking readers on a ride like no other in the Marvel 'Verse. There aren't the mind-expanding forays into esoteric metaphysics that were the trademark specialty of Chris Claremont in his heyday; but you get lines like an annoyed Emma Frost saying to Scott Summers, "You will never see me naked again."

Volume One is primarily about the old, old issue: should mutants be cured of their wild genome? A cure has been advanced; many mutants want it; others fear having it forced upon them. In the X-Men's own ranks there is irreconcilable dissent. One the side, there is the reoccurring



testosterone-charged slug-fest between Cyclops and Wolverine. Then the Danger Room goes hostile/sentient on the X-Men and tries to kill them, using all it knows from years of testing them to zero in on their weak points. The young students, the new trainees, are in the crossfire of all these conflicts, and in these is a poignant casualty. On the other hand, one of the trainees emerges from the herd in a serious way.

The X-men are especially prone to psionic attacks for some reason – no other team gets its collective mind f - , um, messed with like these guys. When Hellfire Alumna and Alien Queen B. Cassandra wants a piece of them, she rips into them like the mental equivalent of Wolverine's claws. Even here, Whedon works in laughs amid the catharsis; there is nothing whatsoever funny about what Cassandra does to Kitty, but the Emma-Scott dialogue roasts Jean Grey's sacred cow status while it harrows Summers' soul. Meanwhile, out on the lawn Beast

and Logan provide comic relief.

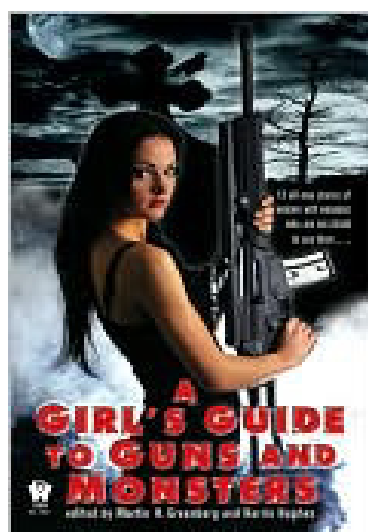
The other major story line is a convoluted struggle for survival and paradigm shift on an alien planet where oracles have foretold that an X-Man will destroy their world. So they have a plan: destroy the X-Men in a pre-emptive strike; if that doesn't work, destroy Earth. S.H.I.E.L.D. and their galactic dark ops sister organization S.W.O.R.D are in on the action, and there are some snark infested verbal exchanges between the groups.

While every main character gets center stage time, Kitty Pryde is the central character of this story arc. Whedon does her justice in a way no one, ever, has done before.

Final word: the March issue of *The Uncanny X-Men*, # 522, brings Pryde back from the depths of space. My copy is pre-ordered. It won't be Josh Whedon at the helm, however; I just hope they at least consulted him. ~ **Chris Paige**

**A Girls Guide to Guns and Monsters**  
**Edited by: Martin H. Greenberg and Kerrie Hughes**  
**Daw, \$7.99; 406 pp**

Thirteen stories about powerful women and their encounters with monsters. The astute will note I left out the bit about guns, in less than half the tales do the women use guns. However, that should in no way be taken to mean they are defenseless. I wouldn't want to be on the wrong side of any of them. The



most telling point of these stories is that with a little tweaking these protagonists could be men or women, (with one notable exception), any race, or species. So I have to believe that finally the genre is focusing on whether the character is a Hero or a Villain and not dragging out old stereotypes.

Ok, off my soapbox now. The stories are wonderful; they speak to the collective unconscious and our need for heroes. The stories are arranged in chronological order from the old west to the far future. Some of them move a little slower than others but they all deliver on fun. I enjoyed the variations and different cultures presented.

Many of them appeared to be chapters in a much larger tale; I want them when they come out.

Highly Recommended ~ **Bob LaPierre**

**Starfist: Double Jeopardy**  
**by David Sherman and Dan Crag**  
**Del Rey, \$25.00, 351 pp**

This is the latest of the *Starfist* series [#14]

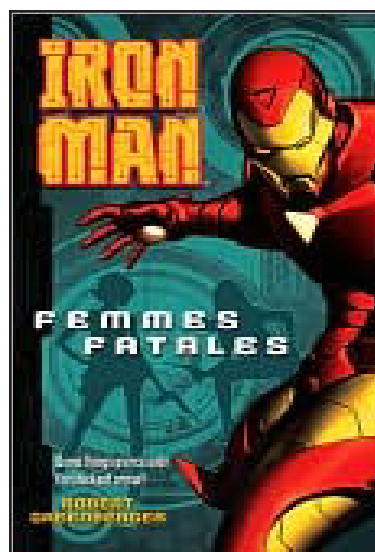
The Thirty-Fourth is preparing for an invasion of the Skink home world.

With no downtime, they are suddenly sent to a neutral world where indigenous people have been enslaved for the fun and profit of a large and very well-armed corporation who don't intend to be stopped. But these are the space Marines.

This is also state-of-the-art military science fiction. Fast-paced with a good understanding of the military and corporate mindset. It also has one of the best written alien species. If you are a fan of military action, you could find yourself collecting the whole series. ~ **Pam Allan**

**Iron Man: Female Fatales**  
**by Robert Greenberger**  
**Del Rey, \$7.99, 309 pp**

Tony Stark a.k.a. Iron Man not only has to deal with the new organization S.H.I.E.L.D but also two vamps- Madame Masque and Madame Hydra. He will be also in constant battle with Hydra as well as within his own organization, Stark Industries.



Need to generally know Iron Man's beginnings and history or this can be confusing. This is an updated version of Iron Man. Couple crude but realistic language. Not your average comics but in novel form. Recommended to adult Marvel fans. ~ **Jeffrey Lu**

**First Lord's Fury**  
**Book Six of the Codex Alera**  
**by Jim Butcher**  
**Ace, \$25.95; 468 pp**

Butcher has a love of incredibly long story arcs. However, unlike many, his arcs are necessary to properly tell the tale. And while this book closes many of the plotlines it still leaves enough open to start another arc.

Tavi is now Princeps Octavian, grandson to the First Lord and acknowledged heir to the throne. He is still struggling to master his furies and since he spent so much of his life without them, his use of them is ...different and unique. He has returned from Canea with the remnants of that race as his allies. He finds that the capitol is now an active volcano and his grandfather buried beneath it. He discovers that the remains of the humans in Alera are being pursued into the Calderon valley where his uncle has fortifications to withstand the siege, for a while.

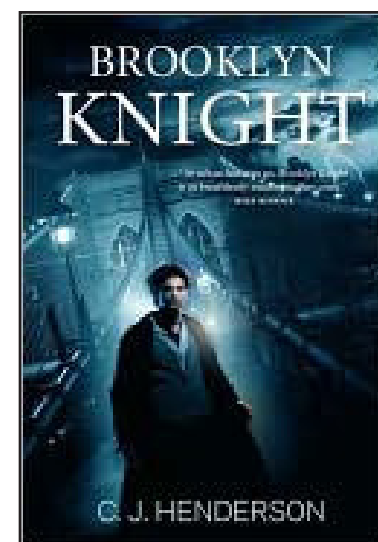
The final battle with the Vord is well-written and is full of the kind of heroics that you expect in superb writing. The only reason to be glad this arc is over is that it gives him more time for writing Dresden stories.

Very Highly Recommended ~ **Bob LaPierre**

**Brooklyn Knight**  
**by C. J. Henderson**  
**Tor, \$14.99, 335 pp**

There is no list of previous books, but the text refers to a previous adventure.

Here we have Brooklyn's homage to Indiana Jones, Professor Piers Knight, curator of the Brooklyn Museum. He has just met his attractive new intern, Bridget Elkins when a break-in to the museum ends in four deaths and a lot of unanswered questions. They must unlock



the secret of the Dream Stone, an artifact that has rested in a dusty basement of the museum for decades. Finding the answers as to why it is important to call a fire demon to steal it, leads the two face-to-

(Cont'd on page 17)



## In Our Book (Cont'd from page 16)

face with the dark powers that want world domination and leads to an internship that may be to die for.

This is a interesting book. It has action and plotting for a movie, the style of both a young adult and a '40s mystery and dialog. It has interesting characters and holds your interest. It makes a fun read that you may read compulsively straight through. And it makes you wonder...what does lurk out there? ~ Pam Allan

### **The Battle for Devastation Reef** by Graham Sharp Paul Del Ray, \$7.99, 357 pp

This is the third volume of *Helpforts War*.

Michael Helfort is newly appointed captain of the dreadnoughts and a hero who survived capture and torture by the enemy. He is also the only man to save the federated worlds. So why does his own side want him to fail as well as the enemy leaders who want him dead?

This is an action-thriller that lovers of military space thrillers will enjoy. ~ Pam Allan

### **Deadtown** by Nancy Holzner Ace, \$7.99, 326 pp

Boston has a quarantine section for its inhuman and undead residents. Most humans stay away, but Vickie Vaughn is Boston's only professional demon slayer. Her demanding job gets in the way of her romance with her lawyer (a werewolf), throw in a zombie apprentice



who never understood Obey, a mysterious demon-plagued client, and a mysterious research facility that has taken an unhealthy interest in her family. But there more things to worry about: a hellion (a powerful demon) has broken through Boston's wards and he has a personal grudge against Vickie and Boston with a strong scorched-earth policy that includes everyone. What is a welsh-blooded shapeshifting demon slayer to do?

Holzner has created a kick-ass heroine  
Volume 20 Issue 2

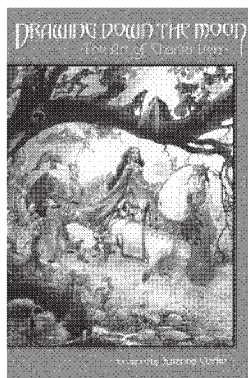
with a sense of humor woven with fast action, good characters, and plot twists that keep you from putting it down. Might be time for a trip to the bookstore. ~ Pam Allan

[www.leprecon.org/lep36](http://www.leprecon.org/lep36)

# LepreCon 36

## May 14-16, 2010

Phoenix Marriott Mesa in Mesa, Arizona.

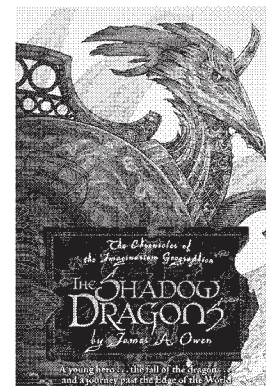


Artist Guest of Honor  
**Charles Vess**

Author Guest of Honor  
**George R.R. Martin**

Music Guest  
**Emma Bull**

Local Artist Guest of Honor  
**James A. Owen**



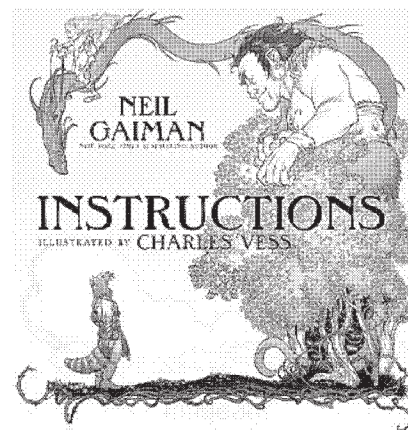
LepreCon 36 is the annual Phoenix area science fiction and fantasy convention with an emphasis on art.

We will have full programming with our guests and other participants, an art show, charity auction, expanded gaming, hospitality suite, music, and more. Confirmed participants include Rick Cook, Emily Hogan, Ernest Hogan, Jon Jos. Miller, Adam Niswander, G. David Nordley, Will Shetterly, Melinda Snodgrass, Sam Sykes, Ian Tregillis, and more.

### Membership Rates

\$40 thru 4/30/10, \$45 at the door  
Kids 7-12 half price, Kids 6 & Under Free\*  
\* with Adult membership

Pay online using PayPal!



### LepreCon 36 Room Rates

Phoenix Marriott Mesa  
200 North Centennial Way,  
Mesa, AZ  
(480) 898-8300

Room Rates: \$99 S/D/T/Q + tax  
Book online with code "leplepa"

### Contact LepreCon 36 at:

Write: LepreCon 36  
PO Box 26665  
Tempe, AZ 85285  
Phone: (480) 945-6890  
Email: [lep36@leprecon.org](mailto:lep36@leprecon.org)

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## In Our Book (C ont'd from page 17)

**Wild Hunt**  
by Margaret Ronald  
EOS, \$7.99, 309 pp

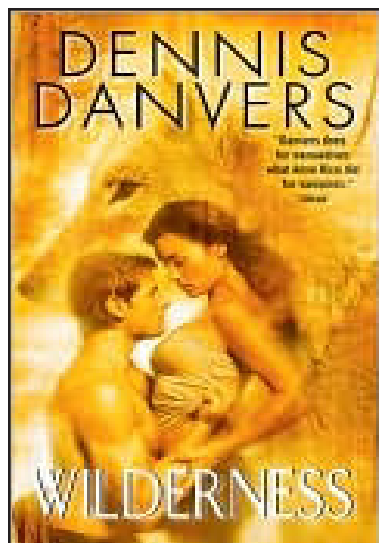
*Wild Hunt* is the sequel to *Spiral Hunt*. Evie Scelan, Bike Messenger and supernatural tracker, thought she was through with magic...dream on. She finds herself the center of a lot of unwelcome magical attention and a legendary pack of hounds terrorizing Boston. Evie may try to deny her legacy, but when the Hunt is called, the hounds must run.

Roland has done a great job with the Celtic mythos. The book is fast-moving and touches a few of our own fears about fate. Definitely worth going back to read the first as well. Enjoy. ~ Pam Allan

**Wilderness**  
by Dennis Danvers  
EOS, \$7.95, 376 pp

*Wilderness* is a stand-alone novel by the author of *Time and Time Again*.

Alice White is a reclusive loner with no friends until she meets professor Erik Summers who draws her out; igniting an passion within both of them. She decides to tell him the truth about herself. He decides, like the few she shared her



secret with, she is delusional and needs psychiatric care. She changes to her werewolf form and flees to the Canadian wilderness to join the wolves. When he seeks her in the wilderness, seeing her change he realizes a new reality. They both must make a choice.

This is a novel of character and reality. Danvers tells her story with a tenderness verging on lyricism and the warmth of romance that makes this novel something greater than a coming-of-age in the woods. A must-read in a cliched world. ~ Pam Allan

**Flight into Darkness**  
by Sarah Ash  
Spectra, \$7.99, 512 pp

*Flight into Darkness* is book two of the *Alchemist's Legacy*.

As a young man, Rieuk Mordiern freed Azilis, the guardian spirit charged with keeping the balance between the



living and the dead. Now, she must return, but she has attached herself to Celestine, a singer/spy in great danger from the inquisition seeking power in the country she has served along with her partner Jagu. Chaos is rolling over the lands. Seven daemons from another realm are readying to lay siege to the Mortal world. Celestine, Jagu, and Azilis must all become Heroes.

A rich tapestry full of action and political machinations with the flavor of 17th century France with rich and conflicted characters trying to save the world against all odds. One of the best classical fantasies in years; this an author to collect by serious fantasy lovers. I loved it. ~ Pam Allan

### An American in New Zealand Part 10: Auckland- Sky Tower and Bungee Jumping by Jeffrey Lu

I was on a glass elevator in Auckland's Sky Tower. I was going downward with a group of people.

Halfway down, I saw something fall within fifty feet away from me. Correction, *two things*.

My mouth dropped. There was a couple going down from a thousand feet!

I looked and saw some type of black cord behind each of them. I quickly registered this as bungee jumping. New Zealand is known for this original extreme sport. Cool.

But I thought these two daredevils should now be bouncing upwards.

Instead, I see the them going beyond 3/4 of the way down.

I held my breath. Will there be two splats?

## The Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society NEEDS YOU!



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

If you enjoy our events and want them to continue then please consider helping any or all of Arizona's fan run events. By volunteering you can be part of making the conventions the kind of event that you want to see and attend.

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

And even if you do not have the time to volunteer please come join us at CopperCon because without you, the attendees, all our effort is for naught.

Our parent organization, the Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society (CASFS) is also looking for new members. Check our web site at

[www.casfs.org](http://www.casfs.org) for information on meetings and upcoming events or contact us at [info@casfs.org](mailto:info@casfs.org)

\*Darkcon and RandomCon are not CASFS events,  
Darkcon © The Dark Ones Inc & RandomCon © WesternSFA Inc

The elevator I was in touched down first. I looked up and saw them still falling.

In about the last one hundred feet, I watched these bungee divers being pulled slowly down to the ground. They landed safely on a platform.

I later found this was an advanced bungee jumping in Auckland, New Zealand. Wow.

Curious, I was wondering who in their right mind would do this stunt. Later, I

found it was a couple of friends- one was a director of a funeral parlor. The other was a psychologist.

I guess they were trying to overcome their fear of heights. Maybe, falling to their deaths?

Anyway, more power to them.

**Next in An American in New Zealand: Meeting Manta Rays and Penguins at Kelly Tarlton's Antarctic Encounter**



# 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](mailto:acrossplus@westernsfa.org)

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

**AERIAL MIRAGE JUGGLERS.** Meets Wednesday 7-10pm in Encanto Park, 15th Avenue, south of Encanto. No dues, everyone welcome. All levels skill exchange in many areas of object manipulation Dave Davis <[aerialmirage@gnerns.com](mailto:aerialmirage@gnerns.com)>, 602-955-9446; or Ron Harvey <[rhh1s@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto:azlanbashers@earthlink.net) Web: [www.lanparty.com/all/](http://www.lanparty.com/all/) VoiceMail: 602-306-9339

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

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

**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](mailto: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](mailto:basfa@earthlink.net) our website at <http://home.earthlink.net/~basfa/>

**CENTRAL ARIZONA SPECULATIVE FICTION SOCIETY, INC. (CASFS)** The non-profit corporation that puts on CopperCon conventions, SmurfCons, HexaCons, occasional regional cons, and publishes Con-Notations. Best described as SF/F generalists with a strong bent towards literary SF/F. Guests welcome - meets at 8pm on the last Friday of each month in January thru September and the second Friday in October, November and December at Denny's, 2360 W Northern Ave in Phoenix, AZ. For information: write PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 or email [info@casfs.org](mailto:info@casfs.org) Web [www.casfs.org](http://www.casfs.org)

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

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

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

**A GATHERING OF PLAYERS-** Find Your Adventure Our club is running into our 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 experienced 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](mailto:agatheringofplayers@gmail.com)

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

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

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

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

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

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

**THE PHOENIX FANTASY FILM SOCIETY** A Phoenix based club interested in the entire realm of SF, Fantasy and Horror film. PFFS has been in existence for 30 years, meeting every 6 weeks in member's homes. Dues are \$10 per year. Membership includes newsletters, an annual film awards and various outings. For information, contact PFFS, P.O. Box 34023, Phoenix, AZ 85067 or

call David Storck at (602) 274\_7404, e-mail: [Menzeez@aol.com](mailto:Menzeez@aol.com).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**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

( Cont'd on page 20)



Club Listings (Cont'd from page 19)

the valley. Activities include watching videos, discussions, parties, games, and occasional outings with more to come now that Doctor Who is returning from hiatus. Many members maintain an active presence at conventions. You can contact us at 2243 W Wagon Wheel Dr, Phoenix, AZ 85021, Voice Mail at (602) 864-0901, E-mail [TARDIS-Info@cox.net](mailto:TARDIS-Info@cox.net) or visit us at <http://members.cox.net/tardisaz/tardis.html>

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CASFS Business Report  
January/February 2010

**CopperCon 30** -- Chairman Mark Boniece - Various methods are being implemented to improve publicity for CopperCon 30. Len Berger has submitted our application to get free public Service announcements about CopperCon on the on the slide show at Harkins Theatres. Mark has written a press release which will be distributed to media outlets and web sites. A post card flier has been distributed with ConNotations. Len Berger has gotten us listed on a number of online event lists. Our thanks to Richard Bolinski for creating the post cards and Mark Boniece for writing a press release for distribution. We have established a CopperCon presence on LiveJournal, Facebook and Twitter. Thanks go to Bob LaPierre and Stephanie Bannon for their work in establishing us there. **CopperCon 31** -- Chairman Nyki Robertson. The CopperCon 31 Guest of Honor is Carrie Vaughn, Author of the "Kitty" werewolf novels. The Committee has been formed and is ready to begin. Arrangements with the Windemere have been finalized.

**CASFS Book Social** – Randall Whitlock. The Book Social is held in the Coffee Shop of the Bent Cover on the west side of 28th Drive north of Cactus Road in Phoenix at 7 p.m. On the third Tuesday of each month. In January we discussed *Turncoat* by Jim Butcher. In February we discussed *The Invisible Man* By H.G. Wells. Both discussions went well. Next are *The Last Centurion* By John Ringo in March, *The Empress of Mars* by the recently deceased Kage Baker in April and *The Humanoids* by Jack Williamson in May. Discussions of SF and Fantasy in general follow the discussion of the current book.

**Generic CopperCon Promo Shirt.** The membership authorized the production of a shirt reading "Ask Me About CopperCon" It would include a graphic of the CASFS Logo as seen on the website. The shirt will be sold at cost to anyone willing to wear it to promote the Convention.

**A mixed box of Autographed Books and Old Swag from CES** was delivered to Stephanie by Jim Strait, Archivist. The Swag was put out on a table at the February meeting for the members to take. **Old CASFS Materials** from Randy Rau. Randy has turned 11 boxes of books and an envelope of records over to Treasurer Stephanie Bannon. After discussion the members voted to sell the books to Stephanie at \$30.00 a box rather than trying to have the books sold by CASFS over time by volunteers. The envelope of records was a challenge as it referred to an \$18,000.00 building fund CD held by CASFS in the 1980s. We wonder what happened to it. A search will be made for additional records.

--Gary Swaty

Convention Listings

**LepreCon 36** (May 14-16, 2010) Phoenix Marriott Mesa, 200 North Centennial Way, Mesa, AZ Ph: (480) 898-8300, Room Rates \$99 S/D/T/Q. [www.marriott.com](http://www.marriott.com), online boking code is "leplepa". Guests: Artist GoH Charles Vess, Author GoH: George R.R. Martin, Local Artist/Author GoH: James A. Owen. Memberships rates:\$35 until December 31, 2009, \$35 Jan 1 thru April 15, 2010, \$45 at the door. Web site at [www.leprecon.org/lep36](http://www.leprecon.org/lep36) or email [lep36@leprecon.org](mailto:lep36@leprecon.org) for more information.

**RandomCon 2010** (July 9-11, 2010) Windemere Hotel and Conference Center, 5750 East Main St. • Mesa, Arizona 85205 • Ph: (480)985-3600 • Toll Free: (800) 888-3561 Room Rate: \$59 S/D/T/Q and includes breakfast and free Internet. For our games we plan to have **RPGA** - plans include Living Forgotten Realms, Arcanis and Pathfinder. **Amber Diceless** - In the tradition of AmberCons across the World, RandomCon brings you the Chronicles of Amber in roleplaying form in a variety of games. **PLUS Console Gaming, Card Games, Board Games, Miniature Gaming, LARPs**, and much more! There will be a consuite and a small dealer room. Cost is \$15 through December 31, 2009, \$20 From January 1 to June 30, 2010 and \$25 at the door. Pay now via Paypal on our web site at [www.randomcon.org](http://www.randomcon.org) or mail check or money order to RandomCon, PO Box 67457, Phoenix AZ 85082. Memberships also available at Imperial Outpost, 4920 W. Thunderbird, Glendale, AZ 85306. Check our web site for updates or contact us at [info@westernsfa.org](mailto:info@westernsfa.org)

**CopperCon 30** (September 3-6, 2010) Windemere Hotel, 5750 East Main St., Mesa, Arizona 85205, Ph: (480)985-3600 • Toll Free: (800) 888-3561 Room Rates \$59 S/D/T/Q. <http://www.resortmesa.com/> Rooms include Complimentary gourmet deluxe breakfast buffet served every day and fresh baked cookies served every evening. The hotel has 114 rooms so there is a good chance we can have the entire hotel for ourselves. Guests: TBA. Memberships rates: \$30 until December 31, 2009, \$35 Jan 1 thru April 30, 2010, \$40 May 1 thru August 23, 2010. Please check the web site at [www.coppercon.org](http://www.coppercon.org) or contact us at [info@coppercon.org](mailto:info@coppercon.org) for more info.

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 Denny's Restaurant at 2360 W Northern Ave in Phoenix The meetings begin at 8PM and are held on the last Friday of the month Jan. through Sept. and on the second Friday of the month Oct through Dec. Everyone is invited to attend two meetings as a guest (non-member). Membership rates are \$12/year plus an initial \$3 application fee and rates are pro-rated for the amount of the year remaining. For more info: Webpage: [www.casfs.org](http://www.casfs.org) Email: [info@casfs.org](mailto:info@casfs.org)

Generic Convention Registration Form

Name:

Badge Name:

Address:

City/State/ZIP:

Phone:

Email:

Enclosed is \$ for memberships for convention.

(See individual convention listing for mailing address)

More info on Masquerade Art Show Volunteer Other