

# The National Fantasy Fan

Cras ad Stellas— Tomorrow to the Stars

Volume 79 Number 10 October 2020

## We Have a Treasurer!

Long-time member Kevin Trainor of Tonapah, Nevada, who is an accountant, has volunteered to become our new Treasurer, and as your President I have appointed him. We will for a while be doing changeover, but expect regular Treasurer's reports soon.

## Elections!

Elections for the Directorate and the post of President will soon take place.

For the office of President, we have one candidate, George Phillis.

For the Directorate (five to be elected) we have five candidates, who are

Kevin Trainor  
John Thiel  
Jefferson Swycaffer  
Heath Row  
Judy Carroll

Final election statements and the ballot will appear in the next issue.

## Archives

We make a serious effort to have N3F publications distributed in multiple places. One of these places is FANAC.org.

Joe Siclari writes: Thanks for sending the latest Tightbeam. We have been adding a bunch of old N3F zines to FANAC.org. See our directories for:

Tightbeam - <http://www.fanac.org/fanzines/Tightbeam/> - We now have 141 issues there. Recently we added a bunch of the Tightbeam predecessor zine, Postwarp and

TNFF - <http://www.fanac.org/fanzines/TNFF/> - where we have 83 issues going back to 1945. Our directory for Bonfire - <http://www.fanac.org/fanzines/TNFF/> - TNFF's predecessor zine starts with #1 in 1941.

We also have other N3F publications online like the Fandbooks - <http://www.fanac.org/fanzines/Fandbook/> and the 1950 Fan Directory - [http://www.fanac.org/Fannish\\_Reference\\_Works/WhosWho/WhosWho03.pdf](http://www.fanac.org/Fannish_Reference_Works/WhosWho/WhosWho03.pdf)

## Proposed Constitutional Amendment

The President has proposed to amend our N3F Constitution. To be enacted, the proposal must first be approved by the Directorate and then be approved by a membership vote:

Remark: The Constitution and Bylaws are inconsistent with each other. The Constitution should be changed, not the Bylaws. The main change is that the Constitution failed to notice that fen can have children who are also fen. The change follows. If the Directorate approves, the proposal then goes to the membership for the deciding vote.

The Directorate presents to the members a motion to

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Art  
3 — Kylo Ren — Jose Sanchez  
7 — The Last Jedi Trio Collage — Jose Sanchez  
7 — The Sea Steed — Angela K. Scott  
10 — The Voyage — Angela K. Scott



## Your Volunteer Team

### Directors:

Heath Row— kalel@well.com (Chair)  
 Judy Carroll - BlueShadows2012@gmail.com  
 Jefferson Swycaffer - abontides@gmail.com  
 John Thiel - kinethiel@mymetronet.net  
 R-Laurraine Tutihasi - lauraine@mac.com

### Officers

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 Treasurer David Speakman - davodd@gmail.com

### Editorial Cabal

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 Editor, The N3F Review of Books: George Phillies  
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### Bureau Heads

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Continued Next Column, Middle

amend the Constitution, to replace:

"3. Joint memberships are available to two persons residing in the same household. A joint membership will include The National Fantasy Fan Federation (TNFF) and all rights such as voting and club activities. The dues shall be more than a single membership but less than a double, to be set by the Directorate."

with

"Household memberships are available to several persons living in the same household. Dues for the first member of the household are at the rate set for a single membership. Dues for additional persons living in the same household, these being the 'household members', are set at rates fixed by the Directorate. Household members have all rights of other dues-paying members, such as voting and club activities, but are not sent separate issues of N3F paper mail newsletters."

## Your Volunteer Team

Neffy Awards Bureau George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net  
 Pro Bureau George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net  
 Round Robins Patricia Williams-King, 335 Forrest Park  
 Road, Apt # 75 Madison, TN 37115.  
 Short Story Contest J. Swycaffer abontides@gmail.com  
 Social Media David Speakman, George Phillies  
 Video Bureau: Cathode Ray the anonymous  
 Welcommittee: Judy Carroll BlueShadows2012@gmail.com  
 Writers Exchange: Judy Carroll BlueShadows2012@gmail.com

## WANTED! WordPress&Web Help

### Join or Renew

We offer four different memberships. Memberships with TNFF via paper mail are \$18; memberships with TNFF via email are \$6. All other zines are email only. Additional memberships at the address of a current member are \$4. Public memberships are free. Send payments to N3F, POB 1925, Mountain View CA 94042. Pay online at N3F.org. Our PayPal contact is treasurer@n3f.org Send phillies@4liberty.net your email address for a public membership.

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## Proposed Bylaws Change

Colleagues:

Some years ago, we merged the offices of Secretary and Treasurer. This process, through the fault of no one in particular, has not eventuated as well as might have been hoped. The more tasks that are piled on the poor Treasurer, the harder it is to find a new Treasurer to replace our current Treasurer, who has repeatedly asked to be replaced. I am therefore requesting that we amend the Bylaws by inserting a new Section IV, as shown below, with all other Sections being renumbered to match. Please act promptly on my request.

George

### IV. The Secretary.

1. The Secretary maintains the membership roster of the National Fantasy Fan Federation, in the form of an electronic spreadsheet. A copy of the spreadsheet shall be sent monthly to the President, Treasurer, and each member of the Directorate.
2. The Secretary is appointed by the President. The Directorate may by majority vote disapprove of a Presidential appointment, in which case the President must appoint a different person as Secretary.
3. The Secretary may serve as a member of the Directorate.
4. The President and Treasurer shall ensure that the Secretary is promptly notified of each new member, change of address, and membership renewal, notification being in no case less often than once a month.

## Letters of Comment

Editor,

I wanted to offer a correction to a statement in TNFF -- "...the Cincinnati Fantasy Group, which apparently started meeting in 1935, making it the oldest extant sf/fan club" The Los Angeles Science Fiction Society was founded in October 1934, and still meets.

Best wishes,  
Mike Glyer

George,

The new TNFF arrived in great shape. The new folding method is working much better than the previous one.

Jon

George,

Thank you very much for the Neffy Award Certificate! I never thought I'd see this day. I'm very elated that I was chosen as best fan artist and I still feel like I'm in a "dream state". What an honor this is.

Thanks again,

Jose Sanchez



1706-24 Eva Rd.  
Etobicoke, ON  
CANADA M9C 2B2  
October 6, 2020

Dear Neffers:

I hope I can get this in on time! Might already be late! But, try I shall. I have the September National Fantasy Fan here, Volume 79, Number 9, and a fast loc will issue forth.

Some of your newest members are among some of the oldest current fanzine fans I know, so I hope you can welcome them with that proviso. Perhaps I should just announce my own membership so I can continue to receive this issues without missing anything. If there's any paperwork, please do let me know what to do.

Reminders about kindness, disagreements, credit for artists, no promotions, spam or porn...in some ways I am a little surprised that we still have to be reminded about that. I have witnessed some much newer fandoms go through such warnings, which are often ignored by many, and the description of fandom being toxic is seen in many places. It's not the fandom being toxic, but some of the people within it. We have to do better; we have to play well with others. But then, there are politics inherent in just about any human activity.

I can't really say much about Jack Armstrong or Brick

Bradford, given I grew up in Canada, and to be honest, such characters were considered jingoistic by many on my side of the border. Still, depending on the kilowattage of the station's transmitter, it was probably possible to hear some of these episodes on American stations on our AM radios. I think I would have liked to have heard some of Brick Bradford's adventures, especially if his Time Top took him to the unknowable future.

My loc... I have received congratulations on my Neffy win from a number of people, so word of the awards is getting out there. The weather has turned cool to cold, so we can't go out for our picnics, so we are looking at other ways to get out for some activity. The local shopping malls beckon, but they might not like us bringing our own lunches along with us.

Done I am, and off it goes in hopes of meeting this month's deadline. Many thanks for more issues, and see you all with the next.

Yours,

Lloyd Penney

George,

I own exactly one Big Little Book: *Brick Bradford With/And Brocco the Modern Buccaneer*. ('With' on the cover, 'And' on the title page.) I always assumed it was an isolated curiosity, but Jon Swartz set me straight as to the character's 50-year existence and popularity. I may even have to read the BLB some day. It was also interesting to discover the connection between Jack Armstrong, merely a name to me, and Johnny Quest, one of my favorites when I was young.

Angela K. Scott's 'Dragon Mailbox' is quite charming; I'd love to have such a creature popping out of my next issue of TNFF (though I suppose the postage surcharge would be prohibitive.) The juxtaposition of the title and the last line of the paragraph on Clarence Gray almost led me to congratulate Angela on becoming the cartoonist for the Toledo *News-Bee*.

Judy Carroll's account of the transition from longhand to computer use in her writing connects intriguingly with A. E. Van Vogt's description, in his 1946 World-Con GoH speech, of a similarly productive transformation. By the time he wrote *Slan*, he avowed, "I had attained a flow [...] But one might error I made. I had trained myself in the wrong medium. Long hand." In 1943, Van Vogt estimated, "I had produced approxi-

mately a quarter of a million words. This compares with a million voters who gained their flow, their rhythm, on a typewriter." The moral was simpler "You must use the right tools, or you will suffer."

Carroll's comments about taking her time "to contemplate and better understand what I was writing and why" — that is, to find her sense of flow — illuminates Van Vogt's point strikingly (even if, as I assume, she's not seeking to hit the million-word-a-year mark.)

In my non-fiction, especially Fanfaronade or various articles for *Far Journeys* and *Dreams Renewed*, I almost invariably write at the computer now. Oddly enough, my fictional pieces nearly always begin with two or three longhand versions before making the shift to screen.

Lloyd Penney, a worthy loccer in the tradition of Harry Warner, Jr., notes the extensive lettercol in the August TNFF and invites readers to 'keep that up'. Amen. One small suggestion is to have a We Also Heard From listing. The acknowledgement of additional letters encourages correspondents to make their letters as interesting as possible in the hopes of being published and makes clear that there is more ferment among the membership than space allows to be demonstrated.

Justin E. A. Busch

## SerCon

### The Shadow and Walter B. Gibson by Jon D. Swartz, Ph.D. N3F Historian

The Shadow is a fictional character that appeared originally on 1930s radio, and then in a wide variety of media. Details of the title character have varied across various media, but he is generally depicted as a crime-fighting vigilante with psychic powers posing as a "wealthy, young man about town." One of the most famous adventure heroes of the 20th Century, The Shadow has been featured on the radio, in a long running pulp magazine series, in comic books, comic strips, television, a movie serial, video games, and in several feature-length motion pictures. The radio drama is well-remembered, even today, especially the early episodes starring Orson Welles.

Introduced as a mysterious radio narrator for Street and Smith Publications, The Shadow was developed fully and

transformed into a pop culture icon by author/reporter Walter B. Gibson who was also a magician. The character of The Shadow would go on to become a major influence on the subsequent evolution of comic book superheroes, in particular DC's Batman.

The Shadow first appeared on July 31, 1930, as the mysterious narrator of the Street and Smith radio program Detective Story Hour. After gaining popularity with the show's listeners, the narrator became the star of The Shadow Magazine on April 1, 1931, a pulp series created and primarily written by the prolific Gibson.

On September 26, 1937, The Shadow radio program premiered with the story "The Death House Rescue," in which the character was characterized as having "the power to cloud men's minds so they cannot see him."

This was a contrivance for the radio. In the magazine stories, The Shadow was not given the literal ability to become invisible, only to be very difficult to see by hiding in the shadows.

The introduction from The Shadow radio program -- "Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? The Shadow knows!" -- has earned a place in American folklore. These words were accompanied by an ominous laugh and a musical theme, "Omphale's Spinning Wheel," that had been composed in 1872. At the end of each episode The Shadow reminded listeners that, "The weed of crime bears bitter fruit. Crime does not pay. . . The Shadow knows!"

Walter B. Gibson (1897 – 1985) was a professional magician. In addition he was a reporter, composer of crossword puzzles, ghostwriter for professional magicians Howard Thurston and Harry Houdini, and the author of numerous non-fiction books on magic, yoga, judo, and harness racing. And all of this activity was in addition to the 283 Shadow novels he wrote under his Maxwell Grant pseudonym!

## Pulps

Starting with The Living Shadow in April, 1931, the first 112 Shadow pulp novels were written by Gibson, using the Grant pseudonym. During the 1930s the success of The Shadow allowed the company to publish several other "character" magazines, including Gibson's own creation: Norgil, the "magician-detective."

The last Shadow pulp novel (Number 325) was "The Whispering Eyes" in the Summer, 1949, issue of The Shadow Magazine.



## Radio

The Shadow as he is usually thought of today first appeared on radio in 1937. This version of the character was man-about-town and amateur criminologist Lamont Cranston who, as The Shadow, could "hypnotically cloud men's minds so that they could not see him." The program began with Orson

Welles as Cranston/The Shadow and Agnes Moorehead as Margo Lane, his companion/assistant and the only person who knew his dual identity. Welles was succeeded in the title role by Bill Johnstone, John Archer, Steve Courtleigh, and Bret Morrison. Margo was later played by Marjorie Anderson, followed by several other actresses; the last radio Margo was Grace Mathews. Commissioner Weston was played by a number of actors, including Dwight Weist, Kenny Delmar, Santos Ortega, and Ted de Corsia. Shrevie, the cab driver who sometimes assisted Cranston, was played by Keenan Wynn, Alan Reed, and Mandel Kramer. Music was by organist Rosa Rio. The Shadow was also heard in several foreign countries. Nearly 200 episodes of the various series are available for listening today. Science fiction writers Alfred Bester and Max Erlich wrote some of the episodes in the 1940s.

In an earlier version of the radio series, The Shadow was just the narrator. During this run from 1930 to 1933, the voice of The Shadow was supplied by several actors, including Frank Readick and James La Curto. During 1934-1935, The Shadow became more of an actor in the stories; and again, Readick and La Curto played the part.

## Television

Two attempts were made to make a TV series based on the character. The first, in 1954, was called The Shadow and starred Tom Helmore as Lamont Cranston. In this program, Lamont Cranston, a psychiatrist on retainer to the police department, is asked to assist in the "Case of the Cotton Kimono" murder investigation. Cranston and his girlfriend, Margot Lane, are not satisfied with Detective Harris' analysis and call on the two prime suspects: the victim's voice instructor and her boyfriend.

When Harris, convinced that the boyfriend is guilty, frames the young man for the crime, Lamont is forced to

assume his secret identity as The Shadow, and cloaked by his power of invisibility, forces the true killer to reveal himself.

The second TV attempt in 1958 was called *The Invisible Avenger*, combined two never-aired episodes, and was released theatrically instead. This film was later re-released in 1962 as *Bourbon Street Shadows*, with additional footage. Starring Richard Derr as The Shadow, *The Invisible Avenger* centers upon Lamont Cranston investigating the murder of a New Orleans band leader. The film is notable as the second directorial effort of James Wong Howe (one of the two TV episodes only).

### Films/Filmettes/Movie Serial

In addition to the film made from planned TV shows, mentioned above, The Shadow appeared in other motion pictures, short “filmettes,” and a movie serial.

Six two-reeler mysteries were filmed, beginning in 1931, as part of Universal Pictures Shadow Detective Series. In all of these “filmettes,” however, The Shadow's role was limited to that of narrator – as in the early radio broadcasts.

In 1937, *The Shadow Strikes* featured Rod La Rocque (1898 -1969), who had been a major silent film star, as Lamont Cranston/The Shadow. The movie's plot had Cranston as a suave criminologist searching for the criminals who murdered his father. The plot was loosely based on one of the Walter Gibson pulp novels from *The Shadow Magazine*.

In 1938, another feature film about The Shadow, again starring La Rocque, appeared. In this film, titled *International Crime*, The Shadow unfortunately doesn't even appear, although the plot was taken from a pulp novel in *The Shadow Magazine* by author Ted Tinsley (titled *Foxhound*). In the plot, Lamont Cranston is a radio crime reporter carrying on a personal crusade against pre-war fifth columnists. His girlfriend/assistant is named Phoebe (not Margo) Lane! On the plus side, some of the other regular characters from *The Shadow Magazine* stories – missing from the previous movie – are present here: cab driver Moe Shrevnitz (Shrevvy), Commissioner Weston, etc.

In 1940 Victor Jory starred in a 15-chapter serial, *The Shadow*, for Columbia Pictures. Jory had a three-part role as Lamont Cranston, The Shadow, and the mysterious Chinese Li Chang, who was able to infiltrate the gang of the villain. Veda Ann Borg played Margo Lane, and Frank La Rue was police commissioner Weston. The villain was the invisible Black Tiger, voiced by Richard

Kramer. The characters and plot were true to The Shadow, as portrayed in the pulp magazine stories by Gibson.

In addition to the 1940 serial, three “B” movies about The Shadow were produced in 1946: *The Shadow Returns*, *Behind the Mask*, and *The Missing Lady*. All three films starred Kane Richmond as Lamont Cranston/The Shadow, Barbara Reed as Margo Lane, and Pierre Watkin as Commissioner Weston.

The Shadow finally got his just due in 1994, when a big budget, Technicolor movie about The Shadow, starring Alec Baldwin, was made. Baldwin played Lamont Cranston/The Shadow, Penelope Ann Miller was Margo Lane, Peter Boyle was cabby Shrevvy, and John Lone was the madman Shiwan Khan. Khan was described as the last descendant of Genghis Khan, who planned to fulfill his ancestor's goal of world domination. Although Cranston could have joined him in this plan, he refused; and he and Khan became bitter enemies.

Sources indicate that the plan of the producers was to have this movie the first in a series; and this series of movies would capitalize on their popularity to sell toys, games, books, clothing, etc. The film grossed \$32 million domestically, with a worldwide total of \$48 million; the budget for the film, however, was over \$40 million. The producers felt that this profit margin was not enough for them to follow through with their original plans.

### Comic Books/Newspaper Strip

The Shadow first appeared in Street & Smith's comics from 1940 to 1949 following its success in pulp novels. The villains were mostly fantastic, out-of-this-world beings whom The Shadow fought every month. Most of the stories were written by Gibson, while various artists from Vernon Greene to Charles Coll drew the characters. Gibson and Greene also teamed to produce the newspaper comic strip featuring The Shadow during that time. The strip lasted only two years, from 1940 to 1942, and was based on the pulp novels by Gibson. It came to an end, however, principally because of wartime paper shortages.

After this series folded, Archie comics took over the adventure series in the mid- 1960s. Their version disappointed many fans, as it depicted their favorite character in tights and brandishing gadgets such as air jet-powered boots and a “weakness gun” -- a far cry from the original crime fighter. Fortunately, for most fans, this series was canceled after only eight issues.

The Shadow reappeared in 1973 in a 12-issue series from DC comics. This version was close to the original pulp

hero, and the artwork by Michael Kaluta was well received.

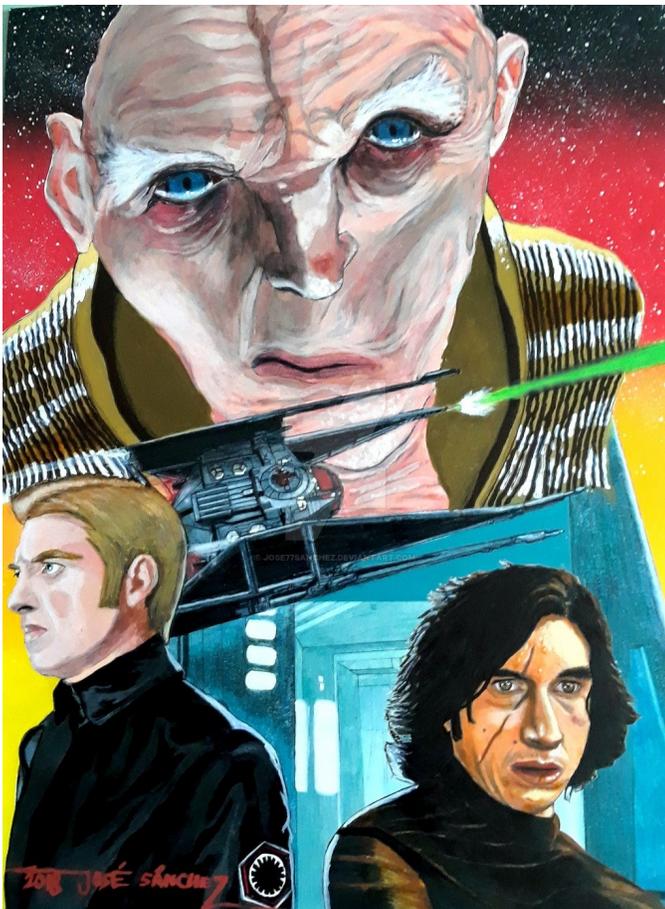
Since the 1970s, there have been other attempts by DC and other comic book publishers to revive the character in comic books, mini-series, and graphic novels, but none were especially successful.

## Big Little Books (BLBs)

There were three Shadow BLBs: *The Shadow and the Living Death* (1940), *The Shadow and the Master of Evil* (1941), and *The Shadow and the Ghost Makers* (1942).

## Hardbound/Paperback Books

There have been hardcover books about The Shadow since the 1970s, usually reprints of the pulp magazine stories. In 1994 a paperback novel by James Luceno, based on the screenplay of the movie, was published. In this book it was restated that The Shadow was in reality, Kent Allard, a World War I pilot, who took as one of his identities that of playboy Lamont Cranston, because he and the real Cranston looked so much alike – and because the real Cranston was so often not in the United States. Kent Allard had been revealed as the



true identity of The Shadow in the early pulp magazine stories by Gibson. Other agents of The Shadow, originally mentioned in the pulp stories, play roles in this plot. In Luceno's story, *The Shadow* also meets Margo Lane for the first time.

## Some Conclusions

It is now generally acknowledged that The Shadow was a great influence on the creation of Batman, who has an alter ego that resembles Lamont Cranston's. In addition, he often operates by night. Of course, The Shadow also influenced the creation of characters in other media, such as The Whistler and The Green Hornet on radio.

The Shadow has been with us now, in one form or another, for over 90 years. It appears that he probably will be with us in some form for many years to come. There have even been rumors of another feature film.

## Sources

Cline, William C. *In the Nick of Time*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1984.

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Gibson, Walter B. *The Shadow Scrapbook*. NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979.

Harmon, Jim. *The Great Radio Heroes*. NY: Doubleday, 1967.

Swartz, Jon D. & Robert C. Reinehr. *Handbook of Old-Time Radio*. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1993.

Tollin, Anthony. *The Shadow: The Lost Shows*. Cedar Knolls, NJ: Radio Spirits, 1998.

Note: In addition to the above, several Internet sites were consulted.

## Club Activities

### Birthday Card Bureau

Birthday cards sent in September: 12  
... R-Laurraine Tutlihasi

### Book Review Bureau

There is renewed discussion on the net about a more serious fannish effort to review more of the avalanche of new book titles, so that good books are not lost in the wash. As the N3F contribution to review more books, the N3F Review of Books continues to appear on a regular monthly basis.

### Correspondence Bureau

Because there have been few responses I have decided to change the setup of the Correspondence Bureau.

If you wish to join you need to do the following:

1. Send me your name and either email address OR postal address,
2. If you wish to correspond with a member already listed with the Correspondence Bureau include their name.
3. If you have a postal address and wish to correspond with someone listed "by email" let me know and I will contact them. I will let you know their reply.

Depending on your preference you will receive an email or postal mail with the contact information of the person you wish to contact, and they will receive your contact information.

The following members are interested in corresponding.

Jeffrey Redmond - by email  
John Thiel - by email  
Judy Carroll - by email or postal mail.

Send email requests to :  
Judy Carroll BlueShadows2012@gmail.com

Send postal mail requests to: Judy Carroll 975 E 120 S  
Spanish Fork, UT 84660

## Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau

I will be outlining Fan-Pro coordinating problems and such problems as underlie them in Ionisphere, beginning with the next issue. I hope to make the meaning of Fan-Pro Coordinating clear, and stress the need for action and activity.—John Thiel

### Franking Service

We continue to forward to the members fanzines, when they are received by us. We also sometimes fill in gaps. Thanks to Evelyn Leeper for sending us a missing issue of MT VOID. We are now almost caught up with mailing fanzines.—George Phillis

### History and Research Bureau

I have neglected talking about N3F's history and research objectives on the SF fan sites up until now, but will be attempting to establish reader interest on such fan sites as the Facebook Fan History page. Stirring up more activity on sites is becoming more feasible. Origin continues to present vivid looks at SF's past.—John Thiel

### Games Bureau

Race to the Red Planet — Report by Wesley Kawato. I'm thinking about how I'll introduce this game to my gamer friends. This game plays more like a wargame and not like a Euro game. One of the other members of my club asked me if this game was like *Terraforming Mars*. I told him the game system was totally different. I'll need to give the club a basic description of the game and see if they are interested.

### Recruiting

I am commencing an investigation via Facebook SF sites and perhaps some of the other SF sites of why people are not joining the N3F. My method is asking why they would not be joining us, pointing out the high quality the N3F has as a fandom organization. Jeffrey Redmond has been continuing to do colorful N3F advertising. Any answers I get will appear in N3F publications.—John Thiel

### Pro Bureau

The N3F Review of Books, Incorporating Prose Bono, the magazine of fine writing, continues to appear monthly. When we began publication, the fear was that this would be a very thin magazine section, with perhaps on

article every month. In fact, Prose Bono is by itself now a publication of significant thickness.

## Welcommittee

The purpose of the Welcommittee is to welcome new members to the club. A letter is sent, by email or postal mail, to new members informing them of club activities they may be interested in joining. Those members with email addresses are also sent attachments to the current TNFF and other publications the N3F has to offer.

We would like to welcome Cathy Palmer-Lister as our newest member to the N3F. Cathy, we hope your stay with us is long and filled with new friends and great adventures.

If you have questions about the club or are interested in helping, please contact

Judy Carroll at [BlueShadows2012@gmail.com](mailto:BlueShadows2012@gmail.com)

## Writers Exchange

Welcome to the Writers Exchange!

I think it would be fun, exciting, and informative if our writers would actively participate in the monthly Writers Exchange article. We could get to know one another and help with writing questions and problems.

We have a lot of answers from members this month.

The question for August was - What do you do when you sit down to write and discover you have nothing to say?

Jefferson Swycaffer

What to do when you realize you have nothing to say -- I fret a lot! I go for long walks and have imaginary conversations with my characters. I deliberately \*don't\* think about it for a period of time, hoping the unconscious will pop up with an idea. Other times, I concentrate and try to reason it out. So far, the unconscious is doing the better job!

George Phillies

What do I do if nothing comes to mind? I switch projects. I certainly have enough of them. A bunch of slowly advancing novels, for example. Usually if I sit down to write I have something of a scene already in my mind so I know what will happen. Editing older segments is also a choice. There is also housework and garden work.

September's question: Do you prefer writing on a desktop computer, a laptop computer, a tablet, a cell phone, or paper and pen/pencil?

Jefferson Swycaffer

The Mechanics of writing, I came late to word processing, but now I adore it. I use the backspace key a LOT. A big part of writing, alas, is "unwriting," and on-the-spot editing is highly valuable. I started out with a pen and lined paper, and put down a lot of material that way. But once I actually got the hang of word processing (old Word Perfect!) I love it and would hate to give it up.

George Phillies

I type or use Dragon dictate on a 'desktop' (actually out of the way under the desk), except for algebraic calculations, which are sometimes paper and pencil. Notes are paper and fountain pen.

For October: I asked for member responses on what you feel is the scariest book, short story or movie you have ever encountered, and why.

Jefferson Swycaffer

Scary? I don't do "scary" very well. I'm a horror wimp. There's an old anthology, edited by Groff Conklin, titled "Science Fiction Terror Tales." The stories are all scary, but the one that Got To Me the most was "They" by Robert Heinlein, a haunting exploration of existential doubt and the madness of solipsism.

Here's My Scary Story

I love books and I like watching movies and TV. I have read scary books and short stories in many genres and watched movies and TV episodes of scary situations and beings. I have been to distant planets, encountered aliens, taken part in invasions, watched brothers fight demons from hell, and sisters save innocents from demons. I have observed the end of the earth from many viewpoints, human and otherwise. I have watched people become possessed by hideous creatures that live underground, and I have watched children save their town, families and each other from those creatures. I have watched humans fall in love with aliens who look very different from them and different alien species fall in love with one another.

One of the scariest things I have ever seen, that sends me into panic and fear and hopelessness, is an episode from the TV series The Twilight Zone. This episode, Time Enough at Last, first aired in 1959 and stars Burgess Meredith. The information given about the episode simply states -A bookworm survives a nuclear holocaust. While

another one says - A henpecked book lover finds himself blissfully alone with his books after a nuclear war.

**Spoiler Alert!!!!** \*\*\*\*\*

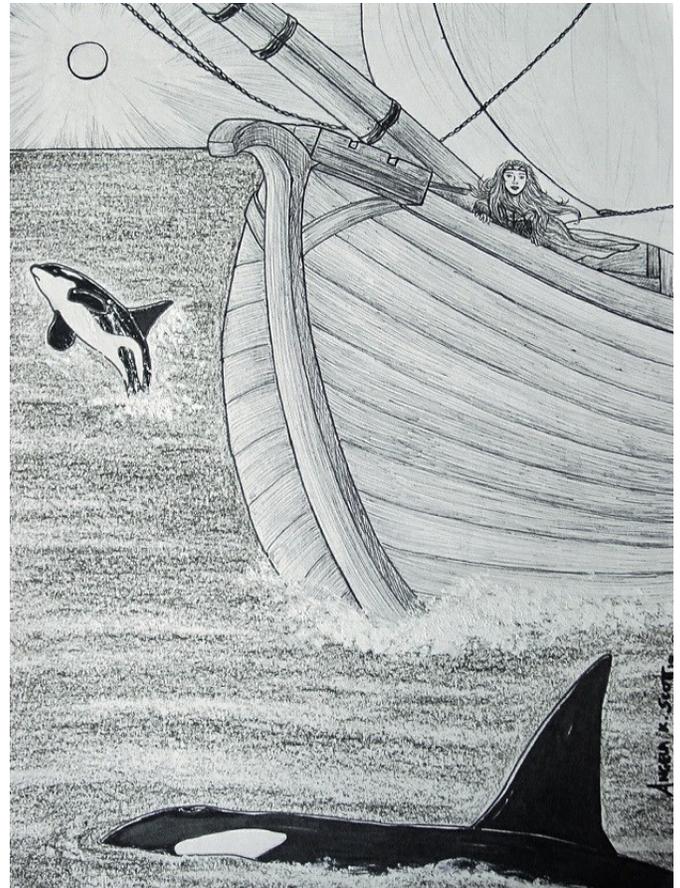
Henry Bemis (Meredith's character) loves to read, but he can't find a place to read nor the time. While at work he goes to the bank's vault in the basement hoping to read. There is an explosion above. When he gets outside he discovers the world was destroyed in a nuclear holocaust, and he is the only survivor. He ends up at the public library where he is delighted to find hundreds of books lying on the steps and on the ground. Many are in good condition. He excitedly divides them up and lovingly places them on the steps and gleefully counts off how many years it will take him to read all these wonderful books. Henry sits down on a step. He reaches for something on the step in front of him. As he does his glasses fall to the concrete. He reaches for them. Picking them up he holds them to his eyes and both lenses fall out, breaking as they hit the ground. Without his glasses Henry is blind.

I've seen this episode a couple of times and I refuse to see it again. This story is so scary to me because I can relate to this poor man no longer being able to read while surrounded by books waiting to be read. Being alone is bad enough, but not being able to find some kind of comfort in reading. Some kind of "normalcy" or familiarity to lean on. So, I choose to use my imagination and send a group of friendly people (who were also protected from the blast) to his aid in three days' time. They will care for him and many will take turns reading to him. They will create a new society of readers and storytellers.

**Spoiler Alert Ends** \*\*\*\*\*

Question for November: When you are writing how do you develop your characters?

If I don't have much of an idea of how I want a character to behave - if he/she doesn't already come equipped with some traits - I have a tendency to pattern them after someone I know. I will start off with the name of a friend or relative. Let's call the main character, Joe. Joe and his wife, Alice, have just had a baby girl they named Cindy. (No, I do not have any friends or relatives named Joe, Alice, or Cindy.) Both Joe and Alice are delighted and happy with this adorable little daughter they have. Alice understands what Cindy needs almost immediately. She shows understanding and patience and is always saying positive things to the child. Joe, though devoted to his wife and daughter, finds it



difficult to understand what Cindy needs or wants. He is frustrated and confused and loses his temper easily.

After writing a few scenes with Joe and Cindy, Joe's true character emerges and takes over. Then I change the character's name, and he begins to tell his own story.

I want to thank Jefferson and George for contributing to this month's Writers Exchange. I look forward to more participation and ideas from our writers.

If you are a new writer, a professional writer, or someone who dreams of being a writer - this is the place for you. If you love reading unpublished work and find it exciting to do so, this place is also for you.

The Writers Exchange is for anyone interested in writing. If you have a story you would like read and commented on, or if you just want the excitement of reading unpublished work, then the Writers Exchange is here for you. Published or unpublished - all are welcome. You may join as a writer, a reader or both.

If interested, please contact: Judy Carroll. BlueShadows2012@gmail.com OR if you prefer postal mail, Judy Carroll 975 E 120 S Spanish Fork, UT 84660.

# 2020 N3F Amateur Short Story Contest

## Story Contest Rules and Entry Blank

Now and then, it has been suggested to open the N3F Amateur Short Story Contest to professional writers, writers who have had one or two sales. I've never favored this. It is my opinion that we want new blood. We want to reward the new kids on the block. To be blunt, we want writing that is not that good. We want stories from people who don't know their object from their subject, who don't know where commas go, and who use apostrophes to denote plurals -- but who have a story to tell. I want stories from guys nobody's ever heard of...but in the years ahead, we will. Those who are already successful don't need the encouragement of our little contest. If they were to enter the contest, the danger is that they'd win, every time, and crowd out the promising newcomer.

1. This contest is open to all amateur writers in the field, regardless of whether they're members of the National Fantasy Fan Federation. For the purposes of this contest, we define an amateur as someone who has sold no more than two (2) stories to professional science fiction or fantasy publications.
2. Stories entered in the contest must be original, unpublished, not longer than 8,500 words in length—and must be related to the science fiction, fantasy, or similar genres in the opinion of the judge.
3. Email attachments of Word documents are acceptable for submission. Manuscripts on paper should be typed, single sided on 8 1/2"-by- 11" white paper, double spaced, with pages numbered. The name of the author should not appear anywhere on the manuscript to ensure impartial judging. Photocopies are acceptable, if they are of good quality. Computer printouts must be legible.
4. Contestants can enter up to three stories. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) if you would like your story returned at the end of the contest. Stories will not be returned without an SASE. Do not send your only copy in case of accidental loss. We are not responsible for lost manuscripts.
5. Email entries will be accepted. Send to Jefferson P. Swycaffer at [abontides@gmail.com](mailto:abontides@gmail.com). No guarantee can be made of email receipt. Privacy and property rights will be absolutely respected. No one other than the Short Story Judge will ever see the submission.
6. There are no entry fees.
7. Cash prizes totaling \$100 will be awarded as follows: First prize is \$50, second \$30, and third \$20. Honorable mentions and semi-finalists will receive a certificate of award.
8. Send all manuscripts to the contest manager: Jefferson Swycaffer, P. O. Box 15373, San Diego, CA 92175-5373; [abontides@gmail.com](mailto:abontides@gmail.com). Emails with the story attached in word format are preferred. Paper manuscripts are acceptable. All entries must be received or postmarked no later than Dec. 31, 2020.
9. The Short Story Judge is a published science fiction professional, and also a loving fan of the sf and fantasy genres. All comments and critiques are solely the Short Story Judge's opinion, but he promises to be constructive and polite.
10. Stories will also be reviewed by the Editor of the N3F Fiction zine Eldritch Science; authors of suitable tales will be invited to submit their tales for publication in our zine. This review and invitation will only occur after contest winners have been announced, so it can have no effect on the contest outcome.
11. The NSF may want to publish an electronic book including top entries from one or more years of publication. You will not be contacted about this until after the contest is over and prizes have been awarded. If we want to publish your story, you will have to sign over to us first world serial rights. Your willingness to sign over rights cannot affect whether or not you win the contest. Winners will be notified as soon as the judging is completed. Announcements and notifications of winning entries will be made by March 2021. Please take your time and submit your best work. You can resubmit stories previously entered if they did not win previously. All entries will be kept confidential and will be judged fairly and anonymously. The deadline for all entries is Dec. 31, 2020. Good luck!

*Please supply on a separate page the following information as your entry form.*

**Title of story (for identification):**

**Author's name and address:**

**Author's email address:**

**I have read the above rules for the 2021 N3F Amateur Short Story Contest, and I agree to them.**

**Signature/Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to:** Jefferson Swycaffer, P. O. Box 15373, San Diego, CA 92175-5373 ; or email [abontides@gmail.com](mailto:abontides@gmail.com)



**We Have a New Treasurer!**

Elections!

Proposed Constitutional Amendment

Proposed Bylaws Change

Letters of Comment

Mike Glycer — Jon Swartz — Jose Sanchez — Lloyd Penney — Justin E. A. Busch

SerCon

The Shadow and Walter B. Gibson

Club Activities

Birthday Card Bureau — Book Review Bureau — Correspondence Bureau

Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau — Franking Service

History and Research Bureau — Games Bureau — Recruiting

Pro Bureau — Welcomittee — Writers Exchange

N3F TNFF

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