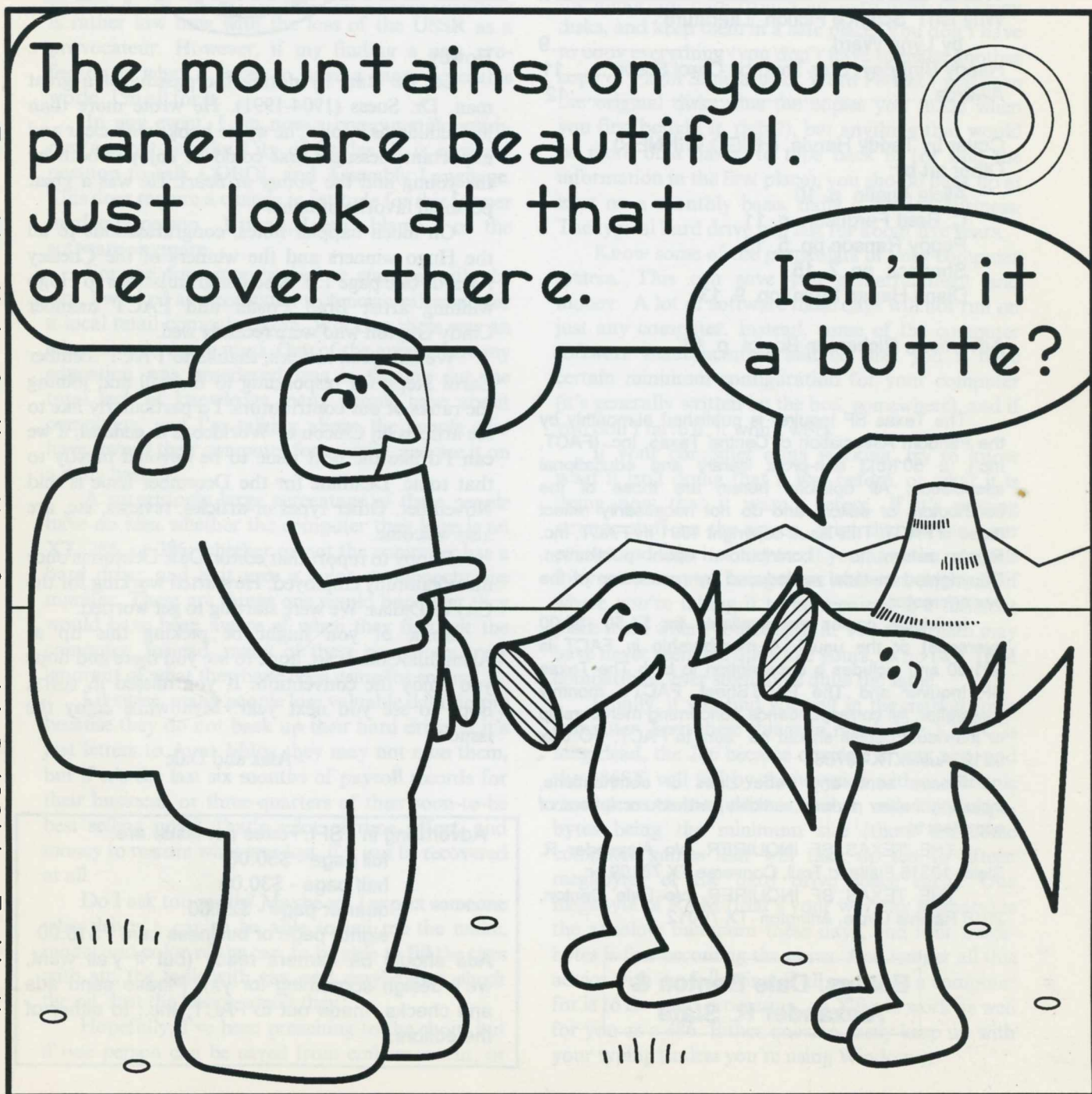


# ***Texas SF Inquirer***

October 1991

Number 41

From WingNuts Go Hawaiian, Copyright © 1991 by Teddy Harvia



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THE TEXAS SF INQUIRER, c/o Dale Denton, 2016 Ravinia Circle, Arlington TX 76012

**Editors: Dale Denton &  
Alexander R. Slate**



Howdy

Let me start by noting the passing of a great man, Dr. Suess (1904-1991). He wrote more than just 'childrens books', he wrote books with clear and important messages that could be enjoyed both by the young and the *young at heart*. He was a great personal favorite of mine.

On much happier notes, congratulations to all the Hugo winners and the winners of the Chesley Awards (see page 13). Also congratulations to Hugo winning artist Brad Foster and FACT member Cindy Guyton who were recently wed.

We still need articles, thanks to FACT member Carol Stepp for responding to the call and joining the ranks of our contributors. I'd particularly like to see articles on Chicon or Worldcons in general, if we can I'd like the next issue to be devoted mostly to that topic. Deadline for the December issue is mid November. Other types of articles, reviews, etc. are also welcome.

Happy to report that editor Dale Denton is once more gainfully employed. He started working for the City of Dallas. We were starting to get worried.

Some of you might be picking this up at ArmadilloCon. If so, hope to see you there and hope you enjoy the convention. If you missed it, sorry, hope to see you next year. Meanwhile enjoy the issue.

- Alex and Dale

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full page - \$50.00

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Ads should be camera ready (but if y'all want, we'll design something for ya). Please send ads and checks, made out to FACT, Inc., to either of the editors.

**Editorial:**

## Up The Creek

by Dale Denton

It looks like the country has gotten out of its depression and is back in a recession. In other words, I am once again gainfully employed with a positive cash flow. This has involved a career change as well, as the market for Weapon System engineers is rather low now with the loss of the USSR as a provocateur. However, if my finding a new profession is what it takes to have a more peaceable world, I'm all for it.

In any event, I am now a computer Programmer/Analyst for the City of Dallas. It is now my position to talk COBOL and Assembly Language. This does require a change in attitude for this former hardware person. I mean, I can't blame it on the software anymore.

For the four months before starting with the city, I worked as a computer technician/salesman for a local retail computer store. Working there was an education, in many ways. One of the areas where my education was broadened was in finding out the total lack of knowledge many people have about computers, and I'm talking about the people who have owned their computer for a while, and use it on a daily basis.

A surprisingly large percentage of these people have no idea whether the computer they have is an XT, 286, or 386; whether or not the computer has a hard drive; and if it uses a color or monochrome monitor. These are things one would hope that they would have been aware of when they first got the computer. Instead, many of these people are truly ignorant of what they have been using for so long.

Likewise, many people lose valuable data simply because they do not back up their hard drive. If it's just letters to Aunt Milly, they may not miss them, but if it's the last six months of payroll records for their business, or three-quarters of their soon-to-be best selling novel, that's a lot of time, effort, and money to restore what was lost, if it can be recovered at all.

Do I ask too much? Maybe so. I expect someone who drives a car to be able to tell me the make, model and color of the car, to be able to fill the tires with air, the tank with gas, and maybe even check the oil. Just the basics, aren't they?

Hopefully, I've been preaching to the choir, but if one person can be saved from embarrassment, or

from the loss of valuable information, this will be worth it.

I offer some suggestions and advice for those of you who use computers at home or at work. Back up the important data from your hard drive to floppy disks, and keep them in a safe place. You don't have to copy everything (you don't have to make another copy of Flight Simulator or Word Perfect - you have the original disks plus the copies you made when you first bought it, right?), but anything that would be more of a hassle to type back in (or find the information in the first place), you should back up at least on a monthly basis, daily if it's for business. The typical hard drive will last for about five years.

Know some of the particulars of your computer system. This can save you embarrassment and money. A lot of software these days will not run on just any computer. Instead, some of the computer software manufacturers assume that you have certain minimum configuration for your computer (it's generally written on the box, somewhere), and if you don't have it, it won't work.

If your computer quits working, try to know what it isn't doing that it was before, or what it is doing now that it wasn't before. If it's putting strange stuff on the screen, print that off on your printer and take it with you. If you have the manuals for your computer, bring them with you, especially if where you're taking it to be repaired is a different place from where you bought it. The repairman may have never seen one quite like yours, as no two 'IBM compatibles' ever seem to be quite the same.

Finally, if you find yourself in the market for a computer, keep these things in mind. The XT-PC is long dead, the 286 became obsolete a year ago, and the 386SX will fall by the wayside within a couple more years. A hard drive is a must, with forty megabytes being the minimum size (there are some computer games that will take up ten to fifteen megabytes of the hard drive space each). One megabyte of RAM (that's your working memory) is the absolute minimum these days, and four megabytes is fast becoming the norm. And temper all this advice with the following: if all you want a computer for is to do word processing, an XT will work as well for you as a 486. Either one can easily keep up with your typing (unless you're using Windows).

## Professional Profile:

# George Alec Effinger

by Alexander R. Slate

It is assumed by many of us that writers are people who grew up surrounded by books; that their parents (or grandparents) were well read people who kept large libraries. I have interviewed a number of authors over the past four years and found this to be generally so. George Alec Effinger is an exception to this rule.

George Alec Effinger's grandfather was a policeman killed during the Depression in the line of duty. As a consequence, George's father had to quit school at age 11 and grew up functionally illiterate. This didn't keep George (who was born January 10, 1947 in Cleveland, Ohio) from growing up with a love of literature.

George was a straight A student who liked school (and all his subjects) enough to go early and stay late. Yet he wasn't a bookish hermit. He loved playing baseball and his boyhood dream was to be a professional baseball player. But this wasn't to be.

Instead, scholastics earned George a National Merit Scholarship and entry into Yale in 1965. He started out to be a surgeon, but ran afoul of a chemistry course, and for lack of a second choice ended up as a classics major. George was in his last year when the Black Panthers occupied the campus to protest the Bobby Seals' trial.

Yale is an expensive place, George's family couldn't afford to send him, and the scholarship didn't pay for everything. This meant that George worked his way through school, didn't attend school straight through, and eventually meant that he couldn't afford to return to school and thus never graduated. Between attending school in 1965, 68, and 69, George worked at a number of jobs.

One of those jobs was in a New York City bookstore in 1967. One day a beautiful blond came in and started browsing in the SF section. This woman was Diana, she would become George's first wife. It turned out that Diana grew up babysitting for Damon Knight and Kate Wilhelm. The first time she took George home to her parents Damon and Kate put George up. They became friends and the Knights introduced George to many of the east coast writers before he ever started writing.

In 1970 George attended the Clarion workshop. The story George wrote for Clarion, *The Capitals are Wrong*, was accepted by Harlan Ellison for the

*Last, Dangerous Visions* collection (it still hasn't been printed).

The first money that George received for a story came from Damon for *Things Go Better*, published in *Orbit 11*. But even this wasn't the first story which saw print, that honor goes to *The 8:30 to 9:00 Slot* which was published in either *Amazing* or *Fantastic*. George's first novel, *What Entropy Means to Me*, was published by Doubleday and was a Nebula nominee. "From the beginning, I've been real lucky and have sold everything I've ever written; except for one story."

After he started writing, George continued working in bookstores for two years, then quit to write full time. Fortunately, Diana was a systems analyst working for IBM and was making enough to support them both while George's sales supplemented their income. That wasn't a lot at first, \$5,000 or \$6000 a year, those first few years.

"I was never a commercially successful writer. From the beginning I was always very well received critically. I had a pretty loyal, but moderate-sized readership. I wasn't writing the kind of stuff that becomes wildly, commercially successful. And I didn't have anything that was really commercially successful until recently with *When Gravity Fails*. Up until then, all the books were very popular with a small group of readers." And now? "Now I'm making a comfortable living. Not like Larry Niven or Jerry Pournelle ..."

But we've gotten ahead of ourselves. The second year, Clarion was held at Tulane University. George spent the summer in New Orleans and fell in love with the city. George brought Diana back to New Orleans in January for a vacation and convinced her that they should move there. Diana sent out resumes and found a job. They moved in early '72.

After being married for seven years, George and Diana were divorced, with a less than friendly parting. George was married again in 1976, to Beverly. This lasted just a little over five years, but this time the parting was friendly. The marriage hadn't really been a marriage *per se*, it had really been more of a close friendship. George now shares digs with well-known fan Debbie Hodgkinson. They met at ArmadilloCon 4 in 1982. Debbie even remembers that it was at 12:30 PM. During that

time, Debbie was living in Austin. She moved to New Orleans the following year, and they moved in together the year following that.

I asked Debbie, "What is it really like living with George Alec Effinger?" And her answer . . .

"Very unpredictable. Very hard to plan for, you never know when you're going to have money." It's also hard to plan since Debbie works for a firm that does inventories for other companies. According to George she works some strange hours. When they spend time together, their two favorite past-times are reading and going out to eat. Besides these two activities, they attend about 8 to 10 conventions a year.

Besides writing and the aforementioned, George teaches adult evening classes in writing at the University of New Orleans and also runs a writers workshop. The students are generally suspense and mystery writers; New Orleans doesn't have a large colony of SF/F writers. Thus far, two of George's students have already published books; O'Neil DeNoux and Chris Wiltz.

George was nominated 11 times before winning the Nebula for *Schrodinger's Kitten* in 1989, which also won the Hugo. George was particularly pleased at winning the Hugo, though it did have an unexpected side-effect. "I froze up for 8 months after winning the Hugo." George's best known works are the Marid Audran series.

The first two, **When Gravity Fails** and **Fire in the Sun** are already published. Number 3 is due out in May '91 and number 4 is already plotted out and George plans to get to it after completing his current project, a book on the Civil War. He already has the general ideas for numbers 5 and 6. Each one of these books is an attempt at recreating a particular mystery style or mystery author's style. **When Gravity Fails** and **A Fire in the Sun** are hard-boiled detective, Raymond Chandler styled mysteries. Though the third fits none of the accepted styles the fourth will be an Agatha Christie country-estate style of mystery.

As mentioned, George is currently working on a book about the Civil War. It is an expansion of his novelette, *Everything But Honor*. He is also collaborating with Mike Resnick on a horror novel (Two chapters had been completed when this interview was conducted.), and has also done some murder/suspense/spy thriller books as well.

What kind of books does George read? George was on the Nebula jury for two years running; he got burned out on SF for a while because of that, and only recently starting reading in the genre again. But

to answer the question more directly, he generally reads books by good friends and the *major* books of the year, those which are receiving serious attention for the Nebulas and Hugos. He also reads a lot of non-fiction for research.

What kind of legacy does George want to leave?

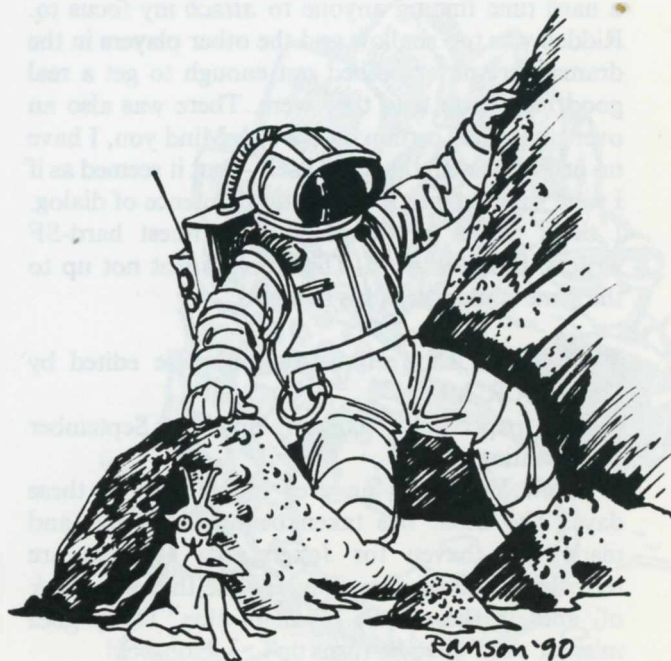
"As long as my books are in the library, I'm happy. In the SF field, once you're dead, people tend to forget you."

And what else does George feel?

"I'm responsible for myself. I don't expect other groups or individuals to solve my problems for me. By the same token, I don't want to solve the problems of other people. Basically, I want to be left alone to do my own work and write my stuff."

Which I think is pretty sensible.

Editor's Postscript: Many of us in FACT are pretty familiar with George since he's a regular attendee at ArmadilloCon. As such, we know that George has had some pretty nasty times recently, medically, and some terrible bills along with this. It is for this sort of reason that SFWA (Science Fiction Writers' Association) has a medical fund. Many conventions, ArmadilloCon included, hold charity auctions with the proceeds going to the SFWA Medical Fund. If you love SF/F, I urge you to attend these auctions and bid. The money goes for a really good cause, and you can pick up some pretty nifty stuff as well.



## Book Reviews:

# From the Recliner

by Edw. A. Graham, Jr.

Fall blew in to Central Texas a mite early and my poor ol' bum knee just loved it. Unfortunately, I can't get comfortable, even with a good book like some of these...

### **Lunar Descent** by Allen Steele

(\$4.99, paperback, Ace, October 1991) Rating: 3.7

Lester Riddell had been to the moon once already. It had been a real bad trip, in every sense of the word. Why would the infamous SkyCorp want to send him back? To straighten out the "moondogs," the cantankerous and anti-establishment workers supplying the materials for orbital operations. But that's not the real reason. And Lester killed a man the last time he was in Descartes Station.

Set in Steele's burgeoning history of the future, this is another novel of the "working man" in space. Steele demonstrates his affinity for blue-collar operations, while maintaining a very high technological, and plausible, back-ground. The author also manages to insert other levels of complexity, such as global politics and multinational corporations playing patsy.

The characters are real enough; however, I had a hard time finding anyone to *attach* my focus to. Riddell was too shallow and the other players in the drama were never fleshed out enough to get a real good handle on who they were. There was also an over-use of one certain cuss-word. Mind you, I have no problems with the word itself -- but it seemed as if I were running into it every other sentence of dialog. I think Steele is still one of the finest hard-SF writers, living or dead. This book is just not up to the same standards of his first two.

### **Wild Cards IX: Jokertown Shuffle** edited by George R.R. Martin

(\$4.99, paperback, Bantam Spectra, September 1991) Rating: 4.1

New York is in an even bigger up-roar these days. The Bloat has taken over Ellis Island and made it a haven for Jokers, the Jumpers are terrorizing and blackmailing anyone they can think of, and, in the middle of all of this, Tachy goes missing. And when he turns up . . . Hoo-boy!

The NMM (New Mexico Mafia) and their cronies are turning the heat up on this series.

Another *threaded* novel, this one appears even more seamless than any of the others. There are resolutions to some of the stuff that's been hanging for a long time, and even more bizarre twists of fate started. Plus, the return of one of the instigators, Lewis Shiner, sheds a different light on one of his Aces.

Some have accused Wild Cards of being *dark*. Well, it's supposed to be! Do you think walking around like Snotman is funny? This is *realism* at it's best. You have to realize that one of the reasons why this series was started was a common love for comics and a common distaste for the unrealistic approach the Big Two adopted for their mags.

### **Man-Kzin Wars IV** created by Larry Niven with Greg Bear, Donald Kingsbury, and S.M. Stirling

(\$4.95, paperback, Baen, September 1991)

Rating: 4.2

Niven's Kzins are not pretty little pussiecats. They are proud and fierce warriors and conquest is in their blood. Unfortunately for them, the monkeys from Earth are in their way...

In *Survivor*, we are treated to some real inner-workings of a cowardly Kzin and more details on their incredibly complex social structure. This novelette by Kingsbury is a masterful blend of the sciences and technology, while keeping a high level of competency in characterizations and character interactions. I was completely bowled over...

*The Man Who Would Be Kzin* is a more straight-forward tale of one Lawrence Halloran, the only person that was truly capable of penetrating the Kzin command and spying on them, without being detected! Bear and Stirling brewed up a fine tale.

### **Barrayar** by Lois McMaster Bujold

(\$4.99, paperback, Baen, October 1991) Rating: 3.2

Ever wondered about how Miles Vorkosigan got the way he was? Aside from small hints dropped here and there, the details have never been revealed. Now, journey back in time to the days following Captain Cordellia Naismith and Aral Lord Vorkosigan's wedding and the time of political upheaval that threatened to tear the fragile monarchy of Barrayar apart..

(Continued on Page 15)

## Convention Report:

# ReaderCon-1991

by Karen Meschke & Fred Duarte, Jr.

ReaderCon was held in Worcester, MA over the weekend of July 12-14. **ReaderCon** is a small (less than 400 attendees) convention with an excellent program oriented for the serious reader. The scheduled GOH, Tom Disch, was unable to attend due to personal reasons so the con committee brought in Barry N. Malzberg as their GOH with John Clute as Critic GOH.

**ReaderCon** also presents the *Readercon Small Press Awards*. FACT member Dwight Brown served as one of their judges this year. The convention was held in a small Marriott with all the programming, dealer's room, office, and green room in the same area of the hotel.

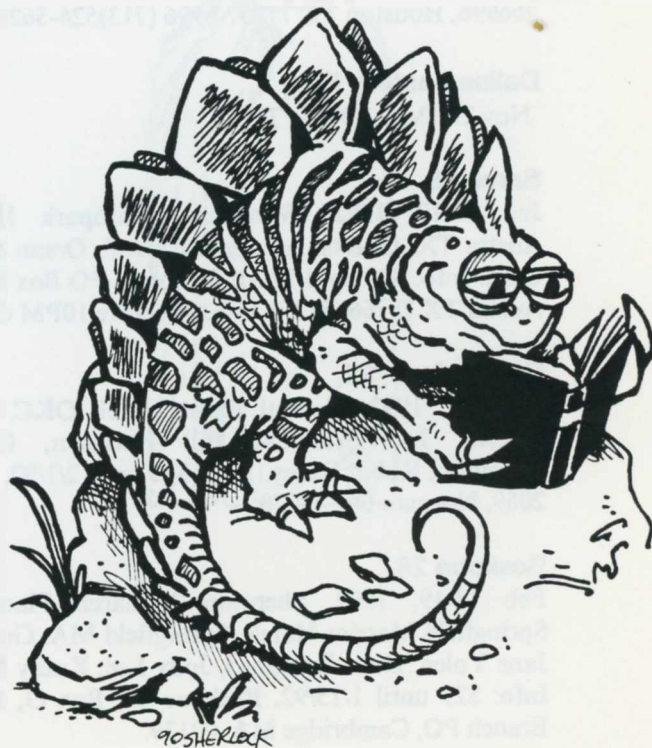
The main reasons we went were for the programming and to see friends on the East Coast since Karen would be unable to attend this year's **WorldCon** in Chicago. This was also scheduled to be a working convention, as we went to promote **Sercon 6** in Austin in January of 1992.

**ReaderCon's** program contained up to five tracks, including autographings. The list of guests read like a who's who of the East Coast; Ellen Kushner, Terry Bisson, Samuel Delany, S N Lewitt, Melissa Scott, Michael Swanwick, John M. Ford, James Morrow, Esther M. Friesner, John Morressy, Jeffrey A. Carver, Craig Shaw Gardner, Patricia A. McKillip, David Hartwell, Aline Boucher-Kaplan, Geary Gravel, Kathryn Cramer, Rosemary Kirstein, John Cramer, Gordon Van Gelder, and Heather Wood among others. Program items included; "Archetype vs Innovation in Fantasy", "The People vs the Critics: Why Isn't Foreign SF Famous" (Karen's favorite panel, one page of translation averages \$150.00!), "How I Build Planets in My Spare Time and So Can You". Every panel we attended was well thought out by the concommittee and participants. Comments from the panels, including those from the audience, were excellent. Many times the discussion continued long after the panel had ended.

There was a **Sercon 6** party thrown on Saturday night, along with *five* other parties. We also had a full page ad in their program book which was placed on the inside cover. **ReaderCon** is a sercon type convention and their members are the folks we want to come to Texas for our convention.

This brings about the question as to why we are doing **Sercon** in the first place. Both of us enjoy smaller conventions that specialize in strong literary tracks. Fred went to the first **Sercon** in 1987, both of us attended/worked the **Sercon** in Austin in 1988, and we both went to the 1989 **Sercon** in San Francisco. We attended our first **World Fantasy Convention** in 1990 and look forward to attending other **Sercons** and **World Fantasy Conventions** in the future. **ArmadilloCon** is known as a general SF convention with a heavy dose of literary programming and **Sercon** takes that one step further.

We will both want to go back to **ReaderCon** in future years to enjoy their hospitality, excellent programming and cool weather.



# Convention Listing

## **World Fantasy Con,**

Oct 30-Nov 3, Doubletree Hotel, Tuscon AZ.  
Guests: Harlan Ellison, Stephen R. Donaldson,  
Arlin Robins, Susan Ellison. Memberships: \$80 until  
10/15 (limited to 750), Box 27201, Tempe AZ 85285  
(602) 470-0494 (602) 730-8648

## **JusticeCon,**

Nov 1-3, LeBaron Hotel, Dallas, TX. Guests: Janet  
& Chris Morris, L. Sprague & Catherine deCamp,  
John Steakley, David Cherry, NASA. Membership  
\$20 (\$24 at the door, \$8/one day). 3201 Colonel Ct.,  
Garland TX 75043 (214) 840-2303.

## **SoonerCon 7**

Nov 22-24, Central Plaza Hotel, OKC OK. Guests:  
Tim Powers, Patricia Davis, Curtis Berry, Marilyn  
Berry, Marty Burke, Mike McQuay. Info: \$15 until  
11/01, Box 1701, Bethany OK 73008 (405)769-4417.

## **ConTex,**

Nov 29-Dec 1, Ramada Hotel (7787 Katy Freeway),  
Houston TX. Guests: P.N. Elrod, Ed Greenwood,  
Joy Marie Ledet, Patty Bushman. Info: \$18 until  
11/1, CONTEX, c/o Friends of Fandom, PO Box  
266996, Houston TX 77207-6996 (713)526-5625.

## **Dallas Fantasy Fair,**

Nov 29-Dec 1, Dallas TX.

## **Sercon 6,**

Jan 17-19, 1992, Wyndham Southpark Hotel,  
Austin TX. Guests: Jonathan Carroll, Orson Scott  
Card. Info: \$30 until 12/31, Sercon 6, PO Box 9612,  
Austin TX 78766 (512) 835-9304 before 10PM CT.

## **Psurrealcon '92,**

Feb 7-9, 1992, Central Plaza Hotel, OKC OK.  
Guests: Tad Williams, Bill Hodgson, Casey  
Hamilton, Robin Bailey. Info: \$15 until 2/1/92, Box  
2069, Norman OK 73070.

## **Boskone 29,**

Feb 14-19, 1992, Sheraton Monarch Place &  
Springfield Marriot Hotels, Springfield MA. Guests:  
Jane Yolen, Dave Langford, Jody Lee, Kathy Mar.  
Info: \$29 until 1/15/92, Boskone 29, Box G, MIT  
Branch PO, Cambridge MA 02139.

## **AggieCon XXIII,**

Mar 26-29, Texas A&M University, College Station  
TX. Membership \$13 until 3/1. Cepheid Variable,  
Box J-1, College Station TX 77844, (409) 845-1515

## **Conniption MCMXCII,**

Feb 29-Mar 1, 1992, La Quinta, Arlington TX.  
Guests: Wilson Tucker, Brad Foster, Robert Taylor.  
Info: \$10 until ?, SFWA & ASFA members free,  
Conniption '92, POB 260912, Plano, TX  
75026-0912.

## **NameThatCon5 - Condition: TBA,**

May 1-3, St. Louis Airport Hilton, St. Louis MO.  
Guests: Mercedes Lackey, Paul Daly, Ron & Chere  
Raiti, Mickey Zucker Reichert. Info: \$16 until  
1/1/92, SCSFFS, PO Box 575, St Charles MO 63302.

## **New Orleans Science Fiction and Fantasy Festival,**

June 5-7, 1992, Clarion Hotel New Orleans, New  
Orleans LA. Guests: Stephen R. Donaldson, David  
Cherry. Info: \$15 until 10/31, NOSF3, 1992, POB  
791089, New Orleans, LA 70179-1089.

## **MagiCon (Worldcon 50),**

Sep 3-7, 1992, Orange County Convention & Civic  
Center, Orlando FL. Guests: Jack Vance, Vincent  
DiFate, Walter A. Willis, Spider Robinson. Info:  
\$95 until 3/31/92, \$45 (children), \$25 (supporting),  
MagiCon, POB. 621992, Orlando FL 32862-1992.

## **ConFransisco (Worldcon 51),**

Parc Fifty Five & Le Meridian Hotels, San  
Francisco CA. Guests: Larry Niven, Alicia Austin,  
Tom Digby, Guy Gavriel Kay, Jan Howard Finder.  
Info: \$70 until 9/30, ConFransisco, POB 22097, San  
Francisco CA 94122.

## **Worldcon 52,**

Labor Day Weekend 1994, Winnipeg, Manitoba,  
Canada. Info: Winnipeg in '94, PO Box 2430,  
Winnipeg, MB, Canada, R3C 4A7.

## **BIDS:**

1995 - Atlanta GA USA, Glasgow Scotland  
1996 - LA CA USA  
1997 - San Antonio TX USA  
1998 - Baltimore MD USA

## Fanzine Trades

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**Austin Writer Sep 91**  
**BCSFazine #220**  
**Chemobyzation #2**  
**Cry Havoc Jul-Aug 91**  
**DASFax V.23, #9**  
**File 770 #89**  
**The Knarley Knews #29**  
**OASFis Event Horizon V.5, #3**  
**Opuntia #2,3**  
**PSFS News Sep 91**  
**Pulsar V.5, #2**  
**Scavenger's Newsletter #91**  
**SFSFS Shuttle #77,78**  
**Smart Ash #48**  
**Stet #2**  
**Stone Hill Launch Times V.5, #7-9**  
**Summa Nulla #2**

### **New or Notable:**

#### **Peripheral Visions #7**

Rob Sommers, 926-C Waverly Way NE, Atlanta, GA 30306-2551. A new zine picked up at Worldcon. It is primarily a fiction zine, easy to read with good, clear type on white paper. Rob makes some comments on the cost of Worldcon and Steve Antczak does some capsule reviews. There are 3 stories, by DF Lewis, Jeff Behrnes, and Steve Antczak. As you'd expect the three stories are not great and are fairly predictable, the best is Antczak's which is a short-short humor piece.

#### **The Reluctant Famulus #18**

Tom Sadler, 422 W. Maple Ave., Adrian, MI 49221. Fannish genzine that I'd heard about. Met the editor at WorldCon. Comments on TV, the space program, and TV's THE FLASH, and the Hugo's. Some articles are reprints from other zines. Interesting reading.

#### **The SemiCircular of Janus June 1991**

ed: Greg & Linda Dunn: The Circle of Janus SF Club of Central Indiana, POB 19776, Indianapolis, IN 46219. A special issue of the Circular of Janus, picked up at Worldcon. A zine featuring both articles and fiction. Especially notable is "Levels of Consciousness" by David Henninger. Well produced, easy to read. I hope the Circular of Janus is as good.

#### **Jabberwocky Graphix Catalog 1991**

Jabberwocky Graphix, PO Box 165246, Irving, TX 75016. Jabberwocky Graphix is the small press operation run by Brad Foster, Hugo winning fan artist. Brad not only publishes his own works, but also works by other artists that he enjoys.

#### **Richerson's Books Catalog**

Richerson's Books, PO Box 181, Blanco, TX 778606. Mail order catalog from our advertiser. Carries a number of quality books.



# Why Isn't Science Fiction "Literature"?

by Lynn Ward

Did you ever wonder about the way books are divided into sections in a Walden's or Dalton's? There's general fiction and *literature*, SF, romances, westerns, etc. Okay, it's practical to divide books by type. But beyond that, it's also obvious SF wouldn't be considered *literature* if fiction was not sorted by type.

With a few hoary exceptions, such as Orwell (he wrote *social satire*) or Verne (respectable, *classic* childrens' yarns), SF is considered lightweight escapism a step below mainstream fiction. It's reviewed separately, and sparsely, in the newspapers. Some reviewers congratulate a writer when they 'escape the SF ghetto'.

Why? Because it's mere escapism? It's not realistic? Its birthplace was pulp fiction? It doesn't address the human condition? It's got no heart, no emotional depth? How valid are these statements?

Is it escapism? Depends on which books you read. Is it *unrealistic*? No more so than the highly regarded (genre) *magical realism* popular today, or the farther reaches of Kurt Vonnegut. For that matter, has anyone stayed at an inn remotely resembling the "Hotel New Hampshire"? (Would anyone want to?)

Comes from pulp fiction, you say? Well, literary genres, like bastard children, can surely overcome their origins.

It doesn't deal with the human condition, circa the end of the twentieth century? Bull. Urban anomie, drugs, violence, the capacity for technology to restructure reality (and perhaps our own cortexes, literally), and ecological crisis, alterations in societal structures from family to church -- these are dealt with vigorously.

The most valid criticism is the lack of emotional depth in SF, partly due to its pulp origins and its infatuation with technology. But as the typical SF reader becomes more a "thirtysomething" college-educated man OR woman, and less an adolescent male in love with macho-tech, SF's creators respond.

It's a flawed, not-yet-grown kind of literature willing to attack life with energy and hope. SF protagonists tend to *do something*, even in the context of bloody cyberpunk thrillers. They do not sit around, page after page, engaged in self-pitying and passive interior monologues.

Yeah, folks, someday we will make it to "Fiction and Literature" at Walden's. But come to think of it -- do we want to?





ST and More:

## Happy Birthday, Star Trek!

by Carol Stepp

On September 8, 1966, Star Trek went on the air. The show was Mantrap. Gene Roddenberry didn't know on that day that we would be here 25 years later celebrating its very existence. Nor could he, or anyone else, guess what an impact it would have on society - in America and around the world.

Two years later, they tried to take it off television. Bjo Trimble made her now famous plea to fans across the nation to initiate a letter-writing campaign. Never before had television seen such a campaign. Letter poured in from everywhere, asking, pleading, demanding the show be kept. They gave in and ran it for one more season.

Finally it really was cancelled. For a long time, no Star Trek. But funny things happened. Animated happened. Comics happened. Novels happened. The phenomena didn't go away, even if it wasn't on television. In fact, it got bigger. The Star Trek movement spread.

Syndication brought the episodes back to television. And then Gene decided to make movies. One - two - three - four. Star Trek-The Next Generation came to television and introduced a new cast, a new model of the Enterprise. Fans of the old were joined by fans of the new, and our Star Trek universe continued - and continues. Movies, comics, novels, collectibles - all are healthy, all are demanded, all are welcomed.

Now, 25 years later, there are celebrations everywhere. Conventions, with stars, have sprouted in Los Angeles and Denver and elsewhere, and here in Austin, the Star Trek Austin Regulars (S.T.A.R.), a fairly new club (less than a year old) is thriving, made up of some long-time Star Trekkers and some who are new. On August 31, we held a small convention in Westgate Mall. We thought it would be small, anyway, with a few dealers, a few games, a few hundred people. No guests. But it was free!

It was a bigger success than any of us could have hoped for. Twenty dealers (I was one), a model room, activities and games, a "Write your own caption" board, AND BJO TRIMBLE! And lots and lots of people having fun and spending money. The Mall loves us - they want us back - several of the stores tripled their business - they want us back - the dealers did quite well - they want to come back. We had costuming, an artisan creating Klingons, an art

show, an auction (some real goodies - I spent a few bucks myself), and games. Part of our auction proceeds went to help the Muscular Dystrophy Association which was also holding its annual fund-raiser that weekend. A *dead tribble* party was held at the Flying Pizza place afterwards, and everyone decided they had had a really great time. So we are going to do it again.

On September 8, several of the members of S.T.A.R. went to Houston for the one-day convention put on by Starbase Houston - Trekfest 1991. Several members went in their own cars on Saturday and attended the 12-hour marathon of all five movies shown at a local movie house, along with a 3-time showing of trailers and teasers of ST VI. Ask someone about that. Sounds like a lot of the rumors are true, some not, and an unanswered question or two. I'm certainly curious!

Fourteen of us went together on a rented school bus on Sunday morning. We left Austin about 6:15 a.m. We got to the Holiday Inn in Houston, where the con was being held, just after 10:00 that morning, and by the time we got inside and went through registration (where we were all pre-registered), David Gerrold, who was one of the three guests, was already into his first talk. Some of us went on in, some of us hit the dealers' room, where I would estimate there were 20-30 dealers with sorts of buyables from books to models to trading cards to tee shirts and jewelry ad infinitum. I spent several dollars in there. My prize purchase was a game that contained a model of the original phaser, unused, in the original box, for \$20. I was soon offered \$40 for it - but I don't think so. I recently saw Devil in the Dark on television and my phaser looks just like the one Kirk is holding.

At 11:00, David Gerrold was signing autographs - for \$1 each - BUT the money was to benefit AIDS research in California. Well, that was just fine with me, and I got six autographs. Well worth it, not only to have his signature on his books (and one of his scripts that I have), but because the money is being used for a very worthy cause. I commend David for doing this, because he must have had writer's cramp before the day was over. (He did a second autograph signing later in the day.)

At noon, I went to watch a video. They had two

video rooms running videos all day long - not just Star Trek, but some other things that were chosen because the creative team included someone who was involved with Star Trek. I saw a good Logan's Run episode that listed D.C. Fontana in the credits.

They showed the Wrath of Khan, but I had had my own mini-marathon the day before at home and so didn't see it. But lots of people did.

David Gerrold had another talk at 2:00 - he's quite funny, and charming, and most of the talk was a question-and-answer session. I asked him about his writing class at Pepperdine and he told us he was called "the teacher from the Black Lagoon". He described his first class, in which he pretty much tells the prospective students just exactly how hard the WILL work, which apparently weeds out the three or four who think it will be an easy credit, and is able to proceed with the serious students. Sounds like a class I wouldn't mind taking.

Of course, lots of questions about Star Trek and some of his books.

Bjo Trimble talked at 3:00. Again, lots of questions, lots of inside information - she is a very entertaining lady.

At 4:00 they held an auction. David Gerrold was the auctioneer. He had brought a lot of his own personal things - scripts and such - and interspersed them with the items that Starbase Houston had. Again, lots of nice items - some big-money items sold as well. Part of Starbase Houston's proceeds went to help two childrens' organizations. Sorry, I've forgotten exactly who, but if anyone really wants to know, I will find out for you.

I bought several scripts that David brought, and also an edited manuscript for *Protostars*, one of the anthologies he put together in the 1970's - this one is dated May 1970.

At 5:00 there was a costume contest. Some rather good ones too. One pretty woman dressed as Beverly Crusher did a wonderful song to the tune of *Without You* from *My Fair Lady*, but the words were about her jealousy over Picard and Vash and were really quite hysterical. Another entry was a little boy around 3 years of age who wore a Picard costume and hummed the theme from classic Trek. He won everyone's heart. (This kid was also doing some bidding at the auction - his mother was with him, and when David asked if the bids were legitimate, the mother said yes and that it was his money he was spending.) This child, by the way, won a blue ribbon for *best hummer*.

There was a banquet scheduled in the evening at 7:00, but our bus party and a couple of other

S.T.A.R. members who drove their own cars left a little after 6:00. We stopped at a barbecue place and had supper together, and then we headed for home, arriving back in Austin about 11:00 p.m. A wonderful time was had by all.

S.T.A.R. has a monthly board meeting open to anyone and everyone where business is discussed. Then there is a monthly general meeting where information is given to members, things are voted on that needs to be, and we have some small form of entertainment. We are forming a committee to find benevolent work we can do as a group. We have a 10 Forward committee to plan fun events, and we are currently working (as I write this) on a video watching and potluck get-together for September 28, a picnic in mid-October, and a Halloween costume, carnival, and strange-food party on October 26, and we'll be doing things throughout the year.

I'm looking forward to the next 25 years.



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## Honors & Awards

The Texas SF Inquirer is happy to congratulate all the winners of the honors listed here.

### HUGOS

Best Novel: **The Vor Game** by Lois McMaster Bujold  
Best Novella: *The Haldeman Hoax* by Joe Haldeman  
Best Novelette: *The Manamouki* by Mike Resnick  
Best Short Story: *Bears Discover Fire* by Terry Bisson  
Best Non-Fiction Book: **How to Write Science Fiction and Fantasy**, by Orson Scott Card  
Best Dramatic Presentation: **Edward Scissorhands**, 20th Century Fox  
Best Professional Editor: Gardner Dozois (**Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine & The Years Best Science Fiction**)  
Best Professional Artist: Michael Whelan  
Best SemiProzine: **Locus**, Charles N. Brown  
Best Fanzine: **Lan's Lantern**, George 'Lan' Laskowski  
Best Fan Artist: Teddy Harvia  
Best Fan Writer: David Langford

### OTHER AWARDS AT THE HUGO CEREMONY

John W. Campbell Award: Julia Ecklar  
First Fandom Hall of Fame Award: Robert A. W. "Doc" Lowndes  
Big Heart Award: Julie Schwartz  
Seiun Award for Translated Novel: *The Uplift War* by David Brin  
Seiun Award for Translated Short Story: *Schrodinger's Kitten* by George Alec Effinger  
Chicon V Special Award: Andrew Porter, for editing SF Chronicle  
Special Committee Award: Elst Weinstein for starting and continuing the Hugu Awards

#### CHESLEY AWARDS (Given by ASFA)

Best Cover Illustration, Hardback: Keith Parkinson, *Chernevog* by C.J. Cherryh (Del Rey)  
Best Cover Illustration, Paperback: tie Don Maitz, *Magic Casement* by Dave Duncan (Ballantine/Del Rey) & Michael Whelan, *The Madness Season* by

C.S. Freidman (DAW)

Best Cover Illustration, Magazine: Bob Eggleton, *Aboriginal SF* (January 1990)

Best Interior Illustration: Val Lakey Lindahn, *The Flowers ...* Analog (June 1990)

Best Color Work, Unpublished: Dean Morrissey *Charting the Skies*

Best 3-D Art: James Christensen, *The Fishwalker* (Bronze)

Award for Artistic Achievement: Michael Whelan for body of work to date

Award for Contribution to ASFA: Erin McKee and Bettyann Guarino for chairmanship and coordination of the Chesley Awards

Best Art Director: Don Munson, Ballantine Publishing

### WORLDCON ART SHOW AWARDS PEER VOTE

SF, Pro: Michael Whelan, *The Summer Queen*

SF, Am: John Hantsch, *Old World*

Fantasy, Pro: Keith Parkinson, *Fire Sea*

Fantasy, Am: Linda Michaels, *Book Report*

Astronomical, Pro: Patricia Davis, *Lumina*

Astronomical, Am: Edwin J. Reck, *Meteor Shower*

Media, Pro: Joseph DeVito, *Further Adventures of Wonder Woman*

Media, Am: J. Clinton Alvord, *CarrotCon I*

Humor, Pro: David Mattingly, *The Subway Wizard*

Humor, Am: John Stadter, *There Are Aliens Among Us*

Macabre, Pro: Demos Beauvais, *Tasmanian Devil*

Macabre, Am: April Lee, *Rex*

Use of Color, Pro: Michael Whelan, *The Summer Queen*

Use of Color, Am: Joyce Norton, *Temple Guardian*

Monochrome, Pro: Michael Whelan, *The Changeling Sea*

Monochrome, Am: Linda Michaels, *Guardian*

B&W, Pro: Wayne Barlow, *Book of the Dead*

B&W, Am: Ann Chancellor, *Mistress of Magic*

3-D Craft, Pro: Clayburn Moore, *Celestial Jade*

3-D Craft, Am: Nevenal Smith, *Waveriders*

3-D Creat, Pro: Clayburn Moore, *Celestial Jade*

3-D Creat, Am: Beth Willinger, *Woodstalker*

Best in Show., Pro: Michael Whelan, *The Summer Queen*

Best in Show, Am: John Platt, *The Killing Stone*

## POPULAR VOTE

SF, Pro: Romas B. Kukalis, *The Rowan*

SF, Am: Robert D. Ashton, *The Universe ... at our Doorstep*

Fantasy, Pro: Keith Parkinson, *Fire Sea*

Fantasy, Am: Linda Michaels, *Astral Armillary*

Astro, Pro: Patricia Davis, *Lumina*

Astro, Am: Edwin J. Reck, *Meteor Shower*

Media, Pro: Barbara Fister-Liltz, *Silent Guardian*

Media, Am: J. Clinton Alvord, *CarrotCon I*

Humor, Pro: Phil Foglio, *Practicing Safe Sex*

Humor, Am: John Stadter, *Design Error*

Macabre, Pro: Joseph DeVito, *Here I Stay*

Macabre, Am: April Lee, *Rex*

Use of Color, Pro: Todd Cameron Hamilton, *Skytouchers*

Use of Color, Am: Joyce Norton, *Pavel*

Monochrome, Pro: Rick Berry, *Skull Fetish*

Monochrome, Am: Mary Rubasky, *Giger's Alien*

B&W, Pro: P.D. Breeding-Black, *3 Strange Companions*

B&W, Am: Sheila Regan, *Bighorn Badger*

3-D Craft, Pro: Laura L. Butler, *Post Modern Manitou*

3-D Craft, Am: Beth Willinger, *Draco Illuminatus*

3-D Creat, Pro: Laura L. Butler, *Post Modern Manitou*

3-D Creat, Am: Janice Hanchar, *Unicorn Falls*

Best in Show, Pro: James Christensen, *Once Upon A Time*

Best in Show, Am: Peggy Ranson, *The Perch*

**Elizabeth Pearse Award** (given by the Art Show Management): Jeff Adams, *Wall of Serenity*



### From the Recliner (Continued from Page 6)

A relatively quick read, Bujold treats us to more of the bizarre (to Cordelia and us as well) politics and mind-sets of the Barrayarans. Nice little adventure and it flesh out the two major people in Miles' life as well, along with a brief intro of Miles as a child.

Quick mentions:

**Prime Directive** by Judith and Grafield Reeves-Stevens. Just goes to show how you can still write a good yarn twenty five years after the fact. Pleasant read if you can get the image of Shatner's bad acting out of your mind.

**The Harriers -- Book One: War and Honor** created by Gordon R. Dickson with Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, S.N. Lewitt, and Steve Perry. Another series starter, also another military-type (where are all of these things coming from?!), and another Bill Fawcett production. Not bad stuff, but not great stuff. I've read much better, but I've also read some that are lots worse. If you're into this kind of approach, go for it.

That's it for now, folks. I've got a couple of hot-and-bothered Editors breathing down my phone line... (Hi, guys!)