

ConNotations

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FREE

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

A Conversation with Esther Friesner

by Catherine Book

Esther Friesner was a special guest at the first North American Discworld Convention held in Tempe, Arizona over Labor Day weekend 2009. She generously made a little time to be interviewed during that con.

I started off asking her what she was doing when she published for the first time. She was a full time mom and having fun writing all the time. She even wrote some non-fiction. Her first professional sale in 1983 was in Cats magazine and the next was in Brides Magazine. She was writing in just about every genre – mystery, science fiction, historical, even a bodice-ripper. She thought at the time that she would try writing in all these genres simply because she *liked* all these genres. But, she thought – whatever sold first would probably be an indicator of what she ought to continue writing. So, what sold first? The first was a short story to Isaac Asimov's



magazine....BUT...it could have gone another way. She had sent out a mystery novel and got back a rejection letter that sincerely regretted not being able to take her work as they thought she might be another Donald Westlake. So she might, at this minute, be writing mysteries rather than our beloved fantasy and science fiction.

So, how was it that she fell into editing? She feels that she must blame SF/F conventions for almost all her

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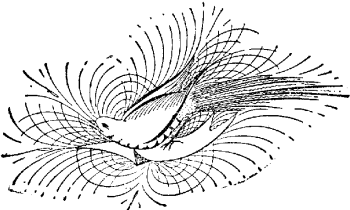
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SF Tube Talk

TV News & Previews

By Lee Whiteside

The **Doctor Who** finale for **David Tennant** and producers **Russell T. Davies** and **Julie Garedner**, *The End of Time*, drew very good ratings in the UK and record ratings in the US for BBC America, which aired each of the two parts the day after they aired on the BBC. Lots of surprises in the finale with the return of The Master, **Timothy Dalton** as Rassilon, a mysterious woman that may have been The Doctor's mother, and a farewell look at many of the companions seen over the last five years. We then got a short look at **Matt Smith** in the role following the regeneration and we'll get more of him starting in late March or early April. Joining **Matt Smith** is **Karen Gillan** as Amy Pond, a contemporary Scottish girl who meets up with The Doctor as he (and the TARDIS) are recovering from the effects of his latest regeneration. The first episode of the new series, *The Eleventh Hour*, will pick up from the previous episode with the Doctor about to crash the TARDIS. Not much detail about the monster or problem in the episode, but it will definitely deal with the newest companion for The Doctor and how he adapts to his new self. Other early episodes include one with Daleks set during World War II with **Ian McNeice** as Winston Churchill, a return of River Song (**Alex Kingston**) AND the Weeping Angels, in a two-parter. Other episodes in the works include a **Richard Curtis** penned episode with Vincent Van Gogh, one with vampires in Venice, and a two parter on global warming with the return of the Silurians. Keep in mind that none of this has been confirmed by the BBC, although bits seen in the preview for the new series made available by the BBC does confirm some of it. With the ratings success on BBC America for the finale, expect to see the new series air on BBC America very soon after it debuts on the BBC.

Survivors debuts on BBC America in mid-February, and they will air all twelve episodes from Series One (which aired on the BBC in 2008) and Series Two (which just started on the BBC in January). The series is set in the present day where the world's population is decimated by a virus, leaving only a small fraction of the population alive. The series follows a group of survivors who band together who are led by Abby Grant (**Julie Graham**), whose main motivation to keep going is to find her son who she believes is still alive. Also in the group are Greg Preston (**Paterson Joseph**), a man with a hidden past, Anya (**Zoe Tapper**), a doctor who has seen too many people die, Al Sadiq (**Phillip Rhys**), a former playboy who becomes a surrogate father to a

streetwise urchin, Najid (**Chahak Patel**), and Tom Price (**Max Beesley**), who was a high security prisoner before the virus hit. According to writer/executive producer **Adrian Hughes (Primeval)** "**Survivors** is about what it means to be human. It asks questions about our nature and confronts us with our deepest fears. When everything else is stripped away, would we band together and find the best in ourselves, or would we fall apart and retreat into barbarism and savagery?" The second series of **Being Human** started on BBC3 in early January and will turn up on BBC America later in the year. In the second series, the trio try to settle into normal lives, but events outside of their control threaten to expose their supernatural worlds. Several bloody murders turn up and Mitchell must try to stop the other vampires from killing while Annie and George try to have normal lives (or as normal as a werewolf and ghost can). On the **Torchwood** front, there's not been much news about a fourth series of **Torchwood** other than that the BBC has definitely wants it to continue and the they are in talks with the actors and producers to determine how it will move forward.

SYFY debuted the **Battlestar Galactica** prequel series in late January and will run the first half of the season through the end of March with the second half of **Stargate Universe's** first season expected to return in April. There's not a lot of episode specific details surfacing about **Caprica**, though and buzz about the series seems to be somewhat muted. Syfy has announced that they have renewed both **Stargate Universe** and **Sanctuary** for additional seasons, bumping **Sanctuary** up from 13 to 20 episodes in the process. Syfy has obtained the rights to make an US based

version of **Being Human** and have tapped husband-and-wife team **Jeremy Carver (Supernatural)** and **Anna Fricke (Privileged)** to be the head writers. According to Syfy executive **Mark Stern** [He's] kind of got the genre cred, and **Anna** comes out of a more character-based drama world so between them they'll be really interesting. Syfy has also indicated that of their two miniseries in the works, **Riverworld** and **The Phantom**,

one will air in the spring and the other will air in the fall. Syfy has also ordered a drama series, **Haven**, based on the **Stephen King** novella *The Colorado Kid*. **Sam Ernst** and **Jim Dunn** co-wrote the pilot, and coming on board for the series will be **Scott Shepherd**, **Shawn Piller** and **Lloyd Segan**, the latter trio previously worked on **The Dead Zone**. According to **Mark Stern** **Haven** is the

(Cont'd on page 4)



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SF Tube Talk (Cont'd from page 3) quintessential **Stephen King** town, full of complex, yet identifiable, characters and compelling supernatural situations. **Sam** and **Jim** wrote a great pilot, and we can't wait to see **Scott, Lloyd**, and **Shawn** join them in bringing this town to life as a series.

The big news from NBC is that they have dropped their prime time **Jay Leno Show** which opens things back up for more scripted dramas. **Heroes** will end its fourth season in early February with *The Wall* and *Brave New World* on February 1st and February 8th. There's not been much information about the end of the current season and with the ratings down even more this season, it is definitely not certain that NBC will pick the series up for another season. There is better news, however, for **Chuck**, which returned in early January, posting decent numbers for its special Sunday night airing as well as the first couple of weeks on Monday night. Even before the series returned, NBC gave the show a vote of confidence and ordered 6 additional episodes. This was after they had already plotted out the 13 episode season. For those six episodes, they've developed a mini-arc that reportedly will feature **Scott Bakula** returning as Chuck's dad, Steve Bartowski. **Kristen Kruek** will guest star in several episodes as Hannah, who Chuck met on a plane in Paris that ends up working at the Buy More with sparks flying between the two, although she may not be what she seems. Other guest stars coming up include **Diedrich Bader**, and **Robert Patrick** as Col. Keller, a mysterious figure from Casey's past. NBC's remaining genre series, **Day One**, continues to be scaled back to where it will now air as a two hour movie sometime in the spring.

ABC will have the final season of **Lost** starting up in early February with a planned uninterrupted run of episodes to the series finale. Their other series, **V** and **Flash Forward**, are both scheduled to return to the air in March, **Flash Forward** on March 18th and **V** on March 30th. For **Lost**, the producers are promising to definitely end the series with no plans or seeds for spinoffs or sequels. They have revealed that two characters will be back, Michael (**Harold Perrineau**) and Libby (**Cynthia Watros**) will be seen again in the final season. The two hour opener is reportedly an epic episode and may also leave viewers even more confused. It will follow on directly from the season 5 finale and resolve the explosive cliffhanger. A lot of questions will be answered, but not all of them. According to **Daman Lindelof**: For us, ... there's an inherent process when you're ending something ... to be thinking about the beginning as writers, and in fact the story of the sixth season very specifically has to go back to the beginning to examine a lot of things.

... When you basically say, 'Here's where our character started, A, when we first met them, and here's where they've come to. One of the things that I think we're trying to do—all of us, the actors and the writers as well—in the sixth season is to show the audience the 'before,' so they have some sense of 'Oh, this is what he used to be, and who they are now,' so you really get a sense of how far that person's come. And obviously, the process of doing that—not just thinking about it, but doing it on a story level—really makes you feel like we felt in season one. On **Flash Forward**, we've been promised to learn what will actually happen on April 29, 2010. **Robert Sawyer**, author of the original novel the series is based on, is contributing a script for near the end of the season.

Over on the CW, **Smallville** will have its biggest episode yet with the two hour *Absolute Justice* written by **Geoff Johns** on Feb 5th featuring the Justice Society.



Photo © The CW/Warner Brothers

Guest starring are **Michael Shanks** as Carter Hall/Hawkman, **Brent Stait** as Kent Nelson/Doctor Fate, **Britt Irvin** as Courtney Whitmore/Stargirl, **Phil Morris** returns as John Jones/Martian Manhunter, and **Ken Lawson** as Wesley Dodds/Sandman. From press reports and publicity pictures, the JSA members will be costumed much like their comic book counterparts. There may also be a Green Lantern involved and as of yet they have not revealed who the actual villain is that brings this all about. There's not much information on the following episodes, but expect to seem more of Amanda Waller (**Pam Grier**) and the Checkmate organization, a likely return of **Brian Austin Green** as Metallo, and another bout of Red Kryptonite infection for Clark.

Supernatural episodes include *My Bloody Valentine* where Sam and Dean

investigate reports of couples engaging in deadly behavior, and it may be Cupid is to blame. Supernatural creator **Eric Kripke** had previously indicated that the fifth season of Supernatural would be its last. According to CW boss **Dawn Ostroff**, she's had talks with him recently and he is considering keeping the series going. The CW definitely would like to keep it around since its ratings have gone up, including more young women watching than before. The CW has also been very happy with **The Vampire Diaries** and even gave their entire prime time schedule over to the series for a marathon in December. There's not much to report on upcoming episodes, though.

FOX has shut out the lights on **Dollhouse**, airing the final episodes in January. They have brought on **Human Target**, based on the DC comics property and buzz for it is relatively high at press time. **Mark Valley** stars as Christopher Chance, with **Chi McBride** as Winston,

A Conversation (Cont'd from page 1)

editing work. The first thing she remembers editing was "Alien Pregnant by Elvis." She was at a con, maybe in DC, when she was looking at a display of scandal zines like Nat'l Inquirer and its ilk and the question popped into her head - had anyone ever done an anthology based on Nat'l Inquirer-type stories? So she went and talked to Martin H. Greenberg who had all the experience with anthologies and soon she was off and running. Her 'Chicks' anthologies had a similar beginning. It started with a tour of a con artshow with the typical paintings of woman warriors dressed in improbable chainmail, combined with a memory of those dreadful old movies of women in prison and her mind went to "Babes Behind Bars" and suddenly the muse spoke and "Chicks in Chainmail" was born. She took the idea to an editor at Baen and she was off and running. And that was thirteen years ago - and all five books in the series are still in print. Quite an accomplishment for anthologies.

So, what's more fun? Writing or editing? Oh, writing She answered. But there's fun in editing, too. Sometimes one finds a great new writer or just discovers a really great new story. She used to make it 'invitation only' due to her very poor eyesight. Reading a mountain of submissions was just impossible. And sometimes the decision rests with the publisher. She once worked on a vampire anthology and decided to open it up to anyone and everyone. She got so much material that there was enough for two volumes - to which the publisher agreed. Unfortunately, after Esther had bought enough for two volumes, the publisher changed their mind and many great stories had to be cut. And to make matters worse, she was out of the country and had to ask her co-editor to make the necessary cuts. Esther felt terrible about how it worked out but there was little she could do.

I had heard that Esther's story "Death and the Librarian" was inspired by a gift from Terry Pratchett at a WorldCon in San Francisco. He gave her two little pewter figures that were from a game based on his Discworld stories - Death and The Librarian. Esther commented that "weren't there times that one might hear words spoken that just 'sounded' like they belong together..." "? Well, that's what she heard with the words "Death and The Librarian" and decided she had to write a story about them. It was supposed to be a funny story but the muse had something different in mind and it became a story that won Esther a Nebula.

It sure seems like so many of her anecdotes revolve around fandom so I wondered exactly how long Esther had been coming to cons. She had been a member of SCA early on and after her first story sold to Asimov's, an SCA

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A Conversation (Cont'd from page 4)

friend told her that she ought to come to a con. She had no idea that conventions even existed but she ended up going to a Boskone, probably around 1983. It was a culture-shock experience including seeing a Wookiee on a balcony and having to sleep in a ‘zoo room.’ She didn’t care for it much and decided not to get a membership and to just return home in the morning. But, before leaving, she wanted to say goodbye to the friend who had a table in the Dealer’s Room. Happily, for all her fans, the door guard let Esther in without a badge and encouraged her to look around; even directing her over to the art show. That did it...all those pretties...oh, my.... She still left for home but told herself she was a fool for leaving all those nice people and she wouldn’t make the same mistake again. Even her parents, who had always supported her writing, came to conventions with her – impressed with the intelligence and intellectual achievements of the people they met there.

In case you didn’t know it – Esther is the Queen of Hamsters and practices divination thru a hamster wheel – Cheeblemancy. The term was coined by her son and the most commonly-agreed upon definition is that it is the cry of the enraged bull hamster... The whole story involves a feud between a hamster and some folks on a GENie RTC (real time conference), deteriorated into a paternity suit involving a rodent from another species and of the same sex, and culminated in Esther acquiring a hamsterwheel during opening ceremonies at a con in Michigan. (see her website for the whole sordid story) Anyway.... while she’s toting around the hamsterwheel at the con, a friend speculated that Esther could probably devise a way to do fortune-telling with a hamster spinning inside the wheel. Another creative friend embellished the wheel with stuffed hamsters wearing bellydancing costumes and Cheeblemancy was born. Esther only performs Cheeblemancy for charity. Over the years she thinks she’s probably raised thousands of dollars for the Revlon Run/Walk for Women, and the Wall Street Heart Walk but has recently changed to supporting the Susan G. Komen for the Cure walk/run. So, if you want your fortune told bring a fiver with you the next you’re at a con with Esther....or, give her a twenty and she’ll leave you alone...

But that’s not the only role she plays in our world, she’s also Queen of the SFWA Musketeers. This role was thrust upon her since Musketeers need a Queen... It seems that quite a few women writers also fence. Who woulda thought? Elizabeth Moon is their Captain. They fence to raise money for the SFWA (Science Fiction Writers of America) emergency medical fund. Many writers

have no medical insurance so the fund allows them to take out interest-free loans for emergencies if they are members. So, while Esther isn’t a fencer herself, she wanted to be part of it. But, although she doesn’t fence (and shouldn’t be allowed near sharp things), she does act. And, as she says, she has no stage fright anymore. She says she used to be shy but gave it up. A fool’s game, she called it.

Finally, I asked her what she was currently working on. She laughed saying she ought to be working at that moment. She’s very proud of her young adult series which is a historical fantasy. Originally, she was to write two books: one on young Helen of Troy and the other on young Queen Nefertiti. But the Helen story kept getting bigger and more interesting so Esther called up her editor and asked if she could do two books and got a big Yes. So, we have “Nobody’s Princess” (2007) and “Nobody’s Prize” (2008) which have been very successful. She said these were really fun to research and write. Following right behind she’ll be doing two books about young Nefertiti, the first of which is titled “Sphinx’s Princess” published in Sep 2009, and then “Sphinx’s Queen” scheduled for 2010.

Esther is also planning a novel about a historical event that occurred in NYC in 1911 that claimed the lives of 146 young women. It was an infamous sweatshop factory and it was called The Triangle Factory Fire. The title will be “Threads and Flames.” No pub date yet but maybe we’ll see it in 2010.

Is there anything she’s done (she’s published over 30 books) that she’d like to redo? No, she answered – at least not any of her writing. But she did regret never having done summer stock. Considering how much fun she has now without that experience, it’s scary to consider that we might have lost her as a writer if she had succeeded in acting.

At the end I asked her of what was she most proud. She pulled back and said that would be like asking a mother which of her children she loved best. But then she went on to speculate which of her titles would be best on a big screen. She enjoys playing the casting game with some of her titles. But mostly, she told me – writing is just...fun. And she’s particularly satisfied when she really gets something right. And the best accolades come from readers who tell her that something in her stories really touched them. Thank you again, Esther, it was a real pleasure spending a little time with you.

An American in New Zealand Part 9: The Last Third Blunder- Sheep in The Shire

by Jeffrey Lu

Believe it or not, I was counting sheep. I was not trying to fall asleep but was puzzled why Peter Jackson, i.e. director of Lord of the Rings movies trilogy, did not want New Zealand sheep. There were hundreds of them.

Instead, Peter had brought English sheep from England.

The New Zealand sheep were banned from the film. Only English sheep were allowed.

I guess he wanted authentic, English animals in J.R.R. Tolkein’s LOTR. That makes sense.

Comically, one New Zealand sheep was actually a stunt...sheep. When the bridge was made at the Shire, security thought it unstable. Somehow, one of these local wooled animals decided to take a closer route to the other pasture. Needless to say, the New Zealand sheep ignored the warning signs and walked through the bridge with no problem.

As the Hobbit Town tour near its end, I noticed one of the tour guides handing something to a few selected in my group. Curious, I saw a bottle- a baby bottle to be

precise.

Out of nowhere, there was a group of baby lambs- very hungry lambs. They were charging towards our group.

Dumbfounded, my friends stared. They were like deer staring at headlights. All them were perplexed as these animals were literally leaping.

From experience at a farm, I grab a friend’s bottle. I put the bottle down so a little lamb can drink. Others quietly followed with relief.

The little lambs were cute. One friend of mine literally picked one up. He had no clue what to do when he held one in his arms. He panicked but I told him he was all right. He later gently laid down the lamb.

I smiled. I’m going to have a great nap after this. Really, I did.

Next: Auckland’s Sky Tower and Bungee Jumping

www.leprecon.org/lep36

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LepreCon 36 will have an art show, charity auction, gaming, hospitality suite, filk & music, and more.

Membership Rates

\$40 through 4/30/10,
\$45 at the door
Kids 7-12 half price*,
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Mesa, Arizona 85201
480-898-8300

Room Rates: \$99 S/D/T/Q + tax
Online booking code “leplepa”

LepreCon 36 Contact Information

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

Costume
(Cont'd from page 6)

Kufi and Sephardic kippah are often formed with a circular or oval flat crown and straight sides, like the pillbox hats favored by ladies in the middle 20th century.

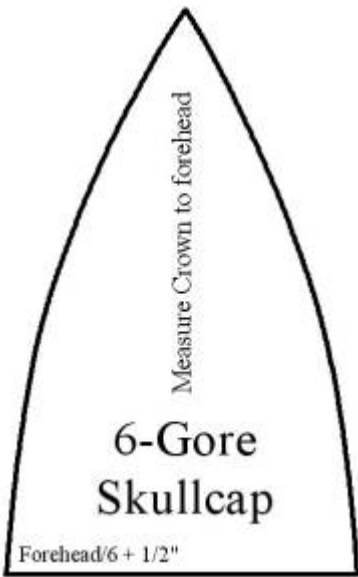
The biker skullies mentioned above usually have side panels shaped like half-ellipses, a roughly rectangular center panel and an extended headband to form the ties.

My favorite way to build a skullcap is to cut it from a number of gores shaped like triangles with their sides bowed



outward. I usually work with four gores (a common cut for a yarmulke) or six gores (as seen on baseball caps). Zucchettos traditionally have eight gores.

To form the gore pattern, measure the circumference of your head and divide this measurement by the number of gores, then add a half-inch for seam allowance. For me this comes out to 6-inch wide gores for a four-panel hat or 4-inch wide



gores for a six-panel hat. The height of the triangle equals the distance from the cap rim to the crown of your head.

Getting the curvature of the sides right can be tricky. A good cheat is to take a sheet of aluminum foil, lay it against the side of a baseball cap, and rub it with your thumb to pick up an impression of the seams of one gore. (An aluminum foil skullcap is, of course, great for screening out those nasty alien mind-control rays.)

The two gore patterns seen above are correctly proportioned. Just copy and enlarge them until the base is the proper length for your forehead measurement. You may have to do some math.

Cut four or six gores from your favorite fabric. Craft felt and felted wool are easy to work with. If you use a stretch fabric, make sure it stretches across the gore instead of along its length. Alternate panels of contrasting colors for a 1950s college beanie look, like Yorick is wearing at the top of this article.

Sew your gores together using as narrow a seam as your fabric will allow. A quarter inch works well in most cases.

Finish the rim of your cap. To turn under and sew is probably good enough, but your cap will be stronger if you stitch on a bit of ribbon or elastic and roll it into the inside of the cap. When making a generic cap for my renfaire booth, where I don't know the exact size of the potential wearer, I add a hollow headband with a drawstring (again, look at Yorick).

Fantasy skullcaps sometimes have complicated shapes to their rims. These might include an exaggerated widow's peak in the middle of the forehead, arches over the eyebrows, or extended ear flaps.

The skullcap makes an excellent base for designing a special hat for your character. Add curved felt horns with bells for a medieval jester or a comic Viking helmet. Wings, antlers, a rooster's comb, etc make for comic fun. Appliqué or embroider mystic symbols for a wizard. Add gears, lights and electrodes for a mad scientist or his Igor.

Flesh-colored and textured skullcaps, often molded from latex, make excellent bases for creature costumes or when you simply want to hide your natural hair. Stretchy skullcaps (they probably have a special name, but I'm out of research time) can be used to hold down your hair under a wig.

Around the Dial

Alice
 SyFy Channel Original
 Starring Caterina Scorsone, Phillip Winchester (Jack Chase), Andrew Lee Potts (Hatter), Matt Frewer (White Knight), Tim Curry (Dodo), Kathy Bates, Harry Dean Stanton, and the ubiquitous Colm Meaney.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass get a modern updating that is geared for adults, especially the ones who never entirely outgrew their sense of awe. Just as all good *marchens* do, it starts with the familiar. For Lewis Carroll's Alice, that was the English countryside; in 2010 USA, it's a martial arts dojo. Alice is a part-time instructor with a hunk of a lover named Jack Chase. Her mother is named Carol, in a nice nod to the author of the original. In her spare moments, Alice is doing internet searches for her father, missing for 10 years. Look at all the motifs presented in just the first 3 minutes British male protagonist named Jack, spunky heroine, romance, a quest, and lots of attention to detail, such as the roses – white and red – and Alice's blue dress, to act as foreshadowing or reminders of other Alices.

Swiftly the story takes a dark turn, as Jack gets a warning of danger that overtakes him with Alice as a witness. When a dapper, white-haired gentleman with two loooong ponytails – the Rabbit, if you will – played by Allan Gray, tries to warn Alice out of the story, she pursues his vanishing figure through alleyways into a warehouse and... through a looking-glass. As a symbol of reflection and self-knowledge, it signals the kind of adventure Alice will have: no mere picaresque dalliance, but a journey to the interior, to her subconscious and beyond to the soul of the world. Alice finds

herself in a place like yet unlike the city she left. There are strange anomalies, depths, heights, and oddities: the helicopter has a carapace; the stock market trades in commodities like compassion and clear conscience. The famous Bottle on the Glass Table makes no appeal to passive Suggestibility, no mere "Drink Me" for this Alice. My laughter at what it did say was cut short when I realized Alice is in a *padded* room – and her peek-a-boo view of the space beyond is ominous. Humans, or as they are called, "Oysters," are brought to Wonderland to be harvested of their emotions, which are pearls of great worth to Wonderlanders.

Stay alert for touchstones, for the Dormouse, the Cheshire Cat, the Playing Cards. References to the poetry of the stories gets included as well. After all, what would *Alice* be without the Walrus and the Carpenter, the crocodile with gently smiling jaws, or the Jabberwocky? For core fen, there are scattered tributes to genre shows like Dr. Who. Rather than enumerate them, I leave them for discovery and Trivia contests. I also don't want to give away too many plot details, because their revelations are intrinsic to the story-telling. But I will say I noticed the distinct Terry Gilliam influence in the visionary aspects.

This is the best SyFy Original I've seen to date. After the abysmal betrayal of *Earthsea*, I was leery of the brand. But I recommend *Alice* whole-heartedly. The cast members play well together. Allan Gray is perfection, from his mercurial changes of expression to his every movement and inflection. Andrew Lee Potts insinuates himself into your affection. Phillip Winchester, with his chiseled good looks and charisma, should be cast as a starship captain. Everyone involved, writers, directors, actors, have made a piece of work – a masterpiece – of which they may be proud. – **Chris Paige**

FYI

CASFS BOOK DISCUSSION

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

Come do some face-to-face interaction with your fellow readers and SF/Fantasy fans! Haven't read the book? Don't worry, there's no quiz or anything. You can use the rest of us as your personal book reviewers to see if it's something you'd like. We start out with the book discussion, but the conversation can go anywhere. The get-together is held in the coffee shop of Bent Cover Books near 28th Drive and Cactus Road in Phoenix. We welcome potential new friends.
February 16, 2010 - INVISIBLE MAN by H.G. Wells
March 16, 2010 - THE LAST CENTURION by John Ringo
April 20, 2010 - THE EMPRESS OF MARS by Kage Baker
May 18, 2010 - THE HUMANOIDS by Jack Williamson
June 21, 2010 - THE HITCH-HIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY by Douglas Adams

AUTHOR SIGNINGS

DAVID N. ALDERMAN
Bookmans, Speedway in Tucson,
Feb 6, 11am
Bookmans Mesa, Feb 20, 2pm

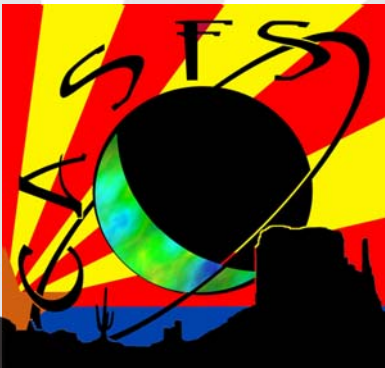
TIM BOYER (self-pub SF novel)
Bookmans, Mesa,
Feb 6, 2pm & Feb 13, noon

CHARLINE RATCLIFF (Egypt, past-life,
Queen Nerfertiti)
Bookmans Mesa, Feb 13, 2pm

DIANA GABALDON
DANA STABENOW
Arizona Biltmore (hosted by Poisoned
Pen bookstore), Feb 16, 7pm

DAN SIMMONS
Poisoned Pen bookstore, Mar 3, 7pm

CHRISTOPHER MOORE
Poisoned Pen bookstore, Mar 27, 2pm



BOOK DISCUSSION GROUPS

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

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

SPECIAL BOOK RELEASES

This listing is to introduce you to smaller publishing houses that offer exclusive or limited edition books that you wouldn't be able to find at your local chain bookstore.

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

Edge SF & F Publishing/Tesseract Books
"Evolve" ed by Nancy Kilpatrick
"Hell Can Wait" by Theodore Judson

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

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

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

Wildside Press
"Gothic Grotesques" by Brian Stableford

GAMING EVENTS

DRAWN TO COMICS

STAR WARS MINIATURES. Fridays 730p-11pm, Sundays, 1pm-4pm
SIT-AND-SKETCH with local artists. Saturdays, 4pm-8pm
HEROCLIX. Sat 2pm
Check FaceBook for other events

GAME DEPOT

BATTLETECH. Feb 23, noon.
WARHAMMER FANTASY TOURNEY, Feb 23
MAGIC, THE GATHERING gameday. Mar 6, noon.
HEROCLIX. Wed, 530pm-8pm
MALIFAUX. Fri, 3pm-7pm
LEGENDS OF THE 5-RING CARDGAME. Sat, noon.

GAMER'S INN

MAGIC, THE GATHERING, WORLDWAKE release event. Feb 5, 10am
YUGIOH sneak peek. Feb 7, noon.
FLAMES OF WAR, late period 1750. Feb 20, 10am
GARY GYGAX RPG FESTIVAL. Mar 7, all day
MAGIC, THE GATHERING, Type II tourney. Mar 13, 10am. Grand Prize is \$1000

IMPERIAL OUTPOST GAMES

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

SAMURAI COMICS

(check website for correct store location)

MAGIC, THE GATHERING Worldwake Launch Party. Feb 6, noon.
YUGIOH Prerelease Tournament. Feb 6, 10am. Feb 7, 11am
POKEMON Prerelease Tournament. Feb 7, 4pm.
WORLD OF WARCRAFT TCG Realm Qualifier. Feb 20, noon
ANIME FESTIVAL. Mar 14, noon.
YUGIOH TOURNAMENT. Sundays, noon (Phx) & Sat, noon (west valley)
ANIME CLUB. Sundays, noon (west valley)
POKEMON. Sundays, 2pm (west valley)
MAGIC, THE GATHERING. Friday, 6p at both locations, & Tues, 6pm (west valley) & Sat 1pm (Phx)

SCIENCE EVENTS

ARIZONA SCIENCE CENTER

ROBOTS, THE INTERACTIVE EXHIBITION. Sep 27-Feb 14, 2010.
SCIENCE FOR GIRLS. Feb 20 Slumber Party, Apr 3 "Small Scale, Big Ideas workshop". Also workshops for Brownies and Junior Girl Scouts.
SATURDAY SCIENCE CLASSES for ages 6-10. Check website for dates and topics. Feb 13 "Surfing the Oceans", Feb 27 "Beaks and Feet", Mar 13 "Beautiful Butterflies", Mar 27, "Power of the Sun" Family-friendly talks about biology topics. Feb 27 "Human Cloning", Mar 13 "Ask a Biologist", Apr 17 "Allergies & Your

Immune System, May 15 "A Day in the Life of a Scientist", and Jun 5 TBA.
More info on the Arizona Science Center webpage
ONGOING EXHIBITS:
DORRANCE PLANETARIUM
EVANS FAMILY SKYCYCLE
MY DIGITAL WORLDS
FORCES OF NATURE
NEW ROCK WALL for climbers aged 8 and above
ADULTS NIGHT OUT, 1st Fridays, check website for topics & time

ASU

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

CHALLENGER SPACE CENTER, PEORIA

STARGAZING. STARLAB PLANETARIUM. Check website for dates and times
FAMILY FUN DAYS. Feb 27 & Mar 27, 10am. Kids activities, games, tours, space-themed videos, science & physics demos, and more.
NATIONAL ASTRONOMY DAY. Apr 24, 10am-4pm. Stargazing party begins at 730pm.
"UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF LIGHT" Fridays, 2pm, 1hour demonstration.
THE SPACE PLACE is a 2-hour interactive program for little ones with big imaginations! Designed for children ages 3 through 6, the program features age-appropriate activities designed to teach preschoolers about our planet and solar system. Call for reservations. Saturn: Feb 15&16, 930am-1130am. Uranus: Mar 15&16, 930am-1130am.
ASU METEORITE EXHIBIT
COLUMBIA SHUTTLE MEMORIAL DISPLAY
IRIDIUM SATELLITE MODEL
LOWELL OBSERVATORY DISPLAY
JOURNEY THRU THE SPACE PROGRAM
ATLANTIS SPACE SHUTTLE MODEL

MOON SOCIETY MEETING

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

PIMA AIR & SPACE MUSEUM, TUCSON

NEW VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION. Feb 13 & Mar 13, 930am
VOLUNTEER PRESENTATION SERIES. Feb 20 & Mar 27, 10a-11am
2010 ARIZONA AVIATION HALL OF FAME INDUCTION CEREMONY. Apr 17, 530pm
B-36 PEACEMAKER SYMPOSIUM. Apr 23, 1pm and Apr 24, 10am

(Cont'd on page 9)

FYI

(Cont'd from page 8)

SPACE GALLERY EXHIBIT. See an Apollo space capsule, moon rock, Phoenix Mars Mission.

SETI Institute's Weekly

SCIENCE RADIO PROGRAM - Mondays, avail as podcast
<http://radio.seti.org>
<http://podcast.seti.org>

Titan Missile Museum

TITAN MISSILE MUSEUM TOURS.
Reservations only - The only publicly accessible Titan II missile site in the nation. Tour the underground missile site. See the 3-ton blast doors, 8' thick silo walls and an actual Titan II missile in the launch duct. Visit the launch control center, experience a simulated launch, and more. Top to Bottom Tours: Feb 9, 13, 19 & 27. Mar 9, 13, 19 & 20. More dates avail on website.

OTHER GENRE-RELATED EVENTS

BOOKMANS, PHOENIX

ARIZONA BROWNCOATS SHINDIG 1st Saturday, 7pm
SCIMITAR-TALON is a group of people wanting to enjoy recreating portions of the middle ages prior to 1600 AD. Classes on Medieval Arts and Sciences.. 1st Saturdays, 130pm-230pm
ACROSS PLUS ANIME CLUB. Sundays, 6pm
METAPHYSICAL GROUP Thursdays, 6pm
N.E.R.D.S. MEETUP, Saturday, Feb 27, , 6pm

BORDERS, PARADISE VALLEY

Metaphysical Fridays, 1st Fri

CHANGING HANDS BOOKSTORE

Science Story Time, 4th Sat, 11a-1p.
Family-friendly bioscience topics.
Presented by the Arizona Science Center.

CONLAN PRESS

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LOFT THEATRE, TUCSON

SCREENINGS OF MOVIES, many SF genre.
Check website for times and listings.

MISC

Every Day Fiction – An Online Venue

Here is a website I **strongly recommend** to our readers, especially those with dreams of seeing their name in print, of having their stories read. <http://www.everydayfiction.com> is a treasure trove, and an amazing online library of new fiction with wonderful divisions, such as Science Fiction, Author

Interviews, Fantasy, Horror, Humour/Satire, Mystery/Suspense, Romance, and Surreal. Not only can you READ some fantastic stuff you will not find anywhere else, you can SUBMIT your own literary offspring. There is even a Poetry sister site, which filkers may wish to use to reach a wider audience.

I stumbled across it while looking up an author, Ellie Tupper, who had written an intriguing bio-blurb for the anthology *Witch Way to the Mall* (reviewed this issue). Google led to this site, where I read a short story of hers called "Mandala: A Dish of Lime-Vanilla Ice." Strange title; neat story; a speculative fiction take on the theme of love going awry across dimensions of space and time and social barriers.

Warning: this site is intended to provide lunch break entertainment in short doses but may prove addictive. Do you have any time sensitive projects on your table? Do you lack the maturity to postpone gratification, or can you be contented with pleasure in small bytes? Know thyself and explore accordingly. Good hunting! – **Chris Paige**

SPECIAL TV SHOW:

3-PART SERIES "THE HUMAN SPARK" PBS on Jan 6, Jan 13 & Jan 20, hosted by Alan Alda

TUCSON FESTIVAL OF BOOKS

March 12-14, 2010

Last year, various groups came together to put on the first Tucson Festival of Books. It was a big success, with hundreds of authors on hand in all genres and drawing a large number of people to both days of the event. This year it looks to be even bigger. It is being held on the University of Arizona campus on Saturday March 13 and Sunday March 14th. There will be many booksellers on hand with books and plenty of authors to sign them. More information can be found at

www.tucsonfestivalofbooks.org

Just in the science fiction and fantasy field they have scheduled Jennifer Ashley, Elizabeth Bear, Frank Beddor, Emma Bull, Laurie Brooks, Terry Brooks, Charles de Lint, Amanda Downum, Karen Joy Fowler, James Frenkel, Alice Hoffman, Nina Kiriki Hoffman, Janis Ian, Jane Lindskold, Jeff Mariotte, Cheyenne McCray, Dennis McKiernan, Sarah Monette, David

Morrell, Yvonne Navarro, Weston Ochse, James A. Owen, Jon Scieska, Will Shetterly, Janni Lee Simner, Jeanne Stein, Vickie Lewis Thompson, Aimie * David Thurlo, Joan D. Vinge, John Vornholt, Catherine Wells, and Timothy Zahn.

Check web sites or contact stores for more info

Game Depot, 480-966-4727

Websites:

<http://www.azchallenger.org>

<http://www.azscience.org>

<http://store-locator.barnesandnoble.com/storelocator>

<http://beyond.asu.edu>

<http://www.bookmans.com>

<http://www.borders.com/online/store/LocatorResults>

<http://www.cemeterydance.com>

<http://www.changinghands.com>

<http://www.conlanpress.com>

<http://www.dragoonmoonpress.com>

<http://www.drawntocomics.com>

<http://www.gamersinnaz.com/>

<http://www.imperialoutpost.com>

<http://www.library.pima.gov>

<http://www.loftcinema.com/showtimes>

<http://madcaptheaters.com/>

<http://www.pimaair.org>

<http://www.poisonedpen.com>

<http://store.pspublishing.co.uk/>

<http://www.pyrsf.com/catalog.html>

<http://www.samuraicomics.com>

<http://www.seti.org>

<http://www.spazdogcomics.com/>

<http://www.subterraneanpress.com/>

<http://www.titanmissilemuseum.org/>

<http://tucsonfestivalofbooks.org/>

<http://www.wildsidepress.com/>

SCI-FI as we know it Comic Book Style

By Jesse James

It would be hard to track down the first ever Sci-Fi Comic Book ever published. However Sci-Fi has always been part of the comic book lore since the early 1900's. Every generation has had the chance to open up the pages to space exploration or invasion of the earth. Comics offer the chance to let their minds flow with the dream of the unknown and unbelievable.

From Standard Comic's "Fantastic Worlds" in the 50's to Gold Key's "Magnus Robot Fighter" "U.F.O flying saucers" in the 60's there has always been a way for a young comic book novice to go to his local malt shop and pick up a title or two.

Now, in 1967, Gold Key graced the comic land with probably its first big hit Sci-Fi comic in Star Trek. It paraded its first nine covers with photos of the crew members until going to cover art at number #10. Now the comic itself started to become more popular and a demand comic when "Star Trek The Motion Picture" came out in 1979. The series value almost tripled during this period and is still a very sought out series until this day. Including a vary rare copy of number "1" which had a front and back photo cover instead of the standard front cover photo only.

Not only did the series, movie, and comics marvel us with a sense of WOW and Amazement back then; we now use a vast amount of the technical innovations in our everyday life without a second thought of far-fetched impossibility. Since its first step into the comic world, over 30 titles and series have come and gone and we still savor more and of course more will come.

(Cont'd on page 10)

GAME DEPOT
"Voted AZ's Best Game Store"
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Dominoes • Cribbage • Chess • Go

GAMES WORKSHOP
MAGIC The Gathering™

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3136 S. McClintock Dr. Ste. 11, Tempe, AZ
NW Corner Southern & McClintock

Comics (Cont'd from page 9)

Now there was a ten year gap with a whole bunch of comics such as DC’s ‘House of Mystery” going from horror to Sci-fi and “Rip Hunter Time Master” Till the next legend was born.

I didn’t start collecting comics until 1982 but already had some comics my mom had bought me in 1977. It was the almighty Star Wars comic series. It came out like gang busters in June of 1977 and took the universe by surprise. A very rare #1 variance came out (only 1500 made) with a .35cent cover versus the traditional .30 cent which continues to be one of the most sought out comics of all times. In 2005 a graded issue sold for \$6500.00. We bought every issue like they were going out of style till issue #107 came out and thus ended one of the greatest “Marvel” Sci-fi series of all time.

Now, like Star Trek, many more series came out but the original Star Wars series stands alone as “The Force” of the comic title run.

Now, in a whole new century we are offered a HUGE amount of Sci-fi comics every week on new issue day. However, they don’t hold the awe or astonishment we once had a young readers looking in the sky and thinking “wow space travel” how hard would that be for the masses” or I could talk to someone else far away without a land line.

I love Sci-fi and now it’s up to the publishers, writers and artist to think so far ahead to insure that we can put down our comic book after reading it and again look up at the stars in awe and amazement of the unknown and unbelievable

Videophile

Chad Vader, Day Shift Manager.
www.youtube.com

Chad is Darth Vader’s underachieving younger brother, who has only gotten a job in a grocery store on Earth. Like his brother, he was injured in a volcano and wears the same black suit, mask, and helmet. He sounds just like him, too. This is an ongoing series of about five-minute sketches. It’s live actors, with good special effects for things like the light sabers. There have been two complete seasons with continuing story lines, and other series of employee training videos, holiday greeting videos, and single subjects. Season three debuts this year. If you like Star Wars – and who doesn’t? – you should find this very funny. ~~ Mike Griffin

Lost Parody.
www.youtube.com

I’ve never watched a TV episode of Lost, but I didn’t need to to find this series very funny. It’s done completely with toy action-figures, and in each episode the cast of Lost encounters the cast of some other popular show or movie. The premier episode had them meet Star Wars characters. Other episodes

have included the casts of Star Trek, Twilight, Harry Potter, Indiana Jones, Lord of the Rings, Pirates of the Caribbean, Batman, Heroes, and Alien. Lots of opportunities for sarcastic criticism of the show’s shortcomings, which was still funny if you know the minimum, like only what you read in this paper’s SF Tube Talk. Typical episode lengths are a few minutes. ~~ Mike Griffin

Black Books
www.hulu.com

This is a half-hour British TV sitcom which started in 2000. It only has three seasons of six shows each. The setting is contemporary mundane, but it should enthrall any genre fan. Why? Two reasons: first of all, it is set in a small independent bookstore. Second, it is extremely funny. Only three main characters: the owner is a misanthropic Irishman, Bernard Black, who prefers to sit and read instead of sell books. He takes on a helper, Manny, who looks like a hippy but quit his job as an accountant. Bernard’s only other friend is the gal who works next door, Fran. Three very eccentric characters who inhabit a small bookstore – the spirit of Monty Python lives ~~ Mike Griffin

Screening Room

Avatar
The Book of Eli
The Imaginarium of Dr Parnassus

Avatar
Starring: Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana, Sigourney Weaver, Stephan Lang
Director: James Cameron
Runtime: 162 minutes
Rated: PG-13 – Warfare and Language
Release Date: December 18th, 2009
Reviewed by: Len Berger
(ConNotations Film Editor)

An Avatar is a humanoid creature created from human and Na’vi DNA. The Na’vi are the rather tall blue humanoid creatures that inhabit the peaceful moon Pandora. The Avatar itself is controlled by the human whose DNA was used to create the specific Avatar. A “link” is established between the human and “his” Avatar through some impressive technology.

The basic story is a common one where Earthlings would like something from someone or something and generally think that they can just take it. The something in this case is unobtainium which is an energy source that sells for \$20 million per kilo on Earth. In the year 2154 the Resources Development Administration (RDA) sends humans in suspended animation on a 6 year journey to Pandora to mine the unobtainium. Once there, some Avatar “drivers” are needed to assist in the mining operation since the atmosphere is toxic to humans.

Jake Sully (played by Sam

Worthington – Marcus Wright in *Terminator Salvation*) had a brother who was to travel to Pandora to control his Avatar. Unfortunately he died unexpectedly so the RDA asked his twin brother Jake to take his place. Jake had no training and was wheelchair bound due to a war injury but could certainly control an Avatar “link”. Jake met the beautiful Neytiri (played by Zoe Saldana – Uhura in *Star Trek*) when he became separated from the rest of his excursion crew and was being attacked by a group of Viperwolfs. Neytiri saved Jake’s life and commented “You have a strong heart but are stupid like a child”. Jake befriends Neytiri and asks her to teach him the ways of the Na’vi.

Dr. Grace Augustine (played by Sigourney Weaver – can you say *Alien*) is a scientist who uses her Avatar to study Pandoran plant life and the Na’vi race.



The doctor developed a relationship with the Na’vi and ran some schools to teach the children of the Na’vi.
Col. Miles Quaritch (played by Stephan Lang – Gen. Hopgood in the *Men Who Stare at Goats*) views the Na’vi as savages who are jeopardizing the mining operation. The Colonel asks Jake to spy on the Na’vi and in return the Colonel will make sure Jake’s legs are repaired when he returns to Earth. The relationship that develops between Jake (through his Avatar) and Neytiri jeopardizes Jake’s mission.

It is hard to come up with the words to describe the visual experience of the film. The moon Pandora is gorgeous, stunning and unbelievable. Usually the word gorgeous is reserved to describe a person but in this case the film itself deserves the description. The audience will feel that they are on the moon Pandora and perhaps will feel that they are flying around on one of the Mountain Banshees. James Cameron’s imagination created the moon and it is certainly the highlight of the entire film. 3D has never been seen with this amount of detail – the terrain, the plants, the animals, the bugs, and even the computer terminals are visually amazing. The live action sequences blended quite well with the CG sequences. Production time was approximately 4 years.

The film is being released in IMAX 3D 70mm, IMAX 3D Digital, 3D Digital

and 2D. This reviewer saw the film at an IMAX 3D Digital theatre and will recommend that the film be seen in IMAX 3D. The music went well with the serene moon scenes. At the IMAX 3D Digital screening the seats shook.
Avatar is rated “B+” and is highly recommended.

The Book of Eli
Starring: Denzel Washington, Gary Oldman, Mila Kunis
Directors: Albert & Allen Hughes
Runtime: 118 minutes
Rated: R
Release Date: January 15th, 2010
Reviewed by: Len Berger
(ConNotations Film Editor)

Some 30 years after an apocalyptic event that destroyed most of the earth’s surface and its people there is a man traveling the countryside to accomplish a mission. Eli (played by Denzel Washington) is traveling towards the west with a book and a hope of finding a better place. Eli must hunt for his food, scrounge for water and take clothes off of the dead to stay alive. He does have his book which he reads from every day and an IPOD so all is not lost.

Criminal gangs are roaming the countryside but they are no match for Eli. His knife skills are only matched by Rambo. After dispatching one gang of thugs a survivor asks “Who are you?”



Yes indeed – we are all wondering who Eli is.
Running out of water Eli enters a town of criminals run by Carnegie (played by Gary Oldman). Everything in the town is for sale: water, women and even charging a battery which Eli needs to keep his IPOD playing. Carnegie is searching for “the book” to gain the power that it will give him. Little does Carnegie know that Eli is carrying that book which happens to be the only copy left on earth. Carnegie’s adopted daughter Solara (played by Mila Kunis) befriends Eli since she sees something different in him and wants him to take her along on his journey.

Eli’s dedication to his singular mission and the relationship between Eli and Solara are strong elements of the film. However the film is a bit too slow

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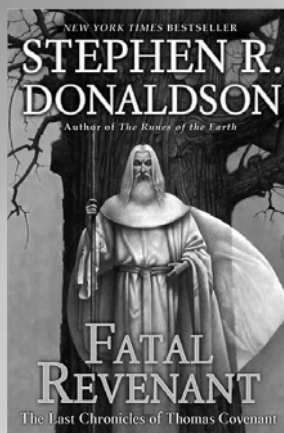
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Screening (Cont'd from page 10)

and somewhat repetitive in the gang vs. the good guy fights. Those who enjoy a film about faith, religion and dedication should enjoy the film. Religion can both destroy and rebuild and both elements are shown in *The Book of Eli*. For the hand to hand fight scenes Denzel Washington performed his own stunts.

Tag line: Some will kill to have it – he will kill to protect it.

Rated R for violence and language.
The Book of Eli is rated “C+”.

The Imaginarium of Dr Parnassus
Starring: Christopher Plummer, Tom Waits, Lily Cole, Heath Ledger
Director: Terry Gilliam
Rated: PG-13
Running Time: 122 Minutes
Produced by Infinity Features, Poo Poo Pictures, Davis Films
Distributed by: Sony Pictures Classics
Release Date: January 8, 2010
Reviewed by Bob LaPierre, ConNotations Film Critic

Only a great movie maker could have his star die during the production of his movie and have that movie turn out as incredible as this. The sets are fantastic, the story amazing, and the acting superb. Fans of Monty Python will recognize one of the sets and the influence in some of the humor, watch for the dancing policemen.



The story is based on a simple premise, what if one of those traveling charlatans was a real mystic? And what if he had the ability to allow you into his mind in order to guide you to salvation? Dr Parnassus (Christopher Plummer) is such a man. He has a secret, years ago he made an agreement with Mr. Nick (Tom Waits) to give him any children he fathers when they reach the age of sixteen. Now his daughter Valentina (Lily Cole) is three days from her sweet sixteen.

Parnassus makes a bet with Nick for her life, the first one to five souls wins. They come across a man hanging from the bottom of a bridge. After rescuing him they discover that his name is Tony (Heath Ledger) and he begins to help them increase their income and tries to help gather the souls needed, but he has a dark secret of his own.

The story of how Parnassus became what he is and what choices he made on the way is captivating. The bantering between Parnassus and his assistant Percy (Verne Troyer) kept me chuckling throughout. Just remember “you’d get a midget” and you’ll laugh too.

Five stars out of five

Pro Notes

Hi, Everyone Thanks for reading ConNotations and my column. No new faces but old friends to welcome back. We have a tremendous variety this month with authors checking in from all over the nation.

We’ll start in cold, wintry Maine where **James Hetley** lives. Shoveling snow, feeding the wood stove, getting out on the cross-country skis whenever the trails look good... He has a new novel-ette out, a story in the Stonefort series, in chapbook form with SRM Publisher, Ltd. -- *Dragon’s Bones*, available at some specialty SF&F booksellers and via internet sales at www.srpmpublisher.com. That could become the start of a full novel, if any publisher shows interest. James is still working fitfully at “Powers”, a stand-alone urban fantasy, but that’s been a Work In Progress since the last time we heard from him. In foreign rights news, French editions of the mass-market “Summer Country” and trade paperback “Winter Oak” translations came out last spring. And **Sharon Lee** and **Steve Miller** report that 2010 will be a barnburner for them, and for the LIADEN Universe®. The mass market paperback of “Fledgling” will be out in early March; followed by sequel “Saltation” (in hardback) in late April. These are the Baen editions of the two books they first-drafted on the web in 2007 and 2008. Sharon and Steve will be Writer Guests of Honor at Oasis 23, in Orlando, FL, from May 28-30 <http://www.oasfis.org/oasis/> On June 1, two LIADEN Universe® books will come out from Baen -- brand-new novel “Mouse and Dragon,” and “The Dragon Variation” -- an omnibus edition including “Local Custom,” “Scout’s Progress,” and “Conflict of Honors.” Just ten days later, they’ll be headed out to Naperville, IL as DucKon 19’s Literary Guests of Honor www.duckon.org/, from June 18 --20) Then a quiet few months after DucKon, except for a trip down to Raleigh for NASFiC in early August, which is good, because they’ll be needing to finish writing LIADEN Universe® novel “Ghost Ship,” which is due to their editor at Baen in mid-August. In November, “Carousel Tides,” by Sharon, a contemporary fantasy novel set in a Maine coastal resort, will hit the shelves, also from Baen. After that, no excitement until January 2011, when “The Agent Gambit,” an omnibus collection of “Agent of Change” and “Carpe Diem” will be in stores.

Down to Massachusetts to hear from **Christopher Golden** (one my personal favorites). As usual, he’s got a lot of pots on the stove – He and Tim Lebbon are writing the fourth HIDDEN CITIES novel for Bantam, this one set in Boston. The third, “The Chamber of Ten,” is set in Venice and will be out in July. He’s working on a secret project for Disney Press that is tied in to an upcoming film written by Guillermo del Toro. Chris recently completed a new young adult dark fantasy called “When Rose Wakes” for MTV Books and he’s working on the third issue of “Baltimore: The Plague Ships,” the first in a new series of miniseries that he and Mike Mignola are writing for Dark Horse Comics, with Ben Stenbeck illustrating. The comics are a spinoff from his first novel with Mignola...but they recently signed a contract with St. Martin’s Press for two new novels. He says he’s started work on the brand new, fifth Peter Octavian novel, “Waking Nightmares.” The entire series is going to be repackaged and rereleased by Ace books starting in July with “Of Saints and Shadows,” which has a brief foreword by Charlaine Harris. And finally, “The New Dead,” the zombie anthology he edited, will be out in February. It received a starred review in Publishers Weekly, and Fangoria loved it, too. This pleases him.

Our token Artist this month is **Donato Giancola** from New York. He has a lot of news: First off, he recently partnered up with the folks over at Massive Black to create one of their wonderful demonstration DVDs. The 5-hour DVD follows Donato for three days in a step by step progression of his painting: *The Mechanic* an image to appear on the cover of ‘The Hugo Awards Winners Showcase’ due out later this year. The demonstration goes over everything from thumbnails to the photo-shoot to preliminary drawings to the oil painting and nearly everything in between. It’s the first time such an in-depth look into his method has been available outside the studio, and he has been getting some wonderful feedback from it already. The DVD can be ordered directly from Donato at www.donatoart.com/mechanic/ or the download or DVD from www.media.massiveblack.com/. Secondly, he is happy to announce a new partnership with the Richard J. Demato gallery in Sag Harbor, New York. Richard has been an avid collector for years and has just opened up this new gallery to exhibit a number of exciting artists, established and emerging. Several of Donato’s favorite paintings, including the original oils for ‘The Mechanic’, are now being represented by the gallery and on a constant rotated display there. You can learn more about Richard, his gallery and the artists showing at: www.rjdgallery.com. Last is a bit of news I am particularly excited to share.

Donato is currently working with publisher Tim Underwood on a Tolkien-themed art book titled *Visions from Middle Earth*. He says he’s been wanting to do a Lord of the Rings book since the beginning of his career and is now thrilled that this will happen. He is in the process of creating a number of new paintings for the book and it is planned for a release in Summer 2010, hopefully just in time for San Diego Comic Con

We’ll detour up to Canada, since it’s really not that far from NY, to hear from **Nancy Kilpatrick** who has a labor of love about to publish – “Evolve” will be out in March www.vampires-evolve.com/. Nancy has been writing about vampires most of her writing career. The publisher gave her carte blanche about almost everything, although she did have to include a broad spectrum of the country. But it’s the first anthology where she felt free to put in what she liked entirely. The publisher has done a nice job with the book, the hardcover, the trade paperback, and the special coffin-boxed edition. The stories take the vampire as he/she has evolved and what we are seeing now in such visuals as *True Blood*, *Twilight*, *The Vampire Diaries* and the books on which these are based, and moves the vampire into the future. The contributors were asked to envision: *what next?* And “Evolve” is NOT a YA book. It launches in the UK and Canada, not sure when or if it might hit the US but you can buy it on the Edge Publishing website.

Jacqueline Carey in Michigan wrote to tell me that the second book of the NAAMAH trilogy, *Naamah’s Curse*, will be coming out in June 2010. Meanwhile, she’s working on the third volume, working title *Naamah’s Blessing*, as well as a sequel to *Santa Olivia* titled *Santitos at Large*. Moving along to Illinois to hear from **Jody Lynn Nye** with some welcome news. The third novel in Robert Asprin’s DRAGONS series “Dragons Deal” just went into the publisher. It is due out in December 2010. (The two previous books are “Dragons Wild” and “Dragons Luck”.) She has also sent in a book to Baen, entitled “View From the Imperium”. It’s a humorous military SF novel. No word on when that will come out yet. She’ll be back at DragonCon this fall.

We’ll drop down to Florida, before moving west, to hear from **Ben Bova**. In February, Tor Books will publish “Able One,” his high-tech thriller based on the real-life Airborne Laser program. North Korea launches missiles at us and the ABL-1 aircraft has to shoot them down or see nuclear holocaust erupt. Ben worked at the lab where the high-power laser was invented, and has watched with dismay as the U.S. has pursued missile defense technology (and politics) with lukewarm enthusiasm. In April, the Forge side of Tor will bring out “The Hittite,” an

(Cont'd on page 13)

Pro Notes (Cont'd from page 12)

historical novel about what happens to Helen after the Trojan War ends. He is in the final stages of writing "Leviathans of Jupiter," the sequel to the novel "Jupiter." (We have found gigantic creatures living in the world-spanning ocean of the planet Jupiter. Are they intelligent, and if so, how can we communicate with creatures so completely different from us?) Finally, in August, Tor is reissuing the first three novels of his Voyagers series: "Voyagers," "Voyagers II: The Alien Within," and "Voyagers III: Star Brothers." These form the basis for the novel "The Return" published by Tor last year (paperback in August). In "The Return", he ties together the backgrounds of the GRAND TOUR novels and the VOYAGERS series. Ben also does a weekly column for the Scripps Howard newspapers, available online at www.naplesmews.com. Also in Florida is Joe Haldeman whose new novel "Starbound" appears this month from Ace Books. It's the sequel to "Marsbound," but stands alone, too. The paperback of "Marsbound" is already out. (Carmen Dula and her husband have spent six years traveling to a distant solar system that is home to the enigmatic, powerful race known as The Others, in the hopes of finding enough common purpose between their species to forge a delicate truce. By the time Carmen and her party return, fifty years have been consumed by relativity-and the Earthlings have not been idle, building a massive flotilla of warships to defend Earth against The Others. But The Others have their own plans.) Please visit Joe's website at home.earthlink.net/~haldeman. You can order books from there, too. Come visit his blog on LiveJournal or SFF.Net.

Okay... on to Arkansas for the delightful **Charlaine Harris**. She has a lot coming out this year, a real smorgasboard. April 6, 2010: "Crimes by Moonlight" (Charlaine Harris - editor) - this one has a Dahlia story. May 4, 2010: "Dead In the Family" - the next Sookie novel (Yay). August 3, 2010: "Death's Excellent Vacation" (Charlaine Harris, Toni L. P. Kelner - editors) - another short Sookie story (double Yay). Plus, Charlaine is in the "Delta Blues" anthology, edited by Carolyn Haines with a foreword by Morgan Freeman, which will be out May 1 from Tyrus Books. Then, she'll be off for a brief tour of Europe in early March, a quick tour of the US with the publication of DITF in May, and on to Australia and New Zealand in September.

Jane Lindskold, in New Mexico, wrote that *Thirteen Orphans*, which came out in November of 2008 to strong reviews, was recently released in paperback. The paperback release hit number eight on the Locus list, making it officially a bestseller. (Congrats, Jane) The sequel, "Nine Gates," came out in August 2009, also to strong reviews. Reader e-

mails went way up with this one, so people must really be getting into the story. "Five Odd Honors" comes out in May of 2010. Jane's also been writing a lot of short fiction. The Drifter will be in "The Girl's Guide to Guns and Monsters" from DAW. The Writing on the Wash-room Wall will be out in a yet-untitled anthology of Twilight Zone stories edited by Carol Serling from Tor. Like the Rain will be in a very special anthology edited by Joan Saberhagen and based on Fred's wonderful novel, "Mask of the Sun." The working title for this anthology is "Golden Reflections." Other projects are pending, but some are so top secret that they're shoot before reading.

Not much from my home state, Arizona, this time. **Ernest & Lee Hogan** (aka Emily Devenport, Maggie Thomas) just wanted me to pass onto their fans that they have blogs to visit:

www.emsjoiedeweird.blogspot.com and www.mondoernesto.blogspot.com.

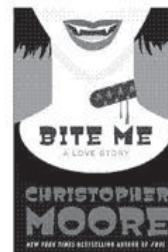
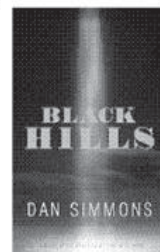
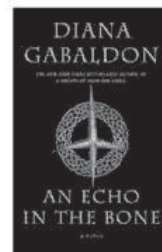
They've been doing some online publishing and trying out some audio-visual stuff. And from Jennifer Roberson - A collection of 20 short stories, titled "Guinever's Truth and Other Tales," was published last year. She is currently finishing "The Wild Road," the third volume in the KARAVANS series - which will publish later this year - and will then begin on the fourth and last volume. After that she'll start work on two new SWORD-DANCER books; the six older titles are now available in three 2-volume omnibus editions. Following the new SWORD-DANCER books will be three new CHEYSULI books. On to California, where Michael Cassutt and David S. Goyer (screenwriter of BATMAN BEGINS, BLADE, many others, executive producer of FLASHFORWARD on ABC) have sold an SF trilogy to Ace Books, editor Ginjer Buchanan. First volume is titled "Heaven's Shadow" and is scheduled for publication in June 2011. And on up to Washington - Elizabeth Ann Scarborough's "Catalyst, a Tale of the Barque Cats" has just been let out of the bag by Del Rey. This is the first of two tales of the space-faring kitties by her and Anne McCaffrey. They turned in "Catacombs" (another tale of the Barque Cats) at the beginning of November. Meanwhile, three of her earlier books, "Song of Sorcery," "The Godmother" and her short story collection "Scarborough Fair" have been released as books on demand and e-books and are available through Amazon.com and other virtual vendors. Also hailing from Washington is William Dietz who told me that the next thing coming up is the April 2010 release of "Heaven's Devils," a hardcover tie-in novel set in the extremely popular STARCRAFT universe. (For the poor, hardworking citizens of the Confederacy's fringe worlds, the Guild Wars have exacted a huge toll. Swayed by the promise of financial rewards, a new batch

of recruits joins the fight alongside a slew of mysteriously docile criminals -- and a few dubious military leaders. Eighteen-year-old Jim Raynor, full of testosterone and eager to make things right at home, ships off to boot camp and finds his footing on the battlefield, but he soon discovers that the official mission is not what he's really fighting for. For the first time ever, StarCraft enthusiasts will learn the origins of the enduring friendship between the young upstart Jim Raynor and the streetwise soldier Tychus Findlay. Watch as they battle on the front lines of a fierce interplanetary war and bear witness to the Confederacy's rank corruption -- corruption so reprehensible that it rains immeasurable death and destruction upon the government's own people.) Meanwhile Bill will be working on an original novel called "A Fighting Chance," which will be the final volume in the nine volume LEGION OF THE DAMNED series. He would like to thank his readers for following the overarching story since 1993. However, even though the original series will be coming to an end, fans will be happy to hear that a prequel trilogy will follow "A Fighting Chance." Of course, that's a couple of years down the road. Lots of work to do before then

And, lastly, from Hawaii, I was pleased to hear from Kate Elliott who sold a new series to Orbit Books. The first volume is called "Cold Magic," and it will probably be published in Sept 2010 (that's

not yet totally confirmed). Her publisher describes it this way: A Victorian fantasy novel set in an alternate world of trolls, dragons, and darker magic, this is a combination of steampunk and adventure fantasy at its most fast--and furious. Kate usually describes it as an Afro-Celtic post-Roman icepunk Regency adventure novel with Bonus airship, Phoenician spies, and the intelligent descendants of troodons. So take your pick. Either will do. It's Book One of a trilogy, and she'll be starting the second book in very short order. Meanwhile, the third CROSSROADS novel, "Traitors' Gate," was released in August 2009, completing the trilogy. She's done some work on CROSSROADS 4, a standalone novel that takes place about 15 years after the end of the Gate trilogy, but is currently trying to figure out if she's writing the right story in the right way for it. She still hopes to write a second trilogy in the universe, which takes place about 60 years later, but that's yet to be determined. That's it for this month. I hope you enjoyed yourselves. And, as always - if anyone wants to contribute or knows someone who knows someone...please write to ConNotations or email me at Editor@casfs.org. And I wish you all a healthy and happy 2010. - Catherine Book.

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



Feb 16

Diana Gabaldon (*An Echo in the Bone*), Dana Stabenow (*A Night Too Dark*), & Laurie R. King (*God of the Hive*) at the Arizona Biltmore - 7 pm

Mar 3

Dan Simmons signs *Black Hills* at The Poisoned Pen - 7 pm

Mar 27

Christopher Moore signs *Bite Me* at The Poisoned Pen - 2 pm

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In Our Book

Iorich
by Steven Brust
Tor Books, \$24.99, 320 pp

Steven Brust is one of the truly great writers, employing diverse styles and voices, imbedding puzzles, contradictions, Zelazny-like puns, and inside jokes in these stories of assassin turned adventurer, Vlad Taltos. In previous volumes, Vlad had confronted gods and wizards, fought in a battle over a Great Weapon, obtained a great Weapon of his own, won and lost a wife, assassinated rivals, insulted nobility, committed regicide when a goddess told him to, solved mysteries, endured torture, learned drumming techniques, and released chaos into the ordered world, both figuratively and quite literally, with lethal results.



In *Iorich*, Vlad returns to Dragaera City, even through there's a substantial bounty for his instigated death, enough to motivate every assassin except the few, the very few, the *very, very* few, who hold him in esteem. Fortunately for Vlad, those few include the Empress Zerika and the Sethra Lavode, the Sorceress of Dzur Mountain. Even so, Vlad knows better than to tempt fate, but what else is he to do when Alieria is arrested on capital charges and faces execution? These two have a history of saving each other's lives, and Vlad is a traditionalist when he isn't an iconoclast.

Along the way, he further imperils himself and those he genuinely loves by visiting Cawti and their young son, and by enlisting the help of Kragar, his former second-in-command.

Iorich includes a representation of the Cycle, the totems of the 17 clans of the Dragaerans and the source of all the series titles, with illustrations and characteristics of each beast. These summaries explicate the themes of the prior novels and provide tantalizing previews of what remains to be explored.

According to the Great Cycle, the Iorich represent "Justice and Retribution." But during a Phoenix reign the Iorich are low on the totem pole, having little power

and less influence. In classic left-hand-not-knowing-what-the-right-hand-is-doing mode, certain members of the Iorich have formed an alliance with other clans to offset their lowly status; while others, enlisted and galvanized by Vlad himself, serve their original purpose, without benefit of honor, recognition, or much in the way of recompense.

At the end of the story, Vlad has accomplished his mission, after opening more cans of worms than you'd think even a *taltos* could discover. But success bears a high price tag, even if the collection date is postponed. The ending, and numerous asides scattered throughout, leave you wanting desperately to know what happens next, and before, and besides. (*What Dragaeran lover?*)

This review is based on an advanced uncorrected proof, so there may be some minor changes by the time it hits the shelves. I just hope the Deleted Scenes are retained for readers' delectation: seven shots of risky and wry. ~ ~ **Chris Paige**

Time Travelers Never Die
by Jack McDevitt
Ace Books; \$24.95; 371 pp

My favorite thing about time-traveling tales is current sensibilities/knowledge applied to ancient life and people. And this novel is no disappointment. Can you imagine perusing one of the ancient Seven Wonders of the World, the Library at Alexandria, Egypt—which contained all the known wisdom of the world—that had been put to paper (or vellum or papyrus...)? ...and you know some Greek?

The son of a famous physicist discovers a couple of curious, hand-held electronic devices left behind by his father who has gone missing. And cryptically (of course) the father tells his son to destroy these items.

Adrian Shelborne (known as "Shel") doesn't destroy them and discovers through careful usage that they allow him to time-travel. His dad, Michael Shelborne has gone suddenly missing and neither Shel nor his brother Jerry know where he's gone.

Except Shel gets an envelope from his father through the family lawyer.

And this is how Shel finds the time traveling devices called "Q-pods."

The bulk of the novel is Shel and his friend Dave (a linguist whom he dragoons into helping him) trying to discover just where in time his father is and that he is not a victim of foul play as everyone thinks. There is tons of looping back and forth between the current time and the past---where Shel even meets himself (with no sign of paradox).

Would you be able to keep time-traveling a secret? Didn't think so. And Shel is no different. He decides to allow

himself some fun and he and Dave start off to find the missing plays of Sophocles in the Library of Alexandria. (Sophocles apparently wrote a hundred plays and only about seven exist today). Shel sends a play "Achilles" to an ancient Greek scholar Dave's acquainted with who is able to authenticate the fact that the play is not a mere mirror image of Sophocles' style and word usage, but is indeed the real thing. He mails the copy to the scholar—and communicates by email his intentions.

But of course, does not reveal his source.

Shel and Dave's travels are not random; they are trying to track down Michael Shelborne based mostly on the things he especially liked. But they also travel hither and yon meeting historical figures or witness great events.

McDevitt wrote another time/anomaly novel that I also thoroughly enjoyed titled "Ancient Shores."

P.S.: A note to the author: Thanks for remembering (and reminding us) that one of the high points of drama and courage in American history was made on March 7, 1965 in Selma, Alabama. ~ ~ **Sue Martin**

The Trouble with Heroes
Ed. by Denise Little
Daw Fantasy, \$7.99, 305 pages

As usual, Denise Little has come up with an intriguing theme for her newest anthology – what's it really like having a relationship with a Hero? There are 22 contributors. Adrian N. Phoenix gave us a delightful piece from the point of view of H.P. Lovecraft's housekeeper. I also enjoyed a different take on Maid Marian from Jean Rabe. It may just be my taste but I found Nina Kiriki Hoffman's offering a bit dull and clumsy. Pauline Alama has a most amusing rendition of Odysseus' homecoming and his excuses to his wife for why he was so late. And I did enjoy Ken Scholes' quirky story about dating a superhero. Allan Rousselle has a good idea – Medea trying to rationalize the things she did to save Jason of the Argonauts – but it never really got off the ground. It was meant to be wry and funny, I think. My favorite – and the best reason to buy this book – is from Laura Resnick. Poor Queen Guinevere is slipping in the opinion polls and Arthur engages a makeover team to improve her image...among other things. ~ ~ **Catherine Book**

Private Worlds: A Revised Atlas: Poetry & Haikus
By Scott E. Green
Abbot ePublishing, Manchester, New Hampshire, 2009.
Format: PDF or Mobipocket, \$2.49, 41 pp
Available from <http://www.abbottepub.com/>

This book is a wonderful survey Atlas of Classic Science Fiction with some coverage of Mystery, Horror, Fantasy and associated Art. Each short poem encapsulates a theme or emotion most often expressed in the author's work. In most cases the poet was spot on though the expression in so short a form must necessarily be inadequate as a complete description of the author's works. Nonetheless the poems catch in every case an important recognizable element from the author.

The Poems are arranged alphabetically by the author they apply to from Charles Addams to Roger Zelazny.

They are completely beautiful and delightful. Any person well-read in the Genre will love this book. I recommend this highly. ~ ~ **Gary L. Swaty**

Pandemonium
by Daryl Gregory
Del Rey Trade Paperback Original,
\$13.00, 290pp

What if – comic book superheroes were real? What that really means is, what if a FEW of them were real, since the comics always portrayed them as in our mundane world. Thus, we get stories like *Watchmen* instead of endless superpowers. Taking the superpowers to a broader yet still limited population gives mutants like in the TV show *Heroes*. Now we have a Jungian spin on it: what if



archetypes of the collective unconscious become conscious as superheroes, possessing normal people to make them do extreme things. In our modern society, 20 thousand people a year get possessed, not just as superheroes but as any archetypal character. The main public reaction to all of this is to call it demon

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possession, whether the interpretation is religious or secular. ‘Demonology’ sections between chapters give examples of possession by The Captain (Captain America), The Truth (pulp gunman The Shadow), Smokestack Johnny (a railroader), The Little Angel (the token girl), The Kamikaze, the Boy Marvel (Captain Marvel), and The Hellion.

Our main character is the young man Del Pierce, who has the unique quality of carrying his demon around always contained inside, whereas for most people it is a transient event. In Chicago, Del attends an International Conference on Possession, crashed by DemoniCon fanboys. He meets the sexy exorcist Mother Mariette. Later he meets the Human League, a group based on A.E. van Vogt’s novel *Slan* – they think of demons as mutant telepaths. He is helped by the Lovecraftian demon Shu’garath. There is also a bit of alternate history in this story. For example, Philip K. Dick did not die in 1982; instead, he was possessed by the demon Valis and saved from his stroke. He is a major character in this story. To sum up, fans of PKD, van Vogt, Lovecraft, Jung, archetypes, or comic book superheroes should read this novel. Does that leave anyone out? ~~ **Mike Griffin**

Changing the World
Edited by Mercedes Lackey
Daw Books, \$7.99, 343 pp

Lackey is too busy with her many projects to write more than the occasional Valdemar novel these days, but she is loyal enough to her loyal fan base to edit the almost-annual anthology of Valdemaran tales, written by friends, fen, and some surprises. Just as Misty got her breakthrough in Marion Zimmer Bradley’s *Sword and Sorceress*, she has introduced new writers in these anthologies and – I hope – transformed lives in the process. Surely seeing your first story in print is bit like being Chosen. And often these first stories are some of the best in the collection.

For *Changing the World*, Lackey wrote a story called “The One Left Behind” introducing a theme that is explored by several of the stories that follow: what if being Chosen is problematic? What if it causes a mess for those left behind? Or what if you don’t want to leave your familiar world, in which you might be very happy, thank-you very much Mr. Blue-Eyed Horse? This is a novel approach to the life-changing moment of recognition that characterizes being Chosen by a Companion of Valdemar, the magical guardians of a country that many of us wish we could find. In Lackey’s story, Marya is a master weaver with a serious grudge against Heralds and Companions.

Her father was Chosen before his wedding to Marya’s mother, and he just ... disappeared from their lives. Then the horrible pattern repeats itself, as her wonderful fiancé is Chosen too. So when a couple of Heralds come asking her for help, she derives great satisfaction in telling them, “NO ” Or does she? It turns out that Marya has some talents that have been, not exactly buried, but certainly under a bushel, and we all know how bad for the soul that is, don’t we? Oddly enough, these despised Heralds and Companions are the first to see and appreciate how much more Marya is than *just* a master-weaver.

15 stories follow, including “The Reluctant Herald” by Mickey Zucker Reichert, which is the thematic dilemma from the *groom*’s point of view; and “For Want of a Nail” by Rosemary Edghill and Denise McCune, which describes the initial formation of the Kingdom by Baron Kordas Valdemar – a story many readers have requested.

“Softly Falling Snow” gives us a quiet interval in the life of Elspeth the Peacemaker, written, appropriately enough, by Elizabeth A. Vaughan. It contains sorrow, humor, and romance, and is a pleasure to read.

Elizabeth Waters contributes “A Storytelling of Crows,” a shining jewel in this collection in which animals play a prominent part.

“Waiting to Belong” takes on the challenge of addressing, What if your being Chosen is actually bad for your home? What if you are needed at home as much as by Haven? Kristin Schwengel captures the tension of this dilemma. This story needs a sequel, I think. Perhaps we’ll hear more of Shia’s story next year. Of all the contributions, this one seems most in need of follow-through.

“The Last Part of the Way” gives some attention to the Bards and Healers of Valdemar, as two older circuit riders make their rounds, because “even usually peaceful towns need healing and song.” You got that right, Brenda Cooper. In this instance, a young Herald is desperately in need of both after his home village was buried under a mudslide, no survivors.

Stephanie Shaver and Tanya Huff have too much fun with “Midwinter Gifts” and “Nothing Better to Do” respectively. In “Gifts,” a herald with precog and a bard team up to prevent a murder at a Countess’ party. I liked how this story was written, except that, unfortunately, the bait-and-switch twist at the end unravels the logic of the set-up. Still, there are some nifty exchanges in the story, and an ending that feels very right, even if it disappoints the romantics. Besides, it’s got Rolan and Talamir making a guest appearance. As for Huff’s story, it is a laugh-out-loud account of a bemused Herald transporting an orphaned toddler to distant family.

“Wounded Bird” by Michael Z. Williamson is a reminder that for many women, equality isn’t even a concept; and “Defending the Heart,” by Kate Paulk, exemplifies that Valdemar is a haven for those whose appearance or orientation would be condemned elsewhere. Lackey has ever been sensitive to these issues, and has done more to alleviate prejudice than any fiction writer I know.

“The Thief of Anvil’s Close, by Fiona Patton, continues the lives of the Dann family in Haven. I think this is a trend to be encouraged; there are many other characters introduced in these anthologies I want to meet again.

Judith Tarr wrote “Twice Blessed,” in which two girls who everyone expects to be best friends *hate* each other. Their non-sibling rivalry is intense and utterly realistic. Too bad for them; to get their hearts’ desire they’ll have to get over it.

“Be Careful What You Wish For” by Nancy Asire takes us back to the troubled Karse border, where a Karse-born Herald is looking for family that may have survived the purges.

Good as the preceding stories are, the prize goes to Benjamin Ohlander for “Interview with a Companion” which gives the low down on many aspects of life and rule in Valdemar, with spot-on analysis of hallowed characters and traditions. Mercedes Lackey clearly loved this one and gave it the end piece position of honor.

Changing the World is perfect for the winter months when you want to snuggle down with a good set of stories. But you know what? It will be just as good in summertime. It is the best Valdemar collection to date. ~~ **Chris Paige**

Dreamfever
by Karen Marie Moning
Delacorte Press; \$26; 388 pp

This is the fourth book in a projected five book dark paranormal series. So events have really ratcheted up in this novel.

Moning’s tale involves the initially clueless blonde Southern Belle named MacKayla Lane who goes to Dublin from Ashford, Georgia to find out who murdered her sister Alina who was going to university there.

Needless to say—this opens up a huge kettle of paranormal fish and “Mac” as she is known finds herself thrown willy-nilly into a struggle between the Seelie and Unseelie courts of Fae---known in Ireland as the *Tuatha de Dannan*—the fairy folk of the Emerald Isle. And one of them is responsible for her sister’s murder.

This is a nasty vicious battle; make no mistake. It is all centered on retrieving an intensely magical tome named the *Sinsar Dubh* which is not only a compendium of the deadliest magic—but a sentient Beast.

The book disappeared from where it had been safely hidden for centuries—and now the Fae are fighting not only to find the book but to control the human world. And Mac is able to sense the book (which is in constant motion) if she crosses its path.

The novel opens on a Dublin utterly devastated by a riot of dark Fae savagery which was unleashed on the unsuspecting city (and eventually the rest of the world) on Halloween night when the walls between the evil ravening Fae hoards and the “normal” human world fell apart despite the efforts of a druidic circle.

At the end of the previous novel, “Faefever,” Mac had been cornered by four dark Fae princes and raped (in a church, no less). This book opens with graphic sex between Mac and Jericho Barrons—Mac’s mysterious employer with many unusual, possibly fae powers of his own. Constant sex cures her of being *pri-ya*—a human addicted by fae sex (and usually kills the addict). After months of “therapy” with Barrons, Mac finally comes back to herself and resumes her new career (established in the first novel) as a *sidhe*-seer (one who can see the fae for what they are though they may look human). She joins the pitiful few who remain in Dublin to fight the dark Fae.

Moning’s tale follows Mac as she and many others search for the Sisnar Dubh. Her adventures are vivid, extreme confrontations with horrific creatures in usually ugly circumstances or outrageous landscapes. We do learn a little about Mac’s genetic heritage. But the burning question throughout these four novels is just *who* is Jericho Barrons, or more precisely, *what* is Jericho Barrons. (and to be honest—does he care for Mac at all or is it all just macho posturing) Moning gives us glimpses of his past, but not enough to clearly define what kind of being he is.

So trust me, this is as gripping a novel as Moning has written, and like so many series---I hate that I have to wait for the conclusion ~~ **Sue Martin**

Burning Shadows
by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro
Tor, \$27.99, 351 pages

This is the 24th novel of the enigmatic Comte Sainte-Germain. This one takes place during the invasion of what was left of the Roman Empire by Attila the Hun’s forces. Saint-Germain is forced to flee to the relative safety of a monastery along with several hundred villagers and a handful of soldiers. The story tells the tale of how these diverse groups of people – the monks, the villagers, the former-Roman soldiers...and Saint-Germain – try to maintain peace and harmony within the overcrowded monastery, while waiting for

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the inevitable attack by the Huns. An attack that they cannot survive. The inevitable woman is a refugee from a Hun attack that destroyed her family. She displays an interest in helping Saint-Germain in his infirmary and the villagers are happy to let her stay with him. She isn't one of them; nobody knows exactly where she came from. But she came with a deadly secret. And, in due course, she knows Saint-Germain's secret since she becomes his lover. And then the question becomes – what exactly is the secret she's hiding, will she betray Saint-Germain to the attacking Huns, and as a bonus question – who is the spy inside the monastery working for the Huns?

I have been reading these novels since the late 1970s and I have always been a faithful follower; but... lately they seem to all be of a formula. This story is slightly better than the last couple years but it still isn't as entertaining as the earlier stories. That said – there were a couple twists I enjoyed. We get to enjoy Olivia for a while – it's been too long since we heard from her. And, amusingly, her companion – Niklos – joins Saint-Germain while Rogerian is dealing with issues that keep him from Saint-Germain's side. Later he joins Olivia who writes to Saint-Germain that she found it amusing that each of them had the other's bondsman. There is a little suspense that I've found lacking in the past few years but a lack of insight into Saint-Germain's feelings or motivations. Unless you are a die-hard fan of the Comte, or have missed Olivia – there isn't a lot to recommend. ~ ~ **Catherine Book**

Kitty's House of Horrors
by Carrie Vaughn
Grand Central, \$7.99, 292 pp

This is the seventh installment chronicling the adventures of Kitty the werewolf with the midnight radio talk show.

Kitty is approached by TV producers to take part in a reality TV show starring supernatural beings. She agrees only after she finds the producers have tricked her friend Tina, a psychic, into agreeing. Soon Kitty and Tina along with another werewolf, a were-seal, a second psychic, a second radio talk show host, a magician, a couple of vampires and the obligatory skeptic find themselves at a hunting lodge in an isolated Montana valley. Fairly quickly it becomes evident that a TV show is not the primary purpose of the exercise as the show participants find themselves being hunted by unknown assailants.

This is a great installment in the series. We learn more about the Long Game, we see more evidence of the coming conflict between good and evil and Cormac finally has something good happen to him,

though there are hints that, even behind bars. he has been more involved than we've been aware. All in all a satisfying chapter in the series. Highly recommenced and I can't wait for the next one. ~ ~ **Stephanie L Bannon**

Fallen
by Tim Lebbon
Ballantine/Spectra, \$7.99, 413 pages

This is an installment in the list of stories Lebbon has written of a world called Noreela. This is a standalone story and you don't need the other stories; although, they may add some depth to your understanding of this strange world.

We don't get much backstory in this novel. It's an interesting idea on the surface: the world seems to be divided into two wildly different ecosystems. Noreela is where the known civilized world exists. Far to the south rises an unimaginably high cliff and no one knows what's on the other side. Our protagonists (I wouldn't call them heroes) have reason to believe there is another world on top of the cliff and since they are Voyagers, the thrill of discovery drives them to scale the cliff, no matter the cost. And the cost will be quite dear. Voyagers are those souls who feel the need for exploration either for knowledge or riches. Our two Voyagers are one of each. Nomi and Ramus have a long, sometimes affectionate, association. But secrets from their past will cause a horrific break between them and change the character of their trek and the fate of their world. What lies on top of the cliff is worse than anything they could have imagined and I kept wishing they wouldn't do what they were driven to do. Of course, if they had not, the book would have had a pretty tame ending. This is not a pretty story, it's actually very grim. And don't expect happy endings from Lebbon.

The plot is good and not too complex to follow. The characters are defined sufficiently for the story though most of his effort is for his two main characters. The rest were just walk-ons. I can't really recommend it but that's mostly just because this wasn't to my taste. I prefer my protagonists to have some redeeming characteristics and I really do like happy endings. ~ ~ **Catherine Book**

Hunting Memories
by Barb Hendee
Roc, \$15.00, 306 pp

Hunting Memories closely follows the events of *Blood Memories*, but if you can follow an out of sequence episode of your favorite TV show, you should be fine if you pick up this one first. And if you are a fan of *The Noble Dead Saga*, you will probably want to – follow the author

Julian Ashton is a vampire who lacks the telepath abilities that let vampires adjust the short term memories of their

food supply. Resenting this, he resolved to kill off all telepathic vamps so that he could be the master, instead of a freak. It was Julian who ushered in the era of killing humans to feed, and all the vampires he makes think this is the norm – the law. One human he turned, Eliesha, had a unique assignment: she was the caretaker for his immortal but helpless father, a once proud Lord of an estate in Wales condemned to endless senility.

But, far away from the watchful eye of Julian, Eliesha's latent telepathy emerges, and she rediscovers the possibility of feeding without murdering.

Now Eliesha is the leader of a small but growing number of vampires and their friends who want to come out of hiding but fear discovery by Julian. One vampire, Philip, is tormented by bloodlust which jeopardize the fragile new order. Perfect love casteth out fear, but in Philip's case, fear of losing Eliesha has to overturn his love of killing.

I have one major objection to this book, so if you are a Hendee fan please skip the rest of this paragraph. This is chick fic. The estrogen is so thick that virtually all the xy chromosome characters are unmanned and demasculated. They're what some females think men *ought* to be: domesticated; and the ones that *don't* play well with others are tormented or psychotic. Fair enough; something has to balance out all the publicized male wish-fulfillment fantasies that abound. But here's a secondary problem I had with the storyline: personally, if I were a vampire with a conscience, I seriously doubt that would stop me from going vigilante. It seems to me these characters do more harm *not* killing their socialized victims than they ever did when they were reducing the ranks of recidivists. Hey, if I were a vampire, I'd be the next Lone Ranger, taking a bite out of crime. ~ ~ **Chris Paige**

Indiana Jones and the Army of The Dead
by Steve Perry
Del Rey, \$7.99, 325 pp

In this WWII tale, Indiana Jones will team up with his friend Mac McHale and a lovely lady Marie to find an artifact, the Heart of Darkness, before the Germans and the Japanese. Yet, there is a third party that is also interested in this object-someone who lived over one hundred years and commanded a group of zombies at will. Predictable but interesting. Recommended to Indiana Jones fans and zombie readers. ~ ~ **Jeffrey Lu**

The Silver Mage
by Katharine Kerr
Daw, \$24.95, 446 pp

The Silver Mage is book four of the *Silver Wyrms* cycle and concluding volume of Deverry saga.



The wild Northlands hold many secrets, among them dweomer magic.

Because of the religious crusade of the Horsekin pushing south, Deverry and its allies realize their fate is threatened by the Horsekin. Only through the magic of the elven Wise Ones and the intervention of the powerful dragons, Arzosah and Rori, can the allies have any hope of mastering the secrets that can save them from conquest.

My first reaction is - don't stop now. Kerr's Celtic based medieval fantasy is one of the best fantasies of the post Lord of the Rings World. With characters you care about, plots that are complex. Long may she write.[so we can read them] Though *the Silver Mage* may be the best, the series belongs on your shelves. ~ ~ **Pam Allan**

Star Wars Death Troopers
by Joe Schreiber
Del Rey, \$24.00, 234 pp

An old Imperial prison barge Purge breaks down. The Imperial staff will go to a deserted Star destroyer for parts. Little do they know that they will be infected with a military zombie-like virus that will kill everybody on board Purge except for six survivors. Will these last six be able to get out of Purge, alive?

Zombie sci-fi theme. Overall, liked it. Rather dark. There is one surprise that I didn't expect. Recommended to dark Star Wars readers and zombie fans. ~ ~ **Jeffrey Lu**

Dark Road Rising
by P.N. Elrod
Ace, \$15.00, 389 pp

Dark Road Rising is a continuation of *the Vampire Files*.

Jack Fleming, vampire, and proprietor of Lady Crymsyn has his hands full in mob-run Chicago. His partner is in the hospital in critical condition, He is running the Nightcrawler for his Mob boss friend Gordy, and babysitting Whitey Kroun, a mentally unstable killer sent to kill him, and a new vampire with deadly secrets of his own, As Jack tries to

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unravel the mystery of Kroun’s undead state, Killers from New York are trying to kill them both. All this leaves him vulnerable to an old enemy while his girl friend is going to California to become a star. How much can a hard-working vampire survive?

What’s not to love about this book? It is full of action, mystery, character, and leavened with humor. This is the best Vampire Files yet. Grab your wallet, get down to the bookstore and settle in for a treat. ~~ **Pam Allan**

Magic in the Shadows
by Devon Monk
Roc, \$7.99, 357 pp

Magic in the Shadows is the third novel in the Allie Beckstrom series. Allie Beckstrom’s magic is blessing and curse, It allows her to track down abusers of magic and stop them from harming innocents but they take a physical toll and erase memories. Unfortunately, her late father, a wealthy deceased businessman of questionable morals, has found a way to insert himself into her mind and try take over.. She wouldn’t have anything to do with him or his wealth when he was alive. She hopes to join the Authority and gain control over her abilities. Now if she can only survive her enemies, inside and out of the Authority who want to kill her, and deal with her father.

Devon Monk has created a unique version of Urban Fantasy with a beautifully drawn character, complex, and conflicted in a system of magic different than usual. The book is a page turner, fast-paced and compulsively readable. If you are a fan of urban fantasy you will want to collect the series to revisit the rainy streets of Portland. I do. ~~ **Pam Allan**

The Child Thief
by Brom
Eos, \$26. 95, 484 pp

The Child Thief is a dark retelling of Peter Pan. Brom is a horror artist and author/ artist of games and two horror novels. Here he has taken the softer happier Peter Pan back to the more threatening early Celtic myths. Nick, a lost boy in Prospect Park has been set upon by a gang taking his ill-gotten gains to finance running away, Peter saves him to take him to a Neverland that has more horrors than Michael Jackson and James Barrie ever dreamed of in their wildest nightmares. But it is well-written, and if you love a children’s classic turned into modern horror you will love it. Most of the

original myths and fairy tales were horror stories. Loss of innocence, the greatest loss. Just ask Peter. ~~ **Pam Allan**

Black Blood
by John Meany
Bantam Spectra, \$24.00, 374 pp

Black Blood is by the author of *Bone Song*. Police lieutenant Donal Riordon isn’t alive as we know it. In one second his love was killed taking a bullet meant for him, and now her heart beats in his chest. As a zombie cop, he is the target of Trisopoli’s Unity Party, and the Black Circle. At the center of this ring of evil is the man responsible for his lover’s death - a man he has had to kill before.

Black Blood is an enthralling combination of futuristic fantasy gothic fantasy that sends a cop across the barrier between life and death. Stopping just before creating a new sub-genre, *Black Blood* draws you into its world where the dead are more alive than the living. Enjoy this one, horror lovers. A new star has appeared in the dark firmament. ~~ **Pam Allan**

Courts of the Sun
by Brian D’Amato
New American Library, \$16.00, 684 pp

This begins the Mayan Trilogy. The year is 2012. Jed DeLanda, a descendent of the Maya, is a math prodigy who rakes in profits from online trading using an ancient Mayan divination tool, the Sacrifice game. Jed is pulled into action by Game designer Marena Park who wants his help in deciphering the Mayan Codex. The Codex foretells the end of humanity. Jed must enter the mind of an ancient Mayan King to prevent the end. His journey takes him back to Mayan civilization and forward to the end of time. It also brings him into the hands of an international corporation with its own agenda.

Wow. An intelligent fantasy mixing science, legend and history in an awesome cocktail the reader can’t put down till the last drop. You have a historical thriller based on prodigious research and a sure hand with plot, action and character that equals D’Amato’s sculpture. This is the best I’ve read in its genre, a classic. I can’t wait for the next installment due out in 2010. ~~ **Pam Allan**

Destroyer of Worlds
by Larry Niven and Edward M. Lerner
Tor, \$25.99, 365 pp

Destroyer of Worlds is a continuation of the *Fleet of Worlds* series. The Pak are fleeing the chain reaction of supernovae at the galactic core. God help those who stand in their way. The puppeteers have the resources but don’t confront anyone. Who but New

Terra will be pressed into action. Sigmund Ausfaller, and his allies, the Gw’oth, don’t plan to become cannon fodder even if they go crazy in the action. This is far future adventure set two centuries before Ringworld, well-written with intriguing characters, and science with lots of action. This is some of the best hard SF in the decade, if not the century. Hard SF fans - time to get the plastic out. ~~ **Pam Allan**

In Great Waters
by Kit Whitfield
Del Rey, \$15.00, 398 pp

In Great Waters is by the author of *Benighted*. During a time of great upheaval, the citizens of Venice broker a treaty that will change the world. Landsmen of the city form an alliance with the water-dwelling deepsmen, and cement the alliance with marriage. The merging of the races produces a strain of royal blood and triggers other alliances. Jealous of the power engendered, they bar further unions, making them punishable by death, the offspring must be destroyed. This alternate reality is a world of intrigue and betrayal. In this world Anne, the youngest princess of a faltering England, and Henry, a deepsman child, abandoned on a beach, find themselves pawn in a game they do not fully understand, Even a pawn can checkmate a king.

This is an imaginative twist on mermen, full of adventure, beautiful if alien, characters so well-drawn that their reality overwhelms the reality of the reader and make for a transcendent read. Fantasy lovers won’t want to miss this one. ~~ **Pam Allan**

Candle in the Storm
by Morgan Howell
Del Ray, \$7.99, 370 pp

Candle in the Storm is book two of the *Shadowed Path*. The Shadow of the Devourer lies over the land destroying all in their path with armies of ensorcelled slayers.. Only two people, followers of the gentle goddess Karm, stand in the way of hell on earth. Honus, a grim-faced warrior sworn to Karm, and Yim, who carries the power to stop Lord Bahl are the only hope.

But the price is high. Yim must leave her love, Honus and seek out Lord Bahl in sacrifice. As the destruction grows, can the flame of hope survive? This is classic fantasy with a believable world, well-drawn characters, and enough action to keep the reader enthralled. What more can one ask for on a rainy afternoon? You’ll love it. ~~ **Pam Allan**

Heart’s Blood
by Juliet Marillier
Roc, \$24.95, 402 pp

Heart’s Blood is a new novel by the author of the *Sevenwaters* series. Whistling Tor is a cursed fiefdom, filled with secrets. The crumbling fortress ruled by a chieftain who cannot move beyond its borders; it’s woods filled with a host of phantoms who lead all visitors to death,.

Into this depressed household comes a young scribe, fleeing abuse by cousins who move in and take over her world, leaching her courage and hope till she flees with only her writing materials. She hears of a scribing job at Whistling Tor and with the help of a member of the household and his dog make it through the host., The job is translating three generations of journals to find a way to lift the curse. The crippled chieftain begins his road to hope, the changes in the household begins to make a home, but then the curser cursor strikes again. The abusers try to abduct the scribe but are driven off, but the Normans come to take the Tor. The chieftain denies his love and sends her away with a purse of silver to find her sister, telling her never to return. She finds her sister is now in the hands of the abusers, but she also finds a Lawyer and physician that can free them both and goes back to stop the curse and regain her love.

The plot is not new, but the writing is lyrical, with great characters, and rich description that draws you in and the combination of the grounding in Celtic myth and emotion are fabulous [no pun intended] Not only Fantasy lovers but romance lovers will love it. This is a keeper. I will be surprised not to see a mention of Heart’s Blood at award time. ~~ **Pam Allan**

Night of Demons
by Tony Richards
Eos, 390 pp, \$7.99

Night of Demons is by the author of *Dark Rain*. Raines Landing was settled by the witches of Salem and cloaked in magic. No one who lives here can leave, but a twisted serial killer has pierced the boundaries, killing the village’s oldest adept, and inadvertently gains possession of a powerful tool. That lets him take over bodies so he can torture and kill at will. Ross Devries is an ex-cop with no supernatural powers and with his motorcycle riding partner Cassie are the last line of defense.

This is a dark fantasy, touching on horror. It is a well-written with plenty of action and a pleasant way to spend some time. Enjoy. ~~ **Pam Allan**

In Our Book (Cont'd from page 17)

Confessions of a Demon
by S.L. Wright
Roc, \$7.99, 339 pp

This is apparently a debut novel.

Allay is the only demon/human hybrid created when attacked by a dying demon. Since demons feed on human emotions, Allay opens a bar where she eases the pain of her patrons while staying under the radar of the demons who want her essence.

She is attacked and nearly killed by another demon. She is saved by a handsome mortal who appoints himself as her bodyguard. But demon plots are hatching and war looming between powerful forces with Allay in the middle. Who can she believe? And where should her loyalties belong?

This is a tightly-written supernatural action mystery with the obligatory romance. It sports a well-developed world with a tortured heroine trying to hold on to her shreds of humanity and ready to kick ass as needed fighting a demonic religious plot. I couldn't put it down as the story unfolded. This is a keeper, and I look forward to an exciting series. ~~ Pam Allan

Howling Legion
by Marcus Pelegrinas
Eos, \$7.99, 356 pp

Howling Legion is the second book of the *Skinner* series.

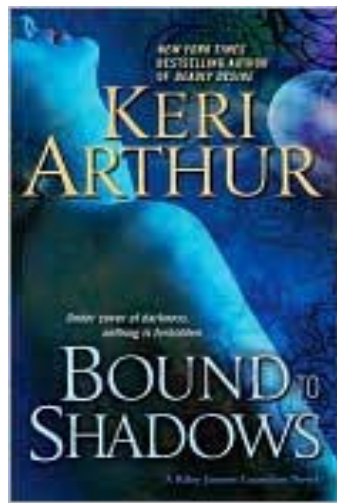
Cole was a video game designer when he learned the truth about the monsters of the night lusting for our blood and the world we live in. Now he is a member of the skimmers, an ancient secret society of warriors keeping the monsters at bay. Now the monsters are suddenly free and decimating the unsuspecting city. No one knows what is next, but Cole and his sexy partner will be the first to charge the maelstrom and hope to come out without looking like hamburger. Oh yeah, and save the world.

Howling Legion adds another twist to man versus monster. With all the gore and action the most dedicated fan could want, there is also humor, wisecracks and fun. Monster hunters, there is a new kid on the block you will really enjoy. ~~ Pam Allan .

Bound to Shadows
by Keri Arthur
Dell, \$7.99, 346 pp

Arthur is the author *Full Moon Rising* and other urban fantasies.

Riley Jenson is part Vampire, part werewolf and knows well what can happen when the two species won't play well together. But this series of brutal murders leaving the victims beheaded is threatening to blow up into a full fledged



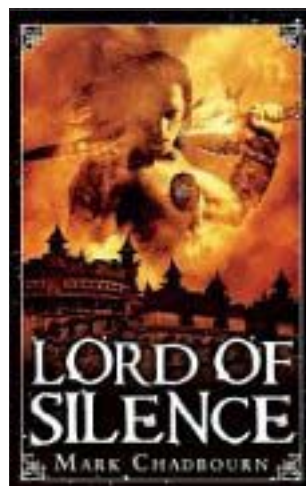
war and not just the multiple murders. One suspect is trying to seduce Riley. Her soul mate [whom she hates] is on a power trip and is a major suspect. If he is killed, she may die. And then there is Quinn, the cool elegant vampire she loves and who may be targeted... along with her.

Keri Arthur writes with imagination and energy that carries you along through her well-done urban fantasies and that's rare [pun intended] so enjoy oh lovers of urban fantasy. The collecting urge may surface. ~~ Pam Allan

Lord of Silence
by Mark Chadbourn
Solaris, \$7.99, 537 pp

Lord of Silence is the two-time winner of the British Fantasy award by the author of the *Kingdom Of The Serpent* series.

When the hero of Idriss is murdered, the Vidar, the Lord of Silence, must take



his place as the defender of Idriss. But he is also an amnesiac ridden by a vampire jewel. that demands the life energy of others.

The Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society NEEDS YOU!



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

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

For information on available CopperCon positions please contact us at info@coppercon.org or www.coppercon.org

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

Our parent organization, the Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society (CASFS) is also looking for new members. Check our web site at www.casfs.org for information on meetings and upcoming events or contact us at info@casfs.org

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

Now he must solve a murder, defend the city, deal with the politics, and solve the three thousand year old mystery that holds the key.

This is not a standard how-to fantasy. It is fantasy noir with magic, romance, and mystery with some great characters. It is a stand alone but might well become a series. Either way, it is a page turner that fantasy lovers will love to keep and reread. Enjoy. ~~ Pam Allan



Club Listings

ACROSS PLUS - So you live in North Phoenix and are interested in anime? Well there is a club out there available for you people. Across Plus is a social club that discusses anime, video games, manga, other animation, and the Japanese culture. We meet at Bookman's on 19th Ave and Northern on Sundays at 7:00pm until 9:00pm. In general, we explore anime, manga, and other styles of animation, creative educative demonstrations, participate in interactive discussions, attend local Arizona conventions, and make cosplay. We are willing to gain any new members out there who are interested. Our members are very friendly, respectful, and fun. We welcome any and all. For more information, contact Todd Miles at acrossplus@westernsfa.org

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

AERIAL MIRAGE JUGGLERS. Meets Wednesday 7-10pm in Encanto Park, 15th Avenue, south of Encanto. No dues, everyone welcome. All levels skill exchange in many areas of object manipulation Dave Davis <aerialmirage@gnerns.com>, 602-955-9446; or Ron Harvey <rbh1s@yahoo.com>, 480-775-4690 for more info or impromptu juggling sessions.

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

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

THE AWAY TEAM: The Away Team, is a general sci-fi appreciation group that meets once a month for discussion of various sci-fi news regarding several mediums to include: television, movies, video, books, comics, magazines, collecting, and so forth. The meetings are comprised of news, review and comment, BBS/computer news and help, meeting new members, video presentations, games, and socializing fun! Food and drinks are provided, via a \$3 munchie fee (per meeting) to compensate the host. (No other fees are involved.) The electronic home of the Away Team, is the Lightspeed Space Station BBS at (520) 325-6674.... Member ages for the group range from 13-40-something with both male and female members. Other activities include null-modem link gamefests, group theater movie viewings, convention trips and more. Have sci-fi fun in a relaxed, low-structure environment. NO RUBBER EARS ALLOWED!! For questions, you can call the BBS, or write to: LSS c/o R. Martin; 2522 N. Sparkman Blvd.; Tucson, AZ 85716
Volume 20 Issue 1

AZCorsairs “Founded in 1971 as a branch of the Society for Creative Anachronisms, or SCA, our primary focus is 16th – 18th century European culture and the pirate lifestyle of the time. The Corsairs will extend pirate portrayals as far back as Phoenician, Roman Era or to future Space, Science Fiction genre, and more publicly recognizable Hollywood styled pirate. Corsair membership is largely volunteer-oriented, gathered together for fun and while helping others out. Members of the Arizona Corsairs are, much like their historical counterparts, masters of their own destiny. Creation of characters, complete with backstory with correlation to history, period costume, and emulation of pirate traditions and arts, rests on each performer, creating varied storylines and deep, interesting characters. For more information, please contact Captaim Max - Ambassador, AZCorsairs cptmax@myway.com 602-799-6184”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Club Listings (Cont'd from page 19)

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

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

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

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

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

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

USS LEONIDAS The Leonidas is a member of Region IV of STARFLEET International. The chapter is an opportunity for those that share a love of Star Trek to have fun and help the community at the same time. The Leonidas stresses uniforms or other costumes to have the ability to participate actively in various events as they present themselves but they are not required.

In an effort to expand membership the USS Leonidas has assisted in the formation of a High School Star Trek club called the STARFLEET Science and Tactical Academy. Students participate in a wide range of activities with the hope that they will become interested in Star Trek and join STARFLEET as officers. The USS Leonidas has a crew of 30. Starfleet Science and Tactical Academy has 52 cadets. Members age from 14-65 years old. Average age is 20-25. Club meeting locations vary due to scheduled away missions and such, but usually meet in a classroom at Apache Junction High School. Membership with Starfleet International is required. www.sfi.org Upon joining STARFLEET a member is a Cadet. Upon passing the Officer's Training School Exam at the Online Academy, the member becomes a Commissioned Officer aboard the Leonidas. The chapter does not have dues as of yet. The dues to be a member of STARFLEET International are \$15 a year. No newsletter, but members do receive an activities E-mail update. No web site yet. Contact : Jonathan Krieger, 480-677-0269, LAHCommander@mchsi.com

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

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

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

Convention Listings

LepreCon 36 (May 14-16, 2010) Phoenix Marriott Mesa, 200 North Centennial Way, Mesa, AZ Ph: (480) 898-8300, Room Rates \$99 S/D/T/Q. www.marriott.com, online booking code is "leplepa". Guests: Artist GoH Charles Vess, Author GoH: George R.R. Martin, Local Artist/Author GoH: James A. Owen. Memberships rates: \$40 Jan 1 thru April 15, 2010, \$45 at the door. Web site at www.leprecon.org/lep36 or email lep36@leprecon.org for more information.

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

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



CASFS Business Report

CASFS Business Report Jan 12, 2010

CopperCon 30 — Chairman Mark Boniece - The CopperCon 30 Author Guest of Honor is Stephen R. Donaldson, known for his Thomas Covenant Triple Trilogy. Additional Author Guests are David Lee Summers, SF and Fantasy Author and Weston Ochse, Horror Writer. The Convention theme is The Anti-Hero in SF, Fantasy, Comics and Anime. The CopperCon Hotel is the Windemere, 5750 East Main St. Mesa, Arizona 85205 Ph: (480)985-3600 Toll Free: (800) 888-3561 Reservations by phone ONLY. Our rate is \$59 Single/Double/Triple/Quad Rooms include: FREE Deluxe Continental Breakfast. Given the low rate reserve your room now or you might be disappointed. **CopperCon 31** — Chairman Nyki Robertson. The CopperCon 31 Guest of Honor is Carrie Vaughn, Author the "Kitty" werewolf novels. The Hotel is again the Windemere.

CASFS Book Social – Randall Whitlock. The Book Social is held in the Coffee Shop of the Bent Cover on the West side of 28th Drive North of Cactus Road in Phoenix at 7 p.m. January 19, we will discuss *Turncoat* by Jim Butcher. February 16, we will discuss *The Invisible Man* by H.G. Wells and on March 16, *The Last Centurion* by John Ringo.

By-Law Revisions. – We completed the revision of By-Law language to make it more consistent and clear. The only real change was to authorize a Audit Committee or an Auditor. Formerly only the Auditor was authorized.

Elections – In December we elected the President, the Vice President and three Board positions. The only change was the election of Gary Swaty to the Board replacing Randall Whitlock who did not run.

ConNotations – ConNotations was printed and mailed later than planned due to a problem at the Payson printer. Current issue is proceeding normally. –Gary Swaty, Secretary

What is CASFS?

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

Generic Convention Registration Form

Name:_____

Badge Name:_____

Address:_____

City/State/ZIP:_____

Phone:_____ Email:_____

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

(See individual convention listing for mailing address)

More info on __ Masquerade __ Art Show __ Volunteer __ Other _____