



## SPOOKY "THE ECLIPSE IS HERE" OCTOBER EDITION

# ASFACTS 2023



## GREEN SLIME AWARDS ANNOUNCED

In a ceremony August 26 during Bubonicon 54, Green Slime Mistress Jessica L. Coyle (with assistance from the Slime Time Puppets) presented the following with recognition of their wretchedness in the last 12 months:

**FOOD:** *Lucky Charms Oatmeal* (Hot mushy mess, artificial vanilla flavor can be over-powering, marshmallows are gummy and melt oddly).

**BOOK:** *Silk Fire* by Zabé Ellor (alternates between being overly edgy & trying to be poetic, characters feel like they came from the set of *Gossip Girl*, portrayals of women are one-dimensional, painfully repetitive internal monologs, backwards worldbuilding with things thrown in for coolness).

**TELEVISION:** *Gotham Knights* (sad & destined to be ignored footnote to The CW's DC run, stale writing, characters are hollow archetypes, defaults to a grim tone with lots of teen drama).

**COMEDIC MOVIE:** *Haunted Mansion* (Nine-minute ride stretched to an overlong length, oddly specific and distracting product placements, a clattering mess, never scary and only sporadically funny, generic haunted house movie, middling entertainment and lifeless).

**SCI-FI MOVIE:** *Gray Matter* (Young girl has powers but we're not told their significance or how they interplay with the world at large, sad mashup of *The X-Men* and *Firestarter*, feels like result of a focus group creating a generic superhero franchise, lethargic pacing and lifeless, pedestrian script, flat dialog, a dull slog).

**HORROR MOVIE:** *Winnie the Pooh: Blood and Honey* (Rock-bottom joint that fails to meet the most basic expectations set up by its conceptual gimmick – Pooh and timid friend Piglet are all grown up and have become serial killers and that's about it right there, barely any framing or narrative, no sense of the Winnie the Pooh story or nostalgia or even parody/basic humor, unrelievedly grim, lack of talent in front of and behind the camera, embarrassing kind-of-bootleg masks, frequently underlit).

## EARTH WILL EXPERIENCE TWO ECLIPSES THIS MONTH

by Brett Tingley, [space.com](http://space.com) 10-5-23

An annular solar eclipse and a partial lunar eclipse make October an exciting month for skywatchers. Both the sun and the moon will experience eclipses this month, although seeing them both in person could be tricky.

The October 14 annular solar eclipse will be visible

from eight states in the US Southwest (including New Mexico). This type of eclipse happens when the moon is slightly farther away from Earth than usual, making it appear too small to block out the entire sun and instead leave a thin "ring of fire" visible.

The annular solar eclipse begins in New Mexico at 10:30 am MT with the speed of the Moon's shadow being 3005 mph. The annular solar eclipse leaves New Mexico at 10:46 am and the Moon's shadow diminishes to 2108 mph. The maximum duration of annularity in New Mexico is 4 minutes and 46 seconds.

And later in the month, on Oct. 28, a partial lunar eclipse will be visible from much of the Eastern Hemisphere, including Europe, Africa, Asia, Antarctica and Oceania. During the partial lunar eclipse, the moon will pass through Earth's shadow, making it appear less bright than usual. The partial lunar eclipse will begin at 1:36 pm MT (1936 GMT) and end at 2:53 pm (2053 GMT).

The next annular eclipse will take place on Oct. 2, 2024, when a ring of fire will be visible from the Pacific Ocean and parts of South America.

But eclipse watchers have another event to be excited about: A total solar eclipse on April 8, 2024, that is already being hailed as the "Great American Eclipse."

In fact, the "ring of fire" annular eclipse on Oct. 14 is being used as a "warm-up" by scientists who are preparing to conduct atmospheric and heliospheric research during the upcoming 2024 total eclipse.

The Oct. 28 partial lunar eclipse is the second lunar eclipse of the year after a penumbral lunar eclipse on May 5. That eclipse saw the full Flower Moon pass through the outermost part of Earth's shadow, known as the penumbra.

## UPCOMING ASFS MEETINGS

- **October 13 (Tonight):** Benjamin Radford returns to talk on "Friday the 13th: Curses, Luck, and Superstitions." Plus club officer elections & Holiday Cook-Off discussion...
- **November 10:** Author/Scientist Ian Tregillis gives a pseudo-science talk on "The Math of *Wild Cards*."
- **December 8:** Our Holiday Social, with food treats & video amusements. Plus, the annual issue of *SITHFACTS* (deadline 6 pm Mon, Dec 4).
- **January 12, 2024:** Club reports/discussion on what members read in 2023...
- **February 9, 2024:** Unknown! The Valentine's *ASFACTS* will be published (deadline Feb 5).
- **March 8, 2024:** Again unknown! Maybe the annual Club Auction? Or a Science Talk?

**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: [cwrcraig@nmia.com](mailto:cwrcraig@nmia.com). *ASFACTS* published February, April, July & October for the Albuquerque SF Society. *SITHFACTS* out each December. **NEXT DEADLINE: Mon, Dec 4.**  
**Club Officers:** Jessica Coyle & Craig Chrissinger, co-Zec Secs (505) 266-8905. Troy Stull, Moderator. Mike McCommas, Alternator. HAL 9000, Advisor. Jack Skellington, Pumpkin King. **Bubonicon Chair:** Craig Chrissinger, google voice (505) 559-0931. [www.bubonicon.com](http://www.bubonicon.com)

While lunar eclipses can be viewed with the unaided or unprotected eye, witnessing solar eclipses requires the right protection. To safely view the Oct. 14 annular solar eclipse or any other solar eclipse, you must use certified solar filters at all times. Even cameras, binoculars and telescopes will need these filters.

## 2023 DRAGON AWARDS ANNOUNCED

Dragon Con announced the winners for the 2023 Dragon Awards during Labor Day weekend in Atlanta, GA. They include one of Bubonicon's author friends.

BEST SCIENCE FICTION NOVEL: *The Icarus Plot* by Timothy Zahn, BEST FANTASY NOVEL (INCLUDING PARANORMAL): *Witch King* by Martha Wells, BEST YOUNG ADULT / MIDDLE GRADE NOVEL: *The Golden Enclaves* by Naomi Novik, BEST ALTERNATE HISTORY NOVEL: *Lost In Time* by A.G. Riddle,

BEST HORROR NOVEL: *A House With Good Bones* by T. Kingfisher (Ursula Vernon), BEST ILLUSTRATIVE COVER: *Tower of Silence* by Larry Correia, art by Kurt Miller, BEST COMIC BOOK OR GRAPHIC NOVEL: *Dune: House Harkonnen* by Brian Herbert, Kevin J Anderson & Michael Shelfer, BEST SCIENCE FICTION OR FANTASY TV SERIES, TV OR INTERNET: *The Sandman*, and BEST SCIENCE FICTION OR FANTASY MOVIE: *Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves*.

The winners of the 2023 Julie Award for lifetime achievement in multiple genres and the 2023 Mike Resnick Award for an unpublished SF story by a new author were also announced during the same ceremony. Julie Award: Marty Krofft, and Mike Resnick Memorial Award Winner: "For the Great and Immortal" by Daniel Burnbridge.

Winners in various gaming-related categories were also announced.

## 2022 SIDEWISE NOMINEES RELEASED

The finalists for the 2022 Sidewise Awards for Alternate History were announced in late August. They include two former Bubonicon Guests of Honor – Harry Turtledove and Michael Cassutt.

LONG FORM: *The Peacekeeper* by B.L. Blanchard, *Babel* by R.F. Kuang, *Appliance* by J.O. Morgan, *Begin the World Over* by Kung Li Sun, *Three Miles Down* by Harry Turtledove, and *Beat the Devils* by Josh Weiss.

SHORT FORM: "Kingsbury 1944" by Michael Cassutt, "A Sky and a Heaven" by Eric Choi, *It's Real Life* by Paul Levinson, "Why the Bridgemaisters of York Don't Pay Taxes" by Gillian Polack, and "Dreams of Electric Mothers" by Wole Talabi.



The Sidewise Awards have been presented since 1995 to recognize excellence in alternate historical fiction. Winners will be announced during the World Fantasy Convention in Kansas City MO, to be held October 26-29 at the Sheraton Kansas City Hotel at Crown Center.

## SF BOOK GROUP READS ON

The Droids & Dragons SF Book Group meets 7:30 pm Monday, October 16, inside Jason's Deli (northwest corner of Louisiana & America's Parkway NE) to discuss *The Hollow Places* by T. Kingsher (Ursula Vernon). The group then meets November 20 to talk about *The Scourge Between Stars* by Ness Brown.

Meetings of D&D are open to all interested readers on the 3rd Monday 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 mrsransom@hotmail.com or Craig at 266-8905.

## MICHAEL FLYNN DIES

SF writer Michael Flynn died September 30 at home in Easton, PA. He was 75 years old, reports Locusmag.com.

Michael Francis Flynn was born in 1947 in Easton, PA, and attended La Salle University, where he earned a BS, and Marquette University, where he got his Master's degree in topology. He worked as an engineer and statistician, and lived in Colorado and New Jersey before returning to settle in his hometown.

He began publishing short fiction in 1984, and soon became a regular in *Analog*, as well as publishing widely in other venues; some of his work appeared under the name Rowland Shew. Notable stories include Hugo Award finalists "Eifelheim" (1986), "The Forest of Time" (1987), "The Clapping Hands of God" (2004), and "The Journeyman: In the Stone House" (2014); Hugo and Sturgeon Award finalists "Melodies of the Heart" (1994) and "Dawn, and Sunset, and the Colours of the Earth" (2006); Sturgeon Award winner "House of Dreams" (1997); and Sidewise Award winner "Quaestiones Super Caelo et Mundo" (2007). Some of his short work is collected in *The Nanotech Chronicles* (1991), *The Forest of Time and Other Stories* (1997), and *Captive Dreams* (2012).

Debut novel *In the Country of the Blind* appeared in 1990, and won Prometheus and Compton Crook Awards. Other standalone novels include Campbell Memorial Award finalist *The Wreck of The River of Stars* (2003) and Hugo Award finalist *Eifelheim* (2006), the latter expanded from his Hugo-nominated novella from two decades earlier. His Firestar series is *Firestar* (1996), *Rogue Star* (1998), *Lodestar* (2000), and *Falling Stars* (2001), and the Spiral Arm series includes *The January Dancer* (2008), *Up Jim River* (2010), *In the Lion's Mouth* (2012), and *On the Razor's Edge* (2013). He co-wrote *Fallen Angels* (1991) with Larry Niven & Jerry Pournelle.

Flynn received the Robert A. Heinlein Award for hard SF inspiring space exploration in 2003.

## LE GUIN SHORT FILMS ON LITHUB

The Ursula K. Le Guin Foundation announced in mid-September *The Journey That Matters*, a six-installment series of short films is on LitHub. They feature never-before-seen footage of Le Guin discussing her life and childhood, her writing, and more, as well as interviews with Adrienne Maree Brown, Julie Phillips, Nisi Shawl, and others.

The series was created by director Arwen Curry in collaboration with the foundation. The shorts contain unused raw material from Curry's award-winning documentary *The Worlds of Ursula K. Le Guin* (2018).

The first installment in the series, "What it Was Like," is available for screening on LitHub. Subsequent shorts will be available from LitHub each Wednesday through October 18, and will also be available for streaming on Project.

## CITY DEDICATES AVENUE TO BUTLER

On July 29, 2023, the city of Lake Forest Park, WA, held a ceremony to name a section of 37th Avenue NE "Octavia Butler Avenue," in honor of author Octavia E. Butler. The section includes the house where Butler lived from 1999 until her death in 2006. The ceremony was opened by city council vice-chair Phillippa Kassover, deputy mayor Tom French, and council member Tracy Furutani. Other speakers included Caren Gussoff Sumption, Sheila Liming, and Terry Morgan.

## 2023 SCRIBE AWARD WINNERS

The International Association of Media Tie-in Writers (IAMTW) announced the winners of the 2023 Scribe Awards on July 21 at Comic Con, honoring excellence in licensed media tie-in writing.

SPECULATIVE NOVEL: *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds: The High Country* by John Jackson Miller, GENERAL/ADAPTED NOVEL: *Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Firewall* by James Swallow, GRAPHIC NOVEL: *Kolchak: the Night Stalker* by James Aquilone, David Avallone, Rodney Barnes, James Chambers, Nancy A. Collins, Peter David, Gabriel Hardman, Jonathan Maberry, R.C. Matheson, Kim Newman, Steve Niles, & Tim Waggoner, AUDIO DRAMA: *Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Firewall* by Sebastian Baczkiewicz & Paul Cornell, and YOUNG ADULT/MIDDLE GRADE: *Squirrel Girl: Universe* by Tristan Palmgren.

The winners were announced at San Diego Comic Con. For more information about the Scribe Awards, see the IAMTW website.

## TREK 4 WRITER CONFIRMS IT IS "STILL ON THE TRACKS"

by Samantha Coley, collider.com 09-25-2023

*Star Trek* fans can look forward to another installment in the reboot series, although it may take some time before it hits the big screen.

Lindsey Anderson Beer, the writer/director of the upcoming *Pet Sematary: Bloodlines* prequel movie, ex-

pressed her love for the *Star Trek* project and hinted at its positive progress.

While the script may have changed hands, the studio has not abandoned *Star Trek 4*, and director Matt Shakman confirmed that they are still working on a version of the project he was involved in before he moved to *Fantastic Four*.

*Star Trek* fans have had a feast of content over the past six years with *Star Trek: Discovery* kicking off a renaissance of television shows following Starfleet's best and brightest on some of the most thrilling adventures the galaxy has ever seen. However, none of the currently or recently airing *Star Trek* shows would've been possible without the wild success of the reboot movies following Chris Pine and Zachary Quinto as the iconic Captain Kirk and Mr. Spock. With an alternate origin story, the movie franchise boldly hit theaters in 2009 and spawned two sequel movies with *Star Trek: Into Darkness* remixing the *Wrath of Khan* in 2013, and *Star Trek: Beyond* telling a whole new story in 2016.

Now, seven years later, fans are still clamoring for another installment in the now-loved reboot series. During a conversation about her upcoming *Pet Sematary* prequel movie, writer/director Anderson Beer spoke with Collider's Perri Nemiroff about the status of her long-in-development follow-up to *Star Trek: Beyond*. While it sounds like things are likely still in the early stages, Anderson Beer sounded positive about the likelihood that we'll still be getting that fourth movie.

As she told Nemiroff: "It is, it's still on the tracks. I love that project, and it was another one that I had to hop off of to direct this movie, and that was a hard thing to do. But I love that everybody involved with that project."

*Star Trek 4*, was initially set for production in the back half of 2022, but that first announcement jumped the phaser a bit as it also surprised the stars who were reportedly set to return at the time. While it looks like Anderson Beer may no longer be penning the script for this one, it does sound like the studio hasn't abandoned the project. Director Matt Shakman shared similar comments with Collider earlier this year. Shakman was slated to direct the fourth movie, however, he too had to step away from the project when he was tapped to helm the upcoming *Fantastic Four* movie which is set to introduce the super team to the MCU. Shakman told Editor-In-Chief Steve Weintraub, "I think what they're still working on is a version of what I have been working on for the time that I was involved."

While it may be a while before the movie fully gets off the ground, *Star Trek* fans can rest assured knowing that the project is still on the table.

## SHAPE-SHIFTING CAT COP STARS IN NEW WILD CARDS RELEASE

by Cheryl Eddy, gizmodo.com 10-01-2023

George R.R. Martin's Wild Cards shared-world universe series continues with a new graphic novel that arrived October 3. *George R.R. Martin Presents: Wild Cards: Sins of the Father* is written by Melinda M. Snodgrass and illustrated by Michael Komarck and Elizabeth Leggett, and io9 got a preview.

Here's what *Sins of the Father* is about, including some *Wild Cards* backstory if you're unfamiliar with what it's all about:

A cop on the trail of a bizarre murder uncovers a hidden conspiracy—and shocking secrets about his late father – in this original graphic novel set in George R. R. Martin's shared-world universe, *Wild Cards*.

In 1946, an alien virus ravaged the world, its results as random as a hand of cards. From that fateful moment to the present day, those infected either draw the black queen and die, draw an ace and receive superpowers, or draw the joker and are bizarrely mutated. Today, Aces, Jokers, and uninfected humans live in relative peace.

Francis "Franny" Black is an uninfected human cop, trying to police a world filled with people with the extraordinary powers that he lacks. Newly – and some would say too suddenly – promoted to detective, he has been working out of Wild Card Central, the precinct in Jokertown where the bulk of the virus victims fell in 1946. Franny's father was one of the heroes of the precinct, killed in the line of duty, and Franny is finding it hard to fill his dead father's shoes. That is, until he's given a particularly insidious case and starts uncovering long-buried secrets that his father might have died to protect.

Illustrated in a gorgeous, cinematic style by Michael Komarck and Elizabeth Leggett, this unique graphic novel is a visual feast certain to delight.

## **Bubonicon 54 Happened:** **ATTENDANCE UP SOME, MONEY MADE**

by Craig Chrissinger, con chair

More people showed up this year for Bubonicon than in 2022, but it still was a smaller affair than before the Covid pandemic struck. Even so, we managed to be in the black financially. Bubonicon 54 took place August 25-27 at the ABQ Marriott Uptown with Author co-Guests of Honor Rebecca Roanhorse and Carrie Vaughn, Toastmaster Kelly Robson, Guest Artist Rachael Mayo, and Science Speaker Ness Brown.

With 632 attendees, Bubonicon 54 was small but still had 94 people more than the previous year. Attendees spent good money in the Auctions, in the Art Show and at Bubonicon's sales table – and the convention committee was frugal on spending – so we are in the black about \$2,900, which will help to rebuild our nest egg after large losses in 2022 and 2019.

People seemed happy to be in-person and given the choice of masking. All in all, the 2023 convention was a success.

With the most successful Friday night Charity Auction to date, Bubonicon 54 is able to donate \$1,850 to non-profit organizations. The Williamson Library Collection at Eastern NM University is receiving \$400, the Roadrunner Food Bank is receiving \$500, World Central Kitchen is getting \$425, the American Red Cross of NM is receiving \$210, New Mexico PBS is receiving \$175, and the Albuquerque Public Library Foundation is getting \$140.

Bubonicon 54 saw eight new programming participants – Lynn Barker, Jon Black, Ness Brown, J.C. Cervantes, J.L. Doty, Brian D. Hinson, Arkady Martine, and Viv-

ian Shaw; plus the return of Gordon Garb, Elizabeth Leggett, Benjamin Radford, M.T. Reiten, Diana Rowland, and Robert E. Vardeman.

The Art Show had 42 artists displaying their wares with sales of \$15,939 – 47.6 percent of all artwork entered was sold. The Sunday Auction was strong with sales of \$2,075 (*Froomb* went for \$50). Of that, 70.2 percent went to Bubonicon.

Bubonicon 54 marked the 10th year at the Albuquerque Marriott Uptown, and all went as well as possible. Unfortunately, lighting panels in rooms still don't work properly after the building was hit at least twice by lightning in storms that happened right before the 2018 con. The Good News is that the Marriott is expecting to fix the lighting issue before August 2024. And it remains true that a large percentage of the hotel staff are closet fans!

We tried out Ron Oakes' audio system with multiple microphones, which seemed to work out quite well overall. There was a slight learning curve, which is to be expected the first time out – and unfortunately a bag of Ron's microphone stands and some cables disappeared on Friday of the con.

COSTUME CONTEST AWARDS: Best of Show was "Plague Doctors Are Just Birds In Disguise" by Xandi Greenwall, Best Beginner was "Herbert West, Reanimator" from Malia M. Grimes, Best Intermediate was "Sun Spider and Ghost Spider" by Evie and Allie, Best Master was "Stained Glass Angel" by Karen Lopez, and Best Use of Theme went to "Doctor Donna Strange" from Laurie McFarland.

ART SHOW AWARDS: Professional to Brenna Deutchman, Amateur to Rachael Mayo, Student to Tristan Sinatra-McCracken, and Beast of Show (theme) to Alan Beck.

All in all, while we still have a few things to relearn, Bubonicon 54 went very well thanks to every individual who pitched in! So, a tip of the con-com's hats to everyone who contributed their time & efforts!

BUBONICON 55 will be held August 23-25, 2024 – normal weekend – hopefully at the Albuquerque Marriott Uptown (Louisiana & I-40), with Guests of Honor Mur Lafferty & TJ Klune, Toastmaster Duo Ursula Vernon & Kevin Sonney, and Guest Artist Dale Ray Deforest. Rooms most likely will be around \$149 single-quad with free WiFi in sleeping rooms. Con chair is Craig Chrissinger, with Jessica Coyle & Mandy Self as assistant chairs. It will take place two weeks after the Glasgow, Scotland Worldcon, and an attempt at a 3rd NM Comic Expo.

Suggestions/program ideas are being taken at bubonicon@gmail.com.

## **REVIEWS ROUND-UP**

*The Terraformers* by Annalee Newitz, 2023 Tor Books, tp \$19.99, 352 pages.

Review by Geneva Schult

Welcome to the strange, complicated, post-human, post-scarcity wonderland of the planet Sask-E (Sasky). Once a dead world, it has been engineered over millennia with human, organic and robotic efforts to "terraform" it to a luxury version of an idealized time in Earth's past, the Pleistocene. Homo sapiens are brothers to variants such as Homo diversus, and work with animal people: cats, dogs, naked mole rats, moose, to name a few, with powerful

minds. The story begins 60,000 years in the future and takes place over 1,000 years. There are three character clusters in the different time periods, all addressing sub-themes of slavery, aptitude, intelligence, and what it means to be a “Person.” The powerful corporation that is funding the terraforming is conducting some unethical commercialism, using a proprietary ecosystem development kit. The origins of the kit’s contents are not as they seem, which is a huge moral crisis in the story. There are non-homo-sapiens living in the core of a volcano on the down low on/in Sasky, and when they reveal themselves after many hundreds of years to the populace and the corporation that may or may not own them, it all hits the fan.

There is sexuality in the story, including some TMI descriptions of non-homo-sapiens sexual organs. This was during a sex scene taking place in a multi-species underground pole-dancing nightclub(!).

The entire story was certainly entertaining, and the dilemmas of ethics and morality were interesting, especially when the protagonists cleverly outmaneuvered the evil corporation. The non-protagonists were sometimes presented in a one-dimensional way, and I would have enjoyed it if they had been fleshed out more. The first third really was a wonder, and I do recommend the book based solely on that part.

***The Road to Roswell* by Connie Willis, 2023 Del Rey, hc \$28.00, 416 pages.**

**Review by Jessica Coyle**

Part alien abduction, part romantic comedy, and part road trip story, *The Road to Roswell* is the latest novel from SFWA Grand Master Connie Willis. The story follows Francie, who is on her way to Roswell, NM, for her friend Sarena’s wedding. Francie has a long history of talking Sarena out of impulsive engagements, and she is determined to stop Sarena from marrying her UFO-believer boyfriend. Francie is shocked when, shortly after reaching Roswell, she is kidnapped by a tumbleweed-like alien. The alien, who is searching for something even he seems unsure of, takes Francie on a crazy road trip throughout the Southwest.

Along the way, he kidnaps a hitchhiking con man, a UFO-believer, a little old lady, and a RVer with an obsession for old Westerns. The more time they spend together, the more Francie becomes convinced that the alien is in trouble, and she needs to help him. Will she be able to figure out what they need to do before they are caught by the alien’s people or by the federal government?

*The Road to Roswell* is an absolute delight from beginning to end. Willis proves yet again why she is a master of the genre; the book weaves a delightful mix of references to many alien, Western, and romantic comedy films with a heart-felt and funny story of found family. I loved the book from beginning to end, and highly recommend it to everyone.

## **ASFS MEETING REPORTS —**

### **MAY 2023: TWO CLIMATE FICTION AUTHORS**

Albuquerque authors Lauren C. Teffeau and Sarena Ulibarri talked about their latest releases with 29 people.

Ulibarri talked about her new novel, *Another Life*, which was being released in May. “What if there was a

23andMe-style test that could tell you who you were in a previous life,” she said. She then read from the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter in which the narrator goes to confront a reincarnation researcher about the results of the test.

Teffeau said she was “writing a lot of short fiction. I have three stories being published this year in anthologies, one based in the world of *Implanted* – all centered on climate fiction and solarpunk.”

She then read from “Trial by Fire,” a story that will be in *Solar Flare*. “They wanted something optimistic, which some people know I struggle with at times. I ended up asking what a better-managed fire season in New Mexico would look like.”

Teffeau also read a short bit from “Water Cycle,” which will be in *Solarpunk Creatures* from Ulibarri’s press. She noted, “Solarpunk is a fairly new thing.”

Ulibarri said, “Solarpunk is what a sustainable society looks like, and how we get there. It’s optimistic sci-fi dealing with climate change and a future where we’ve worked through that. I’ve edited a couple of solarpunk anthologies, and I’ve been interested in it for a while. It’s difficult to write since the problem is so immense and it’s hard to be optimistic.”

Asked about research, Teffeau replied, “How much research I do depends on the story. My background is in the social sciences, so I’m used to doing research.”

Ulibarri answered, “For *Another Life*, I did a lot of research on Death Valley – the plants, the climate, how a lake would affect the area, et cetera.”

Adding to that theme, Teffeau remarked, “Location is one of the hardest things. You’re told to write what you know, which can limit you. Traveling helps, and so does research on how things relate to each other.”

Ulibarri noted, “In climate fiction, location is even more important.”

Asked about what’s next, Teffeau said she has most of a sequel to *Implanted* written. “So that could happen. But most of the people I know at Angry Robot are no longer there, so I’m not sure of its future. I did write a horror story, which was challenging and also fun.”

Ulibarri has *Steel Tree*, a science-fiction retelling of *The Nutcracker* set on an alien planet, coming out later this year. “It should be a lot of fun,” she said. “My husband and I go to see *The Nutcracker* every year, and one time I came up with the inspiration. The novella, *The Nutcracker and The Mouse King*, is kind of weird. I have quite a range of characters – aliens, robots, cats and dogs, and sentient water.”

To end their visit, Ulibarri gave away an ARC copy of *Another Life* in a random drawing, which was won by Greg Nelson.

## **JUNE 2023: O’LEARY & PEREZ TALK FILMS**

Twenty-seven people listened as Devin O’Leary of *The Paper* and director Michael Perez talked about filmmaking in general and their latest project, *Coyote Cage*.

“The movie industry has changed quite a bit,” O’Leary noted. “They are doing very little in advance promo screenings since the pandemic. The movie studios have their own streaming services now, and are not releasing as much to theaters these days.”

Perez previously had directed *Big Mistake* from a

script by O'Leary. "We had a good time, so we wanted to do another feature together," Perez said. "We started working on the premise for *Coyote Cage* back in 2020, and then Covid hit. *Coyote Cage* has a micro-budget, but still more financing than *Big Mistake*. We've been editing for six months, and we just locked in the time-code cut version at one hour and 43 minutes."

O'Leary noted, "We looked at what films were being picked up, and not surprisingly horror is on top. In *Coyote Cage*, a group of immigrants hire a coyote to smuggle them into America. Once here, things get worse and worse. Things are even worse once they reach a safehouse, which turns out to be a horrible place. My inspiration was Hansel and Gretel, where the characters are tossed into the wilderness and then they spot a pretty house, which turns out to be a terror – the safehouse that isn't."

Perez added, "It has a lot of twists and turns, and we got a lot of Hispanic actors from across the country. Devin is a phenomenal story writer, and he has great characters and a good story sense. This probably will be distributed in 2024. Our next movie will be religious-based and supernatural. I love horror films, but I hate ghost stories. Jason scared me when I saw a *Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>* film as a kid."

They showed a trailer for *Coyote Cage*, and also a few short scenes from the film.

Looking at his own writing, O'Leary said, "We're going back and forth on the next film's premise, and I'd like to go totally crazy at some point. I always want to do something new and different, and Michael had suggested an anthology film. I've never done an anthology, and there are good ones and not-so-good ones. So, I tried doing some old-school science-fiction stories at less than 1,000 words. The scifishorts.co website has published six of my stories so far, and they've bought two others."

"One mistake people make is dropping all dialog," O'Leary continued. "You still have to tell a story with a beginning and end. It's an exercise and a challenge to get down to 1,000 words."

O'Leary read "A Small Price To Pay," which has humor in it, and "Unjust Mechanics of Life and Death."

Asked about his writing practice, O'Leary said, "I do word processing. I have no problem with it since I've been a journalist for more than 30 years. But I do carry a notebook and pencil to jot down notes and ideas when I'm on a walk or such. Even on a computer, I do editing to see when something is awkwardly written or in the wrong order."

Perez noted that the story is the most important, "and actors are second. If you have a good story and good actors, you can get away with other stuff not being that good. We all have old films that are corny but we love them."

## JULY 2023: SUMMER MOVIE TIME!

Twenty-seven people were on hand for the club's summer movie month. Patricia Rogers, back from her Vlad tour of Romania, noted that she had quite the adventure getting there.

We then watched a Road Runner & Coyote cartoon, "Fur of Flying," and this year's feature film, *Dark Star*. We watched the 68-minute version of this early sci-fi comedy film from director John Carpenter and writer Dan O'Bannon. (It started as a University of Southern California student film produced from 1970 to 1972, and was

gradually expanded to feature-length until it appeared at Filmex in 1974. *Dark Star* subsequently received a limited theatrical release in 1975.)

## AUGUST: B'CON PREVIEW & SF TALK

We had 37 people present as Craig Chrissinger gave a preview of Bubonicon 54's programming schedule and the t-shirt art by Rachael Mayo.

And then Troy Stull gave a short presentation on "The History of Science Fiction," which he first gave at last year's convention. Stull noted that proto-SF predates Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* in 1818. "Her work often is considered the first science-fiction novel," he noted. "It includes rationalism, humanism, and the scientific method."

*Frankenstein* was followed by Jules Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth* in 1864 and H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine* in 1895.

The play *R.U.R* by Karel Capek came out in 1920, *Amazing Stories* began in 1926, *Metropolis* (German film by Fritz Lang) was released in 1927, and *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley was published in 1932.

Of course, 1946-1979 was ruled by Isaac Asimov, Arthur C. Clarke and Robert A. Heinlein. And in the mid- to late 1990s, technology became part of everyone's lives.

## EDITOR NOTES THAT FIT THIS SPACE

• **WHAT'S UP THIS SPOOKY MONTH?** ABQ finally has started to cool down after a very hot Summer, and it's feeling like Fall this week. Of course, we get an Annular Eclipse this Saturday, so crossing fingers the skies "are not cloudy all day" to quote a song. Because the Slime Mistress lives here, we just got our house painted a bright green. Even with most of our house being brick, it still took six days to do it all. Our house needed new paint after 25 years! And we like it. We both got our Covid boosters and Flu shots as we're going to Milehicon 55 in Denver at the end of the month (our first MHC since 2019) - and we are planning on COSine in January 2024. In September we saw Ringo Starr & His All-Starr Band, which was a lot of fun; and we have tickets for *The Lion King* at Popejoy this month. And lit'l Gizmo cat turns one year old sometime this month.

Jessica is changing jobs soon, which will make our lives and weekly routines different. It's a good thing for her. Just sayin'.

The ongoing war in Ukraine and now the violent struggle in Israel/Gaza are very concerning, and I really hope they don't escalate even further. Or China doesn't decide to make a move.

• **BUBONICON 54 WAS MUCH BETTER** than 2022's con, in terms of attendance, sales in auctions and art show, behind-the-scenes con-com work, and final numbers. I was very pleasantly surprised that we ended up fairly comfortably in the Black...

• **NOT A LOT OF NEW TV** right now (thanks to strikes), but we have watched *Quantum Leap*, *Only Murders in the Building*, *Our Flag Means Death*, *What We Do in the Shadows*, *Wolf Pack*, and *Evil*. We still have two seasons of *Star Trek: Picard* to enjoy, plus Marvel's *Secret Invasion* and the 2nd season of *Loki*! I read *The Humans* by Matt Haig for book group, and also have been reading the usual magazines & comics.

• **CAN YOU TELL** I save the writing of these editorial notes for the last thing I do before *ASFacts* goes to the copy shop? You probably can! That's just what happens.

• **THANKS** to Jessica C & Geneva S for contributions. More stuff really is needed for *SithFacts* in December! Have a **Happy Halloween & Thanksgiving**. Take care, get vaxxed (again) and stay strong! — Craig C.

