



# ASFACTS 2026

## WARM YET AGAIN FEBRUARY ISSUE



### LOCUS 2025 RECOMMENDED READING LIST

It's time for *Locus Magazine's* annual list of reading recommendations. Published in *Locus Magazine's* February 2026 issue, the list is assembled by Locus editors, columnists, outside reviewers, and other professionals and well-known critics of genre fiction and non-fiction.

Of interest to Bubonicon and Southwest fans are:

SF NOVELS: *The Shattering Peace* by John Scalzi. FANTASY NOVELS: *Hemlock & Silver* by T. Kingfisher (Ursula Vernon), *Snake-Eater* by T. Kingfisher, and *Queen Demon* by Martha Wells. HORROR NOVELS: *The Buffalo Hunter Hunter* by Stephen Graham Jones, and *It Was Her House First* by Cherie Priest.

NOVELLAS: *What Stalks the Deep* by T. Kingfisher, and *Apprehension* by Mary Robinette Kowal. NOVELLETES: "When He Calls Your Name" by Catherynne M. Valente. SHORT STORIES: "Landline" by Kelly Robson, and "Woolly" by Carrie Vaughn.

### ENMU WILLIAMSON LECTURESHIP PLANNED FOR THURS-SAT, APRIL 9-11

The 49th annual Jack Williamson Lectureship is scheduled for Thursday-Saturday, April 9-11, at Eastern New Mexico University in Portales. Special guest is Ursula Vernon/T. Kingfisher, with Colorado's Connie Willis as Mistress of Ceremonies.

A campus tradition since 1977, the Lectureship annually draws well-known authors to visit ENMU and discuss the interactions of science and the humanities. The theme of this year's Lectureship is "Beneath the Bones."

Williamson, long-time SF author and professor of English passed away in 2006. Williamson's novella, "The Ultimate Earth," won a 2001 Hugo Award, and his last novel, *The Stonehenge Gate*, was released in 2005.

Vernon, born in 1977, grew up in Oregon and Arizona, went to college at Macalester College in Minnesota, and stayed there for 10 years, earning a degree in anthropology. She has worked as a freelance writer, artist and illustrator. She has won numerous awards for her work in various mediums, including Hugo Awards for her graphic novel *Digger*, fantasy novel *Nettle & Bone*, and fantasy novella *Thornhedge*, the Nebula Award for her short story "Jackalope Wives", and Mythopoeic Awards for adult and children's literature. Under the name T. Kingfisher, she is also the author of books for older audiences. She writes short fiction under both names.

Her novels include *Nine Goblins*, *Snake-Eater*, *Hemlock & Silver*, *The Twisted Ones*, *A Wizard's Guide to Defensive Baking*, *Paladin's Faith*, *Swordheart*, *Castle Hangnail*, and *What Stalks the Deep*. Her short fiction has appeared mostly in various anthologies.

Other participants confirmed so far include Darynda Jones, Jeffe Kennedy, Diana Rowland, Melinda M. Snodgrass, John E. Stith, Lauren C. Tefteau, Sarena Ulibarri, Cordelia Willis and Courtney Willis.

Cordelia Willis should be giving a forensic talk in the afternoon of Thursday, April 9. That will be followed by a Carnival Cantina with student organizations.

On Friday, April 10, Vernon will give a Guest of Honor address after an introduction by Willis at a Luncheon in the Campus Union Ballroom, with seating starting at 11:30 am. The Luncheon cost is yet to be determined.

The Lectureship finishes up Saturday morning with a Creative Writing Workshop led by Connie Willis.

Updates at [enmu.edu](http://enmu.edu) or [david.sweeten@enmu.edu](mailto:david.sweeten@enmu.edu).

### JEFFREY A. CARVER DIES

SF author Jeffrey A. Carver died February 6 in Massachusetts, reports [Locusmag.com](http://Locusmag.com). He suffered multiple strokes and entered a coma after a lung transplant in July 2025. He was 76 years old.

Jeffrey A. Carver was born August 25, 1949, in Cleveland, OH. He studied creative writing at Brown University and marine affairs at University of Rhode Island. His debut novel, *Seas of Ernathe*, began the space opera Star Rigger series, including *Star Rigger's Way* (1978), *Panglor* (1980), *Dragons in the Stars* (1992), *Dragon Rigger* (1993), Nebula Award nominee *Eternity's End* (2000), and omnibus *Dragon Space* (2011).

### UPCOMING ASFS MEETINGS

- **Tonight:** Local author Jane Lindsfold talks about her latest projects, and reads a new short story.
- **March 13:** The Club Auction with Bob Vardeman & Patricia Rogers as your auctioneers. Look for 2-7 donations, plus quarters and dollar bills.
- **March 27:** Bubonicon 58 Guest Nominations...
- **April 17 - One Week Late:** Local authors Lauren C. Tefteau & Brian D. Hinson talk about their latest publications... Plus the Spring issue of *ASFACTS*.
- **May 8:** Program unknown at press time (we would love to have a science presentation)...
- **June 12:** Maybe our Summer Movie Night?

**Craig Chrissinger, normal editor. Darth Vader, guest editor each December. Please Send All Correspondence to** — 2018 Cardenas Dr NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110. Contact: (505) 266-8905 or via [cwraig@nmia.com](mailto:cwraig@nmia.com). *ASFACTS* published February, April, July & October for ABQ SF Society, *SITHFACTS* each December. NEXT DEADLINE: Sunday, April 12. **2026 Club Officers:** Craig Chrissinger & Jessica Coyle, co-Zec Secs (505) 266-8905. Eric Klammer, Moderator. Danielle & Arthur Maurici-Pollock, co-Alternator. Cupid, holiday host. **Bubonicon Chair:** Craig Chrissinger (505) 559-0931.

He wrote the Chaos Chronicles as well, with *Neptune Crossing* (1994), *Strange Attractors* (1995), *The Infinite Sea* (1996), *Sunborn* (2008), *The Reefs of Time* (2019), and *Crucible of Time* (2019). He wrote *From a Changing Star* (1989) and *Down the Stream of Stars* (1990) in the Starstream series. He wrote *Clypsis* in Robert Zelazny's Alien Speedway series. His standalones include *The Infinity Link* (1984) and *The Rapture Effect* (1987). He wrote a novel tie-in for the *Battlestar Galactica* universe. His short fiction has appeared in *Galaxy SF*, *F&SF*, and other magazines, and in collections *Reality and Other Fictions* (2012) and *Going Alien* (2012).

In 2022, Carver received the Helicon Awards' Frank Herbert Lifetime Achievement Award for SF writing.

## **GAY HALDEMAN RECEIVES SFWA AWARD**

The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers Association (SFWA) announced in early February that Gay Haldeman as the winner of the 2026 Kevin O'Donnell, Jr. Service to SFWA Award. The award is presented for "outstanding work on behalf of" the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers Association.

The announcement notes, among other things, that Haldeman was a founder of the University of Iowa Science Fiction League in 1975 and the club secretary of the Washington Science Fiction Association.

SFWA President Kate Ristau said, "What a joy it has been to get to work with Gay over the years, and an honor to learn from her grace and expertise. She is the literal embodiment of community; she has selflessly given her support to SFWA over the years while also challenging us to do better and to be better."

Haldeman will be honored June 3-7 at the 61st Nebula Awards Conference in Chicago, IL.

## **BOOK GROUP KEEPS READING**

The Droids & Dragons SF Book Group meets at 7:30 pm Monday, February 16, in the back room of the 66 Diner, 1405 Central Ave NE (between I-25 and University Blvd) to discuss *The Fold* by Peter Clines. The group then focuses on *Project Hail Mary* by Andy Weir on Monday, March 16 at either the 66 Diner or Flying Star Café (on Juan Tabo).

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 Books, Mountain Run Shopping Center. For info, contact Leah at [mrsansom@hotmail.com](mailto:mrsansom@hotmail.com) or Craig 505-266-8905.

## **JOHN VARLEY PASSES AWAY**

Author John Varley died December 10, 2025, in his home in Beaverton, OR. He had COPD and diabetes, reported *Locusmag.com*. He was 78 years old.

John Herbert Varley, known to his friends as "Herb," was born August 9, 1947, in Austin, TX. He attended Michigan State University. His first novelette, "Picnic on Nearside", released in 1974, establishing the Eight Worlds

universe. He went on to publish about 20 more Eight Worlds works, including his first novel *The Opiuchi Hotline* (1977), the Anna-Louise Bach detective stories, and the Metal Trilogy. He also wrote the Gaeon trilogy, including *Titan* (1979), *Wizard* (1980), and *Demon* (1984), and the four-book Thunder and Lightning series, including *Red Thunder* (2003), *Red Lightning* (2006), *Rolling Thunder* (2008), and *Dark Lightning* (2014). Standalone novels include *Millenium* (1983, made into a 1989 movie by director Michael Anderson), *Mammoth* (2005), and *Slow Apocalypse* (2012).

He also wrote many shorter works of fiction featured in magazines such as *Analog*, *F&SF*, and *Asimov's*, and in other texts such as *New Voices III: The Campbell Award Nominees* (1980), *Year's Best SF 9* (2004), and *The John Varley Reader: Thirty Years of Short Fiction* (2004). Titles include "In the Hall of the Martian Kings" (1976), "Air Raid (1977)", "Beatnik Bayou" (1980), "A Christmas Story" (2003), and "In Fading Suns and Dying Moons" (2003). Much of his work has been translated into several languages besides English.

Varley was nominated 15 times for a Hugo Award, nine times for a Nebula Award, and 40 times for a Locus Award. Short story "The Pusher" (1981) won Hugo and Locus Awards, and novellas "The Persistence of Vision" (1978) and "PRESS ENTER[]" (1984) both won Hugo, Nebula, and Locus Awards. *Titan* (1979), *The Barbie Murders* (1980), "Blue Champagne" (1981), collection *Blue Champagne* (1986), and *The John Varley Reader* all received Locus Awards. He also collected an Endeavour Award, a Prometheus Award, two Seiun Awards, a Jupiter Award, and a Prix Apollo Award, among others and many more nominations. He received the Robert A. Heinlein Award in 2009.

## **RIFFTRAX PLANS NEW MST3K EPS**

Few shows have had the longevity beyond their initial run like *Mystery Science Theater 3000*. After initially going off the air in 1999, the writers and performers who made robot puppets and made fun of old cheesy movies went on to various other projects, most notably *RiffTrax* which began in 2006. *MST3K* itself came back with new seasons in 2017 following a hugely successful Kickstarter campaign. Now, the worlds are colliding again. On February 2, *RiffTrax's* Michael J. Nelson, Kevin Murphy, and Bill Corbett announced a Kickstarter for the trio to return for four new episodes of *Mystery Science Theater 3000*.

During the Syfy Channel period (1997-19990), the main cast was Nelson as the host, Murphy as Tom Servo, and Corbett as Crow T. Robot. The new project, *MST3K: The RiffTrax Experiments*, will film this year in Minneapolis, where the original series was produced. Murphy and Corbett will also reprise their "Mads" roles of Professor Bobo and Brain Guy, respectively, as will Mary Jo Pehl as Pearl Forrester.

"Getting a chance to revisit *MST3K* after all this time has really energized all of us at *RiffTrax*. And for my part, hey, I truly did miss standing next to plastic puppets. It's been too long," said Nelson.

And on February 10, it was announced Trace Beaulieu and Frank Conniff will reprise their roles as Dr. Clayton

Forrester and legendary second banana TV's Frank in the fourth and final episode of the new run, with the two also set to co-write the episode.

News of Beaulieu and Conniff's return came just one day after it was revealed that one of the movies to be featured is 1978's *Deathsport* starring David Carradine.

## **BUBONICON 57 PLANNING BEGINS**

by **Craig W. Chrissinger, con chair**

We're six weeks into 2026 now, and planning for Bubonicon 57 has begun. A hotel contract was signed in late November, and three-day passes went on sale January 10. And the Theme of "Androids & Robots and Droids, Oh A.I." was recently revealed.

Weekend Passes currently are \$43, and then go to \$48 on April 25. They can be purchased in person at club meetings; by mailing payment with the PDF registration form to "Bubonicon Inc" at 933 San Mateo Blvd NE, Ste 500-208, 87108; or by paying online with a credit card.

Bubonicon 57 is August 21-23 at the ABQ Marriott Uptown, Louisiana Blvd NE at I-40. This year, we are four days before the Los Angeles Worldcon and two weeks before DragonCon in Atlanta. The Marriott is offering sleeping rooms at \$159 single-quad, with free WiFi in sleeping rooms. Reservations are needed by August 7. That's 1-800-228-9290.

Our special guests this year are Patricia Briggs, Martha Wells, Travis Baldree, and artist Jon Sanchez. We're expecting many regular participants, and Mandy Self and Jessica Coyle again are assistant chairs.

We're asking for all Fan Programming proposals to be submitted by the end of Saturday, May 2. Some planned programming includes the Green Slime Awards, the mass autographing session, the usual two auctions, the costume contest, fan/video programming, and kids programming.

More info to come in the next few months!

## **REVIEW ROUND-UP**

***Moonflow* by Bitter Karella, 2025 Orbit, tp \$21.07, 384 pages.**

**Review by Arthur Maurici-Pollock**

*Moonflow* is, in a word, *weird*.

Our protagonist, Sarah, cultivates psychedelic mushrooms to make a living, but when her best customer is only interested in one species of fungi – The King's Breakfast – Sarah has to head into the Pomogo, a barely-charted forest in northern California in search of the illusive spores. Once there, Sarah and her guide – a ranger named Andy – stumble onto a lesbian, feminist separatist cult that has not only figured out how to cultivate the King's Breakfast, they use it to speak to their goddess, the Green Lady, as they work to keep her counterpart, the Lord of the Forest, from asserting control over the world.

At least, that's what they claim. There are a lot of mind altering substances involved.

*Moonflow* is a deeply unsettling, extremely strange book that ends with the reader not entirely sure of what exactly just happened.

I found this to be an interesting read with a lot of fascinating commentary on gender and the relationship of the masculine to the feminine. It is also a very uncomfortable

read, definitely on purpose, and leaves one sitting with unsettling imagery and reckoning with difficult topics. While I understand that the bulk of the uncomfortableness is on purpose, I did find some of the language used to describe fat characters to be *too* much at times, particularly coupled with the inclusion of a character who very much fetishizes fatness.

Overall, I liked the book and would recommend it for fans of horror that is both psychologically disturbing and kind of gross.

***Hell's Heart* by Alexis Hall, (March) 2026 Tor Books, hb \$29.99, 464 pages. Review by Arthur Maurici-Pollock**

In *Hell's Heart*, Hall masterfully blends classic literature, science fiction, and Lovecraftian horror.

Our nameless protagonist, running from and trying to pay off their medical debt to one of the many corporations that run the worlds humanity has settled after fleeing a dying Earth, decides to join the crew of a hunter-barque – a ship that sails the storms of Jupiter to hunt leviathans for their cerebrospinal fluid (called spermacti) which humanity uses as a source of power. The ship that she signs onto, though, has a vengeful captain hellbent on hunting down the legendary Möbius Beast – a huge, all white leviathan that cost the captain her leg on her last voyage.

If that sounds quite a bit like the plot of Melville's *Moby Dick*, that's on purpose. *Hell's Heart* is a sapphic, Lovecraftian sci-fi re-imagining of Melville's work, and Hall manages it with an expert hand.

This universe is one where humanity has, mostly, left Earth for the skies and has brought capitalism with them, the system intricately intertwined with every aspect of the characters' lives from their work onboard the hunter-barque itself – the bottom line of the company the ship is licensed to being almost the most important part of the hunt – all the way to how religion has evolved since humanity took to the stars. The protagonist is a mostly lapsed member of the Church of Prosperity wherein the more money you have, the closer you are to God.

*Hell's Heart* is written as if it were our main character's memoir as she revisits this period in her life, telling the story of the mostly doomed crew she sailed with deep into the heart of Jupiter in search of a beast that isn't supposed to exist. Narratively, it serves as both her memoir and also as a memorial to the members of the crew who did not escape the stormy heart of the gas giant. It asks us to reckon with human connection, with our relationship to Earth, and with our relationship to profit and capitol.

Hall has taken the bones of *Moby Dick* and built a stunning science fiction universe, taking us into the stars to look hard and long at ourselves.

## **EDITOR NOTES TO FILL THIS SPACE**

- WE HAD A NICE TIME at COSine in Colorado Springs last month. Drove up in patchy fog and very cold temps, and stayed an extra day to let snow melt on I-25. Jessica sold craft art once again, we played trivia, and had breakfast with Connie & Courtney Willis and Rose Beetem. Jessica and I helped Arlen, Anna, Dany & Karen with con stuff. Cory Doctorow was very nice.

- ONCE AGAIN, stay strong, stand tall. Remember: Amidah!

- ANOTHER SHORT FEBRUARY ISSUE, which is appropriate for the shortest month. Thanks to Arthur M-P for book reviews. Submissions needed & welcomed for April. Take care. -Craig C.

**HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!**



**Albuquerque SF Society**

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*NEXT DEADLINE SUN, APRIL 12, 2026*

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