



ASFACTS 2024

MAY "SPRINGTIME & WIND" ISSUE

2024 HUGO AND OTHER AWARD FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

At the end of March, finalists for the Hugo Awards, the Astounding Award for Best New Writer, and the Lodestar Award for Best Young Adult Book were announced by Glasgow 2024, the 82nd World Science Fiction Convention, reported Locusmag.com. There were 1,720 valid nominating ballots received and counted from members of the 2023 and 2024 World Science Fiction Conventions for the 2024 Hugo Awards. Voting on the final ballot opened during April 2024.

Finalists include four people with connections to Bubonicon and/or New Mexico: John Scalzi, Martha Wells, T. Kingfisher and Arkady Martine:

BEST NOVEL: *The Adventures of Amina al-Sirafi* by Shannon Chakraborty, *The Saint of Bright Doors* by Vajra Chandrasekera, *Translation State* by Ann Leckie, *Starter Villain* by John Scalzi, *Some Desperate Glory* by Emily Tesh, and *Witch King* by Martha Wells.

BEST NOVELLA: "Seeds of Mercury" by Wang Jinkang, translated by Alex Woodend, *Thornhedge* by T. Kingfisher, *Rose/House* by Arkady Martine, *The Mimicking of Known Successes* by Malka Older, *Mammoths at the Gates* by Nghi Vo, and "Life Does Not Allow Us to Meet" by He Xi, translated by Alex Woodend.

BEST NOVELETTE: *I AM AI* by Ai Jiang, "The Year Without Sunshine" by Naomi Kritzer, "One Man's Treasure" by Sarah Pinsker, "Ivy, Angelica, Bay" by C.L. Polk, "Introduction to 2181 Overture, Second Edition" by Gu Shi, translated by Emily Jen, and "On the Fox Roads" by Nghi Vo.

BEST SHORT STORY: "Tasting the Future Delicacy Three Times" by Baoshu, "How to Raise a Kraken in Your Bathtub" by P. Djèli Clark, "The Mausoleum's Children" by Aliette de Bodard, "The Sound of Children Screaming" by Rachael K. Jones, "Better Living Through Algorithms" by Naomi Kritzer, and "Answerless Journey" by Han Song, translated by Alex Woodend.

BEST SERIES: *The Universe of Xuya* by Aliette de Bodard, *Imperial Radch* by Ann Leckie, *The Last Binding* by Freya Marske, *October Daye* by Seanan McGuire, *The Laundry Files* by Charles Stross, and *The Final Architecture* by Adrian Tchaikovsky.

BEST GRAPHIC STORY OR COMIC: *Bea Wolf, Saga, Volume 11, Shubeik Lubeik* (as *Your Wish Is My Command*),

The Three Body Problem, Part One, The Witches of World War 2, and Wonder Woman Historia: The Amazons.

BEST RELATED WORK: *The Culture: The Drawings* by Iain M. Banks, *Chinese Science Fiction: An Oral History, Volumes 2 and 3* edited by Yang Feng, *All These Worlds* by Niall Harrison, *A Traveller in Time: The Critical Practice of Maureen Kincaid Speller* by Maureen Kincaid Speller, edited by Nina Allan, *A City on Mars* by Kelly Weinersmith & Zach Weinersmith, and *Discover X*, interviews presented by Tina Wong.

BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION, LONG FORM: *Barbie, Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves, Nimona, Poor Things, Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse, and The Wandering Earth II.*

BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION, SHORT FORM: *Doctor Who: "The Giggle," Doctor Who: "Wild Blue Yonder," The Last of Us: "Long, Long Time," Loki: "Glorious Purpose," Star Trek: Strange New Worlds: "Subspace Rhapsody," and Star Trek: Strange New Worlds: "Those Old Scientists."*

BEST GAME OR INTERACTIVE WORK: *Alan Wake 2, Baldur's Gate 3, Chants of Sennaar, DREDGE, The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom, and Star Wars Jedi: Survivor.*

BEST EDITOR, SHORT FORM: Scott H. Andrews, Neil Clarke, Yang Feng, Jonathan Strahan, Lynne M. Thomas & Michael Damian Thomas, and Liu Weijia.

BEST EDITOR, LONG FORM: Ruoxi Chen, Yao Haijun, Lindsey Hall, Lee Harris, Kelly Lonesome, and David Thomas Moore.

BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST: Micaela Alcaino, Rovina Cai, Galen Dara, Dan Dos Santos, Tristan Elwell, and Alyssa Winans.

BEST SEMIPROZINE: *Escape Pod, FIYAH Literary Mag-*

UPCOMING ASFS MEETINGS

- **Tonight:** Jeff Benham of 7000 BC visits to talk about "How Comics Animate Culture."
- **June 14:** Time for our fun Summer Film. It might be set at the beach. There might be a creature!
- **July 12:** Author Diana Rowland visits. Plus summer's issue of *ASFACTS* (deadline July 8).
- **August 9:** Bubonicon 55 preview & something else completely different.
- **August 16:** Bubonicon 55 Gofer Meeting.
- **September 13:** Reports on Bubonicon 55, and possibly the Glasgow Worldcon and DragonCon.
- **October 11:** Benjamin Radford returns with another skeptic investigation, plus our annual club elections... And the Halloween issue of *ASFACTS*!

Craig Chrissinger, normal editor. Darth Vader, guest editor each December. Please Send All Correspondence to — 2018 Cardenas Dr NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110. Phone: (505) 266-8905. E-mail: cwrcraig@nmia.com. *ASFACTS* published February, April/May, July & October for the Albuquerque SF Society. *SITHFACTS* out each December. **NEXT DEADLINE:** Mon, July 8. **Club Officers:** Craig Chrissinger & Jessica Coyle, co-Zec Secs (505) 266-8905. Eric Klammer, Moderator. Marian Skupski, Alternator. Pollen, Spring pest. Perry Rodent, rat mascot. **Bubonicon Chair:** Craig Chrissinger (505) 559-0931.

azine, *GigaNotoSaurus*, *khōrēō*, *Strange Horizons*, and *Uncanny*.

BEST FANZINE: *Black Nerd Problems*, *The Full Lid*, *Idea*, *Journey Planet*, *Nerds of a Feather Flock Together*, and *Unofficial Hugo Book Club Blog*.

BEST FANCAST: *The Coode Street Podcast*, *Hugos There*, *Octothorpe*, *Publishing Rodeo*, *Science Fiction Fans Buma*, and *Worldbuilding for Masochists*.

BEST FAN WRITER: Bitter Karella, James Davis Nicoll, Jason Sanford, Alasdair Stuart, Paul Weimer, and Örjan Westin.

BEST FAN ARTIST: Iain J. Clark, Sara Felix, Dante Luiz, Laya Rose, Alison Scott, and España Sheriff.

LODESTAR AWARD FOR BEST YOUNG ADULT BOOK [Not a Hugo Award]: *Promises Stronger than Darkness* by Charlie Jane Anders, *To Shape a Dragon's Breath* by Moniquill Blackgoose, *Abeni's Song* by P. Djèli Clark, *Unraveller* by Frances Hardinge, *Liberty's Daughter* by Naomi Kritzer, and *The Sinister Booksellers of Bath* by Garth Nix.

ASTOUNDING AWARD FOR BEST NEW WRITER [Not a Hugo Award]: Moniquill Blackgoose, Sunyi Dean, Ai Jiang, Hannah Kaner, Em X. Liu, and Xiran Jay Zhao. (Zhao's eligibility was extended at the request of Astounding Award sponsor Dell Magazines.)

The following nominees received enough votes to qualify for the final ballot, but declined nomination: Best Novel: *System Collapse* by Martha Wells, Best Novelette: "The Far North" by Hai Ya, Best Related Work: Bigolas Dickolas Wolfwood's promotional tweets for *This Is How You Lose the Time War*, Best Editor, Long Form: Natasha Bardon, and Best Fan Writer: Camestros Felapton.

VERNOR VINGE PASSES AWAY

Author, professor of mathematics, and Bubonicon 39 Guest of Honor Vernor Vinge died from Parkinson's disease on March 20, reported Locusmag.com. He was 79 years old. He was noted for introducing the technological singularity concept (AKA the Singularity) and known for his gripping hard science fiction.

Vernor Vinge was born in Waukesha, Wisconsin on October 2, 1944. He was married to fellow science fiction author Joan D. Vinge from 1972 to 1979.

His first published work of science fiction was "Apartness" in 1965. Other notable short fiction includes "Bookworm, Run!" (1966) and "The Peddler's Apprentice" written with Joan D. Vinge (1975). He had two Hugo Award-winning novellas: "Fast Times at Fairmont High" (2001) and "The Cookie Monster" (2003).

Vinge's debut novel *Grimm's World* was published in 1969. Vinge came to prominence in 1981 with his novella *True Names*, perhaps the first story to present a fully fleshed-out concept of cyberspace, which would later be central to cyberpunk stories.

A Fire Upon the Deep (1992), the first book in the *Zones of Thought* series, won the Hugo Award; the second book in that series, *A Deepness In the Sky* (1999) won the Hugo Award, the John W Campbell Memorial Award, and the Prometheus Award; it was followed by a third novel in the series, *The Children of the Sky* (2011); other notable novels include Hugo Award winner *Rainbows End* (2006), *The Peace War* (1984), and *Marooned in Realtime* (1986).

His nonfiction work includes the notable 1993 paper, "The Coming Technological Singularity: How to Survive in the Post-Human Era," which introduced the concept and greatly influenced post-singularity SF.

Vinge retired in 2000 from teaching at San Diego State University, in order to write full-time. He was Writer Guest of Honor at ConJosé, the 60th World Science Fiction Convention in 2002. Additionally, Vinge served on the Free Software Foundation's selection committee for their Award for the Advancement of Free Software for most of the years between 1999 and his death.

2023 NEBULA BALLOT ANNOUNCED

The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers Association (SFWA) released the final ballot for the 2023 Nebula Awards in mid-March.

NOVEL: *The Saint of Bright Doors* by Vajra Chandrasekera, *The Water Outlaws* by S.L. Huang, *Translation State* by Ann Leckie, *The Terraformers* by Annalee Newitz, *Shigidi and the Brass Head of Obalufon* by Wole Talabi, and *Witch King* by Martha Wells.

NOVELLA: *The Crane Husband* by Kelly Barnhill, "Linghun" by Ai Jiang, *Thornhedge* by T. Kingfisher, *Untethered Sky* by Fonda Lee, *The Mimicking of Known Successes* by Malka Older, and *Mammoths at the Gates* by Nghi Vo.

NOVELETTE: "A Short Biography of a Conscious Chair" by Renan Bernardo, I AM AI by Ai Jiang, "The Year Without Sunshine" by Naomi Kritzer, "Imagine: Purple-Haired Girl Shooting Down the Moon" by Angela Liu, "Saturday's Song" by Wole Talabi, and "Six Versions of My Brother Found Under the Bridge" by Eugenia Triantafyllou.

SHORT STORY: "Once Upon a Time at The Oakmont" by P.A. Cornell, "Tantie Merle and the Farmhand 4200" by R.S.A Garcia, "Window Boy" by Thomas Ha, "The Sound of Children Screaming" by Rachael K. Jones, "Better Living Through Algorithms" by Naomi Kritzer, and "Bad Doors" by John Wiswell.

ANDRE NORTON AWARD: *To Shape a Dragon's Breath* by Moniquill Blackgoose, *The Inn at the Amethyst Lantern* by J. Dianne Dotson, *Liberty's Daughter* by Naomi Kritzer, and *The Ghost Job* by Greg van Eekhout.

RAY BRADBURY AWARD: *Barbie*, *The Boy and the Heron*, *Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves*, *The Last of Us*: "Long, Long Time," *Nimona*, and *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse*.

GAME WRITING: *Alan Wake II*, *Baldur's Gate 3*, *The Bread Must Rise*, *Chants of Sennaar*, *Dredge*, and *Ninefox Gambit: Machineries of Empire Roleplaying Game*.

Winners will be announced at the 2024 Nebula Conference and Awards, to be held June 6-9, in Pasadena, CA.

MARY ROBINETTE KOWAL IN ABQ

by Craig W. Chrissinger

As part of her visit to Albuquerque for a writers retreat and workshop, author Mary Robinette Kowal (Bubonicon 50 co-Guest of Honor and Bubonicon 47 Toastmaster) visited Books on the Bosque for a short talk and book signing on Saturday, April 13.

While the trade paperback of *The Spare Man* was the focus of the signing, Kowal was happy to sign any of her books for the approximately 55 people in attendance.

Kowal announced that the fourth *Lady Astronaut* novel – *The Martian Contingency* – will be out next year, and it apparently will be the last book in the series. She was surprised to learn that fact when the Tor catalog listed it as the “final” book. Currently she is working on a Young Adult novel.

“I also have a Kickstarter campaign for a *Lady Astronaut* short story collection starting this June,” she said.

Kowal then read from a new short story involving time travel with a future person visiting her past self. She noted that the story does not have a home yet.

Talking about Elma York (*Lady Astronaut* protagonist, mathematician and former WASP pilot), she said, “I had done a story where Elma is older. But for now, I decided it was better to do a prequel to explore an interesting world.”

Discussing her children’s book, *Molly on the Moon*, Kowal remarked, “My agent said I had done puppet shows for middle schools, so why not write something for kids. And that’s why I also am working on a Young Adult novel now.”

Currently living in Tennessee, Kowal did say she would like to get back to New Mexico and participate at Bubonicon at some point.

BOOK GROUP STILL READING

The Droids & Dragons SF Book Group meets at 7:30 pm Monday, May 20, at Jason’s Deli (northwest corner of Louisiana & America’s Parkway NE - across the street from Bubonicon’s Marriott Hotel) to discuss *A Psalm for the Wild-Built* by Becky Chambers. The group then focuses on *Song For a New Day* by Sarah Pinsker on Monday, June 17, at Jason’s Deli again.

Meetings of D&D are open to all interested readers on the third Monday of each month. Books for discussion are chosen two months in advance, and group members receive a 20% discount on selected novels at Page One Books in the Mountain Run Shopping Center. For more info, contact Leah at [mrsranson@hotmail.com](mailto:mrsransom@hotmail.com) or Craig at 266-8905.

PAUL AUSTER PASSES AWAY

Author Paul Auster died April 30 of lung cancer at home in Brooklyn, NY, reports Locusmag.com. He was 77 years old. Auster wrote more than 30 books, including literary novels and non-fiction, and occasionally incorporated surreal and genre elements in his fiction.

Paul Benjamin Auster was born February 3, 1947, in Newark, NJ. He attended Columbia University, graduating with bachelor’s and master’s degrees before moving to Paris in 1970, where he worked as a translator. He returned to the US in 1974, where he became a prolific author of poetry, non-fiction, novels, and works in translation.

His debut work was memoir *The Invention of Solitude* in 1982, and he achieved acclaim with his New York Trilogy, a postmodern take on detective fiction: *City of Glass* (1985), *Ghosts* (1986), and *The Locked Room* (1986). Other works of genre interest include 1989’s *Moon Palace*, *In*

the Country of Last Things (1987), *The Music of Chance* (1990), *Leviathan* (1992), *Mr. Vertigo* (1994), *Timbuktu* (1999), *The Book of Illusions* (2002), *Oracle Night* (2003), *Travels in the Scriptorium* (2006), *Man in the Dark* (2008), and Booker Award finalist *4 3 2 1* (2017).

Auster was diagnosed with cancer in 2023. He and first wife Lydia Davis had one son, who predeceased him. He is survived by second wife Siri Hustvedt (married 1981) and their daughter.

2023 LA TIMES BOOK WINNERS

The *Los Angeles Times* announced winners on April 19 for their 44th annual Book Prizes, reports Locusmag.com.

Works of genre interest include *The Reformatory* by Tananarive Due, which received the Science Fiction, Fantasy & Speculative Fiction Award; *Same Bed Different Dreams* by Ed Park, which received the Fiction Award; and *Gone Wolf* by Amber McBride in Young Adult Literature. Jane Smiley received the 2023 Robert Kirsch Award for lifetime achievement.

Winners were announced in a ceremony at USC’s Bovard Auditorium on April 19, 2024. For more information, including the complete list of winners, see the *LA Times* website.

2024 PROMETHEUS AWARD FINALISTS

In mid-April the Libertarian Futurist Society (LFS) released the finalists for the Prometheus Award in the Best Novel category, honoring pro-freedom works published in 2023.

They are *Theft of Fire* by Devon Eriksen, *Swim Among The People* by Karl K. Gallagher, *God’s Girlfriend* by Dr. Insensitive Jerk, *Lord of a Shattered Land* by Howard Andrew Jones, and *Critical Mass* by Daniel Suarez (Dutton)

All members of the Libertarian Futurist Society are eligible to vote. The award will be presented during an online ceremony in August “at a time and event to be announced.”

For more information, see the LFS website.

RAY GARTON DIES

Author Ray Garton died April 21, just weeks after being diagnosed with stage four lung cancer. He was 61 years old, reports Locusmag.com. Garton was the author of nearly 70 books, most horror.

Ray Garton, Jr. was born December 2, 1962, in Redding, CA, and grew up in Anderson, CA with his adopted parents. He worked at Pinnacle Books in New York City in the 1980s.

Garton’s debut novel, *Seductions*, appeared in 1984. Other novels include Stoker Award finalist *Live Girls* (1988), *Darklings* (1985), *Invaders from Mars* (1986), *Crucifax Autumn* (1988), *Warlock* (1989), *Trade Secrets* (1990), *The New Neighbor* (1991), *Lot Lizards* (1991), *Dark Channel* (1992), *Shackled* (1997), *Biofire* (1998), International Horror Guild Award finalist *Sex and Violence in Hollywood* (2002), *Scissors* (2004), *The Girl in the Basement* (2004), *Nids* (2006), *The Loveliest Dead* (2006),

Graven Image (2007), *Ravenous* (2008), *Serpent Girl* (2008), *Bestial* (2009), *Meds* (2011), *Frankenstorm* (2014), *Loveless* (2023), and *Trailer Park Noir* (2023).

His collections include *Methods of Madness* (1990), *Pieces of Hate* (1996), *The Girl in the Basement and Other Stories* (2004), *Nids and Other Stories* (2006), *Slivers of Bone* (2008), and *Wailing and Gnashing of Teeth* (2012).

Garton coedited anthologies *Cafe Purgatorium* with Dana M. Anderson & Charles de Lint (1991), *Cut Corners: Volume 1* with Ramsey Campbell & Bentley Little (2012), and *Cut Corners: Volume 3* with Kealan Patrick Burke & Bryan Smith (2017). He contributed to *Unearthed* with Richard Chizmar & Brian Keene (2016) and *Four Halloweens* (2016) with Kealan Patrick Burke, Ed Gorman & Norman Prentiss.

He wrote young-adult novels under the name Joseph Locke, and sometimes used the pen name Arthur Darknell. He wrote several tie-ins, including for the *Nightmare on Elm Street* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* series.

Garton was named a World Horror Grand Master in 2006. He is survived by Dawn, his wife of 30+ years.

PUBLISHERS JOIN IOWA IN LAWSUIT AGAINST BOOK BAN

Hachette, HarperCollins, Macmillan, Simon & Schuster, and Sourcebooks have joined a previously reported lawsuit opposing Iowa's SF 496, a law that seeks to ban books depicting sex or involving gender identity or sexual orientation, reported Locusmag.com in mid-April. They join existing plaintiffs Penguin Random House; the Iowa State Education Association (ISEA); authors Laurie Halse Anderson, John Green, Malinda Lo, and Jodi Picoult; three teachers; and a high school student.

"We as publishers are uniting in our unwavering commitment to stand with educators, librarians, students, authors, and readers against the unconstitutional censorship measures being imposed by the state of Iowa," the publishers said in a joint statement. "Now, more than ever, we must stand firmly with our authors and readers to defend the fundamental right to read and the freedom of expression."

Federal judge Stephen Locher blocked major aspects of the bill in December 2023, and the state filed an appeal in March 2024. The plaintiffs are calling for the court to uphold the block.

FAN JOHN TRIMBLE DIES

Fan John Trimble died April 19. He was the husband of the late Bjo Trimble and very active in Los Angeles fandom. He was 87 years old.

Trimble was born November 17, 1936, and married Bjo in 1960. He was a member and officer of the Los Angeles Science Fiction Society and many other fan organizations, and was a founder of the Trans Oceanic Fan Fund. He was also a convention organizer, who co-chaired Westercon 18 and chaired Westercon 23. He edited numerous fan publications, including *De Profundis* and *Shangri-L'Affaires*, and co-edited *To the Stars* with Bjo. The two of them were fan guests of honor at the 2002 Worldcon.

Together the couple launched a grassroots letter writing campaign to Save *Star Trek* following NBC's cancellation of the Original Series, which resulted in a third season. With enough episodes then, *Star Trek* was able to enter syndication, propelling it into a phenomenon that warranted an animated series in 1973 and big-budget features starting in 1979.

In 2016, John and Bjo were brought on stage at *Star Trek Las Vegas* in celebration of the 50th anniversary on their *Trek* effort, and the *Star Trek* franchise team surprised and honored them with a painted portrait of them by artist JK Woodward.

COMPTON CROOK AWARD GIVEN

The Baltimore Science Fiction Society (BSFS) has announced that *The Splinter in the Sky* by Kemi Ashing-Giwa is the winner of the 2023 Compton Crook Award.

Other nominees were: *To Shape a Dragon's Breath* by Moniquill Blackgoose, *These Burning Stars* by Bethany Jacobs, *Deathwind* by Brad Pawlowski, and *How to Be Remembered* by Michael Thompson.

The award honors the best first SF/fantasy/horror novel of the year, and "includes a framed award document and, for the novel's author, a check for \$1,000 and an invitation to be the Compton Crook Guest at Balticon for two years."

The winner was announced April 11. The award will be presented at Balticon 58, to be held May 24-27 at the Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace Hotel in Baltimore, MD. Selection is by vote of the BSFS membership.

ARTIST TRINA ROBBINS DIES

Artist, editor, and author Trina Robbins died April 10 of a stroke in San Francisco, CA. She was 85 years old. Though best known as a legendary feminist comics writer and artist, she was also a science fiction fan and occasional SF writer, with stories including "Lines from a Diary" (1992) and "Innana: Witchwoman" in 2011. She wrote and illustrated a comics adaptation of Tanith Lee's *The Silver Metal Lover* in 1985, and was guest of honor at feminist SF convention WisCon in 1992.

Trina Perlson was born August 17, 1938, in New York City. She married Paul Jay Robbins in 1962, divorcing in 1966, and had a daughter with cartoonist Kim Deitch. She became romantically involved with artist Steve Leialoha in 1977, and was with him for the remainder of her life.

In the '50s and '60s she was involved in SF fandom, with illustrations appearing in fanzines. She was active in the music scene as well, becoming friends with Jim Morrison, Joni Mitchell, and other prominent figures. She was a fashion designer and ran a boutique in the East Village called Broccoli, creating clothes for Mama Cass, David Crosby, and other musicians.

Robbins moved from New York to San Francisco in 1970, where she became involved with underground comics. She curated *It Ain't Me Babe*, a collection of comics by women, and the book was a huge success, especially by underground comics standards. That anthology led to a serial, *Wimmen's Comix*, which ran for 20 years, and was collected as a lavish omnibus in 2016.

She co-created comics character Vampirella in 1969,

and began working on Wonder Woman comics in 1986, with her groundbreaking run collected as *The Legend of Wonder Woman* (written by Kurt Busiek). She also collaborated with Colleen Doran on 1998 graphic novel *Wonder Woman: The Once and Future Story*. In 1990, she edited *Choices: A Pro-Choice Benefit Comic Anthology for the National Organization for Women*. She cofounded Friends of Lulu, which promoted women in comics. Robbins was inducted into the Will Eisner Hall of Fame in 2013 for her contributions to the comics industry.

She was also a scholar, and author of *A Century of Women Cartoonists* (1993), *The Great Women Superheroes* (1997), *From Girls to Grrrlz: A History of Women's Comics from Teens to Zines* (1999), and *The Great Women Cartoonists* (2001). Her memoir *Last Girl Standing* appeared in 2017.

Robbins is survived by her partner, daughter, and granddaughter.

2023 HWA SPECIALTY AWARDS

In early April, the Horror Writers Association (HWA) announced the recipients of its 2023 Specialty Awards, reported Locusmag.com.

Thunderstorm Books is the recipient of the Specialty Press Award, given “to a publisher whose work has substantially influenced the horror and dark fantasy genres.”

The Richard Laymon President’s Award, “presented to a member who has served HWA in an exemplary manner and shown exceptional dedication to the organization,” goes to Brian W. Matthews. The winner is chosen by HWA’s sitting president.

Lila Denning is the winner of the Karen Lansdale Silver Hammer Award, presented periodically “to an HWA volunteer who has done a truly massive amount of work for the organization, often unsung and behind the scenes” and chosen by HWA’s Board of Trustees.

Lisa Wood is the winner of the Mentor of the Year Award. Introduced in 2014, the Award “recognizes one mentor in the Mentor Program who has done an outstanding job of helping newer writers” and is chosen by the current chair of the mentor program.

The 2023 Stoker Awards final ballot was previously announced, as were this year’s Lifetime Achievement Award winners, Mort Castle, Cassandra Peterson, and Steve Rasnic Tem. All winners will be honored during StokerCon 2024, to be held May 30-June 2 in San Diego, CA. For more information, see the Stoker Awards website.

ALA NAMES MOST CHALLENGED BOOKS

In early April, the American Library Association (ALA) released their Top 10 Most Challenged Books of 2023, including some works and authors of genre interest:

Me and Earl and the Dying Girl by Jesse Andrews, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky, *This Book Is Gay* by Juno Dawson, and *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison.

The ALA listed the top 10 most challenged books amid a record number of books targeted for censorship in 2023. Over 4,240 challenges were recorded by the ALA, a “65% surge over 2022 numbers.” The ALA archive of the

most challenged books dates back to 2001, and the ALA is accepting donations to strengthen their efforts to fight censorship in publishing, schools, and libraries.

For more information, see the ALA site.

JACOBS WINS 2024 PK DICK AWARD

These Burning Stars by Bethany Jacobs (Orbit) is the winner of the 2024 Philip K. Dick Award, Locusmag.com reported. *The Museum of Human History* by Rebekah Bergman (Tin House) received a special citation.

The other nominees were: *Danged Black Thing* by Eugen Bacon, *Infinity Gate* by M.R. Carey, *Wild Spaces* by S.L. Coney, and *Where Rivers Go to Die* by Dilman Dila.

The award is presented annually to a distinguished work of science fiction originally published in paperback form in the United States. The award is sponsored by the Philip K. Dick Trust and the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society, and the ceremony is sponsored by Norwescon. This year’s judges were Nicky Drayden, Gordon Eklund, Christopher Rowe, Kali Wallace (chair), and Lisa Yaszek.

The winner was announced at Norwescon 46, held March 28-31 in SeaTac, WA.

STEPHEN GRAHAM JONES VISITS

by Craig W. Chrissinger

At a signing event at Bookworks on March 27, horror author Stephen Graham Jones talked to an audience of nearly 60 people about how he started writing when he was 19 years old.

“When I graduated from high school, my mom gave me a suitcase,” he said. “She said, ‘If you stay here, you’ll die.’ I knew she was right and I could have stayed and driven a tractor. I was always reading, and I ended up going to Texas Tech in Lubbock. It blew my mind that other people had read the assigned books.”

Jones was in conversation with local author Ramona Emerson, a Diné writer and filmmaker originally from Tohatchi, New Mexico. The author of *Shutter: A Novel*, she has a bachelor’s in Media Arts from the University of NM and an MFA in Creative Writing from the Institute of American Indian Arts.

Asked by Emerson how his writing began in college, Jones replied, “Well, my uncle ended up in a burn unit in Lubbock, and I was there for three days and three nights waiting for him to die. All I had with me was a spiral notebook and a pen, so I wrote a short story the second day.”

Back at college after the tragic event, one of his professors read the story and submitted it to the college literary magazine.

Discussing the Native American influence on horror, Jones noted, “Horror is a knee-jerk natural for us (Native Americans) from five hundred years of history. We’re expecting people to devour us. I tried writing science fiction, fantasy and general fiction, but by the fourth page someone had their stomach ripped open.”

Discussing Jennifer “Jade” Daniels, the slasher film-obsessed star of his *Indian Lake Trilogy*, he stated, “A protagonist in a horror trilogy shouldn’t expect a good time. Jade dreams of a slasher and justice. In the first book (*My Heart is a Chainsaw*), she was fighting for her dad and in

the second book (*Don't Fear the Reaper*) she's fighting for her community. It was fun to write Jade's 'Slasher 101' essays in *My Heart is a Chainsaw*."

Jones then read one of Jade's essays from the last book of the trilogy, the newly released *The Angel of Indian Lake*.

The Colorado author admitted he uses lots of 1980s references in his works, both music like Def Leppard and films. "We had a gas station with a wall of movies. I rented *American Ninja* almost every Friday."

Asked about his connection to horror, Jones remarked, "I feel one hundred percent connected. I feel like horror saved my life. My responsibility to horror is to walk into the hallowed halls of horror and not just eat the food, but to get out and some tools and help fix up the place for the next people to come along.

"Stephen King said some of us are just wired that way," he continued. "Asking why I'm drawn to horror is code for why am I so weird. Horror basically is a balance between a moment of terror and then the realization you're alive. Some form of monstrosity is a vital element to horror, and that can be supernatural, an evil person or something else."

As a writer and reader, Jones said he looks for two things when he is reading – "the sincerity of the writer, and to get a visceral reaction to it. The sensory details are important and should hit the reader in the head."

Asked whether readers might see Jade again, he replied, "In the last few days, I had a short story she could slip into. But I feel like I should let her retire and walk off into the sunset. I can't say it won't ever happen since she's still alive."

Jones told the audience his favorite slasher film is *Scream* from 1996, which he watched every night for a week even though he was working on his doctorate. "I like Stu Macher a lot, and how expansive he is in *Scream*. The 'Final Girl' (a reference to the last girl or woman alive to confront the killer, ostensibly the one left to tell the story) I really like is Nancy from *A Nightmare on Elm Street* because she outsmarts Freddy."

The *Indian Lake Trilogy* has been optioned for a movie a couple of times, Jones noted, and a writer currently is working on a *Chainsaw* script.

"I don't do well with body horror," he admitted. "The movie *Tusk* (2014) makes me feel weird inside. The sub-genre that really scares me is possession. It gets under my skin and is really disturbing. Sleepwalkers are similar as they are not moving under their own conscious power."

Jones, who has written an *X-Men* story for Marvel, stated, "I like writing books. I like comics, too, but I like writing fiction more."

Before starting to sign books, Jones ended his conversation with Emerson by saying, "They say you have your whole life to write your first book, and just six months to write your second. In your second book, it's all about tone – and also expanding the narrative."

TANITH LEE WINS INFINITY AWARD

Tanith Lee (1947-2015) was named the recipient of the second Infinity Award in mid-March, reported *Locusmag.com*.

The award is presented by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers Association (SFWA) to "posthumously

honor acclaimed creators who passed away before they could be considered for a Damon Knight Memorial Grand Master Award. This new award aims to recognize that even though those celebrated worldbuilders, storytellers, and weavers of words are no longer with us, their legacies will continue to inspire."

SFWA President Jeffe Kennedy said, "Tanith Lee was writing combinations of science fiction, fantasy, romance, horror, queerness, and sex long before the current trends. She was a true trailblazer in multiple cross-genres and influenced so many of today's authors. It's a sorrow to me that she passed before we could celebrate her as she should have been, but a bittersweet joy to at least be able to give her this honor today."

Lee will be honored during the Nebula Awards Ceremony on June 8 in Pasadena, CA.

Instead of a physical award, SFWA makes a donation to a cause the honoree supported. This year, it has been requested by the family that the donation be split between Pasadena Humane and the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

ENEMY MINE'S LOUIS GOSSETT JR DIES

by The Associated Press, 03-29-24

LOS ANGELES — Louis Gossett Jr., the first Black man to win a supporting actor Oscar and an Emmy Award, died the morning of March 29 of chronic pulmonary disease in Santa Monica, CA. He was 87 years old.

Louis Gossett always thought of his early career as a reverse Cinderella story, with success finding him from an early age and propelling him forward, toward his supporting actor Academy Award for *An Officer and a Gentleman* in 1983 as an intimidating Marine drill instructor opposite Richard Gere and Debra Winger. He also won a Golden Globe for the same role.

Gossett broke through on the small screen as Fiddler in the groundbreaking 1977 miniseries *Roots*, which depicted the atrocities of slavery on TV. It earned him an Emmy Award, and the sprawling cast included Ben Vereen, LeVar Burton and John Amos.

"More than anything, it was a huge affirmation of my position as a Black actor," he wrote in his 2010 memoir, *An Actor and a Gentleman*.

He had earned his first acting credit in his Brooklyn high school's production of *You Can't Take It with You* while he was sidelined from the basketball team with an injury.

Louis Cameron Gossett was born on May 27, 1936, in the Coney Island section of Brooklyn, New York, to Louis Sr., a porter, and Hellen, a nurse. He later added Jr. to his name to honor his father.

Gossett attended New York University on a basketball and drama scholarship. He was soon acting and singing on TV shows hosted by David Susskind, Ed Sullivan, Red Buttons, Merv Griffin, Jack Paar and Steve Allen. He became friendly with James Dean and studied acting with Marilyn Monroe, Martin Landau and Steve McQueen at an offshoot of the Actors Studio taught by Frank Silvera.

Gossett first went to Hollywood in 1961 for the film version of *A Raisin in the Sun*. Other films included *Skin Game*, *Travels with My Aunt*, *The White Dawn*, *The Deep*, *Jaws 3-D*, *The Principal*, the *Iron Eagle* series, *Toy Sol-*

diars, *Bram Stoker's Legend of the Mummy*, *Firewalker*, and *The Punisher*, in an acting career that spanned over five decades.

In 1985, Gossett co-starred with Dennis Quaid in Wolfgang Petersen's *Enemy Mine*. The film is about a human (Quaid) and alien soldier (Gossett), respectively, who become stranded together on an inhospitable planet and must overcome their mutual distrust in order to cooperate and survive. The production was troubled as the original director and the producer had creative difference. Petersen was asked to take over the directorial duties, however when he joined he found the original location, and footage unusable. Hence the production moved and new set were built. Also, Gossett's original alien costume was scraped and it took five months to create the one used in final product.

On his preparation for *Enemy Mine*, Gossett said "I went to the zoo with a mime, a dancer, an athlete and a linguist. There we studied lizards, snakes, wildcats, giraffes and the kangaroos, especially the females with the pouch. I also used a little ordinary cat and dog, and in the scenes where the Drac is in his religious ecstasy, a little bit of Stevie Wonder."

The film was a flop at the box office, and the critics were divided on whether the it was great or bad. Over the years, *Enemy Mine* has developed a cult following and has started to receive positive re-assessments.

Gossett made a series of guest appearances on such TV shows as *Bonanza*, *The Rockford Files*, *The Mod Squad*, *The Invaders*, *McCloud*, *The Six Million Dollar Man*, *Stephen King's The Dead Zone*, *Stargate SG-1*, *Watchmen*, and a memorable turn with Richard Pryor on *The Partridge Family*. He also did voice work for *Captain Planet and the Planeteers*, *Family Guy*, and *The Batman*.

For one season – September 1982 to April 1983 – Gossett was part of the cast of *The Powers of Matthew Star*, a science fiction TV series that aired on NBC on Friday evenings. It starred Peter Barton as the title character, the alien prince Matthew "E'Hawke" Star of the planet Quadris, who used his powers to fight crime. Also starring were Amy Steel as Pam Elliot, Matthew's girlfriend at Crestridge High; and Gossett as Walt "D'Hai" Shepherd, Matthew's guardian.

In 2002, *Matthew Star* was ranked #22 on the list of TV Guide's "50 Worst TV Shows of All Time."

In 2010, Gossett announced he had prostate cancer, which he said was caught in the early stages. In 2020, he was hospitalized with Covid-19.

He was married three times, and is survived by sons Satie, a producer-director from his second marriage, and Sharron, a chef whom he adopted. His first cousin is actor Robert Gossett.

QUANTUM LEAP CANCELED

by Lesley Goldberg, *The Hollywood Reporter* 4-5-24

There will be no leap to season three for NBC's *Quantum Leap*. The network has canceled the reboot of the 1989 series after a two-season run, sources tell *The Hollywood Reporter*.

The series, starring Raymond Lee as physicist Dr. Ben Song, wrapped its sophomore season in February and ranked as one of the broadcast network's lowest-rated

scripted originals.

The show served as a follow-up to the 1989 show of the same name starring Scott Bakula and Dean Cain. The revamped version saw Song attempting to restart the *Quantum Leap* project pioneered by Dr. Sam Beckett, which led to him being trapped in different people's lives in the past just like Beckett. As he seeks to put right what once went wrong in those lives, he "leaps" to different lives while hoping that each leap will be the leap home.

The cast of the series also included Caitlin Bassett, Ernie Hudson, Mason Alexander Park, and Nanrisa Lee.

Quantum Leap, which was produced in-house at Universal Television, earned a speedy season two renewal as NBC kept production going in a bid to have scripted originals during the writers and actors strikes.

After the cancellation announcement, Lee shared a statement on Instagram saying: "Just wanted to say thank you to our QL fans and those who've tuned in. Your support was felt and always warmly received. You all have made it a ride of a lifetime."

Bassett, who played Addison Augustine, went on to say: "So sorry to say... farewell leapers???? Thank you so much for every moment of this amazing journey. And thank you @nbc and @universaltv for the ride of a lifetime. As the wonderful QL super-fan Matt Dale said - "be excellent to each other."

With the cancellation of *Quantum Leap* coming as a surprise to the show's creators, a proper ending was not served up during the season 2 finale. Instead, fans were left with a hefty cliffhanger that they likely won't ever get answers for. Having nailed the formula to bring Ben home, the project needed someone to swap with him and Addison volunteered. However, instead of a proper swap, she merely joined him on his time-traveling adventure.

Quantum Leap was the first NBC cancellation of the season and came after the network previously renewed five of its six Dick Wolf shows. NBC also handed out early renewals for rookie dramas *Found* and *The Irrational*, both of which were developed during the 2022 pilot season and were able to air during the strikes.

The cancellation arrived as NBC previously ended *La Brea* and *Magnum P.I.* after three and six seasons, respectively, earlier this year and as the network has drama *Dr. Wolf* already on deck for next season.

BUBONICON 55 MOVES ALONG

Bubonicon 55 is just about 3 ½ months away, and work is progressing of confirming participants and starting to visualize the programming schedule.

Weekend passes for the August 23-25 Albuquerque convention are now \$48.00 for adults through the end of August 9. Youths, 13-19 year of age, are \$28.00. Passes can be purchased on the Registration page of the Bubonicon website or at meetings of ASFS.

Confirmed participants so far are Lynn Barker, Lou J. Berger, Jon Black, Stephen R. Donaldson (Saturday-Only: tentative), J.L. Doty, Josh Gentry, Brian D. Hinson, Darynda Jones (tentative), Carolyn Kay, Chaz Kemp, Jeffe Kennedy, Rachael Kuintzle, Jane Lindsfold, George RR Martin (Saturday-Only: tentative), Chris Panatier, Benjamin Radford, Joan S. Saberhagen, Jon Sanchez, Melinda M. Snodgrass (tentative), Jim Sorenson, S.M. Stirling, Da-

vid Lee Summers, Lauren C. Teffeu, Ian Tregillis, Jessica Tucker, Sarena Ulibarri, Carrie Vaughn (tentative), and Connie & Courtney Willis (tentative).

The con committee is awaiting proposals from individual fans and groups who would like to run programs during the weekend. The deadline for requests is Sunday, June 2.

The Art Show, headed up by Kathy Kubica, is staying with the silent auction bidding method for sales of pieces – so be sure to check your bidding status often!

The Con Suite, managed by Stormy Tuttle, plans to mostly have individually wrapped items again to cut down on the handling of food by multiple people. They also are planning on having breakfast burritos on Saturday morning thanks to a financial donation from Walter Jon Williams and Kathy Hedges.

Kevin Sonney, co-toastmaster, will be Master of Ceremonies for the Costume Contest, organized by Geneva Schult. And Jessica Coyle, slime mistress, is waiting on your nominations for the Green Slime Awards. Nominees must have been released between Bubonicon 54 and August 9, 2024. Send nominations to bubonicon@gmail.com.

Hotel rooms at the ABQ Marriott Uptown (Louisiana NE at I-40) are \$149.00 per night (same as last year), and reservations are needed by Monday, August 5. Go to the hotel page of the Bubonicon website for the link or call 1-800-228-9290 – Make Sure To Mention Bubonicon.

Updates will be posted on www.bubonicon.com.

BOOK, MOVIE AND TV REVIEWS ROUND-UP

***Remedial Magic: A Course in Magic 1* by Melissa Marr, 2024 Bramble (Tor), tp, \$17.99, 322 pages.**

Review by Jessica Coyle

Remedial Magic by Melissa Marr, a *New York Times* bestselling author best known for her YA *Wicked Lovely* series, is one of the first releases from Tor Publishing's new "Romantasy" line Bramble. This new imprint was developed specifically for romance books with fantasy elements.

Remedial Magic follows the story of three people who have near-death experiences, and are then snatched from their everyday lives and sent to the College of Remedial Magic in the land of Crenshaw. Once there, they discover that they are witches whose magic manifested in order to save their lives. They are Maggie, a lawyer with a teenage son that she is trying to protect from her criminal ex-husband; Dan, a cancer patient with many other reasons to want to run away from his life; and Ellie, a librarian who strives to make every aspect of her life as "normal" as possible. They are told that they are required to attend classes at the College to learn how to handle their magic. At the end of their time there, they will either become part of the Crenshaw community or their memories and their magic will be erased so that they can return to their former lives. The story is complicated by Maggie's attraction to the College's brooding Headmaster, Sondre; Ellie's budding relationship with the mysterious and powerful witch Prospero; and the growing realization that something terribly wrong is happening in Crenshaw that is starting to kill witches.

I enjoyed *Remedial Magic*. Marr does an excellent job of creating a world that is parallel to ours but also different enough to make the attendees of the College of Remedial

Magic feel off-kilter. The politics of Crenshaw, which are wrapped throughout the story, are interesting and well done. For those who do not like books with multiple viewpoint characters, this book is not for you as each chapter changes viewpoint between Maggie, Ellie, and Dan. The romance elements were the weakest aspect of the book in my opinion, but I do not particularly enjoy when the author sets up a major power imbalance between the characters so that one is manipulating the other through their relationship.

That said, this was a well-written book and I enjoyed the characters and the world enough that I will read the sequel when it is released in 2025, especially because the story ends on a major cliffhanger. I am curious to see how Marr resolves it.

***Navigational Entanglements* by Aliette de Bodard, 2024 Tordotcom, hc \$20.99, 163 pages.**

Review by Becky C. Davis

It is nice to see works by other than "American" authors in science fiction. Aliette de Bodard of France follows in the steps of Jules Verne, Pierre Boulle (*Planet of the Apes*), Liu Cixin (*Three-Body Problem*) and others. But is this short novel "space opera"?

There are space ships, space "gliders" and weird, inhabited planetesimals which trail a fractured moon. There is plenty of emotional opera: anger, betrayal, disdain, despair, murder of a clan elder, bickering, political maneuvering and finally, love. But it does not rise to my idea of space opera. Her world is Vietnamese-based, controlled by eight elders of four (that I could count) wealthy family clans (Dog, Ox, Rooster, Snake) who control shipping navigation using their "Shadows" through a null-space called "The Hollows." The Hollows contain nasty beasts called "tangles" which appear like jellyfish, but can kill whole spaceships.

Four junior navigators, still learning their navigational skills, each from a different clan, are ordered by their elders to catch/kill a tangle which escaped from The Hollows. They hate each other, but they obey the clan elders. Then the elders RELEASE the captured tangle so the juniors must catch it again before it kills sentients on some of the planetesimals.

It is a girl-on-girl romance, a world-view dive into what the navigational entanglements of a Vietnamese society, mores and politics might be in four or five centuries, and some of the deeper levels of Vietnamese culture and spirituality. But this reader felt more like a small space ship constantly bouncing off the atmosphere of de Bodard's world, never truly understanding the continents or construction of the world and its characters. Some of the fundamentals of the plot and this world are opaque to this reader.

If one wants a quick read about a unique culture and an innovative world, here it is. If one is a more dedicated space opera fan, look for a different book that concentrates more on the mechanisms of space, sentients cooperating for a goal, and with more optimism in its pages.

***For the First Time, Again* by Sylvain Neuvel, 2024 Tordotcom, hc \$27.99, 320 pages.**

Review by Craig W. Chrissinger

For the First Time, Again is the final book in Sylvain Neuvel's *Take Them to the Stars* trilogy, continuing the story of the Kibsu, who subtly help mankind toward space travel, and the Radi Kibsi, ruthless enemy trackers who want to stop them (and call out for more of their people). The First Rule for the Kibsu has always been "Always run,

never fight.” But in 1999, Aster is in foster care and knows nothing about her alien heritage. At least not yet. The Radi Kibsi have found her and the beacon at a celebratory party at Stennis Space Center, and chaos ensues. The next thing she knows, she’s locked up in a white room in a secret basement below Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Colonel Veilleux is telling her about her “peculiar” blood test results. Medical Intelligence wants to know more about her. Shades of *The X-Files*.

Of course, she manages to break out. And after another attempt on her life, she is rescued by Samael, the rebel tracker of Neuvel’s second book, *Until the Last of Me*. Samael wants to train her to protect herself against other trackers and hunters that are coming from the stars. And Aster slowly realizes she has to get the space beacon off the Earth so invaders and colonizers can’t follow its signal.

For the First Time, Again is a fast-paced first-contact thriller with clever historical references told in first-person mostly from both Aster and Samael. From the beginning of this third entry, the action and their differing accounts keep the story interesting. I was happy to see how Neuvel resolved the series, and I’m intrigued by what he might create next. Recommended.

***Dune: Part 2*, a movie directed by Denis Villeneuve, screenplay by Villeneuve and Jon Spaihts, based on *Dune* by Frank Herbert, released March 2024. Review by Becky C. Davis**

Both Part 1 and Part 2 are awesome in developing the vistas of Frank Herbert’s *Dune* epic. Dennis Villeneuve clearly loved the book and convinced backers that it could not be a boxed-in all CGI product. He makes you feel the heat of Arrakis, the weight and hatred of the Harkonnen family, and the fierce independence and spiritual commitment of the Fremen who live in the desert.

Dune: Part 2 is still only half of the original book, but it is the part that shows Paul Atreides (Timothée Chalamet) turning into a man, the leader of the Fremen, and a Fedyken warrior, fighting against both the Harkonnens and the despised Emperor Shaddam IV. The cinematographer has done beautiful work creating the sietches (settlements) of the Fremen, the brooding fortress on Arrakis, and, of course, the huge sandworms. The scenes (admittedly CGI) of Paul (Muad’Dib) and the Fremen riding the sandworms to new destinations and over the Shield Wall of the fortress should be enshrined in the hall of movie classics. Stillsuits, worn by the Fremen, marvelously imagined!

Small quibbles. Villeneuve and the cameramen had to show the faces of speaking characters when they were out in the dry Arrakis heat when Herbert clearly had all skin surfaces covered by stillsuits and goggles. It might have been more convincing to have actors speak through some altered voice mechanism. Baron Harkonnen (Stellan Skarsgård) is killed by the Gom Jabbar wielded by Paul instead of by 5-year-old Alia, young sister of Paul, as it was in the book. In the movie, Alia is not yet born when the Baron is killed. That jarred on my recollection of the book, but the writers and producers wanted to get a product to market. Sadly, I get it. The driven sandworms (Shai Hulud) coursing across the dunes have their mouths open and zillion teeth bared. In the book, all sandworms had their mouths closed until about to consume a spice-harvester or a bunch of people.

Dune: Part 2 is a rip-snorting epic film which should

be seen as many times as one’s pocket book and time constraints will allow. It is wonderful.

PS: The Dune folk want to make *Dune Messiah* next. Watch for it.

***Beacon 23*, a science fiction series on MGM+, created by Zak Penn, based on the short story series of the same name by Hugh Howey, starring Lena Headey and Stephan James. Season 1 composed of 8 episodes, November 2023–December 23. Season 2, again 8 episodes, premiered April 7. Review by Becky C. Davis**

Beacons are constructed by humans in the deep recesses of the galaxy to warn passing spaceships of space debris and gravity fluctuations. A mature space culture! They are each operated by one human and an accompanying AI interface.

Beacon 23 is one such space station which gets a lot of attention from numerous unsavory types (who wants a safe but boring watch tower in the wilds?). In the first episode of the MGM+ series, Halan is apparently the beacon operator who intercepts a drifting life pod from a stricken ship. He retrieves Aster, a take-no-prisoners former government agent. He is conflicted about notifying authorities to remove her, because his own presence on the station is not authentic. He murdered the original operator, Solomon, when he, Harlan, arrived, after going AWOL from his military posting. More intrigue.

The plots get noticeably more tangled and the emotional quotient ramps higher in the first season until somebody dies. Then Season 2 begins. I was only able to watch Season 1, episodes 1 and 2 before the first of May, when MGM+ closed the “free” door on the service. You may have better luck with other streaming options.

Beacon 23 is space opera worthy of the name and I hope it comes back around as a temporary “free” view.

ASFS MEETING REPORTS — JAN 2024: BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

The beginning of 2024 saw 23 people gather to discuss books read in 2023, whether good or bad. A book title mentioned by more than one person is indicated by an asterisk.

Among reading materials named were *Spelunking Through Hell** by Seanan McGuire, *Bookshops & Bonedust* by Travis Baldree, *The Road To Roswell** by Connie Willis, *The Kaiju Preservation Society** by John Scalzi, *Breaking and Entering 101: The Case Files of Henri Davenforth Book 4* by Honor Raconteur, *Bad Deal for the Whole Galaxy: The Salvagers 2* by Alex White, *The Alchemy of Chaos: Maradaine Saga: Thorn of Maradaine Book 2* by Marshall Ryan Maresca, *The Naturalist* by Andrew Mayne, *Alternate Routes* by Tim Powers, *Forced Perspectives* by Tim Powers, *109 East Palace: Robert Oppenheimer and the Secret City of Los Alamos* by Jennet Conant, *The Killer Angels* by Michael Shaara, *The Hunger* by Alma Katsu, *Holly* by Stephen King, *Hollywood Gothic: The Tangled Web of Dracula from Novel to Stage to Screen* by David J. Skal, *Something in the Blood: The Untold Story of Bram Stoker, the Man Who Wrote Dracula* by David J. Skal, *Halloween: The History of America’s Darkest Holiday* by David J. Skal, *Dark Carnival: The Secret World of Tod Browning* by David J. Skal and Elias Savada, *The Monster Show: A Cultural History of Horror* by David J. Skal, *Boldly Go: Reflections on a Life of Awe and Wonder* by William Shatner with Joshua Brandon (*STINKER*), *The Demon-*

Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark by Carl Sagan, *Doomsday Book* by Connie Willis, *Project Hail Mary* by Andy Weir, *Land of Nuclear Enchantment: A New Mexican History of the Nuclear Weapons Industry* by Lucie Genay, *Star Trek: The Kobayashi Maru* by Julie Ecklar,

Post-Apocalyptic Nomadic Warriors: A Duck & Cover Adventure by Benjamin Wallace, *Starter Villain* by John Scalzi, *System Collapse: The Murderbot Diaries 7* by Martha Wells, *The Goblin Reservation* by Clifford D. Simak, *Miss Percy's Pocket Guide to the Care and Feeding of British Dragons* by Quenby Olson, *Kraken Rider Z* by David Estes, *Moon Cops on the Moon* by C. T. Phipps, Non-Fiction books, *A Bad Day for Sunshine: Sunshine Vicram 1* by Darynda Jones, *A Hard Day for a Hangover: Sunshine Vicram 3* by Darynda Jones, *Feed: Newsflesh Book 1* by Mira Grant, *In the Lives of Puppets* by TJ Klune, *Whiskers and Lies: Magical Cats 14* by Sofie Kelly, *The Man with the Golden Torc: Secret Histories 1* by Simon R. Green, *Demons Are Forever: Secret Histories 2* by Simon R. Green, *Alive: The Generations Trilogy 1* by Scott Siegler, *Railhead* by Philip Reeve, *Black Light Express: Railhead 2* by Philip Reeve, *As You Wish: Inconceivable Tales from the Making of The Princess Bride* by Cary Elwes, *Long Past Due: The Unorthodox Chronicles 2* by James J. Butcher, *Martians Abroad* by Carrie Vaughn, *Space Station Down* by Ben Bova and Doug Beason, *Bloodshot* by Cherie Priest, *Conan: Blood of the Serpent* by S.M. Stirling, and *The Water Knife* by Paolo Bacigalupi.

FEB 2024: HALL ON SPACE MICROBES

Twenty-four brave souls ventured forth to hear space historian Loretta Hall speak on “Microbes In Space: Friend Or Foe,” an encore presentation of her Bubonicon 54 talk.

She started by telling attendees that millions of microorganisms or microbes can fit into the eye of a needle, and include bacteria, viruses, fungi and more. Why should we worry about these small organisms during space travel? Because they can cause disease and damage, flourish in a spacecraft environment, and they thrive in micro-gravity.

Hall showed how microbes can cause material damage, such as moldy wiring, corroded gauge needles, and holes in aluminum plating. “These kinds of damage have happened despite astronauts trying to keep things clean,” she said. “Spacecraft environments are usually 65-80 degrees Fahrenheit, sixty percent humidity, and with no air convection.”

The environment of Space means radiation exposure, stress on humans, diminished immunity, and reactivation where viruses wake up. Hall reported that half of the astronauts returning from the International Space Station had weaker immune systems than before they left Earth.

Microgravity also affects microbes through increased growth, resistance to antibiotics, increased virulence, and decreased diversity. “There are hardy space bugs,” she reported. “Some bacteria become stronger and harder to kill, including ‘Conan the Bacterium,’ SAFR-32.”

She also said, “Humans have microbes on our skin, in our gut and stomach, on the genitals, in our lungs, eyes and mouth, and there is an aura or cloud around us. Altered microbiome can cause diarrhea, microbial infections, cancer, chronic diseases, and mental disorders such as anxiety and depression. Some help against them can come from prebiotics, fiber and probiotics.”

Astronauts have experienced infections during missions involving Apollo, the Mir Space Station, space shut-

tles and the International Space Station.

Hall said some precautions can cause problems. “Antibiotics are problematic as they kill good bacteria along with bad. Alcohol can contaminate the water supply, and silver can lead to heavy metal build-up. Basically, it’s the same as on Earth – wash your hands, don’t touch your face, and avoid sick people.”

The good news of microbes in space include algae growing easily for food, mushrooms also are easy to grow, other fungi can be used for materials, and *Shewanella* bacteria can be used to produce an electric current.

“NASA is aware of these microbe issues,” she said. “Just recently, two microbes reached the ISS for studies. Microbes are her, they’re there. Technology has to be developed to slow growth, and cleaning is necessary and must continue.”

Asked about us contaminating other worlds, Hall finished her presentation by saying, “Even though our spacecraft and probes are sterilized, our microbes go to other planets and asteroids. We cannot guarantee we won’t contaminate those places. Even here, a meteorite hitting the atmosphere and melting still could hold something that survives. We don’t know!”

MARCH 2024: ANNUAL CLUB AUCTION

The annual Club Auction drew 32 people to St. Andrew’s Activity Room, and plenty of bidding. All in all, the Auction raised about \$535 for ASFS. Thank you to Auctioneers Robert Vardeman & Patricia Rogers, money trackers Mandy Self & Jessica Coyle, and item organizers Geneva Schult and Roberta Johnson.

Some of the more interesting items included *Star Trek: The Game* plus four books \$10, *The Art of Chesley Bonestell* book \$10, a dozen *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* scripts \$16, framed dragon art \$34, blood-red table runners \$6, three signed John Scalzi books \$5, a Randall Spangler dragon print \$12, an Eco-Flux set \$5, *The Dagger Before Me* by Robert Vardeman \$60, a collection of Elizabeth Peters books (some signed) \$30, a box of *Analog* magazines \$5, a dinosaur lamp \$20, five hardback books \$5, a shamrock tablecloth \$5, a bundle of Sherlock Holmes books \$3, a remote-controlled Mars rover \$5, and a 2nd signed Robert Vardeman book \$35.

EDITOR NOTES TO FILL THIS SPACE

• **NOT MUCH ROOM FOR ME**, which is okay. I’m just happy to have this Spring issue done - and it’s not even midnight! Woot woot.

• **WHILE JESSICA HAD** to work half of April 11, we still got out to the Williamson Lectureship in Portales just as things started. We had a nice time, even with the fire alarm malfunctioning the first night in our hotel room. We enjoyed seeing Martha Wells, Connie & Courtney Willis, and the rest of the usual gang of authors/Portales friends. And we raced back to ABQ on April 13 to see Mary Robynette Kowal at Books on the Bosque. It was good to see her. My report on the Lectureship is in the May issue of *Locus Magazine*.

• **WE SAW Shatner: You Can Call Me Bill, American Fiction**, and *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* (all enjoyable) on the big screen, along with *My Fair Lady* and *Forbidden Broadway* at Popejoy.

• **IN HORROR**, earlier this year I read *The Dead Take the A Train* by Cassandra Khaw & Richard Kadrey (very visceral, enticing, fast read). Listening to Stephen Graham Jones at Bookworks in March was interesting, and last week I went with Lauren T to watch *Late Night with the Devil* at the Guild Cinema (enjoyable, different, worth seeing). Glad *Morgue & Krypt* is returning this September.

• **THAT’S ABOUT IT!** Thank you to Becky D and Jessica C for their contributions! See you in July - please send in stuff. – Craig C