

# ScientiFiction

A publication of **FIRST FANDOM**, the Dinosaurs of Science Fiction

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New Series #6 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2005  
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## Presidents Message

### Greetings:

It is time again to vote for the First Fandom Hall of Fame awards. You will find a ballot included with this issue. Please fill it out and send it back to me by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

This has been a really sad year for our members so far. We have lost several wonderful people in just the first few months. Besides Kelly Freas and Andre Norton, we have lost Jack Chalker and Buzz Busby. They may have gone but fond memories and their creativity still live on.

Got a nice note from Sir Arthur Clarke on what his latest ventures are. He had a birthday not to long ago and sent a picture of the party. Looked like a really great time.

Have a great summer!

*Joan Marie Knappenberger*  
[Knappenberger@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Knappenberger@sbcglobal.net)

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## We Get Letters

Dear Joe,

Many thanks for the latest SCIENTIFUNCTION and congratulations and welcome to the editorship.

I must say I prefer the old booklet format, do you plan to use that once you have settled in? [*We've decided on this form because there's less chance of damage in the mail when we send it in an envelope. Joe Martino*]

The archives made me think that Asimov was re-incarnated, until I saw the date. Sir Arthur seems to have escaped the tsunami, I wonder if the Cocos Islands did as I was stationed there briefly in 1945 and the islands were low lying .

*Trivia News:* We have just had a few disasters, mainly minor ones, but annoying never the less. First, our electric kettle packed up. We got a cordless one to replace it, but apart from the base taking up space on the breakfast bar, it is very awkward to fill. Next item was the TV control wand locked up and nothing would free it. A 28 year old youth fixed it in five minutes for a call out charge of £20. Then my e-mail stopped working, for a week when the ISP broke down and nothing came in & went

out. Then my easy chair broke a leg. So it goes.

Great excitement last week when a car across the road caught fire and huge flames went up. Luckily, they managed to put it out.

I don't know if this is in order, but if it is, can you put a plug in the next issue:

ASTOUNDING SF, all issues for 1938 Good condition, Offers ?

Terry Jeeves, 56 Red Scar Drive, SCARBOROUGH UK Y0125RQ

e-mail [terryjeeves@ic24.net](mailto:terryjeeves@ic24.net)

Oh well, no other news so I will sign off.

All the best.

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*Terry Jeeves*

From: Ed Meskys

To: Joan Marie Knappenberger (forwarded)

Cc: Mark A. Mandel

Subject: Computers and Visual Impairment

I am submitting this to SCIENTIFUNCTION, the newsletter of First Fandom, and am carboning Mark Mandel since I refer to him in the article.

I noticed in the latest STF a discussion of our aging population and various members needing help accessing computers.

I became totally blind November 1971 at the age of 35, and have had a talking computer since 1984. I was a good touch typist and have never needed dictation software. Mark Mandel, a fan in the Philadelphia area, makes regular use of "Dragon Dictate," for writing his email. I understand this software exists with various levels of accuracy at various prices. I use screen-reading software to read email, websites, books and fanzines scanned with optical character recognition, and books and magazines on computer disks. There are three major packages, JFW (JAWS for Windows/Job Access With Speech) from Freedom Scientific in Florida, Window Eyes (mental block on manufacturer) and a product from Dolphin in England. These are all very expensive. JFW, which I use, is about \$800 or \$900. Window Eyes is about \$200 less. I do not know the price structure of Dolphin's product. I understand that all three programs are about equally good.

Because Windows is constantly changing, and because blind people want to access more and more programs, the access software is upgraded one or two times a year and you have to buy a Software Maintenance Agreement. JFW costs \$120 for two upgrades. If you do not pre-buy an SMA each upgrade costs \$100, and if you get behind you have to buy all the ones in-between. This can run to almost the cost of starting from scratch and buying a new program. I understand that the cost of SMAs for Window Eyes is a bit more reasonable. Then why did I buy JFW? I did not know about the big difference in price and all but two of my friends were using JFW. I had more people I could turn to for help in getting up to speed on the software. The software allows me to read a whole document, read paragraph, sentence, line, or word at a time. I have keyboard echo turned on so I catch typos as they happen. I can edit what I have written, easily finding the place to insert corrections. I can read words a letter at a time, and even use alpha, bravo, charlie, etc., to get exact spelling when I am trying to write down an address or website URL. JFW includes "scripts" for ease in working with specific software packages, tho they are invisible and do not have to be called up individually. I regularly work in Word, Access, Outlook Express, and Internet Explorer. I have heard of a new Windows screen reader which is far less sophisticated and costs much less. Of course it will do less, but might be good for someone wanting to get started. I do not remember name or manufacturer, but will be glad to ask on the blind computer users' listserv.

Best, *Edmund R. Meskys*

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From Chester Cuthbert:

Enclosed is a copy of the obituary notice from the Winnipeg Free Press of David Henry Blair, my local fellow member of First Fandom, and a copy of the family Memorial Service which I was privileged to share. David encouraged me to join First Fandom in 1992. His interest in fandom was minimal, but he subscribed to *LOCUS* and, since I did not, he reported faithfully after receiving each issue, anything he thought of interest to me. Since neither of us possessed a car, most of our contacts were by telephone.

David attended many conventions and was acquainted with authors who received from him three publications of his notes regarding every story published by *ASTOUNDING/ANALOG*. He was a meticulous researcher, and

would send to everyone revised pages if he found even a simple typographical error. Other researchers benefited from his detailed notes of series stories and authors' *noms de plume*.

Unsuccessful in finding a professional publisher, David sold copies of his books for the cost of photocopying them. As his personal opinions were based on lifelong reading, they are helpful in guiding readers to the best stories. His dedication to science fiction left him little more than time for his family activities, but we who knew him will miss him greatly.

I did not have an opportunity to show this letter to his son Donald until today, but I hope it will reach you ahead of your next issue of *SCIENTIFICTION*.

*Chester D. Cuthbert*



**DAVID HENRY BLAIR**

David Henry Blair, 81, passed away in Winnipeg, Monday, August 16, 2004 at the Victoria General Hospital after a brief illness.

Born in St. John's, NL, he was the son of the late Kenmure Maitland and Anna May (Davis) Blair.

He was a Second World War Veteran with the RCAF and was retired from Canada Customs. As well, he was an avid collector and reader of science fiction literature, throughout his life.

He was predeceased by his brother, John and is survived by his wife, Mildred; sons, Robert (Gloria) and Donald of Winnipeg; daughter Anne (Ron Cutler) of Halifax and grandchildren, Joshua, Rachel, Elizabeth, Victoria and Stephen.

Cremation has taken place. Private service and burial of ashes to follow at a later date in St. John's, NL.

Condolences may be sent to Voyage Funeral Home, 1531 Pembina Hwy., Winnipeg, MB R2L 0L4 or [voyage@mts.net](mailto:voyage@mts.net).

Dear Friends and Fans of Andre:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support and encouragement during these past few weeks. It was a very difficult time for all of us here and your thoughts and prayers most assuredly helped us through.

As we have learned from the many cards and e-mails that came pouring in, many of you, your children, and grandchildren have literally grown up with her books. I have even had people tell me that their lives were

changed for the better by her. There are successful writers who have told me that she was the one who inspired them to write. She was truly a person who blazed a shining path for others to follow.

To me, she was my best friend and companion whom I came to love and cherish and I shall miss her always.

Sincerely, *Sue Stewart*

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[Keep those cards & letters coming, folks  
*Joseph P. Martino*]

### **MILLENNICON REPORT**

This year the Millennicon returned to a former venue, the Blue Ash Hotel and Conference Center. I thought it was a nicer venue that the places it has been held the past few years. Anyway, the location was a good one.

I was on a panel on self-publishing. I'm still peddling my first novel. I was able to report on my success or lack thereof.

Our own Don Dailey showed some movie shorts of old science fiction films. They brought back some memories for those of us who had seen the originals.

Bill Breuer was there as usual, this time showing pictures of fake flying saucers. It's amazing how much effort people went to to fake them. Some of the fakes were pretty good, but a close examination showed the problems.

One of the most interesting sessions, to me anyway, was one in which we extracted some DNA from a breakfast cereal, using only household chemicals. After watching the "experts" on CSI for so long, it was nice to know that I could do it myself. It makes a nice demonstration for school kids, too.

Another interesting session was on authors' pseudonyms. The panelists showed a great deal of depth in their knowledge of who wrote under what names. Some were quite surprising to me.

The Mars Society was there again, with some updates on the latest events on Mars, as well as information on their Mars Analog stations and the experiments being done there.

All in all a worthwhile 'con, and I had a good time.  
*Joe Martino*

### **NEBULA AWARDS REPORT**

I attended the Nebula Awards, held by the Science Fiction Writers of America, held in Chicago. The Nebula Awards this year went to:

**Novel:** Lois McMaster Bujold for *Paladin of Souls*

**Novella:** Walter Jon Williams for *The Green Leopard Plague*

**Novelette:** Ellen Klages for *Basement Magic*

**Short Story:** Eileen Gunn for *Coming to Terms*

**Script:** Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens & Peter Jackson for *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*

In addition to the panels on writing and editing, there were several other interesting activities for attendees. There was a full-day seminar on contract law for writers. I found it very interesting. When I got home, I made a point of seeing my lawyer and taking some of the actions the seminar presenters recommended.

There was a full day tour that included the Argonne National Laboratory and the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory. I enjoyed the tours, and may use some of the material in stories some day.

The Nebulas are usually held on one coast or the other, so I rarely attend. I was glad of the opportunity to have them within driving distance (I'm boycotting the airlines because of the stupid security requirements. Last time I flew I was selected for "secondary screening," and was wanded and patted down. My luggage was pawed through. I figure if a retired Air Force Colonel, who held a top secret clearance for nearly 40 years can't be trusted, no one can.)  
*Joe Martino*

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### **Membership Notes:**

Newsletters for the following FF members have been returned as "undeliverable", "unable to forward" etc. So these individuals are "lost in space"!

**Arden R. Benson**, 720 NW Naito Parkway, #D-12, Portland, OR 97209-3726

**Steve Frischer**, PO Box 410632, St. Louis, MO 63141-0632

**Ken Krueger**, 6226 N Galanto Ave, Azusa, CA 91702-4044

**Roger Sims**, 7030 Villa Estelle Drive,  
Orlando, FL 45246-3811

**Bill Thalling**, 3830 E 38<sup>th</sup> Street, Newburgh  
Heights, OH 44105-3015

Anyone with knowledge of the current  
whereabouts of these members, please let  
me know. Thanks. *Don Dailey*

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Some notes from the Renewal Forms that  
have come in:

"Thank you for what you are doing".

*John Dalmas*

Under the "Thanks for staying with us for  
another year" line:

"At 87, I'm trying! Thanks for the good  
news on Sir Arthur-a big relief. Keep up the  
good work". *Ronald J. Small*

"I'm sorry to write you that Richard  
(Minter) passed away on November 6<sup>th</sup> after  
a lengthy illness. He looked forward to  
getting your newsletter and reading about  
the other old timers. He was 84.

*Mildred Minter*

"This person (George R. Greiff) has been  
dead for 1 1/2 years. Please remove from  
list." *Unsigned*

"Please take note of my latest book in the  
next issue". *Darrell C. Richardson*

**"The Life & Work of J. Allen St. John"**

by Darrell C. Richardson. Designed by  
Dennis McHaney. Published February 2005.  
Full Color Edition: \$29.95, s&h \$3.05. Total  
cost \$33.00 per copy.

Make checks/MOs payable to: Darrell C.  
Richardson, 1960 North Parkway, Apt. 406,  
Memphis, TN 38112-5052

And just for fun, for those of you who like  
to keep track of such things, the renewal  
notices went out with the last newsletter.  
The first to respond were **Ralph W.  
Goldsmith** and **Margaret Ford Keifer**,  
and the last (as of 31 May 2005) were **Joe  
& Gay Haldeman**.

So I give a honorary "Hare and Tortise  
Award" to these stalwart individuals.

The renewal rate was great, we really  
appreciate those of you who have decided  
to remain with us for another year (or  
longer)!

And before I forget, a hearty "hi" to our  
newest *First Fandom* member, **Stephen  
Dedalus Korshak** Esq., of Orlando, Florida.  
Welcome aboard, Dinosaur!

*Don Dailey*

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**First Fandom Officials**  
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**President:** Joan Marie Knappenberger,  
1474 Summerhaven Drive, St. Louis, MO  
63146-5440

Vice President: (vacant)

**Secretary:** Joe L. Hensley, 2315 Blackmore  
Steet, Madison, IN 47250-2303

**Treasurer:** Keith W. Stokes, 555 N. Murlen  
Road, Apt. 201, Olathe, KS 66062-5418

**Membership Chairman:** Don Dailey, PO  
Box 354, Georgetown, IN 47122-0354

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**Editorial Staff, SCIENTIFUNCTION**

**Editor:** Joseph P. Martino, 905 South Main  
Avenue, Sidney, OH 45365-3212  
jpmart@bright.net

**Special Features Editor:** Jon D. Swartz,  
1704 Vine St., Georgetown, TX 78626-7228

**Contributing Editor,** Don Dailey, PO Box  
354, Georgetown, IN 47122-0354  
fadmdon@otherside.com

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