

ConNotations

Volume 13, Issue 1
February/March
2003

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

SF Tube Talk TV News & Previews By Lee Whiteside

It's winter and time for February Sweeps which means lots and lots of new episodes from your favorite shows (or the ones that made it that far) including a Super guest star. We've also got the final episodes of *Farscape* coming up in March along with the debut of *Children of Dune*, *Tremors* and *Scare Tactics* on SciFi.

Over in the Trek Universe, *Enterprise* is moving along at a fair pace, but doesn't seem to be drawing any many additional viewers, with the last several new episodes reaching low points in the ratings for the

series. Coming up in February will be a batch of new episodes. Starting off the month will be "*Stigma*", where the

SciFi Wire "It's one thing to have a story where you see a character who's sick and dealing with it, and it's another to see



The ENTERPRISE shuttlecraft lands on a "Strange New World". © 2001 UPN

Enterprise visits a planet where an Interspecies Medical Exchange conference is taking place, Dr. Phlox tries to obtain research on a terminal disease from the Vulcan contingency there. But he must not reveal that T'Pol has contracted this disease, because that knowledge would forever stigmatize her among her people. According to interviews with **Jolene Blalock** who told

how a character contracts the disease. And we do show how. She contracts the disease through a mind-meld, and there's a lot of shame concerning the act." This episode is part of an AIDS awareness campaign started by media conglomerate Viacom, the parent company of Paramount Pictures and *Enterprise* network UPN. Viacom has joined forces with the Kaiser Foundation to educate the
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April 5, 2003

Featuring David Brin & other
authors See the Back Page for
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ConNotations
Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society
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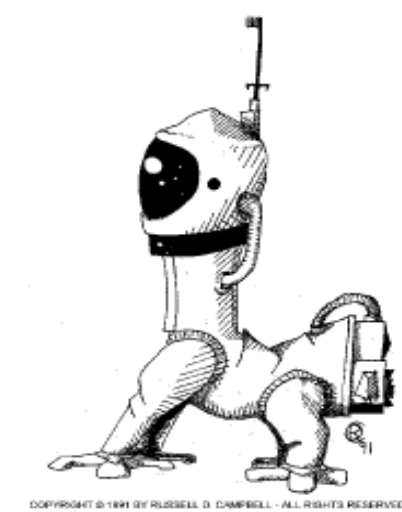
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FYI

INFORMATION LINE: For up to date information on each month's CASFS and fan sponsored sci-fi related events call (602)973-2341 and select option 2 for a pre-recorded message. There is also a weekly email update. If you wish to receive the email update send your email address to Stephanie at leigh@casfs.org

Supernal Readers,
In January the CASFS Meetings move back the regular slot, the last Friday in the Month. The January meeting will be on Friday the 31st. The last Friday is the meeting slot except in October, November and December when it is the second Friday. Occasionally we move a meeting out of necessity. If this happens, all who attend the previous meeting will be told and those who don't will be notified by Email or snail mail if they have been good enough to keep their information up to date. If their information is not up to date they are technically inactive members per the by-laws.
The February Meeting has in fact been moved to February 21st, the third Friday to keep our meeting from being overwhelmed as it was last year by the February basketball tournament participants.
In November and December we nominated for the President, Vice President, and three board seats. Mark Boniece was Elected President. Lee Whiteside become our Acclaimed Vice President as he was the only candidate. There were three nominees for the three board seats, Jeff George, J.B. Talbot and Ray Gish. They were also elected by acclamation. Welcome to J.B. He has earned this office through his contributions to HexaCon and his stellar work in securing ads for ConNotations.
The books on HexaCon 12 are not yet closed. Final results are expected at the January meeting. The Convention is going to pass well over the minimum required back to CASFS Main. Work on HexaCon 13 is proceeding well. They have not yet decided about a guest. CopperCon 23 is developing nicely. Author Guest of Honor is Connie Willis. Artist Guest of Honor is David Mattingly. Music Guest of Honor is Larry Warner. It should be a great Con. Work on CopperCon 24 and HexaCon 14 are in the formative stages.
Lee Whiteside has got CASFS a \$1500 Grant from the Book Festival so we can sponsor an author to come to the Book Festival. We are bringing in David Brinn. We are also having Emily Devenport, Alan Dean Foster and Adam Niswander. Our Booth at the Festival is alongside the LepreCon Booth. Much of the clout we have obtained at the Festival is because of this juxtaposition. The LepreCon Art Display is very popular. The combined effort of both organizations at the Festival has been the key.
Until next time
The Busy Scribe

What is CASFS?

What is really behind putting on a convention? What the funds raised by a convention used for? Why not attend a meeting and find out? We're the sponsor of ConNotations, CopperCons, HexaCons, SmerfCons and other conventions. We are a charitable, non-profit organization that exists to further science fiction, fantasy and science fields in Arizona. CASFS currently meets at the JB's Restaurant at 2560 W Indian School Rd in Phoenix (NW corner of I-17 and Indian School). 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 Call: Stephanie L. Bannon (602)973-2341 Webpage: www.casfs.org email: casfs@casfs.org

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About ConNotations: ConNotations is the fan published newszine of the Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society (CASFS) an IRS-recognized 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Circulation is estimated at 4,000 readers for this issue, primarily CASFS members and attendees of recent AZ sf/f conventions.
Subscriptions: The newszine is currently sent free of charge to anyone who has attended a CASFS or LepreCon sponsored convention in the last two years and to all CASFS members. Subscriptions are available. Cost for a six issue subscription is: USA: \$12/bulk.
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Publication: Publications dates are February, April, June, August, October & December. Publication date of this issue is 01/29/2003; mailing date is 02/03/2003
Advertising: ConNotations reaches approx. 4,000 science fiction, fantasy, gaming and horror fans throughout the Phoenix metro area, the Southwest and nationwide. Our ad rates are:Back cover/ \$150, \$100/full page; \$70/two-thirds page; \$50/half page; \$35/one-third page; \$25/ one-fourth page; \$18/one-eighth page. More information can be obtained by contacting Stephanie L. Bannon, PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 Phone or FAX; (602)973-2341; Email: editor@casfs.org
Submission Info: Writers and artists are encouraged to submit work for publication. While we cannot pay you for your efforts your work will be seen by over 4,000 fans across the Southwest and the country. You will retain the copyright to your work for future publication. To submit your work or for more information please write to: ConNotations; PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 or contact us via Email at Editors@casfs.org
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ConNotations
ISSN: 1082-7765
PUBLISHED: Six times a year
BY: Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society, PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082
ISSUE NUMBER: Volume 13 Issue 1
SUBSCRIPTION: \$12 for 6 ISSUES

SF Tube Talk (cont'd from page1)

public about HIV and AIDS, and Enterprise will be participating with this episode.

In “*Cease Fire*”, A military conflict erupts between the Vulcans and Andorians over a small terra formed planet that both sides make claim to. In the midst of the skirmish, the Vulcans announce they wish to discuss terms for a cease-fire, but Imperial Guard officer Shran (**Jeffrey Combs**) believes the only one he can trust to mediate such a negotiation is Jonathan Archer, so the captain and his ship are called into the fray. The episode also features **Suzie Plakson** as a guest star, playing the Andorian Tarah. **Plakson** has appeared on TNG as Dr. Selar and Worf’s lost love K’Ehleyr and on Voyager as a female Q. In “*Crash Landing*”, the Enterprise crew is shocked to find a small craft adrift in remote area of space that contains what appears to be a human corpse. Trip Tucker and Malcolm Reed discover the craft holds some strange secrets, and the mystery deepens when the Suliban arrive making claim to the salvage. On top of that, Captain Archer is confronted by the Tholians, who also aggressively try to procure the enigmatic vessel. In *Canamar*, upon leaving the Enolian home world in a shuttlepod, Archer and Tucker are mistakenly arrested and placed on a prisoner transport vessel bound for the penal colony Canamar. Before the error can be rectified, one of the alien inmates engineers a takeover of the transport, leading Archer to engage in a dangerous gambit. Likely airing in March will be “*The Crossing*”, which reportedly will feature the Enterprise crew being possessed by wispy alien entities and “*Judgement*” where Archer is called to testify at a Klingon inquest after rescuing a group of Arin’sen, who are trying to escape from the Klingons’ control. Rumored to feature a Klingon with the name of Duras.

In other *Trek* news, UPN entertainment president **Dawn Ostroff** said at the television critics winter press tour that **Enterprise** will definitely be returning for a third season next year, despite lower ratings this season. In DVD news, 2003 will see the release of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* on DVD, following the every other month pattern that Paramount did with *Star Trek: The Next Generation* in 2002. Season One hits the stores on February 25th.

Elsewhere on UPN sees some nods to history on a couple of later February *Twilight Zone* episodes. **Bill Mumy** will revisit his character of Anthony Fremont from the classic episode “*It’s a Good Life*”. He’ll play a middle-aged Anthony, who’s still wishing people into the cornfield. **Cloris Leachman** will also return as his mother and **Mumy’s** real life daughter, **Liliana**, will play Fremont’s daughter, who also has paranormal abilities. The new episode is titled “*It’s Still a Good Life*”. Also coming up is a new take on the original TZ episode “*The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street*” with

it being updated to reflect today’s fear of terrorism. According to producer **Ira Steven Behr** “The big change in the show is ... that what was cutting-edge at the time was to suspect each other. ... Is your neighbor a communist? And in this one, ... instead of the whole neighborhood falling apart, it’s everyone banding together to blame this one family. So it’s kind of different. ... This is a show about the scapegoat. And I think that’s what we do nowadays. We have a lot of problems that can’t be solved, and we look for convenient scapegoats.” Early in the month will see the following episodes: “*Another Life*” To escape the reality of his situation, an innocent man fantasizes about life as a successful hip-hop artist, while being brutally interrogated by the police. “*Rewind*”: A compulsive gambler thinks he can finally “beat the house” when he finds a tape recorder that rewinds time in 5 minute increments. However, at a high stakes game, he finds out that the casino owner has a better tape recorder. “*Into the Light*” sees a schoolteacher that can tell who is about to die by the light emanating from their faces. She saves the school from a massacre, giving her own life to save her students. In “*Tagged*”, a gang member confesses to murder after his graffiti artist victim’s mural transforms into a version of the crime scene.

At the critics press tour, UPN indicated that it is unlikely that *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* will return next season, although other reports are that **Joss Whedon** is in discussions with UPN for a sequel or spinoff series of some sort. The show kicks into gear in February as they try to find a way to fight The First. In “*The Killer in Me*”, when Willow starts to give in to romantic feelings for Kennedy, her guilty conscience causes her to turn into Warren, Tara’s killer. Also, the gang gets clues that lead them to believe Giles may be The First, and Buffy helps Spike with what seems to be his malfunctioning chip, ultimately leaving Buffy with a shocking choice. In “*First Date*”, Buffy goes on a date with Principal Wood, while Xander goes on date with an evil woman. Making a guest appearance will be musical star **Ashanti**. In “*Get it Done*”, Buffy time-travels to meet the original slayer.

Things are really heating up on *Angel* in it’s new Wednesday time slot, where Angelus has been brought back to take on The Beast, but he’s escaped and wreaking lots of havoc of his own. In order to try to take down Angelus (and bring back Angel), Faith (**Eliza Dushku**) is released from jail just in time to help capture, but not kill, Angelus. According to **Alexis Denisof**, “enlisting Faith’s help is pulling a step back from just going out and killing Angelus, so it’s really kind of a last-ditch attempt. It’s that, or try to destroy him, because he’s wreaking such havoc on L.A. and the world at large. So there are some kick-ass scenes with Faith. I mean, she’s an intense character. Obviously, she has a history with Angel, Angelus and Wesley, as you know. And ...

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24 Frames

Movie News By Lee Whiteside

Holiday Hits and Misses

The big winner over this year’s holiday season was once again *The Lord of the Rings*, with the second installment, *The Two Towers*, doing better than last year’s *Fellowship of the Ring* by roughly 25%. The second Harry Potter movie, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, did decent box office as well, but was about 25% lower than last year’s *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*. *The Two Towers* is likely to hit \$350 million for it’s U.S. Box Office while *The Chamber of Secrets* will likely end up with around \$275 million U.S. Neither is a shabby take, but the *Lord of the Rings* is definitely turning into a very good investment for New Line. The third *Lord of the Rings* movie, *The Return of the King*, is scheduled for the same time next year while the third Harry Potter movie, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, won’t hit the screens until June of 2004. They’ve got to slow down with the Harry Potter movies somewhat otherwise they will catch up to the books pretty quickly. The only other genre related movie over the holiday season that did well was the 20th official James Bond movie, *Die Another Day*, looking to end up around \$175 million domestic box office, which is the highest grossing James Bond movie in history. That’s a good thing since the budget was estimated at around \$140 million. But with worldwide receipts and video rights, it will still end up well on the plus side.

At the other end of the spectrum were two disappointments with *Star Trek: Nemesis* and *Disney’s Treasure Planet*. The tenth *Star Trek* film got lots of publicity and promotion, and there just wasn’t the clamor to see it by anyone other than the die hard fans. The opening weekend was a respectable \$17 million, but with *The Two Towers* opening the next weekend, it quickly went down at the box office and will likely end up with only \$45 million in the U.S. With this lackluster performance, the future of *Star Trek* at the movies is very much up in the air. Disney’s big animated movie, *Treasure Planet*, their space age update of the classic *Treasure Island*, will end up with close to \$40 million US box office. This is a big disappointment, especially considering its estimated \$140 million cost. It is a decent movie, but just didn’t have the wide appeal that the more successful Disney movies have had.

Production News and Notes

Star Wars - Nine Movies After All?

In a recent interview with *FOX News’ Roger Friedman*, **George Lucas** let slip that he may after all do the later trilogy of *Star Wars* movies after having denied it for the last several years. **Friedman** reported that **Lucas** has been hanging out with **Peter Jackson** and commented that “essentially, Peter is making three three-



Lee Whiteside

hour movies out of one book, and I’m making nine two-hour movies from one book.” So, either **Lucas** is planning on re-editing the first six movies into nine or he’s actually going to go back to *Star Wars* sometime next decade. Or **Friedman** just didn’t quote him right, which is also a strong possibility. In any case, **Lucas** says that after he finishes episode three, which starts filming next year, he plans to make some personal, non-commercial movies along the lines of *THX-1138*.

Superman Redux - Ratner Out, Bay In as Director? The latest rumors on Ain’t It Cool News is that director **Brett Ratner** may be exiting the *Superman* movie and the **Michael Bay** may step in. According to **Harry Knowles**, **Bay** has always been Warner Bros. first choice for director but was not available. With the movie taking longer to get off the ground, supposedly with a highly revised new draft from **J. J. Abrams**, they may be able to fit it into **Bay’s** schedule after all.

Disney Rebounds with Pixar - On the Disney front, May’s co-production from Pixar looks to be another winner. Titled *Finding Nemo*, it is about a clownfish named Nemo who is captured in a coral reef by a scuba diver and ends up in a Dentist’s aquarium with a looney assortment of other fish. His dad, Marlin, sets out to rescue him with some other cohorts. From initial reports, this looks to be better than *Monsters, Inc.* and could be up to par with the *Toy Story* movies. This should do much better than *Treasure Planet*.

Matrix 2003 Double Shot - May will see the second Matrix movie, *Matrix: Reloaded* with the third movie, *Matrix: Revolutions*, hitting the theatres in November. In a recent MTV’s Movie House interview, **Keanu Reeves** said that one fight scene will feature his character, Neo, fighting multiple instances of Agent Smith and a very complex fight scene that took 27 shooting days to complete. Returning are **Keanu Reeves** as Neo, **Laurence Fishburne** as Morpheus, **Carrie-Anne Moss** as Trinity and **Hugo Weaving** as Agent Smith. New characters include The Twins, played by **Adrian Rayment** (Twin One) and **Neil Rayment** (Twin Two); **Jada Pinkett-Smith** as Niobi; **Nona Gaye** as Zee; **Monica Bellucci** as Persephone and **Gina Torres**

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24 Frames (cont'd from page 3)

as Cass. **Reloaded** will end with a major cliffhanger. According to a recent Newsweek preview, the action in **Reloaded** takes place within the Matrix while the events in the third movie will take place mostly in the real world and will be an all-out war between the humans and the machines.

X2 - The second **X-Men** movie is coming along with the latest trailer having been released over the holidays. We get a look at **Alan Cumming** as Nightcrawler, **Kelly Hu** as Yuriko, an attack on Xavier's School and the X-Men base, and Wolverine looking into his origins.

The Hulk - We've gotten a bit of a look at what the Hulk will look like in the second summer Marvel movie. Reports are that the movie will be more psychological and less action than other recent comic adaptations. Actors who have worked on the film such as **Josh Lucas** (Major Talbot) have heaped praise on director **Ang Lee**, calling it "the greatest experience I've ever had making a movie, period. BECAUSE of **Ang Lee**. Nothing comes close. I hope to God I have another experience like that in my career," said Lucas.

Gearing up for production is **Hellboy**, based on the **Mike Mignola** series of comic books. Starring as Hellboy, a 50

year old demon, will be **Ron Perlman** with **Selma Blair** as Liz Sherman aka Firestarter, a pyrokinetic and love interest for Hellboy. Writing and directing is **Guillermo del Toro** (**Mimic**), who looks to be keeping the movie close to the storyline and feel of the comic. In recent appearances, creator Mignola has been very enthusiastic about the production and will be visiting some of the sets during filming.

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban will see a new director for the film series, **Alfonso Cuaron** (**The Little Princess**). "I don't know if 'dark' is the word for it, because there's a great deal of humor [in the third tale]," Cuaron told the Hollywood Reporter. "I would say that rather than going into darker territory, it goes into more emotional territory. Because the characters are a little bit more grown up, the experience is completely different." Cuaron added, "In the first two books, the fear was outside, like a boogeyman. But here, the fear comes from inside. When you're 13, you stop believing in the boogeyman and start dealing with the monsters inside."

In the summer release of **Pirates of the Caribbean**, based on the Disney theme park ride, producer **Jerry Bruckheimer** says that there is a strong supernatural element to the movie. The original script from Disney didn't impress him much but it was fleshed out by screenwriters **Ted Elliott** and **Terry**

Rossio (**Shrek**, **Zorro**) and director **Gore Verbinski** (**Mouse Hunt**, **The Ring**)

"What happens is they stole this cursed treasure, and unless they put the treasure back, they never die, they can't enjoy life, they can't enjoy food or sex,"

Bruckheimer told SciFi Wire. "All they want to do is plunder and get more and more gold, and in the moonlight they turn into skeletons. **Verbinski** is very imaginative. He's working with ILM, and I've never seen skeletons like this, because they have actual features and pieces of flesh, costumes still on. So it's just fascinating."

Upcoming Movie Previews for February & March

Daredevil - The first of the three movies based on a Marvel comic book hits theatres on Valentine's day. **Ben Affleck** is Matt Murdock, who's boxer father was killed by petty criminals when he refused to take a dive. When a childhood accident robs Murdock of his sight, his other senses develop including a mental radar of sorts. He becomes a successful lawyer by day and a vigilante crime fighter known as Daredevil by night. Also starring is **Jennifer Garner** as Elektra, an assassin-for hire, **Colin Farrell** plays thug Bullseye and **Michael Clark Duncan** plays mob boss Kingpin. Note that this seems to be the least anticipated of the three Marvel Comics

movies coming out this year (**The Hulk** and **X-Men 2** being the others).

The Jungle Book II - The latest Disney sequel to a classic movie, this one going to theatres before it makes it to home video. It picks up where the first movie left off and features **John Goodman** as Baloo, **Haley Joel Osmont** as Mowgli, and **Tony Jay** as Shere Khan.

Agent Cody Banks - **Frankie Muniz** of **Malcolm in the Middle** stars as teenager Cody Banks, who just happens to be part of a secret teen CIA program. When he's assigned to a prep school where he's to befriend Natalie Conner (**Hillary Duff**) in order to get access to her father, he discovers that Mr. Conner is unknowingly developing nanobots for the evil organization ERIS. He's got to use everything he's learned to stop ERIS from using the nanobots for their evil plans.

Johnny English - On the other edge of the spy movie spectrum is **Johnny English**, starring **Rowan Atkinson** (**The Black Adder**, **Mr. Bean**) as a bumbling secret agent originally created for a series of UK credit card commercials. He's out to save the British Crown Jewels from a scheming French business magnate (**John Malkovich**). It looks to be a fun spy spoof.

The Core - When the Earth's core stops rotating, it's up to a group of "terranauts" piloting an experimental craft to break through the Earth's mantle

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SF Author of *Doomsday Book*, *Passage*, *To Say Nothing of the Dog* and *Bellwether*.
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Artist Guest of Honor: **David Mattingly**

Illustrator of over 500 science fiction and fantasy covers including the "Honor Harrington" series for author David Weber. He is a two-time winner of Magazine and Booksellers "Best Cover of the Year", & winner of the Association of Science Fiction Artists "Chesley" award

Music Guest: **Larry Warner**

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24 Frames (cont'd from page 4)

and repair the problem before the core superheats and destroys all life on the surface. It stars **Hilary Swank, Bruce Greenwood, Aaron Eckhart** and **Stanley Tucci**. It looks to be a big special effects movie ala *Armageddon*. I'm sure Paramount is hoping for a similar box office result, but it's likely to be more in line with *Star Trek: Nemesis*' disappointing results.

Dreamcatcher - Based on a **Stephen King** novel, *Dreamcatcher* tells of four young friends who perform a heroic act - and are changed forever by the uncanny powers they gain in return. Years later the friends, now men, are on a hunting trip in the Maine woods when they are overtaken by a blizzard, a vicious storm in which something much more ominous moves... Challenged to stop an alien force, the friends must first prevent the slaughter of innocent civilians by a military vigilante, then overcome a threat to the bond between them. In the end, the friends confront an unparalleled horror, with the fate of the world in the balance.

House of 1,000 Corpses - Set in the 1970's, two young couples seek refuge from a storm in a mansion which turns out to be a house of horrors. The movie was produced and directed by rocker **Rob Zombie** and has finally found a distributor in Lion's Gate Films. It is tentatively scheduled to be released sometime in March, but could always get pushed back.

Movie Release Dates for 2003
Feb 14 - *Daredevil, Jungle Book II*
March 14 - *Agent Cody Banks, Johnny English*
March 28 - *The Core, Dreamcatcher*
March TBA - *House of 1,000 Corpses*
April 4 - *Cowboy Bebop: The Movie (LA/NY)*
April 11 - *Timeline, Shaolin Soccer*
April 16 - *Bulletproof Monk*
April TBA - *George and the Dragon*
May 2 - *X2*
May 15 - *Matrix: Reloaded*
May 16 - *Pokemon 5*
May 23 - *Bruce Almighty*
May 30 - *Finding Nemo*
June 13 - *Freddy vs. Jason*
June 20 - *The Hulk*
June 27 - *Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle*
July 2 - *Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines, Sinbad: Legend of the Seven Seas*
July 9 - *Pirates of the Caribbean*
July 11 - *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*
July 18 - *Exorcist: The Beginning*
July 25 - *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life, Spy Kids 3*
Aug 8 - *Cursed, Ella Enchanted*
Aug 29 - *Like Hell: Jeepers Creepers 2*
Nov 7 - *The Matrix: Revolutions, Elf*
Nov 14 - *Looney Tunes: Back in Action*
Nov 21 - *Around the World in 80 Days, Dr. Suess's The Cat in the Hat*
Nov 26 - *The Haunted Mansion*
Dec 5 *The Last Samurai*
Dec 17th - *Lord of the Rings: Return of the King*

SF Tube Talk (Cont'd from page 3)

they left each other with cuts and bruises and burns, so it's pretty interesting when they get back together again." The first of the three February episodes, "Soulless", was directed by **Sean** "Sam Gamgee" **Astin** and deals with the resurrected Angelus, and the team learns about his connection to the Beast. *Calvary* sees Lilah steal Angel's soul from its box, and when Angelus escapes from his cage, things get worse. *Salvage* sees Faith turn up at Angel Investigations after being released from jail, and she is enlisted to help them capture Angelus and restore his soul.

Smallville is pulling out all the stops for February sweeps with a guest appearance by **Christopher Reeve** in the February 25 episode "Rosetta". The crippled star of the **Superman** movies will play Dr. Virgil Swann, a brilliant scientist who provides Clark with "revelatory insight into his superhero destiny." Swann has been using his millions to personally fund research about the planet Krypton. After Clark learns that Swann holds the key to his origins, he makes a shocking discovery about his home planet that will change his life forever. Producer **Al Gough** has said that Reeve may return for future episodes, having been conceived as a possible recurring character. Earlier in the month we'll see "Rush" where Clark attempts to stop a rave dance in the caves and we discover some alien worms that infect people, giving them a big rush of adrenaline. In "Prodigal", Lex has tracked down his supposedly dead brother, Lucas Dunleavy, and brings him to Smallville, where their father plays them against each other. Meanwhile, Clark tries to talk Lana into giving him a job at the Talon. "Disease" finds Martha Kent and Clark both being infected by a green dust, which brings in the Disease Control Agency to investigate things. Of course, Lex tries to use them to find out more about Clark. A later episode that may not air until April will see both Clark and Chloe be affected by some Red Kryptonite, which leads to some romantic sparks between the two.

The WB has pulled the plug on *The Birds of Prey*, leaving two more episodes left to air. Supposedly they will bring the series to some sort of closure. It's possible they may air in March or April to burn them off. They are "Feat of Clay", which features Clayface and his son, who has the ability to turn other people into stone or clay and "Devil's Eyes" where Harley finds a way to hypnotize people and they start trashing all of New Gotham, including all the standing sets of the series. Airing on The WB on the last Wednesday of February will be a movie updating "*The Lone Ranger*", intended as a back-door pilot for a possible series. **Chad Michael Murray** ("*Gilmore Girls*," "*Dawson's Creek*") stars as Luke Hartman, a 19th century law student who takes on a secret identity as the masked man after witnessing the murder of his brother. **Nathaniel Arcand** ("*American Outlaws*"

) co-stars as Tonto, his partner. Spicing things up a bit will be Tonto's sister Alope (**Anita Brown**) creating a love triangle between her tribe's chief and Luke. Also included is a hot tub scene that takes place in a teepee (shades of the decontamination chamber in Enterprise!). Possibly starting in March on The WB is the mid-season series "*The Black Sash*", which stars **Russell Wong** as a U.S. cop who, after being wrongfully imprisoned in Hong Kong, returns to the States and opens a martial arts school. The WB has ordered six episodes to go with the one-hour pilot already in the can. According to WB President Jordan Levin "the emphasis of the show is not on eye-popping martial arts wizardry, it is going to focus much more on the mentor relationships the main character has with his students a la '*The White Shadow*' as well as his own relationship with his mentor, a martial arts teacher."

As for the rest of the broadcast network fare, most of it has been canceled. FOX finally aired *Firefly's* pilot episode as the last scheduled episode in December and has taken it off the schedule with three episodes left to air. They gave **Joss Whedon** permission to shop the show around but it has already been passed over by all the other broadcast networks and the SciFi Channel, so things don't look good for the show to continue. Other network shows such as *Do Over* (The WB), *That Was Then* (ABC), *Push, Nevada* (ABC), *The Haunted* (UPN), and *Dinotopia* (ABC) have all been taken off the air and officially canceled. Showtime has also not renewed *Odyssey 5* and it's final episodes will air through the end of February.

ABC still has *Alias* on Sunday nights, and following it's post-Super Bowl airing, it may pick up a bit in the ratings. Joining *Alias* on Sunday nights starting in February on ABC will be **Dick Wolf's (Law and Order)** take on *Dragnet*, with **Ed O'Neill** as Joe Friday and **Ethan Embry** as Frank Smith. It looks to be a pretty straightforward contemporary take on the classic **Jack Webb** TV series. Already started on ABC on Monday nights is "*Miracles*", starring **Skeet Ulrich** as Paul Callan, a Miracle investigator for the church who is disheartened by having to discredit such phenomena. He ends up recruited by a secret organization and ends up working for them. Earlier in the evening is *Veritas: The Quest*, which stars **Ryan Merriman** as Nikko Zond, who's father, Solomon Zond (**Alex Carter**), leads a classified, high-tech organization named Veritas. The quest of this top-secret team of archaeologists is to try to unlock the secrets of ancient civilizations before their enemies do so. Looks to be a fun cross between *Indiana Jones* and *Lara Croft*.

Moving into the cable realm, unlike most sweeps periods, we're getting mostly new episodes through February and into March for a lot of the shows. SciFi will be airing the final episodes of *Farscape* straight through with the series finale airing on Friday, March 21st. Not many

details have surfaced on the very end of the season and the series, but reports from producer **David Kemper** indicates that they did have a chance to film some additional scenes that will go into the final episodes to give them better closure but by no means will end the series in a way they would have liked to. Starting in February we'll see *Bringing Home the Beacon* where the

women of Moya stumble upon a secret meeting, one that will change the future of the Uncharted Territories, "A Constellation of Doubt" in which Scorpius reveals his true agenda after trapping Crichton and the others on a Scarran base, "Prayer", where Crichton and Scorpius travel through a wormhole to try and locate the Scarran base where Aeryn is being held hostage and *We're So Screwed, Part 1: "Fetal Attraction"* where the crew docks at a Scarran Border Station in an attempt to rescue Aeryn from her captors. As to any news on the save *Farscape* side of things, there's been little news to report on interest from other networks. The first new episode did a respectable 1.34 rating, which is higher than the series has been averaging. However, the first episode of *Tracker* the same night did an even better 1.45 even though it has already aired once in syndication. If the ratings hold up or rise, the better the chance that someone will take an interest in *Farscape* and find a way to continue it.

Stargate SG-1 continues on with it's sixth season on SciFi and will also have its season finale on March 21st, with the new season likely to start up in June or July. Remaining episodes for this season are "Metamorphosis", where SG-1 joins a Russian team in attempting to save a planet's inhabitants from strange Goa'uld experimentation, in "Disclosure", General Hammond and the Pentagon are forced to reveal the existence of the Stargate to other world governments (via heavy use of clips from previous episodes), and must defend the United States military's gate program, "Forsaken" has the SG-1 team find a crashed ship on another world, and their efforts to help the crew effect repairs are hindered by a group of aliens, *The Changeling* is written by **Christopher Judge** and deals a lot with Teal'c including a lot of dream sequences of some sort including Daniel Jackson, "Momento" sees the team forced to land the Prometheus on an alien world, where the local Stargate is their only chance of returning home, but the local government refuses to acknowledge its existence. In the next to last episode, "Prophecy", SG-1 visits yet another backwards world where the population bows down to the Goa'uld, whose emissary, Lord Mot, arrives to collect naquadah. However, there is an old prophecy that strangers would come through the gate to free them, and the people think that SG-1 is that ticket to freedom. The season finale, "Full Circle", has SG-1 defending the people of Abydos from the Goa'uld once again when they learn that Anubis is about to attack. It features the return of

(Cont'd on page 6)

SF Tube Talk (Cont'd from page 5)

Michael Shanks as Daniel Jackson and revelations about Anubis and a third Stargate on Earth.

In other SciFi Channel news, their **Steven Spielberg Presents Taken** miniseries was a major success for the channel, setting the record for the highest ever rating for the channel with the first episode and subsequent episodes held pretty steady to make the channel the top rated cable channel in prime time for the two weeks that the series ran. As you may have noticed, SciFi's ads for **Tremors** changed from "debuting Jan 10th" to "coming in March" during the miniseries. Due to special effects delays, SciFi opted to delay the launch of **Tremors** until March, putting repeats of last season's syndicated **Adrian Paul** series **Tracker** in the 10 pm ET/PT time slot, which did decent ratings with the first episode with little extra promotion. Debuting in early April will be SciFi's new reality series **Scare Tactics**, a hidden camera show where people are scared out of their wits. The show will be hosted by **Shannen Doherty**.

So, what should we expect from **Tremors** when it debuts on March 28th with two back to back episodes at 9 pm ET/PT? Pretty much what we've seen in the first three movies, with a bit more character development to flesh out a weekly series. SciFi has ordered 13 episodes of the series and the producers are also planning on filming a fourth movie after they finish the initial batch of episodes. Continuing from the movies will be **Michael Gross** as survivalist Bert Gummer. Other returning characters with new actors are Jodi Chang (**Leela Lee**), Perfection's shopkeeper, and aging hippie Nancy Sterngood (**Marcia Strassman**). New characters include Tyler Reed (**Victor Browne**), a former NASCAR driver who takes over the Perfection tour business, Rosalita Sanchez (**Gladise Jimenez**), a relative of Miguel from the first movie who is a former Las Vegas showgirl with a mysterious past, and W.D. Twitchell (**Dean Norris**), a U.S. Department of the Interior official who has come to town protect the great white mutant worm that is considered and endangered species. In the series, we'll learn more about the worms including their long-term hatching cycle, see Bert start up a Survivalist school and maybe see a love triangle between Tyler, Jodi and Rosalita. The show plans to mix horror, action and humor as they have with the movies.

Debuting on March 16th on SciFi is the **Children of Dune** miniseries. The six-hour, three-night series is based on the second and third books in Herbert's heralded Dune Chronicles books. The sequel continues the story of the Atreides family 12 years after Paul Muad'Dib (**Alec Newman**) freed Dune from the control of the evil House Harkonnen and brought water to the desert planet. Many of the original cast and crew from the first miniseries return, with **Susan Sarandon** joining the ensemble as

Wesicia, a ruthless princess eager to restore her deposed family to the imperial throne. Returning players include **Julie Cox** as Princess Irulan, **Barbara Kodelova** as Chani, **Ian McNeice** as Baron Harkonnen, and **P.H. Moriarty** as Gurney Halleck. New additions to the cast include **Alice Krige** as Lady Jessica, **Edward Atterton** as Duncan Idaho, **Steven Berkoff** as Stilgar, **Jessica Brooks** as Ghanima, **Daniela Amavia** as Alia and **James McAvoy** as Leto II.

Based on *Dune Messiah* and *Children of Dune*, the new miniseries continues the saga of the Atreides dynasty. Under Paul Muad'dib's rule as Emperor, the planet Arrakis has enjoyed a renaissance. However, the revolution Muad'dib has inspired has transformed into a brutal jihad and a conspiracy threatens to rob Muad'dib of his throne and his life. The future of all of humanity rests in the hands of Muad'dib's heirs - specifically his son, Leto II, who is destined to become a force for sweeping changes, both on Arrakis and in the universe at large. In the end, Leto II must risk sacrificing his own humanity for the sake of humanity itself.

Upcoming SciFi Original movies include **Antibody** (Feb 8), starring **Lance Henriksen (Aliens, Millennium)** as the leader of a team of scientists in an experimental miniaturized craft within a dying terrorist's bloodstream - where a detonator chip will set off a doomsday weapon if the unconscious man dies! **Do or Die** (Feb 22) stars **Nigel Bennet** in a future where a virus infects Earth with a rapid-aging disease that divides the population into the ruling "Cleans" and the outcast "Infecteds." When a Clean woman is impregnated by an Infected man, a class war erupts that could destroy all of humanity. Coming in March is **Cube 2: Hypercube** where "eight terrified strangers awaken in a room unlike any other - a four-dimensional cube ... a hypercube. And unlike the poor souls of the acclaimed, award-winning **Cube**, this time

perhaps none will survive". SciFi still lists the **Riverworld** movie as airing soon. But not before April. They have also green-lighted the four hour **Battlestar Galactica** mini-series for airing later this year. It is being re-imagined by Trek and Roswell writer **Ron Moore**. More on his new version next time...

The Dead Zone also returned to the cable airwaves in January and continues with new episodes at least through February. The show airs new episodes on Sunday nights on USA network with

repeats on the channel through the week plus a repeat showing the following Friday at 7 pm ET/PT on SciFi Channel. Upcoming episodes include *The Outsider* that sees Johnny pitted against a giant pharmaceutical company when he sees that a new drug about to come out will cause massive birth defects, but has no way besides his visions to prove it. In *Precipitate*, Johnny gets a blood transfusion and has a vision of one of the

(cont'd on page 7)

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SF Tube Talk (cont'd from page 6)

several donors dying soon and he needs to figure out who it is. *Misbegotten* sees Johnny abducted and at the mercy of three female fans who take him to an abandoned house where a horrible murder occurred years ago. *Scars* has **Gerald McRaney** guest starring as the veteran incumbent congressman running against Greg Stillson. When Johnny decides to throw his psychic support behind him, his visions show him an unexpected curve. *The Very Thought of You* guest stars **Robert Culp** as a man who Johnny meets and has a vision about him literally disappearing and ceasing to exist. When he does disappear, Johnny must figure out why he's the only one that even knows the man existed. In *Cabin Pressure*, Johnny has 52 minutes to figure out why the plane he is on is going to crash and prevent it from happening. For the new season, the *Dead Zone's* official website will be making available the original story and teleplay for each episode to show how things develop from the original story to the screen. Check that out at www.thedeadzone.net.

Finally, in the syndicated realm, advance info on both *Andromeda* and *Mutant X* has been very minimal. *Andromeda* writers **Ashley Edward Miller** and **Zack Stentz** have been pretty quiet on the message boards of late partly because they have left *Andromeda* now that the third season is done filming and are currently working on the new

Twilight Zone. Also leaving the series after the current season are writers **Matt Kiene** and **Joe Reinkemeyer** and visual effects supervisor **Jim Finn**. This leaves none of the original writing staff that started the series left as the show goes into its fourth season. Joining continuing producer **Bob Engels** will be **Naomi Janzen**, who has already written several *Andromeda* episodes in the third season and writing team **Larry and Paul Barber**, who have also written for *The X-Files*, *Seven Days* and *Witchblade*. As for what's happening in the current batch of episodes for both series, tune in and see! I hope to pry some info out of someone for the final batch of episodes in April and May.

A few more tidbits for this issue: The Cartoon network has announced

they will have a *Teen Titans* series starting later this summer. They will also possibly be starting the new season of *Justice League* sometime in March, but have yet to make any announcements about it.

If you'd like to catch past seasons of

Futurama, it has joined the Cartoon Networks Adult Swim each weeknight at 11 pm ET/PT. A DVD release of the first season is coming soon as well.

A TV series is in the works based on **Erik Von Daniken's** *Chariots of the Gods* books, that propose that Earth was visited by ancient astronauts. They've got a nifty website up at www.chariotsofthegods.com, but no info as of yet as to where the show might be seen, although it appears that they have made a pilot or promotional piece. The series will be about a special corporation set up to investigate evidence of ancient astronauts and the truth behind the origins of life on Earth. Their major foe is The Institute, that has been set up to also collect artifacts but suppress them and keep the truth from coming out.

ReAnimation

- **** **Soul Hunter Volume 1: Taikoubou's Mission**
- **** **BioHunter**
- *** **Sherlock Hound Case File VI**
- **** **Sailor Moon Super S: Diana's Secret**
- **** **Sailor Moon S: The Love War!**

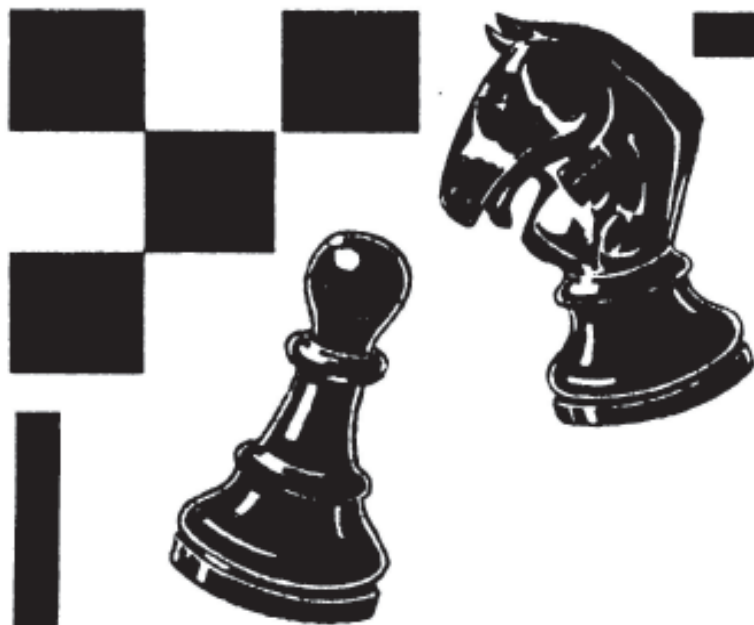
**** **Soul Hunter Volume 1: Taikoubou's Mission**
ADV Films, 125 mins, 12 up
DVD \$26.98

This series is based on a manga adaptation of a Chinese ghost story. Zhou is the emperor of China but he is bewitched by the evil Dakki. Busy indulging her whims Zhou neglects the empire and its people. This comes to the notice of Genshitenson, one of the Taoist Immortals. Genshitenson decides to restore order and assigns disciple-in-training Taikoubou to imprison the souls of Dakki and 364 other demons in Houshin Mountain. Of course, Taikoubou is an unlikely hero since he routinely skips his lessons and naps while he's meditating. He is armed with nothing but a magical rod and a hit list, as he rides off on the spiritual beast Sibuxiang (which looks like a cross between a cat and a hippo). He searches for allies to assist him in imprisoning the demon souls in Houshin Mountain and meets several unusual characters along the way.

(Cont'd on page 8)

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ReAnimation (cont’d from page 7)

By the end of episode 5 we learn that there is more going on than a simple mission to imprison demons as we learn that innocent human souls as well as demon souls are being sent to Houshin Mountain.

This volume contains episodes 1 through 5 of a 26 episode series. The historical notes on the Yin Dynasty are fascinating and provide an understanding of the background against which the story plays. Soul Hunter is loosely based on a Chinese classic called *Investiture of the Gods* which is centered around one of the most tyrannical king in Chinese legends, king Zhou and the events that ultimately led to the downfall of the Yin dynasty.

The mix of drama, action and comedy is slightly uneven but the pace is fast and the story holds one’s interest. The plot ends up being much deeper than it first appears and so does the main character, Taikoubou.

While the case rates it as 12 up it probably should be rated 14 up for violence, brief nudity and minor profanity however the light comedic touch is suitable for 12 up. I look forward to viewing the rest of the series. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

****** BioHunter**
Urbanvision, 60 mins, NR
VHS \$19.95, DVD \$24.95

The first thing to say is that while this Anime is unrated it is definitely intended only for ages 18 or older for its nudity, sex, violence (both general and against women) and cannibalism. So, if that peaks your interest read on.

Komada and Koshigaya are Bio Hunters, agents who battle the Demon Virus that causes humans to mutate into weird monsters. Together the partners hunt for the monster that is terrorizing Tokyo by killing women and eating their livers. A famed psychic holds the answer to the mystery. After Komada rescues his granddaughter, Sayaka Murakami, from a gang, the partners help her search for her grandfather. This action pits Komada and Koshigaya against the powerful politician Seijuro Tabe . Tabe is actually the monster that has been preying on the young women and it is up to the partners to try and stop him. They have one advantage in this fight. Komada, even though he is infected with the virus, has something in his immune system that enables him to control his transformation into a demon. But will he be able to control the demon and save Sayaka and her grandfather from Tabe without losing his humanity?

Bio-Hunter is definitely violent entertainment and not for the squeamish. The ending sounds like there is or was a series planned since Koshigaya declares the Bio Hunters’ dedication to the ongoing battle against the Virus. If there are more of these I’d like to know since I thoroughly enjoyed this and would like to see more. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

***** Sherlock Hound Case File VI**
Pioneer, 100 mins, 7 up
DVD \$29.98

Sherlock Hound Case File VI contains the last 4 episodes of the series. For those unfamiliar with the series Sherlock Hound was created by Japanese director Hayao Miyazaki (Totoro, Princess Mononoke), first for Italian television with additional episodes made for the TV Asahi network. The world of Sherlock Holmes is re-populated with anthropomorphic dogs.

In *The Priceless French Doll* Professor Moriarty and his henchmen Todd and Smiley almost succeed in stealing a fabulous diamond. *The Secret of the Parrot* and *The Bell of Big Ben* are complicated, any synopsis would either make no sense or spoil your viewing. In *The Missing Bride Affair*, the final episode of the series, Holmes and Watson aid a pair of star-crossed lovers.

The stories of this series pay homage to Conan Doyle’s famous detective as Sherlock Hound outwits both Inspector LeStrade and Professor Moriarty. While earlier episodes were more intelligent the series remains a favorite that can be enjoyed by the whole family. The 7+ rating is for minor cartoon violence and tobacco use. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

****** Sailor Moon Super S: Diana’s Secret**
Dubbed in English, Pioneer,
70 min. Uncut, Ages 13 up
60 min. Cut, Ages 7 up
VHS \$14.98

(uncut) Episode 4) Capture the Pegasus! The Amazon’s Trap (cut) Episode 4) Baiting the Trap

Grand Zirconia has grown irritated with the three failings so far of the Amazon trio, but Hawk’s Eye boasts of a trump card up his sleeve. This time it would seem that Serena’s best friend Molly is the target! A redheaded girl with a Boston accent in Japan? I’d be suspicious too. The episode features a date between Molly and Melvin, showing old fans the couple is still together. Tiger’s Eye receives a bruised ego when Molly hands down chooses Melvin over him. A circus man in spandex, versus the school nerd. Molly attracts the most interesting men. Tiger’s Eye plays off of Molly’s desires to become a nurse by pretending to be ill. In dramatics enough to make you laugh, he asks her to be his girlfriend, as he’s only got ‘months to live’. Molly being the sweet, and somewhat gullible girl she is, agrees. Of course our Sailor Scouts want to help out Molly, so they do what they do best. Follow her and try to set things right. In the meantime Rini keeps an eye on Melvin, only to discover him surrounded by 15 empty milkshake containers. Will Molly’s dreams be destroyed? Will the Sailor Scouts escape from Hawk Eye’s mysterious trap? Will Melvin run away to live on a mountain?

(uncut) Episode 5) A Couple Made For Each Other! Serena and Darien’s Love (cut) Episode 5) Perfect Couple

Innocently enough the episode begins with Darien’s high school friend, Saori, coming to visit Darien at his apartment. Not too startlingly it becomes apparent very fast that she, as so many others, wants to be more than friends with Darien. Saori’s friend Kobayashi pushes her to be more forward with Darien, specially since his 15-year-old girlfriend Serena seems to be a... well, a ditz. Rini shares Kobayashi’s outlook on Serena and fears that Saori will steal Darien from her slow-witted mom to be, so while Serena is busy making “grown-up choices” (i.e. the blue hippo or the pink donkey?) Rini goes on a crusade to make sure Darien and Serena stay together so she may be born. In the meantime the Dark Moon Circus has set the intellectual Saori as their next target. If only Saori could believe that Darien’s girlfriend was a good enough match for him. This episode features amusing and quick qwerps from Rini, Tiger’s Eye being turned down again, and an endearing look into Darien and Serena’s relationship.

(uncut) Episode 6)Artemis’ Affair?! A Mysterious Kitten Appears (cut) Episode 6) Much Ado About Kitten

Love is still in the air in this episode, this time for the two felines of the series; Luna and Artemis. Luna suspects Artemis of making cateyes at another woman. Oddly enough a nun. At any rate, her suspicions of him chasing other women are confirmed when a small, talking, crescent moon foreheaded, kitten appears calling him... Daddy. Luna, after giving Artemis a good lashing, reminds everyone that she and Artemis are just friends and she has a very long way to go training Serena to be Queen of the Moon Kingdom. Artemis doesn’t get the luxury of innocent until proven guilty, so he goes out to find the little kitten he met earlier and prove everything is a misunderstanding. On his search he runs smack into the third time in a row on the tape that Tiger’s Eye is being rejected by a woman. As always there is some spectacular posing in this episode as the girls fight against evil, and with the introduction Rini’s kitten Diana and a nice love story on the side, it’s a well-rounded end to an enjoyable tape. -

Jennifer Bohling

****** Sailor Moon S: The Love War!**
Dubbed in English
Pioneer, 60 min. cut, Ages 7 up
VHS \$14.98

Swept Off Her Feet

Andrew’s sister Elizabeth is distraught about making her first kiss, and confides this in Serena. Once Serena is sure she’s not after her Darien, she comes to visit Elizabeth at work and talk about it. The mysterious Amara and Michelle turn out to be seated right next to the two as they talk in the diner over the arcade. The two offer their thoughts on the subject of a first kiss, and once alone discuss possibility that Elizabeth could be attacked for her pure heart. Sure enough, a heart snatcher has come and gone by the time the Sailor Scouts come

over for some conversation and muffins. Without her pure heart though, she is devoid of her pure thoughts, and eager to kiss anyone. Rei keeps an eye on “hot lips” while the girls search for the missing heart crystal. This episode continues to delve into the mystery of which side Sailor Uranus and Neptune are on, drawing in the watcher. Blinded by Love’s Light

Romance continues in Blinded by Love’s Light as we see Molly and Melvin experiencing confusion on both sides of their relationship. Serena decides to ask Rei’s expert advice on helping the two out and in no time at all the girls are cheering on Molly and Melvin in a very game show-esque love competition. Amara and Michelle enter as well, but merely as a joke. To fans of the uncut series, the portrayal of the often heart framed duo, Amara (AKA Haruka) and Michelle (AKA Michiru), as cousins, may grind one’s nerves more so in this episode than most of the others. That aside, it’s an excellent chance to look at a sweet love story of kindhearted yet nerdy Melvin hopelessly devoted to his redheaded love. Which attracts not only fans of Sailor Moon’s attention, but that of the Heart Snatchers as well. Lita Borrows Trouble

Lita fans will flip for this episode. We open on Serena and Lita walking along. They talk about a subject very close to Serena’s heart; Lita’s cooking. Lita suggests that she needs cooking as a way to have at least a bit of a soft spot. Maybe so others won’t fear her. As they cross the street Amara nearly runs over Serena on her motorcycle. Lita saves Serena at the cost of a scraped hand, but the opportunity allows Lita to receive a scarf and some long moments of blushing at Amara. The very same scarf from Amara attacks Lita when a heart snatcher decides to infect it. Lita escapes, but Amara and Michelle decide to stick close to the “target”, and pull up in their convertible to invite Lita for ice cream. After Serena’s previous experience with Amara’s driving she decides not to tag along. In this episode we learn that Amara and Michelle are first year high school students. You have to love to hate them... their constant help and betrayal of our scouts, and a motorcycle and convertible in their first year of high school. The heart snatchers make a second strike, and Jupiter finds a new reason to harbor suspicion and to an extent anger at the two new Sailor Scouts Neptune and Uranus. This episode is a personal favorite because of the way it begins with Lita questioning herself, leading to her admiring a woman who seems personally stronger than herself, then ends with a touching scene of Lita full of new found inner strength and courage. - **Jennifer Bohling**

GOLDILOCKS AND THE DRAGON
by Mikki Ross

“Where did you come from?”

The words echoed in my head and all around me. A moment ago I was leaning against my front door and now . . . Now I was kneeling in what felt like a pile of small rocks. A creepy chill slithered across my shoulders and down my back as I took a deep breath, stood up and turned around.

As my eyes focused I saw arms, shoulders and . . . claws. I swallowed hard and looked up. I’ve always been considered tall for a woman, but I kept looking up until a large scaly head on a long, supple neck arched down to stare at me. My breath caught.

“I asked where you came from?” The creature said again, its warm breath caressing me. Until that moment I’d been too disoriented to realize I was cold, and scared. No, terrified was probably a better word.

“My house,” I said weakly. A heartbeat or so ago I was wishing there was a decent man somewhere in the world and now, I was here; wherever here was.

“Well you’re in my house,” the creature’s voice echoed, “in my home, uninvited and poking through my possessions!”

The force of that last word made me stumble back.

“Look, you.” I gained a foothold in the shifting surface of what I realized was

thousands of gold coins scattered across the floor, and drew myself up to my full five foot twelve inches - hey, that’s what they put on my driver’s license. “I’m telling you the truth. I wasn’t doing anything and I didn’t know this was your home and, and . . . where the hell am I, anyway?” I put my hands on my hips and stared at the creature as it wound its long neck around me so its head was inches from my face.

“Well, well, Lovely, I wonder just what little piece of magic dropped you here?” By now I knew it was a dragon - but it was purring. Dragons didn’t purr.

“I can purr if I want.” As the dragon tilted its head to look at me with its great green, unblinking eye, each iridescent scale shimmered.

“Can you hear what I think?” A stupid question, but how else would it know about purring?

“Yes, Lovely, and I’m a he, not an it.”

“Oh,” I managed. This had to be a dream. Yup, that was it. I was really at home in my bed in Tucson and when I woke up everything was going to be just fine.

“No, you’re not in Tucson, wherever that is. You’re in my home.”

He settled his big body on a pile of coins and gems, wiggling around a little to get comfortable.

“Here,” a foot-long claw reached out almost daintily for a huge pillow lying near him. He dragged it over in front of me. “Make yourself comfortable.”

I looked around. The dragon’s lair

was huge. No, that was such a plain word. It was enormous. The chamber’s ceiling must have been forty feet high, like an old-world cathedral. The entire floor was covered with gold coins, jewelry, huge gemstones and every other kind of treasure you might imagine a dragon would amass.

I shook my head. None of this made any sense. This was a bad dream and when I awoke everything would be like it was supposed to be. I settled onto the cushion. Maybe I should pinch myself just in case.

“Ouch! Why’d you do that?” I rubbed my arm where he’d poked me.

“Trust me, you’re not dreaming. You’re here.”

“But I don’t want to be here,” I said. “I want to go home.”

“Well,” said the dragon, “whining about it isn’t going to get you home.”

“I wasn’t . . .” I stopped. Maybe I was whining, a little. But let’s face it. How would you feel if one minute you were walking into your own house and then suddenly you were having a conversation with a dragon? I mean, it’s not something that happens every day.

“What were you thinking when you walked into your house?”

“What do you mean?”

“Well, Lovely, some piece of magic dropped you here. If you want to know why, you’ll have to remember what you were doing, what you were thinking. Magic acts in strange ways.”

“How would you know?”

The dragon’s laughter filled the

cavern. “I’m a creature of magic, little girl. You reek of it, and I don’t mean the doing kind.”

I stared at the dragon through narrowed eyes. What was he talking about?

“You can’t do magic, little girl,” his head moved towards me and he sniffed once, twice, “but the magic that brought you here is all over you. Why didn’t it change you?”

His expression and the way his body moved as he watched me was almost human.

I was human, once. The wistful words filtered through my head.

“What? You were human?” If dragons could smile, he was smiling at me, or maybe that was the way dragons looked at you before they ate you. I shuddered at the thought.

I don’t eat little girls, the words formed in my mind. But when I was human . . .

I had to laugh. Just what I needed, another lech. Oh was I sick and tired of blind dates, men with no conversation and only one thing on their minds.

“They have liches where you come from?”

“It’s not lich, it’s lech.” I chuckled at his question. “It’s short for lecher. Means some jerk who can’t keep his hands to himself. I’ve found a lot of them lately.”

His head snaked down in front of me. “Do you know Dona Elvira?”

“Who’s Dona Elvira?”

(Cont’d on page 10)



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Goldilocks (cont'd from page 9)

"The nasty witch who turned me into a dragon."
"Oh," His head was so close to me that I almost had to cross my eyes to see him.

"She cursed me." He sighed and laid his head down on a chest next to me.
I waited. When he didn't continue I succumbed to curiosity. "Why?"

He heaved another sigh, this one a mixture of annoyance, frustration and . . . guilt?

"I guess I was what you'd call a lech." He spoke the words softly, well, as softly as possible when you are as big as he was. "I seduced someone and then turned my back on her. I didn't know she had a witch for a friend, and," he shrugged his shoulders, "I guess it wouldn't have mattered if I had known. The conquest was everything."

"What did she do?"
"I told you, she cursed me: Not less than a hundred times a hundred will thee remain thus unless a wronged one sets you free." He spoke the words deliberately, as if he'd memorized them quickly and wasn't sure he had it right.

I waited for him to go on.
"One minute I was standing in my drawing room, laughing at her. Daring her to exact revenge for her friend." I could feel his defiance, even now. He still hated her. "There were flames. Then everything went black. When I awoke I was here, like this."

The words were so mournful I had to stifle a giggle. It wasn't that what happened to him was funny, it was the way he looked. I mean, how can you describe the aura of abject misery emanating from a creature that makes an eighteen-wheeler look like a Hot Wheels toy? Every inch of his huge body rippled with that poor-pitiful-me attitude dogs get when you catch them with your best shoes in their mouth.

I would have been less surprised if he'd acted like a cat. They're never

guilty about anything. Maybe some of his humanity was left and he was ashamed of what he'd done. As I watched him, his head rose and he stared at me, as if daring me to laugh.

"I only acted as expected of me in my time."

"Oh, sure. Justify your bad acts," I said. "So what was your time?"

"It was in March of 1602."
Four hundred years ago.

"My name is Juan Diego Gabriel Miguel de Alcala y Garcia. Comte de Burgos, at your service." I had never been around nobility but as he dipped his great head and shoulders I had the impression of a handsome young man elegantly dressed performing a sweeping, graceful bow. Oh my!

"Where were you when she cursed you?"

"In Sevilla." He pronounced Seville with a Spanish lilt, and a hint of the Castilian lisp. My Spanish was very American, but so far we'd understood each other. "At my castle. We were having dinner when she challenged me."

"You're Don Giovanni! Mozart wrote an opera about you." That wasn't what I'd planned to say.

Someone wrote an opera about me?
The words echoed in my head. He sounded very pleased.

"Don't be," I said. "Don Giovanni is a wonderful opera, but he was a dissolute bastard."

The dragon drew himself up stiffly. "I am not a bastard. My parents were wed in the church. They waited years for me to be born."

My laughter rippled through the cavern. The picture of a very proper Spanish noble family shimmered in my mind. As I worked out an explanation, the dragon gave an affronted huff and settled back down on his hoard. Maybe his ability to read my thoughts wasn't so bad after all.

"I didn't mean your parents weren't married." I spoke the words out loud. "In my time, the word bastard has more

meanings than being illegitimate. It can mean a really rotten, vicious, despicable person."

He harrumphed and squirmed on his hoard. "What is the last day you remember?"

"Today, June 21, 2002."
"Four hundred years." His head jerked up. "It's only been four hundred years!" With a roar of rage, the rest of his body lumbered up and he started running. He rushed past me and disappeared.

I sat there, frozen. It was no more than a moment but it seemed like I held my breath forever. Breathing reminded me that I was still human; that I was still alive. It was good start.

I got up from my pillow and looked around. There was a glowing light that illuminated the cavern making it bright enough that I could see to walk around. Walking on gold coins and jewels is like walking on loose gravel, you slip and slide. Then I came across what looked like a dragon-sized trail. Following it through the chamber, I saw chests overflowing with gold and jeweled objects, piles of coins, gemstones, stacks of ornate jewelry and shimmering armor.

As I wandered along the trail through the main room and several of the other chambers, I found chests filled with silks and velvets and what must have been cloth of gold. One room was filled with gold, silver and jewel encrusted weapons and another with jewel encrusted crowns, tiaras and other royal objects. Anything you could name that would have been made of gold was here. There was millions and millions and millions of dollars worth of gold strewn throughout the cavern!

There were even bolts of brightly colored silk lying about as well as some ornate costumes. And then I found an alcove that held a huge carved bed, covered with a colorful velvet patchwork quilt.

I pulled back the quilt and saw fluffy pillows covered in silk and a lace so fine it looked like a spider web. I sat down. It

gone to sleep, but suddenly I was wide awake. The dragon was back. Stretched out beside the bed, watching me.

"I'm sorry," he said. "None of this is your fault. I wasn't angry with you." He sighed.

"That's not what it looked like from here," I said under my breath as I sat up.

He chuckled. "You may be right. Would saying I am sorry be an appropriate response?"

"No, it's all right. It's not like you have lots of company." Maybe he was learning something after all. Apologizing wasn't something Spanish aristocrats of his time did. I wasn't sure about dragons.

His laugh rumbled through the cavern. "You're my first guest, ever."

"What about people trying to steal your horde?"

"There have been a few, but I call them lunch. So, tell me. What happened, how did you end up here?"

"I told you before, I don't know."
"You must be forgetting something. Tell me what you did; what you said."

Well, I'd politely told my date goodnight, rather than strangling him there on the spot, walked into the house and shut the door, and then . . .

"I shut the door and leaned up against it." I tried to remember exactly what I'd done. "Under my breath I whispered: I wish there was a man somewhere out there who had a sense of humor, who liked to laugh, who liked to kiss as much as he liked to make love. And it would be nice if he was tall. That's what I said, and before I could take another breath, I was here."

"I have a sense of humor," he said softly. "I like to laugh. I love making love to a woman, and I like to kiss, too. I'm cultured, and well read even though I'm now four hundred years behind. And, most importantly, when I was human," he ducked his head down and looked me in the eye. "I was taller than you. I wish I'd known you before," he whispered.

I stared at him in amazement as my heart started beating a little faster. I wished I'd known him before, too. But it was to late now.

Suddenly, he began to glow.
The glow got brighter and brighter and brighter! Just before it was so bright I couldn't see, it abruptly winked out and I was alone.

"Nooooooooo," I cried out. "That's not fair!" Wait a minute. What was I complaining about? That was Don Giovanni, the most notorious womanizer in history. I'd had enough Don Juans in my time, thank you. I didn't need the world's greatest, even if he did meet my criteria, even if I did like him. I sat there in stunned amazement as I realized I liked him. As a dragon, that was.

"Excuse me," a deep baritone voice intruded into my thoughts.

My head jerked up and I met sea green eyes.

"I am Juan Miguel Alcala, Senorita," he said in that lilting Spanish. "Welcome to my home." He performed the courtly bow I remembered the dragon performing. As he straightened, there was a dangerous, sexy gleam in his eyes. "Do you know you are sleeping in my bed?"



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was a heavenly bed. I felt just like Goldilocks. Well, not just like Goldilocks since I was a lot older and taller, but I did have blonde hair. So much for my warped sense of humor. Maybe if I shut my eyes for a moment all of this would be gone when I opened them.
I didn't realize I'd



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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Ongoing events Wednesdays Hero Clix Tournament 6:00pm Samurai Comics www.samuraicomics.com Mechwarrior Tournament 6:00pm Samurai Comics www.samuraicomics.com Adrian Empire Fghtr Practce 7:30pm Encanto Park www.adrianempire.org Thursdays Camarilla Anarch Game 6:00pm Kiwanis Park www.titheofsouls.com Dragonball Z CCG Trnmnt 6:00pm Atomic Comics-Phx www.atomiccomis.com Fridays Hero Clix Tournament 6:00pm Samurai Comics www.samuraicomics.com Night Magic (Magic CCG) 6:00pm Samurai Comics www.samuraicomics.com Saturdays Magic Tournament 4:00pm Atomic Comics-Prdse Vly www.atomiccomics.com						1 Arizona Renaissance Fest. weekends thru March 22 10:00-6:00 royalfaires.com Beginning D &D 1pm - samuraicomics.com Alternative Press Feb 1 & 2; San Francisco comic-con.org
2 V. Game Release .hack - PS2	3 Book Release Pattern Recognition V. Game Release Robocop - Xbox Game Releases Steve Jackson & White Wolf (Several each) Sjgames.com white-wolf.com	4 Book Releases Evolution by Steven Baxter Drowning World by Foster V. Game release Battlebots - PS2 Battlefield 1942 - PC DVD Releases Predator 2 Stargate SG1 Season 2	5	6	7	8 Anime Fest 11:00am - midnight samuraicomics.com Cosplay Contest 1pm samuraicomics.com Murder Inn... (murder mysetry dinner) 7pm, Midtown Grill 602.955.3872
9 RPGA - Living Greyhawk 12n - samurai comics.com Leprecon Inc. Mtg. 7pm, JB's Restaurant I-17 & Indian School www.leprecon.org	10 V. Game Release Barbarian - Xbox, Gmcube	11 DVD Releases Angel Season 1 X- Men Collectors Edition	12 Estrella War Feb 12-17 Estrella Park www.estrellawar.org	13	14 RadCon 3C Feb 14-16 Kennewick, WA www.radcon.org Movie release Daredevil	15 Gallifrey 2003 Feb 15-17 Gallifreyone.org Movie release Jeepers Creepers 2 Mage Knight Campaign 4pm - samuraicomics.com
16	17 President's Day	18 V. Game Release Dark Cloud 2 - PS2 Indiana Jones - Xbox DVD Releases Metropolis	19	20	21 CASFS Meeting 8pm, JB's Restaurant I-17 & Indian School www.csafs.org	22 Murder Inn.. (murder mystery dinner) 7pm, \$65/ person Midtown Grill 602.955.3872 U F P Las Vegas Trip www.u-f-p.org
23	24 V. Game Release Star War:Knights- Xbox	25 DVD Release Star Trek : DS9 Season 1	26	27	28 Condor X Feb 28 - Mar 2 San Diego, CA www.condorcon.org	Feb 8 Addtl listings U F P Meeting & Laser tag www.u-f-p.org ConRunners laetitia@doverkeep.com

Calendar of Events - March, 2003

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
To have your event or meeting listed please email connotes@cox.net (It is free so take advantage of it) Due to limited space available, Calendar Listings may only contain an event title & website or phone number. All release dates are tentative.		Ongoing events (Cont) Feb 1, 15, 22 & Mar 1, 22 Star Wars Card Game Trnmnt 4pm www.samuraicomics.com Feb 2, 16, 23 & Mar 2, 16, 23 Yu-Gi-Oh Tournament 12noon www.samuraicomics.com Mar 1, 6, 13, 22 Mage Knight Campaign 3pm www.samuraicomics.com				1 Mage Knight Campaign 3pm - samuraicomics.com V. Game Releases Tron 2.0- PC Legend of Zelda - Game Cube
2	3	4 V. Game Release Batman Dark Tomorrow Gamecube, Ps2, Xbox Final Fantasy XI -PS2 Sniper - Xbox	5 V. Game Releases 1503 AD - PC Aero Elite Combat - PS2	6 Mage Knight Campaign 3pm - samuraicomics.com	7	8 U F P - Out of Africa www.u-f-p.org
9 RPGA - Living Greyhawk 12n - samuraicomics.com	10	11 V. Game releases Jurassic Park - PC, PS2	12	13 Mage Knight Campaign 3pm - samuraicomics.com	14 V. Game release Blood Rayne - PC	15 Anime Fest 11:00am - midnight samuraicomics.com
16 Miniseries Children of Dune SciFi Channel	17 V. Game releases Pokeman Ruby - Game Boy Advanced Pokeman Sapphire - Game Boy Advanced	18	19	20 V. game release Red Faction II - PC, Xbox	21 Movie Release Willard Phone Booth	22 Mage Knight Campaign 3pm - samuraicomics.com
23	24	25 V. Game release Return to Wolfenstein - Xbox, PS2 DVD release Futurama - Season 1	26	27	28 CASFS Meeting 8pm, JB's Restaurant I-17 & Indian School www.casfs.org Movie Releases The Core Dreamcatcher	29
30	31					

Musical Notes

by Tom Tuerff

Julia Ecklar - “Divine Intervention” (Prometheus Music PM-1001)

Julia Ecklar is sort of a revered name in filk, and this album has a lot to do with it.

This marks the long-awaited CD release of what can truly be described as one of the “landmark” filk albums, if indeed there is such a thing.

For those of you who are not familiar with it, Ecklar’s “Divine Intervention” was the very first professionally-produced album of filk music, recorded and released on cassette back in 1986. What’s more, it was digitally recorded, which 17 years ago was far from a given thing even for the most famous musicians.

The album was an instant bestseller among filk singers and performers and is held in great admiration to this day. I have never been to a filk anywhere where somebody, at some point in the evening, didn’t sing one or two songs from this album.

So the emergence of “Divine Intervention” on CD is a very welcome event, and one that damn near didn’t happen. As it turns out, the digital masters of Ecklar’s baby were lost in the mists of time, or beamed up to a starship, or something. Which left producer Michael Moricz and engineer Dave Bjornson to remaster the albums from a 15 ips analog two-track dub. And even THAT had to be restored by a New York company that repairs such things to make them workable. Phew.

That said, the finished product is well worth your time, money and listening. It kicks off with an Ecklar standard, “Ladyhawke!” based on the movie of the same name. It’s interesting how she’s able to sum up the core of the movie without giving anything away and that allows the song to stand on its own, even if you’ve never seen the film. Which, at this late date, is quite possible.

Ecklar’s inspirations jump all over the place here, from “Star Trek” to characters from her own stories to the post-apocalyptic TV movie “The Day After.” Moricz’s smart production and arrangement talents really help to lift these ideas onto a whole new plane.

It’s easy to see why this album has always been held in such high praise, and even if you have the cassette, you ought to pick up the CD right away.

I’d also like to mention that the packaging on this CD is simply fantastic, with a 24-page booklet featuring all the lyrics, new liner notes and comments from Ecklar, Moricz and Larry Niven.

And of course, no CD reissue would be worth its weight in plastic without bonus tracks. This CD has three of them, including a previously unissued tune, “Roxanne.”

“Divine Intervention” is every bit the legendary album it’s played up to be. Intervene at a filk dealer’s table and pick one up.

Derek Bell: RIP
Irish/Gaelic music fans and sci-fi fans seem to run in packs together. In other words, if you like fantasy stories, there’s a good chance your background music features pennywhistles, harps, violins and uilleann pipes.

And it probably also means that you have at least one album by the *Chieftains*. If it’s any album by that group released after 1973, then it features harpist and pianist **Derek Bell**, who died suddenly and unexpectedly last October.

The local media apparently chose not to run even a blurb about Bell’s passing, which is very strange, considering the fact that Bell died in Phoenix! He was here at the Mayo Clinic for treatment of pneumonia and some routine tests when he died of a sudden heart attack.

Bell was an accomplished symphony harpist when he made his first albums with the *Chieftains*, and remained a member of several orchestras for years after joining the band. A musical prodigy, Bell wrote his first orchestral work before he was ten and actually had the nerve to submit it to the London Symphony Orchestra, with specific instructions that it should be played by **Yehudi Menuhin**.

Bell had the driest sense of humor, which of course made him hilarious to watch. In *Chieftains* shows, he would dress formally in a usually crumpled gray suit, complemented by completely clashing socks-usually either argyle or Warner Brothers’ Cartoon Characters. He recorded several solo albums where even there you got an idea of what the guy was like. One of those albums, on which he played all the instruments, was called “Derek Bell Plays With Himself.”

At a *Chieftains* show in Scottsdale in 2001, when **Paddy Maloney** introduced Derek between songs, he mentioned that Derek had just bought a house that he was really proud of. Bell responded by pulling out a photo album of 4-by-six prints of the house, which no one, even in the first row, could possibly see, and which he kept holding up whenever he

wasn’t busy playing something on stage.

No doubt Bell’s spot in the *Chieftains* will be covered by another fine musician, but he will never be replaced. To get an idea of what Bell

was like in solo concert, check out the link at http://www.ananda.org/news/derek_bell.html
Tom Tuerff writes filk reviews for ConNotations. Send your stuff to the paper or bribe somebody to throw it through Tom’s front window.

Pointless Meanderings by Brandon Huigens

Ben Templesmith has no idea who Styx is.

Granted, this fact has no bearing on his intelligence; he is poised to become one of the most complete visual storytellers the medium has **ever seen**, ala Dave McKean and Ashley Wood, as evidenced by his hauntingly amazing artwork in the runaway independent comic (and soon, movie!) sensation, *30 Days of Night*.

It is, however, near impossible to imagine the prodigious Templesmith is unknowing of who, according to Adam Sandler in the movie *Big Daddy*, are the greatest rock group of all time. This impossibility is even harder to fathom, being as how his girlfriend’s name happens to be the same as a **great** Styx tune called *Lorilie*. “I don’t know who Styx is!” exclaimed the incredulous 24 year-old Australian native, not aware of the keen importance of what is undeniably one of modern American music’s most influential and important rock bands.

However, shortly thereafter, the bombshell just described was blown away by Templesmith’s announcement of this exclusive bit of comic gold: there is currently a sequel in the works to the pulse-pounding horror extravaganza, *30 Days of Night*. “Steve Niles and I will be doing a six issue mini-series that will be out sometime next year,” revealed the artist during his recent appearance for ACTOR at Samurai Comics in Phoenix, Arizona. Asked why he felt there was more to tell about the events in Barrow, Alaska, here’s Ben: “It ends in a way that lends itself to finding out how several of the key characters and events pan out. Steve has a brilliant little follow up

percolating in his head, let me tell you. Plus, it means I get to do something for the coolest independent publisher out there, IDW. The story will pick up a little after the events in Barrow. Not directly after I think...but we’ll see the ramifications of what that event had on several of the survivors, put it that way.”

For those of you that had a tough time tracking down the aforementioned acclaimed three-issue mini-series *30 Days of Night*, an incredibly creepy horror story about vampires striking in Alaska just hours before the city would be without sun for 30 days.

One could order this splendid series in the limited-edition trade paperback, due out in January with a **free** autographed bookplate from Templesmith and writer Steve Niles, from www.samuraicomics.com, if one were so inclined...

Though Templesmith wasn’t at liberty to talk much about the plot of the sequel, he was candid about his enjoyment of co-creating the series with long-time comics scribe Steve Niles.

“Steve came up with the story,” he explains, “and I came up with all the character designs-Steve just chose the ones he liked. It was a lot of fun to illustrate such a complete collaboration. He writes it, then I draw it, then Steve goes back and reworks the script sometimes to better fit the art. Not al the time, but sometimes. Oh, and we discuss stuff all along the way. It’s a very organic thing really.”

Mr. Templesmith is a new breed of artist-as opposed to the classic approach, which has consisted of a collaborative art team that can be 3 or 4 people, Ben himself is responsible for the **entire** artistic process, and is ridiculously proficient all media: acrylic and water painting, pencils, inks, textures, and colors. His favorite part of the entire creative process, as will be illustrated soon in *Cal McDonald*, a gritty crime-driven detective story penned by the aforementioned Mr. Niles, is the computer process in which he uses several programs (and tons of Photoshop) to texture and layer his art. Why the predilection for the computer stuff? And

(Cont’d on page 16)

Things For Thinkers!

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Things for Thinkers

Pointless (cont'd from page 15)

how does he make it look so damn lovely?

“How does an artist use a brush? It’s not that easy to explain, same with computer work. That’s actually about a 23 part question you know. Which I can’t answer here really, and would change for every piece I do anyway!

Computers just give you a bit more flexibility, the chance to do some things you can’t in the real world as such. They’re just another tool though.”

As a member of the comics community, Templesmith has an excellent working knowledge of his peers, and cites mixed-media greats Ashley Wood and Dave McKean, his favorite artist, as a few of his influences. Templesmith made clear his love for McKean’s work, as he danced lustily around after the idea was suggested that he and a friend watch McKean’s hard-to-find short films. He then cemented his deep-rooted affection for the Sandman cover artist with a few flattering (read: PG-13, and remember, he’s got a girlfriend, fellas) words: “Dave McKean gives me an erection. I think it has something to do with the beard. Or it could be that he’s also one of the industry’s most mainstream artists...in the true sense, not the bastardized superhero term of ‘mainstream’. Look at the sheer amount of work he has out there in the public eye.

And yes, his films were brilliant little pieces.”

A pretty rewarding career is what this fine young man has, yes? *30 Days of Night, Hellspawn, Cal McDonald, Fused*, secret projects for big publishers...the guy is in demand. Oh, he’s aware of it too, but he stays humble and kind, and enjoys his job, as he should. “Well, not all the time,” argues Ben lightly. “The people I’ve met since starting work [have been the most rewarding experience to come out of working in comics]. Both on a professional and a personal level, have been absolutely amazing. That to me is the most rewarding aspect. To meet people who love the medium as much as I do, and think the same as I do too.”

How about getting to know the real man behind the soon-to-be superstar persona? Here’s Ben on:

The Crocodile Hunter: “[He’s annoying because] that’s pretty much your only access point into what Australians are like over there really...I mean, it’s him or Croc Dundee, eh? He’s a moron and we’re nothing like him really. I mean, what would it be like if all we knew about the US was from Steve Urkle? That would suck. That said, the Croc Hunter has made a ton of money. He’s a smart guy. More power to him.”

What he wants his fans to know, and what he wants to achieve in comics: “Christ, I have fans?? All 4 of them need to know I value their readership! Hmm, as for the other bit... I think I’d like to eventually just work on something a little different...something a decade from now people might sit up and say ‘ hey, you know, that thing was something no one had done before. A tad ambitious I guess...I’ll stick to just learning the ropes for now I think.”

Why he likes to flip everyone off: “Flipping off gets you many more facial expressions than a boring old happy snap-think about it. Smiling just because you’re having your photo taken is a stupid and deceptive convention I think!

They didn’t do it in the old days you know. Think what we’d think of Lincoln if he was showing a big toothy grin instead of his more somber expression! The horror!”

What he does after his instant-coffee-laden 20 hour workdays: “I don’t know...I’m looking for a new hobby, I guess! I like traveling, spending time with loved ones, and just sleeping.

His first encounter with legendary underground cartoonist Jim Mahfood: “Jim Mahfood tried to kill me in LA! I’d just visited a comic shop after I went to meet with Sam Raimi’s guys and he almost ran over me and Steve Niles!”

On his future endeavors as a writer: “What people don’t know about me is that I’m top-schooled in English, so someday I would like to write my own stuff. Of course, I don’t get paid for that yet, so I’ll stick to the art for now.”

On working with ACTOR: Well, I was happy to help. Hope it made a little cash for them.

On Foster’s beer: “None of us drink that crap-you know that, right?”

All in all, Templesmith is proving to be an incredibly talented creator with an intensely bright future, and he’s also a great example of what’s right with comics and the people involved in creating them.

Now, if someone would only send him a copy of that Styx album...

Go look at these related spectacular websites for more: www.templesmitharts.com (mmmm...mousepads and other cool stuff)

www.actorcomicfund.org (A Commitment To Our Roots is a great way to help retired comics creators make a living after comics and get forays into more paid comics work-find out how you can help)

www.steveniles.com (Check out what Steve’s got to say about these two’s next projects)

www.styxworld.com (Buy Ben a poster or something)

www.idwpublishing.com (*30 Days of Night* publishers churn out other cool stuff like *Lurid*)

www.spawn.com (Find out when the next issue of *Hellspawn* ships so you can order it from Samurai)

www.weapon6.com (It’s the guy who discovered Ben Templesmith! Read about the world-renowned graphic artist and former McFarlane art director Brent Ashe as he explains the difference between a “Hot Carl” and a “Cold Karl”. You might have to pay to find out about “Warm Karl”, though...)

My Bio Column (By popular demand because of a fiercely engaging bio on Samurai Comics” web page...)

Sometimes, when I’m sitting around not doing much, I write a few pretty useless things that other people do not get to, and should not, read.

This, of course, is not one of those things.

It’s a bio about me and why I write this column, and it provides a deluge of vital information that, while fantastically engaging and delightful, pertains to no one at all except me. Enjoy!

Name and Age: Hunky Brandon N. Huigens, age 24.

Occupation: I’m just a guy who

volunteers at a comic shop. My career aspirations include stand-up comedy, journalism, creating my own comics and winning awards for my efforts, and sports broadcasting (my ESPN catch-phrase will be: “Holy Calamity!”in honor of cartoonist legend Jim Mahfood). But I’m pretty lazy and stand offish about actual adult responsibility, so again, I volunteer at a comic shop.

Base of Operations: I live in Phoenix, AZ, and since I’ve never owned a car, I really can’t move anywhere else. Luckily, I am one of three people I personally know who enjoy living here, so that’s something.

Career highlight: One time, while I was hosting karaoke, I sang Neil Diamond’s Brother Love’s Travelin’ Salvation Show to a surprisingly spry packed house of seven old guys drinking double Manhattans. After the song ended, one of the said old ‘uns, an inebriated fellow wearing a shoddy denim jacket and a stringy salt-and-pepper-colored beard, tossed a bottle at me. Luckily it missed me, but it struck me deep inside to know the disdain of my fair-weather fans. In compensation for my damaging emotional suffering, I ingested several free refreshing beverages and switched to singing Poison’s heart-wrenching power ballad Every Rose Has It’s Thorn 14 consecutive times until every ancient drunkard left irritated.

Oh, yeah: a comic store highlight? I got to sit next to Jim Mahfood for six hours while he did a signing at our store and he thought my Chihuahua puppy (Alex P. Keaton) was a gerbil and I introduced him to James Kochalka Superstar’s magically ingenious musical album *Monkey Vs. Robot* (go to www.mp3.com to get some samples of his music). Sweet!

Why I write a weekly column: Ya know how some people just like to hear themselves talk? Well, that’s me, only with writing. And I love comics.

Why I love comics: Greatest, most diverse medium of entertainment ever. More fun than movies and video games, and just as fun as eating Fritos with Tabasco sauce in bed when my girlfriend says I’m not supposed to. Plus, I love being ridiculed by people who don’t understand me or my hobby, and it’s nice to share sarcastic and saccharin-like banter with (some of , not all of, and namely, none of) the local news reporters who come in once a year, every year, with the ground-breaking and original angle: “Comics aren’t just for kids anymore.”

Following are a couple of short lists of comics-related things I like, so you’ll know if you should bother reading this column in the future if you didn’t happen to enjoy, oh, say...- Transmetropolitan (So long, Spider...I saw your midget version in Punisher #16.) - - James Kochalka’s Sketchbook Diaries (every four panels are a Wes Anderson movie.) - Breakfast After Noon (Andi Watson is the nicest man on earth and his comics are amazing.) - Preacher (Ennis&Dillon’s opus would be a Tarantino masterpiece.) - Powers (Nail-biting crime-noir and hilarious hero hyjinx from Bendis and Oeming.) - 100 Bullets (Grittier than your uncle Dick’s calloused hands and dirty fingernails. Azzarello and Risso are approaching status as my favorite ongoing creative

team of all time.) - Barry Ween, Boy Genius (Funniest read in comics. Period.) - Amazing Spiderman (Straczynski and then Smith? New super-hard-to-beat bad guys and maybe a few cameos of confused young Jay Phatbuds-yeah, that’s Mewes’ actual movie last name. Can’t get any better...)

- Ultimate Spiderman (Unless it’s Bendis having Mary Jane rip Petey’s heart out. Um, metaphorically.)

- Stray Bullets (“Cool Beans!” is what he wrote on my #1 at the last San Diego Con. One of comics’ most twisted guilty pleasures that actually involve a lot of intelligence.)

- Optic Nerve (Adriane Tomine really knows what’s going on-eerily perfect life perspectives jump out at you from the pages.)

- 40 oz. Comics (Jim Mahfood drew me a sketch of Smoke Dog in the Spider-man costume!)

A bunch of creators I like: - Brian Michael Bendis, Judd Winick, Kevin Smith, Woody Allen (He’s really , influenced my writing.), Scott Morse, Mike Huddleston, James Kochalka,, Greg Rucka,, Stan Lee, Peter David, Andi Watson, Mike Allred, Joe Matt, Daniel Clowes, Wally Wood and Will Eisner Ernest Hemingway (Whatever. You know they did a Classics Illustrated of The Old Man and the Sea.)

One thing I can contribute to comics: I’d like to write a mini-series for Vertigo featuring the entire battered and long-forgotten Legion of Super Pets taking a vacation from being super heroes and hitting Las Vegas. Virgin apple martinis, and Triumph the Insult Comic Dog vs. Streaky the Super Cat in a death-defying, martial arts super-fight extravaganza on top of the Empire State Building even though the series is set in Las Vegas would pepper the pages as just a few of the plethora of highlights in this unwritten masterpiece. I also have an idea about the life of a villainous vigilante of an old woman that drives around your hometown and has all the cars in the handicapped spots towed. You’ve got a huge to-go order at a downtown chain restaurant and its’ 12:30pm on Friday. What do you do? What do you do?!

My intentions regarding this column are simply to have fun talking about comics and trying to pass along as much useful information as I can in order to help educate new and old readers alike just a little more about comic books.

And also to be discovered by Wizard magazine, then by a small but dedicated group of eclectic fans, then by Oni Press, then by the Eisner Awards, and then by the people within comics that I admire.

That would be nice. So are you for reading this column. See you next time.

The Costume Closet



The Versatile A-Line Robe by Randall Whitlock

Wizards, Jedi Masters, monks, and alien ambassadors with uncounted legs all seem to wear long, flowing robes. This is one of the simplest and most versatile garments you can make for your hall costumes.

Described below is a simple A-line robe you can lay out without a pattern, using a yardstick, chalk, and string. Add features and details as appropriate. As the name would suggest, an A-line robe follows a straight sideline from the

underarm to the hem, with no defined waist in itself. You can create a waistline by wearing a belt or sash.

Material: Your choice of fabric will depend upon the costume you wish to create. Monk and Jedi costumes work best with coarse-textured materials like linens, thick wools, and cotton calcutta. Wizards may dress bright or dull, according to the fantasy culture of their origin. Aliens might wear bright colors and shimmery textures. Desert dwellers (like AZ con goers) may favor lightweight, breathable fabrics. I've made monk robes of cotton terrycloth for the walk to the showers at camping events. Use bargain rack flannel for an extra-full bathrobe.

Any robe fabric should drape well. Stiff fabrics are not practical. 45-inch wide fabric will do for most of us, but use 60-inch wide where possible. You will need twice as much fabric as the distance from the nape of your neck to the floor, plus an extra half-yard for a hood. On my bod this works out to five yards. You can get a simple sleeve from the material left over from cutting the body. Other sleeve styles will need more fabric.

Measurements: Standing, measure the distance from the nape of your neck to the floor. We'll call this the total length (L). Measure L both down your back and your front. Use the longer of the two measurements. It's easier to raise the hem

later than to add material. Measure the sleeve length (S) from the back of your shoulder to your wrist. Measure your one-shoulder width (W) from the outside of your shoulder across your back to the nape of your neck. Measure your forehead circumference and divide this figure by 2 to get your neck diameter (N). Loose necks are best for robes. Measure your chest circumference wherever your body is widest, then add 10% for wearing ease to derive your body size (B).

The Body: Measure out 2L of fabric. Fold the fabric over from selvage edge to selvage edge. Most fabrics are stored folded on the bolt, so this fold line may already be pressed into the material. Fold the fabric again, lengthwise. You now have four layers of material L long by half the bolt wide. Mark the point where the two folds cross – it represents the nape of your neck. (See Figure 1)

Using chalk, mark a point on the top fold line, W from the long fold line. Scribe an arc from this point to a second point about eleven inches down from the top and ¼ of B in from the long fold line. This arc is your sleeve inset.

Pin a string to the top of the material at the nape point. Stretch out the string out to the raw edge of the material and use it as a compass to scribe an arc from the bottom of the fold line to the edges of the fabric. This arc is the hem of your

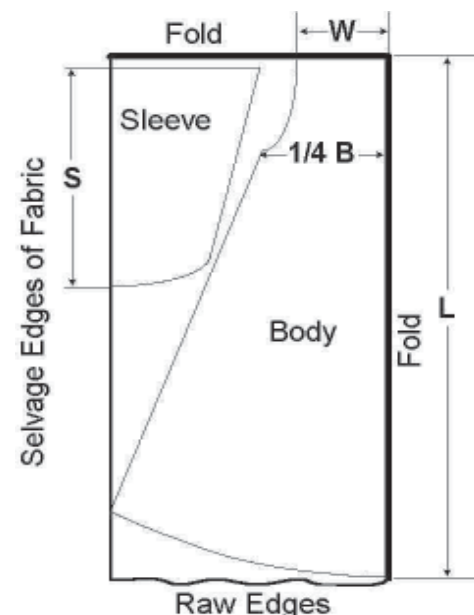


Figure 1

robe. Draw a straight line from the high end of this arc to the bottom of the sleeve inset. This line is the side of the robe.

Cut out the body along these chalk lines, cutting through all four layers of fabric.

Unfold the body. Use a drawing compass to scribe a circle of diameter N centered on the long fold line, a little down the front of the robe from the nape point, as shown on Figure 2. The circle

(Cont'd on page 18)

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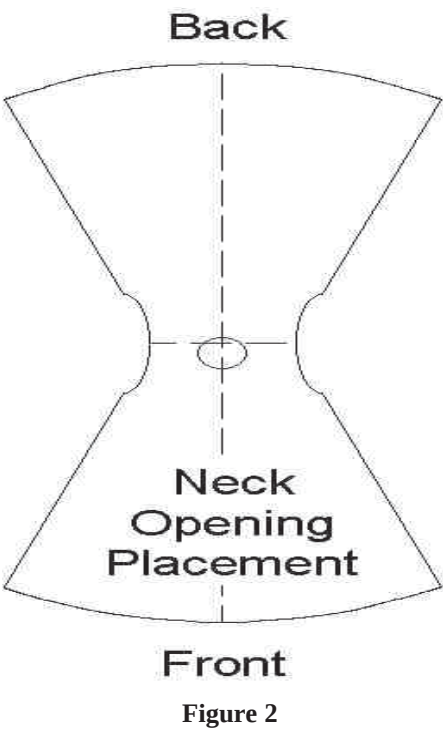
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...Fantasy is just the beginning...

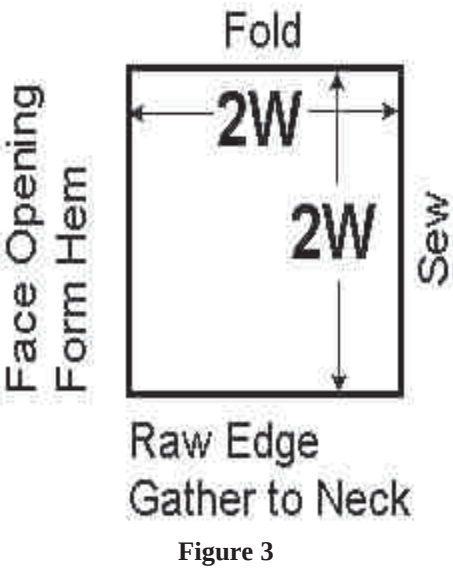
Costume Closet
(cont'd from page 17)

should extend about an inch above the nape point. The circle is your neck opening. Cut out the circle. (See Figure 2)



The Sleeve: There should be enough material left from cutting the body to make a simple flared sleeve, positioned as shown on Figure 1. Use the same curve you have drawn for the sleeve inset as the sleeve cap. Draw a line of length S from the top of the sleeve cap along the selvage edge of the fabric, then draw a cuff at right angles to the selvage edge as long as the material will allow. Draw a straight line from the bottom of the sleeve cap to the end of this line. Cut the sleeve out through all four layers of fabric Sew the two parts of each sleeve together along the fabric selvage edge. This forms the top of the sleeve. Roll the end of the sleeve over and sew to form the cuff. Sew the sleeve cap to the sleeve inset of the body.

The Hood: Most styles of robe call for a hood. You can form a very simple, full hood by cutting a rectangle of length 2W and width W. Fold over and sew one of the long sides to form a hem for the face opening. Fold the rectangle over lengthwise and sew from the fold to the unfinished end to form the back of the hood. The unfinished end will be the base of the hood. Gather the base of the hood to the cape's neck opening in pleats. This will make a big, draping, shoulder-wide hood. For an open-fronted robe, sew the hood to the neck before you finish the face opening. (See Figure 3)



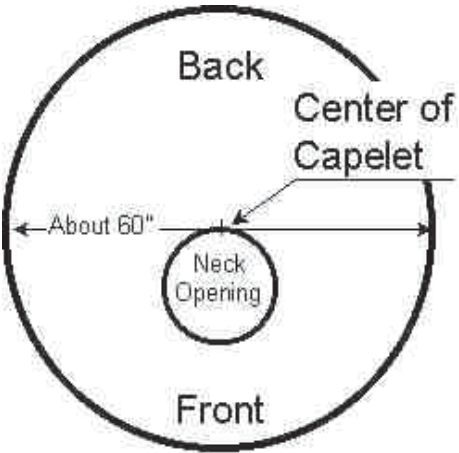
Finishing Up: Once the sleeves and hood are attached, finish the robe by forming side seams which run from the wrist, under the arm and down the body side to the hem. Finish the hem of the robe by turning under the edge and sewing. Keep the turnunder small to avoid puckering. For an open-fronted robe, cut the front body panel in half along the fold line, then turn these new edges under and sew.



Other Necks: You can also finish the neck with a standing collar, a circular flat facing, a keyhole neck, or many other possibilities. Apply a broad, scooped neckline and the robe becomes a practical medieval lady's gown.

Capelets: An excellent detail for a monkish or Cardinal Richelieu look is a circular capelet or shoulder cape. Cut a circle with a diameter between 24 and 60 inches. Cut a circular neck opening on your fabric circle the same size as the robe's neck opening. This circle should be on the front portion of the capelet, with its edge just touching the center of the

capelet. Sew the capelet to the robe's neck opening before you apply the hood. Finish the outside edge of the capelet by turning under and sewing, or by applying a trim.



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In Our Book

The Honorverse Disk
by David Weber et al
Included with War of Honor by David Weber
Baen Books, Hardcover, 864 pages,
\$26.00
Reviewed by Randall Whitlock

This is not a review of *War of Honor*, the latest novel in the saga of Honor Harrington, David Weber’s Hornblower-esque heroine of the Royal Manticoran Navy. I haven’t read it yet. For reasons made obvious below, I won’t get around to reading it for months. Don’t tell me any spoilers This is a review of the bonus material you get with *War of Honor*.The hardback edition comes with *The Honorverse Disk*, a CD ROM containing all ten of the Honor Harrington novels, the three Honor anthologies, the cover art for of all of the books, some blueprint art and maps, and three MP3 filk songs about Honor by Echo’s Children. The disk also contains complete e-books by ten Friends of Honor David Drake, Eric Flint, Michael Flynn, David Freer, Mercedes Lackey, Keith Laumer, Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle, John Ringo, and James H. Schmitz with as many as nine books or collaborations by some of the authors, and MP3 audio book samples by these and other authors. Appropriately, most of these fall into the Military SF category. The books by the late messrs Laumer and Schmitz are classics from the 1960s, including a collection of Retief stories and the entire Hub series. This is a whole freaking library for the price of one hardback!

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Take a Thief
By Mercedes Lackey
DAW, 435 pages, PB \$6.99
and
Exiles Honor
By Mercedes Lackey
DAW, 433 pages, HC \$24.95

In these two books, Mercedes Lackey revisits Valdemar where Heralds ride semi-magical companions (that look like horses but are not). She has taken two minor characters from previous books and looked at their backgrounds. In my

opinion these are not stand-alone books. If you have not read *Arrows of the Queen*, start there. If you are already a fan of Valdemar you will read these even though only one of them is good.

Take a Thief follows Skif from a very young orphan living in the lowest type of tavern owned by a nasty uncle to his first year of Herald training. This book is okay but it is shallow and I had a hard time suspending my disbelief on what such a young character can do. I also felt that this story creates a logic flaw in *Arrows*. I was sorry that it ended when it did, I would have enjoyed a second viewpoint of the *Arrow’s* story.

Exile’s Honor is a much more serious and thoughtful book dealing with loyalty and personal honor. The book covers Alberich’s story from his selection as a herald under fire (one might say) to the coronation of Selenay. This book is definitely worth reading and covers some of Valdemar history that has only been glimpsed before.

Recommendation: For fans of Valdemar, two more fixes for our addiction. For those who have not experienced Valdemar, start with *Arrows of the Queen*. - **Nora Rankin**

The Crow: Hellbound
by A.A. Attanasio
HarperCollins 2001, 237 pages, \$15.00

Hellbound is the last book in The Crow book franchise according to the book publisher. The book has the usual Crow elements. The bad guys kill good guy. The Crow brings back good guy from the dead. Dead man and Crow wreak vengeance on the evil.

In *Hellbound*, however this is a very minor part of the story. The familiar Crow elements aren’t tagged on just to justify this as being part of the Crow franchise (although it does walk the edge of that). The real story deals with the escape from hell and the salvation of a demon named Dren.

In the course of Dren’s escape and salvation he uses Billy (our dead guy) and the Crow in the battle against the demons sent by Satan to bring Dren back from Hell. Billy’s story is an interesting subplot of the novel but could be written without specifically needing the Crow elements to fit into the overall story.

I’d recommend this book, it is a very good read. I will warn you that if you read this book just because it is a Crow book you may find yourself disappointed. - **Rick Andrews**

The Queen’s Gambit
by Deborah Chester
Ace paperback, 464 pages, \$7.99

A follow-up novel to *The Sword, The Ring and The Chalice* trilogy, *The Queen’s Gambit* delivers a strong stand-alone romantic fantasy and a great introduction to the author. The Queen’s Gambit tells the tale of Princess Pheresa, a naive but ambitious niece of the King with his throne on her mind. When the king suddenly dies and Pheresa does ascend the throne, her new husband tricks

her into leaving the palace and attempts to usurp the throne. Her struggles to regain the crown and become a stronger ruler continue without resolution, but with much tension, until the very last page. A light, easy read for teens and adults. --**Allison Ewing**

Explorer
by C.J. Cherryh
DAW 2002, 408 pages, \$23.95

Explorer is the concluding volume in the second of the Foreigner trilogies by C.J. Cherryh. In this book the starship Phoenix has left station Alpha with a mixed crew of humans born on the Phoenix, humans from the colony on the *atevi* planet and *atevi* as well.

There mission is simple, they are returning to Reunion Station to remove any records that may have survived the attack by unknown aliens and rescue any possible survivors that were left on Reunion when Phoenix fled the attack.

On board the Phoenix is Bren Cameron human *paidhi* (translator) to the *atevi* ruler. With him are his *atevi* bodyguards and household staff. Also aboard are the *aiji*-dowager, mother of the current *atevi* ruler and his 7 year old son.

Bren must keep peace not only between the *atevi* on board but between the factions of humans as well. All is going relatively trouble free until Bren finds out that a now dead Captain of the Phoenix lied about the attack and

destruction of Reunion. Now facing the possibility of abandoned station personnel as well as a possible alien threat, Bren must convince a suspicious Senior Captain of the Phoenix to allow him to use his skills as *paidhi* to defuse the situation while trying to keep peace between all factions of human, *atevi* and unknown alien peoples.

Cherryh has once again written a great book. I highly recommend it. You should however read the other volumes in this series before you read *Explorer*. - **Rick Andrews**

The Way of Light
by Storm Constantine
TOR, 493 pages, \$27.95

This is the third book in a trilogy that began with *Sea Dragon Heir* and followed by *The Crown of Silence*. This is a grand epic of a power struggle between two dynasties for control of a world. The Malagash overthrew the Palindrakes generations before and forced the Dragon Heir to serve the Magravandian’s god. The women of the Palindrakes have kept the old ways alive in secret ceremonies to the Sea Dragon that accomplished nothing without the Dragon Heir and his wife, the Sea Wife. After a number of generations, an heir is born with the power to rule again if he can only be made to accept the crown. Through the preceding two books, we observe the

(Cont’d on page 20)

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ConNotations

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In Our Book (cont'd from page 19)

growth of the Dragon Heir, Valraven Palindrake and his sister, Pharinet, and their experience in attempting to resurrect the fabled Sea Dragon. Valraven is seriously disaffected by the experience that claimed the life of his first wife, Ellony. We also follow the fate of Valraven's best friend, Khaster, who becomes his greatest enemy. It is Khaster, though, who assembles the group who seek to serve the True King; although, there is some question whether Valraven is to be the True King or if it will be his son. On top of all this intrigue, is the Empress of Malagash, who seeks to put one of her sons on the throne and who knows more of the old ways of the Palindrakes than the Palindrakes themselves.

This third book traces the evolution of Valraven as he begins to see himself as the True King and what that means to both himself and his wife, the daughter of the old king, now deceased. Tatrini, the Empress, is still attempting to control events in order to put one of her more compliant sons on the throne. Her efforts to control her daughter, now married to Valraven, have come to naught so she moves her efforts to her grandson, the next Dragon Heir. This book also follows the adventures of Varencienne, Valraven's wife, as she is abducted by Khaster, a man she has always secretly loved. Their trials and travels cause both Varencienne and Khaster to reevaluate their values and goals. Both are significant to the outcome of who is to be King. Ms. Constantine does a very nice job bringing all the threads together for a very satisfying ending.

I felt I should read all the books before reviewing this third book. Seldom does one find a trilogy where any single book stands alone. And this is no exception. It is very necessary to read the entire trilogy to appreciate the resolution. Ms. Constantine has created a memorable roster of characters and a credible world. One has Dragons, Firedrakes, sorceresses, wizards and apprentices, magic talismans and mystical lakes in these books. The author attempts a great deal by introducing so many powerful characters who all require a great number of pages to explain themselves. One common pitfall is to introduce a character only to ignore it in favor of a different one and then carelessly reintroduce it, throwing the story off-stride. Ms. Constantine balances her characters quite well. This was a substantial story, well-written and characterized and I enjoyed every book.-
Catherine Book

White Apples
by Jonathan Carroll
Tor HC, 304 pages, \$24.95

If you've read any of Jonathan Carroll's novels, you'll find that *White Apples* falls right in line with his last few novels. Instead of tying in old characters or their relatives, we're introduced to new characters: Vincent the dead guy and his

girlfriend, Isabel, who also happens to be carrying their child—the would be savior of mankind. In *White Apples*, Carroll gives chaos a face, personality and an agenda—destroy the child, get Vincent back in the grave and maintain the consciousness he/it now possesses. The story is slow building and doesn't have the forward momentum as his other works have had. It follows in the same vein as his previous novels with his ever-increasing recurring themes of death and the meaning of existence, but lacks interesting characters and a directed plot. It's a different road—some of the landmarks are the same, but it keeps going without any turns and it's missing that sharp little turn at the end you've come to know and love. - **Allison Ewing**

Darwin's Children by Greg Bear
Del Rey Hardcover available April 1, 2003
368 pages, \$24.95 Also released on
Random House Audio

This is a direct sequel to Greg Bear's *Darwin's Radio* and forms a nearly continuous narrative with the previous book, set about ten years later. Here's the story so far:

Molecular biologist Kaye Rafelson, her husband archaeologist Mitch Rafelson, and CDC virus hunter Chris Dicken have discovered a new class of retroviruses hidden dormant in the human genome. Since these viruses are contagious when activated, they can cause massive evolutionary change in the transition from a single generation to the next. This is punctuated equilibrium, punctuated with an exclamation point! A pandemic of one such virus, called SHEVA, has produced a generation of children far different from their parents. The New Children have enhanced abilities to communicate through a complex double-sound language, shifting skin pigmentation, and pheromones.

The story is woven of threads following each of the major characters Kaye, Mitch, their New Children daughter Stella, Chris, and master bureaucrat Mark Augustine. The new children have been rounded up and placed in special schools, really internment camps, because of popular and government fears that they may be sources of new infection. Augustine's Emergency Action department is on the brink of becoming a form of martial law.

This is hard SF at its hardest. The science is speculative, but consistent with the state of the art. The author provides a glossary of biological terms for easy reference to cutting-edge concepts, clearly delineating where current knowledge ends and his speculation begins. The scientific discoveries of the characters constitute much of the action of the story. The reasons behind this sudden change in humankind are speculated at in some of Kaye's very personal experiences, but the characters themselves never know for sure. Could it begin with a capital G? All in all I found it a good read, if not as gripping as the prior book. Definitely read *Darwin's Radio* first. - **Randall Whitlock**

Jaran
by Kate Elliott
DAW PB, 496 pages, \$7.99
Re-release—10th Anniversary

The 2002 release of *Jaran* is a tenth anniversary printing of this title. The new edition includes an introduction by the author wherein she describes this tale as "Genghis Kahn meets Jane Austen." *Jaran* is a romantic novel of a galactic princess who finds herself lost on a planet with a more primitive culture—pre-first contact. As she attempts to return to her own life, she finds a place among the Jaran, a nomadic people with a semi-matriarchal leadership, and falls in love. *Jaran* is a pleasant read for fans of romantic fantasy, but to non-fans it can seem like one very long horseback ride. . - **Allison Ewing**

The Briar King
by Greg Keyes
Del Rey HC, 560 pages, \$23.95
Released January 2003

The Briar King is the newest fantasy novel from Greg Keyes, formerly published as J. Gregory Keyes, author of the Age of Unreason series. *The Briar King* is full of lush scenery, intrigues, and unrequited love. When an ancient and terrifying evil resurfaces after thousands of years, it's up to mankind to discover the secrets of laying the evil back to rest in order to save itself. With his gift for diverse and interesting characters, Keyes brings to life a wide variety of heroes and villains to wage the war between good and evil, from bar wenches and low-born servants to studious monks and the royal families themselves. As the story unfolds you begin to see the connections between such entirely different personalities as they come together in order to fight their battles. *The Briar King* is a great start to what will be a four book series, and is a must-read for fans of traditional fantasy. - **Allison Ewing**

The Maquisarde
by Louise Marley
Ace HC, 400 pages, \$23.95
Released 12/03/02

The Maquisarde is a feminist power fantasy that lacks any emotion and garners no sympathy for its main protagonist. As a result of weak characters and a weaker plot, I couldn't bring myself to finish reading this book. The story begins with a young woman whose husband and small child are killed by terrorists and a corrupt government that covers up the killings and turns away her plea for help. In her grief, she is recruited by an anti-government movement and becomes a terrorist herself. However, the protagonist is so shallow, one-dimensional and weak that even the death of a small child evokes no emotional response. Leave this one on the shelf. - . - **Allison Ewing**

Orphans Of Earth
by Sean Williams and Shane Dix
ACE, 384 pages, \$7.50

Orphans of Earth is the sequel to *Echoes of Earth*. While *Echoes of Earth* was a fascinating and thought provoking novel, after 192 pages the only thought that *Orphans of Earth* has provoked in me is why am I wasting my time with this trash?The characters are self-absorbed and self centered. The action is minimal and I can see no reason why anyone who wrote as good a story as *Echoes of Earth* would be willing to put their names to something as terrible as *Orphans of Earth*.

The only reason I could recommend buying this book is if you needed a new doorstop. - **William B. Whitmore**

M.Y.T.H. Inc. in Action/
Sweet MYTH-tery of Life
by Robert Asprin
Ace, 357 pages,\$7.99

M.Y.T.H. Inc. in Action/ Sweet MYTH-tery of Life is the fifth of the "omnibuses" or Ace doubles. The introduction suggests that there will be two more stories to come. The first is a single, *Myth-ion Improbable* may already be out since one of the book sellers at CopperCon had it in stock.

Things got real hectic, and I had to send Guido and Nunzio, my bodyguards, off to Possiltum to counter Queen Hemlocks positive growth plan [ie: taking over the planet of Klahd] but little did I know what they would do when they joined the Possiltum Army. Maasha took up with General Badaxe again, Gleep almost toasted Tananda and by the time I got there, Queen Hemlock proposed to either marry me, or abdicate and name me king. Since her last husband died under mysterious circumstances, the choice seemed to be either a quick death, or a lingering death from tedium. So I sent for Bunny to find a fix for the approaching Bankruptcy of the kingdom and who could blame me if I developed a drinking problem or went planet hopping with a vampire vamp. I mean how can I make decisions with all that hanging over me. Fortunately the rest of the group seemed to be functioning. But I have to ask "is Gleep becoming sentient." - **Pam Allan**

Club Listings

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Please check your club listing for errors. Please send corrections and updates to the editor in writing or via email)

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

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

THE AWAY TEAM: The Away Team, is a general sci-fi appreciation group that

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

BASFA Baja Arizona Science Fiction Association, a non-profit organization. Puts on TusCon Convention annually. Webpage: <http://home.earthlink.net/~basfa> Email: basfa@earthlink.net

CENTRAL ARIZONA SPECULATIVE FICTION SOCIETY, INC. (CASFS) The non-profit corporation that puts on CopperCon conventions, SmurfCons, HexaCons, occasional

regional cons, and publishes Con-Notations. Best described as SF/F generalists with a strong bent towards literary SF/F. Guests welcome - meets at 8pm on the last Friday of each month in January thru September and the second Friday in October, November and December at JB's Restaurant, 2560 W. Indian School in Phoenix, AZ. Write PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 or call Stephanie L. Bannon (602)973-2341 for information. Web 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. As an organization, it is our goal to promote fellowship while researching lifestyles and trades concurrent with the Celtic Peoples from 400 BC until 1746 AD. Although most members claim Scots, Irish or Welsh ancestry and do Celtic reenactment, it is our intent to open participation to anyone with an interest in period crafting and entertainment, no matter what his/her ethnicity. The sense of being a real village surrounding Croft is vital to promote a feeling of family and fellowship which was a reality in earlier times. Croft is a family-oriented and kid-friendly organization. C.R.O.F.T. members can be found demonstrating in events such as the Highland Games, Scarborough Fair, and the Arizona Renaissance Festival. Web page <http://www.crofters.org>

www.crofters.org

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

DAYSTAR HOLT Arizona's first and longest-running Elfquest fan club. Daystar meets to talk about EQ and related stuff, develop characters, publish stories in our 'zine *Playelf* and create an annual calendar. Other common interests include music, belly dance, camping and of course, SF. Membership is free (18 or over) and is attained by group vote after you attend two meetings or holt-related get-togethers. Meetings are usually the first Saturday of each month; for more info, call Tom or Janice at (602) 581-2258. They have a website up at <http://members.home.net/jeanderson/daystarholt.html>

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,

(cont'd on page 22)

Leprecon, Inc.

Presents Two World Class Professional Conventions to be held in Phoenix in 2004!

WORLD HORROR CONVENTION 2004

APRIL 8-11, 2004

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Toastmaster: David Morrell

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Memberships are \$110 through 9/30/03, \$120 after

Room Rates: \$88 S/D/T/Q plus tax

For info, contact Chair Mike Willmoth at:

World Horror 2004, c/o Leprecon

P.O. Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285

Phone: (480) 945-6890

Fax: (480) 941-3438

Email: whc2004@leprecon.org

www.leprecon.org/whc2004

WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION

2004

October 28-31, 2004

Tempe Mission Palms, Tempe, Arizona

Guests To Be Announced

Memberships are \$100 through 4/30/03, \$110 after

Room Rates: \$155 S/D/T/Q plus tax

For info, contact Chair Mike Willmoth at:

World Fantasy 2004, c/o Leprecon

P.O. Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285

Phone: (480) 945-6890

Fax: (480) 941-3438

Email: wfc2004@leprecon.org

www.leprecon.org/wfc2004

Club Listings (Cont'd from page 21)

Events (Feasts, Tournaments, Ceremonies and Wars) and Combat Arts covering the years of 800AD up to 1650AD and any location within Europe or its explored territories. For more information contact Bart Smith (Phoenix) (602)937-6995 or Leonard Bird (Tucson) (520)742-2432 Web: www.galandor.org

THE JEDI KNIGHTS Meetings are the 3rd Sunday of each month. For more information call Carol Alves, Publicity, (760)244-9593 or write Jedi Knights, c/o Jim Lowerre, 12291 Meade Street, Garden Grove, CA 92841-3629

LEPRECON, INC. One of the two Phoenix area corporations that put on yearly con-ventions. Best described as SF/F gene-ralists 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@compuserve.com www.lepercon.org

MIB The Men in Black is the official organization of field operatives for Steve Jackson Games. They attend local conventions to demonstrate and promote products of Steve Jackson Games. The also schedule demos in local gaming stores. If you have a gaming store or convention that you would like to have official Steve Jackson Games representation at, please contact the MIB Arizona Cell Leader at justjessie@mindspring.com.

ORANGE COUNTY SCIENCE FICTION CLUB meets last Wednesday of every month (except Dec.) We frequently have author guest speakers. You're all welcome to come if you're in the area. We meet in Fullerton, about 5 miles north of Disney-land. For more details ph. Greg at [949] 552-4925 or send a message to our listserve OCSF@yahoogroups.com

PAReX is a non-profit, just for fun organization dedicated to the proliferation of robotics as a hobby. Monthly meetings will be held and will be announced under the Meeting Information page, <http://www.parex.org/meetinfo.htm>. All interest-ed persons are invited to participate. We are currently in the process of getting organized and becoming an official organization with tax status. Web page: <http://www.parex.org/> E-mail Contact: John Kittelsrud, johnkit@teamdroid.com

THE PHOENIX FANTASY FILM SOCIETY A Phoenix based club interest-ed in the entire realm of SF, Fantasy and Horror film. PFFS has been in existence for 25 years, meeting every 6 weeks in mem-ber's homes. Dues are \$10 per year. Mem-bership includes newslet-

ters, an annual film awards and various outings. For information, contact PFFS, P.O. Box 34023, Phoenix, AZ 85067 or call David Storck at (602) 274_7404, e_mail: Menzeez@aol.com.

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

RAW GAMES (Role-players & Wargamers, Inc.) Role-players & Wargamers, Inc. is the Valley's oldest role-playing and wargaming club. Currently meeting at 8159 W. Weldon in Phoenix every Sunday from 3pm-9pm (except during conventions and other special events). Open to new members - call (602) 849-9515. WWW.rawgames.org

REBEL LEGION - JUNDLAND OUTPOST The Jundland Outpost is a small band of Rebels which form a part of the rapidly growing Rebel Legion. While it's main focus is Star Wars costuming, much like it's 501st counter-part the Dune Sea Garrison, the Jundland Outpost's mission is to brighten up the lives of children and Star Wars fans of all ages across the Phoenix Metro area and eventually other parts of Arizona as well. Members also make appearances with other Star Wars organizations as part of a joint effort to help with Charities and events around Arizona. If you have an event you would like us to appear at, please contact us at azrebellion@cox.net.

SCIENCE FICTION CONTINUUM The Science Fiction Continuum: An Independ-ent Star Trek and Sci-Fi club in

Phoenix, AZ. The SFCOM is an active club that participates in Local Phoenix, and South-western Star Trek and Sci-Fi conven-tions and movies. The SFCOM has three differ-ent divisions. The SFCOM itself, a free group where fun is the name of the game. The Deep Space SolarFlare (DSSF) an active member club

in the International Federation of Treker's (IFT). This group is based on DS9 (a space station). And the IKV Sto-Vo-Kor (Independent Klingon Vessel). A Klingon Bird of Prey, roaming the desert looking for battle. Are the Fed's too soft, looking for combat, feel the call to glory. This is the ship for you. Member-ship in the SFCOM is free! To join DSSF or the Sto-Vo-Kor a nominal fee for the national clubs involved and uniforms. For further information contact President John Nelson at (602) 409-7169 or on the internet at; BNelson502@aol.com or check out our web site. <http://www.thesfcom.com>

SFACE (Speculative Fiction And Computer Enthusiasts) Phoenix College's one and only connection to the worlds of speculative fiction, including science fiction, fantasy, and horror as well as table top, live action and internet gaming, SFACE also serves as a guide through the Internet - both teaching basic use and utilizing as a source of speculative fiction. For more info contact Dr Ray Bromley at bromley.ray@a1.pc.maricopa.edu. The SFACE Web site is found at <http://www.pc.maricopa.edu/departments/studentact/organizations/sface/>

SHADOWKEEP BBS Intelligent conver-sation, awesome graphics, stupendous door games, unworldly filebank, RPG forums, QWK message system and online RPG BBS-mode-rated games! Our BBS is mainly RPG oriented and we offer many services to GMs and players. No fees neces-sary for users who post intelligent messages! \$5 in credits to new users. Over 20 conferences and 10 doors to choose from! Shadowkeep BBS - PCBoard 15.2/M - US Robotics 28.8 Modem. Phoenix, AZ (602)245-0919; Connect at 2400-28800

THE SOCIETY FOR CREATIVE ANACHRONISM The kingdom of

Atenveldt doth lie in the state of Arizona. Within the fair kingdom can be found six Baronies: Atenveldt, Mons Tonitrus, Twin Moons, SunDragon, Tir Ysgithr and Ered Sul. For more information on any of these or for general information on thy past tomorrows thou mayest contact Mistress Myrddina o Dolwyddelan (Terry Schwartz) PO Box 584, Sonoita AZ 85637 (520)455-5835 Email: myrddina1@aol.com www.atenveldt.org

THE 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 Conven-tion masquerades. They meet on the last Sunday of each month at various mem-bers' homes in the greater Phoenix area. For details. Southwest Costumers Guild, PO Box 39504, Phoenix, AZ 85609 or call Randall Whitlock at costumers@casfs.org or www.southwestcostumersguild.org

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

STARBASE TUCSON Tucson Arizona based Star Trek club. For info call Geof

(cont'd on page 23)

FACEPAINTING

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eocenepainting@aol.com

602-992-3414

Club Listings (Cont'd from page 22)

Wood at (520) 746-1822 or write Star-base Tucson; 3314 E. Benson Hwy; Tucson AZ 85706. Email: pegasis409@aol.com

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

TARDIS is a Phoenix-based General SF/Fantasy Fan Club, specializing in International media SF/Fantasy since 1983. TARDIS meets every two weeks at different locations around the valley. Activities include watching videos, discussions, parties, fund-raisers, auc-tions, games, camping trips and outings. We also maintain an active presence at local conventions. TARDIS publishes a monthly inform-ative news-letter, *The Index File*, with a national circulation which is included with mem-bership. Annual membership is just \$12.50. You can contact us at 2243 W Wagon Wheel Dr, Phoenix, AZ 85021, Voice Mail at (602) 864-0901, E-mail TARDIS-Info@primenet.com or visit <http://www.primenet.com/~jgeorge/tardis.html>

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

T.H.E.M. is ASU's science fiction and fantasy club. Weekly meetings are held on the Arizona State University campus, with dates and places to be announced after the semester starts. For more information, contact Erik Wennstrom, email: ew@asu.edu Phone: 480-968-5257.To subscribe to our listserve, send a message to them-request@asu.edu.

TUCSON FAN ALLIANCE E-Mail Address is Bkoehler@Juno.com or DMitchell1@Juno.com.

USS STORMBRINGER The Storm-bringer is a correspondence Star Trek fan club chapter of Starfleet, Intl. based out of Tucson AZ. The chapter was commis-sioned as the USS Stormbringer NCC-74213, attached to Division 31, Starfleet Covert Operations, on 10/31/98. As of 11/

29/98 there were 32 members. There are no dues other than the \$15 for joining Star-fleet Intl.. Members are scattered world wide but the primary clusters are in Tucson, AZ and Plano, TX. They don't meet on a regular basis since they are a correspondence chapter. Their web site is: <http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Vault/9505/> and their contact/CO is Capt. Dave Pitts, thepitts52@hotmail.com.

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

UNITED FEDERATION OF PHOE-NIX 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 25 years of continuous activity. Dues are \$15/per year prorated when you join; no restrictions. Membership includes membership roster and monthly newslet-ter. 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

WESTERN SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION (WesternSFA) A non-profit corporation that sponsors the ConRunners seminars and is sponsoring the 2004 Westercon. Dedicated primarily to educational activities relating to literature, music, and visual and perform-ing arts, especially in the genres of 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 applica-tion fee. General Meetings are held on the first Friday of February, May, August and November, usually at the home of a member. Guests are welcome. For more info contact Craig Dyer at WesternSFA, PO Box 87457, Phoenix AZ 85082, (602) 973-2341, Email: craig@westernsfa.org. Webpage: www.westernsfa.org

Convention Listings

ConRunners 4 (Phoenix AZ) Feb 8, 2003 Embassy Suites North, 2577 West Greenway, Room 3005 A day long seminar on fan-run science fiction conventions. Are there things you would like to see at local conventions? Have you ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes in planning a convention? Then this is the place for you! Come, let your ideas be heard and pick up some tips from others. Registration opens at 8:30AM. Our Morning Session will be from 9AM to 1PM and the topic is Registration.

Lunch Break 1PM-2PM Afternoon Session 2PM to 6PM Topics: TBA We will provide soda, coffee, tea and light munchies Membership: \$15 For more info: ConRunners, PO Box 67457, Phoenix AZ 85082 or call 602-973-2341 ConRunners@westernsfa.org www.westernsfa.org

Gallifrey One Episode XIV: The Faction Paradox - (Los Angeles, CA) Feb 14-17, 2003 The Airtel Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles, CA Guests: Colin Baker, Sylvester McCoy + many more Memb: \$30 thru 5/31/02, \$35 thru 8/31/02, \$40 thru 11/30/02, \$45 thru 1/31/03 and \$50 at the door. Info: Gallifrey Conventions, Post Office Box 3021, North Hollywood, CA 91609 Email: info@gallifreyone.com

ConDor X - February 28-March 1, 2003 DoubleTree Hotel Del Mar, San Diego, CA Guests: TBA DoubleTree Hotel Del Mar, 11915 El Camino Real, San Diego, CA 92130; 1-800-222-TREE, 858-481-5900; rms: \$99 sngl/dbl. Memb: \$25 until 8/31/02; \$30 until 11/30/02; \$35 until 1/31/03. Info: Con-Dor, PO Box 15771, San Diego, CA 92175; Info@ConDorCon.org.

LepreCon 29 (Phoenix, AZ) May 16-18, 2003 Embassy Suites Phoenix North, Phoenix, AZ Artist GoH: Larry Elmore; Local Artist/Author GoH: Madame M; Media Technical Guest: Richard Coyle; Author Guest: TBA; Music Guest: TBA Memb: \$25 until 8/31/02, \$30 until 12/31/02 Hotel: info: Embassy Suites Phoenix North, 2577 W. Greenway Road, Phoenix, AZ 85023-4222, (602)375-1777 Room Rates: \$89 S/D, \$99 T/Q (plus tax) Info: LepreCon 29, P.O. Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285 Phone: (480)945-6890 Email: lep29@leprecon.org Web: www.leprecon.org

CopperCon 23 (Phoenix, AZ) Sept 5-7, 2003 Embassy Suites North, Phoenix, Arizona Guests: TBA Embassy Suites Phoenix North, 2577 E. Greenway Rd, Phoenix, AZ (602) 375-1777. Rooms: \$79 + tax S/D, \$89 + tax T, \$99 + tax Q Info: CopperCon 23, PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082, Phone (480) 423-0649, Email: cucon@casfs.org; www.coppercon.org

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ConKopelli, Westercon 57 (Litchfield Park, AZ) July 2-5, 2004 Wigwam Resort, Litchfield Park, AZ Guests: Author GoH: C.J. Cherryh; Artist GoH: David Cherry; Music GoH: Heather Alexander ; Fan GoH: John Hertz Info: Arizona in 2004 PO Box 67457 Phoenix, AZ 85082 Email: info@conkopelli.org Web: <http://www.conkopelli.org>

Generic Convention Registration Form

Name:_____

Badge Name:_____

Address:_____

City/State/ZIP:_____

Phone:_____ Email:_____

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

(See calendar for mailing address)

More info on __ Masquerade __Art Show __Volunteer __ Other

Book Festival
FULL PAGE

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