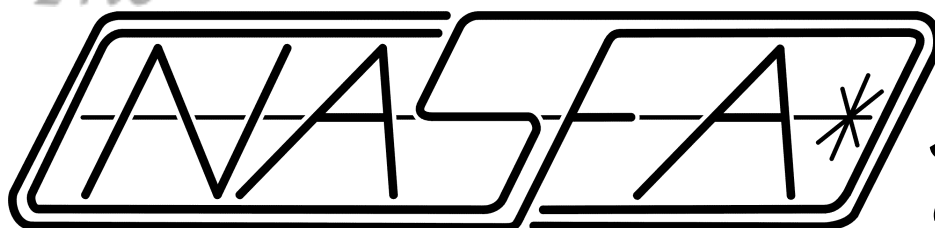


The



Shuttle
January 2009

The Next NASFA Meeting is 17 January
2009, at the Regular Time and Location
ATMM at Maria & Adam Grim's house following
First Con†Stellation XXVIII Concom Meeting Sunday
11 January 2009, 2P, Mike Kennedy's House
(past by the time you see this)

! Oyez, Oyez !

The next **NASFA Meeting** is Saturday **17 January 2009** at the **regular time** (6P) and the **regular location**. Meetings are at BookMark, 11220-J South Memorial Parkway — at the corner of the Parkway and Meadowbrook Drive.

PROGRAM

The January program will be a presentation by Dr. Travis S. "Doc" Taylor on "Your Brain is a Quantum Computer." He will also be available to sign books, including his November 2008 release with John Ringo, *Claws that Catch*, the fourth book in the Looking Glass series. (The meeting will just miss, by 10 days, the official paperback release date for the previous book in the series, *Manxome Foe*.)

ATMMs

The January After-The-Meeting Meeting is at Adam and Maria (Mia) Grim's house — 2117 Buckingham Drive SW in Huntsville. Directions will be available at the meeting.

The February ATMM is tentatively scheduled for Nancy Cucci and Ray Pietruszka's house in Madison (assuming a possible change in the meeting date happens; details at the January

club meeting). We have a tentative volunteer for the March ATMM, subject to whether the meeting date is changed or not (see the calendar for details of that). We need ATMM volunteers for April and forward, and potentially sooner than that.

CONCOM MEETINGS

The first Concom Meeting for Con†Stellation XXVIII: Vulpecula will be Sunday 11 January at 2P at Mike Kennedy's house — 7907 Charlotte Drive SW in Huntsville (past by the time this seems print). It is anticipated that most Concom Meetings this year will be at Mike's house the Sunday six days before the monthly NASFA Meeting, but you should of course stay tuned for potential changes.

Remember that Con†Stellation will be about a month earlier than in the recent past so we really need to hit the ground running this year.

NASFA CALENDAR ONLINE

Thanks to Bill S. NASFA now has an online calendar on Google. Interested parties may check the calendar online but perhaps more importantly you can subscribe to that calendar and have your Outlook, iCal, BlackBerry, or other calendar automatically updated as events (Club Meetings, Concom Meetings, local sf/f events) are added or changed. Contact Bill for details.

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Deadline for the February issue of *The NASFA Shuttle* is Friday, 30 January 2009

News and Info

HUGO NOMS OPEN

Nominating ballots for the 2008 Hugo Awards are now available. See the *Awards Roundup* column elsewhere in this issue for full details.

VIDEO INFO ON WORLDCON BIDS

SMOFCon — a long-standing annual convention on con-running — features a “Fannish Inquisition” where bids for future Worldcons and NASFiCs give presentations and answer questions. That panel at SMOFCon 26 (5–7 December 2007, in Columbus OH) was recorded by Lisa Hayes and has now been posted (in segments) on Google Video. Kevin Standlee (who did the editing) has posted links to each segment at <community.livejournal.com/worldcons/19415.html>. Note that you do *not* need a LiveJournal account to see this LJ post (or indeed most others). Links are included for presentations by the following (Worldcon bids except as noted):

- Raleigh in 2010 (NASFiC bid)
- Reno in 2011
- Seattle in 2011
- 2011 Worldcon Bids joint Q&A session
- Chicago in 2012
- Texas in 2013
- Europe in 2014
- San Diego in 2015

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

Have you ever wanted to be a starship captain? Well, if you're willing to shell out moderately big bucks (SRP \$2,717.01) you can at least sit like one. Replicas of Kirk's chair from the original *Star Trek* (a “limited edition” of 1,701) are to be available from Diamond Select Toys and Collectibles via comics and other specialty shops. Delivery is to be no sooner than April 2009; ask for DST's item JAN094948 if you're interested.

The replica is a full size swiveling model and includes “all the accents and details from the historic prop along with modern lighting, sound effects, and phrases designed to thrill any *Star Trek* enthusiast.” This sucker is big (reportedly 48”w x 40”d x 55”h) and somewhat heavy (reportedly 215 lbs.) so you'll probably need to clear a space especially for it.



UAH GRAD STUDENT SF CONFERENCE PARTIALLY OPEN TO PUBLIC

A Graduate Student Conference, “In Other Worlds: Estrangement, Cognition, and the SF Imagination,” will be held Friday and Saturday 3–4 April 2009 at the University of Alabama in Huntsville's University Center. The conference is sponsored by the UAH Department of English but is open to papers from graduate students in other disciplines and indeed other universities. (It should be noted that the deadline for submission of abstracts was 1 January 2009.)

Two evening events will be open to the public. Friday 3 April will see a talk by Professor Phillip E. Wegner (University of Florida) drawn from his forthcoming book on sf. The talk is entitled “Genre, Globalization, Politics: Toward a New Periodizing History of SF.” On Saturday 4 April, sf novelist Tobias S. Buckell will read from and discuss his recent work.

Further info can be had by contacting Dr. Eric D. Smith, Department of English, University of Alabama in Huntsville, 222 Morton Hall, Huntsville AL 35899 <Eric.Smith@uah.edu>.

“FIRST CELEBRITY ROBOT” REVIVED

Well, *partially* revived, at least.

Few *Shuttle* readers would have been in even a theoretical position to see Elektro when it (or is that he?) appeared at the 1939 New York World's Fair. The 'bot, built by Westinghouse, was quite advanced for it's time — responding to voice commands given via a telephone handset and responding both with audio (using a built in bank of 78 rpm record players) and with movements. At about 8 feet tall, Elektro was doubtless a spectacle. The onboard brain was composed of 48 telephone relays (though this number may have varied over time) and the control logic was reportedly to count the number of distinct syllables in a command as a trigger to start the corresponding pre-canned actions.



Elektro fell out of favor with the company slowly over time. During part of WWII it was being stored in the house rented by the family of young Jack Weeks. Weeks says he thought of Elektro as a playmate of sorts from his pre-tween years. After the war Westinghouse took Elektro on promotional tours but eventually “retired” him (it?) for a time in the late 1950s to an Oceanside CA amusement park. In the early '60s Elektro fell almost completely off the radar, disassembled, with the torso and limbs crated and the head eventually given as a retirement present in the 1970s to Westinghouse executive Harold Gorsuch (important in the creation of Elektro and a 1940-vintage companion, the robot dog Sparko).

A few years later Weeks was reunited the his boyhood friend (well, partially) when his brother moved into what had been Gorsuch's house and found the head abandoned in the basement. In 1990 Weeks loaned the head to Westinghouse for a party celebrating (perhaps morbidly) the closing of the Mansfield OH plant where Elektro was built. A newspaper photo led to a contact by one John McDivitt who had the limbs and torso, still in the Westinghouse crates. However, they could not reach an agreement on price, so Weeks went away disappointed... until, in 2004, he became interested again and ended up buying the parts for a mere \$500 from McDivitt's brother-in-law (McDivitt having died in the interim).

Restoration has continued in the years since (though Elektro is still minus the voice system and the motors for the legs; and Sparko is still MIA). Elektro is on display at a small museum in Mansfield, but Weeks is negotiating to send him (it?) to the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn MI where it (he?) could be seen by a much wider audience.

What a long, strange trip it's been.

Viewers who want to see Elektro in full, glorious, action can check YouTube at, e.g., <www.youtube.com/watch?v=T35A3g_GvSg>. More adventurous souls might want to seek out a copy of the out-of-print 1960 film *Sex Kittens Go to College* <www.imdb.com/title/tt0054298> in which Elektro plays the role of Thinko alongside Mamie Van Doren, Tuesday Weld, Mijanou Bardot (Brigitte's younger sister), Vampira, Conway Twitty, and a host of others — including a chimp in golf pants.



December Minutes

by Steve Sloan, Secretary

The December meeting of the North Alabama Science Fiction Association was called to order on Saturday, December 20, 2008 in the BookMark meeting room at 6:15:24P by President Mary Ortwerth. The crickets are back again. Doug made an immediate motion to adjourn, but the chair did not recognize the motion.

OLD BUSINESS

Doug moved to close officer nominations, and was ignored. Mike C. moved to open officer nominations. Anita seconded. Doug tried again. As Secretary, Steve read the current slate of nominations:

- President: Mary Lampert
- Vice-President: Mike Kennedy
- Secretary: Steve Sloan
- Treasurer: Samuel A. Smith
- Program Director: Sue Thorn
- Publicity Director: Bill Savage

There are no vacant officer positions to be filled. Sue nominated Alice as Sergeant at Arms. Sam said that it's an appointed position, as necessary. Mary asked if there were any other nominations for any positions. Mike K. moved that nominations be closed. Mike C. moved that the slate be accepted as read, and Mike K. and Manda simultaneously seconded. In voting, only Doug opposed, proving that he was there and breathing.

Next came the final vote to change the Bylaws to raise annual dues to \$25 for the first member, with \$6 per additional member over the age of twelve in a family membership. Out of a total of 18 votes, 12 voted in favor of the change, and 4 opposed. Mike C. asked if a 3/4 majority is required for a Bylaws change, or just a simple majority. We had a simple majority last time. Very simple, according to Mike K. Sam checked the Bylaws, and the requirement is actually 2/3 of the members present. Sam made a quick check of the membership roll to see who is actually an official member, and checked it twice. This triggered a discussion of who has been naughty or nice. Best Sam could tell, there were only two nonmembers present.

Sue moved to open nominations for 2010 convention chair, and Anita seconded. Mike C. volunteered Sunn, and she immediately declined. Anita nominated Mary, and Manda seconded. Sue nominated Doug to go with her. Doug seconded the combined Doug and Mary nomination, so they could run against each other. In the vote to amend the first nomination from just Mary to Mary and Doug, only Doug opposed. Sue suggested Steve and Jennifer. They did not accept the nomination. Sam nominated Bill Savage, who was not present, and Doug seconded. Sue moved nominations be closed, and Sam seconded.

Doug delivered Bill's platform in his name: "If you elect Bill, we will not have the crickets." Mike K. quipped, "Bill is now turning over in his grave, and he's not even dead." Sam attempted to call Bill, and got his voice mail. Sam left him a message, saying if he doesn't get to the meeting in five minutes, he'll be the 2010 con chair. People joked about him getting a ticket while speeding to the meeting. Knowing she was being recorded, Manda said Bill was very helpful at last year's con.

Because she was a candidate, Mary turned voting over to Mike K. Many to 4 voted in favor of Mary and Doug, so Doug and Mary will be the 2010 Con+Stellation chairs. The vote to tell Bill that he was elected was unanimous. Mike K. turned the meeting back over to Mary.

Mike C. noted that we were asked to participate in a UAH program. According to Mike K., it is four months away, and he will write about it in the *Shuttle* as the date gets closer. Mike C. asked if we should appoint an official procrastinator to handle that, thereby nominating himself. The extent of participation UAH wanted from us was unclear. The program is related to gender issues in science fiction, and only non-PhD grad students will be allowed to submit papers, so it probably doesn't apply to us. [The public is invited to special sessions on two evenings, and NASFans could, of course, attend those. -ED]

NEW BUSINESS

Jack had a picture of the late Majel Barrett Roddenberry that he took in 2003 that he wanted to show off. She had passed away two days before this meeting.

According to Sam, the club will lose about \$88 this year, plus or minus *Shuttle* postage.

Anyone who wants to only get the *Shuttle* electronically can let Mike K. know by email, or write it down so he remembers. Currently, Bruce Butler is the only club member who gets it electronic-only, but Mike K. will be glad to do it for anyone else.

Sam had one spammish email: Birmingham fans will be putting on ImagiCon this spring. It will be put on by the same people as OmegaCon, minus the head guy.

Mike K. announced that thanks to the new concon schedule, which will cut into his usual time to prepare the *Shuttle*, he will have to more strongly enforce the *Shuttle* submission deadline, which is 15 days before the club meeting.

CON BUSINESS

Sam reported that the con has lost \$3262.08 so far, assuming NASFA pays back the \$384 it owes to the convention.

Sam downloaded a donation form from the American Heart Association. In memory of Pat McAdams, NASFA will donate a combination of this year's charity money, plus last year's money that never got to ReadAssist. That would be a \$737.32 donation to the American Heart Association. Doug moved we round it up to an even \$750 through member donations, and Manda seconded. Club members contributed the difference, along with a little excess that Sam put into the club's petty cash.

Mary asked for guest suggestions. Con+Stellation 2009 currently has David Weber as literary GoH, and Gary Shelton as Fan GoH.

Police sirens went by in the distance. Mike K. decided that they must have been chasing Bill. "Blues Brothers" jokes ensued.

Sam moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:46:55P.

The program was the annual Christmas gift exchange. Sue Thorn and her sister Eva Walding hosted the After-the-Meeting Meeting/Christmas party at their house.

NASFA Calendar

JANUARY

- 01 New Year's Day.
- 03 BD: Jim Kennedy.
- 03 BD: Karen Hopkins.
- 06 BD: Rich Garber.
- 07 BD: Douglas E. Lampert.
- 08 Bailey Cove Library Book Discussion: *Book of Lost Things*, John Connolly; 6P.
- 09–10 Shadowcon XIII — Memphis TN.

- 09–11 GaFilk 11 — Atlanta GA.
11 Con†Stellation XXVIII Concom Meeting, 2P, Mike
Kennedy’s house.
16 BD: Bruce Butler.
16–18 MarsCon — Williamsburg VA.
17* NASFA Meeting — 6P Business, 7P Program, at
BookMark. Program: Dr. Travis S. “Doc” Taylor pre-
sents “Your Brain is a Quantum Computer” plus signs
books. ATMM: Maria (Mia) and Adam Grim’s house.
19 BD: Martin Luther King, Jr.
20 Inauguration Day.
20 BD: Larry Montgomery.
23–25 Chattacon 34 — Chattanooga TN.

FEBRUARY

- 01 National Freedom Day.
01 Atlanta Comic Convention — Atlanta GA.
02 Groundhog Day.
05 Bailey Cove Library Book Discussion: *Princess of Mars*, Edgar Rice Burroughs; 6P.
08 BD: Lin Cochran.
09 BD: Jack Lundy.
10 BD: Marcia Illingworth.
11 BD: Jeanna Woosley.
12 BD: Abraham Lincoln.
14 Valentine's Day.
15 **Tentative** Con†Stellation XXVIII Concom Meeting, Mike Kennedy's house. **NOTE:** Stay tuned for a possible date change if the club meeting date changes (see below).
16 President's Day.
17 BD: Nancy A. Cucci.
20–22 Con Nooga 2009 — Chattanooga TN.
21* NASFA Meeting — 6P Business, 7P Program, at BookMark. Program: TBD. ATMM: Ray Pietruszka and Nancy Cucci's house. **NOTE:** Stay tuned for a possible date change due to a special conflict to be discussed at the January club meeting.
21 BD: Susan Stockell.
22 BD: George Washington.
27–01 SheVaCon 17 — Roanoke VA.
27–01 MegaCon — Orlando FL.

The North Alabama Science Fiction Association meets on the third Saturday of each month. (Unless there is a large nearby convention being held that weekend — in which case we often move the meeting to the second or fourth weekend.) The regular meeting location is the meeting room at BookMark on South Memorial Parkway. The Executive Committee meeting (if scheduled) is at 5P. The business meeting is at 6P. The program is at 7P. Anyone is welcome to attend any of the meetings. There is usually an after-the-meeting meeting with directions available at the program.

MARCH

The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America <www.sfwaweb.org> has posted online the Preliminary Ballot <www.sfwaweb.org/news/2009/08nebprelim.htm> for the 2008 Nebula Awards — perhaps the premier peer-voted awards in the sf/f field. The Nebula Awards use a sliding two-year window, so works published in both 2007 and 2008 are eligible for the 2008 awards.

The aforementioned post notes that minor changes may still be made. Non-minor changes between the Preliminary and Final Ballots may include works added by separate juries for each category — only one additional work except for the Andre Norton Award for Young Adult Science Fiction and Fantasy where the jury may add up to three additional works. That latter may be critical, since *zero* works qualified in the voting round that established the Preliminary Ballot.

The Final Ballot will be mailed to SFWA members in early March. The awards will be announced and presented at a banquet during the Nebula Awards Weekend, to be held this year

- MARCH**
- 02 BD: Ronnie Lajoie.
05 Bailey Cove Library Book Discussion: *A Dirty Job*,
Christopher Moore; 6P.
06 Vulkan Orlando Spring Sci-Fi Expo — Orlando FL.
08 Daylight Savings Time begins.
09 BD: Tracey Kennedy.
10 Purim.
10 BD: Kerry Gilley.
13 BD: Anita Eisenberg.
13–15 Stellarcon 33 — High Point NC.
13–15 Madicon 18 — Harrisonburg VA.
14–15 MomoCon 2008 — Atlanta GA.
15 **Tentative** Con†Stellation XXVIII Concom Meeting,
Mike Kennedy’s house. **NOTE:** Stay tuned for a possi-
ble date change if the club meeting date changes (see
below).
15 BD: Carlo DeShouten.
17 St. Patrick’s Day.
19–22 Furry Weekend Atlanta 2009 — Atlanta GA.
20 First Day of Spring.
20–22 FantaSciCon ’09 — Chattanooga TN.
20–22 MidSouthCon 27 — Memphis TN.

24–26 April at the Luxe Hotel Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles. This year the Nebula Awards Weekend <www.nebulaawards.com/index.php/nebulaweekend> is being held in partial conjunction with the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books on the nearby UCLA campus.

NEBULA NOVEL PRELIMINARY NOMS

Daniel Abraham, *A Betrayal in Winter* (Tor, July 2007)
Chris Barzak, *One for Sorrow* (Bantam, September 2007)
Emma Bull, *Territory* (Tor, July 2007)
Cory Doctorow, *Little Brother* (Tor, April 2008)
Kathleen Ann Goonan, *In War Times* (Tor, May 2007)
Ursula K. Le Guin, *Powers* (Harcourt, September 2007)
Jack McDevitt, *Cauldron* (Ace, November 2007)
Ian McDonald, *Brasyl* (Pyr, May 2007)
Terry Pratchett, *Making Money* (Harper, September 2007)
Patrick Rothfuss, *The Name of the Wind* (DAW, April 2007)

NEBULA NOVELLA PRELIMINARY NOMS

Catherine Asaro, “The Spacetime Pool” (*Analog*, March 2008)
Gregory Benford, “Dark Heaven” (*Alien Crimes*, SFBC, January 2007)
Kelley Eskridge, “Dangerous Space” (*Dangerous Space*, Aqueduct Press, June 2007)
Charles Coleman Finlay, “The Political Prisoner” (*F&SF*, August 2008)

NEBULA NOVELETTE PRELIMINARY NOMS

Richard Bowes, “If Angels Fight” (*F&SF*, February 2008)
Michael F. Flynn, “Quaestiones Super Caelo et Mundo” (*Analog*, July/August 2007)
James Alan Gardner, “The Ray-Gun: A Love Story” (*Asimov’s*, February 2008)
Lisa Goldstein, “Dark Rooms” (*Asimov’s*, October/November 2007)
John Kessel, “Pride and Prometheus” (*F&SF*, January 2008)
Ted Kosmatka, “The Prophet of Flores” (*Asimov’s*, September 2007)

David Moles, “Finisterra” (*F&SF*, December 2007)
Johanna Sinisalo, “Baby Doll” (*The SFWA European Hall of Fame*, Tor, June 2007; translated by David Hackston)
K. D. Wentworth, “Kaleidoscope” (*F&SF*, May 2007)

NEBULA SHORT STORY PRELIMINARY NOMS

Mike Allen, “The Button Bin” (*Helix: A Speculative Fiction Quarterly*, October 2007; Reprinted in *Transcriptase*)
Michael Cassutt, “Skull Valley” (*Asimov’s*, October/November 2007)
Sheila Finch, “Stranger Than Imagination Can” (*The Guild of Xenolinguists*, Golden Gryphon Press, September 2007)
Jeffrey Ford, “The Dreaming Wind” (*Coyote Road, Trickster Tales*, Viking Juvenile, July 2007)
Samantha Henderson, “Bottles” (*Realms of Fantasy*, April 2007)
M. K. Hobson, “The Hotel Astarte” (*Realms of Fantasy*, June 2007)
Kij Johnson, “26 Monkeys, Also the Abyss” (*Asimov’s*, July 2008)
Gwyneth Jones, “The Tomb Wife” (*F&SF*, August 2007)
James Patrick Kelly, “Don’t Stop” (*Asimov’s*, June 2007)
Ruth Nestvold, “Mars: A Traveler’s Guide” (*F&SF*, January 2008)
Brian Plante, “The Astronaut” (*Analog*, May 2007)
Mary Rickert, “Holiday” (*Subterranean #7*, September 2007)
Ken Scholes, “Summer in Paris, Light From the Sky” (*Clarkesworld Magazine*, November 2007)
James Van Pelt, “How Music Begins” (*Asimov’s*, September 2007)

NEBULA SCRIPT PRELIMINARY NOMS

Andrew Stanton, *WALL-E* (Pixar, June 2008)
ANDRE NORTON YA AWARD PRELIMINARY NOMS
None

Awards Roundup

HUGO NOMS OPEN

Anticipation, the 2009 Worldcon to be held 6–10 August 2009 in Montreal, has announced that nominations for the 2008 Hugo Awards (and Campbell Award) are open. Members (both Supporting and Attending) of either Anticipation or the 2008 Worldcon (Denvention 3) may nominate, though only members of Anticipation can vote in the final selection round.

A nominating ballot can be downloaded from Anticipation’s web site at <www.anticipationsf.ca/files/uploads/Hugo_Nomination.pdf> and will presumably be mailed to current members. Online voting is also planned, though that was not available at press time. Nominating ballots mailed to Anticipation must be postmarked by 28 February 2009.

More details about the Hugo and Campbell Awards can be found on Anticipation’s web site at <www.anticipationsf.ca/English/Hugos> or at the official Hugo Awards site <www.thehugoawards.org>.

THAT’S SIR TERRY

Author Terry Pratchett has been listed for knighthood in the Queen’s New Year Honours — for his services to literature. He’d already been made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire in 1998, so this represents a promotion of sorts. He has been widely quoted as saying “There are times when phrases such as ‘totally astonished’ just don’t do the job... I am of course delighted and honored and, needless to say, flabbergasted.”

AFI TOP TENS INCLUDE GENRE EFFORTS

The American Film Institute announced Top Ten lists for both 2008 movies and TV on 14 December 2008. Genre and related works did very well in the movie category but not as well for TV shows. The four genre-related movies honored were *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, *The Dark Knight*, *Iron Man*, and *WALL-E*. The only genre-related TV show that was recognized was *Lost*.

SFPA DWARF STAR AWARD

The winner and runners-up for the Science Fiction Poetry Association’s 2008 Dwarf Star Award (for “speculative poems of 10 lines or less”) were announced in early January 2009. The eligibility period for the Dwarf Star Awards is a bit odd due at least in part, it would seem, to the logistics of getting short poetry noticed. All the nominated poems were published in 2007 then collected in the 2008 *Dwarf Stars Anthology* (copies of which are available for \$5+^{s&h} at <www.sfpoetry.com/dwarfstars.html>), from which the winner and runners-up were tapped.

Winner..... “Place Mat by Moebius,” Greg Beatty (*Asimov’s*, January 2007)

Second Place..... “Muse,” Sonya Taaffe (*Strange Horizons*, 12 March 2007)

Third Place..... “Dancing to Van Gogh,” Ann K. Schwader (*Mythic Delirium*, Fall 2007)

PEOPLE’S CHOICE AWARDS GIVEN

The 35th Annual People’s Choice Awards <www.pcavote.com> were announced Wednesday 7 January 2009 in a ceremony broadcast by CBS from Los Angeles’ Shrine Auditorium. The categories for the PCAs are set up such that genre works

may be excluded (e.g., Favorite Game Show or Favorite Reality Show) or concentrated (e.g., Favorite Superhero or Favorite Action Movie). Nonetheless, genre films did well in the “mixed” categories, too (e.g., Favorite Cast).

The Dark Knight ran away with the most honors for a genre work, and indeed the most for any movie or TV show. *DK* took Favorite Movie, Favorite Action Movie, Favorite Cast, Favorite On-Screen Matchup (Christian Bale and Heath Ledger), and Favorite Superhero (Christian Bale as Bruce Wayne/Batman). Other genre and related winners included *WALL-E* (Favorite Family Movie), *The Simpsons* (Favorite Animated Comedy), and *Heroes* (Favorite Sci-Fi/Fantasy Show).

Some notable genre and related (some *distantly* related) works that were nominated but did not take home the prize include *Get Smart* (Favorite Comedy Movie), *Fringe* (Favorite New TV Drama), *Quantum of Solace* (Favorite Song from a Soundtrack; “Another Way to Die,” Jack White and Alicia Keys), and “*Star Wars*” *A Capella Tribute* (Favorite User Generated Video). That latter can be found online at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=lk5_OSawz4>.

SAG NOMS ANNOUNCED

Nominees for the 15th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards <www.sagawards.org> were announced 18 December 2008. The SAG Awards represent the only major TV and movie awards voted on entirely by actors. The main movie and TV awards will be cablecast on both TNT and TBS at 7P (Central) Sunday 25 January 2009 from the Los Angeles Shrine Exposition Center. Recipients of the stunt ensemble honors will be announced from the SAG Awards red carpet during the TNT.TV and TBS.COM live pre-show webcasts. Genre and related works receiving nominations include:



The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (3 noms, for Lead Actor in a Motion Picture (Brad Pitt), Supporting Actress in a Motion Picture (Taraji P. Henson), and Outstanding Cast in a Motion Picture)

The Dark Knight (for Supporting Actor in a Motion Picture (Heath Ledger))

24: Redemption (for Actor in a Television Movie or Miniseries (Kiefer Sutherland))

Hellboy II: The Golden Army (for Stunt Ensemble in a Motion Picture)

Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull (for Stunt Ensemble in a Motion Picture)

Iron Man (for Stunt Ensemble in a Motion Picture)

The Dark Knight (for Stunt Ensemble in a Motion Picture)

Heroes (for Stunt Ensemble in a Television Series)

NEW DGLA FANTASY AWARD

The David Gemmell Legend Award for Fantasy <gemmellaward.ning.com> is a new popular award (online voting) for fantasy written “in the spirit of David Gemmell,” the late British author of heroic fantasy. Voting details are a bit fluid, but it appears that interested readers are encouraged to nominate one item. All nominated works will be part of the longlist with the top five becoming a shortlist from which the winner will be selected in a separate voting round. That winner will be announced in an Award Ceremony on Friday 1 June 2009. Eligible works for this first iteration of the award are those “in the English language, first published in 2008.”

PGA NOMS AVAILABLE

The Producers Guild of America announced their film and TV nominees on Monday 5 January 2009 for the 20th Annual PGA Awards. Genre works received several nods in the various

film categories; somewhat less love was shown to TV. Winners will be announced at a ceremony Saturday 24 January at the Hollywood Palladium. Genre and related works mentioned for the headline award, the Darryl F. Zanuck Producer of the Year Award in Theatrical Motion Pictures, were *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* and *The Dark Knight*. All three films included in the Animated Theatrical Motion Pictures category fit the genre classification: *Bolt*, *Kung Fu Panda*, and *WALL-E*. In the Episodic Television, Drama category, *Lost* was the lone genre-related nod. Similarly, one genre-related work received a nod in the Long-Form Television category, for *24: Redemption*. Of course, for all the works it’s actually the producers, not the works, nominated.

CRITICS’ CHOICES INCLUDE SOME SF

The 14th Annual Critics’ Choice Awards (sponsored by the Broadcast Film Critics Association <www.bfca.org>) were announced Thursday 8 January 2009 in a ceremony cablecast live on VH1 from the Santa Monica CA Civic Auditorium. Genre and related works had been nominated in about a dozen categories (including Best Picture) but took home only three trophies.

The Dark Knight did take both Best Supporting Actor (for Heath Ledger) and Best Action Movie, while *WALL-E* copped the honor for Best Animated Feature. The big genre/related loser for the night was *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, which went 0-for-8.

Brown Recluse in the Fruit

No Need for a Ring — Chapter 26

by PieEyedDragon

[Editor’s Note: This is the tenth chapter in the second part of the NNFAR trilogy — *The Two Hairy Towers* — and is thus numbered as Chapter 10 in some places. The *Shuttle* is serializing the entire tale and chooses to use the alternate sequential chapter numbering system.]

PED waves her “dowsing rod” amongst the holly tickets at the muddy edge of the former pool. Eventually, she finds what she was looking for — a place where the rod gives some faint tugs.

Behind and below the greenery there is a jumble of boulders and massive, sprouting, holly tree trunks.

PED: Yes, holly trees are very difficult to kill; especially when planted by High Elves who intended them to stay healthy! This job looks too big for me; bigger, therefore, I shall be!

In a reverse of the previous spell, PED starts crooning arcane words that begin quiet and grow louder. She does a turning dance to the right, faster and faster. Larger and larger she becomes. Finally she stops, looks over the work site, and begins carefully digging. Trees with good roots are carried away and replanted in gaps along the old Hollin road. She adds a bit of her very special, homemade, “fertilizer” to each replanting and lays smaller, broken limbs around as mulch.

Now, she begins to attack the boulders that are too large or too firmly wedged-in to be safely moved. She applies a bit of Elemental magic by gently biting at the upper rocks, which quickly turn into dry dust. Fanning her wings moderately, she blows most of the dust out of the way. Layer by layer, she unearths the original holly trunks. They are twisted by new, rank growth patterns, but still alive. Checking the mithril traces of the original gates once more, she begins digging a pair of larger holes beside the hidden gate. Suddenly, she hears her name

spoken fairly close by, by an elf! Leaving the diggings, she ambles down to the Stair Falls to take a look around. Orophin has ostensibly been foraging all day, if he did not after all try to leg it and run away. She sees the elf in the distance, standing between a pair of wild plum trees.

— O — O — O —

Orophin, meanwhile, makes his way first to his cache by the Stair Falls and leaves a message for his brothers. Then, he selects suitable plants and weaves three broad, shallow baskets. Taking one and wandering around, he loads it with wild grains, straw and all. A second basket then receives assorted berries and mint leaves. Since he has not had much food lately, he eats a portion of what he gathers.

He eventually arrives at a pair of very similar plum trees. One of them has a raven sitting near the top.

Orophin: What news of the world, brother raven?

The raven caws a bit, very like laughter, and appears to actually shrug.

Picking the fruit from the side of one tree, and eating a few, he half-fills a basket before turning to the other tree. Strangely, the second tree now looks as picked-over as the first! Starting to examine this anomaly, he is shocked to hear a tense, quiet voice!

Voice: Take your hand off that! I don't know you that well! And if you try to bite me, I'll kick you!

Orophin: Who is there?

Voice: A master of shape and hue. How about you? Orophin is your name, correct?

Orophin: Yes. Are you an Ent?

Voice: No, but they are interesting creatures. Guess again.

Orophin: Then, you must be a wizard. That would make you...

Voice: The one sometimes called Radagast the Brown, yes! The great eagle, Landroval, came to me. He said there was a dragon to be seen. Now, I am very interested in all manner of beasts. Only a few times have I gotten a chance to study one of these! He graciously carried me on his back, for it was too far to walk quickly. Odd, though. His face is not very expressive, but I could have sworn that he was laughing about something! Are you very lucky, or do you know some dragon charm of surpassing potency?

Orophin: Just luck, either good or bad. I can't quite decide which. Have you changed into a tree?

Radagast: No. I'm just copying the image of that other tree. It is much simpler. Now, pray tell me everything you have learned about this creature. It seems to be an enigma. It is not much interested in destroying for the sake of destruction. Also, a little birdie brought me some relevant news that is all but impossible to believe!

Orophin begins his tale with the moment he and his brothers discovered signs of the beast, being caught, and their unexpected luck at being released because of a birthday! He continues on. Shortly after telling some of the things that the dragon spoke he hears a sharp gasp. Looking around, he sees, in the distance, the dragon — much larger — looking in his direction!

Orophin: Wizard, take a good look. This may be the last thing you will ever see!

Radagast: I think not, see there!

They watch the dragon appear to shrug, and go back toward the mountain.

Radagast: Her name must be a Name of Power! She didn't tell you *that*, did she? We are being ignored, it seems. Finish your tale.

[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

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

Sheryl Birkhead
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21 December 2008

Okay, forget how long it has been since I was a responsible fan and responded to an ish — profound apologies. Also, since I am just looking at what I have lying in a pile at my feet, I wouldn't be surprised if I forget and when I start working on the stack of zines I tote around end up retroactively responding to them, too. We'll see...

The only thing I can say in my defense is that I am still getting over the creepy crawly crud coupled with several batches of pulled muscles and topped off with a fall — all interrelated and all, some day I am sure, quite amusing... but not yet!

Because you liked *WALL-E* so much, I thought you might find this of interest. Only one person I know has seen the film. In case it has any bearing on the assessment, she has six kids. I asked her about it and she said not to bother seeing it — that it was depressing. Just thought I'd pass that along. Please note it does not change my desire to see it. It is ensconced as #1 on my Netflix list, but has *Long Wait* perpetually attached to it. Just saw *Iron Man* — liked it. I continue to price *WALL-E*, but it has not yet entered the attractive range. Looks as if I will follow the original plan and see it before deciding to get a copy but with the beauty of the animation, I can't think I will wait, but one never knows.

As with the loss of so many of our "icons," Forry will be missed. All of us "knew" him and all of us will miss his presence.

A wrinkle in the digital converter box — I have the only model that will allow remote programming for various channels with the VCR (most just allow only one channel to be taped remotely). I have not been able to make the sucker tape various programs so I finally broke down and called the customer service number. Well (after being told to turn it off — as I always do — and see if it healed itself overnight — nope!) after chatting with the technician I noticed a curious inconsistency — the actual time disagreed with the time the converter box *said* it was by 16 minutes. Hmm — there is no way to go in and change the time. So, the company's technical research section is looking tonight to see if they can figure out how to fix this. They *tried* to convince me it was because I said Daylight Savings time was observed — nope, I cheerfully opined, if that was the problem it would be off by an hour. Then I found out the technician was in Korea... wait... hold your temper and smile... They tried to be helpful and suggest that I program the VCR as normal (check) but program the remote times for 16 minutes (*no* check) before the listed program time — uh... whoa, this is all getting far too complicated! The saga continues — I am to call them tomorrow and see if research has come up with some way to change the time. Well, I have until February to figure out (or find the funds to buy new TVs or get cable/whatever) how to make the thing do what the instructions say it will do.

Ah, seeing the Worldcon membership rate hikes makes me all the happier that I settle for a supporting membership. Ye-ouch, I hadn't actually looked at the full membership rates in years — no way that would fit into the budget!

I just found out *The Day the Earth Stood Still* has been remade. I cannot imagine that it will hold a candle to the original

— but just maybe Reeves will pull it off.

Of the robot movies the only one I have not seen is *The Hitchhiker's Guide* — if it really is that good (robot-wise), maybe I ought to add that to the Netflix list?

The Chesley Awards surprised me — was there any mention as to why they were delayed? Just curious.

I subscribed to *Locus* when it was a zine... mimeo, etc. I even took a copy of #1 as a promotion gift for re-subbing at some point. I have several large binders (pressure, not ring) in which they reside, hopefully resistant to humidity — someday I'll look and find out.

I hope all have/had a pleasant holiday season. The New Year has the potential to be quite extraordinary. We'll see — at least I have high hopes in that direction.

Here's to locating the elusive 36-hour day — I know it is out there somewhere!

[It sounds like your life has been, er, full enough without locating; certainly no blame can attach for missing an issue or three. But, you don't need a 36-hour day, Sheryl, you just need to join the rest of us every week on Pluterday <www.tinyurl.com/7jn89e>. I can't attest as to whether the most recent *Hitchhiker's* movie is really worth watching or not — maybe one of our readers will chime in with an opinion? (I believe several NASFAns saw it in theatrical release.) For the recent *Day*, however, I'm willing to say "take a pass on it" without seeing it myself. Sixteen Minutes; sounds like it should be a time-travel movie title, maybe for one featuring a souped-up Omega 13. I know nothing about the tech details of your DTV converter, but it's possible the clock is synced to an on-air signal from one of the digital TV stations and their clock is screwed up. If it's not that then it becomes (potentially, at least) very weird. I'm tempted to ask what movie your friend was watching instead of *WALL-E*. Did she miss the ending completely? Of blank out on the love story? Yes, there depressing elements but the movie is very much about love and hope while she apparently only saw the bleakness (of which there is, admittedly, much) and missed the "good" parts. -ED]

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

Mike Glicksohn
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23 December 2008

As Christmas rushes upon us and even more snow falls to trap us (they closed the New York Thruway yesterday and after leaving at 6:30 am we turned back and canceled a visit to Susan's family) I feel an obligation to let you know that I truly appreciate the steady stream of newszines you send me.

Sadly, it was the obituary for 4E that meant the most to me in the December issue. I met him many times, visited his mansion several times (and was very pleased to discover that the fanzines I'd sent him were a part of his collection) and was on his

mailing list for many years. It was Forry who got me into fandom as it happens. I read a very short announcement in *Famous Monsters of Filmland* (yes, I bought it regularly back in the 60s instead of buying dope) about the 1966 World SF Convention in Cleveland and I drove my motorbike down and discovered fandom. And it has been a very major part of my life for the last 42 years (a stfnally significant number, eh?).

At the 1973 Westercon in LA I attended the fan fund auction and was astounded to find a copy of the 1944 *Fancyclopedia*, produced by Jack Speer (also recently deceased) and published by Forry. As there weren't many people in attendance I thought I'd lucked into my best ever chance to buy a copy of this legendary publication. But every time I bid, a voice from the back of the room raised that bid. After several raised bids I finally turned around and discovered that the person bidding against me was Forry himself! I tried once or twice more but Forry raised my bids and as he had a lot more money than I did, I bowed out. And figured I'd lost my only chance to ever own a copy of this seminal fannish publication.

Until, in a con hallway later that night, Forry presented me with the copy which he had inscribed to me with the additional requirement "Don't let me buy this back again!"

I can't imagine a Forry story that better encapsulates his relationship with science fiction fandom. And I'm even willing to forgive him for "sci-fi"!

I really cannot imagine why a convention committee would need to know that "There are places where you can get chocolate covered bacon" so please refrain from explaining this comment any further!

All best wishes to all of you and thanks again for keeping me in touch with the ebb and flow of fandom.

[Your fannish activities predate mine by about a decade, Mike, which may be part of the reason I never met Forry. But, as Sheryl intimated above, we all felt we knew him in some ways whether we'd ever met or not. (Likely another significant reason for the non-meeting is the relative isolation of Southern Fandom — rather less now than when I started, but still real.) I found your Forry story an interesting insight into his character and entirely in keeping with what I already knew about him. -ED]

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29 December 2008

Well, Christmas is done for another year, and we're well-fed and well-gifted, and may you all be the same. I am also quite tired, so if this loc on the December *Shuttle* makes no sense at all, you won't be surprised.

I have appreciated the slack in responding to the *Shuttle*, especially since the letter column is at the back of the zine. I will try to respond asap in the future to help with the deadline.

I am lucky enough to have met Forry Ackerman several times, twice at Worldcons and once in Montreal when he was a guest at Con*cept some years ago. Always friendly and smiling, and full of interesting stories... he was truly the example to follow when it came to dealing with other fans, and especially new fans.

Good luck to all in getting Con+Stellation on the go. I've worked on enough conventions, and I know how much work it

is. It's a business on the go, and you've got to be businesslike, no matter how much fun you might want to have.

Yvonne's birthday was on December 19, and I have certainly learned to treat a birthday separate from Christmas. I made sure I spoiled her rotten as far as gifts go, and I don't think I could buy her any more gifts; she's got all she wanted.

I am amazed that Donato Giancola got four of the Chesleys awarded by ASFA. He'd definitely be the favourite for the Hugos in 2009. Seeing it's the end of 2008, it's time to talk about the Hugos, and very shortly Anticipation will be sending out their PR3s. A .pdf version of PR3 is available for download from their website.

Some have said I was being ripped off with a \$10 issue of *Locus*... take the US dollar price of \$6.95, add in exchange rate, import duties, transportation costs... probably Can\$10 is a fair price. However, I haven't bought an issue of *Locus* in years, and I haven't been on their website very much any more.

Because of the holiday time, there's not much to say about this issue. Liked the foxhead clipart, missed PieEyed again... oh, well, the new year should bring lots of activity again, and planning for cons and clubs and other events. We have our usual spring conventions to plan for, the usual fannish pub-nights to gather at... Beyond that, not much more. I've got a

ton of letters to write, and that will keep me busy for some time.

All done... take care, all, and see you in 2009. Let's hope for a happy year.

[I didn't finish my Christmastime activities until several days into the new year and my mother still has presents to be delivered the next time she's in Birmingham. I'm finishing up this issue of the *Shuttle* on the same weekend I'm hosting the first concom meeting for this year's Con+Stellation so it's yet to be determined if we'll pull it off, but we have a good, experienced, committee and I have faith; even though their leadership is suspect. (Sam Smith and I are co-charing. I had my mother move in a few months ago and Sam is getting married next month — so we're both a bit distracted.) Yeah, I noted now many Chesley Awards Giancola walked away with; obviously a big year for him. But, peer awards don't necessarily translate to popular awards and the Chesleys he won were for work in 2007, not eligible for the current Hugo round. (Of course, that's something of a theoretical argument since garnering votes for Hugos — especially the Best Professional Artist category according to many people — depends in part on reputation and past work.) -ED]

Breaking News

After the *Shuttle* was — or at least *should have been* — put to bed, the results of the Golden Globe Awards became available. Genre/related winners included:

Actress In A Television Series, Drama.....Anna Paquin
(*True Blood*)

Animated Feature Film..... WALL-E

Supporting Actor in a Motion Picture.....Heath Ledger
(*Dark Knight*)

Steven Spielberg, who, of course, has *numerous* genre credits, was announced earlier as the winner of the Cecil B. De-Mille Award. Short clips of several of those genre movies were included in the compilation that introduced him before his acceptance speech.

As in the Critics' Choice Awards, *The Curious of Benjamin Button* was skunked, going 0-for-5 in this case.



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The NASFA Shuttle is the newsletter of the North Alabama Science Fiction Association, Inc. This is the January 2009 edition (Volume 29, Number 1). NASFA Officers for 2009: President Mary Lampert; Vice President Mike Kennedy; Secretary Steve Sloan; Treasurer Sam Smith; Program Director Sue Thorn; Publicity Director Bill Savage. Shuttle Editor Mike Kennedy.

Comments, inquiries, and contributions of writing by email to: nasfa.shuttle@con-stellation.org — EDITORIAL ADDRESS (EMAIL)

Comments, inquiries, and contributions of writing by snailmail to: Mike Kennedy, 7907 Charlotte Drive SW,

Huntsville AL 35802-2841 — EDITORIAL ADDRESS (SNAILMAIL)

Dues (\$), subscriptions (\$), and Official Mail to: NASFA, Inc., P. O. Box 4857,

Huntsville AL 35815-4857 — OFFICIAL ADDRESS

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NASFA Dues = \$25/year (Family rates available) Subscription only = \$15/year Single copy = \$2 each.

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