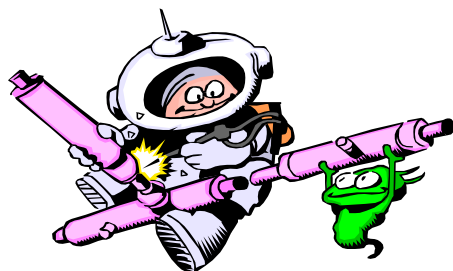




SITHFACTS 2013

"BABY, IT'S COLD OUTSIDE" DECEMBER ISSUE



2 NM AUTHORS ON KIRKUS REVIEWS' BEST OF 2013 SCI-FI/FANTASY LIST

Two New Mexico authors (and Bubonicon friends) – Ian Tregillis and Phillippa Bornikova (Melinda Snodgrass) – are on the Kirkus Reviews list of the Best Science Fiction/Fantasy novels of 2013, released around Thanksgiving. All novels on the list received the coveted "Kirkus Star" in reviews during the year. The best genre books of 2013 for Kirkus are:

Written in Blood by Anne Bishop, *Box Office Poison* (the 2nd Linnet Ellery novel) by Phillippa Bornikova, *Queen Victoria's Book of Spells* edited by Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling, *Deep Space: Star Carrier Book 4* by Ian Douglas, *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* by Neil Gaiman, *Transcendental* by James Gunn, *Neptune's Brood* by Charles Stross, *Blood Oranges* by Kathleen Tierney, *Something More Than Night* by Ian Tregillis, and *The Land Across* by Gene Wolfe.

GOODREADS NAMES BEST OF 2013

In late November, Goodreads.com announced their 2013 Goodreads Choice Awards, the only major book awards decided by readers online. Congratulations to the best books of the year, which include some by Bubonicon friends Darynda Jones, Diana Rowland, James S.A. Corey, Jack Campbell and Brandon Sanderson:

Fantasy: *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* by Neil Gaiman

Paranormal Fantasy: *Cold Days* (Harry Dresden) by Jim Butcher (Portales' Darynda

Jones' *Fifth Grave Past the Light* came in 7th, with Diana Rowland's *Touch of the Demon* also nominated)

Science Fiction: *MaddAddam* by Margaret Atwood (James S.A. Corey's *Abaddon's Gate* came in 9th, and Jack

Campbell's *The Lost Fleet: Beyond the Frontier: Guardian* in 11th)

Horror: *Doctor Sleep* by Stephen King (Diana Rowland's *White Trash Zombie Apocalypse* came in 6th)

History & Biography: *Jim Henson: The Biography* by Brian Jay Jones

Humor: *Hyperbole and a Half: Unfortunate Situations, Flawed Coping Mechanisms, Mayhem, and Other Things That Happened* by Allie Brosh (*Vader's Little Princess* came in 5th, and *William Shakespeare's Star Wars: A New Hope* was 9th)

Poetry: *The Fall of Arthur* by J.R.R. Tolkien

Young Adult Fantasy and Science Fiction: *Allegiant* by Veronica Roth (Brandon Sanderson's *Steelheart* came in 6th)

Middle Grade & Children's: *The House of Hades* by Rick Riordan

DELANY NAMED GRAND MASTER

In early December, The Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America named Samuel R. Delany, 71, the recipient of the 2013 Damon Knight Memorial Grand Master Award. Delany is the author of many classic novels and short stories, an impressive body of criticism, and non-fiction on the art and craft of writing. He has won four Nebula Awards, two Hugo Awards, a J. Lloyd Eaton Lifetime Achievement Award in Science Fiction, and was inducted into the Science Fiction Hall of Fame in 2002,

UPCOMING ASFS MEETINGS

- **Tonight:** Comedic holiday film shorts, plus the 9th ASFS Dessert Cook-Off. Prizes! Mirth! Bacon!
- **January 10, 2014:** Group Book Discussion! What did you read in 2013 & would recommend?
- **February 14:** We're hoping for a scientist visit. Plus the Valentine's *ASFacts* (Deadline Sun, Feb 9).
- **March 14:** The Annual Club Auction with Bob Vardeman as your auctioneer. Start looking for stuff to donate to the cause. And save up your pennies...
- **April 11:** Unknown program, perhaps an author visit. And *ASFacts* for spring (deadline Sun, April 6).
- **May 9:** Again, unknown. Possibly film previews.
- **June 13:** A visit from local author Jane Lindskold on her new science fiction novel.

Darth Vader, guest editor. Craig Chrissinger, normal editor. Send Correspondence to — PO Box 37257, Albuquerque, NM 87176-7257. Darth Vader's Phone: c/o (505) 266-8905. E-mail: cwraig@nmia.com. *SITHFACTS* printed each December. *ASFacts* published February, April, July & October for the Albuquerque SF Society. NEXT DEADLINE: Sun, Feb. 9. **Club Officers:** Kevin Hewett & Craig Chrissinger, co-Zec Secs (505) 266-8905. Randi Hewett, Moderator. Harriet Engle, alternator. Kris Kringle & Rudolph the Red, Holiday Hosts. **Bubonicon Co-Chairs:** Caci Cooper & Craig Chrissinger.

among many other honors.

The Grand Master award, given for "lifetime achievement in science fiction and/or fantasy," will be presented at the 49th Annual Nebula Awards Weekend in San Jose CA, May 15-18, 2014. Previous recipients of the award include such luminaries as Ursula K. Le Guin, Isaac Asimov, Ray Bradbury, Connie Willis, Anne McCaffrey, Joe Haldeman, and Gene Wolfe.

WORLD FANTASY NAMES WINNERS

The World Fantasy Awards winners for works published in 2012 were announced at a ceremony held on November 3, 2013. The awards were presented in Brighton, UK, during the World Fantasy Convention, October 31-November 3, 2013. The World Fantasy Award winners are:

Life Achievement: Susan Cooper and Tanith Lee, Novel: *Alif the Unseen* by G. Willow Wilson, Novella: "Let Maps to Others" by K.J. Parker, Short Story: "The Telling" by Gregory Norman Bossert, Anthology: *Postscripts #28/#29: Exotic Gothic 4* edited by Danel Olson, Collection: *Where Furnaces Burn* by Joel Lane (PS Publishing);

Artist: Vincent Chong, Special Award Professional: Lucia Graves for the translation of *The Prisoner of Heaven* by Carlos Ruiz Zafón, and Special Award Non-Professional: S.T. Joshi for *Unutterable Horror: A History of Supernatural Fiction, Volumes 1 & 2*.

SF BOOK GROUP READS ON

The Droids & Dragons SF Book Group meets 7:30 pm Monday, December 16, at Page One Bookstore to discuss *Dauntless: The Lost Fleet Book 1* by Jack Campbell (Bubonicon 46 co-Guest of Honor).

The group then focuses on *Bowl of Heaven* by Gregory Benford & Larry Niven on January 20, 2014. This meeting should be at Page One's new location in the Mountain Run Shopping Center (where Eubank Blvd and Juan Tabo intersect, south of Academy).

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 the selected novels. For more information, contact Leah at skycaptain1883@yahoo.com or Craig at 266-8905.

LEGEND WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The 2013 David Gemmell Legend Awards winners have been announced, reported Locus Online in early November:

The Legend Award for Best Fantasy Novel: *The Blinding Knife* by Brent Weeks, The Morningstar Award

for Best Fantasy Newcomer: *Malice* by John Gwynne, and The Ravenheart Award for Best Fantasy Cover Art: Didier Graffet & Dave Senior for the cover of *The Red Country* by Joe Abercrombie.

The winners were announced October 31, 2013 in a ceremony at the World Fantasy Convention, at the Metro-pole Hotel in Brighton, UK.

DORIS LESSING PASSES AWAY

Nobel Prize-winning author Doris Lessing died November 17, 2013 in London at the age of 94, reports Locus Online. Lessing is best known for her mainstream fiction, but she wrote many books of SF, most notably the *Canopus in Argos: Archives* sequence: *Re: Colonised Planet 5*, *Shikasta* in 1979, *The Marriages Between Zones Three, Four, and Five*, *The Sirian Experiments*, *The Making of the Representative for Planet 8*, and *Documents Relating to the Sentimental Agents in the Volyen Empire* in 1983.

Other works of genre interest include *Briefing for a Descent into Hell* in 1971, *The Summer Before the Dark*, *The Memoirs of a Survivor*, *The Fifth Child* and sequel *Ben, in the World*, *The Cleft*, and *Alfred and Emily*. The Mara and Dann series is postapocalyptic SF: *Mara and Dann: An Adventure* in 1999 and *The Story of General Dann and Mara's Daughter, Griot and the Snow Dog* in 2005.

Among numerous other awards, Lessing received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2007, with the committee calling her "the epicist of the female experience, who with skepticism, fire and visionary power has subjected a divided civilization to scrutiny." She famously replied, "Oh Christ! I couldn't care less," when informed of the Nobel win. She was guest of honor at Worldcon in 1987, and at ICFA in 1989.

Doris May Taylor was born October 22, 1919, in Kermansha Persia (now Iran), and lived briefly in England before moving to Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in 1924. Her first novel *The Grass is Singing* appeared in 1950, followed by the Children of Violence series: *Martha Quest*, *A Proper Marriage*, *A Ripple from the Storm*, *Landlocked*, and *The Four-Gated City*; the final volume moves into near-future SF territory. She became famous for her 1962 masterpiece *The Golden Notebook*, which many found scandalous for its frank discussions of women's issues and sexuality.

In all, she wrote more than 50 novels, as well as numerous story collections, plays, non-fiction, and a book of poetry. She is survived by a daughter and two granddaughters.



2013 ROMANTIC TIMES NOMINEES

In mid-November, *Romantic Times Book Reviews* announced the nominees for their 2013 Reviewers' Choice Awards. There are over a dozen categories of SF/Fantasy/Horror interest, which include novels by past Bubonicon participants Jeanne C. Stein, Diana Rowland and Paul Cornell.

The Book of the Year category includes the following works of genre interest: *Omens* by Kelley Armstrong, *The Shining Girls* by Lauren Beukes, *Written in Red* by Anne Bishop, *Wicked as She Wants* by Delilah S. Dawson, *The Chocolate Kiss* by Laura Florand, *The Best of*

All Possible Worlds by Karen Lord, *Broken* by Cj Lyons, and *Sleep with the Lights On* by Maggie Shayne.

Steampunk Nominees: *His Clockwork Canary* by Beth Ciotta, *Gilded* by Karina Cooper, *Breath of Iron* by Kate Cross, *Wicked as She Wants* by Delilah S. Dawson, *The Queen is Dead* by Kate Locke, and *Heart of Iron* by Bec McMaster.

Urban Fantasy Novel: *Magic Rises* by Ilona Andrews, *Written in Red* by Anne Bishop, *Dead Things* by Stephen Blackmoore, *The Shambling Guide to New York City* by Mur Lafferty, *Mountain Echoes* by C.E. Murphy, and *Blood Oranges* by Kathleen Tierney.

Urban Fantasy Protagonist: *Binding the Shadows* by Jenn Bennett, *Frost Burned* by Patricia Briggs, *Hot Blooded* by Amanda Carlson, *Watcher of the Dark* by Joseph Nassise, *Tempest Reborn* by Nicole Peeler, and *Blood Bond* by Jeanne C. Stein.

Urban Fantasy Worldbuilding: *Heart of Venom* by Jennifer Estep, *Blood Winter* by Diana Pharaoh Francis, *Last Blood* by Kristen Painter, *Touch of the Demon* by Diana Rowland, *Trickster* by Jeff Somers, and *Ritual Magic* by Eileen Wilks.

Science Fiction Novel: *The Mad Scientist's Guide to World Domination* edited by John Joseph Adams, *Fortune's Pawn* by Rachel Bach, *The Best of All Possible Worlds* by Karen Lord, *The Severed Tower* by J. Barton Mitchell, *The Human Division* by John Scalzi, and *The Melancholy of Mechagirl* by Catherynne M. Valente.

Fantasy Novel: *Masks* by E.C. Blake, *London Falling* by Paul Cornell, *Cold Steel* by Kate Elliott, *The City* by Stella Gemmell, and *Without a Summer* by Mary Robinette Kowal.

Epic Fantasy Novel: *Blood of Dragons* by Robin Hobb and *Children of Fire* by Drew Karpshyn.

Young Adult Urban Fantasy/Paranormal: *Relic* by Renee Collins, *Unbreakable* by Kami Garcia, *Shades of Earth* by Beth Revis, *Allegiant* by Veronica Roth, and *The Dream Thieves* by Maggie Stiefvater.



LIFEFORCE'S COLIN WILSON DIES

Writer Colin Wilson died December 5, 2013, at the age of 82, reports Locus Online.

Wilson wrote more than 150 books of fiction, criticism, philosophy, and assorted non-fiction during his career. His first core SF novel was *The Mind Parasites* in 1967. Other novels of particular genre interest include *The Glass Cage* in 1967; *The Philosopher's Stone*; *The Space Vampires* (adapted for film as *Lifeforce* in 1985); *The Personality Surgeon*; and the four-volume *Spider World* series (1987-2003).

Wilson's most famous book is debut *The Outsider* (1956), a non-fiction study of social outcasts and outsiders in literature and culture. He also wrote extensively on crime and the paranormal.

Colin Henry Wilson was born June 26, 1931 in Leicestershire, England. He left school at 16 and educated himself while working in a wool warehouse, and worked as a lab assistant, civil servant, and magazine salesman before becoming a full-time writer in 1954.

NEW BATSUIT IN BATMAN VS. SUPERMAN LIKE NOTHING YOU'VE SEEN BEFORE

by Stephanie Marcus, *The Huffington Post*

There are those still doubting Ben Affleck's ability to pull off the role as the caped crusader in *Batman vs. Superman*, but fans might rest easier knowing that director/comic book fan/Affleck-champion Kevin Smith has seen the new Batsuit, and he approves, it was reported mid-November.

During his weekly *Hollywood Babble-On* podcast on Nov. 9, Smith revealed he actually saw a photo of his pal in the costume, and he was so happy with the results he "instantly bear hugged [the film's director Zack Snyder]."

Smith continued: "You have not seen this costume on film before," he explained to fans of the superhero franchise. "For a comic book fan, it was mind-bending... Because every other movie does this *Matrix*-y black armor thing... There wasn't a single nipple on this suit."

"I think everyone is just gonna be like 'Holy Sh-t!'" he continued. "It's its own thing. We haven't been down this path before. Even the hardest core [most skeptical] person will be like 'Alright, I'm ready.'"

And though it was been bleeped out in the actual podcast, likely in an effort to avoid spoiling too much about the new Batsuit, a fan who attended the live podcast says that Smith went on to say that the suit seems "very Jim Lee influenced."

Lee has drawn a few different looks for the superhero over the years, but ComicBook.com is betting that Affleck's Batman will be wearing a grey suit instead of a black suit this time around.

EDNA KRABAPPEL TO BE RETIRED

by Brent Lang, The Wrap

Edna Krabappel, the chain-smoking fourth grade teacher with a derisive laugh on *The Simpsons*, will be retired after more than two decades on the show, Executive Producer Al Jean said in a statement October 26.

The move follows the news that Marcia Wallace, the comedienne who gave voice to the character, died October 25 at the age of 70 from complications related to breast cancer.

"I was tremendously saddened to learn this morning of the passing of the brilliant and gracious Marcia Wallace," Jean said in a statement. "She was beloved by all at *The Simpsons* and we intend to retire her irreplaceable character."

Mrs. Krabappel has been a fixture on the Fox sitcom since the second episode of the first season in 1990. Divorced and congenitally disaffected, she would endure a series of romantic and professional misadventures, including getting fired for being drunk on the job and having a relationship with the wholesome Ned Flanders.

In the lead-up to the show's 25th season, Jean teased that an iconic character would be killed off, telling reporters that the actor playing the character won an Emmy for playing that character, which Wallace did in 1992. However, he said he was not referring to Mrs. Krabappel.

"Marcia's passing is unrelated and again, a terrible loss for all who had the pleasure of knowing her," Jean said.

In addition to *The Simpsons*, Wallace spent six seasons playing Bob Newhart's daffy receptionist on *The Bob Newhart Show*.

BATMAN VS. SUPERMAN FILM GETS ITS WONDER WOMAN

The speculation is over – *Batman vs. Superman* will officially introduce Wonder Woman to the big-screen canon, reported *Blastr.com* in early December. Even more interesting? The studio also has announced who is going to play her.

Relative newcomer Gal Gadot (*Fast & Furious* franchise) has signed on for the key role in the *Man of Steel* sequel, joining Henry Cavill and Ben Affleck as a founding trio for the future Justice League.

The rumor mill has been buzzing that Wonder Woman will be in the sequel, but the casting has been the big question up until this point. Considering just how high-profile of a role the Amazon Princess is, some have found it interesting that Warner Brothers went with a relative unknown. It's speculated that perhaps Gadot blew them away in the auditions.

As for her acting chops? She has not been seen much in films to this point, but her stint in the *Fast & Furious*

franchise has shown she can kick some ass and take a few names.

Here's what director Zack Snyder said about the hire: "Wonder Woman is arguably one of the most powerful female characters of all time and a fan favorite in the DC Universe. Not only is Gal an amazing actress, but she also has that magical quality that makes her perfect for the role. We look forward to audiences discovering Gal in the first feature film incarnation of this beloved character."

ASFS FRIEND STARTS WRITERS WEBSITE

by Bill Scott

Have you heard of www.fablers.net? Probably not. It is a new website created by your very own local, Bill Scott. The website aims to be "a community environment in which hopeful amateur writers can receive help developing their skills, read other writers' chapters, and receive exposure for themselves and their work to the larger world." Currently, the highlight of the website is that it offers a \$100 monthly writing contest with no entry fee. It is a small site but growing daily. For people who enjoy reading short stories, it is an excellent way to pass the time as *Fablers* has a collection written by established authors and aspiring writers alike; it also offers a featured story on the index, which the public may vote on. The writers' rating is then in turn affected by the votes their stories garner.

BUBONICON 46 PLANS START TO ROLL

Co-chairs Caci Cooper and Craig Chrissinger can confirm that Bubonicon 46 will enjoy the same sleeping room rates at the Albuquerque Marriott Uptown as the last two years! Yes, the August 2014 convention takes place at the Uptown Marriott, at the intersection of I-40 and Louisiana NE.

Bubonicon 46 is August 1-3, 2014 – three weeks early due to the London Worldcon – and the Marriott room rate will be \$99 single/double and \$109 triple/quadruple, with reservations needed by Monday, July 21. We made our room count 2004-2013, so please help us hit our goal of 130 room nights on Friday and Saturday of the con (Thursday & Sunday are considered if we're borderline).

Jack Campbell (aka John G. Hemry – *The Lost Stars: Perilous Shield, Stark's Crusade, The Lost Fleet: Beyond the Frontier – Invincible, Dauntless: The Lost Fleet Book 1*, etc) and Cherie Priest (*Fiddlehead, Boneshaker, Hellbent, Four & Twenty Blackbirds, Fathom, Wild Cards*, etc) are our co-Guests of Honor. Guest Artist is Darla Hallmark, local fantasy artist and illustrator (coloring books, fanzine illos, tarot decks, Perry Rodent art). And local author/current SFWA president Steven Gould (*Impulse, 7th Sigma, Jumper, Avatar* novels, etc) will serve

as Toastmaster.

Weekend Passes for Bubonicon 46 are \$35 through February 1. They go to \$38 Feb. 2-April 19, and then to \$40. They may be purchased from "Bubonicon Inc" at club meetings or at PO Box 37257, Albuquerque, NM 87176 (a registration form is available on the Bubonicon website's home page – and a shopping cart for credit card payments should be up by the beginning of February).

Again, a "youth" is defined as ages 14-17, and youth tickets are \$23 for the weekend. Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult, and should not be running around the hotel (especially on different floors) without a parent/guardian nearby. Also, no unaccompanied children will be permitted in the Art Show due to possible mature content.

The con committee especially would like to hear your panel discussion ideas, fan program proposals and convention suggestions BY MARCH 31. Adam J. Brown most likely will be presenting another collection of locally made feature films and random shorts. Unfortunately, the Con Suite has to return to the 16th floor suite due to health department restrictions, but the "party floor" will remain on the 3rd floor. This early in the game, not much else is confirmed yet...

We also are looking for volunteers to help out with programming events, running the convention, and checking attendees' badges. Our volunteer "gofers" receive swag before the con, and are in a drawing for prizes during the Bubonicon weekend.

Updates on the con will appear in ASFACTS issues, on fliers, or at the official website: www.bubonicon.com. Suggestions, questions and volunteers: 559-0931 or 266-8905, email bubonicon@gmail.com, or send mail to the PO Box..

UPCOMING SIGNINGS, EVENTS & NEWS NOTES

The future is fairly busy this holiday season and into the New Year! Check out these forthcoming events in the Southwest:

+ KIMO THEATRE'S HOLIDAY FILM FESTIVAL this year is a complete run of the animated *Madagascar* movies and the *Twilight* teen vampire/werewolf flicks. On Thursday, Dec 26, *Madagascar* (rated PG) screens at 2:00 pm, and *Twilight* (PG-13) runs at 6:00 pm. On Friday, Dec 27, *Madagascar Escape 2 Africa* screens at 2:00 pm, *New Moon* shows at 6:00 pm, and *Eclipse* runs at 9:00 pm. And on Saturday, Dec 28, *Madagascar 3: Europe's Most Wanted* screens at 2:00 pm, *Breaking Dawn Part 1* shows at 6:00 pm, and *Breaking Dawn Part 2* runs at 9:00 pm. The KiMo Theatre is located at 5th and Central NW. Event info: 768-3544 or www.kimotickets.com.

+ STEPHEN KING X-MAS DOUBLE FEATURE of *Maximum Overdrive* and *Pet Sematary* screens Friday-Saturday, December 27 & 28, at the Guild Cinema, 3405 Central Ave NE. *Maximum* runs at 9:15 pm, followed by *Pet* at 11:15

pm. All seats \$8.00. Stranger Factory is the prize sponsor. www.guildcinema.com.

+ AIRPLANE 2: THE SEQUEL rings in the New Year in a madcap screwball fashion at the Guild Cinema. *Airplane* 2 screens 4:30, 6:30 & 8:30 pm Tuesday-Wednesday, December 31 & January 1. Of course, the film features the first lunar shuttle and William Shatner. www.guildcinema.com.

+ PAGE ONE BOOKSTORE IS MOVING! The store will close at their Montgomery & Juan Tabo NE location at the end of December 31. They hope to be open the first week of January 2014 at 5850 Eubank Blvd NE in the Mountain Run Shopping Center near Smith's Grocery Store (where Eubank and Juan Tabo meet). Volunteer help is needed. Check their website - www.page1book.com - for more information.

+ THE HOUSE OF USHER (1960), part of an Edgar Allan Poe/Vincent Price Festival, screens 7:00 pm Friday, January 3, at the KiMo Theatre, 423 Central Ave NW (between 4th & 5th Streets). www.kimotickets.com.

+ TALES OF TERROR (1962), part of an Edgar Allan Poe/Vincent Price Festivals, screens 7:00 pm Friday, Jan 24, at the KiMo Theatre. www.kimotickets.com.

+ COMING UP AT THE GUILD CINEMA in January-February 2014: *The History of Future Folk* (2013 homebrewed sci-fi), *Evangelion 3.0: You Can (Not) Redo* (2013 anime), and *Coraline* (2009 animated, Neil Gaiman story). www.guildcinema.com.

+ THE EIGHTH ANNUAL SOUTHWEST BURLESQUE SHOWCASE takes place 8:00 pm Friday-Saturday, February 14 & 15, at the KiMo Theater. Dancers, singers, aerialists and comedians from around the country perform, with the *Weekly Alibi's* Devin O'Leary as co-host both evenings. Ages 18 & older. Tickets are \$18-25 each. www.kimotickets.com.

+ THE 2014 WILLIAMSON LECTURESHIP takes place Friday, April 4, at Eastern NM University in Portales. Special Guests are Darynda Jones & Arthur M. Dula (space lawyer), with Toastmistress Connie Willis. For info: Patrice.Caldwell@enmu.edu.

REVIEW ROUND-UP

***Mars Inc.: The Billionaire Club* by Ben Bova, 2013 Baen Books, hc \$25.00, 368 pages.**

Review by F. A. Aiken

Mars Inc.: The Billionaire Club tells the reader about a future that could lay before us if the right choices are made by the public. The story traces the first private attempt to build a rocket to send a seven-person crew to Mars using existing proven technology. This effort is led by Arthur Thrasher, an almost billionaire who recruits the richest men and women in the United States to form Mars Inc., and to fund it with one billion dollars each per year for five years. Given that it took 78 chapters to cover this 60-month time frame, each chapter is a short vignette, making the story as interesting as a high school history book or a finance text book.

The story lacks tension and excitement. A significant

portion of the story takes place in New Mexico, and is built on recent events in space history. One of the two subplots involves an unknown person buying Thrasher Digital, Arthur's company, to gain sufficient stock to acquire a controlling interest. Neither Ben Bova nor the fact checkers managed to do due diligence in researching SEC disclosure rules that state that anyone who acquires more than 4.9% of a company's stock must disclose this fact to the public. I particularly liked that the womanizing Arthur Thrasher found an intelligent, faithful, beautiful woman to marry. Despite the problem that I mentioned, I still would recommend this book to anyone interested in human exploration of Mars.

***Ancillary Justice* by Ann Leckie, 2013 Orbit Books, tp \$15.00, 416 pages.**

Review by Corbett Wade

Ancillary Justice hooked me in on the first page. If I had the kind of lifestyle that allowed me to read a book cover-to-cover in one or two sittings, that is how I would have read it. The story and the main character kept me intrigued. The main character is a troop ship serving an empire that has continually expanded for 2,000 years under the same Emperor until they get the attention of an alien race that has better technology and is difficult to fathom or with which to communicate. After another thousand years of expansion the Emperor has to face the possibility of a civil war. After an act of seemingly mindless treachery an ancillary of the ship, in a human body, sets out on a quest that could throw the whole empire into chaos or complete the destruction the treachery started.

The way Ann Leckie's story is told is quite entrancing. I enjoyed this book and look forward to the next book in the trilogy.

***Watcher of the Dark: Jeremiah Hunt Chronicle 3* by Joseph Nassise, 2013 Tor Books, hc \$25.99, 304 pages.**

Review by Al Kulp

Watcher of the Dark is the third novel in Joseph Nassise's *Jeremiah Hunt* series. Although it is billed as urban/dark fantasy, the few parts that are could easily be removed and the story would be none the worse for wear. It's a very good hardboiled crime fiction novel, with a touch of ghosts and demons. I wanted to check out the previous novels, but the Albuquerque library did not have them. Thankfully, the book stands by itself and anything related to the story from previous novels is explained along the way. Nassise is a Bram Stoker Award winner and a former president of the Horror Writers Association.

The novel itself is fast-paced, and a quick read. Hunt is caught up with a bunch of bad guys, looking for the Clavis Sclerata key to the Bone Gate of Hell. Think like the Maltese Falcon but with a sexy half-demon as the femme fatale. The setting is the eternal Los Angeles of any number of films. Nassise has a gift for this type of dialogue that this genre requires. Bad things have hardened our hero, including losing his family and his sight. However, he can borrow the sight of any number of ghosts that populate the city using his ghostsight. That's about it for the fantasy aspect, some phantasms and this magical power. He also has a brief encounter with Peg Entwistle, who leapt to her death from the famous Hollywood sign. It does

have several scenes of graphic violence, but if you can handle the old Mickey Spillane/Mike Hammer violence it shouldn't be a problem.

I highly recommend it, but it is much more of a noir fiction, just with some things that go boo in the night added.

ASFS MEETING REPORT — **SEPTEMBER: CONVENTION REPORTS**

Thirty-eight people were on hand for the Bubonicon 45 summary report from Kristen Dorland & Craig Chrissinger (record-breaking attendance, very successful, people hated the wristbands), and then heard comments on the San Antonio Worldcon & Atlanta's DragonCon.

Randi Hewett commented San Antonio was "hot and humid! It hit 100 degrees. They had a mechanical bull for four hours Thursday. Kevin and I both rode it for the full eight seconds, and we have fuzzy photographic proof."

Kevin Hewett reported there were 4,000 people on-site, and the best part of the Art Show was the Darrel K. Sweet exhibit. "I feel like Bubonicon has a more robust variety of art on display," he said. "The con had the normal 20-track programming and then room parties at night."

Corbett Wade noted the Doctor Who displays including a full Dalek and a TARDIS - and "K-9 chasing women around."

Serge Mailloux talked about working the Costume Masquerade. "They had a great buffet for the entrants. Cheeses, crackers and such to keep people's blood sugar up."

Randi noted, "A highlight of the weekend was a panel talking about Summer Blockbusters. We mentioned we were from Bubonicon in Albuquerque, and that *After Earth* won a Green Slime. The moderator asked for a moment to consider the awesomeness of our con's name."

Corbett said she spent most of her time in autograph lines. "The line for George RR Martin made a big loop around the room."

Randi stated, "There were no chupacabras at the Alamo, which was within walking distance. The Riverwalk was very pretty and cooler than street level during the day. But it was very busy in the evenings."

Mandy Pietruszewski then spoke about DragonCon: "This was my 6th year, and it rained for the first time I've been going. Jim Butcher was a highlight for me. He did five signing sessions, and all were jam-packed. His Q&A filled an entire ballroom, standing-room only. I went to *Warehouse 13* and *Defiance* panels. And I came in second in the SF Trivia Contest. I was the youngest person and the only woman in the finals. And I went to a couple of *Wheel of Time* panels, and a few Young Adult panels because I'm a sucker for YA literature. There was so much to do! Over 50,000 people bought passes this year."

EDITOR NOTES TO FILL THIS SPACE

Happy Holidays! Not much room here. We've had a cold December so far, huh? It was good to see Connie Willis around Thanksgiving. I've enjoyed *Frozen*, *Saving Mr. Banks*, *Big Ass Spider*, *Agents of SHIELD*, Ian Tregillis' *Something More Than Night*, and Brian Jay Jones' *Jim Henson: The Biography*.

And that's a wrap. Thanks for the contributions! See you all for February 2014's issue. Stay warm & take care - Craig C