

ASFACTS 2019

JULY "NOT QUITE AS HOT THIS YEAR" SUMMER ISSUE

2019 LOCUS AWARDS WINNERS

The Locus Science Fiction Foundation announced the winners of the 2019 Locus Awards during the Locus Awards Weekend in Seattle, WA, on June 29. Several Bubonicon friends are among the winners:

SCIENCE FICTION NOVEL: *The Calculating Stars* by MARY ROBINETTE KOWAL (Other nominees included Becky Chambers and Catherynne M. Valente). FANTASY NOVEL: *Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik (*The Wonder Engine* by T. Kingfisher – Ursula Vernon – was also nominated). HORROR NOVEL: *The Cabin at the End of the World* by Paul Tremblay. YOUNG ADULT NOVEL: *Dread Nation* by Justina Ireland (*The Agony House* by Cherie Priest & Tara O'Connor also was nominated). FIRST NOVEL: *Trail of Lightning* by REBECCA ROANHORSE.

NOVELLA: *Artificial Condition* by Martha Wells, NOVELETTE: *The Only Harmless Great Thing* by Brooke Bolander, SHORT STORY: "The Secret Lives of the Nine Negro Teeth of George Washington" by Phenderson Djèlí Clark, ANTHOLOGY: *The Book of Magic* edited by GARDNER DOZOIS, COLLECTION: *How Long 'til Black Future Month?* by N.K. Jemisin.

MAGAZINE: Tor.com, PUBLISHER: Tor, EDITOR: GARDNER DOZOIS, ARTIST: CHARLES VESS (also nominated were Bob Eggleton and John Picacio), NON-FICTION: *Ursula K. Le Guin: Conversations on Writing* by Ursula K. Le Guin, ART BOOK: *Charles Vess for The Books of Earthsea: The Complete Illustrated Edition* by Ursula K. Le Guin, and SPECIAL AWARD 2019: Community Outreach & Development: Mary Anne Mohanraj.

The Locus Awards, except for the Special Award, are chosen by a survey of readers in an open online poll.

ROGERS & DENNING HOSTING PRE-CON PARTY

Patricia Rogers and Scott Denning will uphold a local fannish tradition when they host the Bubonicon 51 Pre-Con Party 7:30-10:30 pm Thursday, August 22, at their home in Bernalillo – located at 909 Highway 313.

The easiest way to get there 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 a cow crossing sign and Mile Marker 9. The house - with a mummy on the gate - is on the west side of the road.



Please park your car on the shoulder of Highway 313.

In addition to socializing, attendees can help assemble the membership packets, & check out the 2019 t-shirt with artwork by Greg Spalenka.

Please bring snacks & drinks to share. Also welcome: plates, napkins, cups and ice. As with any hosted party, please keep the house clean and in good shape!

2018 NEBULA WINNERS NAMED

The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA) announced the winners of the 2018 Nebula Awards during the 53rd Annual Nebula Banquet on Saturday, May 18, in Woodland Hills, CA. Mary Robinette Kowal, who served as co-Guest of Honor at Bubonicon 51, was among the winners:

NOVEL: *The Calculating Stars* by Mary Robinette Kowal, NOVELLA: *The Tea Master and the Detective* by Aliette de Bodard, NOVELETTE: *The Only Harmless Great Thing* by Brooke Bolander, SHORT STORY: "The Secret Lives of the Nine Negro Teeth of George Washington" by Phenderson Djèlí Clark, GAME WRITING: *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* by Charlie Brooker, BRAD-

UPCOMING ASFS MEETINGS

- **Tonight:** Climate Fiction discussion with Lauren C. Teffeau & Sarena Ulibarri...
- **August 9:** Bubonicon 51 preview, and local author Reese Hogan on her debut *Angry Robot* book.
- **September 13:** It's All About the Cons! Bubonicon 51, Irish Worldcon & DragonCon reports.
- **October 11:** Election of 3 club officers, and Christopher Marsh talks on the original NASA Mission Control! And Halloween's *ASFACTS* (deadline Mon, October 7).
- **November 8:** Ben Radford on crystal skulls!
- **December 13:** 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: Mon, Oct 7. **Club Officers:** Jessica Coyle & Craig Chrissinger, co-Zec Secs (505) 266-8905. Harriet Engle, Moderator. Heather Hay & Patricia Rogers, co-Alternators. HAL 9000, Advisor. **Bubonicon Chairs:** Caci Cooper (505) 559-0931 & Craig Chrissinger. www.bubonicon.com

BURY (SCRIPT): *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*, and ANDRE NORTON (YA): *Children of Blood and Bone* by Tomi Adeyemi.

The Kevin O'Donnell Jr Award for Service to SFWA went to Lee Martindale. The Kate Wilhelm Solstice Award went to Neil Clarke and Nisi Shawl. The Damon Knight Memorial Grand Master Award went to William Gibson.

NASFiC 2020 SITE SELECTED

Columbus 2020 NASFiC has won the bid to host the next North American Science Fiction Convention (NASFiC), to be held August 20-23, 2020 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel and Convention Center in Columbus, OH, reported Locus Online in early July. There were no other registered candidates.

Confirmed Guests of Honor include author guests Brian Herbert and Kevin J. Anderson, artist guest Stephanie Pui-Mun Law, editor guest Christopher J. Garcia, science guest Marc Millis, fan guests Sue & Steve Francis, and 1632 Minicon guest Eric Flint.

NASFiC happens whenever a Worldcon is held outside of North America (as in the case of ConZealand, the 78th World Science Fiction Convention, July 29-August 2, 2020, in Wellington, New Zealand). For more information, see the NASFiC website.

[Information via File 770]

MARTIN RECEIVES CARL SANDBURG LITERARY AWARD

George R.R. Martin will receive the 2019 Carl Sandburg Literary Award from the Chicago Public Library Foundation, reported Locus Online in early June. Martin will be honored at an awards dinner held October 10 at the Isadore & Sadie Dorin Forum on the University of Illinois at Chicago campus. Previous winners of the award, which "recognizes the work of the world's most heralded authors," include Isabel Allende, Margaret Atwood, Toni Morrison, Joyce Carol Oates, Salman Rushdie, Neil deGrasse Tyson, Kurt Vonnegut, and Tom Wolfe.

For more information, see the Chicago Public Library Foundation website.

HELP NEEDED AT BUBONICON

It's true! Volunteers or "gofers" are needed to help out at Bubonicon 51 the weekend of August 23-25 at the Albuquerque Marriott Uptown. We're looking for people who can donate four, seven or even 12 hours of their time during the con to help things run smoothly and give committee workers much needed breaks from time to time.

It should be noted that gofers will not be handling

money – that's for the Bubonicon staff. We especially need people to check badges/wristbands at doors to meeting rooms, the gaming space and the con suite this year.

Volunteer workers will be in drawings for various goodies liked bookstore gift certificates, restaurant gift certificates, Guild Cinema passes, signed books, toys, genre t-shirts, and more!

The Volunteers (Gofers) Organizational Meeting will take place 7:30 pm Friday, August 16, at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, 5301 Ponderosa Ave NE (between San Mateo and San Pedro, south of Montgomery – enter through the North Door on the backside of the building). All attending volunteer workers at this meeting will receive some kind of promotional goods.

If you're willing to help us out, please email coordinator Suzanne Busch at volunteers@bubonicon.com.

GENRE BOOKS STILL DISCUSSED

The Droids & Dragons SF Book Group meets 7:30 pm Monday, July 15, at Jason's Deli (northwest corner of Louisiana & America's Parkway NE – across the street from Bubonicon's Marriott Hotel) to discuss *The Calculating Stars* (Nebula Award winner) by Mary Robinette Kowal. The group then recommends 2-4 books read in the last year but not discussed in group on August 19.

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 at Page One Bookstore in the Mountain Run Shopping Center. For more info, contact Leah at msransom@hotmail.com or Craig at 266-8905.

GENE WOLFE DIES

Grand Master Gene Wolfe died April 14 after a long struggle with heart disease. He was 87 years old. Wolfe was famed for his ambitious, challenging, and enthralling novels and stories, most famously the *Book of the New Sun* series.

Gene Rodman Wolfe was born May 7, 1931, in Brooklyn, NY, and grew up in Texas, where he attended Texas A&M and the University of Houston, graduating from the latter in 1956 with a BS in mechanical engineering. (His most famous engineering feat is helping to create the machine that makes Pringles potato chips.) Wolfe served in the US Army in Korea from 1952-54 and received the Combat Infantry Badge, was a project engineer for Procter and Gamble from 1956-72, and a senior editor of *Plant Engineering* from 1972-84, when he left to become a full-time writer. He lived in Barrington, IL, with his family until relocating to Peoria, IL in 2013.

Wolfe's first published story was "The Case of the Vanishing Ghost" (1951) in student magazine *The Commentator*. His first professionally published story was

"The Dead Man" for erotica magazine *Sir* (1965), and most of his early SF stories appeared in the *Orbit* anthology series. He went on to publish scores of stories in magazines and anthologies, notably Nebula Award winner and Hugo Award finalist "The Death of Doctor Island," Nebula Awards finalists "The Island of Doctor Death and Other Stories," "Against the Lafayette Escadrille," "How I Lost the Second World War and Helped Turn Back the German Invasion," "The Eyeflash Miracles," "War Beneath the Tree," and "A Cabin on the Coast"; Hugo Award finalists "The Woman the Unicorn Loved" and "No Planets Strike"; Hugo and Nebula Award finalists "The Fifth Head of Cerberus," "Seven American Nights," and "Memorare"; World Fantasy Award finalists "In the House of Gingerbread" and "Golden City Far"; and Sturgeon Award finalist "The Lost Pilgrim."

His stories have been collected in many volumes, including *The Island of Doctor Death and Other Stories and Other Stories* (1980), World Fantasy Award winner *Storeys from the Old Hotel*, *Endangered Species*, *Castle of Days*, *Strange Travelers*, *Innocents Aboard*, *Starwater Strains*, and *The Best of Gene Wolfe*.

Wolfe began publishing novels in 1970 with *Operation Ares*. His most ambitious and acclaimed works are the 12 books and assorted stories that take place in the Urth universe: the *Book of the New Sun* sequence (including World Fantasy Award winner *The Shadow of the Torturer* in 1980; Nebula Award winner *The Claw of the Conciliator* in 1981; John W. Campbell Memorial Award winner *The Citadel of the Autarch* in 1982; the *Book of the Long Sun* sequence, and sequel trilogy *Book of the Short Sun*.

Other books include *The Fifth Head of Cerberus*; *Peace*; *The Devil in a Forest*; Latro books *Soldier of the Mist*, *Soldier of Arete*, and *Soldier of Sidon*; *Free Live Free*; *There Are Doors*; *Castlevue*; *The Wizard Knight* duology; *An Evil Guest*; *The Sorcerer's House*; *Home Fires*; World Fantasy Award nominee *The Land Across*; and *A Borrowed Man* in 2015.

Wolfe was honored with a World Fantasy Life Achievement Award in 1996, was made a living inductee of the Science Fiction Hall of Fame in 2007, and was named a SFWA Grand Master in 2012. He married Rosemary Frances Dietsch in 1956; she predeceased him in 2013. His son Roy also predeceased him. Wolfe is survived by two daughters, a son, and three grandchildren.

2019 SFWA ELECTION RESULTS

Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA) announced the results of its election for open Board of Directors positions in early May, reported Locus Online.

President: Mary Robinette Kowal, Secretary: Curtis Chen, and Directors-at-Large: Andy Duncan, Jeffe Ken-

nedy and Sarah Pinsker.

Three positions for director-at-large were available. Additionally, Tobias Buckell will replace Lawrence Schoen, who earlier resigned. The election committee consisted of Kate Baker, Maurice Broaddus, Laura Anne Gilman, Cat Rambo, and Fran Wilde (chair). For more information, see the SFWA site - <https://www.sfwaworld.org>

BRADBURY STATUE DEDICATION

A statue of Ray Bradbury will be erected in the author's hometown of Waukegan IL, with the dedication planned for August 22, his birthday, reported Locus Online in early May. The 12-foot-high statue, designed by Zachary Oxman, depicts Bradbury riding a clockwork rocketship and holding a book, and will be sited in front of the Waukegan Public Library. The Ray Bradbury Statue Committee is still raising funds for the sculpture, but have already begun production. For more information, go to www.raybradburystatue.org/about.

SCHULMAN WINS PK DICK AWARD

Theory of Bastards by Audrey Schulman (Europa) won the 2019 Philip K. Dick Award, announced April 19 during Norwescon 42 in SeaTac, WA. *84k* by Claire North (Orbit) received a special citation.

The award is presented annually to a distinguished work of science fiction originally published in paperback form in the United States. The award is sponsored by the Philip K. Dick Trust and the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society, and the ceremony is sponsored by the Northwest Science Fiction Society. The judges for 2019 were Madeline Ashby, Brian Attebery, Christopher Brown, Rosemary Edghill, and Jason Hough (chair).

MARTIN JOINS MEOW WOLF

Meow Wolf, the arts and entertainment group based in Santa Fe NM, has named George R.R. Martin as their Chief World Builder, reported Locus Online in early June. Formed in 2008 as an art collective, "Meow Wolf creates immersive and interactive experiences that transport audiences of all ages into fantastic realms of story and exploration. This includes art installations, video and music production, and extended reality content." As Chief World Builder, Martin will advise on narratives and ideas for Meow Wolf installations.

Martin previously contributed \$2.7 million to the company's first permanent installation, a retrofitted bowling alley called the House of Eternal Return, filled with sculptures and secret passages, which opened in 2016.

[via SF Signal]



DENNIS ETCHISON DIES

Dennis Etchison, who received a Bram Stoker Award for lifetime achievement in 2017, died May 29. He was 76 years old. Etchison was a major writer and editor of horror fiction, especially in the '80s and '90s, reported Locus Online in late May.

He began publishing short fiction in the 1960s, and notable stories include British Fantasy Award winners "The Olympic Runner" in 1986 and "The Dog Park" in 1993, and BFA and World Fantasy Award winner "The Dark Country" in 1981. Some of his stories were collected in World Fantasy Award finalist *The Dark Country*, *Red Dreams*, *The Blood Kiss*, *The Death Artist*, *Talking in the Dark*, *Fine Cuts*, *Got to Kill Them All & Other Stories*, and *A Long Time Til Morning* (2014).

Etchison's original novels include *Darkside* in 1986, *Shadowman*, *California Gothic*, and *Double Edge*. His first book was a novelization of John Carpenter film *The Fog* in 1980, and he did other film novelizations, notably for David Cronenberg's *Videodrome* (as Jack Martin) and for the *Halloween* franchise (also as Martin). He was highly knowledgeable about film, studying it in college and serving as a consultant to Stephen King for non-fiction volume *Danse Macabre*; he also wrote for TV.

Etchison was also an influential anthologist. He edited groundbreaking horror anthology *Cutting Edge* in 1986, three volumes of the *Masters of Darkness* series, *Lord John Ten: A Celebration*, World Fantasy Award winners *MetaHorror* and *The Museum of Horrors*, and World Fantasy Award finalist *Gathering the Bones* (with Ramsey Campbell & Jack Dann).

Dennis William Etchison was born March 30, 1943, in Stockton, CA. He attended Los Angeles State College and UCLA, and worked various part-time jobs while writing his early stories, including some years as a gas station attendant in Malibu. He later taught creative writing. Etchison became a full-time writer in 1976, and served as president of the Horror Writers Association from 1992-94. He is survived by his wife Kristina.

PHILIP K. DICK NEWS

A first edition of *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* by Philip K. Dick (1968) was pulled from the shelves in a Tennessee Library, to be trashed or sold at the Friends of the Memphis Public Library book shop, when staff member Geoff Hopkins noticed the book and realized its value. The library's online sales manager Louise Brown listed the book online for \$1,250 and sold it within a few weeks, bringing in a record sum for a single book sold by that library. "This thing was going to be thrown away, and I can't imagine how many programs that it will fund for the library," Brown told a local newspaper. "It's what we're calling the 'sale of the decade.'"

BARNES & NOBLE SOLD

Barnes & Noble, the largest bookstore chain in the US, has been sold to Elliot Management Corporation, the same hedge fund that purchased leading UK bookseller Waterstones in June 2018. Waterstones CEO James Daunt will take over as CEO of B&N when the deal is complete and plans to relocate to New York, reported Locus Online in early June. The all-cash transaction is valued at around \$683 million — \$6.50 a share, plus the assumption of B&N's debt.

Barnes & Noble has been seeking new ownership for some time, and the board of directors voted unanimously to approve the deal and recommend it to the company's shareholders. Leonard Riggio, founder and chairman of B&N, said, "We are pleased to have reached this agreement with Elliott, the owner of Waterstones, a bookseller I have admired over the years. In view of the success they have had in the bookselling marketplace, I believe they are uniquely suited to improve and grow our company for many years ahead. I am also confident that James Daunt has the leadership ability and experience necessary to lead this great organization. I will do everything I can to help him make the transition smooth."

Daunt said, "I look forward greatly to working with the booksellers at Barnes & Noble. Physical bookstores the world over face fearsome challenges from online and digital. We meet these with investment and with all the more confidence for being able to draw on the unrivalled bookselling skills of these two great companies."

The deal still needs stockholder and regulatory approval, but is expected to be concluded later this year.

TERMINATOR: DARK FATE TRAILER HAS HAMILTON BLOWING UP TERMINATOR

by Johnny Brayson, CometTV.com, May 23

The first trailer for *Terminator: Dark Fate* is here, and it really does look like the film *T2* fans have been waiting for all these years.

The movie, which ignores the events of *T3: Rise of the Machines*, *Terminator: Salvation*, and 2015's *Terminator: Genisys*, acts as a proper sequel to 1991's *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*. The trailer leans hard into that fact, prominently featuring the return of Linda Hamilton as Sarah Connor and touting James Cameron's return as producer. Even the film's tagline from the first post-



er is “Welcome to the day after Judgement Day.” And since we all know there is no such thing as a proper Terminator movie without Arnold Schwarzenegger, the man himself also shows up briefly in the trailer.

But despite so much attention paid to the old gang getting back together, the new trailer mostly focuses on the next generation. Gabriel Luna portrays a terrifying new Terminator who can use his liquid metal structure to create duplicates of himself. Mackenzie Davis portrays Grace, a mysterious augmented human with Terminator-like abilities. She appears to be protecting a young woman named Dani Ramos (Natalia Reyes), whom this new Terminator is apparently after. That draws the attention of Sarah Connor, looking more badass than ever, who joins forces with Grace to protect Dani before bringing in an old friend for even more firepower.

The trailer certainly offers some great action and awesome set pieces, but it also raises a few serious questions. First and foremost is this: Where is John Connor? The trailer sets up Dani as the target for the new Terminator, with Grace stating that they “win” by keeping Dani alive, and Sarah saying she cares about protecting Dani because she “was her.” Does this mean the future has been changed and that Dani’s offspring will now be the savior of mankind rather than John Connor? It’s all very confusing, but we have confidence that Linda, James, and Arnold will sort it all out for us in the end.

Terminator: Dark Fate hits theaters on November 1.

AYKROYD PENS 1960s-SET GHOSTBUSTERS PREQUEL

by Johnny Brayson, CometTV.com, May 22

We’re finally getting *Ghostbusters 3* next year, and you just know Dan Aykroyd has to be over the moon about that fact after trying to get some version of the film made for decades. But even that movie, as satisfying as it may be, might not mark the end of the franchise – or Ray Stantz’s involvement in it – as Aykroyd has revealed that he has written a very retro *Ghostbusters* prequel.

Jason Reitman, son of original *Ghostbusters* director Ivan Reitman, is helming the upcoming *Ghostbusters 3*, but Aykroyd is hoping Reitman can keep the show going even after next summer. The former *SNL* star revealed to Canadian outlet 660 News that he’s already given the junior Reitman a script for a new *Ghostbusters* prequel that would follow Ray Stantz, Peter Venkman, and Egon Spengler as high schoolers in the 1960s. Here’s how Aykroyd describes it:

“I’ve written *Ghostbusters High*, where they meet in New Jersey in 1969, and we’re looking to do that as probably a glorified feature or pilot within the next maybe five years... And it would lead to a television project and I thought of [Reitman] immediately for that.

“It’s on [Reitman’s] desk but that’s years away from

the current project,” Aykroyd continued. “But it’s a neat idea for a prequel. Imagine casting the three characters as teenagers!”

It’s an intriguing idea, as it could show how the three founding *Ghostbusters* first developed their interest in the paranormal. But as interesting and fun as this project sounds, it sounds like it would be quite some time – if ever – before we ever got to see it. Aykroyd says there are already plans to produce other non-prequel *Ghostbusters* content post-*Ghostbusters 3*, so we probably shouldn’t get ahead of ourselves when it comes to trying to picture Venkman as a hippie high schooler.

Speaking of *Ghostbusters 3*, Aykroyd also discussed how the new movie plans to be successful, and it all comes down to scaling back the massive budget from 2016’s *Ghostbusters* reboot, which is believed to have lost money for the studio. “[The new film’s budget is] definitely going to be way under \$100 (million). I would think. Movies cost a lot today. It can’t be \$30 (million), \$50 (million) would be stretching it. I don’t know. Listen, it’s going to be as little as we can spend,” Aykroyd said.

One way to keep costs down, according to Aykroyd, is by using as many old school practical effects as possible. “I’m always urging to use puppets. I’m always urging to go back to the mechanicals. But CGI is so efficient and easy to use but I think that all of us are on board with the idea of maybe doing mechanicals and puppets where we can,” he stated.

We may never see *Ghostbusters High*, but *Ghostbusters 3* – or whatever it ends up being called – will hit theaters on July 10, 2020... possibly starring Bill Murray.

ROBOCOP RETURNS BRINGING BACK KEY ELEMENT FROM THE ORIGINAL

by Johnny Brayson, CometTV.com, July 3

Neill Blomkamp is still hard at work on his upcoming *RoboCop* sequel, *RoboCop Returns*, and the director recently offered an update on the film that is sure to excite longtime fans of the Detroit lawman.

On his Twitter account, Blomkamp responded to an update request for the film by confirming that he is still working on the script and comparing it to the work of original director Paul Verhoeven. “Script is being written. Going well! Imagine watching Verhoeven do a follow-up film,” he tweeted. Upon seeing this, a fan responded asking if that meant the iconic original *RoboCop* suit would be returning for the film. And praise Omni Consumer Products, Blomkamp confirmed that was the case while leaving himself absolutely no wiggle room. “1 million% original” were his exact words.

One problem many fans had with the 2014 *RoboCop* reboot – in addition to its lack of R-rating and wildly dif-

ferent tone from the original – was the suit worn by Joel Kinnaman. Sleek, black, modern, and superhero-esque, the suit would have been fine for an original character, but it didn't look anything like RoboCop. Whether you're a fan of RoboCop or not, you've got to admit his '80s suit is pretty iconic and is an integral part of his character, so the fact that Blomkamp is bringing it back for the new sequel makes a ton of sense and should encourage the fanbase to get on board with his vision.

RoboCop Returns does not yet have an official release date, but when it does eventually make its way to theaters, it's going to have a very familiar look.

ON THE CONVENTION FRONT: **BUBONICON 51 JUST SIX WEEKS AWAY**

by **Craig Chrissinger, co-chair**

Bubonicon, New Mexico's annual science fiction convention, celebrates its 51st edition August 23-25 at the Albuquerque Marriott Uptown, 2101 Louisiana Blvd NE (at I-40). More than 48 authors, artists, scientists, filmmakers & fans will be participating in programming.

This year's convention features special guest talent from the East Coast and New Mexico. Guests of Honor for Bubonicon 51 are Massachusetts novelist Allen Steele and North Carolina writer/artist Ursula Vernon; Guest Artist is Greg Spalenka of Santa Fe; and Toastmaster is Portales, NM resident Darynda Jones. And Dr. Harrison Schmitt of New Mexico, Apollo 17 astronaut and geologist, is the Science Speaker. We also are blessed to have Ben Bova, Suzy McKee Charnas, Stephen R. Donaldson, Gordon Garb, Chaz Kemp, Chris Marsh, Susan R. Matthews, editor Scot Noel, and Ian Tregillis with us throughout the weekend. Sadly, Colorado author Connie Willis and Colorado scientist Courtney Willis have had to cancel their appearances at the con.

Proceeds from the Friday charity auction and a portion of any Bubonicon 51 profits will benefit the (Jack) Williamson Library Collection at Eastern NM University, and the local Roadrunner Food Bank.

Bubonicon 51 opens with Pre-Registered check-in 1:00-2:30 pm Friday the 23rd, with regular registration open at 3:00 pm; and goes almost nonstop through 5 pm that Sunday. The first programming is at 4 pm, the same time the Art Show opens. The Con Suite and Gaming open at 5 pm.

The theme for the weekend is "The Future Is Now (2019 Is History)." The five tracks of programming at the Marriott are really full, so don't be surprised if you're torn between attending two or three panels/readings at a time!

Two Programming Notes – Kevin Sonney, Vernon's husband, will be Master of Ceremonies for the Costume Contest at 8:00 pm Saturday; with Jessica Coyle's Green Slime Awards remaining at halftime. Geneva Schult is

organizing the costuming event, and already has judges lined up. And on Sunday, Terri Verrette is organizing two Afternoon Tea Socials in the Hospitality Suite (1:00-2:00 pm and 2:30-3:30 pm). Nine authors are involved, and each session will have a limit of 36 attendees. Sign-up lists will be posted by Registration, as in the past.

Of course, there's Gaming in two rooms by the Art Show and also on the 2nd Floor, the usual Dealers Room, and the large Art Show space! One change for the Art Show – they are staying open later on Saturday, and closing the Silent Auction at 9:00 pm. Sunday, they will be open for Quick Sales and print shop sales, plus the pickup of artwork.

Don't forget about the hospitality suite– located on the 16th floor in a Suite with two adjoining sleeping rooms. The Con Suite will be open during Saturday's Costume Contest! And on Sunday, it will be open 8:00-10:30 am.

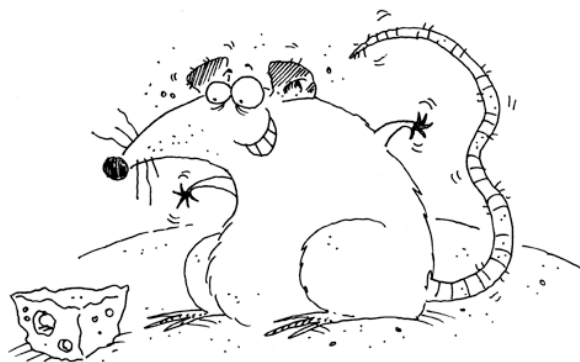
We need volunteer workers (gofers in con speak) to help us throughout the weekend (see separate blurb earlier in this newsletter). If you can help, please email Suzanne Busch at volunteers@bubonicon.com, or come to the meeting Friday, August 16, at St. Andrew Presbyteri-an Church on Ponderosa NE (home of ASFS).

Passes for the whole weekend are \$40 if purchased by August 3. After that, you'll have to wait to pay \$45 at the door. Daily memberships are \$15 Friday, \$25 Saturday and \$15 Sunday. Youths 14-17 years old are \$23 for the whole weekend. Children under 14 years are free when accompanied by an adult.

There are two ways to pay now! You can send payments with the registration form by August 3 to Bubonicon Inc at 933 San Mateo Blvd NE, Suite 500-208, Albuquerque, NM 87108; or you can use your PayPal account/Credit Card on our website (make sure to include the names for all passes purchased).

The Bubonicon 51 special \$99 room rate (single-quad occupancy) is only guaranteed through Monday, August 12, so get your reservation in now! 800-228-9290 to make your reservation.

Info is available from our Google voicemail at (505) 559-0931, Craig at (505) 266-8905, by email at bubonicon@gmail.com, or through the website at www.bubonicon.com.



BOOK REVIEW ROUND-UP

A Cathedral of Myth and Bone: Stories by Kat Howard, 2019 Saga Press, hc \$25.99, 368 pages.

Review by Heather Hay

The title says it all: this book is a compilation of short stories about taking myths and internalizing them through the experiences of modern women. The cathedral being a bound book that stores tales of retold European myths and the bones of the characters that were fated to play them out. *A Cathedral of Myth and Bone* is homage to women's gender studies and how their roles can be explained through the Catholic religion and folklore.

The goal of these stories is for personal reflection. Some shorter tales have a good sense of suspense and excitement through a buildup of dangerous cat and mouse escapades. But most stories read like they began as academic studies. The bulk of the book is a novella of the story of Camelot through several college students who are assigned to play the characters as a course requirement. Magically, story elements occur in real life and then the students take on the magical property of the characters within the historical context. Each student is critiqued through Morgan as to whether they have been possessed by the tale or simply bored with the assignment. The story is led to the same conclusion that all the other short stories have and that is that there is a fatalistic loss or tragedy that must occur.

Mythology students or literary fans would more enjoy the stories because they are aware of the original works. Mostly the stories read like you are dipping in and out of conversations at a party of people discussing their mythology thesis. Sometimes the reader is introduced to the conversation and given a brief fill in of the conversation. In other stories the reader is left to linger on the edge of the conversation and attempt to ease drop without any context. The ghost story, for example, directly addresses the reader and prepares them for the twist on the usual tale of a haunted house and the woman possessed inside. In "The Speaking Bone," the reader is given a few historical references about the bones of saints being used in the building of cathedrals but then the main character gives vague senses of pain when they lose their own body parts and the ending is left wide open for many interpretations.

Alpha and Omega by Harry Turtledove, 2019 Del Rey, hc \$28.99, 480 pages.

Review by Roberta Johnson

What if you found proof that God is real? What if you didn't believe in God, but saw proof even you could not deny? Maybe even worse, what if you believed all your life in God, prayed to Him, followed his tenets, and found out God isn't your God? What if you found God and didn't like Him?

In *Alpha and Omega*, the ancient prophecy of the

End of Days is coming true. A red heifer with no white hairs is born in the United States; Eric Katz, secular archeologist (who may or may not believe, but mostly just likes digging things up) has found the Ark of the Covenant in Jerusalem – and even he cannot deny this is the real thing. For one thing, it floats.

Turtledove has peopled this chronicle with plenty of well-developed and mostly likeable characters who are faced with the dilemma of reality confounded by faith. New Yorker Eric and his Israeli girlfriend Orly are uneasily aware that there has been sinning. Their solution to this is to get married asap (fortunately, they really love each other and it would have happened anyway- probably). Barb Taylor, an evangelical Protestant from Pawtucket, NY, is comfortably certain that she is going to Heaven and most everyone else will probably go to Hell – and she's okay with that. Chaim, raised ritually pure in anticipation of just this event, is a pretty good kid for an adolescent who is really interested in girls – but ironically, his participation is leading him to question the strict tenets by which he has been raised. Gabriela, an ambitious reporter, has the good or bad fortune to be covering the red heifer's arrival in Israel just when Palestinians decide to detonate a dirty bomb there. And then there are the Palestinians, who are in for a rude shock.

We will also meet a Christian televangelist who actually believes what he preaches, is faithful to his wife, and gives away a lot of his substantial income to charity. He's interested in what the Jews are doing and willing to consider other beliefs than his own. He's pretty shocking in these cynical days – and in fact, Turtledove's novel does not seem at all cynical.

The trouble is, the God of the Old Testament is pretty old-fashioned. He smites unbelievers, and he demands animal sacrifice on a daily basis. When an ambitious rabbi's actions produce the new Messiah, followers of other faiths must decide whether to fight God or follow him under someone else's religion. And then Muslims produce their own Mahdi, and everyone is confounded by the fact that there are two messiahs of different faiths, who have a lot in common, including their ability to raise the dead and their distaste for the whole thing. Rabbi Kupferman, who is building the Third Temple, is not that happy either – for one thing, the Messiah is really mad at him for what he did to his favorite heifer.

In the climactic denouement, followers of a number of faiths will find that there is only one God – but he may be known by a number of different names, and he may be found in a number of unusual places. And he may even have more than one child.

The Gordian Protocol by David Weber and Jacob Holo, 2019 Baen Books, hc \$27.00, 512 pages.

Review by Bill Pletsch

War is Hell. So, when we say "Send in the marines," we should not lose sight of the cost. Some marines will die and their mothers will mourn.

David Weber and Jacob Holo, authors of the standalone novel *The Gordian Protocol*, drive this point home with a whang. The cost of war, here in this book, the grieving of close family is vividly portrayed. It is like being there and looking right over their shoulders, and it is very sad.

The battle scenes are as vivid. You are there. Weber's ability to draw battle scenes with hallucinogenic clarity is well known. He and Holo do it again in *The Gordian Protocol*. You are in a seat right with the team. The confusion and the terror seem real as destruction and carnage relentlessly walk up the deck coming at you. Bullets chew up the bulkheads, splinters fly all about and you are right in the middle of it.

It is space opera. Good battle scenes, over the top melodrama, and as noted, some very deep and poignant moments lest we forget war is hell. There are some costs from the frenetic pacing. Deeper themes are raised then dropped. We brush up against the idea of time, note its fundamental weirdness, and then move on. The same is true for the nature of consciousness. The authors seem to say hey we've got a story to tell. We've got you started. Now we are moving on. Ultimately, they are right and on the deeper stuff I should be doing my own thinking anyhow, but I am just saying.

Not a romp, but sometimes verging on it; not quirky, but some literary devices seem a little like it; and not trite but... you'll see. At times you are jolted right out of the story wondering is it romping, quirky, or trite. To be so jarred makes it a harder read than I like, so does the self-conscious attempt to link *The Gordian Protocol* to Alexander's sundering of the famous knot. Being thusly bounced out of the story I tended to go get a glass of water and wander off.

But really this is caviling. I was probably thirsty. Seriously these complaints are small potatoes. The real question is "Do I like space opera? Well punk do I?" Yes, Clint I do.

A warning: It's a time travel novel. Time travel is fraught with paradox and this book is no exception. Get past that and my carping above, and the book is a singing paean to space opera.

ASFS MEETING REPORTS — MARCH 2019: ZOMBIE TALK

Dr. Russell Morton of UNM, who was Bubonicon 50's science speaker, visited the club to repeat his talk, "The Neurobiology of Zombies: Does the Zombie Brain Explain Their Behavior" to 41 people. Morton is a research assistant professor in the Department of Neurosciences at UNM's School of Medicine.

Morton explained that Neuroscience is a branch of science that studies the brain. He said our brains contain 100 billion neurons, and 100 trillion synapses. "You can think of a neuron being like a tree with branches, a trunk

and roots," he said. "Neurons come in all shapes and sizes. There are two main types of neurons - excitatory and inhibitory."

The questions that Morton examined was what happens in the brain to transition from human to zombie, and what are the symptoms of zombies. "They seem to have a lack of coordination, and act on impulse," he noted.

Showing a clip from 2007's *I Am Legend* (with Will Smith), Morton said the most recent studies indicate it's caused by a virus. Other cases studies in his talk were provided by clips from *Dawn of the Dead*, *Zombieland*, *28 Days Later*, and Michael Jackson's *Thriller*.

"The primary goal of zombies is getting food," Morton said. "But the question is why zombies want to eat human flesh. Zombies seem to be addicted to human flesh, as though Dopamine is being released."

Morton showed an MRI image of a "zombie brain," and noted that cutting off the head works to keep the zombie brain still enough for scanning.

Finishing his tongue-in-cheek talk, Morton said there are websites and books if anyone wants more information on zombie research and survival.

APRIL 2019: ROANHORSE VISITS

Forty-three people were on hand to listen to Santa Fe author Rebecca Roanhorse talk about her *Sixth World* novels, her short stories, and future projects. With several officers not in attendance, co-alternator Heather Hay read club announcements as dues were collected.

Roanhorse started by saying, "I was a lawyer until March 5, and now I'm a full-time writer." She said she has a new short story, "Harvest" – a Deer Woman story – in the *New Suns* anthology, and has her award-winning story in *The Year's Best Dark Fantasy & Horror 2018*.

She described *Trail of Lightning* as post-apocalyptic urban fantasy set on the Navajo Nation. "Maggie is just a girl looking to kill a monster, and in love with a guy," she said. "It's a little bit horror, little bit fantasy, and a little bit Gods and Monsters."

She read from a section of *Trail of Lightning* in which Coyote (the Trickster) is visiting Maggie in a dream. "Pictures of Coyote sometimes come across as benign, but he can be dangerous and a manipulator," she noted.

Talking about "Harvest," she said that the Deer Woman is a beautiful woman who comes to dance in a long dress that brushes the floor to hide her hooves. She mostly appears in Eastern U.S. tribe tales and seduces those who are susceptible. Reading the story from the *New Suns* anthology (people of color speculative fiction), she commented at its conclusion, "My lesbian serial killer love story, I call it."

Asked about *Trail of Lightning*'s style, she said, "It's first person, present tense, which I know annoys some people. But I wanted to have the reader see her perspective, and hopefully have some sympathy."

She actually wrote the novel before her award-winning “Welcome To Your Authentic Indian Experience™,” but the story was published in August 2017 and the book was not out until June 2018. “That’s just the nature of the business,” she said before she read from the story in which people want to experience time as a movie Indian, not real life.

“For short stories, I am going for an experience so I don’t plan as much,” she said. “For a novel, I do more planning. *Trail* took two years, but *Storm of Locusts* was under contract so I wrote it in nine months. All my books are character driven.”

Between Earth and Sky, her epic YA fantasy, will be out in 2020, and has an Anasazi influence. “I’m doing a lot of world building for it,” she noted.

Asked about how she went from lawyer to writer, Roanhorse replied, “I’ve always been a writer. I won an award in third grade for a poem. In middle school, I was watching *Star Wars* and reading Robert Jordan, and writing knock-offs. I kind of moved away from writing and reading science fiction, and then in college I discovered urban fantasy. When I was out of Law School, I had a baby, and I started writing *Trail of Lightning* for myself. I always found myself through writing, and I was not enjoying being a lawyer. I went through three or four agents before I found the right fit. Once I got my agent, the book sold in a week.”

Continuing, she said, “Writing was my passion, and kept me going when the world sucked. Get yourself a critique group. They are awesome and help a lot. And they are your best cheerleaders.”

She then read from a section of the new novel, *Storm of Locusts*, in which Maggie goes outside the wall around the Navajo Nation to travel to Lake Powell. And she said the third book, still untitled, will take readers to the ‘Burque (Albuquerque).

Finishing up the evening, Roanhorse said she writes best at night, and has a soundtrack for each book to help her get into the writing zone. She even wrote an entry for Mary Robinette Kowal’s blog on the soundtrack to *Trail of Lightning*. She also reads a lot, often reading an author because she likes their voice. “You have to find your own voice and your own way to tell a story,” she said.

MAY '19: SUMMER FILM TRAILERS

Devin O’Leary of the *Weekly Alibi* made his seventh trip to the club to show trailers of upcoming genre films to 38 people, and talk about the buzz on various titles and what is known about them. He mentioned that the film *Big Mistake* is now available on Amazon Prime, for which he wrote the script.

Starting off, he said that *Tolkien* was a very BBC-style historical bio-pic. “It all takes place before he wrote anything, so all is speculative on his life.”

Looking at the live-action *Aladdin* and *The Lion King*, he said, “Disney has made good money, and now

continues to do live-action remakes. *Aladdin* is directed by Guy Ritchie, which is kind of weird. Will Smith takes over for Robin Williams. And *The Lion King* is not really live-action, just a different kind of animation.”

Godzilla: King of the Monsters has a “ton of monsters. I’m pretty excited about it. Japan is taking a break, so the US is going full tilt on this. It’s pretty much full-tilt apocalyptic monster action!”

Artemis Fowl is a teen-lit series by Eoin Colfer, which will get compared to *Harry Potter*. And *Dark Phoenix* takes place in the 1980s, using Chris Claremont’s comic saga and doing it with the newer cast. “It’s been a good series since the reboot, so I’m looking forward to this.”

John Wick 3 is part of an impressive action staple. The first one helped revive Keanu Reeves’ career, and the second one was just “bat-crazy action.” This film, said O’Leary, continues that with lots of impressive action sequences.

The Secret Life of Pets 2 and *Toy Story 4* are both animated sequels in successful series. In *Pets 2*, there’s a baby and Max has to protect it. *Toy Story 4* “looks like another sentimental story, with some new toys and voices.”

Anna is the latest from Luc Besson (*Fifth Element*). “He likes female assassins, and is a very stylistic filmmaker,” he noted. “This should be a pretty cool release if you like female-led action films.”

Yesterday is about a guy who wakes up after a crash in an alternate universe where the Beatles never existed, so he becomes them. “It’s from Danny Boyle, so it should be fun.” And *Shaft* has Richard Roundtree, who was Shaft in the 1970s and Samuel L. Jackson as his nephew in the early 2000s. “And now we have Samuel’s son, and all three are named John Shaft – and all three films are titled *Shaft*. Confusion may be part of the fun.”

In *Spider-Man: Far From Home*, lots of crazy stuff happens while Peter Parker is on vacation in Europe. “I’m excited to see what this does, and it’s cool to see the old Steve Ditko stuff coming back – Mysterio as the villain.”

O’Leary also showed clips and talked about *The Dead Don’t Die* (“Good cast. I’m pretty excited for this zombie film”), *Men in Black: International* (“Whole new cast. Stories are choppy, but it looks fun”), *Hobbs & Shaw* (“Looks fun, and ridiculous over-the-top”), *Scary Stories To Tell In The Dark*, *Annabelle Comes Home*, *BrightBurn* (“Superman, if he grew up to be a total bastard”), *Sonic the Hedgehog* (“They’re redoing all the CGI because people didn’t like his teeth”), *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* (“Closing out this group of chapters, and I’m not sure what the title means”), and *The New Mutants* (“It’s based on a X-Men spinoff, and has been delayed until April 2020”).

Summing up the short future for Marvel genre films, O’Leary said, “We’re getting *Doctor Strange 2* and *Black Panther 2*, and probably *Captain Marvel 2*. And now

James Gunn is coming back to do the third *Guardians of the Galaxy*, which is at least a year out. I'd like to see Adam Warlock, but don't know when we might see it. Maybe if Disney is able to do *Fantastic Four* and introduce cosmic stuff."

JUNE 2019: SUMMER FILM NIGHT

Thirty-two of us came together to watch two cartoons and a feature film from the 1960s. First up was *Tom & Jerry* in "Cat Fishin'," followed by *Bugs Bunny* in "Knighty Knight Bugs." The feature film was 1963's *Eegah* with Arch Hall Jr, Marilyn Manning, and Richard Kiel as the prehistoric giant who falls in love with a modern teenager. We laughed at much of the dialog and enjoyed Hall Jr's memorable ballad "I Love You, Valerie."

While entertaining, it also was easy to see why *Eegah* has been a staple of both *Mystery Science Theater 3000* and *Elvira's Movie Macabre*.

EDITOR NOTES THAT FIT THIS SPACE

- **FIFTY YEARS AGO**, for a brief, shining moment, all of mankind was one community as Apollo 11 landed on the Moon, and then Neil Armstrong & Buzz Aldrin stepped out onto the lunar surface. It was an amazing moment for all humans on this blue planet Earth. And what would it take today to bring humanity together like that?

- **PBS THIS WEEK** showed a three-part documentary entitled *Chasing the Moon*, and it is excellent. There's fascinating footage and behind-the-scenes stories many of us haven't heard before. I loved every moment of it. The tragedy of Apollo 1 makes me get weepy every time, but I also feel full of happiness and relief watching Apollo 11 actually land on the Moon (Armstrong had just 17 seconds or so of fuel left). It's amazing to watch two humans walk and hop around on the Moon.

I remember being 7 1/2 years old in July 1969. We were visiting my aunt and uncle and our cousins. We had been put to bed, but then woken up to watch the astronauts step out of the Lunar Module. All us kids were sleepy, so the adults bribed us with Fudge-cicles. And I watched those fuzzy images with fascination. It helped cement my love of science fiction and of space travel.

- **SO, IT SHOULD COME** as no surprise that I am very excited that Dr. Harrison Schmitt, Apollo 17 astronaut and geologist, is the science speaker at Bubonicon 51. It is so cool to have him with us in this year that marks 50 years since we landed on the Moon. I actually worked on his campaign to become a US Senator from New Mexico back in the 1970s. My grandmother, my mother, one of my sisters and I volunteered in a campaign office, stuffing envelopes, calling people to remind them to vote, and such. I still have an Apollo 17 crew photo somewhere that my grandmother got signed by Schmitt. (Gotta go dig!)

- **TONIGHT'S NOVA WAS ABOUT** a return to the Moon, and why we might want to do so. Resources, of

course. But also the human need to explore and to discover. And, of course, to get all our eggs out of just one basket - especially with climate change and nuclear threats and the possibility of some super virus...

Space: The Final

Frontier - to

boldly go

where no

one has

gone before!

- **I WANT**

TO ROCK &

ROLL all

night and

part of every day (you have to sleep some time).

Jessica and I went to see

TacoCat (kind of a punky pop Go-Gos/B-52s) with

Kristen & Kennard at Meow Wolf in June, and right after Bubonicon 51 we'll be seeing Joan Jett and Heart - and on Labor Day we'll be in Taos to see Sting. That should be interesting, and a unique experience. And it's not rock 'n roll, but we have tickets (thanks for the assist, Geneva) to see *MST3K Live* next year on Valentine's Day at Popejoy Hall. Very excited about that! It's going to be Joel's last time on tour, and we really enjoyed meeting him and hanging out at the final ACE in 2014.

- **SPEAKING OF COMIC EXPOS**, really sorry that we'll miss the first NM Comic Expo since it's the weekend before Bubonicon. Really would like to go and see Felicia Day, Jewel Staite, and Hayley Atwell. Plus hang out at the ABQ Browncoats booth, look at costumes, shop, and just soak in the experience. Hopefully, Matt and the Age of Comics crew will be able to grab late July or the first weekend of August next year (or even better, June).

- **WE SAW RIFFTRAX LIVE: STAR RAIDERS** in June, and the actual movie is really, really bad. Thank goodness, Mike, Kevin & Bill had some funny comments and jokes for it! *RiffTrax: Octaman* in April was similar - bad movie, good jokes. We did enjoy *Avengers: Endgame* (satisfying story & ending), *Pokemon: Detective Pikachu*, *Aladdin*, *Godzilla: King of the Monsters*, *Shaft*, *Yesterday*, *Toy Story 4*, *Stuber*, and *Spider-Man: Far From Home* (plus seeing *Ghostbusters*, *Night of the Living Dead*, *Evil Dead 2* and *Mannequin* again at the Guild).

- **GOOD LUCK & SPEEDY RECOVERY** to Connie Willis on her upcoming knee surgery (which is why she will miss Bubonicon this year). Hoping for a speedy recovery!

- **OUTTA ROOM ALMOST**. Thanks to Heather, Bill P, & Roberta for book reviews. Hope to see you all at *Blade Runner* (set in 2019) at the Guild Cinema, then at Bubonicon 51, and in the pages of October's *ASFACTS*. - Craig C

