

FENCON XVI

SEPTEMBER 20-22, 2019



QUACHRI -- THE DOUBLECLICKS -- MONTGOMERY
CHARLIFU -- CZERNEDA -- HOORAP -- SANCHEZ

ART © 2019 PERI CHARLIFU

MATTHEW SIMS

1966 – 2019



Many of you knew Matthew Sims as the Gaming Manager at FenCon and other local conventions, or as the host of FenCon Squares, his brain child and pet project. Matt was active in gaming throughout the Dallas Metroplex since the 80's. I first met him back then at a gaming table run by John Manning. We played the new Advanced Dungeons & Dragons, loving it like it was the most amazing thing since the decision to slice bread. Which in my personal belief it still is.

Matt loved gaming of all types, and always tried to share his love of it with as many people as he could. He didn't referee just for the fame, fortune, and glory. He did it to involve you into the story of your own making, and return the karmic debt each of us owes to Gary Gygax. Whether it was D&D, Munchkin, or the latest card game to hit the streets, his goal was to share a laugh and make your day better.

Matt took up the mantle of de facto Dallas gaming coordinator from John Manning over a decade ago. He tried his best to include every gaming group in the area, no matter how big or small, and whether they played Dungeons & Dragons or some other lesser game.

Gaming and fandom are what allowed him to meet Donna, the love of his life. They enjoyed games of all types, as well as rooting for the Dallas Stars every chance they got. It has been my pleasure to watch their relationship grow and blossom. I can truly say that Matt was an exceptionally happy man when he left us.

On August 4th, Matt went to roll initiative with John and Gary. He leaves behind a wealth of friends and family who loved him dearly. Take a moment to share what you love with someone else. Let's make the world a bit brighter.

— Victor Manuel

FENCON XVI

Dallas/Fort Worth September 20-22, 2019

GATEWAY TO THE FUTURE...

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FenCon is a production of the Dallas Future Society, a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation dedicated to the advancement of science, literature and music for the future of all mankind.

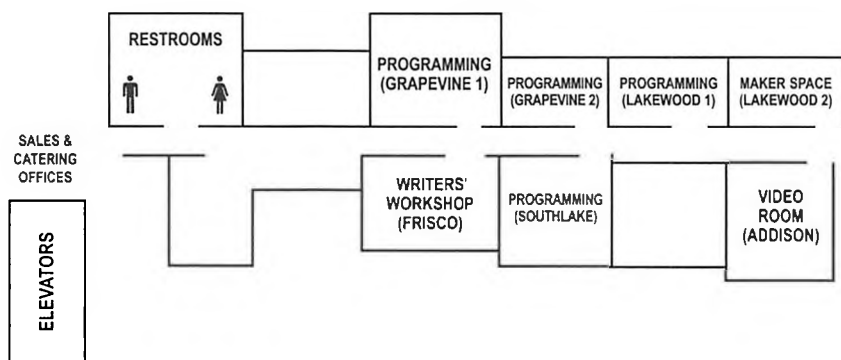
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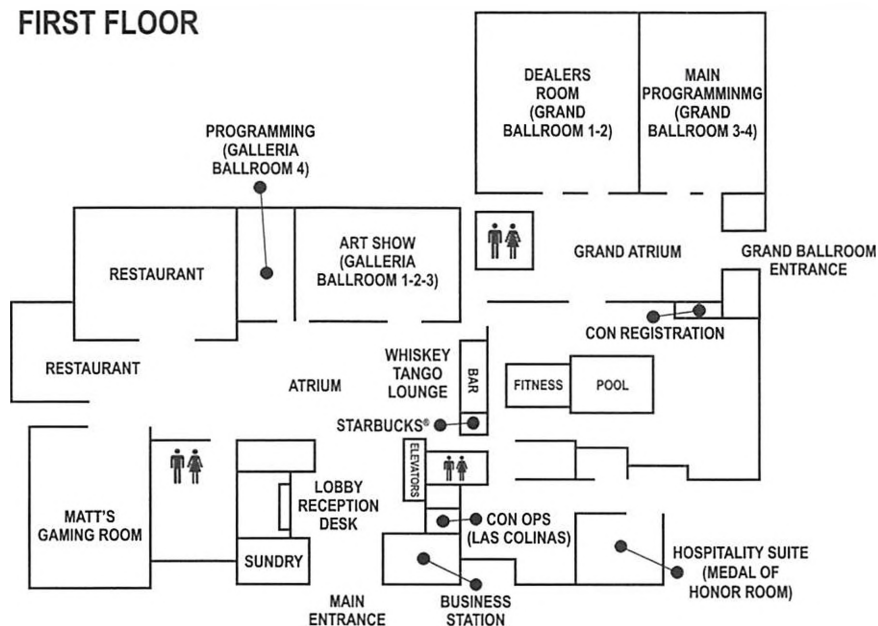
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SHERATON OF W AIRPORT HOTEL MAPS

MEZZANINE LEVEL



FIRST FLOOR



Main programming and Dealers area take place in the Grand Ballrooms around the Grand Atrium.

The Restaurant/Bar will be selling special food baskets as well as drinks and Starbucks coffee.

Gaming will be in the area across from the restaurant known as Matt's Gaming Room.

Art Show, smaller concerts and some panels will be held in the Galleria ballrooms next to the Whisky Tango Lounge.

All other programming including Costuming, Maker Space and Video will be on the Mezzanine level.

Hospitality will be in the Medal of Honor Room, entrance is past the Starbucks on the right.

LETTER FROM THE CONCHAIR

by Robyn A. Winans

Welcome Futurists!

Who knew we'd make it this far to FenCon XVI? This year we are looking toward the future. See the back page of the program book for FenCon XVII. But to get from today to the future of tomorrow you've got a lot to do in the next three days. We've got a gateway just not a time machine, yet!

This is my first year as Conchair and you just don't do this alone. As with every FenCon, our Gateway crew of staff and volunteers are the best and they've gained much experience over the years. A BIG THANK YOU for your hard work this last year. Be sure to look for the Staff list in the program book and thank them for their tireless efforts.

Now you want know how we're going to open that gateway and travel into the future.... We've got a new hotel, fantastic guests and panelists as well as a ton of programming for your near future. Make sure to check your maps and schedules for a fun-filled weekend.

Have you seen the Guest of Honor list? It's a diverse group of people that you need to meet this weekend.

Trevor Quachri as Editor of *Analog Science Fiction and Fact* and gets a chance first hand to see the future and where writers would like to take us. Find time to chat with him and find out who you should be reading.

The Doubleclicks (Laser Malena-Webber (they/them) and Aubrey Turner (she/her)) Our Music Guests of Honor are a chart-topping duo who've just returned from Dublin's Worldcon and an International Tour.

Helen Montgomery, a grand dame of Worldcons, joins us. Helen has been involved

in Worldcons for many years and will co-chair Chicago in 2022.

Peri Charlifou's Art is legendary and you just might have some in your home. If not, get a T-shirt or the Charity Art print to take home with you.

Julie Czerneda is not only a sci-fi writer but a scientist as well. Join her panels for an educational and informational weekend.

Orlando Sanchez, to hone his fantasy craft, started with D&D stories and now writes the Montague and Strong case files. Mix a renegade mage, an NYC private eye and one lovable Hellhound and you've got a heck of a read.

Angie Hodapp is running our Writers' Workshop this weekend. A veteran teacher and speaker, she loves helping authors hone their craft including the business side of writing and how publishing world is ever changing.

Plus, we've got over 80 panelists, artists and musicians for you to check out as you read through the program book in your near future.

FenCon's charity for 2019 is North Texas – Reading Partners. This is a great group of people who support local North Texas Schools in helping to get kids reading and keep them reading thru their communities.

If you need to relax from the Con be sure to check out our Consuite, on the ground floor just on the other side of the bar.

Last but never least, FenCon has lost two of its own this past year. Lee Billings, a long time Vendor in late 2018, and Matt Sims, our Gaming director this summer. We'd appreciate it if you could share your memories of Lee and Matt with us this weekend. ●



Getting the Most Out of FenCon

You've waited through the registration line. You handed money to the convention and they gave you a badge, a lanyard and this book with a pretty cover and Program Schedule Sheets. Now what?

First, put your badge on. It is your passport to most of the convention activities, so keep it visible.¹

Second, take a few minutes to review the Program Schedule Sheets. Schedules are found on printed sheets at Registration, on electronic signs outside programming rooms, and at fencon.org/programming. It provides a list of when the events start and stop and detailed descriptions of what the panels will cover, when and where.² Think of this convention as a circus: lots of performances happen simultaneously, so there is something happening wherever you look.

Third, read through the descriptions, choose which ones you want to see, then find them on the grid on the Program Schedule Sheets. The grid format lets you scan across the different activities during an hour, making it easier to find conflicts (or, if a panel isn't quite what you wanted, to find alternatives).

You may not be so interested in the panels, but the convention has other activities, too. Take some time to check out the Art Show and items in the Charity Auction, play some games in Gaming, explore the Dealers Room and shop for books, jewelry, clothing, collectibles, and more, watch movies and video shorts in the Video Room, or just hang out in the Hospitality Suite.

On Friday we start with opening ceremonies, a few very special videos, and a few important messages. Most of Friday and early Saturday, you can bid in the silent auction on Charity items benefiting this year's charity, as well as bid on art from many talented artists.

After the Dealers Room and Art Show close, other conventions and groups often throw parties. On Saturday night, you have filk bands playing into the wee hours of the morning, where you may hear strains of music with fannish phrases.³

There are many activities to choose from, starting Friday until the convention closes Sunday afternoon, so pace yourself. Schedule time for eating, drinking, sleeping, and being kind to your fellow convention attendees by taking care of personal hygiene (bathing, etc.).

Finally, Programming can change after the schedule sheets are printed. Look for schedule changes posted around the convention. For the latest and complete schedule go to <http://www.fencon.org/programming.aspx> or on mobile at mobile.fencon.org.

¹ By paying for your membership, you help finance the convention. Although a registered, non-profit 501(c)3 organization, the convention still needs real money to pay for the hotel, equipment, and food for the Con Suite. Showing your badge shows that you've done your part to make this convention happen.

² Wait... what's a panel? Some attendees are happy to meet the Guests of Honor, listen to authors read their own stories, or hear how artists put together that really cool piece of art. The convention schedules these discussions and presentations into panels. The Program Schedule describes what the panel topics are and who is on them (as well as concerts, demonstrations, workshops and guest autograph sessions), but also lists when and where they will happen, in the order they will happen.

³ Some terms you may hear around the con but may be new to you:

fan \ fan \ *noun* \ Merriam-Webster lists: an ardent admirer or enthusiast (as of a celebrity or a pursuit) <science-fiction fans>

fen \ *noun* \ The plural form of fan, just as "men" is the plural form of "man"

fanzine \ fan-zeen \ *noun* An amateur-produced magazine written for a subculture, usually for little or no compensation (only to defray costs). Original source: fan + magazine

filk \ Music or songs associated with science fiction/fantasy culture. Allegedly, this was a typographical error of 'folk.'

newbie \ nu-bee \ A person who is new to fandom. We were all new, so don't hesitate to ask someone when you need to.

Dallas Future Society – Convention Code of Conduct

...or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Enjoy the Con

The Dallas Future Society (DFS) is the parent organization responsible for producing FenCon and other events. As such, DFS is committed to providing a safe and congenial environment for all its members, and any other groups at the facility. We expect all members to demonstrate respect and appropriate behavior to all present: members, convention staff, hotel staff, and anyone else present at the hotel.

To promote a positive convention experience for everyone, we have established the following Code of Conduct for convention members. It applies to all pre-convention, at-convention, and post-convention activities associated with each event.

Above all, we ask all members to exercise common sense rules for public behavior, personal interaction, common courtesy, politeness and respect for private property.

For the complete Code of Conduct, please refer to the Fencon.org website: <http://www.fencon.org/page/code-of-conduct>

1. MEDICAL EMERGENCIES:

In the event of a medical emergency, please go directly to the hotel staff, not the convention staff – either the front desk or the nearest hotel staff member. The hotel has asked that all attendees work through them directly in these situations.

2. IDENTIFICATION (BADGES):

Each convention member will be provided with a badge. Your badge is your permit into convention functions and spaces. Wear your badge so it is visible at all times. Anyone seen without a badge in any of our function rooms will be asked to leave and retrieve their badge before returning. If you lose your badge, you may be required to pay for a new membership.

If you find someone's badge or lose your own badge, please contact Registration or Convention Operations (Con Ops) immediately. Badge sharing is prohibited. To insure this, we require that all members give a verifiable real name in addition to any listed badge name when they register. Anyone found to be sharing a badge will be removed from the convention and the membership associated with that badge may be revoked without refund.

3. SAFETY:

We will not tolerate dangerous, illegal, or destructive behavior at the convention. Please report any incidents to Convention Operations immediately. Any members found to have participated in potentially dangerous, illegal, or destructive activity anywhere in or around the convention hotel will be asked to cease immediately and may be subject to the Consequences section listed below (see #17).

4. MANNERS & ETIQUETTE:

We expect all members to treat all people at the event with respect. The best way to do that is by exercising good manners and by being patient and polite. Areas of the convention can be crowded and stressful at times. Please be aware of your tone of voice, body language, and behavior. In short, be polite and be nice.

5. ANTI-HARASSMENT:

We want everyone to have a great time, consequently we will not tolerate harassing or menacing behavior. Please report to Convention Operations any incidents of verbal or physical harassment including but not limited to:

- Inappropriate language or gestures such as suggestive, insulting, intimidating, demeaning, discriminatory, or offensive comments
- Unwanted physical or sexual attention
- Unwanted physical contact or proximity
- Threatening language or behavior



Dallas Future Society – Convention Code of Conduct

...or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Enjoy the Con

5. ANTI-HARASSMENT (continued):

If you feel you or another member are being harassed, please do the following:

- Tell the individual that their behavior is inappropriate and ask them to stop
 - If they don't stop, or you do not feel comfortable addressing them, then immediately contact a convention staff member. Request to be immediately escorted to Convention Operations
 - Provide Convention Operations with as much information about the incident as possible, including badge name (if available) and description
 - The Chairperson and convention leadership will work to evaluate and address the incident as quickly as possible
- Advice – If someone asks you to leave them alone or tells you "no" or "stop", immediately acknowledge the request, walk away, and do not approach them again. This will stop most incidents from escalating and allow everyone to enjoy the convention. Always remember your "good fun" might be another person's harassment.*

6. ATTIRE & COSTUMES:

No nudity. This is a family-friendly convention. Keep your clothing and costumes PG-13. For your safety, no bare feet please.

We reserve the right to request you change into more appropriate attire or put away your props if we find them to be inappropriate or disruptive.

When sitting in panel or performance rooms, please remove any large hats, fezzes, or other items that might obstruct another's view.

Advice – Body paint is not a costume. Save it for adult-only conventions.

Remember – Costuming is NOT consent. Please treat all costumers with respect.

7. OTHER HOTEL GUESTS:

Please be considerate to all hotel guests. There may be other events going on at the hotel. Please treat non-convention guests with courtesy and deference. Do not disrupt other events that may be going on at the hotel. Please observe all rules posted by the hotel.

8. CHILDREN:

The convention is an event that is fun for the entire family, and we welcome children as attendees. Children of appropriate ages may take part in our scheduled children's programming. See the convention schedule for details. To ensure your children's safety, please watch them at all times. Parents/guardians are responsible for their minor children and their minor children's behavior at all times. Children with Kid-in-Tow memberships are required to be with their responsible adult at all times and can never be left unattended in **any** convention space or with convention staff.

Advice – If your child cannot sit quietly through a discussion panel or other event, please take them out in the hallway so that they won't disturb other members.

9. SMOKING & E-CIGARETTES:

Smoking of all kinds is prohibited in all areas of the hotel, including function rooms, sleeping rooms, hallways, and the Hospitality Suite. Please obey the hotel's posted smoking policies in other areas in and around the hotel. Use of e-cigarettes or similar devices is prohibited in all hotel function rooms and the Hospitality Suite. Please follow the hotel's e-cigarette policy in all other hotel areas.

10. ALCOHOL:

The legal drinking age in Texas is 21 years old. Any minors found in possession of alcohol or any adults found to be providing alcohol to minors will have their memberships revoked and be removed from the convention. No exceptions. Please drink responsibly.

Advice – If you have had too much, please get a room at the hotel, call a cab, or ask a sober friend for a ride.

11. FOOD: No outside food or drink is allowed in any convention space. Food and beverages purchased from the hotel restaurant or bar may be carried into the function space. Food from the Hospitality Suite cannot be taken into the function space.

Advice – The hotel has several dining options including a restaurant, the bar and room service. Check them out if the Hospitality Suite doesn't have what you want.



Dallas Future Society – Convention Code of Conduct

...or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Enjoy the Con

12. HEALTH AND WELFARE (5-2-1):

Not only for your own enjoyment of the convention, but also for the enjoyment of your fellow fans, please follow the 5-2-1 rule: at least 5 hours of sleep a night, at least 2 nutritious meals a day, at least 1 shower a day. *Advice – Please minimize the use of colognes and perfumes. Many people are sensitive or allergic. Clean is the best smell of all.*

13. WEAPONS:

Apart from the costume contest, no one is allowed to carry any weapon that would be considered illegal in Texas. A pocketknife is fine. A dagger is not. Please use common sense. Any swords, knives, or other weapons purchased in the Dealers Room must be wrapped before leaving the room and taken immediately to your hotel room, car or other safe place.

14. AUTOGRAPHS:

Most of our guests are willing to give you their autograph, but please follow these simple rules: When possible, only request autographs during the designated autograph sessions. If there is a line, please limit yourself to 3 items to be autographed per guest. Multiple trips through the line are allowed, time permitting. Please do not ask any guest for an autograph as they are leaving, going to a panel, or while they are at a meal.

15. PHOTOGRAPHS:

The convention will not restrict your right to take photos as long as you respect the wishes of your intended subjects. Ask permission before you photograph any individual or group. If someone asks that you not take their picture, please respect their wishes. Please do not take photographs in any high traffic areas. Please move to a less populated area instead.

16. RECORDING:

Recording of performances and programming at the convention is allowed only for the private use of the person making the recording. If a panelist or performer requests that there be no video or audio taping, please respect his or her wishes. Recording of any kind within hallways and hotel public spaces is not allowed without prior permission of the subjects or their legal guardians. *Advice — Be polite. Always ask first before recording anyone.*

17. CONSEQUENCES:

DFS and the Convention Chairperson reserve the right to evaluate any and all potential code of conduct violations. Failure to adhere to this Code of Conduct may result in one or more of the following:

- Mediation with all parties involved by the Chairperson or designated DFS representative
- Verbal warnings
- Revocation of membership and/or removal from hotel
- Reporting individual to hotel staff/security
- Reporting individual to local law enforcement
- Any other actions deemed appropriate by the Chairperson

18. EVALUATION OF CONDUCT VIOLATION CLAIMS

In all cases, the convention will strive to quickly and impartially evaluate all available facts in order to make a fair determination. Consequently, DFS and the convention leadership reserve the right to investigate the circumstances of all accusations and apply the above list of consequences to individuals who we determine to be in violation of this Code of Conduct.

DFS and the convention leadership recognize that some Code of Conduct violation accusations may be false either due to misunderstandings or malice. In cases of misunderstanding, we will strive to arbitrate an equitable resolution for all parties involved. Anyone we determine to have maliciously brought a false Code of Conduct violation accusation will be subject to one or more of the consequences listed above. DFS and the Convention Chairperson are the sole interpreters and arbiters of the Code of Conduct rules for this convention.

19. ASK US!

No policy can cover every contingency. If you have any questions or concerns about the policies in this document, please let us know.



GUEST OF HONOR

Photo credit: Che Ryback

TREVOR QUACHRI: AN APPRECIATION

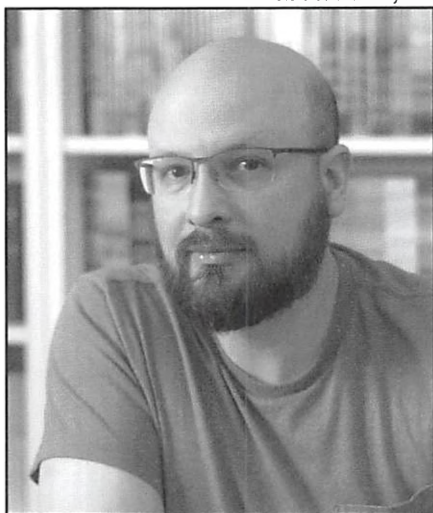
by Sheila Williams

Trevor Quachri was born cool. It's in his DNA. My proof for this statement is that his parents met as New York City bicycle messengers. I don't believe there's another science fiction or fantasy editor who can make this claim. I am in awe of the people who risk their lives daily to deliver packages and important papers. Trevor may not have been a bike messenger himself, but he clearly inherited his parents' aplomb.

I hired Trevor Quachri twenty years ago to be a shared editorial assistant for *Analog Science Fiction and Fact* and *Asimov's Science Fiction*. Before making the final decision, I called both his references. One was the gruff chief of security at Trevor's college who said that although Trevor was just a college work-study student, he wished he could have stayed on his staff permanently. The other was a gruff Broadway stagehand director who said he wished he could have kept Trevor forever, too. While neither of these recs gave us a true picture of Trevor's abilities as an editorial assistant, they did indicate that he'd be a great person to work with.

I was working very late one night a few months later. Because it was one of those intermittent New York City school holidays that occur throughout the fall, I had my six-year-old first grader in the office with me. Our company took up an entire floor and I think Trevor, and a friend of his who'd dropped by, may have been the only other people around. Immersed in deadlines, I gave distracted permission to my daughter Irene when she asked if she could hang out with Trevor. Sometime later, I looked up from my work to discover no daughter and no Trevor. How well did I know Trevor? I was suddenly certain that he was an axe-murderer in disguise.

The dimly lit deserted halls seemed to grow in length as I ran through them. Finally, I found Trevor, his friend, and my daughter at the opposite end of the floor in the art department.



Trevor was working at the paper cutter and his friend and Irene were standing several feet away. Clearly, nothing nefarious was taking place. I suddenly realized that Trevor had actually told me they were going there. Trevor said he knew I'd be nervous, and I thought, oh my God, the poor guy knows I thought he was an axe murderer. Then he added, so I made sure she stood at least six feet from the paper cutter. I had a profound epiphany that not only was Trevor not an axe murderer, he was in reality a really sweet and conscientious guy.

Since then, I've had a lot of fun traveling the continent with Trevor to attend SF conventions. My one real regret is that I wouldn't let him introduce himself to Stan Lee when we were all waiting for a plane at the San Diego airport. Lee was sitting about five feet from us, but I was certain his security squad would prevent any contact. Also, I was embarrassed, but I should have let Trevor make that call!

Over the years Trevor has sometimes tried on the gruff demeanor of his former supervisors, but his compassionate inner core always shines through. Trevor is also super smart and super competent. When Stanley Schmidt, the long-time editor of *Analog*, told me that he planned

TREVOR QUACHRI

to retire in a couple of years, I knew that Trevor would be my first choice for the person who would take over from Stan. They were big shoes to fill, though, and of course, I wasn't going to be the person to make that hiring decision.

Fortunately, Stan and the powers that be at Dell Magazines were also very impressed with Trevor's abilities. Trevor has done a terrific job of maintaining *Analog's* stellar reputation for hard science fiction, while searching out and encouraging new authors to submit stories to the magazine. All magazines reflect the personality of the editor in chief, and the current rendition of *Analog* is no exception.

Trevor's twentieth year at *Analog* will overlap with the magazine's ninetieth anniversary. With retrospective guest editorials by Stanley Schmidt and Ben Bova; an essay about John Campbell, Jr.; and stories by stars of the SF field and promising newcomers; and a daylong symposium at the New York City College of Technology, December and all of 2020 will be an astounding time for the magazine. It will be a great time to celebrate Trevor's astounding tenure, too. ●

THE BRITISH EMPORIUM'S ANNUAL DOCTOR WHO DAY

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SUNDAY 27 OCTOBER 2019



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ARTIST GUEST OF HONOR

PERI CHARLIFU: AN APPRECIATION by Aislinn Burrows

Peri Charlifu's masterful pottery is the reason I know what it is like to open a box of magic. Setup day for a convention art show is a mad kaleidoscope of colors, textures, bid sheets and boxes. It is a delicate dance between placement and sheer wonder at the hundreds of artworks. Within hours, a nondescript ballroom for meetings and symposiums transforms into a sacred imaginarium of creation and long held traditions. Through the winding temporary walls and skirted tables, future and fantasy weave together to inspire and delight participants. It is an enchanting experience.

The first I recall him showing at our hometown convention was just over a decade ago. At the time he was a mail-in artist (in addition to custom orders, he sends work to between 30-50 art shows annually). My art show counterpart helped me set down the heavy box on the table. We had finally moved to our 3D section and were anxious to begin the unpacking/checking/control/placing process after a long afternoon's scrambling to get the 2D shows bones up. What could this impossibly dense box contain? I was unfamiliar with him as an artist and admittedly, was struggling to pronounce his last name for the data entry person.

We slit the packing tape and brown flaps sprang open showing a tightly bound bundle of bubble wrap burritos, perfectly seated in the package for transport, and each containing a piece of the collection. I set to work unbinding one of them and slowly, a delicate blue-green and lilac Elvish filigree revealed itself in my hands banding the cream-colored round ceramic. A small placard came out with the last of the wrapping to share that this was one of Bilbo Baggins' honey pots. Further inspection of the box included more of Bilbo's crockery and a shallow serving bowl at the bottom. It was remarkable.

Instantly, I was a girlchild with my younger brother listening for the first time to our father read about



uninvited dwarves at a dinner table filled with every possible piece of dishware from a hospitable hobbit house. Here they were displayed all around me, imagined and carefully handmade into being, each more whimsical and inviting than the last. Transfixed by their cleverness and beauty, and the range of patterns, glazes, and their unique stories, I gave myself over to that childhood memory in our care for setting his pieces and it felt like falling in love with home, a warm and quiet kind of magic.

It is a joy seeing Peri's works on display and in full use in people's personal spaces. For years now, friends have gifted each other pieces, gallantly bid at auctions, made gentleman's agreements for quick sales, and collected custom sets that he produced, establishing a sophisticated visual narrative of their geekiness. His artwork lends itself to elegance and good-naturedness wherever it appears.

Peri creates accessible and functional ceramic artworks predominantly using a high density mix of porcelain and white stoneware. His distinctive style is inspired by elements of speculative fiction ranging from a Tolkien fantasy kitchen, to sensible Whovian desk sets, thought-provoking steampunk lamps, Lovecraftian dice bowls, dragon's tea sets, plus a full complement of vases, jars, and beyond. He is a prolific artist with more than 51,000 pieces

PERI CHARLIFU

to his credit owned by collectors worldwide. His craftsmanship includes hand painting and carving original designs, along with mixing color and stains. Peri has developed an underglaze technique that he uses in 90% of the items he produces. He is also an accomplished graphic artist, though his first love remains pottery.

With over 35 years of experience professionally selling his work, he is a teacher and artistic mentor to many. He regularly gives workshops and seminars on pottery, sculpture and theory, as well as artist's self-care techniques and art marketing and branding. He eagerly shares his knowledge, volunteers in the convention art show when appearing at cons, and enthusiastically supports the development and emergence of artists year-round. He is generously funny, kind, enjoys many fandoms, and is especially well-versed in

horror trivia. He is a founder and guild master of the Art and Artisans, a founding member of the Stoneleaf Potters Guild, and is Guild Primus for the Convention Artists Guild (CAG, Colorado chapter). He graduated Metropolitan State College with a degree in psychology and art therapy.

Peri Charlfu is an award-winning full-time artist and lifelong fan whose AGOH appearances include: SoonerCon, FenCon, DuckKon, Bubonicon, ConQuest, WillyCon, Apollocon, Loscon, and MidSouthCon. A native of Colorado, Peri was born in 1962 in Alamosa, Colorado. His father Jake was an art teacher and his mother Ellen is a retired social worker. He and his husband Lee reside in the Denver area. You can view his work and learn more about him at Aegeangoods.com and visit him on Facebook at [Aegeangoods-Peri Charlfu](https://www.facebook.com/Aegeangoods-Peri-Charlfu). ●



MUSIC GUESTS OF HONOR

A POEM by Marian Call

And as the past millennium braced itself
to bank hard round a hairpin turn,
there sprang up from that tangled neural thicket of winding ways (O Massachusetts)
two new children, both alike in dignity, by blood bonded yet distinct,
certain of uncertainty,
secure at insecurity,
filled with faith that they were not alone.

They chose their axe and rapier young:
fretted, fretless, rhythmic thrum and melody
Bardic trained in family expertise, they followed each their voices,
first to far-flung coasts – the eldest cellist stayed to play at Berklee,
the hard-boiled junior journalist went West to grill Lewis & Clark –
but in time they'd find a rain reunion
in the soft and gray and green City of Roses.

And schooled now, grown and steady, back together,
both felt drawn to play at Mississippi Pizza something new:
in rare and raw performance,
they would simply take the stage
and tell the truth.

Such bold-faced honesties in song, the audience was shocked down to their bones;
they laughed and felt gut-punched in the most primal perfect way
and with every 90-second tune that boldly said what they'd thought all along
they felt the loneliness lift off their tightened shoulder blades and drift away.

The word spread quickly: come and see The Doubleclicks!
They sing of fears and feelings yet the whole house laughed all night.
There's a cat keyboard and singalongs, banana dances, yes,
but underneath it all there's something more.
To speak plain truth can set the crowd a-roar
and set nervous yet contented introvert wallflowers free.

Now, certain of uncertainty,
secure at insecurity,
they share the good word – no one is alone.
Around the world on tour, in myriad films and albums, decked in bitchin' blazers,
Let Aubrey and let Laser tell you true.

They've come all this way for them, but they'll gladly share with you.

Translated from the Sindarin Elvish saga "Glîr cû i Edaid-Dringai."
*For more information about The Doubleclicks, find them at TheDoubleclicks.com
as well as on Youtube, Twitter, Bandcamp, and the other obvious virtual places.
Laser plays guitars, cat keyboards, and other instruments; Aubrey plays cello and
occasionally dances in a banana suit. Their most recent album, "Love Problems,"
is available now wherever you stream music.*

THE DOUBLECLICKS

Photo credit: Kim Newmoney



FEN GUEST OF HONOR

COMPETENCY IS ITS OWN PUNISHMENT

(a.k.a. The Helen Montgomery Story, a parable in 37 parts)

by Dave McCarty

So, a fannish biography! How awesome, this is where I get to spill the beans and leak some embarrassing stories about someone. Except, well, it's Helen...stories are only embarrassing to me. Damn. Which way to go, what to say?

There's so much and is almost uniformly awesome. Helen's first convention ever was a Capricon (in Chicago). Capricon 11, I believe. Like most of us, she got dragged from college to the convention by someone she knew...in this case, the boy she was sweet on at the time (we'll call him "Bob"). Even though Bob did his level best to monopolize her time that weekend, quite a number of us did manage to meet her for the first time (myself included). We found we'd met a smart, funny, and quite fetching woman that we somehow managed to avoid spooking completely. This was, as it turns out, much to our benefit.

She took a short break from fandom to finish college (K College naked euchre REPRESENT!). Afterwards, Helen moved to Chicago to be with her current "Bob" (To be fair, that Bob was me, but that's the only time I'm spilling the beans, you nosy people) and fell back into fandom full time. She was a happy, well adjusted, normal member of fandom...but of course, I had to spoil that.

Helen ended up being one of the folks that I dragged (kicking and screaming, usually) into running conventions when I got involved with assisting to steer the ship that was Capricon just before the turn of the millennia. In Helen's case, I dragged her in because I had (by that point) an extensive knowledge of what she brings to the table for everything she does... and it's a pretty awesome list.



She remembers everything.

She's organized as all get out.

She's calm when things go **BOOM**.

She knows how to listen better than anyone I'd met.

She's flat out competent at almost everything (except spiders. Totally not competent about spiders).

She cares. A lot. No, really, A LOT.

These traits are invaluable in a con runner. They're also golden for her day job, which for a whole lot of years was as a psychiatric social worker. What's that? Well, in her case it meant helping a population that carried the

HELEN MONTGOMERY

medical euphemism of "dual diagnosis." It's kind of like the trifecta of mental health, but there's only two things and I don't know a good word for that... "dufecta" is clearly wrong and "daily double" doesn't really fit. Anyway, dual diagnosis means that the patient has both mental illness issues and a problem with addiction. This is a hard population to deal with...but Helen did, every day. She rocked that job for the same reason she rocks when she works on a con. She's smart, she's competent, and she cares.

These skills saw Helen work her way up the Capricorn food chain, including chairing the convention twice and serving on the board of directors (including a stint as chairman). Was that enough for her? Apparently not. She stepped up to working on the Worldcon, where she started as a division head, moved on to chairman's advisor, became a Flying Monkee, and has been a division head TWICE (both for Loncon 3 and Dublin 2019). For those of you that don't know, that's like racing the Iditarod twice, except with no jacket and the dogs get to ride in the sled while you pull....oh yeah, and every dog is telling you to run in a different direction.

Of course, that sort of stepped over what is (for me) the biggest thing. The Chicago bid. Helen joined the Chicago Worldcon bid with me in the fall of 2004. That original bid was for 2008, which many of you know we came up just shy for. The bid was ultimately successful in bringing the 2012 Worldcon to Chicago (a little con called Chicon 7). For that entire bid process, I'd be hard pressed to name any 3 other people for the bid who did as much work as Helen (me included). She got us organized, figured out where we were going, who needed what, where the ads were going to run, kicked me to do things I was supposed to have done already, a whole lot of things. It's hard work.

It's drudgery and draining and it's easy as hell to get you down...and while she did it she never lost the ability to sit at a bid table and look happy and cheerfully answer questions that would make me want to take a swing at somebody.

On my best day, no, forget that, on my best week I can't match her daily work ethic.

Once the bid was won and we'd have to actually run the convention, Helen continued to bring the competence and caring and the ability to make sure things happened by serving as one of the Flying Monkees (vice chairman). She made the trains run on time, she kept things moving forward, and she kept me sane. She flat out rocked it. So much so that we decided we wanted to host the Worldcon again and started a bid for 2022 right there in the Old Pharts Party at Chicon 7...except this time it would be the pair of us in charge (for the bid, for the bid, we're still more than a year away from figuring out who will chair the convention if we win).

Helen has a ribbon, and if you're very unlucky, she'll pin it on you. It says "Competency is its Own Punishment." There are very few truer words than those. Every con needs a Helen. Every bid needs a Helen. There's lots of folks out there now who know what a good job she does...which of course means there's lots of folks who want her to work with them. You do good, you get asked to do more...a LOT more. It's both a happy and sad thing. It can be very tiring for normal humans, Helen says it makes her tired too...except even when she's tired she still gets more done than I can in a week. She's awesome and invaluable, and now she's being recognized for that. I couldn't be happier about it, you should be too. ●

SCIENCE GUEST OF HONOR

JULIE C. CZERNEDA: AN APPRECIATION

by Sheila E. Gilbert

When a convention contacts you and asks you to write an appreciation of someone like Julie E. Czerneda, what can you say except, "Of course!" Should be the easiest thing in the world to do. I've known Julie for twenty-five years although we didn't meet in person for the first several years. But that didn't really matter because from the first time we spoke we became fast friends. We have worked together creatively for decades. I've been adopted into her family as she and Roger have been adopted by mine. We've gone exploring nature together, sometimes inspecting the ecosystem they created in their own backyard, sometimes farther afield by canoe or plane. And we've brainstormed together on countless ideas that became the magnificent science fiction and fantasy novels I have been delighted to publish at DAW Books.

Naturally I am eager to share with you all Julie's sterling and endearing qualities and explain that no one could be more deserving of the honor of being your Guest of Honor nor can I think of anyone who will do a better job. Oh, wait, did you say Science Guest not Author Guest? Well, that is still an excellent choice but not as easy for me to write about. I really should have read your email more carefully. You said this should be humorous and anecdotal rather than just factual. Then you sent me samples by talented authors who are all extremely clever. Still, I did say yes, but please forgive me if some of those darn facts got into the mix.

Julie Czerneda started out planning to spend her life as a biologist. But before she had even finished her degree, she found herself edging down the slippery slope of "What if..." That can only lead to winning numerous scientific accolades and making discoveries that will change the future path of humankind while saving the planet—or it can end with you becoming a science fiction writer. I suspect

Photo credit: Roger Czerneda Photography



you've already guessed that Julie answered the siren call and began to write fiction.

In 1997, I published *A Thousand Words For Stranger*, the first novel in what would ultimately become her long-running *Clan Chronicles* series. I soon wondered whether we should have changed the title because it was amazing how many incorrect permutations people could come up with for the name. Still, that didn't stop Julie, and she went on to create her incredible *Clan Chronicle* series, about a human-seeming race which through genetic experimentation nearly bred itself out of existence.

In the midst of writing this series, Julie branched off and started her *Webshifter* novels, which introduced readers to Esen, last-born member of a vanishing race of shapeshifters who was always getting into trouble, even as she learned about the many species in the universe by becoming them.

These are just two examples of how Julie's imagination meshed with her scientific training to create characters and worlds that any fan of the genre will be thrilled to explore. If you haven't read these series or Julie's other science fiction and fantasy novels, I suggest you stop reading this and go buy them immediately.

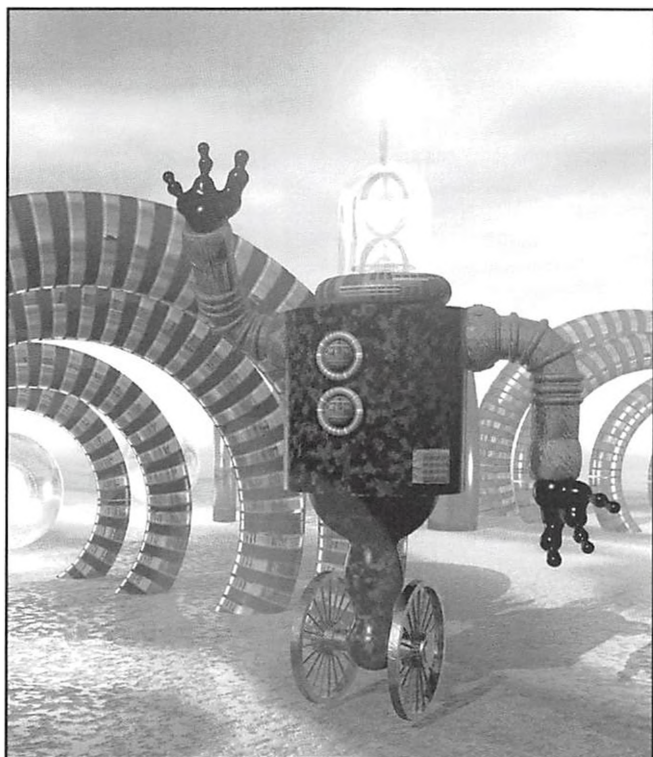
JULIE CZERNEOA

Julie has put on her editorial hat as well, spearheading such works as *Tales from the Wonder Zone*, a collection aimed at teaching children about science through storytelling. *Revisions*, another of her editorial innovations, allowed authors to envision alternate cultures that might have arisen based on specific scientific discoveries. She has also lectured at schools and been feted by library organizations. So, as you can see, Julie is indeed an excellent choice to be your Science Guest.

Finally, here are the most important things you should know about Julie before your first encounter with her. She is Canadian, need I say more? She is almost always accompanied by her

husband Roger. And Roger has minions. So if you need anything done, just ask Roger. The minute you meet Julie you will realize you have found a wonderful new friend. But watch out! She has an excellent memory, and should you run into her again five or ten years from now, she will be able to recount the entire conversation you had with her at FenCon. So don't say anything too foolish or embarrassing.

Other than that, enjoy your time with Julie. Enjoy dabbling in science with her. Enjoy partying with her and Roger. If you've read her books, enjoy talking with her about them. If you haven't, just ask her which book you should read first. ●



TOASTMASTER

INTRODUCING TOASTMASTER ORLANDO A. SANCHEZ

by John P. Logsdon

The first thing you'll notice about Orlando is that he's built like a brick building. You can't help but wonder if he could crush you with a thought.

It should be noted that he can.

But you'll soon find out that Orlando's also one of the nicest people you'll ever meet.

He's genuine, honest, and is most definitely an eternal optimist. Where some see the glass as half-empty, Orlando grabs the pitcher and fills the glass the rest of the way up. He is always willing to stop and help someone who is serious about listening, and he truly cares about helping them find success.

The thing that I found most impressive about him, though, is that he listens, too.

When I first met Orlando, I was at my wits end with helping authors who just wouldn't listen. My wife, who was Orlando's editor at the time, asked me to talk to him because she believed that he could get to the next level with the proper guidance.

I begrudgingly agreed and got on a video conference with him.

He sat there stoically as I laid down the law, telling him precisely what I expected if he wanted me to help him. I was a bit of a jerk, to be honest. Surprisingly, he agreed and then he went about doing everything I'd instructed him to do. He questioned things in order to gain a better understanding, but he never argued...even when he'd learned some things weren't super easy.

Orlando's goal was simple: success.

I soon learned that he was an owner of a martial arts facility. While he was sensei during the day, teaching people how to crush others with a



thought, he was grasshopper at night, learning the ins and outs of becoming a successful independent author.

He could chameleon. That was an enormous boon to his ability to learn.

After a few months of working with him, Orlando started seeing a turnaround.

He was not only applying what he'd been learning, he was also taking those seeds of knowledge and growing them, finding different ways to employ those newfound skills. He stretched his writing muscles, studied the successes of others, looked at the reader landscape, and found a place where he could write in a world that fit him perfectly.

That was the day his bestselling Montague & Strong series came to life.

Since then, Orlando has carved out a fantastic niche in the world of Urban Fantasy. He's respected by the independent author community, been asked to serve at roundtables, joined super-secret author summits, and is rumored to have been requested to act as toastmaster at a particularly popular event in Dallas.

In other words, Orlando has found the success he so readily deserves.

ORLANDO SANCHEZ

The story doesn't end there, though.

When I finally had the chance to meet Orlando in person, I gulped at all those "my way or the highway" comments I'd made to him over the years.

Again, the dude is huge.

Just as on video, though, I found him to be a gentle giant.

Orlando had a crowd of people around him, and he made every one of them feel like they were the only person in the room.

To him, in that moment, they were.

He wasn't putting on some persona, and he was not playing at some game in order to further his own career. He was simply being himself.

That was impressive.

I'd met Orlando on pretenses that were intended to help him move to the next level in his writing career, but it was me who ultimately got the sweet end of the deal. I was fortunate enough to meet someone who has bettered me as a person, and I'll take that over learning the ins and outs of publishing any day.

So, I ask you to count yourself lucky this year at FenCon. You not only have the benefit of a toastmaster who will most certainly bring fun to the esteemed position, you'll also get a chance to meet a fellow author who has found solid success, who works harder than most any author I know, who is a pillar in the independent publisher community, and, most importantly, who is a damn fine person.

...even if he can crush you with a thought. ●



SPECIAL WORKSHOP GUEST

ANGIE HODAPP: OUR MID-MOD GLITTER QUEEN

by Mario Acevedo and Jeanne Stein

If we had one word to describe Angie Hodapp, it would be "glittering," but not as glam-rock David Bowie from his early days but the more sincere and dynamic David Bowie, post-Ziggy Stardust.

Mario claims that he and Angie crossed paths maybe ten years ago, but he's not sure because at the time he was well into Happy Hour. She had been invited to join our critique group, and we were meeting at Hanson's Bar and Grill, emphasis on the "Bar," which explains his hazy recollection of this first encounter. His initial impression was that Angie was really tall. Then again, he was picking himself off the floor so his perspective might have been a bit exaggerated. Plus, she exuded this intense Nordic Minnesota vibe and soon confirmed that impression when Mario ordered casserole from the menu, because she immediately corrected him by calling the item by its proper Midwestern name of "hot dish."

At the time Angie was on the rebound of a divorce. She quickly made the acquaintance of another esteemed member of our critique group, Warren Hammond, who is also tall and was also on the rebound from his recent divorce. The two began courting and despite both being brainy and educated people, on Halloween they tied the knot, laying credence to Oscar Wilde's quote that "A second marriage is proof that hope triumphs over experience."

A science-fiction buff, Angie cranked out short stories and chapters from works-in-progress. Frustrated as we all get in the seemingly Sisyphean effort of getting published, she switched genres and tried her hand at romance. In her desire to keep "things real," she didn't flinch from sharing a chapter where the love interests consummated their love interest. The scene proved so hot and steamy that the passage set off the fire alarm. The married couple at the adjacent table had been eavesdropping and the next week confessed that Angie's narrative got them so aroused that they rushed home to



revive their stagnant relationship and that the wife was now pregnant.

While she loves writing, Angie has too much energy to confine her interests to any one subject. She's a devotee of Mid-Century architecture, home furnishings, and fashion. Thanks to her sharp eye and sartorial sense, she once commented to Jeanne Stein about her choice of clothing and more to the point, noted that Jeanne was wearing her blouse inside out.

Angie also loves cats and remodeled her home to make it more comfortable for her pet felines. Though we wouldn't yet classify her as a "cat lady," she is responsible for posting fifty-two percent of all the cat pics on social media.

ANGIE HODAPP

Angie's résumé shows her hopscotching from job to job – working as a supermarket cashier, a manager of a quilting store, then a Starbucks, then a computer lab, and as a magazine editor – before landing on her present perch with the Nelson Literary Agency, where she shares insights about the publishing business from querying, to contracts and royalty statements, to the sausage-making details of the acquisition process.

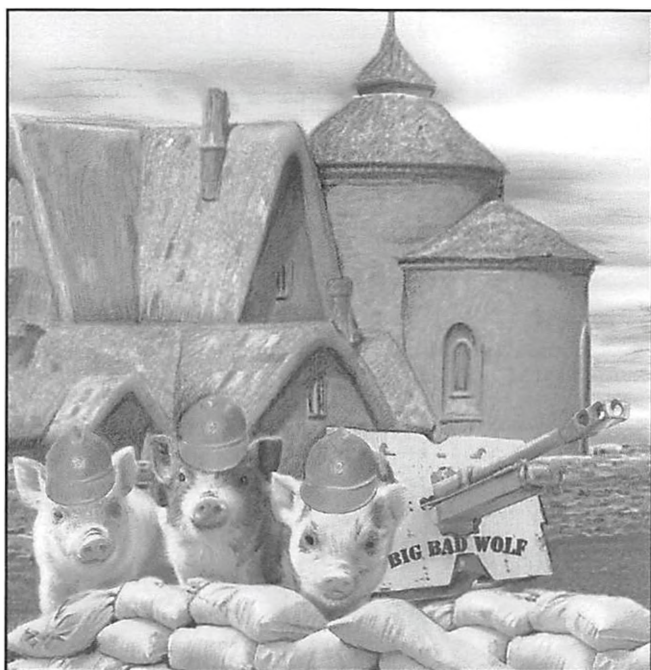
After years of wandering from various watering holes, our critique group decided to establish a home base where we could record our fabulous CritTiki Party podcast, during which we would read and critique submissions from the public. Angie and hubby Warren offered to host the CritTiki Party at their home since the Tiki theme allowed them to blend her appreciation of Mid-Mod and his fondness for vintage-recipe cocktails. Unfortunately, our first recording session got no further than Warren's Macadamia Nut Chi-Chis. However, it was during the second

attempt at podcasting that Angie dazzled us with another of her talents: Her golden reading voice. She made even the lamest and most convoluted of prose ring like crystal bells.

A life goal for Angie is to get her passport stamped in as many countries as possible. Ever the practical woman, from her travels around the globe where she's witnessed many of civilization's inspiring marvels, her favorite memories remain those of Japanese toilets.

Now to the glittering part: Angie is generous with her blessings and forgiving of those who stumble. But she won't hesitate to smack you with a dose of tough love when needed. She's the first to remind you that writing is a tough business, but if you're willing to work hard, the rewards are there for the taking.

While some strive to merely get noticed and some perhaps to shine, Angie Hodapp always glitters. ●



FENCON CHARITY NORTH TEXAS - READING PARTNERS

BOOKED FOR SUMMER

NBC 5



Laura Harris



Wayne Carter

TELEMUNDO 39



Andrea Aguirre



Marthe Mejia



JUNE 17 - AUGUST 16
GRADES K-5

Join Reading Partners, NBC 5 and Telemundo 39 for nine weeks this summer as we take a vacation through books. We'll adventure back in time, visit far-away locations, and make new scientific discoveries.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN JOIN THE FUN THIS SUMMER:

1. Find our recommended reading list and reading resources at www.readingpartners.org/booked-for-summer/.
2. Pick a book to read. But don't stop there! We encourage you to read all the titles on our list!
3. Record the books you read on your library's summer reading book log. Find out how to participate in your city's program by clicking on "Participate".
4. Tune in to NBC 5 and Telemundo 39 during the *Reading With You* and *Leyendo Contigo* segments to see which book your favorite newscaster features on TV each week.

ABOUT READING PARTNERS

Since 2011, Reading Partners has mobilized community volunteers in North Texas to provide thousands of students in under-resourced elementary schools with proven, one-on-one literacy support they need to read at grade level.

readingpartners.org/north-texas

readingpartners.org/north-texas

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.	Mary Miller		
.	Loretta Morgan		

SPECIAL THANKS

FenCon XVI would like to thank the following:

A big thank you to AnimeFest and CosMAKtx for their help and support. Thank you to TheLab.ms for supplying our unique Friend of Fen badge holders. Thanks to Kyle Lichty for the "Portal" artwork used on our badges and page number icons. Thanks to our good friends at British Emporium, SoonerCon and Baen Books for their valued support. To Clint Smith from Blanks Printing for making sure our Program Books look amazing. Tanya Malena and Monica Simmons at the Vendor Guide for the fantastic job printing our Friend of Fen backpacks. Minuteman Press on Preston Road in Dallas for the Charity Prints and Badges. Jordan Hughes and Terminus Tees for their stellar job printing our Friend of Fen t-shirts.

Bag stuffer bags donated by Ruth Cruise in remembrance of her dear husband William H. Cruise II, a true Friend of the Fen.

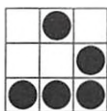
FENCON XVI FRIENDS OF FEN

Ailshire, Jaimie
Alfred, Matthew
Barrett, Ami
Barrett, Julie
Barrett, Paul
Blaylock, LaMonté
Braun, Ellen
Braun, Michael
Brigdon, Floyd
Brigdon, Sarah
Bucher, Troy
Caldwell, Todd
Carsten, Jeremy
Carter, Howard
Cleric, David
Closs, Joshua
Cruise, Ruth
Cruise, Sarah
Curless, Matt
Curless, Michele
Davey, Mark
Davis, Ron
Davis, Suanna
Diggs, Amanda
Diggs, Marsha
Diggs, Michael
Dingler, Jack
Draeger, Amber
Eber, Arroxane
Ellison, Terri
Eudaly, Rhonda
Fair, Lynne
Fair, Michael
Fair, Red
Fenwick, Ben
Fenwick, Shaista
Feyrer, Faith
Freiberger, Rebecca
Gallagher, Laura
Gallagher, Maggie
Garcia, Joaquin
Gatlin, Chuck
Gayle, Crystal
Gayle, Sam
Glynn, Jim
Haber, Anthony

Hauldren, Pat
Hazlewood, Richard
Herring, Rebecca
Herring, Stuart
Hill, Criss
Hines, Meredith
Hull, Corintha
Hull, Jeremy
Hull, Sylvia
Isham, Joe
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Levack, Brian
Mahaffey, Fran
Mahaffey, Jim
Miller, Russ
Mize, Kenneth
Mize, Sherry
Mize, Suzanne
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Morgan, Tim
Morryn, Katheryn
Murphy, Marah
Nash, Shelley
O'Brien, Kathleen
Paule, Katja
Paule, Will
Pierce, Susan
Richardson, David
Roper, Heather
Saunders, Andrew
Seaman, Patrick
Sharpe, Libby
Simpson, Jimmy
St. Jean, Patrick
Thomas, Alexander
Traux, Dorothy
Valetutto, Mark
Walker, Adam
Waller, Bobb
Waller, Debbie
Warren, Kit
West, Karen
White, Kyle
Winans, Robyn
Zrubek, Scott

The Lab.ms

Plano's Makerspace



<http://thelab.ms> • 1915 N Central Expy #370 • leadership@thelab.ms
Meetup: meetup.thelab.ms • Twitter: [@thelab_ms](https://twitter.com/thelab_ms) • 469.298.9683

What is The Lab.ms?

We are a makerspace/hackerspace located in the heart of Plano, Texas. We are an online and in-person (meatspace) hub for the creative and the curious: engineers, artists, hackers, makers, crafters, and general tinkerers.

What does The Lab.ms have to offer?

TONS! We currently have 3D printers, a laser cutter, a vinyl cutter, electronics stations, a conference room, a classroom and more. We have classes on a variety of making and hacking topics, for free! Our most valuable resource are our members and their knowledge. The larger our member base grows, the more we can offer and expand!

How do I join? Is it for me?

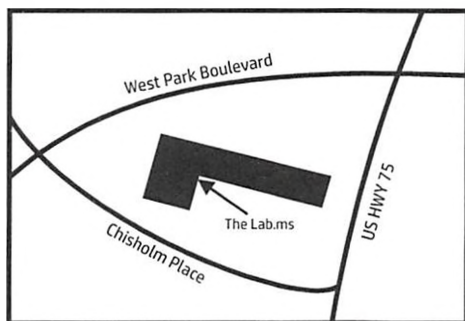
Are you passionate about making, collaborating, and learning? This is the place for you! Currently the Lab.ms has monthly memberships at \$30 and annual at \$250 (save \$110!). Visit <http://join.thelab.ms> for more info.

When can I visit the Lab.ms?

When you're a member, you have 24/7 access to all of our facilities. Our members visit at all hours, from daytime co-working folks, to night-owl gamers. Not a member? Come to our Open House! We'd love to give you a tour. Check <http://meetup.thelab.ms> for times.

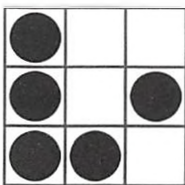
Where is the Lab.ms located?

The Lab.ms is located in Plano, Texas. Specifically, we're located at 75 and Park.



The Lab.ms is a 501c3 organization.

The Lab.ms
Plano's Makerspace



FENCON HISTORY

FENCON I – September 24-26, 2004

Theme: Of the Fen, By the Fen, For the Fen
GoH: Larry Niven, Filk GoH: Michael Longcor,
Fen GoH: Jim Murray, Toastmistress:
Elizabeth Moon, Special Guest: Joe R. Lansdale,
Special Guest: Ardath Mayhar
Chair: Michael Nelson, Attendance: 322
Location: Holiday Inn Select North Dallas
2645 LBJ Freeway, Dallas, TX 75234

FENCON II – September 23-25, 2005

Theme: What If?
GoH: S.M. Stirling, Music GoH: Leslie Fish,
Fen GoH: Randy Farran, Artist GoH: Larry Dixon,
Toastmaster: David Gerrold,
Special Guest: Mike Resnick
Chair: Michael Nelson, Attendance: 459
Location: Holiday Inn Select North Dallas
2645 LBJ Freeway, Dallas, TX 75234

FENCON III – September 22-24, 2006

Theme: Sci-Fi Camp
GoH: Alan Dean Foster, Music GoH: Heather
Alexander, Fen GoH: Judith Ward*, Artist GoH: Darrell
K. Sweet, Toastmaster: Jim Butcher,
Special Guest: Lawrence Watt-Evans
Chair: Tim Miller, Attendance: 629
Location: Holiday Inn Select North Dallas
2645 LBJ Freeway, Dallas, TX 75234

**Judith Ward passed away on July 3rd, 2006,
but she remained Fen GoH.*

FENCON IV – September 21-23, 2007

Theme: Fantastic Four
GoH: Connie Willis, Music GoH: Tom Smith
Fen GoH: Kathleen Sloan, Artist GoH: David Mattingly,
Toastmaster: Steve Perry,
Special Guest: Toni Weisskopf,
Shindig Guest: Jarrod Davis
Chair: Tim Miller, Attendance: 663
Location: Crowne Plaza North Dallas
14315 Midway Road, Addison, TX 75001

*FenCon IV was the site for the 2007 Lone Star
Shindig, hosted by the D/FW Browncoats for fans of
Firefly and Serenity from across Texas.*

FENCON V – October 3-5, 2008

Theme: 50 Years of SF Conventions in Texas
GoH: Gregory Benford, Music GoH: Three Weird
Sisters, Fen GoH: Gerald Burton,
Artist GoH: Real Musgrave, Toastmaster: Howard
Waldrop*, Special Guest: Jay Lake,
ORAC Special Guest: Doris Egan

Chair: Russ Miller, Attendance: 591
Location: Crowne Plaza North Dallas
14315 Midway Road, Addison, TX 75001

** Due to health concerns, Howard Waldrop was unable
to attend. He would attend FenCon VI the next year.*

FENCON VI – September 18-20, 2009

Theme: Sci-Fi DIY
GoH: Lois McMaster Bujold, Music GoH:
Carla Ulbrich, Fen GoH: Warren Buff,
Artist GoH: Kurt Miller, Toastmaster: Paul Cornell
(sponsored by ORAC), Special Guest: Keith R.A.
DeCandido, Special Guest: Howard Waldrop, Chair:
Russ Miller, Attendance: 854
Location: Crowne Plaza North Dallas
14315 Midway Road, Addison, TX 75001

*FenCon VI hosted the Region Three Summit for
Starfleet International, an annual gathering of Star Trek
fans from Texas and Louisiana.*

FENCON VII – September 17-19, 2010

Theme: Mad Science!
GoH: Spider & Jeanne Robinson*,
Music GoH: Jeff & Maya Bohnhoff, Fen GoH: Andy
Trembley & Kevin Roche, Artist GoH: John Picacio,
Science GoH: Dr. John Randall, Toastmaster: Joe
R. Lansdale, Special Guest: Jessica Wade, Special
Guest: Robert J. Sawyer
Chair: Julie Barrett, Attendance: 724
Location: Crowne Plaza North Dallas
14315 Midway Road, Addison, TX 75001

**Jeanne Robinson passed away on May 30, 2010, but
she remained GoH.*

FENCON VIII/DeepSouthCon 49 – September 23-25, 2011

Theme: Southern Steam
GoH: Gail Carriger, Music GoH: Joe Bethancourt, Fen
GoH: Steven H. Silver,
Artist GoH: Vincent Di Fate*,
Science GoH: Les Johnson, Toastmaster:
Bradley Denton, Special Guest: Lou Anders, Special
Guest: Stephan Martinieri
Chair: Julie Barrett, Attendance: 900
Location: Crowne Plaza North Dallas
14315 Midway Road, Addison, TX 75001

**Due to professional commitments,
Vincent Di Fate attended virtually.
FenCon VIII was the host for DeepSouthCon 49,
a gathering of fans from across the southern United
States. This was the first DSC to be held in Texas.*

FENCON HISTORY

FENCON IX – September 21-23, 2012

Theme: The Future's So Bright...
GoH: C. J. Cherryh, Music GoH: John Anealio,
Fen GoH: Teresa Patterson, Artist GoH: Donato
Giancola, Science GoH: Dr. David Hanson*,
Toastmaster: Peter A. David**,
Special Guest: Karl Schroeder,
Guest Speaker: Stanley G. Love
Chair: Tim Morgan, Attendance: 747
Location: Crowne Plaza North Dallas
14315 Midway Road; Addison, TX 75001

**A medical emergency stranded Dr. Hanson in Hong Kong so he was unable to attend.*

***Peter David's appearance sponsored by ORAC.*

FENCON X – October 4-6, 2013

Theme: Infinite Possibilities
GoH: Cory Doctorow, Music GoH: Heather Dale, Fen
GoH: Tom Smith*, Artist GoH: Charles Vess, Science
GoH: Geoffrey A. Landis, YA Author GoH: Amber
Benson, Toastmaster: John Ringo, Special Guest:
Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Special Guest: Teresa Nielsen
Hayden,
Gaming Guest: Sandy Petersen
Chair: Tim Morgan, Attendance: 839
Location: Crowne Plaza Dallas Near the Galleria
14315 Midway Road; Addison, TX 75001

**Larry Niven was the originally scheduled Fen GoH but had to be replaced due to a scheduling conflict.*

FENCON XI – September 26-28, 2014

Theme: The University of FenCon
GoH: Eric Flint, Music GoH: Ookla the Mok,
Fen GoH: Geri Sullivan, Artist GoH: Rick Sternbach,
Science GoH: J. Storrs Hall, Toastmaster: Timothy
Zahn, Special Workshop Guest: Carrie Vaughn,
Special Artist Guest: Cat Conrad, Special Gaming
Guest: Steve Jackson
Chair: Tim Miller, Attendance: 746
Location: Crowne Plaza Dallas Near the Galleria
14315 Midway Road; Addison, TX 75001

FENCON XII – September 27-29, 2015

Theme: It's About Time...
GoH: S.M. Stirling, Artist GoH: Mitch Bentley,
Music GoH: Tricky Pixie, Fan GoH and Toastmaster:
Tadao Tomomatsu, Science GoH:
Dr. Penny Boston, Special Guest: Jaye Wells, Special
Gaming Guest: Rick Loomis
Chair: Russ Miller, Attendance: 550
Location: Westin Dallas Fort Worth Airport,
4545 W. John Carpenter Freeway, Irving, TX 75063

FENCON XIII – September 23-25, 2016

Theme: Magical Journeys
GoH: Jim Hines, Music GoHs: Bill and Brenda Sutton,
Fen GoH: Sarah Felix, Artist GoH: Kristina Carroll,
Science GoH: Michael S. Brotherton, Toastmaster:
Esther Friesner,
Special Workshop Guest: Rachel Swirsky,
Special Gaming Guest: Tiffany Franzoni,
Special Music Guest: Mary Crowell
Chair: Julie Barrett, Attendance: 681
Location: Westin Dallas Fort Worth Airport,
4545 W. John Carpenter Freeway, Irving, TX 75063
FenCon XIII hosted the 1632 Series Minicon.

FENCON XIV – September 22-24, 2017

Theme: Beyond The Stars
Special GoH: Kevin J. Anderson,
Music GoH: Vixy & Tony, Artist GoH: Tom Kidd,
Fen GoH: Ben Yalow, Special Science
Guest Speaker: Stanley G. Love,
Toastmaster: Selina Rosen, Special Workshop Guest:
Cat Rambo, Special Gaming Guest: J. R. Honeycutt,
Special Music Guest: Leslie Hudson
Chair: Ellen Braun, Attendance: 613
Location: Westin Dallas Fort Worth Airport,
4545 W. John Carpenter Freeway, Irving, TX 75063

FENCON XV – September 21-23, 2018

Theme: It's Alive!
GoH: Larry Niven, Music GoH: Mañan Call,
Artist GoH: Travis Lewis, Fen GoHs: Aislinn Burrows
and Carmen Bryan, Science GoH: Marianne Dyson,
Toastmaster: Timothy Griffin, Special Workshop
Guest: Martha Wells
Chairs: Meredith Hines, Jim Mahaffey, Julie Barrett
Attendance: 649
Location: Westin Dallas Fort Worth Airport,
4545 W. John Carpenter Freeway, Irving, TX 75063

FENCON XVI – September 20-22, 2019

Theme: Gateway To The Future...
GoH: Trevor Quachri, Music GoH: The Doubleclicks,
Artist GoH: Peri Charlifou, Fen GoH: Helen Montgomery,
Science GoH: Julie Czerneda, Toastmaster: Orlando
Sanchez, Special Workshop Guest: Angie Hodapp
Chair: Robyn A. Winslow
Attendance: TBD
Location: Sheraton DFW Airport Hotel,
4440 W. John Carpenter Freeway, Irving, TX 75063



FENCON XVI PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Joe Abbott

Joseph Abbott, aka Fax Paladin, has been filking for basically as long as FenCon has been around and was the very first Friend of the Fen. He's still trying to work out what he wants to be when he grows up, especially now that "newspaperman" has been taken off the table.

C. Dean Andersson

C. Dean Andersson's *I Am Dracula* was honored with a cameo in Amy Hesketh's vampire film, *Ollala*. Dean's novels are available in new editions from Crossroad Press. Works in progress include a novel of *Swords, Sorcery, and Showbiz*, *Valkyries from Hel*, and part 2 of his Dracula Saga, *I Am the Witch*.

Kimm Antell

Kimm Antell is an artist and writer from Pflugerville, TX. She also has a husband, 5 cats, 1,500 books, 1 house, 5 friends (she lost one to Portland,) 400 comic books, 2,795 ancestors, and 1 white lie to FenCon. Favorite sci-fi movie is *Ghostbusters (Original)*. Favorite horror movie is *From Dusk 'Til Dawn*. Favorite fantasy movie is *The Adventures of Baron von Munchausen*. Favorite mystery is *The Fugitive*.

Lou Antonelli

Lou Antonelli has had 124 original short stories published in the U.S., U.K., Canada, Australia, Brazil, India, and Portugal in venues such as *Asimov's Science Fiction*, *Jim Baen's Universe*, *Tales of the Talisman*, *Andromeda Spaceways In-Flight Magazine*, *Greatest Uncommon Denominator (GUD)*, *Daily Science Fiction*, *Buzzy Mag*, and *Omni Reboot*, among many others. His debut novel, the retro-futurist alternate history "Another Girl, Another Planet", was a finalist for the Dragon Award for Alternate History in 2017.

Julie Barrett

Julie Barrett is a writer, photographer, and maker of interesting things from Plano, TX. She is also a founding member of The Generic Radio Workshop, member of the Dallas Future Society board, and sells photography and art through SteamCat.net. Julie writes short stories, radio plays, and whatever else helps pay the bills. She hates the bills. Find her at Stately Barrett Manor or on Facebook.

Paul Barrett

Amongst Paul's many pastimes, a favorite is creating, finding, and programming the sound effects for Generic Radio Workshop productions. As with the other GRW founders, he's done so many of these shows, he's no longer sure if this is reality, or if he's living in an episode of Dimension X. Other hobbies are prop-building and 3D printing – he has been known to demonstrate all the ways this can go wrong.

Mitch Bentley

Mitch Bentley is mostly known for his astronomicals, but also does a variety of fantasy and technology pieces, often as illustrations for small presses and independent authors. You've probably seen his work on covers from some of your favorite authors such as Rhonda Eudaly, James K. Burk, Katharine Eliska Kimbriel, Laura J. Underwood, Lee Killough, Linda L. Donahue, Phillip Drayer Duncan, Gary Moreau, and many more. Mitch is the current Central Director of ASFA, and a previous AGoH of FenCon.

Paul Black

Paul Black always wanted to make movies, but a career in advertising sidetracked him. He's the international award-winning author of *The Tels*, *Soulware*, *Nexus Point*, *The Presence*, *The Samsara Effect*, *Cool Brain*, and *Dark Slide*. He has twice won each the Independent Publishers Book Award, London and the New York Book Festival. He has also been on the Barnes & Noble Regional Best Seller list, has won the Writer's Digest Book Award for Genre Fiction, and was optioned for television.

Bland Lemon Denton and the Lemon-Aides

Over the past twelve years, Bland Lemon Denton, "The World's Oldest (and Worst) Bluesman," has played guitar and harmonica at conventions throughout the Midwest and South. For FenCon XVI, he'll be joined by the Lemon-Aides: Caroline "Honey Badger" Spector (bass), Bob "Thumper" Yeager (percussion), David Lee "Psychobot" Anderson (guitar), and Sherri "Monkey Queen" Dean (backing vocals). They invite all y'all to come get the Blues, too.

Karen Bogen

K.B. Bogen is a self-confessed knit-yarn-aholic. She spends much time knitting something, inventorying her stash, or fondling yarn anywhere within driving range. She likes to cook and enjoys reading forensic anthropology books. Occasionally simultaneously. For nearly thirty years, she has also been lurking behind the scenes doing editing, copy editing, and manuscript repair. With the increase in the numbers of publications, her client load has increased drastically. Time to come out of the editorial "closet"!

Troy Carrol Bucher

Troy Carrol Bucher served over thirty years in the U.S. Army, where his assignments sent him to three wars and places like Turkey, Albania, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Germany, Kuwait, and Korea. His travels allow him to tap into a lifetime of experience working with diverse cultures and peoples, bringing multiethnic customs and realism with a distinct military flavor to his Science Fiction and Fantasy. His first novel, *Lies of Descent*, was published by DAW in August 2019.

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Aislinn Burrows

Aislinn Burrows is an old Millennial keeping busy as a full-time student and creative media projects consultant. Plus, she helps run SoonerCon in Oklahoma City. She's passionate about nerd culture, connecting communities, karaoke, and considers herself a geek Girl Friday-type and NPR junkie. She and her wife Carmen live with their fur family in a small house filled with books, oddities, art, warmth, and joy. Fen friends can find her on Facebook!

Lillian Stewart Carl

Lillian Stewart Carl's work features plots based on mythology, history, and archaeology, often with paranormal aspects. She's published twenty novels, including the Jean Fairbairn/Alasdair Cameron mysteries – the most recent is *The Avalon Chanter*. Her twenty-five published short stories have been reprinted in *Along the Rim of Time* and *The Muse: Stories of History, Mystery, and Myth*. With John Helfers, she was nominated for a Hugo for *The Vorkosigan Companion*, a retrospective on Lois McMaster Bujold's Vorkosigan books.

Peri Charlifu

Working out of Colorado, Peri has sold his work professionally for over 38 years. He has won dozens of awards and is founder and Guild Primus for Convention Artists Guild. He is a full time artist and participates in about 40-45 Science Fiction convention art shows a year, all over the country! His work is exhibited and sold all over the United States as well as several countries. To date he has produced over 42,000 pieces. His work is available for limited special order and at art shows only. Peri works mainly in a high density mix of porcelain and white stoneware. He mixes his own glaze and his work is food, oven, and microwave safe. All the design work is hand painted and or carved and he mixes all his own stains and colors. He is also a graphic artist, and his prints and original works can be seen on his website, aegeangoods.com!

J. Kathleen Cheney

J. Kathleen Cheney taught mathematics ranging from 7th grade to Calculus, but gave it all up for a chance to write stories. Her novella "Iron Shoes" was a 2010 Nebula Award finalist. Her novel, *The Golden City*, was a finalist for the 2014 Locus Awards (Best First Novel). *Dreaming Death* (Feb 2016) is the first in a new world, with *The Horn* coming out in 2017, and the books of *The King's Daughter* and sequels to *Dreaming Death* in 2018/2019.

Roger Czerneda

Roger Czerneda's love of photography began when he worked at his uncle's camera store. Leaving a successful career in environmental chemistry, Roger grabbed his camera and computer and began life as a professional, first in film and now totally digital. He's made the leap from commercial and industrial photography to also

express himself as a visual artist, most recently doing book covers, including the Aurora-nominated art for *Tales of Plexis* (DAW Books).

Julie Czerneda

For over twenty years, Canadian author/former biologist Julie E. Czerneda has shared her curiosity about living things through her science fiction, published by DAW Books, NY. Julie's written fantasy too, the first installments of her Night's Edge series (DAW), *A Turn of Light* and *A Play of Shadow*, winning consecutive Aurora Awards (Canada's Hugo) for Best English Novel. Having completed her Clan Chronicles series with *To Guard Against the Dark*, Julie's latest SF novel is *Search Image*. Book #1 of her new SF series, *The Web Shifter's Library*, bringing back her beloved character Esen the Dear Little Blob. Julie's edited/co-edited numerous award-winning anthologies of SF/F, including SFWA's 2017 Nebula Award Showcase, but nothing prepared her for the sheer joy of opening her Clan Chronicles to fans of the series to produce *Tales from Plexis*, out December 2018. What's coming next? Her new fantasy standalone, *The Gossamer Mage*, out August 2019, and so much more.

Deborah L. Davitt

Deborah L. Davitt was raised in Nevada, but currently lives in Houston, Texas with her husband and son. She's worked as a technical writer on contracts involving nuclear submarines, NASA, and computer manufacturing. Her poetry has received Rhysling, Dwarf Star, and Pushcart nominations; her short fiction has appeared in *InterGalactic Medicine Show*, *Compelling Science Fiction*, and *Pseudopod*. For more about her work, including her Edda-Earth novels and her forthcoming poetry collection, *The Gates of Never*, please see her website, edda-earth.com.

Aaron de Orive

Aaron de Orive was a writer/designer on several video games, including *Metroid Prime 3: Corruption*, *Star Wars Galaxies: An Empire Divided*, *Tabula Rasa*, *Anarchy Online*, and *Star Wars: The Old Republic*. He co-authored the middle-grade fantasy novel *Blade Singer* with Martha Wells, and created the tabletop role-playing game *Shard: World of the False Dawn*. He's also the founder and co-host of The Gentlemen Nerds podcast. Aaron lives in Austin with his precocious daughter and an incredibly spoiled Yorkie.

Sherri Dean

Sherri Dean, or Feisty Mistress of Fear, is a jack-o-lantern of all trades and a monster of none! In addition to being a published author and artist (Yard Dog Press) she is also an editor, costumer, judge, emcee, and sings as the Monkey Queen with convention favorites Bland Lemon and the Lemonades. Ask for your Monkey Minion button and visit her on Facebook for more feisty fear!

FENCON XVI PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

John DeLaughter

John DeLaughter is a planetologist living on a sailboat with Nimrod the cat. His work has taken him to all seven continents where he always meets the nicest people. Among the stories he's had published is description of money in Hell (in *Strange Economics*). Right now, John is working with Mel. White on new Duncan & Mallory stories; their latest, *Tangled Up in Clues: A Sadie and Bilgewater Adventure*, is available on Amazon.

Charlayne Denney

Given Charlayne's habit of checking people for fangs and living in the dark, she discovered her own vampires and Lilly, Marcus, and the rest of the gang living in the Fangs & Halos series she writes. When not hanging with vampires, she is a WoW gnome mage, Rubyrose. She's the crazy lady in the wheelchair with the Werepup. She found her husband, Bruce, through a want-ad in the program book for ConTroll 93. She's done conventions in Texas since 1979.

Bradley Denton

Four Bradley Denton titles are in new formats for 2015: Novels *Blackburn* and *Lunatics*, plus story collection *One Day Closer to Death*, are now available as ebooks. And *Buddy Holly is Alive and Well on Ganymede* is now an audiobook -- complete with cover art from FenCon Artist GoH Mitch Bentley. Meanwhile, Brad's 2014 collection *Sergeant Chip and Other Novellas* is still in print, and he still manages the career of Bland Lemon Denton, the World's Oldest (and Worst) Bluesman.

Linda L. Donahue

Linda has degrees in computer science, Russian studies, Earth science education, and electrical engineering. Additionally, she teaches tai chi and belly dancing, can borrow moon rock samples, and is a certified commercial instrument pilot, advanced ground instructor, and SCUBA diver. Her latest short stories have appeared in *Heroic Fantasy Quarterly #25* and *Chicks and Balances*. Her novel, *Jaguar Moon*, is available from Yard Dog Press. She lives with her husband and pet rabbits, sugar gliders, and cats in Garland, Texas.

Chris Donahue

Chris Donahue is an electrical engineer living in the Dallas area with his wife and fellow-author, Linda. A former member of a Joe Bob Briggs' Drive In Review committee, he served the public by counting rolling heads, types of Fu, and exposed breasts in committee films. Outside of that, he has been a Navy Avionics tech, brewer, and writes sci-fi, military fiction, horror, humor, and combinations of those themes. His first novel, *Death's Paladin*, is now available.

Carole Nelson Douglas

Carole Nelson Douglas's Vegas feline Sam Spade and Noir narrator, Midnight Louie, has finished his 28-book alphabet title series. His new Cafe Noir series also features her urban fantasy heroine, Delilah Street. *Absinthe Without Leave* is "Twisty, riveting, and intriguing; zingy humor and powerful emotions." *RT Book Reviews*. *Brandi Alexander on the Rocks* arrives in November, 2019. Carole will reissue her Probe SF thrillers and bestselling Irissa/Kendric high fantasies. She also designs book covers and rescues cats in Fort Worth.

Dan Erickson

Dan Erickson is a performer in word, stage, poetry slam, and video. He's dressed women around the world for the world-renowned fashion business XCENTRICITIES. Author of 8 books and counting, including the book/performance *This Book Smells Like Coffee*. Come see Dan speak with authority on the fashion industry, science, comedy, unspeakable pictures found on everyone's phone, and American Paganism. Dan's mid-life crises have included MMA cage fighting and standup comedy. Come sit next to Dan, you won't be bored.

Rhonda Eudaly

Rhonda Eudaly lives in Arlington, Texas where she's ventured into several industries and occupations for a wide variety of experience. She's married with dogs and a rapidly growing Minion™ army. Her two passions are writing and music, which is evident in her increasing horde of writing instruments. Rhonda has a well-rounded publication history in fiction, non-fiction, and script writing. Check out her website at www.rhondaeudaly.com for her latest publications and downloads.

Sara Felix

Sara Felix is a Texas conrunner and artist living in Austin. She started working on conventions after working with Willie Siros at the bookstore Adventures in Crime and Space. While wearing her artist hat she makes jewelry and small clay robot sculptures that she sells at art shows, and was once featured on HGTV's Crafters Coast to Coast where she crafted a flying pig. She has designed Hugo award bases for MidAmerican 2 and for Worldcon 76 with Vincent Villafranca.

Michael Ashleigh Finn

Mickey is a thematic consultant, film critic and wordmonger with specialties in genre and comparative mythologies. He's worked on everything from *Shadowrun* to the *Dresden Files* comic, floated a few Hollywood adaptations, and even performed CPR on a few scripts. He's dipped his hands into podcasting, anthology editing, synth music, foley, odd digital art and puppet consulting. Despite all this, he's never managed to crack writing a novel. He maintains this is due to never having been a short-order cook.

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Mark Finn

Mark Finn is an author, an editor, and a pop culture critic. He is a nationally-recognized authority on Robert E. Howard and has written extensively about the Texas author. He is a managing editor for Skelos Press, and he podcasts with The Gentlemen Nerds. When he is not waxing eloquent about popular culture, he writes comics and fiction, performs community theater, and runs a movie theater in North Texas with his long-suffering wife and their gregarious pit bull, Sonya.

Melanie Fletcher

When she's not writing science fiction, Melanie Fletcher writes SF, fantasy, and paranormal romance as Nicola M. Cameron, and cares not who knows it. The fourth entry in her *Two Thrones* series, *King of Blades*, was released in September, and the second entry in her *Pacifica Rising* series, *Uncertainty Principle*, will be released in November. When not writing or fabricating sterling silver jewelry, she's usually riding herd on her cats (aka the J Crew) or spending time with her husband.

Brad W. Foster

Hugo-award winning artist Brad W Foster lives to draw, and draws to live, and still loves to see his artwork in that so-last-century thing called "print". Over the decades his work has appeared in hundreds of publications, large and small, and he hopes to add a few thousand more to that list. You can learn more than you would probably care to just by spending a few hours wandering around his website, jabberwockygraphix.com.

Monalisa Foster

Monalisa won life's lottery when she escaped communism and became an unhyphenated American citizen. Despite her degree in physics, she's worked in engineering and medicine. Her primary genre is space opera with a bit, or a lot of, romance. Her novel, *Ravages of Honor*, is scheduled for release this fall.

Bill Frank

Bill Frank was one of the first members of the International Space Center Mission Control team. He happily gave up night and weekend work to move into spaceflight training as a Chief Training Officer—he leads the team that creates problems for astronauts and mission controllers during training events. His voice can be heard in the movies *Gravity*, *The Martian*, and *Transformers: The Last Knight*.

Karl Gallagher

Karl K. Gallagher is a systems engineer, currently performing data analysis for a major aerospace company. In the past he calculated trajectories for a commercial launch rocket start-up, operated satellites as a US Air Force officer, and selected orbits for government and commercial satellites. Karl lives in Saginaw, TX with his family. He writes both science fiction (the *Torchship*

trilogy) and fantasy (*The Last War*). His books are available on Amazon and Audible.

Generic Radio Workshop

Generic Radio Workshop has been around longer than the Golden Age of Radio lasted – a little over thirty years. They started with the Texas Broadcast Museum and have performed at festivals, conventions, and yes, on the radio. They use as much vintage equipment as possible for that "old time radio" feel. Plus, many of their sound effects devices are hand-built, following period designs. While they've made a few concessions to modern technology, their core practices follow radio's Golden Age.

Ben Gibbs

Ben Gibbs has been producing music and sound for various projects including three bands and fourteen albums, a live theater project, a podcast, and a legislative update, over the course of almost twenty years. He provides the music, mixing, and intentional production for the *Gentlemen Nerds* podcast. In his spare time, Ben practices law, enjoys time with his family, and tolerates a small dog.

C. Stuart Hardwick

C. Stuart Hardwick has won *Writers of the Future* and the *Jim Baen Award*, and is a regular in *Analog Science Fiction & Fact*. He leans toward hard scifi, but also writes YA & fantasy, and has been called "Bradbury meets Heinlein, with the poetry of Ursula K. Le Guin." He's built ill-conceived flying machines, married an aquanaut, and has been known to wear a cape. Check out his website for free sample stories, cstuarthardwick.com/.

Teddy Harvia

Teddy Harvia is the well-known pen name of David Thayer. He has drawn scores of wild beasts, strange BEMs, and big-nosed whiz kids from a world far from Earth who use short words to make fun of all kinds of things in scores of toons and fan art for flyers, zines, and con pubs since 1967. He lives with wife Diana and five fat cats in Dallas, Texas. To earn his keep, he works with words at a high-tech firm.

Rubiee Hayes

Rubiee Hayes is a renaissance Pooka who sings, writes, blends geeky loose-leaf teas, and creates functional pottery. It is said that her mischievous grin and bright laugh herald her arrival. She owns *Dryad Tea* and *Dryad Pottery*, where her art is available for purchase. Find her work in the art show or online!

Angie Hodapp

Angie Hodapp is the Director of Literary Development at Nelson Literary Agency. She holds a BA in English and secondary education and an MA in English and communication development, and she is a graduate of the Denver Publishing Institute at the University of

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Denver. She has worked in publishing and professional writing and editing for the better part of the last two decades and is the author of *Do You Need a Literary Agent?: The Writer-in-the-Know Guide to a Literary Agent's Role in the Publishing Industry* (January 2019). A veteran teacher and speaker, she loves helping authors hone their craft and learn about the ever-changing business of publishing.

Lee Killough

Lee Killough began storytelling at age five, making up her own bedtime stories. At age eleven these became SF/Fantasy and Mysteries when she discovered the genres in her hometown library, and led to her first publication, a short story in *Analog*. Seven older novels have been revised and published as e-books (on Amazon and Kobo). Currently in print with Yard Dog Press are: *The Leopard's Daughter*, space opera *Ancient Enemy*, and a writer's world-building aid: *Checking On Culture*.

William Ledbetter

William Ledbetter is a Nebula Award winning author, with fiction published in *Analog*, *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, *Asimov's*, *The Year's Best Military and Adventure SF*, *Yard Dog Press*, and many others. He is an unapologetic space geek and runs the annual Jim Baen Memorial Short Story Award contest for Baen Books and the National Space Society. The audio version of his best-selling science fiction thriller novel *Level Five* is available from Audible Originals.

Julia S. Mandala

Julia S. Mandala holds a BA in history from Kansas State University and a JD in law from Tulane University. In addition to being editor of *The Fantasy Writers Asylum*, an imprint of Yard Dog Press, she is a scuba diver and belly dancer. She lives in Plano, TX with her husband Larry and two very demanding, but adorable cats. She is best known as a co-author of the Four Redheads of the Apocalypse series and the Corimar series.

A. Lee Martinez

A. Lee Martinez is best known for his sparkling wit, incredible good looks, and his ability to endlessly debate the Superman VS. Batman dilemma. (Correct answer: Tarzan). Also, he's written 10 fantasy novels and managed to get paid for it. If you would like to read random thoughts from him, you can go to his website at <http://aleemartinez.com/>, or check him out on Twitter or Facebook.

Wil McCarthy

Wil McCarthy is a WIRED former contributing editor, Syfy channel science columnist, and two-time AnLab award winner. Discover magazine rated his world "P2" one of the 10 best science fiction planets of all time, and his short fiction has appeared in *Analog*, *Asimov's*, *WIRED*, and *SF Age*. His novels include the New York Times

Notable Bloom, Amazon "Best of Y2K" *The Collapsium*, and the upcoming *Antediluvian*. Previously an aerospace engineer and tech startup founder, McCarthy holds 31 issued U.S. patents.

Dawn Mennear

Dawn comes from Des Moines, IA, and she has been coming to FenCon since FenCon II and considers it one of the best run conventions, with some of the friendliest people around. She doesn't write but she reads voraciously and considers that an excellent reason to attend. She is 54, Rubenesque, and nosy in a good way. Loves to crochet and will often be seen in corners crocheting away.

Margaret Middleton

Filker Margaret Middleton is retired from 25 years of "designing piles of dirt and holes in the ground" for the Arkansas Highway Department and now lives in Starkville, MS. In between science fiction conventions, she quilts and collects songs about aviation and the space program. She also builds model rockets, both with the Civil Air Patrol cadets and on her own hook. She made it to both EAA Air Venture and NARAM's annual event this just-past July.

Helen Montgomery

Helen Montgomery is a Chicago fan who recently relocated to Seattle. She is currently a co-chair of the Chicago in 2022 Worldcon Bid, the Division Head for Events for Dublin 2019: An Irish Worldcon, and an Area Head for Capricorn in Chicago.

Helen has been active in Chicago fandom since 2000, holding many roles for Capricorn, including Conchair (twice) and serving on their Board of Directors (twice). She has worked on six Worldcons and three NASFiCs, including Chicon 7 in 2012, when she was one of three "Chairman's Flying Monkees" (Vice Chairs). She also chaired SMOFcon 2016 in Chicago.

Additionally, she is the President of the Science Fiction Outreach Project, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that promotes literacy and fandom through the reading of science fiction and fantasy.

Tim Morgan

Tim Morgan is an award-winning professional futurist who has worked with NASA Langley, Kimberly Clark, Ontario Institute of Cancer Research, & others. Tim is currently CEO of the North Texas Foresight Institute, member of the Association of Professional Futurists, a 2019 APF Emerging Fellow, past president of the Dallas Future Society, and former FenCon conchair.

Michelle Muenzler

Michelle Muenzler, also known at local conventions as "The Cookie Lady", writes fiction both dark and strange

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to counterbalance the sweetness of her baking. Her fiction and poetry have been published in magazines such as *Fireside*, *Daily Science Fiction*, and *Apex Magazine*, and she takes immense joy in crinkling words like little foil puppets.

Ethan Nahtë

Ethan Nahtë is an author, journalist, screenwriter, photographer, musician, and has several years of experience working in TV/Film/Radio. He has over thirty published stories and poems spanning speculative fiction, historical fiction, comedy, pulp, and young adult. He has two story collections: *Of Monsters & Madmen* and *The Undead Ate My Head* plus the novellas *The Savage Caged* and *Wings of Mercury* and the novelette *The Mansion on Champagne*.

Kathleen O'Brien

Kathleen M. O'Brien began sewing at age 4, learning traditional techniques from her mother and grandmother. She collects and studies vintage clothing to decipher mysteries of drape and fit found in previous eras. Her costumes include both original designs and reproductions, utilizing many historical techniques. She enjoys sharing both these skills and her collection with others and has published her first e-book *Victorian Smoking Caps*. Check out her website at vintagefashionexplained.com.

Stephen Patrick

Stephen Patrick believes Texas is the perfect state for writers and aspires to participate in the rich history of Texas storytellers, including those in *Road Kill: Texas Horror by Texas Writers, Vol 1 and 2*. Drawing from the diverse literary palette ranging from the panhandle to the coast, the desert to the big city, and every genre between, he never tires of stories from his home state. His latest work, *The Holocaust Engine* with David Rike, becomes available October 2019.

Teresa Patterson

Teresa Patterson's work includes, *The World of Shannara* with Terry Brooks, *The World of the Wheel of Time* with Robert Jordan, *No Quarter* with Robert Asprin, *Combat Corpsman* with Navy SEAL Greg McParlin, numerous short stories, and humorous history essays. Her newest work, with Navy SEAL Craig Marley, is *No Lifeguard on Duty*. When not writing she works as a balloon sculptor, kayak instructor, show horse trainer, and managing The Armory at DragonCon. She also loves to sing and entertain.

Alan J. Porter

Writer, and award-winning editor, Alan J. Porter, has written adventures featuring Sherlock Holmes, Allan Quatermain, Houdini, and private eye Rick Ruby; as well as his own New Pulp adventurers, *The Raven and The Lotus Ronin*. His pop-culture non-fiction work has featured

properties such as Batman, Star Trek, The Beatles, and James Bond. He has also written comics for Tokyopop, BOOM Studios, Marvel, Disney, and Kid Domino.

Trakena Prevost

Trakena Prevost is from the great state of Texas, where everything IS bigger. She spends time running after her young son, trying to annoy her husband to distraction, and being completely obsessed with reading. She also happens to write the fantastic stories in her head--mostly to quiet the voices there. When not writing, Trakena works in HR and spends time with family.

Trevor Quachri

Before taking the reigns of *Analog Science Fiction and Fact* as editor in 2012, Trevor Quachri started off as an editorial assistant in 1999 and worked his way up the ladder at *Analog* and *Asimov's Science Fiction*, under Stanley Schmidt, Sheila Williams, and Gardner Dozois, respectively. On top of that, he's also been a Broadway stagehand, collected data for museums, and executive produced a science fiction pilot for a basic cable channel. He lives in New Jersey with his fiancée, daughter, and way, way too many comic books.

Dusty Rainbolt

Dusty Rainbolt swears she was raised by aliens after being abandoned on Earth by grays who abhorred the TransGalactic School System. She's the author of the new Yard Dog Press paranormal mystery, *Death Under the Crescent Moon*, and coauthor of *The Four Redheads of the Apocalypse* series. She's the editor of *Stupid Gravity* Press. Her latest release is *Ghost Cats: Human Encounters with Feline Spirits*. She's written numerous books and thousands of articles on cat care, behavior, and animal hauntings.

John Randall

John Randall is the President of Zyx Labs, Executive VP of NanoRetina, VP of Teliatry, Adjunct Professor at UTDallas, and a proud former Science GoH at FenCon. John has spent his entire career as a nanofabricator, which might mean that he tells small lies. He plans world domination with Atomically Precise Manufacturing, is an amateur saxophone player, has built robots that make fine art paintings, is working to heal the blind, and loves his wife and kids.

Ravenar

Ravenar (Amora, Linda Donahue, and Julia Mandala) performs traditional and SF/Fantasy-themed belly dance. They have appeared at several World Cons and at regional conventions in the Midwest and South.

M. T. Reiten

M. T. Reiten has been absent from FenCon for a number of years, but is happy to be back. He is a researcher at

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Los Alamos National Laboratory, practices aikido, and lives in New Mexico with his beautiful wife and daughter. He is a Writers of the Future winner and has published short stories with Yard Dog Press, World Weaver Press, and in S.M. Stirling's Change anthology. His latest story is "The Post-Apocalyptic Tourist Guide: Santa Fe and Los Alamos."

Rook Riley

Rook Riley was once a military linguist, burlesque-show bouncer, Krav Maga instructor, and Department of Defense contractor. Current job titles are: Army vet, middle-school history teacher, parent, and short-story author. TL;DR: Combat vet, writer, game enthusiast, and linguistic badass.

Rob Rogers

Rob Rogers is the author of *Devil's Cape*, a superhero thriller set in Louisiana. *Devil's Cape* was a Pop Matters pick and a HeroPress book of the year. His short stories have also appeared in the anthologies *The Improbable Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, *This Mutant Life*, and *Origins & Endings*. Rob lives in Texas, where he continues to write about superheroes, pirates, aliens, mad cultists, dragons, interdimensional rifts, carnival freaks, and cowboys, often in the same stories.

Rie Sheridan Rose

Rie's short stories appear in numerous anthologies, including *Killing It Softly: Nightmare Stalkers and Dream Walkers Vols. 1 and 2*, *Avast Ye Airships*, and *In the Bloodstream* as well as Yard Dog Press' *A Bubba in Time Saves None*. *Mocha Memoirs* has the short story collection *RieTales*. Online, she has appeared in *Cease*, *Cows*, *Lorelei Signal*, and *Four Star Stories*. She is also the author of nine novels (4 in *The Conn Mann Chronicles*) and six poetry chapbooks.

Selina Rosen

Selina Rosen is the author of over twenty-five novels including *Sword Masters* and *Strange Robby*, and she has had dozens of short stories published in professional venues including *Thieves World* and *Impossible Monsters*. As editor-in-chief of Yard Dog Press she has edited ten anthologies including *Bubbas of the Apocalypse*. She is married, owns a small farm, and has kids and grandkids. She is a carpenter, a rock mason, a sword fighter, and an all-around swell gal.

Amber Royer

Amber Royer writes fun science fiction involving chocolate, aliens, lovesick AIs, time travel, VR, and more. She's the author of the *Chocoverse* series (*Book 2, Pure Chocolate*, coming March 2019 from Angry Robot Books). She's also the co-author of two cookbooks (one of which is all about chocolate). She teaches creative writing in North Texas.

Ken Ruffin

A Trekkie & former Aerospace Engineering student, Ken serves on the Board of Advisors of the National Space Society (NSS). Ken has also been the VP of the award-winning NSS of North Texas (NSS-NT) since 2016. Across North Texas, Ken gives presentations to inform and inspire audiences about "the latest and greatest information in space travel and space development". Also, "Space Peeps" are encouraged to register for the International Space Development Conference (ISDC) in May 2020.

Orlando Sanchez

Orlando has been writing ever since his teens when he was immersed in creating scenarios for playing Dungeons & Dragons with his friends every weekend. An avid reader, his influences are too numerous to list here. Some of the most prominent are: J.R.R. Tolkien, Jim Butcher, Kat Richardson, Terry Brooks, Piers Anthony, Lee Child, George Lucas, Andrew Vachss, and Barry Eisler to name a few in no particular order. The worlds of his books are urban settings with a twist of the paranormal lurking just behind the scenes and generous doses of magic, martial arts, and mayhem. He currently resides in Queens, NY with his wife and children and can often be found in the local coffee shop where most of his writing is done.

Patrice Sarath

Patrice Sarath is an author and editor living in Austin, Texas. Her novels include the fantasy books *The Sisters Mederos* and *Fog Season* (Books I and II of the *Tales of Port Saint Frey*), the *Gordath Wood* series (*Gordath Wood*, *Red Gold Bridge*, and *The Crow God's Girl*), and the romance *The Unexpected Miss Bennet*. You can find more about Patrice and her work at her website, patricesarath.com.

Martin L. Shoemaker

Martin L. Shoemaker is a programmer who writes on the side...or maybe the other way around. Programming pays the bills, but a second place in the Jim Baen Memorial Writing Contest earned him lunch with Buzz Aldrin! His *Clarkesworld* story "Today I Am Paul" won the 2016 WSFA Small Press Award and also appeared in four year's best anthologies and seven international editions. The story will continue in *Today I Am Carey*, a novel coming from Baen in March 2019.

Adrian Simmons

Adrian Simmons lives in Norman, Oklahoma. He has hoofed the Ouachita and Ozark Highlands trails, the England coast to coast trail, and the Camino de Santiago in Spain. His nonfiction has appeared in *Black Gate* and *Strange Horizons*. His fiction has been in *Lackington's*, *Strange Constellations*, *Giganotosaurus*, and the anthologies *Apotheosis* and *No Sh!t! There I Was*. In 2009 he founded the webzine *Heroicfantasyquarterly.com* and currently serves as 1/3 of its editorial staff.

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Brad Sinor

Bradley H. Sinor has many short stories published in a variety of anthologies. He has several collections: a Holmesian collection, *The Game's Afoot: A Sherlock Holmes Miscellany*, published by Pro Se Productions and a collaborated novel with his wife, Sue, in the Ring of Fire universe, called *The Hunt for the Red Cardinal*, are available on Amazon. Also his short story collection, including stories by Sue, called *Of Two Minds* is available from Yard Dog Press.

Sue Sinor

Sue Sinor started writing at the urging of her husband, Brad. She has stories in several Yard Dog Press publications, as well as others. Sue and Brad have collaborative stories in the anthology *Rotten Relations* and in *Grantville Gazette 4*, as well as several for Yard Dog Press. Most recently they have a joint collection, *Of Two Minds*, and a novel in the Ring of Fire universe titled *The Hunt For The Red Cardinal*, both available on Amazon.

Amy Sisson

Amy Sisson is a writer, reviewer, librarian, Trekkie, and crazy cat lady. Her recent short story publications include "Places We Call Home" in *Perihelion* and "Jackpot Time" in *Devilfish Review*.

Libby A. Smith

Libby A. Smith's works have appeared in the anthologies *Avast, Ye Airships* and *Haunted Holidays* as well as *4 Star Stories*, several *Caliber Comics*, *Atomic Mouse*, and in other publications. An adaptation of *The Story of the Rainbow Bridge* was designed for counted cross stitch by Sue Hillis. Libby lives in Central Arkansas with two sassy cats. She also acts on stage and in films, including *The Hanging of David O Dodd* which has aired on the Arkansas PBS station.

Tiffany Smith

Tiffany Smith has degrees in both biology and education. Within the field of biology, she is most interested in limnology, oceanography, and astrobiology. She has recently switched gears to pursue a writing career, fulfilling a lifelong dream to write science fiction; this past year, she was a finalist for the Jim Baen Memorial Short Story Award. She lives in Austin with her husband, daughter, and an ever-increasing number of pet fish.

Caroline Spector

Caroline Spector has written and edited in both the SF/F and gaming worlds. For the last ten years, she's been a contributor to the *Wild Cards* series, appearing most recently in *High Stakes, Knaves Over Queens*, and the upcoming *Texas Hold 'Em*. Her *Wild Card* novella, "Lies My Mother Told Me," appeared in the critically acclaimed anthology *Dangerous Women*. Her story "The Flight of Morpho Girl" (co-authored with Bradley Denton) is on *Tor.com*.

Mike Stewart

Mike Stewart has participated in the Role Playing Game industry for the past fifteen years. His recent work, the Steampunk Superhero RPG *Victorious* was the 2017 winner of the Three Castles RPG Award. His other writing runs the gamut from RPG and wargaming writing to fiction and nonfiction academic work as a professor of Victorian history. He and his wife Liz host the *Save for Half* podcast, a show about Old School RPGs and the modern games inspired by them.

Kathryn Sullivan

Kathryn Sullivan writes young adult science fiction and fantasy. Any place and any object is at risk of appearing in her stories – the river bluffs surrounding Winona, MN, where she lives, can become the windswept cliffs of an alien planet or the deep mysterious woods of a fantasy tale. She is owned by a large cockatoo, who graciously allows her to write about other animals, as well as birdlike aliens.

Shanna Swendson

Shanna Swendson is best known as the author of the *Enchanted, Inc.* series from Ballantine Books, the YA steampunk fantasy *Rebel Mechanics*, and a variety of geeky pop-culture essays published by BenBella Books. She can occasionally be lured out of her writing cave by movies, promises of Doctor Who episodes, conventions, or new books calling to her from the library or bookstore. Or tea or chocolate (or tea and chocolate, but not chocolate tea).

Mel Tatum

Mel writes songs, short stories, essays, and assorted academic articles. Her short stories can be found in Yard Dog Press anthologies and her songs online, in folk circles, and on the CATH Benefit CD. For those desperately seeking an insomnia cure, her academic articles are also available online.

The Doubleclicks

The Doubleclicks are a folk-pop sibling duo, featuring clever lyrics about dinosaurs, literature, love, and the Internet—with a cello, guitar, and meowing kitten keyboard. Their latest CD *Love Problems* debuted at number one on the Billboard comedy albums chart, and they've toured the world, playing at conventions, comedy festivals, living rooms, and one time in a circus in Australia. Their songs and YouTube videos have been viewed over 4 million times and are frequently featured on *BoingBoing*, *io9*, and *NPR*.

The Fogeys

Dennis Donigan, James Harbich, and Chuck Hall were all part of a group that played guitars and sang at nursing homes. Dene Foye, a Celtic singer, started playing Irish music with Dennis, who talked him into performing with them. The nursing home loved what

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they did...so the Fogeys were born. Eclectic, they have played Christmas, folk, pop, rock, blues, patriotic, country music, & now FILK!!!

Tex Thompson

Ariane "Tex" Thompson is a 'rural fantasy' author, egregiously enthusiastic speaker, and professional ruckus-raiser. She is the author of the *Children of the Drought* epic fantasy Western trilogy, an instructor for the Writers Path at SMU, and 'chief instigator' of WORD – Writers Organizations 'Round Dallas.

Triskelion

Triskelion started as a group of friends who enjoyed playing music for fun, using MusicOnFriday as their Yahoo group. Inspired by a love of Celtic music, Triskelion brings a variety of musical talent to the stage. Floyd Brigdon's background playing guitar for rock bands (and a begrudging country band or two) and as a singer/songwriter, Sarah Brigdon's as a church vocalist, and Leah Tharp's rhythm 12-string guitar and vocals blend together to bring a joyful and diverse blend of harmonies.

Katherine Turski

Kathy Turski writes the way she looks--short and funny. She's published in *Flush Fiction*, *A Bubba in Time Saves None*, *The Anthology From Hell*, and *Uncle John's Bathroom Reader*. Her humor essay, "My Inner Fat Girl", is in *You & Me Magazine*. Kathy lives in North Texas with her husband. She's retired after clerking for a local library for 32 years and loves old movies, baking,

and coming up with weird story ideas--mainly fueled with caffeine and chocolate.

Laura J. Underwood

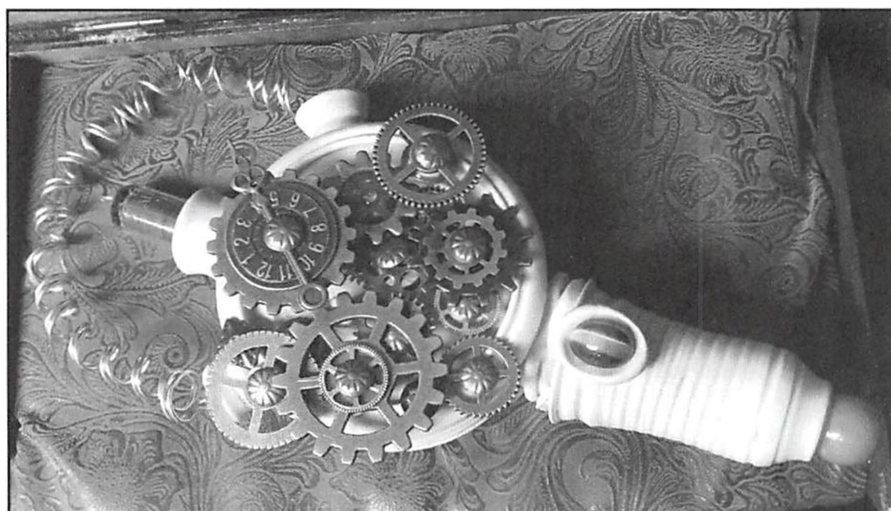
Laura J. Underwood is that strange librarian who writes, draws, plays harp, and collects BJDs. She mostly writes epic fantasy but occasionally delves into darker elements like bubbas versus zombies and old folklore. Her latest novel is *Angels of Mercy*, the story of a small town librarian fighting dark elves and bogies in East Tennessee. She is best known for her *Ard-Taebh Chronicles* available from Yard Dog Press and her gonzo mystery collaborations with Selina Rosen.

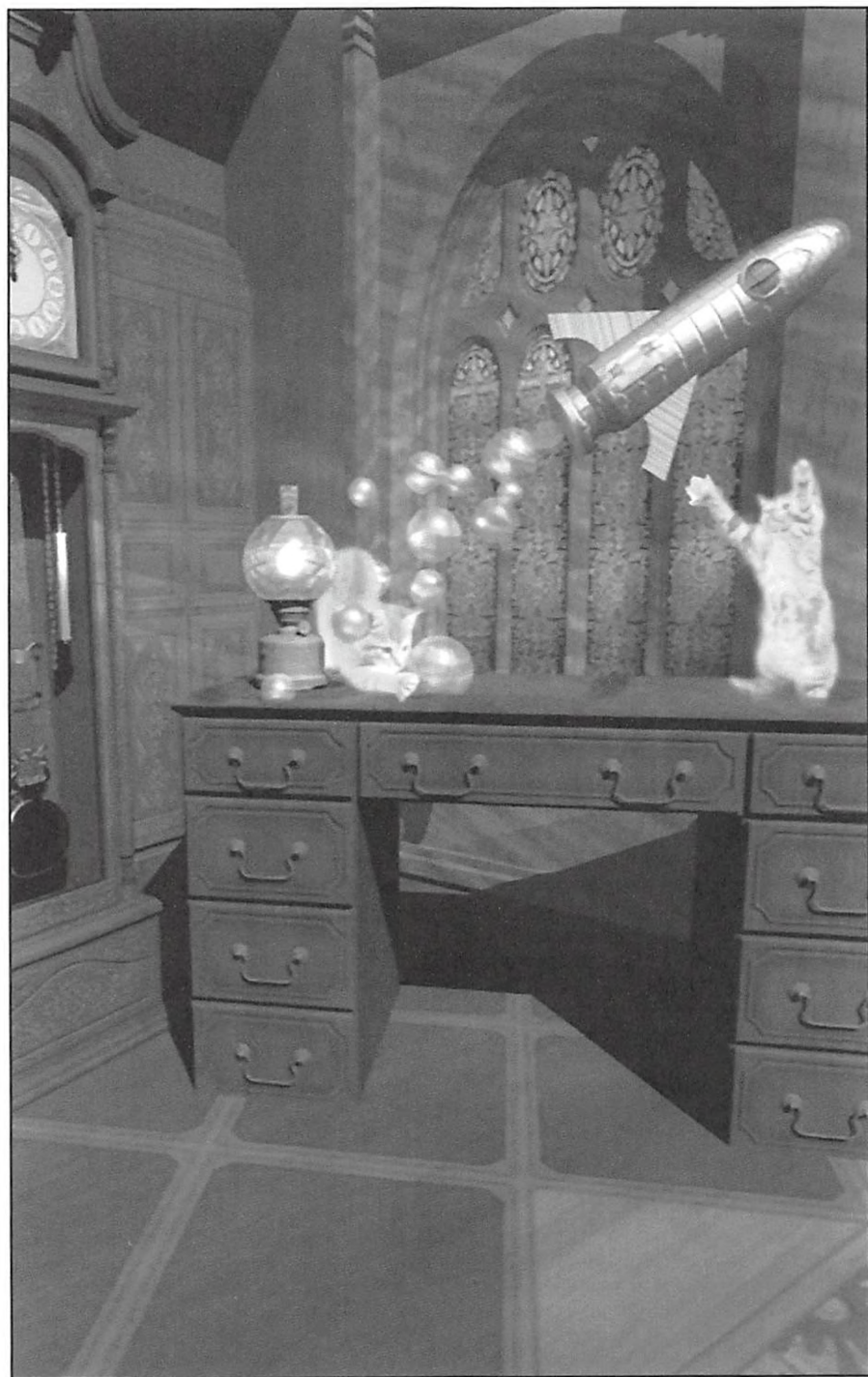
Melanie Unruh

Melanie Unruh is a Denver-area artist and maker, specializing in decorative and functional pottery and fantasy and historical sartorial arts. A life-long fan of science fiction and fantasy literature, alternate worlds influence the styles and themes of her art. Melanie is a founding member of the Convention Artists Guild.

Mel. White

Known to her kids as "Indiana Mom", Mel. has gone back to school to become "Dr. Indiana Mom." She still works on fossils for the Museum of Nature and Science, and is now a volunteer educator at Trinity River Audubon Center as well as a Texas Master Naturalist. She's also a proud member of the Yard Dog Press gang, with a story in *A Bubba in Time Saves None*. ●





THINGS I'M NOT ALLOWED TO TALK ABOUT:

by Trevor Quachri

Being the editor of *Analog* is a tremendous responsibility for a number of reasons, ranging from the magazine's long and esteemed history (we're just about to hit our 90th anniversary) and the readers who trust me to challenge and entertain them, to the power inherent in having an editor's page.

I prefer to share the power of the editorial whenever possible -- an ongoing expectation that I Will Be Listened To is just the kind of thing to make a "platform" quickly seem like a soapbox, and then a pulpit in short order. We don't need some blowhard with a captive audience complaining about minuscule bits of their day-to-day or how Everybody Else is Wrong.

So I find it works out well to "lend the keys," so to speak, to someone who has a pressing need to say something specific.

In spite of all that, I don't actually have complete freedom to talk about just *any* subject that crosses my mind. After all, *Analog* has a very specific mission statement. While "hard SF" includes lots of interesting material, there are limits. I typically keep subjects confined to the science-fiction-related (obviously), or barring that, cultural commentary that, as best I am able, falls squarely under a pro-reason, pro-science rubric. So: an "overblown fear of drones" editorial here, a "dangerous trend toward conspiracy theories in public life" editorial there.

So what *can't* I talk about? I'm glad you asked!

Politics: Stanley Schmidt once observed that people only notice politics that they don't agree with, and that has certainly been true in my experience. If I run ten stories where nine of them lean one way, and the tenth leans the other, you can bet I'm going to get irate letters about that *one* story from people who agree with the first *nine*, telling me to "Keep politics out of the fiction!" Folks have a real selective memory sometimes.

Fantasy: I love fantasy almost as much as I love science fiction, but I *never* get to talk about it. I

discovered them both at about the same time, and even though I vaguely understood genre differences as a child, I didn't really consider them important. Sure, they were separate, but they all still "went together," like how the peas and potatoes and chops on your plate are all still dinner. I first got hooked by fairly run-of-the-mill D&D-esque high fantasy (and I still occasionally run an actual D&D game for some authors in New York), and Susan Cooper's stellar *The Dark is Rising* series, but the stuff that kept me around into adulthood was Fritz Leiber, Lord Dunsany, C.L. Moore, Gene Wolfe, and Robert Howard (of course he was going to come up: we're talking about fantasy, in *Texas*), as well as Moorcock's Elic (particularly the early stories), LeGuin's Earthsea series, Michael Shea's *Niff the Lean*, Yves Meynard's *The Book of Knights*, and even John Steinbeck's unfinished *The Acts of King Arthur and His Noble Knights*.

The thing that the fantasy I prefer has in common with hard SF, interestingly, is often *rules*. In genres where just about anything can happen, limitations set the tone. What can't be done is as important as what can, and that's true whether you're trying to invoke the feeling of half-remembered codes of conduct when dealing with faerie, or trying to research a plausible way to incorporate semi-organic carbon nanotubes into the chitin of your aliens to get around the square-cube law.

Ultimately, it's about playing fair. One of Raymond Chandler's Ten Commandments for a mystery novel was "It must be honest with the reader" -- no withholding evidence until the final scene, for example -- and this applies to science fiction and fantasy every bit as much as it does mysteries: no overly-convenient prophecies or nonsense "science" that just happens to do precisely what's needed to propel the plot forward.

Sex: Every once and again, I come across someone who expresses, either directly or through implication, the lingering misconception that "science fiction is for kids," and I'm always surprised by it. It's almost never actual readers of the magazine with this opinion, but sometimes

someone will flip through a copy in the store and they're shocked to discover adult subject matter. We endeavor to 1) not be gratuitous; and 2) have the broadest appeal possible, but trying to please absolutely everyone results in pap, and we're not a children's publication. So people shocked at sex in stories will remain a periodic reminder to carefully consider just how necessary any given instance is. Admittedly, I've yet to actually think of a subject for an editorial that would require me to talk about it, but based on how well it usually goes over in the rest of the magazine, I'm not exactly wracking my brain to do it. The same holds true, by and large, for "salty" language.

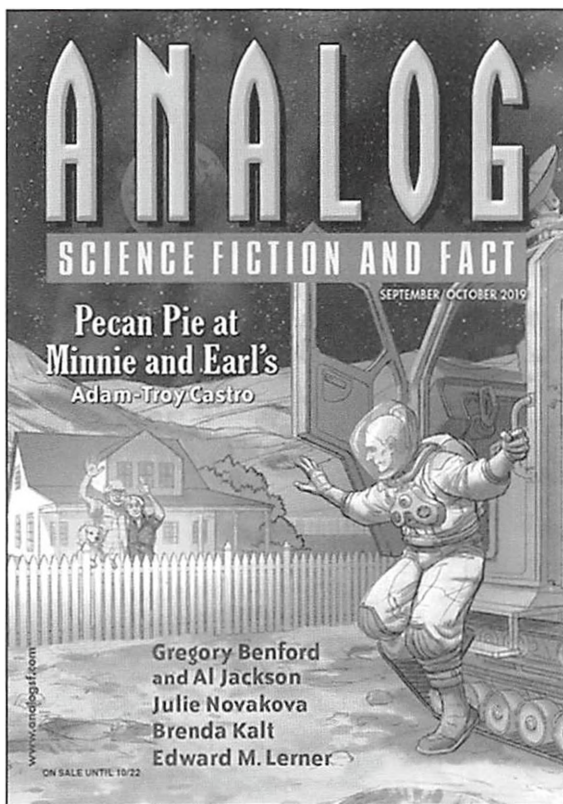
Politics: Nope, not gonna poke that bear.

Horror: Like science fiction and fantasy, I'm a big fan of horror (though I usually see it as more of a narrative "layer," rather than a neatly self-contained genre of its own: you can have SF

horror; fantasy horror, etc.) but I almost never get to use any, and it took me a long time to figure out why. Even setting aside supernatural elements that would be at odds with SF, a lot of horror involves "Things Mankind Was Not Meant To Know," or has "We Never Should Have Played God" as its thematic heart (In fact, *Frankenstein*, arguably the very first science fiction novel, is about just this.), and I can't think of a message that *less* embodies the spirit of *Analog*. *Analog's* position is that human reason ultimately makes the world a better place, and that cuts out a *lot* of horror. So alas: I've seen some great horror stories come in, but I haven't been able to use them.

Politics: Still no.

Well! It's a relief to get all that off my chest! Thanks for letting me borrow your soapbox, FenCon! ●



IMAGINING IMMORTALITY. OR HOW I CAME TO WRITE A BLOG

by Julie E. Czerneda

Hello FenCon folks.

I'm honoured to be your science GOH. Grateful too. While I haven't been in a lab or classroom for some time, science is part of me. I care passionately about, well, all of it and my writing is chock full of the real stuff.

*Side note: Except when I write fantasy, as I did earlier this year with *The Gossamer Mage*. That's when I try my best not to think like a scientist—or SF writer, for that matter—other than keeping my interest and reading. Feel free to ask me about that.*

Fortunately, I'll be spending the summer before meeting you writing my next SF title and need to get right back into the thick—or rather slime and sex—of biology. What am I to write? Why *Mirage*, featuring, yes, my now famous semi-immortal blob of blue goodness, Esen-alit-Quar. Which is why the perfect reset to science for me? Sharing with you how science brought this, my favourite character, to life.

Bonus? You'll get a deep dive into how I think. Convoluted, maybe. With occasional weird. A fair helping of the ridiculous and as much wide-eyed wonder as I can squeeze into this lifetime.

Always with science. In Esen's case?

Especially biology.

Immortality, really?

Early on, (when *Space Ghost* was new.) I found immortal characters in science fiction to be either tragic and lovelorn, or rather nasty bits of work you really don't want to live forever.

Had I wanted to be nasty myself, I'd also have pointed out such immortals, unless inhabiting non-biological bodies, were typically explained by magic or supernatural forces. Don't get me wrong. Since, I've wept and gasped and shaken

my head knowingly because Things Won't Go Well with thorough enjoyment.

I just didn't see me writing anything about immortals. Science was my jam, as they say, and SF stories the best labs of all. You can ask me about that too.

Until I was teaching population dynamics in an ecology course to biology undergrads one day. As you do, I prepared graphs. Number of offspring versus lifespan being a favourite. (R-K strategies, for those inclined to check details.) Simply put, species who produce vast numbers of offspring—think shrimp—tend as individuals to live far shorter lives than, say, species who produce a handful—think us, having hands.

Why? It comes down to the cost of parental care. If you're able to gaily toss thousands of sperm or eggs into an ocean current, relying on chance meetings to create the next generation, well, you can't really claim to have any at all. From that laissez-faire approach to us, and elephants, there's a brilliant (and weird and joyfully ridiculous) spectrum of "do we or don't we" in nature. There are wasps who stand guard over offspring not their own. Father frogs who kick away predatory wasps from their eggs. Birds who blithely leave their eggs to the care of other species. Alligators mothers guard their eggs and hatchlings, tenderly carrying them in their jaws to water. Mourning Doves need practice before their eggs don't drop out of poorly constructed nests. Caribou, like many prey species, run with their herd within a few breaths of birth.

Our offspring? Born able to squirm, a little, but that's okay. We feed and cuddle and care for them throughout this helpless stage. Which lasts quite a while, compared to other organisms but baby humans have much to learn. Language. Social interaction. Coordination. We teach them. Send them to school for more teaching. (Takes a community, after all.) Continue to care for them until they are ready (we hope) to live on their own,

then go on to be part of their lives (we hope) for the rest of ours. Now that's an investment!

Whatever the strategy a species has evolved, suffice to say we mustn't judge. It's the one that's worked for them. (I quite like cuddling, truth be told.)

Where was I? Oh yes. Immortality. One night, inflicted by whimsy as one is, I drew the line on my population graph to infinity and beyond. To an immortal life. Ish.

Look at that. The longer-lived the species, the more time spent in parental care, the vanishingly few the offspring. I knew that, but until then I hadn't quite visualized a peculiar consequence of immortality.

If you didn't want to spend all that life in parental care, you'd avoid pregnancy like the plague. (Not to mention the universe would fill up with, well, you if you didn't.)

Interesting.

I pondered the biological parameters needed for a virtually immortal form of life. Being able to clear the wastes, toxins, and debris generated by living from cells would help, perhaps even be enough. We now know *Hydra* fit into this category, constantly renewing their bodies with new cells under ideal conditions. Back then, I elected for a model where mass could be sacrificed to provide energy to modify, renew, and cleanse cells.

Such control, at the molecular level, would require perfect form memory. A knowledge of self to the deepest possible level. With no sense of where this fun new thought would lead me, I realized the consequence would be no one shape would be required, beyond the convenience of the moment. Shiny! I'd semi-immortal shapeshifters.

Side note: I keep qualifying my immortal beings as semi-, virtually, etc. because I am a biologist and to me life depends on death and decay. Plus being able to be killed makes a plot that much more interesting, doesn't it?

Not that I'd a plot. I set them in space, consuming the energy radiated by stars etc.; an ecosystem of one thing, if you will. They'd be extremely rare and few. Roam the universe while possibly humming in century-long stanzas, not that they'd throats. Even then, I saw them more as jelly-like

blobs (a tribute of sorts to my favourite SF space invasion creature).

And that would have been that...

Except for my science fiction writer's itch to add "what if?" What if such beings existed?

To start with, what would they do with all that time?

They wouldn't be bored, that's for sure. I've no patience for the immortal scenario of "seen it all, nothing will ever again be new, want to die now." The very world we stand on constantly changes. Continents shift. Mountains rise and erode. Living things adapt and evolve at rates that themselves change. Storms roll around the planet, carrying sand from deserts to enrich oceans and we? We humans find new things every second and every where we look. We create new things. We try to talk to everything remotely capable of it and we refuse to be limited, even by ourselves.

Imagine, then, a being who had multitudes of worlds like ours to examine. Every form of life through space—and time.

Ta Da! They'd be archivists. I made my immortal shapeshifters archivists of us. More specifically, of the accomplishments of what would be, to them, curious noisy flickers of civilization. Ephemeral species who appear, become interesting by creating culture, language, and art, then go extinct, to be forgotten by everyone else. Archivists of the biology too, for shapeshifters would need to be able to assume a form, to learn about it. (Remember I said that.)

Data capacity? No problem. After all, when you store memory in wetware, so to speak, you've room for a great deal. I'd another thought, while watching my hatchling Northern Pike ("Killer") consume hapless goldfish. My beings could share their memories with one another by mutually chowing down.

Ouch?

I envisioned this as a precise exchange of mass, presorted to contain the new and interesting memories, including body shape. What one had learned, or more accurately assimilated throughout their biochemical memory, the rest would know. There'd be six of them, I decided,

the seniormost, Ersh, having reluctantly budded five times in her immense lifespan and now stuck with caring for the lot, her "web of sisters," forever. Which was fun and good and fascinating, at least to me, but where was the story?

Side note: One of the things SF writers, including myself, find themselves doing is talking to scientists about how to look beyond their current hypotheses. To find their story. Often that's to speculate on other applications or societal impacts should their work go in particular directions. Or to help generate those directions. It's really fun to watch their faces. I'm sure mine. As I was thinking about my semi-immortal shapeshifters, had much the same expression of perplexed but willing brain "boom."

Fortunately for me, all I needed was Esen-alit-Quar to arrive. Esen for short, Es between friends or in a hurry. Who does go "boom" by the way, but that's not this topic.

You see, I'd envisioned my semi-immortal shapeshifters with constraints. Key among them was when taking a different biological form, you run by its rules. You are the person you are in whatever form you take. Ersh, for instance, is an extremely old human female missing an arm (a misadventure remembered perfectly) and can be no "one" else of that species.

Side note: Why "she"? Because my web beings reproduced, like Hydra, by budding a piece of themselves. Parthenogenesis. As a biologist, I identify the source of the next generation's germinal material as female and I gave it no more thought than that when I started. As a result, when the first of these books were published in the nineties, this gave me more female characters in play than most SF of the time. Science for the win!

Running by rules means what happens naturally to another species will happen to you. How you appear at different ages, for example. When you grow hair under your armpits, or lose it from your head. Grow scales or develop annoying acne.

Still no story, but I knew I was close. I needed... a problem for Ersh and her Web.

What if one of the Web, budded properly from Ersh, took her duties as archivist a step further? I gave her, Ansky, a hobby. Sex, not a Web function but definitely common and natural among other species, fascinated her. Ansky indulged as often as possible, over millennia, secure in the belief nothing would happen but being stuck in a form during the occasional pregnancy. Uninterested in learning parental care, she'd leave the absolute normal new member of her chosen species behind and go forth to do it again.

Until Ansky gave birth to what should have been a Lanivarian pup, and it turned out to take after Mom instead of Dad.

Her web-kin were appalled. Ersh was horrified. Esen, new, youngest, and utterly uninformed, cooed.

Esen was, in story terms, a pure gift. Her arrival disrupted the placid, planned lives of Ersh's Web. As she grew up, she'd make mistakes and one would be a biggie. Meaning well as she always did, she'd reveal the existence of her kind to... let's see...

The worse possible choice. A First Contact, Alien Culture and Linguistics Specialist named Paul Ragem. Kind, brilliant, Human, and oh yes.

Curious to his core.

Side note: Paul's not immortal. Before you worry if this means their story takes that turn towards the trauma of immortality of out-living those you care about. nope. While there are brief moments in their stories when that comes up, it's not the point. Esen and Paul are too busy in the now.

I still, decades later, sit back to admire the Dear Little Blob. Through Esen, I can play with any and all biological oddities of this world. Through Esen and Paul, I can tackle themes such as friendship, trust, and messy compromise. While having a great deal of fun with slime.

Science led me here. I make a living from my own love of the weird wonders of nature. If there is true immortality to grasp, I believe it lies in the legacy of living things, including us.

Oh, and cuddles. ●

**DAW
CONGRATULATES
GUEST OF HONOR
JULIE E. CZERNEDA**



THE BALLAD OF LUCY BLUE

by Angie Hodapp

Home for Difficult Girls stands Lucy Blue. She holds a spyglass to her eye and looks out across the channel where, two miles west, the mainland is burning. Fat-bellied bombers soar low across the horizon, making short work of turning the city to rubble and ruin. Incendiaries fall. Fire blooms. Smoke billows. Lucy, even way out here on Charling Island, feels the old house shudder beneath her boots. The bombardment has been in full swing for some twenty minutes now. An eternity. The day is fading to dusk, yet still the bombers come.

The havoc is part of some game, one that until now Lucy understood was being played far, far away—perhaps near enough to Charling Island, but never this near, and certainly not near enough to seem anything more than a thrilling abstraction. She has a vague knowledge of the players: a queen, a president, a prime minister, a chancellor, and a kaiser. But which sent the bombers? She cannot guess.

She lowers the spyglass and peers out at the ferry that has just left the island. It motors south, not toward the mainland, of course, but parallel to it. Where will they go? And once they arrive, who will take in Matron and Cook and Nurse and forty-nine Difficult Girls?

Surely, Lucy thinks, the evacuation plan for Charling Island had been mislaid or forgotten. Perhaps the procedures were somewhere in Matron's office, in a black book high on a dusty shelf or at the bottom of a drawer Matron never opened. Surely such a plan stipulated a roll call or, at the very least, a count of heads. Yet here she is, and there they go. Any plan to evacuate the island in a sensible manner that ensured no one would be left behind has, at this moment of true crisis, been good and truly ignored.

Not that she would have gone with them. Lucy Blue planned long ago to never, ever leave Charling Island. For this, she has her reasons. Still, the fact that no one came to find her before the ferry shoved off rankles.

The evacuation, such as it was, went quite poorly. Chaos reigned. Some of the Difficult Girls screamed. Some cried. Others went pale and dumb. They pressed their hands over their ears to muffle the wail of the air-raid sirens and the low growl of the bombers approaching from the north. All of them ran. Whether they ran the right way, the wrong way, or in circles, they ran. There was much pulling and pushing and shouting by Matron and Cook and Nurse until, eventually, forty-nine Difficult Girls found their way down the stairs, down the hill, down the rocky path to the dock. *Down, down, down* they fled, and such was their panic that no one noticed Lucy Blue fleeing *up*.

Up went Lucy Blue. Up, up, up to the attic, where she retrieved her spyglass from its hiding place. She crawled out the window onto the widow's walk in time to watch the ferry leave without her. Lucy looks to the mainland again. What she sees sets her knees to knocking.

The bombers are banking east. They are coming this way, flying low and tight. Flying straight toward Charling Island.

Surely they won't bomb the island! Surely it's too small and of no consequence! Surely...

Lucy is sure of nothing, except that staying on Charling Island is the choice she made, the choice she always knew she would make. Even if it meant her end.

Standing tall, Lucy faces the bombers. They are angels of death, black wings stretched wide and soaring out of a magnificent orange sky, out of sunset and fire and thick, black smoke.

Their droning grows louder, and louder still. The sound burrows into the very marrow of Lucy's bones and shakes her from the inside out. She sets her jaw to keep her teeth from clacking. She would clap her hands over her ears, she would close her eyes, but she finds she cannot move. She is frozen. The bombers are close now, so many she

can't count, so near she can just make out the shapes heads and shoulders, pilots and gunners hunched behind domed glass.

And then they are flying over.

Such noise! The roar chokes out every thought in Lucy's head like nettles choking a hedge. There is nothing left inside her that can sense anything but these machines. Nothing exists but the sound of their engines beating against the inside of her chest like a hundred-hundred hearts, and for a wild moment Lucy is part of them, she is whole in a way that makes her realize she was not whole before now, and in this moment, she thinks, *Take me with you!*

She waits for a bomb to fall, to crush her and flatten the house and break Charling Island into a thousand-thousand rocks that will tumble into the sea. No bomb comes, and the planes are already gone, their drone growing distant. They were not angels of death come to take Lucy away from the island. They were metal and glass and rivets, made and operated by men who follow orders.

Only now does Lucy close her eyes. She is alive and standing. She inhales, one slow breath after another, until the acrid stench of fuel and smoke and death dissipates and she can once again smell the salty sea and the sweetness of Matron's late-summer roses. She listens until there are only the familiar sounds of Charling Island: a loose shutter banging lazily against a dormitory window, the creaking of the cedars beyond Cook's vegetable garden, waves breaking against the rocky shore.

She opens her eyes. What now, now that she is alone?

Now, she supposes, she will go down to the kitchen. She will find matches and light the stove. She will warm herself a bowl of soup and a cup of tea. She will lie on her bed and wait, as she has always waited.

She hikes her skirt and lifts a boot over the sill, but something catches her eye. Down at the end of the dock, a girl jumps up and down, one arm waving madly at the departing ferry. The ferry is little more than a speck in the distance that shows no sign of coming about.

Lucy sighs and collapses the spyglass against her palm. Just as she was growing accustomed to the idea of being here alone, the population of Charling Island is not one Difficult Girl, but two.

*

Down in the kitchen, Lucy heats two bowls of soup, steeps two cups of tea. Night has fallen. The house is dark. By candlelight, Lucy sips her supper. The other Difficult Girl, whichever one she is, will eventually give up on the ferry and return to the house. When she does, Lucy will offer a hospitable welcome.

But the girl does not return. Across the table, the second bowl of soup and the second cup of tea grow cold.

Lucy washes the dishes, then dries them and stacks them in the cupboard. She lights a lamp and moves toward the cellar. The girl must be hungry, but if she is one of those silly girls who are afraid that empty houses are not empty at all but full of ghosts that float along ceilings and ghouls that lie in wait beneath beds, then she may be too afraid to return at all. Lucy will take her a bit of bread and cheese and assure her that any dark house is merely dark and nothing more.

Halfway down the cellar stairs, Lucy smells something bright and sharp. She swings the lantern high. A shelf has tipped. All around it lie hundreds of broken jars: pickles and beets, carrots and beans, relishes and jams and jellies and marmalades. Lucy's heart sinks. All Cook's hard work! There are plenty of other shelves and plenty of other jars, but still. The work of an entire season seeps into the dirt floor. The sight is a disappointment.

How did the shelf tip? She frowns. The bombardment caused the house to tremble, but only a little. Whatever the cause, Lucy resolves that tomorrow, she will set the cellar to rights.

By moonlight, she makes her way to the dock. The girl is still there, sitting now, chin on drawn-up knees. She is watching the mainland burn.

Lucy holds up the lamp and steps lightly so as not to startle her. The girl jumps anyway, of course. When she turns, Lucy sees that tears streak her puffy cheeks.

"It's two of us they left behind, is it?" says the girl. "Or is it more?"

"Only you, really," says Lucy. "I stayed behind on purpose."

"Whatever for?"

"I have my reasons."

Lucy watches the question form on the girl's lips, but after a moment of consideration, the girl remains silent.

Surprised, Lucy smiles. The Difficult Girls of Charling Island have never been known for their manners, which is why Lucy has never befriended them. Better to keep one's own counsel than to speak one's soul to those who would throw it to the wind. But this girl is different. This is a girl who understands discretion, perhaps even values it as Lucy does.

For the first time in her life, Lucy thinks she might make a friend. Something that feels like a flower unfolding stirs in her heart. She has never had a friend.

She looks more closely at the girl and recognizes her as the newest arrival to Charling Island, shipped across the channel and assigned a bed only a week ago. She looks to be near Lucy's age, sixteen or seventeen. A dark braid hangs down the middle of her back, a braid from which unruly tendrils have escaped to blow wild across her face. The girl seems not to notice.

Lucy knows neither the girl's name nor the nature of her transgression. But she knows which question is impolite to ask, and whether or not Lucy Blue is a Difficult Girl, she is nothing if not polite. She asks the girl her name.

"Polly May."

"I'm Lucy Blue. Here." She offers a small parcel.

With one hand, Polly takes it and folds back the cloth. When she sees the bread and cheese inside, her shoulders slump a little, as though until now she has been holding herself taut as guy-line, and this small kindness has afforded her some slack.

"Thank you," says Polly.

Lucy sits beside her, setting the lamp on the dock between them. She is careful not to stare, but she notices that Polly does everything with her left hand. Her right she holds snug against her ribs.

"Matron will come back for us, won't she?" Polly asks. "She'll send a boat once they've found a safe place and realized—"

"Nothing is certain, I'm afraid," Lucy interrupts. She does not mean to sound curt, but she finds she wants to douse any ideas Polly might have about leaving the island.

Side by side, the girls fix their eyes on the horizon, a fiery knife slicing dark sky from dark water.

Presently, Polly heaves a great sigh, her shoulders slumping a little more. "Is this the end of the world?"

Lucy remembers the bombers, how they commandeered her every sense, untethered her, made her feel as though she wanted to fly, and all there was to do was step into the air and do it. Then she remembers the dark shapes of the men hunched behind their controls.

"Those fires are the work of men, and men can only play at the end of the world. They cannot bring it about."

"I'm glad to hear you say it because I need to get to the mainland immediately."

Surfiness sours Lucy's tongue. "What mainland? Are we not looking at the same destruction? Are you blind?"

"I have a little sister there. She needs me."

Lucy, still in a temper, locks her heart tight against this revelation. She does not want to think of Polly's little sister, who is likely dead or dying. She does not want Polly to think of such things either. Instead, Lucy thinks of the rowboat pulled up and turned over on the south shore of the island, its oars tucked neatly underneath, and wonders where to hide it. Would Polly know about it already? Lucy isn't sure. She cannot remember when it was last taken out or by whom. And anyway, the boat is meant for tending Cook's lobster traps and getting around to the island's east beach to dig clams. It is not meant

for crossing the channel. Anyone mad enough to attempt it would be lost at sea. Wouldn't they? Surely they would.

Yet Lucy knows deep down, though she can't say *how* she knows, that the rowboat is sturdy enough to make the trip, but Polly is merely a slip of a thing and wouldn't have the strength to row. Yes, hiding the boat from Polly would be a kindness. Besides, Lucy knows how to grow vegetables and which spices and vinegars to use to preserve them. She knows how to nurture the apple and chestnut trees, catch fish, tend rain barrels, and chop wood. She knows how to staunch the worst of the icy drafts that plague the old house in winter. In summer, she knows just which windows to open at which times of day to usher in the coolest breezes. The two of them can live here quite happily for a long, long time.

Lucy is suddenly aware that silence has fallen and is ashamed of her manners. A friend would assure Polly that her sister escaped the bombing, that she is alive, that the two of them will be reunited. Yet the silence has drawn on long enough to have become awkward, and she is at a loss as to how to break it.

Before she can worry any longer, Polly says. "I'm not a Difficult Girl."

"Nor am I."

Polly huffs. "I bet all the Difficult Girls all say that, don't we? Fine. Do you want to know the truth? I'm a thief. I stole."

Lucy bites her lip.

"Don't you want to know the whole of it?"

"It would be impolite of me to ask."

Polly shakes her head. "You're a strange one, Lucy Blue, but I feel I can trust you. I'm going to tell you why I'm here."

*

I started working for Mrs. Emory, a dressmaker, when I was nine. Taking up hems, letting out seams, mending tears, that sort of thing. She paid me a respectable wage, enough to keep my little sister fed, my mother in her gin, and our landlord off our doorstep.

Last spring, Mrs. Emory received a shipment all the way from China: twenty bolts of the most beautiful silks you can imagine. Blues the color of peacocks and robin's eggs. Jade and emerald and another green the color of new grass in spring. Reds and oranges like fire. Purple fit for kings. Bright saffron and soft yellow like the down of a chick. Magenta and copper and cream and...oh, it was all so lovely I could hardly breathe!

Society ladies filled the shop for days, slipping off their gloves to finger the silks, remarking on their fine quality and the richness of their colors, putting in their orders. So many orders! For weeks, Mrs. Emory required me to work from sunup until well past dark. She did not trust me on the new treadle yet, so the hand-sewing was left to me. I stitched and stitched until I was so tired I pricked my fingers, until my back ached and my eyes crossed.

You'd think I minded, but I didn't. I was being paid for the extra work, but it was the silk that kept me going. It slipped like quicksilver beneath my fingers. My needle slid through it as easily as a fish glides through water. It was heaven for a girl like me. All I could think is how someday I would have my own shop like Mrs. Emory's. I, too, would buy silk from China and fill orders for fancy society ladies. I would have sent Willa—that's my sister—to study in the city by then, and she'd have come back something grand: a medical doctor, an inventor, a scientist. I would employ a poor shop girl and teach her everything I know. I would be kind to her as Mrs. Emory was to me.

At the end of each day, I was to collect the scraps that had fallen to the floor, then press them and lay them aside. The small pieces would become embellishments. The large, Mrs. Emory explained, would make dresses for little girls.

Little girls. Little girls like Willa, whose sixth birthday was two weeks away.

I was careful about the scraps I stole. Not too much of this color, not too much of that. You'd think Mrs. Emory would have inventoried every precious thread, but she was busy and she trusted me. Perhaps that makes my stealing from her worse, but once I started, I couldn't stop.

For two weeks, I stitched until after nightfall for Mrs. Emory. Then I walked home, silk scraps

lining my pockets, and stitched for Willa until well after midnight.

On the morning of Willa's birthday, I gave her a patchwork dress. Every piece, panel, and placket was a different color. It was ridiculous, really, fit for a circus performer. But when Willa held up that dress, every color shone in her eyes. I meant it to be worn around the house for playing pretend, but Willa was only six and had never touched such finery, had never seen so many colors in our drab rooms. I should have realized that to her, the dress would be more than a plaything.

I told her she was never to wear it outside, and she promised she wouldn't. But then came the day we quarreled.

Our mother had been sauced for days, lifting her head from her pillow only to pour more gin down her throat. A spree like that always made Willa crabby. She clung to me that day as I tried to leave for Mrs. Emory's, but I pulled her off and scolded her and told her to have the dishes washed and the floor swept before I came home. She screamed that she would not, that I couldn't make her, and threw herself kicking to the floor. Exasperated, I left, not realizing until I was almost to Mrs. Emory's that I had left my lunch pail on the sideboard.

Lunchtime came. I had no food but plenty of work, so when the bell over Mrs. Emory's door chimed, I didn't bother peeking out from behind the curtain that separated the shop from the workroom. It was Mrs. Emory's shocked gasp that brought me hurrying out.

There in the middle of Mrs. Emory's shop stood Willa, clothed in all her silken-patchwork glory. And there in her hand was my lunch pail.

She had no way of understanding what she had just done. Willa was always kind, and she had come to make peace, but she was strong-willed as well. It was her choice to wear that dress. And wear it she did—straight under the nose of the woman who would recognize it for what it was.

And me for what I was.

In that moment, all my years of service, all my hard-won mastery of dressmaking, were nothing to Mrs. Emory. I was a thief exposed. She called the

constable, who dragged me before the magistrate, who deemed me a Difficult Girl and sent me here.

So here I am. And there you have it.

*

Lucy twists her hands in her lap. She had not wanted to think about Polly's sister, but now Willa is real. She is alive in Lucy's mind, a little girl in a colorful patchwork dress who Lucy imagines must look like a miniature Polly, with a long dark braid and a heart-shaped face.

"You must go to the mainland." Even as Lucy speaks, she surprises herself. She chose to stay here, damnation or hellfire, but Polly did not. Forcing Polly to stay would not make Polly her friend.

"How would I get there?"

Lucy swallows. "There's a rowboat on the southern beach. I'll show you."

"I can't row." Polly nods at her right arm, still held tight against her body.

The wind shifts. Lucy sniffs the air. Polly smells vinegar and dill and mustard seed and apple butter. "You were in the cellar when the shelf toppled, weren't you?"

"I didn't mean to. Cook sent me down to collect carrots for supper, but I couldn't find them. I was on my hands and knees, crawling along, looking for them on the lowest shelves when the sirens sounded. I startled and knocked into the shelf, and it's lucky I still had a few wits about me because I managed to get mostly out of the way before it fell. When it did, I bumped my head, and when I came to, the shelf had pinned my arm. By the time I managed to get free, the ferry had gone without me."

For a moment, Lucy feels a sharp pain in her own arm. "Is it broken? If it is, I can set it. I once watched Nurse set a wrist when one of the Difficult Girls fell from the—"

"I'll see a doctor when I get to the mainland." Even in the dim light from the lamp, Lucy can see Polly's face blanch, can see Polly's body curl more protectively around her arm. Setting bones is an agonizing business, and Polly seems to know it. "But perhaps..."

Lucy grows wary, sensing what Polly is about to suggest.

"You can row. Then we'll both be off the island!" Polly's voice is bright, as though she has just suggested that the two of them travel to Paris to ride bicycles along the Seine and drink champagne.

Lucy stiffens. "I told you, I stayed on purpose. I'm not leaving the island. Not ever."

"But why?"

"I have my reasons."

"I told you my story. Tell me yours."

"My story is none of your business." Lucy stands. "It's late, and I'm tired. I'm going up to the house. Are you sleeping on the dock tonight?"

Polly's face falls. With one arm, she struggles to stand. Guilt bites into Lucy's heart like a thousand needle-sharp teeth, yet she does not move to help. She has told Polly about the rowboat. She has offered to examine her arm. But their friendship, such as it is, can go no further.

"To the house then," Polly says, the bread and cheese lying forgotten at her feet.

Lucy turns on her heel and swings the lamplight onto the path.

*

Lucy wakes late. She has spent the night dreaming of bombers flying over her head. Legions of them, so colossal that each alone could block out the sun. She dreamed their stench—fuel and power and death. She dreamed she stepped up into the air and, despite an indomitable fear hooked like a sickle in her soul, she joined them.

Breathless, she opens her eyes. Yellow sunlight streams through the dormitory windows, slanting onto rows of empty beds. Grateful for the bright warmth that chases away the nightmare, she rolls onto her back.

Polly sits on a stool at the foot of Lucy's bed.

Lucy sits up. "What are you doing?"

"Waiting for you to wake." Still favoring her right arm, Polly lays a sheaf of papers on Lucy's quilt.

"What's this?"

"I've been to Matron's office." Polly's expression is soft, even a little sad. "I found out about you."

Lucy stares at the papers. She feels something lodge itself at the back of her throat, thick like a boiled egg. Her eyes prickle.

"Do you remember why you're here?"

Lucy pushes against the headboard and hugs her knees. Fear grips her. Fear the color of coal. Fear that tastes of ash. A patchwork veil lies draped over her memories, though she sees now that time has worn the fabrics thin and the thread has grown weak. She stares at the papers and understands: Polly is here to unstitch her.

She doesn't have to allow it. She can run away. Not away from the island—she'd never leave the island—but away from Polly. How foolish she'd been to think Polly a friend! The girl is a snoop. A busybody. For as long as Polly is on the island, Lucy can hide. It would serve Polly right to fend for herself. Lucy knows the island better than she knows her own soul, and for as long as she wants to, she can hide so well that Polly will come to wonder whether Lucy ever existed at all.

And yet...

Lucy is tired. Bone-weary beat and suddenly so very, very sad.

The first tears drip onto the nightgown pulled tight over Lucy's knees. "I remember a little." Her voice shakes. "I came here alone. In the rowboat." She remembers waiting for a clear day, remembers how her arms burned and ached and how difficult it was to row despite the calm sea. Why was it so difficult? Because she wasn't well. Not sick, exactly, but...

She brushes that particular memory aside and offers a different one instead. "There was something in the bottom of the boat. Something of value."

"Your spyglass?"

Lucy feels a seam give way. Stitches pop as thin thread breaks. "Yes. My grandfather's. He was a

ship captain. He gave it to me when I was a child, and I brought it with me because..." Lucy tries to remember. Another seam rips.

"Because?"

"I had no money, but I thought I might be required to pay."

"For what?"

"My keep. My care. I had nowhere to go, and I was...I was..." Lucy is crying hard now, sobbing, in fact. Sobbing so hard she can barely catch her breath. She wipes at her face with the sleeves of her nightgown.

Polly inches closer and lays a hand on Lucy's arm. "It's OK, Lucy. Say it."

Lucy feels part of herself split. "I was pregnant." The words fall out of her so simply. The egg slips down her throat. The ash-taste dissolves on her tongue. She is almost startled to find she can breathe again.

Now Polly is crying.

Lucy wants to comfort her, but her confession is flowing out of her like lifeblood. "My father turned me out. He made it clear I had disgraced him, disgraced my mother and our family name and God Himself, and I would never again be welcome under his roof. My mother didn't want him to send me away, but was never one to dare speak out against him. The day I left, I told them I was coming to Charling Island. I was a Difficult Girl, and for that I was sorry. But even then I believed that after the baby was born, they would come for us. They would come and take us home. I swore I would never leave this island until they came."

Lucy waits for Polly to ask the next question, the obvious question, but she doesn't. Even if Polly were to ask about the baby's father, Lucy finds that some of her seams are still stitched tight as iron.

Instead, Polly says, "You've been waiting here for your parents. You've been waiting a long time."

"Silly, isn't it? I don't suppose they're coming."

"No." Polly wipes at her eyes. "I don't suppose they are."

Lucy stretches out her legs and closes her eyes, resting her hands on her belly. "It was a girl. She was born blue. Never drew a single breath."

The harder Polly cries, the brighter the peace inside Lucy glows. When Polly speaks again, her voice is barely a whisper. "What then, Lucy Blue?"

Lucy smiles at her friend. She reaches out, but her hand is made of light and passes through Polly's fingers like mist. "And then," says Lucy Blue, "I died, too."

★

High on the widow's walk of the Charling Island Home for Difficult Girls stands Lucy Blue. She holds her spyglass to her eye watches a fishing boat pull away from the dock. On the deck stands Polly May. Her injured arm rests in the sling Lucy showed her how to fashion from an old kitchen apron. With her other arm, she waves wildly up at Lucy.

Clever girl, thinks Lucy. The file wasn't the only thing Polly found in Matron's office. Matron's wireless allowed her to contact the mainland, and a fisherman motored out to collect her. Perhaps it's a miracle there's still life on the mainland, but Lucy doesn't think so. After all, this is the end of something, but it isn't the end of the world.

Lucy waves back. She hopes Polly finds Willa, and that Willa is wearing her patchwork dress. How lovely it was to have a friend, if only for a day, but this is how it should be.

The low hum of planes draws Lucy's attention to the sky. Not bombers this time, but aid. They carry food and fresh water, blankets and medical supplies. She can't say how she knows this, but she does. Perhaps it's the taste on her tongue—not ashes, but apple butter. Perhaps it's the scent in the air—not death or fear, but salt air and late-summer roses. Over her head the planes fly. Lucy tips her face to the sky, feels wings spread in her soul. She sets her spyglass on the windowsill. Then, stepping up into the air, she flies. ●

LOVE PROBLEMS

by The Doubleclicks

I let things bother me that I shouldn't let bother me
and I feel sorry like I should be stronger
I know I shouldn't listen to the insults or the heckles
but I listen and they all stick with me longer

My friend Michael Bain told me this is because
we're evolved to remember the things that endanger us
If I was an animal searching for food
I would always be vigilant for things that are dangerous

So if when I am in real life or reading the comments
I'll always remember those who cross the line
And not all the wonderful women and children
who tell me I've helped them by speaking my mind

If it is negative I'll memorize it fast
Because I'm sensitive, not just a badass
I am sensitive, I am a badass

I act like I'm cocky I have a persona
cause I don't want to seem like I'm open for feedback
But that's just because I internalize everything
...that I should redact

I don't know if it's clear that that's just who I have to be
I love my friends so much, I love them all more than me
It feels like they all know just who they each want to be
And I'll always feel lucky that anyone talks to me

(i wanna say...) Let's start a band that just yells at the man
and never has a Facebook page and never does signings
I'm so scared about emails from moderate straight white cis males
that I stop myself writing when I feel like I'm whining

Don't tell me to calm down, don't tell me it will pass
I am still sensitive, I am a badass
I am sensitive, I am a badass
If you haven't yet realized that we are political,
you haven't listened so we will start yelling
I often want to just burn down the world,
sometimes I'm an anarchist, sometimes I'm a pacifist

I just want all of us to love each other
and listen when somebody tells you they're hurting
I want us to maximize joy and equality
instead of what we're earning

I'm a survivor, and if you're a survivor too
We want you to know, that both of us believe you

You have the strength, and though all of the scars will last...
You can be sensitive and still a badass
just say it now,
I am sensitive, I am a badass.



MYTHS AND LEGENDS COME TO LIFE



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Guest of Honor
ADAM-TROY CASTRO

Music Guest
JODI KRANGLE

Science Guest
**BENJAMIN C.
KINNEY**

Artist Guest
CHAZ KEMP

Toastmaster
MAURICE BROADDUS

Fan Guest
RENEE BABCOCK

And More To Come!

FENCON XVII
Dallas/Fort Worth  September 19-21, 2020 

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