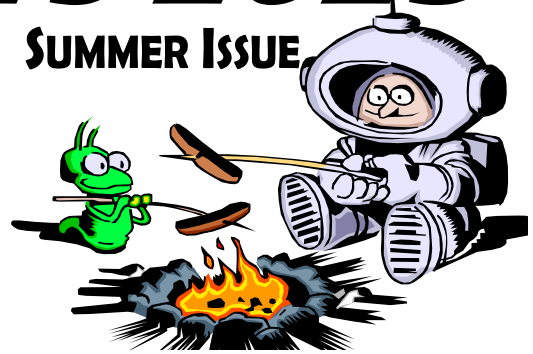
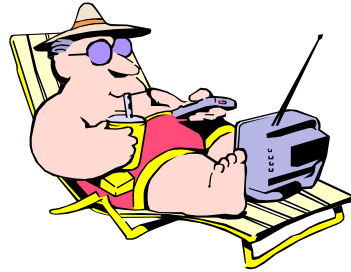




ASFACTS 2023

JULY "WAY TOO HOT" SUMMER ISSUE



2022 NEBULA WINNERS NAMED

The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA) announced winners of the 2022 Nebula Awards at the 58th Annual Nebula Banquet on May 14 during the 2023 SFWA Nebula Conference:

NOVEL: *Babel* by R.F. Kuang, NOVELLA: *Even Though I Knew the End* by C.L. Polk, NOVELETTE: "If You Find Yourself Speaking to God, Address God with the Informal You" by John Chu, SHORT STORY: "Rabbit Test" by Samantha Mills, ANDRE NORTON AWARD: *Ruby Finley vs. the Interstellar Invasion* by K. Tempest Bradford, RAY BRADBURY AWARD: *Everything Everywhere All at Once*, and GAME WRITING: *Elden Ring*.

The SFWA DAMON KNIGHT MEMORIAL GRAND MASTER AWARD went to Robin McKinley, The INFINITY AWARD was given to Octavia E. Butler, The KATE WILHELM SOLSTICE AWARD went to Greg Bear (posthumous) and Cerece Rennie Murphy, and The KEVIN J O'DONNELL, JR. SERVICE TO SFWA AWARD was given to Mishell Baker.

ROGERS/DENNING TO HOST PRE-CON PARTY

Patricia Rogers & Scott Denning are upholding a local fannish tradition by hosting the Bubonicon 54 Pre-Con Party 7:30-10:30 pm Thursday, August 24, 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 (N. Camino del Pueblo just past Walgreens), turn right to head north. You will pass Bernalillo High School and the closed Country Store on your right. 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 or in the mowed field to the north.

In addition to socializing, attendees can help assemble the membership packets, & check out the 2023 t-shirt with artwork by Rachael Mayo.

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!

2023 SF&F HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

The Museum of Pop Culture (MoPOP) in Seattle announced the 2023 inductees to the Science Fiction and Fantasy Hall of Fame in late June: N.K. Jemisin and John Carpenter were honored as Creators, while *Dune* by Frank Herbert and *Rocky Horror Picture Show* were honored as Creations. Inductees are added to the SF&F Hall of Fame display in the museum.

The Science Fiction Hall of Fame was founded in 1996 and then relocated from the Gunn Center for the Study of Science Fiction and Fantasy at the University of Kansas to its permanent home at MoPOP (formerly EMP) in 2004.

NM's CORMAC MCCARTHY DIES

Author Cormac McCarthy died June 13 at home in Santa Fe, NM. He was 89 years old, reported locusmag.com. McCarthy was a celebrated and bestselling

UPCOMING ASF'S MEETINGS

- **Tonight, July 14:** Summer Movie Time!
- **August 11:** Bubonicon 54 schedule preview and a presentation on "A Brief History of Sci-Fi: From Mary Shelley To Andy Weir" by Troy Stull...
- **August 18:** Bubonicon 54 Gofer Organizing Meeting in the Adult Education Room.
- **September 15 (One Week Late):** Convention reports in the Adult Education Room.
- **October 13:** Benjamin Radford talks about the psychology of curses, luck and superstitions. Plus Club Officer Elections & the Halloween *ASFacts*.
- **November 10:** Unknown! We're working on it.
- **December 8:** Holiday Dessert Cook-Off and Film Shorts. Plus the annual issue of *SithFacts*.

Craig Chrissinger, normal editor. **Darth Vader**, guest editor each December. Please Send All Correspondence to — 2018 Cardenas Dr NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110. 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: Monday, October 9.**
Club Officers: Craig Chrissinger & Jessica Coyle, co-Zec Secs (505) 266-8905. Troy Stull, Moderator. Mike McCommas, Alternator. Perry Rodent, con mascot. **B'con Con Chair:** Craig Chrissinger (505) 559-0931.

novelist, mostly of Westerns, but he also wrote Pulitzer Prize-winning postapocalyptic novel *The Road* (2006), adapted as a film in 2009.

Debut novel *The Orchard Keeper* appeared in 1965. Other novels are *Outer Dark* (1968), *Suttree* (1979), *Blood Meridian* (1985), National Book Award and National Book Critics Circle Award winner *All the Pretty Horses* (1992), *The Crossing* (1994), *Cities of the Plain* (1998), *No Country for Old Men* (2005), and *The Passenger* (2022) and its companion novel *Stella Maris* (2022). He was also a playwright and screenwriter.

Charles Joseph McCarthy, Jr. was born July 20, 1933, in Providence, RI, and grew up in Tennessee. He briefly attended the University of Tennessee in 1951 before dropping out to join the Air Force in 1953; he returned to college in 1957, and then began publishing stories. He dropped out again in 1959 and worked part-time while focusing on his writing, often struggling financially.

He traveled extensively in Europe, funded by writing grants, and received a MacArthur Fellowship in 1981, which allowed him to travel and research in the American Southwest. He later settled in New Mexico, where he became a trustee for the Santa Fe Institute, a scientific research center. He was married and divorced three times, and is survived by two sons.

HELP NEEDED AT BUBONICON

It's true! Volunteers or "gofers" are needed to help out at Bubonicon 54 the weekend of August 25-27 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 like 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 18, in the Adult Education Room of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, 5301 Ponderosa Ave NE (between San Mateo and San Pedro, south of Montgomery – park on the backside of the building, and follow the sidewalk to the East-side door). All attending volunteer workers at this meeting will receive some kind of appreciation gift.

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

2023 LOCUS AWARDS WINNERS

The Locus Science Fiction Foundation announced the winners in each category of the 2023 Locus Awards on June 24 during the Locus Awards Weekend. Maggie Tokuda-Hall MCed the awards ceremony with Connie Willis as special guest. Additional weekend events included readings and panels with leading authors.

SCIENCE FICTION NOVEL: *The Kaiju Preservation Society* by John Scalzi, FANTASY NOVEL: *Babel* by R.F. Kuang, HORROR NOVEL: *What Moves the Dead* by T. Kingfisher, YOUNG ADULT NOVEL: *Dreams Bigger Than Heartbreak* by Charlie Jane Anders, FIRST NOVEL: *The Mountain in the Sea* by Ray Nayler.

NOVELLA: *A Prayer for the Crown-Shy* by Becky Chambers, NOVELETTE: "If You Find Yourself Speaking to God, Address God with the Informal You" by John Chu, SHORT STORY: "Rabbit Test" by Samantha Mills, ANTHOLOGY: *Africa Risen: A New Era of Speculative Fiction* edited by Sheree Renée Thomas & Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki & Zelda Knight, COLLECTION: *Boys, Beasts & Men* by Sam J. Miller.

MAGAZINE: *Tor.com*, PUBLISHER: Tor, EDITOR: Ellen Datlow, ARTIST: Charles Vess, NON-FICTION: *Terry Pratchett: A Life With Footnotes: The Official Biography* by Rob Wilkins, ILLUSTRATED AND ART BOOK: *Chivalry* by Neil Gaiman, with art by Colleen Doran, and SPECIAL AWARD 2023: Developing Diversity in Genre Communities - Carl Brandon Society.

GENRE BOOKS STILL DISCUSSED

The Droids & Dragons SF Book Group meets 7:30 pm Monday, July 17, at Jason's Deli (northwest corner of Louisiana & America's Parkway NE – across the street from Bubonicon's Marriott Hotel) to discuss *Station Eternity* by Mur Lafferty. The group then recommends 2-4 books read in the last year but not discussed in group on August 21.

Meetings of D&D are open to all interested readers on the third Monday of each month. Books for discussion are chosen two months in advance, and group members receive a 20% discount on selected novels at Page One Bookstore in the Mountain Run Shopping Center. For more info, contact Leah at mrsransom@hotmail.com or Craig at 266-8905.

BRADBURY ONLINE PANEL AT LOA

The Library of America is hosting an online panel, "The Enduring Genius of Ray Bradbury," 4:00-5:00 pm MDT on Wednesday, July 19, reports Locusmag.com.

"In *The Martian Chronicles*, *The Illustrated Man*, *Fahrenheit 451*, and other visionary works melding science fiction, horror, fantasy, and high literature, Ray Bradbury electrified readers and inspired generations of genre-bending younger writers. Acclaimed authors Connie Willis and Kelly Link join LOA Bradbury editor Jonathan R. Eller and SF expert Gary K. Wolfe for a conversation about this American original's towering legacy.

"There will be a brief Q&A at the end of the program; you will be able to type a question and submit it to the event moderator."

The LoA also stated, "Registration is required to attend this event. After registering on Eventbrite, you will receive a confirmation email from Zoom with instructions on how to join the presentation. We ask that you download the Zoom app in advance for the best user experience."

“LOA Live programs are presented free of charge to help readers across the nation and around the globe make meaningful connections with America’s best writing.”

Registration is available at www.eventbrite.com/e/the-enduring-genius-of-ray-bradbury-registration-667627591097?aff=campaignmonitor.

2023 HUGO FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

Finalists for the Hugo Awards, the Astounding Award for Best New Writer, and the Lodestar Award for Best Young Adult Book were announced July 6 by Chengdu Worldcon, the 81st World Science Fiction Convention. There were 1,847 valid nominating ballots (1,843 electronic and 4 paper) received and counted from members of the 2022 and 2023 World Science Fiction Conventions for the 2023 Hugo Awards, reported [Locusmag.com](http://locusmag.com).

BEST NOVEL: *Legends & Lattes* by Travis Baldree, *Nettle & Bone* by T. Kingfisher (Ursula Vernon), *The Spare Man* by Mary Robinette Kowal, *The Daughter of Doctor Moreau* by Silvia Moreno-Garcia, *Nona the Ninth* by Tamsyn Muir, and *The Kaiju Preservation Society* by John Scalzi. **BEST NOVELLA:** *A Mirror Mended* by Alix E. Harrow, *What Moves the Dead* by T. Kingfisher, *Where the Drowned Girls Go* by Seanan McGuire, *Even Though I Knew the End* by C.L. Polk, *Ogres* by Adrian Tchaikovsky, and *Into the Riverlands* by Nghi Vo.

BEST NOVELETTE: “If You Find Yourself Speaking to God, Address God with the Informal You” by John Chu, “Murder By Pixel: Crime and Responsibility in the Digital Darkness” by S.L. Huang, “A Dream of Electric Mothers” by Wole Talabi, “The Difference Between Love and Time” by Catherynne M. Valente, “We Built This City” by Marie Vibbert, and “The Space-Time Painter” by Hai Ya. **BEST SHORT STORY:** “The White Cliff” by Lu Ban, “On the Razor’s Edge” by Jiang Bo, “Rabbit Test” by Samantha Mills, “Resurrection” by Ren Qing, “Zhurong on Mars” by Regina Kanyu Wang, and “D.I.Y.” by John Wiswell.

BEST SERIES: *Rivers of London* Series by Ben Aaronovitch, *The Founders Trilogy* by Robert Jackson Bennett, *October Daye* by Seanan McGuire, *The Locked Tomb* Series by Tamsyn Muir, *The Scholomance* Series by Naomi Novik, and *Children of Time* Series by Adrian Tchaikovsky. **BEST GRAPHIC STORY OR COMIC:** *Cyberpunk 2077: Big City Dreams*, *Dune: The Official Movie Graphic Novel*, *Monstress, Volume 7: Devourer*, *Once & Future, Volume 4: Monarchies in the UK*, *Saga, Volume 10*, and *Supergirl: Woman of Tomorrow*. **BEST RELATED WORK:** *Blood, Sweat & Chrome: The Wild and True Story of Mad Max: Fury Road* by Kyle Buchanan, *Chinese Science Fiction: An Oral History, Volume 1* by Yang Feng, “The Ghost of Workshops Past” by S.L. Huang, *Buffalito World Outreach Project* by Lawrence M. Schoen, *Still Just a Geek: An Annotated Memoir* by Wil Wheaton, and *Terry Pratchett: A Life With Footnotes* by Rob Wilkins.

BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION, LONG FORM: *Avatar: The Way of Water*, *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*, *Everything Everywhere All at Once*, *Nope*, *Severance*, *Season One*, and *Turning Red*. **BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION, SHORT FORM:** *Andor: “One Way Out,” Andor: “Rix Road,” The Expanse: “Babylon’s Ashes,” For All Man-*

kind: “Stranger in a Strange Land,” She-Hulk: Attorney at Law: “Whose Show is This?” and Stranger Things: “Chapter Four: Dear Billy.”

BEST EDITOR, SHORT FORM: Scott H. Andrews, Neil Clarke, Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki, Sheree Renée Thomas, Xu Wang, and Feng Yang. **BEST EDITOR, LONG FORM:** Ruoxi Chen, Lindsey Hall, Lee Harris, Sarah Peed, Huan Yan, and Haijun Yao. **BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST:** Sija Hong, Kuri Huang, Paul Lewin, Alyssa Winans, Jian Zhang, and Enzhe Zhao.

BEST SEMIPROZINE: *Escape Pod*, *FIYAH*, *khōrēō*, *PodCastle*, *Strange Horizons*, and *Uncanny*. **BEST FANZINE:** *Chinese Academic SF Express*, *Galactic Journey*, *Journey Planet*, *Nerds of a Feather*, *Unofficial Hugo Book Club Blog*, and *Zero Gravity Newspaper*. **BEST FANCAST:** *Coode Street Podcast*, *Hugo*, *Girl!*, *Hugos There*, *Kalanadi*, *Octothorpe*, and *Worldbuilding for Masochists*.

BEST FAN WRITER: Chris M. Barkley, Bitter Karella, Arthur Liu, RiverFlow, Jason Sanford, and Örjan Westin. **BEST FAN ARTIST:** Iain J. Clark, Richard Man, Laya Rose, Alison Scott, España Sheriff, and Orion Smith.

LODESTAR AWARD FOR BEST YOUNG ADULT BOOK [Not a Hugo Award]: *Dreams Bigger Than Heartbreak* by Charlie Jane Anders, *Bloodmarked* by Tracy Deonn, *In the Serpent’s Wake* by Rachel Hartman, *Akata Woman* by Nnedi Okorafor, *The Golden Enclaves* by Naomi Novik, and *Osmo Unknown and the Eightpenny Woods* by Catherynne M. Valente. **ASTOUNDING AWARD FOR BEST NEW WRITER** [Not a Hugo Award]: Travis Baldree, Naseem Jamnia, Isabel J. Kim, Maijia Liu, Everina Maxwell, and Weimu Xin.

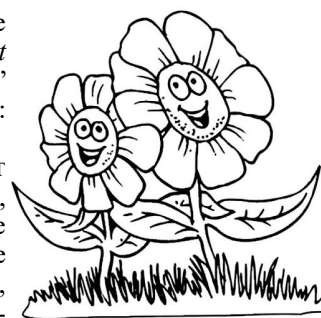
Only Chengdu Worldcon members will be able to vote on the final ballot and choose the winners for the 2023 Hugo Awards. The 2023 Hugo Awards, the Lodestar Award, and the Astounding Award will be presented on Saturday evening, October 21, at a formal ceremony at Chengdu Worldcon. The 81st World Science Fiction Convention, Chengdu Worldcon, will take place in Chengdu, China, October 18-22.

ALAN ARKIN PASSES AWAY

Alan Arkin died June 29. He was 89 years old, reported [Locusmag.com](http://locusmag.com). Though best known as an actor and director, Arkin also wrote SF, including stories “Whiskaboom” (1955) and “People Soup” (1958) in *Galaxy*, “The Amazing Grandy” (2001) in *F&SF*, and novel *The Clearing* (1986).

Alan Wolf Arkin was born March 26, 1934, in Brooklyn, NY, and moved with his family to Los Angeles when he was 11. He took acting classes at Los Angeles State College of Applied Arts and Sciences (later California State University, Los Angeles) before transferring to Bennington College in Vermont.

He was active in the Vermont folk music community, and his first film role was in *Calypso Heat Wave* (1957), where he appeared with his band the Tarriers. After that,



he focused on stage performance, including time with improv troupes in Chicago and eventually roles on Broadway. His first major movie role was in Cold War satire *The Russians Are Coming, The Russians Are Coming* (1966), and he went on to appear in scores of films. He was most famous for comedic roles in films *Catch-22* (1970) and *Little Miss Sunshine* (2006); he won an Academy Award for the latter. He also wrote and directed for the stage and screen.

Arkin was married three times, to Jeremy Yaffe, Barbara Dana, and Suzanne Newlander; Newlander survives him, along with two sons from his first marriage and one from his second.

SUPERMAN AND LOIS RENEWED, CAST CUT BY SEVEN REGULARS

by Eric Diaz, nerdist.com, 6-15-23

Fans of the Kent family have good reason to rejoice. By all reports, The CW has renewed *Superman and Lois* for an abbreviated fourth season. In normal times, a renewal for *Superman and Lois* would be a no-brainer, as it's one of CW's better-performing shows. But with The CW shifting away from original scripted programming under its new management, the fate of the series was very much up in the air.

However, *Superman and Lois*' good news comes along with some bad news for another DC Comics-related series, *Gotham Knights* – which is ending after only one short season. This leaves *Superman and Lois* as the final DC Comics-related series on the CW, which has been home to eight series based on DC properties, with six of them occupying the Arrowverse. All series, including this one, were produced by Greg Berlanti. *Superman and Lois* is only tangentially related to the Arrowverse. Both Tyler Hoechlin and Elizabeth Tulloch originated their roles in episodes of *Supergirl*, but these versions exist on a separate Earth in the Multiverse.

Things will be different for *Superman and Lois* in season four, however. The network has reduced the episode count from 13 to 10. It reduced the budget as well, which likely means fewer fights in tights and big effects, and more family drama. It also means they are reducing the rather large cast due to budgetary concerns. According to TV Line, seven series regulars have been cut: Dylan Walsh, Emmanuelle Chriqui, Erik Valdez, Inde Navarrette, Wolé Parks, Tayler Buck, and Sofia Hasmik. This leaves only four series regulars returning for *Superman and Lois* season four. These are Tyler Hoechlin (as Clark Kent/Superman), Elizabeth Tulloch (as Lois Lane) and

Alex Garfin and Michael Bishop as the duos twin sons, Jordan and Jonathan Kent. Michael Cudlitz, who will play Lex Luthor, will become a season regular as well.

With the WGA strike in full effect, it might be some time before production begins on season four.



ON THE CONVENTION FRONT:

BUBONICON 54 JUST SIX WEEKS AWAY

by Craig Chrissinger, con chair

Bubonicon, New Mexico's annual science fiction convention, celebrates its 54th edition August 25-27 at the Albuquerque Marriott Uptown, 2101 Louisiana Blvd NE (at I-40). More than 40 authors, artists, scientists & fans will be participating in programming.

Recently, Ursula Vernon and Kevin Sonney had to cancel their appearance as Toastmaster Duo since Vernon will be in the middle of chemo therapy for Stage 2 breast cancer (she also is immunocompromised).

As such, Kelly Robson of Toronto (Canada) has stepped in to be Bubonicon 54's Toastmaster. Robson is the Nebula Award-winning author of *High Times in the Low Parliament*, *Gods, Monsters and the Lucky Peach*, *Alias Space and Other Stories*, and more.

Ness Brown, astrophysicist grad student in New York City and author of *The Scourge Between Stars*, is the Science Speaker this year. Brown used to live in New Mexico and is looking forward to getting a fix of green chile.

With the additions of Robson and Ness, this year's convention features special guest talent from Colorado, Missouri, Canada, New York, and New Mexico. Guests of Honor for Bubonicon 54 are New Mexico novelist Rebecca Roanhorse and Colorado writer Carrie Vaughn; Guest Artist is Rachael Mayo of Missouri; Toastmaster is Robson; and Brown is Science Speaker.

We also are happy to have with us (among others) John Barnes, J.C. Cervantes, Peri Charlifou, Yvonne Coats, Gordon Garb, Loretta Hall, Reese Hogan, Betsy James, Darynda Jones, Carolyn Kay, Chaz Kemp, Jeffe Kennedy, Elizabeth Leggett, Jane Lindskold, George RR Martin, Arkady Martine, Susan Matthews, Wil McCarthy, Benjamin Radford, John Maddox Roberts, Diana Rowland, Joan Saberhagen, Vivian Shaw, Melinda M. Snodgrass, S.M. Stirling, David Lee Summers, Lauren C. Tefteau, Ian Tregillis, Sarena Ulibarri, Robert E. Vardeman, Walter Jon Williams, and Connie & Courtney Willis.

At least \$500 from Friday's charity auction and a portion of any Bubonicon 54 profits will benefit the ENMU Williamson Library Collection, Roadrunner Food Bank, World Food Kitchen, and possibly NM PBS.

Bubonicon 54 opens with Pre-Registered check-in 1:00-2:30 pm Friday the 25th, 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 "Across the Multiverse (Alternate Dimensions, Parallel Worlds)." The five tracks of programming at the Marriott are fairly full, so don't be surprised if you're torn between attending two or three panels/readings at a time! And by the way, we again are using Carlsbad for the con office, so smaller program will be in Salon G (across from Cimarron/Las Cruces).

Two Programming Notes – Jessica Coyle will serve as Mistress of Ceremonies for the Costume Contest at 7:00 pm Saturday; with her Green Slime Awards remain-

ing at halftime. Geneva Schult is organizing the costuming event, and has judges lined up. And the Charity Auction on Friday remains at the earlier time of 9:10 pm.

Don't forget about the hospitality suite—located on the Top Floor. The Con Suite will be serving individually wrapped snack items and canned drinks, and patrons will place orders at a counter. Sadly, there again will be no Sunday Afternoon Tea (so the Con Suite will stay open until 12 Noon that day).

Gaming takes place in two rooms by the Art Show and also on the 2nd Floor. The Dealers Room, which is full for 2023, is in the usual space.

Art Show rules/forms are now online as PDF files on the Bubonicon website. One change for the Art Show – It is back to having a Silent Auction. Bidding on pieces goes until 12 Noon Sunday (unless you claim the Quick Sale Price). Plan ahead if you really want a specific art piece!

There will be a Dead Dog (post-con gathering) 7:30-11:30 pm in the hospitality suite, hosted by Eric Klammer, Mark Gillespie, Geneva Schult and Michelle Melen-dez. Again, mostly single-serve items will be on hand.

We need volunteer workers (go-fers 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 18, at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church on Ponderosa NE (home of ASFS).

Passes for the whole weekend are \$48 if purchased by August 11. After that, you'll have to wait to pay \$55 at the door. Daily memberships are \$20 Friday, \$30 Saturday and \$15 Sunday. Youths 13-19 years old are \$28 for the whole weekend. Children under 13 years are free when accompanied by an adult.

There are two ways to pay: Send payment with the registration form to arrive by August 11 to Bubonicon Inc at 933 San Mateo Blvd NE, Suite 500-208, Albuquerque, NM 87108; or use your PayPal account/Credit Card on our website (make sure to include all names for passes).

The Bubonicon 54 special \$149 room rate (single-quad occupancy) is only guaranteed through Friday, August 4, so get your reservation now at 800-228-9290.

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

BOOK REVIEW ROUND-UP

***A House With Good Bones* by T. Kingfisher, 2023 Nightfire Books (Tor), hc \$26.99, 256 pages.**

Review by Craig W. Chrissinger

A House With Good Bones is the latest horror effort from T. Kingfisher (Ursula Vernon), and tells the story of Samantha, who has come home to North Carolina to visit her mother when her archaeology dig is shut down. Her mother lives in a secluded subdivision, and Sam is looking forward to drinking boxed wine and watching murder mystery shows in her late grandmother's house.

But something is not right about the situation. Vultures sit on the mailbox and circle the area, her mother has painted the walls a sterile white and rehung a Confederate wedding photo over the fireplace, and now she jumps at the smallest noises and seems to be looking around for

someone who isn't there.

As Sam tries to figure out what is going on and what has her mom so frightened in her own home, she begins hearing voices and is filled with nervous dread by the magazine-worthy rose bushes planted by her "Gran Mae" out back. It just might be that some secrets are better left alone rather than being dug up.

This book is a satisfying Southern Gothic tale with a creepiness that slowly builds through it until a dramatic and chilling conclusion. Kingfisher is becoming quite the champion of dark stories that are scary, witty, and charismatic. Well worth reading.

***In the Lives of Puppets* by TJ Klune, 2023 Tor Books, hc \$28.99, 432 pages.**

Review by Jessica Coyle

TJ Klune, the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The House in the Cerulean Sea* and *Under the Whispering Door*, tackles a far-future retelling of Pinocchio in his latest novel. *In the Lives of Puppets* follows the story of Victor Lawson, a young man who lives in the woods with his robot father, Giovanni Lawson, and his robot friends, Nurse Ratched and Rambo. Vic, who has been raised by the robots and never seen another human, salvages and repairs an android he discovers in the dump he often explores. The android, whom they decide to call Hap based on his partially destroyed serial number, remembers nothing of his life before Vic reactivates him.

Shortly after Hap is reactivated, the family is discovered by other robots, who destroy their home and kidnap Giovanni. This forces Victor and his friends to venture out of the forest on the long journey to the City of Electric Dreams, where they hope to enlist the help of the Blue Fairy to rescue Giovanni and restore their family.

Klune is one of my favorite currently working authors, and *In the Lives of Puppets* does not disappoint. Vic is a wonderfully developed character, and both his physical and emotional journey through the novel are handled well. The robot characters are equally fleshed-out; I particularly loved Rambo, a robotic vacuum with deep emotions and an infectious joy. I highly recommend this novel to anyone who enjoys stories with an emotional connection.

***The Scourge Between Stars* by Ness Brown, 2023 Nightfire Books (Tor), tp \$16.99, 166 pages.**

Review by Craig W. Chrissinger

In Ness Brown's debut, a massive generational starship is limping back to Earth after a failed colony attempt on a distant planet. Jacklyn Albright becomes acting captain after her father mentally checks out, and it's her responsibility to keep the possible last of humanity alive. They face constant threats of starvation and destruction in the interstellar space during their long voyage to a home that may not be able to sustain life any longer.

Unrest is spreading through the ship, and then a new threat appears. Some unknown intruder is killing crew members in grim, bloody fashion.

The Scourge Between Stars is a fast read with a sense of tension that builds. It is a good first effort for Brown, though parts will remind readers of the plot and feel of *Alien*. Brown gives good descriptions of the ship, the people and the interstellar threat in a short space. It will be interesting to see what they come up with next in their fiction when not working as an Astrophysics grad student.

ASFS MEETING REPORTS —

FEB 2023: ANNUAL CLUB AUCTION

The annual Club Auction drew 34 people to St. Andrew's Activity Room, and plenty of bidding. All in all, the Auction raised almost \$400 for ASFS. Thank you to Auctioneers Robert Vardeman & Patricia Rogers, money trackers Mandy Self & Jessica Coyle, and item organizers Geneva Schult and Roberta Johnson.

Some of the more interesting items included a NM Trivia Game signed by Bruce King \$8, a Halloween tray and plates \$5, a stack of DVDs and Blu-Rays \$15, a tin rocket toy \$30, a *Doctor Who* postcard set in box \$75, *Starship Troopers* game \$10, Peri Charlifu Cthulhu piggy bank \$35, three Can't Stop the *Serenity* patches \$15, corral of Breyer horse figures \$5, stack of books \$10, bag of Minion stuff \$2, Peri Charlifu Lovecraft box \$25, and fidget toys \$8.

MARCH 2023: LYNN BARKER VISIT

Twenty-five people were present as local author and screenwriter Lynn Barker talked about her career in Hollywood and becoming friends with *Star Trek*'s D.C. Fontana.

"I went to San Francisco after college," she said. "I got a job at KRON-TV, but I didn't want to be on-air talent. I visited the set of *McMillan & Wife*, and fell in love with fictional shows. I ended up at CBS as an assistant to a producer. I wrote a letter to D.C. Fontana, and she called me a week later to meet her for dinner at a place near Paramount. I sold stories to *Space Academy* and its spin-off *Jason of Star Command*, which is when I got my WGA credit."

Barker said she wrote several scripts that were never produced, for such shows as *Hawaii 5-0*, *Knight Rider*, Spielberg's *Amazing Stories* ("that one hurt"), and *Quantum Leap*. For *Twilight Zone*, she wrote three scripts, but only two were made into episodes.

Asked about her *Quantum Leap* effort, Barker said it involved Sam having to help Native Americans who are defending their land against developers.

"I also sold an indie movie, but the money fell through - twice" she said. "That gave me an ulcer."

She said the novel she wrote with Fontana, *Futurus Rex*, is based on a script they did, which may have been ahead of its time. The short book is set in a far-future Britain with a resurrected King Arthur.

Barker read from three sections of the book, and then read the eulogy she did for Fontana in December 2019. Barker said they were friends for more than 40 years, and that Fontana also was a mentor. The did belly dancing together, joined the SCA, and helped Bob and Kathy Burns with their elaborate Halloween house shows.

Barker ended her visit by playing guitar and singing "UFO Ditty," which she wrote with Fontana.

APRIL 2023: WAGNER'S OPERA TALK

Twenty-one people came to the week-late meeting to hear Rick Walter talk on "Richard Wagner's Made-Up Myth," which centered on the annotated books he's written on Wagner's magnum opus, *The Ring Cycle* (beginning with *The Rhine Gold* (*Das Rheingold*)).

Walter said that before Wagner, Germany really wasn't a country, but instead a batch of independent city states. It

did have an old poem, *The Nibelungenlied* ("The Song of the Burgundians"), which existed in hundreds of versions. Wagner, a megalomaniac composer, conductor and storyteller, decided to manufacture a new myth for Germany. *The Ring of the Nibelung* was completed in 1852, and told the tale of a lustful dwarf hungry for power. It includes a ring of power, a sword that was broken, an underground arm, a dragon sleeping on a treasure trove, a fortress in the sky, and an orphan hero and a white-bearded old man who advises him. First performed in 1876, it consists of four parts.

"It took Wotan, a corrupt ruler, and three generations for the ring to return to the Rhine River, and it took Wagner four evenings to spin the tale," Walter said. "He staged the four operas over a week on four separate days, with the highest tech he could assemble."

Walter said the operas often remind people of *The Lord of the Rings*, *Star Wars: A New Hope*, the *Harry Potter* series, and *A Game of Thrones*. But it also influenced *The Chronicles of Prydain* by Lloyd Alexander, *Conan the Barbarian*, and Lin Carter's *The Wizard of Lemuria*.

"Most of the *Ring Cycle* is not genuine myth," Walter stated. "It was Wagner's invention, but billions think it's an actual German myth. The whole thing is 15 hours long. Wagner also did operas based on medieval mythology and Arthurian legend. His *Flying Dutchman* is a ghost story."

Walter also has worked as a translator for new editions of Jules Verne's works. "I read them as a kid and they were thrilling, but they seemed to have dumb things in them," he noted. "I couldn't figure them out. For instance I was reading *20,000 Leagues* and the English translation had the harpooner start a fire using a bean. Years later, I happened upon a French version and the original made more sense.

"A lot of English translations were slapped together because Verne had become popular," he continued. "And some of the translators weren't scientists - they missed things. I ended up doing the translations because I loved Verne so much as a kid. I was one of the first to re-do the translations, but now there are many other translations."

To end the evening, Walter gave away a set of the four *Ring* books in a drawing, and Charlie Fitch was the winner.

EDITOR NOTES THAT FIT THIS SPACE

- **MORE THAN HALF OF 2023** IS over now, and it seems to be fairly racing by. Of course, July may seem to go on forever with the above-normal heat New Mexico (and the West) are sweltering through. We need our monsoon rains! With the WGA strike, we've been watching a lot of shows on streaming services - such as *Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, *Ted Lasso*, *The Mandalorian* Season 3, *Shrinking*, *Platonic*, and *Secret Invasion*. Plus old shows like *My Name Is Earl* and *The Munsters*. We did enjoy *Guardians of the Galaxy 3* and John Carpenter's *Christine* at movie theaters.

- **THE 1ST MORGUE & KRYPT HORROR FEST** was interesting, though not as well-attended as hoped. Jessica and I were there, working Don's Bookstore booth, and also had a chance to check out the other vendors. We found some cool stuff, and the event seemed to be well run. We're hoping the fans who organized it did okay financially.

- **HARD TO BELIEVE BUBONICON 54** will be here in just six weeks. Yikes! Still so much to do - now and at the con. We definitely need assistance, as usual, at the con...

- **OUT OF ROOM!** Many thanks to Jessica C for her book review. Next *ASFacts* will be in October - Submissions are needed! Stay well, keep safe, see you at Bubonicon. -Craig C