

# ConNotations

Volume 21, Issue 1  
February / March 2011  
FREE

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

## A Chat with Adam Niswander by Chris Paige

*Not all who  
wander  
are lost.*  
(Tolkien).

Adam Niswander, a Phoenix-based writer, is the author of the supernatural thrillers *The Charm*, *The Serpent Slayers*, *The Hound Hunters*, *The Sand Dwellers*,



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*The Repository*, *The Cost of the Cure*, and most recently, *The War of the Whisperers*. Some years ago, Adam had an idea: he wished to revive the tradition of a convention dedicated to the heritage of H.P. Lovecraft. Health issues and accompanying financial setbacks kept the idea a ghost of a dream; nevertheless, at any Arizona convention you attended, there was Adam, in a wheelchair now, still happily and eruditely socializing, the idea alive in his mind. Came a turning point, and he resolved that, come what may, he would labour to make MythosCon a reality. Three years in the making, MythosCon gathered to itself some of the best writers of Lovecraftian horror on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011, at the Mission Palms in

Tempe, AZ.

CP: So, we're at MythosCon. Is it what you dreamed?

AN: Yes, it is. (Laughs) Three years of getting to this point; on Thursday afternoon when it opened up was a really exciting day.

CP: Did most of the invited authors arrive on Wednesday?

AN: The two main people, Ramsey Campbell and Robert Price, came in on Tuesday, actually. We brought them in early because we didn't know about weather and airports and wanted a day of leeway and to give them a chance to catch up from jetlag. Most everyone else came on Thursday. Normally Thursdays at a con is a really week day, but here at

(Cont'd on page 3)

## Featured Inside

### Regular Features

#### SF Tube Talk

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

#### 24 Frames

All the latest genre movie news  
by Jeffrey Lu

#### Pro Notes

News about  
genre authors and fans

#### Costume Closet

Articles covering topics of  
interest in the costuming field

#### NonGenre By Genre

Non SF/F books by SF/F Authors

#### ConClusion

News and Reviews  
of SF/F conventions

#### MangaZone

Reviews of Manga, Comics & Graphic  
Novels

#### In Our Book

Reviews of New SF/F Books

#### Trivia Questions

### Special Features

**A Chat with  
Adam Niswander**  
by Chris Paige

**Farewell**  
**It's the very nearly 50th  
Anniversary of**  
**Rocky the Flying Squirrel and**  
**Bullwinkle J. Moose - Part 11**  
By Shane Shellenbarger

**An American on the  
Iberian Peninsula**  
by Jeffrey Lu

### Plus

### FYI

News and tidbits of interest to fans

### CASFS Business Report

**Club Listings**  
**Convention List &**  
**Generic Registration Form**

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## In This Issue

### News & Reviews

SF Tube Talk	3
Pro Notes	5
24 Frames	7
ConClusion	7
FYI	8
Costume Closet	10
Trivia Questions	10
Non Genre by Genre	11
MangaZone	12
In Our Book (Book Reviews)	13
CASFS Business Report	20

### Special Features

A Chat with Adam Niswander by Chris Paige	1
It's the 50th Anniversary of Rocky and Bullwinkle - Part 11 by Shane Shellenbarger	11
An American in the Iberian Peninsula by Jeffrey Lu	11
Trivia Answers	20

### Convention & Fandom

Club Listings	19
Convention Listings	20
Convention Registration Form	20

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## 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)



# SF Tube Talk

## TV News & Previews

By Lee Whiteside

Advance word on upcoming episodes seems to be hard to find in this new year, so we've got a bit of a preview of things coming down the pike along with a few tidbits about things you'll be watching in the next couple of months.

BBC America's day and date broadcasts of the ***Doctor Who*** Christmas special "*A Christmas Carol*" and the debut of season four of ***Primeval*** on Jan 1st appears to have paid off for the channel with decent ratings. The last two episodes of ***Primeval***'s fourth series will air in early February with the fifth series (being filmed back to back) possibly turning up before the end of the year. For the new season of ***Doctor Who***, it is expected to start up sometime in March but could debut sometime in April. BBC America is planning to show the episodes the same date as the UK and with the season opening two-parter being set in the US and having filmed in Monument Valley, expect to see a big promotional push as it gets closer. The season opener sees The Doctor, Amy, Rory, and River Song the Doctor being summoned to the United States in the late 1960's with the Utah desert (although some of it was filmed in Arizona), New York City, and the Oval Office being locations as The Doctor and companions deal with Men in Black (led by **Mark Sheppard** as Canton Everett Delaware III) and who knows what else. After that is the episode penned by **Neil Gaiman** for which there isn't much known other than a plot point from the War Games is revisited and **Gaiman** has blogged that ""My ***Doctor Who*** episode is Bigger [than his ***Babylon 5*** episode *Day of the Dead*] in every way, inside and outside: I've asked them for the impossible, and they've knocked themselves out to give it to me, and when they can't they've managed to somehow give me the very improbable." There will be four more episodes on tap as a lead up to the mid-season cliffhanger. These include *What Are Little Boys Made of?* written by **Mark Gatiss**, and *The Rebel Flesh/Gangers* by **Matthew Graham**. The series will then resume in the Fall with the remaining six episodes of the season.

Also coming up on BBC America will be ***Outcasts***, a new series from the creators of ***Life on Mars*** and ***MI-5*** which is about a group of pioneers that have traveled to the new planet Carpathia to try to create a place where the human race can continue to survive. It stars **Eric Mabius**, **Liam Cunningham** (President Tate), and **Hermione Norris**. Also on tap likely following the spring ***Doctor Who*** run will be the new season of the original UK version of ***Being Human***.

The new season of ***Torchwood*** started filming in January, and has

had a title change from *New Earth* to *Miracle Day*. The "Miracle" in question is that on that day, no one in the entire world dies. And so for the next day, and the day after that. As it continues, people begin to realize the implications of it leading to overpopulation now that everyone is, effectively, immortal. As C.I.A. agent Rex Matheson (**Mekhi Phifer**) begins to investigate what has caused this to happen, he starts to discover information about the mysterious group Torchwood. **Alexa Havins** is C.I.A. agent Esther Drummond who is a novice compared to Rex, but soon gets drawn into the global conspiracy that Rex uncovers and they join together with Jack Harkness (**John Barrowman**) and Gwen Cooper (**Eve Myles**) on a race from one crisis to another, taking them from Washington to Wales and Shanghai. Also featuring is **Bill Pullman** as Oswald Danes, a child killer sentenced to death who is one of the many people who don't die when they are supposed to making him a media focus for Miracle Day. **Arlen Tur** is Dr. Vera Jaurez, a surgeon who is brought in to advise on the new status quo and gets drawn into the action with Torchwood. Writers on the series include **Jane Espensen**, **John Shiban**, and **Doris Egan**. Filming has started and the series is expected to debut in early July on Starz and the BBC.

Also coming to Starz is ***Camelot***, an adult take on the Camelot legend, debuting on the channel on April 1. Leading the cast is **Joseph Fiennes** as Merlin, **Jamie Campbell Bower** as Arthur, **Eva Green** as Morgan, and **Tamsin Egerton** as Guinevere. The series begins with the aftermath of the death of King Uther, where Merlin reveals the heir to the throne, Arthur, who takes on the mantle of King in the face of opposition from his half-sister Morgan. Starz promises that "Forget everything you think you know... this is the story of Camelot that has never been told before." Of course, Syfy is currently airing the third series of the BBC's ***Merlin*** (aka Camelotville) which takes a much younger approach to the Camelot myths.

Debuting on April 17th on HBO will be ***A Game of Thrones***, based on the **George R. R. Martin** series. At the Television Critics Association winter press tour, HBO screened a preview of the series for the press which was well received by both fans and the general press. In a press roundtable with producers **David Benioff** and **Dan Weiss**, when asked about the pressure in making the series with the rabid fanbase, **David** commented that it is "not just with the fans, but with George who entrusted these books to us and for ourselves who had such a great time reading the books and not wanting to screw it up. It's a huge thing. But you are always going to have trolls out there who are going to be angry about something. You can't try to please 100% of the

people. But if we can make George happy and we can make ourselves happy, as incredible fans of the book, I think we feel confident that we'll make the vast majority of the readers happy." **Weiss** added "it's easy to respect the fanbase, when you are the fanbase. I feel like the fact that people occasionally get angry about something is great. You don't get angry about something unless it matters to you, unless you care about it. By and large, 95% I would say, it's a very respectful and intelligent fanbase."

***Smallville*** continues on towards the series finale with new episodes in February including ***Beacon***, which sees the return of Martha Kent (**Annette O'Toole**), Lionel Luthor (**John Glover**) and Alexander Luthor (**Lucas Grabeel**). Martha is seen at a pro-vigilante rally while Lionel comes out from behind the shadows to take control back of LuthorCorp. **Allison Mack** will also continue in these episodes after having returned as Chloe Sullivan in January's *Collateral*. The remaining episodes in February have titles *Masquerade*, *Fortune*, and *Scion*, but no actual details about what's to happen in them although it is likely more will happen with Darkseid. When the show returns in April for the final batch of episodes, it should lead off with the **Geoff Johns** penned ***Booster***, which will introduce Booster Gold and Jaime Reyes (The Blue Beetle) into the Smallville universe. According to Johns, Booster will be very much the early Booster Gold as seen in the comics, out to make a buck as a super hero and pretty full of himself. ***Supernatural*** and ***Vampire Diaries*** both will run new episodes through February. First up for ***Supernatural*** is *Unforgiven* where Sam starts to have flashbacks to when he worked with Samuel (**Mitch Pileggi**) when Dean was missing and when Sam receives a mysterious message, he and Dean visit a small town where they find out more about Samuel. Following that will be episodes *Mannequin 3: The Reckoning* and *The French Mistake*. An upcoming ***Supernatural*** episode will see Sam and Dean end up in an alternate universe where they are the stars of the TV show *Supernatural* including a guest appearance by **Genevieve Cortese**, **Jared** (Sam) **Padalecki**'s real life wife. Expect to see other behind-the-scenes crew in front of the camera in this episode. As for ***Vampire Diaries*** spoilers, there's not much beyond the tease that Bonnie and Jeremy will share a kiss!

On ABC, *V* returned to lukewarm ratings for its shortened (10 episode) season. Whether the appearance of original series actor **Jane Badler** and **Marc Singer** will boost the series is unknown at press time. Expect to see Oded Fehr in a three episode arc as a resistance member. ***No Ordinary Family*** continues as well with steady, if unspectacular ratings.

Syfy's ***Being Human*** debuted

in mid-January before this went to press, so how it did ratings wise will be discussed next issue. According to interviews with the producers, they intend to use the original UK series as a base for the overall season arc, but will delve into the characters and situations in more detail, expanding the ideas and situations seen in the original six episodes over the thirteen episode US season. But having watched the UK series does not mean what you will see in the US series is familiar. They diverge down different story paths; since it is an adaptation, and not just a remake of the original series. UK series creator **Toby Whithouse** has been involved with the Syfy version to some extent. Syfy will air ***Being Human*** on Monday nights for now with ***Merlin*** season 3 running on Friday nights following ***Friday Night Smackdown***. The rest of the third season deals with Morgana's rise to power as Queen of Camelot and the epic battle with Arthur and Merlin resisting it with Arthur in line to become King at the end of the season.

It is not clear when ***Eureka*** will return for the second half of its fourth season, although it is likely it could be sometime in March. Expect to see **Wil Wheaton** and **Felicia Day** in multiple episodes. Syfy also announced that ***Stargate Universe*** will not be renewed for a third season and has not yet indicated when the remaining season two episodes will air. For ***Caprica***, Syfy ran a mini marathon of the last episodes to burn them off. Syfy apparently thinks ***Being Human*** will be a hit, so they've ordered a pilot for a remake of ***Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased)***, an ITV series from the sixties that was recently remade in the UK. **Jane Espenson** and **Drew Z. Greenberg** will write the pilot script and if it goes to series, it will be a co-production between Universal and ITV. ***Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased)*** is based on the popular British detective series from the late 1960s in which Hopkirk (**Kenneth Cope**) was murdered while investigating a case. He returned as a ghost, visible only to his former partner, **Randall (Mike Pratt)**, and assisted him in sleuthing from beyond the grave. ITV remade the series a decade ago which ran for two seasons.

## A Conversation

(Cont'd from page 1)

Opening Ceremonies we had 75 people sitting in front of us and I thought it was great.

**CP:** Did you have a chance to talk with Ramsey Campbell and ask burning questions?

**AN:** I've met Ramsey multiple times. He was at the 2004 World Horror Con and we did the pre-reg panel the night before it started. He was in New York at the World Fantasy Convention and he signed

(Cont'd on page 4)



## A Conversation

(Cont'd from page 3)

a box or two of books for me. He's a delightful and charming person – his wife is charming too.

**CP:** What made this convention possible?

**AN:** Well, there used to be a convention called the NecronomiCon which was held in Providence, Rhode Island. They did it every other year for about a decade, and then it went away. 2001 was the year that it just disappeared. People missed it! But Lovecraftian stuff is kind of a small pond; there just weren't enough fish to make it happen again.

I went to the Providence HPL film festival and caught pneumonia there and it almost killed me, so I realized I couldn't go back there again and that was a big deal because that was the only Lovecraftian event I could find. Otherwise, to see the people you see here this weekend, I would have to go to thirty conventions over several years just to meet them, and some of them I wouldn't have met at all. For example, Dan Clore, who wrote a wonderful book called *Weird Words*, which deals with Lovecraftian language, hasn't been to a convention since NecronomiCon. Mark Boniece and I talked about it and I said, "This is what I've always wanted to do," and he said, "Well, let's do it!" And I thought about it, and I said, "Okay, let's!" I had just done a reverse mortgage on my house because I had to buy handicapped equipment, and there was enough money left to do the funding to make this work. So we did!

**CP:** Earlier on we were reminiscing. Could you just describe some great moments in your life?

**AN:** In '86 at CopperCon 6 I had met James P. Hogan, and for some reason we just hit it off. We were very friendly and we enjoyed hanging out together. At one point he told me I was one of the more talented people he had talked with at the con, and of course I was very flattered. He knew I was trying to be a writer, and in '87 when we went to University 7 in LA, it turned out the convention was not what I thought it was – it was a gaming convention! I had been told it was a science fiction convention, so I went as a book dealer. I set up my table and waited, and there was *nobody* there. The dealer's room was empty, except for the other dealers. And Hogan stuck his head in and looked and said, "Adam! Wot are you doing here?" and I said, "I'm trying to sell books." He said, "You're not going to sell any books here! This is a Gaming convention! They're all in the Gaming Room and we're not going to see them all weekend. Come on up to the Green Room with the writers!" And it was like God inviting me to heaven! I got to sit in the Green Room with A.E. Van Vogt, and Harry Harrison, and

Larry Niven, and Jerry Pournelle, and David Gerrold, about a dozen writers all told.

**CP:** What were so many authors doing at a Gaming convention?

**AN:** They were being paid by the convention to go, but there were no fans, so they were being ignored. But the convention had agreed to pay their bar tab, and they were having drinks brought up like there was no tomorrow. The minute my butt hit that chair they treated me like I was one of them. I had not been published, I was a newbie. So it was very cool.

**CP:** What was Van Vogt like?

**AN:** He had an Alzheimer's like problem. He had a tricky memory and could get disoriented. But he had all kinds of devices that I learned from, too. He had a cheat sheet with all the titles of all his books, and there were about 90 of them, each one with an inscription. If you triggered his memory he could hold forth for a long time. It was a very odd affliction. I was sitting in the audience next to his wife when he was on a panel with Jim Hogan and Harry Harrison for Pournelle's *There Will Be War*. I was feeling terribly awkward but I leaned over and said, "Lydia, it's a pleasure to meet you. I'm embarrassed to ask, but I have two cases of your husband's books. Do you think he would sign some of them for me?" But in the middle of the discussion Van had an incident, he almost fainted, and he was taken up to his room to let him lie down for a while and recover a bit. He had been gone about five minutes, and everyone was going, Oh, dear, oh, dear! when a runner came down and said to me, "Mrs. Van Vogt wants you to know that they'll meet you in the Green Room in one hour and sign all your books." And I was just so amazed! They were wonderful people. Lydia would say, "Oh, come to visit us in California. We live under the W of the Hollywood sign, just knock on the door. We're there all the time and we'd love to have you." I never went, but they invited everybody, and many people did go.

**CP:** Would you repeat the story about Larry Niven and the tee shirt?

**AN** (laughing): We have a local fan in Phoenix who has a tee shirt, pretty much a plain white shirt. She has sewed a red velvet bag with a zipper to keep it in. For maybe 20 years now she has been bringing it to cons and asking the Guests of Honor to sign it. At this particular con I think it was WesterColt 45, Anne McCaffrey was there, and Larry Niven. She wanted Larry to sign the shirt, and she walked up to him with it in the bag and said, "Would you sign my tee shirt?" and Larry said, "Sure," and she started taking it out of the bag, but he said, "I only sign shirts when people are wearing them." So she whipped off her blouse, but she didn't have anything on underneath

it! Perfectly calmly she put on the tee shirt and said, "Okay, here!" He was so shocked that he just sat there with his mouth open. One of the guys near him leaned forward and said, "Larry – it begins with an L."

**CP:** With your own books, is there anything you wish you had done differently, anything you'd like to change?

**AN:** The first book, *The Charm*, is a key book because it introduces all the characters in the series. But if I were smart I wouldn't have written it the way I did. 13 main characters is a lot of main characters to handle in one story. If I had been more experienced I would have written about one or two instead of 13. But I did, and *it turned out moderately well*. *Some people don't like the stand-alone novel The Sand Dwellers* because it's a tribute to Brian Lumley, and there's a faction of the mythos people who don't like him. So the fact that I resurrected one of his characters and dealt with Myskatonik University and the Cthulhu cycle deities, and that's all Brian Lumley stuff, meant that some of the purists who don't care for that suddenly didn't like me either. Everybody's got their own thing. It's not a big deal.

**CP:** Do you have more stories in mind?

**AN:** Well, I have lung disease and not enough oxygen gets to the attic. I have some challenges keeping track of all the fine points of plot and detail that I used to be able to do off the top of my head. There's another Shaman Cycle novel that's written. I had planned originally to do 13; four are out, and the fifth one is called *The Nemesis of Night*. The story is good, and I'm excited about having Hippocampus publish it. I've actually started the next book, which is going to be called *The Primal Pipers*, but I'm not sure I'm going to be able to finish it, at least not without some help. Mark Boniece, who is the MythosCon chairman and lead the Cthulhu Prayer Breakfast, is my assistant and wants to write. So it works out pretty well. He will help me keep track of things and hopefully we'll make progress on the book.

**CP:** Perfect! So he'll get credit on the cover?

**AN:** This one will be 'with Mark Boniece'; the next one he'll have a lot more input and it will be 'and Mark Boniece.' Then if I croak he can pick up the series and do the rest of the books. He has my permission.

**CP:** If I were a writer and had a 13 book series in mind I would like to know that someone knew enough and cared enough to finish what I couldn't finish. I wouldn't be on my deathbed trying to claw my way back to life saying, "No, I can't go yet! I'm not done!"

**AN:** Unfortunately, many series end prematurely because the

author dies. Robert Jordan didn't get to finish *The Wheel of Time* series, which is brilliant, so Brian Sanderson is finishing it up at the request of Jordan's wife and the estate. And Gordon Dickson had a wonderful series, which I consider to be probably the most literate science fiction ever written, called *The Child Cycle*. The premise of the series is that mankind has a group consciousness which is debating with itself which is the best way for humanity to evolve. Therefore it experiments. It tries a direction and then tries another direction. The story is *supposed* to start with a historical general who is considered the first modern general. Gordon had written twelve books or so, and still hadn't written that initial book. In 1993 at World Fantasy in Minneapolis I was in the audience and I asked, "When the heck are you going to write the book? The beginning isn't there." And he said, "I'll finish it by the end of next year." But he *never* got to it, and he died a decade later. I'll never forgive him for that!

**CP:** How did you start writing?

**AN:** I was living with a delightful lady at the time and I showed her the first chapter of *The Charmed*. She asked me, "What do you know about the Pima Indians?" and I said, "Not much," and she demanded, "Then how dare you *write* about them?!" I protested, "It's just a story!" She said, "Yeah, but if you don't know anything about the tribe you can't write about them!" And of course she was right. So I was quite chastised and I put it in a drawer for 3 years. She moved on with her life and one day I pulled it out of the drawer and I said, "I still like this chapter. Maybe I better do the research. Maybe that's the way you go." So I began to research the various tribes. I think I read 213 books. All of them about the various southwestern tribes and their cultures, some of them written by the People. One of the great 100 American books is *A Pima Remembers*, by George Webb. So I named one of the main characters in *The Charmed* Andy Webb. Then I had a used book store in the Tower Plaza Mall. I had a lot of customers who were Native American, so I was able to talk to them and ask them questions. I'd ask them about locales, because I was poor, and unable to travel. So I would read guide books and interview people, to put my characters in a realistic setting.

**CP:** What was your life before writing?

**AN:** I come from an acting background; I was a professional actor for 17 years. I was able to go to a pre-production road show of *A Little Night Music* and I got to meet Margaret Hamilton. That was the first time I gushed over a celebrity. With her it was like I was a little baby. "Oh, Miss Hamilton! I just love everything you've done!"

(Cont'd f on page 5)



## A Conversation

(Cont'd from page 4)

The Wicked Witch of the West is just so cool!" I was like that, going on and on, and she reached out and hugged me. She pulled me close and said, "Shut up." The other time I gushed was over Robert Heinlein. The same thing. "Oh, Mr. Heinlein! Your work is so wonderful!" On and on. And *he* said, "Shut up." (laughs) I have learned that that is a standard response to gushing.

**CP:** Have you had any experience at this convention that stands out?

**AN:** After three years of work and desperate hope that we did enough things right for people to have a wonderful time, I can't tell you how many participants have come up to me and thanked me for having the convention. The plan was to do an international professional convention at which fans would be welcome, and to do it with a sense of humor. Because the mythos is fiction! It's not real. For example, this morning we had a Cthulhu Prayer Breakfast with acolytes singing hymns to Cthulhu with very strange lyrics and a Cthulhu idol in the background. The description in the guide says, "Begin by placing your tongue in your cheek." And it went very well. People laughed in the right places.

**CP:** Do you want to try to repeat the experience in another few years?

**AN:** I want to do it again next year. But we probably will do it in a different month. This year we invited 75 authors, and most of them agreed to come. At the last minute, with the snow storms and health problems and the like, many of them had to drop out, but we still had 45 of the finest mythos writers in the world show up, and if we do it next year, I think we can double the membership and the number of pros.

**CP:** On behalf of us all, thank-you for MythosCon.

**AN:** You're very welcome.

## Pro Notes

Hi, Everyone! Thanks for reading ConNotations and my column. No new faces but some old favorites are back. My best wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year to all.

I'll start with the most distant of my contributors and by that I mean geographically: **Brian Aldiss** from the UK complains of how busy he is; wishing he had his feet up with a book in his lap but is, instead, getting towards the end of a work-biography entitled "As I was passing Through Oxford..." He is also working on a difficult story set in Beijing. And his Great Work (well, in size if not in stature) has now reached Volume 69! This is mainly a hand-written Journal, A5, hardcover, illustrated. Brian has been working on it for

almost 40 years. It will not be for sale; he plans to donate it to the Bodleian Library in Oxford. The Bodleian will shortly be publishing a collection of Brian's essays. Just before Christmas, he had a grand exhibition in Oxford of much of his artwork (96 pieces). If not profitable, at least immensely enjoyable and brilliant publicity. Right now his literary agent bravely tussles with two sets of publishers, both planning modern ways of displaying and selling books. In the midst of this struggle bubbles the novel, "Finches of Mars", which Brian longs to see presented to what readers he has. Including maybe some he hasn't...

**Ed Greenwood**, living in Canada, is happily at work on "Elminster Enraged," the sequel to "Bury Elminster Deep" (due out in hardcover in August 2011, and itself the sequel to the bestselling "Elminster Must Die!" that he told us about last time he checked in). It's the third of his current six-book contract with Wizards of the Coast. The Wizards of the Coast website continues to host Ed's monthly "Eye On The Realms" column (part of the DUNGEON ezine), and will soon feature his annual "Spin A Yarn" tale, composed from all the story elements and ideas shouted out by Ed's seminar audience at the long-running GenCon every August in Indianapolis. Ed's novelette "Guns of Alkenstar," set in the shared world of Golarion, is currently being serialized in six parts on the Paizo.com website, part of their PATHFINDER TALES web fiction series. Ed is also involved in "Foreshadows: The Ghosts of Zero", an anthology of linked dark SF tales, art, and music (each story has its own art and an accompanying new musical composition), that can be found at [www.foreshadows.net](http://www.foreshadows.net), and will be published in early 2011 by Blindsided Books. Ed's story is entitled "Best Served Flash-Frozen." Ed will also have a story, "Daggers In Her Garters," in "Beauty Has Her Way..." an anthology of stories about women across the ages using their assets to get what they want edited by Jennifer Brozek and expected in early 2011 from Dark Quest Books. The forthcoming anthology "The New Hero" (edited by Robin D. Laws), the first release (in early 2011) from

Stone Skin Press, will feature Ed's short story "The Midnight Knight." With Dragon Moon Press Editor and Associate Publisher Gabrielle Harbowy, Ed is also co-editing an anthology entitled "When The Hero Comes Home," due out in trade paperback from Dragon Moon Press in the summer of 2011. It will include Ed's short story "Dark Helm Returns." Ed is also currently designing and writing about a dozen other contracted game and fiction projects that still belong to the "publishers more-or-less-kept secret" species right now.

Also from Canada, is another of my personal favorites – Robert Sawyer. His 20th novel, "WWW: Wonder," comes out April 6, and he just signed a contract for three more stand-alone novels with Ace. {Way to go!}

Starting from our eastcoast, **Allen Steele** in Massachusetts tell us that his next novel will be "Hex," the third novel set in the COYOTE universe after "Spindrift and Galaxy Blues." It will be coming out in June as a hardcover from Ace. This will be his 25th published book (not counting the unpublished novel he wrote while in college mumble-mumble years ago), making it a personal landmark. Allen has been celebrating by taking a break from novels and returning to short fiction; four stories appeared last year in *Asimov's* and *Analog*, and he's currently working on several more. "The Emperor of Mars", published in the June 2010 issue of *Asimov's*, will be reprinted in *The Year's Best Science Fiction*, edited by Gardner Dozois, and its recent StarShipSofa podcast will reappear in the upcoming AudioText anthology *The Best Science Fiction of the Year #3*, edited by Allan Kaster. Also hailing from Massachusetts is **Jane Yolen** who has two fantasy books out this year definitely and one other possibly. This spring, "Snow in Summer: An Appalachian Snow White" (YA novel, Philomel Books, part of the

Penguin Putnam group) This fall "The Last Dragon" (YA graphic novel with pictures by Rebecca Guay, DarkHorse) and possibly this fall but more probably next year, the sequel to her first graphic novel "Foiled." Called "Curses, Foiled Again" out from First/Second part of the Holt/Macmillan group. She also has a book of fantasy poetry from Midsummer's Night Press, tentatively titled "The Selchie's Child" and three poems in the new Bordertown anthology. Still on the eastcoast and from New York, one of my personal favorites is **Anne Bishop**. 2010 was an exciting year for Anne! "Shalador's Lady" made the New York Times bestsellers list in the U.S., and was also published in Australia and Portugal. She also had books published in the Czech Republic, France, Germany, and Poland. And 2010 saw the release of several audio books, both in the U.S. and in Germany. 2011 should be just as exciting. The U.S. hardcover edition of "Twilight's Dawn"--four connected novellas set in the BLACK JEWELS world--is coming out in March. (It will also be released this year in Australia and Portugal.) Other BLACK JEWELS books will be published in France (The Invisible Ring), Germany (Shalador's Lady), and Poland (The Invisible Ring and The Shadow Queen), and there will be more audio books, both in the U.S. and in Germany. Right now Anne is finishing up a story set in EPHEMERA, which is due in March. After that? She says she's playing with some story ideas and will have to see which one floats to the surface first.

And from **Michael Swanwich** in Pennsylvania – he just turned in "Dancing With Bears," the adventures of Postutopian con men Darger & Surplus in Moscow, to Night Shade Books. It will hit the stands on May 1st. To promote the book, Michael wrote a series

(Cont'd on page 6)



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# Pro Notes

(Cont'd from page 5)

of short podcasts in which Darger & Surplus explain "How To Run A Con." In the recordings, he plays the part of Surplus and his fellow fantasist Gregory Frost is simply magnificent as Darger. He also has a number of stories due out in the coming months: "An Empty House with Many Doors" and "For I Have Lain Me Down on the Stone of Loneliness and I'll Not Be Back Again" in Asimov's Science Fiction; "The Man in Grey" in Eclipse 4; and "Pushkin the American" in Postscripts. Oh, and just for the heck of it, Michael says he's posting scans one of the Scribbledehobbledohydenii (his notebooks) a page a time, five days a week, on his blog at [www.floggingbabel.blogspot.com](http://www.floggingbabel.blogspot.com).

From Florida, we heard from **Janny Wurts** and **Don Maitz**. Janny was thrilled to announce the Audible's release of her CYCLE OF FIRE trilogy in unabridged audio, superbly narrated by David Thorpe, who even used all the correct pronunciations! All three volumes are now available, and a full chapter excerpt of vol I, "Stormwarden," is offered as an mp3 download on her website, free for anyone to sample. The manuscript draft for "Initiate's Trial" is also complete, with only the last two chapter sets to go in final polish. Janny will turn it in early this year, with the expectation to announce a 2011 publication date. For LIGHT AND SHADOW enthusiasts, also, there is an 'in-depth' discussion of the complete series ongoing at GoodReads group, Beyond Reality. The pace is three chapter sets per week, with "Peril's Gate" just beginning, and all threads for prior books still open for new posters. Feel free to jump in, new readers and old. Janny is offering large printed versions of the map of Athera from her WARS OF LIGHT AND SHADOW series. Giclee' prints are available of the cover art to that series as well. Contact her via the website. Janny and Don have artwork featured in an award winning documentary film titled Mythic Journeys. The film has been described as "A Cinematic Fusion of Documentary, Myth & Animation." The film presents stop motion puppets by Brian and Wendy Froud with voices provided by Mark Hamill, Tim Curry, and Lance Henriksen. The film contains animation sequences merged with art, interviews with spiritual proponents such as Depak Chopra and Michael Bernard Beckwith, and live action photography all centered around the importance of myths and storytelling. The documentary film is available from Netflix, Amazon, or from the producers' website: [www.MythMovie.net](http://www.MythMovie.net) where you can view the trailer. This film has won awards at film festivals in Rome, Santa Fe, Los Angeles (Dances with Films), and at DragonCon. And Janny and

Don completed another of their few collaborative paintings. It is titled "Changing Tides." Janny originally intended the work for The World Fantasy Convention program book cover when she was the Artist Guest in Tempe, AZ. The convention theme was women in fantasy. However, a writing deadline took precedence and the painting was unfinished at the time of the convention. It lurked in the studio until Don asked Janny if she minded if he added some things to it. She agreed and added some more to the work and after lurking some more, they finally finished it. The painting can be seen on their collaborative website: [http://www.paravia.com/Janny\\_Don/website/index.html](http://www.paravia.com/Janny_Don/website/index.html) Don has had some reproductions of his pirate art touring around the country within Odyssey Marine Exploration's exhibition titled "SHIPWRECK, Pirates, and Treasure." Following previous successful engagements in New Orleans, Tampa, Detroit, Oklahoma City and Charlotte, Odyssey's "SHIPWRECK! Pirates & Treasure" exhibit is currently on display at the Maryland Science Center in Baltimore. Additional information is available at <http://www.mdsci.org/>. Don has had some paintings on exhibit. His work has been juried into the Annual International Marine Art Exhibition at Mystic Seaport and a work into the international Miniature Art Society of Florida's annual exhibition. Don produced the cover art to Pirate Devlin by Mark Keating from Grand Central Publishers

(the image is included in Spectrum 17) and he produced the cover to Mike Resnick's short story collection from Golden Gryphon Press titled "Blasphemy."

Slipping over to Texas...after finishing the Vatta's War group, **Elizabeth Moon** went back to fantasy for awhile; with a new series, PALADIN'S LEGACY, set in the same world with many of the same characters as "The Deed of Paksenarrion." Paks continues to refuse to be a POV character, so Elizabeth's living in the heads of Kieri, Arcolin, Dorrin, and Stammel, as their lives change dramatically because of Paks. The first volume, "Oath of Fealty," came out last spring. The second volume, "Kings of the North," will be out March 22, 2011, and she turned in the third volume on January 3. Several years ago, she created a dedicated website and blog for the whole group: <http://www.paksworld.com> and its embedded blog <http://www.paksworld.com/blog>. The site contains a lot of background info--history, cultures, characters, maps--as well as updates on new books and appearances--and the blog has developed a community of readers. Newcomers welcome! Family stuff--and writing really long books--has curtailed her travel since 2008, but she will definitely be at Dragon\*Con this year over the Labor Day weekend and hopes to make a couple of other cons.

**Doranna Durgin** has completed her series of moves to and within New Mexico (formerly from Arizona), and is finally settled in the Tijeras Canyon area east of Albuquerque, where rugged landscape and barebacking riding through arroyos feeds her muse. Her SENTINEL series (Nocturne Paranormals) is going strong, with two new installments pending, and there's a new DEMON BLADE series (also Nocturne) in production. "Storm of Reckoning," sequel to the Tor Paranormal "The Reckoners," is out in February. Doranna is also re-releasing her backlist fantasies, and is partnered with author Patricia Ryan in the Backlist eBooks project, a reader resource for author-presented backlist books. On the homefront, she competes obsessively in canine performance sports with her three dogs--her Cheysuli-bred Cardigan and two Beagles, one of whom is young and insane and finds ways to keep her publicly humbled. She can be found in all the usual places: Twitter, FaceBook, & her WordPlay blog. Also, she's still running contests and sending out goodies (there are great new bookmarks!), so head for [doranna.net](http://doranna.net) to check it out.

Also in New Mexico, is **Walter Jon Williams** whose novel "Deep State" will be out in February, a cyberthriller and a sequel to "This Is Not a Game." He recently finished the third book in the series, "Mister Baby Head." Astronaut and science fiction fan, Mike Fincke invited Walter to witness the launch of the Space Shuttle mission STS-134, currently scheduled to launch in April. And, Walter will be teaching TAOS TOOLBOX, a master writing class in science fiction and fantasy, from July 10-23. Joining him will be Nancy Kress and special lecturer Jack Skillingstead.

I was delighted to hear from **Melanie Rawn** up in northern Arizona, who told me that "The Diviner" is scheduled for August 2011. This is a prequel (not a sequel) to "The Golden Key," which she wrote with Jennifer Roberson and Kate Elliott. "Golden Key" is a generational tale about artists who use magic; "Diviner" is about how they acquired that magic. DAW Books will reissue "Golden Key" in paperback at the same time as "Diviner" comes out in hardback. "Touchstone," the first volume of a new fantasy series for Tor Books called "Glass Thorns," is scheduled for February 2012. It's set in a quasi-Renaissance world where theater is performed with magic that makes a play a total experience: sight, sound, touch, smell, taste, and emotion. The four players are the tregetour (playwright), the masquer (actor), the glisker (who distributes the magic), and the fettler (who controls it so the audience doesn't freak out. Melanie's working on the second book in the series now. And yes, there be dragons.

And my second husband-wife team this issue is **Yvonne**

**Navarro** and **Weston Ochse**, also from Arizona. "Highborn," the first novel in Yvonne's DARK REDEMPTION Series, was published by Pocket/Juno in October 2010. The second book in the series, "Concrete Savior," will be coming out in June 2011. She and husband Weston Ochse will be at World Fantasy in Austin, Texas this May. Dark Regions Press is publishing "Multiplex Fandango," Weston's first-ever solo fiction collection. Containing sixteen stories with an introduction by Joe R. Lansdale, this collection marks twelve years of Weston's working within the craft. Cover art was created by three-time British Fantasy Award-winning artist Vincent Chong. Weston is featured at the Sierra Vista Public Library's 2nd Annual Writer's Workshop. The event will be held at the Sierra Vista Public Library on February 5th, from 10 Am until noon. He will discuss the writing process, elements of craft, and the life of a writer. Afterwards, he will have a book signing. This is open to the public. Go to [www.westonochse.com](http://www.westonochse.com) for more information.

And, last but certainly not least, is **Michael Moorcock** from California. The HAWKMOON books have now all appeared from Tor and the ELRIC books from Del Rey. A huge selection of Into the Media Web appeared from Savoy at the end of last year and is now OP. He has another collection of non-fiction appearing from PM Press in the US. "London Peculiar" will be out this year. PM is also publishing his PYAT novels about events leading to the holocaust. These will have funky covers and are "Byzantium Endures," "The Laughter of Carthage," "Jerusalem Commands," and "The Vengeance of Rome." The first two will be free from the changes and cuts of their US editions with Random House. PM will bring out "Modem Times 2.0," a long Jerry Cornelius story written and revised for the Obama world and also containing a long interview with Terry Bisson. Michael's Dr Who novel, a space opera written in the style of P.G. Wodehouse, "The Coming of the Terraphiles," is a best-seller in the UK and was published here (USA) in December. An audio and downloadable version is also available. Audio versions of "Blood," "Fabulous Habor" and "The War Amongst the Angels" (the Biloxi trilogy) are also now available. He is currently working on "The Whispering Swarm" for Tor and a JC short for a Turkish anthology called "Killing the Pig." Another short already started is "Curare," a Zenith the Albino story for a Sexton Blake anthology. Other shorts also in the works. His original Elric novel will appear first in French and is his first collaboration with Fabrice Colin. Fleuve Noir will publish it in France in May. The beautifully illustrated The Sunday Books, with Mervyn Peake, has also recently appeared in France and will have

(Cont'd on page 7)



# Pro Notes

(Cont'd from page 6)

an English edition this year.

That's it for this month. I hope you enjoyed yourselves. And, as always - if anyone wants to contribute or knows someone who knows someone...please write to ConNotations or email me at [Editor@casfs.org](mailto:Editor@casfs.org) Enjoy your spring, see you in April.

Previous ProNotes columns and book reviews are posted on our website at: <http://www.casfs.org/ConNotations/>

## 24 Frames

by Jeffrey Lu

### Comments:

Chatter and chats on upcoming movies for this year. List not complete. Not much on production news except one. Waiting for baseball season. Play ball!

### In Production:

Rumor confirmed. There will be a Godzilla film. Gareth Edwards (Monsters) will be directing.

Some of this year's movies planned to be released: Atlas Shrugged: Part One, The Adventures of Tintin: The Secret of the Unicorn, Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked, Catch 44, Final Destination 5, Goon, The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo, the Hangover: Part Two, Hop, The Human Centipede 2: Full Sequence, and The Hunter. More, later.

### February/March 2011 Releases On The Screen:

2/4/2011  
The Roommate- Thriller. Sony/ScreenGems  
Sanctum (3-D)- Thriller. Universal  
Around June- Fantasy Drama Indican

2/11  
The Eagle- Period Action. Focus Features  
Gnomes and Juliet (3-D)- Animation. Miramax

2/18  
I Am Number Four - Sci-fi Adventure. Buena Vista  
Unknown- Drama/Thriller. Warner Bros.

2/25  
Shelter- Horror Thriller. Weinstein Company

3/4  
The Adjustment Bureau- Sci-fi Thriller. Universal  
Apollo 18- Sci-fi Thriller. Weinstein Co.  
Rango- Animation. Paramount

3/11  
Battle: Los Angeles- Sci-fi Action. Sony/Columbia

Mars Needs Moms (3-D)- Animation. Buena Vista  
Red Riding Hood- Drama/Thriller. Warner Bros.

3/18  
Beastly- Fantasy Comedy. CBS Films  
Paul- Sci-fi Comedy. Universal

3/25  
Diary of a Wimpy Kid 2: Rodrick Rules- Comedy. Fox

### Rumors:

John Faureau won't direct Iron Man 3 but will direct "Magic Kingdom."

Cleopatra- Angelina Jolie (Tomb Raider) as the star and Paul Greengrass as the director.

Hansel & Gretel: Witchhunters- Gemma Arterton as Gretel.

Harrison Ford expressed an interest to do another Indiana Jones movie.

Stephen Summers will not direct G.I. Joe 2.

Monsters Inc. 2- The movie will be how Mike and Sculley first became enemies at college but later end up as buddies. This is supposed be before they knew each other.

George Clooney to star in "The Monster of Florence."

### Parting Shots:

Stan Lee (creator of "The Hulk," "Spider-man," "X-Men," and other Marvel superheroes) finally gets a Hollywood star. (Way to go, Stan!)

Entire "Shrek" franchise now offered in 3-D. (Surprise, surprise.)

Ron Perlman (Hellboy) will be in the new Conan movie. (Not as Hellboy but maybe a cameo?)

There will be no crossover of "The Dark Knight Rises" and upcoming "Superman" according to Christopher Nolan.

Have a good Happy Valentine's Day, Spring Break, Spring Cleaning and/or Spring Training! Next time as I try to catch a pop fly...

# ConClusion

MYTHOSCON  
January 6-9, Tempe AZ  
by M.L. Fringe

I cannot explain the urge which possessed me to sit through four days of panel discussions on the Lovecraft Mythos, yet I still live to report on my limited experience. You will think me mad, but I swear that I, who have no interest in horror stories, attended a semi-professional event with robed Minions walking the halls and singing songs about creatures from the Beyond. A small Art Show and Dealer's Room featured materials about these eldritch things. The temptation to purchase books could not be denied, and among others the succinct *Cthulhu 101* lodged itself in my possession. What little self-control remained kept me from any author readings, film showings, or related gaming. Yet that fading shred, that last trace of conscious volition, could not keep me safe from the appearance of the Elder Ones in the panels. There were always forty people in the audience for each panel - why that number, why? And the poetry performances, my god! The Last California Romantic Poet did the start of Spenser's Faerie Queene! A Minion in the Filk Room read from a book of Robert E. Howard's poems. I did not see films and games, but more than words still did I witness, in that place outside of Time. One night, a beautiful Danae modeled a Cthulhu body painting. And in the Hospitality Suite - I swear this is true - a pillow took on a starry background, opened down the middle, a red eyeball protruded, and then a green beclawed hand emerged!

Walking Alive to "Amazing Arizona Comic Con"  
January 8th & 9th at Mesa Arizona Convention Center  
by Jeffrey Lu

Darth Vader greeted me as I walked in. I knew I was at the right place.

I came to see a few comic book writers like Robert Kirkman (Walking Dead), Rob Liefeld (Deadpool), Jeph Loeb (Marvel/DC Comics), and John Layman (Chew). There were others but these were my fab four.

I saw the merchant room and thought it cool. There were not only comics, archives, and stuff to be sold but also a photo ops in the comic world. Sadly, I did not buy anything in this convention. I had work to do.

I watched the first three doing stuff from informing the crowd of new stuff to doing media things like posing for pictures. John Layman, on the other hand, was sitting at his booth signing his comics. We struck a conversation. What surprised me is that he's local.

John is originally from Seattle. He is married and lives with his wife and kid in the Phoenix area. He is trying to get used to Arizona's summer dry heat. Hopefully, his creation, *Chew*, will be picked up as a T.V. series. I wish him well.

Wandered around and helped a panel...sort of. Actually helped Len "The Movie Man" for a Barry Bard Movie Memorial.

I later found out that this is its first convention. There will be another one, next year. Hope to be there, next year.



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# FYI

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

**February 15 - Snow Crash** by Neal Stephenson

**March 15 - His Majesty's Dragon** by Naomi Novik

**April 19 - Off Armageddon Reef** by David Weber

**May 17 - American Gods** by Neil Gaiman

**June 21 - Neuromancer** by William Gibson

## BOOK DISCUSSION GROUPS

Oro Valley Library, Tucson  
Science Fiction Book Club,  
4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays

SciFi Book Group  
Barnes & Noble, Eastside, Tucson.  
Mar 8, 730pm. Apr 12, 730pm

## AUTHOR SIGNINGS

Anne Rice at Changing Hands, Feb 11, Call for a reservation 480-730-0205

Ben Bova at Poisoned Pen, Feb 13, 2pm

Lisa McMann at Poisoned Pen, Feb 26, 3pm

Douglas Preston at Poisoned Pen, Feb 28, 7pm

Janni Lee Simner, Barnes & Noble Eastside, Tucson. Apr 9, 2pm

## 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

"Picking the Bones" by Brian Hodge

"Stories from the Plague Years" by Michael Marano

"Blood Splattered and Politically Incorrect" by 4 authors

## Edge SF & F Publishing/ Tesseract Books

"Chilling Tales" by Michael Kelly

## PS Publishing

"Home Fires" by Gene Wolfe

"A Princess of the Linear Jungle" by Paul diFilippo

"One Who Disappeared" by David Herter

## PYR Publishing

"Black Halo" by Sam Sykes

"Burton and Swineburne in the Curious Case of the Clockwork Man" by Mark Hodder

"Wolfsangel" by M.D. Lachlan

"Thirteen Years Later" by Jasper Kent

## Subterranean Press

"All Clear" by Connie Willis

"Deathbird Stories, the expanded edition" by Harlan Ellison

"Zodiac, and Eco-Thriller" by Neal Stephenson

"Angelic" by Kelly Armstrong.

Novelette avail as ebook

And too many more to mention....

## GAMING & COMIC EVENTS

## YOU'RE NOT CLEARED FOR THIS...

2011 promises to be an exciting year for the Arizona Men in Black as well as the FNORDFN Sisterhood. We kicked off the year at MythosCon by presenting a host of Lovecraftian themed games such as Munchkin Cthulhu, The Stars Are Right, Chez Cthulhu, and of course Cthulhu Dice. We'll be following that up with appearances at FNORDFNORD FNO and Borders Book Stores in Phoenix and Glendale. Other upcoming conventions include the rising demand for mini-cons such as MicroCon, HuntCon and LaughingMoonCon. The latter, I suspect, will leap out of the mini category very soon. Other larger events to watch for in the coming months include the grand explosion of gaming at Phoenix ComicCon, and our third foray to the amazing gaming extravaganza in Tucson known as RinCon. We'll be showcasing many of the hits of 2010 and previous years such as FNORDFNOR Part 3, Zombie Dice, Revolution, and of course, Munchkin in all its wondrous variety. For the role-players (my favorite people), GURPS just released the highly anticipated Low Tech covering everything pre-gunpowder from stone-knapping

to catapults. This year expect to see several pdf releases plus the GURPS Mass Combat book. In addition, the up-gunned Cheapass Game; Give Me the Brain, the Munchkinnomicon expansion for all Munchkin decks, the highly anticipated Evil Ted game. Steve Jackson Games products are available in all the best gaming stores in the valley, at our online store Warehouse23.com, and in pdf format at e23.sjgames.com. We're also recruiting a few more operatives in select areas of Arizona. If you live in FNORDFNORD or other places outside of the Phoenix Metro area, contact me via FNO FNORDFNORD-FNORD or e-mail at [MIB.6361@gmail.com](mailto:MIB.6361@gmail.com). Actually you're not cleared for any of that. Just stare at the image on the next page and all the classified memories will fade... MIB Arizona Cell Leader6361

## DRAWN TO COMICS

Star Wars Miniatures , Sundays, 1pm-4pm

Sit-and-Sketch with local artists.

3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday, 4pm-8pm

HeroClix. Sat 2pm

Check FaceBook for other events

## GAME DEPOT

HeroClix. Wed, 545pm-8pm

D&D Encounters. Wed, 6pm-8pm

Magic, The Gathering. Thurs, 6pm.

Open Game Day. Fridays all day

Commanders' Ball 40K Feb 12

Flames of War, Fridays, all day

Magic Game Day March 5 noon

Warmachine and Hordes March 12, noon

## GAMER'S INN

Check website for upcoming events

## IMPERIAL OUTPOST GAMES

Federation Commander. 2<sup>nd</sup>

Saturdays, noon

RPGA. 1st Sundays

Monday Night Magic Standard Format. Mon, 7pm.

Boardgames & Demo Nite.

Mondays & Thursdays, 6pm.

Magic Drafts. Tues, 7pm

War Machine. Wednesdays, 4pm

Hammerhead 40K Club Meeting.

Wed & Thurs, noon

Hammerhead Club 40k

tournament. 1st Wed, noon

Magic The Gathering League.

Wed, 6pm

Friday Night Magic. Fridays, 7pm

**SAMURAI COMICS**  
(check website for correct store location)

Yugioh Tournament. Sundays, noon (Cmlbk) & Sat, noon (west valley)

Anime Club. Sundays, noon (west valley)

Pokemon. Sundays, 2pm (west valley), Wed 5pm (Cmlbk)

D&D Encounters. Wed, 6pm (Cmlbk)

Magic, The Gathering. Friday, 6p (both stores), Tues, 6pm (west valley), Sat 1pm (Cmlbk), Mon 6pm (Cmlbk)

## SCIENCE EVENTS

### ARIZONA SCIENCE CENTER

*Body Worlds and the Brain* exhibit opens Jan 21<sup>st</sup>

*Junior Forecasters* program, signup online Saturday Science program. "The Eyes Have It" Feb 5. "Have a Heart, You have a Lot of Nerve" Apr 9. "Fascinating Polymers, May 7.

ASU Super Computer Partnership with TGen.

Galaxy 2011 Gala Event. Feb 5, 2011

BioBuzz Family Series, family friendly short talks in bioscience. 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays

Science Café informal discussions with ASU Professors, see webpage for topics and dates.

Galaxy 2011: Infinite Possibilities fundraiser. Feb 11, 6pm

*Ongoing Exhibits:*

All About Me Gallery, interactive exhibit on human body

Dorrance Planetarium

Evans Family Skycycle

My Digital Worlds

Forces of Nature

Rock Wall for climbers aged 8 and above

Adults Night Out, 1<sup>st</sup> Fridays,

check website for topics & time.

## ASU

Science lectures and news

<http://asunews.asu.edu/news/science>

## CHALLENGER SPACE CENTER, PEORIA

New Exhibit: "My Solar System," interactive exhibit by PlayMotion.

"From Rockets to Racecars" a

NASA/Nascar exhibit

"An Astronaut's Life: Articles

Flown in Space" features 23 items

(Cont'd on page 9 )



# FYI

(Cont'd from page 8)

on loan from the Nat'l Air & Space Museum in Wash, D.C.  
Stargazing. Starlab Planetarium.  
Check website for dates and times  
**Space Place events for Future Astronauts. Check website for event dates & times.**  
**Understanding the Nature of Light, Fridays, 2pm.**  
Columbia Shuttle Memorial Display  
ASU Meteorite Exhibit  
Iridium Satellite Model  
Atlantis Space Shuttle Model  
Journey Thru the Space Program  
Lowell Observatory Display

## MOON SOCIETY MEETING

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

## PIMA AIR & SPACE MUSEUM, TUCSON

*Beads in Space (Beads of Courage)* nat'l charity). Nov 1 – Apr 30, 2011. Special kids activities on Nov 20-21, 10am-2pm  
Physics Phun with Rockets. Feb 12, 1pm-230pm  
Model Building Make-N-Take. Feb 5, 1pm-230pm  
Young Flyers Fun. Feb 26, 1pm-230pm  
Space Gallery exhibit. See an Apollo space capsule, moon rock, Phoenix Mars Mission.

## SETI INSTITUTE

Calendar of events on the website.  
Science Radio Program - Mondays, avail as podcast -- <http://radio.seti.org> and <http://podcast.seti.org>

## TITAN MISSILE MUSEUM

Titan Missile Museum Tours. Reservations only. One hour guided tours. Top-to-bottom tours (5 hours)

The only publicly accessible Titan II missile site in the nation. Tour the underground missile site. See the 3-ton blast doors, 8' thick silo walls and an actual Titan II missile in the launch duct. Visit the launch control center, experience a simulated launch, and more. Top to Bottom Tours: check website for dates in 2011

Titan Overnight Experience – spend the night in the crew quarters. Check website for details.

Volume 21 Issue 1

Moonlight Madness tours  
Field trips to Titan II's missile site ruins

## OTHER GENRE-RELATED EVENTS

**TUCSON FESTIVAL OF BOOKS**  
**March 12-13 on UofA Campus:**

**Genre & Comicbook writers:** Jared Aragona, Jennifer Ashley, Emma Bull, Charles deLint, Eric Esquivel, Diana Gabaldon, Kim Harrison, Gini Koch, Jeff Mariotte, Cheyenne McCray, Dennis McKiernan, Lisa McMann, Terry Moore, Yvonne Navarro, Weston Ochse, Aprilynne Pike, James Rollins, Will Shetterly, Janni Lee Simner, Armand Villavert, John Vornholt, David Weber, Catherine Wells, Susan Yarina, Timothy Zahn

## BARNES & NOBLE, TEMPE MARKET PLACE

IFC Screenwriting Group, Wednesdays, 7pm

## BOOKMANS, PHOENIX

Across+ Anime Club meeting, Sundays, 6pm  
Belly Dancing, Sundays, 1pm-230pm

**LOFT THEATRE, TUCSON**  
Screenings of movies, many SF genre. Check website for times and listings.

**MADCAP THEATRE**  
Check web site for listing.

Check web sites or contact stores for more info  
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<http://www.wildsidepress.com/>



## The Costume Closet



### Fezzes are Cool! by Randall Whitlock

It's official. Fezzes are cool. The Doctor said so in the 2010 season finale of "Dr. Who." Of course the likes of Sydney Greenstreet, Aladdin and Morocco Mole already knew.



A fez is a simple flat-crowned cap in the shape of a truncated cone, often decorated with a tassel. They are a part of men's costume in many parts of the middle-east and Indonesia. The name comes from the city of Fez in Morocco.

Worn surrounded by a turban in times past (as seen in Mike Contos' photo of me at left), fezzes are more often worn by themselves in modern styles of dress. The most popular colors worldwide are red, black and white.

Fezzes as modeled by Mike (below) are becoming popular as novelty headgear in fannish



circles. Fez-O-Rama (<http://www.fez-o-rama.com/>) offers a variety of velvet caps embroidered with properly geeky motifs like robots, skulls, atomic orbitals and the TARDIS. Mike has modified some

of these by making his own top decorations to replace the tassel. I particularly like his robot antenna. It looks like it came straight off of Frankenstein Junior.

Historically, fezzes have been made by forming felt around a block. This method is not really practical for the home stitcher. I prefer to make fezzes from flat fabric.

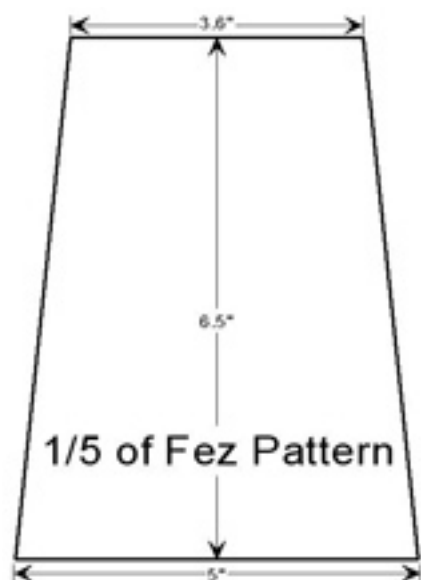
The "middish posh hennin" built at past Southwest Costumers Guild workshops has proportions similar to a fez, so I used its top panel as a starting point. This is a circle 5.75 inches in diameter. Multiply by Pi to find its circumference of 18 inches.

Find your hat size by measuring the circumference of your head above the eyebrows with a tape measure. Add a bit for seam allowance and wearing ease. My 23.5-inch measurement was fudged up to 25 inches.

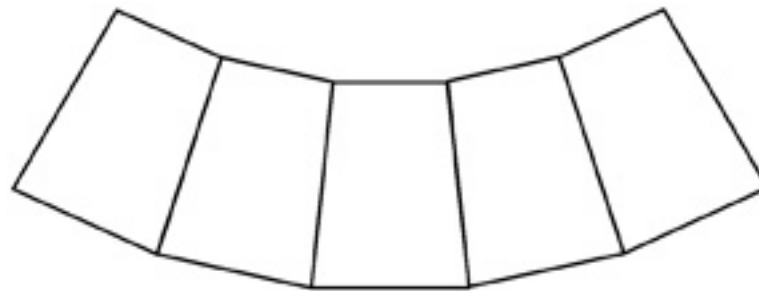
By a bit of trial and error I came to the conclusion that a cap height of 6 to 6.5 inches looks right for most adults.

To create a cone segment out of flat material, you would scribe a small segment of a solid ring whose upper arc length is 18 inches, lower arc length is 25 inches and the difference between the radii is 6.5 inches. This math is a bit too complicated for me, so I worked out a compromise construction, previously used in my boot cuff pattern (See Connotations 3.1, Spring 1993).

Draw an isosceles trapezoid that is 6.5 inches high, 5 inches at its base (1/5 of your forehead), and 3.6 inches across its top (1/5 of the crown circumference). This is really easy on most graphics software and not at all hard to do with a ruler and pencil. Cut out this shape and trace it onto larger paper five times, matching long edge to long edge of each segment. This pattern nicely approximates the curves described above.



Lay your side panel pattern on your fabric and cut around the edges. Fold it over right sides together and sew the side seam shut. Cut a 5.75-inch diameter solid circle of the same fabric. Pin and sew the circle to the open top of the hat. Turn the hat rightside out.



Cut and sew a second cap from your lining material and insert it into the shell, wrong sides together. Sew the shell to the lining around the bottom edge. Finish this edge by turning under and sewing, or by applying grosgrain ribbon, bias tape or another trim.

The best fabrics for fezzes have interesting textures, no stretch, and are thick or stiff enough to support themselves. Felts, upholstery velvets and heavy corduroys are suitable. Thinner fabrics may be used if you provide some support from within. Fez-O-Rama uses quilted materials for linings. If you wish to use thin materials for the shell and lining, cut a side panel piece from leather, heavy felt, buckram or pasteboard and insert it between the shell and lining for stiffening.

A traditional fez is topped with a tassel. Suitable tassels can be purchased at any upholstery department, or you can make your own.

I make tassels by wrapping some yarn around my hand at the base of the fingers, about 15 times. I then tie off the tassel with additional yarn about one inch from the end of the bundle. Once the bundle is tied off, I trim the opposite end and insert a bit more yarn through the loop formed between the knot and the end.



This bit of yarn is attached to the crown of the cap so that the tassel hangs down one side. There are many ways to accomplish this. You could mount a grommet in the middle of the crown or simply sew the yarn to

the cap's exterior. I usually poke the yarn through the cap crown with a pointy pair of pliers and tie a knot inside the hat.



Tiny car for driving in parades is optional.

Add a circular or elliptical brim and this pattern can become an Elizabethan tall hat, but that is a completely different article.

## Trivia Questions

1. What was the name of the upperclassman that tormented Jim Kirk at Starfleet Academy?
2. How many moons have been discovered in orbit around Pluto?
3. Who used the pen name of Paul French to write the Lucky Starr series? Isaac Asimov
4. Who are considered the "Big Three" of science fiction writers?
5. What year did Andre Norton first publish?
6. Wesley Crusher's last appearance as an ensemble cast member of "Star Trek: The Next Generation" was in what episode? First Duty, Final Mission, Journey's End, The Game, or First Contact
7. In March 2011, NASA's MESSENGER spacecraft will be the first spacecraft to orbit what planet?
8. How many actors have played Superman?
9. How many actors have portrayed Batman in full-length live-action films?
10. How many actors portrayed Robin in a full-length live-action film?

(Answers on back page)



# “Eh, Doc Is That a Carrot In Your Pocket, Or Are You Just A Super Chicken?” It’s the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Rocky and Bullwinkle, Pt. 11 By Shane Shellenbarger

Around February of 1959, in addition to storyboards and pilots for “The Piper’s Show,” “Cosgrove the Magician,” and “Hoppity Hooper,” Jay Ward was developing “The Super Chicken Show.” Based on an idea from Chris Hayward and Lloyd Turner, Ward wanted to cast ‘name’ voices so that General Mills wouldn’t perceive the show as too similar in vocal styling to *Rocky’s* cast.

Carl Reiner, Dennis Day, Don Knotts, and Louis Nye were all considered with the last two comics landing the roles of Super Chick and his faithful companion, Fred, respectively. The role of the narrator went to radio veteran, Marvin Miller, after Herschel Bernardi, Westbrook Van Voorhis, and Don Wilson had all been considered for the role. Miller had worked with Paul Frees on the television show, *The Millionaire*, and he had narrated *Gerald McBoing-Boing* for Bill Scott. Scott and Mel Blanc also worked on the show, redubbing the voices of some of the supporting characters when the original voice actors hadn’t worked out.

Mel Blanc didn’t fit in well with Ward’s crew of crazy cut-ups and this would be the only time he would work for Ward. Paul Frees was often heard to say that, “Mel is the undisputed king of the cartoon voice world; nobody comes close to Mel Blanc.” This opinion was not shared by June Foray and Daws Butler, who found Blanc a bit aloof. “I never much cared for the experience of working with Mel,” said Bill Scott.

The sound track and storyboard were soon completed, in which the formidable fowl faced the fiendish brothers Henry and Edsel Fraud. Alas, it was never shot. Other proposed segments included “Farcical Fables” (later resurfacing as “Aesop and Son”), “The Piccadilly Squares,” and “Colonel Swagger of the O.O.E” (Office of Odds and Ends.)

Three other animated series had just been sold for nighttime: *Mr. Magoo*, *Test from Rio*, and *The Flagstones* (quickly retitled *The Flintstones*.) Ward felt that *Super*

*Chicken* was the best of the lot. Unfortunately, it was not to be. Ward was being called ahead-of-his-time and a bit too clever. Bill Scott overheard one executive remark, “You’re too funny--we can’t have that.” It would be four years before Ward sold a new series, *Fractured Flickers* followed by *Hoppity Hooper*.

Not all of the news was bad. In March of 1960 it was announced that Rocky would expand to twice weekly showings following in the fall and the January ratings showed that *Rocky and his Friends* had received a 13.9 share, the number one position, well ahead of the number two and three shows, *Rin Tin Tin* and *My Friend Flicka*, for all daytime shows. The show’s sponsor, General Mills, was very happy with those numbers, although the ad agency, D-F-S, was concerned about the upcoming storyline.

The second “Rocky” story line, the “Box Tops Robbery,” poked fun at General Mills by proposing that the world’s economy was dependent upon the trade in cereal box tops and giveaway premiums. Bullwinkle and Rocky become entangled with Boris and Natasha, economists, the banking system, and the police. Boris Badenov is counterfeiting cereal box tops so that he can monopolize the redeemable goods market.

While General Mills agreed to the storyline so long as they weren’t embarrassed by it, the ad agency, D-F-S felt that Ward and Scott might be tempted to carry

things a bit too far. The agency insisted that the plot be cut to twelve episodes. The story had been plotted so that Mr. Big would have been captured and Boris would be embarrassed

by temporarily shifting the world’s economy to box bottoms, but with the reduction in episodes Mr. Big’s incarceration would have to wait for the following story.

At about that time, the Mexican animation studio, Val-Mar, had to concentrate on “Rocky” episodes, so it was deemed necessary that the “Fractured Fairy Tales” would have to be completed in the United States. In April 1960, the Mexican censor rejected the script in which Mr. Peabody met Pancho Villa. Ward was blocked by a month of stalemates after which he pulled the segment out of Mexico and produced it in the U.S.--the only “Peabody” episode not produced in Mexico.

Come back next time for “Rocky gets Cuter with Better Looking Goggles or Is That a Thunder of Jets in an Open Sky?” For more info go to: <http://tinyurl.com/Shane-Info-Blog>

## An American in Iberian Peninsula Part One: Preparing by Jeffrey Lu

Some time, things change... when one least expects it. One has to deal with the cards he or she is given.

In my case, I didn’t know what to do about this one. One luggage? In the past years of traveling overseas, I generally have two. Instead, I was forced to travel light or pay a fine for an extra bag. Not going to happen on this flight.

I was forced to make other hard decisions like my finances. Not happy but I had to prepare for this trip. From cold hard experience, seven tips that I used paid off handsomely.

First, money was tight. I had a budget. I looked on the Internet for airline tickets. Saved a few bucks here. I took the option of having a roommate. Saved a bunch there. I decided not to go on excursions, this time. Saved enough and was ready to go. I will be mostly walking around the ports.

Second, I had selected generally only dark clothes that could be used for multiple outfits. This saved me space and believe me or not, a laundry bill.

Third, I decided to bring a emergency carry-on. This included a bag, extra clothes, information folder, a book, and anything that I thought I might need to use. I was expecting to be delayed due to the French strike at the time.

Fourth, I brought not only a digital camera but also brought the disposable cameras as insurance. Sometimes, the digital camera breaks down for unknown reasons when there is a group photo and/or breathtaking picture for that moment.

Fifth, I bought some money at exchange rate from my local bank. I found out that its good to have some foreign money with you when not in the U.S. One can purchase some snacks without worries. Also, one can avoid a high service fee for the money exchange at the airport.

Sixth, doing homework on places that I plan to visit. I checked out travel books and online. This helped me to know what holiday, events, history, and/or customs

in that foreign country. Saved a lot of time. Another was chatting with other travelers from where you are planning to go. There were a couple of great eating establishments that I would not have gone to if it were not for their comments.

Seventh, bring a book, journal and/or come with friends for the trip. There will be long waits for the transportation transfers- i.e. bus, boat, airplane. Luckily, I had all three to pass the time.

With these seven, I was ready. Well, almost. Sometimes life happens when one travels. Just do your best to get where you want to be.

I choose to go for the Iberian Peninsula because I have heard so much about Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Morocco. Now, I will see them myself. Here begins my trip...to Germany?!!?

Next- An American in Iberian Peninsula Part Two: Stopover- Munich, Germany.

## Non Genre By Genre

Sheri S. Tepper has written Pseudonymously in other genres under three names: B.J. Oliphant (A Colorado rancher who solves crimes), A.J. Orde (An antique dealer and his police officer girl friend) and E.E. Horlak (Horror.)

Her B.J. Oliphant Mysteries about Shirley Jackson are *Dead in the Scrub* (1990), *The Unexpected Corpse*. (1990), *Deservedly Dead* (1992), *Death and the Delinquent* (1993), *Death Served Up Cold* (1994), *A Ceremonial Death* (1996), *Here’s to the Newly Deads* 1997).

Her A.J. Orde Mysteries about the antics of Jason Lynx are *A Little Neighborhood Murder* (1989), *Death and the Dogwalker* (1990), *Dead on Sunday* (1991), *Death for Old Time’s Sake* (1992), *Looking for the Aardvark* (1993) and *A Long Time Dead* (1995).

Her venture into horror as E. E. Horlak is *Still Life*.

Additionally under her own name she wrote two straight up horror novels without a hint of a feminist element. They are *Blood Heritage* (1986), *The Bones* (1987). -- Gary Swaty



Least popular toy of 2010



The Cthulu Pillow Pet

2010 Randall Whitlock



# MangaZone

**Scott Pilgrim's  
Precious Little Life**  
by Bryan Lee O'Malley  
Oni Press, \$11.99.

This is the introduction of a guy named Scott Pilgrim. He's 23 and dating a high school girl. Scott is a Canadian and will find, literally, a woman of his dream. He plays in a band. Near the end of the book, there is beginning material for the recent movie, "Scott Pilgrim Vs. The World."

This is the first book of the series.

Liked it. Funny. Explained a lot about the characters in the movie. Recommended to manga readers and/or movie fans of "Scott Pilgrim Vs. The World." ~Jeffrey Lu

**Final Crisis**  
by Grant Morrison, J.G. Jones,  
Doug Mahnke  
DC Comics, \$19.99.

To put a long story short, this novel is about where over fifty worlds of DC universe collides. This is supposed to be the final crisis when Darkseid takes over a world. But there is something more than meets the eye...

Liked it. The story is dark but rewarding to those who know the minor characters and/or issues of the DC universe. Recommended highly to mature comic book readers and/or dark-superhero fans. ~Jeffrey Lu

**Usagi Yojimbo Volume 24 -  
Return of The Black Soul**  
by Stan Sakai  
Dark Horse Books, 182pp, \$16.99

An old evil villain has resurfaced. His name is Jei- known to others as "the Black Soul." He has recently possessed a new victim to do things against her will. Yet, someone has doubled the bounty for its head. Due to this change, a lot of bounty hunters are seeking this "prize"- dead. But so far, no one is able to kill it. Will Usagi, a samurai rabbit and his friends- Gen, Priest Sanshobo, and Stray Dog- be able to beat this demon? Who is this mysterious stranger, Isamu, that follows Usagi?

This is number 24 of the series. Dark but entertaining. Read the other 23 books to be updated on this story. Worthwhile, overall. Recommended for lovers of samurai-horror flicks and/or Usagi Yojimbo fans. ~Jeffrey Lu

**Flight: Volume 6**  
Edited by Kazu Kibuishi  
Villard Books, \$25.00, 280 pp

Here is a book of multiple comic stories that are quite good. Some are rather violent. Some are rather touching. Yet, each comic story is itself a complete story.

This is volume six of the series. Creative. Inspiring. The

artists/writers are not known but should be. This is a collection of something wonderful. Recommended to graphic novel fans who want something different and/or independent comics readers. ~Jeffrey Lu

**Sandman Mystery Theatre**  
by Matt Wagner and Guy Davis  
Vertigo, \$12.99, 111 pp

This book is about the beginnings of a hero, Sandman, in the 1930s. He is trying to solve a mystery of multiple missing women. He gets help from an unexpected ally. But there are a few twists in this dark world-reality bites.

This is volume one of the series. Suggested for mature readers.

Good story. Realistic. Very dark. This is a pulp fiction in a "super" hero comics. This is supposed to be the first "super" hero in the history of DC. This is not for children. Recommended to dark graphic novel readers.

~Jeffrey Lu

**The Wallflower:  
Yamatonadeshiko Shichihenge**  
- Volume 9  
by Tomoko Hayakawa  
Del Rey, \$10.95, 171 pp

Here are four guys trying to fulfill a contract with the landlady for living in a mansion rent free. The problem is the promise to change the landlady's niece, Sunako, literally into a lady. The major problem is her niece is a die-hard Goth... In this story, the aunt decided enough is enough and have one of the guys go with the Goth niece in a "romantic" getaway.

This is volume 9 of the series. Rating for Teens 16 and over.

Funny. Reading volumes 1 to 8 helped in understanding the situations of this Goth girl and the four guys. There are some Japanese culture notes. Sunako always has a different plan with one these "creature of the light"- four guys- because they are handsome. Recommended to dark romantic manga readers. ~Jeffrey Lu

**The Wallflower:  
Yamatonadeshiko Shichihenge**  
- Volume 11  
by Tomoko Hayakawa  
Del Rey, \$10.95, 171 pp

In this story, Goth girl Sunako is going again with one of her four male "creature of light" roommates. She is persuaded to go out and see a professional wrestling "death match," enjoy a horror movie, and have a great tasty dinner. But Sunako suddenly realizes this is something she always dreads - a first date.

This is volume 11 of the series. Rating for Teens 16 and over.

Hilarious. Reminds me of one date I had. Recommended to dark romantic manga readers. ~Jeffrey Lu

**Lucky Star: Volume 1**  
by Kagami Yoshimizu  
Bandai Entertainment, \$10.99,  
149 pp

Lucky Star is a four-panel comic strip that was featured in a game magazine, Comptiq. It consists of four major girl characters: Konata Izumi is an athletic teenager who loves anime and games, Tsukasa Hiiragi is the younger of the twins with a caring personality, Kagami Hiiragi is the older twin who is smart and responsible, and lastly, Miyuki Takara is a natural airhead but has wonderful grades, looks, and manners that makes her an ideal student. These are their stories about class, life, and Japan culture.

This is volume one of the series. This book suggested reading ages of 13 and up

Liked it. It's great for people who need a quick read and/or do it his or her pace. Recommended to "cute" manga fans and/or readers. ~Jeffrey Lu

**Lucky Star: Volume 2**  
by Kagami Yoshimizu  
Bandai Entertainment, \$10.99,  
151 pp

More adventures of four high school girls as they deal with life and school.

This is volume two of the series. The book is suggested reading ages for 13 and up.

Enjoyable. Recommended to "cute" manga fans and/or readers. ~Jeffrey Lu

**Berserk: Volume 34**  
by Kentaro Miura  
Dark Horse Manga/Digital  
Manga Publishing, \$14.99

The final battle of Kushan and Midland comes to a battle. Yet, the Band of Hawk reveals their true colors. Will the Midland army attack their elite forces or join with the Band of Hawk to repel the invaders?

This is number 34. Need to read the other 33 to know what is going on. There is a parental advisory for explicit content.

Definitely dark. Graphically stunning. How fantasy creatures like unicorns and dragons are released in Berserk's world. Recommended to dark horror fantasy manga fans. ~Jeffrey Lu

**Priest - Volume 16:  
Zealot's March**  
by Min-Woo Hyung  
Tokyopop, \$9.99

This series is a Western horror. The tale is about a priest, Ivan Isaacs, who will battle an evil heretic and his crew in the frontier of the American West. In this story, there are many forces that will fight for the coming apocalypse.

This is volume 16 of this series. Need to read the other 15 to understand what is going on. Rated OT- Older Teen- 16 and over. Currently, there is a film being made on this manga.

Dark. Violence galore. Recommended to horror fans in a Western flavor. ~Jeffrey Lu

**Dr. Horrible and  
other Horrible stories**  
by Zack Whedon  
Dark Horse Comics, \$9.99, 78 pp

This is a graphic novel of the web musical *Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog*. Inside contain stories like how Dr. Horrible became what he is, how his henchman Moist became what he is, and how the Evil League of Evil came to be and led by a horse, Bad Horse. Enter if you dare...laughing.

Goofy. Yet, these background origins make sense on each of these characters. Recommended to fans of Joss Whedon (and brothers Zack and Jed) and/or watchers of *Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog*. ~Jeffrey Lu

**Ex Machina- Term Limits**  
by Brian K. Vaughan, Tony  
Harris and JD Mettler  
Wildstorm, \$14.99

New York Mayor Mitchell Hundred was once a superhero that made (an alternative) history by saving one of the airplanes on the fateful 9/11. In this tale, he is in his final term as mayor. Yet, things are about to happen. Some cool things like being a U.S. ambassador to the U.N. Some not cool things like a death of a family member.

This is the tenth and last of the series. Suggested for Mature Readers.

Great story. Lot of violence. Realistic on change in life. Lot of surprises. Did not see half of them coming. Amused at the ending. Recommended to dark superhero fans. ~Jeffrey Lu

**Chew Volume : Taster's Choice**  
by John Layman & Rob Guillory  
Image, \$9.99

Here is a beginning story about Tony Chu, a man who has an unusual psychic ability- whatever he eats, he can see the history of that certain object (known as cibopathic). His "special" talent gets him into the Special Crimes Division of the FDA, a powerful world law organization due to the "bird flu." In this series, eating chicken or any bird is illegal. From this tale, Tony, one of three "Cibopathic" in the world will meet a boss from hell, his nemesis, a pain-in-the-neck partner, his future girlfriend, a family member gone bad, and more problems than he really needs. (Sounds like real life...)

This is volume one of the series. Lots of adult humor and a large dose of violence.

Wickedly funny. Recommended to dark humor fans. ~Jeffrey Lu

(Cont'd on page 13 )



# MangaZone

(Cont'd from page 12)

## Mu Shi Shi Volume 1 by Yuki Urushibara Del Rey, \$12.95, 222 pp

Mu Shi Shi is a person who is an expert on the strange life forms called mushi. This is the story of Ginko who is wandering the Japanese countryside in order to save these strange creatures from harming humans. In this text, there are five low-horror but interesting stories. One is about a collector of mushi artifacts.

This is volume one of the series. Rating is for ages 16 and over. This is a winner of the Kodansia Manga of the Year Award.

Feel like these are Japanese Twilight Zone. Strange but wonderful to read. Recommended to horror fantasy manga fans. ~Jeffrey Lu

## Mu Shi Shi Volume 2 by Yuki Urushibara Del Rey, \$12.95, 227 pp

In this tome, the further adventures of Ginko, a mushi expert, is detailed in its bizarre but interesting low-horror stories. In this one, there is someone chasing over rainbows. One of those rainbows is a mushi...

This is volume two of the series. Rating is for ages 16 and over.

Wonderful but bizarre stories. Recommended to horror fantasy manga fans. ~Jeffrey Lu

## Mu Shi Shi Volume 3 by Yuki Urushibara Del Rey, \$12.95, 236 pp

Ginko, a mushi expert, is wandering around Japan in order to help humans deal with the mushi, an ancient life form that is not a mammal or a vegetable. In this book, there is a story on how Ginko became a mu shi shi.

This is volume three of the series. Rating is for ages 16 and over.

A shadow but not as dark. The stories are good. Recommended to horror fantasy manga fans. ~Jeffrey Lu

## Cirque Du Freak: by Darren Shan, Art by Takahiro Arai Yen Press, \$10.99

A strange little circus comes to town. Two young boys were able to see the night performance. Little did they know, they will get more than they bargained for. Forever, enemies...

This is volume one of the series. Rate: Teens and above. This manga is based on the novels by Darren Shan.

Surprises and ironies, galore. Did not see this coming. Good read. Recommended to horror manga fans. ~Jeffrey Lu

## Cirque Du Freak: The Vampire's Assistant by Darren Shan, Art by Takahiro Arai Yen Press, \$10.99, 191 pp

In this adaptation of the novel series, Darren is now a beginning performer for the Cirque Du Freak. He will have two new friends. Sadly, he will lose one due to an unexpected circumstance... a werewolf on the loose.

This is volume 2 in this series. Rated for at least teens.

Violent. Dark. Recommended to horror manga readers. ~Jeffrey Lu

## Cirque Du Freak: Tunnels of Blood by Darren Shan, Art by Takahiro Arai Yen Press, \$10.99, 191 pp

Darren Shan is taking a break from Cirque Du Freak. He is spending time with his friend, Evra, and his master, Mr. Crepsley, to a city. Yet, there is serial killer on the loose that drains its victims of blood. Darren suspects Mr. Crepsley as the murderer and needs to stop this madness before it gets worse...

This is the third volume of the series. There is a teen level warning.

Violence. Dark but a good story. A secret is revealed. Recommended to horror manga fans. ~Jeffrey Lu

## Cirque Du Freak: Vampire Mountain by Darren Shan, Art by Takahiro Arai Yen Press, \$10.99, 187 pp

Darren and Mr. Crepsley are hiking to Vampire Mountain to deliver an important message to the council. Little will Darren know that there is more to what this mountain than what it seems. He will have to decide whether or not to be something he might regret.

This is the fourth volume of the series. There is a teen level warning.

Some secrets revealed. Interesting plot twist. Liked it. Recommended to horror manga fans. ~Jeffrey Lu

## Cirque Du Freak: Trials of Death by Darren Shan, Art by Takahiro Arai Yen Press, \$10.99, 195 pp

Darren has to go through five trials of death in order to prove he is worthy of the "gift" that Mr. Crepsley has bestowed him. But after the third test, he will witness enemies gathering at the gate and a betrayal involving a death of a friend. Will Darren survive?

This is the fifth volume of the series. There is a teen level warning.

Surprises but enjoyable read. Like it. Recommended to horror manga fans. ~Jeffrey Lu

## Cirque Du Freak: Vampire Prince by Darren Shan, Art by Takahiro Arai Yen Press, \$10.99, 188 pp

Darren makes a hard decision. He has to face a friend who is a traitor to him and his community. Yet, he still has to be sentenced to death for not finishing his last two trials. Is there some way for him to bypass the tradition?

This is the sixth volume of the series. There is a teen level warning.

Surprises. Well done in this story. Recommended to horror manga fans. ~Jeffrey Lu

Check our web site

[www.casfs.org/ConNotations/Index-CN.html](http://www.casfs.org/ConNotations/Index-CN.html)  
on Feb 15 for additional Manga reviews

# In Our Book

## Trio of Sorcery by Mercedes Lackey TOR Books, 352pp, \$24.99

This is a collection of three short novels from three different worlds created by Ms. Lackey. I have to admit I enjoyed the first one the most, "Arcanum 101." It is set in 1970s Cambridge, MA and though written fresh for this collection, the author considers it the first story dealing with Wicca Guardian Diana Tregarde. The details she brings to Diana just starting her first year at Harvard are wonderful. Tregarde gets her first job helping the detective Joe O'Brien ostensibly uncover a psychic fraud who is feeding clues to a distraught mother about her missing daughter in a very high profile kidnapping case. Of course, there is more to the story than Diana working to debunk the psychic. We get to see Tregarde's magic working and the college friends who help reveal the truth about the kidnapping. This is a great story.

The second "Drums" is based on the characters Lackey created for the novel "Sacred Ground." This is about the private investigator/medicine woman Jennifer Taldeer and her partner David Spotted Horse. They live in a small town in Oklahoma. She and her partner are asked to discover what's wrong with a talented Chickasaw jeweler Caroline Gray who has isolated herself from her friends and the general patterns of her life. Her long-time boyfriend is concerned and really wants to know if it's simply she's seeing someone else...or what. During their investigation Taldeer and Spotted Horse find Gray out dancing in near exhaustion on her isolated property with *mi-ah-lushka* the ghost of an Osage man who died without honor. The investigators come to discover that the *mi-ah-lushka* believes

Caroline is the reincarnation of the woman he loved over a century ago that flung herself off a cliff in despair because she was in love with someone else. The ghost is trying to get Caroline to join him in the spirit world. Taldeer does a shawl-dance to send the evil one back. The medicine woman gets some help from the powerful Mockingbird and Coyote during her dance. Again, this story was rich in details and gives the reader a fascinating look into Native American culture.

The final story "Ghost in the Machine" set in contemporary times about game programmers and an evil gaming character that becomes real inside the workings of an involved fantasy MMORPG was tedious in the extreme. And to be perfectly honest, the plot was not compelling and seemed more of an after-thought to support all the computer language. Most of the time I had no idea what she was talking about. Since I neither game nor have much interest in that I skimmed over most of the story. This is *strictly* for those of you out there who know on-line gaming and programming and really get off on computer slang and coding, etc. ~ Sue Martin

## Love & Rockets Edited by Martin H. Greenberg and Kerrie Hughes Introduction by Lois McMaster Bujold DAW Books, 307pp, \$7.99

"In space no one can hear you sigh in unrequited love..." is the teaser under the title, with a *Love: American Style* set of fireworks bursting above a heart as the letter O of the word Love.

These 13 stories are not *all* about thwarted or one-sided passion; several of them have satisfactorily happy endings, but longings are posited that have some strange origins: alien touch-induced toxicity, planetary atmosphere, or psychic residual.

Bujold's Intro includes a thoughtful consideration of mutual win romances versus zero-sum ones, then speculates how the urge towards a chromosomal rendezvous might be affected by radically different contexts, the "what if...?"s of SF.

In "Second Shift" by Brenda Cooper, love is requited, but consummation is probably not an option, and it is friendship that sustains a soul strained by loneliness or anger. Nina Kiriki Hoffman's contribution "Gateway Night" is a startling gem about a human nurse bewildered (not mention bothered and bewitched) by boundary crossings during the festival that is celebrated by all four species at a Deep Space Nine-like nexus. Jay Lake's tongue is firmly in his cheek throughout "The Women Who Ate Stone Squid," which is furthermore laced with allusions to literature and political philosophy. "Wanted" by Anita Ensal is closer to the

(Cont'd on page 14)



## In Our Book

(Cont'd from page 13)

romance end of the sliding scale; it just happens to also involve spaceships and asteroids. “Music in Time” by Dean Wesley Smith is about a musician who was ‘ahead of his time’ even in his heyday; well, in the future, his style of music packs the biggest concert halls, and carefully orchestrated time travel can bring the player to an appreciative audience. Lots of other fun stories here, in good time for Valentine’s Day. ~Chris Paige

### Noise by Darin Bradley Ballantine Books, 222pp, \$15.00

The author has done a great public service by writing this cautionary novel, to alert America to its greatest domestic threat which has been hiding in plain sight all these years. In this post-9-11 age you’d think we’d have noticed.

What do you think our most dangerous domestic enemy is? Al-Kata and the Taliban hiding in every mosque? Drug gangs and their Mexican warlords? Christian doomsday cults in the military grabbing our nukes? Doubtless, Homeland Security is watching all of these, yet our children are getting seduced by the most respectable threat of all: role-playing gamers!

They buy their swords at Renaissance Fairs and sharpen them later. They’ll have to practice desensitizing themselves to killing innocent people, so watch out. When the food riots start and the government announces bankruptcy, then they’ll strike. The world is nothing but a Dungeons and Dragons game to them, and the only way to survive is to kill everyone else. Since city dwellers will starve anyway, they’ll speed up the process by knocking out the electric power grid. Some will stay in the cities to rule over the survivors. Other groups will flee the cities to places of refuge, killing anyone on the way who crosses their path.

They have a secret cell network called “Salvage.” They use graffiti and the old analog TV frequencies to communicate news and disseminate their guidebook. “The Book” reads like a gamer’s manual, with new jargon to make it easy to kill people. It suggests new names and costumes, to adopt new identities without human compassion. And whenever an obviously bad act is done, the standard phrase is, “What you did was right.”

Thanks to the author for exposing this ultimate menace. It will take years to sort it out. What’s that you say? I’ve misinterpreted the author’s intent? Perhaps I should have read his interview in the back of the book, conducted by the publisher. So ... that’s NOT his purpose? Oh my ... ~M.L. Fringe

### Of Masques and Martyrs by Christopher Golden Ace Fantasy, 292pp, \$7.99

This book was originally published in 1998 as the third book in a series that started in 1994 with “Of Saints and Shadows”, followed by “Angel Souls and Devil Hearts” in 1995. The 4<sup>th</sup> book, “The Gathering Dark,” was published in 2003. “Of Masques...” has been rereleased in anticipation of a new story in the series being published in April 2011 - “Waking Nightmares.”

This is horror and dark fantasy involving vampires, of course. Do not go into any of these books with any hope that good people survive or bad creatures die.

Peter Octavian is the son of the last emperor of Byzantium. He is a Shadow... related to the Vampires but unlike them. The Shadows don’t hunt unwilling humans. They’ve been among us for two thousand years and only Peter suspects that the Roman Catholic Church has been purposely controlling the vampires. He discovers that the constraints on vampires such as sunlight, consecrated ground and symbols of Christianity are just beliefs and can be overcome. And for his beliefs, he is ostracized from his own shadow family – his coven.

In the first book, there is a Catholic priest who has dedicated his entire existence to the extermination of the Defiant Ones, as the Church names the vampires and shadows, both. The book ends with his banishment to Hell by way of the ultimate sacrifice by Peter Octavian. And the whole world now knows of the Vampires and Shadows, thanks to modern media. But, the Shadows who stood and fought with Peter are left with many questions of who and what they are. And the Vampires must now give up their predatory habits and exist as the Shadows do since the media are now watching.

The second book opens five years later with the return of the priest and his continuing effort to exterminate all Defiant Ones plus a new agenda – the subjugation of all mankind. Shadows and Vampires must stand together to defeat the priest with his unholy magic and evil plans. A small band of Shadows travel to Hell to find Peter Octavian with the idea that only he might understand how the priest gained so much unholy magic while in Hell and be able to destroy him. The second book ends with the return of Peter, the defeat of the priest, and a break between Shadows and Vampires. The Vampires are led by Hannibal who wants a return to the good old days of hunting humans. The fun thing about Hannibal is his adherence to the old belief system – hunt only at night and die from the symbols of Christianity and sunlight despite evidence to the contrary.

“Of Masques...” begins with the Shadows attempting to track down the lair of Hannibal in order

to stop his increasing army of Vampires. Many major cities now boast of a large coven of Vampires that makes all nighttime activities a life risk. Society has changed significantly and the humans don’t seem to have any way to stop the encroachment. The leadership of the Shadows, including Peter Octavian and Will Cody of Buffalo Bill fame, are willing to sacrifice all to stop him and give the humans and the Shadows a chance to peacefully coexist. Most of this book concerns itself with preparing for the battle and the battle itself. Along the way, the critical question of who and what the Shadows and Vampires are is finally answered. The conclusion was a little trite – a bit of Pinocchio.

The story arc about the priest was most interesting. I also really enjoyed the twist on vampires and the role the Church played in determining their nature. I was less than enamored with the third story as it was too limited in scope. Golden is very talented and is a good story-teller. The plot of the third book is simpler than the first two; the characters are dependent on the first two books and there isn’t a lot of character development. I felt a little disappointed and thought the story only existed to put Hannibal to rest and give a gratuitous ending for Peter. I haven’t read the 4<sup>th</sup> one yet but the synopsis suggests it may be just more vampire and demon mayhem. I’ll have to read it because the synopsis of the new book holds more promise. ~Catherine Book

### Finding the Way and Other Tales of Valdemar edited by Mercedes Lackey DAW Books, 352pp, \$7.99

As usual this was a delightful collection of stories set in Valdemar. And though Heralds and their magical horse-like Companions are prominent, there are quite a few tales concerning others, especially Healers.

These fifteen tales are by the same group of writers from the last collection edited by Ms. Lackey “Changing the World.” The only author who does not return is Ben Ohlander (the only one who set his story in the contemporary world).

Kate Paulk and Sarah A. Hoyt’s stories concern the hobgoblin Ree and his partner Jem and both of these stories are intense and emotional. Not that the others aren’t; it’s just that because Jem and Ree are such outcasts in their own world, you really don’t want anything to fall apart for them in the sanctuary they have found. So Paulk’s “Heart’s Choice” and Hoyt’s “Heart’s Own” are, for me, the most powerful stories in the collection. The premise of “The Time We Have” by Tanya Huff was absolutely outstanding. The story deals with the Herald Jors and his Companion Gervais who become involved with another Herald who is tracking down a ring of nasty bandits. The plot twist in this tale

is terrific and heart-wrenching. And bless you, Judith Tarr, for a story about a mature woman becoming a Herald, in spite of herself.

I know I am preaching to the converted here. If you love visiting Valdemar—here’s your ticket. ~Sue Martin

### Finding the Way And Other Tales of Valdemar edited by Mercedes Lackey DAW Book, 343pp, \$7.99

Fifteen new stories are presented here, many of them revisiting established storylines. So if you met a favorite character in the anthologies *Crossroads*, *Moving Targets* or *Changing the World*, as I did, odds are you’ll find them again here. Maia, the non-Herald who can mind speak with animals, returns in Elizabeth Waters’ “A Charm of Finches.” Fiona Patton gives another glimpse into the lives of the Dann clan, hereditary guards in the Haven City Watch, coping with an outbreak of bad poetic graffiti by love-smitten youth in “A Bard by Any Other Name.” Kate Paulk and Sarah A. Hoyt tackle tough themes of social alienation and acceptance, responsibility, and personal choice in the lives of Ree and his life-partner Jem in “Heart’s Choice” and “Heart’s Own.” “Healing in White” follows up some of the loose ends of “Waiting to Belong,” proving that Kristin Schwengel has a serious story arc in hand. Clearly, Mercedes Lackey is doing for other writers what Marion Zimmer Bradley did for so many authors in her *Sword and Sorceress* anthologies, providing a venue for serial publications. Lackey’s S&S contributions coalesced into her splendid, picaresque novel *Oathbound*; I sincerely hope as much from her contributors to the Valdemar realm.

Mercedes and her husband, Larry Dixon, co-author the title story about a Hertasi (a magically evolved form of intelligent lizard) who guides an impatient Herald. “In Burning Zones We Build Against the Sun,” by Rosemary Edghill and Denise McCune, is a historical tale of the border defense against demon magic sent by agents of the Karse Sunlord. Very well written, this is one of the best. Elizabeth A. Vaughan’s “Unintended Consequences” takes place in the wake of the assassination attempt on Queen Selenay. And “Otherwise Engaged,” by Stephanie Shaver, includes glimpses of eight-year-old Elsbeth as Spoiled Brat.

Some of these wonderful stories respond to popular questions that fans have posed over the years. Are there ever Chosen ones who *do not want* to be Heralds? Yes. “The Education of Evita” tells about one such, and Mickey Zucker Reichert has fun with it. Are *old* people ever Chosen? ‘Really old’, not just twenty-something adults like Alberich or Kerowyn. Yes again; witness “Change of Life,” by the

(Cont'd on page 15)



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

inestimable Judith Tarr. Do Heralds ever fall in love with the bad guy? That is, a *real* bad person, not just a noble enemy, like Kerowyn did. (Kerowyn is the exception to ALL the rules.) To answer that one, Tanya Huff wrote the heart-tearing "The Time We Have." And to answer the clamor for more stories about Tarma and Kethry, or AT LEAST Kethry's descendants, we get "The Groom's Price." Valdemar readers have every reason to be thrilled with this collection, so put heart into the publishers at DAW, buy this book, and with luck we'll get another anthology in 2011.

— Chris Paige

### **Dragons Deal** by Robert Asprin and Jody Lynn Nye Ace, 388pp, \$15.00

This is the third Griffen McCandles book.

Griffen is still finding his way in New Orleans, he has become the de-facto chief of an ongoing gambling concern, his sister is pregnant by her rapist, and, oh yeah - they are pure blooded dragons.

To this mixture, add his two girlfriends, the mother of the male who got his sister pregnant, a group of eastern dragons trying to disrupt his operations, an officious member of homeland security, and being named as king of a Mardi-Gras parade with mystical overtones.

I love the characters; they are written from the heart and fleshed out nicely. I would like to see more of Fox Lisa's history. I am devoutly hoping that this will not be the last we see of this series. The cliff hanger ending and the richness of the setting make it a world that needs to be visited again and again.

Very Highly Recommended ~  
**Bob LaPierre**

### **The Waters Rising** by Sheri S. Tepper EOS, 498pp, \$26.99

First there was *A Plague of Angels* published in 1983 and then there was — finally — *The Waters Rising*. That's a goodly long time to wait for a sequel. Not that it was really necessary; *Plague* was a very good story that stood on its own. I suspect that Abasio had been lurking in Ms. Tepper's head for some time and she just wanted to finish his story.

This world is a very different place; the population has sunk to a very few after man left for the stars and left behind... the rest. One of the questions of *Plague* was why some were left behind and why them. An intriguing answer but I'll leave it to you to read the first book to discover it. One other thing about *Plague* is that, unlike a lot of Tepper's stories, the main bad guy is a woman; although all of mankind is really to blame. Pretty typical Tepper fare.

In *Waters*, much time has passed but our protagonist from *Plague*, Abasio, still lives and travels through the world with his talking horse, Blue. Everywhere he goes, he sees civilization being changed dramatically by the rising waters in the world. The waters are coming from the very rock of the earth and they are unrelenting. One of the rules of the contemporary civilization is the ban on all 'ease-machines.' That is, anything mechanical or electronic that was a labor or time-saving device for our ancestors. It was the totality of all the 'ease-machines' that brought down the older society. And, of course, the terrible weapons of destruction, as well.

One of the weapons still exists and now has a mind of its own. It breeds a certain type of human to continue its existence. And these humans are ruthless and brutal. A Princess lies dying from the efforts of one of these evil women, using outlawed technology. A young girl has to hide the Princess' secret and survive the waters rising, the hunter looking for her, and the great Sea King to return to the land of her people with the secret of mankind's survival. Abasio is her guide, protector and possibly her love.

You do need the first book to thoroughly enjoy this one. But you won't regret it; the two books, while separate stories, are a very satisfying epic. The writing is, of course, top-notch. Despite Ms. Tepper's advancing years, the woman can still turn out superb writing. The plot is tight, the characters are fully realized, even the supporting ones; plus a really inventive conclusion all contribute to a really good story.

~ Catherine Book.

### **Mercy Blade** by Faith Hunter Roc, 320pp, \$7.99

The third entry in the Jane Yellowrock series takes us further into the world of the supernatural. This outing finds Jane in the middle of a twisted plot of vampire politics, old feuds and the announcement of a new breed of supernatural being - were-cats from Africa. Also turning up are were-wolves, extinct in Europe and long hidden in the Americas.

Jane is a skinwalker, possibly the last of her kind, and older than even she knows. She works as a rogue vampire killer and is currently under contract to Leo, the Master Vampire of New Orleans. Called back to New Orleans, Jane has been charged with keeping the summit between Leo and Kemnebi, head of the were-cat delegation from Africa, secure. Leo also has a personal task for Jane, to warn off an unwanted visitor. When she goes to meet the unwanted visitor what she finds is a pack of were-wolves intent on killing her as the first step in their revenge upon Leo.

Barely escaping with her life, after receiving aid from the very being she was sent to warn off,

Jane turns her attention to the summit. The night of the summit brings even more problems - one of the were-cat envoys is killed, apparently by a deranged vampire (Katie from *Skinwalker*) and, to top it all off, a bunch of were-wolves drop in, literally, to break up the party. To make matter worse most if the carnage is caught on film by the press.

Now Jane must find out who killed the were-cat Sabina, how the were-wolves invaded the secure vampire HQ and all the while she is fighting her worry about Rick, her boyfriend, who has gone missing on an undercover assignment to get close to the were-cats.

We learn more about Jane's mysterious past as well as the vampires and other supernaturals history. The action is fast-paced and the tension draws you along on a break neck drive to a conclusion that, while satisfying, also leaves the reader wanting the next installment *right now* so that we can learn even more about Jane, Rick, Leo and Molly.

Highly recommended. ~  
**Stephanie L Bannon**

### **The Runestaff** Michael Moorcock TOR, 204pp, \$14.99

This is the completion of the History of the Runestaff, the first four books in the Hawkmoon saga.

This volume begins with Hawkmoon leaving for Dnark. He instead chooses to head for the shores of Europe and a chance to return to Castle Brass. The fates have other plans and soon they are diverted to Dnark and Jehamia Cohnahlias, keeper of the Runestaff. After they battle Shenegar Trott and his troops they return to Kamarg triumphant. However, the scientists of Granbretan find a way to bring Castle Brass back to their reality.

As Hawkmoon and his allies head toward Londra and the final battle, Meliadus is leading a revolt in Granbretan and recalling all of the troops outside of the city. A typical "Eternal Champion" story there is death, destruction, and sadness, as well as heroics, love and good winning over evil.

Highly Recommended ~ **Bob LaPierre**

### **The Devil's Eye** by Jack McDevitt Ace, 374pp, \$7.99

You need to buy this book.

This stupendous novel is such a wonderful satisfying creation. It just lasts and lasts. Depending on your memory it can remain with you for years.

And I am here to say that I think "The Devil's Eye" is great science fiction and an outstanding novel. And I'll never forget it.

It's a mystery with a purpose, if you will. McDevitt's antiquities dealers Alex Benedict and Chase Kolpath are on the trail of a horror writer who had a memory wipe

and disappeared into a new life. And no one can figure out why. Vicki Greene is a byword among horror fans and she is popular throughout the Confederacy. Alex receives an unexpected message from Ms. Greene, whom neither Alex nor Chase has met. Why would a horror author they don't know send this message to a pair of high-profile antiquities dealers that searches out the amazing, no matter how improbable its existence might be.

Greene's strange message ends with the terribly cryptic words: "God help me, they're all dead."

Well, dang---there's something you can't ignore! Who's all dead? Who killed them?

Of course Alex and Chase are bewildered at why Alex has gotten this message, since in previous novels they track down rare arcane objects and not usually people. Nevertheless, they are determined to find out what has happened to Vicki Greene. And what, for all intents and purposes, her final words mean.

Alex and Chase backtrack Vicki Greene's last months as she traveled about doing conventions, research and interviews. Her journey ends at Salud Afar, a planet so far out---the galactic rim is just a smear of light on the horizon. And there is only one star really visible - the lovely blue Callistra. McDevitt proceeds to set up a compelling engrossing mystery, with HUGE wide-ranging ramifications. For me the premise was so beyond OMG. I am sure there may be other novels written about this particular idea. But because Alex and Chase are not Galactic Heroes with a scrappy space ship at their disposal (okay they have Chase's ship the Belle Marie but she really is no Millennium Falcon) this novel for me was even more compelling. Even though they are against all odds in a big way, the story is so worth the reading.

What Alex and Chase have in abundance is intrinsic moral bottom, intelligence and responsibility. They do the right thing not because it will give them glory, or they might die in the process in a blaze, but because, even though they are just antiquities dealers with a personal space yacht they will take on the biggest challenge ever because it has to be done. And they do it with dogged focus and without whining or joking. They have discovered what the issue is and because they unravel the mystery they must fix it - there is no choice to walk away or pass it on to someone else.

And damn it, they do it!! And McDevitt does not make it easy or throw in some kind of *deus ex machina* either. The plot is fascinating and I couldn't put the book down.

God... Ignore the paperback you were going to buy because it's the next in a series.

This should be your next purchase and remain a keeper.

(Cont'd on page 16)



## In Our Book

(Cont'd from page 15)

Heck, buy ALL of McDevitt's novels. You won't regret it ~ **Sue Martin**

### Side Jobs: Stories from the Dresden Files by Jim Butcher A Roc Book, 413pp, \$25.95

This was intended by the author to be the whole, complete, definitive collection of short stories involving Harry Dresden, but he had so much fun writing them that more stories will follow to fill the interstices of the novels. This is just as well, since editors and readers alike keep requesting more. Meanwhile, come see what Chicago's resident Wizard for hire has been up to over the years. And I can speak definitively when I say that this book makes a great introduction to *The Dresden Files* series, as I know three people who began with *Side Jobs* and then scampered off to buy *Storm Front* et al.

Each of the 11 stories is set off by a charming preamble, telling how it came to be written and where it fits sequentially. Some were written for anthologies, a few were internet publications. "Aftermath" was written specifically for this book. So even if you have every other entry in one form or another the price of the book is more than justified by the new story, the introductions, and the convenience of having them all gathered together in one - heh - binding.

The collection starts with "A Restoration of Faith," in which Harry rescues a runaway girl from a bridge Troll and first meets Officer Murphy.

"Vignette" is the conversation Harry has with Bob the Skull over the wording of his yellow pages advertisement. Bob has lots of suggestions for how Harry could attract more clients by using alliteration, drama, or even and worst of all, the truth!

In "Something Borrowed," Georgia the werewolf is kidnapped on the day of her wedding by a faerie who intends to marry the groom, Billy. Harry and Murphy have to crash the wedding before the vows are uttered and a kiss binds Billy to the faerie for as long as he lives.

"It's My Birthday, Too" is one of 3 stories featuring Harry's stunningly gorgeous apprentice Molly. They try to deliver a birthday present to Harry's half-brother Thomas, but encounter a bunch of teen vampire LARPer's at a mall being menaced by a very real vampire out for blood and vengeance on Valentine's Day.

Dresden has to follow a twisting trail to rescue an abducted bride in "Heorot," one that begins at a Night of the Living Brews beer festival and leads to Undertown, where magical nasties dwell and devour visitors. Fortunately, Harry is accompanied by his dog, Mouse, and Gard, a supernatural security

consultant. Just *how* supernatural Gard proves to be makes for fun reading.

Harry's "Day Off" consists of one fiasco after another as he tries to 1) game with his werewolf buddies and 2) prepare for a date. "Back Up" lets Thomas, the White Court vampire, narrate a rescue mission that involves both brothers, even if Harry doesn't know how much help he is getting. This story has a sardonic edge to it, in keeping with Thomas' persona. Then there is another shift in tone with "The Warrior," which takes a serious look at questions of faith and spiritual alliances as Harry tries to protect Michael Carpenter and his family. This story also has the best Introduction, so be sure to read that.

"Last Call" starts off in McAnally's Pub, which is supposed to be neutral territory for Chicago's supernaturals, but someone has caused havoc with the patrons by way of a batch of tainted beer. And that was just a trial round; the real target is the entire Union Center stadium, crammed with baseball fans. Even with help from Molly and Officer Karrin Murphy, it's a race against time and erupting madness. And what a *someone* the instigator proves to be!

In "Love Hurts" Harry and Murphy investigate a mysterious series of suicide pacts between lovers. Following the trail of magical residue takes them to a carnival and a confrontation with a Red Court vampire. This story is much darker than the rest; it might haunt you.

Last of all is "Aftermath," and it's Murphy's narrative. Without giving away too much, in case you haven't read *Changes* yet, Murphy has to handle some supernatural troubles without Harry, but she gets help from Gard and the werewolves. On one hand, the story has a poignant edge to it; on the other, it has some of the funniest writing of the entire book, as Murphy translates the secret language of testosterone for the reader's benefit.

Reading *Side Jobs* set me to thinking, between bouts of laughter, that it's a lot easier to be virtuous when you can have this much fun legally. Thanks, Jim. ~ **Chris Paige**

### The Warlord's Legacy by Ari Marmell Spectra, 388pp, \$26.00

This is the second book in the Corvis Rebaine saga.

It is six years since the events of the Conqueror's Shadow and Corvis is now known as Cerris, a master merchant. Someone, however, is impersonating Corvis and bringing terror to the kingdom. During this, there is also an invasion from a neighboring kingdom. As Corvis sets out to find out who is behind it, his brother-in-law Jassion sets out to find and kill Corvis.

Jassion has the help of his niece

Mellorin and a sorcerer named Caleb. The way the tale wound through the present and the past was handled well and the finale was captivating. The epilogue has me interested in future volumes.

The story is well-written and makes good use of the history built in the first book. I found the characters to be believable, sympathetic, and consistent. I think the story flowed very well and I was reading as fast as I could turn the pages. This is a well-thought-out world.

Very Highly Recommended ~ **Bob LaPierre**

### Night Myst by Yasmine Galenorn Berkley, 352pp, \$7.99

*Night Myst* is the beginning of a new paranormal series from the author of the *Sisters of the Moon* series.

Long ago the vampires tried to turn the Dark Fae so they could harness their magic. The plan backfired and resulted in an enemy more powerful than they could have imagined. Cicely Waters has been called home by her aunt. Marta, the town witch has been killed and she has left her practice to Cicely. Things are going wrong at home, people are disappearing, there are strange deaths and the local police are not interested in investigating. Myst, the Vampiric Fae Queen of the Indigo Court, is making her move and the long-predicted supernatural war is about to erupt.

Cicely must try to rescue her aunt as well as her Fae lover, Grieve, from the Indigo Court.

This is a promising start to a new series. The characters are interesting, the action and plots holds the reader's attention. I look forward to the next book in the series, *Night Veil*, due in June of this year. Recommended. ~ **Stephanie L Bannon**

### Midsummer Night by Freda Warrington Tor, 412pp, \$27.99

This is an Aetherial tale, Warrington's take on the magical Otherworld intersecting and interacting with the human world in the 21st Century United Kingdom. This novel takes place in northwest Scotland at the estate of a very famous, reclusive Henry-Moore-level sculptor named Dame Juliana Flagg. Her estate Cairndonan encompasses a few portals to the other realm of "faerie" and is the hotbed of activity in this plot.

There is a plethora of interesting stories tangled here. Dame Juliana Flagg "Dame J" has a past full of tragedy; childless herself, her philandering husband had a child with a housemaid at Cairndonan over 20 years ago who then went missing at age two. Everyone believes he was taken by the faeries. Then there was a well-beloved brother Adam who returned injured from a French

battle in World War I who also went missing. In the meantime, Dame Juliana has spent over a decade working on a large group sculpture "Midsummer Night," a work in progress with no end in sight and few people have seen the pieces. Public opinion is Dame J is suffering from artistic block but of course it's much more fascinating and complicated than that.

During Dame J's annual summer art classes, Gill Sharma shows up---but she is really Gillian Shaw an Olympic running hopeful who has had her career literally smashed in a car accident. Gill comes to Cairndonan to rent the estate's charming Robin Cottage to recuperate/hide (not to take art classes). Gill's only goal in life has been to be an exceptional runner and since the accident is in chronic pain and completely adrift.

There is Peta, an Aetherial who is teaching a mask-making class at Cairndonan. She is from Cloudcroft; the village that was the center of Warrington's previous novel "Elfland." She is a catalyst for a lot of the action in the story - lively sprite whose nosiness gets her involved in the lives around her, especially Dame J and the reclusive Gill. Because she is an Aetherial, she becomes the point person for explaining the eccentricities of the Otherworld to her human friends.

There is also Colin, a budding sculptor who is enamored of Dame J and Ned and Flora all of whom work at Cairndonan at various jobs to keep the place running. Ned is slavishly devoted to Dame J and obsessively does what he can to keep the Dubh Sidhe (the Aetherials) from interfering at the estate. He is married to Flora, the mother of the missing two-year-old.

And then there is Rufus Dionys Ephenaestus. A rogue Aetherial who has spent thousands of years indulging himself in perversity, monstrous acts and even genocide and is thoroughly entertained by humans and their world. He is compared to Loki in the novel by one character and the comparison is apt. A master of chaos and malicious mischievousness--he acts as if all his antics are charming. He is devastatingly handsome and is very fond of manipulation through sex.

Outrageous and compelling, he is the lively colorful heart of this story - even if he is a deviant monster. A lot of the Aetherials (and most of the humans) want to see him thrown into the Abyss for his heinous crimes.

Seem a bit confusing? Sometimes. There are lots of characters to keep track of and who is related to whom gets very interesting at the end. But as with "Elfland," it is the multiple layers of the author's characters, flawed and fascinating that keep the novel so involving. Warrington's Aetherials are vividly imperfect and are more complex than a lot of fantasy creations. "Midsummer

(Cont'd on page 17)



## In Our Book

(Cont'd from page 16)

Night" is worth the cover price (as is "Elfland.") And there is a third novel to come. ~ **Sue Martin**

### **The Cassini Code** by Dom Testa A Tor Teen Book, 283pp, \$8.99

*The Cassini Code* is the third volume of The Galahad series, with the newest, latest, and greatest installment, *The Dark Zone*, already prepped for a March, 2011 publication.

In the first book, *The Comet's Curse*, the entire population of Earth is devastated by Bhaktul's Disease, a comet-borne plague, and 251 teens, too young to be infected, are selected to represent the human race and sent off towards an out-system planet, in a spaceship run by an Artificial Intelligence computer system with an irreverent personality, named Roc. In *The Web of Titan*, the *Galahad* crew try to contact an outpost of scientists studying Saturn and its moons to find out if those adults were infected by the plague or not (reviewed respectively in *ConNotations* volume 19, issue 4, 2009, and 20.4, 2010).

In both previous books, the dangers were primarily external: sabotage by suicidal oppositionists in the first case, an alien mind-probe in the second. Now the troubles are internal. The *Galahad* crew has an elected council of five: Gap Lee, Engineering; Channy Oakland, Activities/Nutrition Director; Bon Hartsfield, Agriculture Department; Lita Marques, Health Director; and Triana Martell, Council Leader. All five were selected for their combination of technical and interpersonal skills; Bon may be dour, but all of them are highly ethical and absolutely dedicated to the mission. Their dedication is about to be tested. As they approach the hazardous pass through the debris-strewn Kuiper Belt, a charismatic leader named Merit Simms (great name, Dom! Love the irony!) organizes a Back to Earth movement. His timing couldn't be better. The ship is experiencing technical glitches in Environment Control, and their surveillance system simply cannot anticipate all the erratic movements of the asteroids and boulders of the Kuiper Belt, any one of which could collide fatally with *Galahad*. After two very near misses, more and more of the crew join Merit in demanding an about face. To make the situation much worse, Lita has to deal with her first serious medical emergency, and it does not go well. This seeming failure fuels Merit's rhetorical fires. Bon's punching Merit in the face doesn't help matters either.

Gap's girlfriend, Hannah, is the quiet heroine of this story, for her logical arguments against Merit's case, her mathematical analysis of the Kuiper Belt anomaly, and her intuitive leap to decipher the anomaly's significance. Other

story lines get carried further, such as Channy's efforts to arrange a boyfriend for "ice queen" Triana, and there are several surprise revelations, but those are for readers to discover. ~ **Chris Paige**

### **Riverworld:** **The Magic Labyrinth** by Philip Jose Farmer Tor, 448pp, \$17.99,

Riverworld is a mysterious planet on which all of humanity has been resurrected. The fourth novel in the classic saga finds Sam Clemens cruising the river in his great iron riverboat, Not for Hire, on a quest to reach the beginning of the river. Having spent 33 years on the river since the end of the previous novel, *The Fabulous Riverboat*, Clemens and his crew are finally near the end of their journey. Only one obstacle remains: the evil John Lackland who is upriver in the first riverboat that Sam constructed, the *Rex Grandissimus*, which John and his crew hijacked. Both Sam and John are determined to sink the other, though such a battle may not go as planned since both crews include agents, or possibly even members, of the Ethicals, the advanced beings who created Riverworld who are rumored to live in the tower at the head of the river.

In the mix is also the Church of the Second Chance, those who live along the banks of the river and whose leader, La Viro, may attempt to sink one or both of the riverboats in order to prevent the battle.

While these were reissued to coincide with the SyFy mini-series the books are much, much better than the TV adaptation. Highly recommended. ~ **Stephanie L Bannon**

### **Seed Seeker** by Pamela Sargent Tor Books, 287pp, \$25.99

*Seed Seeker* is a sequel to *Earthseed* (1983) and *Farseed* (2007), but it can be easily read on its own merits, for these are new characters having their own adventures. This is first rate juvenilia, well-written with strongly depicted protagonists, a driving plot, and tense action. There are also themes for careful readers to explore concerning societal pressures, the uses of technology, and how fears, even groundless ones, can precipitate our actions.

The planet called Home was colonized several generations earlier, and there are two distinct populations, those who live outside the domes in villages dotted along the riverbanks, and those who remain huddled in the original settlement. The dome dwellers have been raised to regard themselves as the truly human descendants of Earth and the out-dwellers as people who forsook their heritage and alienated themselves. And indeed, radiation and other factors have

caused genetic drift, as the outside populations have adapted to their un-Earthly environment. The villagers are the descendants of the first colonists who wanted to be self-reliant and interact directly with their new home world. These differences, ideological, social, economic, and genetic, are the basis of conflicts that have triggered violence in the past, and may do so again.

Periodically, villagers trek to the dome to trade produce for maintenance technology: recharges for their lightsticks, batteries, metals. These traders know that the dome dwellers look down on them, and some of them wonder why their counterparts trade with them at all; the original settlement has all the benefits of advanced technology, after all.

Bian is a shy and quiet girl, not adventuresome like her great-grandmother, Nuy, the oldest of all the villagers, the one who remembers a war she will not talk about, but who tells all the village children how their ancestors came to Home, brought by Ship, the intelligent starship sent from Earth to seed other planets with humanity. What Nuy hadn't told them was that Ship had promised to return one day to see how Earth's seed had flourished on this new world. Why stir hopes that may only be disappointed? Why foster dependency on an entity that may never materialize?

But then, a new light appears in the night sky....

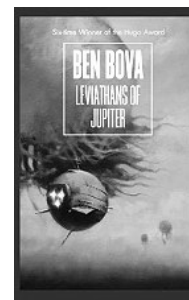
Nuy warns her community that if this light is Ship, it will be able to communicate with the colonists via the original equipment, but that equipment is in the original settlement. All information about the colonists will be filtered through the perceptions and prejudices of the dome-dwellers. What if they tell Ship that the riverside dwellers aren't really human? And what if Ship is programmed to purge Home of deviant stock? On the other hand, what if Ship has come to help, as it promised, and what if it sees their efforts at living on Home as the true fulfillment of their mission?

Bian volunteers to make the journey to find out if the light is indeed caused by the return of Ship, and what messages are being conveyed. Accompanying her goes Arnagh, only a few years older, but an experienced trader. Along the way, Bian and Arnagh are joined by other young adventurers, each in search of answers, or of opportunities. One of these is Enli, a musician born, whose parents think he is wasting his time making melodies instead of farming and starting a family with a nice local girl. Lusa, the girl Enli is refusing to marry, follows him; her pain and jealousy drive her to become an inadvertent member of the group.

The real surprises are taking place under the shelter of the dome.

For starters, the radio isn't

(Cont'd on page 18)



## Upcoming Signings and Events at The Poisoned Pen

**Feb 13 – Ben Bova signs *Leviathans of Jupiter* 2 pm**

**Feb 23 – Nancy Atherton signs  
*Aunt Dimity and the Family Tree* 7 pm**

**Feb 26 – Lisa McMann signs *Cryer's Cross* – 3 pm**

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## In Our Book

(Cont'd from page 17 )

working very well. Any messages Ship may be sending aren't coming through after the initial contact. Other things are going wrong too, but it would be telling too much to divulge details. Safrah, Awan, Jina, and Mikhail are the counterparts to the four travelers en route; all eight contend with fears and hopes and dangers triggered by Ship's appearance. These characters struggle to reach a place where communication is possible and redemption may be an option.

In the very last few pages, Ship, the entity which triggered all these confrontations, begins to emerge as a character in and of itself. An AI that has learned to evaluate its original program and expanded beyond it, Ship also has the silicon equivalent of a limbic system, evincing feelings, longings of its own. Sargent seems serious about taking this series further, and I predict that Ship will be promoted from *deus ex machina* to major character in the next installment.

Sargent has been compared to Heinlein on a number of occasions for the quality of her young adult fiction. I venture to say that in several ways she is a better writer, for Heinlein loved to dazzle readers with how clever and provocative he was, while Sargent seems to invite readers to self-discovery. I love being dazzled, but sometimes it is pleasant to be honored. ~ **Chris Paige**

### **Unusual Suspects** edited by Dana Stabenow Ace, 320pp, \$7.99

*Unusual Suspects* brings us a dozen stories of paranormal investigation.

My favorite is Charlaine Harris' Sookie Stackhouse tale, *Lucky*, that tells how one insurance agent's good luck makes him a target. Other notable entries include *Bogiemán* by Carole Nelson Douglas in which a "resurrected" Humphrey Bogart is murdered, as well as Sharon Shinn's *The House of Seven Spirits* which deals with a divorcee with a houseful of ghostly roommates and John Straley's *Weight of the World* which finds Santa Claus investigating the murder of an elf.

A delightful collection with something to please everyone. ~ **Stephanie L Bannon**

### **Secret of the Dragon's Claw** by Derek Hart iUniverse, 231pp, \$16.95

From the back cover: "*Secret of the Dragon's Claw* continues the adventures of Gavin Kane, Emily Scott, and Bunty Digby, fourteen-year-old teens who struggle with their daily lives in England during the winter of 1941 and into the spring of 1942. War has forced everyone to settle into an uncomfortable daily pattern, while England is still under siege, as U-boats relentlessly attack

vital convoys. Halfway across the world, British, American, and Allied forces are now also fighting the Japanese Empire. Twice before, the teens have helped battle the forces of darkness, but once again face strange and wicked creatures sent from deep within Nazi Germany.

*Secret of the Dragon's Claw* further develops the friendship and alliance between this teenage trio and the eccentric Sir Thaddeus Osbert. The dragon has become accustomed to battling a myriad of dangerous foes over the ages, but protecting Gavin, Emily, and Bunty has become a full-time endeavor. Thaddeus must deal with his nagging sweet tooth, which this time gets him into several compromising situations. However, the dragon's addiction to sugar has unforeseen benefits too. The children band together with their dragon friend, of course, but they also discover magical powers are commonplace throughout the United Kingdom. Will a hasty alliance with a senile old wizard be enough to prevent something so horrible, so unimaginable, that it threatens to plunge the entire world into permanent darkness?"

This is the third book in the series. As with the previous books, *Secret of the Dragon's Breath* and *Secret of the Dragon's Eye*, this was a book destined for read aloud time with my nephews. As with the first two books the boys,

and I, were drawn deeply into the story and were reluctant to stop after each day's chapters. As an added attraction these stories have peaked the boy's interest in history and they have both spent time learning more about WWII on their own.

If you are an adult fan of history, dragons or fantasy you will enjoy these books and they are certainly going to be a hit with young readers as well. Parents will find this series a wonderful series for the young readers in their families. Highly recommended. ~ **Stephanie L Bannon**

### **The Exile** by Diana Gabaldon, Hoang Nguyen (Illustrator) Random, 22pp, \$25.00

Diana Gabaldon's *Outlander* saga has been an award-winning series read by millions of loyal fans. Now, readers get a fresh look at the events of the original *Outlander* as this illustrated book tells Jamie Fraser's side of the story.

While Hoang Nguyen's artwork is beautiful the story itself suffers from the graphic novel treatment which is hardly surprising when one tries to turn an 800plus page book into a 224 page graphic novel.

While the serious *Outlander* fan will want this to complete their collection the casual fan or those new to the series can probably skip this. ~ **Stephanie L Bannon**

### **The Big Stink** by David Lubar Tor, 176pp, \$5.99

This fourth outing in the Nathan Abercrombie, Accidental Zombie series find our intrepid hero and his fifth grade classmates forced to share classroom space with the first graders because of a mold problem. Things get worse when the eighth graders are forced to join them as well, including the bully Ridley, big brother of fifth grade bully Rodney. As if that wasn't bad enough, Nathan seems to have an odor problem, he stinks and the odor is getting worse.

This is another wonderful addition to the series sure to please fans both young with the funny plans the kids come up with to deal with the bully and stop Nathan from stinking. Recommended ~ **Stephanie L Bannon**

### **House of the Star** by Caitlin Brennan Starscape, 288pp, \$17.99

From the cover: "Elen is a princess of the kingdom of Ymbria. Her greatest wish is to become a rider of worldrunners: the magical horses that are the only safe way to

travel the roads through the worlds of Faerie. Now Elen has the chance to fulfill her dream at last, but the price is much too high.

To become a worldrider, Elen must journey to the House of the Star on Earth, the Arizona ranch where the worldrunners live and breed. There, she must try to forge a peace with her people's worst enemy—a traitor from the world of Caledon—and end the war that has been tearing their worlds apart for centuries. If Elen doesn't succeed, the Master of the House of the Star will close both Ymbria and Caledon off from the worldroads forever. Can the wisdom of a worldrunner named Blanca help Elen in her quest to save her world?

Caitlin Brennan is an Arizona author and this is her first novel for young readers. The story is sometimes complex but always riveting and will appeal to fans of fantasy and, of course, to all those young (and not so young) girls who dream of horses. Both my niece (16 years old) and I enjoyed it. Recommended ~ **Stephanie L Bannon**

### **Star Wars Red Harvest** by Joe Schreiber Del Rey, 244pp, \$27.00

Two Jedis are mixed up in a planet where a Sith Academy trains

(Cont'd on page 19 )

[www.leprecon.org/lep37](http://www.leprecon.org/lep37)

## LepreCon 37

**May 6-8, 2011 Tempe Mission Palms, Tempe, AZ**

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**Artist Guest of Honor: John Picacio**

**Author Guests of Honor: Elizabeth Bear and Sarah Monette**

**Music Guest: Seanan McGuire**

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Call 800-547-8705 or 480-894-1400

### **LepreCon 37 Contact Information**

**Write: LepreCon 37, PO Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285**

**Phone: (480) 945-6890**

**Email: [lep37@leprecon.org](mailto:lep37@leprecon.org)**



**In Our Book** (Cont'd from page 18 )  
their new Sith students. When things could not get worse, Darth Scagrous brings in an ancient experiment gone wrong- zombies...

This is the same author who wrote *Star Wars Death Troopers*.

Different. Surprises. Dark but interesting. Recommended to Star Wars horror readers. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**The Lost Journal of Indiana Jones**  
by Henry Jones  
Lucas Books, 160pp, \$25.00

This supposed to be a record of the four movies and TV series in the Indiana Jones saga.

Amusing. Interesting in the small and incomplete tome of Dr. Henry Jones, Jr.'s adventures. Recommended to fans of Indiana Jones. . ~ Jeffrey Lu

**The Everything Guide To Edgar Allan Poe**  
by Shelley C. Bloomfield, Ph.D.  
Adams Media, \$14.95, 277pp

This is an Edgar Allan Poe biography. Not only one gets a sense of his genius but also the dark, brooding part of being a professional writer and being his own man. Not only is he the father of a detective story but also had a very interesting life.

Liked it. Big fan of Poe. Was surprised at a few things I thought I knew about him. Nevermore! Recommended to fans and/or beginners to Poe. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Stupid American History**  
by Leland Gregory  
Andrews McMeel Publishing,  
\$9.99, 266pp

In these pages are stuff that American History has generally overlooked. These are the nuggets that are strange but true. For example, what was the first motto that appear on the U.S. coins? "Mind Your Business." More interesting tidbits.

Fascinating. Recommended to trivial fans and/or obscure information readers. ~ Jeffrey Lu

**Naamah's Curse**  
by Jacqueline Carey  
\$26.99, Grand Central Publishing,  
567pp

Ms. Carey has begun a new series with "Naamah's Kiss" and this is its sequel. This story introduces Moirin, whose mother is an Alban and worships the bear-goddess Maghuin Dhonn and whose father is a D'Angeline priest of Naamah. Moirin grows up in the wilderness with a reclusive mother and enjoys the small gift of magic bequeathed to her from the bear-goddess which allows her invisibility and a small gift of growing plants from one of her father's gods. She doesn't realize she's also favored by her father's goddess, Naamah, until she's much older. Naamah is the goddess of desire. And it seems to be an alliance between the Maghuin Dhonn and Naamah that drive Moirin's destiny.

In "Naamah's Kiss," Moirin leaves

Alba at the behest of the Maghuin Dhonn herself. It is clear that her destiny will take her far away from everyone she knows. She travels to Terra D'Ange to find her father. She also finds a teacher who hones her skills, something she'll need to survive. But those same skills attract the attention of an ambitious healer, who takes advantage of Moirin while breaking her heart. In defeating his ambition of raising fallen angels or demons, she is sheltered and loved by the Queen, a mercurial and passionate young beauty who eventually steals Moirin's heart. But her goddesses don't allow Moirin much rest before they are pushing her to leave Terra D'Ange for the distant country of Ch'in where she has to rescue a princess from her possession by a dragon. She leaves in the company of her teacher and his apprentice, Bao. Later, as Bao lies dead, the teacher combines his knowledge and Moirin's magic to resurrect him. Unfortunately, Bao and Moirin find his rebirth had a terrible cost. The beloved teacher is dead and now the two share Moirin's *diadh-anam*, the soul-spark of Maghuin Dhonn. This yokes them together, unwillingly. Bao leaves to come to terms with this new destiny and to discover if he feels true love for Moirin or if it's just the magic of the *diadh-anam* that drives his desire.

In "Naamah's Curse," Moirin waits patiently for Bao to return and when he does not, she cannot ignore the insistent pull of their linked *diadh-anam* and sets out over the steppes of Tatar country to find him. Bao has gone to find his own father, a Tatar prince who raped his mother. When Moirin finally finds him, it is too late – the Great Khan has gifted Bao with his daughter as wife. Bao finally declares his love for Moirin and the Great Khan sells Moirin to some travelers to protect his daughter and his honor. Moirin ends up in the hands of a fanatic priest of Yeshua. This priest is on a holy – or unholy – crusade to bring the Yeshuite faith to the licentious D'Angelines. Because of her dual heritage, he sees Moirin as a perfect candidate for conversion. If he can convert her to his faith, he'll be able to use her as rallying point in a holy jihad. He binds her with magic chains that cut her off from her connection with Bao and from her gods. He uses her cruelly and finally, with some help, she escapes. She immediately plans to find Bao, who is obviously in trouble as Moirin can tell once their linked *diadh-anam* is connected again. The rest of the story is her journey to the other end of the continent to find Bao. Like Phedre in Carey's earlier books, Moirin is the agent of the gods and in her path are wrongs to be righted. She is an unintentional heroine.

As with Carey's other books, I am in love. She is the mistress of romantic fantasy. The books are superbly plotted, the characterizations are deep and rich, the storytelling is incomparable. I will own that I started "Naamah's Kiss" with some trepidation. The heroine and the story were so much gentler than her previous books that I felt a bit... disappointed. The sex and the passion in her earlier books were... intense. But, fortunately, the disappointment didn't last. In her own way, Moirin is as passionate and brave as Phedre albeit with gentler intentions and skills. I'm looking forward to the third book where Moirin will, undoubtedly, return to Terra D'Ange to finish what she started with the ambitious, and probably possessed, healer. ~ Catherine Book

## 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 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday 10am at El Oso Park. Web: <http://www.kingdomofumbria.com/events.html> All are welcome. Free.

**AERIAL MIRAGE JUGGLERS.** Meets Wednesday, 7:30-10 PM. Encanto Park, 14th Avenue, south of Encanto. Elliot Goldstein, 602-266-4391, e-mail [jugglearts@aol.com](mailto:jugglearts@aol.com), 5535 N. Eleventh Street, Phoenix, AZ 85014; or Timmie Ann Schramm, 602-585-7623, 2326 E. Electra Lane, Phoenix, AZ 85024.

**The ARIZONA BROWNCOATS** are a social group and state non-profit devoted to continuing the spirit of Joss Whedon's inspired series Firefly through charity events, a presence at local conventions, and social events. We are all over Arizona with monthly shindigs in Phoenix and Tucson. In September, both cities will be hosting screenings of Serenity to benefit Equality Now. For more details, visit our website at <http://azbrowncoats.org> and follow our twitter @azbrowncoats

**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. Web: [www.lanparty.com/all/](http://www.lanparty.com/all/)

**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/>

**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

**AZ MIB** The Men in Black is the official global organization of field operatives for Steve Jackson Games. The Arizona Cell attends local and regional 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@gmail.com](mailto:MIB.6361@gmail.com) . We are also recruiting new MIBs in some areas of Arizona. If you're interested, contact us. You can also find additional information about us on our Facebook group, Arizona Men in Black.

**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> Gatherings are held at the Irish Cultural Center on the 2nd Saturday of every month. The center is located at 1106 North Central Avenue, Phoenix, AZ, 85004, phone number 602-258-0109, across from the Burton Barr Library. The Board meeting will be at 12:00 Noon with the General meeting starting at 12:30 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 Web: <http://www.ecs-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

( Cont'd on page 20)



Club Listings (Cont'd from page 19)

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)

**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)

**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.

**THE SHIELD** The Shield 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.nyrond.org](http://www.nyrond.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 is part of the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA), a not-for-profit educational organization that studies western European history by recreating the “best” pastimes and crafts of the Middle Ages. The Atenveldt branch of the SCA encompasses all of Arizona and small parts of Utah and California. 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 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>

**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)

**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. 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 : Arthur Fesler-Butts, Jr [feslerbutts22@msn.com](mailto:feslerbutts22@msn.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: [info@westernsfa.org](mailto:info@westernsfa.org) Webpage: [www.westernsfa.org](http://www.westernsfa.org)

CASFS Business Report

**Elections --** Re-elected to procedural offices were President - Mark Boniece, Vice President Gary Swaty. Re-elected to the Board were Gary Swaty, Susan Uttke and Mark Boniece. The Board now includes Chairman: Bob LaPierre, Vice Chair: Tina “Nyki” Robertson, Secretary: Mark Boniece, Corporate Treasurer:Stephanie L Bannon, Board Member: Kevin McAlanon, Board Member: Gary Swaty, Board Member: Susan Uttke. Elected as Chair and Banker of CopperCon 32 were Bob LaPierre and Stephanie Bannon.

**CopperCon 31** Chairman Nyki Robertson. Work continues. The Staff has walked through our Hotel, The Hilton Garden in in Avondale, and are planning use of space. The Committee is fully formed. The guests are lined up. See CopperCon.org for details.

**ConNotations** Work on planning for the transition to being a web based publication continues. During our transitional year 2011 we will gradually beef up web content between print issues to get our readers used to accessing us via the web. --Gary Swaty

Convention Listings

**LepreCon 37** (May 6-8, 2011) Tempe Mission Palms, 60 E. 5th St, **Tempe, AZ** Ph: 480-894-1400 , Room Rates \$109 S/D/T/Q + tax. [www.missionpalms.com](http://www.missionpalms.com) Artist GoH John Picacio, Author GoHs: Elizabeth Bear & Sarah Monette, plus > Shadow Unit mini-con with Emma Bull, Will Shetterly & more. Memberships rates:\$25 until August 31, 2010, \$30 Sept 1 thru Oct 31, 2010 Web site at [www.leprecon.org/lep37](http://www.leprecon.org/lep37) or email [lep37@leprecon.org](mailto:lep37@leprecon.org) for more information

CopperCon 31 (September 2-5, 2011) Hilton Garden Inn, 11460 West Hilton Way, Avondale AZ Guests: Carrie Vaughn Author Guest of Honor; Janni Lee simner, Local Author Guest and Special Guest Adam Niswander. Membership \$35 thru April 30, 2011. For more info email [info@coppercon.org](mailto:info@coppercon.org) or visit the web site at [www.copeprecon.org](http://www.copeprecon.org)

Trivia Answers

10. Two: Burt Ward and Chris O'Donnell
9. Five
8. Eleven
7. Mercury
6. Final Mission
5. 1934
4. Astinov
3. Isaac Asimov
2. Three: Charon, Nix and Hydra
1. Finegan
- Answers: