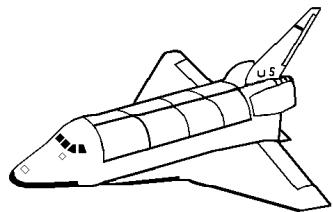


The



SHUTTLE
March 1999

*The Next NASFA Meeting will be 20 March
1999 at the Regular Time and Location*

Concom Meeting 18 March 1999 at BookMark

Oyez, Oyez

The next **NASFA meeting** will be **20 March 1999** at the **regular time** (6P) and the **regular location** (room 130 of the Madison City Municipal Building).

For the March program, bring your metaphorical picks and shovels and get ready to roll up your sleeves as we tackle a round table on World Building. We'll create our very own science fiction or fantasy universe. Maybe you'll even be inspired to set some fiction there.

The March after-the-meeting meeting will be at Mike Kennedy's house.

Concom Meeting Set

by Mike Kennedy

The next Con[†]Stellation XVIII concom meeting will be held at BookMark at 6:30P on Thursday 18 March 1999. This is an eating meeting — the first of the year. It was decided at the February meeting that food themes would be centered on (this is my term) "monsters and other things that go bump in the night." (This is in honor of our Halloween date for the con this year.) So the food theme (and don't blame me for this one!) is "cannibalistic homicidal maniacs."

Buck Coulson — A Legend Departs

by Mike Kennedy

As many of you already know, long-time fan and *Shuttle* contributor Buck Coulson died recently. I have known Buck for many years, primarily through his letters in the *Shuttle* and elsewhere. We met in person only a few times, notably when he and Juanita were Fan Guests of Honor at Con[†]Stellation X in 1991.

I was particularly saddened by Buck's loss, as were many fans. His place in fannish history — and in prodom — is secure but we would all have preferred that his contributions go on for many, many more years. In commemoration, therefore, I am dedicating this issue of the *Shuttle* to his memory.

Inside this issue...

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Deadline for the April 1999 issue of *The NASFA Shuttle* is Friday, 2 April 1999.

NASFA Calendar

MARCH

- 02 BD: Ronnie Lajoie.
04–07 World Horror Con 1999 — Atlanta GA.
08 BD: Bill Payne.
10 BD: Kerry Gilley.
13 BD: Anita Eisenberg.
15 BD: Carlo DeShouten.
17 St. Patrick's Day.
17–21 20th International Conference on the Fantastic — Ft. Lauderdale FL.
20* NASFA Meeting — 6P Business, 7P Program, at the Madison City Municipal Building. ATMM at Mike Kennedy's house.
22 BD: Jayson Woosley.
26–28 MidSouthCon 17 — Memphis TN.
28 Palm Sunday.

APRIL

- 01 Passover.
02 Good Friday
03 BD: Kevin Ward.
04 Easter.
14 BD: Gordon Cross.
15 BD: "Uncle Timmy" Bolgeo.
16–18 Galacticon 1999 — Chattanooga TN.
17* NASFA Meeting — 6P Business, 7P Program, at the Madison City Municipal Building. ATMM TBD.
21 BD: Randy B. Cleary.
23–25 Parthecon 26 — Nashville TN.
26 BD: Chloie Airolidi.
30 BD: Mark Maxwell.
30–02 1999 Nebula Weekend — Pittsburgh PA.

MAY

- 09 Mother's Day.
14 BD: Debbie Hughes.
16 BD: Linda Bolgeo
19 BD: David O. Miller.
14-16 OASIS 12 — Orlando FL.
20 BD: Mike Glicksohn.
23* NASFA Meeting — 6P Business, 7P Program, at the
Madison City Municipal Building, ATMM TBD.
27 BD: Kathy Paulk.
28-30 LibertyCon 13 — Chattanooga TN.
31 Memorial Day.

JUNE

- 01 BD: Glenn Valentine.
02-06 SFRA 1999 — Mobile AL.
11 BD: Rhett Mitchell.
14 Flag Day.
19* NASFA Meeting — 6P Business, 7P Program, at the
Madison City Municipal Building. ATMM TBD.
20 Father's Day.

The North Alabama Science Fiction Association meets on the third Saturday of each month. (Unless there is a large nearby convention being held that weekend — in which case we usually hold the meeting on the second or fourth weekend.) The regular meeting location is room 130 of the Madison City

Municipal Building. The Executive Committee meeting (if scheduled) is held at 5P. The business meeting is held at 6P. The program begins at 7P. Anyone is welcome to attend any of the meetings. There is usually an after-the-meeting meeting with directions available at the program.

February Minutes

by Samuel A. Smith, 7 cents lighter

The February meeting of the North Alabama Science Fiction Association was called to order on Saturday, February 20, 1999 in Room 130 in the Madison City Municipal Building at 6:19P by President Anita Eisenberg. Since we are still awaiting our permanent Ewoks picture, once again Barney was the smashee of honor.

OLD BUSINESS

Q: Where are our Ewoks? A: Mike Ray is out blowing things up tonight. Maybe next month.

NEW BUSINESS

Ray Pietruszka announced the final numbers on the 1998 Con†Stellation. Our income was \$9,447.00 and our expenses were \$9,765.00, giving us a net loss of \$319.00. (Yes, I know that doesn't add up, talk to Ray.) This was better than the 1997 Con†Stellation which had a net loss of \$1,110.00. We can't keep this up forever, folks!

Jim Woosley: "Imagination is more important than knowledge" A. Einstein.

Mike Kennedy called for a moment of silence for the dear dead Suburban. Afterwards there was some discussion on the options for scrapping it.

CONVENTION BUSINESS

At this point, the elections for the Co-Chairs for the Y2K Con†Stellation occurred. The nominees were: Anita Eisenberg and Mike Cothran, and Mike and Robin Ray. Anita Eisenberg and Mike Cothran won on an 8 to 6 vote, with one abstention. The Y2K Con†Stellation will be known as Con†Stellation XIX: Virgo.

After the election, there was much digression in the land.
(Virgos! Signatures! Buttons!)

The meeting was adjourned at 6:41P. The program was the semi-annual NASFA auction, which raised some sixteen-odd dollars for the cause. (Gotta do something to make up those convention losses!) The After-The-Meeting Meeting was the annual Aquarius birthday party at Nancy Cucci and Ray Pietruszka's home.

Nominations News

1998 NEBULA AWARDS FINAL BALLOT

The Nebulas are awarded each year by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America. The awards will be presented at the Nebula Award's Banquet in early May. This year's nominees are:

NOVELS

The Last Hawk, Catherine Asaro, Tor, November 1997

Forever Peace, Joe Haldeman, Ace, October 1997

Moonfall, Jack McDevitt, HarperPrism, April 1998

How Few Remain, Harry Turtledove, Del Rey, October 1997

The Death of the Necromancer, Martha Wells, Avon Eos,
July 1998

To Say Nothing of the Dog, Connie Willis, Bantam Spectra,

January 1998

NOVELLAS

“Aurora in Four Voices,” Catherine Asaro, *Analog*, December 1998

The Boss in the Wall, Avram Davidson and Grania Davis, Tachyon Publications, August 1998

“Reading the Bones,” Sheila Finch, *F&SF*, January 1998

“Izzy and the Gather of Terror,” Eliot Fintushel, *Asimov’s*, July 1997

“Jumping Off the Planet,” David Gerrold, *SF Age*, January 1998

“Ecopoiesis,” Geoffrey A. Landis, *SF Age*, May 1997

NOVELETTES

“The Truest Chill,” George Feeley, *SF Age*, November 1997

“Time Gypsy,” Ellen Klages, *Bending the Landscape: SF*, October 1998

“The Mercy Gate,” Mark J. McGarry, *F&SF*, March 1998

“Echea,” Kristine Kathryn Rusch, *Asimov’s*, July 1998

“Lethe,” Walter Jon Williams, *Asimov’s*, September 1997

“Lost Girls,” Jane Yolen, *Realms of Fantasy*, February 1998

SHORT STORIES

“When the Bough Breaks,” Steven Brust, *The Essential BorderTown*, September 1998

“Standing Room Only,” Karen Joy Fowler, *Asimov’s*, August 1997

“Fortune and Misfortune,” Lisa Goldstein, *Asimov’s*, May 1997

“Winter Fire,” Geoffrey Landis, *Asimov’s*, August 1997

“Thirteen Ways to Water,” Bruce Holland Rogers, *Black Cats and Broken Mirrors*, June 1998

“Tall One,” K. D. Wentworth, *F&SF*, April 1998

1998 PHILIP K. DICK AWARD NOMINEES

The Philip K. Dick Award is presented annually for distinguished science fiction published in paperback original form in the United States. The award is sponsored by the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society and the award ceremony is sponsored by the Northwest Science Fiction Society. First prize and any special citations will be announced on 2 April 1999 at Norwescon 22 in Seattle WA.

253: The Print Remix, Geoff Ryman, St. Martin’s Press

Lost Pages, Paul Di Filippo, Four Walls Eight Windows

Brown Girl in the Ring, Nalo Hopkinson, Warner Aspect

Slaughtermatic, Steve Aylett, Four Walls Eight Windows

The Invisible Country : Stories, Paul J. McAuley, Avon Eos

NASFA Receivables

by Randy B. Cleary

Heres the latest round up of things NASFA has received. This column covers the last two months. I apologize for missing last months deadline. Contact me to see any of these documents for yourselves. Mood music for this article consisted of the following motion picture soundtracks on random play: *The Crow*, *Johnny Mnemonic*, *The Lost Highway*, *Romeo & Juliet*, and *The X-Files*.

FANZINES

ConNotations, Volume 8, Issue 5, Winter 1998, P. O. Box 62613, Phoenix AZ 85082-2613, <editor@casfs.org>. This 20-newsprint-page newszine of the Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society is packed with news and reviews of all media of fannish interest. This issue’s special feature was on

Elfquest.

De Profundis, #319, December 1998 and #320, January 1999, Editor Tim Merrigan, 11513 Burbank Boulevard, North Hollywood CA 91601, 818-760-9234, <<http://www.lasfs.org>>. These 14- and 8-page newszines of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society contained it’s usual fill of fannish news and minutes of the club. This may be Tim Merrigan’s last issue due to dereliction of duty. NASFA’s *Shuttle* is listed in their receivables section.

Derogatory Reference, #91, Arthur D. Hlavaty, 206 Valentine Street, Yonkers NY 10704-1814, 914-965-4861 <hlavaty@panix.com>. This 6-page perzine has reports of a few books, discusses tele-marketers, impeachment, and has some LoCs.

File 770, Issue 128, Mike Glyer, 705 Valley View Avenue, Monrovia CA 91016, 626-305-1004 <MGLyer@compuserve.com>. This 18-page issue had a yellow cover by Taral and the usual fan news roundup. Some of the art stolen from Janny Wurts and Don Maitz has been reputed to be offered for sale by e-mail to a University of Texas student. Jerry Pournelle takes up extreme sports. Guy Lillian gets blown (by bad weather). Bowen wins TAFF. People respond on the earlier topic of the death of SF clubs. And more fine writings and LoCs.

FOSFAX, #194, February 1999, Editors Timothy Lane and Elizabeth Garrott, P. O. Box 37281, Louisville KY 40233-7281, <jtmajor@iglou.com>. This 84-page monster of a club zine for the Falls of the Ohio Science Fiction and Fantasy Association is not for the weak willed. Quake puny mortals! Filled with political pundits and SF criticism.

Kronos, January and February 1999, D. A. Hussey, <dah2@hotmail.com>. This e-zine is the Newsletter of the Middle Tennessee Science Fiction Society. These issues contained club doings, party reviews, a GA-Filk report, Chattacon comments, and *Crusade* TV Show news.

Memphen, #251, January 1998 and #252, February 1999, Editor Tim Gatewood, 3125 South Mendenhall Road #353, Memphis TN 38115 <memphen@aol.com>, <<http://members.aol.com/memphen/mpn1.html>>. The January 10-page club zine had a yet another cover by me (of the Enterprise Shuttle launching), club news, great zine reviews, and a review of *Outward Bound* by James P. Hogan, and LoCs. The February 10-pager has a great cover by Tom Foster in honor of the Gatewoods’ passing over the Editorship, a Darrell Awards report, LoCs, and reviews of several books.

OASFIS Event Horizon, Volume 12, #1, January 1999 and February 1999, Leslie R. Hammes, 4796 East Michigan Street #2, Orlando FL 32812, 407-263-5822, <michaelhammes@worldnet.att.net>. The January 8-page club zine contained short fiction, club news, and reflections on the end of *Babylon 5*. The 6-page February issue has numbering problems, words from the President, IHGA Nominations, and an essay on the CBLDF.

Scavengers Newsletter, #180, February 1998, Editor Janet Fox, 519 Ellinwood, Osage City, KS 66523-1329, 785-528-3538, <foxscav1@jc.net>, <<http://www.cza.com/scav/index.html>> This 24-page issue had another mermaid cover and the latest small press listings and scroungings.

MISCELLANEOUS

Cargo Cult Books and Notions January/February 1999 Catalog; **FANDATA Publications** Catalog #18; **MegaCon99**, Orlando FL, March 5-7, 1999 Flyer; **Star Trek Collection for Sale** by T. J. McDaniel Flyer; **Writers of the Future: Volume XIV** Flyer.

Submitted for Your Approval

Baen Books, in the person of Toni Weisskopf, recently sent NASFA a care package of books Baen is promoting as potential Hugo nominees. We have managed to get a few of them reviewed in time, albeit just barely in time, for your consideration before the Hugo nomination deadline (ballots must be postmarked by 23 March 1999). NASFA members who would like to see any of these books, or review any of the ones we did not get to this month, should ask at the March meeting.

Alternate Generals edited by Harry Turtledove, Baen Books, August 1998, Paperback, 314 pages, ISBN: 0-671-87886-7, \$5.99, reviewed by Mike Kennedy.

I am probably not the best person to review this anthology since I have always wondered just exactly how alternate history stories qualify as either science fiction or fantasy and I am not a major fan of military sf. That said, the alternate history concept can indeed lend itself to interesting stories so when *Alternate Generals* fell to me to read and review I was not really displeased, especially given how many well-known and well-respected authors are represented.

The 16 stories in this tome are generally short, the longest being around 30 pages and probably under 10,000 words. My biggest handicap in critiquing any of the AG stories is a lack of any detailed knowledge of military history since most of them revolve around one or more military decisions that could have gone a different way. Given that disadvantage, I resolved to just read them as stories and not worry about how well they depicted historic events.

I'm sad to say that I found only a handful of the stories very interesting. My favorites included "A Hard Day for Mother" by William R. Forstchen, "And to the Republic for Which it Stands" by Brad Linaweaver, and "Vati" by R. M. Meluch. A couple of others, though perhaps not as strong in my opinion, were nevertheless interesting for other reasons. John Mina's "Vive l'Amiral" was a decent story, but was interesting to me in part because I knew more of the history and understood the non-explicit historic references. "The Craft of War" by Lois Tilton was interesting mostly because it was framed as a Socratic dialog. The presentation was effective, the story somewhat less so.

The Forstchen story is primarily set during a pivotal battle of the America Civil War (that's the War Between the States — or even the War of Northern Aggression — to some of y'all). Given the collection's alternate history theme you won't be surprised to hear that things don't go as our history books say. I suspect many Civil War buffs will particularly like this story.

Linaweaver's tale is one of the shorter one in AG, only some 8 pages. It deals with the plot against Julius Caesar and that's about all I can say without giving something away. The Meluch story was interesting in part because it covered a much longer time period, some three years, than would normally be the case in a short story. The action centers around the European-theater air war during World War II and the time lapse between a critical decision and its ultimate consequences is the reason for the time covered. (Of course, only the high spots are hit — there are only so many words in 22 pages.)

Unfortunately, I can really only recommend this volume to people with a strong interest in military history, or alternate history, or who are completists for one or more of the authors represented.

In The Company Of Mind by Steven Piziks, Baen Books, October 1998, Paperback, 339 pages, ISBN: 0-671-57776-X, \$6.99, reviewed by Mike Cothran.

Toni sent a few of the Baen Empire Treasures our way recently in hopes that NASFA members would find time in their busy schedules to read and review a title or two, ah, such is the strength of character of Toni that I choose to pick up one of these books and read it from cover to cover. I am still in the process, as of this writing I am on page 257 of 339, it is not hard going, it is a great book so far and I don't say that lightly. Imagine, if you would, what life inside your head would be like if you suffered from Multiple Personality Disorder — MPD — in a future where bio-sculpt, FTL drives, FTL communications, and Nano Hive Activity exist... Add a bit of good old-fashioned action adventure to this psychological thriller and you have what I am reading at present. There will be a full review next month but take my early recommendation and get this book now, the waiting is over, Robin Cook has met his match in this writer.

Rules of Engagement by Elizabeth Moon, Baen Books, December 1998, Hardback, 368 pages, ISBN: 067157778, \$22.00, reviewed by Doug Lampert.

The trouble with writing a book review is that most things you can say about the book will spoil it for others. Which means that since I cannot talk about anything important I have nothing left but background and generalities.

BACKGROUND

Rules of Engagement is either the second or fifth of a series depending on how you count. Elizabeth Moon has written five novels set in this universe. The first three, *Hunting Party*, *Sporting Chance*, and *Winning Colors*, are about Haris Serrano. The middle third of *Winning Colors* is a large space battle, which ends with Our Heros' lives being saved by a minor character, Lt (jg) Esmay Suiza. The next book, *Once a Hero*, is about Esmay (it starts with the court-martial, and Board of Inquiry, which the events of the battle require). *Rules of Engagement* follows *Once a Hero* and deals with Esmay's further adventures.

Since Esmay has about six lines in the first three books, and in *Once a Hero* the court-martial goes over as much background as is needed, I would recommend starting with either *Hunting Party* or *Once a Hero*, rather than *Rules of Engagement*.

There seems to me to be a change of tone between the first trilogy and the Suiza books. Suiza is a serving military officer and her books are military SF, while the Serrano books are mostly about civilians. I also find the Serrano books do not stand alone well. I like the trilogy as a whole, but it seems to me to be one story spread over three books while *Once a Hero* and *Rules of Engagement* stand alone better. In other words, liking or not liking the Serrano books is probably a poor predictor of your response to the Suiza books.

Rules of Engagement does involve several characters from the first trilogy and, while familiarity with the Serrano books is probably more important here than in *Once a Hero*, I do believe it would be enjoyable without having read the Serrano books. (One of my biggest problems with the whole series is that the navy seems too small for the space it guards, everyone seems to know everyone else. On the other

hand this never really bothers me while I am reading the books.)

GENERALITIES

I liked this book and recommend it. This is military SF, with some interesting characters, something most military SF writers cannot seem to manage. I place it somewhere between Weber and Bujold, closer to Bujold in tone, closer to Weber in writing skills. (Note: I rate Bujold higher than Weber in both respects, so this is one out of two. However since I still like Weber this is a fairly harsh scoring system.)

Komarr by Lois McMaster Bujold, Baen Books, June 1998, Hardback, 311 pages, ISBN 0-671-87877-8, \$22.00, reviewed by Mike Kennedy. [This review first appeared in the June 1998 *NASFA Shuttle*. -ED]

The saga of Miles Vorkosigan is one of the most popular in contemporary science fiction. *Komarr*, which is at least the twelfth book set in this universe, is almost certainly destined to continue the popularity of its predecessors. (A few of the books cover events starting before Miles birth.)

Even though I have missed several of the more recent books in the series, and even though his situation has changed considerably, I found myself right at home with Miles. He is about 30 years old in this book and no longer in the military (the lingering effects of injuries received in earlier books precluded continuing that career). His life, indeed, has taken a left turn and he is now an Imperial Auditor — one of the few people empowered to act more-or-less independently as the eyes, ears, and (when necessary) voice of the Barayaran Emperor in investigating any matter.

The matter at hand is a recent accident that has severely damaged an orbital mirror designed to increase the sunlight falling on the planet Komarr (one of the planets in Barayaran's pocket empire) as part of a long-term terraforming project. Were the deaths and damage accidental or part of a plot? If a plot, by whom and for what purpose? Miles and his fellow Auditor, Professor Vorthys, are assigned to unravel that mystery — or at least to act as the Emperor's eyes and ears while the thinly-spread local branch of Barayaran's Imperial Security and Komarr's planetary forces investigate.

If you've never read any of the prior works, you can surely still guess that Miles and the Professor get deeply involved in guiding the investigation. And you can almost as surely guess that there is more involved than initially meets the eye — even the Eye of the Emperor.

Lord Auditor Vorthys has a niece, Ekaterin Vorsoisson, on Komarr. Both she and her husband Tien figure prominently in the book. One glance at the Gary Ruddell cover gives you the idea that Miles falls in love (again) in this book. The first sentence of the second chapter makes it plain who that love interest will be — though she is fairly oblivious to Miles feelings until the end of the book.

The plot behind the destruction of the mirror (did you *really* ever believe it was an accident?) has several twists and turns which Bujold navigates us through with aplomb. While the book is quite a satisfying read, I found myself bemused afterwards by one aspect — an aspect more of the series as a whole than of the book itself.

Miles Vorkosigan, and indeed all Barayarans, belong to a basically feudal system. Individuals owe their allegiance only to their Count and the Counts only to the Emperor. Well, male individuals in any case. Married women, at least in theory, owe their allegiance to their husband while unmarried women owe theirs to their father or other

senior male relative. While that is no longer strictly true in practice by the time Miles is born, and even less so by the time of this book, it is still the official theory. In fact, the tension between the theory and practice of the husband-wife relationship is integral to the character of Ekaterin Vorsoisson and creeps into Miles' inner dialogue on more than one occasion.

Feudal societies are a staple of fantasy books, but are rather rarer in contemporary science fiction. We are perhaps too used to thinking of fantasy in terms of the past — including past political and social structures. Science fiction, on the other hand, is “supposed” to reflect the future. Retro structures like feudalism are “obviously” not part of the future, are they? And when such societies exist in science fiction, their members are more likely to be the antagonists than the protagonists.

How, then, is the fictional feudal society surrounding Miles Vorkosigan so popular? How do feudal lords get to be the good guys? I suspect the answer is in Bujold's depiction of Miles and many of the secondary characters as such likeable people. Their nobility is more in their character than in their inherited titles. Miles being such an unlikely hero, with his stunted stature and physical frailties, may also help the reader identify with him.

In fact, Miles is (in some ways) very much in the pattern of that staple of heroic fiction — the competent man. While often identified strongly with science fiction (and in particular with Heinlein's fiction), the competent man character is also prominent elsewhere. Not long after finishing *Komarr* I was thinking about writing this article and was suddenly struck by the similarities between the competent man character in science fiction and some of Ayn Rand's protagonists — particularly in *Atlas Shrugged*. (Okay, so it was morning and I was in the shower, still struggling to become fully awake. Even in more sober retrospect, however, I still like the comparison.)

Having missed several books, I think I am a fair judge of how well *Komarr* fares as a stand-alone book. Some of the deep background in Miles character may not be evident from this one book, but Bujold does an excellent job of working in essential elements of that background without spending long stretches simply recapitulating the previous books. I would say that *Komarr* is easily strong enough to stand on its own. If you read *Komarr* and become interested in reading more, there is a handy chart in the back of the book listing the books in order within the internal timeline of this universe. (This is not the same as the order in which the books were written or published.)

And for Miles' future? One suspects that his budding love interest will carry forward. Miles is, after all, 30 and appears to be thinking about “settling down.” But I wouldn't worry too much about married life (if that should come to pass) stopping his adventures. Miles is like the concept of a strange attractor in chaos theory. No matter where things start out, they seem to make their way toward him in the end.

In Coming Issues

Also included in the package were *Starchild* by James P. Hogan, *Prophets for the End of Time* by Marcos Donnelly, *With the Lightnings* by David Drake, and a trilogy of novellas in *More than Honor* by Weber, Drake, and Stirling. Some or all of these will be reviewed in future issues of the *Shuttle*.

Letters of Comment

POC-POC-POC-POC-POC-POC-POC-POC-POC-POC

Sheryl Birkhead
23629 Woodfield Road
Gaithersburg MD 20882

16 February 1999

Dear Mike — forgive me — I had the *Shuttle* in a folder that goes to my Continuing Education meetings and I did a sketch on it... and forgot where I put it. Another meeting this Thursday, so the folder just resurfaced.

The Hugo Nominating ballots are out so I hope all you readers who can nominate will.

Brimstone/Cupid/Fantasy Island have all died — so I understand — so much for my ability to pick “good” (?) TV shows.

[Actually your postcard missed being in the February *Shuttle* by less than a week. The deadline for a given issue is generally the Friday 15 days before that month's meeting but I can usually slip in short items for another week or so since the issue doesn't go in the mail until the Monday 5 days before the meeting. Since that Monday was a holiday last month, there was even an extra day in the schedule. Lately the airwaves do seem to be full of marginally sf/fantasy shows, most of which don't survive their first season. Of course, a lot of TV shows don't survive their first season so I suppose that the sf/fantasy wannabes probably have no worse record than other genres. - ED]

LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC

Algis Budrys
the unifont co.
Box 6038
Evanston IL 60204

19 February 1999

Here's a partial list of WOTF winners over the years. I'm just going through my memory and hitting the high spots, so the list is far from complete:

Nina Kiriki Hoffman	Howard V. Hendrix
Dave Wolverton	Dean Wesley Smith
Bridget McKenna	Bruce Holland Rogers
Karen Joy Fowler	Robert Reed
James C. Glass	Leonard Carpenter
M. Shayne Bell	Ray Aldridge
David Zindell	Martha Soukup
Valerie Frireich	J. R. Dunn
Michael H. Payne	R. Garcia y Robertson

There are many others; I believe the count is over a hundred regularly published writers, with about two hundred novels and book collections of short stories. Then there are the almosts — Kathryn Rusch and Lois Bujold, for two — who got effective criticism of their non-winning stories, to the point where they promptly went out and made themselves ineligible by publishing more than three short stories before the next contest quarter.

The fact is that contest graduates now make up a hefty percentage of all SF writers.

[As you will see, a couple of other people chimed in with their own lists — some of which you covered as well as some different ones. I'll comment more on the subject

below. -ED]

LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC

Harry Warner, Jr.
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown MD 21740

19 February 1999

Last night I faced the formidable task of writing a loc on two fanzines that totaled 168 pages and arrived in the same envelope. You can imagine how easy it will be to do my duty tonight by the six pages of the February *Shuttle*.

I'm sorry about your back trouble (which reminds me, it's about time for my once-each-decade moment when I reach down to pick up something weighing only a few ounces and my back begins three months of pain) and about your Suburban which I have more difficulty visualizing. Tentatively, I've decided it's some kind of motor vehicle which now must rust in peace. I shouldn't complain about my much less serious problem of my first flat tire in seven years a week ago.

Somewhere I read about the SETI@home project, which seems to be genuine. As I remember the news article, it was set up because data from radio telescopes aimed at distant worlds has been arriving faster than the scientists' computers can run through it for possible signs of transmissions. But I can imagine that already at various spots all over the continent, trouble-makers are doing their best to figure out how to create excitement with manmade signals that will cause some obscure participant to think he's become world-famous as the first person ever to receive messages from elsewhere in the universe.

I enjoyed your conreport. However, I was shocked at the news that some fans didn't like to go up or down about 40 steps to get to different levels of the con hotel. At 76, I manage pretty well to maneuver myself on somewhat more than these 40 steps to inspect the house during the morning from attic to cellar for some calamity or other during the night. My stairs are extremely steep, too, except for the ones leading to the cellar.

It's good to know that Chattacon had several hucksters selling books. I've read reports of other quite large cons where nobody or just one dealer was offering such exotic merchandise. I've been suffering the usual winter deprivation from used book sources, but a couple of library sales are coming up in the spring, the first yard sale advertisements have begun appearing, and I learned today that a new store is opening on the outskirts of Hagerstown which will offer 80% discount from publisher's prices. I hope it stocks something other than romance novels and obsolete computer manuals.

[Think of a Suburban as a full-sized pickup truck with a built in bed cover whose top is even with the top of the cab. Alternatively, think of it as a sport-utility vehicle on steroids. (Of course, the Suburban line existed long before there was such a thing as an SUV.) Some fan “do stairs” at cons, but it continually surprises me now many young folks stand around in the elevator lobby waiting for the rare elevator with enough space for them to squeeze on rather than walk up three flights of stairs. (Of course, some of those young folks have been drinking enough ethanol solution that their ability to walk, much less climb stairs, is in question.) -ED]

EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC

Michael D. Glicksohn
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24 February 1999

□ Thanks for the February *Shuttle*. It's too bad it doesn't contain one last loc from the irascible yet loveable Mr. Coulson whose recent passing diminishes fandom as I've always known it during my thirty two and a half years as a fan. I often disagreed with him but I always respected him for never failing to make his feelings and opinions abundantly clear and for having an astute perspective on just what fandom was all about. So I mean it as a compliment when I say you may state proudly that as he went on his significant way through fandom, the Buck stopped here.

[I have expressed my feelings about our collective loss elsewhere in this issue and won't belabor them here but you are certainly correct that Buck's death diminishes fandom. I will greatly miss getting those missives from Hartford City and I'm sure many of our readers will miss reading them. -ED]

EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC

George "Lan" Laskowski 26 February 1999
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I offer my condolences on the demise of your Suburban. I hope you find a suitable replacement (at a reasonable price!) as soon as possible.

Your convention report on Chattacon was interesting, and makes me long for times when I could attend cons again. However, the vicarious thrills from your reports and others will suffice. Hosting *two* room parties is a brave thing indeed, and I am glad that you survived. I have never been to a Chattacon myself, though I had intentions at one time of attending one, but given the amount of snow between Michigan and Chattanooga, I decided that driving (my most economical method of travel — this was when I attended 12+ cons a year) would be too risky.

I have several books by Tara Harper on my shelves, but, alas, have not read a single one, even though the blurbs and tags tease me to do so. I hope she will be a good GoH next year at the convention.

Harry Warner's comment about how writers published in the Writers of the Future volumes have fared sent me to the copies of those books that I have. For some reason, the only volumes on my shelves are I, II, III, V, and VI. Looking through the authors and comparing them with my card file, I found some interesting information from these five volumes.

In volume I, copyright 1985, the most notable names are Nina Kiriki Hoffman, Karen Joy Fowler, David Zindell, and Mary Frances Zambreno.

In volume II, 1986: Bridget McKenna, Ray Aldredge, and Marina Fitch.

In volume III, 1987: M. Shayne Bell, Carolyn Ives Gilman, Martha Soukup (though I have seen very little from her lately), J. R. Dunn, Dave Wolverton, Paula May (not too much from her), and Eric Heideman (more noted for his editing of *Tales of the Unanticipated*, the literary zine from Minn-STF).

In volume V, 1989: Virginia Baker, K. D. Wentworth, Jamil Nasir, Stephen Baxter, Paula May (a repeat performance!), and Steve Martindale.

In volume VI: Pete D. Manison and James Alan Gardner.

Perhaps you might have more choices from later volumes. It was interesting to do this little search, and see that there indeed *has* been results for the Writers of the Future.

I am sure that you have heard by now that Buck Coulson died on February 19. Juanita managed to get to the hospital and spend a few minutes with him before he died.

As for my condition, the cancer has spread again, but my chemotherapist and I hope that a new approach to treatment will put it back under control.

[Chattacon has had it's share of bad weather events over the years, but, if you're willing to stay over another night or so it's usually OK to travel in the general area by then. Traveling all the way to Michigan could be somewhat more problematic of course. I do remember one icy year when many of the Huntsville-area folks convoyed back from Chattanooga on Sunday afternoon with no incidents. But one of the people *not* in the convoy did slide off the road and, as I recall, sustained significant damage to her car. I'm sorry to hear of your setback, but here's hoping that the new treatment will soon have you back on the road to recovery. -ED]

POC-POC-POC-POC-POC-POC-POC-POC-POC

Sheryl Birkhead
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5 March 1999

I imagine that by the time the March issue is out, the deadline for the Hugo nominating ballots will be a memory — hope all who could nominate did.

Chattacon continues to be on my *some day* list, but the longer I'm away from cons the more I recall how nervous (etc.) they made me — much better to read about what a super time everyone else had!

I didn't escape the ice — when branches came down only minor dents on the car but, coincidentally, the furnace died and, basically, the water stopped — had nothing to do with electricity — I never lost that. Things won't change — whee — coldest day was last Monday and it was *really* cold — uh, I remember I *really* don't like laundromats!

P.S: Phil T. — without looking I believe it's a West Palm Beach [address].

Got Lan's zine and feel terrible I hadn't worked up material for him/it. No excuse.

[This issue will hit the mail, and be received by many people, just before the deadline. Of course, your exhortations as well as the book reviews in this issue may not have time to have any effect, but we can only try. -ED]

TCOC-TCOC-TCOC-TCOC-TCOC-TCOC-TCOC-TCOC

Marie McCormack

13 March 1999

In reference to your editorial comment last month about new writers whose careers have been launched by the Writer's of the Future contest, in one early volume alone there was Dave Wolverton, Robert Reed, and David Zindell. Those are just three I can remember off the top of my head.

Wolverton has written *The Courtship of Princess Leia*, an extremely popular Star Wars book, *On My Way to Paradise*, which won awards as well as critical acclaim, and now he's writing fantasy including the Golden Queen trilogy. He now edits the Writer's of the Future series since Algis Budrys left.

Reed wrote a number of novels, each darker than the last. Zindell's Requiem for Homo Sapiens series started with *Neverness* — a novel based on his winning WOTF novella. Hans Brinker with mass.

In fact we (Mike Cothran and I) use the WOTF series as
(continued on back cover)



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our touchstone for up-and-coming new writers, much in the same way we used to use the Terry Carr-edited series.

You don't get out enough Mike, but thanks for taking all this dictation.

[For our readers, I'll point out that this telephone call happened as I was sitting at the computer working on the *Shuttle*. I had called Marie at BookMark to get her to look up some information I needed in proofing the book reviews and she took advantage of that to make comments on the WOTF/ new writers question. Now to my reply. The lists that you (Marie), Algis, and Lan supplied are very impressive and pretty much convincing. There is one aspect, however, that is not addressed (and cannot be) by just listing names. Accepting that many big-name writers won in the quarterly/annual WOTF contest with one of their first few published stories, it does not immediately follow that winning or being published

in the WOTF anthologies is partially or completely *responsible* for launching their career. I'm not *disputing* that it is so, just saying one does not inevitably follow from the other — let's not commit *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* errors. Surveying either the authors themselves or the editors responsible for subsequently publishing them would be interesting but perhaps impractical. As for not getting out enough, Marie, I suppose you're right — I don't read enough new fiction, but then who has the time? I'm too busy making phone calls and cajoling people to contribute to the *Shuttle*. (Thank the gods that Pat Brooks took the lead in lining up book reviewers for this issue.)-ED]

WAHF-WAHF-WAHF-WAHF-WAHF-WAHF-WAHF

We also heard from Tom Feller thanking us for the *Shuttle* and for sponsoring the parties at Chattacon.