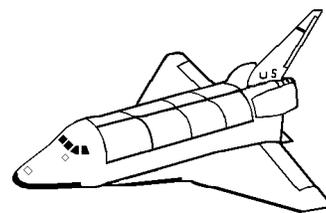


The



SHUTTLE  
January 2006

*The Next NASFA Meeting will be 21 January  
2006 at the Regular Time and Location*

*Con†Stellation Concom Meeting Thursday 19  
January 2006; 7P, at Sam Smith's Apartment*

### 🔔 Oyez, Oyez 🔔

There will be a **Con†Stellation concom meeting** at **7P Thursday 19 January 2006** at **Sam Smith's apartment**. The main order of business is expected to be finalizing committee assignments.

The next **NASFA meeting** will be **Saturday 21 January 2006** at the **regular time and location**.

The **January program** will be — or at least is *threatened* to be — a campaign speech by Program Director Doug Lampert. [Well, we wouldn't let him give one when he was nominated, so I guess he figures he's due. -ED]

The location of the **January after-the-meeting meeting** is TBD at press time.

### NASFA Calendar

#### JANUARY

- 01 New Year's Day.
- 02 New Year's Day (Federal Holiday).
- 03 BD: Jim Kennedy.
- 03 BD: Karen Hopkins.
- 06 BD: Rich Garber.
- 06–07 ShadowCon — Memphis TN.
- 06–08 GaFilk — Atlanta GA.
- 07 BD: Douglas E. Lampert.
- 16 BD: Bruce Butler.
- 16 BD: Martin Luther King (Observed).

*(continued on page 2)*

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**Deadline for the February 2006 issue of *The NASFA Shuttle* is Friday, 3 February 2006.**



Director, which she declined. He then nominated Karen for Programming Director, who declined, followed by Aaron Kennedy, who was not seconded. Jim Kennedy nominated Mike Kennedy for several new offices, all declined. Doug nominated Jim for Programming Director, Mike seconded that nomination, and KO offered to vote for him, but that nomination was also declined. Doug then nominated Joshua Kennedy for Programming Director, which was seconded. Jim asked for a ruling on this. Steve skimmed the bylaws, and determined that a member with a family membership can be nominated and serve in an office. (However, he later realized that he missed the phrase saying a family membership only applies to family members over the age of 12 years, which makes his ruling incorrect.) Nominations were closed for the year, with this slate of nominees:

President ..... Mary Ortwert  
 Vice President ..... Mike Kennedy  
 Secretary ..... Steve Sloan  
 Treasurer ..... Samuel A. Smith  
 Program Director ..... Doug Lampert and Joshua Kennedy  
 Publicity Director ..... Maria West

With nominations closed, elections began. Mary was reelected as President, with one opposing vote. Mike was reelected as Vice President, with one opposed. Sam was reelected as Treasurer, with two opposed. Steve was reelected as Secretary, with one opposed. Program Director was the only office with more than one candidate. Joshua received 6 votes, but Doug won. In the final election for the year, Mia was reelected as Publicity Director, with (noticing a pattern here?) one opposing vote.

This is the final list of officers for 2006:

President ..... Mary Ortwert  
 Vice President ..... Mike Kennedy  
 Secretary ..... Steve Sloan  
 Treasurer ..... Samuel A. Smith  
 Program Director ..... Doug Lampert  
 Publicity Director ..... Maria West

#### NEW BUSINESS

Mia moved to hold the NASFA auction twice per year, with dates to be determined by the Programming Director, and was seconded. Jim amended the motion to eleven times per year, but was not seconded. The [original] motion [carried], with three opposed.

We played "Where's Waldo" with David Mattingly's latest Christmas card.

Sam gave a Treasurer's report. The NASFA balance for the entire year will be \$20 to the good, even including the \$1000 transfer from the Con+Stellation account. [That is, the total cash flow is positive even without the transfer mentioned, which was made to bring the balance to a point where monthly charges would stop. -ED]

Postage rates will be going up in January. The increase will cost the club about \$25 more each year, which could put us about \$5 in the hole. It's close enough that we probably won't have to worry about it until next year.

Mike [actually, it was Sam -ED] printed a list of next year's Southern conventions, and highlighted all known conflicts with NASFA meetings. Will we move the January meeting for Chattacon? Doug moved that we do not move for Chattacon. The motion (or lack of motion?) was seconded, and it carried. The February, March, April, May, and June meetings will not be moved for StellarCon, FantaSciCon, Frolicon, Mobicon, or Sci-Fi Summer Con, respectively.

Next comes the big conflict: the regular October meeting

date conflicts with Con+Stellation. A con weekend is complicated enough without cramming a club meeting into it. If we move the meeting back to October 14, that would put a nice four weeks and five weeks between the September, October, and November meetings. Moving the meeting forward a week would leave only three weeks between the October and November meetings, which would make completing the *Shuttle* difficult. So, we voted to move the meeting to October 14. We will need to make sure BookMark's meeting room will be available at that time. There are no conflicts with the November and December meetings.

Sue Thorn talked about the After-The-Meeting Meeting to be held at her house. She handed out star decorations to everyone who planned to attend, so they could put them on her Christmas tree when they arrived.

#### CONVENTION BUSINESS

We received a "Season's Greetings" card from the hotel. We also received a "Thank You" letter from the American Red Cross, thanking us for our donation to the Hurricane Katrina Relief — which is not how Sam made the check out, and the amount they thanked us for is different than the amount we raised. [The latter effect was because one of the checks we received was made directly to the Red Cross and was passed along by us but not counted by the Red Cross in our total. -ED] As usual it's the thought that counts.

We have an outstanding bill for engraving, which Anita knows nothing about. Sam will try calling them, to find out what's going on.

So far on the 2005 convention, we're \$524 in the hole, but only because of the \$1000 that was transferred to the NASFA account, so overall, the con made almost \$500. We have one outstanding bill for \$123, and we still have \$50 of outstanding income from the Rocket City FurMeet. KO will ask their treasurer about it.

Next year's con is \$1500 to the good, because we haven't had any expenses yet.

Anita gave \$60 she earned through T-shirt sales to the con account, all twenties.

Don't forget that dues are due in January.

Sam and KO are "pen twins."

The meeting adjourned at 6:54:56P.

For the program, we had the annual NASFA gift exchange. Many minds were boggled by Mike's system for divvying up his gifts, but it was worth it.

The After-the-Meeting Meeting and Christmas party was held at Sue Thorn's house.

## Preliminary Nebula Ballot Released

The Nebula and Andre Norton Awards are perhaps the premier peer award in the science fiction and fantasy field. Members of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America are eligible to participate in the multistage nomination and voting process. A public version of the preliminary ballot is available at [www.sfga.org/awards/2006/NebPrelim2005.html](http://www.sfga.org/awards/2006/NebPrelim2005.html) with links to additional information on most of the nominated items, including the full text of a number of the shorter works. Juries for the Nebula categories may each add one work to the final ballot. The Norton jury may add up to three works to the Norton final ballot.

Nebulas are awarded in five categories: Novel, Novella, Novelette, Short Story, and Script. The Andre Norton Award, for an outstanding young-adult science fiction or fantasy book, will be awarded for the first time this year. The 2006 Nebula Awards Weekend will take place 4–7 May 2006 in Tempe AZ. Lists of the nominees in each category follow.

#### NOVEL

- The Hallowed Hunt***, Lois McMaster Bujold (Eos, May 2005)  
***Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell***, Susanna Clarke (Bloomsbury, Holtzbrinck Publishers, September 2004)  
***Survival (Species Imperative I)***, Julie E. Czerneda (DAW, May 2004)  
***The Rebel: An Imagined Life of James Dean***, Jack Dann (William Morrow, December 2004)  
***Camouflage***, Joe Haldeman (*Analog*, March 2004–May 2004; Ace, August 2004)  
***Mortal Love***, Elizabeth Hand (William Morrow, June 2004)  
***The Child Goddess***, Louise Marley (Ace, May 2004)  
***Polaris***, Jack McDevitt (Ace, November 2004)  
***Cusp***, Robert A. Metzger (Ace, January 2005)  
***Iron Council***, China Miéville (Del Rey, July 2004)  
***Going Postal***, Terry Pratchett (HarperCollins, October 2004)  
***Forty Signs of Rain***, Kim Stanley Robinson (Bantam Spectra, June 2004)  
***Air***, Geoff Ryman (St. Martin's Press, September 2004)  
***Trash, Sex, Magic***, Jennifer Stevenson (Small Beer Press, June 2004)  
***Dread Empire's Fall: The Sundering***, Walter Jon Williams (HarperTorch, March 2004)

#### NOVELLA

- "The Tribes of Bela,"** Albert Cowdrey (*F&SF*, August 2004)  
**"Magic for Beginners,"** Kelly Link (*Magic for Beginners*, Small Beer Press, July 2005)  
**"Identity Theft,"** Robert J. Sawyer (*Down These Dark Spaceways*, Mike Resnick, ed., Science Fiction Book Club, May 2005)  
**"Clay's Pride,"** Bud Sparhawk (*Analog*, July/August 2004)  
**"Left of the Dial,"** Paul Witcover (*SCIFICTION*, September 2004)

#### NOVELETTE

- "Flat Diane,"** Daniel Abraham (*F&SF*, October/November 2004)  
**"The People of Sand and Slag,"** Paolo Bacigalupi (*F&SF*, February 2004)  
**"Harvest Moon,"** William Barton (*Asimov's*, September 2005)  
**"The Ocean of the Blind,"** James L. Cambias (*F&SF*, April 2004)  
**"Anda's Game,"** Cory Doctorow (*Salon.com*, 15 November 2004)  
**"Nirvana High,"** Eileen Gunn and Leslie What (*Stable Strategies and Others*, Tachyon Press, September 2004)  
**"Men are Trouble,"** Jim Kelly (*Asimov's*, June 2004)  
**"The Faery Handbag,"** Kelly Link (*The Faery Reel: Tales From the Twilight Realm*, Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling, eds., Viking Press, August 2004)  
**"Keyboard Practice Consisting of an Aria with Diverse Variations for the Harpsichord with Two Manuals,"** John G. McDaid (*F&SF*, January 2005)  
**"Strength Alone,"** Paul Melko (*Asimov's*, December 2004)  
**"Dragon's Eye,"** Beth Shope (*Lords of Swords*, Daniel E. Blackston, ed., Pitch-Black Books, December 2004)

#### SHORT STORY

- "Rough Draft,"** Kevin J. Anderson and Rebecca Moesta (*Analog*, January/February 2005)  
**"The End of the World as We Know It,"** Dale Bailey (*F&SF*,

October/November 2004)

- "There's a Hole in the City,"** Richard Bowes (*SCIFICTION*, June 2005)  
**"I Live with You,"** Carol Emshwiller (*F&SF*, March 2005)  
**"Still Life With Boobs,"** Anne Harris (*Talebones*, Summer 2005)  
**"Small Moments in Time,"** John G. Henry (*Analog*, December 2004)  
**"My Mother, Dancing,"** Nancy Kress (*Asimov's*, June 2004)  
**"Super Goat Man,"** Jonathan Lethem (*New Yorker*, April 2004)  
**"A Princess of Earth,"** Mike Resnick (*Asimov's*, December 2004)  
**"Cold Fires,"** M. Rickert (*F&SF*, October/November 2004)  
**"Start the Clock,"** Benjamin Rosenbaum (*F&SF*, August 2004)  
**"The Sky's the Limit,"** Lawrence M. Schoen (*All Star Zeppelin Adventure Stories*, David Moles and Jay Lake, eds., Wheatland Press, November 2004)  
**"Glinky,"** Ray Vukcevich (*F&SF*, June 2004)  
**"Christus Destitutus,"** Bud Webster (*Crossroads: Tales of the Southern Literary Fantastic*, F. Brett Cox and Andy Duncan, eds., Tor, August 2004)  
**"Born-Again,"** K. D. Wentworth (*F&SF*, May 2005)

#### SCRIPT

- The Old Negro Space Program***, Andy Bobrow (web, April 2005 (Andy Bobrow writer/director)) [The SFWA site notes that the eligibility of this work has been questioned and has yet to be ruled on by the rules committee.]  
***Serenity***, Joss Whedon (Universal Pictures, September 2005)  
***Valiant: A Modern Tale of Faerie***, Holly Black (Simon & Schuster, June 2005)

## Movie and TV Awards

The holiday season is over so now it's time for the annual movie and television awards shows to ramp up. As usual, there is at least some genre presence in these awards.

#### PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS

One of the first award shows each year, the People's Choice Awards (their 32<sup>nd</sup> year) were presented on CBS TV Tuesday 10 January 2006. Nominees are compiled using a web-based market research panel that is supposedly selected to be representative of the entire US population, though it's limited to ages 18–54. The top three selections in each category became the final nominees. Final selection is via open online voting. Some of this year's genre winners include:

- Favorite Movie Drama** ..... *Star Wars: Episode III — Revenge of the Sith*  
**Favorite Family Movie** ..... *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*  
**Favorite Movie** ..... *Star Wars: Episode III — Revenge of the Sith*

A number of the other nominees in each of these categories were also sf or fantasy. There were no genre winners in the TV, Music, or Miscellaneous categories.

#### SCREEN ACTOR'S GUILD AWARDS

Nominations for the 12<sup>th</sup> annual SAG Awards were announced Thursday 5 January 2006. The winners will be announced 29 January during a ceremony at the Shrine Exposition Center, televised by cable channels TNT and TBS.

None of the movie-related nominations were for genre

films. In the TV categories, there were a few nominations for arguably genre or genre-related work. Kiefer Sutherland was nominated in the Actor in a Drama Series category for *24*. Patricia Arquette received an Actress in a Drama Series nod for her work in *Medium*. Finally the entire Drama Ensemble of *Lost* was nominated.

#### PRODUCER'S GUILD NOMS

This year's PGA <www.producersguild.org> awards will be presented Sunday 22 January 2006. While there were no genre films nominated in the headliner Best Film category, all of the Animated Motion Picture noms went, not surprisingly, to genre films: *Chicken Little*, *Madagascar*, *Robots*, *Tim Burton's Corpse Bride*, and *Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit*. Two of the Drama TV Series nods also went to genre/related works: *24* (Fox) and *Lost* (ABC).

#### WRITER'S GUILD NOMS

None of the WGA <www.wga.org> film nominations went to genre films this year. In the TV categories <www.wgaeast.org>, genre and related works did receive a very few nods. *Lost* (ABC) copped one of the Dramatic Series nominations. All the Animation category nods went to episodes of *The Simpsons* — quite a stretch to fit in a genre category. Finally, a couple of the Children's Episodic and Specials noms went to arguably genre works. Winners will be announced at a ceremony held simultaneously in New York and Los Angeles on 4 February 2006.

#### GOLDEN GLOBE NOMS

The 2006 Golden Globe Awards <www.thegoldenglobes.com> (sponsored by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association <www.hfpa.org>) will be presented Monday 16 January 2006 — less than 24 hours after this issue of the *Shuttle* is put to bed, but before it hits the mail. Genre works received a number of nominations. Johnny Depp got a nod for Best Performance by an Actor in a Musical or Comedy Motion Picture for his work in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Peter Jackson was nominated in the Best Director, Motion Picture category for *King Kong*. Two composers got nods for genre films in the Best Original Score category, James Newton Howard for *King Kong* and Harry Gregson for *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. The *Narnia* film also copped a nom in the Best Original Song category for Alanis Morissette's "Wunderkind."

The genre nominations continued in the TV categories with *Lost* (ABC) getting a Best Drama TV Series nod. Patricia Arquette was honored in the Best Performance by an Actress in a TV Drama Series for her work in *Medium*. The corresponding Best Actor in a TV Drama category got two genre-related mentions for Matthew Fox in *Lost* and Kiefer Sutherland in *24*. Finally, Naveen Andrews received a Best Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role nomination for *Lost*.

## Wooden Rocket Awards Announced

The Wooden Rocket Awards <www.sfcrowsnest.com/wooden/wr\_index.php> are given annually for "the best online sites operating in the science fiction and fantasy genre, as voted for by the online world's science fiction and fantasy fans." Winners for 2005, the third year of awards, were recently announced. Voting closed on 30 December 2005 with a total of 11,538 voters making a total of 61,462 nominations. The winners and runners-up in the various categories are listed

below.

#### BEST ONLINE MAGAZINE

Winner .....**Sci-Fiction** <www.scifi.com/scifiction>  
Runners-Up .....**Science Fiction and Fantasy World**  
<www.sffworld.com> and  
**SciFi 247** <www.scifi-247.com>

#### BEST PRINT-TO-WEB MAGAZINE

Winner .....**Locus Online** <www.LocusMag.com>  
Runners-Up .....**Asimov's** <www.asimovs.com> and  
**SFX** <www.sfx.co.uk>

#### BEST AUTHOR SITE

Winner .....**The Manifold** (Stephen Baxter)  
<www.themanifold.co.uk>  
Runners-Up .....**Runagate Rampant**  
<runagate-rampant.netfirms.com> and  
**Robin Hobb** <www.robinhobb.com>

#### BEST ARTIST SITE

Winner .....**Michael Whelan** <www.michaelwhelan.com>  
Runners-Up .....**Anne Sudworth**  
<www.annesudworth.co.uk> and  
**Brom** <www.bromart.com>

#### BEST GALLERY SITE

Winner .....**ASFA** <www.asfa-art.org>  
Runners-Up .....**Worlds of Wonder** <www.wow-art.com>  
and **Elfwood** <elfwood.lysator.liu.se/elfwood.pike>

#### BEST PRINT PUBLISHER SITE

Winner .....**The Black Library** <www.blacklibrary.com>  
Runners-Up .....**DAW Books** <www.dawbooks.com> and  
**Voyager** <www.voyager-books.co.uk>

#### BEST E-BOOK PUBLISHER SITE

Winner .....**Blackmask Online** <www.blackmask.com>  
Runners-Up .....**Electric Story** <www.electricstory.com>  
and **Baen Webscriptions** <www.webscription.net>

#### BEST E-BOOK SITE

Winner .....**FB Hamilton** <www.slicerdragon.com>  
Runners-Up .....**Jordanna Morgan**  
<www.jordanna.net/icestorm> and  
**Thomas Nevin Huber** <www.star-spawn.net>

#### BEST OFFICIAL MOVIE SITE

Winner .....**Serenity** <www.serenitymovie.com>  
Runners-Up .....**Harry Potter** <www.harrypotter.com>  
and **King Kong** <www.kingkongmovie.com>

#### BEST FAN MOVIE SITE

Winner .....**Kong is King** <www.kongisking.net>  
Runners-Up .....**Narnia Web** <www.narniaweb.com>  
and **Batman on Film** <www.batman-on-film.com>

#### BEST OFFICIAL TV SITE

Winner .....**Doctor Who**  
<www.bbc.co.uk/doctorwho/index.shtml>  
Runners-Up .....**Battlestar Galactica** <www.scifi.com/  
battlestar> and **Stargate SG.1** <www.stargate-sg1.com>

#### BEST FAN TV SITE

Winner .....**Krypton Site** <www.kryptonsite.com>  
Runners-Up .....**Alias TV** <www.alias-tv.com> and  
**Doctor Who Cuttings Archive**  
<www.cuttingsarchive.org.uk>

#### BEST ONLINE SFF STORE

Winner .....**Forbidden Planet** <www.forbiddenplanet.com>  
Runners-Up .....**Mysterious Galaxy**  
<www.mystgalaxy.com> and  
**Slow Glass Books** <www.slowglass.com.au>

#### BEST DIRECTORY SITE

Winner .....**Internet Speculative Fiction Database**  
<www.isfdb.org>  
Runners-Up .....**Scifi Matter** <www.scifimatter.com>

and **SFWA Links** <www.sfw.org/links>  
**BEST CONVENTION/ORGANIZATION/  
SOCIETY SITE**

**Winner** ..... **SF Hub** <www.sfhub.ac.uk>  
**Runners-Up** ..... **The Speculative Literature  
Foundation** <www.speculativeliterature.org> and **World  
Science Fiction Society** <www.worldcon.org>  
**BEST FOREIGN LANGUAGE SITE**

**Winner** ..... **Galaxies** <www.galaxies-sf.com>  
**Runners-Up** ..... **Fantascienza.com**  
<www.fantascienza.com> and **SF Fan.DE** <www.sf-fan.de>

**BEST BLOG**

**Winner** ..... **Boing Boing** <www.boingboing.net>  
**Runners-Up** ..... **The Early Days of a Better Nation**  
<kenmacleod.blogspot.com> and **Making Light**  
<www.nielsenhayden.com/makinglight>

**BEST RICH CONTENT**

**Winner** ..... **TSFPN** <www.tsfpn.com>  
**Runners-Up** ..... **SF Site Podcasts** <www.sfsite.com/  
podcast01.htm> and **Hour 25** <www.hour25online.com>

## Other Awards News

### PHILIP K. DICK AWARD FINALISTS

The Philip K. Dick Award <www.philipkdickaward.org> is given annually for distinguished science fiction published in paperback original form in the United States. Nominees for the 2005 award have been announced:

- **Cagebird**, Karin Lowachee (Warner Aspect)
- **Cowl**, Neal Asher (Tor)
- **Natural History**, Justina Robson (Bantam Spectra)
- **Silver Screen**, Justina Robson (Pyr)
- **To Crush the Moon**, Wil McCarthy (Bantam Spectra)
- **War Surf**, M. M. Buckner (Ace)

The award is sponsored by the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society, while the award ceremony is sponsored by the NorthWest Science Fiction Society. Judges for this year's award are Charles Coleman Finlay, Kay Kenyon, Robert Metzger, Lyda Morehouse, and Graham Murphy (chair). The winner and any special citations will be announced on Friday 14 April 2006 at Norwescon 29 <www.norwescon.org> at the Doubletree SeaTac Hotel in SeaTac (Seattle) WA.

### SPECIAL HUGO TO BE AWARDED

L.A.con IV, the 64<sup>th</sup> World Science Fiction Convention <www.laconiv.org> to be held 23–27 August 2006 in Anaheim CA, has published its Hugo Awards nomination ballot. Each Worldcon is allowed to add one special Hugo category (used in 2002 and 2004, for instance, for a Best Web Site Hugo). L.A.con IV has chosen to award a Best Interactive Video Game Hugo. Their web site defines eligible games as follows:

Any interactive computer, game console, or on-line graphics-based game whose subject is science fiction or fantasy and which has been released for the first time during the previous calendar year. Games reissued or ported to new platforms but not substantially changed do not qualify as new games for purposes of this award.

### CARL BRANDON SOCIETY AWARDS CREATED

The Carl Brandon Society <www.carlbrandon.org> has created two new juried awards to recognize excellence in speculative fiction by or about people of color. Each award comes with a \$1,000 prize. To be eligible, works must have been published in 2005. Nominations are being accepted online at <www.carlbrandon.org/nomination.htm>.

The **Carl Brandon Kindred Award** will be given to any work of speculative fiction dealing with issues of race and ethnicity; nominees may be of any racial or ethnic group. The submission period closes 1 March 2006.

The **Carl Brandon Parallax Award** will be given to works of fiction created by a person of color. Nominees must provide a brief statement self-identifying as a person of color; creators unwilling to do so will not be considered for this award. The submission period closes 1 February 2006.

## What I Did On My Summer Vacation

No Need for a Ring — Chapter 1  
by PieEyedDragon

[The *Shuttle* has been advised that there were some changes we missed in the Prologue to this story, printed last month. While none of them are believed to be substantive, compulsive completists are advised to seek out the definitive text online. -ED]

It was good to be out flying. I had spent the dark months in study and practice; so far satisfying my instructors. Since I was a “special” student, they came up with unique or modified classwork. It is obvious that my magical aptitude is primarily in the Elemental areas. The higher magics I just can’t get my jaws and claws around.

I’m heading southwest; toward warmer climates, vast forests, and hot sunny beaches with plenty of fresh fish.

After a few days aloft (with a few dips into the ocean), I approach the continental landmass. I see lots of ancient green mountains in the distance, clouds and... smoke!

I see that a major forest fire is in full blaze: miles and miles of leaping flames... yummy! I angle in for a landing near a blazing cove and start drinking the fresh flames. My reserves of fire had been getting low.

Over the whooshing and snap-crackle-popping noises of a major conflagration, I begin to perceive many other noises: poundings, and slappings, made by tails and feet of many animals. I look around the area and spot bears, deer, beaver, and many varied creatures. They are not running from the fire but are staying in place, making noises; loud noises. I hear next the sound of wings as an immense Raven swoops down near me.

Raven: Stranger beast; can you make loud noises?

PED: Why, yes; to what purpose?

Raven: Because of the fire, of course. The rain clouds are feeling insulted, and will not answer to our calls. The Chiefs of the Four Quarters have gone to spend a season at councils and contests. They are not available to call the rains. So, we are trying to lure the clouds back with noises like thunders, but so far they will not come. Can you clap your wings or pound your feet; or anything to make thunder noises to help us?

PED: I can make many loud noises. How close to thunder do the noises need to be?

Raven: As close as possible.

PED: Then I shall fly up and make thunders for you, since you ask it of me.

— O — O — O —

I lift off, and glide over the hottest flames. Catching the rising air I ascend up several thousand feet; but I must go much higher still. My plan requires as it’s beginning a steep dive at great speed. I have reached the maximum height of my normal

flying ability. I now apply what I've learned from Mom and "Extreme Altitudes, Methods For Reaching." I direct a constricted blast of flame Earthward and ride the reaction up for several thousand more feet.

This is enough. I furl my wings, employ a friction-cutting shield spell, and drop straight down toward the mountains and flames; gaining speed with each second. Near the surface, I minimize the shield spell and extend my wings slightly, pulling-up into a level glide — at roughly seven times the speed of sound — through the blazing valleys and hilltops. A Shock Collar of condensation mantles my leading edges, and trails in a cloak behind my fully-extended wings. My kinetic energy converts to sonic energy as the atmospheric drag slows me down. The sonic boom trails in a cone behind me, echoing off the hillsides, as I cover many miles in a few seconds. When I have slowed down below sonic speed, I angle upwards and blast toward the thinner altitudes to repeat my maneuver six more times.

Clouds have begun gathering, so I land again in a hot spot and replenish my fires until the rains begin falling in sheets of fierce winds.

— O — O — O —

Days later, Raven called all the Animals together to meet this new Beast. Honorific names were suggested. Some offered "Lizard-Bird;" a small winged rodent suggested "Lizard-Bat." The most popular proposal was "Thunder-Lizard."

Raven: All these names are good, but the true Thunder Lizards are long gone. Even their spirits can seldom be called. This one is obviously a young Thunder; for it flew high up to the very edge of the sky to gather the Thunder-Seeds; and then, wearing a feathery cloud cape, sowed them in the valleys like the corn. Thunder shook the mountains and so appeased the clouds, that they gathered near and gave up their rain. This is Very Great Medicine. My own legs, like all other birds, are scaled and clawed, too; and without fur. This one perhaps has just not yet grown feathers. I therefore declare that this one is: *Thunderbird!* Who brings good fortune to those who see it.

*Thunderbird!* cry the Animals. Bringer of good luck, and summoner of rain!

— O — O — O —

All these competed to try and show me greater wonders and medicines, as they called their magics. Great Bears taught me wrestling tricks. The Animals knew a tremendous lot of herb-lore that I found most interesting. Best of all, they introduced me to pepper plants, which I found to be a delicious source of living, fiery earth-power. Best of these were the tiny Bird-Peppers that grew in the hotter climates.

As Autumn approached, I bid farewell to my new friends and began the long flight back toward the island of my birth... and the *Alfheim* school. What new studies and trials had they designed for me?

The night skies now held a rare wonder. A hairy star was growing brighter in the early mornings. The mages were always divided as to whether these comets portended good luck, bad luck, or nothing in particular. There was evidence to support all cases. We shall just have to wait and see.

— O — O — O —

But not all the Alfheim wizards were watching the comet. *Another* star had been seen that moved... oddly. It was not in the plane of the other known planets; and was certainly changing direction from time to time as it gradually brightened in the morning sky; getting closer and closer.

[Some of the above beings and situations have been suggested by the works of J. R. R. Tolkien. (But you already knew that, didn't you?)]

## Letters of Comment

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

Sheryl Birkhead  
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18 December 2005

Two more weeks — then it's into '06!

I still haven't mastered the ribbon on that typer — I need to invest in the manual — when I get a chance to order one. I *think* I tried every possible permutation of that ribbon and all the guides, but I only ended up with heavily inked fingers and inkless paper. Sigh.

I gave in and made a movie day — saw the *Harry Potter* movie and *Narnia*. I planned it for a weekday *morning* (i.e., during school hours) — and then it snowed. I saw the films, but not alone.

Yes, you handled Irvin's obituary very nicely.

Netflix just sent *Batman Begins* — and I think I like it the best — not sure what "critical" acclaim has to say.

Yes Bilbo — I think we *all* realized the Tolkien connection!

Happy Holidays — safe travels to all who do — and start the Hugo thoughts again!

[It is indeed Hugo time again. L.A.con IV has already released their Hugo nomination ballot. As has been the case in the recent past, eligible voters can fill out their nominations online <[www.laconiv.org/2006/hugos/hugofom.htm](http://www.laconiv.org/2006/hugos/hugofom.htm)>. Hmm... missing a movie because of snow. Gee, I'm glad I can honestly say that's never happen to me. In fact, it's been many years since I've missed *anything* because of snow. I've seen none of the movies you mention. Neither the *Potter* film(s) nor *Narnia* has much appeal for me, though I suppose I might watch them on TV if it was convenient. I've seen most (if not all) of the Batman films — not all in theatrical release — but somehow *BB* came and went in the theaters without raising enough of a fuss for me to notice. -ED]

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

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22 December 2005

Just a few days until Christmas, all the shopping is done, and there's a little more time to relax. I plan to catch up on all the zines and e-zines yet to respond to, so here's something on the final *Shuttle* of 2005, the best way to ring out that 25<sup>th</sup> year of publication.

I believe I met Irv Koch once, and that was at a Worldcon. He was friendly enough to people who were strangers, but whose names he recognized from elsewhere. May we all have people to mourn our passing, which won't happen for some time, I hope...

The calendar... Yvonne celebrated her birthday, and her birthday dinner was a big spaghetti dinner, with meat sauce and garlic bread... all whipped up at home by yours truly. Well, she always says she's a cheap date. Not going out for dinner means we have a little extra money to spend on Christmas presents.

(continued on back cover)



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Greetings to Pie-Eyed... I have loved the tales of Middle-Earth so much, I could easily read more and more adventures. To see even a glimpse of the life of the elves, Gandalf, and Bilbo Baggins post-*LotR* is a treat. Bilbo is 250+ years old? Perhaps there are benefits to having been near the Ring after all. I look forward to seeing who Bilbo must tell his tales to again.

There seem to be fewer Worldcon bidders, or perhaps I am looking for them fewer and fewer times. I know very little about the Montreal bid except some of the people behind it. I have not supported the bid, but neither am I against it. I think what's being called the Torcon effect will give Kansas City 2009. As for years after that, well, I doubt I'll be able to afford them anyway. World Horror 2007 in Toronto will be held the end of March beginning of April.

Th-th-that's all, f-f-folks, in my best Porky Pig... Yvonne and I wish you all the best Christmas and New Year's ever, and

see you in that sciencefictional year of 2006.

[I had to smile when I read your first paragraph because it reminded me I need to revert back to the *Shuttle* template that doesn't have the 25<sup>th</sup>-year tagline. I probably would have caught it before starting anyway, but you can never tell. Don't get settled in with revisiting Middle-Earth just yet. I have seen only seen the first few episodes of the latest tale from PED but they don't all take place there just because the prologue did, as you'll see when you read Chapter 1 in this issue. During my history with Worldcon (which only goes back 20 years or so), I've heard the "where are all the bidders" lament several times, but have seen their numbers rebound just as often. I don't put much stock in claims that the number of bidders is being constricted for this reason or that — or won't unless it has a *lot* of credible analysis behind it. -ED]