

ConNotations

Winter 1999
Volume 9, Issue 4

The Quarterly Science Fiction, Fantasy & Convention Newszine of the Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society

SF Tube Talk

by Lee Whiteside

The fall season is well underway with only one major genre casualty so far with even more new shows debuting mid-season.

On the **Babylon 5/Crusade** front, the prospects of **Crusade** continuing are nil. Ratings were fairly decent, especially considering the level of promotion TNT did for the series, but the only other viable outlet, the SciFi Channel, just wasn't interested in footing the bill for more. It's unlikely that TNT will repeat the series anytime soon and we'll likely not see it again until TNT's contract runs out and **Babylon 5** and **Crusade** move to SciFi, who are interested in the show as a repeat property.

There are still some **Babylon 5/Crusade** related works coming out in print.



Straczynski has penned three short stories for the *Amazing Stories* magazine, one featuring Londo, and one featuring G'Kar and Lyta that have already been published. A third story featuring the new **Babylon 5** crew should be published early next year. There will also be some **Straczynski** penned short fiction next year in the official *Babylon 5 Magazine*. On the novel front, **J. Gregory Keyes'** *Bester Trilogy* was recently completed and a **Peter David** penned Centauri trilogy has just started. Following that will be a Technomage trilogy featuring Galen by **Jeanne Cavelos**. A computer game that has been in development from Sierra Online has been shut down due to budget cuts. It features scenes filmed with several cast members as well as a very good flight

simulator. Efforts are underway to attempt to have it picked up and completed by another company so it may still make it to the stores.

Straczynski has been keeping busy working on other projects since the shutdown of **Crusade**. His comic series for Top Cow, *Rising Stars*, is underway, although not quite as on time as readers would like. He's penned a **Murder She Wrote** TV movie for CBS, and a script for a radio adaptation of **C. M. Kornbluth's** "The Marching Morons" for NPR. He's also been working on developing a new series that would be about 10% speculative fiction. He was working with **Chris Carter** and 1013 productions to develop the series for CBS but that alliance ended when FOX Studios decided that any future **Chris Carter** shows would be solely created by him, which is what they blamed the failure of **Harsh Realm** on. **Straczynski** is now looking for other production partners for the series.

According to one recent interview with **Straczynski**, he had been approached by some **Trek** producers about helping them out, which he turned down. **Trek activities & non-activities**

Over in the **Star Trek** universe, **Voyager** is still trying to make its way home, future movies are in limbo, and ideas for a new series are being looked into.

There's been various reports and rumors about the next **Star Trek** series, but nothing has been announced or decided on as far as anyone is willing to admit to. Rumors are that several ideas that **Rick Berman** and **Brannon Braga** have pitched to Viacom have been rejected and that they've gone back to starting over. More than likely, the next series will end up on CBS due to the Viacom/CBS merger currently in the works. On the movie front, recent interviews with cast members and producers have indicated that nothing is currently in development, so it may be several years before we see another **Star Trek** movie.

On **Voyager**, after the holiday repeats we'll get a string of new episodes

(Cont'd on Page 9)

24 Frames

Movie News & Reviews

Toy Story 2 - Digital All the Way

By now you know that *Toy Story 2* is a very good, fun and entertaining movie. It is also the first all digital movie to be screened digitally. Last summer, Lucasfilm screened *The Phantom Menace* at a couple of LA theaters for a month. Disney has decided to step up digital screenings and starting with *Toy Story 2*, they opened the movie with digital theater screenings including some outside of the Los Angeles area. So if you're traveling over



the holidays to San Francisco, Hollywood, Burbank, or Irvine in California as well as Plano, Texas and Orlando, Florida, check the local movie listings for the theater and times. They will also be screening *Bicentennial Man* digitally when it opens in mid-December. Planned locations are Toronto and Vancouver, B.C. in Canada and Kansas City, Missouri, Chicago, Illinois, Cleveland, Ohio and the Arizona Mills Harkins Theater in Phoenix, Arizona.

The digital projection made the images for *Toy Story 2* VERY sharp and VERY colorful. The best way to describe it is a giant, high definition computer screen. You could really see the details in the characters, especially the ones made of cloth. Having seen it already in a regular theater, I could really appreciate the improved projection of the digital system. The resolution is high enough that the only time you really noticed any pixels was when a lot of text was on the screen. As a bonus, the trailers for *Fantasia 2000* and *Dinosaur* were also digitally projected and looked very impressive as well.

- Lee Whiteside

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Movie Reviews

Toy Story 2

Directed by Colin Brady & Ash Brannon
Voices by Tom Hanks, Tim Allen
Pixar/Walt Disney
Reviewed by Sue & Johanna Martin

Let me say right out: this is just as good as the first one.

All your favorite toys are back: Mr. and Mrs. Potato Head, Slinky dog, Little Bo Peep, the timorous T-Rex, the Piggy Bank, and of course, Buzz and Woody. The new characters are a cowgirl named Jessie, Stinky Pete the Prospector and Bull's Eye, Woody's faithful companion/horse.

What a surprise: There are lots of allusions and/or nods to the Star Wars universe, including the beginning bit with Buzz (very funny!), but this story is Woody's tale, as the first one was about Buzz's introduction into the world of Andy's toys.

(Cont'd on page11)

FYI

Book Discussion Groups

We have two monthly book discussion groups going, one at Glendale Public Library on the first Thursday of each month and another at Barnes and Noble in Metro Center on the fourth Thursday of each month. Here's a schedule of upcoming books:

GLENDALE PUBLIC LIBRARY: 1st Thursday of each month

Jan 6: Scent of Magic - Andre Norton

February 3: Bimbos of the Death Sun - Sharyn McCrumb

March 2: Folk of the Air by Peter Beagle

April 6: The Stranger by Mark Twain

May 4: Firebrand by Marion Zimmer Bradley

June 1: Paris in the Twentieth Century by Jules Verne

For information on the Glendale group contact Sue Martin at (623)939-7815

BARNES & NOBLE METRO CENTER: 4th Thursday of each month

December 16: Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone by J.K. Rowling

January 27: Something Wicked This Way Comes by Ray Bradbury

Feb 25: Perseus Spear by Julian May

March 24: Time Enough for Love by Robert Heinlein

April 28: Forty Thousand in Gehanna by C.J. Cherryh

May 26: Hammer of God by Arthur Clarke

June 23: Snowbrother by S.M. Stirling

For more information on the Barnes & Noble group contact Stephanie at (602)973-2341

If you would like CASFS to sponsor a book discussion near you, please contact Stephanie at the number above.

Upcoming Star Trek Event:

Creation

Source: WWW.Creationent.com

Phoenix, AZ, Sat & Sun FEB 12th & 13th, 2000

Mesa Community Center

Star Trek & Sci-Fi Media Convention

with guests: Robert Beltran (Star Trek Voyager's Chakotay), Grace Lee

Whitney and Star Trek expert Richard Arnold. Other guests to be announced.

!!!!ATTENTION!!!!

This may be your last issue of ConNotations.

If you have not attended an Arizona convention (LepreCon, HexaCon, CopperCon or TusCon) during the last two years this is your last issue of ConNotations unless you are a paid subscriber. Subscriptions are available for \$10 for 4 issues mailed bulk, \$15 for 1st class postage. Make check payable to ConNotations and mail to PO Box 62613, Phoenix AZ 85082

CASFS Business Report

Dear Faithful Reader,

By the time you read this, we will have completed another year's worth of meetings in the merrily controlled chaos that is CASFS. What have we done this quarter?

CopperCon 19 was successful-especially in the eyes of the lucky group that spent Friday night hanging out with our Author Guest of Honor, David Weber, in the lobby. Brett Bass, the Artist Guest of Honor, delighted all who stopped by the art show with both his conversation and his insanely fast airbrush. Everyone who bid on a blank canvas (and there were several) took home a stunning painting completed over the weekend.

CopperCon 20 has announced author Philip Jose Farmer, artist Vincent di Fate, and musician Cecelia Eng as Guests of Honor. Additionally, long-time fan and local horror writer Adam Niswander has accepted the brand-new position of "Local

Author Guest of Honor." Plus, HexaCon 10 is gearing up for a gaming convention even better than the last one.

In financial news, ConNotations is getting close to being self-supporting. If you run a business or a convention, please consider purchasing an ad to support the magazine. CASFS also managed to obtain its very own credit card machine, which made its successful debut at CopperCon.

CASFS continues to recruit new fans with our two monthly book discussions at the Glendale Public Library and the Barnes & Noble store at Metrocenter. We also plan to have another booth at the Phoenix Public Library's Book Festival on April 8, 2000. Mark your calendars and be sure to stop by!

Have a happy holiday!

Until next time,

The Frantic Scribe

A New Wave: Publish-On-Demand

by Patrick Connors

In this issue of ConNotations, I reviewed **Peter L. Manly's** novel *Dragon Three Two Niner*. In this article, I review its publishing process. Why? It is published electronically.

Availability of this book is different than most. You can order it from the www.scifi-az.com Web site either electronically or as a soft-cover, using a print-to-order process.

I reviewed the electronic edition, which is distributed as an Adobe Acrobat .pdf format file. PDF stands for Portable Document Format, and it really is portable. There are options a publisher can use to make one of these files easy to read, and the publisher has done an excellent job in formatting the document for ease of use. However, there were more typographic errors than there should have been.

Printed copies of the book are made to order. The printed copies which I have seen from this press are good enough for a casual read, but still relatively primitive compared to even the cheapest paperback. Presumably time, experience, and advances in low-cost printing will improve the quality of the printed copies.

One thing print-on-demand makes practical is custom bookbinding. I asked about the availability of a set of pages and end-papers for *Dragon Three Two Niner* for the purpose of making a custom-bound copy, and have been informed this would not be a problem.

The ordering process could stand to be better streamlined, but is typical of small business over the Internet. SciFi-az.com uses a third-party ordering system which works well enough. I have, however, heard reports of difficulty in ordering. It would serve all concerned well to place the book on Amazon or Barnes and Noble, and to remember that Internet access and ordering still has a long way to go before it's universal - even among the science-fiction community.



What is CASFS?

What is really behind putting on a convention? What the funds raised by a convention used for? Why not attend a meeting and find out? We're the sponsor of ConNotations, CopperCons, HexaCons, SmerfCons and other conventions. We are a charitable, non-profit organization that exists to further science fiction, fantasy and science fields in Arizona. CASFS currently meets at the JB's Restaurant at 2560 W Indian School Rd in Phoenix (NW corner of I-17 and Indian School). The meetings begin at 8PM and are held on the last Friday of the month Jan. Through Sept. And on the second Friday of the month Oct through Dec. Everyone is invited to attend two meetings as a guest (non-member). Membership rates are \$12/year plus an initial \$3 application fee and rates are pro-rated for the amount of the year remaining. For more info Call: Stephanie L. Bannon (602)973-2341 Webpage: www.casfs.org email: casfs@casfs.org

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Submission Info: Writers and artists are encouraged to submit work for publication. While we cannot pay you for your efforts your work will be seen by over 4,000 fans across the Southwest and the country. You will retain the copyright to your work for future publication. To submit your work or for more information please write to: ConNotations; PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 or contact us via Email at Editors@casfs.org

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PRO NOTES

by Daryl F. Mallett

The End of the '90s... But Not of the Millennium

Well, folks, here's the last column for the 1990s. It is NOT, however, the last column of the century/millennium...that, as all of us educated people know, is NEXT December 2000). I know no one truly cares, and everyone's going to party like it's...well...1999, but PLEASE help debunk this common misconception! Save the world! Educate others! But enough about Y2K...

Travel since last time included my annual trip to Two Harbors, MN to sit on the shores of Lake Superior with friends **Shanda Elking** and **Cody Michael Barker**. Then it was further north to The International Wolf Center in Ely, MN, where I had my annual visit with wolf biologist **Bill Route**; **Keiko Aylsworth**, the researcher at the Center; and the three surviving members of the pack (Mackenzie, Lakota and Lucas; Kiana passed away just before Christmas 1998).

Then it was on to Minneapolis/St. Paul to visit one of my dearest friends, horror anthologist and vampire queen **Pam Keeseey**. During the trip, I attended Diversicon 7, whose GoHs included the ever-wonderful **Nalo Hopkinson** and **L. A. Graf** (**Karen Rose Cercone** and **Julia Ecklar**). Other attendees included artist **Rodger Gerberding**, **Eleanor Arnason**, fellow Orange Countyian **Martha Hood**, editor **Eric M. Heideman**, **Rebecca Marjesdatter**, **Lyda Morehouse**, **Robert Subiaga Jr.**, **Michael Levy**, **Peg Kerr**, **Phyllis Ann Karr**, **Michael Levy**, **Russell Letson**, and many more. I also got to visit with superFens like **Joseph Agee**, **Harry LeBlanc**, and **Michelle Clark**, who introduced me to her extended family, including her beautiful and charming daughter **Shaya** (Hi, Shea!). As usual, my profound thanks to everyone in Twin Cities fandom and pro-dom for their hospitality and wonderfulness.

NASFiC in Anaheim was great fun this year as well. Fellow scribe **Jeremy Bloom** and newcomer **Shell Majury** and I trooped around the convention together, wreaking havoc. GoHs **Jerry Pournelle**, **Ellen Datlow**, and **Dick & Nicki Lynch** were great fun.

Others in attendance included **Jim & Viki Blaylock**, **Tim & Serena Powers**, **Harry Turtledove**, **Laura Frankos**, **Frank Kelly & Laura Freas**, **Sharon King**, **Bob Eggleton**, **Sue Dawe**, **Scott Welch**, **Jim Brunet**, **Sheila Finch**, **Harlan Ellison**, **David Brin**, **Bridget McKenna**, **Bill Wu**, **Rob Chilson**, **Mike Toman**, **Gardner Dozois**, **Pat Murphy**, and so, so many others. Truly a wondrous event for those of us unfortunate enough to have missed Melbourne.

We got word there that **Jim White** had

passed away. That was followed by the loss in September of **Marion Zimmer Bradley**, so, as usual of late it seems, there has been much sorrow in our little family this year. Go hug those you love!

Thankfully, **Rick Cook** is doing well in recovering from his heart surgery!

After that, it was on to Potrero, CA and Sierra Vista and Sonoita, AZ for SCA events, and COMDEX-Las Vegas in November, where I saw **Jerry Pournelle** checking out all of the latest technology. **Kevin J. Anderson** reports that the "best news is that my *Dune* prequel," *House Atreides*," is currently on its third week on The *New York Times* bestseller list (and on *Publishers Weekly*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, and just about every other list). Just finished a two-week book signing tour of the western U.S. with **Brian Herbert**, then spent a week touring in England with **Rebecca [Moesta]**.

Rick Cook is still recovering from heart surgery. He "is still annoyed by ("suffering from" is putting it too strongly) diabetes," but he has it under control with diet and exercise. Meanwhile, he is "eagerly awaiting" publication in *Analog* of "*Obsidian Harvest*," the Aztec dinosaur detective noir story he wrote with **Ernest Hogan**, and is working on the sixth "Wiz" novel (currently without a title). So far he has managed to convince himself "that Ernest's turning up with a new, larger, heart on his keychain after his surgery is just a coincidence." Keep getting well, **Rick!**

Marian Crane reports that **Lee Martindale** "recently bought a short story of mine, "*The Blood Orange Tree*," for publication next summer in her SF&F anthology *Such a Pretty Face*, from Meisha-Merlin Press. A very old and downright clunky version of this story won an at-con writing contest at the 1991 WFC, and first got the attention of my agent. I'm glad that it's finally found a good home. My SF&F textile art made a brave showing at the 1999 WFC in Rhode Island: one necklace sold, another given an honorable mention (with eight honorable mentions, among them names like **Donato, Leo & Diane Dillion**, and **Alan Clark**, I feel very honored indeed.) Although I've been entering and placing in mainstream art shows for several years, WFC marks a satisfying foray back into the SF&F community." Welcome home, **Marian!**

Artist **Max Espinoza** reports: "I'm currently finishing my play entitled "*Weather Permitting*," which I hope to have on a stage sometime in the year 2000, and will also be working on my collection of comic strips called *Babylon Brothers*. As ever, the caricature business is still keeping our [Max and colleague **Ruben Gerard**] ventures alive!"

Alan Dean Foster sold "*Time Belong Mountain*," a non-SF novel set in contemporary Papua, New Guinea, to

Forge and "*Interlopers*," a contemporary dark fantasy, to Ace.

Alan says he "spent a nice day with **Arthur C. Clarke** in Colombo, Sri Lanka in January Sri Lanka's a beautiful place, so long as you ignore all the military activity due to the ongoing civil war. Went diving in the Maldives. Was GoH at the New Zealand National SF Convention in Auckland in March. Drove the length of the country and visited with **Murray & Pam Ball** (author of the great comic strip *Footrot Flats*) in Gisbourne. Went diving in the Cook Islands. In August was a guest at Star Wars Night in Dortmund, Germany, after which visited friends in Vienna. Also stopped off in Prague, Cracow, and Bratislava. A busy travel year, yielding much excellent material for future work. "

"Am currently writing high fantasy, "*Kingdoms of Light*," for Warner Books, incorporating material from my visit to Eastern Europe." He also attended the World Fantasy Convention in Providence, Rhode Island in November 1999.

Artist **Ruben Gerard** is on the road publicizing his collection of Penny and Wade comic strips called "*More Chocolate, Less Stress*." He has also been picked up as a regular contributor by *The Fullerton Observer*, a newspaper in Orange County, California.

Fiona Kelleghan reports that she is "busy, busy here. I'm working on three essays for Salem Press—on **David Mamet**, **Paul Zindel** and **John Fowler**. These will go to a Cavendish encyclopedia on literature, aimed at high school kids. I'm also about to send an essay and interview on/with SF writer **Paul Di Filippo** to the British SF 'zine, "*The Edge*." I'm just returned from World Fantasy Con, where I interviewed World Fantasy Award nominee **Sean Stewart** and SF writer **Patrick O'Leary**. These I will send to Science-Fiction Studies. Desultorily working on fiction."

Katherine A. Lawrence says: "Look on the Sci-Fi Channel early Friday mornings, and local syndication for "*Roswell Conspiracies*." Katherine's "*Monster Within*" episode should air theoretically sometime in March 2000. For a continually updated list of her most recent credits, check out www.wordmagik.com.

Daryl F. Mallett's interview with **Diana Gabaldon** will appear shortly on *Phantastes: The Online Journal of Fantasy Criticism* <www.nocturne.org/phantastes> is the URL. A short story, "*Crystal Clear*," appeared in the most recent issue of *M&V Magazine*, and comic book *Hero-Lore #1: Battle Scars* was released at the International Comic Convention in San Diego in August. Books turned in by the end of 1999 included: "*Pilgrims & Pioneers: The History and Speeches of the Science Fiction Research Association Award Winners*" (ed. w/**Hal W. Hall**; SFRA Press); "*Wail!*," a book he edited, by Beat

writer **Brio Burgess** (Jacob's Ladder Books); and "*The Gargoyle*," another book he edited, by **Gary Lovisi** (Gryphon Books). He is currently working on an online support desk document for NOW! Internet Tools; a business plan; and numerous essays for St. James Press' International Directory of Company Histories and Vocational Biographies. Appearances scheduled include *Estrella War* (Queen Creek, AZ) in February '00. **Daryl's** writing website is at www.geocities.com/Area51/1295 and www.bluefiretech.com is his business site.

Jack McDevitt appeared in November at the Camden County Library in Georgia. On 25 Jan 00, he will appear in an online chat with **Paul Levinson**, sponsored by *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine* and <SciFi.com>. For two days (19-20 February 00), he will appear with Much Ado About Books at the Prime Osborn Convention Center in Jacksonville, Florida. His new novel, "*Infinity Beach*," will appear that month also from HarperPrism, and his website can be found at <http://www.sfga.org/members/McDevitt/>.

Dennis McKiernan reports: "I've a couple of stories in anthologies which are forthcoming in March of '00: "*This is a Test*," in *Treachery and Treason* (Roc Books) and "*For the Life of Sheila Morgan*," in *Spell Fantastic* (DAW Books). In June '00, my novel *Silver Wolf, Black Falcon*, another tale set in Mithgar, is due in the bookstores. My story "*Darkness*" is in the hardcover anthology 999: *New Tales of Horror and Suspense*, which was released on 9/9/99. This anthology also features **Steven King**, **William Peter Blatty**, and many more writers, twenty-nine authors in all. In my opinion, the best story in the anthology is **P. D. Cacek's**, a splendid tale."

Yvonne Navarro was seen lurking at World Fantasy Con in Providence, RI. She reports: "*Buffy, The Vampire Slayer: The Willow Files, Vol. I*, published by Pocket Books," was released "in December (just in time for the holidays—toot-toot!). It's now available from Amazon.com, and its subpage on Darke Palace (<http://www.para-net.com/~ynavarro/willow.htm>) contains the cover and an excerpt." In February 2000, *Deadtimes* will be available from DarkTales Publications (<http://www.darktales.com>) in trade paperback format.

Cover and excerpt available on Darke Palace soon." And "*That's Not My Name*," the psychological thriller I've been working on now and again for some nine years, was finished this summer [1999] and is scheduled for publication by Bantam Books in June 2000. Cover and excerpt available on Darke Palace as soon as we have it. The current project in the works is an original adult novel called *Buffy, The Vampire Slayer: Paleo*, about... You guessed it! Dinosaurs

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Page 3

Musical Notes

by Tom Tuerff

Tom Smith -- "Debasement Tapes"

Tom Smith is everything that's good and bad about filk music all rolled into one.

The good: He's an incredibly gifted word crafter. He bills himself as the "world's fastest filker." His parodies are dead-on, they "scan" the song he's spoofing damn near perfectly, and he's basically a pretty funny guy.

His new CD, "Debasement Tapes," shows this off with great success.

The bad: Well, this is something that you can't really get away from in filk music, but when Smith goes for the truly "in" joke, or writes about a TV show, book or single episode, he assumes that you read, watch and enjoy the same things he does. And when this happens, you got trouble in River City. (Now there's an "in" reference I bet some of you don't get. See what I mean?)

"Debasement Tapes" certainly has its "in" joke moments. The best one is probably the design and title of the album itself, a rather hilarious nod to one R. L. Zimmerman from Hibbing, Minnesota and his pick-up band, the Hawks.

The album kicks off with "Five Years,"

a parody of Barenaked Ladies' "One Week." Imagine trying to write a parody to a song like that. But Smith succeeds. I have to admit that I have no idea what he's writing about here. It's obviously a TV show that was on for five years that I never watched--Babylon 5 maybe?

I think my favorite song on here is "Be our GOH," to the Disney tune "Be Our Guest," where Smith sums up the pros and cons of being a guest of honor at a science-fiction convention.

From the "You either get it or you don't dept.: "Barenaked Coburn," a song that combines Bruce Cockburn's "If I had a Rocket Launcher" with Barenaked Ladies' "If I had a Million Dollars." If you know the original songs, this one's pretty good. If you don't, then you miss out on the point of the whole thing. I admire Smith's ability to just let the ideas fly and see if they stick.

Smith recorded this album in the basement of his mother's house before a live audience of friends, somewhere in the Midwest. Knowing what basements in the Midwest look and sound like myself, my hat is off to him for getting the decent sound that this CD has.

Another plus to this CD is there are about 80 million songs on it. So if you see it on a table at a con, trade some green presidents for this one.

Ookla the Mok -- "Super Secret"

Filk bands don't happen too often. You're not gonna get a lot of gigs if you go into a bar and sing grunge music with the words "Captain Kirk" and "Buffy" in them. However, there are rather delightful exceptions to this rule.

Which brings us to Ookla the Mok.

When you have a name that sounds like a Burr Tillstrom puppet on acid, you're going to sing and play like one, too. That's what makes Ookla the Mok so much fun. I'd like to say that I wish the band had maybe rehearsed a little more before putting most of these songs down on tape but I think that might have ruined it.

Ookla the Mok is an acoustic group with a much more general approach to filk than Mr. Smith. More often than not, they go after genres and stereotypes rather than specific characters in the sci-fi world. Their new album, "Super Secret," is a kind of acoustic/punk/grunge/Violent-Femmes-meets-the-Martians-in-outer-space-while-sipping-Captain-Beefheart-through-a-straw non-stop good time.

The first song on this album is "The Uber Tuber," basically a superhero theme song about Mr. Potato Head. Other highlights include "Tandem Bike," which shows off the odd side to feminine

behavior in relationships, and "Cowboy Secret Space Detective," where a fully grown man puts off yet again deciding what he wants to be when he grows up.

My absolute favorite song on here (and one of my favorites for the whole year) is "Stop Talking About Comic Books or I'll Kill You," which is what I've wanted to say to every person I've ever met who was too obsessed with anything, whether it was comic books, Pokemon, Anime, Star Trek, religion or you name it.

Musically, these guys aren't the greatest, but that's clearly the point. They will have you rolling on the floor at one point and nodding in recognition of yourself at other points and that's pretty damn good for a filk act. Pick it up if you can find it.

By the way, both Tom Smith and Ookla the Mok have fantastic websites. Check them out at <http://www.izzy.net/~tomsmith/home.html> and <http://www.otmfan.com/ssclub> respectively when you get the chance.



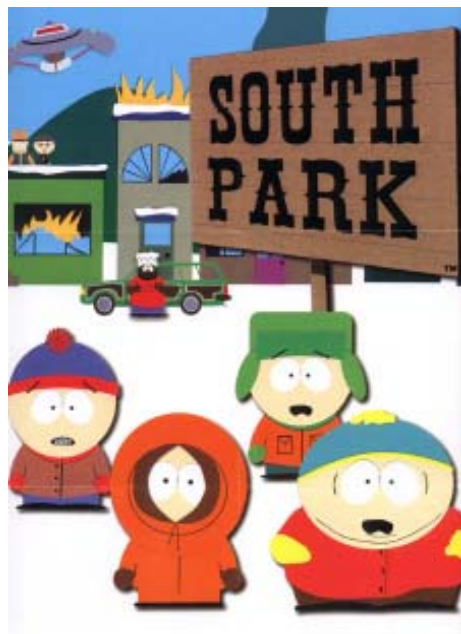
The Gaming Arcade

A Visit to South Park:

Review of the Nintendo 64 game
By Shane Shellenbarger

If you haven't heard about these foul-mouthed, frequently flatulent, grade school gang of boys from South Park, Colorado, then you've probably been able to avoid other pop culture icons like the Power Rangers, Star Wars: The Phantom Menace, and Poke' Mon.

"South Park" is the paper cutout animation brainchild of Trey Parker and Matt Stone who met at the University of Colorado. While in the film program at the U of C, the two students created "Frosty vs. Santa Claus" which was remade into "The Spirit of Christmas" where in the "South Park" gang looks on as Jesus and Santa Claus battle for ownership of Christmas. Their controversial movie, "South Park: Bigger, Longer, and Uncut" was the talk of this summer's moviegoers.



The Nintendo 64 version of "South Park" is as irreverent and nearly as vulgar and prone to potty humor, as is the Comedy Central cable series. The object of the game is to protect South Park from Dastardly Turkeys, Evil Clones, The Alien Visitors, Stampeded Cows, Evil Robots, and other villains. Their appearance is due to the convergence of a full moon on Friday the 13th during a solar eclipse as the "Bad Luck Comet", Colossal Shoo Bop Titan Behemoth 299 returns after 666 years.

Cartman, Kyle, Stan, and Kenny are all available as characters for first person play, although you need to meet (capture) the other boys so that you can switch to their characters/weapons when you come upon them. The game not only features the four sixth graders, but Chef also acts as their advisor during the cut scenes. As you complete each single

player level you will be given a code to play as one of 16 wacky citizens, including Starvin Marvin, Big Gay Al, and Officer Barbrady.

The game also contains a Multi-Player match mode that allows two to four players to choose from up to twenty characters plus a weapon only available in the Multi-Player Mode: the Alien Dancing Gizmo which will have your enemies doing an uncontrollable boogie.

The look of the game is similar to the show, but the N64 program has more of a three-dimensional, computer animation appearance. The voices of the characters are straight from the show, with all of the wisecracks and occasionally bleeped out curse words. The music is somewhat repetitive, but not annoying. The sound effects are appropriate and interesting. The weapons are in keeping with the sensibilities of the South Park Four: Snowballs, Dodge Balls, Toilet Plunger Launcher, Terrance and Phillip (you should excuse the expression) Fart Dolls, Foam Dart Launcher, Super Sniper Chicken, Dr. Mephesto's Warpo Ray, the Cow Launcher, and the aforementioned Alien Dancing Gizmo. Power-ups include Snacky Cakes and Cheesy Poofs for health, Weight Gain 4000 for temporary invulnerability, Football Pads help protect you for a few attacks, Lighting Bolts will raise the fire rate of your weapons for awhile, Mr. Hankey Attack Turd spreads himself thin acting as an orbital shield, and Zipp! Cola will give you a short burst of speed.

The game play is pretty standard, somewhat like a bright and sunny Quake in a city with surrounding countryside. The enemies attempt to overwhelm you, attacking in waves of three, six, and sometimes even ten at a time. The enemies aren't especially brilliant, but they can be fast and they are persistent. You won't be able to make the gymnastic moves of Laura Croft, but I only found one section at the bottom of a canyon where I needed to develop my jumping ability in order to extricate myself. The best skill to develop is sighting in a distant target, especially when fighting the final Boss: The Ultra Mega Mega Man.

To sum things up, I found the game interesting, but not addictive. Viewers of South Park will probably enjoy the in-jokes and characters in the game more than would a player unfamiliar with the show. Parents might not enjoy the vocabulary their children pick up from exposure to this game. Hardcore gamers, used to first person shoot 'em ups like "Doom", "Quake", and "Resident Evil", will find the action a bit slow.

"South Park" is rated M for mature audiences and is also available for PC's.

DRAKAN - Order of the Flame

Psygnosis, Mature (ages 17+)

Reviewed by Craig L. Dyer

This game is one of the best 3D Graphic playing adventures I have seen in a long time. I enjoyed playing so much that I was forced to limit my playing time each day other wise I wouldn't have quit. The more you play it the more you are hooked on it. This is not a easy game to play, it takes skill, brains and guts to play.

The story line follows Rynn, a warrior-heroine and Arokh, a dragon, as they set forth on a quest to rescue Rynn's little brother from an evil sorcerer. The adventure takes place on 11 massive levels encompassing four fantasy scenarios with realistic weather effects, interactive characters, and over 50 hand-held weapons to choose from. There are several experience levels (three I believe) and it also offers multi player games for up to 8 players via LAN or Internet. If you are a Game player this is one of the "I must have it" games.

Drakan requires a Minimum of a P166, 320MB, 4MB 3D Graphics card or better. Check out their web site www.drakan-game.com to get a downloadable demo of Drakan plus artwork, press releases and screen snapshots.

"Nations WWII Fighter Command" "Panzer Elite"

Psygnosis

Reviewed by Robert Barber

The latest games from Psygnosis are a history buffs dream. Both are full of details about the aircraft and tanks that fought in WWII. However from a gamers' standpoint they are cumbersome and unwieldy. Both have the potential to be favorites, if you can make it through learning how to play.

First things first, the recommended settings for the games are a P II 300MHz processor, 64Meg RAM, 8MB Direct3D Compatible video card, Direct Sound Compatible sound card, and a 16 speed CD drive with Windows installed and about 800MB of space on your hard drive. My system meets all recommendations or exceeds them. Despite this I had troubles with both games in the graphics department. During movement in both games, the graphics can have distortions and blank areas that appear. This is a greater problem for "Nations WWII Fighter Command" than "Panzer Elite". "Nations" would get small lines running through it in the direction you were flying, this looked exactly like what you see when an enemy plane is firing on you. Not a good thing to ignore. "Panzer Elite" had a tendency to go flat and lose its' three dimensional aspects when moving.

Installation was a different story for both

games as well. "Nations" went in without a problem even though I installed to a different drive than recommended.

"Panzer Elite" gave me some fits and crashed my system when I tried to install to a different drive. I am not sure that it ever installed properly, because whenever my tank was destroyed, the game kicked me out to my desktop.

In "Nations WWII Fighter Command", you can fly for Britain, Germany or the U.S. in a choice of four aircraft representing each country. The planes are the obvious choices for each nation. The ME109, Fw190, ME-262, and the ME-163 Komet to fly missions for Germany, the Spitfire, Hurricane, Typhoon, and Mosquito for the British, with the P40 Warhawk, P51 Mustang, P47 Thunderbolt and P38 Lightning representing the United States. The type of missions as well as the choice of aircraft will keep you busy for quite a long time just looking at the beautiful renditions of the aircraft in this game. Flying them is something else. Each is given an historical cockpit with the gauges showing what is happening to the aircraft. The gauges (13 to 16 gauges per plane) are small and hard to read, at least on my monitor, and you need to know what they mean and which key on your keyboard affects them. I flew a number of training missions (a great idea considering the complexity of the game) without accomplishing my goals for the mission. Simple things like target practice takes on a whole new dimension when you find you can't turn without stalling your aircraft or even take off and climb to altitude without remembering to change your flaps and raise your landing gear.

The game comes with three settings for play, relaxed, realistic, and ultra realistic. I never got off relaxed and I crashed every time. In my own defense, I don't usually play fighter aircraft kinds of games, mostly for this reason. The complexity of trying to operate three devises (you need at least your keyboard and a mouse to play and a joystick is recommended) will tax your eye-hand coordination and your memory. The keyboard commands are a two column list a page and a half long. The mouse is used to show you your instruments and to look around, the same functions minus the instrument panel is covered on the keyboard and joystick if you have a POV button. A pull out list of commands would have been nice to include in the game.

After a great deal of practice I was able to fly reasonably well though I still couldn't fight. The choice of views available is excellent and a real saving point to the game for me. The standard view is from the cockpit with most of your instrument panel showing, this obstructs your view to the front of the

plane. Changing the view to outside of the plane gives a much less restricted view and shows you the aircraft you are flying. The aircraft have been beautifully done and are the real stand out to the game. While you can only fly twelve of the planes, you get to see twenty-two more during your missions.

The missions include ground support, fleet interceptions, dogfights, and bomber interceptions. Being in a ME-109 diving into a formation of B-17's brings a new level of respect for the bomber crew and the fighter pilots who had to face the real thing. I hope the time I put into this game will payoff with my being able to fly a real mission and survive before Christmas, even if I don't make it, the journey will be fun.

"Panzer Elite" is another story. The game has promise on several levels, but I was unable to experience that promise due to the number of technical difficulties I encountered. The game did not install as easily as "Nations" did and I had to reinstall the game several times to correct problems with the video and sound portions of the game. I never did solve that kept throwing me out of the game and back to my desktop when my tank was destroyed. I can't imagine that the game is supposed to play that way. The game allows you to command from one to five tanks of American or German make in three different theaters: North Africa, Italy, and Normandy. Again the details are overwhelming. You can view the action from any crew position in the tank and from outside the tank as well. Better go for the outside views as the inside views are very claustrophobic and limited. I was killed a number of times without ever seeing who hit me.

Being able to see from every position in the tank also means having to set controls for the crew. You have choices of experience levels and competence settings for your men and they must be matched to their positions in the tank. Control of your own tank is hard enough at first; trying to control another tank or platoon of them as well is madness. There are three and a half pages of keyboard commands to accomplish all of this on top of a mouse tank and a joystick if you have one.

Once you learn how to move the tank combat can begin. Here "Panzer Elite" has the edge on playability over "Nations", you can set the defaults to make yourself invulnerable. This isn't a total give away as you can still flip over due to terrain or be buried in mud or have buildings collapse on your tank. The game can be set at Beginner, Advanced, and Expert levels, giving you multiple layers of realism. Invulnerability is set separately from the same menu.

The graphics are not as good as in "Nations" Movement and terrains are jerky and flat. Buildings disappear and

are replaced with burned out and collapsed rubble even if just clipped by a tank going by, troops have a weird lope and look fuzzy. For realistic feeling it has to be said it is true to form from the interior views of the tank but unlike the aircraft in "Nations" the tanks are not well detailed and the poor graphics will keep most people from committing the time to learn control and get full use out of this game.

"Panzer Elite" will be favored by those gamers who are looking for realism in their games even at the cost of playability. With forty scenarios, three campaigns to be played from either side and with different tanks anytime you want, there is plenty here to look at. Time to learn and play will take longer, but when you have learned, you will know what it was like to be a tank commander.

Sci-Fi Pinball

Fox Arcade, Rated E, \$29.95
Reviewed by Stephanie L. Bannon

System requirements: Windows 95/98 with DirectX 6.0 (or higher); Pentium 166MHz; 16 Mb RAM (32 Mb recommended); 100 Mb free Hard drive space (250 Mb for full install); 4x CD rom; DirectX compatible graphics card supporting High Color (16-bit) at 800x600 resolution; DirectX DirectSound compatible sound card. Installation was simple and I opted for the minimum install to save hard drive space.

This pinball game offers several sci-fi based tables; The Fly; Predator; Alien and, my personal favorite, Buffy The Vampire Slayer. It offers Novice, Regular and Arcade levels with up to four players allowed. You can use a mouse, gamepad or the keyboard to play. I chose the keyboard and found the controls easy to use.

On the Buffy table some shots and target combinations trigger mini-games. According to the box there are also cool animations, score jackpots and film clips but I'm such a lousy player I haven't really gotten to see too many of these yet. Obviously I'm going to have to improve my game since the small glimpses I've had of these additions have made me eager to see more. I haven't tried the other tables since I am already, after five minutes, hooked on the Buffy table. I look forward to spending more time going deeper into the game to find out just what else is waiting in the background. This would be a great Christmas gift for the Buffy fan on your gift list.

Quake 3: Arena

Adrenaline Addiction
Reviewed by Shane Shellenbarger

I may be jumping the gun by reviewing a demo test version of QUAKE III: ARENA, but I am so impressed with the four levels contained within the demo that I wanted to share the information.

The main difference in this test version

from Quakes I and II is that Quake III does not have a story line threading through the murderous mayhem. The action is single, multiple, and team attacks on other opponents. In the single player mode, you are pitted against other free agents controlled by the computer whose goal is to rack up the most kills. The multiplayer mode can be played on a Local Area Network, over a server, or on the Internet. This allows for team play or a free-for-all, everyone-for-themselves game that can get as frantic as a shark feeding frenzy.



The playing fields begin with a simple series of areas: In Arena Gate you have a courtyard, hallway, and small hall. Then the area shifts location and expands: Temple of Retribution contains stairs, bounce points or jump pads, bridges, parapets, hidden passageways, and areas of apparent sacrifice. In The Longest Yard, the battlefield takes place in a black limbo with a series of platforms, directional jump pads, and transporters. The final level is The Proving Grounds, a tournament level that allows for a hit-and-run strategy with quick entry and exit from prime powerup rich locations.

One of the fascinating options is the ability to become a spectator in the multiplayer mode. You can either wander around the playing field, invisible and intangible to the other players, or you can see the game through the eyes of the other players. This feature can enrich your experience and allow you to witness first hand the strategy of other players. Another addition is the ability to control Bots, fellow fighters of a robotic nature. Bots can guard your back, patrol a given area, and secure a valuable weapon.



Q3 ARENA Demo Test is addictive, violent, and suggested for mature audiences. Downloadable versions are available for Windows 32 95/98,

Macintosh, and Linux at <http://www.quake3arena.com/demo/> . For more information on the Quake community, go to <http://www.gamecenter.com/Resources/Action/Quake3/> . Happy hunting.

It's A Bird, It's A Plane: Superman 64 Video Game Review

Reviewed by Shane Shellenbarger

The public at large became aware of the Man of Steel when he made his first appearance in the June 1938 issue of Action Comics #1. In that issue, author, Jerry Siegel, and artist, Joe Shuster, gave us the origin of Superman, strange visitor from another planet. Since that beginning, the powers and abilities of Superman have undergone an evolution, from being able to leap tall buildings in a single bound, to being faster than a speeding bullet, to out racing a beam of light. Superman has appeared on radio, on television, in the movies, in novels, and in several animated series. In recent years, Superman's god-like powers have been scaled back and his recent appearances in the animated adventures have brought him full circle to his origins, complete with lesser powers.

The character of Superman has always been a highly marketable commodity: Pajamas, radio premiums cereal boxes, board games, costumes, and toys of every shape, size and type have all been big sellers. In one form or another, Superman has appeared on pinball machines, video arcade games, and home video systems since the 1970's. His most recent incarnation has been in the Titus (www.titusgames.com) produced game, SUPERMAN for the Nintendo 64. In this game, Superman enters Lex Luthor's Virtual Metropolis to save Lois Lane and Jimmy Olsen. With powers and abilities that come and go, Superman must do battle with Dark Shadows (cybernetic soldiers created by Luthor), robots, mine droppers, para-demons (created by the Parasite) Mala, the Parasite, Brainiac, Metallo, Darkseid, and (behind the scenes) Lex Luthor.

In Luthor's Virtual Metropolis, Superman is a shadow of his former self. Powerups are temporary and need to be replenished. They include Superhealth, Superbreath, Superspeed, X-ray Vision, and Heat Vision. In addition to having a time limit, not all powerups will work on all items: X-ray vision doesn't work on organic material, Heat Vision doesn't melt most inanimate objects, and Superbreath won't freeze many things beyond people, villains, and tornadoes. The ability to fly and pound steel with his bare hands is always available. There are twelve levels available in the single player mode and two modes in the multiplayer game of up to four players: fight and race. Multiplayer fight allows you to select a villain and fly a ship

(Cont'd on page 7)

through three levels. You attack the other player(s), attempting to collect the most energy. The Multiplayer race is a game of tag with players trying to stay in the lead and to eliminate their opponents



In general I enjoyed the game, but I wish that Titus would have added a few touches such as having Superman's misses having a negative effect on Virtual Metropolis or allowing Superman to be superdestructive: Melting lampposts, toppling buildings, freezing rivers. His superrampage could have been incorporated into a hidden level where Superman is on a world where he is the villain and Lex Luthor is the superhero. Something that I truly missed was the title music from the animated series that this game is based upon. While every sound effect from Superman's leap into the sky to the use of his heat vision was faithfully transferred from the show, the music was absent.

The game is rated for play by everyone and an official strategy guide is available from Brady Games at www.bradygames.com



ConClusion

WorldCon 1999 Review by Mike Willmoth

This year's World Science Fiction Convention (aka WorldCon) was held in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia - September 2nd thru 6th. Guests-of-Honor were George Turner (deceased), Gregory Benford, Bruce Gillespie and J. Michael Straczynski.

We started planning to go to Australia since hearing about Melbourne's bid for WorldCon six years ago. They ran pretty much unopposed, won and called their event AussieCon 3. The two previous Aussie Worldcons have also been in Melbourne. Sydney bid for 1991, but lost to Chicago. This year's WorldCon was the 57th World Science Fiction Convention. Hard to believe it's been running that long.

Earlier this year we tried to get reservations at the hotel next to the Melbourne Convention Centre, the Centra on Yarra (Yarra River runs through Melbourne), but couldn't get a quad. We tried numerous alternatives, but apartments seemed like the only option or fall back to double. By the time we tried a double, the Centra was full. We then used our travel agent to book a non-con hotel nearby when we booked our airfare. It seems United, the con airlines, was also holding a super summer saver discount of 25% off vs the 18% convention discount. Plus, it was less restrictive. So, for a little over \$900 per person we booked our travel and accommodations. Shortly afterward we heard from a friend in Tennessee, Uncle Timmy (runs LibertyCon in Chattanooga), and he had some folks cancel on his hotel room. Since they had room for us at the Grand Hotel (across the street from the MCC) in their two-bedroom suite, we canceled our hotel and opted to share with him.

Because of our pre-con schedule we ran out of time (yet again) to get everything done and had to rush to the airport. Fortunately, we found close-by parking and checked in. We left Mon Aug 30 for Los Angeles (1 hr flight), then caught our leg to Auckland, New Zealand. This leg (12 hours) was actually NZ Air and was really nice. We can recommend them anytime! The seats were farther away in front of us than US airlines and they had little footrests to kick down for when you lean back. The video display, when not showing movies, had a Global Positioning System display. There was a plane icon and the land displayed. It showed where we were relative to LA, then over the ocean near Hawaii, then near Fiji, and finally New Zealand. As we left LA it zoomed out at various times and zoomed in as we neared Auckland. They did the same thing on the leg to Melbourne on the ~4 hour flight there.

We arrived in Melbourne in the morning of Wed Sep 1, having "lost" a day crossing the International Dateline. An Irish fan was supposed to meet us outside customs to car pool to the convention centre hotels, but we couldn't find him. By the time I found the Airport-Down-town bus it left before we could get our luggage to it. So, we resorted to a taxi. They had to call a station wagon taxi for all our luggage (3 wks packing), so it's probably good we didn't find the other guys. We arrived at the Grand Hotel late morning, but there was no problems checking in early. The only odd thing was the training on how to use the plastic bob on the key ring. It turns out you have to insert it into the receptacle with the light switch in order to operate the lights! It seems power over there is really expensive, so they don't want you walking out without shutting the lights off. The hallways were huge, the two bedroom suite was huge, and we commandeered the bedroom with a double bed. The place had two bathrooms; one was toilet and sink, the other shower/tub and two sinks. Another oddity all toilets have two flush options; one for half flush and one for full flush. I leave it to the reader to distinguish the reasoning.

Jean & I crashed until our friends arrived from their stay in Sydney. Tim and Sam (another con chair, from Alabama) got in without incident. Sam took one of the twin beds in the other bedroom upstairs while Tim used the rollaway bed downstairs. Since the suite had a kitchen, dining table, office area, living area, etc. there was plenty of room. We all went out to a sandwich shoppe up the hill for lunch before heading to the MCC for pre-registration. We had to walk across the street and under train tracks to get there, but it was signaled safely. The main entrance had an escalator or stairs, then a big lobby area. If you went to the left, you had the registration desk for the Centra Hotel. We went to the right, up another escalator, and to the left before finding the pre-reg stuff I was on programming this year, so I got my schedule and we chatted with folks before returning to the hotel. Our final roommate, Mark (yet another con chair, from Pennsylvania), arrived from his consulting tour and we walked downtown for dinner. There we found McDonalds (they all liked cheap food, we found out) and a 24-hour Cole's Market. It was 6 blocks from the hotel, so it wasn't terribly convenient. But, where else can you find Vegemite in little packets at McDonalds! (If you have to ask what that is, you haven't experienced it.)

The convention started on Thursday first thing, so we wandered over early. My first (and only event) was at 10am with Hugh Gregory, space flight historian from Vancouver (BC), and Jan Howard Finder (aka The Wombat), big name fan and space enthusiast. Our panel was

called Apollo: 30 Years After and it went pretty well. We discussed what had happened since then, where we were when Apollo 11 landed on the Moon, and invited the audience to add input to the experience. After it ended I wandered around to figure out where everything was located.

The MCC is multiple floors with the first level the Loading Dock and Brasserie. The second has some small function rooms (Otway Suites for Program Ops and Green Room, Howqua Suites for Press Room, Virtual Worlds Room, Parties, General Programming and Kaffeeklatches) and the hotel entrance on the other end; it also has the upper access to the LaTrobe Theatre. The next level up the escalator or elevator was where Registration was located, to the right. You could also enter the lower entrance to the Batman Theatre (John Batman, that is, where the Hugos and Masquerade were scheduled) to the right of Reg or behind the escalator. To the left of Reg were various programming rooms (You Yangs 1-5 for General Programming and Children's Programming) and the Hall where Gaming and the fan tables were located. This is where you voted for WorldCon 2002 (San Jose beat Roswell) or chatted with future bids. Since it was around the corner from everything there wasn't a lot of traffic unless you looked for it.

Upstairs (Level 4) was the upper entrance to the Batman Theatre and the Bellarine rooms (1-7) for General Programming, Fan Lounge, Video Room, Child Care, Art Show, Exhibits, Lounge (Internet), Dealers Room, and Book Signs.

While Jean waited to use the Internet computers I sat down with Tim, Sam and Mark to play spades at a table nearby. While playing an Aussie fan stopped and watched us play, so we brought her up to speed on the rules and became friends with her. Allison McGaw was at her first convention and didn't know what to do or where to go. So, we took her under our wing and showed her a good time by going to lunch at the Casino Food Court across the river from the MCC, touring the maritime museum nearby, and introducing her to the various events at the con.

By the time we were through she was filking until the wee hours and enjoying the Masquerade Contest. We later visited with her in her home town of Brisbane post-con where she introduced us to Lamingtons, the Aussie national dessert.

I never made it into the Art Show since they wouldn't let me take my knapsack in and I didn't have anyone with me to leave it with. The Dealers Room was mostly books and, boy, are they expensive over there! I didn't spend any money this year there. Gaming was pretty small and underutilized by our standards. There was no Voodoo Board until Filthy Pierre put

one together. Once he did I managed to meet up with a fellow from online who lives there and we did lunch, compared notes, etc. I didn't see as many American fans as I expected to, but still got to see many that don't make it to Phoenix much. The bid parties were different. Because of some contract thing with the convention they couldn't be held in regular suites, so had to be on Level 2. This meant they had to purchase all their food and drink from the hotel. By the time I got to ConJose's WorldCon bid party it was bleak. I only spotted two fans that I knew, virtually no food or drink to experience. I left quickly.

The party situation was spread out between the other hotels nearby, but I didn't make it to them.

Some of the other events offered on Thursday were the Newcomer's Guide to WorldCon, SF and Education, Building the Perfect World, Science & Terror: Close Shaves in the Lab, Loose Canons, the Origins of Melbourne SF Club, Y2K: A Space Idiocy, Other Tales of Horror: Running A Convention, and Opening Ceremonies. A banquet was offered Friday evening, the Hugo Awards Saturday and the Masquerade Sunday.

Other Friday events included Terra forming, Business Meeting, From Canberra to Norstrilia - The Australian Adventures of Cordwainer Smith, Sweet Candy for the Eye - Flashy Computer Graphics, Fandom and the Internet, Ticonderoga Publications Book Launch

(Lady of Situations) and Crap Australian SF Movies.

Saturday brought Modern Vampire, Fan Fund Auction, An Hour with Robert Silverberg, SF & Disability, SF Poetry and Slash Fiction. Programming was held in around 10 locations 60 minutes apart starting at 8am each day and ending at midnight.

Sunday had Virtual Selves: Survival in Cyberspace, FanHistoricon 9.5 with various international fan groups participating, more signs, Posthuman SF: A Symposium, Classics of the Slush Pile, and SF & Social Issues: The Law and Difference.

Monday finished with Electronic Publishing, Solo Reading by Robert Sawyer, Masquerade Review, SF and Music, and an Interview with JMS.

The Hugos went pretty well, but shocked me when The Truman Show won Best Dramatic Presentation over Sleeping in Light (Babylon 5 season 5 last episode). JMS took it in stride. One fellow accepted an award for Bob Eggleton and mimicked him so accurately the audience lost control with laughter.

The Masquerade was much better than the Netherlands in 1990 (ConFiction at The Hague), but much more disappointing than San Francisco in 1993 (ConFrancisco). It had its moments. There were two MCs entertaining the audience between entries. After opening to filkers, they ran around crazily and did stupid stuff that occasionally came off funny. One skit had Wil Robinson and Dr. Smith from Lost in Space where Wil

converted into a Minbari, bonehead and all. Another had one of them dress in a trenchcoat while the other shot at him with the bullet running down the clothesline. The first leaned back Matrix-style so that it would pass by him. The Brits nearby were almost as entertaining, having consumed vast quantities of beer, and were laughing so loud and hard they could scarcely stay seated.

We didn't stick around for Monday, but flew out to Cairns in the northeast instead. We snorkeled the Great Barrier Reef, toured the Rowunda Rainforest, drove to Airlie Beach to tour the Whitsunday Islands, then Brisbane and finally Sydney. Between the last two I managed to use the binoculars I bought in Melbourne along with the star atlas also bought there to locate the Magellanic Clouds for the first time! These are irregular galaxies just outside the Milky Way, but gravitationally bound to it. They are only visible from down under, along with Alpha and Beta Centauri and a host of other neat stuff. While in Sydney we saw the Opera House was 10,000 angles, toured the vast harbour by ferry and catamaran, took several bus tours of downtown and the various beach areas, visited the aquarium and watched sharks swim overhead while we walked below, and witnessed everyday life in the red light district near our hotel. Best foods were the Shakespeare Pie Shop in Sydney, Lone Star Steakhouse in Brisbane (where we taught them how to say y'all and brew iced tea), and Tim's Restaurant in Cairns (where you are dared to finish their meals - I did both times). Steak is generally not as tender there, hot tea with cream is the norm, you say g'day mate when meeting someone, instead of Good For You, you say (nasally) Good On Ya', and no worries instead of no problems.

Next to Canada, it is the easiest place for Americans to travel. They just have funny accents and drive on the other side of the road. And they are incredibly nice, friendly, and wonderful to be around.

I could go on, but that would take hours. We had a wonderful time, both during the con and afterwards. We took lots of photos and are still getting them developed. Our friends used digital cameras and uploaded them every night we could get a connection. When we returned they burned us a CD complete with all their photos. We plan to scan our best in and E-mail them for inclusion on the next one.

But, if you haven't been to Oz, you should go. Avoid 2000 since the Olympics are taking over, but after that you're ok. And have a bonzer time!

How to Enjoy a Star Trek Convention

By Lewis Geoffrey

Space, the final frontier?

That's what I thought when I went to my first Star Trek convention, early this decade.

I later realized that, like space, these conventions can be enjoyable if you know what to do.

Here is my advice on a Star Trek Convention:

1) Be Prepared- This sounds simple but many things can go wrong. You will need money, ticket(s), and other things for the whole day. If you plan, you can reduce the headaches in staying the whole day for the Star Trek convention.

2) Be Early- If you do not have the tickets, you will have to wait for a crowd. If you do have the tickets, you will have the advantage in being early in the dealer's room for that special deal or item(s) that you're looking for.

3) Be Ready- If you want to be in the costume contest, you will need to find where and when the contest takes place. The judges are usually the fans' applause.

4) Get the Schedule- This is the map of where and what is going on. You can choose what you want to do for that day.

5) Be Happy- You are among family, fans, and friends in the Star Trek Universe. Anything can happen in this convention. Even some surprise guest appearances.

On my journeys, I found out there are many types of conventions. Here are a couple:

I. Creation (www.creationent.com) is one of the big fan conventions. They will have one in Phoenix, AZ on Saturday and Sunday Feb 19-20, 2000 at Mesa Community Center. The guests will: Robert Beltran (Star Trek Voyager's Chakotay), Grace Lee Whitney and Star Trek expert Richard Arnold. Other guests to be announced. From experience, I usually get the preferred or golden circle in order to get autographs from the Star Trek guests. General admission does not guarantee an autograph.

II. Slanted Fedora (www.sfedora.com) is another big fan conventions. The reserved admission is higher but they do guarantee an autograph. I recommend buying the dinners with the stars. You will have a photo opportunity to meet your some of the Star Trek stars at your table. Also, there will be an after dinner show by some of the Star Trek cast. These are my some of my gems for enjoying a Star Trek convention. Live Long and Prosper in many Star Trek conventions! Till Then, Lewis Geoffrey.

Lasers, Phasers, and Erasers: Information on a Captain's Wedding at Star Trek: The Experience, Las Vegas Hilton.

By Lewis Geoffrey

I've been fortunate to been at the grand opening of Star Trek: The Experience. Yet, I've been bugged by fellow fans and friends on the wedding information for the past few months.

Luckily, I have acquired the following facts on the Captain wedding at www.StarTrekexp.com under weddings. This is what it generally says:

"Captain's Wedding:
Complete arrangement of wedding services at Star Trek: The Experience- One hour on the Bridge of the USS Enterprise 1701-D for rehearsal and ceremony.

Wedding photography which includes two rolls of film plus negative. Intergalactic floral bouquet and boutonniere for the bride and groom. Official to perform ceremony. Two Star Trek: The Experience Characters of your choice to be present at your wedding: Klingons, Ferengi, or Starfleet Officers

Commemorative Star Trek: The Experience Wedding Certificate

'His and Hers' Official Star Trek watches from Latinum Jewelers
Brass Plaque recognition of your wedding date on display in Quark's Bar & Restaurant.

Tickets to the Voyage through Space and History of the Future Exhibit for your wedding party (up to 15) \$2,000.

Note: Ceremony is limited to 30 guests." If you can go beyond the expenses where a few has gone before, there are additional options to shake a stick at a Ferengi. There is a wedding upgrade to Admiral. Also, there is more information in regarding to wedding receptions in Quark's Bar & Restaurant. Another, additional choices for the wedding can help make that day more special. Look at the wedding section under www.startrekexp.com for more data. Call (702) 697-8751 to book your wedding at Star Trek: The Experience at the Las Vegas Hilton.

SF Tube Talk (Cont'd from page 1)

through the February ratings sweeps. They'll be pulling out all the stops with a three part Borg story as well as a guest appearance from the World Wrestling Federation's "The Rock". In "Fair Haven", Tom Paris's latest holodeck creation is a 19th Century Irish village with a bartender who Janeway takes a fancy to. In a later episode, some of the villagers will begin to achieve sentience. In "Blink of an Eye", Voyager investigates a planet running on a time scale so fast that civilizations rise and fall within minutes. "Tsunkatse" has **DS9** recurring stars **J.G. Hertzler** (Martok) and **Jeffrey Combs** (Weyoon & Brunt) guest starring along with the WWF wrestler "The Rock". **Hertzler** is a Hirogen hunter who kidnaps Seven of Nine and forces her to fight a Pendari alien (**The Rock**) in a Tsunkatse gladiator contest run by the gamekeeper Penk (**Combs**). In "Virtuosos", The Doctor introduces music to a planet that has never had any musical culture, becoming a celebrity in the process. The three part Borg mini-arc will deal with a group of Borgified children who have become separated from the collective who are attempting to rejoin The Borg at any cost.

X-Files/Harsh Realm

The new season of the **X-Files** finally got underway in November, somewhat resolving the mystery of the writings on the alien spaceship and at least getting Mulder back to his "normal" self. How much things really advanced in the overall story line is hard to tell, though. Supposedly, these threads will be picked back up in a two-part story in February sweeps. Until then, we'll be getting mostly standalone episodes through December and January. Although, with "The Kiss" in the Millennium episode, fans will be watching to see what happens between Mulder and Scully on a personal level as well as their investigations.



We'll see a sequel to Season's 2 "Irresistible" with Donnie Phaster having escaped from prison and going after Scully as well as dealing with the prison priest who helped Donnie and other convicts to escape. Another will be a lighter episode dealing with the death of a magician. We'll see Mulder & Scully investigate a fire and brimstone church that has some strange things going on, they'll take on a soul-sucking Asian woman, and another episode will deal

with child abduction and snakes, lots of snakes according to set reports. Finally, we'll get another episode written by **William Gibson**, who has described it as "The episode takes place in a video game design studio that's struggling to meet a deadline on a *Final Fantasy VII*-type project when the programmers begin dying off. The culprit? An avenging angel - Lara Croft gone bad - who's using virtual reality to even the score."

The WB

Over on the WB, the one-two tandem of **Buffy** and **Angel** has been pretty successful so far, with The WB giving **Angel** a full season pickup after only a couple of episodes had aired. Buffy and crew have been adjusting to college life while we've been teased about the overall story for this season. They have written Oz out for a time so that **Seth Green** can film a movie. It is still up in the air if he'll come back as a regular, though. **James Marsters** (Spike) has returned to be a semi-regular, in his neutered condition. Things should progress with The Initiative and Buffy and Riley's relationship will grow, including their learning about each others secret identities. Look to see the Hellmouth reopen when an earthquake happens and for Faith to make an appearance during February sweeps.

Other rumored re-appearances are **Ethan Hawke** and **Amy Madison**.

Over on **Angel**, we've got the ongoing villains with the evil law firm popping up occasionally and some mystery about Doyle's past which is pretty much moot since he's been written out of the series. Rumors are that before he sacrificed himself he was able to pass along his psychic "gift" to Cordelia.

Also look for the former watcher Wesley to turn up as well as a new female demon who has the hots for Angel and its likely that Kate's role will expand some.

Elsewhere on The WB, **Roswell** has done quite well so far and has garnered a loyal fan following pretty quickly with its alien mysteries and teen angst.

Charmed has added more music to its story lines, featuring real-life bands at the show's nightclub.

Xena, Hercules, Jack and Cleopatra 2525

Xena and Gabrielle didn't stay dead long and since then have been dealing with Xena's pregnancy, working **Lucy Lawless's** real-life pregnancy into the story line. When new episodes resume in late January, we'll finally learn who the father of Xena's child is and bring the baby into the world. During February sweeps we'll have episodes dealing with the child and it's father. (And yes, it will be a quick-to-grow-up child). In other episodes we'll have Gabrielle turned into a mermaid, we'll meet Joxer's gay brother, Jace, and we'll also have another musical episode of sorts.

With Hercules having completed its run in November, we'll have repeats of the

final episodes until late January, when the two half-hour replacement series debut with faces familiar to **Hercules** and **Xena** viewers. The one I'm looking forward to the most is "Jack of All Trades" which will star

Bruce "Autolykus" Campbell as Jack Stiles and **Angela Dotchin** (Nautica in **Hercules** and Soraya in **Xena**) as Emilia. The show is set in the French East Indies in the mid-18th century and is about the exploits of Jack Stiles, a James Bond-like spy in the British Secret Service. Entirely a man of his time, Jack believes a woman's place is in the home — ideally his home fulfilling his every desire. He is therefore completely unprepared when he discovers that his boss on this mission is Emilia, the French Governor's niece.

Disguised as a British dragoon, Jack teams up with Emilia on secret missions to prevent the evil governor from spreading his tyranny across the New World. They overcome their foes through an array of ingenious gadgets built by Emilia and Jack's convincing way with a sword.

The other half hour show is **Cleopatra 2525**, which stars **Jennifer "Amarice" Sky** as an exotic dancer who gets cryogenically frozen in the year 2001 and is awakened in 2525 by two warrior women, played by **Gina Torres** (Nebula on **Hercules**) and **Victoria Pratt** (Cyane on **Xena**). Also appearing as Creegan is **Joel Tobeck** (Strife). She learns that Earth is now under the control of evil robots and mankind is now living underground. While the two warriors, Cara and Sarge, educate Cleopatra in the ways of war, she likewise introduces them to the customs she left behind.

Other New Series

Starting on NBC in on Saturday nights in February will be the "The Others", a supernatural series about "ghosts, spirits, and communication with the dead". It is created by **Steven Spielberg** for Dreamworks and will be executive produced by **Glen Morgan** and **James Wong** (**X-Files**, **Millennium**, **Space: Above and Beyond**). It stars **Julianne Nicholson**, **Gabriel Macht**, **Melissa Crider**, **Kevin J. O'Connor**, **John Aylward**, and **Bill Cobbs**. **The Others** centers around a society of ordinary people who experience otherworldly phenomena and who possess strange powers.

These "others" meet regularly to help support one another and to determine how they can battle the forces of evil.

Also likely to turn up on FOX sometime in the spring is the **James Cameron** series "Dark Angel" which stars **Jessica Alba** as Max, a genetically-enhanced human prototype hunted by her former military handlers through the edgy, underground street life of 21st century San Francisco. Eighteen-year-old Max is aided in her quest by Logan Clarke, an idealistic cyber-journalist battling repression and corruption in post-

apocalypse America. UPN should start airing **Secret Agent Man** sometime early in the new year. They held it back from debuting in the fall to give the show more production time to get the gadgets developed and more episodes in the can.

SciFi Stuff

Over on SciFi, we'll be getting the final episodes of the first season of **Farscape** in January (second season to start in March), the final episodes of **Sliders** last season, the U.S. debut of **Lexx**, the second season of **First Wave** and a new take on **The Invisible Man**.

In the final four season 1 episodes of **Farscape**, Moya will give birth and we'll meet a new alien enemy, who will continue into the second season, stalking them through space, and forcing them to travel deeper into the Uncharted Territories.

Lexx is a weekly series that follows on from the four TV movies produced for Showtime that aired in the U.S. as "Tales from a Parallel Universe". Its about the adventures of the crew of The Lexx, a living ship with the power to destroy



worlds that has been taken over by a misfit crew. In control of the Lexx is Stanley Tweedle, a former security guard and traitor. With him is Xev, a housewife that was transformed into a love slave, but the love slave programming went into a robot head, 790, who is in love with Xev. Joining them is Kai, a former assassin who was killed 2000 years ago and is kept functioning by proto blood. If you haven't seen the original movies, I'd suggest you track down at least the first one, "I Worship His Shadow". The first series has already screened in Canada and is a very offbeat take on the standard sci-fi ship in space series. Most of the time they get in trouble because either Stanley or Xev thinks they can get laid. The first episode, *Mantrid*, introduces a recurring villain who as the season goes on is destroying the entire universe. I'm glad to see that SciFi has finally picked it up and I'd suggest you check it out. **The Invisible Man** series will star **Vincent Ventresca** ("Prey", "Maggie Winters") as a small-time thief named Darian who avoids a prison sentence by undergoing an experiment that allows him to become temporarily—and often accidentally—invisible. While an evil scientist tries to

(Cont'd on page 10)

hunt down Darian to learn his secret, the misguided thief is forcibly enlisted into a ramshackle, under funded intelligence agency. **Rebecca Chambers** will star alongside Ventresca as Casey, Darian's gorgeous girlfriend, who also happens to have a genius-level IQ. **Joel Bissonnette** will be Arnaud, the evil scientist who wants to capture Darian and use his invisible powers for no good. **Paul Ben-Victor** (Crazy in Alabama) and **Eddie Jones** (Lois & Clark) have also joined the cast. The series will be executive produced by **Matt Greenberg** (Halloween: H20).

Also to debut in the spring is SciFi's Short Film Series which will collect existing and new short films (including the **Star Wars** parody "**Troops**") for screening on the channel.

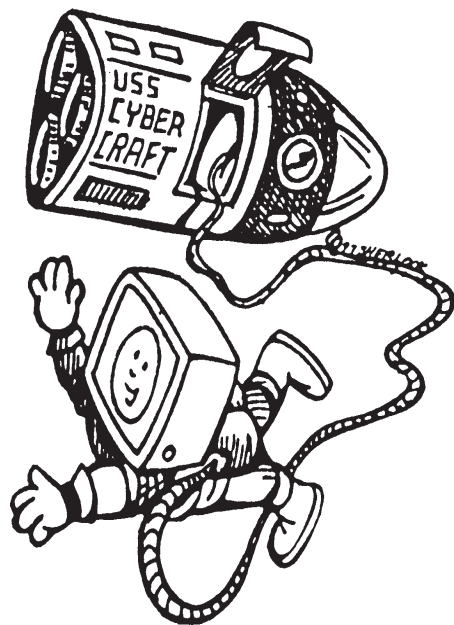
SciFi has also started production on a six-hour **Dune** miniseries which will air in the fall of 2000. Cast announced includes **William Hurt** (Duke Leto), **Giancarlo Giannini** (Emperor Shaddam IV), **Alec Newman** (Paul Atrides), **Muriel Baumeister** (Princess Irulan), **Uwe Ochsenknecht** (Stilgar), **Ian McNeice** (Baron Harkonnen) and **Barbara Kodetova** (Chani).

Starship Troopers

One of the better new animated shows this season is **Roughnecks: The Starship Troopers Chronicles**. It is an all-cgi show, which is being produced with Foundation Imaging (**Babylon 5**, **Star Trek: Voyager**) doing the CGI work. The series itself is quite good, sticking much closer to the ideas in the novel than

the movie. It has gotten a rough start, however, because of production problems, which has caused the Sci-Fi Channel to stop airing it until enough episodes are completed. It is still airing in syndication in a lot of areas, include KUTP-45 in Phoenix.

The characterization is done well and the overall story line of the season looks to be very dramatic, especially for a kids show. I'd suggest checking one of the online resources such as <http://sicon.homepage.com> for the proper episode order so that you can know what order the episodes should run. For other news and episode schedules, check out Lee Whiteside's Magrathea/SFTV web pages at <http://www.sftv.org>.



arrive in Sunnydale. Hey, it could happen."

Adam Niswander reports that his novel, "*The Repository, A Novel of Magik and the Occult*," continues to sell well, despite a glitch in the Barnes & Noble computer system that kept it in the warehouse, versus the store."

Reviewer **Harriet Klausner** called it "simply great storytelling." His short story, "*The Licentious Lycanthrope*," should be out in "*Eternity: Alternatives*" about the same time as this column (Dec. '99). His hard SF novel, "*Thermopylae Transit*;" his YA novel, "*Golden Dreams*;" and a short fiction collection titled "*Blurring the Edges of Dream*" are currently in submission, but no decisions yet. **Adam** was recently interviewed by Sinister Element, and has a column in the current issue of Bloody Muse. Weston Ochse reports that his "co-authored collection of short stories, "*Scary Rednecks and Other Inbred Horrors*," which can be seen at <http://westwood.fortunecity.com/chanel/338/index/index.html>, was released at the end of November by Darktales Publications. It is a trade-paperback collection containing 23 tales of horror, ranging from Dark Comedic Redneck Farces to Traditional Supernatural Southern Gothic. The stories delve into the dark, deadly beauty of the hidden South, the culture of the uncultured and the interplay of everyday violence, supernatural mythology and the comedy of the common man." Sounds like something Darth Y'All (better known as AZ fan **Randall Whitlock!**) would like! He also has a story titled "*Tender Hearts Taste Better Butter*" appearing in the magazine *Darkness Within*, and another, "*Tender Boys*," appearing in *The Edge*.

As always, he is the editor of Bloody Muse <<http://westwood.fortunecity.com/chanel/338/bm/bm.htm>> and Pillow Screams <<<http://members.spree.com/SIP/forevernight/pscreams/pillow1.htm>>>, two online horror magazines, and "is looking to publish excellent works," so if you have the time, send him some poetry and short stories at <drkwrtr@c2i2.com>.

Kristi Hutson Oper reports that she has been "published in *The Harrow* (an online horror mag), with two shorts: "*My Boy*" and "*New Orleans by Night*." I'll be at PhilCon in November and haven't gotten any further than that in my planning. My current project is a novel called "Sevon's Tear."

Jennifer Roberson's "*Lady of Sherwood*," "a sequel to *Lady of the Forest*, my Marian/Robin Hood historical, is now out in bookstores. My editor called the other day to inform me it has received a starred review in trade journal Publishers Weekly, so it's off to a good start! Meisha Merlin, an F/SF small press, will be publishing a collection of my short fiction first in hardcover, then trade paperback. No pub date as yet, but likely the end of 2000 or early 2001. I'm currently working on *Sword-Sworn*, the sixth "Sword-Dancer" novel, and then will begin the first volume in my new "*Karavans*" fantasy universe. I've also just bought a custom home in Flagstaff on 2.5 acres, with a lovely view of the San Francisco Peaks, and will be heading north permanently come January. It's a mile away from **Melanie Rawn's** house, so we fear the Peaks may implode from the proximity of our egos! <VBG>"

Congratulations, **Jennifer!**
Janni Lee Simner reports: "I have a short story out this month in **Bruce Coville's** *Shapeshifters*. And, I'm writing a new middle grade series, "*Terratrek*," for HarperCollins."

Michael A. Stackpole reports in November, the "first of four monthly issues of *Star Wars Union: The Marriage of Luke Skywalker*" appeared from Dark Horse comics. The "series will [be] complete on St. Valentine's Day." In December, his "*Tales from the New Republic*" collaboration novella with **Timothy Zahn** will be released. He plans to attend RustyCon and ChattaCon in January 2000 as a guest and, in February, appear with Zahn at StellarCon, just as "*Onslaught*," "a New Jedi Order novel" appears. In March, **Mike's** original fantasy novel, "*The Dark Glory War*," will be released from Bantam Books, and his new website is <<http://www.stormwolf.com>>.

Wu Yan spent a week traveling in Shangdong Province, China during November.

C. F. Yankovich "was one of the artists chosen to exhibit at Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport's Millennium Exhibition. One of her paintings (ConNotations Editor **Stephanie Bannon's** favorite) is on the ramp to the International Wing of Terminal Four, while others are in the Gallery. Also, **Cathie** provided the cover art for **Peter Manly's** latest novel, "*Asterisms*."

That's it for this year! See you all again in 2000!



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The Dream Is Alive
VHS videotape originally released in Imax theatres, photographed in space by the Shuttle astronauts, \$40

Apollo 13
Widescreen VHS, directed by Ron Howard, starring Tom Hanks, \$15

Artemis Project Reference Mission Poster
With art designed by Jim Gerrish and images by Vik Olliver, this beautiful 24" x 36" poster illustrates the Artemis Project's Reference Mission in full-color glossy glory!
\$9.95

Of course, the computer animation is top-notch.

In this film, Woody is toynapped by an unscrupulous toy dealer (voice undoubtedly by Wayne Knight) who needs him to complete a collection he wants to sell to a wealthy Japanese gentlemen for a museum.

So, Buzz must rescue Woody this time.

And in the meantime, Woody finds out he was part of a huge marketing campaign in the Fifties because he was the star, along with Jessie, Stinky Pete and Bull's Eye, of a popular kids TV show. He was a radio! A lunch box! A yo-yo! And the other toys convince him to stay with them and go on to Japan and the museum, to be stared at by children for years and years.

Woody is willing to believe that his life as Andy's toy will disappear as soon as he's lost under the bed, or put up on the high shelf again because his arm gets partially ripped off, and because, like all children, Andy is growing up.

This is the best part of the movie: there's a sad song sung by a woman (by now it's probably well-known, but I apologize as right now I don't know who the chanteuse is) about toys being abandoned by their owners who don't love them anymore. It's a weepy moment, I'll tell you.

And the ending of the film zooms and zips with high-speed energy, like Tarzan on a tree branch, like a kid in a podrace...

Anyway...this a hit. - -Sue Martin

Jo Martin (age 7) says: "It was funny...it was like Star Wars.. I liked the part with Woody and the horse Bull's Eye and when he says 'Ride like the wind, Bull's Eye!'" I liked it better than the first one because it was cooler, I liked it because I could see the puppy Andy got at the end of the first movie. When Woody proved that he was brave when he jumped with Jessie on the old TV show. I want to see it again and again and again!" There you have it

WARNING!!

This review contains spoilers!
TOY STORY 2 Review
 By Shane Shellenbarger

One of the Thanksgiving traditions that my wife, Lauren, and I look forward to is the holiday movie releases. If circumstances permit, we'll see a movie on Thanksgiving Day when the theaters are nearly empty. That's the theory, anyway. This Thanksgiving Day, theaters were packed with moviegoers of all ages eagerly anticipating what is likely to be the hit of the holiday season: TOY STORY 2.

In 1995, the computer animation film company, Pixar released the Disney distributed film, TOY STORY, which received two Golden Globe nominations for Best Musical Score or Comedy Film

and Best Original Song. Director, John Lasseter, received a Special Achievement Academy Award for the development and application of techniques in the creation of TOY STORY.

In 1997, Pixar announced their direct-to-video sequel to TOY STORY. If you've seen other direct-to-video sequels, ALADDIN: THE RETURN OF JAFAR, ALADDIN AND THE KING OF THIEVES, or LION KING II: SIMBA'S PRIDE, you know that results are often mixed and rarely would a sequel do well as a theatrical release. Rumor has it that when the story of TOY STORY 2 was still in development Disney executives were so impressed that they took the gamble and gave the go ahead to shift the emphasis toward a costly theatrical release. I believe that their gamble will pay off.

What follows is a description of the film that may include information that would spoil your enjoyment of the film. You have been warned!

TOY STORY 2 begins with the apparent destruction of Buzz Lightyear by Evil Emperor Zurg. In actuality, it's Rex who is defeated by a Buzz Lightyear video game he is playing. All of Andy's toys are in good spirits, but Woody is beside himself with anticipation because he'll be spending a week with the boy at Cowboy Camp. While Andy and Woody are playing, Woody's right arm is damaged and it cannot be fixed in time for him to accompany Andy to camp. Woody is placed on a shelf where he grows despondent, thinking that he will suffer the same fate as Wheezy the Penguin with the broken squeaker: Yard Sale! Woody attempts to rescue Wheezy, but is himself stolen by an unscrupulous toy dealer: Al of Al's Toy Barn. What follows is the rescue mission headed by Buzz Lightyear with Rex, Mr. Potato Head, Hamm, and Slinky Dog bring up the rear. They discover the terrors of city traffic, the enticements of Tourguide Barbie, and the complexities of navigating a skyscraper when you are less than a foot tall. Woody discovers that he is the final piece in a special collection of television memorabilia headed for a museum in Japan. "Woody's Roundup" was a puppet show from the 1950's that was canceled before its time. The other members of the cast were Cowgirl Jessie, Stinky Pete the Prospector, and Bullseye the horse. At first, Woody fights for his freedom and to return to his beloved boy, Andy. The embittered Jessie eventually convinces him that Andy doesn't need him anymore and that maybe he should join the rest of the "Roundup" in the Japanese museum. Jessie's intentions are not entirely altruistic. She is good-hearted, but desperate to not be placed in storage again. Even more desperate is Stinky Pete who further impedes Woody's return. As in all good adventure movies, the hero makes the right decision and with the help of his buddies is returned to Andy. The final rescue scene takes place in an

airport and gives you a truly horrifying view of what your luggage goes through when you are comfortably seated in the airplane.

The animation in TOY STORY 2 is outstanding and more detailed than in the first film. Human beings are animated in a more realistic manner and Al is completely believable in a stylized manner. Though the film is completely computer generated, it is sometimes difficult to determine what is animated and what could be live action. While it is rated G and appeals to children, the dialogue is clever, witty, and adult. There are references and in-jokes sprinkled heavily throughout the movie. Disney even kids itself in the Al's Toy Barn scene. To tie this all together is a good story; something that is lacking in many films these days.

TOY STORY 2 is not only a great sequel, but is a great movie. It just goes to show you that Disney and Pixar can go to infinity and beyond.

The Muse

Written and Directed by Albert Brooks
 Reviewed by Michael Griffin

This is a charming, funny and thoroughly entertaining movie. Every few years, the Hollywood talent makes a movie which satirizes their corporate studio bosses. Now, it's Albert Brooks' turn. He plays a middle-aged screenwriter, married with two kids, who's "lost edge" and can't get work. A friend puts him in touch with a very special script consultant: a muse. Sharon Stone plays this mythological character who claims to be a daughter of Zeus. Is she really? She certainly has the power of inspiration. Not only does she inspire Brooks' screen writing, but she also inspires his wife, played by Andie MacDowell, to pursue her dream of going into the home-baked cookie business. And Stone has a long list of former clientele who still keep in touch with her. This enables famous show biz people like James Cameron, Rob Reiner and Martin Scorsese to put in cameos making fun of themselves. The wickedest humor is reserved for the studio bosses, but a lot of the humor is of the domestic variety, as Stone disrupts Brooks' family life. There are plot twists and a surprise ending which works, too. If you love to hate Hollywood, if you love screen writing, if you want to see a brief nude scene by Sharon Stone, if you like to laugh, see this movie.

Mystery Men

Written by Neil Cuthbert
 Directed by Kinka Usher
 Reviewed by Michael Griffin

This is my favorite new movie (my favorite old movie is the same as most everyone else's—Casablanca). To a fan of superhero comic books, this is the ulti-

mate movie, going beyond any adaptation of familiar, established characters. While based on Bob Burden's characters in Dark Horse Comics, the story is original for the movie while retaining aspects of Burden's milieu: funny parody. Very funny, if you love superheroes. Maybe even if you hate them.

A common notion of literary criticism is that a genre is past its prime if it starts publishing self-satires, and this is no doubt true with superhero comic books. A mark of greatness, 'Mystery Men' achieves this while still fitting the superhero story formulas: damsel in distress, hero's power lost and regained, a supreme final effort, etc.

The Mystery men consist of Mr. Furious, whose power is to get very angry; The Blue Raja, master of silverware; The Shoveler, a man with a shovel; Invisible Boy—only if no one is looking; The Spleen, master of flatulence; The Bowler, a woman with a flying a bowling ball; and The Sphinx, who can slice guns with his mind. They're losers, a group of oddballs who want to be superstars. This is the story of how they triumph over adversity and rise to meet a super challenge. Not only do you get to laugh at all the superhero cliches, but in the end you get the best effect that you can from reading superhero comic books. You feel good about do-gooders, like you want to be a good person yourself. And if those lameos can do it, anybody can, which is another way of saying that audience identification is very easy.

Of course, media tie-ins abound for this: website, soundtrack album, a book from Dell. There is now both a comic book adaptation of the movie, and also a new comic book series, 'Bob Burden's Original Mystery Men.' But the first comic book with 'Mystery Men' in its title was published from 1939 to 1942: 'Mystery Men Comics.' That was during the golden age of superhero comics. Fans call the 1960s the silver age and the present...is merely the modern age.

Movie News

The holidays are here and we've got a good number of genre movies on the screens. Already we've seen **Tim Burton's Sleepy Hollow**, **Toy Story 2**, **The World is Not Enough** and **End of Days**.

Opening on Christmas is **Galaxy Quest**, a sci-fi comedy about the stars of a TV Sci-Fi show getting kidnaped by aliens who think they really are the characters they play. The aliens need their help in fighting their intergalactic war. With Tim Allen, Sigourney Weaver, and Alan Rickman as the leads, It looks to take some good swipes at the whole Trek phenomom. The initial official web page was done up like a real fan website for the fictional TV series and is still available to view as part of the full site at www.galaxyquest.com.

(Cont'd on page 13)
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AGAMEMCon

The Stephen King novel, **The Green Mile**, is brought to film with Tom Hanks starring as prison guard Paul Edgecomb. King kept watch on the movie to make sure it followed the novel closely. Be warned that the execution scenes are pretty graphic.

Also in December is **The Bicentennial Man**, based on the Asimov short story and starring Robin Williams and Sam Neill. Its about an android who grows to be more and more human over the 200 year span of the story. On a technical note, Harkins theatres will have a digital screening of the movie in Phoenix.

Opening at the beginning of the year exclusively in IMAX theatres will be **Disney's Fantasia 2000**. It will feature almost all new segments with only "The Sorcerer's Apprentice" remaining from the original Fantasia. It will be exclusive to the IMAX theatres and may never be released to regular theatres.

Other movies opening up over the holidays of some interest to fans are **Man on the Moon**, starring Jim Carrey in the biopic on the life of comedian Andy Kaufman and **Stuart Little**, the story of a mouse who is raised by the Littles, a human family played by Geena Davis, Jonathan Lipnicki, and Hugh Laurie with as Stuart being voiced by Michael J. Fox and Nathan Lane voicing Snowball, the cat.

Opening early in the year is **Supernova**, which has been delayed, had its director, Walter Hill, quit, and Francis Ford Coppola was brought in to complete the editing. It's about a deep space medical ship and its six-member crew who answer an emergency distress signal. They soon find themselves in danger from the mysterious young man they rescue, the alien artifact he's smuggled aboard, and the gravitational pull of a giant star about go supernova. It stars James Spader, Angela Bassett, and Lou Diamond Phillips.

In February, **Scream 3** hits the theatres, supposedly concluding the horror trilogy. Neve Campbell returns with a host of new characters to be killed off.

Lost Souls, with Winona Ryder, Ben Chaplin, and John Hurt has the devil coming to Earth yet again, with an atheist journalist being the portal for him (or something like that). **Pitch Black** is a low budget scifi/horror flick about a transport crew marooned on a sun-scorched alien world who realize that the inhabitants of the planet are nocturnal, savage beasts who never emerge into sunlight. However, every sixty years the sun is eclipsed and the entire planet turns dark, and the lifeforms emerge from their dark slumber to feed.

March sees the first of two Mars movies. **Mission to Mars** stars Gary Sinise, Tim Robbins, Don Cheadle, Kim Delaney and Jerry O'Connell and is directed by Brian DePalma. After all contact with the first manned mission to Mars ends

when they discover an unusual beacon on the surface, a rescue mission is quickly launched to find out what happened. It is supposed to be a more cerebral movie and not a slam-bang action film.

Movies in production updates.

The X-Men is currently filming with the following cast: Patrick Stewart (Professor Charles Xavier/'Professor X'), Ian McKellen (MaxLenscherr/'Magneto'), Famke Janssen (Jean Grey), James Marsden (Scott Summers/'Cyclops'), Hugh Jackman (Logan/'Wolverine'), Tyler Mane (Victor Creed/'Sabertooth'), Anna Paquin ('Rogue'), Halle Berry (Ororo Munroe/'Storm'), Rebecca Romijn-Stamos ('Mystique'), Bruce Davison (Senator Scott "Frank" Kelly), Ray Park (Mortimer Toynbee/'Toad') and Matthew Sharp (Henry Gyrich). Look for it to open the weekend before July 4th.

New Line Films formally announced the cast for the first of the three **Lord of the Rings** movies. Official cast is Elijah Wood (Frodo), Sean Astin (Sam Gamgee), Sean Bean (Boromir), Cate Blanchett (Galadriel), Orlando Bloom (Legolas), Billy Boyd (Pippin), Brad Dourif (Wormtongue), Ethan Hawke (Farimir), Sir Ian Holm (Bilbo), Christopher Lee (Saruman), Sir Ian McKellen (Gandalf), Dominic Monaghan (Merry), John Rhys-Davies (Gimli), Uma Thurman (Eowyn), and Liv Tyler (Arwen). Stuart Townsend was announced to play Aragorn, but has since been replaced by Viggo Mortensen. The look of film will be close to what we've seen in Tolkien illustrations since the conceptual artists are Alan Lee and John Howe, who have done many Tolkien illustrations.

MOVIE RELEASE DATES

- Dec 10 - **The Green Mile**
- Dec 17 - **Bicentennial Man, Stuart Little**
- Dec 22 - **Man on the Moon**
- Dec 25 - **Galaxy Quest**
- Jan 1 - **Fantasia 2000** (IMAX)
- Jan 14 - **Supernova**
- Feb 4 - **Scream 3, Lost Souls**
- Feb 11 - **Pitch Black**
- Mar 3 - **Mission to Mars**
- May - **Battlefield Earth, Gladiators, Dinosaur, The Sixth Day, The Haunted House, Mission Impossible 2**
- June - **Tomb Raider, Red Planet, Titan A.E., X-Men, Chicken Run**

Videophile

Jingaroo 1 and 2

Beckett Entertainment.
Both tapes 30 minutes or less

Johanna and I watched two new videos for kids called Jingaroo, undoubtedly an Australian TV show for kids, completely computer generated.

Jingaroo is a soccer-playing kangaroo surrounded by an interesting band of mates: Victoria, I believe she's an emu, possibly a peahen, the Groote brothers

(two moles), Sydney, a thespian fringed-neck lizard, Humpty a koala whose speech reminds me of Bob Newhart and Jabiro, a Tasmanian Devil.

They have simple adventures with clear moral point at the end: being good friends, sharing, team-work, etc. There is always a decent song or two with some diggerydoo sounds. And the tales all take place in the dry Outback somewhere.

"I thought they were really good," says Johanna, "because I like Victoria; she's funny. The lizard is funny because he does funny voices, like Elvis. I liked it when Jabiro was a pirate. And Humpty because he talks weird (see, I told you!). And I like Jingaroo because he plays soccer and helps people."

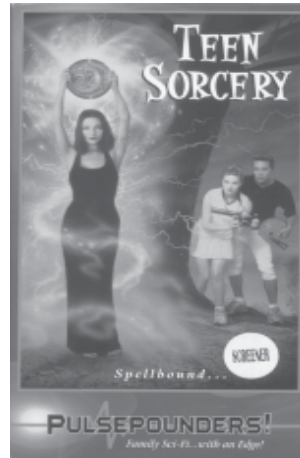
Anyway, your young kids will like these as they are simple and colorful...and most important, set in a different country. - Sue and Johanna Martin

Teen Sorcery

Pulse Pounders/Full Moon, 90 min, PG
Stars: A.J. Cook, Lexa Doig

This is a light comedy adventure for female teens.

A new student at the high school, Dawn (A.J. Cook) is having problems with Mercedes (Lexa Doig), the prom queen. Dawn is especially troubled by the fact that those who oppose Mercedes have "strange" things happen to them.



Dawn and her friends discover Mercedes is using black magic. With a little magic of their own, Dawn and her friends set out to stop her.

This adventure has time travel to the Middle Ages, dragons, knights, magic and a brave prince. At the end everyone lives happily ever after—except Mercedes.

Enjoyable, but best if you are under 18. No nudity, no language, and almost no violence. Good for kids on a Saturday afternoon. - Barry Bard

The 13th Warrior

Buena Vista, 103 min, Rated R
Stars: Antonio Banderas, Omar Sharif

A traveling ambassador from an Arab country, Ibn Fahdlon (Antonio Banderas)

comes across a boatload of Viking warriors. While in their camp, an emissary from another Viking king comes to ask for help to defeat an ancient enemy that has returned which is rumored not to be human and an eater of the dead.

An old fortune teller has told the Vikings that thirteen warriors are needed to confront this evil, and the thirteenth must not be a Viking. That is how Ibn Fahdlon, a poet, learned to be a warrior.

This is an exciting adventure and well-worth seeing. There are subplots that start, but go nowhere, giving the whole thing an unfinished feeling. But, this is still recommended for anybody that wants to see an exciting action adventure.

Nudity, some language, violence. - Barry Bard

Something Wicked This Way Comes

Anchor Bay, 94 min; PG
Stars: Jason Robards, Jonathan Pryce, Dianne Ladd, Pam Grier

Based on the Ray Bradbury story, this film was originally released in 1983. It has now been digitally remastered and is a widescreen presentation being marketed as a collector's edition.

I must confess here that I had not read the story this is based on, nor had I previously seen the film.

Dark's Pandemonium Carnival, a strange, shadowy traveling show, comes to Green Town. What price would you pay to have your dreams come true? One by one the townspeople find that the price they are paying is too high. When two young boys discover Mr Dark's secret they turn to the town librarian for help. Hidden strengths are discovered and good triumphs over evil.

This is a typical Disney production, nothing too scary for children, but well crafted enough to hold the interest of adults. It lacks the spectacular special effects of recent years and that actually works to the story's advantage. The dark atmosphere is spooky without overpowering the story. - Stephanie L Bannon

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The Car

Anchor Bay, 96 mins, PG
James Brolin, Kathleen Lloyd

Again this is a digitally remastered, widescreen presentation in Anchor Bay's Collector's Editions.

James Brolin stars as Sheriff Wade Parent in the small New Mexico town of Santa Ynez. Out of nowhere comes a strange black car. First it runs down two bicyclists, then a hitchhiker, who will be next? No one knows where the car came from or who (or what?) is driving it. They only know they must destroy it before it destroys them.

This was originally, I believe, a made-for-TV movie, or at least TV is where I first saw it. While it isn't great art, it is kind of fun watching Brolin battle the car into submission. - Stephanie L. Bannon

Timelock

MTI Home Video and EGM Film International, Inc.

Directed by Robert Munic

Starring: Maryam D'Abo, Arye Gross, Jeffery Meek, Jeff Speakman

This direct to video artifact begins with our heroine, Maryam as a pilot and Ayre as a petty thief she is transporting to Alpha 4, an escape proof asteroid prison. There is, it seems, a plot to release from cryofreeze, a really serious felon(Speakman). His half brother aided by an inside traitor are set to release him and take over Alpha4. They scheme, not only to escape, but also to deal a serious blow to civilization in the process.

It is left to our intrepid pilot, aided by the petty thief to save the universe from this evil. The film has action, humor, moderately good sets and better acting than the hackneyed plot deserves. It is not great cinema, but it is fun. The action carries you along and you finish the movie smiling. What more can you ask? - Gary Swaty



In Our Book

Full Tide of Night

by J.R. Dunn

Avon Eos Books, 312 pp., \$5.99

It's no trade secret that the three main sources for modern storytellers are Shakespeare, the Bible, and classical mythology. Dunn has sort of used all three in this novel. The cover blurbs note that the inspiration for this book is Shakespeare-influenced play 'The Duchess of Malfi', a revenge tragedy by John Webster, written circa 1613 (Webster was the snooty kid with the mice in the movie 'Shakespeare in Love'). There are occasional Biblical allusions and new Judeo-Christian sects on this 24th-century colonized planet. And some villains Dunn has modeled after the mythic Furies, and even given them the same Latin-Greek name: Erinye. But the main villains are the Rigorists, an amalgam of every collectivist ideology that has committed mass murder in modern times: communists, fascists, ethnic cleansers, Jacobins of the French Revolution. Dunn expertly portrays the psychology that goes into such ideologies, and the motivations of various movement leaders. There is Fredrix, the epileptic Rigoist; Danil Cardanale, the academic scholar who helps the Rigoists; Tony Perin, the leader of the agricultural rebels; the Lady Amalfi, matriarch of the world, who has been overthrown by an alliance of rebels and Rigoists. And Cariola, Lady Amalfi's artificial intelligence computer, has its own hidden agendas. There is also an approaching starship which may contain the Erinyes. Most of all, this is a tale of paramilitary warfare, while the Lady Amalfi is under house arrest, the conquering alliance unravels. Dunn gets in historical, political, and military analyses in his tale, too. All of the characters except Cariola are human beings, and this is a novel that explores real human nature. The evil ones are the ideologues who have unrealistic views of human nature to impose on the world. In their warped minds, this justifies deceit, treachery, mass murder, torture, and war. Lots of that in this book, and it's still science fiction.

I especially like the touches where famous people and sayings from Earth history are misquoted or only half-remembered. It gives me a real sense of the future, ensconced in the problems of any time. - Michael Griffin

Kaspian Lost

by Richard Grant

Spike/Avon Books, 320 pp. \$24

I haven't read any Richard Grant for awhile. He wrote Rumors of Spring which I liked and Views from the Oldest House which I didn't much.

I liked this one. It's a weird, quirky tale about teenager Kaspian Aaby ('like the prince, with a 'K' he constantly explains) who, spiritually adrift, a trial to his ultra-religious stepmother (and without the much needed buffer of his father who died when he was a kid) and a puzzle to the public school system, finds himself in an experimental school, sponsored by a wealthy cattle baron who is trying to sell the idea of schools as franchises to a Congresswoman from North Dakota.

Soul weary of his inability to feel connected to anything, Kaspian decides one evening to take a literal hike from the scheduled curriculum and head off on his own into the Main woods....(what IS it about the Maine woods? Among others, they're Stephen King's favorite hang-out) And there he has an Experience: an 'X-files' type of encounter with little people and a white angel type woman who does an examination of him against his ability to resist.....

Are they aliens? Little people? (the others he meets are strange little men) Fignments of an awkward teenager?

He has no idea exactly what's happened, but when this experience is over, he finds four days have passed and he's sleeping on a 'fairy rock' some 60-70 miles away.

Unwilling to talk about his experience, his life just goes on downhill from there.

And even gets worse, because he meets up with the white angel woman one more time, has a vivid sexual experience with her, after falling asleep in the school's chapel. One of the school counselors finds him, in a pool of broken stained glass. Of course the administrators believe he broke the window (They neglect to notice the interesting detail that the glass is broken into the chapel and not laying outside in the grass).

Seen as incorrigible, he is sent away to the model of the school franchise program in Virginia, the cattle baron's pride and joy. Kaspian meets some other outcasts of course, whom he gets along with, including a troubled young woman, Charity, with whom he falls in love.

The story is likeable because Kaspian's trials seem believable, even with their unbelievable trappings and settings. He pulls you along into the story, stumbling and alternately confused and insightful about his predicament.

We even get an interesting explanation from one character about the nature of Kaspian's other-worldly experiences.

And the book's resolution is satisfying.

Grant's writing style is also quirky and flavorful, especially his dialogue. So, if you are in the mood for a moody teenager, lost, as they say, 'in his own private Idaho.'" I'd pick this one up. - Sue Martin

Sailing to Sarantium

by Guy Gavriel Kay
HarperPrism; 438 pp. \$24

I'm just going to do a quicky here about Guy Gavriel Kay's latest book.

I really, really enjoy this man's writing. It's literate, intelligent, spiced with dry wit and a wonderful sense of the magical. I loved Tigana and Song for Arbonne, etc. He develops characters and worlds (only slightly off from this planet) that are rich and human. And in this novel his skills are once again put to good use.

Sarantium (aka: Byzantium) is the capitol of an empire with fluctuating edges, like most empires. The emperors rise and fall, sometimes helped by assassination. Sarantium is the center of the Roman-esque civilisation people with Senators and artisans and military men of the rugged centurion mold.

Into this glittering decadence comes Crispin, a mosaicist from the outlands, a descendant of a tribe of people who once were as powerful as the current Sarantine Empire. He takes on his master's name (Martinian) to gain entry into Sarantium because the master doesn't want to leave his home town and Crispin decides to go in his stead. And take the Imperial offer he simply can't refuse: laying mosaic in a cathedral of awesome particulars (modeled no doubt on Hagia Sophia in Istanbul).

Crispin comes to Sarantium after having some amazing adventures, (and one with an 'old' god in a dark wood), and immediately gets plunged into the convolutions of Imperial politics and rival factions of charioteers.

But once he sees where he's going to use his artistic skills, he is swept into the emperor's vision.

And so, dear readers, are we.

Sail to Sarantium, and enjoy the ride! - Sue Martin

The Prophecy

by Sharon Green

Avon, 405 pp. \$6.50

The book "The Prophecy" is the last book in a series of five books called the Blending. It is a book that brings together the Powers of the Earth and the Spirit world to unite with Destiny. It is the perfect conclusion to a powerful series and for those of you who have read the first four books of this series, this book is everything you have been waiting for. - Karen Lantz (Jeff George's 15-year-old niece)

Memoranda

by Jeffrey Ford

Avon, 230 pp.; \$12

"Memoranda" is the second volume of a series that began with "The Physiogomy," World Fantasy award winner. A third volume is in the works.

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Volume 9 Issue 4

Cley, the former physiogomist, has fled the “well built city” with his friends and established an agrarian community without technology or cruelty.

Master Drachton Below’s evil ambitions were not destroyed with the explosion of his dark social experiment. Though subject to his own sleeping plague, Below unleashes it on the community. Cley must return to the illusionary dream world of Below’s mind to obtain the antidote. He must also survive to bring the antidote home.

This is a complex Quest taking place in the stygian depths created in Below’s dreaming. In saving his neighbors, Cley also saves Below. But, in giving the antidote, he turns the community into crime-ridden drug addicts, a plan of the evil master. When the compassionate demon After Misrix returns to detox him, they must leave to find new lands in the uncharted wilderness, (and set up Volume Three). The tale seems most like Franz Kafka giving birth to a child with John Gardner. The character of Misrix reminds me of Gardner’s Grendel.

The story, though complex, is not difficult to follow in its allegorical style. Not an easy read, but well worth the effort. - **Pam Allen**

We

by Yevgeny Zamyatin
Avon Books, 256 pp, \$5.99

This is a reprint of a historical volume which has had great impact on the writers of this century.

Penned by a disaffected Russian citizen only three years after the 1917 Revolution, it accurately portrays how the initial excesses of Socialism can expand to become a totalitarian society.

This is one of the books used by George Orwell to research parts of his outstanding novel, “1984” which was actually written in 1948. The reader will see many parallels in the structure of society between these two books, but the authors’ writing styles and character portrayals differ vastly.

Zamyatin’s protagonist starts out as a well-adjusted (for his society) worker with a rather pleasant lifestyle—just what the Socialists promised. He has food, shelter, a job and friends in a modern, technological, well-regulated and peaceful society. But some of his friends have original and independent ideas. These ideas are not considered illegal or anti-social, but rather the symptoms of a disease that needs to be “cured” in an ailing comrade—for his own good, of course. The plot becomes obvious from here on but the details of how the protagonist wends his way through the ultimate Socialist State are in the reading. And it’s quite an adventure. **Pete Manly**

The Repository by Adam Niswander Meisha Merlin, 291 pp.; \$14

This is about as classic a tale of Good Vs. Evil as you’ll find on the market today.

The Fellowship of Magic has waged a centuries-long tug-of-war with Satan and his minions. The Fellowship gives their all to maintain a balance and to keep Satan from getting the upperhand.

Lee Randall, a child of two mages in the Fellowship, who are, alas, undone by the machinations of the evil Urthane LaVoisin, is raised in an orphanage, in Virginia, ignorant of his heritage.

He’s extraordinary abilities manifest themselves very early and those adults around him (all members of the Fellowship), encourage and train his skills without revealing themselves until the time is right.

And that time comes when his uncle Josiah (who had organized his life so far) is killed by the wiley, centuries-old LaVoisin, plunging the young mage Lee into the adult world of no-holds-barred magic, fast.

His Destiny, according to his fellow mages, is to confront, and defeat LaVoisin once and for all, and keep Satan from running the planet.

Niswander lays all this out in a straightforward manner.

He brackets the third person narrative with notes from Ambrose Bierce, who is writing down the sequence of events for Lucifer’s edification: one Tall Tale teller to another. Bierce admits, of course, to some poetic license as he wasn’t there for every turn of event.

Niswander surrounds our hero with interesting characters. One of the most interesting being LaVoisin’s “Igor,” her assistant in her heinous deeds, Torgrimson. He is a huge, hulking, toad-like being—but once human. His is undoubtedly an interesting tale, like the pumpkin-headed kid in Niswander’s “The Sandwellers.”

My one quibble is: Egyptian magic, Druidic magic, Voodoo, Medieval magic and even the Black Arts are mentioned as sources of study for the Fellowship, but there is no mention of Kabbalistic esoterica, or any Eastern magics, other than ancient Egypt.

But this is just a small quibble. - **Sue Martin**

Science Fiction of the 20th Century

Frank M. Robinson
Collectors Press, 256 pg, \$59.95 hb

Science Fiction of the 20th Century is a superbly illustrated tour of science fiction in literature and film. The author, Frank M. Robinson, well known among SF fandom for his knowledge of the literature, displays his wide knowledge of the history of the field throughout his

commentary.

Most significant in the coverage of the book is a whole segment on the SF that is lost to most of today’s fans: The SF pulp and digest magazines. Robinson traces the history from its earliest form (the now rather brittle pulp magazines ... so called because of the cheap paper used) and the digest-sized magazines that are still around today.

The books chosen are by no means a complete list of the most significant publications in the field, but I’d have a tough time arguing with most of those he chose to include. Many are still available in reprint forms or used book stores today and I’d recommend most to a new reader ... though some are rather heavy fare for a novice in the field.

The one area that I’d argue with is its somewhat limited interpretation of SF. That is, the book mostly excludes fantasy and horror (except mostly-horror cross-overs, such as Frankenstein because of its scientific experimentation nature, and other such mixed themes). While it’s not too tough to define SF as only that which includes science, it rather excludes some good books written by many authors in the field.

I’d recommend this book as both a coffee-table reference that’s impressive to view and as a guide to help you find what to read for the coming year. Well worth the money! — **Bruce Farr**

Ancients of Days: Book Two of Confluence

by Paul McAuley
Avon/Eos, 386 pp.; \$16

As this is a second volume in a series, I decided to read Book One: “Child of the River,” which I enjoyed very much. I recommend you do the same as the book’s richness will be pretty much terra incognita in Book Two.

“Ancients of Days” continues the story of Yamamanama, known as Yama, a child found floating on the Great River as a baby on the breast of a ghostly white, dead woman.

He is raised by the Aedile of Aeolis as his son, and though motherless, has a happy childhood, shared with his stepbrother, Telmon.

But once he is a young man, everything changes.

You see, of all the shaped races on Confluence—a construct of the sainted and long absent Preservers—Yama’s bloodline is unique. He is the only known member of his people.

So, he leaves his happy home, sent ostensibly by his stepfather to the big city of Ys to be a clerk, but Yama, driven by his need to know himself, and unsettled by his companions, decides he doesn’t want to be buried in paperwork in a huge machine of a bureaucracy. He leaves his entourage and sets off to discover who he is and his destiny.

It’s all sort of Siddhartha meets up with Gene Wolfe’s “Shadow of the Torturer” series.

To put it very mildly, this is a wildly colorful and eccentric bit of business.

McAuley has a wonderful antique store kind of creativity: odd bits and pieces of the old and new; the unknown and the cobbled-together. All wrapped up in a fascinating quilt of images, peoples, landscapes, cultures, clothing and ancient ruins. The one other book of his I’ve read, “Pasquale’s Angel” is very similar in richness, though set in a Renaissance-flavored world.

Confluence itself is a straight stick of a world, divided lengthwise by the Great River and seemingly millions of years old. It is peopled with human-seeming races—with strange bits of animals thrown in—all developed by the revered Preservers, the center of the worlds religion, who disappeared one fine day into a black hole called, funnily enough, “The Eye of the Preservers.” Are they gone for good—a million years defunct? Or will they return some day?

And Yama, steadfast and goodhearted, remains true to his desire to discover his purpose and his people, no matter how folks try to disuade him. Can he prove he is truly one of the Builders, the first people of Confluence, as so many believe, especially his arch-nemesis, Dr. Dismas? Is he a messiah to lead the people into a new age? These are the ideas he wrestles with throughout the book. He trusts strangers on the road instinctively, but is equally repelled by the endless parade of nasty bureaucratic characters who want to use him for their own ends.

Throughout his travels, Yama also acquires a motley cadre of loyal followers who do their best to help and protect him and, who follow him to the ends of the earth, literally.

And this is where McAuley leaves us in Book Two. Book Three will take us over the edge, no doubt! - **Sue Martin**

The Gilded Chain: A Tale of the King’s Blades

by Dave Duncan
Avon/Eos; 396 pp.; \$6.99

This is the start of another high fantasy adventure series from Duncan, writer of the Great Game series.

The tale follows the adventurous life of one of the King’s Blades, Durendal (named for a famous Blade of the past).

A King’s Blade is bound through an arcane ritual to a ward, a person he is sworn to protect and serve above all else, above his own life and even above the king’s life.

Durendal’s career as a Blade, finds him first sworn to the weak and wishy Marquis of Nutting (get it?) which, though unbearable, gives him some valuable life lessons. He eventually ends up as the Blade for the much admired and

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In Our Book (Cont'd from page 15)

blustery King Ambrose IV, and his life is never the same.

I enjoyed reading about his five-year mission to mysterious Samarinda with his own Blade, Wolfbiter, where the two of them discover a horrible immortality ritual that has taken in one of their fellow Blades, and eventually proves a downfall for many of the high and mighty. I enjoyed his character and his abilities, especially how he handles the king.

Of course, what would a high adventure, swords-flashing hero be without his tenacious nemesis? Kromman is Durendal's constant thorn: an evil, crooked Inquisitor who dogs his career.

There is obviously lots of swordplay, and wordplay, battles in close quarters, hair-raising rides and lots and lots of political maneuvering in this novel.

And it is fun...BUT, Duncan used a literary device that was not only confusing but unnecessary. He starts the tale off with Durendal a sullen young lad talking to the Grand Master of Ironhall (where one trains to be a Blade), and then in the next chapter, we're suddenly dealing with Durendal as a old man. He switches between the young Durendal and the old only a couple of times, and then drops the switching back and forth and just proceeds on with the events of Durendal's life.

It took me a while to figure this out, because, early on, we find out there was ANOTHER Durendal, a legendary Blade, ages ago, the greatest swordsman of his time, etc., etc. All those around the current Durendal thought he had a lot of nerve naming himself for this larger-than-life hero...but its a moot point, because, he becomes a larger-than-life hero himself and quite lives up to the name.

This aside, the book was still fun and peopled with stalwart men and women, interesting evils and a slew of curious rituals.

The second volume of this series, "Lord of the Fire Lands" has just been published in hardback. - **Sue Martin**

The Daughters Of Bast The Hidden Land

by Sarah Isidore
Avon Books, 369 pp, \$6.50

"The Daughters Of Bast: The Hidden Land" is a historical fantasy that promises to be the first in a series of novels.

Vedela is a young girl born to one of the six tribes of Belgae, who lives by the river Rhine. Her aunt, or "foster mother," is one the most powerful Druids of her tribe. Vedela is sent to capture a animal, a cat, for a healing spell for a plague decimating her people. She lets the cat go, much to the displeasure of her aunt, who tells her that the animal was a gift from Great Mother Anu, and that she must recapture

it. On her way to look for the cat, she is lead to the Otherworld. There she meets Bast and her evil sister Sekmet. Bast tells Vedela that she will give her the ability to heal her tribe and also to give them a warning; the Romans are coming and her tribe will be conquered. Vedela then returns to her own world, starts healing her tribe and gives them Bast's warning. The tribe takes the warning the wrong way, thereby setting the stage for the rest of the book.

Sarah Isidore has done her home work and now I know where some expressions come from. The cat was relatively unheard of in Northern Europe at the time of the Druids, so the inspiration came from her own cat.

The pace of this book is pretty straightforward, although at times it seems to branch out, but the "branches" all come together again, making for a interesting read. I, for one, am looking forward to Sarah Isidore's next book. - **Helen "April" Rice**

Dragon Three Two Nine

by Peter L. Manly
169 pp, \$15.00 + \$2.50 shipping
orelectronic edition, \$5.00 (pdf file) at
www.scifi-az.com/manly

Princess Irulana is a bit of an over-achiever. A licensed dragon pilot, magician and messenger for her father the King, she rides Georgine the dragon all over her country on errands. Gradually, she discovers a dark plot to unseat her father and the situation gets Really Interesting.

This pleasant, easy reading juvenile novel is an expansion of three stories which have appeared in *Con Notations*. I particularly liked the flying sequences, which draw heavily on the author's piloting experience for an authentic feel. Though Manly has no current plans for more stories in this world, the world is drawn well enough to allow for other stories. - **Patrick Connors**

Lord of Sunset

by Parke Godwin
Avon; 566 pp.; \$6.99

As elegant a novel as "Sherwood," Parke Godwin has once again swept the reader into the early days of Norman England with smooth and graceful writing.

I've always been a fan of Godwin's. "A Truce with Time" is exquisite and "Waiting for the Galactic Bus" and "The Snake Oil Wars" were fall-down hysterical.

With this novel, we follow the last of the Saxon kings—Edward the Confessor and Harold Godwinsson—Harold II—the king who met William the Conqueror that day at Hastings.

Godwin follows the facts of Harold's life, much as they are succinctly laid out in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and then embroiders the story with prose as earthy

and colorful as the Bayeaux Tapestry. Edward the Confessor's career as king is shown from mid-reign. He is presented as prissy and settled into his absorption with his relationship with God—and only spottily interested in the rank and file of England and the struggles for the future.

Harold is straightforward as he can be, whether dealing with fractious brothers, loud Welsh kings taken with their own legend or the bullish concerns of William of Normandy. He is admirable, warm-hearted and clever and deeply loved his hand-fast wife Edith—whom the Church wouldn't recognize when he became king. So once crowned, he had to bow to expediency and "marry" some one else. But he loved Edith all his life and Godwin says, it was she and not the queen who was there at Hastings when the battle was over.

Godwin is a steady, wonderful writer—much the same as Guy Gavriel Kay. His fiction is suffused with a deep glow and a welcome underabundance of exclamation points and hysteria. But don't think it is all pastoral or intellectual ruminating, there is plenty of action, and character development.

This fateful tale begins where it ends: that awful night, long after sunset on the battleground of Hastings. The inevitable has happened, and William has conquered.

What a hellava a ride. - **Sue Martin**

Krondor: The Betrayal

Avon/EOS, Paperback, 418 pp, \$6.99
and

Krondor: The Assassins

Avon/EOS Hardback, \$25.00
by Raymond E. Feist

These two books are the latest adventures in Raymond E. Feist's long running fantasy series set in the land of Midkemia, under the umbrella title of *The Riftwar Legacy* trilogy.

Krondor: The Betrayal is based in large part on ideas and adventures that Feist developed for a computer role playing game *Betrayal* at *Krondor* for *Sierra Online* that is considered one of the best computer RPG's ever produced. In fact, the hardback edition of *Krondor: The Betrayal* came with a CD-ROM that contained the game. Feist has done much more than just adapt the game to novel form, and familiarity with the computer game is definitely not a requirement. However, having read the novel could help out with the game.

Krondor: The Betrayal covers a lot of territory in the *Midkemia* universe. Dealing with a threat from the *moredhel* to the kingdom and ending with a confrontation at *Sethanon* over the *Lifestone*. Familiar characters such as the magician *Pug*, thief turned squire *Jimmy the Hand*, squire *Locklear*, and Prince *Arutha* all play major roles. New characters such as the *moredhel* *Gorath*, the

apprentice magician *Owyn*, and the mysterious *Patrus* add to the roster of *Midkemia* characters.

The book does betray its computer RPG origins, however, with a lot of the characters moving around the kingdom on various quests and reaching decision points where they list their possible courses of action before deciding which one to take.

It is still a good read, maybe not up to the best of the overall series, but a worthy addition to it.

The new novel, *Krondor: The Assassins*, is not directly based on the original game or its sequel, *Return to Krondor*, but takes place between the two games, bridging the events of the two. Thus it reads more like a regular novel, not having as heavy an RPG background as the first novel. A third novel, *Krondor: Tear of the Gods*, will be released next year that adapts the events in the second game to print form.

Krondor: The Assassins focuses on three of the major characters, giving us more insight into what made them into the characters we see in the *Serpentwar Saga* novels. The main focus is on *Jimmy the Hand*, the former thief who is now a squire to Prince *Arutha*. Also featured is *William*, *Pug's* son, who has elected to become a soldier instead of a magician, much to his father's dismay.

The other major force in the novel is Prince *Arutha*, who has to deal with the threats to *Krondor*, making use of *Jimmy's* skills and *William's* trust to resolve them.

Krondor: The Assassins follows on directly from the events in *Krondor: The Betrayal*, with *Arutha* returning to *Krondor* to find that there has been a series of seemingly random murders. *Jimmy* discovers that a new force has pretty much wiped out *The Mockers*, *Krondor's* thieves guild and works to find the connection between the various murders. To make things worse, a visiting *Duke* is a target of these assassins and after a near successful attempt on his life, *Jimmy*, *Arutha* and *William* have to work together to find out who or what is behind it all.

Feist really makes the characters come alive in this novel, especially *Jimmy*. Since the focus is on fewer characters, the reader really gets a chance to identify with them. Its not as sprawling an adventure as some of the other novels in the series, keeping most of the action in *Krondor* or nearby. It definitely keeps the reader's interest as the story develops. It is relatively self-contained, but does offer an epilogue that serves as a teaser for the next novel in the series.

What I like most about these novels is the development we see in the characters that we first met in the *Riftwar Saga* and say goodbye to in the *Serpentwar Saga*. There was a lot that happened to them

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In Our Book (Cont'd from page 16)

between those two series and it's enjoyable to see more about them in print. - **Lee Whiteside**

Dust

by Charles Pellegrino
Harper, 450 pp, \$6.99

Science fiction fans as a group have seldom shied away from literature whose fabric was thickly interwoven with theoretical concepts which underpinned the action of the text. And *Dust*, an apocalyptic novel by Charles Pellegrino is just such a work of fiction.

Certainly there are flesh munching dust mites, crazed mobs hunting scientists through burning laboratories in the dark of night and enough nuclear explosions to spell out 'Lime Jello here' in Morse code to the folks on Aldebaran. But these are only secondary within the book to a presentation of interesting, and disturbing, speculations about the fragility of life on Earth. The author presents these in a well crafted narrative which moves the reader briskly along as the ecological disaster unfolds leaving one turning page after page to see what will happen next. At the end, after finishing the fictional tale, the author includes two extra sections. The first confirms as present day reality many of the disturbing signs of civilization's impending fall. The second is a bibliography of texts for those who would want to learn more about planetary ecology and the cycle of mass extinctions which seem to occur every 33 million years.

In many ways *Dust* is the best type of science fiction. Not only entertaining as literature it engages the speculative curiosity of the reader about many aspects of the natural world they might not yet have considered.

A definite recommended read in the hard science fiction category. - **Bruce Saul**

Plan B

By Steve Miller and Sharon Lee
Meisha Merlin, 336 pp, \$14.00

Now available from Amazon.com or Mark Ziesing is Steve Miller and Sharon Lee's "Plan B" published by Meisha Merlin

Plan B is the long awaited sequel to Miller and Lees 80's Trilogy. The series was incomplete and at long last in their inimitable style the authors have provided rip roaring answers to many of the questions about events in the wonderful Liaden Universe of Conflict of Honors, Agent of Change and Carpe Diem.

The authors have maintained the combination of dramatic action and humor in the original tales and have preserved their original flavor.

A Really Good read.

Meisha Merlin is reprinting the three

original novels in the Omnibus volume, Partners in Necessity in February 2000.

Two prequels in a volume titled Pilot's Choice are expected in 2001.

Additionally fans can look at www.korval.com for more about the Liaden Universe. - **Gary Swaty**

A Signal Shattered

by Eric S. Nyland
Avon, 378 pp, \$23.00

A Signal Shattered is a sequel to *Signal to Noise*. It would appear to have at least one sequel more to come. It can stand alone.

In *Signal To Noise*, The Earth has been destroyed by the offices of the alien trader known only as Wheeler, [through the unknowing help of Jack Potter, Mathematician and cryptographer] Jack has managed to save himself and a few others through instantaneous transmission to a base on the moon. Along with Jack, and his few survivors, also saved are Isabel, and Zero, Jack's former friends and partners. No one trust anyone else. Someone is sabotaging their survival mechanisms and Wheeler wants Jack to join him or be destroyed. and Zero has infected them with an enzyme that makes them smarter but fragments their minds past coherence. Will the remains of the Human race survive and wend their way free of their fragmenting minds.

Does Mandelbrot seem an artist? Do virtual reality, fractals, and fragmenting minds hod a fascination? You'll love this novel. But even I, the mathematically challenged, found myself pulled in and following the permutations of this challenging book. Though not an easy read, it is worth the effort - **Pam Allan**

The Stone And The Maiden

by Dennis Jones
Avon, 421 pp, \$23.00

The Stone And the Maiden is classic Fantasy. A sequel is in the works for a series titled *The House of the Pandragore*.

The Tathers, barbarian hordes abetted by the Black sorcerer Er kai of the Chain, have cut a bloody swath through the Ascendency and are on the verge of winning the war. Er kai's chain consumes the life force of the captured and grows stronger with every one it takes. The only hope is the Signata, a talisman of deep magic, which appears different to every one and whose location is unknown. Mandine Dascaris, heiress to the throne, and Key Mec Brander of Elthame are chosen by the god and goddess to save the world if they can. The price of success could be their lives.

This book transcends the usual epic fantasy confines with good characters, and strange twists. It is hard to put down. { a real Page turner} A must read for fantasy lovers - **Pam Allan**

Club Listings

(To have your club listed or to correct your listing please contact the editor in writing.)

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. For details, call (602)582-6990.

ARERIAL MIRAGE JUGGLING CLUB International Juggling Association affiliate club meets 7-10pm Wednesday evenings at Encanto Park. No dues, everyone welcome. All levels skill exchange in many areas of object manipulation. Devils' Club meets Fridays 5pm north of the Hayden Library on the ASU campus. For more info, call (602) 585-7623, or write 2326 E. Electra Lane, Phoenix, AZ 85024.

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@earthling.net Web: <http://www.gibbed.com/all> VoiceMail: 602-306-9339

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

BASFA Baja Arizona Science Fiction Association, a non-profit organization. Puts on TUS-CON Convention annually.

CENTRAL ARIZONA SPECULATIVE FICTION SOCIETY, INC.

(CASFS) The non-profit corporation that puts on CopperCon conventions, SmurfCons, HexaCons, occasional regional cons, and publishes Con-Notations. Best described as SF/F generalists with a strong bent towards literary SF/F. Guests welcome - meets at 8pm on the last Friday of each month in January thru September and the second Friday in October, November and December at JB's Restaurant, 2560 W. Indian School in Phoenix, AZ. Write PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 or call Stephanie L. Bannon (602)973-2341 for information. Web www.casfs.org

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 (602) 978-9314.

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

DESERT LURKERS Tucson based Babylon 5 fan club. Meets and communicates via listserv over the Internet. Anyone with e-mail access can subscribe to the Desert Lurkers by sending e-mail to b5-l-request@dragon.org and putting "subscribe" (minus the quotation marks) in the subject line. Interested people can contact Alexander Goodrum at E-mail address: goodrum@AZStarNet.com

EARTHLINK SCI-FI CLUB SF

generalists with some focus on comics and environmental issues. Meets at various conventions and occasions. Publishes a quarterly newsletter called *Cosmic Wavelengths*. For information contact them at 8508 E. San Lorenzo, Scottsdale, AZ 85258, or call Nohl Rosen at (602) 991-8847.

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Club Listings (Cont'd from page 17)

THE EMPIRE OF CHIVALRY AND STEEL, INC. The Empire of Chivalry and Steel specializes in the general recreation of the culture of the Middle Ages including all of the Art Forms, Events (Feasts, Tournaments, Ceremonies and Wars) and Combat Arts covering the years of 800AD up to 1650AD and any location within Europe or its explored territories. For more information contact Bart Smith (Phoenix) (602)937-6995 or Leonard Bird (Tucson) (520)742-2432

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF JEDI KNIGHTS Members of the Tatooine Base have revised the International Brotherhood of Jedi Knights, a not-for-profit fan club dedicated to Star Wars. Membership is \$8.00 U.S. and/or \$11.00 (Canada/foreign) and includes a membership packet consisting of a one year subscription to *The New Jedi Times* (published 6 times a year), membership card, IBOJK charter & bylaws information on Jedi studies and a free gift. Checks should be made to either Patty Vance or Elizabeth Laignel. For further information send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: The I.B.O.J.K.; P. O. Box 5459; Glendale, AZ 85312-5459; or call either Patty or Lilly at (602) 843-8303. May the Force show you the way of the Jedi!

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION COUNCIL Meets every 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month. Meeting at the Westridge Mall (75th Ave. and Thomas Rd. Phoenix, AZ. The IFC is regimental (Using Ranks and structured simmialrly to ST) but has social events as well. Attends local Creation And Trek Production Cons, and ST Movie premiers. POC for IFC is A/Fleet Admiral John Nelson (602) 934-3987 or by voice mail (602) 409-7169 or c/o P.O. box 14370 Phoenix, AZ 85063-4370. E-Mail: Bnelson502@aol.com Membership Approx 35-50. The Bi-Monthly newsletter is *Cactus Log*.

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

LEPRECON, INC. One of the two Phoenix area corporations that put on yearly conventions. Best described as SF/F generalists with a main thrust into SF/F art. Guests are welcome. The meetings are quarterly on the second Saturday of February, May, August & November unless otherwise notified. August is the annual meeting where board positions are determined. For more information, write PO Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285 ; call Mike Willmoth at (602) 945-6890 or Email: mwillmoth@comupserve.com

THE PHOENIX FANTASY FILM SOCIETY A Phoenix based club interested in the entire realm of SF, Fantasy and Horror film. PFFS has been in existence for 25 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.

PHOENIX JAPANIMATION SOCIETY Local chapter of Japanimation/general animation oriented fans - meets monthly. Membership is free, though optional monthly newsletter is \$5/year or \$.50 per month. Call Tom Perry at (602) 996-2196 or write 3241 E. Altadena, Phoenix, AZ 85028.

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 AZ85202-3144 or email to 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 Carrow's Restaurant at 7th Street & Monte Vista in Phoenix every Sunday from 3pm-9pm (except during conventions and other special events). Open to new members - call (602) 849-9515.

ROLE PLAYING GAMES CLUB (RPGC) The official gaming club of Az. State University. Activities include: live-action roleplaying games, tabletop gaming, conventions, parties, etc. General meetings are open to the public and are held every Friday at 6pm in ASU's Memorial Union. Dues are \$5/semester. For more info, contact Michael McLaughlin, 1730 W. Emelita #2025, Mesa, AZ 85202-3144, or call (602)464-3144; RPGC@asu.edu

SCIENCE FICTION CONTINUUM The Science Fiction Continuum: An Independent Star Trek and Sci-Fi club in Phoenix, AZ. The SFCOM is an active club that participates in Local Phoenix, and Southwestern Star Trek and Sci-Fi conventions and movies. The SFCOM has three different divisions. The SFCOM itself, a free group where fun is the name of the game. The Deep Space SolarFlare (DSSF) an active member club in the International Federation of Treker's (IFT). This group is based on DS9 (a space station). And the IKV Sto-Vo-Kor (Independent Kilngon Vessel). A Klingon

Bird of Prey, roming the desert looking for battle. Are the Fed's too soft, looking for combat, feel the call to glory. This is the ship for you. Membership in the SFCOM is free! To join DSSF or the Sto-Vo-Kor a nominal fee for the national clubs involved and uniforms. For further information contact President John Nelson at (602) 409-7169 or on the internet at; BNelson502@aol.com or check out our web site. <http://members.aol.com/bnelson502/index.html>

SFACE (Speculative Fiction And Computer Enthusiasts) Phoenix College's one and only connection to the worlds of speculative fiction, including science fiction, fantasy, and horor as well as table top, live action and internet gaming, SFACE also serves as a guide through the Internet - both teaching basic use and utilizing as a source of speculative fiction. For more info, contact citizenjustice@hotmail.com

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

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

THE SOUTHWEST COSTUMER'S GUILD The Southwest Costumers Guild is a loose organization of persons interested in all facets of historical, cultural, science fiction, fantasy, and humor costume. Members are often seen on stage and behind the scenes atmost local and regional Science Fiction Convention masquerades.They meet on the last Sunday of each month at various mmmbers' homes in the greater phoenix area. Call, write or email for details. Southwest Costumers Guild, PO Box 39504, Phoenix, AZ 85609 or call Randall Whitlock at (602)995-7514, email randwhit@aol.com or Website: <http://members.aol.com/souwesgld/guulg.html>

STARBASE TUCSON Tucson Arizona based Star Trek club. For info call Geof Wood at (520) 746-1822 or write Starbase Tucson ; 3314 E. Benson Hwy ; Tucson AZ 85706. Email:pegasis409@aol.com

STONEHENGE BBS Enjoy over 60 online games including TradeWars 2002, StarFight, The Pit, Dirty Play, Usurper, LORD, and Battle Grid (new, like Battletech). Topical message boards, E-Mail, and Network Echoes. 1000's of files to download: utilities, games, GIF pictures, & more every day! Stop by and give us a try at Stonehenge BBS (602) 947-2223, FidoNet 1:114/120, 300-9600bps, V.32/V.42bis, 24 hours a day.

TARDIS TARDIS is a Phoenix-based General SF/Fantasy Fan Club, specializing in International media SF/Fantasy since 1983. TARDIS meets every two weeks at different locations around the valley. Activities include watching videos, discussions, parties, fund-raisers, auctions, games, camping trips and outings. We also maintain an active presence at local conventions. TARDIS publishes a monthly informative newsletter, *The Index File*, with a national circulation which is included with membership. Annual membership is just \$12.50. You can contact us at P.O. Box 63191, Phoenix, AZ 85082-3191, Voice Mail at (602) 864-0901, E-mail TARDIS-Info@primenet.com or visit <http://www.primenet.com/~jgeorge/tardis.html>

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

T.H.E.M. T.H.E.M. is ASU's science fiction and fantasy club. Weekly meetings are held in the Memorial Union, with dates to be announced after the semester starts. For more information, contact Becky Fox at E-mail rowan@asu.edu or phone 863-1543 To subscribe to our listserv, send a message to them-request@asu.edu.

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

Z-PHILES are the ariZona x-PHILES. We maintain a mailing list for news and get-togethers of fans of the X-Files living

in Arizona. We get together in both the Phoenix and Tucson areas. To subscribe, send an empty message to z-philes-subscribe@egroups.com

UNITED FEDERATION OF PHOENIX A Phoenix area Star Trek and general SciFi fan club. We are a social club that meets every two weeks at various locations around the Phoenix area. The UFP has been meeting for over 20 years of continuous activity. Dues are \$10/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

UNITED WHOVIANS OF TUCSON A well-informed and very active Dr. Who club. \$15 yearly membership includes four issues of their fanzine - TARDIS Time Lore - written by semi-pros and other dedicated fans. For more information, contact The United Whovians of Tucson at P. O. Box 13541, Tucson, AZ 85732-3541. Also, you can contact the president at kfbuwot@aol.com or the vice-president at uwotwww@aol.com. The web page for the club is located at: <http://www.azstarnet.com/~hgadlng/uwotclub.htm>

Convention Listings

The Eleventh Hour of Gallifrey One (Gallifrey 2000), (Van Nuys, CA) America's annual Doctor Who and SF television convention, is **February 18-20, 2000** at the Airtel Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles (Van Nuys), California. Peter Davison (the Fifth Doctor) is the guest of honor. Additional Doctor Who guests include Terrance Dicks (former script editor); Stephen Cole & Justin Richards (BBC Books editors); Gary Russell & Jason Haigh-Ellery (Big Finish Productions); Philip Segal (1996 film producer); and Dr. Who novelists Kate Orman & Jonathan Blum, Paul Magrs, Dave Stone, Mike Tucker, Keith Topping, Jon Miller and Paul Cornell. Other guests include Gary Graham, Michelle Scarabelli and Eric Pierpoint (Alien Nation); Erin Gray (Buck Rogers); Peter Woodward, Carrie Dobro, David Allen Brooks and Maggie Egan (Crusade); Andrew Prine (V); Bob May (Lost in Space); Tiny Ron (Deep Space Nine); J. Michael Straczynski ("Babylon 5" creator); SF novelist John DeChancie; producer Bill Baggs (BBV); celebrated SF artist Frank Kelly Freas

and many more. Memberships are \$45 until Jan 31st and \$50 at the door. Info: Gallifrey Conventions, PO Box 3021, North Hollywood, CA 91609. Phone: (818) 752-3756 <http://www.gallifreyone.com> or email info@gallifreyone.com.

Arizona Book Festival (Phoenix, AZ) **April 8, 2000** Margaret T Hance Deck Park, 1221 N. Central. 10 am to 5 pm. Free Admission. 3rd annual festival with lots of authors, exhibits and booksellers including CASFS and LepreCon, whose booths will feature local authors and artists. Book Fest info: (602) 257-0335, <http://www.azbookfest.org> Casfs & LepreCon Booth info: <http://www.casfs.org/events.html>

LepreCon 26 (Scottsdale, AZ) **May 19-21, 2000** Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort, Scottsdale, Arizona. Artist GOH: Lubov, Author GoH: TBA, Local Artist GoH: Larry Vela; Filk Guest: Marilyn Miller, More Guests TBA; Memberships \$25 until 1/1/00, \$30 until 5/01/00 and \$35 at the door. Kids 7-12 half price, Kids 6 and under Free. Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort, 7601 E Indian Bend Road, Scottsdale, AZ (602) 991-2400. Standard Rooms \$72 + tax S/D/T/Q, Suites \$125 + tax S/D/T/Q Info: LepreCon 26, PO Box 26665, Tempe, AZ. 85285 Phone: (480) 945-6890 or Email: inverted@primenet.com or mwillmoth@compuserve.com Webpage: www.leprecon.org

AgamemCon IV (Burbank, CA) **June 23-25, 2000** Hilton Burbank Airport. Membership \$45 until May 31, 2000 Website: www.agamemcon.org

HexaCon 10 (Scottsdale AZ) **July 14-16, 2000** Arizona's Largest Gaming Convention held at the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort. 24 hour NON-STOP gaming, Magic and other CCG tournaments, RPGA, LARP, Computers, Miniature Painting Contest, Used Game Auction, Full Con suite and more. Special Thursday evening events for pre-registered members only. Membership \$15 until June 15, 2000; \$20 at the door. Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort, 7601 E. Indian Bend Road (480) 991-2400, Rooms \$65 S/D/T/Q (plus tax) For more information: call (602) 973-2341 write HexaCon 10, PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 Webpage: www.casfs.org email dyer@casfs.org

Chicon 2000, the 58th Worldcon (Chicago, IL) **August 31-September 4, 2000** (Hyatt Regency, Chicago) GoHs: Ben Bova, Bob Eggleton, Jim Baen, TM: Harry Turtledove. Memb.: \$135, higher later, \$40 supporting. Info: P.O.Box 642057, Chicago, IL 60664 E-Mail: infobot@chicon.org, chi2000@chicon.org and <http://www.chicon.org/>

CopperCon 2000 (Scottsdale, AZ) **September 8-10, 2000** Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort, Scottsdale, Arizona Author Goh: Philip Jose Farmer, Artist Goh: Vincent Di Fate, Music Guest: Cecilia Eng. Memberships \$20 thru 12/31/99 \$25 thru 5/31/00, \$30 thru 8/26/00, \$35 at the door. Kids 7-12 half price, 6 & under Free with adult membership. Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort, 7601 E. Indian Bend Road (480) 991-2400, Rooms \$65 S/D/T/Q For more information: call (602) 973-2341 write CopperCon 2000, PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 <http://www.casfs.org/cucon>, email jim@strait.org

BATS 2000 (Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow, London, England) **Oct 27-29, 2000** The multimedia Halloween convention of 2000! With guests from the various facets of the horror genre. Bats 2000 is now being organized by a committee of six with limited experience but lots of determination and stamina! All proceeds go to charity. Web: <http://www.burple.com/bats2000/> Email: bats2000

TusCon 27 (Tucson, AZ) **Nov 10-12, 2000** at the Executive Inn. GoH: TBA, Artist GoH: Liz Danforth, TM: Ed Bryant. Panels, Readings, Meet the Authors, Art Show, Children's Zone, Video Room, and Con Suite. Artists interested in panels should contact Rebecca (520) 293-1455 immediately! Dealers contact Cristi at (520) 881-3709. More info: TusCon 27, PO Box 26822, Tucson, AZ 85726 Webpage: <http://www.azstarnet.com/~basfa>



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Generic Convention Registration Form

Name: _____

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

(See calendar for mailing address)

More info on Masquerade Art Show Volunteer Other

ConNotations
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