

The



Shuttle

January 2015

*The Next NASFA Meeting is 6:30P Saturday
17 January 2015 at the Regular Location*

Concom Meeting, 3P Saturday 17 January 2015, at the Church

▲ Oyez, Oyez ▲

The next **NASFA Meeting** will be **6:30P Saturday 17 January 2015**, at the regular meeting location—the Madison campus of Willowbrook Baptist Church (old Wilson Lumber Company building) at **7105 Highway 72W** (aka University Drive). Please see the map at right if you need help finding it.

PLEASE NOTE that per a vote at the October 2014 meeting, the start of the Business Meeting has changed from 6P to 6:30P. Programs are still scheduled to start at 7P.

JANUARY PROGRAM

The January program will be Short Attention Span Theater—a selection of genre and related short films gathered from dusty corners of the interwebs—hosted by Mike Kennedy.

JANUARY ATMM

The January After-The-Meeting Meeting will be hosted by Maria and Adam Grim at the church. The usual rules will apply—that is, please bring food to share and your favorite drink. Also, please stay to help clean up. We need to be good guests and leave things at least as clean as we found them.

CONCOM MEETING

The next Con†Stellation XXXIII Concom Meeting will be at 3P on 17 January 2015—the same day as this month's club meeting. It will be held at the same place (Willowbrook Madison) as the club meeting. There will be a dinner break between the Concom Meeting and the NASFA Business Meeting.

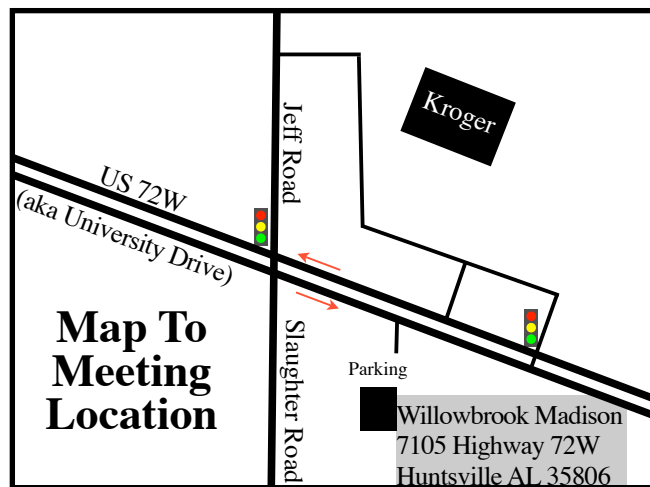
The intent going forward is for the concom to meet on club meeting days, at least until we get close enough to the con to

require going to two meetings a month. Stay tuned, though, and consider all meeting dates past January as tentative until confirmed.

CHANGING SHUTTLE DEADLINES

The latest tweak to the *NASFA Shuttle* schedule shifted the *usual* repro date somewhat to the right (roughly the weekend before each meeting) but much of each issue will need to be put to bed as much as two weeks before the monthly meeting.

Please check the deadline below the Table of Contents *each month* to submit news, reviews, LoCs, or other material. We will generally need to enforce that deadline strictly.



Beginning Our 35th Year of Publication

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Deadline for the February 2015 issue of The NASFA Shuttle is Monday 2 February 2014

FUTURE PROGRAMS AND ATMMs

Future programs for 2015 are TBD at press time. We need ATMM volunteers all remaining months in 2015.

FUTURE CLUB MEETING DATES

All but two 2015 NASFA meeting dates are currently scheduled on the normal 3rd Saturday. The March 2015 meeting has been shifted to the 4th Saturday (28 March) to avoid a conflict with MidSouthCon. The July 2015 meeting has been shifted to the 4th Saturday (25 July) to avoid a conflict with Con Kasterborous.

JOINING THE NASFA EMAIL LIST

All NASFAnS who have email are urged to join the NASFA email list, which you can do online at <tinyurl.com/NASFAEmail>. The list is usually low traffic, though the rate is rather variable. Generally the list is limited to announcements about club activities plus the occasional message of general interest to north-Alabama sf/f/h/etc. fans. Non NASFAnS are both *encouraged* and *welcomed* to join the list, but please only do so if you're interested in the above restricted topics.

NASFA CALENDAR ONLINE

NASFA has an online calendar on Google. Interested parties can check the calendar online, but you can also subscribe to it and have your Outlook, iCal, BlackBerry, or other calendar automatically updated as events (Club Meetings, Concom Meetings, local sf/f/h/etc. events) are added or changed. You can view the calendar online at <tinyurl.com/NASFACal>.

News & Info

2016 DEEPSOUTHCON NAMES GUESTS

DeepSouthCon 54 (aka ABC DSC), to be held 13–15 May 2016 at the Doubletree Hotel in Roswell (Atlanta area) GA, has announced their guests. Author John C. Wright will be the Guest of Honor. Author L. Jagi Lamplighter (Wright's wife) will be a Special Guest of the convention. Bill Ritch (Atlanta Radio Theater Company) will be the Fan Guest of Honor. Wendy Webb Nesheim will be the Toastmaster. Julia Morgan-Scott will be the Fan Artist Guest of Honor.

DSC 54's current membership rate is \$50 (\$25 under age 12) but "will go up soon." PayPal is not yet an option, but it is said it will be available shortly. For now, send your check to:

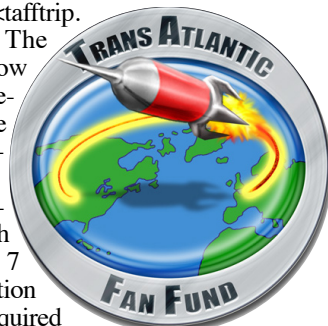
ABC DeepSouthCon 54
3101 Celestial Lane
Hixson TN 37343-5810

TAFF VOTING OPENS

Balloting for the 2015 Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund has opened, matching Nina Horvath and Wolf von Witting to travel in this East-to-West year to the 2015 Worldcon in Spokane.

Full details (including each candidate's platform and a list of nominators) can be found at <tafftrip.com/taff-ballot-form-2015>. The website includes directions on how to vote by mail or PayPal. More-complete PayPal info can be found at <tafftrip.com/taff-voting-using-paypal>.

The voting deadline is one second before midnight British Summer Time the evening of 7 April 2015. There is a donation (minimum \$USD3, £2, or €3) required to vote. This, and other fundraising, helps defer the cost of the delegate attending the convention.



FAAn AWARDS VOTING OPENS

Voting has opened in the 2015 Fan Activity Achievement Awards (for "the best in fan writing, drawing, publishing and posting for the calendar year 2014"). Voting is open to "anyone interested in science fiction fanzines" and closes at "midnight (your local time)" Saturday 14 March 2015. The awards will be presented at Corflu 32/Tynecon III, to be held 27–29 March 2015 at the Vermont Hotel, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK. Corflu <corflu.org> is a rotating annual convention of sf fanzine fans.

The ballot is at <corflu.org/Corflu32/documents/FAAn%20Ballot%202015.pdf>, with directions on where to mail or email (preferred) your vote. The categories are Genzine, Personal Fanzine, Fan Writing, Fan Art, Letterhack, and Fanzine Cover.

2015 HUGO AWARD BASE COMPETITION

Sasquan, this year's World Science Fiction Convention has announced a competition to design the base of the 2015 Hugo Award <sasquan.org/hugo-base-competition>. There is a very short timeline; design proposals are due no later than Sunday 1 February 2015. The winner will be selected by Wednesday 18 February 2015. Full details are at the above link. The convention will be held 19–23 August 2015 at the Spokane Convention Center and several surrounding hotels in Spokane WA.

LONCON 3 REVISES ATTENDANCE STATS AND ESTIMATES SURPLUS

Loncon 3, the 2014 Worldcon, has released updated attendance figures and a projection of their final financial figures.

Their total warm body count (including dealers with passes) was 7,310. The total number of individuals who joined in any capacity (everything from full attending memberships to supporting members to day passes) was 11,125.

For all attending types together, the no-show rare was ~11.3%. For full Attending Memberships that was ~12.2%, Other 5 Day Admissions had no-shows of ~18.0%. For Day Admissions and Hall Passes the rate was down to ~6.4%.

Meanwhile, the first-cut financial report shows a very slim surplus of just under £1,000 with a total income of £939,393.77 and expenses of £938,475.33. Both income and expense figures are apparently very much subject to revision, and include estimates for all outstanding income and expenses. The estimates are said to be conservative in the sense that the surplus may be more likely to increase than to decrease.

The above figures were announced at SMOFcon 32 <smofcon32.org>, held in December 2014.

LONCON 3 PUBS ARTIST PORTFOLIO ONLINE

Loncon 3 made the above mentioned surplus, in part, by producing and selling (for £5) *Artist Showcase 2104*. By all reports seen by your editor it was a gorgeous publication. If you missed the paper version (or even if you didn't), you can now get a PDF copy free at <www.loncon3.org/documents/loncon3-art-showcase-final.pdf>.

SUPPORT FOR INDIE BOOKSTORES

Writer James Patterson has been giving away not-at-all-inconsiderable sums of his own money to support independent bookstores across the country. His third group of stores for 2014 was announced in December, reportedly bringing the grant total to over \$1,000,000. He's also announced that a similar program will continue into 2015 as he will "continue to support independent bookstores in innovative ways and [...] champion a new initiative centered on getting our kids reading and supporting school libraries."

A quick review of the recipients listed in all three rounds of the program to date turned up only one Alabama bookstore (Page & Palette in Fairhope) out of about 180 total stores. Though it's difficult to tell from store names, at least a few of the selectees would appear to be genre-oriented shop.

MORE GENRE FILMS FOR NATIONAL REGISTRY

Several sf/f/h films were included in the 2014 group of 25 selected for the Library of Congress' National Film Registry. These include *House of Wax* (1953), *Rosemary's Baby* (1968), *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* (1971), and *Luxo Jr.* (1986). [That latter might be questionable as a genre film, but I have trouble *not* including a film in which inanimate objects (lamps) are brought convincingly to life <www.youtube.com/watch?v=6G3O60o5U7w>. -ED]

December Minutes

by Steve Sloan

The December meeting of the North Alabama Science Fiction Association was called to order on Saturday, December 12, 2014, in the Madison satellite location of Willowbrook Baptist Church at 6:30:00P (my OCD was pleased) by President Mary Lampert and the traditional crickets, but not until after she was distracted by jigsaw cushions.

OLD BUSINESS

It's election time. We had the same slate of nominees as usual, plus Gary Shelton for President and Bruce Butler for Vice President. In summary, the nominees were:

Mary Lampert or Gary Shelton for President
Mike Kennedy or Bruce Butler for Vice President
Steve Sloan for Secretary
Sam Smith for Treasurer
JudySue Thornsmythe for Programming
Jenna Stone for Publicity

Sam moved to reopen nominations, and Judy seconded. Doug nominated Ray Beddingfield for Programming so we can eat cheesecake every month, but there was no second. Mary nominated Jim Kennedy for 2016 Con†Stellation con chair, but he declined. Sam moved to close nominations and Bruce seconded.

Mary handed Mike K. the gavel to run the Presidential vote. Mary won over Gary 8 votes to 4. Mike K. handed the gavel back for Mary to run the rest. For Vice President, Mike K. won over Bruce 9 votes to 1. Steve was reelected for Secretary with 8 votes. Sam was reelected for Treasurer with 8 votes. Many votes reelected Jenna for Publicity, and many votes reelected JudySue for Programming. No 2016 Con†Stellation con chair was nominated or elected.

NEW BUSINESS

2015 NASFA dues are due.

The club received a letter from Wise Little Lambs Productions promoting their book, which is available at the usual places.

CON BUSINESS

The first person invited to be Con†Stellation 2015 Guest of Honor said no, and the second person has until Christmas to say yes or no.

A concom (convention committee meeting) will be held at 3P on the same day as the club meeting (January 17, 2015) at the club meeting location (Willowbrook Madison).

Sam reported that next year's NASFA club meetings are on the Willowbrook Church calendar.

Con†Stellation 2015 will be held October 16-18, 2015, at the airport hotel.

Sam moved to adjourn at 6:46:03P.

December's program was games and fun followed by the Christmas party, all held at the meeting location. Many people sniffed Judy's stockings.

NASFA Calendar

JANUARY

- 01 New Year's Day.
- 01 Last Day of Kwanzaa.
- 02-04 Anime Kaiju—Nashville TN.
- 03 BD: Jim Kennedy.
- 03 BD: Karen (Hopkins) Omel.
- 06 BD: Rich Garber.
- 06 Epiphany.
- 06 Día de Reyes.
- 07 BD: Douglas E. Lampert.
- 07 Orthodox Christmas Day.
- 09-10 Shadowcon—Memphis TN.
- 09-11 GaFilk—Atlanta GA.
- 14 Orthodox New Year's Day.
- 16 BD: Bruce Butler.
- 16-18 Siege of Augusta—Augusta GA.
- 17* Con†Stellation XXXIII Concom Meeting—3P, at Willowbrook Madison. There will be a dinner break before the club meeting.
- 17* NASFA Meeting—6:30P Business, 7P Program, at Willowbrook Madison. Program: Short Attention Span Theater, by Mike Kennedy. ATMM: Adam and Maria Grim, hosting at the church.
- 17 Anime Blues Winter Remix—Southaven MS.
- 17 Knoxville Anime Day—Knoxville TN.
- 19 BD: Martin Luther King (Observed).
- 20 BD: Larry Montgomery.
- 22-25 Game Fest 25—Atlanta GA.
- 30-01 Chattacon 40—Chattanooga TN.
- 30-01 Not-A-Con—Athens GA.

FEBRUARY

- 01 National Freedom Day.
- 01 Atlanta Comic Convention—Atlanta GA.
- 02 Groundhog Day.
- 02 Día de la Constitución.
- 06 National Wear Red Day (women's heart health).
- 06-08 Days of the Dead—Atlanta GA.
- 08 BD: Lin Cochran.
- 09 BD: Jack Lundy.
- 10 BD: Marcia Illingworth.
- 12 BD: Abraham Lincoln.
- 13-15 ConDFW—Addison (Dallas area) TX.
- 14 St. Valentine's Day.
- 15 BD: Susan B. Anthony.
- 16 Presidents' Day.
- 17 BD: Nancy A. Cucci.
- 17 Shrove Tuesday/Mardi Gras.
- 18 Ash Wednesday.
- 19 Chinese New Year.
- 19-22 Concave XXXVI—Bowling Green KY.
- 21* Con†Stellation XXXIII Concom Meeting—3P, at Willowbrook Madison. **TENTATIVE.**
- 21* NASFA Meeting—6:30P Business, 7P Program, at Willowbrook Madison. Program: TBD. ATMM: TBD.
- 21-22 ETSU-Con—Johnson City TN.
- 22 BD: George Washington.
- 24 Día de la Bandera.
- 27-01 ConNooga—Chattanooga TN.
- 27-01 Kami Con 7—Birmingham AL.
- 27-01 AnachroCon—Atlanta GA.

MARCH

- 02 BD: Ronnie Lajoie.

- # APRIL

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 Saturday.) The regular meeting location is the Madison campus of Willowbrook Baptist Church, (old Wilson Lumber Company building)—7105 Highway 72W. The Executive Committee meeting (if scheduled) is before the business meeting. The business meeting is at 6:30P. 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.

RHYSLING AWARDS WINNERS

Short Poem, First Place.....“Turning the Leaves,”
Amal El-Mohtar (*Apex Magazine*, December 2013)

Short Poem, Second Place.....“Rivers,”
Geoffrey A. Landis (*Asimov’s*, June 2013)

Short Poem, Third Place.....“Music of the Stars,”
Bruce Boston (*2013 Balticon Program Book*)

Long Poem, First Place.....“Interregnum,”
Mary Soon Lee (*Star*Line* 36.4)

Long Poem, Second Place.....“Hungry Constellations,”
Mike Allen (*Goblin Fruit*, Fall 2013)

Long Poem, Third Place.....“I will show you a
single treasure from the treasures of Shah Niyaz,”
Rose Lemberg (*Goblin Fruit*, Summer 2013)

The 2015 People's Choice Awards <www.peopleschoice.com> were presented during a televised ceremony Wednesday 7 January 2015. As the title implies, voting is open to the public. A number of genre and related shows and artists were winners, though it's harder to make that call than for some awards because of the way many of the categories are structured.

and *Divergent* (Action Movie and Movie Duo [Shailene Woodley and Theo James]). **Jennifer Lawrence**, who had a



couple of genre roles in 2014 (in *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay—Part 1* and *X-Men: Days of Future Past*), won both the **Movie Actress** and **Action Movie Actress** categories. **Chris Evans** (*Captain America: The Winter Soldier*) took home the **Action Movie Actor** award.

Marginal calls in the movie categories included **Robert Downey, Jr.**—who’s well known for genre work but did *not* have any genre roles in 2014—who took the **Movie Actor** and **Dramatic Movie Actor** nods. Similarly, **Adam Sandler** had one borderline-genre role (in *The Cobbler*) in 2014 but it’s questionable how much that influenced his **Comedic Movie Actor** win. **Chloë Grace Moretz’s** win for **Dramatic Movie Actress** probably *was* heavily influenced by her role in *If I Stay*, but its genre credentials are arguable. (She did have non-dramatic roles in inarguably genre movies in 2014.)

On the genre TV side, *Beauty and the Beast* took two wins (**Network Sci-Fi/Fantasy TV Show** and **Sci-Fi/Fantasy TV Actress** [Kristin Kreuk]). Five different genre TV shows took a single category—*Outlander* (**Cable Sci-Fi/Fantasy TV Show**), *Supernatural* (**Sci-Fi/Fantasy TV Actor** [Misha Collins]), *The Vampire Diaries* (**TV Duo** [Nina Dobrev and Ian Somerhalder]), *The Simpsons* (**Animated TV Show**), and *The Flash* (**New TV Drama**).

Though it is not a genre show, many fans claim *The Big Bang Theory* for their own. It had a very good showing, picking up awards for TV Show, Network TV Comedy, and Comedic TV Actress (Kaley Cuoco-Sweeting).

PHILIP K. DICK AWARD NOMS

Nominees for the 2014 Philip K. Dick Award <www.philipkdickaward.org> (for a “distinguished original sf paperback published in the US”) were announced early this month. The award is sponsored by the Philadelphia SF Society <www.psf.org> and the Philip K. Dick Trust. The award will be presented at Norwescon 38 <www.norwescon.org>, to be held 2–5 April 2015 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Seattle Airport in SeaTac (Seattle area) WA. The nominees are:

Elysium, Jennifer Marie Brissett (Aqueduct Press)
The Bullet-Catcher’s Daughter, Rod Duncan (Angry Robot)
The Book of the Unnamed Midwife, Meg Elison (Sybaritic Press)
Memory of Water, Emmi Itäranta (Harper Voyager)
Maplecroft: The Borden Dispatches, Cherie Priest (Roc)
Reach for Infinity, Jonathan Strahan, ed. (Solaris)

72ND GOLDEN GLOBE NOMS

Nominations for the Golden Globes <www.goldenglobes.com> (sponsored and voted on by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association) have been announced. Winners will be announced during a televised ceremony on Sunday 11 January 2015.

In the movie categories, genre works picked up several noms. Leading the pack was *Into the Woods* with nods for Motion Picture—Musical or Comedy, Actress in a Motion Picture—Musical or Comedy (Emily Blunt), and Supporting Actress in a Motion Picture (Meryl Streep). All five of the Animated Feature Film nominees have genre qualifications—*Big Hero 6*, *The Book of Life*, *The Boxtrolls*, *How to Train Your Dragon 2*, and *The Lego Movie*. Two other genre films were honored once each—*Interstellar* with an Original Score nom (for Hans Zimmer) and *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay—Part 1* for Original Song (*Yellow Flicker Beat*).

On the TV side, *American Horror Story: Freak Show* received two nominations (Actress in a Series, Mini-Series or TV Movie [Jessica Lange] and Supporting Actress in a Series, Mini-Series or TV Movie [Kathy Bates]). *Game of Thrones* took a single nom, for TV Series—Drama.

BAEN FANTASY ADVENTURE AWARD OPENS

The second annual Baen Fantasy Adventure Award <www.baen.com/baenfantasyaward.asp> is cranking up. Full details can be found at that link, but in summary they’re looking for Baen-like short works (up to 8000 words). Submissions are by email only (to <baenfantasyaward@baen.com>) and the submission period is 1 January 2015, 12:01A EDT through 1 April 2015, 12:01A EDT.

AURORA NOMS OPEN

Nominations for the 2015 Auroras Awards <www.prixaurorawards.ca> (sponsored by the Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Association) have opened. The deadline (for works and activities in 2014) is 25 April 2015 at 11:59:59P EDT. Final voting will run 1 June 2015–17 October 2015 and the awards will be presented at SFCOntario 6/Convention 35, to be held 20–22 November 2015 at the Ramada Plaza Hotel in Toronto ON. Voting is open to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

URSA MAJOR AWARDS TO OPEN NOMS

The annual Anthropomorphic Literature and Arts Awards, aka the Ursa Major Awards, will open nominations on Thursday 15 January 2015. Full details can be seen at <www.ursamajorawards.org/nominations.htm>. This is the second step of their process, following the compiling of a list of recommendations (that step being open to all furry fans).

The final voting round will run 15 March–15 April 2015. Winners will be announced and the awards presented at Morphicon <www.morphicon.org>, to be held 30 April–3 May 2015 at the Holiday Inn Columbus-Worthington in Columbus, Ohio.

The Potterday Tea Party Affair

No Need for a Questing Beast—Chapter 11

by PieEyedDragon

[Editor’s Note: PieEyedDragon’s adventures in Middle-Earth will resume in these pages later. In the meantime, we take you to another time and location. PED spends somewhat less time “on camera” in this adventure, but still plays a major part.]

[The talk rambles on for a while longer, then...]

PED: I have enjoyed this tremendously; but I really must be going. I shall probably be here a few more days. I need to continue searching the lake for my hypothetical door. And I’ve never before seen a tree-climbing squid.

Hagrid: It prolly thought you were gonna eat it. Ya weren’t, were ya?

PED: Bleaah! No, I once ate a freshwater kraken. It tasted so horrible that I mainly avoid squiddy-creatures. I really prefer fish, anyway; or the occasional elk, buffalo, pig, fruit pie, or pastry.

Hagrid: Feel free ta come back tomorra around tea time.

PED: I will, and thank you.

Luna: I need to go back up and see what the news is about poor professor Trelawney. I also need to visit the loo.

Hagrid: I’ve got creatures to see to, meself; after a stop by the “privy council chamber” out back.

PED: Since I’m not leaving right away, is there a preferred place I can empty my bowels? I caught a faint scent of dragon dung, somewhere here. Some folk use it for gardening.

Hagrid: We do, too. ‘Specially in tha exotic-plant greenhouses. I put a little in my pumpkin patch, too. There’s a shed uphill near tha greenhouses. Tha’s where we store it. We’re puttin’ in a’ order fer the school, now.

PED: One person's excrement is another person's fertilizer. You are free to use mine, then. I caution you, though, don't use it like ordinary dragon dung or you'll burn up your plantings. For agricultural purposes, it's about seven times as powerful as the more ordinary stuff. A little can go a very long way.

Hagrid: Thanks fer tha warnin'... and tha rest. Wot with still repairin' tha castle damage and risin' prices, fertilizer expenses were gettin' cut back.

Luna: I'll pass that on to the other staff. Happy Potterday!

PED: Potterday? Something to do with earthenware?

Hagrid: Nah, more an' more folks er startin' ta help celebrate Harry Potter's birthday. Tha Ministry o' Magic still hasn' decided to proclaim it an official holiday, but tha reg'lar witches and wizards mostly decided not ta wait. It's Neville Longbottom's birthday, too, an' lotsa folk think verra highly o' him!

— O — O — O —

Charlie Weasley [Dragon Research and Restraint Bureau] and Parker Oleson [*Daily Prophet* cameraman] had stationed themselves by one of the windows while the arguments, questions, suggestions, and snide remarks rolled around the Headmaster's office.

Charlie Weasley: (Loudly) The door is opening. Luna's coming out. [There is a surge of people, crowding close near the window. The Headmaster points his wand and says a few words. The wall on that side of the room becomes transparent.] And there's Hagrid, heading for the outhouse. There's his dog, who seems to want to hide under Hagrid's legs. Something else at the door, now.

Parker Oleson: (Adjusting telephoto lens and snapping pictures) There it is. What a runt! It's not much bigger than a hippogriff. Blast! Why am I having focusing problems? It's not moving toward us, but it's still getting closer.

Charlie: It's not moving closer. It's just getting bigger... and bigger!

Rita: Keep snapping, Bozo! Keep snapping!

Parker: *I am!* But if that monster gets much closer, don't get between me and the fireplace!

Rita: Front page... front page... the front page isn't big enough, Bozo. Get some close-ups! How big is it now?

Parker: The range finder says about one hundred seventy feet long. Whatever chewed it up like that, I don't wanta meet!

Charlie: I once had to put down a Welch Green that wasn't half so bad off. It's stopping near the greenhouses... and... is it doing what I think it's doing? Yes, it is. I don't think the school will have any shortage of dragon dung this year... or next year, either. The dung looks... odd... more like piles of earth instead of carnivore fewmets.

Hobson: I'll be collecting some samples for my Department.

Professor Record: Minerva, Professor Sprout will be in tomorrow, won't she?

Professor McGonagall: Yes. Tuesdays and Fridays, she comes to check on the plants. The dwarves and masons will be back, too.

Professor Record: It will be very important that she analyze the properties of this new... stuff. She'll need help. Send an owl to Neville Longbottom and ask him to drop in. If we don't have to import any fertilizer this year, we should be able to afford keeping all the greenhouses open; and an assistant for Professor Sprout.

Professor McGonagall: The owls sent out yesterday to the new students should be coming back tonight. *The students!* We can't have a bunch of children crossing the lake in small boats, not with such a monster around! Charlie, can you...

Charlie: Not on my best day, Professor. Not even with all my family to help. Size *does* matter in this. When we brought those

dragons in for the Triwizard Tournament, it took ten wizards all together to subdue that Hungarian Horntail. For a beast *this* large...

Professor Record: It seems to be heading back toward the lake. It's stopped at some of the monuments to the Fallen.

Professor McGonagall: It looks to be... sniffing?

Hobson: More than that. For want of a more precise word, I believe it is... drinking.

Professor Record: There are no springs there.

Hobson: I do not speak of... water.

Luna: Hello, Professor... Professors; and Rita and Mister Weasley. Have you heard any news on Professor Trelawney?

Professor Derwent: The healers say her leg will be fine by tomorrow. They want to hold her until Friday because of possible injuries to her head.

Rita: How could they tell?

Professor Dumbledore: Now, Rita. I know that Sibyll has made at least two genuine *seer* prophecies. Since one was about Voldemort, and he knew but not the entire wording, I kept her here close. Voldemort would have turned her inside out to gain that knowledge.

Professor Record: Mister Hobson, does your Department have any pertinent background information on this... creature?

Hobson: Maybe, probably... we will have to do a few tests to be sure.

Professor Record: Luna, please tell us what else you learned from this creature, after Professor McGonagall left.

[Luna goes on, at great length.]

Rita Skeeter: Headmaster, would you be upset if I only ran the story of Professor Trelawney's accident in tomorrow's *Prophet*?

[Everyone looks at Rita as though she had just gone stark, raving mad.]

Parker: And ignore the biggest story since the Second Fall of the Dark Lord!?

Rita: Just for twenty-four hours. This isn't an article. It's a *book!* Maybe several books! We'll let it grow a bit before harvest.

Professor McGonagall: How very like mushrooms. And we won't have to block up the fireplace quite so soon, either.

Rita: *The Prophet* will need to lay in more printing supplies. Otherwise, the edition will sell out while the ink is still wet! That happened after the Battle of Hogwarts. Can we stir up any sources in Iceland; and what time is it in Japan? No, I have to go to *The Prophet* and warn the publisher.

Professor Record: Then give my best to Barnabas Cuffe. I hope you can convince him to keep a lid on this.

Rita: No problem. I know where enough bodies are buried.

— O — O — O —

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

Letter of Comment

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

Sheryl Birkhead
25509 Jonnie Court
Gaithersburg MD 20882

25 November–13 December 2014

This is going to be short—sitting and waiting for the car to get all set. I didn't think this through. I thought that right before

a holiday would be a ghooood thing... that everyone would have already had car care done and be ready to go. Nope, last minute mad rush. What the heck, might as well get it over and everything ready for winter. So here I sit.

I hope the Sasquan online items work better than they have in the past. With not even (yet—there is always hope) a supporting membership, that is about as close as I am likely to get to the convention.

When my family went to Europe while I was in high school, we tried to get to as many countries as we could—and San Mango counted—not so sure about Vatican City despite what seems to be the legal status.

The thought of a new magazine is exciting until I realized there is absolutely no way to get a copy of that first ish and page through it—eyetracking to my heart's content.

Thank you for the awards roundup—it actually jogged my memory and as soon as I can find some time, I need to do another search for Capclave reports.

(I am guessing that by the time I get this posted, the news of Stu Shiffman's death will be common knowledge. I read about it early Thanksgiving Day He fought a long and hard fight and I am glad he and Andi managed to tie the knot. R.I.P. My thoughts are with Andi at this very difficult time.)

It snowed on the busiest travel day of the year—the day before Thanksgiving. Even with all the warning it was a mess. The previous week a high temp record was set and then... Irritating—snow and melt—making the boots soggy. I gambled (and so far won) on leaving the snowblower in the basement, but eventually it is going to have to make its trip back up to the garage.

Well, I intended to pick up where I left off and get this mailed. Unfortunately I cannot locate the *Shuttle* so I can make up comments!

I am listening to the *Dresden Files* series—and trying to go in order. I am stalled, waiting for the next four in the series to be located from other library systems. In the meantime, I picked up Terry Pratchett's *Unseen Academicals*. The blurb touts it as *Harry Potter* with *Monty Python*. We'll see—uh listen. So far I am not involved in the story, not a ghooood sign into the third disc.

Well, with any luck this will get mailed tomorrow (well, that didn't happen—another week...)—happy holiday one and all!

[I've never made it onto the European continent—the UK a couple of times but never across the channel to the continent itself. If you ever run in to Huntsvillains Sam or Judy Smith at a convention, ask them about what happens when you lose your passport between England and France. Other than a few lone flakes destined to melt on contact, we haven't had any snow in Huntsville this season. Historically January is our snowiest month, though in the last several years it's been February. I'd be just as happy without any at all. Thanks for the holiday wishes, and I hope your holidays were good, too, Sheryl. -ED]

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30 December 2014

Thank you for the December *Shuttle*. Hope someone where you are is planning a New Year's Eve party! Ah, yes, there it

is... In the meantime, some comments...

Interesting to see Lunacon skipping a year. Wonder why? They've been a staple in New York state for decades. This is definitely worth a follow-up. Also, the chlorine leak at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare is definitely a true offence for the police to investigate, but many so-called objective journalists has a laugh-riot field day explaining to their viewers what a furry was.

There's Yvonne's name on the calendar... I made sure she had separate birthday gifts from her Christmas gifts. My mother's birthday was on December 26th, so I know well not to combine gifts.

Near the end of November we attended the brand-new Toronto International Book Fair, three days of book fun and shopping for the general public, and we had ourselves a great time. We got to meet Deborah Harkness (*The Book of Life*) and meet again Lev Grossman (*The Magicians*), plus run into old friend Maureen Jennings (*Murdoch Mysteries*). One of the best weekends ever.

Hello again to PieEyed—a very imaginative connection between the Harry Potter universe and that of Peter Pan. Quite believable, but then that's just me being a doubting Thomas for not instantly believing you in this. You're leaving us hanging for more of this very intriguing story.

I had been having an e-mail discussion with Wolf von Witting about TAFF, and I did know that Nina Horvath would be entering the race as some point. Wolf says that either he or Nina would make an excellent candidate and winner, and I think he is right. I don't think Wolf would be disappointed if he lost, so it is now time to see if European fandom is willing to participate in getting either of them to Worldcon.

That's it for now, and for this year. Next month is your 35th year of publication? Congratulations on that... that's quite the rarity for fannish publications. Hope everyone had a great Christmas, and that everyone will have a spectacular 2015. See you then.

[As I finalize tis issue there doesn't seem to have been any progress announced on the criminal investigation into the chlorine release at MWFF. Of the reports I personally have read, the majority of reputable media outlets have taken a pretty sober view of the event and a pretty neutral tone on furies themselves. Of course that's not absolutely uniform. One cable news reader reportedly had to leave the air because she was laughing.

Too, some (maybe more than just *some*) online comments have been viscous—but that can be said of almost everything on the internet. In better news it sounds like y'all had a good time at the Toronto International Book Fair. Certainly the people you met and re-met there comprise a pretty enviable list. In the ideal case, everyone standing for one of the major fan funds would be a good representative on the other side of whatever ocean, continent, or other geographical divide they're crossing. It's been my observation that this is *usually* but not quite uniformly the case. I'm glad it seems to be so for TAFF this year. -ED]



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