

ASFACTS 2009

JULY "HOT TIME IN THE SUMMER" ISSUE

ROGERS & DENNING HOSTING PRE-CON PARTY

Patricia Rogers and Scott Denning will uphold a local fannish tradition when they host the Bubonicon 41 Pre-Con Party 7:30-10:30 pm Thursday, August 27, at their home in Bernalillo – located at 909 Highway 313.

The easiest and most direct way to reach their house is to head north on I-25 and take exit 242 east (Rio Rancho's backdoor and the road to Cuba). At the intersection with Highway 313, turn right to head north. Look for the Country Store, the John Deere sign and Mile Marker 9. Their house is on the west side of the road, with plenty of parking on the shoulder.

In addition to socializing, attendees can help assemble the membership packets, and check out the 2009 con t-shirt with artwork by Peri Charlifu.

Please plan to bring snacks and drinks to share, plus plates, napkins, cups and perhaps some ice. And, as with any hosted party, please help us keep their house clean and in good shape!

LOCUS EDITOR DIES

Locus publisher, editor, and co-founder Charles N. Brown died peacefully in his sleep July 12 on his way home from Readercon. He was 72 years old.

Charles Nikki Brown was born June 24, 1937 in Brooklyn NY, where he grew up. He attended the City College of New York, taking time off from 1956-59 to serve in the US Navy, and finished his degree (BS in physics and engineering) at night on the GI Bill while working as a junior engineer in the '60s. He married twice, to Marsha Elkin (1962-69), who helped him start *Locus*, and to Dena Benatan (1970-77), who co-edited *Locus* for many years while he worked full time. He moved to San Francisco in 1972, working as a nuclear engineer until becoming a full-time SF editor in 1975. The *Locus* offices have been in Brown's home in the Oakland hills since 1973.

Brown co-founded *Locus* with Ed Meskys and Dave Vanderwerf as a one-sheet news fanzine in 1968, originally created to help the Boston Science Fiction Group win its Worldcon bid. Brown enjoyed editing *Locus* so much that he continued the magazine far beyond its original planned one-year run. *Locus* was nominated



for its first Hugo Award in 1970, and Brown was a best fan writer nominee the same year. *Locus* won the first of its 29 Hugos in 1971.

During Brown's long and illustrious career he was the first book reviewer for *Asimov's*; wrote the *Best of the Year* summary for Terry Carr's annual anthologies (1975-87); wrote numerous magazines and newspapers; edited several SF anthologies; appeared on countless convention panels; was a frequent Guest of Honor, speaker, and judge at writers' seminars; and has been a jury member for various major SF awards. Brown also frequently attended the annual Williamson Lectureship in Portales, often driving in from Albuquerque with Connie Willis.

As per his wishes, *Locus* will continue to publish, with executive editor Liza Groen Trombi taking over as editor-in-chief with the August 2009 issue.

A complete obituary with tributes and a photo retrospective will appear in the August issue of *Locus*.

UPCOMING ASFS MEETINGS

- **August 14, 2009:** Preview of the Bubonicon 41 schedule and t-shirt artwork, screening of *King of the Zombies* (1941 B&W), and announcements of Bubonicon 42 chair candidates.
- **September 18:** It's All About the Cons! Bubonicon 41 & Canadian Worldcon reports. Also, election of the Bubonicon 42 chair (voting rules will apply). *Note:* This meeting is a week later than usual - the 3rd Friday of September.
- **October 9:** An audience-participation Game Show (possibly from Roslee Orndorff), plus the elections of 3 club officers. And the fall issue of *ASFACTS* will be out (deadline Sunday, Oct 4).
- **November 13:** An interesting talk, we hope.
- **December 11:** Dessert Cook-Off? Holiday Film or Book Discussion? What say all of you?

Craig Chrissinger, normal editor. Darth Vader, guest editor each December. Please Send All Correspondence to — PO Box 37257, Albuquerque, NM 87176-7257. Phone: (505) 266-8905. E-mail: cwraig@nmia.com. *ASFACTS* published February, April, July & October for the Albuquerque SF Society. *SITHFACTS* out each December. NEXT DEADLINE: Sun, Oct 4. **Club Officers:** Kevin Hewett & Craig Chrissinger, co-Zec Secs (505) 266-8905. Kathy K. Kubica, Moderator. Roslee Orndorff, Alternator. HAL 9000, Advisor. **Bubonicon Co-Chairs:** Kristen Dorland (505) 459-8734 and Craig Chrissinger. Rats!

NEBULA AWARDS ANNOUNCED

The 2008 Nebula Awards ceremony was held Saturday, April 25, on the UCLA campus. Janis Ian acted as toastmistress, performing a version of her song "At Seventeen" with new SF-themed lyrics, while Chuck Lorre, executive producer of *The Big Bang Theory*, gave the keynote address, reported Sci Fi Wire in late April.

The Nebula Awards are presented annually by the Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America. This year's winners were:

Best Novel: *Powers* by Ursula K. Le Guin, Best Novella: "The Spacetim Pool" by Catherine Asaro, Best Novelette: "Pride and Prometheus" by John Kessel, Best Short Story: "Trophy Wives" by Nina Kiriki Hoffman.

Script: *WALL-E*, screenplay by Andrew Stanton, Jim Reardon, original story by Andrew Stanton, Pete Docter, Andre Norton Award: *Flora's Dare: How a Girl of Spirit Gambles All to Expand Her Vocabulary, Confront a Bouncing Boy Terror, and Try to Save Califa from a Shaky Doom (Despite Being Confined to Her Room)* by Ysabeau S. Wilce.

Solstice Award: Kate Wilhelm, A.J. Budrys and Martin H. Greenberg, SFWA Service Award: Victoria Strauss, Bradbury Award: Joss Whedon, Grand Master Award: Harry Harrison, Author Emerita: M.J. Engh.

FANTASY WRITER EDDINGS DIES

Acclaimed fantasy writer David Carroll Eddings died June 2 of natural causes at his home in Carson City, NV, his family announced the next day. He was 77 years old.

Eddings wrote more than two dozen novels, including the multi-volume *Belgariad* and *Malloreon* series. Many were written with his wife Leigh, who died in 2007. His last book was *The Younger Gods*, published in 2006.

Born July 7, 1931, in Spokane, Wash., David Eddings decided in high school he wanted to be a writer, said Dennis Eddings, his brother. But first he served two years in the U.S. Army, discharging from service in 1956 on the very day that Dennis enlisted.

"He said I was his replacement," the younger Eddings recalled with a laugh.

Eddings went on to work for grocery store chains, and in 1973 published his first novel, *High Hunt*, a non-fantasy story that explores themes of manhood and coming of age for four men on a hunting trip shortly after the Vietnam War.

In 1978, Eddings picked up a copy of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and decided fantasy writing was his calling.

"He said, 'This is where it's at,'" his brother, Dennis

Eddings recalled.

Eddings immediately began laying out the worlds in his eight-book series *The Belgariad*, soon followed by the five-book series *The Malloreon*.

Eddings' wife Leigh contributed to the books, but it wasn't until his fifth book, *Enchanter's End Game*, in *The Belgariad* series that she was credited.

"Leigh had an incredible imagination. She collaborated with Dave on all of the books after *High Hunt*," said Dennis. "At one point she finally said, 'I'm helping you do this and I deserve to be on that page too,' and he said, 'Of course you do.'"

Leigh suffered a series of strokes starting around 1999, said Dennis, and she died in February 2007, a month after Eddings accidentally set his northeast Carson City office on fire.

On Jan. 25, 2007, the world-renowned writer was just a stunned homeowner standing on the street in his pajamas and slippers. Eddings had owned a home in Carson City since 1988.

Eddings admitted he'd made a foolish mistake when, while using water to flush out the gas tank on his sports car, he noticed liquid running out of the garage. Wanting to test whether it was water or gasoline, Eddings tossed a lit piece of paper onto it. The garage went up in flames.

In a room below the garage were the original handwritten manuscripts of Eddings' novels. Dennis said they escaped the flames.

In the past year, Eddings was not the man he once was, said Dennis.

"He had been ill with dementia for a long time but he was on a very fast downhill slide since last September," said Dennis. "He had 24-hour care. His death did not come as a surprise."

In his final months Eddings was working on a manuscript unlike anything he'd ever written. It remains incomplete, said Dennis.

"It was very, very different. I wouldn't call it exactly a satire of fantasy but it sure plays with the genre," said Dennis.

Eddings is survived by his brother, sister, Kay Cox of Wenatchee, Wash., and half-brother, Richard Blake of Kingsland, Ga.

Honoring David's request, there will be no public services, said Dennis.

"David was a brilliant and unique human being who will be very much missed by those of us who knew him. But for us and his readers, his voice is still at hand, ready to ring vibrantly once more by the simple and vital act of opening one of his books," said Eddings' sister-in-law, Jane Eddings, in an e-mail. "For that legacy, we are all thankful."



ANATHEM TOPS LOCUS AWARDS

Locus magazine on Saturday, June 27, announced the winners of its 2009 Locus Awards at a ceremony in Seattle. Following is a list of winners.

Science Fiction Novel: *Anathem* by Neal Stephenson, Fantasy Novel: *Lavinia* by Ursula K. Le Guin, First Novel: *Singularity's Ring* by Paul Melko, Young-Adult Book: *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman.

Novella: "Pretty Monsters" by Kelly Link, Novellette: "Pump Six" by Paolo Bacigalupi, Short Story: "Exhalation" by Ted Chiang, Anthology: *The Year's Best Science Fiction: Twenty-Fifth Annual Collection* edited by Gardner Dozois, Collection: *Pump Six and Other Stories* by Paolo Bacigalupi.

Non-Fiction/Art Book: P. Craig Russell, *Coraline: The Graphic Novel* by Neil Gaiman, adapted and illustrated by P. Craig Russell, Editor: Ellen Datlow, Artist: Michael Whelan, Magazine: *F&SF*, Publisher: Tor.

2009 STOKER AWARD WINNERS

Members of the Horror Writers Association gathered in Burbank, CA, on June 13 to hand out the organization's 2009 Bram Stoker Awards for Superior Achievement. Due to this year's California locale, members of the Hollywood community were in attendance at the banquet to help celebrate horror's best. They included Doug Jones (*Pan's Labyrinth*, *Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer*) and Patricia Tallman (*Babylon 5*, *Army of Darkness*).

Master of ceremonies Jeff Strand presided over the evening, pretending to tweet between categories.

This year's winners were:

Superior Achievement in a Poetry Collection: *The Nightmare Collection* by Bruce Boston; Superior Achievement in Nonfiction: *A Hallowe'en Anthology* by Lisa Morton; Superior Achievement in an Anthology: *Unspeakable Horror* edited by Vince A. Liaguno and Chad Helder; Superior Achievement in a Collection: *Just After Sunset* by Stephen King.

Superior Achievement in Short Fiction: "The Lost" by Sarah Langan; Specialty Press Award: Larry and Debra Roberts for Bloodletting Press; Superior Achievement in Long Fiction: *Miranda* by John R. Little.

Superior Achievement in a First Novel: *The Gentling Box* by Lisa Mannetti; Superior Achievement in a Novel: *Duma Key* by Stephen King.

Additionally, HWA's Silver Hammer Award was given to Sephera Giron, while the Richard Laymon President's Award was presented to John R. Little.

The biggest winners of the night, though, had to be F. Paul Wilson and Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, who were given Lifetime Achievement Awards, joining previous

winners such as Stephen King, Anne Rice and F. Paul Wilson. Wilson and Yarbro are each responsible for creating an iconic horror character: mercenary Repairman Jack and vampire Count Saint-Germain, respectively.

The 2010 Bram Stoker Awards will be handed out in conjunction with next year's World Horror Con in Brighton, England.

HELP NEEDED AT BUBONICON

It's true! Volunteers or "gofers" are needed to help out at Bubonicon 41 the weekend of August 28-30 at the Albuquerque Grand Airport Hotel. We're looking for people who can donate three, five or even 10 hours of their time during the con to help things run smoothly and give the committee workers much needed breaks from time to time.

Volunteer workers will receive some sort of movie promo swag, and be in a drawing for additional goodies!

The Volunteers (Gofers) Organizational Meeting will take place 7:30 pm Friday, August 21, at Some Stuff From Huff Studio, 5900 Domingo NE (north of Central, west of San Pedro). All attending volunteer workers at this meeting will receive some kind of goodies, be it chocolate, a t-shirt or other promotional materials.

If interested, please talk to Christie Rice at 480-2481 or email c_rice@yahoo.com.

BOVA DEVELOPS OWN MOVIE PROJECT

SF writer Ben Bova's B-Four Productions has teamed up with Red Giant Media to develop Bova's own *The Immortality Factor* as a movie, *Variety* reported in early June.

Red Giant principal and *The Negotiator* writer Kevin Fox will write the screenplay, with Fox, Isen Robbins and Aimee Schoof producing for Red Giant and Grant Turck producing for B-Four.

Factor follows two brothers – one a scientist and one a medical doctor – divided over stem-cell research but united by the need to save the life of a woman they both love.

The book, published by Tor in April, is the uncut version of Bova's 1996 thriller *Brothers*.

GENRE BOOKS STILL DISCUSSED

The Droids & Dragons SF Book Group meets 7:30 pm Monday, July 20, in the café area of Page One to discuss *Halting State*, a cyber thriller by Charles Stross. The group then focuses on comedic fantasist Peter David's *Sir Apropos of Nothing* on August 17. And rumor has it that Melinda Snodgrass' *The Edge of Reason* will be discussed on September 21.

Meetings of D&D are open to all interested readers on the third Monday of each month. Books for discussion are chosen two months in advance, and group members receive a 20% discount on selected novels. For more information, contact Yvonne at piebald@juno.com or Craig at 266-8905.

MARTY MCFLY'S MOM, HELLBOY TO FIGHT ZOMBIES

Seems like the zombie genre just won't die. And the trend seems to favor funny movies about the flesh-eating undead.

First came *Shaun of the Dead*, soon we'll have *Zombieland*, and coming up is *Gatekeeper*, which has the distinction of featuring Hellboy and Marty McFly's mom together for the first time!

Here's how *Variety* reported the news in mid-July:

Circle of Confusion's producing *Gatekeeper*, a zombie thriller with Matthew O'Leary, Lea Thompson, Judge Reinhold, Ron Perlman and Jana Kramer attached.

Circle of Confusion exec Stephen Emery will produce, with production starting in September.

Isaac Meisenheimer is signed to make his feature directing debut on *Gatekeeper*. Meisenheimer also penned the script, in which a simple mistake leaves three friends to defend their town from a zombie outbreak.

KUNG FU STAR FOUND DEAD

BANGKOK - Actor David Carradine, a born seeker and cult idol who broke through as the willing student called "grasshopper" in the 1970s TV series *Kung Fu* and decades later as leader of an assassin squad in *Kill Bill*, was found dead June 4 in Thailand. Police said he appeared to have hanged himself, possibly as an accidental sexual asphyxiation.

The officer responsible for investigating the death, Teerapop Luanseng, said the 72-year-old actor was staying at a suite at the luxury Swissotel Nai Lert Park Hotel.

"I can confirm that we found his body, naked, hanging in the closet," Teerapop said.

Carradine came from an acting family. His father, John, made a career playing creepy, eccentric characters in film and on stage. His brothers Keith, Robert and Bruce also became actors. Actress Martha Plimpton is Keith Carradine's daughter.

"My Uncle David was a brilliantly talented, fiercely intelligent and generous man. He was the nexus of our family in so many ways, and drew us together over the years and kept us connected," Plimpton said.

Carradine was in Bangkok shooting the movie *Stretch*, said his manager, Chuck Binder.

"It is shocking to me that he is no longer with us," said Michael Madsen, who played an assassin in *Kill Bill*.

Carradine appeared in more than 100 feature films with such directors as Martin Scorsese, Ingmar Bergman and Hal Ashby. One of his early film roles was as folk singer Woody Guthrie in Ashby's 1976 biopic, *Bound for Glory*.

But he was best known for his role as Kwai Chang Caine, a Shaolin priest traveling the 1800s American frontier West in the TV series *Kung Fu*, which aired in 1972-75.

"I wasn't like a TV star in those days, I was like a rock 'n' roll star," Carradine said in an interview with Associated Press Radio in 1996. "It was a phenomenon kind of thing. ... It was very special."

Carradine reprised the role in a mid-1980s TV movie and played Caine's grandson in the 1990s syndicated series *Kung Fu: The Legend Continues*.

He returned to the top in recent years as the title character in Quentin Tarantino's two-part saga *Kill Bill*. Bill, the worldly father figure of a pack of crack assassins, was a shadowy presence in 2003's *Kill Bill - Vol. 1*. In that film, one of Bill's former assassins (Uma Thurman) begins a vengeful rampage against her old associates, including Bill.

In *Kill Bill - Vol. 2*, released in 2004, Thurman's character catches up to Bill. The role brought Carradine a Golden Globe nomination as best supporting actor.

After *Kung Fu*, Carradine starred in the 1975 cult flick *Death Race 2000*. He starred with Liv Ullmann in Bergman's *The Serpent's Egg* in 1977, and with his brothers in the 1980 Western *The Long Riders*.

But after the early 1980s, he spent two decades doing mostly low-budget films. Tarantino's films changed that.

One thing remained a constant after *Kung Fu*: Carradine's interest in Asian herbs, exercise and philosophy. He wrote a personal memoir called *Spirit of Shaolin* and continued to make instructional videos on tai chi and other martial arts.

In a 2004 interview with the Associated Press, Carradine talked candidly about his past boozing and narcotics use, but said he had put all that behind him and stuck to coffee and cigarettes.

"I didn't like the way I looked, for one thing. You're kind of out of control emotionally when you drink that much. I was quicker to anger. This is a regeneration. It is a renaissance. It is the start of a new career for me. It's time to do nothing but look forward."



NAZI ZOMBIES TO INVADE GUILD

If you can't get enough zombies at Bubonicon 41, the *Weekly Alibi* Midnight Movie Madness will present *Dead Snow* 10:15 pm and Midnight on Friday, September 11, and Saturday, Sept. 12, at the Guild Cinema.

Dead Snow is a 2008 Norwegian goretastic horror comedy from writer/director Tommy Wirkola that is finally blasting its way onto American screens. A ski vacation in a cabin in the Alps turns horrific when a group of Norwegian medical students is besieged by the unimaginable – a troop of thawed-out Nazi zombies who haunt the hills! There's nothing left to do but break out the chainsaws, the snowmobiles and the anatomy books!

In Norwegian with English Subtitles, *Dead Snow* is 91 minutes long and rated R. *Entertainment Weekly* called it, "Cheery, silly, splattery, and respectful of its elders (and betters, particularly Sam Raimi's *The Evil Dead*)... [a] bloody/cheesy Scandinavian lark."

The Guild Cinema is located at 3405 Central Ave NE, in the Nob Hill area across from Flying Star Café and Starbuck's.

FUTURAMA LIVES ON

Entertainment Weekly on June 19 reported that six years after Fox canceled the cartoon, *Futurama* is being resurrected on Comedy Central. That's good news for Bender, Fry and crew who had reached the end of their direct-to-DVD exploits earlier this year.

The cable network has ordered 26 new episodes of Matt Groening and David X. Cohen's late, great animated tale, to begin airing mid-2010. Mirroring the survival story of another Fox 'toon (*The Family Guy*), *Futurama* found renewed life on DVD and in reruns on the Cartoon Network.

ANOTHER PK DICK BOOK TO SCREEN

Halcyon Co. co-chief executives Victor Kubicek and Derek Anderson, who picked up first-look rights to SF author Philip K. Dick's estate in 2007, have selected his 1974 novel *Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said* as the first of his works they will adapt for the screen, according to *The Hollywood Reporter* in early May.

Set in a futuristic, dystopian world, *Tears* is the tale of a celebrity who wakes up after an assassination attempt to find no one has ever heard of him.

Isa Dick Hackett and Laura Leslie, co-founders of Electric Shepherd Productions, will develop the work alongside Kubicek and Anderson.

Dick's works have served as the basis for such movies as *Blade Runner*, *Total Recall*, *Minority Report* and *A Scanner Darkly*, which together have grossed more than \$1 billion worldwide.

AUTHOR NETS BIG BUCKS FOR ABRAHAM LINCOLN: VAMPIRE HUNTER

Pride and Prejudice and Zombies author Seth Grahame-Smith, whose Jane Austen mash-up has more than 120,000 copies in print since its publication April 1, has just inked a two-book deal with Grand Central Press for a rumored \$575,000, *Publishers Weekly* reported in mid-April. Grand Central Press would not comment on the size of the advance.

Grahame-Smith's first book for Grand Central Press, which currently has no release date, will be *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*. The proposal for the new novel sold at auction April 8, and the story is a loose sketch of Lincoln's life with one twist – our 16th president is the world's most skilled vampire hunter.

A film proposal has already started circulating, with the William Morris agency handling film rights.

STARLOG CEASES PRINT VERSION

Starlog, one of the longest-running print magazines devoted to sci-fi and fantasy, ceased publication in April after 33 years, reported Sci Fi Wire in mid-April.

Official word of *Starlog*'s demise came in an update informing readers that *Starlog.com* had relaunched in beta as part of a "massive digital initiative."

"It is also at this time that we announce the temporary cessation of the current run of *Starlog* as a print magazine," the statement read. "After 33 years, and considering the present state of the economy, we feel [it's] time for a major revamp and will be temporarily discontinuing publication while the model and redesign of the magazine are contemplated and executed.

"The last print issue available for the time being is #374," it continued, "while issue #375 will be available exclusively as a digital edition on the network."

Starlog debuted in 1976 as a quarterly magazine created by Kerry O'Quinn and Norman Jacobs. Jacobs eventually sold the company to the Creative Group, and the Brooklyn Co. bought *Starlog* and its horror-centric sister magazine *Fangoria* last year from the Creative Group, which had fallen into bankruptcy.

According to sources, *Fangoria*, which already has a strong web presence, will remain a print entity.

JANE AUSTEN MEETS VAMPIRES

Look out, Jane Austen, reports the July 17 issue of *Entertainment Weekly*. Austen's work has already been attacked by brain munchers in Seth Grahame-Smith's best-selling *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*. Now here classic tale will meet up with bloodsuckers.

Authors Amanda Grange and Regina Jeffers have

reimagined Pride's hero as a vamp in *Mr. Darcy, Vampire* (due out August 11) and *Darcy's Hunger* (December 1), respectively. Meanwhile, Michael Thomas Ford has penned *Jane Bites Back* (December 29), a novel that envisions the author herself as a vampire.

One person who can't quite wrap his head around the supernatural Austen phenomena? Quirk's editorial director Jason Rekulak, who dreamed up *Zombies'* concept. "I just thought it would be funny to desecrate a classic work of literature," he says. "For the longest time, Seth and I were the only two people who thought it was a really good idea."

OTHER SUMMER DEATHS OF NOTE

* **MICHAEL JACKSON**, the self-proclaimed "King of Pop," died June 25 of cardiac arrest at the age of 50. Known for his moonwalk and his bizarre life, he's important to SF for the full-length *Thriller* music video with its army of dancing zombies. The short film was directed by John Landis with spfx makeup by Rick Baker and creepy narration by Vincent Price. Jackson also made the extended music video, *Ghosts*, directed by Mick Garris and Stan Winston from a story by Stephen King. And on *The Simpsons*, he parodied himself as a white mental patient, Leo Kompowsky.

* **FARRAH FAWCETT**, best known for her role as one of the original *Charlie's Angels*, died June 25 of complications from cancer at the age of 62. In 1980, she ventured into SF territory in *Saturn 3* as one of two lovers stationed at a remote base in Saturn's asteroid fields. She also appeared in four episodes of *The Six Million Dollar Man* in the mid-1970s, in the 1976 film *Logan's Run*, and provided a voice in the 1998 animated feature *The Brave Little Toaster Goes to Mars*.

* **BILLY MAYS**, boisterous pitchman, died June 28 from an apparent heart attack at the age of 50. Okay, not that much in the SF arena, but how many of us tried the power of OxiClean after hearing his forceful voice?

* **KARL MALDEN**, actor and pitchman for American Express, died July 1 of natural causes at the age of 97. Perhaps best known for his co-starring role in the TV series *The Streets of San Francisco*, Malden appeared in the 1985 version of *Alice in Wonderland* as the Walrus, 1979 films *Meteor* and *Beyond the Poseidon Adventure*, and 1951's *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

ON THE CONVENTION FRONT: BUBONICON 41 JUST SIX WEEKS AWAY

by Craig Chrissinger, co-chair

Bubonicon, New Mexico's annual science fiction convention, celebrates its 41st edition August 28-30 at the Albuquerque Grand Airport Hotel (formerly the Wyndham), 2910 Yale Blvd SE (south of Gibson, east of I-25).

More than 45 authors, artists, scientists, filmmakers and fans currently are participating in programming.

This year's convention features special guest talent from the west coast and Colorado. Guest of Honor for Bubonicon 41 is California screenwriter and novelist Michael Cassutt; Guest Artist is Peri Charlifou of Denver; and Toastmistress is Boulder, CO's Carrie Vaughn.

Other participants come from New Mexico, Arizona, California and Colorado. The participating newcomers to Bubonicon this year are authors Diana Gabaldon, Nathan Long and Pari Noskin Taichert. We're also proud to have Bruce D. Arthurs, Douglas W. Clark and Connie Willis back with us after absences.

Proceeds from the Friday charity auction and a portion of any Bubonicon 41 profits will benefit the (Jack) Williamson Library Collection at Eastern NM University and the local Roadrunner Food Bank.

Bubonicon 41 opens with registration at 3:30 pm Friday the 28th and goes almost nonstop through 5 pm that Sunday. The first programming is at 4 pm, while the Art Show, Con Suite and Gaming open at 5 pm.

The theme for Saturday is "Everything's Better With Zombies," and that day's programming includes a Talk on Zombies in Cinema, a Zombie Popularity panel, Peri Charlifou's art demo at 4 pm, the "Chapa'ai of Fortune" at 4:30 pm, the costume contest at 7:30 pm, the 9 pm screening of *Zombies of Mora Tau*, the Tentaclecraft Concert in the Valle Grande Room at 10:00 pm, and local filmmaker Adam Brown's late-night shorts selections at 11:00 pm.

Activities on Sunday include Cassutt's presentation at 11 am, the traditional fun auction at 1 pm, the Authors Afternoon Tea 1:30 pm in the Rio Grande Room upstairs, and the 4:20 pm presentation of the Green Slime Awards by Kathy Kelley Kubica.

Of course, there's Gaming (being held in the Gran Quivera Ballroom), 2nd track programming in the Valle Grande Room next to Gaming, 3rd track programming in the Vista Norte (by the restaurant), a smaller programming room on the 2nd floor, the Art Show in the Tijeras Room, and the Dealers Room in Chaco with 21-25 tables.

And, we can't forget about the hospitality suite (Bernalillo Room, 2nd floor) being run by Joe Lane, Ann Sasahara, Tanley McMullan and Shiloh Key. Two-hour sponsorships are still available! Of course, the Con Suite and the Albuquerque Grand remain totally Non-Smoking. In fact, the Albuquerque ordinance requires that smokers be outside at least 50 feet away from any doors.

We really are in need of volunteer workers (gofers) to help us



throughout the weekend (see separate blurb earlier in this newsletter). If you can help, please call Christie Rice at 480-2481, or come to the meeting Friday, August 21, at Huff Studio on Domingo NE.

Memberships for the whole weekend are \$36 if purchased by August 8. After that, you'll have to wait to pay \$41 at the door. Daily memberships are \$15 Friday, \$21 Saturday and \$15 Sunday. Youths 14-17 years old are \$18 for the whole weekend. Children under 14 years are free when accompanied by an adult (or \$555 if left alone and a babysitter needed). Send payments by August 8 to the "NMSF Conference" at PO Box 37257, Albuquerque, NM 87176.

The Bubonicon 41 special \$97 room rate (single-double occupancy) is only guaranteed through Monday, August 17, so get your reservation in now! After that, the Albuq Grand says rooms could be as high as \$125 a night, depending on availability. Call 843-7000 to make your reservation.

Info is available from Craig at (505) 266-8905, Kristen at (505) 459-8734, or through the website maintained by Mike McCommas at www.bubonicon.com.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR VAUGHN & KITTY

For *New York Times* best-selling author Carrie Vaughn, the road trip to promote the back-to-back releases in February and March of the fifth and sixth installments of deejay-turned-werewolf Kitty, *Kitty and the Dead Man's Hand* and *Kitty Raises Hell*, is near the end. At an Albuquerque bookstore visit, Vaughn sits down with this *Fangoria* reporter to discuss what's next for Kitty Norville.

"The seventh book, *Kitty's House of Horrors*, is going through editing right now," Vaughn says. "It's scheduled for January 2010. Kitty's traveling again, away from Denver and (her) pack, working on a TV show with supernatural celebrities. It's a definite horror template. I'm going to write the eighth book this summer, I hope. It only has a working title, but Kitty will be back in Denver. And for the ninth book, I'm planning another road trip. So my pattern of alternating one book at home and one traveling seems to be holding."

In *Kitty Raises Hell*, Vaughn's alpha female werewolf returned home to Denver from Las Vegas after eloping to find that not all that happens in Sin City stays there. "The trouble she found in Vegas follows her back to Denver, and it's a supernatural threat she's never encountered before," says the Colorado author. "She calls on a team of TV paranormal investigators to help her figure out what's going on and how to stop it. The book also introduces a new villain."

The idea of a future collection of Kitty short stories also is a possibility. "I use the stories to explore ideas and situations I don't have room for in the books. The best example is 'Looking After Family,' which appeared in

Realms of Fantasy years ago. It's the backstory of Ben (Kitty's husband) and Cormac (the bounty hunter). In order to work on *Kitty Goes To Washington* and *Kitty Takes a Holiday*, I needed a clear picture of where those two characters came from and about their relationship. The story was a great way to do that."

It's a good time for werewolves between authors Patricia Briggs, Carole Nelson Douglas and Vaughn, and the upcoming release of *The Wolfman*. Despite *Time Magazine* recently opining that zombies may be the new vampires, might the same be asked about lycanthropes?

"I don't think anything will really displace vampires in popularity," Vaughn comments. "Too many people love them. But people have discovered that werewolves can be just as interesting, and give people a chance to write and read different kinds of stories."

In the Kitty universe, werewolves and vampires have jobs, mingle with regular folks, and are just starting to reveal themselves (helped by Kitty's forced transformation on TV in *Kitty Goes To Washington*). The first book opens with Kitty already bitten, and deciding to change her late-night deejay slot into a call-in show for supernatural beings.

"There's always been supernatural fiction that gets hung up on soap-opera relationship issues, especially when it takes place in the 'real' world," Vaughn notes. "Imagine Lestat calling in to Dr. Phil about his relationship problems. I decided that if there are vampires and werewolves in the real world, they'd need their own advice show. I didn't want to write about vampires, so I made my talk show host a werewolf. And I couldn't NOT call her Kitty."

Vaughn knows it often is hard to categorize the books. "I've called them 'light horror.' They're upbeat dark fantasy. The model I use is *An American Werewolf in London*, which is both funny and horrific, and has lots going on besides the horror elements. I'm not sure Urban Fantasy is all that descriptive since people use it to mean different things. The Kitty books really are dark fantasy/horror crossovers. But they tend to defy genre descriptions because they cover so much ground. They have mystery, action adventure, romance and so on. I hear from people that they pick up the books expecting one thing – standard supernatural romance – and they get something different."

Vaughn says the forthcoming *Kitty's House of Horrors* will be the darkest volume to date. "It has some of the scariest, creepiest scenes I've ever written. It definitely has horrific moments. I tend to see horror as a tone rather than a specific genre. It's a tool I can use to scare people, when that's appropriate for the story. One thing I definitely want to avoid is sugarcoating some of the tropes of vampires and werewolves."

The appeal of Kitty, Vaughn says, is to keep her as just a regular person. "She's an ordinary person coping with extraordinary circumstances. I have no intention of turning her into some kind of chosen supernatural warrior.

What I hear most from readers is that Kitty seems like someone they know, someone they could be friends with. I jokingly tell people my books have as much in common with *Bridget Jones's Diary* as they do with *The Howling*."

For now, Kitty is the only horror Vaughn has interest in. She has written stories for George R.R. Martin's superhero-based *Wild Cards* anthologies, but the female werewolf gets most of her attention. "My plate's full right now, and any horror ideas go straight into the Kitty crock pot," she notes. "Any horror tropes I tackle probably will be through her perspective. Nobody's every accused me of selling out, which is kind of nice."

(Note: A variation of this article posted May 29 on Fangoria.com.)

ZOMBIES ARE THE NEW VAMPIRES

by Lev Grossman, *Time Magazine*, Thurs, April 9, 2009

If there's a social hierarchy among monsters, zombies are not at the top of the list. They may not even be on the list. They're not cool like werewolves. There's no Warren Zevon song about them. They're not classy like Dracula and Frankenstein, who can trace their lineage back to respectable 19th century novels. All zombies have is a bunch of George Romero movies.

But the lowly zombie is making its move. For the past few years, vampires have been the It monster, what with *Twilight* and all, but that's changing. Diablo Cody, of *Juno* fame, is producing a movie called *Breathers: A Zombie's Lament*, based on a new novel about life (if that's the word) as one of the walking dead. Later this year, Woody Harrelson and Abigail Breslin will star in the zom-com *Zombieland*. Max Brooks' best-selling zombie novel *World War Z* is being filmed by Marc Forster, the guy who directed *Quantum of Solace*.

In comic books, the *Marvel Zombies* features rotting, brain-eating versions of Spider-Man, Iron Man and the Hulk. The video game *Resident Evil 5* shipped 4 million copies during its first two weeks on the market. Michael Jackson's zombie video *Thriller* is coming to Broadway.

Apparently no one is safe from the shambling, newly marketable armies of the dead — not even Jane Austen. Seth Grahame-Smith is the author of a new novel called *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*, about a strangely familiar English family called the Bennets that is struggling to marry off five daughters while at the same time fighting off wave after wave of relentless, remorseless undead — since, as the novel's classic first line tells us, "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a zombie in possession of brains must be in want of more brains."

It's surprising how easily Austen's novel succumbs to the conventions of a zombie flick. Much of Austen's work is about using wit and charm and good manners to avoid talking about ugly realities like sex and money. In Grahame-Smith's version, zombies are just another one of those ugly realities. "What was so fun about the book is the politeness of it all," says Grahame-Smith, who's a freelance writer in Los Angeles. "They don't even like to

say the word zombie, even though their country is besieged by zombies. They're everywhere, and people are literally being torn apart before their very eyes, and other than the very few, like Elizabeth Bennet, who face this problem head on, they would rather not talk about it."

It's not easy to put your finger on what's appealing about zombies. Vampires you can understand. They're good-looking and sophisticated and well dressed. They're immortal. Some of them have castles. You can imagine wanting to be a vampire or at least wanting to sleep with one. Nobody wants to sleep with zombies. They're hideous and mindless. They don't have superpowers. Their only assets are their infectiousness, single-minded perseverance and virtual unkillability.

Nevertheless, they seem to be telling us something about the zeitgeist. Once you start looking, you see them everywhere. Who hasn't had a high school acquaintance come back from the dead as a Facebook friend or a follower on Twitter? And what monster could be better suited to our current level of ecological anxiety? Zombies are biodegradable, locally sourced and sustainable — they're made of 100% recycled human. And look out for those zombie banks, President Obama!

Let's not forget that *Night of the Living Dead*, the founding film of the modern zombie tradition, appeared in 1968 as a commentary on the Vietnam War, evoking its extreme violence and the surreal dehumanization of the combatants. Now we're locked in another prolonged, morally ambiguous overseas conflict, and — surprise — look who's at the door again wanting to borrow a cup of brains. "We live in an age when it's very easy to be afraid of everything that's going on," Grahame-Smith says. "There are these large groups of faceless people somewhere in the world who mean to do us harm and cannot be reasoned with. Zombies are sort of familiar territory."

If there's something new about today's zombie, it's his relatability. Sure, he's an abomination and a crime against all that is good and holy. But he exemplifies some real American values too. He's plucky and tenacious — you can cut off his limbs and he'll keep on coming atcha. And he's humble. You won't find zombies swanning around and putting on airs like some other monsters I could mention. They're monsters of the people. It was the beginning of the end for vampires when Lehman Brothers went under, those bloodsucking parasites. Down with vampires. Long live (or is it die?) the zombie: the official monster of the recession.

A TRIP TO PORTALES

A Report on the 33rd Williamson Lectureship
by Ian Tregillis

The 33rd Annual Jack Williamson Lectureship was held at Eastern New Mexico University in Portales on Friday, April 10. Dr. Patrice Caldwell, from the University, and Betty Williamson, Jack's niece, kindly invited me to

attend as a panelist this year. How could I say no? I've always had a wonderful time at the Lectureship, and this year proved no different.

I set out for Portales after work on Thursday evening, which meant I had to make the drive all by my lonesome this year. Much to my surprise, I did not get lost and end up in Tijuana. But I did get stuck outside of Lamy where 285 South became... well, it wasn't a *road* so much as a gravel pit. But once I got moving again, the wind did wonders for my gas mileage. Hooray for spring windstorms, I guess.

Unfortunately, I missed out on the traditional Thursday night pre-Lectureship dinner at the Cattle Baron (one of Portales's finest dining establishments). I pulled into the Holiday Inn Express parking lot just as Emily Mah, Trevor Tippetts, and their newly minted son Damien were returning to the hotel from the Cattle Baron. That was my first opportunity to meet their son; he seemed unimpressed with me. Damien was by far the quietest, most popular, and most well-behaved Lectureship attendee.

I bumped into Ed Bryant in the hotel lobby while checking in. Ed had arrived with Connie Willis earlier in the day. He, too, had just returned from dinner at the Cattle Baron, but he kindly agreed to tag along with me while I set out in search of nourishment. Ed is a sterling conversationalist, so I was happy to have his company while I resigned myself to a fast-food dinner. Conversation ranged from British sitcoms to 20th century history to our various writing projects.

On the way back to the hotel I regaled Ed with my newest pet project, a monster-movie concept I like to call *Goranha* ("Half gorilla. Half piranha. ALL hungry.") Ed didn't pull any punches with his opinion: "Good God, Ian, have you no pride?"

Friday, the day of the Williamson Lectureship itself, began as it always does: with breakfast at Mark's Restaurant (another fine dining establishment). As they do every year, the staff endured the mass influx of writers and other disreputable types with great aplomb. The entire group – over twenty of us – enjoyed a nice breakfast while catching up with friends and making new ones. Local attendees included Dr. Christopher Stasheff; his son, Ed; Gene Bundy (curator of the Jack Williamson Science Fiction Library); and Geni Flores. Out-of-towners included Lectureship Guest of Honor Nalo Hopkinson; Emily, Trevor, and Damien; Connie and Ed Bryant; Eleanor Wood (Jack's literary agent); Stephen Haffner (of Haffner Press); Ron and Nina Else (Bubonicon regulars and the proprietors of *Who Else?* books in Denver); Steven Gould and Laura Mixon; and editor *par excellence* Gardner Dozois.

Gardner came all the way from Philadelphia to join the fun, so he edged out Nalo to snag the record for distance traveled this year. That record normally goes to Stephen Haffner (who comes to Portales from the wilds of Michigan every year). Gardner made up for the absence of three sorely missed Lectureship regulars -- Walter Jon

Williams, Patricia Rogers, and Melinda Snodgrass -- who were on vacation in Turkey.

Much of the breakfast conversation involved book titles, and Connie making fun of them:

"Ian, please remind me. What's the title of your first novel?"

"Well, the working title right now is *Bitter Seeds*."

"Bitter or better?"

"Bitter."

"Oh, okay. Better."

"No, bitter."

"Better?"

"Bitter."

"Right, like I said. *Better Seeds*."

"My other idea was *That Book With Nazis and Stuff*."

"Stick with *Better Seeds*."

"It's 'bitter', actually."

"Right."

Then, after stuffing ourselves with omelets and pancakes, it was time for a brief stop back at the hotel before heading to the Williamson Lectureship Luncheon. So, still feeling stuffed full of breakfast, I tagged along with Connie and Ed to the campus of Eastern New Mexico University. (I spent much of the Lectureship riding around Portales in Connie's brand-new car, which thanks to the gravel pit on 285 had a brand-new crack in the brand-new windshield.)

During a wonderful catered lunch, Connie delivered (as she does every year) a fantastic performance as the Williamson Lectureship Mistress of Ceremonies. She welcomed everybody to the 33rd Lectureship, introduced the guests, and reminded us of Jack Williamson's incredible legacy both in Portales and in the wider world of science fiction. She even managed to make fun of my book title again before introducing Nalo Hopkinson.

I hadn't yet had the pleasure of reading Nalo's work prior to the Lectureship. Her Guest of Honor speech was beautiful, moving, and thought-provoking. (Why *does* Storm in the X-Men have blue eyes?) It impressed me greatly. The campus bookstore had a table set up near the entrance to the activity hall, and I took advantage of it to buy a couple of Nalo's books immediately after her talk. She was kind enough to sign them for me. Meeting Nalo and getting to know her was the highlight of the weekend for me. I hope to cross paths with her again in the future.

After the luncheon we had a few hours to kill before the afternoon panels started. This year the panels were scheduled later in the afternoon than in previous years, in order to enable more students to attend. Where does one go while killing time at the Williamson Lectureship?

Dairy Queen, of course. (Packing the local Dairy Queen with as many science fiction writers as possible is a long-standing Lectureship tradition.)

And so, now feeling stuffed from breakfast *and* lunch, I rode to the DQ with Connie and Ed. We were joined by Ron and Nina Else; Betty Williamson and her

daughter, Katie; Gardner; Nalo; Emily, Trevor, and Damien; Steve and Laura. Even Patrice, that unstoppable whirlwind of activity, popped in for a short while.

This rowdy bunch terrorized the DQ until it was time to prepare for the afternoon panels. By then I was feeling every calorie of breakfast, lunch, *and* a milkshake, but somehow I managed the trek to the campus library. Pushing the panels later in the afternoon was a great idea; just about every seat outside the Williamson Science Fiction Library was filled through all three afternoon panels.

The afternoon sessions started off with a bang. On the *New Directions for Sci-Fi and Fantasy* panel, Chris Stasheff deftly moderated a rollicking discussion of the world of SF publishing. Panelists Stephen Haffner, Eleanor Wood and Gardner Dozois provided insights into the past and future of publishing, both print and electronic.

It was a hard act to follow. But Connie, Laura and Nalo topped it with their discussion of *Cross-Cultural Sci-Fi*. Their fascinating and wide-ranging conversation explored issues of race, gender, and cultural appropriation in literature. I was genuinely sorry when the hour was up; the panel easily could have been twice as long.

Then it was my turn as a panelist, and talk about hard acts to follow. Ed Bryant moderated Steve, Emily and me as we discussed *Sci-Fi/Fantasy in Film and TV*. Ostensibly, the discussion centered on a discussion of screenwriting as well as the differences in storytelling between books and films. Of the three of us, only Steve was truly qualified to discuss the translation of books to films, thanks to his experience with *Jumper*. (My main contribution to the discussion were foam-flecked rants about *Heroes* and *Battlestar Galactica*.) Emily was the star of the panel. She kept the audience laughing with her detailed and incisive dissection of the *Twilight* novels. And Ed – who had dismissed my *Goranha* idea not 24 hours earlier – came up with the perfect tag line for the movie: "Eat to Live. Live to Kill." (Saturday night on the SyFy Channel, here we come!)

By the time the discussions wound down, it was time to start thinking about dinner. As they have in previous years, Gene and Geni kindly hosted dinner at their home. Still feeling stuffed to the gills from breakfast, lunch, *and* a Dairy Queen milkshake, I caught yet another ride with Connie and Ed. Great food, great people, great conversation. I chatted with Ed Stasheff, who is a recent transplant to Portales. I also had a nice conversation with Laura Mixon about aging and the "senescence lottery" as she described it. The Friday lasagna dinners are always fun.

Saturday brought rain, but not enough to deter folks from yet another Lectureship tradition. The annual trek to the Williamson Ranch is not to be missed! Betty and her husband, Milz Bickley, put on an incredible spread: barbecued brisket, salad, fruit salad, corn bread, corn on the cob, vegetables and all the fixings. How they manage to feed so many people (there must have been close to 30 people at the ranch!) so well without breaking a sweat is a mystery for the ages.

As with every Lectureship gathering, the food and conversation were top notch. Another reason to visit the ranch is the chance to explore the shed where Jack Williamson did so much of his writing over the years. (It's a fun thing to do as long as one is mindful of rattlesnakes and cow pies.) Emily and Trevor took photos to commemorate their son's first pilgrimage to the ranch.

Things started to wind down by mid-afternoon. So it was time to thank the Williamsons for their incredible hospitality and say a wistful goodbye to Portales for another year. In spite of driving through persistent rainstorms for several hours, I managed an uneventful journey home. (Except, of course, on one particular stretch of 285, which the rain had turned into... well, not really a road... and not really a gravel pit any longer... more like a mud-wrestling pit.)

BOOK REVIEW ROUND-UP

The Mystery of Grace by Charles de Lint, Tor Books 2009, hardcover 272 pages.

Review by D. Lynn Smith

Charles de Lint has been called the father of urban fantasy (mythic themes in a modern, urban setting). His wonderfully imaginative novels, set in the fictitious city of Newford, have gained him critical acclaim and a loyal readership – a distinction that is well deserved for this author. It's not very often that the protagonist of a novel dies in the first chapter, but that's exactly what happens in *Mystery of Grace*, de Lint's new emotionally poignant novel set in the Southwest.

Altagracia, "Grace" to her friends, started working on cars with her grandfather during her senior year of high school. At first it was just a way to be close to her deceased father's family, but she discovers her life's calling when they rebuilt a junked 1929 Model A Ford. To her mother's chagrin, Grace trades in her good Catholic-girl dresses for major ink (including a tattoo of our Lady of Altagracia on her left shoulder and FoMoCo down her right leg), rockabilly music, and lowriders. She becomes the only girl mechanic at Sanchez Motors, where she specializes in building custom hotrods.

Three weeks after her grandfather dies, a routine visit to a convenience store ends with Grace shot to death by a jacked-up robber. She wakes in her own bed, in her own apartment building, being looked after by a tall, overweight black woman who informs Grace, "You're dead, girl."

Grace expected heaven and a reunion with deceased relatives. Instead she is trapped inside a square of a few blocks surrounding her apartment building, populated with people who died within those few blocks. She doesn't have to eat or sleep, and there's nothing to do, except restore an old car she finds abandoned on one of the blocks.

John is an artist whose retreats from the world, stuck in his own life. He meets Grace on Halloween, one of the two nights each year when Grace can physically come back to life, though none of her friends or family recognize her. Through his relationship with Grace, John comes alive

again, awakened by Grace and his growing love of rockabilly and hotrods. He finds his soul again, just as Grace finds she is in love with him.

Though this is truly Grace's story, de Lint artfully weaves in John's story to underscore the themes of acceptance, letting go, and opening your heart to love. Real life themes permeate *The Mystery of Grace*, touching a secret place where all our regrets hide.

The one thing lacking in this novel is a strong flavor or the Southwest. Although the majority of it takes place in a non-reality, more Native Americans, more desert, and more green chile would have better grounded the setting. As it is, Grace could have lived in any Urban area with a Hispanic population.

Even with this flaw, *The Mystery of Grace* is a moving and thought-provoking story that is sure to delight de Lint fans.

***Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* by Jane Austen and Seth Grahame-Smith, Quirk Books 2009, softcover 320 pages.**

Review by Kevin Hewett

When I first heard about this book, I was initially appalled that an author would take a literary classic and add additional plot elements not originally included by the author. Upon reading this novel, however, I have changed my mind. The original Jane Austen plot concerns itself with the pursuit of "single men in possession of a good fortune" by various female characters. The addition of zombies to the novel adds action which complements and livens up scenes of ballroom dancing and social visits between households.

A comparison of the first sentences of the original work and the current reworked novel show how the new concept of zombies has been cleverly added to the prose.

"It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife." - *Pride and Prejudice*

"It is a truth universally acknowledged that a zombie in possession of brains must be in want of more brains." - *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*

The first version, although summarizing the plot, does not tempt one to read further. The new version, however, fully grabs ones attention and entices one to continue reading. The reader does not have to wait long for mayhem as zombies interrupt the ball where Elizabeth and Darcy, the main protagonists, are first introduced.

"...screams filled the assembly hall, immediately joined by the shattering of window panes. Unmentionables poured in, their movements clumsy yet swift; their burial clothing in a range of untidiness. Some wore gowns so tattered as to render them scandalous; other wore suits so filthy that one would assume they were assembled from little more than dirt and dried blood. Their flesh was in varying degrees of putrefaction; the freshly stricken were slightly green and pliant, whereas the longer dead were grey and brittle – their eyes and tongues long since turned to dust, and their lips pulled back in to everlasting skeletal smiles.

"A few of the guests, who had the misfortune of being too near the windows were seized and feasted upon at once. When Elizabeth stood, she saw Mrs. Long struggle to free herself as two female dreadfuls bit into her head, crack-

ing her skull like a walnut, and sending a shower of dark blood spouting as high as the chandeliers." —*Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*, page 14

The original Austen novel followed the courtship of Elizabeth and Darcy as does the new novel. However, where in the original the jousting between the two protagonists was all verbal, in the new novel it is interspersed with martial combat, both against each other and together as they fight off the advancing zombie hordes.

Although the conclusion of the novel is not in doubt, readers will delight in finding out which minor characters from the original are dismembered and eaten or infected and slowly zombieified in this refreshing look at a literary classic. Highly recommended for zombie fans as it conclusively illustrates *Everything Is Better With Zombies!*

***Lamentations (The Psalms of Isaak)* by Ken Scholes, Tor Books 2009, hardcover 368 pages.**

Review by Kevin Hewett

This first novel by author Ken Scholes takes place in a world where a religious order, the Androfrancines, serve as a priesthood for a world religion and are the guardians of knowledge from the past. The Androfrancines limit the temporal power of the kings and rulers of the many kingdoms and principalities in this world. In addition, they prevent research into the past in order to prevent the evils (both magical and technological) that were employed from being rediscovered. The novel opens as an ancient weapon is used to destroy the holy city of the Androfrancines.

What ensues is a race among the various civilian rulers and various remnants of the Androfrancines to determine who destroyed the city and to take control of the world. Corruption among the Androfrancines, blood feuds between rulers, and hidden alliances create the many intricate twists and turns of the plot.

Overall, an enjoyable first novel and recommended for those fans of fantasy.

***The Empress of Mars (The Company)* by Kage Baker, Tor Books 2009, hardcover 304 pages.**

Review by Roberta Johnson

The Empress of Mars is titled after three entities: A bar on Mars, Mary Griffith, proprietress of said bar and the Queen of Britain (while the Queen isn't actually a featured character, she's represented by the British Arian Company, also known as the BAC). Baker's newest novel is based on her Hugo and Nebula-nominated novella of the same name. Baker's expanded it – adding more detail and more characters to the story, but it's the same story. Since her characters are memorable and the details fascinating, this is a good thing.

I originally offered this novel to a friend who's a huge Baker fan, thinking she might want to review it. She declined, saying she'd only babble. The first chapter could easily have stood alone as a short story, and a niggling part of me wishes it had, because it would've been perfect all by itself – it made me want to babble, too. Which is not to say that the novel isn't well worth reading to the end, just to find out what happens next.

Mary Griffith emigrated to Mars during the BAC's

ambitious terraforming project. Since terraforming, as it turns out, is expensive and unlikely to generate much in the way of profit, the emigrants found themselves abandoned along with the project, to struggle along as best they might. Mary, an enterprising woman, started the only bar on Mars, making her ipso facto mother to the new world and everyone in it, as well as her three daughters.

The BAC is the big bad wolf in this story, reflecting Baker's conviction that Big Business and its representatives may or may not act in the best interests of any individual, but if they do it will be purely coincidental while pursuing the company's own nefarious interests. While Baker writes the character-driven fiction I love, there's plenty of action. Mary and cohorts must battle BAC's evil minions who constantly seek to rid themselves of these annoying colonists who just won't leave, not to mention finding ways to make a profit. And then there are the practicalities of surviving on an inhospitable world without the funding for the technology we take for granted.

Baker and her wicked sense of humor also lampoon Political Correctness – this is a world in which religion can only survive if defined as cultism. Mary Griffith is not above using any tool at her disposal, whether it's a goddess-worshipping cult or the lover who heads a powerful family. In fact, she's a woman after my own heart. She's a shrewd and pragmatic businesswoman, but her tendency to adopt strays and turn them into employees may well hinder her profits – or will it? The strays, memorable characters all, include the Heretic, a refugee from religious exploitation and persecution who just might be a genuine prophet and saint (as well as mad as a Hatter); con men, artists, truckers and lawyers. They all turn into her devoted acolytes, and in the end they will save the world, or at least their favorite bar.

***This Is Not a Game* by Walter Jon Williams, Orbit / Hachette Book Group 2009, hardcover 384 pages.
Review by Craig W. Chrissinger**

Belen-based Walter Jon Williams seems fascinated by computer technology lately. Last year's *Implied Spaces* had super computers creating wormholes and whole worlds. Now in *This Is Not a Game*, Williams explores Alternative Reality Games and the vulnerabilities of international economies to online attacks in a near-future thriller of greed and networking.

ARG players receive text snippets, solve puzzles, share information, receive calls from game characters, and even have missions outside their computer screens.

Successful ARG developer Dagmar Shaw is trapped in a Jakarta hotel during a violent siege caused by Indonesia's collapsing currency as the book opens. When the American embassy and a mercenary team hired by her boss, Charlie, can't get her out, she turns to the online gaming community for a grassroots rescue.

Home in Los Angeles, Dagmar becomes involved in designing a new large-budget ARG to promote the release of the company's *Planet Nine*. Life seems to return to normal for her and the men she's called friends since their Cal Tech days – Charlie, venture capitalist Austin, and down-on-his-luck computer programmer BJ.

Then Austin is gunned down by a contract killer, seemingly hired by the Russian Mafia. His murder is odd, and is witnessed by a computer gamer hoping to learn vital clues to Dagmar's ARG by surveillance of the company's building.

First an ARG bled into reality as Dagmar was rescued from Jakarta, and now the real world has crept into the made-up gaming world. Can Dagmar use her gamers to help solve the crime? Can the killer hack into the system so that gamers create more chaos without their knowledge? Why is Dagmar's college gang being targeted? And is Charlie somehow involved with the sweep of economic collapse around the world?

Avid mystery readers may have strong suspicions early on about the sources of the various conspiracies, but that shouldn't interfere with their enjoyment of *This Is Not a Game*. Williams' characters are strong, and the journey to the book's conclusion is worth the read.

(Note: A variation of this review appeared in the May 17 Sunday Journal.)

EDITOR NOTES THAT FIT THIS SPACE

Man, a lot of deaths in the entertainment world lately. What the heck? And then Charles Brown of *Locus* passes away last weekend. His health had been questionable, but his passing still was a surprise. Long live *Locus*!

It's hot and I've been busy with traveling, movie set visits and writing for *Fangoria*, housecleaning (going through comics, action figures and other collectibles) and Bubonicon 41 preparations. We need Gofers, of course! Join us...

Went to northern California near San Francisco at the end of June for my cousin's non-traditional beach wedding. Beautiful country. Saw redwood trees and drove on US 1 overlooking the Pacific. Just four hours in San Francisco - not nearly long enough. Jessica and I hope to go back one day.

Ended up visiting the Albuquerque sets of Hammer Films' psychological thriller *The Resident* three times, talking with Jeffrey Dean Morgan (*Watchmen*) and Lee Pace (*Pushing Daisies*) among cast and crew. My *Fangoria* web-piece on Carrie Vaughn is printed in this issue, and I have full-length articles coming up in *Fangoria* this fall about NM-lensed films *Carriers* (with *Trek*'s Chris Pine) and *The Dark Country* (Thomas Jane & Ron Perlman).

Go see *Moon* (smart, effective SF), *Up!* (another brilliant Pixar effort) and the *Star Trek* reboot (good story, nice interpretations of the characters by new actors). Jessica liked *Harry Potter & the Half-Blood Prince* more than me, probably because she's read the books! It felt like truncated Cliff Notes to me, though it has some great visuals and nice moments scattered throughout. We've also seen the whole first season of *The Big Bang Theory* - lots of fun and full of computer/sci-fi/comic book nerd references. Book wise, I've enjoyed *Go-Go Girls of the Apocalypse* by Victor Gischler, *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy, *Halting State* by Charles Stross, and *Kitty and the Silver Bullet* by Carrie Vaughn.

Thanks this issue to Ian Tregillis, Kevin Hewett, D. Lynn Smith, Roberta Johnson & Carrie Vaughn. Submissions always appreciated. Next Deadline is Sunday, October 4...

Hope to see you all at Bubonicon Aug 28-30 at the Albq Grand Airport Hotel & then in the October issue. - Craig C.