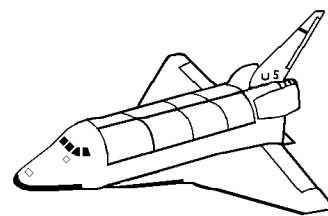


The



SHUTTLE
May 2006

*The Next NASFA Meeting Will Be 20 May
2006 at the Regular Time and Location*

ConCom Meeting 7:30P Thursday 18 May at Sam Smith's Place

🔔 Oyez, Oyez 🔔

The next **Con+Stellation concom meeting** is **7:30P Thursday 18 May** (two days before the club meeting) at Sam Smith's apartment. Call Sam at 883-4493 if you need directions.

The next **NASFA meeting** will be **Saturday 20 May 2006** at the **regular time and location**.

The **May program** will be a talk by local sf author Dr. Travis Taylor.

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

April Minutes

by Steve Sloan, Secretary and
Official *Star Wars* Transformer Nerd

The April meeting of the North Alabama Science Fiction Association was called to order on Saturday, April 15, 2006 in the BookMark upstairs meeting room at 6:19:21P by President Mary Ortwerth.

OLD BUSINESS

Mike brought a brochure from the Space and Missile Defense Conference, so club members can know more about the event we discussed last time.

NEW BUSINESS

None at this time.

CONVENTION BUSINESS

There will be a convention, and we have members. The web site is up, and crash-free so far.

Anita found a new T-shirt vendor, a much less painful process than she thought it would be. She has high hopes for the new vendor, Peake Screen Printing. They've been in business here in town since 1981. When Mike and Anita paid them a visit, they were very professional, with a very professional office staff. They have artists on their staff, so they should know how to make art look good on a T-shirt. She brought them several sample T-shirts, and a floppy of last year's artwork.

Within two seconds, the shop foreman noticed that the former vendor had used the wrong ink, which had bled through. The artist didn't see any problem with the intricacy of the work. When lines are too close together to print correctly, she simply widens them a little on the computer.

Peake Screen Printing doesn't have any extra charges,
(continued on page 2)

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Deadline for the June 2006 issue of *The NASFA Shuttle* is Friday, 2 June 2006.

If I were 40, the con-attendees would be less than half my age. Having different interests, Bekah, an independent gal, and I went to different panels, but with three tracks of programming on the same floor as the gaming room, it was easy to connect back up.

Being an old hand at SF Conventions, I thought I was prepared. The first glaring difference was start time. The gravity in my house is very heavy, and what started as a 7 am leave time quickly turned into a 11 am leave time. I assured my young charge that conventions don't start until after opening ceremonies, usually after people get out of work. *Wrong!!* This convention started at 9 am on Friday morning, and we missed panels that we were both interested in seeing, including *Educational Topics in Anime* and *Writing for Manga*.

The gaming room was *incredible!* I expected a "SF" type gaming room with scruffy young men hunched over role playing or card games. Not So! MTAC had four *huge*-screen TVs set up with state-of-the-art video games, including Dance Dance Revolution. There was a "chair" system set up to keep track of the line and everyone, at least while I was there, seemed polite and patient.

The dealer's room was a bit of a disappointment: they had a lot of stuff crammed into a small area. The ever-present con security manned a line to get in because of Maximum Occupancy Limits. They were basically selling what you would expect at an anime con; I got to save a lot of money (which I spent at JoAnn's Fabrics!)

There was no art show! No art show at a con basically devoted to anime? Curious.

There were two hotel-sized rooms devoted to videos with 24-hour programming. There was nothing I was familiar with, so, with the exception of *Inuyasha* and *Naruto*, I stuck to the live programming.

Surprisingly, there were very few costuming panels. There is a fashion movement in Japan referred to as "Lolita," which has nothing to do with the 1955 novel by the same name. I've been explaining Lolitas as an explosion of lace in a Shirley Temple dress factory. I went to a "What the heck is this?" panel on Lolitas, then signed up for the Iron Lolita contest!!!

The contest gives teams of 9 strangers duct tape, newspapers, and toilet tissue and 45 minutes to make a dress... which, of course, my team won. Despite my flippant tone, I am actually *very proud!! How cool is that!!* A team member promised to send me a picture of the dress. I hope she does.

There was a kimono-making panel, which I went to, but that was silly of me. (My scouts made 14 kimonos for the International Festival).

The *big* panel was the Q&A with the voice artists of *Full Metal Alchemy*. Since they spoke about the voice-over business, it was really interesting. Everyone on the panel knew someone in the business that got them their interview. Everyone on the panel had an extensive theater background. Finally, everyone on the panel had a "day job."

The panels on illustration were disappointing. What I thought were hands-on workshops were computer generated graphic workshops.

We didn't even attempt to get into the Masquerade because of the maximum occupancy limits. The room was nowhere large enough to fit even half of the conventioners and the diehards started lining up at 4 for a 7 pm start time. Bekah and I got dinner and watched *Inuyasha*. She stayed in the video room, while I staked out the lobby to see the contestants pile out of the room.

I was disappointed in the costumes as a whole. Except for

a woman about my age in a gorgeous Civil-War Mourning dress that she called an "Elegant Lolita," there was nothing really special.

Con†Stellation got high praise from one of the conventioners. The Con Suite at MTAC was really disappointing; there were some, not many, munchies, one pot of chili, sodas that ran out early on Sunday, and some hard candies. Some commercially-purchased, soggy rollups were offered on Saturday afternoon and a couple of frozen cheesecakes were thrown out later that day.

As I surveyed the layout, the young man behind me said, "There's this convention in Huntsville that has *real food!!!* It's really great..." and then he detailed all of the food he's eaten at Con†Stellation!

There were a few ParaPara events. I mention this because it is a style of Line Dancing that looks like high school dance teams on speed. There was a ParaPara Battle that I missed for the Iron Lolita, so I guess I'll never know how one actually "battles" with it.

Despite some of the inevitable technical difficulties, MTAC was a great convention. I've already pre-registered (\$12.00) for next year and plan to bring my own Con Suite. You can get more information on the 2007 MTAC at <www.mtac.net> or by writing <membership@mtac.net>.

Noodling on Movies

BOOK-INSPIRED FILMS

The Book Marketing Society recently surveyed "publishing figures" to compile a list of the 50 "greatest film adaptations of all time." UK book chains Borders and Waterstone's will promote the books in coming weeks, with readers able to vote for the best in shops or online. The winner will be announced at the Hay Literary Festival in June. The list features a number of arguably genre films/books (well, some only *vaguely* genre related) including:

Jaws, Peter Benchley

Do Androids Dream Of Electric Sheep? (filmed as *Blade Runner*), Philip K Dick

The Hound Of The Baskervilles, Arthur Conan Doyle

The Jungle Book, Rudyard Kipling

1984, George Orwell

Alice In Wonderland, Lewis Carroll

A Clockwork Orange, Anthony Burgess

Goldfinger, Ian Fleming

Day Of The Triffids, John Wyndham

Watership Down, Richard Adams

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Roald Dahl

MTV MOVIE AWARDS NOMS

Nominees for the 2006 MTV Movie Awards have been announced. Final voting will take place online at <www.mtv.com/ontv/movieawards/ma06>. Genre and genre-related films received a number of nominations, including:

Batman Begins (Warner Bros. Pictures) — 3 noms (Best Movie, Best Villain (Cillian Murphy), and Best Hero (Christian Bale))

Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire (Warner Bros. Pictures) — 3 noms (Best On-Screen Team (Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson, and Rupert Grint), Best Villain (Ralph Fiennes), and Best Hero (Daniel Radcliffe))

Star Wars: Episode III — Revenge of the Sith (20th Century Fox) — 3 noms (Best Villain (Hayden Christensen), Best

- Hero (Ewan McGregor), and Best Fight (Ewan McGregor vs. Hayden Christensen))
- The Exorcism of Emily Rose* (Screen Gems) — 2 noms (Breakthrough Performance (Jennifer Carpenter) and Best Frightened Performance (Jennifer Carpenter))
- Fantastic Four* (20th Century Fox) — 2 noms (Best On-Screen Team (Jessica Alba, Ioan Gruffudd, Chris Evans, and Michael Chiklis) and Best Hero (Jessica Alba))
- King Kong* (Universal Pictures) — 2 noms (Best Movie and Best Fight (Kong vs. the Planes))
- The Amityville Horror* (MGM) — 1 nom (Best Frightened Performance (Rachel Nichols))
- The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Disney Pictures) — 1 nom (Best Villain (Tilda Swinton))
- House of Wax* (Warner Bros. Pictures) — 1 nom (Best Frightened Performance (Paris Hilton))
- Underworld: Evolution* (Screen Gems) — 1 nom (Best Hero (Kate Beckinsale))
- War of the Worlds* (Paramount Pictures) — 1 nom (Best Frightened Performance (Dakota Fanning))

Roundup of Award Winners

NEBULA AWARD WINNERS

The Nebula Awards are presented by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA) and represent perhaps the top peer awards in the sf/f field. This year's winners were announced Saturday 6 May 2006 at SFWA's Nebula Awards Weekend in Tempe AZ.

- Novel** *Camouflage*, Joe Haldeman (*Analog*; Ace Books)
- Novella** "Magic for Beginners," Kelly Link (*Magic for Beginners* Small Beer Press; *F&SF* September 2005)
- Novelette** "The Faery Handbag," Kelly Link (*The Faery Reel* Viking; Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling, eds.)
- Short Story** "I Live With You," Carol Emshwiller (*F&SF* March 2005)

- Script** *Serenity*, Joss Whedon
- Andre Norton Award** *Valiant: A Modern Tale of Faerie*, Holly Black (Simon & Schuster)

This is the first year for the Andre Norton Award. It is for novels in the young adult sf/f field and named in honor of the late SFWA Grand Master. As previously announced, **Harlan Ellison** was presented the Damon Knight Memorial **Grand Master Award**, and **William F. Nolan** was named **Author Emeritus**.

ANALOG and ASIMOV'S AWARDS WINNERS

Winners of the readers' polls for *Analog Science Fiction and Fact* and *Asimov's Science Fiction* were announced the morning of 6 May 2006 during the 2006 Nebula Awards weekend. Complete results of each magazine's poll will be published in forthcoming issues.

AnLab Winners

- Novella** "Sanctuary," Michael A. Burstein (September 2005)
- Novelette** "NetPuppets," Richard A. Lovett and Mark Niemann-Ross (June 2005)
- Short Story** "Alphabet Angels," Ekaterina Sedia and David Bartell (March 2005)
- Fact Article** "Mission to Utah: A Science Fiction Writer's Adventures at the Mars Society Desert Research Station,"

Wil McCarthy (July/August 2005)

- Cover** **November Issue**, George Krauter
- Asimov's Readers' Award Winners**
- Novella** "Diving Into the Wreck," Kristine Kathryn Rusch (December 2005)
- Novelette** "Second Person, Present Tense," Daryl Gregory (September 2005)
- Short Story** "The Children of Time," Stephen Baxter (July 2005)
- Poem** "Newton's Mass," Timons Esaias (December 2005)
- Cover** **January Issue**, Michael Whelan

2005 BSFA AWARDS

Winners of this year's British Science Fiction Association Awards were announced at Concussion <www.eastercon2006.org>, the 2006 Eastercon (British national convention), held in Glasgow 14-17 April 2006.

- Best Novel** *Air*, Geoff Ryman
- Best Short Fiction** "Magic for Beginners," Kelly Link
- Best Artwork** cover of *Interzone* #200, Pawel Lewandowski
- Non-Fiction Award** *Soundings: Reviews 1992-1996*, Gary K. Wolfe (Becon Publications)
- Richard Evans Award** Pat Cadigan
- Doc Weir Award** Steve Lawson

The Non-Fiction Award winner was selected by a panel of judges (Niall Harrison, Steve Jeffrey, and Geneva Melzack) for the best nonfiction writing (book, article, web site, etc.) dealing with Science Fiction and/or Fantasy. A longer list of recommended nonfiction reading will be made available by the BSFA.

The Richard Evans Award was established in memory of "a much loved and respected editorial director at Gollancz who died, tragically young, ten years ago." It is intended to honor a "highly worthy but insufficiently recognized author." The award included a £1,500 check.

The Doc Weir Award is for "unsung heroes of fandom who make a difference." This year's award is the 40th presented since the first award in 1963.

DITMAR AWARDS

This year's Ditmar Awards were presented at Conjure <www.conjure.org.au> in Brisbane Australia, held 14-17 April 2006 — the 45th Australian national convention.

- Best Novel** *Geodesica: Ascent*, Sean Williams and Shane Dix (Ace)
- Best Novella or Novelette** "The Grinding House," Kaaron Warren (*The Grinding House*, CSFG Publishing)
- Best Short Story** "Fresh Young Widow," Kaaron Warren (*The Grinding House*, CSFG Publishing)
- Best Collected Works** *Daikaiju! Giant Monster Tales*, Robert Hood and Robin Penn (Agog! Press)
- Best Artwork** cover of *Australian Speculative Fiction: A Genre Overview*, Nick Stathopoulos
- Best Fan Writer** Shane Jiraiya Cummings, writer/reviewer, *Horror Scope*
- Best Fan Artist** Shane Parker, Poster Art, Conflux
- Best Fan Production** *Edwina Harvey and Ted Scribner, The Australian Science Fiction Bullsheets*, Web Site and Newsletter
- Best Fanzine** *Ticonderoga Online*, Russell B Farr (web site)
- Best New Talent** Rjurik Davidson
- Best Professional Achievement Award** Robert

Dobson, Robert Hoge, Kate Eltham, and Heather Gammage, Clarion South 2005, Clarion South Workshop

The William Atheling Jr. Award**“Divided Kingdom: King Kong vs Godzilla,”**

Robert Hood (*King Kong is Back*, Benbella Books)

PHILIP K. DICK AWARD

The 2005 Philip K. Dick Award <www.philipkdickaward.org> (for best original paperback published in the US) was announced Friday 14 April 2006 at Norwescon 29 <www.norwescon.org> held in SeaTac (Seattle) WA. The winner is M. M. Buckner’s *War Surf* (Ace Books), with a special citation given to Justina Robson for *Natural History* (Bantam Spectra).

SESFA Noms

The webzine *scifidimensions* <www.scifidimensions.com> has announced the nominees for the 2006 Southeastern Science Fiction Achievement Award (SESFA). The SESFAs <www.sesfa.com>, now in their fifth year, are intended to honor accomplishment in science fiction, fantasy, or horror by individuals born or living in the Southern United States. Voters who join the supporting organization (\$7.00 membership fee) may participate in the final vote through 30 June 2006. The winners will be announced no later than 5 July 2006. The nominees are:

NOVEL (40,000 words or more)

The Home, Scott Nicholson (Pinnacle Books)

Seeker, Jack McDevitt (Ace)

Shadow of the Giant, Orson Scott Card (Tor)

War Surf, M. M. Buckner (Ace)

SHORT FICTION (less than 40,000 words)

“Bears Discover Smut,” Michael Bishop (*SCI Fiction*)

“The Karst,” M. M. Buckner (*Apex SF & Horror Digest #2*)

“An Odd Day in I-Forgot,” Athena Workman (*Apex SF & Horror Digest #2*)

“Oranges, Lemons, and Thou Beside Me,” Eugie Foster (*Apex SF & Horror Digest #4*)

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN SF/F/H

Poppy Z. Brite

William S. Gibson

Robert McCammon

Jack McDevitt

Locus Awards Finalists

The Locus Awards are voted on by readers of *Locus* magazine in an annual poll. This year the awards will be presented in June at the Locus Awards/SF Hall of Fame weekend in Seattle. *Locus* has already determined the winners (voting closed 15 April 2006), but is announcing lists of the top 5 finishers in each category as a list of (pseudo) finalists

SCIENCE FICTION NOVEL

Accelerando, Charles Stross (Ace; Orbit)

Fifty Degrees Below, Kim Stanley Robinson (HarperCollins UK; Bantam Spectra)

Learning the World, Ken MacLeod (Orbit; Tor)

Olympos, Dan Simmons (Eos; Gollancz)

Spin, Robert Charles Wilson (Tor)

FANTASY NOVEL

Anansi Boys, Neil Gaiman (Morrow; Review)

A Feast for Crows, George R. R. Martin (Voyager; Bantam Spectra)

The Hallowed Hunt, Lois McMaster Bujold (Eos)

Someone Comes to Town, Someone Leaves Town, Cory Doctorow (Tor)

Thud!, Terry Pratchett (Doubleday UK; HarperCollins)

FIRST NOVEL

Counting Heads, David Marusek (Tor)

Hammered/Scardown/Worldwired, Elizabeth Bear (Bantam Spectra)

Old Man’s War, John Scalzi (Tor)

The Strange Adventures of Rangelgirl, Tim Pratt (Bantam Spectra)

Vellum, Hal Duncan (Macmillan UK; Del Rey 2006)

YOUNG ADULT BOOK

Inkspell, Cornelia Funke (The Chicken House)

Mister Boots, Carol Emshwiller (Viking)

Pay the Piper, Jane Yolen and Adam Stemple (Starscape)

Peeps, Scott Westerfeld (Razorbill)

Valiant, Holly Black (Simon & Schuster)

NOVELLA

Burn, James Patrick Kelly (Tachyon)

The Cosmology of the Wider World, Jeffrey Ford (PS Publishing)

“Human Readable,” Cory Doctorow (*Future Washington*)

“Inside Job,” Connie Willis (*Asimov’s* January 2005)

“Magic for Beginners,” Kelly Link (*Magic for Beginners; F&SF* September 2005)

NOVELETTE

“The Emperor of Gondwanaland,” Paul Di Filippo (*Interzone* January/February 2005)

“I, Robot,” Cory Doctorow (*The Infinite Matrix*, 2/15/05)

“The King of Where-I-Go,” Howard Waldrop (*Sci Fiction* 12/7/05)

“A Knot of Toads,” Jane Yolen (*Nova Scotia*)

“Two Hearts,” Peter S. Beagle (*F&SF* October/November 2005)

SHORT STORY

“Boatman’s Holiday,” Jeffrey Ford (*The Book of Voices*)

“I Live with You,” Carol Emshwiller (*F&SF* March 2005)

“Some Zombie Contingency Plans,” Kelly Link (*Magic for Beginners*)

“Sunbird,” Neil Gaiman (*Noisy Outlaws etc.*)

“Triceratops Summer,” Michael Swanwick (Amazon Short 8/19/05)

MAGAZINE

Analog Science Fiction, Science Fact

Asimov’s Science Fiction

Interzone

The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction

Sci Fiction

PUBLISHER

Ace

Baen

Bantam Spectra

Del Rey

Tor

ANTHOLOGY

The Best of the Best: 20 Years of the Year’s Best Science Fiction, Gardner Dozois, ed. (St. Martin’s)

The Best Time Travel Stories of the 20th Century, Harry Turtledove and Martin H. Greenberg, eds. (Del Rey)

The Year’s Best Fantasy and Horror: Eighteenth Annual Collection, Ellen Datlow, Kelly Link, and Gavin Grant, eds. (St. Martin’s)

The Year’s Best Science Fiction: Twenty-Second Annual Collection, Gardner Dozois, ed. (St. Martin’s)

Year's Best SF 10, David G. Hartwell and Kathryn Cramer, eds. (Eos)

COLLECTION

Harrowing the Dragon, Patricia A. McKillip (Ace)
Looking for Jake and Other Stories, China Miéville (Macmillan UK; Del Rey)
Magic for Beginners, Kelly Link (Small Beer Press)
Platinum Pohl, Frederik Pohl (Tor)
Tales, H. P. Lovecraft (Library of America)

EDITOR

Ellen Datlow Gardner Dozois David G. Hartwell
Patrick Nielsen Hayden Gordon Van Gelder

ARTIST

Bob Eggleton Dave McKean John Picacio
Charles Vess Michael Whelan

NONFICTION

Anatomy of Wonder, A Critical Guide to Science Fiction, Fifth Edition, Neil Barron (Libraries Unlimited)
Soundings: Reviews 1992–1996, Gary K. Wolfe (Becon)
Storyteller: Writing Lessons and More from 27 Years of the Clarion Writers' Workshop, Kate Wilhelm (Small Beer Press)
Transformations: The Story of the Science Fiction Magazines from 1950 to 1970, Mike Ashley (Liverpool)
Ursula K. Le Guin: Beyond Genre, Mike Cadden (Routledge)

ART BOOK

Imago, Jim Burns (Heavy Metal)
The Plucker, Brom (Abrams)
Spectrum 12: The Best in Contemporary Fantastic Art, Cathy and Arnie Fenner, eds. (Underwood)
The Three Incestuous Sisters, Audrey Niffenegger (Abrams; Cape)
Visions of Heaven and Hell, Clive Barker (Rizzoli)

The Better Part of (the) Valar

No Need for a Ring — Chapter 5
by PieEyedDragon

My hosts in this “Faerie Land cubed” showed me around, and there were many marvelous things.

One thing, though, bothered me a very great deal. At the western edge of this land the blue world walls are pierced by a doorway called the Door of Night. It looked like nothing more than a great megalith of basalt. Two black uprights supported a massive black lintel. These surrounded a door that two alone knew the *word* of opening. The basalt was carved with figures of dragons, and smoke would slowly drift from their mouths. I noticed something that my guides did not, since they were not dragons, themselves. I stared and stared, bothered by the carvings, and then summoned a mirror to hold up beside them.

The left hand dragon... was *me*!

The face was lined with pain and determination; and there were tears in the eyes!

Across the black door, the other dragon was even more disturbing. That face, too, was mine. The body was of a different form: wingless and serpentine. The scale patterns were identical; but they were depicted much smaller. This beast was therefore many times larger than the other. The eyes were lamps of madness, violence, and hatred.

This object was not an original feature, I was told; but had

been added by the Valar thousands of years ago. The renegade Melkor had been thrust thru this door into the Outer Darkness. They could not explain why the dragons were made to look that way. I suspected I did not really want to know.

— O — O — O —

Eönwë: The Lord of Winds, Manwë, requests your presence. For this reason the Mariner was sent in search of you.

Thunderbird: Where is this Lord of Winds?

Eönwë (points back and up, toward the peak of a very high mountain): There. Elwing is requested to guide you.

Thunderbird: I don't think I can fly that high.

Elwing: Trust me. If Manwë requests, it will be possible.

Thunderbird: By the way; how can you fly without wings? Levitation?

Elwing: I have close rapport with all birds. They taught me.

Thunderbird: It's a very good trick. I would like to learn it, too.

Elwing: I'll try to show you; but why would you need to know such? You have real wings.

Thunderbird: You never know what you'll need to know; until you wish you knew.

Elwing: How whimsical!

Thunderbird: Life — it's full of whimsy; if you read between the Runes!

Meanwhile, Eärendil looks over his abused ship, shaking his head and muttering “where to start, where to start?”

— O — O — O —

Taniquetil is an unnaturally tall and steep mountain. In the hall atop it sits Manwë and his wife, Varda. Together they see and hear most of what goes on in the world. The great eagles also watch and bring news.

Manwë: Welcome, visitor from afar.

Thunderbird: Thank you. By the way, how did you learn of me?

Manwë: A little bird told me.

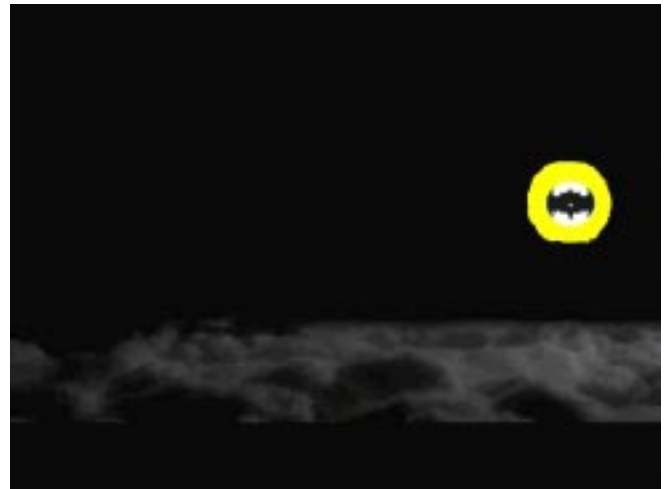
Thunderbird: Really? Was it a... Raven?

Manwë: (Smiling) Do you prefer “Thunderbird” or some other calling?

Thunderbird: What's in a name? I have many; and will no doubt have to choose at least one more for this mission.

Varda: So have we; and “Varda” is not as complicated as “Elbereth.”

Thunderbird: I think my greatest challenge will be to let myself be seen as a terrible monster, without betraying my secret calling as a Protector of Man. Do you have any sugges-



tions or assistance to offer?

Manwë: You will need to visit Oromë and learn what he can teach about the monsters you shall face; and the creatures they were made from. You will need to learn the use of your new wings, too.

Thunderbird: New wings? I was born with these.

Manwë: In bringing Eärendil's crippled ship safely to port, the cold fires that form it's sails have engendered their like within your frame. They will be useful for much more than augmented flight. You should also go to the Tower of Avallónë and become attuned to the Master Stone of all the Palantiri. You will have need to retrieve the lost Stones at some point in your mission; until you can deliver them for the use of the Kings of Gondor.

Thunderbird: Men will try to kill me for the monster I will seem to be; while I will be trying to *not* kill them.

Varda: You may establish a refuge upon the western side of the level, green Hallow of Amon Anwar; atop the mountain Halifirien in the White Mountains. This former tomb site of Elendil, near the border now of Rohan, remains in the keeping of the Valar... ourselves. There now is a beacon site at the eastern side. Otherwise, Men do not come there. Only the Kings and Stewards, and their heirs, ever break the Silence there. Cirion the Steward brought Eorl there; and they swore their oaths to each other upon the Mound of Elendil.

[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
25509 Jonnie Court
Gaithersburg MD 20882

21 April 2006

Arg — I still haven't gotten around to sending my congrats to various Hugo nominees — poor fannish manners.

Netflix — *Serenity* should arrive on Saturday, so I'll have seen all those nominees. Hmmm — haven't seen *any* of the short form dramatic presentations.

RIP Octavia Butler — just recently I was looking for more of her writings at the local Borders Books.

Um — how does one make a chocolate martini? Saturday there is a local Chocolate Feast — I've never been and at \$35 probably never will, but just the idea... Sounds as if the biggest problems at MSC were the lines — that's not bad at all.

[Some of the Hugo nominees for Dramatic Presentation, Short Form are available online — at least sort of. Links can be found on L.A.con's Hugo page at <www.laconiv.org/2006/hugos/nominees.htm>. One item has a full version downloadable; another one at least a partial version. Known show dates of the nominated *Dr. Who* episodes are also listed. I heard about Ms Butler's death but chose not to run an obit. She was of course a major name in the field, but for the most part I only run an item when the deceased had some local connection — say, having been a guest at a Huntsville convention. Otherwise I'd be writing far more obituaries and be far more depressed. What's a chocolate martini? As I understand it, it involves vodka and some kind of

chocolate liqueur. Yes, MidSouthCon went well in most ways, though they really do need to do something about Registration. -ED]

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

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9 May 2006

It's *Shuttle* time, and I'm late. Same as it ever was, same as it ever was... It's the April *Shuttle* this time around.

Ah, there I am on the calendar again. Birthday No. 47 is coming up, and I haven't figured out where my personal reset button is so I can look 29 again. Good party soon, I hope.

I should drop a line to some of the clubzines listed to see if they'd like more letters in their lettercol. I'd like more zines, but I've got enough writing workload as it is. Soon, I will have more time, but I'm sure I'll have something else to fill it.

'Tis award season again, and we have yet to do the Hugo voting thing, but I can tell you about the FAAn Awards. They were given out this past weekend at Corflu 23 in Toronto, and the envelope, please...

Best New Fan **Chris Garcia**
Harry Warner, Jr. Memorial
(Best Letterhack) **Robert Lichtman**
Best Fan Artist **Steve Stiles**
Best Fan Writer **Claire Brialey**
Best Fanzine **Banana Wings**

I gather I came in third for Best Letterhack, so just wait 'til next year...

While I was at Corflu 23 at home, Yvonne was in Los Angeles for the 2006 International Space Development Conference, held at the LAX Sheraton. I think she's almost the space advocate equivalent of a BNF in that industry, and odds are she will bring the ISDC to Toronto for 2009. I will let you know if that happens.

Greetings, Pie-Eyed... I had always wondered where Bilbo and the Elves sailed away to. A retirement village? Resort? Then again, I wondered if there was an Upper-Earth and Lower-Earth to go with Middle-Earth. At last, the unwilling but proud warrior has earned his rest, his task finally accomplished, with thanks, especially from a certain Oxford professor, no doubt. If only there could be a *Hobbit* movie, and we could go back to Middle-Earth just one more time...

Ad Astra 2006, the 25th Ad Astra, was a great time indeed. Seeing that I worked the convention (for the last time), I am not sure I can write a full article, except to say that even with losing three of our main guests (Bradbury, Harryhausen, Rowena), we still staged a great convention. We gathered about 800 warm bodies, so we got our best numbers in years. We said we were retiring from working SF conventions... we didn't say anything about space conferences.

And off it goes! Take care, see you next issue.

[Thanks for the listing of the FAAn Awards. I'm not actually a *completist* when it comes to listing award winners (to be truly complete would be impossible) but I think that spreading around info on honorees is a good thing. The ISDC, yeah... Back in '93 HAL5 (the local National Space Society chapter) hosted that year's ISDC. Several NASFAns (including yours

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truly) pitched in to help with the logistics, and loaned them some equipment. HAL5 still brags — justifiably from what I understand — about that conference on their web site

<chapters.nss.org/al/HAL5/HAL5/HAL5_history.shtml>. Ah, and I see that the conference was in Toronto in '94, so if Yvonne is successful the 2009 conference will be a return visit to your fair city. -ED]