

# ASFACTS 2010

## JULY "HOT SAUCE TIME IN THE CITY" ISSUE

### ROGERS & DENNING HOSTING PRE-CON PARTY

Patricia Rogers and Scott Denning will uphold a local fannish tradition when they host the Bubonicon 42 Pre-Con Party 7:30-10:30 pm Thursday, August 26, at their home in Bernalillo – located at 909 Highway 313.

The easiest way to reach the house is north on I-25 to exit 242 east (Rio Rancho's backdoor and the road to Cuba). At 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 2010 con t-shirt with artwork by Sarah Clemens.

Please bring snacks and drinks to share, plus plates, napkins, cups and some ice. As with any hosted party, please help keep the house clean and in good shape!



Hogan, who wrote hard SF, won three Seiun Awards and two Prometheus Awards. Hogan is best known for the *Minervan Experiment* or *Giants* series, beginning with debut novel *Inherit the Stars* in 1977 and continuing with *The Gentle Giants of Ganymede*, *Giants' Star*, and *Entoverse*.

His most recent novel, *Migration*, was released in May as a Baen Books hardcover. In it, a generation ship departs from a curiously pluralistic post-calamity world to found a new, idealistic culture elsewhere. Aboard is a former traveling illusionist who becomes a key player in finding a lost robot that has discovered religion.

Other novels included *Thrice Upon a Time*, in which a machine that sends messages back to itself through time reveals a startling physics governing events in the universe; *The Proteus Operation*; *Moon Flower*; *Endgame Enigma*; *Bug Park*; and *Code of the Lifemaker*.

Hogan was born in London in 1941, arriving in the world with severe deformities to both feet – which took

### NEBULA WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The 2009 Nebula Awards winners were announced on May 15 during the 2010 SFWA Nebula Awards Weekend, held in Cocoa Beach, FL. *Locus Magazine* announced the following:

Novel: *The Windup Girl* by Paolo Bacigalupi; Novella: *The Women of Nell Gwynne's* by Kage Baker; Novelette: "Sinner, Baker, Fabulist, Priest; Red Mask, Black Mask, Gentleman, Beast" by Eugie Foster; Short Story: "Spar" by Kij Johnson; Ray Bradbury Award (screenplay): *District 9* by Neill Blomkamp and Terri Tatchell; and the Andre Norton Award: *The Girl Who Circumnavigated Fairyland in a Ship of Her Own Making* by Catherynne M. Valente.

Hugo and Nebula award winner Joe Haldeman was honored as Grand Master. Neal Barrett was named Author Emeritus. The honorees for the Solstice are Tom Doherty, Terri Windling and Donald Wollheim.

### JAMES P. HOGAN PASSES AWAY

British author James P. Hogan, 69, died in Ireland on July 12. The cause of death has not yet been determined. Hogan was alone at his house at the time.

### UPCOMING ASFS MEETINGS

- **August 13, 2010:** Preview of Bubonicon 42, screening of *Hitchhiker's Guide* BBC episodes, and announcements of Bubonicon 43 chair candidates.
- **August 20:** Bubonicon 42 Gofer Gathering. Be on hand to pick your work hours & receive bribes.
- **September 17:** Bubonicon 42 report. Also, election of the Bubonicon 43 chair (voting rules will apply) and something more. Note: This meeting is a week later than usual - the 3rd Friday of September.
- **October 8:** Australian Worldcon reports with pictures (from Kevin Hewett & Randi Tinkham), plus the election of 3 club officers. And the Halloween issue of *ASFACTS* (deadline Sunday, October 3).
- **November 12:** An interesting talk, we hope.
- **December 10:** Dessert Cook-Off and Holiday Film Shorts. Plus the annual issue of *SithFacts*.

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: cwcraig@nmia.com. *ASFACTS* published February, April, July & October for the Albuquerque SF Society. *SITHFACTS* out each December. NEXT DEADLINE: Sun, Oct 3. Club Officers: Kevin Hewett & Craig Chrissinger, co-Zec Secs (505) 266-8905. Kathy K. Kubica, Moderator. Jessica Coyle, Alternator. HAL 9000, Advisor. **Bubonicon Co-Chairs:** Kristen Dorland (505) 459-8734 & Craig Chrissinger. Rats! Don't Panic.

many years of surgery to correct. He credits his early years of foot difficulties in creating an insatiable appetite for reading books.

As a teenager, he joined the Royal Aircraft Establishment on a five-year program covering electrical, electronic and mechanical engineering. In the 1970s, he joined Digital Equipment Corporation's Laboratory Data Processing Group.

He is survived by his wife, Sheryl, and six children.

## CAMPBELL, STURGEON AWARDS ANNOUNCED

Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl* (Night Shade) has won this year's John W. Campbell Memorial Award for best science fiction novel published in 2009, and James Morrow's novella *Shambling Towards Hiroshima* (Tachyon) has won the Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award for best short fiction of 2009, in results announced a week prior to the official Campbell Conference and Awards Ceremony, reported Locus Online in early July.

Bacigalupi's novel has already won the Nebula Award, the Locus Award (as first novel), and the Compton Crook Award, and is currently a finalist for this year's Hugo Award. Morrow's novella is also a Hugo finalist, and was a Nebula finalist and Locus finalist.

Winners and runners-up are as follows:

### JOHN W. CAMPBELL MEMORIAL AWARD

Winner: *The Windup Girl* by Paolo Bacigalupi (Night Shade)

Second Place: *Julian Comstock: A Story of 22nd-Century America* by Robert Charles Wilson (Tor)

Third Place: *The City & the City* by China Miéville (Del Rey)

### THEODORE STURGEON MEMORIAL AWARD

Winner: *Shambling Towards Hiroshima* by James Morrow (Tachyon Publications)

Second Place (tie): "As Women Fight" by Sara Genge (*Asimov's* Oct/Nov 2009), "Things Undone" by John Barnes (*Baen's Universe* Dec 2009), and "This Wind Blowing, and this Tide" by Damien Broderick (*Asimov's* Apr/May 2009).

## HELP NEEDED AT BUBONICON

It's true! Volunteers or "gofers" are needed to help out at Bubonicon 42 the weekend of August 27-29 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 promo swag, and be in a drawing for additional goodies!

The Volunteers (Gofers) Organizational Meeting will take place 7:30 pm Friday, August 20, in the Vista Norte Room of the Albuquerque Grand Airport Hotel (Yale Blvd SE, south of Gibson). 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 email Julie Pascal at [julie@pascal.org](mailto:julie@pascal.org).



## AMERICAN SPLENDOR WRITER DEAD

by Terence McArdle, *Washington Post* Staff Writer

Harvey Pekar, 70, the writer whose autobiographical comic book series *American Splendor* chronicled his life as a filing clerk, record collector, freelance jazz critic and one of life's all-around misfits, was found dead July 12 at his home near Cleveland.

No cause of death was reported, but a police captain in suburban Cleveland Heights told the Associated Press that an autopsy was planned. The AP reported that Pekar had prostate cancer, asthma, high blood pressure and depression.

The largely autobiographical comic series portrayed Pekar – inevitably dressed in a flannel shirt and corduroy pants – as a rumpled, depressed filing clerk in a Veterans Administration hospital. He filled the stories with wry observations about his frustrations with work and human relationships and what Pekar called "the 99 percent of life that nobody ever writes about."

"The humor of everyday life is way funnier than what the comedians do on TV," Pekar once said. "It's the stuff that happens right in front of your face when there's no routine and everything is unexpected. That's what I want to write about."

Pekar's comic vignettes were often of the mundane: pushing a girlfriend's car out of the snow, helping friends move a mildewed couch into an apartment, arguing with an editor and selling used records to his co-workers. Other strips featured Pekar engaging in dark, interior monologues against a winter sky.

The series developed a devoted following that extended beyond the usual comic book audience. It was made into a film in 2003 starring Paul Giamatti as Pekar and was adapted for the stage in 1987 as *From Off the Streets of Cleveland Comes...American Splendor - The Life and Times of Harvey Pekar*.

A great believer in the comics medium, Pekar also

used the form for music essays that graced CD jazz reissues and a *New York Times* op-art piece about the decline of the Cleveland economy.

From 1986 to 1988, Pekar was a frequent guest on *Late Night With David Letterman*, including one appearance in which Pekar antagonized Letterman for not endorsing a strike against General Electric, the parent company of NBC. Letterman's show was on NBC at the time, and Pekar was reportedly angered by what he considered GE's business conflicts as an arms manufacturer and media conglomerate.

The tirade prompted Letterman, somewhat jokingly, to apologize to the people of Cleveland.

Harvey Lawrence Pekar was born Oct. 8, 1939, in Cleveland. His parents were Jewish immigrants from Poland. His father, a Talmudic scholar, supported the family as a neighborhood grocer, and the family lived above his store.

Pekar attended what became Case Western Reserve University, served in the Navy in the late 1950s and worked a series of menial jobs before taking what would become a 30-year job as a filing clerk at a VA hospital in Cleveland.

In the early 1960s, he befriended cartoonist Robert Crumb, who was working in Cleveland for the American Greetings card company. Crumb and Pekar had a mutual love of jazz, although Crumb preferred 1920s hot jazz and Pekar's taste ran to swing and modern jazz. After Crumb's success as an underground cartoonist – named R. Crumb – Pekar approached him with stick-figure story boards. Crumb offered to illustrate Pekar's work and also put him in touch with other illustrators.

Pekar self-published the first *American Splendor* comic in 1976 and did the book at a rate of one a year. In addition to Crumb, the many illustrators he collaborated with included Gary Dumm, Richard Corben, Spain Rodriguez, Gilbert Hernandez, Bill Griffith, Drew Friedman and Joe Sacco.

## GENRE BOOKS STILL DISCUSSED

The Droids & Dragons SF Book Group meets 7:30 pm Monday, July 19, in the gift/CD area of Page One to discuss *DarkShip Thieves*, a space opera by Sarah A.

Hoyt. The group then focuses on Nebula winner Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl* on August 16.

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](mailto:piebald@juno.com) or Craig at 266-8905.



## GAIMAN WINS CARNEGIE MEDAL

Neil Gaiman's *The Graveyard Book* is the winner of the prestigious 2010 Carnegie Medal, awarded to "the most outstanding book for children" published in the UK. *The Graveyard Book* also won the 2009 Newbery Medal, given by the American Library Association, and is the first book ever to win both prizes, reported Locus Online in late June.

Shortlisted books included Terry Pratchett's *Nation*, Philip Reeve's *Fever Crumb* and Patrick Ness's *The Ask and the Answer*. The award, administered by CILIP: the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, is judged by a panel of children's librarians.

"It's particularly fantastic for me because it was the first literary prize I was ever aware of as a kid," says Gaiman, who will receive a golden medal and £500 worth of books to donate to a library of his choice.

## JEANNE ROBINSON PASSES AWAY

Dancer, choreographer, and author Jeanne Robinson died May 30, at home and surrounded by family, after a long battle with biliary tract cancer. According to husband Spider Robinson, "Her departure was quite peaceful and she was in no pain at all."

Robinson's many years as a dancer informed her collaborations with Spider Robinson; their novel *Stardance* (1979), about zero-gravity dance, was followed by sequels *Starseed* (1991) and *Starwind* (1995). A novella version of *Stardance* won both the Hugo and Nebula awards.

Spider told the SFWA website, "Because her Palliative Care doctor, Paul Sugar, was able to forecast her passing almost to the hour... Zen priests Michael and Kate Newton were also present per Jeanne's wishes, as were our oldest friends in this part of the world, Greg McKinnon, Anya Coveney-Hughes and Stevie McDowell. Over the next few hours more sangha buddies arrived, and chanting of the Prajna Paramita Heart Sutra was done. Her body was then bathed and dressed in her hand-sewn rakasu as per Zen tradition."

Robinson studied dance at the Boston Conservatory and with the Martha Graham and Alvin Ailey schools, founded the Nova Dance Theatre Company in 1980, and served as its artistic director until its closure in 1987. NASA invited Robinson to be the first dancer to dance in space in 1980. However, the Challenger tragedy ended the project. In 2007, Robinson observed and choreographed a dance in a zero-gravity environment, accompanying dancer Kathleen McDonagh aboard a Zero-G plane.

Jeanne and Spider were co-Guests of Honor at Bu-

bonicon 16 in 1984, and came back to Albuquerque in 2002 as Bubonicon 34's co-Toastmasters.

In accordance with her wishes, she was cremated, Spider said. Half her ashes will be scattered off the Pacific coast, and half were to be taken back to her childhood home in Cape Cod. In addition to Spider, she is survived by mother Dorothy, sister Laurie, daughter Terri and granddaughter Marisa.

## 2010 LOCUS AWARDS WINNERS

The 2010 Locus Awards winners were announced at the annual Science Fiction Awards Weekend, held June 25-27 in Seattle, WA. The Awards were covered live, and a full report will appear in the August issue of *Locus Magazine*.

Best SF Novel: *Boneshaker* by Cherie Priest, Best Fantasy Novel: *The City & The City* by China Miéville, Best First Novel: *The Windup Girl* by Paolo Bacigalupi, Best Young Adult Book: *Leviathan* by Scott Westerfeld.

Best Novella: *The Women of Nell Gwynne's* by Kage Baker, Best Novelette: "By Moonlight" by Peter S. Beagle, Best Short Story: "An Invocation of Incuriosity" by Neil Gaiman, Best Anthology: *The New Space Opera 2* edited by Gardner Dozois & Jonathan Strahan, Best Collection: *The Best of Gene Wolfe* by Gene Wolfe.

Best Non-Fiction Book/Art Book: *Cheek by Jowl* by Ursula K. Le Guin, Best Artist: Michael Whelan, Best Editor: Ellen Datlow, Best Magazine: *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, and Best Book Publisher: Tor.

## FRANK FRAZETTA DEAD AT 82

by Geoff Boucher, *Los Angeles Times*

Frank Frazetta, 82, the fantasy painter and illustrator whose images of sinewy warriors and lush vixens graced paperback novels, album covers and comic books for decades and became something close to the contemporary visual definition of the sword-and-sorcery genres, died May 10 after suffering a stroke the night before.

Frazetta had gone out to dinner with his daughters Sunday, May 9, and then had a stroke at his home in Boca Grande, Fla. He died at Lee Memorial Hospital in Fort Myers, Fla., his manager Rob Pistella told the Associated Press.

"He's going to be remembered as the most renowned fantasy illustrator of the 20th century," Pistella said.

Frazetta's most famous works were in oil, but his canvases were rarely seen in museums; instead his legacy was defined by barbarians and warlocks who reached out to readers from book covers on dime-store spinner racks. But as comic books and fantasy entertain-

ment gained a wider audience in the 1970s and '80s, Frazetta became a brand name and his original artwork became a sensation. Last November, a berserk battlefield image that graced a *Conan the Conqueror* paperback, sold for \$1 million to a private collector.

John Milius, the screenwriter whose credits include *Apocalypse Now*, *Clear and Present Danger* and *Red Dawn*, was the director and co-writer of *Conan the Barbarian*, the 1982 film that was based on the warrior character created by pulp writer Robert E. Howard in 1932. Milius said May 10 that it was Frazetta's muscular paintings of Conan that defined the character for him and modern generations of fans.

"Not that I could ever redo Frazetta on film – he created a world and a mood that are impossible to simulate – but my goal in *Conan the Barbarian* was to tell a story that was shaped by Frazetta and Wagner," Milius said.

Frazetta was born in Brooklyn, NY, on Feb. 9, 1928. By age eight, he was studying at the Brooklyn Academy of Fine Art. One of his key influences was Hal Foster, the great comic-strip artist whose *Tarzan* became a compass point for Frazetta's own jungle scenes.

By 16, Frazetta was working in the booming field of illustration in New York. He toiled under Al Capp on *Li'l Abner* and on his own strip, *Johnny Comet*, in the early 1950s. In comic books, he worked on *The Shining Knight* and a western hero called *Ghost Rider*, but his fame would come with a paintbrush and in a more sensual sector when, in the 1960s, he began painting covers for paperbacks and magazines.

It was his covers for the *Conan* paperbacks of the 1960s, especially, that created a new overheated vision of fantasy realms. Later in life he told an interviewer that he didn't find his strange beasts, sullen warriors or buxom maidens in the text of the books he fronted with his art.

"I didn't read any of it," Frazetta said. "I drew him my way. It was really rugged. And it caught on. I didn't care about what people thought. People who bought the books never complained about it. They probably didn't read them."

Perhaps, but the readers of those *Conan* books – as well as the *Tarzan* and John Carter, *Warlord of Mars* novels that Frazetta famously painted covers for – said



they found the words and pictures melded with a resonant power.

Guillermo del Toro, the Oscar-nominated co-writer of *Pan's Labyrinth*, which he also directed along with the *Hellboy* films, said that Frazetta was nothing less than "an Olympian artist that defined fantasy art for the 20th century." The filmmaker, reached May 10 in New Zealand where he is working on a two-film adaptation of *The Hobbit*, said Frazetta's influence is difficult to explain to people outside the fantasy world, just as Norman Rockwell would be an elusive figure to define for someone unfamiliar with the US heartland.

"He gave the world a new pantheon of heroes," the filmmaker said by e-mail. "He took the mantle from J. Allen St. John and Joseph Clement Coll and added blood, sweat and sexual power to their legacy.... He somehow created a second narrative layer for every book he ever illustrated."

There were also rock album covers: Molly Hatchet, Nazareth, Yngwie Malmsteen and Wolfmother all tapped into the imagery of Frazetta's easel.

His long, restless career took him into Hollywood work, posters, animation, commercial art and almost every corner of American illustration. The artist's final year had been a wrenching one; his wife and partner, Ellie Frazetta, died in July, setting off a dispute among the Frazetta children about the custody of their ailing patriarch and his art collection, which by some estimates was worth \$20 million.

The quarrel reached a bizarre zenith in December when his son Alfonso "Frank Jr." Frazetta used a backhoe to knock down a wall of a small castle-like building that housed much of his father's premium artwork. That building was a mini-museum that sat on the elder Frazetta's farm in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania, and the bizarre invasion led to a criminal case, although charges were dropped during a recent settlement among the Frazetta siblings.

Besides his son Frank, Frazetta is survived by another son, William; two daughters, Heidi Frazetta Grabin and Holly Frazetta; and 11 grandchildren.

## GAIMAN GIVES UP VAMPIRE NOVEL

Would you read a big, honking vampire novel from Neil Gaiman? Of course you would! The folks at Sci Fi Wire, too, says a post in early July. Unfortunately, no one is going to get the chance. At least not for awhile.

According to an interview in *The Independent*, Gaiman, whose *Graveyard Book* recently became the first children's book to win the Carnegie Award, has decided there are far too many bloodsuckers out there.

"My next big novel was going to have a vampire," said Gaiman. "Now, I'm probably not. They are everywhere, they're like cockroaches."

Gaiman likely won't write his vampire character until vamps have become a bit less buzzworthy.

"Maybe it's time for this to play out and go away," he said. "It's good sometimes to leave the field fallow. I think some of this stuff is being over-farmed."

As much as readers would like to see what Gaiman would do with a bloodsucker, the record-breaking box office of *The Twilight Saga: Eclipse* tells Sci Fi Wire: We're going to have to wait a while. A very long while.

## WONDER WOMAN GETS TRENDY MAKEOVER

Wonder Woman has changed her looks and dons a trendy new outfit in issue 600 of the comic book series, reported BBC News in late June.

The super hero's star-spangled swimsuit is to be replaced by a radical new style that includes leggings. The visual makeover goes hand in hand with changes to the Wonder Woman story, publisher DC Comics says.



DC Comics has hired a new writer, *Babylon 5*'s J Michael Straczynski, to give Wonder Woman's life a new direction. Straczynski told the *New York Times* that it had been time to bring the iconic character into the 21st Century.

"She's been locked into pretty much the exact same outfit since her debut in 1941," Straczynski said. "What woman only wears only one outfit for 60-plus years?"

He said the redesign of Wonder Woman's outfit had been his priority when he took on the job. "I wanted to toughen her up and give her a modern sensibility," Straczynski said.

Wonder Woman is an Amazon with superhuman powers and the alter ego of Princess Diana of Themyscira. During the last 69 years, she has fought a range of villains and also appeared in other comic series such as Justice League.

In the 1970s, Lynda Carter played the super heroine in the series *The New Original Wonder Woman* and *The New Adventures of Wonder Woman*.

An animated film was released last year, starring the voice talent of Keri Russell.

## WHY WHEDON CAN'T REBOOT BUFFY

Many fans have been hoping for a big-screen *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* movie for years. And time and again the project has hit a roadblock. The latest reason you won't be seeing a new Buffy in your local theater anytime soon?

Apparently, it's *High School Musical* star Vanessa



Hudgens, reported Sci Fi Wire in mid-June.

According to ShowbizSpy, Hudgens was being courted to co-star with Sarah Michelle Gellar in a theatrical reboot to the TV series, but the actress turned down the chance, primarily because she believed *Buffy* was too old-school a vampire universe now that we all live in Stephanie Meyer's world.

"She felt that with *Twilight* still so massive, *Buffy* would not be the best option right now," said one insider. "The idea was to have Sarah back but with Vanessa as a fresh, new character. The project has been shelved for now."

Has *Twilight* and its sparkily vampires made *Buffy* appear so old-fashioned that it can't get off the ground without a *High School Musical* star? Can that possibly be? Say it ain't so!

## **On The Convention Front:** **BUBONICON 42 JUST SIX WEEKS AWAY**

by Craig Chrissinger, co-chair

Bubonicon, New Mexico's annual science fiction convention, celebrates its 42nd edition August 27-29 at the Albuquerque Grand (Sheraton) Airport Hotel, 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 east coast, Colorado and Arizona. Guest of Honor for Bubonicon 42 is New York novelist, comic book scripter and screenwriter Peter David; Guest Artist is Sarah Clemens of Phoenix; and Toastmaster is Denver's Mario Acevedo.

Other participants come from New Mexico, California and Colorado. The participating newcomers to Bubonicon this year are authors David Boop, Doranna Durgin, Leonid Korogodski, Susan Krinard and Jeanne Stein. No George RR Martin or Stephen R. Donaldson this year, but we are proud to have Ben Bova and John Pelan back with us after absences.

Proceeds from the Friday charity auction and a portion of any Bubonicon 42 profits will benefit the (Jack) Williamson Library Collection at Eastern NM University, the local Roadrunner Food Bank, and the Watermelon Mountain Ranch Animal Rescue.

Bubonicon 42 opens with registration at 3:00 pm Friday the 27th 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 the weekend is

"Life, the Universe and Everything" for *The Hitchhiker's Guide* connection to the number 42. As such, Saturday's programming includes a Vogon Poetry Slam, a (Virgin) Pan-Galactic Gargle Blaster Contest, Sarah Clemens' slide show, the "Chapa'ai of Fortune" at 4:15 pm, the costume contest at 7:30 pm, the 9 pm screening of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (USA version), the Tentaclecraft Concert in the Valle Grande Room at 10:00 pm, and local filmmaker Adam Brown's Late-Night Cinema selections at 11:00 pm.

Activities on Sunday include David'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 23 tables.

And, we can't forget about the hospitality suite (Bernalillo Room, 2nd floor) being run by Joe Lane, Ann Sasahara, Lori Jansen and Harriet Engle. 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 (gofer) to help us throughout the weekend (see separate blurb earlier in this newsletter). If you can help, please email Julie Pascal at [julie@pascal.org](mailto:julie@pascal.org), or come to the meeting Friday, August 20, in the Vista Norte Room of the Albuquerque Grand.

Memberships for the whole weekend are \$38 if purchased by August 9. After that, you'll have to wait to pay \$42 at the door. Daily memberships are \$15 Friday, \$25 Saturday and \$15 Sunday. Youths 14-17 years old are \$20 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 9 to the "NMSF Conference" at PO Box 37257, Albuquerque, NM 87176.

The Bubonicon 42 special \$97 room rate (single-double occupancy) is only guaranteed through Monday, August 16, so get your reservation in now! After that, the Albuquerque 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](http://www.bubonicon.com).



## BOOK REVIEW ROUND-UP

***Kraken* by China Miéville, Del Rey 2010, hc \$26.00, 528 pages. Review by Kevin Hewett**

*Kraken* begins in the British Museum where the protagonist, Billy Harrow, is giving a tour. The highlight of the tour is supposed to be a view of the preserved carcass of a giant squid. Unfortunately, when the tour reaches the room containing the remains, the tour group finds that it has been stolen. As the investigation into the stolen squid commences, a hidden world containing magic constables, father-and-child assassins, animal mediums, and squid-worshipping cultists is revealed.

China Miéville's latest novel is an homage to H.P. Lovecraft and everything Chthulu. Fans of Lovecraft will enjoy it – others should take a pass on this novel.

***A Taint in the Blood* by S.M. Stirling, Roc 2010, hc \$25.95, 432 pages. Review by Caci Gallop**

*A Taint in the Blood* opens with Ellen crying in her car because she's just broken up with Adrian due to his lack of communication in the relationship. Almost immediately, she's kidnapped by the guy's twin sister, Adrienne.

Adrienne describes herself, while kidnapping Ellen, as Adrian's evil twin. Proving that in fact Adrian was holding things back, severely; during the relationship if Ellen was unaware he even had a twin sister.

Adrienne is a complete sociopath and has decided for some reason or another to piss off her brother by snatching Ellen, she comes out from California to Santa Fe, making it very obvious she was there by being intentionally caught on surveillance cameras.

Both Adrian and Adrienne are "Shadowspawn" - not exactly vampires, not exactly shape shifters and not exactly dead... but choose all the things you like from each of the above categories and combine them into one creature and you have "Shadowspawn." Essentially at this point we have these were-vampire twins with these powers and the ability to push likelihoods to turn out in their favor. Adrian, who was trying to deny his Shadowspawn side by living like a recluse in Santa Fe and Adrienne, the opposite, lives entirely instinctively, where whatever feels good and would make her happy is indulged.

The intent of the kidnapping is unclear, maybe an attempt to bring her twin back to the Shadowspawn side of things, but it's really not well explained. Ellen's whisked away to California and fed upon by the sexually and otherwise sadistic Adrienne regularly. She's living in this terribly creepy community made entirely of people who either serve or feed Adrienne, and all the people living there are entirely mentally raped into thinking that what they're experiencing is a good thing.

Adrian, of course, follows them to rescue his ex-girlfriend and stakes out the compound for a number of months. During his stake out Adrian even meets with Ellen both physically and in a weird dream-state. He woos her again; they fall back into love and even get engaged during

these brief meetings. Though, since Adrienne is able to read Ellen's mind when she's close enough, Adrian enables her mind to forget the meetings until they are face to face again, sending Ellen without any knowledge or hope of the impending rescue back into hell.

Why S.M. Stirling doesn't just have Adrian rescue the girl during one of the numerous face-to-face meetings, I don't understand. From my point of view, putting Ellen through the months of sadistic emotional, sensory and psychological torture for a flimsy excuse of using Ellen during an ambush is pointless. The ending fell flat for me. I guess the ending wasn't executed well enough for me to make it plausible, even in an urban fantasy setting.

Overall the story was interesting, if slightly disturbing. Despite the lack of reasoning and coherency in many of the main characters' actions, it was a good read. I'd like to see if the story is fleshed out a bit more in any potential sequel.

***Kitty Goes To War* by Carrie Vaughn, Tor Books 2010, \$7.99, 352 pages. Review by Pat Mathews**

*Kitty Goes To War*, the 8<sup>th</sup> Kitty Norville story, is a good book! Get it!

Kitty is called in by the Army - by an Army psychiatrist, in fact - because after the death of their captain in Afghanistan, an all-werewolf unit fell apart, and one of them seems to be killing off the men one by one. That's not the mystery: we and the Army know who it is. The question is, can the three survivors be reintegrated into civilian society? Or will they have to be locked up the rest of their lives? Or will they end up dead?

Kitty has some outraged comments about werewolves being the ultimate in disposable soldiers, or her need to constantly remind the psychiatrist that these soldiers are *people* - not lab animals - and that they deserve a few excursions into the world they're coming back into, without a SWAT team following them around ready to shoot the minute one of them twitches.

And we get to see how she goes about dealing with these wounded veterans. And the contrast between the psychiatrist and her supervisor's attitude, and the guy at the gate who simply says, "Guy back from Afghanistan just snapped."

There is another plot about the owner of a chain of convenience stores causing trouble of a supernatural, legal, and car-wreck kind. It's important for the light it throws on the former supernatural-hunter Cormac, now trying to turn civilian himself after his release from prison.

But read Carrie Vaughn's latest mostly for the veterans, and Kitty's compassionate and strong handling of them.

***Black Magic Sanction* by Kim Harrison, Eos 2010, hc \$25.99, 496 pages. Review by Caci Gallop**

*Black Magic Sanction* is the eighth book in Kim Harrison's *Hollows* urban fantasy series. The *Hollows*



novels follow the misadventures of Rachel Morgan, a witch who lives in a church and has a supernatural bounty-hunter business with her friends Ivy, a living vampire and Jenks, a pixy. There is an intimate, long-running story through-out this series. I highly recommend readers unfamiliar with the Hollows start with *Dead Witch Walking* and read the books in order.

*Black Magic Sanction* starts shortly after where the timeline in *White Witch*, *Black Curse* (book 7) ended. *Black Magic Sanction* has magic, intrigue and misfortune after misstep for Rachel Morgan. The coven, the ruling body of witches for moral and ethical standards has shunned Rachel and has decided to take it one step further and not allow her to live. During an attempt on her life Rachel is caught and held in Alcatraz. She's given two choices either a lobotomy to effectively end her use of magic or sterilization so she may not pass her genes on through her offspring.

Rachel is finally coming to understand that she's basically the genetic missing link between witches and demons. She's able to invoke demon curses and slowly beginning to realize she's really a witch or a demon. Rachel's also becoming more and more accepting of her position as Al the demon's student, not familiar, and spends weekends in his suite of rooms in the afterlife learning how to twist demon curses.

Jenks' absent from the story for a good bit, but then somewhat out of nowhere his home and family are attacked resulting in a tragedy. He slips into a severe depression and then is remarkably pulled out of it in a relatively short timeframe. A bit later his feelings are callously dismissed by Rachel with, "I was surprised he was talking about her already. Maybe the pixy psyche was like that, live hard and fast." Jenks is a major character in this series and those familiar with the storyline might feel a bit of affront on behalf of the way Jenks' loss was handled.

With Ivy and Jenks strangely absent in the storyline, the demon teacher Al, Al's familiar Pierce, Nick, Rachel's betraying ex-boyfriend and Trent were pushed in to provide much of the support for this story. Rachel's ex-boyfriend who betrayed her multiple times and is the direct reason for one of her demon marks is predictable playing the hidden evil villain. Pierce is an irritating addition as Rachel's love interest and fellow somewhat student of Al's. Of course Rachel is still torn between her feelings for her dead vampire lover Kisten and Pierce.

Al, however, is very capable of being amusing as well as dangerously exciting. When first introduced to Al he was a total and complete monster that you considered truly evil. As a character he's evolved into something much more interesting than just the bad guy. Trent's story is far from done I think, we find out little bits about him each book and each little morsel only makes one want to learn more... which of course makes you want to keep reading.

*Black Magic Sanction* is a good book and a quick read. The main storyline of the entire series may not be progressing at a clip, but each book so far has peeled back a new and interesting layer of the overall story.

***Dragon Soul* by Jadia Jones and Danielle Bennett, Spectra 2010, hc \$26.00, 416 pages.**

**Review by Randi Tinkham**

After the war, the mechanical dragons, which gave Volstov victory over the Ke-Han Empire, were destroyed. But now parts of them are being sold as souvenirs and objects of curiosity on the black market. Four people are on the hunt to find the source of these pieces: Brothers Rook and Thom from a sense of duty to the beasts one of them fought alongside during the war, Madoka being forced to by a magician who believes at least one of the pieces will help bring the defeated Ke-Han Empire back to ascendancy, and Malahide at the orders of her liege who commanded the dragons destroyed in the first place.

And thus ends the second chapter of *Dragon Soul*, and as far as I could stand to read. By the end of it, I found counting obscenities more interesting than the book itself. In the span of seven pages of chapter 1, I counted the word "fuck" or some variation, 48 times. Don't get me wrong, I use profanities myself. But I believe that they are best used as extreme emphasis – to drive a point home be it fear, confusion, frustration, or anger. When overused, they just become ineffective.

I found the writing and characterizations of *Dragon Soul* heavy handed and the extremely liberal use of profanities tiresome. Do mechanical dragons have a soul? Yes. Have the authors made me care enough about that or any of the characters to continue reading? No. And so I consign the book to the recycling bin in the hopes that the paper can be redeemed in its next life as much more interesting reading material such as a stereo instruction manual or direct mail leaflets.

***Children No More* by Mark L. Van Name, Baen (August) 2010, hc \$22.00, 400 pages.**

**Review by Becky Davis**

When given this book, I first asked, who is Mark L. Van Name? A pseudonym for some other author, right? Wrong. This is his real name, and he is a science fiction author living in North Carolina. Look up his bio and activities on Wikipedia. *Children No More* is a continuation in his series on Jon Moore and his amazing AI, Lobo, which began with *One Jump Ahead*.

Lobo. Yeah. Think Keith Laumier's Bolo with wings, hyperdrive, nanites, sarcastic intelligence and super missiles. "The most capable artificial intelligence ever created", says Jon Moore. Then why does this capable AI in a stealth fighter keep asking, "Can I shoot them now?" like a trigger-happy 16 year-old human with his first gun?

Who is Jon Moore? A 154 year-old mercenary soldier who was "changed" with nanomachine enhancements at 15 from "dumb" to "smart" and "strong" by his sister Jeannie. Only Jon tends to act emotionally and physically like his 32 year-old appearing body, rather than with his 154 year-old brain. He does some dumb things in here.

Two stories run parallel in the book. Jon Moore's painful education on Dump Island of planet Pinkelponker (hey, an author has to have some fun!) as a merciless war-



rior. The other is Jon & Lobo's infiltration and rescue of 500 boy-soldiers from a horrid rebel jungle compound on the planet Tumani.

Jon is coerced by first one former lovely soldier-girlfriend, Alissa Lim, and then another, Maggie Park, to support the rescue of the conscripted and brainwashed boy-soldiers. Naturally, by the end of the book, Jon and Lobo are the heroes and the strong-minded women will do just about anything Jon asks.

What is bad about this book: Clichés. This is a "bickering buddies" book. Moore and Lobo frequently lob sarcastic, twitty barbs at each other. The women are gorgeous; the men are stalwart and strong. Words used too often: "I'm sorry" and "I'm awesome", "Yes, you're awesome."

What is good: A couple of supporting characters who could stand well in short stories or other novels. Benny is a genetically damaged quadriplegic (think Thalidomide baby) who navigates doomed Dump Island on a wheeled cart while instilling in Jon the emotional and physical strength to get off the island. The other is Senator Wylack of Tumani, a politician, and psychological cross between Idi Amin and Charles Manson. This character is scary like a cobra, and I hope never becomes multi-cellular.

Readers 16-30 years old who prefer military, gaming and combat sci-fi will like this book. Look for it on the shelves in early August.

## **ASFS MEETING REPORTS — APRIL 2010: S.M. STIRLING VISIT**

Thirty-one people were on hand when S.M. Stirling visited the club to talk about his newest novel, *A Taint in the Blood*, and read from it.

Stirling described his latest work as "an urban 'quasi' fantasy, inspired by many fellow fantasy writers. It's set in New Mexico and California."

Stirling read the first three chapters to an attentive audience. The first chapter introduces the "Shadowspawn," and several points of dialog drew laughter from club members. The second chapter is set in Santa Fe, and the third chapter has a confrontation between a twin brother and sister.

Asked about doing a female villain, Stirling replied, "At times, it's just fun to be bad. I had a lot of fun writing the book. Since they eat well, it's full of food porn."

Stirling has been contracted for three books in the series. After that, it will be a book-by-book arrangement. The second book is titled *A Congress of Demons*, and set in Europe and the country of Georgia.

"I brushed up on vampire lore," Stirling said. "I read the legends. This has influences of Fred Saberhagen, Jack Williamson and others. I don't believe in sparkily vampires, so I do make fun of the *Twilight* vampires in this book. Mine are not truly immortal - they're just hard to kill and long-lived."

Stirling revealed that he is writing a novella based in

the Shadowspawn universe, "Pain and Suffering," from the next anthology edited by George RR Martin and Gardner Dozois.

He said the next *Change* novel will be out in September. "I'm working on the second *Shadowspawn* novel now, and then the next *Change* novel," he said. "I'm busy for a while since you all can read them faster than I can write them. This novel took me about seven months."

Talking about writing in general, Stirling commented, "The thing about writing is that if you've got the knack for it, ideas are easy. Time is the challenge. It takes a long time to do the writing, but ideas are quick. When I start a book, I always have that thought that I'm a fraud. Every author has that internal thought."

And looking back to his very first novel, *Snowbrother*, Stirling stated that it is "full of anger and angst because I was in law school. I modeled the evil wizard on one of my professors. And, thus I decided the law was not for me."

## **MAY: AARON CAMPBELL ON ART**

A large crowd of 40 people were present for artist Aaron Campbell's talk on his career, complete with visual aids. Despite some difficulty with hooking up a laptop with the digital projector (thanks for the assist, Morgan), Campbell was full of energy and revealed he had turned 33 the day before.

"I knew I wanted to be an artist when I was seven years old," he said. "Prior to that point, I wanted to be a paleontologist. I pretty much have played D&D my whole life, and started collecting comics in elementary school.

"I went to college in Baltimore," he continued. "I was dead set on becoming a comic book illustrator until college. That's when I focused on fantasy artwork, with a strong leaning on historical influences. I went to grad school in New York, and worked with Donato Giancola."

Campbell's first cover was for a book set in Roger Zelazny's *Amber* universe, released by iBooks. After grad school, he did cover art for the May 2003 *Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* for a Peter Beagle story. And he had a piece of art displayed at the Albuquerque Museum a few years ago.

"Some of the early stuff I did was for GURPS from Steve Jackson Games," he noted. "It sounds cool, but role-playing game companies don't pay well at all."

After grad school, Campbell and his Baltimore roommate focused on a game they were developing. It didn't work out, and Campbell grew tired of the East Coast. He picked New Mexico because some of his family lived here.

"After I got here, my old roommate developed a *Black Knight* character as a comic book," he said. "He asked me if I was interested. We worked on it for a couple of years because we both were working full-time. Slowly, I finished the first issue. I went to Comic-Con with that issue in my portfolio, and I got work on *Sherlock Holmes* based on that.

"Eventually I was able to quit my regular job and concentrate on my studio," Campbell continued. "So, I like to say I got into comic books because of Dungeons and Drag-

ons. One of the authors on *Sherlock Holmes* was Alan Moore's daughter, so it was a real solid book. The work on those five issues was done digitally. I use a combination of methods now. First, I do the pencils digitally and print out the images in gray. Then I use brush and ink so I have something physical for all my work."

His work on *Green Hornet: Year One* is just one of three *Green Hornet* titles being published at the moment. "Mine is from Matt Wagner with the original Green Hornet in the 1930s," Campbell stated. "It's fun to draw the 1930s esthetics, and I've been attracted to the noir and pulp styles. I tried to get the essence of the locations down on paper."

Campbell revealed that he is contracted with Dynamite Comics for 24 issues of *Green Hornet*. The first story is told in six issues, and he said that Wagner has an idea for another six-part story.

Comparing the new two comics he's worked on, Campbell commented, "The *Sherlock Holmes* scripts were very specific about how many tiers and panels on a page. Matt is a little looser, merely telling me how many panels are on a given page. And then I decide how to lay them out. It has opened up my creative potential."

## JUNE: SUSAN KRINARD CHATS

For the first summer meeting, 28 folks chatted with author Susan Krinard about her career in romance, fantasy, and the two combined. "My interest and background are in SF and fantasy," she began. "I consider myself a writer who happens to do romance. I have 21 paranormal romance books, and two straight fantasy novels from Luna."

Krinard revealed that she actually had wanted to be a SF cover artist when she was younger. She went to art school, and even went to New York with a portfolio. But there were no bites.

"As a child, I was interested in *Star Trek*, Andre Norton and Marion Zimmer Bradley," she said. "My first favorite heroes were Underdog and Mighty Mouse. My first convention was a *Trek* con when I was 14 years old and we were living in San Francisco. Most of the cast was there, and I got their autographs. And then I found out about 'real' SF conventions. I had to drag my mom along to cons for a few more years until I could drive myself."

While waiting for a response to her art portfolio, Krinard worked at some "crappy secretarial jobs" and became involved in a round-robin zine around *Beauty & the Beast*. She met Serge Mailloux through a C.J. Cherryh mailing group while she was in California and he was in Quebec, Canada. Their letters got longer and their phone bills got bigger. They were married in Toronto in a civil ceremony, and Krinard credits with SF bringing them together.

Krinard said she actually got an art job with Chaosium, and did a cover piece for the gaming company. She also did fantasy watercolors and acrylics, and pieces for fanzines. When she tried her hand at fan fiction and completed a story, she was advised that she should write a romance novel.

"I tried to read some 'futuristic romances' and they

were dreadful," she remembered. "I liked shapeshifters, so I decided I wanted to do a biological werewolf - not cursed. I didn't know proper manuscript form, but everyone liked my work. My first book was *Prince of Wolves* in 1994, and I was signed for a three-book contract. There was paranormal romance, but no one was really doing werewolves. I did eight or nine books for Bantam before going to Berkley, where I did the SF romance, *Kinsman's Oath*, one of my favorite romances. It bombed big time."

Krinard said after 10 years of romances, she began to burn out. "I'm still a fan and attend cons, but sometimes I don't want to admit I've written romance. I feel better now having been invited into anthologies with Jim Butcher, Charlaine Harris, Kim Harrison and Esther Friesner. It has given me the confidence to try more SF and urban fantasy."

Krinard is working on a Norse mythology tale for the anthology *Chicks Who Kick Butt*, and her newest book, *Bride of the Wolf*, is the first in a series about western outlaw werewolves. She just turned in the second book.

## EDITOR NOTES THAT FIT THIS SPACE

Based on last April-July and now the same period for this year, spring and summer must be the season for a lot of deaths in the SF field. What the heck? Our condolences to all families involved - all the writers and artists will be missed.

It's hot & work has been crazy at Page One. Plus it's the last six weeks of Bubonicon 42 preparations. I need a nap! We need rain. Of course, the con needs Gofers! Join us...

The biggest recommendation I can make right now is the new film *Inception*, from director Christopher Nolan (*Dark Knight*, *Memento*, *The Prestige*). Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Ellen Page, *Inception* is an amazing and very intelligent SF action-thriller that may overload some people's minds. The idea of stealing people's secrets from their dreams is unique and visually dazzling.

Also worth seeing (yes, even in 3-D) are Pixar's *Toy Story 3* (full of heart, tears and laughs) and Universal's *Despicable Me* (good animation, sweet story, funny minions).

Thanks this issue to Kevin Hewett, Caci Gallop, Randi Tinkham, Becky Davis & Pat Mathews. Submissions always appreciated. Next Deadline is Sunday, October 3...

See you all at Bubonicon **August 27-29** at the Albq Grand Airport Hotel & then in October's *ASFacts*. - Craig C

## REMINDERS

+ **July 20:** CARRIE VAUGHN at Bookworks on Rio Grande NW, 7:00 pm, for *Discord's Apple* and *Kitty Goes To War*.

+ **July 24:** ROBERT E. VARDEMAN & WALTER JON WILLIAMS at Page One, Juan Tabo & Montgomery NE, 3:00 pm, for *God of War* and *The Green Leopard Plague*.

+ **September 13:** WILLIAM GIBSON at the Main Albq Public Library, 5th & Copper NW (sponsored by Bookworks), 7:00 pm, for *Zero History*.

+ **October 22-24:** MILEHICON 42 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Tech Center of Denver. Special Guests Katherine Kurtz, Rachel Caine, Donato Giancola and Paolo Bacigalupi. \$40 to October 1, then \$42 at the door. Rooms \$89 single/double. [www.milehicon.org](http://www.milehicon.org)