

THE NATIONAL FANTASY FAN

PRODUCED BY THE NATIONAL FANTASY FAN FEDERATION



VOL. 10, Nos. 3-4
DECEMBER 2010

National Fantasy Fan Federation 2010 Officers

President: Jon D. Swartz, 12115 Missel Thrush Court, Austin, TX 78750; jon_swartz@hotmail.com

The Directorate

Chairman: Dennis Davis, 25549 Byron St., San Bernardino, CA 92404-6403; n3f_info@yahoo.com

Vice Chairman: Sarah E. Harder, 1574 Notre Dame Ave., Belmont, CA 94002; artistsbureau@yahoo.com

Heath Row, 438 N. Stanley Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036; kalel@well.com

David Speakman, 501 Moorpark Way #83, Mountain View, CA 94041; davodd@gmail.com

Keith Walker, 6 Vine St., Lancaster, Lancashire LA1 4UF UK; kwalker777@aol.com

Secretary: Dennis Davis (see Directorate, Chairman)

Treasurer: William Center; captbilly@verizon.net

Election Teller: Ruth R. Davidson, 4807 Capay Drive #2, San Jose, CA 95118; qualtree@ruthiechan.net

Historian: Jon D. Swartz (see President)

The Editorial Cabal

Editor: Heath Row (See Directorate)

Online Editor: Ruth R. Davidson (see Election Teller)

Reviews Editor: Heath Row (see Directorate)

Art Editor: Sarah E. Harder (see Directorate, Vice Chairman)

Publisher: Craig Boyd, P.O. Box 25631, Little Rock, AR 72221-5631

Distributor: Dennis Davis (see Directorate, Chairman)

Advisor: Ruth R. Davidson (see Election Teller)

Bureaus and Activities

Artists Bureau: Sarah E. Harder (see Directorate, Vice Chairman)

Birthday Cards: R-Laurraine Tutihasi, P.O. Box 5323, Oracle, AZ 85623-5323; laurraine@mac.com

Blind Services: Steven T. Rose, Jr.; therockitrose@yahoo.com

Correspondence: Sarah E. Harder (See Directorate, Vice Chairman)

Gaming: George Phillies, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester, MA 01609; phillies@4liberty.net

Kaymar Awards: William Center (see Treasurer)

The Mangaverse: Ruth R. Davidson (see Election Teller)

Membership Cards: Dennis Davis (see Directorate, Chairman)

Membership Drive: Dennis Davis (see Directorate, Chairman)

N3F Bookworms: Heath Row (see Directorate)

N3F Historian: Jon D. Swartz (see President)

Naffer Amateur Press Alliance (N'APA): R-Laurraine Tutihasi (see Birthday Cards)

Neffy Awards: David Speakman (see Directorate)

Round Robins: Patricia King, 510 Village Court, Nashville, TN 37206

Short Story Contest: Jefferson Swycaffer, P. O. Box 15373, San Diego, CA 92175-5373; abontides@cox.net

Webmistress: Ruth R. Davidson (see Election Teller)

Welcommittee: Cynthia Richter, 1740 Ocean Ave. #11B, Brooklyn, NY 11230

David K. Robinson, 88235 Highway 9 #5, Lineville, AL 36266-6944

Writers Exchange: Joy Beeson, 1700 Park Ave., Winona Lake, IN 46590; joybeeson@comcast.net

Open positions: Computer Gaming, Convention Coordinator, Future Fandom, and Teaching Science Fiction. Please volunteer!

The National Fantasy Fan, Vol. 10, No. 3-4: The Official Organ of the National Fantasy Fan Federation (N3F). This issue was completed Dec. 7, 2010. The editor was Heath Row. The editor for the next issue is Heath Row, 438 N. Stanley Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036; kalel@well.com. Please send submissions and questions to him or the editorial cabal advisor. All opinions herein are those of the writers and do not reflect the opinions of other members of the N3F except where so noted. Submission deadline for the next issue is Feb. 15, 2011. This zine is to be published quarterly in March, June, September, and December through volunteer effort. All material in this issue was contributed for one-time use only, and the copyright is retained by the contributor. Reproduction in any media of any portion of this publication is prohibited without official permission of the current president and directorate or the individual contributor. "Ten months after the last plane passed over, Rolf Smith knew beyond doubt that only one other human being had survived."

©2010 The National Fantasy Fan Federation—<http://www.n3f.org>

Letter from the President

Even though this issue of *The Fan* was delayed, I'm excited about the activities of our club. We've started several new publishing projects to celebrate the important anniversary coming up in 2011. The National Fantasy Fan Federation was founded in 1941, so next year is an important year. Few local science fiction clubs have been active as long as we have, and no national clubs can claim such a distinction.

The first in a new series of Fandbooks edited by Heath Row has been published. *Pseudonyms of Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Authors* was written by me, and club member Ray Nelson wrote the introduction. All members should have received their copy by now; if you haven't, contact Dennis Davis. In the early 1960s, the club published four Fandbooks on such topics as amateur press associations, fandom history, the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund, and fan terminology. I've written about some of the early handbooks in *The Fan*. The new Fandbook was numbered 5 to continue the tradition.

At one time, the N3F was known for its publications, which even included a hardbound book, *The Sign of the*

Burning Hart: A Tale of Arcadia by David H. Keller, MD. Because of that book, the club was listed in references such as *The Index to the Science-Fantasy Publishers* (1966) by Mark Owings and Jack L. Chalker. They wrote, "The National Fantasy Fan Federation is the one exception to our rule of listing everything in paper done by a publisher with a hardback. We couldn't handle the giant mass of fanzines, booklets, etc. they have done since their founding almost 30 years ago. It's an unusual group of fans who join the club, then form their own independent subgroups (publishing, games, bibliographic, etc.) with their own publications." It's our goal to return to those glory days—when other fans were in awe of our productivity. It's even possible we'll publish another book!

We're planning future publications on a variety of topics. If you have any ideas, contact me or Heath. In addition to the new Fandbooks, a membership directory—compiled by Dennis Davis—will be published next year. Be sure you're included in this directory, which will help mark the 70th anniversary of our club!

—Jon D. Swartz

Table of Contents

"Untitled" by Lee and J.J. MacFadden.....	cover	Sidebar: Recommended Discussion Areas.....	18
National Fantasy Fan Federation 2010 Officers.....	2	Fiction: "Escapism".....	19
Bureaus and Activities.....	2	2010 N3F Short Story Contest Entry Form.....	20
Letter from the President.....	3	Re: The Review Section.....	21
Submission Guidelines.....	3	2011 N3F Election Platforms.....	27
Tightbeam: Letters of Comment.....	4	Bureaus and Activities Reports.....	28
Historical Vignette: <i>Hannes Bok Illustration Index</i>	5	Secretary's Report.....	30
Member Spotlight: George Phillies.....	6	Treasurer's Report.....	31
Frank Frazetta: Painting With Fire.....	8	Membership Roster.....	32
Convention Report: Westercon.....	12	Convention Calendar.....	33
Convention Report: Baycon.....	14	Membership Application.....	35
A Fan's Guide to Social Media.....	15	Illustrations.....	credited throughout
Sidebar: A Word on Email.....	17		

The National Fantasy Fan Submission Guidelines

The Fan is the official clubzine for the N3F. It is published quarterly in March, June, September, and December. Deadlines are the 15th day of the month before the publication month (e.g. Feb. 15 for the March issue). When submitting, paper copies are fine, but electronic formats are preferred. Paper submissions won't be returned without an SASE. Submissions can be made to the current editor

or the advisor; query first. Send art to the art editor; send reviews to the reviews editor. Art—covers and illustrations—is always needed. Please send only copies of your work, not originals. If you've never submitted an article to a zine and aren't totally comfortable with writing, please consider writing a letter of comment. All submissions will be edited.

Tightbeam: Letters of Comment

The June issue's interview with Jacqueline Lichtenberg was interesting and inspiring! She's given us some interesting blogs to follow, which I have yet to do. There are just too many of them to read!

I also liked the article on Rod Serling. I was intrigued by the parts that explained the social aspects of his work, especially in *The Twilight Zone*. His way of thinking and the philosophy that has driven his work are fascinating.

It's science fiction and fantasy writers such as those two who inspire my own writing career; that keeps me motivated to keep going with my work.

—Steven Rose, Jr.

I kept telling myself I should get more active in the N3F, and then I realized my membership had expired. Oh woe! So I'm writing to our esteemed president and secretary to see about fixing that.

Ruth Davidson: You are such a sweetheart for sending me your sketch of me as an Honor Harrington-esque spacer! Thank you so much. I plan to get it framed as soon as possible. Hope your studies are going well.

Heath: The comments from the FAPAns you received and ran in Vol. 10, No. 2, are pretty much par for the course. I was in FAPA for awhile as well, but left after I realized that most of the FAPAns were discussing things in which I had no interest. I'm enjoying myself a lot more as co-editor of *Steam Engine Time*. Wish me and Bruce Gillespie luck: He's up for a Ditmar this year for best fan writer and as co-editor with me for best fanzine. The Ditmars are one of the annual Australian science fiction awards—perhaps the best known—and will be awarded this year at AussieCon 4, the Worldcon for 2010.

I have two part-time jobs that should keep me well enough financed in the coming months; I can do both jobs online. One of them is as a freelance book reviewer, so my bookshelves are well stocked. Not sure what to do with the advanced reading copies, though—maybe donate them to the N3F as giveaways? Suggestions are welcome!

The interview with Jacqueline Lichtenberg was very good, and I learned a few things from reading it, so that's a plus! Nice to see fiction back in the clubzine, too.

—Janine Stinson

Editor's Note: Bruce Gillespie and Janine Stinson's fanzine *Steam Engine Time* won the 2010 Ditmar for Best Fan Publication in Any Medium. Congratulations, Janine!

Science fiction and fantasy fan—and author—Patric Michael helped me extensively with the back end of the N3F Web site. I recently found out that he is dying. He was diagnosed nearly a year ago with angioimmunoblastic T-cell lymphoma (stage three), which has since become peripheral T-cell lymphoma.

Ironically, I found this out after asking him for a donation to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. I was taking part in their Team In Training program for an

endurance event. I planned to walk 26.2 miles in one day in December—but an injury will prevent me from participating. Regardless, I helped raise funds to help find a cure for blood cancers. I hoped to wear Patric's name around my neck and on my back during the event. I was going to walk in his honor. I have created a short URL to my fundraising page: tnt.ruthiechan.net.

—Ruth R. Davidson

I've been typing up my bureau reports with the movie *Batteries Not Included* in the background. I can't help it, as cheesy as it is, I think those baby flying saucers are cute! And I love Hume Cronyn and Jessica Tandy. I've always found them to be a charming couple.

I posted an article on our club Facebook page about the upcoming Blu-ray release of the original *Star Wars* trilogy. It's a great idea. The clincher is that they are including a never-before-seen deleted scene from *Return of the Jedi*, along with other goodies. This is great for those with Blu-ray who would buy it anyway, but those of us with only a DVD player feel a little cheated. It wouldn't be a big deal if not for the deleted scene (and *Jedi* is my favorite of the movies). Why couldn't the scene have been released before, I ask? George Lucas keeps re-releasing the movies with even better extras or additions, which I've always felt was a sneaky—if not brilliant—marketing ploy. I mean, how many times do we need to buy those movies? According to the article, this will be the sixth release of the original trilogy. At least he's bringing out the new extras with the release of the Blu-ray and not another DVD set. It's definitely something to look forward to. Any of you in my area have a Blu-ray player?

Well, I've finally decided to do it after a decade of just thinking about it. I'm going to enter the short story contest. I haven't written a short story since high school, but recently I forced myself to sit down and make an attempt. I can't say for sure how good it is, but I do know I'm proud. For not having written for so long, it's not too shabby. I've always encouraged folks to go for it even when they weren't confident they could do it. Now I'm taking my own advice. It's been a great learning—and growing—experience!

—Sarah E. Harder

Thank you for mentioning me and my magazine, *Nova Science Fiction*, in your story about Gallifrey One in the March 2010 issue. I'm not sure how I missed finding out about the N3F until now. I've been a science fiction fan since 1974, when I watched my first *Star Trek* rerun. I've been involved in fandom since 1995, when I attended my first Loscon. In 1999, I began publishing *Nova SF* magazine. I've been in contact with sf writers and fans from all over America and also a few foreign countries. I can't believe I missed hearing about your organization! Well, I'm going to make up for some lost time. I recently joined the N3F.

—Wesley Kawato

Historical Vignette: *Hannes Bok Illustration Index*

By Jon D. Swartz

In 1970, Ned Brooks and Don Martin compiled a 28-page index of all the known published artwork of Hannes Bok for the collectors bureau of the National Fantasy Fan Federation. The publisher of the index was identified as Ned Brooks under his legal name of C.W. Brooks, Jr.

At the time, the collectors bureau was located in Newport News, Virginia, the city where Brooks lived while he worked at NASA's Langley Research Center. Brooks and Martin—who never met face to face—were active in the N3F's collectors bureau and worked on *Collector's Bulletin*, which was published by the bureau. Brooks won the Kaymar Award in 1972.

The price of the index was \$1, except for club members, who only had to pay 50 cents a copy. There were two subsequent editions of the index, the most recent in 1994. That is available online at http://fanac.org/Fannish_Reference_Works/NedBrooks/BOKINDEX.htm.

Hannes Bok, then, was a pseudonym used by Wayne Woodard (1914-1964), an American artist and illustrator, as well as an amateur astrologer and sometime writer of fantasy fiction and poetry. Early in life, he changed his name to Hans—later Hannes—Vajn Bok, as a tribute to his favorite composer, Johann Sebastian Bach. At other times, he used the pseudonym Dolbokgov.

Bok painted nearly 150 covers for various science fiction, fantasy, and horror magazines, and contributed hundreds of black-and-white interior illustrations to those publications. Early in his career, he provided artwork to fanzines such as Ray Bradbury's *Futura*. He was also a member of the famed Futurian Society of New York. Bok's work graced the dust jackets from early specialty book publishers such as Arkham House, Shasta, and Fantasy Press.

His paintings achieved a luminous quality through the use of an arduous glazing process, which he learned from his mentor, artist Maxfield Parrish. Bok was the first artist to be awarded a Hugo Award, which he shared with Ed Emshwiller. As the years passed, Bok became prone to disagreements with editors over money and artistic issues.

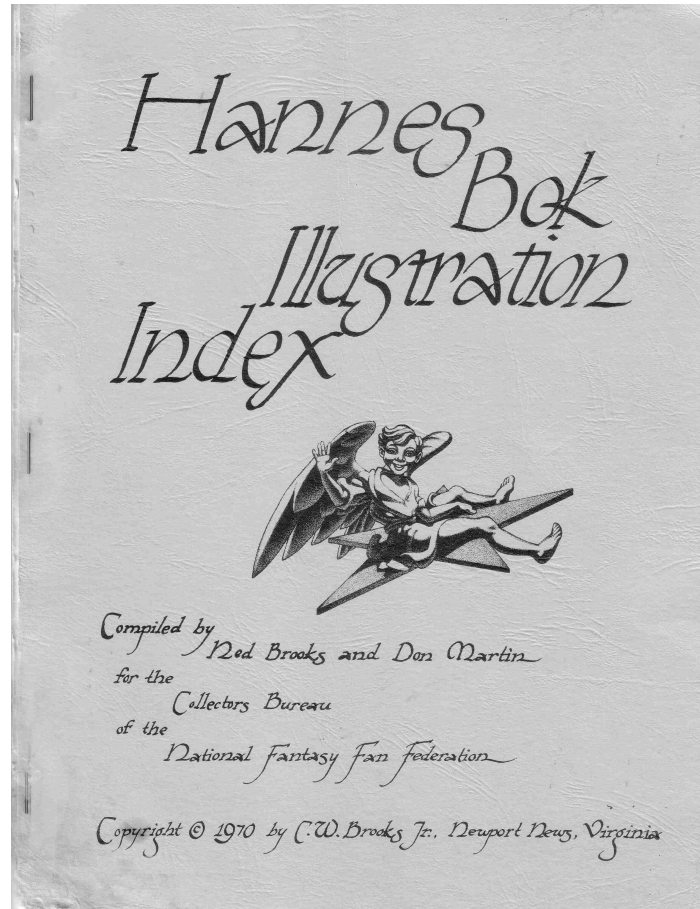
He also grew reclusive, mystical, and preoccupied with the occult. Bok eked out a living and was often in near poverty, until his death in 1964—apparently due to a heart attack. He was only 49.

The index consisted of all known published artwork by Bok in magazines, books, art folios and single prints, fanzines, and miscellaneous items. Magazines listed alphabetically ranged from *Astonishing Stories* (10 issues from April 1940 to April 1943) to *Weird Tales* (38 issues from December 1939 to July 1954). The 36 books, listed alphabetically by title, ranged from *Alien Minds* by E. Everett Evans (Fantasy Press, 1955) to *Who Goes There?* by John W. Campbell, Jr. (Shasta, 1948). There were also 77 art folios and single prints listed chronologically from the early 1940s until the mid-1950s, art for 22 different fanzines, and three pages of miscellaneous items such as Christmas cards, program books, calendars, bookplates, catalogs, collaborations, and non-genre items.

Several books with Bok illustrations are important in the history of science fiction, including *The House on the Borderland* by William Hope Hodgson (Arkham House, 1946), *Skull-Face and Others* by Robert E. Howard (Arkham House, 1946), *The Checklist of Fantastic Literature* edited by Everett F. Bleiler (Shasta, 1948), *Lest Darkness Fall* by L. Sprague de Camp (Prime Press, 1949), *Sidewise in Time* by Murray Leinster (Shasta, 1950), *The Blind Spot* by

Austin Hall and Homer Eon Flint (Prime Press, 1951), *The Moon Is Hell* by John W. Campbell, Jr. (Fantasy Press, 1951), and *All Our Yesterdays* by Harry Warner, Jr. (Advent, 1969).

"We chose Bok as the subject of the index because we really liked his artwork. Almost everyone liked his work," Brooks recalled in an email. "Bok is said to have been influenced by Maxfield Parrish, who, of course, was very popular in general, not in pulp art. There are many artists in the field that are talented. Content is part of it I suppose—but most of these artists were stuck with the content of what they were supposed to illustrate."



From the collection of Jon D. Swartz

Member Spotlight: George Phillies

By Jon D. Swartz and Heath Row

George Phillies, a longtime member of the N3F, holds a doctorate (D. Sc.) in physics and currently resides in Worcester, Massachusetts. In 2006, he was a member of the N3F directorate and headed up the gaming bureau and activity. He won the club's President's Award—now the Franson Award—in 2003.

A prolific writer, Phillies has published professionally the short story “The Puzzle of the Peregrinating Coach” in *Jim Baen's Universe* online. His novels *This Shining Sea* and *The Minutegirls*, as well as a short story collection, are available from Third Millennium Publishing at 3mpub.com/phillies.

Phillies is said to have the largest collection of board war games in the world. He has co-authored two books on designing board games with Tom Vasel, including *Design Elements of Contemporary Strategy Games*. Now a professor at Worcester Polytechnic Institute—where he is a member of the physics, biochemistry, and interactive media and game design faculties—Phillies is currently working on *Phenomenology of Polymer Solution Dynamics*, a book due from Cambridge University Press in 2011.

He is also writing a novel, *The One World*, and a compendium, *All the World's Wargames*. In 1987, Phillies contributed a story, “Who Slays Satan” to *Geep!*, an anthology published by the N3F.

In an email interview, *The Fan* explored Phillies's ideas and experiences in libertarianism, physics, and war games.

The National Fantasy Fan: When did you first get into science fiction?

George Phillies: I was born in 1947. As many of my students are too tactful to ask, that's 1947 A.D. not B.C. I've seen science fiction and fandom change a great deal during that time.

When I started reading, about 1953 or 1954, there were series books: The Happy Hollisters; Nancy Drew; Tom Swift, Jr.; Tom Corbett; and Lucky Starr. Nancy Drew didn't work for me too well, not because she was a girl, but because I become very uncomfortable reading about children who do not do as they are told. I really disliked children as shown on 1950s adventure TV shows; they could be counted on to do the worst possible thing in the worst possible way, with no intelligence, courage, or creativeness.

The first character I recall who did not fit the mold was Will Robinson on *Lost in Space*, but that was far in the future. Note that I have since written *This Shining Sea*, in which the heroine is anything but obedient to authority.

My mother insists that I *really* learned how to read with Theodore Roscoe's *United States Destroyer Operations in World War II*, followed by Samuel Elliot Morrison's *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*—the first three volumes.

There were also TV shows. Namely, every year there was *one* network science fiction show: *Captain Z-Ro*, *Commando Cody*—the third series, which most people have never seen, is better than the first two—and *Space Patrol*—which was broadcast live. My parents did not have a TV, and in any event, the DuMont Television Network didn't have a station in Buffalo, New York. You either watched it when it was on, or you never saw it. There was, however, a *Space Patrol* radio show that I heard faithfully, and a series whose name I think was *Big Jon and Sparkie* that had science fiction components.

I didn't interpret Superman as science fiction. He was a comic book character, of an unrelated genre. Of course, he almost never left the Earth on television. I was seriously not impressed by *The Twilight Zone*, and now understand why. Serling had the fixed desire of wanting bad things to happen to good people, just to make them happen.

There was also a teenager down the street who read science fiction and let me borrow his books one at a time. They were mostly Ace doubles—I remember being impressed by *Dome Over America* and some of the

Andre Norton shorts. I then started picking up the Winston science fiction series, which have since become valuable.

I had the advantage that my parents did not censor my reading, though that was not needed in the 1950s. My parents thought that the idea that parents should read everything before their children read it was bizarre, insane, and paranoid. If a child reads a lot, all the bad parts will cancel out.

So I also read a lot of other stuff. And in 1959, Avalon Hill released the first legitimate board war game. That was *Tactics II*.

The Fan: When did you start writing?

Phillies: I tried writing in sixth grade on an Underwood that was so old the injection-molded “t,” “e,” and “a” keys were worn partway through. The typewriter ended up in a museum, but I don't have any writing left from that period.



Photo courtesy of George Phillies

My first significant bit of progress on writing was as an undergrad. I got about 70 pages into a novel, and I and another undergrad wrote a *Lost in Space* fan script.

In the early 1970s, TSR released *Dungeons & Dragons*. My claim to fame was announcing, far before anyone else had noticed, that *D&D* was not a strange set of miniatures rules; it was a new branch of the wargaming hobby, like board games, miniatures, and *Diplomacy*. I could have noted computer games; I played my first game against a digital machine—computer is an overstatement, because it was hard wired and had nine bits of memory—in about 1958. I also played *Space War* on a PDP-1 in 1963.

In any event, at some point *D&D* content moved out from one Los Angeles science fiction apa or another and became *Alarums & Excursions*, which is still published. The MIT Strategy Gaming Society, the old collegiate wargaming club founded in 1964, published the first board wargaming fanzine, *The Tank*, in 1965. A member, Mark Swanson, then launched his own apa, *The Wild Hunt*.

Modestly, after they began, I introduced serious fiction as opposed to dungeon crawls to both of those apae. Actually the not-completed novel was quite radical for the time, with magicians; a female lead character whose approach to many problems was draw sword, smash opponents; and the most horrific monster ever seen in science fiction. It thought of itself as a whale eating krill. It lived in 11-space, and the insignificant krill were in fact intact universes. The heroine had to work a bit harder than normal to kill it.

There are some novels in there someplace.

The Fan: When were you involved in those apas? How did participants respond to your fiction versus, say, the writeups of roleplaying game sessions?

Phillies: I was a contributor to the first—or so—issue of *The Wild Hunt* and continued on and off until it died. I have intermittently contributed to *Alarums & Excursions*, largely stopping when I started serious novel writing. I never got many comments on my fiction, but it is really difficult to comment on legitimate fiction as opposed to fiction derivative of someone else's work or dungeon crawls.

I rarely have encountered people who were not that fond of my writing. One of the critiques is that my style is a bit dry, a bit precise, and generally letter perfect. I have been in a few apa groups in which we had people who could not write grammatical English at the grade school level and who had really feeble vocabularies, so I would use large numbers of words they did not know. They complained.

The Fan: Have you ever participated in the formerly explicitly Libertarian apa, *The Connection*, published by sf fan Filthy Pierre?

Phillies: Erwin S. Strauss—Filthy Pierre—and I were classmates, three or so years apart, at MIT. We were even both physics majors. I kept doing physics; he went off in other directions. I did not know about his apa.

There were other libertarian activities at MIT. There was a Radicals for Capitalism Chapter. In about 1969 they launched a college newspaper, *Ergo*, that was primarily

objectivist in leaning. I was not left with a positive impression of objectivists.

The Fan: When did you join the N3F? Why did you join the club?

Phillies: I'm really not sure I remember. I was in Ann Arbor, and there was not a lot of science fiction happening that I knew about. I may have heard about the N3F fiction contest; I had been doing short stories—15,000 words—for the two gaming apae.

In fact, I did submit a series of short stories to the contest, as well as other places. For many years, I submitted to the Boskone contest. "Who Slays Satan" won a first prize. So did "The Puzzle of the Peregrinating Coach"; that one was my only professional sale, to *Jim Baen's Universe*.

The Fan: How would you describe your writing in terms of their content and ideas?

Phillies: My basic plot is to show protagonist, find a challenge, solve and beat the challenge. "No Tears for a Princess" put heavy emphasis on richness of description. "The Puzzle of the Peregrinating Coach" is a Holmes pastiche, influenced by another Holmes pastiche, though the narrator is a dentist, and a goodheartedly "Englishmen simply are better than other people" Victorian, who carefully mouths some of the more distressing Victorian period ideas on other races, such as the Irish.

The Fan: How did you get involved in roleplaying and war games?

Phillies: I've been interested in war games since 1959 and *Tactics II*. That's continued to the present and another 4,000-plus board wargames. I have always had one of the largest collections in the world.

In addition, I collect board wargaming magazines and have 15 four-drawer filing cabinets full, plus extras. There is literally almost no competition for my collection.

The Fan: How are war games and science fiction connected?

Phillies: They both require disciplined imagination. My latest novel, *The One World*, could be gamed. It's in fair part military science fiction, pike and bow versus something not quite 16th century French.

The Fan: What do you mean by disciplined imagination?

Phillies: In a science fiction novel, at the points at which reality has not been suspended, reality cannot simply be ignored. It must be followed at least in ways that will keep the readers happy. You may have magicians wandering about, but the range of accurate fire of a conventional bow simply is not 2000 yards.

The Fan: Are you an active gamer, as well as a collector?

Phillies: I have no time for gaming at all. I am barely maintaining my collection.

The Fan: Regardless, what's your favorite game right now?

Phillies: Avalon Hill's *Stalingrad*. The next game to play, other than all the games I must playtest for my game design class, is *Home Before the Leaves Fall*.

The Fan: How long have you taught at WPI?

Phillies: Since 1985. I am now a professor of physics and a member of the associated biochemistry, and interactive media and game development faculties. At Michigan, I was on the chemistry faculty. I suppose I could say truthfully that I have now written a textbook or monograph appropriate for each of the four areas.

The Fan: How does your work in physics influence your writing?

Phillies: Things where real physics applies, I tend to get right. There is a sharp line between $x = x_0 + v_0t + 0.5 a t^2$ and the faster than light drives.

The Fan: How did you get into science? Do you have an area you concentrate in?

Phillies: I have always wanted to be a scientist, as far back as I can remember, second grade. Back then, I was less clear what science is about.

A number of my friends who are also scientists find that early interest odd. They were influenced into science by a teacher as late as high school. I find *that* very strange, but that's the way it is.

The Fan: In 2008, you ran for President of the United States under the banner of the Libertarian Party in New Hampshire. How does libertarianism connect to your interests in science fiction?

Phillies: It's really non-overlapping. There is an alternative

history novel set in the 1930s, really, from Ayn Rand that turns people toward objectivism, but the novel ends with the protagonist making the sign of the dollar over the people of New York. Why? Because he has just killed all of them. Except for small details like their still being alive, their deaths are inevitable and fairly imminent—not to mention almost all of their fellow Americans are dying, too, because they were inconvenient to him personally. It could be said that that complete lack of sympathy for the people about to die, some of whom were probably loyal employees of some of the characters, shows that the lead heroic characters are radically psychopathic.

The Fan: Do you think that science fiction is particularly libertarian?

Phillies: No. There are some “beat them over the head with your politics” novels, which are up there with Stalinist-period Russian science fiction. I am not fond of those.

The Fan: Do you think that libertarianism is a form of science fiction?

Phillies: No. It's a political movement. Centrist Libertarianism is a practical movement, not a utopian exercise.

The Fan: What are some of your favorite libertarian science fiction writers, books, or stories?

Phillies: My favorite writers include James Schmitz; Patricia McKillip; Melissa Scott; David Weber; Barbara Hambly; Harry Turtledove (under various names); L.E. Modesitt, Jr.; Jack McDevitt; Eric Flint; Jack Williamson; and William R. Forstchen.

Frank Frazetta: Painting With Fire

By Jeffrey Redmond

Make no mistake about it: I am most definitely a Frank Frazetta fan, and forever will be.

For a while in the late 1980s, I lived from one Conan the Barbarian paperback to another. It wasn't just because of the Robert E. Howard stories, but because of the cover art by Frank Frazetta. Any book with a Frazetta cover was a book sold, as far as I was concerned. But as much as I loved Frazetta, I knew little about him. That was on purpose, though. I often try to keep ignorant about my heroes—because knowing too much can end your admiration for someone.

But with the 2003 release of a new DVD about Frazetta—and his unfortunate death in May 2010—I couldn't resist learning more. Frazetta also won a Neffy Award this year. I just had to know something about this man who had given me so much pleasure. The DVD, *Frazetta: Painting With Fire*, a two-disc package, is a fine introduction to the artist and, because I knew very little about the man, the film filled in for me nicely.

In the film, directed by Lance Laspina, we learn about Frazetta's life and hear from an impressive list of

interviewees, who tell us what an incredible influence he was in the world of illustration. Artists such as Bernie Wrightson, Bill Stout, Neal Adams, Dave Stevens, Michael Kaluta, Al Williamson, and John Buscema sing his praises as an original who had an effect on their work.

The oldest of four children and the only boy in the family, Frank Frazetta—he would later drop one of the “z”s—was born on Feb. 9, 1928, in Brooklyn, New York. He discovered the wonders of drawing before he was 3 years old, when he sold his first crayon drawing to his grandmother—for the tidy sum of one penny. It was through her interest and encouragement that he continued drawing through those early years.

When he hit kindergarten, his teachers were astounded that a child only 5 1/2 years old drew better than the 10 year olds. Throughout elementary school, Frazetta created comic books featuring a snowman as the main character, along with an array of assorted characters.

Frazetta began drawing his own comic books around the age of 6. Intricate, labor-intensive colored pencil stories featuring his original characters like Snowman and the Red Devil and Goldy still exist and exhibit a level of style and sophistication that is amazing. One of his sisters would

often trade Frank's home-drawn comics with other children for their store-bought issues of *Famous Funnies*.

So Frazetta's artistic ability wasn't a secret to his elementary school teachers. "Christmas, Easter, and Thanksgiving were my big days," he remembered. "I guess I drew more Santa's, bunnies, and turkeys on blackboards than anyone could count. At the insistence of one of my teachers, my parents enrolled me in the Brooklyn Academy of Fine Arts when I was 8.

"The Academy was little more than a one-floor, three-room affair with a total of 30 students ranging in age from 8—me!—to 80. I still remember the professor Michael Falanga's look of skepticism as I signed in. He was rolling his eyes, and you could almost see the thought balloon over his head, 'Oh, no! Not another child prodigy!' He sat me down with a pencil and paper and asked me to copy a postcard featuring a group of realistically rendered ducks. When he returned later to see how far I had progressed, he snatched up my drawing exclaiming, 'Mama mia!' and ran off waving it in the air, calling everyone over to look at it. I thought I was in some kind of trouble."

Falanga, a fine artist of some renown in his native Italy, was impressed with Frazetta's natural ability and believed he had tremendous potential.

"He died when I was 12, right about the time he was making arrangements to send me off to Italy at his own expense to study fine art," Frazetta explained. "I haven't the vaguest idea of whether it would have really affected my areas of interest. I don't know, but I doubt it. You see, we never had any great conversations. He might look over your shoulder and say, 'Very nice, but perhaps if you did this or that.' He spoke very broken English, and he kind of left you on your own."

"I think I learned more from my friends there, especially Albert Pucci. Falanga would look at some of the comics stuff I was doing and say, 'What a waste, what a waste! You should be in Italy and paint the street scene and become a very famous fine artiste!' And that didn't thrill me! After he died, the students tried to keep the school going; we had become such close friends that we couldn't bear to close up shop, so we all chipped in and paid the rent and continued to hold classes. I did nude life drawings and still lifes; we'd paint outdoors. It was all totally different than the way I work now, but it taught me a lot about brush technique and perspective and helped me to develop my own style."

When Frank started working for Magazine Enterprises and National Publications, now known as DC Comics, he graduated to the adventure titles and drew stories for *Durango Kid*, *Manhunt*, *Adventure Comics*, and *Blackhawk*. His covers for *Ghost Rider* received tremendous recognition, and in 1951 Magazine Enterprises gave Frazetta the go ahead to create his own comic character, Thun'da.

"I came up with this Tarzan-like character who gets trapped in a lost world," he explained. "They brought in Gardner Fox to write the script based on my idea, and the first story in the book followed my plans pretty closely. Then the editor, Ray Krank, had Fox take everybody out of the prehistoric setting by the end of the third story in the

book and ruined the entire concept. They turned it into just another cardboard jungle comic."

Thun'da #1, published in 1952, was the only complete comic book Frazetta ever drew.

He quit working for Magazine Enterprises after they sold the rights to the character to Columbia Pictures for a serial starring Buster Crabbe. Because he had created Thun'da under the comic industry's standard work-for-hire agreement, Frank never received additional payment for the characters and art he had created. Bob Powell took over as artist on the comic with the second issue and stayed with it until the title was canceled with #6. The first issue has become a classic. The first was considered by many to have been the best year for Frazetta as far as comic work was concerned.

Frazetta ghosted a few weeks of *Flash Gordon* for Dan Barry and tried unsuccessfully to sell the syndicates several other ideas for newspaper strips: *Ambi Dexter* featured a baseball pitcher adept with either his right or left hand, *Sweet Adeline* was the humorous story of a young working woman, *Nina* was a female version of *Thun'da*, and *Tiga*—originally conceived in 1950 with a script by Joe Greene—was a post-apocalyptic adventure tale.

During the early 1950s, war was raging in Korea, and the prospect of being drafted was a daily worry. Yet this time was an invigorating, fun-filled period in Frazetta's life. He worked as much or as little as he pleased, producing a memorable stack of art for EC Comics (publishers of world-class scary and violent comics), Toby Press, and Prize Publications. His Buck Rogers covers for *Famous Funnies* are considered some of the finest comics work ever published, and many prominent film makers have cited them as a visual influence on their movies. Those covers overwhelmed George Lucas, who has stated—quite accurately—that they were the inspiration for his *Star Wars* stories.

At the same time, Frazetta was far from a workaholic. He enjoyed life too much to be chained to a drawing board, and he made a point of playing baseball everyday. He enjoyed hanging out with artist friends like Nick Meglin, Angelo Torres, and Roy Krenkel, posing for reference photos, and going to the movies. Handsome, muscular, and charismatic, Frazetta was popular with women, and he had a string of intense romances. In 1952, petite, 17-year-old Eleanor Kelly caught his eye, and his days of jumping from one relationship to the next came to an end.

"I sensed that she would be forever loyal, and I never ever had that feeling about any other girl I'd been involved with," Frazetta revealed. "Sure, she had most of the physical attributes I looked for in a woman; she was beautiful and athletic. But beyond that, she was very sharp and alert and pert, and she knew a lot of things I didn't know."

When Frazetta left Al Capp's studio in early 1961—he worked on *Li'l Abner's* Sunday strips from 1954-1961—he thought it would be no problem to land another steady job. And so, with portfolio in hand, he went searching. But it seemed his work had become poison to any publisher he showed it to. His best stuff was rejected as being too "old style." He honestly believed he'd been blacklisted by Capp

because of his leaving the studio on such a down note.

This "down time" in Frazetta's career is best shown in the drawing of his "Self Portrait" in 1962. It captures well the look of the troubled artist at the time. The story goes that he painted it after another exhaustive day of trying to find work. He wasn't completely out of work though. There were companies that found his talent quite useful. For instance, one of those companies, Midwood, hired Frazetta to illustrate a few of their spicy novels.

Finally, the slow trend ended in 1963 when Frazetta's best friend Roy Krenkel introduced him to paperback covers—with which many of us are familiar. He started with Ace Paperbacks doing a series for Edgar Rice Burrough's novels. That was the first published appearance of his painted work. It was also his first official work on one of his favorite characters, Tarzan of the Apes, a dream of Frazetta's since childhood.

The public response was overwhelming. Other paperback firms started noticing. A back cover for *Mad Magazine*, a caricature of the Beatle's drummer Ringo Star, was noticed by United Artists Film Studios. They had Frazetta do the poster for *What's New Pussycat?* Frazetta received \$4,000 for it, a whole year's pay—back then—earned in one afternoon! It finally started to pay off.

An interesting story lies behind his cover for Edgar Rice Burroughs's *The Mad King*. Frazetta so enjoyed his work for the 1964 edition, that when it came time to hand over the art for a reprinted 1970 edition, he reproduced the entire painting and handed that over instead. Even though the copy was of lesser quality, it was readily accepted simply because of Frazetta's popularity. Between 1963-1965, Frazetta produced 25 covers and 22 interior illustrations for Ace.

Then Frazetta began an inspired series of paintings for Jim Warren Publishing, which provided total freedom for the artist to utilize his talents to the fullest. Just about that same time, Lancer Books was picking up on Robert E. Howard's Conan the Barbarian series. They engaged Frazetta to do the covers. When those hit the book stands, they became one of the greatest-selling series in history, with upwards of 10 million copies. Many people bought the books just for the cover art and couldn't have cared less about the contents.

Because Frazetta's covers helped sell so many books, he became more selective about the material offered to him. He retained ownership of all original art and permitted only first printing rights. That started a whole new trend in the paperback industry. To this day, Frazetta's work is considered fine art. Fine art is something that is total: "It has a beginning, a middle, and an end." To prove his point, Frazetta talks about design while pulling pictures from the wall and turning them upside down, drawing the eye toward the center of interest, pleased that it works from any angle.

In 1970, Doubleday's Science Fiction Book Club embarked on an aggressive program of reprinting Edgar Rice Burroughs's interplanetary adventures. Naturally, Frazetta's phenomenally popular covers for Ace and Lancer made him the only logical choice to illustrate the series. His paintings for *A Princess of Mars*, the first in the

series, was so perfectly "Frazetta."

Although Frazetta and his wife were quite comfortable in their New York-area Long Island home, and were keeping busy raising their four children, they moved back to Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn to be closer to family. While there, Ellie had saved some money and taken a gamble by starting a small business called Frazetta Prints. It consisted of just five posters of some of Frazetta's early work. She worked diligently with a few distributors to get his artwork into the public eye. Now, some 28 years later it has blossomed into an empire of over 150 different prints, books, lithographs, and literally anything that pertains to Frank's art.

After living in Sheepshead Bay for only one and a half years, Frazetta still longed for open space and privacy. With his son starting high school, and the big city school violence getting out of control, he decided to set out and fulfill his longtime dream. They started out in search for that old farm house and lots of land.

His son would later explain about this period in his father's life:

I recall driving with my dad for days in western New Jersey and Pennsylvania looking for his dream place—to no avail. The prices had sky rocketed in the past 10 years, and anything my dad liked was already well out of his price range. All the quaint old farms and parcels of land had been bought up and developed upon. Dad turned to me and said, "I can't believe I waited so long; there is nothing left." We drove hundreds of miles with not even one prospect.

Then, lo and behold, a realtor in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, said, "You know, there is this old place just out of town that has 67 acres and a pond. But the house is extremely run down and practically worthless." My dad said, "Let's take a look." My father always told me, you can always fix or replace a home, but there is no substitution for land and privacy. Dad always had great foresight, especially when he first laid his eyes on the house. He immediately fell in love with it.

Sure, the house was run down, the rolling fields were overgrown with brush and trees; the entire place was seemingly never maintained—maybe even since the turn of the century! The asking price was one which dad could afford. The only thing holding my father back from closing was that someone had already put in a bid! Just \$500 less than the asking price. The offer was refused, and to my dad's disbelief the potential buyer had walked away from the deal! Before you could put a period on the end of the previous sentence, my father said, "I'll take it."

Oh boy! All I could think of was how much my mom loved my dad, to move into this place. There was a lot of work to be done in order to turn this rundown house into a home. Mom and dad were determined to make this place a home for their four children. And with the aid of a mop, a Kubota tractor, and lots of hard work, this old house was transformed into the now beautiful estate where three of the four children, and nine grandchildren reside. In just six months, the place was beautiful, the fields were cut, the house was painted, the children were hitting golf balls, fishing and playing hide and seek on the property. That very same year, a developer had offered my dad four times more than the purchased price. With no disrespect to the gentleman, my father said politely, "No thank you, this is our home now."

Some 29 years later, the beautiful estate welcomed the addition of the new Frazetta Art Museum.

The decade of the '80s began auspiciously with an invitation by Ralph Bakshi to come to Hollywood and co-produce an animated film based on Frazetta concepts. Bakshi was a longtime fan and admirer of Frazetta and always thought his art should be seen on the big screen. Frazetta accepted Bakshi's offer and moved to Hollywood. They hired a team of animators to draw and paint—with live performers so that select scenes could be rotoscoped. Frazetta wanted the film to feature realistic and believable action. Many action scenes were Frazetta himself doing the falling, kicking, and rolling over because some of the stunt men said it couldn't be done. Well, he proved some of Hollywood's top stuntmen wrong.

Frazetta sculpted several clay models of the key characters for use by the staff. He also painted a large oil for the movie poster and created a number of stunning pencil illustrations that were used in the opening sequence of the film. Frazetta worked furiously on the project night and day. But because of poor marketing and distribution irregularities, it was not the success he had hoped for.

Undaunted by the disappointment, Frazetta returned to his estate in Pennsylvania and purchased a 10,000-square-foot building in downtown East Stroudsburg. Initially, Frazetta's sons started their own business at this location, with Ellie devoting herself to opening the new Frazetta Art Museum. This was a longtime dream of his wife, Ellie, and she threw herself into the project until it was completed. The museum tastefully displayed his most famous works. Accented with African art and wildlife bronzes, it was an unprecedented showcase for any living artist, much less for one categorized merely as an illustrator.

In April 1985, the new museum opened with much fanfare. A lavish opening day party was thrown. It was attended by many local politicians, Ian and Betty Ballantine, Frazetta's longtime friends, Dave Winiewicz, and Nick Meglin, his mother, father, aunt, uncle, and scores of fans. Frazetta repainted a new version of the standing "Masai Warrior" oil for the museum. It dominated one wall. The museum became a kind of Mecca for the many fans who would travel long distances to see the many marvelous masterpieces on display.

"It was all Ellie's Idea," Frazetta explained. "We were always getting calls from the fans asking if they could come see the originals. The best we had done through the years was to have some exhibits at various conventions, but that got to be a risky hassle. We did the museum for all the people who have had fun with my art over the years. It wasn't for profit—if I wanted to make money I would've sold the originals. My joy is in showing the work."

A fire on the lower floors of the building in 1995 closed the museum; fortunately, none of the artwork was damaged. Announced plans to relocate the gallery to Boca Grande, Florida, were changed at the last moment, and Ellie reopened the museum in East Stroudsburg in 1999.

But along with financial comfort and critical acclaim, the 1980s also brought health problems to the vigorous

artist.

"The first symptoms appeared about 1986," Frank related. "I had three jobs going on at the same time, and I was burning the midnight oil. Coincidentally, I had bought some really inexpensive turpentine, real junk. The fumes were so terrible that it probably screwed my thyroid up. Nobody's quite sure what makes a thyroid malfunction or quit or go hyperactive, but they certainly know it can be affected by chemicals. I was working for about two weeks with this turpentine that just permeated my studio; my wife and kids wouldn't even come into the room it was so bad. But good ol' Frank just kept plugging away. I'm tough; this won't affect me. Around the time I was finishing the jobs, I suddenly got this eerie, insidious taste in my mouth. It was almost as if Death had entered."

His recovery sparked a creative renewal and in the early 1990s Frazetta reemerged in to the market. He allowed a few of his originals to be sold at auction at Sotheby's and Christie's, where they went for high five-figure sums.

Frazetta finished a lovely oil entitled "The Princess and the Panther" that was used on the cover of *Heavy Metal* magazine. That was followed by the publication of *Small Wonders* in 1991, a book by Kitchen Sink Press devoted to reprinting many of Frazetta's funny animal drawings from the 1940s. That was closely followed by the publication of Kitchen Sink's *Frazetta Pillow Book*, a collection of Frazetta's watercolors from many stages of his career. Most of those watercolors were personal productions designed to be given as presents on certain holidays. Ellie would often encourage Frazetta to paint her a watercolor for Christmas, Mother's Day, etc. Or he would simply do them just to amuse himself. The book has a small selection. There are another hundred images that have never been seen before.

Renewed interest in the work of Frazetta reached a fever pitch in the mid-'90s. A number of people arose with new projects and ideas. Randy Bowen convinced Frazetta to help him co-create a bronze sculpture of his signature oil, "The Death Dealer." Glenn Danzig, a longtime Frazetta fan, collector, and emerging rock star, decided to begin his own publishing company, Verotik. He commissioned Frazetta to produce a book of pencil drawings based on monsters and demons. That extraordinary volume was titled *Illustrations Arcanum*, and it immediately became a wild hit.

The quality of the art and the beautiful production values blended to energize Frazetta's name in the art world. Danzig followed this success with a series of *Death Dealer* comics, other assorted fantasy-supernatural theme productions, a series of sculptures based on Frazetta's *Fire and Ice* models, and a new character named Jaguar God, for which Frazetta painted several amazing oils. Danzig's company presented the Frazetta name to the newest generation, and they responded.

Frazetta Pillow Book provided a surprising glimpse of a more whimsical, if not less erotic, side to the artist. Filled with a charming selection of beautiful nude gnomes, fairies, and nymphs, the book showcased Frazetta's proficient skill with watercolor.

"Nearly all the paintings were done as gifts to me or for family," Ellie explains. "They show the playful, fun-loving side of Frank I have known all my adult life."

Indeed, Frazetta certainly had that—and so much

Convention Report: Westercon

By R-Laurraine Tutihasi

Westercon is a regional convention that is held in a different location in western North America each year around the July 4. This year, it was held in Pasadena, California, at the Hilton Hotel. While the Hilton was an OK venue, I felt it was pricey for what it offered. The biggest downside was that the restaurant in the hotel only served breakfast, although their buffet was quite good. Theoretically, food was available from the bar for other meals, but we never checked that out. There were plenty of other restaurants within walking distance. We arrived there a few days before the con to do other things in the general Los Angeles area; we had lived in the area and had many friends to see as well as wanting to do some sightseeing. Weather in southern California in June is typified by "June gloom" in the morning. This is fog that doesn't dissipate until afternoon, keeping mornings cool or even chilly. June gloom was present for most of the con. The same fog that keeps mornings cool unfortunately adds to the humidity in the afternoon, so it can be uncomfortably muggy.

This year's Westercon featured author guest of honor Rudy Rucker, who hails from the Bay Area. Until recently, he taught computer science in Silicon Valley. (**Editor's Note:** For more information on Rucker, see "Dialing Down the Gnarl with Rudy Rucker" in the September 2009 issue of *The Fan*.) His training is in math. His fiction frequently includes a lot of neat geeky ideas. Some of his books are *The Ware Tetralogy*, *Hylozoic*, *Postsingular*, and *Mathematicians in Love*. He has also written some nonfiction books about math and other geeky topics.

The fan guest of honor was John D. Berry. Professionally, he is an editor, typographer, and book designer. It's been a while since he was active in fandom, but he used to publish fanzines.

The artist guest of honor was Marc Schirmeister of LA-area fandom. He is an artist both professionally and fannishly.

This year's Westercon was held in conjunction with ConChord, which is a filk convention. For the most part, I did not attend that side of the programming.

The first day of Westercon, I was awakened by the sun in my eyes for a change. The June gloom was absent that day.

When I got down to breakfast, the Massoglias, Alice and Marty, were just finishing up. The Massoglias had a used bookstore in Reseda, which is in the San Fernando Valley north of downtown LA. They are moving to Tucson, Arizona, because Bank of America foreclosed on their house while they were trying to get their mortgage modified. They will be sharing an apartment near Prince and Campbell with Naomi, Alice's daughter by a previous

more. Next time you're browsing through your favorite bookstore, take a look at so many of the fantasy works' covers. More than a few will be Frazetta covers. And all of them will be the absolute best!

marriage. Prior to their move at the end of July, they held a series of going-out-of-business sales. They will still maintain an Internet used books business and continue to sell books at many conventions.

There seemed to be nothing going on that morning, so I went back up to our room for a while.

A little after 10, I went back down to check out the art show, which should have been open according to the official schedule. It wasn't set up yet, and I ended up helping them out. I put up two panels of artwork and unwrapped some pottery, much of which, unfortunately for the artist, turned out to have broken during the shipping process.

By then, the first program I was interested in was about to start. Artist guest of honor Marc Schirmeister was talking about inspiration. For most of his talk, LA fan Milt Stevens and I were the only people in the audience, but I think everyone enjoyed it. Afterwards, Milt and I continued to converse about various things. As we were walking toward another part of the hotel, I ran into Kathryn Daugherty, and she and I talked for a while. Kathryn currently lives in the Las Vegas area, where she and her husband, James, are building their "last house." They're both very active fans and have worked on many conventions.

In the meantime, Mike went to hear Mike Willmoth's presentation "Astronomy 101: What Every Stargazer Should Know." More about that later.

Then I went back to our room to get videotape; for several years, I've been videotaping all the events I attend at the conventions I go to. I also brought down some ZBS catalogs for the freebie table; they had requested my help in distributing their catalog. ZBS produces audio books, radio plays, and other recordings. I also took care of site selection for the 2012 Westercon; we found out late Saturday that Seattle won narrowly against Tonopah, Nevada. After that, I finally took time out for lunch, for which I bought a salad at Starbucks, located on the first floor of the hotel. I sat myself down next to the Golds in the lobby lounge area. Lee and Barry Gold are active LA filkers.

I spent some time in the dealers room and art show. In the dealers room, I talked at length with Scott Dennis, a frequent dealer at many cons; he and his wife, Jane, sell items such as T-shirts and buttons. While I was at the art show, Heath Row called to confirm he's still coming in the evening; he was unable to attend Westercon due to family obligations. I also checked out the con suite. It was in a tiny cramped space. Basically, all the parties and other similar activities were limited to the second floor of the hotel.

In mid-afternoon, Mike attended Charles Lee Jackson II's presentation on serials; Charlie Jackson is quite the expert on genre TV shows. We have a DVD collection that

includes several of the serials. Charlie talked about the history of serials with anecdotes and showed a short video. Frequently at cons, I attend sessions Mike is interested in with him, but this time I never made it to any of them. I always seemed to be otherwise occupied.

Then I went back to our room, where I eventually ended up napping for about 90 minutes. A few minutes after I woke up, Heath called to say he was about 10 minutes away. We met him in the lobby and got dinner at a depot restaurant a few blocks away. We made it back in time for the tail end of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society meeting; LASFS meets at every local convention that includes a Thursday, though they usually have meetings at their clubhouse in Burbank. Heath had to leave before the end of the meeting. Afterward, I spoke briefly to John DeChancie, an author and fan currently living in the LA area, as well as LA fan Nola Frame.

Mike returned to our room before me. When I got up there, I downloaded email and read Facebook stuff. After that, I went to check out the parties. The con suite was hosting the Tonopah bid for Westercon party. I would have stayed longer, but someone in there was badly in need of a bath. Then I dropped by the fanzine lounge, which was offering alcoholic latte and other similar drinks. There, I had a lengthy conversation with the Glazers, Glenn and Allison; they are both LA fans currently living south of the Bay Area. Finally, I checked out the Seattle party. There, I caught up with Bay Area fan Michael Siladi, who had substituted for Phoenix fan Mike Willmoth on the astronomy talk alluded to earlier; Willmoth had been late arriving in Pasadena and wasn't able to get to the talk. My husband Mike Weasner had mentioned that Michael had given him the brushoff. Michael was very diplomatic and suggested a three Mikes astronomical talk at the San Jose Westercon next year. My husband Mike is an avid amateur astronomer and has written a book about the Mead ETX telescope; if interested, check out his extensive Web site at Weasner.com.

I slept in the next morning and had brunch. Then I went back up to the room and caught up a bit with Facebook and email. When I came back down, I chatted for a while with James Daugherty and Marty Cantor, a very active LA fan, before going to hear author guest of honor Rudy Rucker's talk on "Rockets or Cyberspace or ???"

Meanwhile, Mike attended Kevin Roche's Spintronics presentation. We'd attended at least one of those at a previous convention, but Mike said there was new material this time. Spintronics is a technology that is being utilized in the computer industry.

I wandered around for a bit at that point. In the dealers room, I talked with the Massoglias and LA fan Tom Stern. Then I went back up to our room again.

Later in the afternoon, I went to "Pixels or Print" with Rudy Rucker, author Eileen Gunn, and fan guest of honor John D. Berry.

At that point, I was hungry, so I fetched Mike, and we walked to the nearby mall for dinner at Islands. I had a cheeseburger without a bun—I require a gluten-free diet—and an ice cream sundae for dessert. We used two gift certificates I'd been carrying around for a few years.

After we returned to the hotel, I attended a taping of *Hour 25*. This is an Internet-based radio show; years ago it used to be carried by an LA Pacifica radio station. Host Warren James interviewed the guests of honor and the con chairman. As I was going back up to the room to change, I fell into conversation with Keith Kato—famous for his chilli parties—who had the room across the hall from us. We were joined by Bay Area fan Lisa Harrigan, who had the room kitty corner from ours.

After changing, I went back down for Regency dancing. I delivered a period dress I no longer wanted to LA fan Sue Haseltine. Then I ended up talking with her, Suzanne Gibson, and later, Warren James, her husband. Sue mentioned a Sime~Gen party that I hadn't heard about, so I went to investigate; so I never did get around to doing any dancing. Sime~Gen is a fictional universe invented by N3F member Jacqueline Lichtenberg; check out simegen.com for more information.

When I got to the Sime~Gen party, it was in full swing. I fell into conversation with Kaires (Gene Schneider), a very active Sime~Gen fan and hostess of the party. Others joined the conversation from time to time. When someone came along to ask about Sime~Gen, I excused myself, intending to check out the other parties—but didn't make it out the door. I ended up talking at length with LA fans Sasa Neuman and Sean Smith. Eventually, Sasa left, and Sean and I were the only guests left in the room. By this time, I was half pumpkin. After Sean and I finally left Kaires, we didn't expect any other party to be open still, but the fanzine lounge was. We went in there. After a bit, I decided I really had to get some sleep. It was after 3 when I got back to the room. After puttering around with one thing and another, I finally got to bed. Tired though I was, it took me a while to fall asleep. A wrong number phone call after 6 did not help.

I woke up Saturday with the alarm, despite a shortage of sleep, because I wanted to get to the business meeting.

After brunch, I went over to LA author Art Cover's table for a chat; Art used to own a bookstore called *Dangerous Visions*. His companion, whose name I've already forgotten, is interested in moving to Arizona, preferably near Tucson, so I gave him as much information as I was able.

Then I attended the business meeting, which was mercifully short. There had been a rumor that a motion would be introduced to put an end to Westercon, but this didn't materialize. There had been an earlier panel discussion about the topic, and the prevailing sentiment had apparently been vociferously against the idea. In recent years, there seemed to be less interest than previously in hosting Westercon. In fact, the reason this Westercon was in Pasadena was because no one else had bid. Westercon is a trademark of the LASFS. There is a provision that Westercon's location will be determined by the LASFS in the case that no one else expresses an interest in bidding for any particular year.

I went back to the room to rest. While I was resting, Mike attended "Basics of Writing: What Every Writer Needs to Know" with authors Larry Niven, Laura Frankos, Eileen

Gunn, David Brin, and Marv Wolfman; and “Is There any Science in Science Fiction?” with author Larry Niven, writer Bill Thomasson, and LA fan Genevieve Dazzo.

Then I went back down to see Rudy Rucker's lecture on “Transreal.”

We had dinner at Hamburger Hamlet a few blocks away.

At night we attended the masquerade. It was small, with about 10 entries—but some really outstanding ones. The halftime entertainment was some excellent filk by Maya and Jeff Bohnhoff. They were very entertaining.

I managed to get to most of the parties at night and talked to a variety of people. I had an extended conversation with Bay Area fans Chip and Janice Morningstar in the hallway.

Convention Report: Baycon

By Sarah E. Harder

Baycon is the San Francisco Bay Area's regional annual science fiction convention held over Memorial Day weekend in Santa Clara, California. This year the theme was “It's an Adventure!” I attended with my sister, fellow Neffer Ruth R. Davidson, and her daughter, Hazel. It was a great con, as always. The art room had some wonderful art in it this year, including a whole wall devoted to the wonderful artist guest of honor Lee Moyer. On the last day, I picked up the little print I bought direct by Theresa Mather (I did an artist's spotlight on her earlier in the March 2010 issue of *The Fan*). My favorite dealer was in the dealer's room this year, jewelry artist Lillian Todaro. It's a tradition for me to pick up at least one item from her each year. She makes the most beautiful butterfly jewelry you'll ever see anywhere. The wings are like stained glass when you hold them up to the light. (Tip: If you like her work, try to buy them at a con, where the prices are half of what she charges on her Web site.) I met some new and interesting people that I hope to remain in contact with and see next year. There's a great feeling of community that I enjoy at the conventions. I attended several panels as well. Here is a brief recap of the highlights from a few of them.

Friday, May 28

4 p.m. panel: “From Grail to Goddess: The Heroine's Quest,” with Valerie Frankel. Valerie is a witty young woman who authored the award-winning parody, *Henry Potty and the Pet Rock*. She has recently published her first nonfiction work, *From Girl to Goddess: The Heroine's Journey Through Myth and Legend*. The panel discussion dealt with the differences between the hero's journey and the heroine's journey. While the hero typically has to complete tasks or take up arms, the heroine typically has to defend or save a family member or group of people. The hero's journey has to do with strength and endurance. The heroine's journey relies on her role as a nurturer and thus has to do with people and self-sacrifice.

6 p.m. panel: “YA Fiction: More Than Blanking Out the

At breakfast on July 4, northwest fans Kevin and Lisa Standlee were seated at the table next to mine, and we ended up talking quite a bit.

After breakfast, I had the opportunity to talk briefly with LA fans Len and June Moffatt.

Then I attended Rudy Rucker's talk on “The Future of Science Fiction,” in which he speculated on the direction sf was headed in.

Then I took a very long nap in the afternoon.

In the evening, we attended an offsite fannish party near Beverly Hills, and I was too tired afterward to check out any dead dog parties. Overall, I had a good time at Westercon.

Next year's Westercon will be held in San Jose.

Sex,” with Clare Bell, Valerie Frankel, Laurel Anne Hill, Wanda Kurtcu, Scott Sigler, and Doug Berry. This panel was surprising in that it produced quite a bit of discord between those attendees who thought sex scenes should be allowed in young adult novels and those who don't. The people on the panel had some valuable insights for those interested in writing young adult books. Scott Sigler said that in order to make his football-playing alien locker room scenes realistic, he needed to include colorful language. At the same time, he couldn't use curse words freely because of the rules of YA writing—as well as angry parents who would surely contact the publisher or forbid their children from purchasing the book. His solution was to create curse words that are unique to the alien race about which he was writing! I've seen this in other works, and it's a wonderful compromise that can actually make the books more authentic. As for sex, most panelists agreed that the fade out was the way to go. You can let the audience know it is happening without going into the details. Wanda Kurtcu, a middle school teacher and author of the *Star Trek: The Next Generation* episode “A Matter of Honor,” offered some interesting insight from her perspective as a teacher. She has to be careful what books she recommends to her class so she doesn't get calls or visits from upset parents. She also said that parents tend to be more upset about books with sex in them than with the occasional curse word.

Saturday, May 29

2 p.m. panel: “Fantasy Authors and Illustrators Discuss What Their Characters Wear,” with guest of honor Peter S. Beagle, Larry Dixon, Phillip Gust, Mercedes Lackey, artist guest of honor Lee Moyer, and Doug Barry. This took place in the Grand Ballroom and had the largest attendance I've ever seen for a panel. Besides the popularity of the panelists, the topic had a great appeal for writers, artists and costumers alike. The discussion addressed how the topic relates to each. (I did not attend the entire panel due to other obligations.) Beagle said he doesn't think much about what his characters wear and gives little description—so it's a surprise when fans create wonderful costumes of his characters. Later in the discussion, he said, referring

to the scads of illustrations of scantily-clad women with engorged breasts, that they are “done by 15-year-old boys who don’t know any women.” The audience laughed.

Lackey says she works very closely with artist Jody Lee, who knows what Mercedes likes and usually gets the costumes right the first time. She said she’s had many favorite costumes of her characters done by fans over the years, but her most favorite is the one of the Black Swan at ConJose, Worldcon 2004. I saw that costume at the masquerade that year, and it was amazing! I’m still in awe when I think of it.

Dixon said his and Mercedes’s sculpture of an eagle was used as a model for *The Lord of The Rings* eagles in *The Return of the King*.

6 p.m. panel: “Guest of Honor Interview: Lee Moyer.” with toastmaster Tadao Tomomatsu. Lee suggests that you find local artists and form a group to critique each others’ work. You need people who are not invested in your work—or you—to critique you. That also applies to your writing. Try to meet once a month. It will help you not only as it pertains to critiques of your work, but, as you critique others you are more likely to remember that you should be doing some of those things too.

Sunday, May 30

3 p.m. reading: Valerie Frankel. Valerie read from her Harry Potter parody, *Henry Potty and the Deathly Paper Shortage*. The whole room had a fun time with this. I was amazed at some of Valerie’s cleverness as she read through silly scenes that coincide with those of the original book, yet follow her own book’s storyline. Her book also contains brief references to, or interactions with, parody characters of other science fiction or fantasy shows such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Twilight*, and children’s books such as *The Chronicles of Narnia* and *The Wizard of Oz*. If you are in the mood for a bit of poking-fun at your favorite Harry Potter characters, you might want to give her

parodies a try. Her Web site is calithwain.com.

6 p.m. guest of honor portfolio critique: Lee Moyer. This critique session was the most energizing, fun, and engaging event I’ve ever participated in at a convention! You had to pre-register for this, and there were seven artists in attendance with our art portfolios ready for Lee’s review. What was supposed to be a 60- to 90-minute session ended up being four hours long! Eventually, we moved to another room so that the next panel could take place as scheduled. Before the panel started, while a few of us waited with Lee for others to arrive, he said that when the con staff had asked him what he wanted to do, he decided the best thing he could do for aspiring artists is to critique their work. He said he’s good at it—and that most professionals don’t give full critiques so they don’t hurt the person’s feelings. That’s true. I’ve received many helpful tips over the years from professional artists, for which I am grateful, but no one has ever come close to this level of critique and general enthusiastic discourse before. I won’t go into the advice he gave to all seven of us artists, as that would be an article in and of itself.

Monday, May 31

12 p.m. panel: “Top Ten Rookie Author Gaffes,” with Paul Carlson, Morgan Hua, Berry Kercheval, Dani Kollin, and Eytan Kollin. I didn’t write in my notes what the top 10 gaffes are. Paul and Morgan came prepared with lists of gaffes that they read off. The panel discussed a few of those, and then the other panelists gave their own opinions of frequent rookie mistakes. It was a good discussion. Dani said, “You need to write so that your passion comes through what you write. People want to feel things intently, and your audience won’t unless you do.” The panelists agreed that you should write what you love and not write to trend, unless it’s what you love!. Eytan suggested that you back up your work in three places. “Nothing sucks like losing a manuscript.”

A Fan's Guide to Social Media

By Sarah E. Harder

Have you ever strengthened—or strained—a relationship without ever saying a word to the person face to face? I have done both.

It’s exciting when the former happens and devastating when the latter happens. The online world can be a wonderful, magical place in which information is passed quickly, contact with friends is easy, and family bonds become stronger. However, that world is also fraught with peril; miscommunication abounds, manners and courtesy are oft left behind, and common sense sometimes doesn’t make it from the brain to our fingers on the keypad.

Because we cannot see or be seen by our virtual yet flesh-and-blood friends, we cannot hear the tone of their voice or read their facial expressions and body language. We cannot fully utilize our five senses in the communication process, as we might in person.

There are a few “rules” that go across the board of

online communication, such as not to purposely hijack or take over someone’s posts or threads and not to troll—or seek out discussions with topics or opinions you disagree with for the sole purpose of causing discord.

It might be helpful to review a couple more rules with the help of N3F member Angela Myers.

Back when I was a communications specialist for a large corporation, classes on email etiquette were offered frequently. Most of them dealt with things like “Don’t write in caps—it’s like yelling.” But the most useful fact brought up was that when we speak face to face, something like 90 percent of the communication that occurs is due to body language—expressions, hand gestures, even body positions. When we write, that body language is absent. (Emoticons are an attempt to remedy this lack.) But when we write letters, we tend to be very careful with our composition, checking them several times for errors and tone before putting them into the envelope. When we write email, we tend to write

quickly and hit send. We seldom even proofread. This is WRONG (Yes, that's yelling) and too often results in unprofessional and unfriendly communications. A note you think is efficient can seem curt to the reader. Failure to consider all the connotations of your word choices can result in insulting and/or angering the reader. So proofread before you send, and consider alternate interpretations of your words.

Because I tend to proofread my emails, I've thought about this issue quite a bit (sometimes when I try to quickly get to the point, I end up sounding aggressive or like I don't care about the other party) and would like to share what works for me. I try to add a few friendly sentences that provide a nice tone to the email. That way, when I get down to business, it is taken well. A simple, friendly sentence at the beginning and end of the body of my email usually solves the problem for me. It can be as simple as "I hope you are doing well" or "How are you?" to "Thank you for taking the time to fill-in-the-blank." It's not as time consuming as you'd think once you get in the habit of doing it. That works for me in business and personal emails, and I make minor sentence adjustments accordingly. With close family and friends, though, it's nice to add a more personal touch.

It isn't just in email that we forget to proofread. In forums and on social networking sites like Facebook we also tend to type whatever comes into our heads without a second thought. I've encountered the most trouble in those areas.

The best thing we can do is to proofread (and content read) our posts and comments. That way we can avoid offending others much of the time. Also try not to take offense. Give the other person the benefit of the doubt, just as we'd hope others would give it to us.

As N3F member Ruth R. Davidson reminds us, "Remember that you're reading text, and most people are not story writers, thus the tone they use inside their head isn't 'heard' by the reader. Sometimes adding an explanation of what tone you are using, especially if it's soft spoken and compassionate—but you're asking tough questions or saying something that'll be hard to hear—is helpful." If you can't let go of a perceived offense, then I'd suggest messaging that person privately to let them know how their words affected you. I wouldn't sugar coat your reaction, but I would try to be tactful and let that person know you don't despise them now. (When in doubt about someone's intent, it's appropriate to ask for clarification.) Even then, however, we might inadvertently offend someone, and it's important to address it when it's brought to your attention, even if you don't feel you did anything wrong.

It is too easy to spout off things thoughtlessly, to get

defensive, to "say it like it is" rudely because you don't see the person face to face. It's safer to be rude online than it is to be rude in person. Thus, many folks decide to say things they'd never dream of saying otherwise. But in-person relationships can and will suffer if you forget your manners during those times when it isn't in person. As for people you have never met or will never see in person I'd say it's as important. We form a reputation online. Personally, I also care about the other person. I don't want to make someone's day bad. We should remember that even though we don't see them, there are actual people online.

We should also consider who our audience is. On forums that is fairly easy, but on social networking sites it can be difficult to tailor our remarks because many of us have friends and family from various groups, associations, or times in our lives—and who have varying life situations, interests, beliefs, religions, and political views. Talk about potential for a minefield of trouble! I'm still learning how to navigate my way through Facebook. Most folks who know you well will generally "get" your style of communication and any quirky or fannish remarks (personally, I still don't know what some of my few Facebook friends are talking about, but I don't mind). Most folks ignore the posts of their friends that are related to differing political and religious opinion—or that they have no interest in—while commenting on other posts of those same friends that relate more to them. Others jump right in and enjoy a little friendly debate. I get frustrated when debates turn ugly. With a little tact, respect, and decorum I believe those can be avoided, but every participant needs to be willing. Ruth R. Davidson suggests that you "step back, consider your words, and think about the ramifications. Sometimes it helps to write the flaming post, but not

post it; then after an hour or so, go back and rewrite a more composed reply." (If you're an aggressive debater, I'd recommend only debating with those with whom you have the type of relationship where you know it is OK and won't cause any harm.) When debates go sour, it might be best to walk away before it gets to the point of harming your relationship with the person. There might even be times to block a particular person from posts that you know will set that person off on an angry rant or endless debate. If that isn't possible on a forum, feel free to ignore someone's posts, block messages, or take a break from the forum. It's important not to try to anger someone.

It is courteous to avoid off-topic remarks on someone's thread because that can result in hijacking. It is appropriate to start your own thread or write on someone's Facebook wall if you would like to speak with them about something other than what they recently posted about.

It is also helpful to develop a tough skin, especially for those who are sensitive to certain things. I'm not talking



Sarah E. Harder

about being tough so that you can accept the rudeness of others—though it might help you handle rudeness in a more productive manner—rather so that you enjoy your socializing experiences as much as possible. For example, I have a single friend who very much wants to be married and have children. She recently asked her friends on Facebook if they knew of anywhere she could go to meet people. Her married friends all responded with “girls’ night out” type of suggestions. My friend told me privately that she was a bit bothered by this, but she graciously thanked them anyway since they meant well. They are just in a different place in their life and have a different mindset. One last word on developing tough skin from Ruth R. Davidson “Tough skin is also useful for not having a hissy cow over a perceived tone or dealing with someone with a different viewpoint.”

A few words about grammar and spelling are appropriate, starting with texting shorthand. I find it difficult to read posts or emails in which people revert to texting-style spelling. With phone texting, there are many necessary abbreviations for the simple fact that there’s limited space and tiny buttons to push. At a computer, with the luxury of a full keyboard, we should leave the texting shorthand behind and do our best to make what we say understandable, paying attention to grammar, spelling and punctuation. (We all know how a sentence can change its meaning depending on the placement of a comma.) We also have the luxury of a spell check, which should assist us in any emails or posts. We all occasionally make a mistake or type one word when we meant another.

Those things are to be expected—and are not a big deal. Ruth said it best: “Spelling and grammar mean a lot. The worse you are at it, the more of an idiot you seem to be. At the same time, however, be aware of language differences. Some people from a different country will write in English and totally screw up the grammar and spelling, but that’s OK, because it’s usually consistent. However, at the same time, be willing to be corrected.” My last two cents are that if you don’t know the difference between “your” and “you’re”, “it’s” and “its”, “their” and “there”, etc., now might be a good time to brush up. We all make mistakes even when we know when and how to use them, but done consistently, they can stick out like a sore thumb!

Another important thing to be aware of is that even when you adjust your settings so that your posts are private where only selected people can see them, it is best to assume that they are public and not post anything that would be inappropriate if others read or saw them. Potential—and current—employers commonly look up names online and there are ways to bypass settings. Ruth R. Davidson gives us an example: “A teacher had some racy pictures up on her Facebook profile, and she ended up losing her job because they thought she was being a bad example to students (but she did not have students as friends if I recall correctly).” I’ve also read that it is best in most cases not to be Facebook friends with your employer. Doing so doesn’t keep the relationship professional.

A whole article could be written about the online socialization practices of teens and related safety issues. Their online experiences and how they view them differ

A Word on Email

By Jack Robins

I was walking past the large-print section of the library when I happened to notice a large paperback with the title *Basic Email For Beginners*. There is a lot I do not know about writing and sending emails, so I signed out the book. On the cover it said, “Step-by-Step Instructions,” and “Computer Class in a Book.” That impressed me because I have very specific personal definitions of “class” and “lecture.” I have attended many lectures and listened to how the speaker solved computer problems. I’d nod my head in apparent understanding as the solution was spelled out. Then, upon getting home, I would try to do what the speaker suggested, and I would scratch my head and ask, did the speaker press this button or that button—and I would end up being completely confused. Learning something requires my being guided to use my fingers, which are somehow like another brain; they are the medium that actually does the learning. That can only be done in a class. I have to be shown.

The wonderful thing about this book is that it actually *is* a class. Each time the author, Mary Pelton, makes a point, she first describes how to perform a certain task. Then she *shows* you again step by step using photos. You can get in front of your computer and follow photo by photo to do what she has explained. *That* is a class.

When solving computer problems or learning computer techniques) I have often used the “by gosh and by gee” method, another way of saying, “Do something, do anything, and make the blasted thing work.” I’m like a little kid who isn’t afraid to press buttons—and thus becomes a computer whiz. That method has worked 90% of the time, but sometimes I’ve had to work for hours before finding an answer. The rest of the time, I look through a manual, check the internet, or, when nothing else works, ask somebody who might know the answer.

This book, one of a series issued by “Web Wise Seniors” of Ohio, showed me many things about email that I either did not know—or that I learned the hard way, using the “by gosh and by gee” technique. For example, why are you able to send an email to someone across the country or to a person in a foreign country and expect them to receive the message within a few minutes? I had a friend in New Jersey who communicated constantly with her daughter, who was in Australia. It was cheaper than using the phone—and cheaper and faster than sending a regular letter, and the receiver had the message in a few minutes and could reply just as quickly.

The book explains email service providers, user names, passwords, addresses, address books, forwarding an email, replying to an email, storing emails in folders, sending attachments, what “cc” (carbon copy) and “bcc” (blind carbon copy) are used for, and junk mail and malware. I often wanted to send a photo along with my text, but the book’s only answer was to add the photo as an “attachment” and then shows step by step with black-and-white photos how to send an attachment.

from most adults to some degree. For example, many teens see Facebook or MySpace as an extension of themselves. Many use code words or secret created language or slang in order to talk with friends about things they don't want adults to find out about. What I'd like to address is the serious issue of "flaming." According to wisegeek.com, flaming is "the often deliberate act of posting or writing messages on Internet bulletin boards and message groups that have the intent of insulting or creating dissent within a group. An Internet flame is often filled with coarse language and personal insults." Sometimes, when discussing this issue as it pertains to children and teens, it is referred to as "cyber bullying." While anyone can be a victim of flaming, teens rarely have the emotional maturity to handle it. Since their online world is wrapped up in how they view themselves, flaming is potentially hazardous as has been evidenced in many news bits (psychological upset and even death). According to safesurfingkids.com, "These messages, however false, thoughtless, or baseless they may be, often take a very real emotional toll on their intended victims. At a time in their lives where their self

-esteem is already often at risk, teens can be deeply affected by insults, bullying, and 'flaming' on the Internet." It is important for them to understand that they can avoid forums or bulletin boards when this occurs despite peer pressure, they can delete so-called Facebook friends who flame or slander them. They need to know it is OK to not "friend" someone just because all their friends do. Those are lessons that we can learn, as well. There is no rule that you have to friend someone or keep a friend you already have. And even though you may be more emotionally equipped to handle it, your safety and emotional well-being are important too. And, of course, it is OK to report flaming to the appropriate persons.

The last thing I'd like to add is to try to notice your topic patterns and the type of information you divulge. Do you always post about a particular subject? If so, do you think you'd get more responses if you varied your topics? Do you even care about responses? Do you complain a lot? Do you always or frequently sound negative? (I try to avoid Facebook when I'm feeling consistently down or depressed because I don't want to be a downer. At the same time, friends on Facebook can be a source of information to solve a problem as well as a resource of support and love that can actually cheer me up! And I do offer support myself to friends who indicate they are struggling with things.) Do you use a lot of abbreviations or terms that are only familiar to a particular group of people? (If so, are those comments only meant for those folks familiar with them?) Do you divulge too much personal information? Do you share things you wouldn't normally share with someone face to face? (I'm not talking about things like videos or information you forget to share with someone in person; I'm referring to financial or intimate matters, family discord, or drama, the whereabouts of your children.) Do you use social networking sites as your personal journal or is it a place to connect only? (Be aware that when too much personal information is shared it can make others feel uneasy—or simply give others an impression about you that might not be accurate or that you wouldn't want them to have.) Also notice how often or little you post. Do you post so many times a day that you take up a whole page of your friends' newsfeed on Facebook? (I'm not referencing those who use Facebook as a place to play games. If you do not play games, but your friends do, and their gaming info takes up quite a bit of the newsfeed it is possible to block the application of the games. That way, the game stuff does not show up but any regular posts and updates by those friends will.) The answers to those questions might help us adjust course just enough so that we and our friends have a more enjoyable experience.

I believe that as long as we do our best, try to be courteous when dealing with differences or resolving conflict, proofread and content read anything we write, no matter where we write it—that we will be able to more easily enjoy our magical online communications avoiding and resolving conflict adeptly.

Recommended Discussion Areas

By Heath Row

Here are some of the better mailing lists, discussion forums, and social networking groups that address science fiction and fantasy, as well as fandom. I encourage you to get involved!

FmzFen <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fmzfen/>

Members: 141. **Traffic:** 200 messages a month.

A relatively low-traffic list discussing the history and culture of science fiction fanzines. For fandom fans, primarily. Not much discussion—mostly cross-postings of new material added to Bill Burns's [eFanzines.com](http://www.eFanzines.com). Regardless, a good place to keep up with fanzine fans.

Oldfen <http://on.fb.me/ewKczD>

Members: 79. **Traffic:** A few posts a month.

Organized by fan Robin Postal White, this Facebook group is "a gathering place for old fen (tired or otherwise), and for their fringefen." Not a ton of activity, but a good way to diversify your Facebook friends.

Trufen <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/trufen/>

Members: 160. **Traffic:** 700 messages a month.

Perhaps *the* best mailing list for fans of science fiction and fantasy literature, as well as fandom. Tons of personal updates and commentary, along with news and comments on fandom-related happenings. There's not too much serious and constructive criticism, however. Great to keep up with the doings of big-name fen around the world.

Escapism

Fiction by Nick Mamatas

Piotr was in prison for life for a crime he could not help but commit. He was a scientist, and his theories were borne out by the evidence. The Universe is holographic, two dimensions inscribed across the cosmological horizon.

The Politburo thugs, and they were all thugs to a man, could not tolerate the idea of presiding over a Universe where things were not what they seemed—where they could not stand at least a tiny bit taller than the rest. This wasn't what Piotr meant, but that is what the government heard. Piotr could not recant. He would not. A boot on the back of one's neck was not data, threats were not evidence, torture not proof.

They put Piotr deep underground, in a hole in a honeycomb prison from which no one had ever escaped.

His papers were burned, an axe taken to his computers, and his assistant taken away in the night. Like Galileo, Piotr thought, but there was no Inquisition for Piotr, no nobles who had taken his side, no eventual reprieve and exile to a far-off villa. For Piotr there was just a black hole and the rest of the world in all directions on the other side of the dark.

Piotr licked the condensation off the walls to live. He ate worms and rats and fought the other rats for those tiny bits of flesh he pulled from their comrades' papery bones. Strong enough to stand for longer than any guard or warden would have imagined, Piotr tried to escape.

He pressed himself up against the hewn stone walls of his cell, which had been built around him, and pushed hard. There was a chance, a small chance. A quantum chance. One in ten quadrillion, but it was there—Piotr could just flow through the wall. His mostly nothing and its mostly nothing, meshing perfectly. Well no, Piotr told himself, even as he pushed hard against the dark. I am just insane. My cosmological horizon stops at my now-blind eyes. It was those New-Agers with their breathless speeches and ridiculous websites, they're the ones who believe that rot. The Politburo let them run free, those "harmless kooks" (Piotr snorted as he thought those words), because the silly husbands and foolish wives of the powerful were taken with the pleasing notion of a reality that reorders itself to one's wishes. That attribute of the Universe was even an objective and observable phenomenon as far as the sufficiently wealthy (and sufficiently limited in imagination) were concerned.

The black hole he was in, Piotr reminded himself, was not a black hole. He was not a particle contained in the fluctuations of an event horizon. This wasn't a cage of

maximum entropy, or a divot in the field of space-time. And there wasn't some other particle somewhere else on the other side of the wall to which Piotr was bound by ghostly chains of instantaneous information transmission. Piotr's home was just a hole dug by men so that other men could die in private for the public peace.

However, Piotr had nothing else to do. And he could run his lips and tongue against the wall, sucking up what little water there was. And he could push, alone in the dark, waiting for the cosmos to fall apart around him.

Piotr pushed for days, months. He stopped only to eat and to eliminate. At times he felt a groove in the wall, a groove shaped like his body. It was a trick of the dark—and his desperate mind, he thought at other times. Sometimes he scraped against the cool rock with his fingernails, seeking a seam or even imagining scratching his way to

freedom. Perhaps there was only a five in one quadrillion chance of that. Double my odds, he thought. But he was tired, his limbs and digits weak from the diet of brackish water and rats that could squeeze through the cracks he never seemed to find in the wall.

One day—or was it night?—Piotr pushed hard against the wall, limbs spread, chest and groin pressed against rock, his own hot breath hanging like a cloud. There was a shift. He was no longer explicate—a thing to be moved about by the deeper reality of political expediency, of dark forces

and unseen hands and subtle strings like those bound to the joints of a marionette. Piotr was the implicate, the thing at the dark centre reaching and expanding outwards across the plane of the world. He was the Unmoved Mover of non-locality and all that which could be called locality both, the logarithmic shadow on the horizon of his black hole and that which cast the shadow as well. Sistemi del mondo! Piotr didn't think. He was. In and out. Information everywhere, written across the whole of the cosmos.

With a whoosh of cold air, something gave way, and there was a yowl and an impact that shook the cell, warping its walls like a soap bubble. Light! Grey and coruscating like a far of explosion seen from under ocean waves, but light. "I did it!" shouted Piotr's assistant, a man of rags and bones and wide red eyes. "I'm free! I fell right through the floor of my cell and..." he trailed off and squinted up at Piotr. "Oh." Piotr offered his congratulations, colleague to colleague.

This story previously appeared in the Oct. 15, 2009, issue of Nature. It is reprinted with the author's permission.



Sarah E. Harder

2010 N3F Amateur Short Story Contest

Story Contest Rules and Entry Blank

1. This contest is open to all amateur writers in the field, regardless of whether they're members of the National Fantasy Fan Federation. For the purposes of this contest, we define an amateur as someone who has sold no more than two (2) stories to professional science fiction or fantasy publications.

2. Stories entered in the contest must be original, unpublished, not longer than 8,500 words in length—and must be related to the science fiction, fantasy, or similar genres in the opinion of the judges.

3. Manuscripts should be typed, single sided on 8 1/2"-by-11" white paper, double spaced, with pages numbered. The name of the author should not appear anywhere on the manuscript to ensure impartial judging. Photocopies are acceptable, if they are of good quality. Computer printouts must be legible. Email attachments of Word documents are also acceptable.

4. Contestants can enter any number of stories, provided that each is accompanied by a separate entry blank and fee. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) if you would like your story returned at the end of the contest. Do not send your only copy in case of accidental loss; we are not responsible for lost manuscripts. Stories will not be returned without an SASE.

5. The entry fee is \$3 per story for N3F members in good standing, and \$5 for non-members. The extra \$2 is for printing and publicity, which will be paid for using N3F funds. The basic \$3 is for judging expenses and prizes.

While N3F members are encouraged to enter the contest, members will *not* receive any preference in judging. Because of a long-standing agreement with the British Science Fiction Association, BSFA members can pay the same fee as N3F members.

6. Cash prizes totaling \$100 will be awarded as follows: First prize is \$50, second \$30, and third \$20. Honorable mentions and semi-finalists will receive a certificate of award.

7. Send all manuscripts, accompanied by SASEs, entry forms, and fees to the contest manager: Jefferson Swycaffer, P. O. Box 15373, San Diego, CA 92175-5373; n3f.story.contest@gmail.com. Make checks payable to William Center. Well-concealed American cash (dollar bills) is also acceptable. All entries must be received or postmarked no later than Dec. 31, 2010.

8. The preliminary judge, who will pick the 10 or 12 semi-finalists, will be a knowledgeable member of the N3F. The final judge will be a professionally published writer.

9. The N3F assumes no publishing rights or obligations. We want to encourage professional sales, not fan publication. All entries will be returned after the contest is over, if accompanied by an SASE. Winners will be notified as soon as the judging is completed. Announcements and notifications of winning entries will be made in March 2011.

Please take your time and submit your best work. You can resubmit stories previously entered. All entries will be kept confidential and will be judged fairly and anonymously. The deadline for all entries is Dec. 31, 2010. Good luck!

Entry Form

(Detach or photocopy. Must accompany all entries.)

Title of story (for identification): _____

Author's name and address: _____

Author's email address: _____

Author's age: _____

Enclosed is the entry fee of \$5 (for N3F or BSFA members, the fee is \$3). I have read the above rules for the 2010 N3F Amateur Short Story Contest, and I agree to them.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Mail to: Jefferson Swycaffer, P. O. Box 15373, San Diego, CA 92175-5373

Re: The Review Section

Unless otherwise indicated, the reviews editor compiles and writes the review section. Members of the N3F are invited and encouraged to submit reviews, preferably by email, although postal mail will be accepted. If you send a review by email and do not hear back within a reasonable length of time, please write to check on its status. Publishers: We are especially interested in receiving new books to consider for review. Heath Row, 438 N. Stanley Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036; kalel@well.com.

Editor: Heath Row (HR). **Contributors:** Rick Brooks (RB), Ruth R. Davidson (RD), Gabrielle Lee (GL), Owen Lorion (OL), Jack Robins (JR), David Speakman (DS), Jefferson P. Swycaffer (JPS), R-Laurraine Tutihasi (RLT), Keith Walker (KW), and Holly Wilson (HW). **Illustrator:** Ruth R. Davidson.



Books

Against All Things Ending (The Last Chronicles of Thomas Covenant, Book 3), by Stephen R. Donaldson (Putnam, 2010)

Against All Things Ending, Book Three of the Last Chronicles of Thomas Covenant, by Stephen R. Donaldson, is almost 600 pages long. (This review is based upon an uncorrected proof.) Book Four, *The Last Dark*, presumably still being written, will finally and conclusively end the Chronicles of Thomas Covenant.

In the movie *Amadeus*, Mozart is asked by the emperor of Austria-Hungary about Mozart's opera, *The Marriage of Figaro*. In explaining the opera, Mozart pointed out that in one scene, four people are having a continuous conversation. "Do you know how long the four are speaking?" Mozart asks and replies, himself, immediately, "for 20 minutes." Only in an opera can four people speak (actually sing) together for 20 minutes without listening to each other—and you actually find yourself being drawn into the action.

In Book Three of the Last Chronicles, the main character, Linden Avery, struggles for 80 pages to make a decision about giving up her magical gadgets, despite the impatience of her friends and the coming of an impending

peril—and yet you find yourself being drawn into the narrative. Only Stephen Donaldson can do that.

For those not familiar with this 10-volume series, I can say briefly that there is a parallel earth with a time so accelerated compared to ours that a year or so of our time could be thousands of years in the parallel earth. There are two immortal men or beings, one the "creator" of this earth and the other, presumably his brother, who is trapped there. The brother, also called "the despiser," believes that he can be freed only if the parallel earth is destroyed; he is the major villain of the series. The creator, in turn, believes that, if he interferes, he could become too much like the despiser so he depends upon others, like Linden and Thomas, to resist the despiser. However, underlying this parallel earth, is a terror, a sleeping "worm" that, if awakened, can destroy the entire planet and all of its living entities.

Book Three starts where Linden, using magical powers derived from a white gold ring and a magical staff, brings Thomas—killed in a previous volume but still a spirit—back to life. The wielding of such an enormous amount of magic causes the worm to awaken. The hope of salvation lies in Linden's adopted son, hidden by the despiser and under the control of a parasitic entity. Book Three describes the efforts of finding and rescuing the son, Jeremiah, including somehow destroying the parasitic entity without hurting Jeremiah. Meanwhile, Thomas has the problem of stopping his former wife, who is insane, and also under the control of a parasitic entity.

I found myself vividly absorbed as the heroes and their friends (giants, for example) fight against the most horrific beings in the effort of achieving their aims. Meanwhile, as Book Three ends, the stars are rapidly disappearing as the worm begins to eat. (JR)

The Currents of Space, by Isaac Asimov (Tor, 2009)

I've read this book at least twice before and possibly more. Isaac Asimov has been a favorite of mine since I started to read science fiction. His writing style is straightforward and easy to read. This novel, recently reprinted by Tor, is essentially a mystery that takes place far away from Earth and in the far future. It takes place in the same universe as the Foundation series. Florina is essentially a planet that is enslaved to the planet Sark. The natives of Florina work for the powerful on Sark, growing a substance that no one has been able to replicate anywhere else. On this planet is found an amnesiac. Who is he? The book is fairly short by modern standards and easy reading but enjoyable. (RLT)

The Dragon and the Stars, edited by Derwin Mak and Eric Choi (DAW, 2010)

I enjoy stories about or with an Asian theme, so when I came upon this book, I was very excited. Being of Asian descent and seeing a book showing Asians in a positive way was a major selling point for me, as well. The anthology contains 18 different stories by 18 different

authors, yet all revolving around the same theme of having Asian characters and plots. The stories run the gambit from science fiction to fantasy and even to contemporary.

With so many stories, it is hard to pick any one story as my favorite, but I would like to mention just a few so that you, the reader, can see just what a variety of interesting stories this one book contains.

First off, the book starts out with Toni Pi's story "The Character of the Hound." This was a well-written story very reminiscent of old Asian tales passed down through the generations. I really enjoyed the way that the author used spirits and possession in the plot of the story.

As the book goes on, we move away from the classic Asian-type themes, and we find many more different types of stories—stories like "Intelligent Truth" by Shelly Li, a story about robots and how they might be able to understand human emotions. This was a nice story about finding humanity and truth in the most unlikely places.

Another two stories that I truly enjoyed were "Papa and Mama" by Wen Y. Phua and "Mortal Clay, Stone Heart" by Eugie Foster, two beautiful stories about love and family duty—one about a daughter who must take care of her reincarnated parents and another about two lovers who find a way to be together even in the afterlife.

"Going Down to Anglotoon" by William F. Wu is another story that needs to be mentioned. The story turns the stereotypes against Asians upside down. Even the title to this story is a great draw. I loved seeing the young Asian men going to Anglotoon and coming up with many falsehoods about the people there, just as the tourists who come to Chinatown do.

Charles Tan's "The Fortunes of Mrs. Yu" was another one that takes stereotypes to task. It might be a small thing, but this story tells of fortune cookies and how they are not an Asian item. The main character decides to try a new and different thing—the cookies that they serve to the tourists.

These and many other well-written stories are contained in this book. Through these different stories, the reader is introduced to different authors. I always enjoy short stories because they are a way for us, the reader, to find new authors that we enjoy. How many of us have picked up a book only to find out that we do not enjoy the author's writing style or, after reading a short story, how many have found a new author that they love? This book not only helps us do that—it also helps change the way Asians are represented in stories. I only hope that this is the start of a new trend with authors and publishers. (GL)

Elfland, by Freda Warrington (Tor, 2009)

This is one of the best books I've read in a while. I was drawn to it as a fairy tale. I grew up on fairy tales and still love them. But this is much more than just another fairy tale. It's a powerful novel with the emotional impact of Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*.

In the Aetherial universe, of which this novel is the first of a series, fairy folk live among humans. To humans they seem just like ordinary people if a little eccentric at times. This story takes place in a small village in England. The main characters are members of two fairy households. The

fairy folk travel back and forth between the Aetherial world and our world via gates that are situated in many places around the world, but the main gate that controls them all is in Cloudcroft. Lawrence Wilder controls this gate. In recent years, however, he has closed down the gate permanently because of a danger he sees. Usually when fairy folk reach a certain age, they travel back to the Aetherial world and are initiated to its customs and ways. Because the gate is closed, many younger fairy folk have been cut off from this tradition. Rosie Fox is the main character of the novel. The Foxes are close neighbours of the Wilders, although relations have been strained for many years. Rosie has two brothers. The Wilders have two sons. The lives of these five young people are central to the novel.

Rosie is growing up and suffers from all the emotional ups and downs of all adolescents everywhere. The closing of the gate causes emotional strain all around. Lawrence refuses to say much about the danger waiting on the other side of the gate. Many in the fairy community suspect he is exaggerating the danger and plot to overthrow him. A few of the young are frustrated by being cut off from the Aetherial realm and work at subverting Lawrence.

All these plots and subplots are intertwined and eventually climax in the last several chapters. Once I read about halfway through the book, it became increasingly difficult to put the book down for any reason. The last chapter, especially, was an emotional roller coaster, and I used a lot of tissues.

In addition to the story being engrossing, the book is very well written. I highly recommend the book to anyone who likes fairy tales, emotion-charged romances, mysteries, and good writing. This is Warrington's first American publication, but she's been writing for quite a while in England. I hope to read her other works. (RLT)

The Fall, by Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan (William Morrow, 2010)

This is the second book of *The Strain* Trilogy co-written by del Toro and Hogan.

Best known as a writer and Oscar-nominated director of movies like *Pan's Labyrinth*, *Hellboy*, *Chronos*, and *Blade II*; as well as being a director; del Toro is a fan of vampire fiction since his childhood in Mexico.

He wrote in blogs that he's not been happy with the current crop of vampire fiction with moody, broody, and angst-y vampires with whines worse than their bites.

Vampire books in the post-Anne Rice era are no longer scary like they were in del Toro's childhood. So, to fill that void, he decided to write his own vampire book to reignite the horror of vampirism. Because del Toro never wrote anything longer than a 120-page screenplay before his book deal, his publisher teamed him up with veteran mystery novelist, Chuck Hogan.

The result is *The Strain* trilogy, which offers a unique take on vampirism. The authors also succeed in bringing horror back to the vampire genre. The vampires of this series are truly horrific and gruesome—and disgusting. The first novel, *The Strain*, introduced us to the main character, a Centers for Disease Control (CDC) investigator, Dr. Ephram Goodweather, who is called to the scene when a

777 lands at JFK International Airport full of corpses. The vampire known as the Master has decided to leave the Old World and invade the New World. As it turns out, the Master is set on creating an army of vampires to take over the world. But Dr. Goodweather and his “Scooby Gang” of sorts attempt to thwart those plans and almost kill the Master by the end of the first book.

The second book, *The Fall*, picks up seamlessly from the first novel. Here, the Master’s plans come to fruition—as the heroes battle vampires in the greater New York City area.

We also discover that the Master is not the only elder vamp—there are apparently six others, three in the Old World, three in the new. They want to stop the Master because he is a threat to their quiet existence.

The Master, on the other hand, is hellbent on destroying the competition and using a Warren Buffet-type billionaire to transform the world into one where vampires climb to the top of the food chain as humans are turned into cattle to feed the new dominant race.

Unbeknownst to the other six elders, the Master has discovered the secret to killing them all off one by one.

All in all, this is definitely the second book of a series that does its job of setting us the end game in a thoroughly enjoyable fashion. The forthcoming final novel, *The Night Eternal*, is scheduled to be published in 2011. (DS)

Inkheart, by Cornelia Funke (Scholastic, 2003)

Back when I was about 14, I stumbled across a really fantastic book. I devoured it. Normally, I’d read an entire book in a single sitting, but this was a thick book that took me several days to read. When I finished it, I searched around for other books by the same author, in the same fantasy world. I found only three others, but they were all as fat as the first one. Sandwiched between school and homework, it took me weeks to read them all, weeks immersed in a land of fantastical beings, heroic adventures, and powerful magics. Weeks during which I extolled the books and author to all my friends, who hadn’t yet found that golden pen. With only four books out, I figured that this was some comparatively new author I had found, one who had only recently burst upon the literary scene. At 14, I wasn’t as astute about reading a book as I am now, so it wasn’t until I was well into the final book that I happened to look in the front at such little details as the copyright date. And found that it had been written and first published before I had even been born! I had not found a new author, I had simply reached a new level of reading as a newbie myself. Unknown to me, J.R.R. Tolkien already had a huge following, just none in my particular circle of classmates. Not a quick one to learn, I followed a similar pattern not too much later with C.S. Lewis and Narnia, whose first volume was published the year I was born.

Perhaps I still haven’t learned. A new novel was recently introduced to me by my daughter, who’d gotten it from her teenage kid. Published as a stand-alone story, it has grown into a trilogy by an author I’d never heard of. Once again I thought I’d found a new author, this time going backwards from adult fiction to a children’s book. A fairly thick children’s book, but since the Harry Potter

phenomenon, that was no longer so strange.

Well, *Inkheart* hadn’t been written before I was born, but it had been written long enough ago that this is a much belated review of a book that has already been glowingly reviewed many times over—by an author, Cornelia Funke, who already has a substantial fan following. Indeed, she was described as the “German J.K. Rowling,” comparing her favorably to one of the best-known authors of our times.

Still, discovered soon or late, this is a delightful book that is fun to read. It’s not without its imperfections, mostly limited by its status as a children’s book. Annoying to a more experienced reader is the almost comical ineptness of the purportedly vicious and efficient villains, who seem almost squeamish about actually doing any harm to anyone while on stage. They talk about murder a lot, there is even a very oblique reference to Resa being raped, but it’s all what has been done in the past, or will be done in the future. The premise, that fictional characters can come to life, is beyond credibility in the real world, but quite plausible in the fantasy world woven into this book. Magic, practically by definition, is the accomplishment of the implausible. Too many things are left out or unexplained. That is fine for the magic, because the characters themselves don’t understand it. But why didn’t Meggie read the book when she first had it? What happened to the five backup policemen who were called but never showed up? Why were the books laboriously carried out of the house to be burned, instead of just torching the whole house? The viewpoint character being a very young 12-year-old girl makes some of the annoying gaps understandable, such as the acceptance of so many characters having only a single name and towns having no names at all.

There are also omissions that are enticing. Frequent references are made to storybooks, without the titles being cited, so it’s a guessing game of which stories they are: Peter Pan, a story by Oscar Wilde, and several others, not all of which I recognized. The quotations at the start of each chapter also brought a lot of pleasant memories of other books to mind. An appendix might be nice, but that would take a lot of fun out of the game. If there’s not an Inkworld Concordance in bookstores or somewhere online, there probably ought to be. (OL)

N3F Bookworms Reading Selection

The Once and Future King, by T.H. White (Ace, 1987)
I can’t honestly say I enjoyed this book. It was not at all what I expected except maybe for the first part, which is titled “The Sword in the Stone.” That part was made famous by the animated feature film by Disney, which pretty well reflects the story.

It is not, as I’d expected, another retelling of the story of King Arthur. Well, it is—but it isn’t.

For one thing, White has set the tale much later than all the analyses of King Arthur place it. He has set it in historic times, roughly the time of Richard the Lion-hearted; whereas historically, I think the story belongs in the era of Roman Britain, maybe around the year 500. Later in the book, he introduces even more

anachronisms, such as guns. He also refers frequently to events that happened much later, using Merlin sort of as an excuse, because he is supposed to have aged backwards.

I think the book actually is a satire on humanity, politics, and religion. What a lovely idea Merlin planted in King Arthur's head to try to bring goodness to the world and stamp out belligerence. In the end, it all fails. The failure was inevitable. What was the point? Is humanity in the end incorrigibly evil? Should we keep trying anyway?

Stylistically I found the book uneven. Some of it was easy to read with characters and events that were interesting. At other times it bogged down in silly details that didn't interest me at all.

I would guess that the musical Camelot was largely based on this book, but with most of the analyses left out. The only analysis in the musical occurred in the song "What Do the Simple Folk Do?" except that this wasn't an idea that was made much of in the book.

I've owned the book for so many years and welcomed the opportunity finally to read it. Now I'm not so sure it was time well spent. (RLT)

If you're looking for a Howard Pyle- or *Bulfinch's Mythology: The Age of Chivalry*-like telling of the epic tales of King Arthur, Merlin, and the knights of Camelot, this isn't the book for you. T.H. White's 1939 novel is a literary retelling of the stories. There are four sections, each focusing on a different time period or set of characters. "The Sword in the Stone" concentrates on the young Arthur. "The Queen of Air and Darkness" looks at Queen Morgause—Morgan le Fay—her children, and the role they would have in Arthur's reign. "The Ill-Made Knight" turns its attention to Lancelot, whose relationship with Arthur's queen, Guenever—and the role *that* would play. And "The Candle in the Wind" considers the end of Arthur's reign.

While I prefer more straightforward tellings of the tales—Pyle was my introduction to Arthur—White's book does what it sets out to do very well. His portrayal of the different threads in the skein that was the life of Arthur—his own ideas about leadership, peace, and progress; Morgan le Fay and her children; Lancelot and Guenever—add up to a compelling narrative, and I'd not thought about a lot of the issues related to Arthur until White's writing suggested I do so.

Now that I've read this, I want to reread Pyle. That makes me think the book did its job—not that I read the wrong book. (HR)

The Squire's Tale, by Gerald Morris (Houghton Mifflin, 1998)

As Gerald Morris says in his Author's Note, "Some of the best stories are the old ones." The stories of King Arthur and his knights have been told and retold for more than 1,000 years. You'd think Morris couldn't offer anything new. Yet he tells these old stories in his own way. And adds some of his own stuff.

Such as Terrance, a 14-year-old orphan boy raised by Trevisant, a holy hermit. We find out quite early that this is not just a historical novel. For Trevisant does not remember the past. but the future.

When Gawain, a knight hopeful arrives in time for a dinner of rabbit stew, a late-coming knight is annoyed and will not believe the stew is gone. Soon he and Gawain are engaged in battle, sword to stew pot. Gawain disarms him, turns, and is almost stabbed in the back.

Gawain kills the false knight. Trevisant congratulates Terrance on being Sir Gawain's squire and bids them farewell the next morning.

Soon Sir Gawain and Terrance have to leave Camelot. Five kings oppose Arthur, and he leads a force against them. Terrance's talents as a woodsman have him sneaking up on the enemy camp when he meets a fox who isn't a fox. The fox becomes a little green man called Robin.

Robin tells Terrance of the whereabouts of a magic ring stolen from Arthur's father by one of the five kings.

Terrance steals up on the five kings' tent, slits a hole in back and sees the ring. As he takes the ring, he sees the five kings.

Out through the back of the tent, onto a waiting horse, and away with five kings after him. Into a clearing with Sir Gawain, Sir Kai, and Tor. Unfortunately for the five kings, three knights had the advantage of skill.

After a series of adventures, Terrance and Sir Gawain enter the Other World and become the guest of Ganscotter, the Enchanter. Terrance learns some, but not enough, about his parents—and of an evil woman called the Enchantress.

Months pass in what seemed days in the Other World before they are back in Camelot. Arthur is ill. Together, Terrance and Sir Gawain face the Enchantress, who turns out to be Gawain's mother. The dark knight seems to be Gawain's father—only Gawain buried his father before journeying to Camelot.

This is only the first of many delightful Authurian fantasies. Gerald Morris has a sense of humor—as you might guess from the dust jacket, which shows a knight sitting backwards on his horse. (RB)

The Thirteenth Child (Frontier Magic, Book One), by Patricia C. Wrede (Scholastic Press, 2009)
Patricia C. Wrede has turned out a number of delightful fantasies, including the Enchanted Forest series. This looks like another winner.

Large families have their own rewards. My mother was the youngest of 11, and a seventh daughter. But in a land where magic works, things can be more so.

Eff and Lan are twins. Lan is the seventh son of a seventh son, which will make him a most powerful magician. But Eff is the older of the two, which makes her a 13th child.

When Eff was 5, her Uncle Earn brought a policeman to have her arrested. Uncle Earn and Aunt Janna firmly believe that a 13th child would bring disaster on the family, and should have been drowned at birth. But it isn't too late.

Eff's Papa is a professor of magic. After all, he is a seventh son. He gets Earn to back off and behave after the policeman points out that 5 is way below the legal limit for magic working and leaves Earn sputtering.

It is not too long until Eff's Papa has an offer of a job out on the western frontier. It's his chance to put a stamp on a generation of western magicians, as well as getting his daughter out of an unhealthy atmosphere.

So the family moves to the North Plains Territory, all the way to the Mammoth River, which had a spell laid on it to keep dangerous magical creatures from crossing it—a spell cast by that legendary magician, Ben Franklin.

Yes, the Land of Columbia does seem a lot physically like the United States. And some familiar names appear.

So Eff grew up on the frontier. She learns the magic of other lands such as Cathay, but she never can quite shake her worries about being a 13th child.

Eff's sister has married a Rationalist, a group that believes that magic is a crutch. The Rationalists have one settlement across the Mammoth River, and their settlement seems little troubled by a menace that is destroying all the others.

So on the pretense of a family visit, Eff, Lan, Papa, and some other magicians visit the Rationalist settlement to find out why.

Eff's magical talents are put to the test, where the least doubt could destroy not only her, but many others west of the Mammoth River. (RB)

Comic Books

Doctor Who Annual 2010 (IDW, July 2010)

There are four storylets, all with different artists and different storytellers. The first story, "Ground Control," was about a hick type intergalactic safety patrolman trying to gain control of the Tardis—and doing a bad job of it. It was mildly amusing, but that's about it. The art was detailed, though. Occasionally the characters looked a bit stiff or stylized, but not too bad. Great background art.

The second story, "The Big Blue Box," was interesting. A man who isn't who he thinks he is keeps seeing a big blue box—the Tardis. The ending was satisfying and left me with a smile on my face. The art was subpar, though, very blocky. It's a good thing it had a good storyline. The most egregious thing was the lack of pupils, even in close-up views.

"To Sleep Perchance to Dream" is about our hero going into some sort of dreamscape and meeting a sage-type character for some soul cleansing. The majority of this storyline is told in pictures, so it's a darned good thing that the art was well done, both characters and background, though a few panels made me wonder why the artist got lazy. The opening panels are funny, and the ending predictable.

"Old Friend" seemed to be a prologue to the start of a whole new storyline. Doctor Who meets a man who has met him before, but in our hero's future. It ends with, "to be continued," leaving fans wanting to know what'll come next.

The art also suffers from no-pupil syndrome and looks like glorified choppy line drawings.

I don't know what's up with the art. All of the artists have talent, but it's as though they were all rushing to get it done—and sacrificed good art to do it. This is a no-no with comics, in my opinion, because the art is as vital as the storytelling. If you're gonna rush the art, change it into a regular short story without pictures.

Doctor Who fanatics will likely enjoy this annual publication. (RRD)

Scavengers #1 (Jarlidium Press, January 2010)

Dan Canaan's furry animal science fiction comic book concentrates on the adventures of United Salvage Vessel USV102 Recovery. Using a black-and-white watercolor or wash approach, Canaan's art is cartoony, but detailed enough that the sf aspects are still strong. Because of a foreclosure, the Recovery has a new owner and a new pilot, and this issue largely focuses on how those two characters fit in with the rest of the crew, including its original captain. They find a merchant vessel drifting in space, but before they can board it, another ship enters their space—causing damage to both. When they finally board the other ship, what they find is a surprise. This comic is a little more humorous than *Deep Space Vessel Nautica* and seems to give more nods to furry tropes and in jokes. Fun stuff. \$4 to Jarlidium Press, 13619 Mukilteo Speedway #D-5-141, Lynnwood, WA 98087; <http://www.jarlidium.com>. (HR)

Strange Science Fantasy #1 (IDW, July 2010)

To start off with, I'll let you in on a little personal tidbit: I'm a fan of post-apocalyptic stories in general, particularly when the atmospheric elements translate vividly. I really like to feel the environment when I read something post-apocalyptic or futuristic. Scott Morse's *Strange Science Fantasy #1* is definitely the "High-Octane Adventure" as promised on the cover! The artistic style manages to capture a sense of drama, violence, desperation and, dare I say... hope? So much action and adventure and suspense is communicated in these beautifully drawn, somewhat spare panels. What really struck me, though, is the lack of dialogue. The artwork is all action, and the text is narration. These characters don't have time or energy to speak with all the violence and tension erupting on every side. Yes, this is essentially a bleak picture of a society, but not without a glimmer of hope. One thing's certain—I need to see what comes next! (HW)

Webcomic Archive #5: Deep Space Vessel Nautica #1 (Jarlidium Press, March 2010)

Washington-state based Jarlidium specializes in "small pressed furry things," so it's appropriate that I picked up this anthropomorphic science fiction comic book at Califur in June. It's your basic space opera, pretty much, only with furry animals. Neesha is captain of the *Deep Space Vessel Nautica*, which comes under fire by Keiry Battleford and her crew. The vessel, its 700,000 passengers, its history, and that of the Galactic Confederacy (conveniently outlined in a 1,641-year timeline on the inside front cover) are

intriguing enough that the world seems worth exploring further. Neesha seems interesting, as does her undead now-hologram advisor Kial—and the introduction of Hass'k Singleborne, keeper of the order, at the end of the comic promises an interesting next issue, at the very least. \$4 to Jarlidium Press, 13619 Mukilteo Speedway #D-5-141, Lynnwood, WA 98087; <http://www.jarlidium.com>. (HR)



Movies

Alice in Wonderland

When this movie came out in theaters earlier in the year, I avoided it. The costumes and makeup seemed too garish and clownlike. I'm a borderline coulrophobic (person with an exaggerated fear of clowns) so that, along with so-so reviews, was enough to keep me away.

One day I was in an odd mood and actually watched the film. It was not as bad as I feared. In it, an 18-year-old Alice returns to Underland when she runs away from an arranged marriage proposal.

All in all, the movie was enjoyable and has a very good message about independence, feminism, and heroism geared for little girls. (DS)

Alice in Wonderland

I missed seeing the new Tim Burton *Alice in Wonderland* at the theaters, so I bought a copy as soon as it was released on DVD. I'd heard some very unfavorable reviews, but I love the mythos so much, I had to see it. To my surprise, I found it quite enjoyable. Yes, it's "wrong" in a great many ways, but it is a variant adaption of the original that, I think, has an elegance and an integrity all its own. The treatment of the Cheshire Cat, alone, is worth the cost of the disk: it's the first really "dignified" Cheshire Cat I've ever seen. In fact, the whole movie has a kind of mature dignity that I found relieving. Instead of the "Cuckoo for Cocoa-Puffs" screaming of the old Disney animated version, this has a much more subdued form of Wonderland nonsense: more chortling, less screezing, if you see what I mean. (JPS)

Television

No Ordinary Family

What initially looked like a knockoff of *The Fantastic Four*

or *The Incredibles*, instead has grown to become an intelligent family show that isn't insulting to the intelligence of adults, and is still appropriate for family viewing.

The story involves the Powell family, who crash land in the Amazon jungle while on vacation, only to return to their lives in Los Angeles to discover they have super powers.

But they are not alone—Mrs. Powell's employer is apparently the ring master of a group of supervillains, or of people forced to be supervillains unwillingly. (DS)

The Walking Dead

Of the new TV series in the 2010-2011 season, one sf series is my favorite, *The Walking Dead*, a series based on Robert Kirkman's comic books of the same name. It airs Sunday nights on the AMC cable channel.

The series follows the life of Rick Grimes, a sheriff's deputy who is shot in the line of duty only to wake up to a world overrun by zombies. He travels to Atlanta, home of the CDC, as he searches for his wife and son.

Although it is a zombie story with very good special effects, the story arcs focus on the interpersonal relations of the survivors and how a zombie apocalypse changes and challenges their individual characters.

As it turns out, Atlanta is overrun by zombies. After a close call, Grimes escapes the city to stumble upon a campsite in the Appalachian foothills north of Atlanta—where he discovers his wife and son are members of the ragtag group of survivors. Thinking Grimes was dead, his wife sought comfort in the arms—and bed—of another man, Shane Walsh, who happens to be Grimes's best friend. The show has only aired three episodes at the time of this writing, but I'm hooked. (DS)



Zines

brg #63

An apa/genzine that is beautifully produced. There is a "best of 2009"—books, films, pop and classical Cds—by Bruce, followed by a "best of the decade 2000-2009" from Bruce, Jonathan Strahan, and others. It's a well-worn idea but brings up some interesting—and occasionally surprising—choices. It would be a pretty sad day if we all thought the same. John Litchen recounts his life and sf in a lengthy article. There's a long lettercol and lots of photos. It's a great, lively read throughout. Bruce Gillespie, 5

Howard St., Greensborough, Victoria 3008, Australia;
gandc@pacific.net.au; GillespieCochrane.com.au. (KW)

Data Dump #146-9

All information-packed issues. Books, poetry, events, music, etc.—little sf/fantasy-related seems to escape Steve's watchful eye. Steve reports on the new horror poetry series *Stanza* launched at World HorrorCon. I agree that they are beautifully put together, but they're damned expensive, and way outside my budget. They certainly seemed to be selling well in Brighton at the signing session. However, as Steve himself proves with his Hilltop publications, poetry doesn't have to be expensively produced. Write to him for a list of his publications. Steve Sneyd, 4 Nowell Place, Almondsbury, Huddersfield, HD5 8PB. (KW)

Machenalia Spring 2010

This is the Friends of Arthur Machen's newsletter, and members also receive a hardbound biannual journal and occasional other goodies. Machen is somewhat sadly overshadowed by H.P. Lovecraft, though the latter regarded him as "the greatest living author" of weird tales. Praise indeed. The society is dedicated to encouraging a wider appreciation of Machen and his work. Write Mark Samuels, Flat D, 210 Archway Road, London, N6 5AX for more information. (KW)

Novoid #9

A fannish fanzine—i.e., fans talking about themselves and other fans—that recycles material from blogs, etc. It's a fun read and even includes some ancient locs. Mind you, the environment seems to crop up a few times so it's not really all whimsy. Seems some sf fans do care at least a little about their planet and its reckless destruction. Colin Hinz, 148 Howland Ave., Toronto, ON, M5R 3B5, Canada. (KW)

Relapse #7

It's the essential nostalgia fix of fandom. This is a '50s issue, and it makes me a little sad to realize that though I was certainly reading sf at that time, I didn't discover fandom until the late mid-'60s. To be honest, even when that happened, it was seven years before I actually met a

fan face to face. My only contact was through fanzines and locs. It's true that many of the fans and pros mentioned herein were still around, though looking somewhat older by then. Perhaps Pete has a point in suggesting that in the '50s sf represented a message of optimism for some people after the depression of the war years. Peter Weston, 53 Wyvern Road, Sutton Coldfield, B74 2PS. (KW)

Steam Engine Time #11-12

This is the sercon zine for me. #11 is a special women in sf issue and looks at the work of C.J. Cherryh, Ursula K. Le Guin, and others. However, the men return in #12 with George Zebrowski's SF Research Assoc. Con GOH's speech, and an article on A. Bertram Chandler's John Grimes series. Bruce reappraises books about sf. The *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles* TV series is given the once over. Somehow I missed them. Janine Stinson, P.O. Box 248, Eastlake, MI 49626; and Bruce Gillespie, 5 Howard St., Greensborough, Victoria 3008, Australia. (KW)

Supernatural Tales #16

One slightly dampening recent retort from Ramsey Campbell was that he wasn't looking for new stories at the moment to anthologize. But, fortunately, brave small press zines such as this keep the horror and fantasy short story alive. The quality as always is excellent, and we also get some book reviews. Ambrose Bierce is the featured forgotten author this. David Longhorn, 291 Eastbourne Ave., Gateshead, NE8 4NN. (KW)

Vanamonde 828-837

This is mostly apa reviews but includes poetry, artwork, con reports, and sundry other items of interest to all. A Renaissance Fair—sounds intriguing. Is this some kind of historical re-enactment, I wonder? Your quote on the problems of convention committees recalled for me an enlightening session at World Horror Convention for potential WHC organizers that included discussion on the problems with GOHs. John Hertz, 236 S. Coronado St. #409, Los Angeles, CA 90057. (KW)

2010 N3F Election Platforms

The following members of the National Fantasy Fan Federation seek election to serve as president or director in 2011. Please read their campaign statements and refer to them when casting your vote.

Presidency Platforms

Jon D. Swartz

I've learned a lot during my year as President. We've started several projects celebrating our important 70th anniversary next year, and I'd like to play a part in completing those projects. For that reason I'm running for the 2011 presidency.

My 2010 campaign promise to start a President's Fund—so that members who cannot afford to renew their memberships are able to remain members—has been put into effect, and four members have been awarded funds. A second campaign promise of mine was to return the N3F to the time when it was known for its publishing activities. In an effort to do so, some new club publications are already "in the works," and others are planned. I hope that several will be completed in time to celebrate our 70th anniversary.

If elected, I pledge to continue the President's Fund and to do all I can to return the club to its former reputation of producing publications of interest to fans.

Your vote will be appreciated. Thank you.

Directorate Platforms

Dennis Davis

Platform from September 2009 (*The Fan*, Vol. 9, No. 3): "I am currently a director, and I'm proud to have been a director this past year. I feel like we in the directorate have accomplished a good deal, and I have decided to run again as a candidate for the directorate of the National Fantasy Fan Federation because I desire to continue to serve the membership as one of your directors. I do hope to get your vote. Please vote, however you might decide!"

Sarah E. Harder

I have enjoyed serving on the directorate for many years and will continue to do so with your support. I will serve to the best of my ability as we strive to meet our club goals of exceeding the needs of the membership; improving the look, functions, and prominence of the N3F; and reaching out to others in the science fiction and fantasy community. I will always welcome advice, suggestions, participation, and concerns from the membership. Thank you.

Heath Row

I've enjoyed my first year serving on the National Fantasy Fan Federation's directorate. With your support and vote of confidence, I'd like to continue my service in 2011.

It's been a busy year leading up to our 70th anniversary. I've continued editing *The National Fantasy Fan*, committing to four 36-page issues a year, and we've attracted good notice in the wider world of fandom for that clubzine. I've also teamed up with President Jon D. Swartz to relaunch the series of Fandbooks originally initiated in the early '60s. We completed our first new Fandbook in more than 40 years this summer. And I'm working on several other publications, including a collection of writing by Joy Beeson and a chapbook of fan art by Patricia King.

As editor of *The Fan*, I've also helped Patsy King relaunch the round robins, which have been going gangbusters after a long period of inactivity. That has in turn led to a new—forthcoming—writers project, a collectively written short story following the Exquisite Corpse process. I plan to continue to strive to make the N3F a comfortable home for amateur science fiction, fantasy, and horror writers. To help meet that goal, I support Jefferson P. Swycaffer in the short story contest.

Even though we have a solid membership and a

friendly Welcomittee, I've been working to improve the new member experience by developing a New Member Kit that should launch in early 2011. Every current member of the N3F will receive a copy—as will new members.

And I've continued to stir the pot online, using the N3F's Yahoo! group and Facebook page to help involve former and potential members, celebrate and recognize active Neffers's contributions to the club (the monthly prize for participation), and otherwise encourage activity (including relaunching the Bookworms book club for those more literary-minded Neffers).

All that said, I have not been particularly active in N'APA, our amateur press association, and for that, I apologize. Regardless, I hope you'll give me your vote for director again for 2011. I'd like to help make our 70th anniversary as good as it can be.

David Speakman

I'm willing to serve another year as a member of the directorate. Over the past two years, our club has started to stabilize and grow again, as we're finally finding a place in the 21st century. Even though the N3F of today is much different from the club I first joined in 1983, we're not doing badly. We've made 70 years as of 2011—which is about 50 years longer than some naysayers thought we'd last.

My goals for 2011 are to continue working with the board to further our resurgent growth in print as well as our bettering online presence. On my wish list is to track down as many old back issues of *The Fan* and *Tightbeam* as possible to scan and convert them to a format that's Internet- and eBook reader-friendly in honor of our 70th anniversary—to preserve them for future generations and to enable us to be able to look up old friends who might no longer be with us.

Keith Walker

I'd like to serve again on the directorate, although I don't feel that I've done as much as I'd hoped. I enjoyed my first year on the directorate and hope to be able to serve again.

I bring a lot of experience from my time with the British Fantasy Society, I'm contributing most of the zine reviews in *The Fan*, and while I might not be overly vocal within the club, I do weigh in on all directorate discussions and votes.

My participation in the directorate helps make the N3F not just a national science fiction club, but an international organization. Thank you for your support.

Bureaus and Activities Reports

Artists Bureau

By the time this goes to print R-Laurraine Tutihasi will have received the cards for the birthday cards bureau that we did a few years back as a contest. I've scanned several of the cards and will send them to our Webmistress to post on our Web site so you can see several of the designs. Some of you should start receiving them fairly soon, I think—depending on R-Laurraine's process.

Over Memorial Day weekend, I went to Baycon. You

can read about my portfolio critique by professional artist Lee Moyer in my con report this issue. If you would like additional details—including his recommendations to all the artists—let me know, and I'll email it to you separately. As always, please feel free to let me know if you'd like to do a cover, illustration, or filler art. Thank you!—Sarah E. Harder

Birthday Cards

The birthday bureau is going along pretty well. Many new members have not given us a birth date, so this may be a

diminishing activity. Since the June issue of *The Fan*, I've sent about 10 birthday cards to members.

Thank you to George Phillies, who donated some pretty blank floral cards. If anyone would like to be added to the list or make sure he or she is on the list, please contact me at laurraine@mac.com.—R-Laurraine Tutihasi

Correspondence Bureau

Finally, this issue contains the article on online etiquette and communication—and I'm not just saying that because Heath finished the issue so late! I'd like to thank R-Laurraine Tutihasi, Angela Myers, and Ruth R. Davidson for their comments and suggestions for the piece. I would love some feedback. Perhaps we can discuss aspects of the article that you take an interest in or have experiences with. Is there anything you disagree with? Did I leave out any important points or rules of conduct? Do you have concerns or issues that weren't discussed? I hope the article proves helpful or is at least a good reminder of how we can make our online communications better. I am still learning and improving myself.

I also want to express my sincere appreciation to the other members of this club—and especially to those who volunteer in various ways. I hope it is not inappropriate to do so here. I've just been struck recently by how lucky we are to have so many of you who serve in the club selflessly. There are a number of you who do so much for this organization out of love and a desire to see it thrive. I've always been impressed by that. Part of me wants to name names but another part of me fears leaving someone out. Just know that if you volunteer in any way, big or small, you are appreciated! I love the N3F! And the N3F is about community. I love our fannish community! Your enthusiasm, participation, and ideas benefit the club at large, as well as the individual bureaus and members. You can reach me at artistsbureau@yahoo.com.—Sarah E. Harder

Mangaverse

It's another sign of the coming end of the world! I've finished a new issue of *Mangaverse*, originally Vol. 3, No. 1, now No. 10. I changed the numbering system to something more sane. We have some cool stuff in it, including an interview with Bob Fingerma, anime and manga comparisons, and a new part of "X-men Primer."

Publisher Craig Boyd sent the printed copies to Dennis Davis for distribution in early November. You should receive it soon, if you haven't already. It is also available for download at mangaverse.org.—Ruth R. Davidson

Monthly Participation Prize

I've been remiss in awarding a prize for the "best" discussion list email, *Tightbeam* blog post, Facebook page comment, and other online participation by a member for the last few months—but plan to catch up on August through November soon! It's important to recognize active members—and to highlight some of the best contributions.

In June, I recognized Denise Fisk, and in July, I gave nod to Rikki Winters. They've both been extremely game to get involved in the new writers activity, our recently relaunched round robins, and other collaborative writing projects. Their enthusiasm, involvement, and activity has

helped rekindle interest—and, most importantly, activity—in writing... which the club hasn't focused on in some time.

As a prize, Denise received a paperback of *Is Anybody Out There?*, 15 original stories about the quest to find intelligent life in the universe. Edited by Nick Gevers and Marty Halpern, the book is awarded courtesy of DAW. Rikki, then, received a paperback of P.R. Frost's novel *Faery Moon*, which was reviewed in *The Fan*, Vol. 9, No. 4. That book is also offered courtesy of DAW.

I should have caught up on the rest of the year's recipients by the next issue of *The Fan*. All members are encouraged to vie for this simple recognition. It's not a big deal, but I'm enjoying sending out the swag—and it's good to help stir the pot.—Heath Row

N3F Bookworms

In early 2010, we relaunched the Bookworms, the N3F book club. The first reading selection was T. H. White's Arthurian fantasy *The Once and Future King*—and you can read two perspectives of N3F members who read the book in this issue's installment of "Re: The Review Section."

The initial goal of the book club was to select a title a quarter, but that might have been too aggressive—especially since we did just the one book in 2010! Regardless, I'd like to announce the *next* selection, for discussion in the March 2011 issue of *The Fan*: George R.R. Martin's novel *The Armageddon Rag*.

Out of print for a couple of decades, the 1983 book was reissued a few years ago. It's not your standard Martin fare but has been called the "ultimate novel of revolution, rock 'n' roll, and apocalyptic murder ... a stunning novel that portrays not just the end of an era—but the end of the world as we know it."

If you'd like to participate in the book club, check out, borrow, or buy a copy of the book, and read it. If you'd like to join the discussion, email me, post something to *Tightbeam* online, send a message to the N3F mailing list, or write me a letter. All discussion will be considered for excerpt in the next issue of *The Fan*. If you'd like to have your feedback published, please weigh in before Feb. 15.

As always, you can contact me at 438 N. Stanley Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036; kalel@well.com.—Heath Row

Neff Amateur Press Alliance (N'APA)

N'APA is going along pretty well, though we can always use new members. I collate and distribute new issues every other month. The most recent edition distributed to participants was #206, which was sent in mid-November. Five participants contributed a total of almost 50 pages of material, including a profile of a neglected genre author, a short story, book and media reviews, personal updates, and mailing comments. Members who are interested can receive sample collations of the apa for as long as they want. Contact me at laurraine@mac.com to get on the distribution list.—R-Laurraine Tutihasi

Neffy Awards

The winners of the 2010 Neffy Awards for Best of 2009 are:

Pro Awards—Animation: *Star Wars: Clone Wars* (TV), *Avatar* (Film); Artist: Frank Frazetta; Authors: Stephen King for *Under the Dome* (SF) and China Mieville for *The City &*

The City; Comic: *The Walking Dead*; Video Game: *Batman: Arkham Asylum*; Movies: *Star Trek* (SF) and *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (F); Television: *Doctor Who*—BBCA (SF) and *True Blood*—HBO (F); Pro Web Site: news.Ansible.co.uk; Pro/Semi-Pro Zine: *Weird Tales*

Best in Fandom—Fan site: eFanzines.com; Fanzine: *The National Fantasy Fan*—Heath Row; Fan of the Year: Patricia King.

Congratulations! Nominations for the best of 2010 will be accepted starting Jan. 1, 2011. Look for nomination ballots starting next month. If you want to help out, contact me—David Speakman

Round Robins

The round robins have been extremely active for the last handful of months under the new direction of Patricia King. If you'd like to get involved, here's a list of the groups:

- Cats in Science Fiction and Fantasy #2
- Celtic Folklore and Other Folk Tales
- CGI and Animated Film
- C.J. Cherryh
- Comix
- *Doctor Who* #1
- Dreams #1
- Fantasy and Science Fiction in Films
- *Firefly* and *Serenity*
- Mythology #2
- Science and Technology in Society
- Sherlock Holmes
- *Star Trek*: Classic #1
- *Star Trek*: Deep Space 9 and *The Next Generation*
- Syfy Channel
- *Thieves' World*

Patsy also reports that a handful of round robins have gone missing—or inactive. If you participate in any of the following round robins—and are sitting on a reply to the chain—please respond and send on the robin soon.

- Dogs and Wolves in Science Fiction and Fantasy
- Fairy and Folk Tales #1

- *Star Trek: Voyager* and *Enterprise* #1
- Vampires #2
- *Babylon 5* #2
- J.R.R. Tolkien and *The Lord of the Rings*
- *District 9*
- Magic and Magick

You can contact Patricia King at 510 Village Court, Nashville, TN 37206.—Heath Row

Short Story Contest

With the end of the year approaching, the 2010 short story contest is coming to a close. We will accept entries until Dec. 31, 2010. Full details and rules can be seen on p. 19 of this issue or online at <http://www.n3f.org/N3Fssc.shtml>. The N3F will accept entries via email, as attachments in Word format, as well as via paper mail.

Feel free to help promote the competition, which will be managed and judged by Jefferson P. Swycaffer, author of *Become the Hunted* (Avon, 1985). Entrants should send submissions, entry forms, and fees to Jefferson P. Swycaffer, P. O. Box 15373, San Diego, CA 92175-5373; n3f.story.contest@gmail.com. Entries that miss the deadline will be considered for the 2011 competition.

New N3F member Wesley Kawato, editor and publisher of the litzine *Nova Science Fiction*, has expressed interest in publishing the winner of the 2011 contest in his publication. If the winning story doesn't meet his requirements, he'll consider the second or third place entries.—Jefferson P. Swycaffer

Webmistress

Our main Web site is n3f.org. Please let me know of any needed updates. The little things always seem to get overlooked. Other Websites include tightbeam.net, fandominion.com, and our Facebook page: [facebook.com/pages/N3F/89128934330](https://www.facebook.com/pages/N3F/89128934330). Anyone can participate on those sites, so please feel free to do so.

If any artists would allow us to use some of their art to beef of the N3F shop so it has more than just N3F logo paraphernalia, that would be fantastic. Of course, artists would retain their copyright.—Ruth R. Davidson

Open positions: Blind Services, Computer Gaming, Convention Coordinator, Future Fandom, and Teaching Science Fiction. Contact the president to learn more.

Secretary's Report

By Dennis Davis

I am the secretary of the N3F, and all of the information is as correct as it can be. Please contact me if you find a discrepancy or have not found your name in this report, which I completed Sept. 3, 2010.

Help me to serve you better by doing the following:

1. Check your information in the roster. Notify me of any changes.
2. Mark the expiration date on your envelope or include your renewal reminder card.

3. Send address corrections as soon as possible. The postal service charges me to return undeliverable zines.

My N3F email address is n3f_info@yahoo.com. If you give my email address out to someone, please give them the n3f_info@yahoo.com address. Please send your checks to the secretary: Dennis L. Davis, 25549 Byron Street, San Bernardino, CA 92404-6403. Make checks or money orders payable to William Center.

Key: GS=good standing, NEW=first time membership, RN=renewal, and REIN=reinstatement

Address changes and corrections:

REIN 0711 Owen Lorion, 2501 W. Zia Road #6-104, Santa Fe, NM 87505-5755

Expired list:

June 2010: Jeff Redmond

Reinstated:

REIN 0511 Bob and Diane Blackwood, 4304 N. Marmora Ave., Chicago, IL 60634-1739

REIN 0711 Lisa Cowan, 10952 Orange Park Blvd., Orange, CA 92869

REIN 0611 Jacqueline Lichtenberg, 4133 West Bart Drive, Chandler, AZ 85226-2116

REIN 0711 Owen Lorion, 2501 W. Zia Road #6-104, Santa Fe, NM 87505-5755

REIN 0611 Lee and J.J. MacFadden, 1315 Rock Rose Road, Bristol, TN 37620-5219

REIN 1210 Edmund Meskys, 322 Whittier Highway, Moultonborough, NH 03254-3627

Renewals:

RN 0311 Joy Beeson, 1700 Park Ave., Winona Lake, IN 46590-1637

RN 0511 Charles Bradley, 504 Heritage Ave., Terrytown, LA 70056-4009

RN 0312 Richard Brooks, P.O. Box 834, Angola, IN 46703-0834

RN 0811 David K. Robinson, 88235 Highway 9 #5, Lineville, AL 36266-6944

RN 0411 David Rubin, 15 Leverett Court, Staten Island, NY 10308-1726

RN 0511 William Voharas, 7471 East 29th Place #2004, Denver, CO 80238-0000

RN 1111 George Wells, 3939 W. Windwills Blvd. #1130, Chandler, AZ 85226-1398

Treasurer's Report

By William Center

Receipts

New members dues (includes reinstatements)	\$72.00
Renewal dues	\$84.00
Gift	\$18.00
Total receipts	\$174.00

Disbursements

June 2010 zine printing	\$200.66
June 2010 zine mailing	\$90.00
President's Fund withdrawal	\$22.00
PayPal service charge	\$3.93

Total disbursements	\$316.59
---------------------	----------

Aug. 15, 2010, report

Beginning balance (May 15, 2010)	\$3,794.28
Additions	\$174.00
Subtractions	-\$316.59
Ending balance (Aug. 15, 2010)	\$3,651.69

Send all dues, new or renewal, to Dennis Davis, 25549 Byron Street, San Bernardino, CA 92404-6408. Make checks payable to William Center, not the N3F. Canadian and overseas members, please pay in U.S. funds.

Membership Roster

The following is the National Fantasy Fan Federation's membership roster, as reported by Secretary Dennis Davis on Sept. 3, 2010. Please notify him of any changes or corrections via email at n3f_info@yahoo.com. Total members on the roster: 53.

Key: GS=good standing, NEW=first time membership, RN=renewal, and REIN=reinstatement

002 REIN0411 John Andrews, P.O. Box 5681, Santa Rosa, CA 95402-5681

154 *GS1010 Majik Attic, 9618 Quiet Lake, San Antonio, TX 78254

003 RN0311 Joy Beeson, 1700 Park Ave., Winona Lake, IN 46590-1637

005 REIN0511 Bob and Diane Blackwood, 4304 N. Marmora Ave., Chicago, IL 60634-1739

006 *GSJ1210 Craig and Sherry Boyd, P.O. Box 25631, Little Rock, AR 72221-5631

152 RN0511 Charles Bradley, 504 Heritage Ave., Terrytown, LA 70056-4009

007 RN0312 Richard Brooks, P.O. Box 834, Angola, IN 46703-0834

010 RN1210 William and Michele Center, 1920 Division St., Murphysboro, IL 62966-2320

011 GS1017 Gar Chen, P.O. Box 1286, New York, NY 10013-1286

156 *GS1010 Rowena Cherry, Bloomfield Township MI 48302

161 REIN0711 Lisa Cowan, 10952 Orange Park Blvd., Orange, CA 92869

013 RN1210 Ruth R. Davidson, 4807 Capay Drive #2, San Jose, CA 95118

014 GS0411 Dennis Davis, 25549 Byron St., San Bernardino, CA 92404-6403

018 RN1210 Tom Feller, P.O. Box 140937, Nashville, TN 37214-0937

019 GS0910 Denise Fisk, df_greenrose@hotmail.com

163 NEW0711 Richard Handloff, 264 Massachusetts Ave. #102, Arlington, MA 02474

023 GS0511 Sarah E. Harder, 1574 Notre Dame Ave., Belmont, CA 94002

032 *GS1210 Patricia King, 510 Village Court, Nashville, TN 37206

035 RN1110 Dorothy Kurtz, 230 Kings Highway East #188, Haddonfield, NJ 08033

104 RN1010 Jean Lamb, 4846 Derby Place, Klamath Falls, OR 97603-8338

037 REIN0611 Jacqueline Lichtenberg, 4133 West Bart Drive, Chandler, AZ 85226-2116

038 RN1110 L.A. Vern Loretz, Jr., 8223 Indian Hill Road, Manlius, NY 13104-9705

160 REIN0711 Owen Lorion, 2501 W. Zia Road #6-104, Santa Fe, NM 87505-5755

129 REIN0611 Lee and J.J. MacFadden, 1315 Rock Rose Road, Bristol, TN 37620-5219

116 RN0411 Joseph Martino, 905 S. Main Ave., Sidney, OH 45365-3212

043 REIN1210 Edmund Meskys, 322 Whittier Highway, Moultonborough, NH 03254-3627

044 RN1010 Valerie Mignault, 1584 Scituate Ave., Cranston, RI 02921

155 *GS1010 Angela Myers, P.O. Box 2136, Decatur, IL 62524

139 GS0411 Ray Nelson, 333 Ramona Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530-3739

141 *GSJ1210 Kemse net-Ubasti, 3535 E. Thunderbird Road, Phoenix, AZ 85032

053 RN0411 George Phillies, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester, MA 01609

054 EXP0610 Jeff Redmond, 1335 Beechwood NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505-3830

057 RN0910 Jack Robins, 223 Lake Meryl Drive, West Palm Beach, FL 33411-3392

058 RN0811 David K. Robinson, 88235 Highway 9 #5, Lineville, AL 36266-6944

112 GS0910 Steven Rose, Jr., steven.rose.jr@sbcglobal.net

151 RN0111 Heath Row, 438 N. Stanley Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036; kalel@well.com

061 RN0411 David Rubin, 15 Leverett Court, Staten Island, NY 10308-1726

096 RN1110 David Speakman, 501-83 Moorpark Way, Mountain View, CA 94041

096 RN1110 Rich Speakman, 501-83 Moorpark Way, Mountain View, CA 94041

070 *GS1210 Jon D. Swartz, 12115 Missel Thrush Court, Austin, TX 78750

071 RN0411 Jefferson P. Swycaffer, P.O. Box 15373, San Diego, CA 92175-5373

149 RN0111 Mick Taylor, P.O. Box 4120 #23061, Portland, OR 97208

143 RN0411 R-Laurraine Tutihasi, P.O. Box 5323, Oracle, AZ 85623

077 *GS1110 Susan Van Schuyver, 1921 Churchill Way, Oklahoma City, OK 73120-1149

078 GS0912 Michael Varbanov, 29 Glenhaven, Amherst, NY 14228

080 RN0511 William Voharas, 7471 East 29th Place #2004, Denver, CO 80238-0000

097 RN0411 Keith Walker, 6 Vine St., Lancaster, Lancashire, LA1 4UF United Kingdom

081 RN1111 George Wells, 3939 W. Windwills Blvd. #1130, Chandler, AZ 85226-1398

082 RN1110 William Wharton, 11 Laurel Drive, Oakdale, CT 06370-1727

0-na special Thomas Whitehead, 1210 W. Berks St., Philadelphia, PA 19122

157 NEW0511 Mark Williams, 3114 Freemont St., Round Rock, TX 78681

158 NEW0711 Holly Wilson, 243 Nassau Ave., Brooklyn, NY 1222

083 REIN1210 Rikki Winters, 3535 East Thunderbird Road, Phoenix, AZ 85032

Convention Calendar

The following conventions will occur between this and the next issue of *The Fan*. Not all events can be listed, and con planners should send event listings to the editor for consideration. Please contact organizers before making travel plans.

AnonyCon

Dec. 3-5, 2010, Stamford, Connecticut
Roleplaying and board games
<http://anonycon.com/>

SMOFCon 28

Dec. 3-5, 2010, San Jose, California
Secret Masters of Fandom convene to discuss Worldcon
<http://www.smofcon28.org/>

Steel City Con

Dec. 3-5, 2010, Monroeville, Pennsylvania
The Pittsburgh toy, comic, and children's collectibles show
<http://www.steelcitycon.com/>

Manga and Exotic Worlds

Dec. 31, 2010, to Jan. 2, 2011, Portland, Oregon
Science fiction, fantasy, manga, and anime
<http://www.mewcon.com>

IKKiCON V

Dec. 31 to Jan. 2, 2011, Austin, Texas
Anime and pop culture
<http://www.ikkicon.com/>

MythosCon

Jan. 5-9, 2011, Phoenix, Arizona
"Your view into the worlds of H.P. Lovecraft"
<https://mythoscon.org/>

Shadow Con XV

Jan. 7-8, 2011, Memphis, Tennessee
Gaming and anime
<http://www.shadowcon.org/>

Anime Los Angeles

Jan. 7-9, 2011, Los Angeles
Anime, cosplay, and more
<http://www.animelosangeles.org/ala/>

GAFilk

Jan. 7-9, 2011, Atlanta
Annual filk convention
<http://www.gafilk.org/>

Ichibancon

Jan. 7-9, 2011, Charlotte, North Carolina
Anime, gaming, and pop culture
<http://www.ichibancon.com/>

Further Confusion

Jan. 13-17, 2011, San Jose, California
"The world's largest anthropomorphic convention"
<http://www.furtherconfusion.org/fc2011/>

DeCONpression 8

Jan. 14-16, 2011, Worthington, Ohio
Adult-only science fiction, fantasy, and horror relaxacon
<http://www.deconpression.org/>

GenghisCon

Jan. 14-16, 2011, Perth, Australia
Science fiction and fantasy
<http://www.genghiscon.org/>

MarsCon

Jan. 14-16, 2011, Williamsburg, Virginia
Writer guest of honor: David Weber
<http://www.marscon.net/>

Rustycon

Jan. 14-16, 2011, Seattle
Science fiction and fantasy
<http://www.rustycon.com/>

Arisia

Jan. 14-17, 2011, Cambridge, Massachusetts
"New England's largest and most diverse science fiction and fantasy convention"
<http://2011.arisia.org/>

ConFusion

Jan. 21-23, 2011, Troy, Michigan
Special guests include Paolo Bacigalupi
<http://confusion.stilyagi.org/>

COSine

Jan. 21-23, 2011, Colorado Springs, Colorado
Science fiction and fantasy
<http://www.firstfridayfandom.org/cosine/>

Riverside Dickens Festival

Jan. 21-23, 2011, Riverside, California
The featured book for this year is *Barnaby Rudge*
<http://www.dickensfest.com/>

CreatureCon Orlando

Jan. 22-23, 2011, Kissimmee, Florida
Comic books and collectibles
<http://www.creaturecon.com/>

Twilight Convention

Jan. 22-23, 2011, Seattle
Official *Twilight* convention
http://www.creationent.com/cal/twilight_wa.htm

BPA WAM IX

Jan. 27-30, 2011, Baltimore
Boardgame Players Association card-driven wargames
genre con
<http://www.wamconvention.com/>

Xena Convention

Jan. 28-30, 2011, Los Angeles
16th official Xena convention
<http://www.creationent.com/cal/xebur.htm>

Science Fiction and Fantasy Short Film Festival

Jan. 29, 2011, Seattle
Fifth annual film festival
<http://www.empsfm.org/programs/index.asp?categoryID=216>

Supercon XVIII

Feb. 4-6, 2011, Hastings, Minnesota
17th annual relaxacon
<http://supercon.info/>

Twilight Convention

Feb. 4-6, 2011, San Francisco
Official *Twilight* convention
<http://www.creationent.com/cal/twilight.htm>

G-Anime

Feb. 5-6, 2011, Gatineau, Quebec, Canada
Anime, manga, video games, and pop culture
<http://www.ganime.ca/>

Capricon XXXI

Feb. 10-13, 2011, Wheeling, Illinois
"Chicagoland's only four-day science fiction convention"
<http://www.capricon.org/capricon31/>

Corflu 28

Feb. 11-13, 2011, Sunnyvale, California
Annual convention of fanzine fans
<http://corflu.org/>

Eaton Science Fiction Conference

Feb. 11-13, 2011, Riverside, California
Academic conference on science and the humanities
<http://eatonconference.ucr.edu/>

Basauricon

Feb. 18-20, 2011, Basuri, Spain
International science fiction convention
<http://www.basauricon.com/english.htm>

Boskone 48

Feb. 18-20, 2011, Boston
NESFA's regional science fiction convention
<http://www.nesfa.org/boskone/>

ConDFW X

Feb. 18-20, 2011, Dallas

Science fiction, fantasy, and science
<http://www.condfw.org/>

Con Nooga

Feb. 18-20, 2011, Chattanooga, Tennessee
Multi-fandom convention
<http://www.connooga.com/>

Farpoint

Feb. 18-20, 2011, Timonium, Maryland
Science fiction media
<http://www.farpointcon.com/>

Gallifrey One

Feb. 18-20, 2011, Los Angeles
The 22nd annual North American Dr. Who celebration
<http://www.gallifreyone.com/>

RadCon 5C

Feb. 18-20, 2011, Pasco, Washington
Science fiction and fantasy
<http://www.radcon.org/>

Reenactor Fest

Feb. 18-20, 2011, Chicago
"Indoor convention for all reenacting time periods"
<http://www.reenactorfest.com/>

Visioncon

Feb. 18-20, 2011, Springfield, Missouri
Science fiction, fantasy, and gaming
<http://www.visioncon.net/>

DunDraCon 34

Feb. 18-21, 2011, San Ramon, California
Roleplaying gaming
<http://www.dundracon.com/>

Animation on Display

Feb. 19-20, 2011, San Francisco
Anime and cartoons
<http://www.aodsf.org/>

Condor

Feb. 25-27, 2011, San Diego
Science fiction and fantasy
<http://www.condorcon.org/html/mainmenu.html>

Furry Fiesta

Feb. 25-27, 2011, Dallas
Furry fandom
<http://www.furryfiesta.org/>

MystiCon

Feb. 25-27, 2011, Roanoke, Virginia
Science fiction literature and media
<http://www.mysticon-va.com/>

National Fantasy Fan Federation

Membership Application

New Member Reinstatement Joint Membership Gift Membership

Name (Please Print): _____

Address: _____

City, State, Postal Code, Country: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Occupation: _____ Male: Female: Birthdate: _____

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Interests. Please select any and all of the following that you're interested in or would like to get involved in.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> APAs (amateur press associations) | <input type="checkbox"/> Fanzines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Filk singing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Audio | <input type="checkbox"/> Games and video games |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blogging | <input type="checkbox"/> Movies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Books | <input type="checkbox"/> Online activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cartooning, cartoons, and animation | <input type="checkbox"/> Publishing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collecting | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading and book clubs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comic books | <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computers and technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Roleplaying games |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conventions and clubs | <input type="checkbox"/> Round robins (group letters) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence | <input type="checkbox"/> Taping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Costuming | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching science fiction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DVDs and videos | <input type="checkbox"/> Television |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Editing | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing |

Which would you prefer?

A PDF of *The Fan* emailed to you The clubzine printed and mailed to you Both

How long have you been interested in science fiction and fantasy? _____

How long have you been involved in fandom? _____

List any other clubs you are or have been a member of: _____

List any conventions you've attended: _____

What prozines and fanzines do you read, if any? _____

What is your favorite type of sf/f? _____

Who are your favorite sf/f authors: _____

Are you interested in online activities? If yes, what type? _____

Which, if any, of the following would you be willing to help the club with?

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Artwork | <input type="checkbox"/> Recruiting at conventions | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing for club publications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organizing activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Corresponding | <input type="checkbox"/> Publishing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

Name of Sponsoring Member (if any): _____

Dues are \$18 per year (\$22 for Joint Memberships) which includes subscriptions to the club's fanzine as well as other activities and benefits. Make checks or money orders payable to William Center (the treasurer). **All payments must be made in U.S. funds.** Mail dues and application to club secretary Dennis Davis, 25549 Byron St., San Bernardino, CA 92404-6403. Please allow at least eight weeks for your first clubzine to arrive. You can also sign up online at <http://n3f.org>.

Send all address corrections
and undeliverable copies to

Dennis L. Davis
25549 Byron Street
San Bernardino, CA
92404-6403

“If science fiction is the literature of change, then fantasy is the literature of longing.”—Richard Treitel