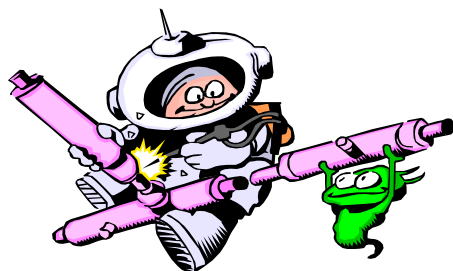




SITHFACTS 2017

A "MR. GRINCH LIKES THE COLD" DECEMBER ISSUE



nology: *Astrophysics for People in a Hurry* by Neil deGrasse Tyson (42,173 votes), Graphic Novels & Comics: *Big Mushy Happy Lump* by Sarah Andersen (26,647 votes), Young Adult Fantasy & Science Fiction: *A Court of Wings and Ruin* by Sarah J. Maas (71,165 votes), and Middle Grade & Children's: *The Ship of the Dead* by Rick Riordan (34,516 votes).

Goodreads reports 3.88 million total votes cast.

2017 WORLD FANTASY WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The World Fantasy Awards winners for works published in 2016 were announced during the World Fantasy Convention, held November 2-5, 2017, in San Antonio, TX. The Lifetime Achievement Awards, presented annually to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding service to the fantasy field, went to Terry Brooks and Marina Warner.

The World Fantasy Awards winners are:

BEST NOVEL: *The Sudden Appearance of Hope* by Claire North (*Roadsouls* by NM's Betsy James also was nominated), **BEST LONG FICTION:** *The Dream-Quest of Vellitt Boe* by Kij Johnson, **BEST SHORT FICTION:** "Das Steingeschöpf" by G.V. Anderson, **BEST ANTHOLOGY:** *Dreaming in the Dark* edited by Jack Dann, **BEST COLLECTION:** *A Natural History of Hell* by Jeffrey Ford, **BEST ARTIST:** Jeffrey Alan Love, **SPECIAL AWARD, PROFESSIONAL:** Michael Levy & Farah Mendlesohn, for *Children's Fantasy Literature: An Introduction*, and **SPECIAL AWARD, NON-PROFESSIONAL:** Neile Graham, for fostering excellence in the genre through her role as Workshop Director, Clarion West.

GOODREADS NAMES BEST OF 2017

Winners of the 2017 Goodreads Choice awards for the "best books of 2017," as chosen by users of the site, were announced December 5. There are several categories of genre interest:

Science Fiction: *Artemis* by Andy Weir (33,957 votes), Fantasy: *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them: The Original Screenplay* by J.K. Rowling (92,611 votes), Horror: *Sleeping Beauties* by Stephen King and Owen King (50,519 votes), History & Biography: *The Radium Girls: The Dark Story of America's Shining Women* by Kate Moore (24,696 votes), Science & Tech-

ATWOOD RECEIVES FRANZ KAFKA PRIZE

Margaret Atwood received the Franz Kafka Prize, given by the Franz Kafka Society and the city of Prague, on October 17, 2017, in Prague, Czech Republic. Atwood was chosen as the 17th laureate of the prize by an international jury on May 22, 2017.

The award, which includes a statue of Kafka and a \$10,000 cash prize, is given for "exceptional literary creation of contemporary authors whose work addresses the readers regardless of their origin, nationality and culture."

ROBINSON WINS IMAGINATION IN SERVICE TO SOCIETY AWARD

Kim Stanley Robinson won the Arthur C. Clarke Foundation's Imagination in Service to Society Award, Locus Online announced late November. He will be recognized at a ceremony during the Unleash Imagination – Shape the Future conference on Saturday, December 9, at George Washington University in Washington DC.

UPCOMING ASFS MEETINGS

- **Tonight:** Comedic holiday film shorts, plus the 13th ASFS Dessert Cook-Off. Prizes! Mirth! *Lovecraft!*
- **January 12, 2018:** Group Book Discussion! What did you read in 2017 & would recommend?
- **February 9:** A talk from a scientist or author, we hope. Plus *ASFacts* (Deadline Mon, Feb 5).
- **March 9:** The Annual Club Auction with Bob Varde-man & Patricia Rogers as your auctioneers. Start looking for stuff to donate - and save up your \$\$\$...
- **April 13:** Unknown program. And *ASFacts* for spring (deadline Mon, April 9).
- **May 11:** Again, unknown. Possibly film previews.

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: cwrcraig@nmia.com. *SITHFACTS* printed each December. *ASFacts* published February, April, July & October for the Albuq SF Society. **NEXT DEADLINE:** Mon, Feb. 5, 2018. **Club Officers:** Jessica Coyle & Craig Chrissinger, co-Zec Secs (505) 266-8905. Kevin Zander, Moderator. Mike McCommas, alternator. Kris Kringle & Rudolph the Reindeer, Holiday Hosts. **Bubonicon Co-Chairs:** Caci Cooper & Craig Chrissinger.

Prior Arthur C. Clarke award recipients include authors Margaret Atwood, Larry Niven, Ursula K. Le Guin, and Sir Kenneth Robinson, as well as scientists and leaders of industry.

BINARY STAR SYSTEM MAY BE PAIR OF ORBITING BLACK HOLES

by Ryan F. Mandelbaum, io9.com, 12/1/17

Oops! Andromeda, our closest galactic neighbor, sits a measly 2.5 million light years away from Earth. Like the Milky Way, it's a spiral galaxy packed with stars. Some of those stars orbit one another. That's all good – but scientists have come to the realization that a particular light source, one assumed to be binary star system in Andromeda, may actually be something far stranger. Like a pair of orbiting super-massive black holes a thousand times further away.

"J0045+41," the strange source, "is an exciting and unique object," the scientists from the University of Washington write in their paper, accepted by the *Astrophysical Journal*.

A team of Spanish scientists first identified the source, J0045+41, back in 2006. More specifically, they were looking for binary star systems that could be used to better determine astronomical distances. Others catalogued it as a potential cluster of stars.

And then researchers from the University of Washington combined data on the object's light using the Gemini Multi-Object Spectrograph and NASA's Chandra X-Ray Telescope to experience their "that's no moon" moment. The data instead implied that J0045+41 was an active galactic nuclei, an incredibly bright galactic center with a super-massive black hole at the core, 2.5 billion light years away.

The scientists did detect some evidence of this light source dimming and brightening regularly. But this regular flashing looked almost exactly how the laws of physics would predict super-massive black holes orbiting one another would look.

Ultimately, the researchers hope to take better data using the upcoming Zwicky Transient Facility survey, a next-generation camera that's just started detecting weird things in space. And if these were really super-massive black holes orbiting one another, perhaps one day researchers will be able to detect their gravitational waves.

SF BOOK GROUP READS ON

The Droids & Dragons SF Book Group meets 7:30 pm Monday, December 18, at Jason's Deli (northwest corner of Louisiana & America's Parkway NE – across the street from Bubonicon's Marriott Hotel) to discuss *The Punch Escrow* by Tal M. Klein. The group then

meets January 15, 2018, to talk about *The Word Exchange* by Alena Graedon (at Jason's Deli again).

Meetings of D&D are open to all readers on the 3rd Monday of each month. Books for discussion are chosen two months in advance, and group members receive a 20% discount on them at Page One Books. For more info: Leah at msransom@hotmail.com or Craig at 266-8905.

JULIAN MAY DIES

Author Julian May died October 17, reports Locus Online. She was 86 years old.

May's first SF story was "Dune Roller" in December 1951's *Astounding*, later filmed as *The Cremators* (1972). During the '50s, '60s, and '70s she mostly moved away from science fiction, writing in numerous genres and under many pseudonyms, including Bob Cunningham, Lee N. Falconer, John Feilen, Matthew G. Grant, Jean Wright Thorne, Ian Thorne, and George Zanderbergen. In all she wrote nearly 300 books, including monster movie tie-ins and non-fiction for children, teens, and adults.

She returned to SF writing in the late '70s. Her best-known work in the genre is the Saga of the Pliocene Exile: Hugo and Nebula Award finalist *The Many-Colored Land* in 1981, *The Golden Torc*, *The Nonborn King*, and *The Adversary*, plus non-fiction *The Pliocene Companion*. The related Galactic Milieu sequence includes *Intervention* in 1987, *Jack the Bodiless*, *Diamond Mask*, and *Magnificat*. The Rampart Worlds series is *Perseus Spur*, *Orion Arm*, and *Sagittarius Whorl*. The Boreal Moon Tale fantasies are *Conqueror's Moon*, *Ironcrown Moon*, and *Sorcerer's Moon*. She wrote *Black Trillium* with Marion Zimmer Bradley & Andre Norton, and sequels *Blood Trillium*, and *Sky Trillium*; Norton and Bradley also contributed volumes to the sequence.

Julian Clare May was born July 10, 1931, in Chicago, IL, and grew up in Elmwood Park, IL. May was active in fandom early on, publishing fanzine *Interim Newsletter* as a teen, contributing letters to SF magazines, and chairing the 1952 Worldcon. She married T.E. Dikty in 1953; they had three children, and he predeceased her in 1991. The pair founded Publication Associates in 1957. May was inducted into the First Fandom Hall of Fame in 2015.

JENKINS GIVES GLIMPSE AT WONDER WOMAN 2 PLANS

by Beth Elderkin, io9.com, 11/30/17

Wonder Woman 2 isn't coming out until November 2019, but director Patty Jenkins is already starting to put the pieces into place. She's sharing a few new details on what to expect in the upcoming film, as well as how the theme of love will carry over from the last film. Hint: It's a person.

In an interview with *Variety*, Jenkins talked a bit about her plans and vision for *Wonder Woman 2*. She implied that, much like the first film, it will co-exist with the other DC Cinematic Universe films but won't be directly



tied to the themes or characters in any of them. That's understandable since *Wonder Woman* currently resides as the best-reviewed DCCU film in the history of the franchise. But it can also stand on its own just fine. Jenkins also shared that *Wonder Woman 2* will feature some new characters—including, notably, a potential new love interest for Diana.

"It's really still going to other values of hers, and a similar formula insofar as making a great, enjoyable fun movie but that ultimately in its third act turns some very big issues, and a very big experience that will aim to have slightly more weight and profundity than it has to have. Because that's a formula that I really like, and I like the idea of taking somebody on a very solid, great journey but that arrives at a bigger question being answered. So it's like that but because she is Wonder Woman and she's here now and she's fully developed, it's got great fun from the start and great big superhero presence from the start, and is funny and a great love story again and a couple new unbelievable characters who I'm so excited about, who are very different than were in the last movie."

Barring the fact that Wonder Woman doesn't really need a love interest in order for her movie to be good, there is the question of who it could actually be. At one point, Gal Gadot joked that Halle Berry could play her romantic lead, which would canonically establish Wonder Woman as queer in the films, like she is in the comics... but that, sadly, seems highly unlikely. Other options include Trevor Barnes, who dated Wonder Woman in the comics, Steve Trevor's nephew, or even Bruce Wayne (which could help explain their awkwardness in *Justice League*).

STRANGER THINGS GETS 3RD SEASON

by Beth Elderkin, io9.com, 12/1/17

In a move that surprises no one, either here or in the Upside Down, Netflix has announced that *Stranger Things* will get a third season.

Netflix announced the renewal on Twitter, confirming that we'll be revisiting Eleven and the Gang, as well as the series' new big bad, the Mind Flayer. They added that there's no release date scheduled, although it seems likely it'll be sometime in fall 2018.

It's no shock that Netflix will be returning to Hawkins, Indiana, the site of one of the online network's biggest shows. Not only did almost 16-million people watch the season 2 premiere within the first three days of its

launch, but the series garnered 18 Emmy nominations last year (taking home five). But it's still great to have the next season set in stone, even if we know very little about where it's headed. As of now, all we know is that next season will have a time jump, like the previous one, to account for the kids aging.

SALT LAKE CITY WINS WFC 2020 Bid

The 2020 World Fantasy Convention will be held at the Little America Hotel in Salt Lake City UT, starting October 29, 2020. A convention website with more information, including membership rates, will be available "at the conclusion of the Baltimore conference."

The 2018 WFC will be held November 1-4, 2018, at the Baltimore Renaissance Harborplace Hotel in Baltimore MD. The theme is "Ports in a Storm."

The 2019 WFC will be held October 31-November 3, 2019 at the Marriott Los Angeles Airport Hotel in Los Angeles CA with the theme of "Fantasy Noir."

MONSTERS ARTIST GOGOS DIES

Basil Gogos, who painted penetrating and chilling color portraits of movie monsters like Dracula, the Wolf Man and the Phantom of the Opera, and imbued Frankenstein's monster with notable compassion, died September 13 at a hospital in Manhattan. He was 88 years old.

Linda Touby, his wife and only immediate survivor, said the cause was probably a coronary.

Gogos produced dozens of covers for the horror magazine *Famous Monsters of Filmland* over more than 20 years. Many looked as if Gogos had invited the monsters into his studio, where he meticulously lighted them and bathed them in brilliant hues.

In Gogos's 1969 portrait of Frankenstein's monster, as played by Boris Karloff, his eyes are downcast, his demeanor is sorrowful. The background is dramatically illuminated by a single glowing candle. The menace that Gogos brought to his portrait of Bela Lugosi's *Dracula* is absent from his vision of the monster first imagined by Mary Shelley.

Gogos painted other actors who were cast as the monster, including Glenn Strange, Christopher Lee and Fred Gwynne, who played a wacky, very human version in the 1960s sitcom *The Munsters*. But he had a special affection for Karloff, who died a few months before Gogos's 1969 portrait was published on *Famous Monsters'* cover.

Gogos created many of his paintings from black-and-white still photographs of films made at various studios, most significantly Universal, which started making monster movies in the 1920s. He painted a bug-eyed King Kong with his mouth agape; the Creature From the Black Lagoon as a red-lipped, amphibious humanoid; Lon Chaney in *London After Midnight* as a top-hated ghoul with blood dropping from his mouth; and Karloff as the

intense, wrinkled, fez-wearing Airdate Bye in 1932's *The Mummy*.

Gogos was born on March 12, 1929, in Alexandria, Egypt, to parents of Greek ancestry who had also been born in Egypt. His father, Steve, was a railroad worker, and his mother, Maria, was a fashion designer. After living in Boston and Washington, they moved to Manhattan, where they eventually opened a clothing shop. Young Basil's uncle was an artist who encouraged him to paint, and his grandmother painted on dishes and fabrics to help support her family.

Gogos attended art schools in Washington and then studied with Frank Reilly, an artist and illustrator, at the Art Students League in Manhattan. While there, he made his first sale: the cover of *Pursuit*, a western novel by Lewis B. Patten.

He had begun illustrating adventure stories for various men's magazines when monsters entered his life. In 1960, Jim Warren, the publisher of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, asked him to paint a cover portrait of Vincent Price, the star of a new film by Roger Corman, *House of Usher*, based on an Edgar Allan Poe short story. Warren told Gogos that his painting needed to be something new and unusual, which Gogos found difficult to define.

"Then, when it was finished, I was too embarrassed to bring it in," he was quoted as saying in the 2006 book *Famous Monster Movie Art of Basil Gogos*, a celebration of his career compiled and edited by Kerry Gamily and J. David Spurlock.

Gogos stopped illustrating monsters in the 1980s to pursue fine-art painting – abstracts, landscapes, wildlife scenes – and supported himself as a photo retouched for United Artists and a storyboard artist at the advertising agency Ogilvy & Mather. He also taught art classes.

He eventually returned to his old world of horrors. He illustrated covers for *Monster scene* magazine, attended horror and science-fiction conventions, painted classic monsters for *Topps's Universal Monsters Illustrated* cards in 1994 and took on commissions, like one for the cover of the heavy-metal musician Rob Zombie's 1998 album, *Hillbilly Deluxe*.

MARGOT ROBBIE WORKING ON A HARLEY QUINN SOLO MOVIE

by Germaine Lustier, io9.com, 11/30/17

There's no doubt Margot Robbie's Harley Quinn was the standout character in *Suicide Squad*. It's why, since then, we've heard the character will not only be in *Suicide Squad 2*, but possibly a *Gotham City Sirens* movie as well as a *Harley and Joker* movie. But the actress is reportedly working on a fourth Harley movie that has nothing to do with any of those.

Robbie spoke to MTV about the project, which she says she's been working on for two years, and that it's unrelated to the other projects that have been discussed.

Robbie has definitely spoken about various Harley projects before, but with so many in play, it seemed likely she was referring to something that had already been leaked. But the way she says it here, all of these projects, including this mysterious solo take, are in various stages of development and any one of them could come out before the others – which could help determine anything that followed.

This comes on the heels of Robbie saying she thinks she'll be playing the character next year. So, the question is – which project will that be in?

Oh, and don't forget she might also provide Harley's voice for a new streaming show.

PLAYBOY'S HEFNER DIES

Publisher Hugh Hefner died September 27 at home in the Playboy Mansion in Los Angeles. He was 91 years old.

Hefner created *Playboy* magazine in 1953, and spun it into the Playboy Enterprises empire including clubs, TV, and book and magazine publishing. A revolutionary men's magazine for its time, *Playboy* from the start featured not only nude females, but also articles and stories by notable authors, among them some of the best in the genre, including Isaac Asimov, Margaret Atwood, Charles Beaumont, Robert Bloch, Ray Bradbury, Algid Burris, Arthur C. Clarke, Road Dahl, Philip K. Dick, Harlan Ellison, Stephen King, Ursula K. Le Guin, Doris Lessing, Richard Matheson, William F. Nolan, Robert Silverberg, and Kurt Vonnegut.

Hefner was also very involved in the cartoons published for *Playboy*, often working personally with the cartoonists, among them Gahanna Wilson with his frequently genre-oriented work, along with other notables such as Shell Silverstein and Jules Feiffer. Playboy Press published a number of anthologies of genre interest drawing on stories from the magazine, starting with the *Bedside Playboy* in 1963, and *The Playboy Book of Science Fiction and Fantasy* in 1966; they added original novels and anthologies to their line from the 1970s to early 1980s.

Hugh Marston Hefner was born April 9, 1926, in Chicago, IL. Hefner married Mildred Williams in 1949 (divorced 1959); they had two children: Christie and David. He married Kimberley Conrad in 1989 (separated 1998) and they had two children (Marston Glenn and Cooper Bradford). His survivors include his third wife Crystal Harris, married in 2012, and his four children.

LAST JEDI DIRECTOR SPEAKS

by Germaine Lustier, io9.com, 12/1/17

Sorry, J.J. Abrams. When it comes to the new era of *Star Wars* movies, there's Rain Johnson, and then there's everybody else. Abrams may have kicked things off with *The Force Awakens*, but that film went through massive

rewrites, then Disney argued with Gareth Edwards over *Rogue One*, took the Han Solo movie away from Phil Lord and Chris Miller, and kicked *Jurassic World*'s Colin Trevorrow off Episode IX – and gave it to Abrams. But after Johnson finished *The Last Jedi*, Disney actually gave him a gift: an entirely new *Star Wars* trilogy.

It's arguably the biggest decision Disney/Lucasfilm has made about the franchise since they first announced the sequel trilogy back in 2012, and one which will have a massive role in shaping the *Star Wars* universe in the years and decades to come. Not only will it tell a non-Skywalker story, it'll be the first films beyond (or maybe before) the original trilogy era that Disney has clearly felt most secure in setting its non-"Episode" films. Given how particular the company has been with its other directors, the fact that it has given Johnson an entire trilogy is proof of its confidence in him... and *The Last Jedi*.

"From the very beginning I had a very good relationship with [Lucasfilm president] Kathy [Kennedy]," Johnson told io9 in late November. "It was really collaborative and I felt very protected by her. And beyond the creative freedom I was given to find what the story was going to be, all the folks at Lucasfilm understood how personal the original films were for George Lucas.

"So [Lucasfilm] actively encouraged me, not allowed me, but actively pushed me to find what was personal about this story for me," he said. "To find a story that was personal and would mean something deeply to me. And they nurtured that and protected that. I think the fact we all knew the movie we were making and were excited about it from day one [meant] we had a great experience."

The experience was so good, in fact, that when Johnson was wrapping up *The Last Jedi*, he and his producer Ram Bergman, as well as top executives at Lucasfilm and Disney, said they didn't want it to end. That's when Johnson floated an idea.

"I was the one who said, 'The thing that's interesting to me would be a new trilogy, one story told over three movies, on that big canvas of the *Star Wars* world. But – go someplace new, meet some new folks, tell a new story,' and they really responded to that," Johnson said. Disney made the news official on November 9, 2017, announcing that Johnson would write and direct the first film in a new *Star Wars* trilogy, and help develop the other two.

Admittedly, at this moment Johnson doesn't quite know what those films are going to be. In fact, he isn't even sure how they will be categorized differently than the Saga films or the *Star Wars* stories like *Rogue One*. "I haven't figured it out yet," he said. "It's a really good question... For me the exciting thing about the new trilogy is the notion of how wide open it is and the idea of what can we create."

The closest clue we will have to what his new *Star Wars* epic may include is likely arriving December 15, when *The Last Jedi* hits theaters – a title that Johnson has regularly admitted refers to Luke Skywalker.

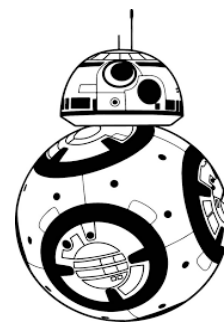
Johnson nodded knowingly when we began listing the ever-growing number of Force-users in the new *Star Wars* universe who aren't defined by an ethos like the Jedi or the Sith, like Rey, Kylo Ren, Ezra Bridger, Ahsoka Tano, and others. When we asked him if this new, gray area of the Force could be a major factor not just in *The Last Jedi*,

but the new trilogy to come, Johnson gave a telling smirk.

"We'll see when we get into the movie a little bit," Johnson said. "I think for me I was just trying to follow the through line of Luke and where Luke's head was at, and part of that is going to be about the Jedi. It's going to be about their place in the universe. But I don't want people expecting there's gonna be some definitive answer in this movie either. To me it's all about where the characters get to and why they have to get there."

For Johnson, *Star Wars* simply has a fundamental power to it. "[It] comes from being tied to myth and tied to the stuff that really matters inside all of us," he explained. "This sounds cheesy when you say it out loud, but it's really true. This is the stuff that really has punch, story-wise. Not just that it's cool or it looks cool but that it can really engage with... big audiences on a big, popular level. The fact you can do something [with it that's] powerful and truly interesting and inspiring that can reach that many people."

He paused. "And it's *Star Wars*, man. Come on."



BUBONICON 50 PLANS BEGIN

Co-chairs Caci Cooper and Craig Chrissinger can confirm that Bubonicon 50 will be at the Albuquerque Marriott Uptown – with rooms once again at \$99.00 per night, single-quad. And just like in 2017, WiFi access is complimentary in these private sleeping rooms!

Bubonicon 50 is August 24-26, 2018 – the normal weekend – just four days after the San Jose Worldcon. Hotel room reservations are needed by Monday, August 13.

John Scalzi (*Lock In*, *The Collapsing Empire*, *Red-shirts*, *Old Man's War*, etc) and Mary Robinette Kowal (*Ghost Talkers*, *Forest of Memory*, *Word Puppets*, *Shades of Milk and Honey*, etc) are our co-Guests of Honor. Guest Artist is Eric Velhagen, who has done the 2018 *Game of Thrones* calendar and many Magic: The Gathering cards. And Lee Moyer (painter, illustrator, literary pin-ups, etc) serves as Toastmaster.

Weekend Passes for Bubonicon 50 are \$35 through April 7. They go to \$40 April 8-August 4, and then to \$45 at the Door. They may be purchased from "Bubonicon Inc" at club meetings or at 933 San Mateo Blvd NE, Ste 500-208, Albuquerque, NM 87108 (a registration form is available on the Bubonicon website. A shopping cart for

credit card payments is up now).

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 without a parent/guardian nearby.

The con committee especially would like to hear your panel discussion ideas, fan program proposals and convention suggestions BY SUNDAY, APRIL 29. This early in the game, not much is confirmed yet... Except we plan to publish a booklet of past Perry Rodent illustrations and stories from throughout Bubonicon’s history.

We will need volunteers to help out with programming events, run the convention, and check attendees’ badges. Our volunteer “gofers” receive swag before the con, and are in a drawing for prizes during the Bubonicon weekend (plus a pizza party).

Updates will be in *ASFacts*, on fliers, and on bubonicon.com. Suggestions, questions & volunteers: 559-0931 or 266-8905, email bubonicon@gmail.com, or write to the 933 San Mateo Blvd NE, Suite 500-208 address.



REVIEW ROUND-UP

***Wonder Woman: Warbringer* by Leigh Bardugo, 2017
Random House Books for Young Readers, hc \$18.99,
384 pages.**

Review by Jessica Coyle

Random House and DC Comics are partnering together to release several young adult novels based around coming-of-age stories of DC’s most popular characters. Leigh Bardugo, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Grisha Trilogy*, is the author of *Wonder Woman: Warbringer*. In this book, a young Diana Prince must leave Paradise Island for the first time in order to rescue Alia Keralis, a young teen who is washed ashore after a shipwreck.

Unfortunately, Alia’s arrival on the Island coincides with terrible earthquakes and illnesses that threaten to destroy both the island, and the Amazons who live there. To figure out how to save both her family and Alia, Diana must travel to present-day New York. While there, she must work with Alia to figure out how to save both of their worlds from extinction.

Wonder Woman: Warbringer is an interesting update on the Wonder Woman saga. Diana is a multi-layered character who is trying to find her own place in a world where she feels overshadowed because she is the youngest and least experienced of the Amazons. Other characters are a little one-dimensional, although they become more fleshed out as the novel leaves Paradise Island for New York.

The book is very much YA, and, in an attempt to build up that audience, DC/Random House are picking authors to write this series who are bestsellers in that genre. That said, I found the novel interesting enough for those who are fans of Wonder Woman and Young Adult books.

ASFS MEETING REPORTS — JUNE 2017: WALTER JON WILLIAMS

Forty people were on hand for a visit from Belen author Walter Jon Williams, who is one of the Guests of Honor at this year’s Worldcon in Helsinki, Finland. Williams said he has a new book out in October, *Quillifer*, which has received some good notices so far. He also has sold three more *Praxis* books, in addition to *Impersonations*, which was released last year.

"After 15 years, the publisher finally decided that the *Praxis* series had sold well enough to want more," he said. "In the meantime, I sold another series that starts with *Quillifer*, named for the main character. This is my first secondary world fantasy series. It’s a young man’s adventures in a fantasy world that resembles Tudor England. It has action, adventure, romance, and humor and character moments."

He then read an excerpt from the book in which Quillifer, 18 years old, is in a ship being attacked by a pirate fleet. He discovers that his home port is under siege, too.

After the reading, Williams said, "It’s not all depressing. Other parts are cheerful and amusing, but this section was easier to separate out for a reading."

He said inspiration for the *Quillifer* series came from a walk in the country. He was near some irrigation ditches and listening to a Shakespeare book on tape. "By the end of a ninety-minute walk, I had worked out the plot for a six-book series. The publisher bought the first three books. We’ll see what happens after that. It’s a story of a clever young man’s rise to whatever he rises to. It’s not a book about magicians running the show."

Talking about publicity and book sales, he said, "Science fiction contradicts all the rules, so the book companies don’t know how to handle them. Word of mouth seems to make a difference, but how that is shaped is not known."

There will be a *Quillifer* story in *The Book of Swords*, an anthology edited by Gardner Dozois, out in October. Williams currently is working on the 6th *Praxis* novel (he said there were three original novels, one in eBook form directly from him, and then *Impersonations* from Tor.com).

The next *Praxis* novel will be released in 2018, followed by the second *Quillifer* in 2019.

Getting ready for his appearance at Worldcon, Williams said he bought a Finnish language primer. "It’s tough," he commented. "It’s not like anything else. Every word is fourteen syllables long, it seems."

JULY: SUMMER MOVIE NIGHT

Forty-three fans came to watch this year’s Summer Movie and some cartoon shorts. First up were Bugs Bunny in “Bunker Hill Bunny,” and Tom & Jerry in “Cruise Cat.”

In keeping with Bubonicon 49’s theme, the main feature for the evening was *Beyond the Time Barrier*, which turned out to be pretty cheesy. As a few club members noted, “In the future, there is much walking.”

Just how did an US Air Force pilot from 1960 break the time barrier and end up in the future? He gets a lot of

mumble-jumble scientific explanation that makes little sense. Among the citizens of the future are “mutants” with obvious rubber bald caps. Yet, shots of their pit dungeon show a mass of lost deserted isle survivors (hairy and dirty). Obviously the wider shots are from another movie! And that’s just how cheesy *Beyond the Time Barrier* film is.

AUGUST: BUBONICON/ECLIPSE PREVIEWS

First up, Caci Cooper and Craig Chrissinger gave a Bubonicon 49 preview of the weekend schedule and the t-shirt design to the 37 people in attendance. Congratulations were given to Elizabeth Leggett, who just found out she won a Hugo Award at the Helsinki Worldcon.

Then Geneva Schult went through a presentation she found online about the upcoming Solar Eclipse. She noted that “eclipse” is a Greek term for abandonment, and that our Moon is at just the right angle to block the sun during an eclipse. During “totality,” day is like night.

The path of totality for the August 21 eclipse was going to be about 70 miles wide, and the total eclipse would last for about two minutes, 41 seconds.

The last total eclipse in the United States took place in 1979, and the next total eclipse here will be in 2020. Schult said most hotels and camping grounds in the path of totality have been booked since last year.

One myth about the eclipse is that it is an omen of “evil” or “change.” Also, there is no such thing as dangerous “eclipse rays.” UV and IR are the same as always.

For those staying in Albuquerque, the eclipse was to start about 11:30 am and finish by 11:46 am on August 21, and to be about 73.7 percent full coverage.

SEPTEMBER: REPORTS ON 3 CONS

A crowd of 50 people were on hand to listen to reports on Bubonicon 49, the Helsinki Worldcon, and the Labor Day DragonCon. Due to a scheduling conflict, the meeting was held in St. Andrew’s Sanctuary, a very nice large space. Unfortunately, we also discovered that the ASFS microphone had died. Before the con reports, Patricia Rogers showed of an advance copy of *The Expanse* board game which had been sent to Daniel Abraham.

Caci Cooper and Craig Chrissinger then went over how Bubonicon 49 went, including attendance of 751 people, and the giving away of \$4,000 to five charities/non-profit groups. It was an off year, but things seemed to have gone well – though there was a rumor of a noise complaint on the 3rd floor that never could be officially confirmed.

Then Kevin & Rebecca Hewett, and Ron & Tara Oakes talked about their experiences at the Helsinki Worldcon in Finland in mid-August. Rebecca said the Hewetts did a tour of northern capitals. They saw *Grease* in Denmark with English and Dutch subtitles, had lunch in Switzerland on the way to Oslo, Norway, and went to a Viking museum.

“We went to Stockholm, Sweden, to a science-fiction bookstore,” reported Kevin. “It was fairly large, and the titles were mostly in English with some translated to Swedish. We saw burial mounds and runestones, and bought some mead. We took an overnight ferry back to Helsinki.

We went to a restaurant called Harold’s for the Viking experience. It was kind of cheesy, but it had amazing food.”

The Hewetts showed off their hockey shirts with the polar bear mascot for the Helsinki Worldcon. The mascot was named “Major Ursa.” Kevin noted the 75th Worldcon was the second largest to date with 7,300 in attendance.

Ron commented, “They had to move a lot of stuff around, and change airwalls. More locals showed up than expected.” And Tara added, “They had lines, and they had to figure out how to handle them. They ended up assigning one person per line for control.”

Rebecca said she went to Walter Jon Williams’ Guest of Honor lecture, where he talked about growing up in a small Minnesota town with Finnish roots. She said Williams was “amusing and charming.”

“The Hugos were not as contentious as in Spokane or last year,” she noted. “We accepted Elizabeth (Leggett)’s award for her, and I read her comments.”

Kevin said that Ursula Vernon’s acceptance speech was “on whale fall, and it was amazing and memorable. We had to sit for two hours with Elizabeth’s award on our laps. Then we went to the Hugo Losers Party at a steampunk-themed bar. It was hot, sweaty and loud in there.”

Both Kevin and Rebecca were on costuming panels, and said the Masquerade had less than 30 entrees.

Ron said, “I mostly made it to the business meetings, and the Hugo Awards. They were fairly calm meetings, but they went long. We ratified the Best Series Award, and they defined North America for Worldcon bids. And I’m the website administrator for San Jose.”

Tara said she was on three panels. “One was on collectibles, and two on robots. Of those, one was on images of robots, and the other on robot morality. I seemed to be the one answering questions of scientific nature. I had to get a *Moomin* to bring home. He’s a character in books written by Tove Jansson, and is a forest troll. We made it to St. Petersburg, but it was disappointing. The river smells, and downtown was very crowded.”

Kevin noted that should New Zealand win the 2020 Worldcon bid, the convention will be in Wellington. Currently, New Zealand is the only bid for that year.

Finally, Mandy P. Self talked about her time at Atlanta for her 10th DragonCon. She said she heard there were 83,000 people in attendance this year. Two *Star Wars* books were launched at the convention, and she did get some books signed.

“There was a huge line to get in the vendors room, which was annoying,” she commented. “I did some comics stuff, including Matt Fraction. There was an academic track and I went to two of the panels. Both were at 10 pm, which is a little late for panels. One was on sexuality in comics. Fraction noted that one panel was full at 10 pm on a Saturday, thus making us one of the nerdiest groups around.

“I went to the big *Star Trek: The Next Gen* panel, and to a presentation by Zachary Levi of *Chuck*,” she continued. “There were several *Doctor Who* panels, and Matt Smith was at the con. I really love the academic panels. And I really liked seeing Billie Piper and Zachary Levi.”

OCTOBER 2017: RADFORD RETURNS AGAIN

For his latest visit to ASFS, skeptic researcher Benjamin Radford started his presentation on UFO conspiracies in the Land of Enchantment by noting, "As you all know, New Mexico is full of weird things."

Radford then went on to talk about three main UFO events here – Roswell in 1947, Aztec in 1948, and the Dulce UFO Base, reported from the 1980s to the present.

He said there is no Roswell "story," but rather there are stories and many of them are contradictory. "Authors can pick and choose which dots and date points to include. Some say there was one UFO, some say two. Some say July 2, some say July 5. But basically, something came down during a violent thunderstorm in June or July of 1947."

Radford said that on July 5, 1947, rancher Mac Brazel visited Corona, NM, where he heard about the infamous flying discs over Mt. Rainier. He wondered whether what he found on his ranch might be related. Two days later, he stopped in Roswell and mentioned the debris to the sheriff. The sheriff then called Major Jesse Marcel at the Roswell Army Air Field. They went out to Brazel's ranch, couldn't identify what it was, and collected it for analysis. Then on July 8, the base's PR office issued a press release saying a flying disc was recovered. Then Brigadier General Roger Ramey explained it was really part of a weather balloon.

"There was a cover-up," said Radford. "The government was hiding an experimental constant-altitude device called 'Project Mogul,' to monitor Soviet nuclear tests."

Next up, the Great Aztec UFO Crash of 1948. "It was the first time it was claimed that the U.S. government had recovered – and then hidden – the recovery of a spacecraft and alien occupants," Radford said. "Top scientists were summoned to investigate this flying saucer."

But the whole thing turned out to be a fictional backstory pretext for an oil investment scam. The "saucer scientist" was convicted of a \$50,000 fraud case. "It was shown to be a complete hoax," reported Radford.

The Dulce UFO Base is supposed to be near Four Corners in a rugged area with lots of mountains and streams. "Much of it is off limits because it is part of the Apache Reservation Tribal Lands," said Radford. "Dulce has been in the news a lot, with people saying weird things are going on there. Some say it is UFOs, and the site of Interstellar Alien Treaties. Others say it is connected with Bigfoot, government mind control, chemtrails, genetic engineering, cattle mutilations, or alien abductions and anal probes – recovered memories. Allegedly, there is an underground multiple-floor installation.

"But there is no evidence that anything unusual happens or has happened there," he continued. "The story has been cobbled together by conspiracy theorists based on 'anonymous sources.' Also, there is the question of how employees and supplies get in."

CLUB BUSINESS: 2018 Club Officers elected were Co-Executive Secretaries Craig Chrissinger & Jessica Coyle, Moderator Kevin Zander, and Alternator Mike McCommas. Theme chosen for December's party: "Lovecraft."

EDITOR NOTES TO FILL THIS SPACE

• WOW, EVEN MORE MIXED EMOTIONS this month than the same time last year. This December 8 is the 37th anniversary of John Lennon's murder. I've noted before it always makes me a little sad. His songs of love and peace go through my head. Meanwhile, racist & sexist actions and words have raised their ugly heads a lot this year. Many political decisions make little sense, and there is little compassion or thought behind various statements and actions.



Hopefully SF fandom remains open to different people/views, and continues to listen. As I said last year, take a moment to offer support/aid to anyone being harassed, suppressed or bullied. We are all human beings who deserve respect & kindness. *Watch each others' backs. It's scary out there.*

• GOT TO MILEHICON this year, but just for two days due to finances (new fridge, 2 new tires, new brakes, cat oral surgery). Thanks to generosity of friends, we at least were there to see Denver folks, host the con suite for Bubonicon 50, and participate on panels and in the literacy auction. Better than last year's gout attack - that's for sure! Good to see Connie & Courtney Willis, Rose Beetem, Nina & Ron Else, Tim Simpson & Kaia Gavere, Carrie Vaughn, and many others.

• WE WERE LUCKY in late July to see Trace Beaulieu & Frank Conniff (*MST3K's* Mads) again at Denver's Voodoo Comedy Playhouse. This year, they riffed Ed Wood's *Glen or Glenda* - a lot of fun to see them in person. And we visited a really cool toy store in Aurora. Short trip, but fun and worth it.

ALSO WAS NICE to have seen Connie, Courtney & Cordelia Willis around Thanksgiving for a signing at Page One Books and to see Pixar's *Coco* (sweet & funny, with beautiful visuals). I've also seen & enjoyed *Thor: Ragnarok* (fun story, smart script), *Wonder* (touching story, good cast), and *Downsizing* (quirky story, interesting social commentary. I also saw *Justice League*, and it's okay. Not as good as *Wonder Woman*, of course. Main problem - the story. The actors are fine, especially those playing Wonder Woman, Aquaman and The Flash. REALLY LOOKING FORWARD to *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*, *The Disaster Artist*, and *The Shape of Water*. Crossing fingers...

• NEW TV SHOWS HAVE BEEN PRETTY GOOD so far. Enjoying *The Oracle*, *The Gifted*, *Ghosted*, and *Young Sheldon* quite a bit. We missed the 1st episode of this season's *Agents of SHIELD* last Friday. Dang it. The older shows we watch seem to be going fine - *Supergirl*, *Lucifer*, *The Goldbergs*, *Designated Survivor* (best President around), *The Big Bang Theory*, *Svengoolie*, and *The Simpsons*. Looking forward to seeing *American Gods*, Showtime's *Twin Peaks*, more *RiffTrax* film presentations, and the 2nd season of *Stranger Things*.

• GLAD WE GOT TO SEE Bruce Campbell in late September. Jessica even assisted him as people brought stuff up to have autographed. I read his *Hail to the Chin*, which is a quick and entertaining look at more recent events in his life. And I found *Leonard* by William Shatner to be a nice look at Nimoy's life, though Capt Kirk has to guess at some things - and sometimes has difficulty keeping the focus on his friend and not himself. And I really enjoyed *Brimstone* and *The Family Plot* both by Cherie Priest. Good gothic horror atmospheres in both. They reminded me that she is one heck of a writer!

• THAT'S ALL. Thanks to Jessica for her review! And to Tim & Kaia for Thanksgiving, all their support, and goodies. See you in February 2018. Stay warm & take care.- Craig C