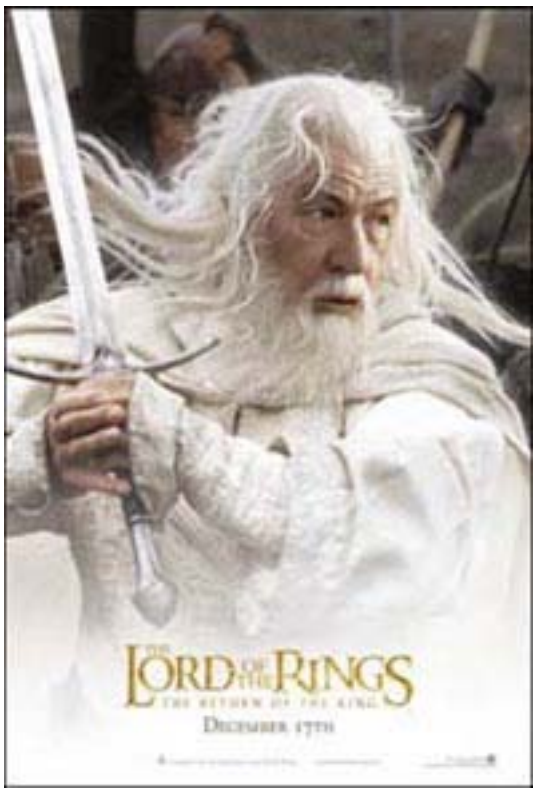
ConNotations

Volume 13, Issue 6
December/January
2003/2004

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

Lord of the Rings Mania
by Lee Whiteside

You've seen the first two ***Lord of the Rings*** movies many times in the theatres, and bought all the DVD releases so far, theatrical and extended. But your home video system just doesn't do them justice and you'd really like to have the big screen experience fresh in mind before you see the third movie. Well, New Line Pictures is making it possible for you to see the extended versions of the first two movies, ***The Fellowship of the Ring*** and ***The Two Towers*** on the big screen. For a lucky few across the country, they will be able to watch the extended versions of both movies the same day they see the third movie, ***The Return of the King***, for the very first time as part of Trilogy Tuesday.



New Line set up 99 theatres in the United States to have one screen only per theatre dedicated to the special screenings. Even though the Trilogy Tuesday screening will be on a weekday, the demand for those tickets was very strong when they went on sale on October 9th (now dubbed Ticket Thursday). A week prior to that date, New Line announced the screenings on their web site and the date that tickets would go on sale. Fans were frantic to find out how they could get tickets before

(Cont'd on page 5)

Featured Inside

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

24 Frames
All the latest Movie News
by Lee Whiteside

ConClusion
Las Vegas ComicCon

Pointless Meanderings
News and Reviews
from the world of comics and Anime
by Brandon Huigens

Videophile
Reviews of genre releases
on DVD and VHS

Screening Room
Reviews of current theatrical releases

In Our Book
Reviews of New SF/F Books

Musty Tomes
Reviews of Classic Genre books

Special Features
Lord of the Rings Mania
by Lee Whiteside

Jinxed, Hexed, or Cursed:
How I ruined Harlan Ellison's return to Arizona, Part 1
By Shane Shellenbarger

The Matrix Trilogy
by Bob LaPierre

Hotel Vendome
A Paranormal Experience
by Dawn Mullan

In Memorium
Hal Clement
Diane Elliott
Lloyd Arthur Esbach
Darlene Rutherford

Plus our Regular Features:
CASFS Business Report
Event Calendar
Area events, TV premires, DVD & Movie releases
FYI
News and tidbits of interest to fans
Club Listings
Convention List &
Generic Registration Form

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

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

Pick up your copy of ConNotations at the following locations

BOOK STORES

Bent Cover
12428 N 28th Drive, Phoenix, AZ 85029
(602)942-3778
Book Adventure
660 N Gilbert Rd, Suite B, Gilbert AZ 85234
(480) 892-2120
Book Connection
6434 S McClintock, Tempe AZ
(480) 820-2953
Book Exchange Plus
2601 E Bell #14, Phoenix, AZ
(602) 867-1018
Book Exchange
4320 N Miller Road #F, Scottsdale, AZ
85251 (480)990-8380
Book Gallery
3643 E Indian School Rd, Phoenix AZ 85018
(602)468-0400
Bookmaster
2949 N Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85251
(480) 423-0501
10818 N Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale, AZ
85254 (480) 998-0606
Books
9201 7th Ave, Phoenix AZ 85021
(602) 678-4576
The Bookstore
4230 N 7th Ave, Phoenix AZ 85013
(602) 279-3910
Borders Book Stores
2402 E Camelback, Phoenix, AZ
(602) 957-6600
870 N 54th St, Chandler, AZ
(480) 961-4915
1361 N. Alma School Rd., Mesa, AZ
(480) 833-2244
4555 E. Cactus Rd., Phoenix, AZ
(602) 953-9699
7320 W. Bell Rd., Glendale, AZ
(623) 487-9110
699 S Mill Ave, Tempe, AZ
(480) 921-8631
Changing Hands
6428 S McClintock Dr, Tempe, AZ 85283
(480)835-0505
Discount Book
3650 W Glendale Ave, Phoenix AZ
(602) 589-0188
Hardcover Haven
15440 N 35th Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85053
(602) 843-0845
Mesa Bookshop
50 W Main St, Mesa, AZ 85201
(480) 835-0757
Poisoned Pen Bookstore
4014 N Goldwater Blvd, Suite 101,
Scottsdale AZ 85251 (480)947-2974
Thirfty Joe's Books
6020 W Bell Road, Glendale AZ 85308
(602)547-2540

COMIC STORES

All About Comics
5060 N. Central, Phoenix, AZ
(602) 277-0757
Ash Avenue Comics & Books
810 S. Ash, Tempe, AZ (480) 858-9447
Atomic Comics
1120 S. Country Club, Ste. 105, Mesa, AZ
85210 (480)649-0807
4537 E Cactus, Phoenix AZ 85032
(602) 923-0733
3029 W Peoria, Suite CC, Phoenix, AZ
85021 (602)395-1066
3155 W Chandler Blvd #5, Chandler AZ
85226 (480)940-6061
Samurai Comics
5024 N 7th St, Phoenix AZ (602)265-8886
Stalking Moon Comics & Collectibles
5775 W Bell Rd #B-6, Glendale, Arizona
(602) 896-9992

GAME STORES

Amazing Discoveries
2545 E Speedway #155, Tucson, AZ
(520) 320-0338
Dragon's Lair
7611 W Thomas Suite G012, Phoenix AZ

Game Daze
2140 E 5th St #11, Tempe AZ 85281
(480)317-9181
Game Daze #1: Paradise Valley Mall, 4550
E Cactus Rd, #422, Phoenix AZ 85032
(602)494-4263
Game Daze #2 Superstition Springs Center,
6555 E Southern Ave #2026, Mesa AZ
85206 (480)981-4850
Game Daze #3 Scottsdale Fashion Square,
7014 E Camelback Rd #2117, Scottsdale AZ
85251 (480) 947-1101
Game Daze #4 Flagstaff Mall, 4650 N Hwy
89 #B2b, Flagstaff, AZ (520)645-0275
Game Daze #5 Park Place Mall, 5870 E
Broadway Blvd #258, Tucson AZ 85711
(520)745-0468
Game Daze #6 Chandler Fashion Mall,
3111 W Chandler Blvd #2416, Chandler AZ
85226 (480)-8997406
Game Depot
3136 S McClintock #11, Tempe, AZ 85282
(480) 966-4727
Game Keeper
Metro Center Mall, 9617 N Metro Pkwy
W., Phoenix AZ (602)944-2073
Game Keeper
7700 W. Arrowhead Towne Center
Phoenix, AZ (
Game Knights
3617 E Southern #8, Mesa AZ 85206
(480) 924-6899
Imperial Outpost
4920 W Thunder-bird, Glendale, AZ 85306
(602) 978-0467
PyramidComics & Games
108 West Fry Blvd, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635
(520) 458-2786
Things For Thinkers
4500 E Speedway Blvd #36, Tucson, AZ
(520) 326-7679
Waterloo Games
213 N Glibert Rd, Gilbert, AZ
(480)497-9554

OTHER ESTABLISHMENTS

Black Hearts Bazaar Noir
4433 N 7th Ave, Phoenix AZ 602-222-6644
Expresso Depot
One North First Street, Suite 105 - Phoenix
Madstone Theaters
5835 W Ray Road, Chandler AZ
McGurkee's Sandwich Shop
2822 N. 15th Ave, Phoenix, AZ
Pop Cultures Paradise
707 S Forest Ave #A, Tempe, AZ 85281
(480)557-6640
Pop The Soda Shop
2015 N Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale AZ
Rascals Comedy Club
100 North First Street, Phoenix AZ
Retro Rocket
1917 N Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale, AZ
Root Seller Gallery
1605 N 7th Ave, Phoenix AZ (602)712-9338
Toy Anxiety
10210 N 32nd St, Suite B3, Phoenix AZ
85028 (602)308-0292

In This Issue

News & Reviews
CASFS Business Report 2
SF Tube Talk 3
24Frames 3
Screening Room 8
Pointless Meanderings 9
FYI 10
ConClusion 10
Videophile 14
In Our Book (Book Reviews) 17
Musty Tomes 24

Special Feature
LoTR Mania
by Lee Whiteside 1
In Memorium 6
Harlan Ellison in Phoenix
byShane Shellenbarger 7
The Matrix Trilogy
by Bob LaPierre 10
Hotel Vendome
by Dawn Mullan 16

Convention & Fandom
Calendar of Events 13
Club Listings 22
Convention Listings 24
Convention Registration Form 24

CASFS Business Report

Greetings,

* CopperCon 24 announced that Alan Dean Foster will be its Author Guest of Honor. Catherine Wells will be the Local Author Guest of Honor.
* Long-time Dealers' Room regular Len Sippel died. The membership voted $50 to his burial fund or charity of choice.
* The membership voted to move the November CASFS meeting to November 21st to avoid conflicting with TusCon.
* The membership voted to make CASFS's organizational membership in SFWA a recurring expense, so we don't have to vote on it each year.

The New Guy

Who's Who This Issue

Managing Editor: Stephanie Bannon
Co-Editors: Sue Martin & Gary Swaty
Graphics Editor: Craig L. Dyer
Film & Video Reporter: Barry Bard, Chuck Cady
Proof Reader - Bob LaPierre
Calendar Editor: Mark Saint Cyr
Staff Writers: Pam Allen, Barry Bard Catherine Book, Charles Cady, Craig L. Dyer, Michael Griffin, Brandon Huigens, Sean Martin, Dawn Mullan, Shane Shellenbarger, Gary Swaty, Tom Tuerff, Lee Whiteside, Randall Whitlock, Mike Willmoth
Layout & Design: Stephanie L. Bannon
Advertising: OPEN
Keeper of the Mailing List: Craig L. Dyer and Doug Cosper
Contributors: Jacqueline Lichtenberg, Jeffrey Lu, Milly McCloskey
Labeling Crew for Volume 13 Issue 5: Catherine Book, Craig L Dyer, Ray & Pinkie Gish, Bob & Lori LaPierre, Sue & Jo Martin, J.B. Talbott, Bill Whitmore
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.

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

Publication: Publications dates are February, April, June, August, October & December. Publication date of this issue is 11/24/2003; mailing date is 12/08/2003
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: $175/Back cover, $120/full page; $80/two-thirds page; $60/half page; $40/one-third page; $30/one-fourth page; $20/one-eigth page. More information can be obtained by contacting Advertising, PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 Phone (602) 973-2341; Email: advertising@casfs.org
Submission Info: Writers and artists are encouraged to submit work for publication. While we cannot pay you for your efforts your work will be seen by over 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
Contact Information: ConNotations and its contributors can be contacted by mail at PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 or via email at editors@casfs.org

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 6
SUBSCRIPTION: $12 for 6 ISSUES

SF Tube Talk

TV News & Previews
By Lee Whiteside

We're through the fall sweeps and into the holiday break which means there won't be much in the way of new episodes of most shows over the next couple of months. The main exception is the SciFi Channel, which debuts it's much touted ***Battlestar Galactica*** mini-series in early December, and resumes season seven of ***Stargate SG-1*** in January. For most of the broadcast series, the next new episode we'll see won't be until January.

On ***Star Trek Enterprise***, the ongoing storyline with the Xindi has taken a few twists and turns along the way and looks to continue on through the next batch of episodes starting up in January. Ratings have been fair, but ***Smallville*** is definitely winning the battle of the netlets on Wednesday night. Look for new ***Enterprise*** episodes in January. In *Chosen Realm*, the Enterprise comes to the aid of a damaged Triannon ship which results in a group of religious zealots hijacking the ship intending to use it against the enemies of their faith. *Proving Ground* sees the Andorians turn up in the expanse with **Jeffrey Coombs** returning as Shran, who will reportedly help Captain Archer in an attempt to capture a Xindi weapon.

Following ***Enterprise***, UPN's ***Jake 2.0*** has been having mediocre ratings at best, but UPN has decided that they can live with them for the rest of the season and has given the series a full season order of 22 episodes. UPN entertainment president **Dawn Ostroff** said the decision to order a full season was based on ***Jake 2.0's*** creative success rather than its ratings performance. "***Jake 2.0*** is a fresh twist on the superhero genre, and we're really pleased with the quality of the show, the talented cast and the creative team behind it."

The WB has seen much success with moving ***Smallville*** to Wednesday, giving ***Angel*** a ratings boost as well. However, the ***Tarzan*** series on Sunday night has not fared well following ***Charmed*** and production has been shut down after eight episodes.

Upcoming on ***Angel*** there isn't much advance info and there may not be many episodes until February sweeps. Look to see an episode with Angel and/or Spike hallucinating in a mostly dream/alternate reality episode and also a storyline starting up dealing with a slayer or two.

Smallville should have a couple of new episodes in January. In *Asylum*, several former Kryptonite Freaks of the Week interred in an asylum team up to go after Clark. *Whisper* has a FOTW that can emit a banshee like scream and Clark has to deal with some eye problems. Pete Ross is featured more in this episode, including finally meeting his mother, a judge.

Elsewhere on the broadcast networks, CBS has seen much success with ***Joan of Arcadia***, which has been winning its time slot on Friday nights. It has delved into all sorts of issues so far and appears to have struck a chord with a large segment of the viewing public. Over on FOX, new series have been dropping like flies, which may be the only saving grace for ***Tru Calling*** in that it has been doing mediocre ratings instead of abysmal like other shows canceled after three episodes. Upcoming episodes for ***Tru Calling*** include *Haunted* where Tru must prevent the death of a med student experimenting with flat-lining, *Star Crossed* where Tru has to unravel the truth about the death of two high school students, *Closure* where Tru helps a dying soldier who wants to see his girlfriend before he dies, and in *Murder in the Morgue*, Tru must save herself when she and Davis are shot.

The four hour ***Battlestar Galactica*** mini-series debuts on Monday Dec 8th and Tuesday Dec 9th. Note that this is a day later than the originally scheduled debut of Sunday, Dec 7th. There's not much more news on the series to report that hasn't already been said. Executive Producer **David Eick** has indicated that is the show does go to a series that he would still be involved in an overseer capacity and the **Ron Moore** would likely be the showrunner for it.

Stargate SG-1 returns to SciFi Channel in January with the rest of season Seven. They kick off with *Evolution Part 2* in which O'Neill seeks help from a former comrade to rescue Daniel and Dr. Lee, who have been kidnapped in Central America. *Grace* sees Carter on a mission to retrieve the Prometheus, and she awakens to find herself alone on the ship, and begins to experience bizarre hallucinations. *Heroes* is a two parter where in part 1 a film crew arrives to document the work of the S.G.C., but may capture more than they planned for when SG-1 is called into action. Part 2 sees the S.G.C. come under investigation after a mission goes terribly wrong. This two part episode is one of the best episodes of the series according to many of the cast and crew. Long time fans may want to be prepared with some tissues. *Fall-Out* sees the Kelownans discover a massive vein of naquadria underground, Jonas Quinn seeks help from Earth in avoiding the total destruction of his planet.

Tremors: The Series is over with, but SciFi will be having a marathon of all 13 episodes plus the three movies on December 26th. If you still want more ***Tremors***, a fourth ***Tremors*** movie, ***Tremors 4: The Legend Begins*** , will be released on home video in early January. This movie was filmed at the same time as the TV series and is a prequel set in 1889 with **Michael Gross** as Hiram Gummer

(Cont'd on page 4)

24 Frames

Movie News
By Lee Whiteside

The Last Samurai (Dec 5) - **Tom Cruise** as an alcoholic Civil War veteran turned Winchester guns spokesman, Captain Woodrow Algren. We see the modernization of Japan through his eyes in the late 1870's. He's come to train the warriors of the emperor to fight with modern weapons. When he is captured by the samurai, he learns of the ancient ways which forces him to decide which side of the conflict he actually wants to be on.

Highwaymen (Dec 5) A Horror/Thriller about a man who sets out to find the serial killer who killed his wife by running her down with a 1972 Cadillac Eldorado.

Crust (Dec 12 - Limited) A pub owner, Bill, buys a seven foot mantis shrimp and trains it to box. Hitting the road with his amateur boxer best friend, Steve, a trainee hairdresser and the giant sea creature, Bill heads to London to convince a TV network to feature the crustacean on an "American Gladiators"-style event hosted by Ulrika Jonsson.

Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (Dec 17) The third movie in the trilogy to end all trilogies. Nuff Said.

Peter Pan (Dec 25) A new live action version of the classic tale. Peter Pan is the boy who won't age, who lives in Neverland with other ageless kids, the Lost Boys. Tinkerbelle, a fairy, gives three children: Wendy, John, and Michael Darling the ability to fly; and soon they're off to Neverland, where they're soon in battle with the evil Captain Hook and his band of pirates.

Paycheck (Dec 25) Another rmovie based loosely on a **Philip K. Dick** short story. Directed by **John Woo** (who says he isn't very concerned with the science fiction aspects of the story), it stars **Ben Affleck** as a brilliant computer engineer who works on top secret projects and has his short term memory erased when they are done so he has no knowledge of the secrets involved. After his latest three year job, he finds himself with only an envelope with random objects and word that he has forfeited his payment. His quest to find out why has him chased by federal angents and his customers who want to see him dead before he finds out what he did.

The Butterfly Effect (Jan 23) A young man (**Ashton Kutcher**) struggling with the psychological effects of sublimated childhood memories devises a technique of traveling back in time to inhabit his childhood body, but he finds that every trip back has unintended results on his present self, leading him to travel back again and again, trying to repair the damage that he's only making worse and worse...

Mindhunters (Jan 23) On a remote island, the FBI has a training program for their psychological profiling division, called "Mindhunters", used to track down serial killers. The training goes horribly wrong, however, when a group of seven young agents discover that one of them is a serial killer, and is setting about slaying the others. Stars **Val Kilmer, Christian Slater** and **LL Cool J.**

Big Fish (Dec 10 LA/NY, Jan 23 Wide) The story of a braggart and exaggerator Edward Bloom and his son, William, who after a long estrangement returns home only to learn his father is dying of cancer. Desperate to know the complicated man before it's too late, William sets about trying to unravel fact from fiction. Directed by **Tim Burton** and starring **Ewan McGregor, Albert Finney, Billy Crudup, Jessica Lange,** and **Danny DeVito.**

SF Tube Talk (Cont'd from page 3)

Scare Tactics has been renewed for a second season, although it is not yet known when new episodes will resume. All episodes of the first series have aired already. The CGI animated comedy series ***Tripping The Rift*** was originally scheduled to debut in January but it now looks to start later in the year.

Showtime's ***Jeremiah*** has had its season split into two after screening seven episodes in five weeks. It is not yet known if it will return in January or not or just sometime in 2004. Just in case, here's info on the next few episodes. *Crossing Jordan* sees Thunder Mountain bringing new towns into the Alliance, but drawing Daniel's attention and bringing Mister Smith a vision too awful to contemplate. In *Running on Empty*, wanting to savor his dish of vengeance while it's hot, Jeremiah joins Markus and Kurdy in a sting to smoke out Daniel's raiders. In *Milhaven*, Mister Smith gives Erin a disquieting message from God. *The Question* sees Mr. Smith faced with permanent paralysis, but he is confident of a miracle; his friends at Thunder Mountain fear he will be disappointed and are more concerned about the army Markus is building and Kurdy is training. In *The Past is Prologue* Kurdy has to trust Lee when he returns to a town - and a load of trouble - he left behind while Jeremiah is imprisoned in an idealized replica of the days before the Big Death.

In the syndicated arena, the new season of ***Andromeda*** has been much improved over the last season in my opinion, bucking the usual trend for Tribune Entertainment shows. ***Mutant X***, however, has met with lukewarm reactions from most fans who don't like the changes made with the new season. If you missed the start of either show's current season, the next couple of months will be repeats of those episodes.

As of press time, there are rumors of a pending ***Farscape*** press conference that is likely to announce some sort of continuation of the series in a mini-series format. Various reports are that the production offices in Australia are gearing up for making more ***Farscape.***

Dark Shadows looks to rise from the grave once again, this time for The WB. They have ordered a pilot from **Dan Curtis** productions for next fall. **Curtis** will team with producer **John Wells (*"ER," "The West Wing," "Third Watch"*)** with the pilot script being written by **Mark Verheiden.**

Doctor Who Returns In 2005
BBC Press Release (9/26/03)

Doctor Who, one of the BBC's best-loved and most enduring characters, is set to return to BBC ONE, it was confirmed last night by **Lorraine Heggessey**, Controller of BBC ONE.

Heggessey said that all rights issues regarding Doctor Who have been resolved and that she has green-lit scripts from award-winning writer **Russell T Davies.**

It is far too early in the day to discuss possible storylines, characters, villains or who might play the Time Lord - it is unlikely anything will be on screen for at least two years.

Doctor Who will be produced by BBC Wales in conjunction with **Mal Young**, Controller of BBC Continuing Series.

The executive producers will be **Mal Young, Russell T Davies** and **Julie Gardner**, Head of Drama BBC Wales.

Russell T Davies's writing credits include ***Bob and Rose, Queer as Folk, The Second Coming, Touching Evil*** (with **Paul Abbott**) and ***The Grand.***

Mal Young says: "Doctor Who is a much-loved, truly iconic piece of television history. It's time to crank up the TARDIS and find out what lies in store for The Doctor.

"We're thrilled to have a writer of **Russell's** caliber to take us on this journey. However, we're at the very first stages of development and further details, including casting, will not be available for some time."

Writer **Russell T Davies**, who grew up in Swansea and lives in Manchester, says: "I grew up watching Doctor Who, hiding behind the sofa like so many others. Doctor Who is one of the BBC's most exciting and original characters. He's had a good rest and now it's time to bring him back!

"The new series will be fun, exciting, contemporary and scary. Although I'm only in the early stages of development, I'm aiming to write a full-blooded drama which embraces the Doctor Who heritage, at the same time as introducing the character to a modern audience."

No budget has been set for the new series; the number of episodes and their duration is under discussion. It will be a family show, but no details are available as to when it will be scheduled.

Following on from the official press release, reports have indicated that the BBC is looking to do twelve 45 minute episodes as two parters that can also be made available as six 90 minute programs. Writer/producer **Davies** has indicated that he will start writing the series after the first of the year and only after writing has been going on will casting start happening.

HexaCon 14

Arizona's Largest Gaming Convention

July 29*-Aug 1, 2004

Tempe Mission Palms, Tempe, AZ

Arizona's Largest Annual Gaming Convention will be even bigger in 2004. We're moving to the Tempe Mission Palms in downtown Tempe with a lot more room and tons of nearby restaurants and shopping. We'll have all of our regular events and activities plus more in the works. *Special events and gaming for Pre-registered members start Thursday, July 29

Gaming starts at 10:00 a.m. Friday, July 30 and runs non-stop until Sunday, August 1st at 3 p.m.

We are planning to have **Sanctioned Magic & CCG Tournaments**, **Steve Jackson Games**, **Board Gaming**, **Miniatures**, **multiple LARPs**, **Battletech**, **Computer Lan Gaming**, **Miniatures Painting Contest**, **Role Playing, Chess Federation Sponsored Chess Events**, **White Wolf**, **Dealer's Room, Used Game Auction**, **Anime Room** and **Full Hospitality Suite**.

Location Information:

Tempe Mission Palms
60 E 5th St, Tempe, AZ 85281
(800) 547-8705

Room Rates $85 S/D/T/Q

Membership Rates:

$15 through Dec 31, 2003,
$20 through June 30, 2004,
$25 at the Door.

Pay Online using PayPal!

Contact HexaCon at:
Hexacon 14
P.O. Box 62613
Phoenix, AZ 85082
Phone: (602) 973-2341
Email: hex14@hexacon.org
Web: **www.hexacon.org**

LoTR (Cont'd from page 1)

they sold out, knowing full well that the demand would far outstrip the supply. Unfortunately, New Line did not work things out in advance with the theatres for the advance sales, leading to lots of confusion all over the country. Some theatres sold tickets only online, some sold them only at the box office, some promised to do both, but found their online ticketing systems couldn't handle the demand and fans attempting to get tickets online were left empty handed. One theatre intended to do online sales only and when they couldn't get it to work, finally made them available at their box office. Some people after being told that their online purchase failed were surprised to find out when their charge card bill arrived that the purchase did in fact go through and they had tickets waiting for them to pick up at the theatre. Some offered meal packages with the tickets while some offered reserved seating so that you wouldn't have to wait in yet another line come Trilogy Tuesday. Here in Arizona, Harkins intended to do online sales in addition to box office sales, but the moviefone system never came up and all 400 of the tickets sold at the box office

in less than 20 minutes to fans waiting in line. Demand in Tucson at the Century Theatres 20 Park Place was not as strong and many Phoenix Fans ended up buying tickets for that location via their online system.

Many of the major cities had such strong demand that extra tickets going up for auction on eBay have been going for $200 to $300 each with a VIP pair in Dallas going for $1,000 each! At this point, if you want to take part in Trilogy Tuesday you will either need to have a very good friend who waited in line that day or can't get off work or spend a good deal more money on a $25 ticket via the online auction sites. For a more reasonable, but limited, option, Fan web site TheOneRing.net has been facilitating ticket exchanges to bring fans together that need tickets with fans who have extra tickets and aren't interested in going the eBay route.

If you would like to have more than a 30 minute break between movies, you can still catch the extended versions of the first two movies in the two weeks leading up to the third. Starting December 5th, the extended ***Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*** will play three or four times each day for a week at the single screen that is allowed to show it. On December 12th, the extended ***Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*** will begin its run for four days. Tickets should still be available from most theatres, although I would suggest you get them in advance regardless of which screening you are going to. Here in Arizona, they will be at the Harkins Arizona Mills theatre and in Tucson at the Century Theatres 20 Park Place.

The Trilogy Ends

To tide you over until the extended version of ***The Return of the King*** next fall (maybe they will do a week long run of extended trilogy screenings?), the theatrical edition of the final movie in the Lord of the Rings trilogy will debut formally on Dec 17th (following the Trilogy Tuesday screenings on Dec 16th). Just from what happens in the third book (plus Frodo and Sam's encounter with Shelob carried over from the second book), the third movie promises plenty of action and drama as Sam, Frodo and Gollum make their way to Mount Doom and Gandalf, Aragorn, Legolas, Gimli, Merry, Pippin and the rest fight Sauron's armies. It is rumored to be running three hours and 30 minutes, but may end up longer. Some last minute filming was happening in New Zealand as late as October with director **Peter Jackson** wanting to make the final movie the best of them all.

From the web site StarECentral.com comes this quote from **Jackson** that pretty much sums up what he thinks the movie accomplishes: "As the story gets bigger and the stakes get higher, the intimacy of the storytelling and emotions get tighter and smaller, until you end up with two beings literally on their hands and knees, struggling to defeat an enormous evil. Yet, instead of wrath and revenge, they have to look inside for forgiveness, for in forgiveness there is redemption, not just for a handful of characters, but for all people. There is tremendous value to standing together for a common cause at times of great risk and looming destruction."

World Horror Convention 2004

April 8-11, 2004

Embassy Suites Phoenix North, Phoenix, Arizona

www.whc2004.org

World Horror Convention is THE annual event for Horror Professionals and Enthusiasts!

Author Guest of Honor: Douglas Clegg
Author of *The Hour Before Dark, The Priest of Blood,* and *Red Angel* (writing as Andrew Harper)

Artist Guest of Honor: Caniglia
An artist of strangely skewed visions of horror and the macabre. Illustrator and cover artist for many books and magazines in the genre.

Editor Guest of Honour: Stephen Jones
Stephen has been editor & writer of more than 70 books. He has accumulated over twenty awards including Bram Stoker Awards, British Fantasy Awards, World Fantasy Awards, and IHG Awards.

Toastmaster: David Morrell
Award winning author of twenty five novels of international intrigue, horror, and high-action thrillers including *Black Evening, First Blood, The Fifth Profession, The Totem, Assumed Identity*, and *The Protector*

Media Guest of Honor: Dee Snider
Star, writer and producer of Dee Snider's Strangeland, a horror cult classic movie, producer of Van Helsing's Curse – a Halloween Orchestra stage show & album, singer for Twisted Sister Rock band, & host of The House of Hair radio show.

Special Guest: Adam Niswander
Author of *The Shaman Cycle* novels as well as non-shaman novels *The Sand Dwellers*, and *The Repository, A Novel of Magik and the Occult*. His short fiction (including many horror stories) has appeared in many anthologies and magazines.

Writer's Workshop Guest of Honor: Mort Castle
Mort Castle has been writing since 1967 and writes everything from novels to poetry. He will be running the Writer's Workshop at this year's convention.

World Horror Convention 2004 will feature an **Art Show**, **Programming and Discussion Panels** on Horror Writing and Horror Art, **Author Readings**, a large **Dealer's Room**, & a **Hospitality Suite**. Special events include a **Charity Auction**, **Artist Reception** with Wine & Cheese Tasting, an **Independent Film Festival**, **Writer's Workshop**, **Mass Autographing** session, **Flash Fiction Contest**, **Gross Out Contest**, and **World Horror Convention Grand Master Award**.

Memberships are US$120.00 through 3/31/04, more at the door.
Pay online with PayPal!

Embassy Suites Phoenix North
2577 W. Greenway Rd.,
Phoenix, AZ 85023
(602) 375-1777
Room Rates: $88 S/D/T/Q plus tax
Group reservation code "OWH"
Rooms are two-room suites that include a made-to-order breakfast and nightly happy hour.

Contact Info:
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

IN MEMORIAM

Hal Clement
Jim Cryer
Diane Elliott
Lloyd Arthur Eshbach
Darlene Rutherford

Hal Clement
1922-2003

Harry Clement Stubbs, who wrote science fiction as Hal Clement, died in his sleep, October 29, 2003, at his home in Milton, Massachusetts.

Born in 1922, Clement was a high school teacher whose fiction gained a reputation as quintessential hard SF -- science fiction firmly based on established physics, chemistry, and astronomy. His novels often depicted highly imagined alien worlds; the most famous was Mission of Gravity, set on a heavy, fast-spinning planet where the force of gravity is several times greater at the poles than at the equator. His last novel, Noise, was published earlier this year.

Clement was named a Grand Master by the Science Fiction Writers of America in 1999. Among other honors was a Retro-Hugo Award in 1996 for his 1945 story "Uncommon Sense".

Clement is survived by his wife Mary, Mary, two sons George and Richard, daughter Christine Hensel, and grandson Jackson.

"Still round the corner there may wait
A new road or a secret gate;
And though I oft have passed them by,
A day will come at last when I
Shall take the hidden paths that run
West of the Moon, East of the Sun."

J.R.R. Tolkien, "The Lord of the Rings"

In Memory of Diane Elliott
Dec 1970 – Nov 2003

Lee Whiteside Dave Rood

Hal Clement Memorial
by Jacqueline Lichtenberg

The news of Harry Clement Stubbs' passing came by email this morning and I burst into tears. We'd been friends and colleagues since the early 1970's, often doing panels together. He helped me sell my first novel, HOUSE OF ZEOR in the mid-1970's.

In Sept. 2003 at TorCon, the World Science Fiction Convention in Toronto I got to show him the current reprint of that novel in SIME~GEN: THE UNITY TRILOGY and we celebrated that triumph of his judgement. That was the last hug I got from him.

At conventions, we had developed a tradition of waving or shaking hands on the escalators - one of us going up, the other going down, hardly ever going in the same direction!

But others saw him just this week at another convention, vigorous, happy, active. He passed away in his sleep, having lived-lived-LIVED until he died. You've all seen the reviews of his latest novel NOISE or maybe read it. Writers never retire!

No doubt you'll be seeing full Memorial posts everywhere for a while so I won't repeat his prodigious bibliography and list of achievements.

If you don't know "who" Hal Clement is or what he's written — google on "Hal Clement" for a list of sites providing enormous amounts of information. Locus already has a post up at http://www.locusmag.com/ and will no doubt do a big feature with precious photos from their archives.

If you've somehow managed to miss reading his classic novels, grab them for your children and grandchildren in acid-free paper editions. You won't regret it. Yes, science will go stale as it does - but beyond the science his books had true entertainment value.

With Robert A. Heinlein & Isaac Asimov, Andre Norton, Edward E. Smith and a handful of others Hal Clement was (I hate that word) the most profound influence on my own development as a writer. I was an abject fan of his work long before I met him — and one of the highest high-points of my life was being accepted by him as a colleague despite that fannish adulation. It was only later - in the mid-1950's that I encountered Marion Zimmer Bradley and the next generation of writers.

The first book I ever special-ordered through a bookstore was Cycle of Fire by Hal Clement - then I went in every single day begging for copies to have arrived. When finally I got a copy, I didn't do my homework. I READ! And never regretted it.

Hal Clement was a fan first, and a professional writer (and fan-artist) second. He was often FAN ARTIST GUEST OF HONOR at conventions, exhibiting his space-scapes.

The kinship I feel with him is based in that sense of profession melding seamlessly into hobby and expressing itself in fan activity (fanac).

He was a professional scientist and teacher BECAUSE he was a fan of science — but to him the value of science lay in how it affects people on the deepest psychological levels.

I loved that man.

Live Long and Prosper,
Jacqueline Lichtenberg
ambrovzeor@aol.com

Jim Cryer
1943 - 2003

Jim Cryer passed away on Wednesday, November 19, 2003 from a massive heart attack. He was 60 years old. He is survived by his wife Marsha, daughters Julie & Lisa and sons Dale and Donny.

Jim was a long time fan who was active

(Cont'd on page 7)

In Memorium (Cont'd from page 6)

in PFFS, CASFS, U.F.P and TARDIS and was a member of John and Candy Fong's video group. He worked on over 50 conventions and was chairman of CopperCon 18 and CopperCon 22. Jim served several terms as President of CASFS and was a member of the board of directors for several years. He regularly was historian for our local conventions, was CASFS archivist for 18 years and was a familiar sight setting up his cameras throughout the convention.

Diane Elliott
1970-2003

Diane Elliott passed away on Nov 9, 2003 following an illness that led to pneumonia. She was 32 years old. She has long been active in fandom since she was a teenager. She has been involved with many clubs and groups including The United Federation of Phoenix (where she was Captain), TARDIS, CASFS (Board Member and Secretary), Staghold, and The Phoenix Filk Circle. She had been committee or staff for several conventions. She had many friends in fandom who will miss her very much. She will especially be missed by Dave Rood, Lee Whiteside and her parents, Ken and Mary Elliott. An online memorial will be set up at www.sftv.org/diane .

Lloyd Arthur Eshbach
1910-2003

Lloyd Arthur Eshbach died Oct. 29 at 3:50 a.m. in the Evangelical Congregational Church Retirement Village in Myerstown, PA where he had resided since March 2001.

Born June 20, 1910 in Palm, Pennsylvania, Eshbach, grew up in Reading. He discovered science fiction at age 15 and began writing letters to the magazines, then his own stories. In 1929, the third story he wrote sold to Science Wonder Stories.

Continuing to write stories and articles, Lloyd briefly published two magazines in the early 1930s, Marvel Tales and The Galleon. In 1946 he founded Fantasy Press a small press which published the work of authors such as E. E. Smith, Jack Williamson, Robert Heinlein and John W. Campbell Jr.

Between 1946 and 1950, Fantasy Press published 32 books. They included the first hardcover editions of many of the works, had small press runs and in total only about 120,000 copies were printed. In 1952 he formed Polaris Press to publish 2 more books.

Lloyd went on to write several novels, mostly late in his career. The last one, The Scroll of Lucifer, was published in 1990. His memoirs, Over My Shoulder: Reflections on a Science Fiction Era, were published in 1982.

Eshbach was a church publisher from 1958 to 1962. From 1962 until his retirement in 1975 he was a salesman by the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.

Upon his retirement, he became a local preacher in the Evangelical Congregational denomination and was assigned to the Mount Culmen Evangelical Congregational Church near Bowmansville, Lancaster County. The following year he served as associate pastor of First Evangelical Congregational, Reading, and in 1977 served a one-year term at Trinity EC Church, Womelsdorf.

An active member of First Fandom, Eshbach was Guest of Honor at the World Science Fiction Convention in 1949 and the World Fantasy Convention 1995.

He is survived by a son, Daniel R., Womelsdorf; five grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. Services were held Saturday, Nov 1, at Lamm & Witman Funeral Home Inc. in Wernersville, PA with burial in Forest Hills Memorial Park in Reiffton.

Darlene J. Rutherford-Wilson
1937-2003

Darlene June Steiner was born on November 22, 1937 in Ellsworth County. While living in New Mexico s he became a writer, selling over 30 short stories. In the late 1995 she moved to Phoenix to be near her mother who had recently retired to Glendale. After her retirement she started writing again, and had just published her first full-length novel, *Haunted! A Paranormal Mystery*, writing as Darlene J. Wilson. Darlene was a direct descendant of Daniel Boone and was a member of the Boone Family Research Association. She was active in Mensa in the 1960's. She became a very active member of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. in 1973 and served as the editor of their newsletter, Southwinds, for several years. She was also a science fiction fan and participated at several conventions on panels about writing and publishing in the field. She had many hobbies including photography, jewelry making and gardening and was working on several novels at the time of her death. Darlene passed away on Monday, October 13, 2003 at Hospice of the Valley in Glendale, Arizona after a short battle with cancer. Services were held on Sunday, October 19, 2003 at Greenwood Memory Lawn. For those who wish to make a donation in her memory instead of sending flowers, contributions to the Humane Society of Central Arizona or the Humane Society of Southern Arizona are suggested. A full obituary may be viewed on website www.legacy.com

Jinxed, Hexed, or Cursed: How I ruined Harlan Ellison's return to Arizona, Part 1
By Shane Shellenbarger

In Al Capp's comic strip, "Li'l Abner", the character of Joe Btfsplk (the last name pronounced as a "Raspberry" or a "Bronx cheer" by Capp) was known as the world's biggest jinx. When Btfsplk would enter a room under his trademark dark rain cloud, bad fortune befell those poor souls in the general vicinity. On September 9th, 10th, and October 7th I knew what it was to be jinxed.

I didn't know it at the time, but the storm clouds began to gather in March of 2002. I had persuaded Harlan Ellison to make a return speaking engagement to Arizona. In 1999, a Lode Star Grant had facilitated his previous talks at Glendale Community College and Arizona State University West. This time, a Learning Grant would pave his and Susan Ellison's way back to the Valley of the Sun.

It was the afternoon of September 9th, 2003 and I had taken and hour off from work so that I could shower and change before picking up the Ellison's at Sky Harbor Airport. Just to be safe, I checked the current arrival time of their flight and discovered that their plane had quite the tailwind. The plane would arrive ten minutes early. No need to panic, I told myself; I can still make it to the gate before the Ellison's. Staying within the law, I got to Terminal 4, spiraled my vehicle up to the best parking level I could find, and parked fairly close to the elevators. I made it downstairs, looked around and discovered I was at the American West gates, as far away from where I needed to be as you can get and still remain within the same terminal. I raced upstairs, found my vehicle, and motored to the other end of the terminal. I raced downstairs, found the Southwest Airlines Arrivals monitor and gasped: the plane had arrived at gate C8! I quickly scanned the nearby crowd: no Ellison's! I scanned the nearby businesses: no Ellison's! I scanned the nearby security area and departure gate: no Ellison's! Less then ten minutes in Phoenix and I had already lost the Ellison's!

As my panic began to rise, something began to worry at the back of my mind. I had seen two elements that didn't jive, didn't make sense. Looking back at the departure gate I noticed that there were too few people walking through the gate for a plane to have so recently arrived. I also noticed that the gates that lay beyond were the B gates! I turned 180 degrees, spotted the C departure gate, and sprinted over. I repeated my scanning and still found no Ellison's! However, people were still streaming through the gate and after five minutes of repeating to myself, "they'll be along any second," a head of silver platinum hair beside an autumn redhead came into view. Hugs all around, an explanation of a stop for a Nathan's hotdog, a heavy sigh of relief, and we headed for my vehicle.

I walked confidently to where I had left the Vue and I couldn't find it! Back and forth, up one aisle and down the next, car alarm key fob in hand and thumb mashing the alarm button and still no vehicle. The Ellison's went to wait in a closer approxi-

(Cont'd on page 8)

Harlan

(Cont'd from page 7)

mation of a temperate climate (the elevator lobby) and I went quietly nuts looking for my Saturn. Then it hit me: I had come out of an elevator on a different side than I had gone in on. I ran to the other side and found my Vue. I hit the unlock button. Nothing. I mashed the button again. Still nothing! I had exhausted the battery in my car alarm key fob!

I stood there for a moment, thinking. I knew there was a way around this problem, but I needed the owners' manual and it was locked in an alarmed Saturn Vue. I took the key, opened the door, retrieved the manual and tried not to look too guilty as I walked away from the blaring horn of the Vue. I found the Ellison's, told them what was happening, and proceeded to search for the bit of information hidden in the owners' manual while Harlan looked on from a chair that resembled a throne that Conan the Barbarian would have festooned with animal hides and stolen silks. After a minute of searching while attempting to block out the horn I could hear echoing throughout the parking structure, I found the hint I needed, reassured the Ellison's that I'd be driving right back to pick them up, and returned moments later with the now relatively quiet Vue. The dark rain cloud departed, at least for that day.

The sun dawned on September 10th to a cloudless blue sky. After having breakfast with the Ellisons and thoroughly enjoying the banter and repartee between Harlan and the IHOP waitress, we headed for the first event of the day: Ellison speaking to a room full of Honors students at Estrella Mountain Community College. After exchanging greetings with the sponsor of the Learning Grant, Rod Freeman, the Ellison's put their belongings down and I set up the video cameras I had brought to record this event. My dark rain cloud began to take form as I noticed that there was quite a bit more room than there were people. Ellison seemed unperturbed, sat down and started talking to the nearest audience member. Justin Stuyter, a University of Arizona student and frequent poster at WWW.HarlanEllison.Com, had driven up from Tucson. Maybe this wouldn't be as bad as I'd initially worried it would be. Wrong!

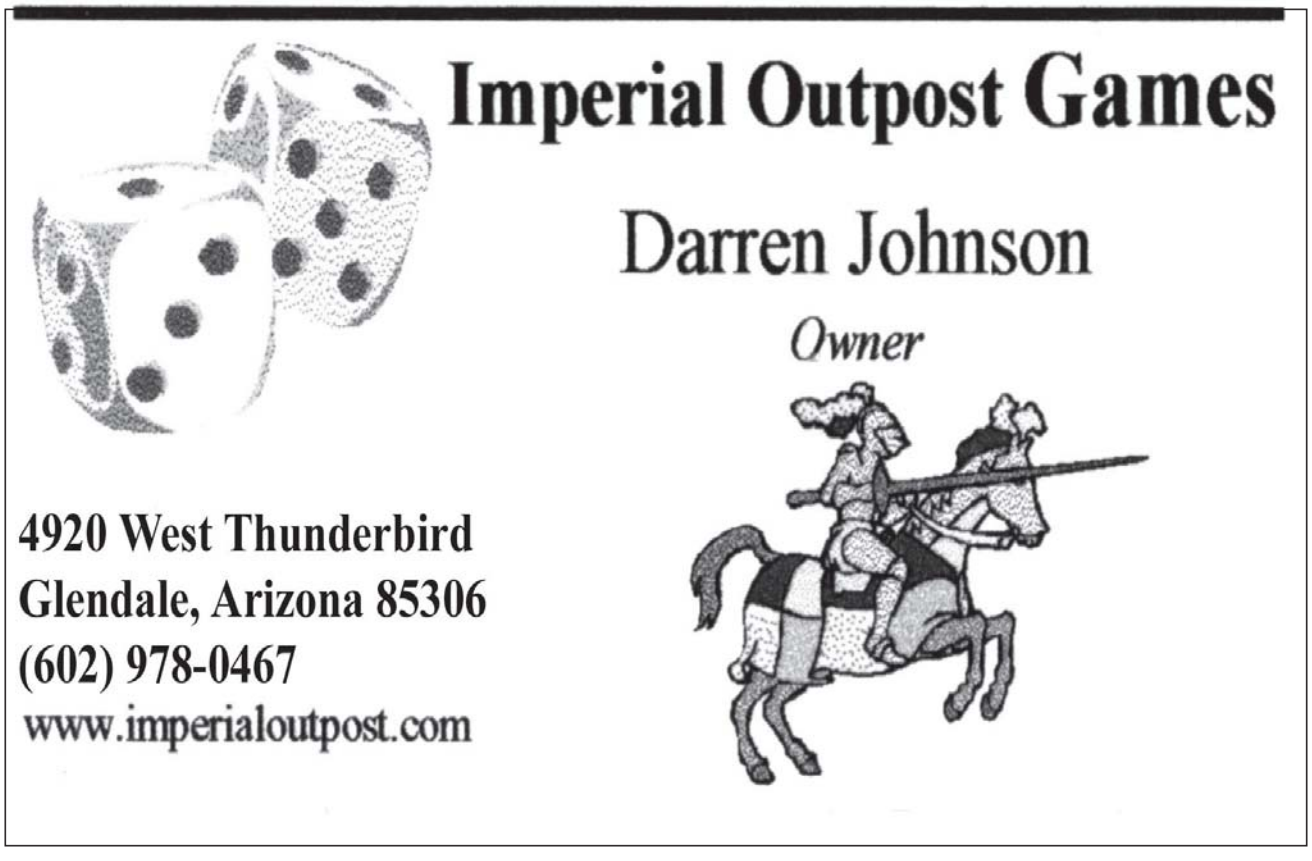
The event was poorly attended, people coming in and going out as classes ended and started. One young woman was apparently unaware that in polite company one does not leave ones cell phone on audible while attending a speech and then take the call! She quickly learned better when Ellison, justifiably outraged, hounded her out of the room. Upon her return, Ellison inquired about the call and when he was told that it concerned the young woman's ill aunt he demonstrated concern and caring. The audience, with a few notable exceptions (Stuyter, reporters, and several staff members), resembled a herd of deer caught in the glare of Ellison's headlights. "Any questions?" Ellison repeated over and over again, attempting to engage the audience. Nothing. He specifically asked one young lady what her favorite food was and he received a blank stare. He tried a different tack. "Ellison asked, "What does your mother make that you like?" She responded with a blank stare. I couldn't understand how these students could squander the opportunity that was handed to them on a silver platter, but they did and my cloud darkened.

After nearly two hours of speaking, Ellison collected his wife, collected their belongings, and we headed for the parking lot with Stuyder, who could no more understand his peers attitudes than we could. We left for Glendale Community College and Ellison's 12:30 P.M. talk. While traveling North on Route 101, I mistakenly exited at Glendale Road instead of proceeding to Olive Avenue. When we got to 59th Avenue and Glendale, I realized that I should be in the left turn lane. Switching on my turn indicator I observed the blue car on my left begin to move toward the intersection, looked back at traffic along the changing turn lane, spotted only a white car ten car lengths back, looked over and saw that the blue car was clear, and proceeded into the left turn lane. I had barely entered the lane when the same white car I had seen back in the dual direction turn lane struck my Vue. I sat there, stunned.

I think that most of us have experienced an event that was so unexpected that we literally cannot believe that it had happened. We're flabbergasted, astounded, and amazed. The last time I could remember feeling that way was during Phringe Con II. I had been directed to keep people out of a roped-off area of the seating for the costume contest. Before I could say anything to this one "gentleman", he had walked past me and proceeded to step over the rope. He had one leg over when I grabbed his foot. He told me to let go and I said I would if he returned to my side of the rope. He told me told to let go and I repeated myself. He agreed to comeback. I let go of his foot and he jumped me, knocking me to the floor. I lay there in total disbelief while he pummeled me. Several members of the convention staff pulled the "gentleman" off of me and I still lay there, dumbfounded. It turns out that this guy was determined to get the best seat in the house so that he could take photographs. The staff members who had pulled him off of me told him to get lost and sent him out of the hall. Later, when the photo hound got a police officer and threatened to press assault and battery charges against me, the staff relented and let him back into the hall. I hope his photos were blurry.

As I sat stunned in my Saturn Vue I asked myself if it could get any worse. As it turns out, it could.

End Part 1



Screening Room

Master and Commander:
The Far Side of the World
20th Century Fox/Miramax/Universal
In theaters now

Director Peter Weir and Russell Crowe join forces to create an epic adventure. Based on the series of Aubrey/Maturin novels, by author Patrick O'Brian, the movie is set during the Napoleonic Wars. Crowe is Captain "Lucky" Jack Aubrey, and Paul Bettany is ship's doctor Stephen Maturin. Their ship, the H.M.S. Surprise, off the coast of Brazil, is suddenly attacked by a superior enemy. With the Surprise badly damaged and much of his crew injured, Aubrey is torn between following what he believes is his duty and his friendship with Maturin as he pursues the French ship across two oceans. His mission is to intercept and capture the larger, better-equipped vessel before it enters the Pacific. It's a mission that can make his reputation – or destroy Lucky Jack and his crew.

In the course of the journey, the Surprise travels the western world starting on the coast of Brazil. They follow the French vessel around the waters of Cape Horn, having to go further south because of the storms, through ice and snow, to the Pacific ocean (AKA: the far side of the world). Finally ending on the remote shores of the Galapagos Islands (becoming the first feature film ever to film there). Ok something of note here, the "French" ship was built in Boston.

The movie was well written, very true to it's time frame, and doomed because it expects the viewer to be intelligent. I firmly believe that movies like these are some of the best made films, but they are written for people with the ability to understand history and appreciate that these men were cut off from their families for months and years at a time. (I over heard one young moviegoer asking why they didn't start the engines to gain more speed.)

I give it four and a half out of five stars. - **Bob LaPierre**

Pointless Meanderings
by Brandon Huigens

As children, Craig Thompson and his little brother Phil once peed on each other.

James Kochalka named his bicycle Rootbeer.

When his ex-girlfriend would get hiccups, Jeffrey Brown would pat her on the head softly three times because "bless you" seemed inappropriate.

Joe Matt has over twenty video tapes he's recorded favorite moments from porno films. He loops the "highlights".

Brandon Huigens tried masturbating with an egg.

Odd characteristics such as the ones described are normally exclusive to the most personal of friends. These quirks, however, can be savored in an intensely growing entertainment genre: autobiographic comics.

Since the late 1960's, autobiographic comics have slowly become the most poignant and relevant brand of comics on the market. R. Crumb. Vaughn Bode. Harvey Pekar. Art Speigelman. These names are the stuff of comic book legend; their myriad achievements range from cult worship to the Pulitzer, and they continue to make their presence felt in many forms of media, as with the recent movie depiction of Pekar's life, American Splendor.

Making these creators' presence felt as strongly as the creators themselves are a talented new breed of cartoonists and storytellers incorporating intensely personal life moments into their art. The sharing of one's life's private, sometimes shameful moments, makes for a cleansing, affirming experience for both reader and creator-all involved are assured that they are absolutely not alone in their peculiarities.

In many cases, and certainly in this instance, the most important thing in art is to relate to an audience; autobiographic comics easily vault this hurdle, streaking across the finish line miles ahead of their well-known counterpart in tights, the super hero. But as the super hero continues conquering new heights in cinema, the autobiographic comic is slowly making it's way to the collective consciousness of comics fanatics and mainstream American readership.

Take for instance, the recently released **Blankets** by Craig Thompson. This black-and-white graphic novel is a 592-page tour de force is one of the most poetic, accessible, and beautifully rendered pieces of literature ever published. As such, it has sold unusually well in chain bookstores such as Borders and Barnes and Noble. According to Chris Staros of Top Shelf Productions, between ten and fifteen percent of the book's initial print run of 10,000 were sold at chain bookstores. While these numbers aren't impressive in scale, they present a promising figure nonetheless. People aren't just looking for graphic novels in comic specialty stores anymore, and autobiographical comics are helping the cause tremendously.

Even so, for comic retailers to embrace, and order confidently, a $30 black-and-white coming-of-age graphic novel is telling of comics-specific readers becoming more willing to treat comics as worthwhile literature. Balancing a comic store budget is a tricky business, and while most retailers would love to stock small press (including autobio) titles, the fact is super hero books always sell. Having gone back for a second printing in less than two months after its' release, **Blankets** (and several other incredible publications) is proving Batman and Spider-man don't have to pay all the bills.

The satiation of relating to a person is fantastic, if only momentary. If only in a comic book.

In addition to **Blankets**, there are several other amazing auto bio comic books on the market for consumption. Give these a try:

James Kochalka's **Sketchbook Diaries.** An eclectic, hilarious, and deviously simple look into the everyday life of a cartoonist/ rockstar. Originator and master of the daily comic. This guy is king.
www.americanelf.com

Jennifer Daydreamer's **Oliver**. An enchanting, ethereal dream on paper. Haunting and phantasmal.
www.topshelfcomix.com

Jim Mahfood's **Stupid Comics**. The hip-hop influenced, funk-infused evil genius himself spins wit and cynicism about society's dumbest. "If you're not angry, you're not paying attention" comes to mind.
www.40ozcomics.com

Gabrielle Bell's **When I'm Old and other stories**. Bell examines everything from fairy tale comics to everyday surrealism with wonderfully-detailed artwork.
www.alternativecomics.com

Jeffrey Brown's **Clumsy**. The first of Brown's work is an extraordinarily human and touching look at the frailty and desperation of a failed relationship. Brilliant, youthful, and honest.
www.theholyconsumption.com

Alternative Comics' **True Porn Anthology**. Compelling autobiographic sex stories by several incredibly talented small press creators. Includes work from Phoenix-local newcomer David Bessent.
www.alternativecomics.com

Enjoy!

www.leprecon.org

LEPRECON 30

May 7-9, 2004

Sheraton Crescent Hotel, Phoenix, AZ

Annual Science Fiction and Fantasy Convention with an emphasis on Art

Art by Donato Giancola

Artist Guest of Honor
Donato Giancola
Renowned Science Fiction and Fantasy Artist. recipient of six ASFA Chesley Awards including the 2002 Chesley Award for Artistic Achievement. Illustrator of over 100 Science Fiction and Fantasy novels & Magic Cards for Wizards of the Coast.

Author Guest of Honor **David Drake**
Author of mercenary military science fiction with his best-selling *Hammer's Slammers* series, and heroic fantasy such as *Lord of the Isles* and *Goddess of the Ice Realm.*

Special Artist Guest **John Eaves**
Senior Illustrator on *Enterprise*, Illustrator on recent Star Trek movies and *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, *The Majestic* and *Terminator 2: Judgement Day.*

Local Artist Guest of Honor: Sylvana Anderson-Gish
Music Guest: Mara Brenner (sponsored by the Phoenix Filk Circle)

LepreCon 30 is moving to the Sheraton Crescent Hotel with more function space where almost all convention activities will be under one roof. As always, LepreCon will feature the Largest Science Fiction and Fantasy Art Show in the Southwest with art from national and local artists, Programming with Panel Discussions on Art, Writing, Science and more, Art Demos, games and special family friendly programming. We will also have a Dealer's Room, Gaming, LARP, Video Room, Anime Room, LAN Party, Masquerade, Hospitality Suite, and a Charity Auction.

Memberships are $30 thru 12/31/03, $35 thru 4/15/04, $40 at the door
Kids 7-12 half price, Kids 6 & Under Free*
* with Adult membership

Sheraton Crescent Hotel
2620 W. Dunlap Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85021
Room Rates:
$79 S/D, $99 T/Q +tax
602-943-8200 or 800-423-4126
Limited number of suites available

Contact LepreCon 30 at:
Write: LepreCon 30,
PO Box 26665
Tempe, AZ 85285
Phone: (480) 945-6890
Email: **lep30@leprecon.org**

ConClusion

Las Vegas Comic-Con Craps Out

By Shane Shellenbarger

I've been attending comic book conventions since 1972; I've attended the San Diego Comic-Con (also known as Comic-Con International San Diego) since 1973; I've worked on and attended LepreCons, PhringeCons, CopperCons, Westercons, World Horror Cons, World Fantasy Cons, and World Science Fiction Conventions. I have a good idea what makes for a good convention. Las Vegas Comic-Con was NOT a good convention.

I can't speak about how good or bad the Halloween Masquerade Party was because I refused to pay the $18.00 admission ($28.00 if you didn't have a convention membership.) I didn't go to the Gaming Area, the Anime showings, and I didn't try to collect any of the Show Premier collectibles (see ConNotations Vol. 13, Issue 5, page 12.) However, I was in the Dealers Room (Exhibitors Hall) a good deal of the time and I attempted to attend panels. I say, "attempted", because the information about times and locations of panels was hazy at best and totally obscured at worst. The program information didn't detail the panelist's names or the length of the panel, and the start times were often missing. Programming was treated as an after thought without much thought being given to either the attendees or the panelists.

The Exhibitors Hall was good sized, with about 270 exhibitors. However, for a "comic book convention," comics were woefully under-represented. If you wanted autographed pictures of "scream queens" (Denice Duff), Penthouse Pets (Sandra Duff) or Reese from "Malcolm in the Middle" (Justin Berfield), then this was the place to be. Attendance on Friday was weak, with walkup attendees breezing right in (I was pre-registered, but they had to look over several lists before they could find my name.) Saturday was better attended, with Sunday on a par with Friday. Several people told me that attendance was in the range of 3,000, but no one could (or would) tell me how many were three-day, two-day, or one-day memberships.

The bottom line is this: LVC-C needs more programming and more structure. Pocket programs with a time/location grid separate from the Souvenir Book would be a good investment. I'd like to think that some of the convention committee has attended other conventions. My hope is that they can learn from the senior conventions that do the work well and avoid the problems that cropped up in this freshman attempt.

http://www.lasvegascomiccon.com
http://scoop.diamondgalleries.com/scoop_article.asp?ai=3747&si=124
http://www.comic-con.org/
http://www.leprecon.org/
http://casfs.org/cucon/
http://www.westercon.org/
http://www.leprecon.org/wfc2004/index.html
http://www.whc2004.org/about_us.htm
http://home.globalcrossing.net/~otsp/whc98/
http://www.worldfantasy.org
http://worldcon.org/

FYI

The Dragon Page Launches Weekly SF Radio Show on KFYI

By Gary L. Swaty

The folks at Dragon Page have started a good thing, a weekly Science Fiction Radio Show on KFYI 550 AM. Their first live broadcast was Saturday November First at 8 p.m. It is scheduled to be broadcast every Saturday at the same time. Hosts are Michael R. Mennenga and Evo Terra. The show has an excellent web page at www.dragonpage.com. They had a fan table at one of our recent conventions, LepreCon I believe.

Their first live show began with a well orchestrated interview with R. A. Salvatore. He discussed the changes in characters and audience of Fantasy over the years. How the female readership has gone from thirty percent up to fifty percent and how the genre has many more strong female characters than it had in earlier days. He said his *Dark Elf* series is coming out in Collectors' editions from Wizards of the Coast. He said that while he regarded his writing as primarily escapist he hoped there was something to learn included as well. He observed that Fantasy/Escapist Literature does better during times of recession and war.

He took a call from a listener concerning the perceived lack of new SF franchises in TV and movies. Star Trek is ending, Star Wars, LOTR. What is next? (This harked back to the prototype recorded show previously aired on KFYI).

Next was the Dragon Bytes segment. First they discussed the incredibly bad remake ideas coming out of Hollywood these days. i.e. *Herbie the Love Bug Meets NASCAR, Six Million Dollar Man* as a comedy starring Jim Carey, Taxi, *Starsky and Hutch, Wild Wild West*, etc. Next came the Top 10 Movie Monsters vs Top ten TV Monsters The contention was that the Movie Monsters didn't stand a chance. I must confess I couldn't make sense of this segment as they weren't consistent with their monsters as far as I could tell. The top Ten is to be a regular feature. Hopefully it will work better next time. It was funny and entertaining while they were delivering it.

Over all I would say that this program is a wonderful addition to our valley SF information repertoire. I look forward to hearing it again and again and ...

"Space Available- Science Fiction Class in Maricopa County Community Colleges"

By Jeffrey Lu

In the spring 2004, there will be a science fiction class for three credits in Phoenix College, Scottsdale Community College, Glendale Community College, and Mesa Community College. The course will be under English: Literature & Humanities-ENH 120: The Literature of Science Fiction.

In Mesa Community College, this class will be on Thursday Night at 7:10 P.M. to 9:50 P.M. Dr. Craig Jacobsen, residential faculty of the English Department, and Mr. Tim Florshuetz, Writing Center Director, will be teaching this course for years to come.

"The class is mostly an historical survey, so it tries to cover most of the history of the genre," replied Dr. Jacobsen.

"The class material will contain analysis of literature including plot, theme, setting, and characterization. Students will write essays," said Mr. Florshuetz.

The books planned are Wells's *The Time Machine*, Pohl's *The Space Merchants*, LeGuin's *The Left Hand of Darkness*, Delaney's *Babel-17*, Gibson's *Neuromancer*, and many other readings.

Arizona Author Publishes Debut Novel

Dear CASFS,

In good's darkest hour, its greatest hero emerges.

EPSILON, my debut novel, is the story of college student Jack Remmler, who is drafted into a galactic war between good and evil. Given an armored battlesuit, he becomes the Cosmic Protector assigned to Earth. But it isn't long before Remmler realizes being a superhero is not as glamorous as it seems. After dealing with horrific street crime first hand, he comes face-to-face with his own mortality as two superpowered villains threaten to ignite the flames of war in the Middle East.

This is not your typical superhero story. Unlike in DC and Marvel stories, *EPSILON* features no elaborate technology (except that of non-terrestrial origin). It also takes geo-political issues into account. One of the best ways to describe it is Marvel Comics meets Tom Clancy meets The X-Files.

For more information, you can go to www.amazon.com , www.bn.com www.xlibris.com , where you can view an excerpt of my novel, or my web site, http://home.att.net/~therustsays .

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,
John J. Rust
Prescott, AZ

Signings

A Fantastic Duo: Stephen Donaldson, Michael Stackpole January 17, Saturday at 12 pm Signing at Poisoned, 4014 N Goldwater Blvd., Suite 101, Scottsdale, AZ 85251, Tel: 480-947-2974, Toll Free: 888-560-9919, FAX: 480-945-1023, sales@poisonedpen.com

Ursula K LeGuin and other Genre Authors at Arizona Book Festival April 3rd.

The Arizona Book Festival will be featuring several genre authors on their main stage this coming April 3rd. The festival's main guests will include **Ursula K LeGuin, Alan Dean Foster** and **Diana Gabaldon**. CASFS and LepreCon will also be hosting many of our local authors at the CASFS booth and as part of a likely programming block. Look for more details in the next issue of ConNotations.

The Matrix Trilogy

By Bob LaPierre Staff Writer

I had occasion recently to view the complete Matrix Trilogy using three different formats. I caught *The Matrix* on HBO, watched *The Matrix Reloaded* on DVD, and had a pass to go to the preview of *The Matrix Revolutions*. I will henceforth refer to them as *Matrix, Reloaded,* and *Revolutions*. *Matrix* was remarkable for the new way of looking at action scenes. It was also the only stand-alone (can anyone say "*Star Wars*"?).

The basic story was the search for and finding of a mythical being known as "The One". Neo (**Keanu Reeves**) is a programmer and hacker who desires to contact the greatest hacker of them all Morpheus (**Laurence Fishburne**). Morpheus sends another hacker Trinity (**Carrie-Anne Moss**) to make contact and bring Neo to him. Morpheus explains to Neo that the world as he knows it is merely a computer program. He offers him a choice of waking and seeing the real world or remaining in the Matrix. After bringing him to the real world they begin his training. Slowly they show him how he can do anything he can think of within the Matrix. Neo is able to slowly develop his powers until they are greater than any of the humans and rivals even the control programs (known as agents).

Morpheus is caught, as a result of one of his people turning traitor, and questioned as to the location of the last human settlement Zion. During this questioning we see that agent Smith (**Hugo Weaving**) is developing differences from the other agents and seems more self-aware than the others. During the rescue we see some of the greatest camera work to date. Neo and Trinity shoot it out in the lobby of the

(Cont'd on page 11)

Matrix

(Cont'd from page 10)

federal building that Morpheus is being held in. The carnage is remarkable; the entire scene takes less than five minutes but stays with you as a key scene of the movie.

They rescue Morpheus and are pursued by the agents and finding an exit point Morpheus and Trinity escape but the agents shoot the phone before Neo can use it. In the ensuing chase Neo comes into his full powers and disrupts agent Smith (this is important). Neo is now thought to be the single most powerful entity within the Matrix and he threatens the computer in the final scene.

Jump forward six months. *Reloaded* and *Revolutions* take place in the next seventy-five hours. The story follows both Neo's quest to free the people trapped in the Matrix and Zion's attempt to defend itself. First it brings us the information that the location of Zion has been discovered. And that the machines would break through in 72 hours. We finally see Zion and her defenses. The sets are wonderful and give you a real sense of them being real locations.

Then within the Matrix, we get the information that the Oracle is missing. She is found again and with her new guardian Ghost (**Anthony Wong**). During the initial encounter with Ghost Neo learns that there are "back doors" in the system and that Ghost is an important program in his own right. After his discussion with the Oracle Neo gets into the most spoofed scene from the movie, the fight scene with hundreds of Smiths. During the encounter we find out that Smith is now "unplugged" and we see him convert another agent into a duplicate of himself.

Other programs and several new characters are introduced. Including Merovingian (**Lambert Wilson**) a smuggler ala The Frenchman in *Casablanca*. Except what the Merovingian smuggles are programs. He has a number of associates that are left over from previous incarnations of the Matrix. He also has, as his prisoner, the Keymaker (**Randall Duk Kim**).

During the rescue of the Keymaker we are treated to a car chase that rivals ANYTHING you have EVER seen or probably will ever see. This was a throwback to the great chases of the seventies with the technology of the 21st century filmmaking. The DVD has an incredible special on how the chase was created. I watched it twice to get all the details.

The second movie ends with the info that Neo can now affect the machines outside of the Matrix. But he collapses and is seen unconscious in the infirmary just prior to the dreaded words "To Be Concluded".

Revolutions starts with Zion looking for the missing ships and their crews. After they find Niobe (**Jada Pinkett Smith**) the story follows the attempt to discover what is wrong with Neo. Discovering where Neo is requires a return visit to the Merovingian and a spectacular shoot out. When Neo is returned to reality he says he must go to the machine world to end the conflict. The others including Morpheus and Niobe return to Zion to make a last stand. The battle for Zion takes up much of the movie; it is a spectacle worth the price of admission by itself. The machines tunnel in through the roof of Zion and we get to see incredible battle armor in use.

Neo meanwhile travels to the Machine City and spends much of his energy destroying combat machines. When he finally arrives and sees the master machine they come to an agreement Neo must destroy Smith to save Zion. The battle takes place in the Matrix with millions of Smiths looking on. It is a complex scene, taking place in four places. First it starts on a rainy street lined with Smiths watching, then they smash their way into a workshop for a few minutes followed by the superman routine in the air and finally finishing in a crater created when they crash to the ground.

Overall despite what the critics say they were extremely fun and the third movie DOES give a sense of completion and allows the intelligent watcher to know what happened and why. I will say that although the first movie was primarily a thrill ride the others were more of an intellectual thrill ride.

Four stars. See them all but pay attention, there are no hidden meanings but there are hidden plots.

ConKopelli Westercon 57

July 2-5, 2004
Litchfield Park, Arizona

C.J. Cherryh - Author Guest of Honor
David Cherry - Artist Guest of Honor
Diana Gabaldon - Local Author Guest of Honor
Heather Alexander - Music Guest of Honor
John Hertz - Fan Guest of Honor

Our Theme: Mythology of the SouthWest

Location:

Wigwam Resort
300 Wigwam Blvd.
Litchfield Park, Arizona
623 -935-3811
Rooms: $105
Suites: $135

Room rate includes gratuity for bellman (check in/out), maid service, as well as unlimited use of the Health Facilities, Valet and Resort Parking, Bicycles, Shuttle to Wigwam Outlet Mall, Croquet, Putting Green, Basketball Court & In-room coffee.

Membership:
Supporting: $30
Attending: $70 thru 1/31/04
More later and at the door

Contact Info:

ConKopelli
Westercon 57
PO Box 67457
Phoenix AZ 85082
602-973-2341
info@conkopelli.org
Web: www.conkopelli.org

Presenting

DarkCon 2004

"ConVergence"

January 9 - 11th 2004

Lord of the Rings
Costume Party
Friday Evening
Costume and Trivia Contests
Hosted by LOTR Characters
Surprises / Prizes / Raffle

Medieval Exhibitions
Art Displays & Demos
Gaming / Merchants
Hospitality Suite / Parties
Comics / Kids Programs

Special Guest: Artist Diana Vick

Has created over 150 cards for collectible card games including: Magic the Gathering: Legend of the Five Rings, and The Seventh Sea. Her works include: Art; Writing; Inking in Strikeforce: Morituri and Storyboarding for animations such as Gargoyles and The Mask.

24 Hour Gaming Areas

Role Playing -Miniatures
Board & Card Games
Multiple Live Action Role Play's
Computer Network Gaming
Giant Chess Board

R.P.G.A. Gaming
brought to you by
the Shield of Almor

Can you save your world?!?
"The Gauntlet"
6+ Game Masters
30+ Players
3rd Edition D&D at its Brutal Best

Largest Gaming Facilities Ever
(Game Masters get in Free*)
* Minimum gaming hours required

Mini-Catapult Competition
Build your own in Advance or Show up and use our parts on site (Rules Online)

Dark Ones Party - Saturday Night
Music and Dancing - "When the Bells Toll"

Music / Dancing / Parties
Barry Bard's Movie Previews
SCA Demo / Live Steel Fighting Demo

$25.00
Memberships
Available Now
www.darkcon.org
Or Buy One at the Door!

Presented by:
The Dark Ones, Inc.

www.darkcon.org
shadowstalker@darkones.org
(623) 435-9700

Embassy Suites Hotel
$89/night (single/double)
+$10/night per additional adult,
children under 18 stay free
2577 W Greenway Rd
Greenway Rd & Interstate 17
Phoenix, Arizona
(602) 375-1777

DarkCon ... Fantasy is just the beginning ...

Calendar of Events -December 2003-January 2004

To have your event or meeting listed please email calendar@casfs.org - **Deadline for Feb/March Submissions - January 15, 2004**
(This is a free service. All release dates are tentative)

DECEMBER 2003

DECEMBER 2 - TUESDAY

DVD: Pirates of the Carribean: Curse of the Black Pearl
DVD-TV: Alias Season 2, Deep Space Nine Season 7, Lost World Season 1

DECEMBER 3 - WEDNESDAY

Meeting: ConNotations Staff Meeting - 7PM at JB's I-17 & Indian School. Info connotations@casfs.org

DECEMBER 5 - FRIDAY

Movie: LOTR: Fellowship of the Ring (extended), The Last Samurai, HIghwaymen

DECEMBER 6 - SATURDAY

Meeting: ConKopelli - 2PM at JB's I-17 & Indian School. Info info@conkopelli.org
Meeting: CopperCon 24 - 4PM at JB's I-17 & Indian School. Info mwillmoth@compuserve.com
Meeting: TARDIS 602-864-0901

DECEMBER 7 - SUNDAY

Meeting: AZ Game Days - Shield of Almor Meeting Info: www.nyrond.org
Meeting: ConNotations Labeling & Potluck - Stephanie's house 4PM - Info laetitia@doverkeep.cm

DECEMBER 8, 9 - MONDAY/TUESDAY

TV: Battlestar Galactica miniseries (SciFi)

DECEMBER 9 - TUESDAY

DVD-TV: Buffy Season 5, Firefly Complete Series

DECEMBER 12 - FRIDAY

Meeting: CASFS - 8PM at JB's I-17 & Indian School. Info info@casfs.org
Movie - LOTR: The Two Towers (Extended), Crust (Limited)

DECEMBER 13 - SATURDAY

Meeting: UFP Video Watching info@u-f-p.org

DECEMBER 16 - TUESDAY

Movie: LOTR: Trilogy Tuesday
DVD: League of Extraordinary Gentlemen

DECEMBER 14 - SUNDAY

Meeting: SouthWest Costumers Guild - Once More Into The Breeches: 1PM at Jean's Info: www.southwestcostumersguild.org

DECEMBER 17 - WEDNESDAY

Movie: LOTR: The Return of the King

DECEMBER 19 - FRIDAY

Event: Fannish Holiday Open House & Potluck at Craig & Stephanie's - 6PM Info: laetitia@doverkeep.com

DECEMBER 20 - SATURDAY

Meeting: TARDIS Holiday Party 602-864-0901

DECEMBER 23 - TUESDAY

DVD: Jeepers Creepers 2

DECEMBER 25 - THURSDAY

Movie: Peter Pan, Paycheck

DECEMBER 31 - WEDNESDAY

Meeting: UFP New Year's Party info@u-f-p.org

JANUARY 2004

JANUARY 2 - FRIDAY

DVD-TV: Tremors IV: The Legend Begins

JANUARY 3 - SATURDAY

Meeting: TARDIS 602-864-0901

JANUARY 6 - TUESDAY

DVD-TV: Babylon 5 Season 4

JANUARY 10 - SATURDAY

Deadline: ConNotations Submissions
Meeting: UFP Workshop/Rocket Building info@u-f-p.org

JANUARY 9-11 — FRIDAY-SUNDAY

Event: DarkCon 2004 Info: www.darkcon.org

JANUARY 13 - TUESDAY

DVD: Freddy vs. Jason
DVD-TV: Lost in Space Season 1, Spiderman Season 1, Xena Season 3

JANUARY 15 - THURSDAY

Deadline ConNotations Ad deadline

JANUARY 16 - FRIDAY

Event: Fannish Open House & Potluck at Craig & Stephanie's - 6PM Info: laetitia@doverkeep.com
Movie: Torque

JANUARY 17 - SATURDAY

Event: A Fantastic Duo: Stephen Donaldson, Michael Stackpole 12 pm Signing at Poisoned Pen - 480-947-2974
Meeting: TARDIS 602-864-0901

JANUARY 20 - TUESDAY

DVD-TV: Stargate SG-1 Season 5, Jeremiah Season 1

JANUARY 23 - FRIDAY

Movie: The Butterfly Effect, Mindhunters, Big Fish

JANUARY 24 - SATURDAY

Meeting: Picnic/Rocket Launch info@u-f-p.org

JANUARY 25 - SUNDAY

Meeting: SouthWest Costumers Guild - Parasol Covering: 1PM at Stephanie's Info: www.southwestcostumersguild.org

JANUARY 27 - TUESDAY

DVD: Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country Collectors Edition, House of the Dead
DVD-TV: Dark Shadows Collection 10

JANUARY 31 - SATURDAY

Meeting: TARDIS 602-864-0901

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 3 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 meetings@casfs.org

Ongoing Events

Wednesdays		New Comics Arrive!	Samurai Comics, 7th St & Camelback	www.samuraicomics.com
	6pm	Hero Clix Tournamets	Samurai Comics, 7th St & Camelback	www.samuraicomics.com
	6pm	Mech WarriorTournaments	Samurai Comics, 7th St & Camelback	www.samuraicomics.com
Thursdays	6pm	Camarilla Anarch Game	Kiwanis Park	www.titheofsouls.com
	6pm	Dragonball Z Tournaments	Atomic Comics-Phoenix	www.atomiccomics.com\
Fridays	6pm	Magic the Gathering	Samurai Comics, 7th St & Camelback	www.samuraicomics.com
	7pm	Anime Club Meeting	Samurai Comics, 7th St & Camelback	www.samuraicomics.com
Saturdays*	3pm	Mage Knight Tournaments	Samurai Comics, 7th St & Camelback	www.samuraicomics.com
	3pm	Classic Battletech	Samurai Comics, 7th St & Camelback	www.samuraicomics.com
	4pm	Hero Clix Tournamets	Samurai Comics, 7th St & Camelback	www.samuraicomics.com
	4pm	Star Wars CCG	Samurai Comics, 7th St & Camelback	www.samuraicomics.com
	4pm	Magic Tournaments	Atomic Comics-Paradise Valley	www.atomiccomics.com
Sundays*	Noon	YU-GI-OH Tournaments	Samurai Comics, 7th St & Camelback	www.samuraicomics.com
	3pm	Dragonball Z Tournament	Samurai Comics, 7th St & Camelback	www.samuraicomics.com
	3pm	Creepy Freaks	Samurai Comics, 7th St & Camelback	www.samuraicomics.com

Videophile

Finding Nemo
Lilo & Stitch's Island of Adventures DVD Game
Indiana Jones Trilogy Boxed Set
Dark Angel - Season 1
Disney's Brother Bear Sing Along
Disney's Sing Along Songs Very Merry Christmas Songs
The Brave Little Toaster - 3 titles
Power Rangers Ninja Storm: Looming Thunder
Power Rangers Ninja Storm: Lightning Strikers

Finding Nemo
Walt Disney, 100 minutes, G
VHS $24.99 , DVD $29.99

Finding Nemo continues Pixar's run of quality films and, as they did with the *Monsters Inc* DVD release, this 2-disc set combines a wonderful film (both wide-screen and full screen presentations) with a set of extras that would be worth the price of the set all on their own.

The basic story of *Finding Nemo* has an over-protective father, Marlin (Albert Brooks) searching for his kidnapped son, Nemo. In this case, Marlin is a clown fish

and his son has been kidnapped by a scuba diver who put Nemo in his office fish tank. Marlin, with the help of a scatterbrained blue tang fish named Dory (Ellen DeGeneres), searches for his lost son, facing sharks, deep-sea anglers, poisonous jellyfish, sea turtles, pelicans, and along the way he learns about friendship, fatherhood and letting one's children grow up.

The DVD extras include the usual deleted scenes and commentary. Following a recent trend in DVDs the commentary option includes the deleted scenes during the actual film, an option I find annoying and disruptive. However, unlike other DVDs that have chosen this method, Finding Nemo offers the option of watching the commentary on the deleted scenes separately from the film, a choice I whole heartedly approve of. Other DVD features include the various theatrical trailers, a "Making Nemo" documentary, "The Art of Nemo" narrated by the artists, a truly delightful "Exploring the Reef" short film with Jean-Michel Cousteau, Marlin, Dory and Nemo (enjoyable enough that I've watched it several times), Pixar's short *Knick Knack* with and without commentary, a Fisharades game, a Read-along story, Learning fun with Mr. Ray's encyclopedia, a behind the scenes tour of the Pixar Studios (interesting but not as interesting as the one on *Monsters Inc*), character interviews which were a riot, sneak preview of an upcoming 2004 film release and lots and lots of virtual aquariums. (Please note that the VHS version does not include any of the extra features.)

I am sorry I missed this feature when it was in theaters, it is one of the most delightful films I've seen in years. Truly a "must have" for any movie collection even if you do not have children. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Lilo & Stitch's
Island of Adventures DVD Game
Disney, $29.99, NR

From the back cover: "Family entertainment reaches a cosmic new level with this ever-changing island adventure that you don't just watch, you play! LILO & STITCH'S ISLAND OF ADVENTURES includes two full-length Lilo & Stitch adventures and a revolutionary new DVD game that takes you inside the world of Lilo & Stitch -- it continues the story of your favorite Disney movie and expands the home entertainment experience on DVD. Get ready for an all-new experience, because you've never watched a DVD like this before!"

This combination DVD and game contains two new full length Lilo & Stitch adventures as well as an interactive game that has 10 levels. Lilo has accidentally released hundreds of Stitch's experimental cousins and the player needs to help round them up. Whoever collects the most experiments wins the game. Experiments are collected by winning an on screen game, performing an activity or following directions from a character.

I'm not a big game player so I borrowed the neighbor's kids.(ages 7, 9 and 11) The game seemed to hold their attention fairly well but did require some adult participation and the 7 year old mainly wanted to watch the stories. Overall the kids all gave it a hearty "thumbs up".

The set also includes a movie poster from *Stitch! The Movie*. I'm not sure this would have been a choice if I had been looking for something to purchase but all in all it seems to be a good family activity and should be a welcome gift this holiday season for the kids on your gift list. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Indiana Jones Trilogy Box Set
Paramount, 359 minutes, PG
DVD $69.98

Finally the *Indiana Jones* trilogy has been released on DVD. All three movies have been lovingly restored frame by frame and are wonderfully crisp and clear, even the 22 year old *Raiders of the Lost Ark* looks as if it was filmed this year. There is no real reason to review the films themselves as everyone is familiar with them by now. Along with the wonderful restoration of the films themselves, the story here is the extras that have been included, and those that are absent. The most notable lack is the lack of a commentary track but the 2 hour documentary almost makes up for that. There are lots of behind the scenes glimpses and interviews with a plethora of people, actors, crew members, stuntmen and even bit players like Alfred Molina.

This is a "must have" set for the Indian Jones fan though I would really have enjoyed a commentary track with George Lucas, Steven Spielberg and Harrison Ford. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

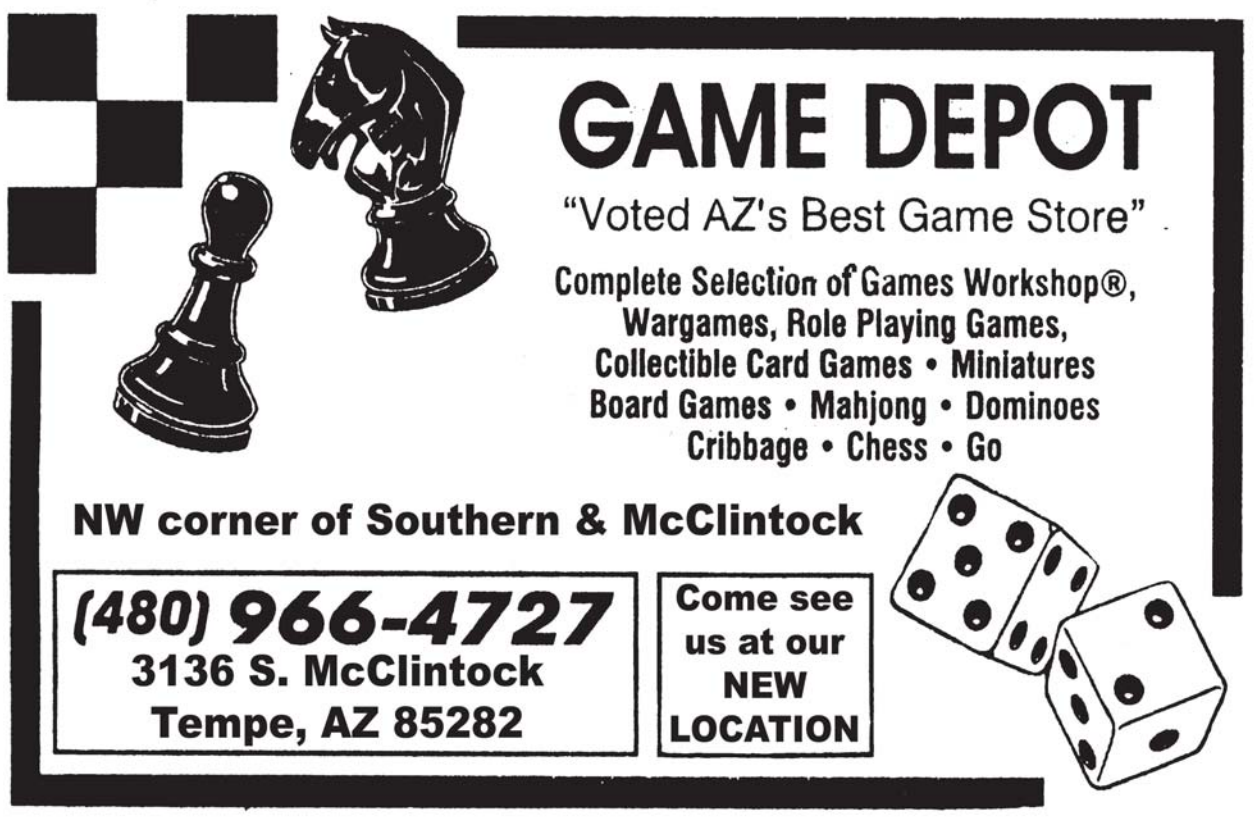
Dark Angel Season 1
Fox Home Video, 999 minutes
DVD $59.98

Dark Angel was one of TV's more interesting tough-girl action shows. Max, (Jessica Alba) and hundreds of other children were bred and trained as a super-soldiers but escaped the government compound where they were being held. Many were recaptured but some managed to elude their pursuers and blend into society. Aided by Logan, a semi-paralyzed crime fighter known as "Eyes Only", Max looks for others like her while still eluding capture by Lydeker, who is hunting all those who escaped the Manticore Experimental Complex.

This is a wonderful series that deserved much better treatment than it received from the network. Created by James Cameron and Charles Eglee the series gave us a dark complex world that has been shaped by biological super-science run wild and a partial social collapse caused by damaged technology . It was a setting that truly offered our heroine, Max, and hero, Logan, the chance to really make a difference

This 6 disc set contains all 22 episodes from the first season as well as some great extras. The extras include Commentary by Charles Eglee & David Nutter on pilot episode, Commentary by Charles Eglee and Renee Echevarria on "Rising", Commentary by Charles Eglee, Renee Echevarria, and Charles Woolnaugh on "And I Am a Camera", Commentary by Michael Weatherly and Jessica Alba on "...And Jesus Brought a Casserole", Featurettes: Dark Angel, Genesis, Seattle Ain't What It Used to Be, Creating an X-5, Audition tapes, Gag reel/bloopers and the James Cameron's Dark Angel video game trailer.

(Cont'd on page 15)



Videophile (Cont'd from page 14)

Season 2 of this great show is now available on DVD and will soon be added to our collection. The only thing better would be if it had gone on for more than two seasons. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Disney's Brother Bear
Sing Along Songs
Disney,44 minutes, NR
VHS $14.99, DVD $19.99

This DVD lets you and your kids sing, dance, and play along with your favorite Disney songs. It is easy to learn or follow the lyrics because the words appear right on the screen. Join Rutt and Tuke -- the wisecracking, sidesplitting moose brothers from Disney's *Brother Bear* as they lead you through 9 sing-along songs and 3 dance-along songs from *Brother Bear, Treasure Planet, 101 Dalmatians Ii, Stitch! The Movie,* along with a "Find It!" word game, spelling activity in a "Letter Puzzle", and reading activity in a "What's This?"challenge. The DVD features random and repeat play options to keep the kids occupied for hours. The VHS features the songs without the extras.

My 2 year old nephew was delighted and his 5 year old big brother enjoyed it as well. My 7 year old niece thought it was fun but it did not hold her attention as completely as it did her younger brothers. All in all the DVD was a success and a welcome addition to their movie collection. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Disney's Sing Along Songs
Very Merry Christmas Songs
Disney, 53 minutes, NR
VHS $14.99 , DVD $19.99

Unlike most of Disney's Sing Along titles this one is not a compilation of theme songs from movies. Instead we have songs (22 on the DVD, 13 on the VHS) that celebrate Christmas, blending traditional favorites with Disney's trademark animation. I am reviewing the DVD version.

The 30-minute program begins with Mickey Mouse singing an original song, "From All of Us to All of You," while Chip and Dale scamper around the Christmas tree. Other songs include Donald Duck singing "Deck the Halls", Santa sings "Up on the Housetop." as he plunges down the chimney and the rendition of "Joy to the World with hundreds of animated fairies dancing through a snow-covered forest before they transform into glistening stars is truly unforgettable.

The DVD includes a Words of the Season vocabulary game, a Very Merry musical game and a Create-a-card activity. This is going to be a stocking stuffer for our nieces and nephews so I don't have their opinions yet but judging by the enjoyment they've had from the VHS version this will be welcome addition to their Disney collection. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

The Brave Little Toaster
Disney, 90 minutes, G
The Brave Little Toaster Goes To Mars
Disney, 73 minutes, NR
The Brave Little Toaster To The Rescue
Disney, 74 minutes, NR
VHS $14.99 each , DVD $24.99 each

The Brave Little Toaster is an animated tale of friendship, loyalty, and courage which tells the story of five electrical appliances in search of their young master, Rob, who has mysteriously disappeared. The unhappy Toaster rounds up Kirby the vacuum cleaner, Blanky the electric blanket, Lampy the bedside lamp and Radio the radio, and together, they set off to search for their beloved owner.

The Brave Little Toaster To The Rescue reunites the five appliances as they set out to rescue their new friends at the local veterinary hospital who are going to be sent to a testing lab.

The Brave Little Toaster Goes To Mars follows Toaster, Lampy, Radio, Kirby, and Blanky as they try to find Robbie, the master's baby, who has been whisked off to Mars. With the help of their new friends -a fan, a microwave, a calculator, a bag of cheddar-flavored popcorn, and "the contraption in the junk drawer" - the friends go to Mars and bring Robbie home safely.

These films vary in quality with the first installment, *The Brave Little Toaster*, being the best of the lot. *The Brave Little Toaster To The Rescue* opens up some disturbing questions about using animals for research purposes that some parents may wish to avoid. *The Brave Little Toaster Goes To Mars* seemed to be an attempt to stretch the series farther than it should go. That said, all three are sure to hold the attention of children aged 5 or younger though parent may wish to watch with the youngest children to explain some things they might find upsetting to begin with. *The Brave Little Toaster* has a making of feature as an extra but other than that the DVD and VHS versions seem similar in features. I am reviewing the DVD versions - **Stephanie L Bannon**

(Cont'd on page 16)

Art by Todd Lockwood

CopperCon 24

Sept 10-12, 2003

Embassy Suites Phoenix North, Phoenix, AZ
ANNUAL LITERARY SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY CONVENTION

Author Guest of Honor: **Alan Dean Foster**
Artist Guest of Honor: **Todd Lockwood**
Local Author Guest of Honor: **Catherine Wells**
Music Guest: **Leslie Fish** (sponsored by the Phoenix Filk Circle)

Memberships
$25 thru 12/31/03, $30 thru 4/30/04,
$35 thru 8/27/ 04, $40 at the door
Kids 7-12 half price*
Kids 6 & Under Free*
* with Adult membership

Embassy Suites Phoenix North
Room Rates: $84 S/D/T/Q +tax
2577 W. Greenway Rd., Phoenix, Arizona
(602) 375-1777

www.coppercon.org

Contact CopperCon 24 at:
Write: CopperCon 24,
PO Box 62613
Phoenix, AZ 85082
Phone: (480) 423-0649
Email: **cu24@coppercon.org**

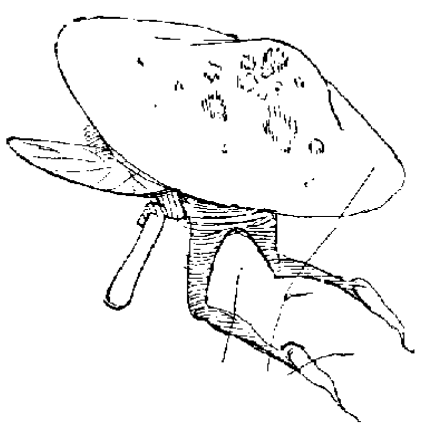
Videophile (Cont'd from page 15)

Power Rangers Ninja Storm:
Looming Thunder
Lightning Strikers
Buena Vista, 79 minutes each, NR
VHS $14.99 each, DVD $19.99 each

Power Rangers Ninja Storm: Lightning Strikers says on the back cover "Every Ranger knows you should never trust an evil space Ninja, but Choobo scores with a scheme that changes the balance of power in the universe! Hunter and Blake are warped into thinking the Wind Rangers are their enemies. The resulting Megazord battles and Toxipod tangles land all the Rangers on a sinking island to sort things out by battling each other! There's a cold wind blowing toward a knock-down, drag-out fight when Choobo takes the Scroll of Empowerment in hand. Only the combined force of a super Thunderstorm Megazord could defeat this twisted evil."

Power Rangers Ninja Storm: Looming Thunder says on the back cover "Just when the Power Rangers are learning to combine forces as a team, a devious plot threatens to destroy their friendship--and the fate of the Rangers. Dustin's new motocross buds seem too cool to be true to Tori and Shane, but Dustin can't resist their high-speed lifestyle. It's no coincidence that the trouble begins as soon as they arrive, from atrocious space monster attacks to the arrival of two mysterious Thunder Rangers who steal their prized Tsunami Cycles! Dustin is forced to take a hard look at the meaning of friendship when Sensei is captured. It'll take all the muscle, courage, and ingenuity of a combined Power Rangers team to mount an awesome Megazord battle, defeat ferocious Ninja Spirits and journey to the mountain of Lost Ninjas to rescue Sensei and save the world."

These two entries in the Power Ranger series seem to be much better produced than earlier series. I will state here that I did not actually watch them but the youngsters at our open house (6-12 years of age) seemed to enjoy them quite a bit. From their reactions I'd say that any Power Ranger fans of your acquaintance will enjoy these and ask for the rest of the series. - **Stephanie L Bannon**



Hotel Vendome
By Dawn Mullan

Ever entered a place, either a home or store, and had your hair stand on the back of your neck? Ever seen or heard something that could not be rationally explained? Perhaps you have encountered the paranormal.

Being a wild-west state, Arizona has many stories of card games, shoot outs, and outlaws. History runs deep as we build statues and museums to explain our rich background. In these places if one would close their eyes and listen to the wind, one might hear the shuffling of cards, the ringing of gun fire, or the whispers of men. For many places in Arizona, the past lives as some individuals refuse to move onto their heavenly destinations.

The Hotel Vendome in Prescott, Arizona is not above exception. In the early 1900's a couple bought the hotel, but lost ownership due to unpaid taxes. The new owners allowed the couple to occupy the place free of charge for the price of being the hotel's caretakers.

Unfortunately before she married, Abby Byr was diagnosed with consumption; a debilitating disease that would someday extinguish her life. That day came earlier than she had expected as her husband went out one day for her medication and never returned. Later, Abby was found dead. She starved herself in the depths of grief and despair taking her cat Noble with her into the hereafter.

Though the story is sorrowful, the emotional trauma has left an indelible scare on the manor. Many people who have stayed at the hotel, especially those individuals who have stayed in Abby's room number sixteen have experienced unusual activities.

From opening doors to doors that won't stay shut, floating cold spots, smelling rose perfume, or hearing cat verbalizations, the Hotel Vendome is home to Arizona's two friendliest ghosts.

However, these two entities are not the only ones who reside at this haunted destination. There are other spirits who cling to the property in hopes of regaining whatever they lost in the past. Counting the few other felines, as well as humans- two female and one male- the Hotel Vendome houses more than a guest may believe is awaiting them.

So if you are planning to take in the scenic view of northern Arizona and find yourself staying at the Hotel Vendome beware what lurks in the shadows. You just might find that you are not the only guest assigned to your room.

WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION 2004

October 28-31, 2004

Tempe Mission Palms, Tempe, Arizona
www.worldfantasy2004.org

The 2004 edition of the **World Fantasy Convention** in Tempe, Arizona has a theme of **Women of Fantasy and Horror**. It will feature a Dealer's Room, Art Show, Programming featuring our Guests of Honor and other participants including discussion panels, workshops and readings, the World Fantasy Awards Banquet, Autograph Reception, Artists Reception, and more.

Join us at the Tempe Mission Palms in downtown Tempe, Arizona!

The Tempe Mission Palms has a wide variety of restaurants, shopping and nightlife in the immediate area plus recreation at Tempe Town Lake and Karsten Golf Course.
Free airport shuttle and free parking are available at the hotel.
The average daytime high temperature in late October is 85 degrees.

Author Guest of Honour Gwyneth Jones

Gwyneth Jones is a writer and critic of Fantasy and Science Fiction and also writes as Ann Halam, a writer of teenage fiction. She has been awarded two World Fantasy Awards, a BSFA short story award, the Children of the Night Award from the Dracula Society, the 2001 Arthur C. Clarke award for *Bold As Love*, and is a co-winner of the Tiptree award.

Artist Guest of Honor Janny Wurts

Janny's award winning paintings have been showcased in many exhibitions of imaginative artwork and she has been awarded three Chesley awards by The Association of Science Fiction and Fantasy Artists (ASFA). She is also the author of eleven novels, a collection of short stories, and the internationally best selling Empire trilogy written in collaboration with Raymond E. Feist.

Editor Guest of Honor: Ellen Datlow

Award winning editor of many fantasy, horror and science fiction anthologies including *The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror* for sixteen years. She has won the World Fantasy Award six times, the Bram Stoker Award once, and the 2002 Hugo Award for Best Professional Editor. Datlow consults for Tor Books, was fiction editor for OMNI magazine for 17 years and is currently the editor for SCI FICTION, the fiction area of SCIFI.COM.

More Guests to be Announced

Memberships are US$130 thru Jan 31, 2004, US$140 through April 30, 2004,
more later and at the door.

Tempe Mission Palms
60 E. First St., Tempe, Arizona 85281

Room Rates: $155 S/D/T/Q plus tax
(Kids 18 & under stay free with adult)

Call 800-547-8705 (or 480-894-1400)
for hotel reservations.

World Fantasy 2004 Contact Info:
World Fantasy 2004,
c/o Leprecon, Inc.
P.O. Box 26665,
Tempe, AZ 85285
Phone: (480) 945-6890
Fax: (480) 941-3438
Email: wfc2004@leprecon.org

In Our Book

The Changeling Plague
by Syne Mitchell
Roc Books, 327 pp., $6.99

This is a near-future hard science story, which remains prosaic until the second half. Then things get a little fantastic, while staying down to earth until the very end. And a nice surprise ending it is, so I shan't say more.

Let's back up to the start: technology has advanced some in genetic engineering, microbiology, and computerized virtual reality. An accidental release of a lab virus devastated the world and led to a ban on recombinant human gene research. Then along comes a sick rich kid who funds illegal research to cure his cystic fibrosis. Unexpected result: a new world-wide genetic plague, an airborne cancer virus. Meanwhile, an outlaw hacker and his girlfriend are trying to catch the rich kid. With the help of a lady scientist they do, and the whole USA goes into panic-mass-quarantine mode, then the whole world does. New unexpected result: the hackers figure out how to use the new disease to modify the human body, making themselves and their friends into superbeings. Now it starts to get fantastic, but the social reactions stay realistically hardball politics. Read this and see what the future may bring, no kidding. - **Michael Griffin**

Under the Mistletoe
by Mary Balogh
NAL Trade Paperback, 249pp, $12.95

I am a Regency Romance fan girl, and have been for sometime. I read any and all of them. From the proper sexless ones, to the ones so steamy you need to close the door!

This collection of five Christmas-themed stories by Balogh is right in the middle. There is some sex, but it is tastefully done in these tales. Balogh is a *grande* dame of this genre and these are all easy on the eyes and warm on the heart.

So find your comfy slippers and your favorite chair and snuggle up with this.

The first story, "A Family Gathering" is a new tale, written for this book, the others are previously published.

And all are just delightful.

The first one deals with an unhappy couple who married and had a child and then lived separate lives. A house full of guests and children, remind the couple of what they really have. And the miracle of Christmas brings them together.

"The Star of Bethlehem" is ale of another unhappy, but childless couple, who fight and love constantly. But then, right before Christmas, a beautiful engagement ring is lost and the machinations of all involved to replace it are very clever, and heart-warming.

"The Best Gift" is sort of a Cinderella tale. An impoverished young teacher at a girl's school is swept up by a viscount bachelor uncle to take care of his 15-yar-old niece over the Christmas holidays, because her parents have decided to go to Italy at the last minute. (And for me this was a very weak plot point. But there you go.)

ANYWAY, the impoverished teacher has a Christmas with the viscount that she'll never forget. It is very sweet. (All these tales are, of course)

The fourth story is called "Playing House" and entails another impoverished miss who realizes after her father, the rector, dies, that she can no longer afford to keep her family together and the younger sister and brother most go to other households for fostering. And this is their last Christmas in their village cottage. Determined her brother and sister have a memorable holiday, she goes to the local lord, the Marquess of Bedford for help. When she was younger, she had had *a tendre* for him, but nothing developed from it and they went their separate ways.

Until this Christmas of course. The Marquess of Bedford is a single parent of an adorable lonely four-year-old, who immediately takes a liking to the spinster woman and her younger siblings.

The final tale "No Room at the Inn" is a very clever take on a poor couple who come to a shabby inn were a variety of the Quality have been stranded by unrelenting rain. The young miss is about due and of course, the only place for them might be the stable....

Of course, they are given a room, and of course a healthy baby boy is born on Christmas.

But it is the characters Balogh surrounds this young couple with that are interesting. And how being stranded in this humble place makes them all more aware of what they have and who they are than if they had continued on their journeys to fancy manor parties, etc.

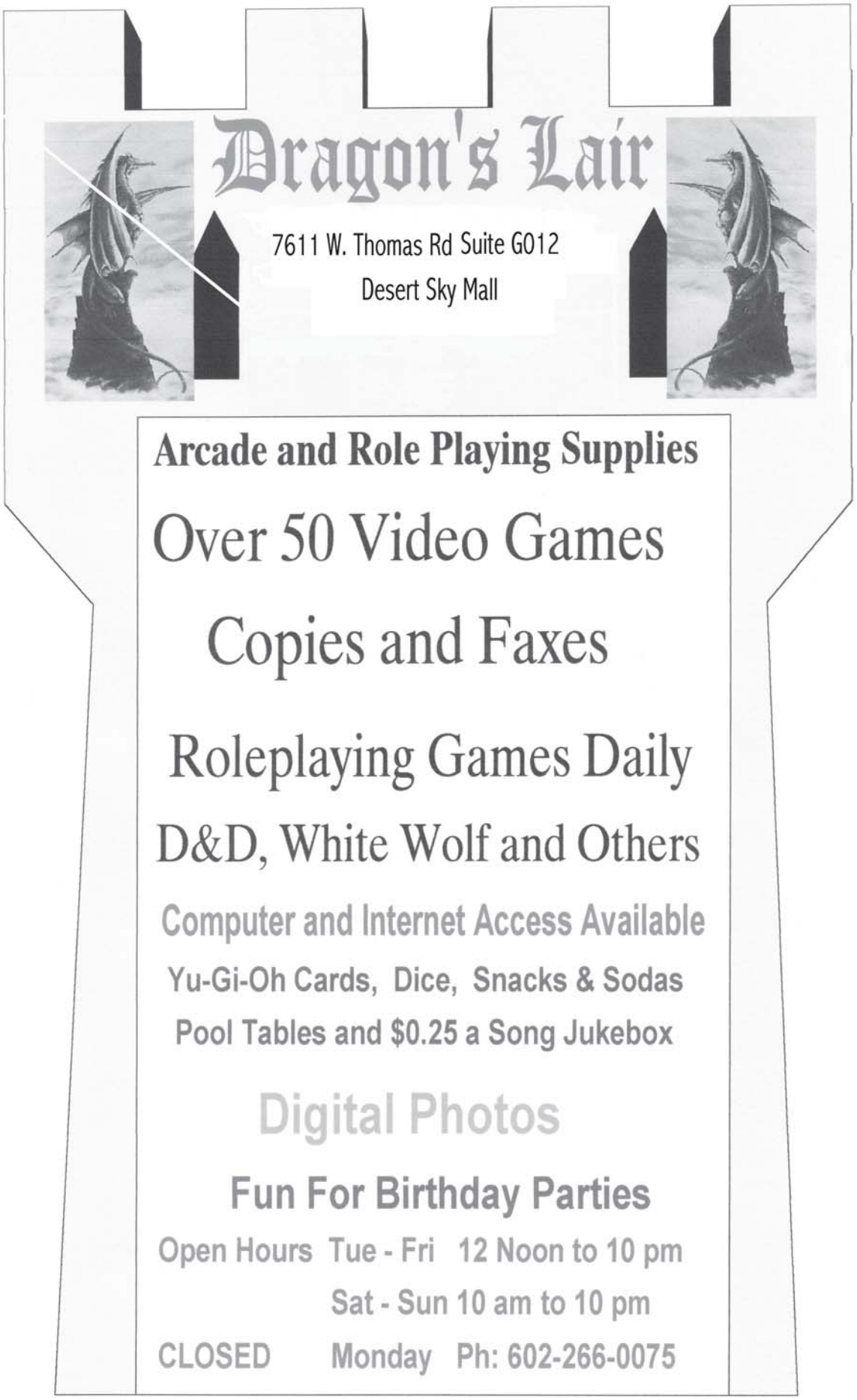
And Christmas works its spell once more.

A very charming tale to end this book with.

If you love the warm fuzzies set at Christmas time in Regency England, with impoverished misses and lonely, brooding lords, this is definitely your cup of tea.

Earl Grey, of course. - **Sue Martin**

(Cont'd on page 18)



In Our Book (Cont'd from page 17)

Haunted
by Darlene Wilson
iUniverse.com, 192 pages, $13.95

In Haunted, Darlene Wilson weaves a story filled with intrigue, excitement and danger. Grace Heathfield, a professional ghost hunter, accepts an assignment to clear a house which appears to be haunted. A family of three had been brutally murdered, so the records say, but the daughter's body had never been found. While working her case, Grace is often reminded of her daughter, Jenny Gray Eyes, who disappeared so many years ago.

Some of the chief characters are veterans of the Viet Nam war. They provide an aura of mystery laced with sinister undercurrents. Carter Stanton, owner of the local newspaper, takes a personal interest in Grace after she consults him about the murders. Eric Madigan, a disliked rival, appears in town hired by someone to investigate the haunting. As the story unfolds, Grace's involvement with the two men takes a startling turn.

Ms. Wilson has painted her characters with a bold brush, allowing them to draw the reader into their lives, thus moving the story along to its exciting conclusion. - **Mildred McCloskey**

Way of the Wolf
Book One of The Vampire Earth
by E.E. Knight
ROC, 400 pages, $6.50

From the back cover: "Louisiana, 2065. A lot has changed in the 43rd year of the Kurian Order. Possessed of an unnatural hunger, the bloodthirsty Reapers have come to Earth to establish a New Order built on the harvesting of human souls. They rule the planet. And if it is night, as sure as darkness, they will come.

But on this pitiless world, the indomitable spirit of man still breathes in Lieutenant David Valentine. And his mission is to win back Earth..."

The story: In a near-future earth where interstellar vampires have conquered the world humans are viewed, at best, as slaves, and at worst, as a food source. The story follows David Valentine as he joins an elite group of guerilla fighters who are trying to drive the vampires from earth, back to the world from which they came. The resistance offers several ways to serve but David chooses to become a Wolf, the most difficult of the paths. As a Wolf he is thrust into the very heart of the battle, whether it is leading escaping humans from the vampire controlled areas into the human controlled "free zones" or being thrust into a covert operation deep in the heart of vampire controlled cities.

This is not your typical vampire novel, it neither romanticizes vampires, nor is it filled with gore or supernatural beings. The world is well-crafted and frighteningly believable, the characters are well developed and compelling and the action is non-stop. I was extremely surprised to learn this is the author's first novel. This book is highly recommended, go out and buy it right now, I promise you won't be sorry. Book two of the series comes out in May 2004 and I can hardly wait. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Myth-ion Improbable
by Robert Asprin
ACE, 208 pages, $6.99

I found this book to be written in a more simplistic style than the previous MYTH novels, almost as if he had written it for the "young adult". So I went back to the Author's Note, and found out it has been, for him, seven whole years since he had written any MYTH books. No wonder, the poor man forgot how to write them. A friend of his made the suggestion of going back and writing about a simpler Skeeve and Aahz story. That is what Robert did and the result is this story.

The story is set in an earlier time when Skeeve was Court Magician for the King of Possiltum. One day Skeeve pulls out this treasure map which leads them, in a really roundabout way, to the Kowtow dimension. Along the way they pick up our favorite green haired would-be assassin, and a shape shifter, who is in a guise that leaves Skeeve's tongue almost hanging out. Their mission is to go after a golden cow that gives gold-laced milk and lives in a gold palace. Little do they know, Kowtow is a place of vegetarians, heck-bent, oops, I mean, hell-bent on protecting their cattle and--really, truly afraid of things that come out after dark.

Would I have paid full price for this book? Probably not, unless it was the only book on the shelf at the airport and I was looking for a book to read on the flight home. But I liked it and I'm glad that it's now in my library. - **Helen "April" Rice**

Trading in Danger
By Elizabeth Moon
Del Rey 2003, 294 pages, $24.95

Elizabeth Moon has added a new stone to her crown of triumph. This book is separate from her Families Regnant series. It is a classic coming of age story. The daughter of a wealthy merchant trader washes out of the military academy. Her life long dreams of adventure and a career in the military fall down in ruins. Her father assigns her the run as commander of the family's oldest trading vessel. She is to deliver a Cargo out to the edge of civilization and once there sell the ship for scrap, a milk run.

Unplanned difficulties ensue. Opportunities rise which prove irresistible for she has trading in the blood. She decides to acquire and deliver agricultural machinery. War interferes bringing with it a new contract. She finds danger and profit. The crew of veterans her father sent are enchanted, but she loses one of them and learns that some things cost dear. She grows. She fulfills the original family contract, the war contract and the Agricultural Machinery contract. The story is wonderful and carries you right along.

The characters are well drawn, the Pilot, the Cargo Master, Her Father, Mother, Her Surprising old Auntie, her Brother. All are believable and sufficiently defined for the purposes of the plot. There are several excellent villains without whom there could no story. The Universe is well built and well defined. You are there. You live it. You breathe it. You experience it. It is complex and dangerous enough to sate anyone's lust for well a delineated universe. I recommend the book **– Gary Swaty**

Agents of Light and Darkness
A Novel of the Nightside
by Simon R. Green
ACE, 240 pages, $6.50

We were introduced to detective John Taylor in *Something From The Nightside* in which we learned that John is not a private detective *per se*. He has a literal "third eye" that gives him a real knack for finding lost things. We also were introduced to The Nightside, an otherworldly realm in the center of London where it is always night and humans share space with monsters, ghosts, gods and demons.

In this second novel of the series John is on a quest for the Unholy Grail, the goblet from which Judas drank at the Last Supper. The problem is that a whole bunch of other people are looking for the Grail as well, including a host of angels, both those from on High and the Fallen... and these are not the sweet cherubs of myth, these guys are NASTY, even the angels from on High.

A few characters make repeat appearances from the first novel, most notable Shotgun Suzie, and we learn a little more about John's mysterious past. This is setting up to be an intriguing series that blends Lovecraftian horror with the hard boiled detective novel of the 1950's. Even the supporting characters are interesting in their own right. I strongly recommend this novel and eagerly anticipate more in the series. - **Stephanie L Bannon**.

Beyond Flesh
edited by Jack Dann and Gardner Dozois
ACE, 200 pages, $6.50

This excellent anthology is on the theme of mind-without-body, consciousness taken up by machines, computers, energy beings or new bodies. It starts with Poul Anderson's 1957 classic *Call Me Joe*, about mind transfers from humans to their genetically engineered creatures, designed to explore Jupiter. A 1986 story from Pat Cadigan follows, then all the rest are from 1997-2001. Gems by Greg Egan, Michael Swanwick, Robert Reed, Michael Cassutt, Ian R MacLeod, Geoffrey A Landis, Stephen Baxter and Paul J. McAuley. This theme is by no means a settled idea. Some of the stories are based on rejecting the possibility onstead of assuming it. Oddly, the most persuasive case comes from Poul Anderson's likening brain waves to radio. What is the basis of a self-conscious mind? We still don't know in 2003 and may never. Tune in to this book for a variety of answers. - **Michael Griffin**

Water: Tales of Elemental Spirits
by Robin McKinley and Peter Dickinson
Ace Trade Paperback, 266 pps, $14

I am a sucker for Robin McKinley. I have always loved her writing, (hopefully I am not denigrating either writer: Mckinley has very much the flavor of Ursula Le Guinn in her "Earthsea" books) and this collection is no disappointment. Peter Dickinson, her husband, adds some interesting stories of his own. There are six stories in all, three by each author. All the tales have water and water creatures as their central theme.

The first two, "Mermaid's Song" and The Sea King' Son." are just out-and-out delightful fairytales. The first deals with an orphaned young girl who lives with her grandparents. The grandpa is severe and strict, but the grandmother has some kindness in her. Before she dies, she teaches the girl a humming song that has been passed down for generations, a mer-song. Because the mer-people saved the first inhabitants of this island they live on.

After the grandma dies, the girl and her grandfather go down to the sea, to hunt for things washed up. The girl finds a wounded mer-child, a "sea child", trapped in a tidal pool. And her grandfather, excited by the find as he thinks this will make them money, goes to find some men to help catch her.

The young girl hums the song to calm the mer-child and then sets it free. Of course when Grandpa comes back, she innocently says, "What Sea Child?"

The second story, "The Sea King's Son," is just a lovely fairytale romance of a young woman who dares to cross a bridge the Sea King has cursed. There she meets the Sea King's son and the two become friendly and share each other's lives. She takes to the sea and learns how to breathe underwater, and he comes to her world and learns to walk and breath on land.

The course of true love never runs smooth, naturally, and such is their tale….

But there is a happy ending.

Now, the third tale, "Sea Serpent" is confusing. The action surrounds one god who wants to move a ring of standing

(Cont'd on page 19)

In Our Book (Cont'd from page 18)

stones to another site. The goddess of the current site of the standing stones sends a huge sea serpent to harry the men the god gets to do the moving.

Dickinson spends a lot of the story's time to go into great detail describing the building and using of the raft to float the stones and the magic used to track the serpent as they cross an estuary. The descriptions, well, I cannot picture them easily. There's too much of this in a short story. So, for me, the tale wasn't very satisfying. Struggling to get what he was telling me, I didn't care much how the story ended.

The fourth tale, "Water Horse," was a story about a young woman named Tamia who has a mother and a step-father, and her best friend is a pony. She like so many fairytale heroines, is sort of a third wheel in her family. She gets unexpectedly picked by the Water Guardian to be her apprentice and of course, a whole new world of growing things and water magics is opened for her. Her family is delighted to let her go.

The tale shows how she and the old woman get along, and how she learns to lay special pebbles in a pool to help control violent storms that come in from the sea and would flood the land, save for the Water Guardian's efforts.

Of course, the story gets more intense, as the Water Guardian falls ill, and the untested apprentice must try her magic against a ferocious Water Horse threatening all with inundation.

The choices Tamia makes are wonderful and this tale comes to a very satisfying conclusion.

"Kraken" is another charming tale of mer people and very, very star-crossed lovers.

A young sea princess does the unexpected and saves two drowning lovers who fling themselves off their ship when pirates attack it. Inexplicably drawn to them, she saves them, but at a cost. Possibly to the destruction of her whole undersea kingdom. But she is a brave and fearless princess (like all good fairy tale princess should be). She makes a hard decision, which will save her kingdom and the lovers...possibly at the cost of her life.

Again, Dickinson goes into a lot of detail on how the sea princess rides a "blue fin," including a great many details of the harness, etc. I assume a "blue fin" is a tuna…put perhaps it is a euphemistic name for a dolphin.

Still, this is a nifty story.

The final tale…ahhhh is a tale connected to the world McKinley wrote of in "The Hero and the Crown" and "The Blue Sword," two of my favorites by her.

This meaty tales concerns a woman constrained by circumstances into a very gray world. Her domineering father makes her do all the chores and clean because the mother has an unnamed nervous disorder which makes her flighty and ineffectual.

Hetta, our heroine starts having dreams about Damar (or Daria as it is also called) Very real and vivid dreams. One night, she even wakes up with sand in her nightie from a visit to one of the Watchers in the desert of Damar.

Poor Hetta keeps having dreams, which usually involve the handsome and slightly mysterious Watcher named Zasharan.

As hopeless as her life seems, Hetta may have found her REAL world in her dreams of Damar.

All in all, this is really a great selection of stories, the weakest being "Sea Serpent." Nevertheless, I don't think you'll be disappointed by this book. It's a wonderful endeavor to be enjoyed by lovers of fantasy. - **Sue Martin**

Legends II
edited by Robert Silverberg
Del Rey, 656 pages, $28.95

Eleven best selling writers present short stories set in the special universes they each created. Some are set before the events of their books, some after; some feature familiar characters while others introduce new ones but all are stand alone stories. This collection compiles stories from Terry Brooks, Orson Scott Card, Raymond Feist, Diana Gabaldon, Neil Gaiman, Elizabeth Haydon, Robin Hobb, George R.R. Martin, Anne McCaffrey, Robert Silverberg and Tad Williams.

Possibly the best of an extremely good lot was Elizabeth Haydon's *Threshold*. It tells the story of five friends who are left to guard what remains of civilization on the verge of destruction after the rest of the people have fled to safety. The characters courage and honor will live in your memory long after you are finished with the book.

Other notables stories are Orson Scott Card's *The Yazoo Queen*, a tale of Alvin Maker and the mighty Mississippi, with a couple of guys named Jim Bowie and Abe Lincoln and Diane Gabaldon's *"Lord John and the Succubus,"* a supernatural thriller featuring Lord John Grey and set in the early days of the Seven Years. The only disappointment was Anne McCaffrey's *Beyond Between* that tells us the fate of a dragon who fails to return from between.

All in all, while I don't generally enjoy short stories each of these was quite a satisfying read, even the ones whose world I was unfamiliar with. Definitely a must have for the fantasy fan. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Web Warriors: Dimension X
by James Luceno
Del Rey, 198 pages, $6.99

This juvenile series is mainly for kids who like to play computer games. Such stories require the unrealistic cliche that whatever is software has an automatic visual image on a computer screen. Take that cliche away, and an enitre subgenre vanishes. Hmmmm, yes, an anti-visual virus..... or you could just enjoy the story. A trio of young teens, two orphaned brothers and a girl, work as cyber-detectives for their adult employer. It's the near-future New York City with more advanced virtual reality simulation. The danger? If you don't unwind from your headset use and motion-effects chair, you may get mentally damaged. Add to this an evil corporation using a hidden domain as a data hideout. This is part two in a series, with a continuing cast of characters. Luceno, a Star Wars novelist, has added some classic series touches. The main cyber-villain Scaum is actually the advance agent for aliens who can possess bodies or software. One of the hero kids has a special destiny with computers. As Scaum says, "He was designed to be different." If you like adventures in cyber-space, this will do. - **Michael Griffin**

Smallville: Shadows
by Diana G. Gallagher

This book I found somewhat interesting, a whole new batch of criminals, created by a "mad scientist" and ta-da, green Kryptonite, aka glowing green meteorite rock. Hooo.....strange things happen around that stuff. Superboy, whoops, I mean Clark Kent watches as an old caretaker dies right before his eyes and he is powerless to do anything to help him. Some of that green rock, don't you know. He scans the area to see if any thing about the land has any of the green rock in it. Not a thing. Too bad he doesn't have telescopic or microscopic vision yet. By the end of the novel, he kills one of the criminals with his heat vision, does not save the mad scientist and his daughter from certain death (not to mention the other criminals), and saves Lana yet again. Mmmmm....where's Krypto when you need the little dog?

As a fan of the family of El (including the Legion of Super Heros in the 30th/31st century) this whole premise is crazy, unless you accept the fact that it takes place in a different universe other than our own little humdrum universe, all part of the great mass of the multi-verses. At least, that's how I have to accept it, otherwise the inconsistences of the series and books would really begin to pile up on me. Anyway, I had a good time reading it (and again and again and again, I was stuck in Piasa). I liked it and I would recommend it to anyone, especially to fellow fan. - **Helen "April" Rice**

Master of Middle Earth: The Fiction of J.R.R. Tolkien
by Paul H. Kocher
Del Rey, 247 pages, $12.95

In this entertaining and informative book Paul Kocher examines the sources that Tolkien drew on in creating Middle-Earth and it's inhabitants. Covering *The Hobbit, The Lord of the Rings Trilogy*, *The Silmarillion* as well as lesser known works such as *Leaf by Niggle* and *Smith of Wootton Major* this comprehensive guide covers most, if not all, that you would want to learn about Middle Earth. Topics covered include Why Aragorn is the most misunderstood character in *The Lord of the Rings* and its true hero; the origin of Sauron as well as the nature of evil in Tolkien's universe, and how Tolkien's ideas of morality, religion, and social order underlie every aspect of his life's work.

With the renewed interest in Tolkien's work due to the *Lord of the Rings* movies, this is an indispensable guide to understanding the meaning in Tolkien's work. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Tales Before Tolkien:
The Roots of Modern Fantasy
edited by Douglas A Anderson
Del Rey, 432 pages, $14.95

Edited by Douglas A. Anderson (*The Annotated Hobbit*), this book collects 21 classic stories and one verse by such masters as George Macdonald, E. Nesbit, H Rider Haggard and James Branch Cabell that influenced Tolkien. Included are such gems as Andrew Lang's romantic swashbuckler, *"The Story of Sigurd,"* which features magic rings, an enchanted sword; a brave hero loved by two beautiful women and cursed by a ferocious dragon; E. A. Wyke-Smith's *"The Marvelous Land of Snergs"* about people "only slightly taller than the average table." and a never-before-published story by David Lindsay called *"A Christmas Play"*.

This delightful collection would be enjoyable even without the extra added attraction of learning about the influences that helped shape Tolkien's Middle Earth. A must for both the fantasy fan and the Tolkien fan. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

A Forest of Stars
The Saga of Seven Suns, Book 2
by Kevin J. Anderson
Warner Books, 464 pg., $24.95

The *Forest of Stars* is a novel of epic fantasy masquerading as sci-fi. Humans have rediscovered an ancient technology which allows them to ignite gas giants, turning them into new suns. What they don't know when they test this rediscovered tech is that the gas giants are inhabited by a technologically advanced race which is not pleased when one of

(Cont'd on page 20)

In Our Book (Cont'd from page 19)

their planets is destroyed and millions of their people killed.

Mr. Anderson has written a masterful story which intertwines six major plot lines into a beautifully woven tapestry. His characters are well developed and engaging. Mr. Anderson is a wonderful writer, unfortunately he appears to have slept through all of his high school science classes. His glaring science errors made it impossible for me to maintain my willing suspension of disbelief. If you don't mind things like;

Having a character stand in an oxygen/ hydrogen atmosphere while enjoying the view of lightning flickering in the clouds on the horizon.

or

Having a character which lets his pet doves exercise by letting them fly free, in the atmosphere and gravity well of a gas giant.

or

Having a character who's family owns a water ice planet, and who's business it is to supply water to millions of people so that they can produce the oxygen they need to survive in hostile environment colonies, go out and spend months alone collecting interstellar gas from a nebula because it is the most plentiful source of hydrogen available.

Then by all means enjoy this book. But if you are like me and want plausible science in you sci-fi this book is not for you. - **William B. Whitmore**

The Gates of Dawn
by Robert Newcomb
Del Ray, 467 pp, $26.95

The Gates of Dawn is the second volume of the *Chronicles of Blood and Stone*.

For three hundred years, the kingdom of Eutracia was at peace. The attack of the Sorceresses of the Coven were finally defeated, but at the price of a royal palace in ruins, a lawless kingdom, with the prince a wanted man. Below the ruins of the palace, Prince Tristan, his sister, Shailiha, and the wizards, Wigg and Faegan have gathered to restore order, and save the kingdom from the loss of magic entirely.

This is a classic epic fantasy with flawed heros, and supernatural evils, prophecies, and the battles between good and evil. Everyone lacks pieces of the puzzle. It also is a page turner that involves you with well drawn characters, and tight plotting. This is an author to watch for, and a series to buy. - **Pam Allan**

Star Wars: The New Essential Guide to the Vehicles & Vessels
by W. Haden Blackman
Del Rey,200 pages $24.95

The *New Essential Guide to Vehicles and Vessels* features completely updated entries that cover more than 150 ships, along with brand new, full-color illustrations by Ian Fullwood. It has been updated to include vehicles and vessels from all five movies, the novels of the New Jedi Order, comics, TV specials, and games.

Inside you will find detailed profiles and vital statistics for each vessel, including data covering the vehicle's construction, size, maximum speed, and its role in *Star Wars* history; a Layman's Guide to Technology, covering common terms applied to each class of vehicle, an outline of the engine technologies that drive the craft across the *Star Wars* galaxy, and their unique weapons as well as schematics for each vehicle.

The artwork in this volume is gorgeous and the detail seems to be well researched though there are some distracting typos that could have been avoided with better editing. All in all though, this is a worthy addition to anyone's Star Wars collection. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Starhawk
Battle at Zero Point
by Mack Maloney
ACE, 341 pg., $6.50

Book three of the *Starhawk* series ended with the protagonists using a device to disappear from known space. In book four, *Battle at Zero Point*, we find out that our band of heroes were bodily transported to heaven. Unknown to our heroes the opening of their gate also opened a second gate, a gate strait to hell. This sets the stage for the climactic battle of good Vs evil to determine the fate of the universe for the next million years.

While book three of this series was a delightful romp in the absurd *Battle at Zero Point* goes to far. It is a bizarre story with an unbelievable plot and cheesy action. The characters returning as angels with supernatural powers is bad enough but the battles are even worse.

I was very disappointed with this final book in the *Starhawk* series and would not recommend it to any one. - **William B. Whitmore**

Devlin's Honor
by Patricia Bray
Bantam, 390 pp, $5.99

Devlin's Honor is the second volume of the *Sword of Change* series.

Devlin, formerly a smith and farmer has lost his family. been named a traitor in his native land, has become the "Chosen One" warrior and general for the conquerors of his people. Saddled with a spells that make him a virtual plaything of the gods, he must return to his native land to reclaim the missing "Sword of Light while being undermined in his role as Defender of Jorsk. He also must stay alive and return to save Jorsk from invasion.

Devlin's Honor is a page turner with some well drawn characters. It makes for a very enjoyable read. - **Pam Allan**

Tathea
by Anne Perry
ACE, 522 pages, $23.95
and
Come Armageddon
by Anne Perry
ACE, 512 pages, $$24.95

Tathea is touted as a fantasy novel when it is, in fact, a religious allegory about a woman on a quest to find God and spread his teachings. The story follows the Empress Tathea as she flees her native land of Shinabar in search of truth and meaning in The Lost Lands. She finds a book that contains the word of God that she is supposed to share with the rest of the world but, unfortunately, the world doesn't want to hear.

Come Armageddon continues the story of Tathea 500 years after the events of the first novel. Granted immortality so she can "spread the word" Tathea returns from exile to find the warriors who will fight Armageddon. While she manages to find the warriors, Asmodeus, the personification of the ultimate evil, refuses to strike. He prefers to wait until the warriors are too old to fight. The forces of Light sacrifice one of their own to force the issue but in the end the battle comes down to Tathea vs Asmodeus.

Being a real fan of Perry's Victorian mysteries I was disappointed in these books, the plot is thin and preachy and, even worse, the characters are poorly drawn. Supporting characters wander in and out and their names as so similar it is difficult to tell them apart. I read the second with the hopes it would be better than the first but it wasn't. I can't recommend these. - **Stephanie L Bannon**

Vincalis the Agitator
by Holly Lisle
Warner Books, $6.99, 591 pg.

The civilization of the Dragon empire is filled with wonder. Magic supports cities floating in the air and provides beautiful art for the amazement of the privileged. But at a price, a terrible terrible price.

For Wraith that price is far to high. He is determined to bring down the empire to save the souls of all those lost to power the magic of the Dragons. To start this process he invents the play write Vincalis whose works, while not openly treason, are thought provoking. More importantly they are popular and profitable. Profitable enough to finance the rebellion. Of course the Dragons are not going to sit still while Wraith pulls their society down around their ears.

Ms. Lisle has written a well crafted, thought provoking novel. I enjoyed it very much and would recommend it to all. - **William B. Whitmore**

Singularity Sky
by Charles Stross
Ace, 313 pp, $23.95.

Singularity Sky is Mr. Stross's first novel.

Faster than light travel is reality, and a super AI has been born. Four centuries later, there are many far flung colonies over thousands of light years of space. They are beginning to rediscover each other.

One colony, the New Republic, is faced with an unusual invasion. Neither new or a republic, it is static society founded in fear of future shock. Technology and advances are taboo. When the "Festival" arrives with a plague of information and technology that throws that world into chaos. The earth sends a battle fleet to save the world, they have their own myriad agendas. Who is the Festival, and what do they want?

And frankly, who wants to be rescued?

Information, no matter if on a superhighway, or on a rural cow path, can change the world. The question before them, [and us] is the usage.

What will result from the clash of ideas and perceptions? This is a fascinating book, hard to put down, and this reviewer will look forward to seeing what Mr. Stross does next - **Pam Allan**

Blade Dancer
by S.L. Viehl
ROC, 314 pages, $22.95

Jory Rask is yor run of the mill pro athlete with a large fan base. Until her mother dies and then her secret is out. She is a despised half-breed. Stripped of all her assets and deported from earth as a pauper Jory now must travel halfway across space to carry out her mother's last wish. Then the story gets complicated.

Blade Dancer is a novel of treachery and deceit, pride and honor, bigotry and slavery, and what "family" truly means. This is a very complicated story with many plot twists and surprises. The characters are well developed and likable. While *Blade Dancer* is set in the *Stardoc* universe it is not part of that series. This is an excellent novel that I enjoyed a lot and I heartily recommend it to you. - **William B. Whitmore**

Nine Layers of Sky
by Liz Williams
Bantam Spectra, 427 pp, $5.99

Nine Layers of Sky is a stand alone by the Author of *the Ghost Sister*.

Former Soviet Space Scientist Elena Irinnovna is cleaning office buildings. There is no longer a Soviet Union, much less a space program. On her day off, she makes a run to sell black market clothes.

(Cont'd on page 21)

In Our Book (Cont'd from page 20)

After a border squabble she picks up a strange black artifact dropped in the snow.

Ilya Muromyets is an 800 year old relic of Russia's past. Broken, and substance abusing, he waits in hope of dying.

The artifact brings them together with the ability to create a breach between dimensions and a world parallel to the one they thought they knew. The powers that be, on both sides of the dividing wall, want the artifact, with or without them. Now, science and myth must combine to discover themselves and their destiny in a place where dreams, and nightmares are reality. If they succeed, only one world will survive. This one is a fast paced page turner filled with thoughtful questions and well drawn characters. I will be searching for other books by Ms. Williams. Can't wait to read more. - **Pam Allan**

Crown of Slaves
by David Weber and Eric Flint
BAEN, 505 pages, $25

Anton Zilwicki was surprised when he received an invitation from the Queen of Manticor for a private audience, he was mare surprised when the invitation asked him to bring his 17 year old daughter Berry with him. But these were nothing like the surprise he got when the Queen told him why he had neen invited to the palace! Princess Ruth wanted to be an intelligence agent and the Queen wanted Captain Zilwicki to train her. In addition, as a security measure, she asks Berry to change identites with the princess so that she can actuall work without all the pomp and circumstances that normally accompany a royal presence.

Mix in Haven's top covert ops person, a group of Masadan Fanatic, and the Audobon Ballroom and you come up with a very good adventure which has a very surprising ending.

Crown of Slaves is the first novel in a new series set in the universe of Honor Harrington. While it draws heavily on the history that has been developed in the Honor Harrington series, the authors have made a conscious effort to make this novel a stand alone book. They have found ways to insert all of the basic backround information into the story line without interrupting the story's flow.

This is a well written book by two master storytellers and I look forward to the next episode in the series. - **William B. Whitmore**

The Wrong Reflection
by Gillian Bradshaw
Ace, 362 pp, $6.50

The Wrong Reflection is a change of pace for Historical fiction writer Bradshaw. She is also the author of *Cleopatra's Heir*.

The one thing Paul Anderson is sure of since being saved from a watery grave is that he isn't Paul Anderson. He is also sure that his putative employer, Stellar Research wants him dead. The only person who believes him is plant pathologist Sandra Murray, who had saved his life. Promising to help him find the truth can be a problem when nobody except them, a young artist, and a muck raking reporter want the truth to come out. This a fast paced page turner with well drawn characters and enough scientific detail to lend truth to a believable telling of an incredible story. I can't wait to read more by this author. Meanwhile grab this one, don't wait for the movie. - **Pam Allan**

The Scoundrel Worlds
A Star Risk LTD Novel
by Chris Bunch
ROC, 338 pages, $6.99

Star Risk Ltd. is a perfectly respectable company which specializes in providing trouble shooters to solve difficult problems. With the emphasis in this job description very heavily on "shooters". If violence can solve your problem, then Star Risk Ltd is your man.

The tongue in cheek style of Chris Bunch places our Characters in a number of wildly improbable situations which they solve using the most outrageously excessive level of violence possible. This book is a complete farce from cover to cover. It's Characters are unbelievably exaggerated, its plot wildly dramatic and the violence is grossly overdone.

The Scoundrel of Worlds is probably the best satire I have read this year. It kept me amused for several hours. I would happily recommend this book to anyone looking for some light reading. - **William B Whitmore**

© Sherlock

ARIZONA'S BEST KEPT SECRET!!!

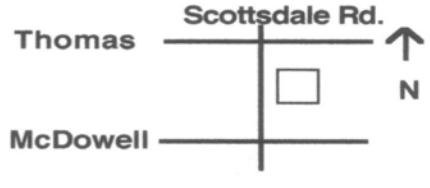
RETRO ROCKET

Always Trading & Buying!

Used toys, comics, gaming goods, cards, anime, models, video games, movie & TV stuff & related fun things!
Got too much STUFF!? We buy and trade collections of all sizes-from one piece to a truckload!
HIGHEST PRICES PAID!!!

Located in South Scottsdale, Retro Rocket specializes in stuff you won't find anywhere else in the Valley!
•Largest selection of ANIME merchandise!
•Comics-silver age to today
•Star Wars, Star Trek & sci-fi!
•HUGE selection of used RPGs!
•Godzilla, Kaiju and sentai stuff!
•Action Figures-US and imported!
•G.I. Joe & Transformers- 70s & 80s toys!
•McFarlane Toys-Spawn, Movies & more!
•Magic: The Gathering and Yu-Gi-Oh singles!
•Mechwarrior, HeroClix & Mage Knight singles!
•Classic video games!
•GUNDAM Import toys & anime model kits-The most in AZ!

Retro Rocket
1917 N. Scottsdale Rd.
Scottsale, AZ 85257
(480) 970-0706
retrorocketaz@yahoo.com



Club Listings

(**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This list will be revamped for the coming year. Please check your club listing for errors and send corrections and updates to the editor in writing to P.O. Box 62613, Phoenix AZ 85082 or via email at clubs@casfs.org)

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

Aerial Mirage Jugglers. Meets Wednesday 7-10pm in Encanto Park, 15th Avenue, south of Encanto. No dues, everyone welcome. All levels skill exchange in many areas of object manipulation Dave Davis <aerialmirage@gnerds.com>, 602-955-9446; or Ron Harvey <rbh1s@yahoo.com>, 602-863-0284 for more info or impromptu juggling sessions.

ARIZONA LANBASHERS LEAGUE A collaboration of computer gaming enthusiasts, the Arizona LANbashers League throws quarterly LANparty events. Between parties, support is given to local groups who wish to advertise their own gatherings. We have no set genre of games and play anything from strategy games to first-person shooters to driving/flying simulations. No annual membership is required and admission to an event ranges from $5-$15. See our webpage for current events. Email: azlanbashers@earthlink.net Web: 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 Local Tuscon science fiction group that puts on TusCon. Contact us at PO Box 2528, Tucson AZ 85702-2528 or basfa@earthlink.net.
our website at home.earthlink.net/~basfa/

CENTRAL ARIZONA SPECULATIVE FICTION SOCIETY, INC. (CASFS) The non-profit corporation that puts on CopperCon conventions, SmurfCons, HexaCons, occasional regional cons, and publishes Con-Notations. Best described as SF/F generalists with a strong bent towards literary SF/F. Guests welcome - meets at 8pm on the last Friday of each month in January thru September and the second Friday in October, November and December at JB's Restaurant, 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 felowship 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 re-enactment, 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 demon-strating in events such as the Highland Games, Scarborough Fair, and the Arizona Renaissance Festival. Web page http://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, 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 conventions. Best described as SF/F generalists with a main thrust into SF/F art. Guests are welcome. The meetings are quarterly on the second Saturday of February, May, August & November unless otherwise notified. August is the annual meeting where board positions are determined. For more information, write PO Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285; call Mike Willmoth, 480-945-6890, Email mwillmoth@compuserve.com www.leprecon.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 MIB.6361@cox.net

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

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

RAW GAMES (Role-players & Wargamers, Inc.) Role-players & Wargamers, Inc. is the Valley's oldest role-playing and wargaming club. Currently meeting at 8159 W. Weldon in Phoenix every Sunday from 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 counterpart 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.

SAMURAI OTAKU ANIME CLUB The Samurai Otaku is a group of fans of anime, manga, and Japanese pop culture. Meetings are held every Saturday night at 6pm at Samurai Comics, 5024 N. 7th St.. Members discuss anime and manga, work on a web comic, discuss fund raisers, and schedule club events. After each meeting the club views selected anime DVD's and plays games. Open to new members. Contact Moryha Banks— (602)265-8886, moryha!samuraicomics.com

SCIENCE FICTION CONTINUUM The Science Fiction Continuum: An Independent Star Trek and Sci-Fi club in Phoenix, AZ. The SFCOM is an active club that participates in Local Phoenix, and Southwestern Star Trek and Sci-Fi conventions and movies. The SFCOM has three different 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

(Cont'd on page 23)

Club Listings (Cont'd from page 22)

too soft, looking for combat, feel the call to glory. This is the ship for you. Membership 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 conversation, 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 members' homes in the greater Phoenix area. For details. Southwest Costumers Guild, PO Box 39504, Phoenix, AZ 85609 or Randall Whitlock at costumers@casfs.org or www.southwestcostumersguild.org

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

SUPERSTITION SPACEMODELING SOCIETY is Arizona's club for builders of model and high_power rockets and those who love to see them fly. Launches are held on the second Saturday morning of each month in Rainbow Valley. SSS hosts the annual G. 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, auctions, 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 membership, make check or money order out for $12.50 to: Official TekWar Fan Club (Membership section), 2522 N Sparkman Blvd., Tucson AZ 85716-2417

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

TUCSON FAN ALLIANCE E-Mail Address is Bkoehler@Juno.com or DMitchel1@Juno.com.

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

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 PHOENIX A Phoenix area Star Trek and general SciFi fan club. We are a social club that meets every two weeks at various locations around the Phoenix area. The UFP has been meeting for over 25 years of continuous activity. Dues are $15/per year prorated when you join; no restrictions. Membership includes membership roster and monthly newsletter. Come to any two meetings at no obligation. For information, write the UFP at PO Box 37224, Phoenix, AZ 85069, or call Jim Strait at (602) 242-9203. Web page: http://www.U-F-P.org or Email to Info@U-F-P.org

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 performing 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 application 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

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

Convention Listings

DarkCon 2004,(Phoenix AZ) **Jan 9-11, 2004** Winter Gaming & SF/F Convention Embassy Suites Phoenix North, Phoenix, AZ Memb: $25 Hotel Rates: Embassy Suites Phoenix North, 2577 E. Greenway Rd, Phoenix, AZ (602) 375-1777. Rooms: $79 S/D, $89 T, $99 Q (plus tax) Info: (623) 435-9700; Email: darkcon@darkones.org ;website: www.darkones.org

Gallifrey One's Fifteen Minutes of Fame (Los Angeles, CA) **Feb 13-16, 2004** The Airtel Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles, CA Guests: Colin Baker, Peter Davison + many more Memb: $30 thru 5/31/03, $35 thru 8/31/03, $40 thru 11/30/03, $45 thru 1/31/04 and $50 at the door. Info: Gallifrey Conventions, Post Office Box 3021, North Hollywood, CA 91609 Email: info@gallifreyone.com

ConRunners 7 (Phoenix AZ) **Feb 21, 2004** Embassy Suites North, 2577 E. Greenway Rd, Phoenix, AZ (602) 375-1777. Registration 8:30AM Morning Session 9AM-1PM, Afternoon Session: 2PM-6PM. Membership $15. Info conrunners@westernsfa.org or 602-973-2341 Web : www.westernsfa.org Mail PO Box 67457, Phoenix AZ 85082

GilaCon 2004 (Phoenix AZ) **April 2-4, 2004** GilaCon 2004 is an RPGA-oriented convention primarily featuring Living Greyhawk, Living Arcanis, Living Force and other RPGA campaigns. GilaCon 2004 will have a one-shot LG Interactive and Nyrond regional premiere as well as a host of other Nyrond regional and meta-regional events.Membership $25. Online registration will be available approximately 2-3 months before the convention at www.gilacon.com. GilaCon 2004 will be held at: Holiday Inn Phoenix-Midtown, 4321 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85012

World Horror Convention 2004, (Phoenix, AZ) **April 8-11, 2004**, Embassy Suites Phoenix North, Phoenix, AZ Guests: Author Guest of Honor: Douglas Clegg; Artist Guest of Honor: Caniglia; Editor Guest of Honour: Stephen Jones; Media Guest of Honor: Dee Snider; Toastmaster: David Morrell; Special Guest: Adam Niswander; Writer's Workshop Guest of Honor: Mort Castle Memberships: US$120 thru 3/31/04, US$130 after and at the door Hotel Rates: $88 S/D/T/Q (plus tax); Embassy Suites Phoenix North, 2577 E. Greenway Rd, Phoenix, AZ (602) 375-1777 Info: World Horror 2004, c/o LepreCon, Inc. PO Box 26665, Tempe AZ 85285; (480) 945-6890; e-mail: whc2004@leprecon.org; website: www.whc2004.org

LepreCon 30 -(Phoenix, AZ) **May 7-9 '04** - Sheraton Crescent Hotel, Phoenix, AZ Science Fiction and Fantasy Convention with an emphasis on art Artist GoH: Donato Giancola; Author GoH: David Drake; Special Artist Guest: John Eaves; Local Artist GoH: Sylvana Anderson; Music Guest: Mara Brenner Sheraton Crescent Hotel, 2620 W. Dunlap Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85021 Room Rates: $79 S/D, $99 T/Q +tax 602-943-8200 or 800-423-4126 Memberships are $30 thru 12/31/03; $35 thru 4/15/04; $40 at the door; Kids 7-12 half price, Kids 6 & Under Free (with Adult membership) Write: LepreCon 30, PO Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285, Phone: (480) 945-6890 ,Email: lep30@leprecon.org Web: http://www.leprecon.org/lep30

ConKopelli, WesterCon 57 -(Litchfiled 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; Local Author GoH: Diana Gabaldon Memberships: $65 until 10/31/03, $70 until 1/31/03, $75 thru 5/31/04; Supporting $30; Conversion is Current rate minus $30 Hotel Rates: $105 standard rooms, $135 Suites, Wigwam Resort, 300 Wigwam Blvd., Litchfield Park, AZ (623) 935-3811 Info: ConKopelli, WesterCon 57, PO Box 67457 Phoenix, AZ 85082; Email: info@conkopelli.org; Web: www.conkopelli.org

HexaCon 14 (Tempe AZ) **July 29*-Aug 1, 2004** Tempe Mission Palms, Tempe, AZ, Gaming starts on Friday and runs 24 hours until Sunday 4PM. Events include RPGA, LARP, LAN Party, CCG, Battletech and much more. Also Anime and a full consuite. *THURSDAY EVENTS for pre-registered members only include Barry Bard's Movie Previews and Giveaways Memb: $15 until 12/31/2003, Hotel: info: Tempe Mission Palms, Tempe, AZ (800) 547-8705 Room Rates: $85 S/D/T/Q, Info: www.hexacon.org or 480-945-6890

CopperCon 24 (Phoenix AZ) **Sept 10-12, 2004** ; Literary oriented SF/F Convention Embassy Suites Phoenix North, Phoenix, Arizona Guests: Author GoH: Alan Dean Foster, Artist GoH: Todd Lockwood; Local Author GoH: Catherine Wells; Music Guest: Leslie Fish Memb: $25 thru 12/31/03, $30 thru 4/30/04, $35 thru 8/27/04, $40 at the door Hotel Rates: Embassy Suites Phoenix North, 2577 E. Greenway Rd, Phoenix, AZ (602) 375-1777. Rooms: $79 S/D, $89 T, $99 Q (plus tax) Info: CopperCon 24, PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082, Phone (602) 973-2341 , Email: cu24@coppercon.org ; Website: www.coppercon.org

World Fantasy Convention 2004, (Phoenix, AZ) **Oct 28-31, 2004**, Tempe Mission Palms, Tempe, AZ Guests: Author Guest of Honour: Gwyneth Jones; Artist Guest of Honor: Janny Wurts; Editor Guest of Honor: Ellen Datlow Memberships: US$130 thru 1/31/04, US$140 thru 4/30/04, US$150 thru 7/31/04 Hotel Rates: $155 S/D/T/Q (plus tax); Tempe Mission Palms, 60 E 5th St, Tempe, AZ 85281 (800) 547-8705 Info: World Fantasy 2004, c/o LepreCon, Inc. PO Box 26665, Tempe AZ 85285; (480) 945-6890; e-mail: wfc2004@leprecon.org; website: www.worldfantasy2004.org

Generic Convention Regestration 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

Musty Tomes

The Final Planet
By Andrew M. Greeley
Warner Books, 1987, 302 pgs

The final planet for the pilgrim ship, Iona, is a beautiful earthlike planet called Zylong. After years of wandering in space, the Iona is worn out and the members of the Holy Order of St. Brigid and St. Brendan, must find a planet that will welcome them. By the rules of their order, if the planet is inhabited, they must be invited before they can stay. So, they send Seamus, a good soldier, a second-rate bard, and searching for the proper woman, to be their spy. His mission: to learn what he can about the human inhabitants and report back with his one-way ESP. What he finds is a human civilization unlike anything he has seen or heard of. Their ways are baffling to the extreme and it rapidly becomes apparent that the civilization is crumbling and it will take a miracle to save it. Seamus believes he knows a thing or two about women but this gets him into so much trouble with two of the female natives, that it looks for a time like he'll not only ruin their lives but any chance the Iona has of landing safely. One of the women is obviously the 'proper' woman Seamus has been searching for and he'll have to save the entire planet if he wants to save her.

This was a delightful story. Mr. Greeley is a Catholic priest who writes wonderful books about *people*. When he dabbles in science fiction, he still writes about wonderful people. I was impressed by the balance of science fiction concepts and character development. While it is true that Mr. Greeley is much more interested in developing his people than plot or special effects, these do not suffer the least. This story satisfied my desire for strangeness and wonder and gave me, at the same time, a character-driven story of one man's best efforts to do the right thing at the right time for everyone. There is occasionally sex in science fiction but not many love stories. This was a welcome treat.-
Catherine Book

© Sue Dawe