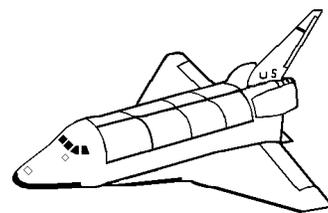


The



SHUTTLE
May 2005

*The Next NASFA Meeting will be 21 May
2005 at the Regular Time and Location*

Concom Meeting Thursday 2 June at Marie McCormack's House

🔔 Oyez, Oyez 🔔

The next **NASFA meeting** will be **21 May 2005** at the **regular time and location**.

The **May program** will be a field trip to the Huntsville Stars baseball game. Mary Ortwerth has secured a large number of free admissions and we can carpool from BookMark to cut down on parking expenses. The game is against the Chattanooga Lookouts and starts at 7:05P. There will be an appearance that night by "Bernie Brewer and The Famous Sausages" from the Milwaukee Brewers. (The Stars are an affiliate of the Brewers.)

There will **not** be a **May after-the-meeting meeting** due to the baseball game (which should last until about 10:00P). If the game is canceled (rain or whatever), we'll decide what to do on the spur of the moment.



DUFF Results

The result of the 2005 Down Under Fan Fund voting has been announced. Joe Siclari will represent North America while traveling to the Australian National SF Convention (to be held in Tasmania 11-13 June 2005) and elsewhere in Anzac.

Volunteer hosts are being sought for his travels.

Siclari (chair of the 1992 Worldcon, Magi-Con, in Orlando FL) won in the first round with 59 first place votes. Chris Barkley received 18 votes, there was one write-in for Earl Kemp, and there was one No Preference vote.

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Deadline for the June 2005 issue of *The NASFA Shuttle* is Friday, 3 June 2005.

Our 25th Year of Publication!

Nebula Awards Winners

Winners of the 2004 Nebula Awards were announced at the annual Nebula Awards banquet on Saturday, 30 April 2005, in Chicago IL. The winners are:

- Novel *Paladin of Souls*, Lois McMaster Bujold (Eos)
Novella **“The Green Leopard Plague,”** Walter Jon Williams (*Asimov’s* October/November 2003)
Novelette **“Basement Magic,”**
Ellen Klages (*F&SF* May 2003)
Short Story **“Coming to Terms,”**
Eileen Gunn (*Stable Strategies and Others*)
Script *The Lord of the Rings:*
The Return of the King, Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens, and Peter Jackson (New Line Cinema; based on the novel by J. R. R. Tolkien)

Two previously-announced awards were also presented. The Damon Knight Memorial Grand Master Award was given to Anne McCaffrey and the Service to SFWA Award was presented to Kevin O’Donnell, Jr. Most recipients were there to accept their awards, with only Walter Jon Williams and the *LotR:RotK* writers absent. Next year’s Nebula Awards banquet will be held in Tempe AZ.

Awards Roundup

ANALOG AND ASIMOV’S AWARDS

Analog Science Fiction and Fact and *Asimov’s Science Fiction* have announced their annual readers’ choice awards. The awards were presented at a breakfast held during the SFWA Nebula Awards Weekend on 30 April 2005 in Chicago IL. The winners are:

Analog

- Short Story **“Shed Skin,”** Robert J. Sawyer
Novelette **“Short Line Loco,”** Stephen L. Burns
Novella **“Layna’s Mirror,”** Rajnar Vajra
Fact **“Open Minds, Open Source,”** Eric S. Raymond
Cover Artist **David A. Hardy**, November 2004

Asimov’s

- Short story **“Travels With My Cats,”** Mike Resnick
Novelette **“The Garcia Narrows Bridge,”** Allen Steele
Novella **“Liberation Day,”** Allen Steele
Poem **“Heavy Weather,”** Bruce Boston
Cover Artist **Donato Giancola**, August 2004

2005 HEINLEIN AWARD

The Heinlein Society <www.heinleinsociety.org> has announced that the 2005 Heinlein Award will be given to Mr. Larry Niven and Dr. Jerry Pournelle. The award is for outstanding published work in hard science fiction or technical writings inspiring the human exploration of space. The awards will be presented at a banquet Sunday 4 September 2005 at this year’s NASFiC (Cascadia Con, Seattle WA). The Golden Duck and Seiun Awards will also be presented at the banquet.

Judges for the 2005 Heinlein Award were Greg Bear, Michael Flynn, Joe Haldeman, Yoji Kondo, Elizabeth Moon, Spider Robinson, Stanley Schmidt, Herb Gilliland, and John Hill. Greg Bear will be Toastmaster for the banquet. Tickets for the banquet are \$45 in advance and may be ordered online at <www.heinleinsociety.org/awarddinner.html>.

A Tale of Two Books

I’m not laughing with you, I’m laughing at you
by Doug Lampert

- Heroics for Beginners*, by John Moore, Ace, paperback, 31 August 2004, ISBN 0-441-01193-4, 246pp, \$6.99
The Unhandsome Prince, by John Moore, Ace, paperback, 26 April 2005, ISBN 0-441-01287-6, 272pp, \$6.99

There are two ways to write humorous fantasy, you can write a fantasy story with the humor growing naturally out of the setting and characters or you can make fun of your own setting and characters.

In most humorous fantasy (as opposed to fantasy with some humor) the author is metaphorically standing over your shoulder as you read saying, “look, isn’t this silly and unlikely,” about his own story, setting, and characters. This does nothing for suspension of disbelief (well, nothing good anyway). He does things like name the villain “Lord Voltmeter, he who must be named” or has the hero be the only character in the book who seems to have no idea what an Ancient Artifact is or where they come from. (Random peasants in a village inn can discourse knowledgeably on it, but despite being an experienced diplomat and military officer the main character has no clue.) John Moore does these things in *Heroics for Beginners*, but he does them fairly well. There are some good jokes, his hero is reasonably appealing, and the story is mildly interesting.

The Unhandsome Prince is in the same setting, and while it still has the humor, it misses the more ridiculous elements which damage suspension of disbelief in the first book.

I suspect that part of the problem with the first book is that humor can’t grow out of the setting until after the setting exists, but since the second book could stand alone I wish the Moore could have avoided *Heroics* and written two books more or less like *The Unhandsome Prince*. Obviously I didn’t actually dislike *Heroics for Beginners*, I bought the second book and I am only reviewing books I liked enough to recommend, but I think *The Unhandsome Prince* shows a noticeable improvement. On the other hand if you really like humor on the level of “Lord Voltmeter” then you should definitely read *Heroics for Beginners*.

Both stories are set in “The Twenty Kingdoms,” and both stories involve marriages by Princes. In *Heroics for Beginners* Prince Kevin of Rassendas is attempting to win the hand of Princess Rebecca of Deserae. The two are in love, and Kevin is doing rather well at convincing the local lords that he (and not the more militarily successful Lord Logan) would be the best match, when Deserae’s Ancient Artifact is stolen by the evil overlord Voltmeter (he started as an evil schoolteacher and worked his way up). The king of Deserae then offers Rebecca’s hand to Logan if he will recover the artifact; obviously the only thing for Kevin to do is get the artifact first, the problem being that he knows nothing about heroics, the solution being *The Handbook of Practical Heroics* which explains everything you need to know to attempt such a task.

In *The Unhandsome Prince*, Caroline has spent seven weeks in a swamp systematically kissing frogs to find the transformed prince placed in the swamp by the local sorceress. When she finally finds and kisses the right frog she discovers that (1) he isn’t handsome and (2) he isn’t the heir. This provides a problem for Caroline, her heart was set on a handsome prince who would inherit the throne (which is what

the sorceress had said anyone who found the prince would get), and she knows what she is due. It provides a problem for Emily (the sorceress's recently orphaned daughter) in that the town council agrees that Caroline is owed a handsome prince, and is inclined to use Emily's inheritance (and hence hope of a decent apprenticeship as a sorceress) to compensate Caroline unless Emily can find a satisfactory match for Caroline. And finally Prince Hal has all kinds of problems with a bankrupt family, the risk of turning back into a frog if the spell is not properly completed by Caroline's marriage, and an older brother who is handsome, the likely heir, and an evil jerk. But all's well that ends well. Prince Kenny is exiled, Caroline marries prince Jeffrey (who will become king very soon), Emily gets a nice apprenticeship and seems destined to marry Prince Hal, the royal family clears most of it's debts, and Rapunzel and Rumpelstiltskin seem happy together.

One novel aspect in both books is the lead character's romantic rival. Lord Logan really is brave and heroic, and in the end is the one who actually defeats Voltmeter. Taking Emily as the main character in *The Unhandsome Prince* we get a similar situation in that Emily's problems are solved only with Caroline's help. More typically in these sorts of stories the rival either turns out to be ineffective or a scoundrel. It's nice to have some stories where the solution involves thought more than action, and where some of the thought comes from someone the hero doesn't actually like all that much. (In many stories, especially allegedly humorous ones, it seems that everyone but the hero and maybe some of his friends has an unmentioned major lobotomy some time before the climax.) I wouldn't recommend these books to anyone as great prose, but taken as stories they aren't bad or totally cliched, and there are some good jokes.

To Panic or Not?

a Movie Review
by Mike Kennedy

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy; PG; Starring Martin Freeman, Mos Def, Zooey Deschanel, Sam Rockwell, Warwick Davis, Alan Rickman, Bill Nighy, et al.; Directed by Garth Jennings; Written by Douglas Adams (book and screenplay) and Karel Kirkpatrick (screenplay); Produced by Douglas Adams (posthumous credit), Gary Barber, Roger Birnbaum, Nick Goldsmith, Jonathan Glickman, et al.; 110 minutes

Douglas Adams made most of a career pretty much out of one idea. Yeah, he published several more books, but *Hitchhiker's* has been a radio play, a "five-book trilogy," a text-based computer game (now available in Java, if you can believe it), miscellaneous merchandise, and a TV series. Now, several years after Adams' death, *Hitchhiker's* is a movie. Which, to my mind, brings up one question: "Should I care?"

Yes and no.

Please, please don't go to *Hitchhiker's* thinking that you're going to see either the eponymous book or any subset of the "trilogy" filmed intact. Don't go if you fell in love with the original radio play and can't imagine anyone tinkering with those golden words. Don't go if you thought the hokey special effects in the TV series were what made the story worthwhile.

Douglas Adams suffered no illusion that a story could survive without changes as it moved from one medium to another. The basic story was not only expanded, but signifi-

cantly rewritten by him several times. Before his death he had completed a complete script, which apparently served as an early draft for this movie. And the movie certainly continues the changes. We may never know exactly which changes were his and which came in later versions of the script or during shooting. Warning, the following paragraph contains something of a spoiler.

I'm not a major Adams fan, but to me as a casual reader perhaps the two strongest points are his verbal gymnastics and the long suffering Arthur Dent. (One is almost tempted to say "man-shaped punching bag" Arthur Dent.) Unfortunately, purely verbal humor doesn't translate well into a movie. A funny movie needs to *look* funny as well as *sound* funny. And if one begins to care about Dent then the jabs the other characters take at him automatically become less funny. And... the movie makes the mistake of trying to make him likable. The less said about the sappy love-story ending the better. If you skipped this sort-of spoiler paragraph above I'll pad the end a little to make it a bit less likely that you'll see something by accident... but then you really should never know that...

The actors did a reasonably credible job with the material they were given. Sam Rockwell is suitably over the top as Zaphod Beeblebrox. Alan Rickman was an inspired choice as the voice of Marvin the Paranoid Android. Bill Nighy did a nice, understated job as architect Slartibartfast. Stephen Fry as the voice of the Guide was suitably soothing. The other main characters (Martin Freeman as Arthur Dent, Mos Def as Ford Prefect, and Zooey Deschanel as Trillian) did a workmanlike if uninspired job.

The special effects were good, if mostly not awe inspiring. There are two notable exceptions, one in either direction. The suit used for Marvin was probably supposed to be funny. It wasn't. It is one of the lamest tries at fx I've seen in a *long* time. On the plus side, much of the sequence where Slartibartfast is taking Dent on an overview of the "factory floor" at Magrathea are very well done, possibly even stunning.

Speaking of special effects, the movie is moderately-well loaded with fx homages to other science fiction movies. Some of them are quite obvious, like the *Star Wars* light saber effect in one scene. Others are a bit less so, like the shape of the Vogon's starships (coupled with some of the dialog). I strongly suspect that quite a few of the homages escaped me on first viewing. But the bottom line is that there will probably be no second viewing for me. Which leads naturally to the bottom line of any review — would I recommend it to you?

Yes and no.

As a cultural event within the sf/f community, going to the movie was a good thing. As a movie per se, not so much. If you have an interest in the material it might be worth your time

and money, especially if you have an afternoon to kill. For myself, I'm glad I had gift certificates so it wasn't money out of pocket.



No Body At Home; But...

No Need for Doctor Drake (aka The Lizard of Oz) —
Chapter 8
by PieEyedDragon

PED: Hello. What is your name?

Elphaba: Call me “Fabala.” My castle prison announced *your* name when you knocked. So, what *is* a “Gamera Bee?” I used to have some bees here.

PED: One made to go first, and follow after.

Elphaba: That sounds like you may actually be the Time Dragon; who creates and destroys. A venerable Elephant once called me “Daughter of the Dragon.” She had powers which reputedly included prophesy. Are you my father?

PED: Not likely. I came here to destroy this castle.

Elphaba: I know: my home and my prison. What about me?

PED: I have no directive to destroy you.

Elphaba: Then please take me away. I’ve been worried that the *other* one out there might gain control over me.

PED: Who else is out there? I’ve seen no one.

Elphaba: Ruggedo, the former Nome King; also once known as Roquat. Now he calls himself “Ozama Ben Loden.”

PED: And... you would trust me?

Elphaba: Yes. I see you better than you may think. Since you aren’t my father, I’ll call you “uncle.”

PED: Very well. (I swallow the crystal, and fly back to the forest.)

— O — O — O —

Circling the devastated forest, I casually start sixteen fires around the periphery. Attuning myself to *air*, I fan the flames with my wings. The breezes shift to blow likewise; fanning the flames, inward. I land and wait some hours until a considerable blaze surrounds me.

Elphaba: What now, uncle?

PED: Your castle is *earth*, which is strongest. I must integrate within the *elemental* equation: *fire* plus *earth* is *smoke*. *Fire* plus *water* is *steam*.

Elphaba: And what of *fire* and *air*.

PED: It’s a combination I never dared produce; a terrible combination: *Firestorm!* I read this spell once. Most written spells are useless unless they are recipes for potions, magical or otherwise. A real spell *can* be written if it includes magical writing techniques such as microprinting. I looked very hard at that spell until I discovered the key: The vowels were not what they seemed!

Water, earth, air and *fire*: these are Gamera-B.

Through the darkness of Future Past,
The magician longs to see.

One chants out between two worlds:

Fire — walk with me!

The wind whips upward, shrieking in gale force; spreading the fires until one tremendous blaze covers all the scattered wood. Fire and smoke rise in a growing, twisting pillar of destruction above me. The pillar of *fire* curves over to caress the castle: melting the fortress and the mountain top into an oozing mass of lava.

My mission accomplished, I redirect the pillar inward, opening the way to the plane of *fire* through which I may be able to find my way back home. I take wing. Concentrating upon my memory of a small eternal flame at the shrine in Okayama; I begin the Opening:

PED: Anahl Nathrach... Ooth Vos Bethud...

Elphaba: I sense something approaching. What is it, an Ozoplane?

PED: No. It’s a surface-to-air missile; and Ben Loden is steering it like a broomstick.

(The Nome King leaps off, for a Nome cannot be injured by hitting the ground in Oz. The missile bursts, spreading an expanding mass of foamy fire-retardant substances. My pillar begins to lose cohesion, but I have already initiated the planar transfer. My lock on the small flame in Okayama is lost as I leave the Land of Oz, going nowhere.)

— O — O — O —

Yosho chants over the small sacred flame, which suddenly flares-up and dies into a fading spiral of smoke for the first time in 900 years. Being alone, Yosho directs a small energy blast from his hand to rekindle the oily wick. The flame returns; but was it too late for the lost dragon? Had the dragon finally died?

[Some of the above beings and situations have been suggested by the works of L. F. Baum and David Lynch.]

Of Wyrms and Wormholes, or What’s Behind Door Number Two?

No Need for Doctor Drake (aka The Lizard of Oz) —
Chapter 9
by PieEyedDragon

Elphaba: So, what is happening now?

PED: I faced destruction recently. Ozma snatched me away. But it looks like destruction will not be denied. We are approaching an area of death.

Elphaba: Can you show me? I see nothing from inside here.

PED: I would not do this ordinarily. You may see through *my* eyes.

Elphaba: *Oh... my...* I never dreamed so many colors existed, or such bright swirl-patterns.

PED: That is in-falling matter. We are approaching a Singularity: a gravitational anomaly of undeniable force. We shall become pretty colors, too; but we won’t know anything about it.

Elphaba: I see some dark knots appear and disappear in the swirl patterns. What are those?

PED: They are temporary wormholes in space. All probably lead to destruction, for their other ends may be who-knows-where.

Elphaba: Do you feel lucky, Unk? I can count them off and let you pick a number. We may have a chance.

PED: Others might choose *seven*; I am what I am, and that’s all that I am. I’ll go with *snake eyes*: two. Do you know a spell that will help?

Elphaba: There was something in the Grimmerie that seemed to be for enchanting a broomstick. It was a gravitation-redirection spell; but I don’t have enough power now to cast anything like that.

PED: I can supply the needed energy. Before Ozma brought me here, I was on the point of dying. I had been deployed in low orbit to block a massive energy beam from piercing the Earth. I scattered or deflected most of it; more was burning me to death. I also absorbed nearly a tithe of the total package. I can use this to power your spell.

Elphaba: Why didn't you use this power on the castle?

PED: I thought a big enough fire would let me contact my home and get a directional reading. It did. Also, I was unsure of my ability to control that much energy. It could have been... excessive; and unwise to attempt it near any populated place. I could have lost control and destroyed much more than the mountaintop. It would have been contrary to the spirit of Ozma's request had I blown a crater four times larger than her entire realm, and over a hundred miles deep. It could also have killed every living thing on the planet.

Elphaba: It sounds like we'll have quite a ride, then; whatever happens. I notice you have my broomstick here, and... *Nessa's*? My sister's broomstick was lost when that house fell on her!

PED: The Munchkins saw me find it and destroy it. Since I rebuilt Dorothy's house they might guess the truth: What I destroy, I can recreate. Yes, I *do* feel lucky. I'll head for door number two!

(I shift things around inside of me a bit and then start the spell.)

The wave of Ki... that blasted me;
A broomstraw net... I'll weave, You Bet!
Some stomach "ick"... will seal this trick.
Start... Position... Key... Ignition;
Turn frenetic. Go *kinetic*!

(A *shove* from my innards gives proof that I've just supercharged a witch's broom. I meander around, getting familiar with directing this new mode of propulsion. I wonder if Elphaba thinks I'm a few Bricks short of a Road. I pass the first nexus and take aim at the second.)

PED: Shine On, my little green lantern. Hold back the Night!

Elphaba: (Singing)

I'm through with playing by the rules of someone else's game.

Too late for second-guessing. Too late to go back to sleep.
It's time to trust my instinct... close my eyes... and *leap*!
It's time to try... defying... gravity.

I think I'll try... defying... gravity; and you can't pull me down!

I'm through accepting limits... 'cause someone says they're so.

Some things I cannot change; but 'til I try I'll never know!
Just you and I... defying... gravity.

With you and I... defying... gravity; they'll never bring us down!

Everyone deserves a chance to *fly*!
Tell them how I... am defying... gravity.

I'm flying high... defying... gravity.

No wizard that there is or was... is ever gonna bring... me... *down*!

(The only way out, is through. I retract my legs and furl my wings around me. Feeding more *power* to Elphaba and the broomsticks, I fly into the wormhole, no turning back. The so-called Wicked Witch of the West sings a spell-song and starts chanting [Eleka Namen Namen Ah Tum Ah Tum Eleka Namen!]; trying to keep the tunnel open. Her spell must operate as the inverse square of distance; like gravity. I keep shrinking until the tunnel is less than half a centimeter wide; at which point dynamic equilibrium is achieved between the Witch and the Universe. I am now only the size of a pin worm; pulling the thread of my life out from the past and trying to stitch it into the fabric of the future. If we survive this trip, I'll submit her name for the Order of Hercules!)

— O — O — O —

(The story goes that Hercules once held up the sky, temporarily, for Atlas. Let no one say that women are weaker; for this one, dead (?) witch defies all of Universal Gravitation to keep this wormhole from collapsing. The tunnel begins to widen. I see a few stars ahead.)

— O — O — O —

(Archimedes is quoted as saying "Give me a lever and a place to stand, and I can move the world" or something like that. The equation also requires an immovable fulcrum that must bear both the weight of the world and the hand of the mathematician. I think I know the name of that fulcrum.)

[Some of the above beings and situations have been suggested by the works of Frank Herbert, Gregory Maguire, and Stephen Schwartz.]

Letters of Comment

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

Michael D. Glicksohn
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20 April 2005

Well, the streak continues, eh? Another obituary. I never met Ms Norton and stopped reading her books over thirty years ago so her passing at 93 wasn't a personal loss for me. (I assume she was "cremated" rather than "creamed" but it's certainly an interesting image.) The death a couple of days ago of my long-time friend and "rival" Bill Bowers was a much more emotional event, one it will take me a long time to recover from. I wonder if he'll rate an obituary next issue as I expect many *Shuttle* readers would be unfamiliar with his name?

I'm sorry but *The Lord of the Rings* is not a musical play. It's a wonderful book (not a "trilogy") and was made into marvelous movies but no matter what they do to it on stage it will be a travesty. I wonder how many people who loved the book and the movies will even want to see it? I guess time will tell (and Lloyd will tell you!).

Well, short is better than nothing I hope.

[You're by no means the only one (or the first) to have pointed out the "creamed" typo to me, Mike. I long ago accepted that "there's always one more typo" but this one is particularly bothersome. I'll plead that I did most of the proofreading for that issue while I was slightly ill and attending DeepSouth-Con. It would be great to have another set of eyes to proof behind me before an issue goes to bed, but my monthly schedule pretty much precludes that. There won't be an obit for Bill Bowers in this issue. It's an unfortunate fact of life that people depart from it, often in an untimely fashion. Doubtless I could fill a zine the size of the *Shuttle* with obituaries for fans and professionals from the sf/f field on a monthly basis. To avoid depressing myself quite that much, I made a rule that I'd run an obit only if the person in question had some tie to Huntsville fandom (e.g., a pro who was a guest at one of our cons) or who was such a big name that I just couldn't avoid it. Even that restricted set leads me to write one far too often. I too am skeptical about adapting *LotR* for the stage. It may well end up being a complete train wreck, though sometimes even disasters are interesting in their own way. -ED]

GCOC-GCOC-GCOC-GCOC-GCOC-GCOC-GCOC

Sheryl Birkhead
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22 April 2005

Sigh — Bill Bowers died a few days ago — not truly unexpected, but unexpected all the same.

Do you happen to know if the Noah Fund (for contributions for Andre Norton) is a local fund or is it national? I tried the Internet and couldn't find it, which leads me to thinking it is a local fund.

Ah, so that's what Naomi's "recent" production looks like.

Aha, so PED impersonates (poor word choice) a lawn mower! He does get around.

The Netflix subscription is paying off — I've seen all but *The Incredibles* — there is a long wait on that one, but I'm in line.

Xanadu sounded fairly quiet and on an even keel. From the report it doesn't sound as if there were any major snafus.

I really wish I could master the 36-hour day. I have so many started projects that need *time* — yeah RSN!

[I believe, but do not *know*, that the Noah Fund is local to the Nashville area. The *Shuttle* does go to several Nashville-area fans so perhaps one of them will comment, if they know for sure. I enjoyed DSC/Xanadu and you're right that there were no significant hiccups. -ED]

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

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30 April 2005

I've been so busy these days... after a long time with no work, I now have two jobs, and our local annual convention was in town, so I haven't been able to keep up with the small flood of zines coming in these days. So, it is catch-up time, and here some comments on the March and April issues of the *NASFA Shuttle*.

March... A shame about her illness, and a shame about her death. At least SFWA has marked her presence and passing with an award in her name. It's up to the rest of us to make sure she isn't forgotten, and that her good works stay in print.

Ah, there I am on the calendar again. This coming June 2, I will turn 46. I'm feeling a little old and out of things, but I'm still staying busy.

Ah, our old friend PieEyed! Such adventures in Oz Mr. Baum never dreamed of. And, such concepts as changing gender through magic? The Wicked Witch of the West's father

is the Wizard? Betcha Baum never thought of that, either! Making the universes collide is worthy of P. J. Farmer's writings.

Mr. Glicksohn returns to these pages... he's right too many obituaries, and we should show our appreciations to these people while they're still alive and able to be suitably embarrassed when we praise them. We can only hope that should they pass on they might hear our words about them, but we're not sure. Praise them while still with us, and they'll definitely hear us. It's not like there's an egoboo shortage or anything...

April... There's Andre Norton, who lived to a good age. "Ms. Norton was creamed with copies of her first and last books"? That typo brings up some rather unfortunate images. I'm sure she'd smile at that one. I wonder if a suitable tribute to her work is to reopen High Hallack and make it available to those writers who had hoped to use it one day?

For the first time in a long time, I had no Worldcon membership, and therefore, no franchise to vote for the Hugos. I know who'd I'd vote for in at least a few of the categories, but I rarely vote for whoever becomes the winner. The DSC awards... Jack Chalker's widow's name is Eva Whitley, not Walker.

And, more PieEyed. I've read some of the Oz books, but definitely not all. Was the character Tipetarius in any of those books?

The *Lord of the Rings* musical will be in Toronto sometime in 2006; haven't seen a firm date yet, but I believe it has been set. The big Gathering of the Fellowship Tolkien con that was held in Toronto in 2003 will be held there again in 2006. There had been though to move it to Denver, but the announcement of the musical, plus the good feeling from the first convention, have convinced them to come back to Toronto for next year. Their next challenge is to find a suitable venue and a vacant weekend in 2006 to stage the con. They've already said they will be careful not to land on any of the existing conventions in Toronto. I had a great time seeing considerable goshwow from lots of Tolkien fans whose only contact with each other was through a website and/or bulletin board. I will definitely be there.

And, caught up, but another issue will be here soon. Hey, at least I beat the deadline by a week or so. For me these days, that's pretty good. Take care, all, and see you at that next issue.

[Turning 46 feels old? Don't cry too much about it to someone more than a lustrum your senior, Lloyd... You caught both of the big typos that I know of in the April issue. I actually know Eva Whitley's name perfectly well and should have caught that, but finding one's own typos is always more difficult than finding someone else's. I imagine that reopening High Hallack isn't in the cards. My understanding is that many of the books were sold off after it was closed — plus of course there's the issue of finding funding and someone interested in (and capable of) running it. -ED]



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