

# ALEXIAD

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It is almost April now, the time when I remember the eighty-nine crewmen of the *Bush* who did not make it home again.

On April 14 it will be exactly one hundred years since the unsinkable *Titanic* met her fate in the cold Atlantic seas. Unless you've been living in a deep cave with no Internet, TV or radio you know of the tragedy all those years ago.

On April 1 I started a new messterpiece. It's kind of a joke. Two Neanderthals walk into the public library and .....This is the third time I've tried the month in a novel project. The most I've achieved with these projects has been 36,000 words, 14,000 short of what I was supposed to achieve. The word count now stands at a little over 2400 words, 47,600 short of the 50,000 goal by the end of April. I think it takes a certain amount of insanity to even think of trying to write a novel in a month and iron discipline to succeed. Iron discipline does not come naturally to me. Nor is this really a good time to start. Yet here I am struggling with fleshing out my idea and learning about my characters. Some I'm recycling. Some are brand new and I have no idea what to expect from them or where their story will take me.

— Lisa

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The 138th Running of the Kentucky Derby is **May 5, 2012**.  
 The 137th Running of the Preakness Stakes is **May 19, 2012**.  
 The 143rd Running of the Belmont Stakes is **June 9, 2012**.

Printed on April 12, 2012  
 Deadline is **June 9, 2012**

## Reviewer's Notes

It's been said that the current shift from science fiction to fantasy, and more to the point, fantasy about vampires and zombies, is a result of a feeling that the world cannot be affected positively and we are all helpless in the face of greater powers. Does this reflect reality?

LucasFilms had planned to build a digital studio in Marin County, near Skywalker Ranch. However, amid the many interrelated boards and authorities that had jurisdiction, it turned out possible to block the construction. So now, Lucas is selling the land to a developer who wants to build low-income housing.

If the opposition had been based on a desire to not have to put up with Jar Jar Binks, that might make sense. More sense than why they actually did, which works out to the well-known acronym BANANA: "Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anyone". Or themselves, anyhow.

We ourselves have been seeing this with the Ohio River Bridge. The opponents became highly unpopular for a few days after the closing of the I-64 bridge, which turned already difficult traffic into a nightmare. Yet, they have bounced back, managing to stall building with one new opposition after another, each of which has to work its way through reviews until it is rejected.

For something you can all see, there is the International Space Station, which went through an expensive and wasteful cycle of redesign and reworking, all for the express purpose of saving money. Added to this were all the objections by those who wished unmanned probes, returns to the Moon, Mars missions, and so on. If the original plan had been executed, the savings would have been immense.

Nowadays, Seaton & Crane would have been required to file environmental impact statements for the extirpation of the Fenachrone. Small wonder Kornbluth & Pohl's "The Engineer" (1955) is so prophetic!

— Joe

## RANDOM JOTTINGS

by Joe



**Falcon Scott** visited Cape Evans in February. He also went to the South Pole from there; unlike his grandfather, he got back alive. Falcon is the son of **Sir Peter Scott**; he has two sisters, a daughter, and two sons.

(Considering the other guys: There is at least one great-grandson, **David Charles Shackleton**. Amundsen had no known children. As for the other pole, the Peary families seem to be substantial and prolific.)

The trailer for Tim Burton's forthcoming movie, *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*, based on Seth Grahame-Smith's novel of the same title (2011), is now out on the web. From all reports, the movie is at least free of **Sparkly Emo Vampires™** and other I-wuv-bloodsucker features. Now for "The Phoenix on the Bayonet"!

*Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*  
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1611224/>

**"Spung!" Department:** A woman who was present at a showing of the new movie *John Carter* was a trifle annoyed that the heroine pronounced her name "dey-ja". She pronounced it "dee-ja". One would think that Dejah Burroughs, great-granddaughter of ERB, would know how to pronounce the name! (I wonder what she said when she found out about *The Number of the Beast*?)

I also saw a still that looked like a scene from the first season of *Rome*. Why not? It had Ciarán Hinds (Caesar; Tardos Mors) and James Purefoy (Antony; Kantos Kan). Pity that Lucy Lawless is currently engaged playing Lucretia in *Spartacus: Vengeance* ("The planet Barsoom in distress cried out for a hero. Ksenia of Zodanga, the female panthan, executed by Tardos Mors but given a new heart by the great surgeon Ras Thavas, dedicated to hunting down the Jeddak of Greater Helium and wreaking her vengeance. . .").

## OBITS

**Professor M. A. R. Barker** has departed for the Islands of Belkhánu, Lord of the Excellent Dead. The creator of the world of Tékumel died on **March 16, 2012** at the age of 83.

His fantastic creations differed from the norm in that they were neither the generic place

of *The Tough Guide to Fantasyland* nor the modern world with zombies, vampires, werewolves, etc., but a world based on other sources; Mesoamerica, Southern India, and Islamic culture. (The "M. A. R." stood for "Mohammad 'Abd er Rahman"; his friends and players knew him as "Phil".)

## MONARCHIST NEWS

We are pleased to announce the birth of **Princess Estelle Silvia Ewa Mary of Sweden** on **February 23, 2012** to **Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden** and **Prince Daniel**. On February 25, **King Carl XVI Gustaf** announced that his granddaughter would be created Duchess of Ostergötland.

**Siaosi Táufa'āhau Manumataongo Tuku'aho Tupou V, King of Tonga**, died on **March 18, 2012** in Hong Kong. His Majesty (known in English as George Tupou V) was born May 4, 1948 and succeeded his father Táufa'āhau Tupou IV on September 11, 2006.

His Majesty was succeeded by his younger brother, the former Crown Prince, **'Aho'eitu 'Unuaki'otonga Tuku'aho Tupou VI**.

We are pleased to announce the birth of **Isla Elizabeth Phillips**, great-granddaughter of **Elizabeth II**, on **March 29, 2012**, to **Autumn** and **Peter Phillips**. She is thirteenth in line of succession to the throne.

**And as year follows year,  
 More old men disappear,  
 Someday no one will march there  
 at all.**

Report by Joseph T Major

Remaining is:

**Poland**

Józef Kowalski\* (112) 22 Pułk Ułanów  
 \* "WWI-era" veteran, enlisted between the Armistice and the Treaty of Versailles

There has been some media activity of late regarding a French veteran named Jean-Marie Lorel, who it now seems, thanks to DNA, has been shown to be the result of an unpatriotic liaison between a *jeune fille* and a Boche *stabsgefeiter* of their Regiment List, who served at a somewhat higher rank and on the other side in the war in which M. Lorel was a soldier. The Hitler family has a very confused pedigree.

**Vati und seine Eltern**

[Father and his Parents]

Alois Hitler the elder [1837-1903] was born "Alois Schicklgruber", the illegitimate son of Maria Anna Schicklgruber. In 1842, Anna married Johann Georg Hiedler, and her son became "Alois Hitler". In other words, calling his child by the former last name is like saying Stanley Johnson is really "Stanley Kemal". It was a propaganda move.

[It's not clear if Alois was the son of Johann Georg Heidler or his brother Johann Nepomuk Heidler. William Patrick Hitler, of whom more

later, in a blackmail attempt claimed that his grandfather was instead the son of Leopold Frankenberger, which would have made the uncle a *Mischlinge* of the Second Class, one-third Jewish. (The Nazis also invented an Aryan Arithmetic.)]

**Die Geschwister**

[the Siblings]

Alois Hitler was married three times. By his second wife, Franziska Matzelsberger, he had two children who survived to adulthood, Alois (Alois the younger was born during the life of his father's first wife, so he was originally "Alois Matzelsberger"; is there a pattern here?) and Angela. By his third wife, Klara Pölzl, he had two children who survived to adulthood, Paula and *him*.

Alois the younger [1882-1956] married twice; by his first wife, Bridget Dowling, he had a son named William Patrick Hitler. He married bigamously in Germany, having returned there before WWI broke out, to Hedwig Heidemann, having one son, Heinrich "Heinz" Hitler.

Angela [1883-1949] married twice, to Leo Raubal and Martin Hammitzsch. By her first husband she had three children, Leo Rudolf Raubal, Angela Maria "Geli" Raubal, and Elfrieda Maria "Friedl" Raubal.

Paula [1896-1960] never married. When her original last name became passé, she used the last name of "Wolff", which her brother had used while in hiding. (Whatever would he have said if he had been told that "Magda Lupescu", the flamboyant mistress of Carol II of Romania, was originally named Helen Wolf — and her father was Jewish!?)

**Die Jüngerer Generationen**

[the Younger Generations]

William Patrick [1911-1987] was invited to Germany by his uncle, and then in 1939 rapidly relocated to the U.S., where he served in the navy. He married Phyllis Jean-Jacques. Perhaps not surprisingly, he changed his last name, to Stuart-Houston, and they had four sons, Alexander, Louis, Howard [1957-1989], and Brian. Alexander Stuart-Houston has denied that the brothers agreed not to have any children, though they don't.

Heinz [1920-1942] joined the army, took part in the invasion of the Soviet Union, and died after being captured.

Leo Raubal [1906-1977] was also captured, at Stalingrad, but not having quite such a notorious name survived. He had a son, Peter.

Friedl [1910-1993] married and had a son, Heiner Hochegger.

And then there was Geli [1908-1931], who apparently had a too-close relationship with her uncle, and wound it up by shooting herself with his pistol. (Eva killed herself. The Hon. Unity Mitford, another intimate of his, shot herself when the war began, and eventually died as a result of the wound. Is there a *pattern* here?)

My apologies to Mike Glycer and the readers of the File 770 blog (<http://file770.com>) for my getting it wrong.

**Francis Joseph Pat Mellen**

September 21, 1914- February 27, 2012

Mr. Mellen's life on this earth began the same year as the Great War and ended in February 97 years later. During those 97 years he raised six children of his own and took a big part in raising me although I had no ancestors in common with him. I was just lucky enough to grow up on his street and spent almost as much time in his house as in the one I legally belonged to. It was at Mr. Mellen's knee that I came to love horses. Every kid should have a Mr. Mellen in their lives. I was very lucky to have had him in my life. I knew he would have to move upstairs at some point but it still came as a shock when my father told me he had passed. Godspeed, Mr. Mellen. I hope he puts in a good word for me upstairs.

**Jim Shelton**

My cousin Jim died on March 11. He had fought cancer for several months. His character was best shown by the fact that when we had car trouble in Hopkinsville several years ago he came out to Wal-mart at ten o'clock at night to help us out. He then saw to it that our car reached the shop safely. He should have grown old surrounded by grandchildren he would have spoiled outrageously and died as a patriarch of the family. Fate denied him that. The world and my family is much poorer without him.

**THE WONDERFUL VISITOR**

by Lisa Major

Around 2 a.m. one morning Joe woke me with the news that a raccoon was in the house. I muttered some expletive deleted comments, pulled on a robe and headed downstairs. Joe had the raccoon trapped in a box. It was voicing its opinion of this in what was clearly expletive deleted comments in the form of loud growls. Grant arrived home in the middle of our struggle to evict the raccoon. He got the kitchen door open but the raccoon refused to go out. It made a break for inside the house.

I spread my arms and yelled no at Tiptree (dammit, I've named this trespasser.) Tiptree listened about as well as the cats and kept coming at me. I braced to be mauled and to kill this striking animal. At the last instant Tiptree ducks the fight and breaks around me. The raccoon races for the inside of the house. Joe and I give chase. Horrified I see that Slim is directly in the raccoon's path. The raccoon does not attack Slim. It jumps over him with an agility that surprises me.

It runs into the entryway closet. We latch the inside door and brace the outside door open. Presumably the raccoon made its escape that way for we have not seen any sign of its presence since that night.

**PLOT IT YOURSELF**

Commentary by Joseph T Major

Several years ago, a writer we knew came to

a club meeting to discuss, among other things, print-on-demand books. Now those had not actually been developed at that time, so we should regard this as an example of SF being twenty minutes into the future.

However, there was a less than predictive backup. The writer also wrote fan fiction, and brought a sample. Now these were the days when fan fiction was not postings to the Net, but actual physical manuscripts. Or, as in this case, substantial perfect-bound thick works on the border between "magazine" and "book". The writer displayed the work, and discussed how it must have influenced a movie recently released, the latest cinematic episode of the work that the fan fiction was also about. The writer, of course, out of courtesy, had dispatched a copy of the said fan fiction to the company producing the original, and expected that one illustration from the work had inspired a scene from the movie. (If this seems a trifle vague, I am trying to be so.)

Well, it doesn't seem like that was the case.

The Nero Wolfe novel for 1959 was titled *Plot It Yourself*. At first, the job would seem to be closer to Archie's department than to Wolfe's. The clients, a group of writers and a group of publishers, for once have a common cause. Recently, there has been a spate of plagiarism cases, ones that have resulted in success for the claimants.

Authors of best-selling works have been charged with plagiarism. Other writers have come forward, claiming that they had sent manuscripts to the writers for review or assistance, only to find that their works have been brought out by the big-name writer as an original work, successful. Juries, eager to help the ordinary guy being exploited by the callous big-shot, have awarded large sums to the victims. The conclusive evidence in each case, it seems, is that the files of the publisher or writer did indeed have a manuscript by the claimant, which is as described.

Now while the solution is interesting — it turns out to involve, among other things, a literary analysis by Wolfe where he determines that the supposed plagiarized manuscripts were in fact all written by the same person (see Don Foster's *Author Unknown* (2000; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 1 #5) for more on this sort of analysis) — it's the precedence that is of concern here. Most plagiarists are less subtle or capable, if less fatally associated. Thus, for example, recently Little, Brown had to withdraw and destroy the copies of their hot new spy novel *Assassin of Secrets* (2011) by "Q. R. Martin" [Quentin Rowan]. Rowan had lifted sections of his work from James Bond novels! But he's still alive, unlike the front-persons for the plagiarist in *Plot It Yourself*.

As if this isn't new. In the early seventies, an author named Terry Dixon wasn't thinking small. He started a vendetta against Harlan Ellison™, no less. I recall, for example, his letter in "Brass Tacks", the letter column of *Analog*, where he blamed the entire failure of *The Starlost* on Ellison. Which was the entirely wrong venue to send such a letter, since Ben

Bova had also been involved with that show, and he knew better. (For which see Bova's *The Starcrossed* (1979).)

Shortly thereafter, Dixon submitted a story to *Strange Gods* (1974), one of Roger Elwood's many many anthologies, titled "The Prophet of Zorayne". Ellison somewhat triumphantly announced that it turned out to have been lifted almost completely from Anatole France's "The Prophet of Judea". Can you say, "Oops."?

[Dixon said by way of explanation, lamely, that his copying had been a *homage*. This is one of those literary terms that is vague and meaningless, but sounds profound.]

One can conclude, therefore, that Nero Wolfe would not have been surprised by N. K. Stouffer, except perhaps that she didn't get killed. For anyone who has been in cold sleep, or even hot sleep, over the past few years, a summary is in order.

Nancy K. Stouffer, a writer from Pennsylvania, claimed that the concept of the Harry Potter series had been stolen from her corpus of work. This included her popular children's picture book *Larry Potter and His Best Friend Lilly* (1984) and her vaster-scoped novel *The Legend of Rah and the Muggles* (1984).

Some of the claims seemed to go over the edge. Stouffer put up a webpage of "similarities". The "similarities" she claimed were so extensive that just about any work of fiction could be said to be derivative of *The Legend of Rah and the Muggles*; "oak-paneled doors" for example.

Yet, the "muggles" Stouffer described were environmentally-changed people; short, gray-skinned, constrained. "Muggles" in the Potterverse are ordinary people. I know that the Pennsylvania mining country has conditions that cause health problems but Stouffer must have a very broad definition of "ordinary".

The case collapsed when Stouffer was shown to have changed documents submitted in court (to her advantage). She was fined \$50,000 and costs, and seems to have given up. However, this doesn't seem to have deterred the heirs of Adrian Jacob, author of the *Willy the Wizard* books, who are claiming that plot elements in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* were lifted from their late ancestor's work.

Somehow I am reminded of the Plastic Man story where a villain somehow patented the wheel and started shaking down all and sundry for royalties. Plastic Man responded by patenting fire, and in a rather humorous scene deprived the villain of almost (he didn't leave the poor guy *completely* naked) everything he had that had been made using fire. [I think that there would be the matter of "prior art", but let's leave that aside for the sake of the satire.]

J. K. Rowling might feel a little sympathy for her fellow notorious fantasist George Lucas. Lucas was dragged into court in Calgary over plagiarism.

In the late nineteen-eighties, Dean Preston of Calgary sued Lucas and LucasFilms (and also the distributor, 20th Century Fox of Canada). His claim was that in 1978 he had sent a script

proposal titled "Space Pets", about a race of little people called "Ewoks", to LucasFilms. Then, in 1983, "Return of the Jedi" came out — with little people called "Ewoks"! He wanted \$128 million to settle the difference. The case went to trial in January of 1990. Preston lost and had to pay the other side's costs. That's got to hurt.

The bizarre testimonies involved need not be gone into in any detail. Except for one little matter: Lucas said, and evidently could back it up, that no such unagented "blind" submission, much less a fan fiction, would be seen by any of their creative people. This was precisely to avoid this sort of situation.

While our writer friend could feel that the story contained elements very reminiscent of the movie, it can be concluded that this was only coincidence. The writer would act only out of pride and admiration of the original; such was the content of the talk. But could the production company be certain of this, either originally, or once the writer got to talk to someone who would be concerned that "they stole your idea!"?

So, no matter how many times you forward the URL to the production company (companies), they won't do your story of the great celebration that Bella, Buffy, Guinan, Hermione, Leia, Sarah Connor, Sarah Jane Smith, Seven of Nine, Sookie, Troi, Uhura, and Xena threw for Katniss after her triumph in the Hunger Games. (David Langford gave this sort of thing as an example of the sort of letters publishers get, but he never followed through on the "Kelvin Throop" theme.)

More seriously . . . that "playing in an established universe" theme is more promising than it works out to be. The theory sounds nice; exploring minor threads in the warp and woof of the world, giving backstories their full due, expanding a world in its full potential. A broad spectrum of creative talents combining their efforts and working off each other.

The realization never quite seems to live up to the concept. The different creators each have his, her, their own concept, and the mismatches between the concepts all too easily become obvious. (Like *War of the Worlds: Global Dispatches* (1996) where it wasn't clear whether the invasion was in 1898, 1899, or 1900, or where Percival Lowell was, and never mind the guy complaining that there were no representatives of the Southern Hemisphere.)

Other realizations fall to lesser talents, and the diverse characters and settings end up becoming blurred, dulled, grayed, reduced to a common image. Even not so lesser talents have that problem.

Consider, for example, the last chapter of *The Number of the Beast* (1979; NHOL G.189). Here we have an assembly of all of Heinlein's noteworthy characters, backed up by noteworthy characters from works he admired, and even by some people who are characters in fictions in other lines (i.e., people from the real world, whatever that is). Yet, the problem observed before in the book persists. In earlier chapters, a problem had been that the two couples in Dora the intrauniversal explorer all

sounded alike. And all these different people all sound alike. If this happens with Robert Heinlein, what about less skilled writers?

Perhaps the best thing to say to the vast majority of those who endeavor to take this path is what Sir Arthur Conan Doyle said in his letter to Arthur Whittaker after reading "The Case of the Man Who Was Wanted". Which was, "Write about your own characters."

### BRET

Review by Joseph T Major of  
**THE DOCTOR AND THE KID**  
by Mike Resnick

(Pyr; 2011: ISBN 978-1-61614-537-8; \$16;  
HarperCollins; \$14.99 [Kindle])  
"A Weird West Tale"

The less-heralded followup to the classic satirical (or comical, anyway) Western show "Maverick" took the easygoing character played by James Garner and settled him down in a tavern that "Bret Maverick" had won in a card game. The show was good enough but somehow it didn't seem the same, even though Bret did get around. Once, he ran into a fellow named variously Antrim, or Bonney, or McCarty, or whatever, but known as Billy.

John Henry Holliday, a tooth-puller of some note albeit not for his painless dentistry, could use the aid of Bret, or perhaps his own successor Bernard Freyberg, up from Mexico, say. Doc got into a card game and bet everything on what he thought was four kings. Oops. When you get so drunk you can't tell the difference between a king and a jack, perhaps you ought to leave high-stakes poker games to guys who shut up "no limits" dealers by slapping fifty thousand on the table. But that's another story, for that limey guy Bond to deal with.

Without even enough money to get a decent funeral, never mind hold on long enough to kick off, Doc Holliday looks up some other guys. Fortunately for him, he doesn't run into this limey friend of Wild Bill Hickock named "Harry". What he gets pitched is a bounty of ten thousand dollars for the killing of Billy the Kid. But the route has some problems.

Things start talking to him; birds, prairie dogs, and the like. Goyathlay is on the outs with his former buddy Hook Nose, and there is a train station on a burial ground that should be removed. (Why does Bwana translate one name but not the other? Well, "goyathlay" means "one who yawns".)

About midway through the book, therefore, Doc signs an autograph for a naive and enthusiastic kid named Antrim. Shortly thereafter, he empties a pistol into him. Somehow, the latter doesn't have the intended effect. Antrim, and other names, the best known of which being "Billy the Kid", is being protected by Hook Nose. (Later on he will be protected by a different sort of character, courtesy of Rebecca Ore, but it's premature for *The Illegal Rebirth of Billy the Kid* (1991).) A standoff seems to be in the making.

When all else fails, try technology. Or call

your friends. Doc does both, bringing in Tom Edison and Ned Buntline, the Frank Reads and Tom Swifts of this series, to figure out how to destroy the train station. Once they can get the demolition work done, there's the little matter of that kid to consider . . .

There are a number of exotic circumstances involved. The reader will note how Doc and the Kid will have the most congenial and cordial of conversations, even as they are considering how to kill each other. And the other bounty hunter who pops up has some surprises, too . . .

Since Resnick has announced that he has sold a fourth book in this series, there is presumably a third on the way, and the weird west will see much gunfighting and brass when this tale is . . . **[To Be Continued]**

### ON THE PAD

Review by Joseph T Major of  
**REAMDE**

by Neil Stephenson  
(HarperCollins; 2011:

ISBN 978-0-06-197796-1; \$35.00;  
HarperCollins; \$14.99 [Kindle])



All right, I give up. Or perhaps, I gave it up. I could stand the family reunion. It's nice to see a protagonist who isn't an abandoned orphan with no hometown.

I could stand the second-world building. *The Tough Guide to Fantasyland* quite properly contains scorn for implausible geography, and being able to write code to make it right is a good thing. And being able to turn online gamers into a useful adjunct to airport security is something that could be done.

I could countenance the mafia threat. This is real; the hip cool mirrorshaded designer-drug doing cyberpunk kids would in real life have gone bust (or worse) helping an African bank clerk get \$127 MILLION DOLLARS out of the country left by someone with the same last name as them so they could give proper donations to charity.

But all together? In a Stephenson novel, there is padding useful of itself, but it's still padding. So much padding that the story is strangled aborning.

### YELLOWSTONE: WEST OF PORTLAND

Review by Joseph T Major of  
**SUPERVOLCANO: ERUPTION**

by Harry Turtledove  
(RoC; 2011;  
ISBN 978-1-101-55137-0; \$25.95;  
Penguin; \$12.99 [Kindle])

It's rather hard to tell how the well-known fanned in Portland would figure out how to blame the eruption in Yellowstone on the shadowy figures of the Insiders. Conspiracy theorists can always find an explanation. (As when he said that James Earl Ray's escape from Brushy Mountain Prison was proof of the conspiracy, since They were sneaking him out to be disposed of, and his rapid recapture was proof of the conspiracy, since he was too dumb to pull off an escape on his own.)

This is the story of the somewhat ill-named Colin Ferguson (in fact, he's on the other side, being a police detective) and his family as they struggle through the aftermath of the great eruption. They aren't particularly extraordinary, except for perhaps the second Mrs. Colin, who is a geologist observing the site before it happens, and who ends up a lot better off (i.e., she survives) than David A. Johnston. Also, her name is "Kelly" and I think Turtledove knows about that story.

The Ferguson family suffers the after-effects of the eruption in various ways. Some are petty, as when french fries disappear from fast-food menus, to be replaced by onion rings. Some are grand, as when the Ferguson daughter has to abandon her cat in order to get transport to a refugee camp. Turtledove's customary method of showing a multitude of perspectives particularly applies here.

Even a non-explosive eruption turns out to be catastrophic, given the spread of ash and its consequent devastation of the West. Now, mind you, there will be even more consequences later on as the effects of global cooling kick in, not to mention the economic and environmental destruction. A comparatively minor eruption in Iceland wrecked airplane engines all over Europe, for example, and here it only looks worse.

The Fergusons have to accommodate in their various ways and locations to the aftermath of this devastation. It's well to remember that it is not raining on Earth this day; a world has many different subcultures and regions. But then, while the book ends, the story doesn't. Which indicates there may be more to come, and most of it no good for the people involved.

### PAWN STARS

Review by Joseph T Major of

**FIREBIRD**

by Jack McDevitt

(Ace; 2011;

ISBN 978-0-441-02073-7; \$24.95;

Ace; \$11.99 [Kindle])

"An Alex Benedict Novel"

**Nebula Award Nominee**

"Hi, this is Pawn Stars. I'm Alex Benedict, and this is my pawn shop. I work here with Chase. Everything in here has a story and a price. One thing I've learned — you never know what is gonna come through that door."

Rick Harrison, the friendly manager of the Gold and Silver Pawn Shop of Las Vegas, Nevada, has recounted how the shop has accepted or rejected all sorts of strange things: a one-man submarine, a katana with a flaw in it that may be repairable, a Super Bowl championship ring the size of a baby's fist, a seventy-year-old Coke machine . . . the list goes on. He seems to have a lot of connections in the specialist appraisal fields, but some of these may have been found by the producers. Nevertheless, watching this show does teach one what strange things people will find.

Rick, Richard, Corey, and Chumlee have dealt with a lot of odd things, but so far their pawns and pawners haven't been disappearing into the voids of interstellar space. In this case, the items in question belonged to a fringe physicist, the somewhat eccentrically named Christopher Robin, who vanished with Pooh . . . er, that is, who vanished one night, after returning home just before an earthquake in which the only witness to his return died heroically.

Alex and Chase get drawn into the matter of what Chris Robin was doing; something that requires tracing an eccentric pattern of buying yachts and losing them, investigating the disappearance of a senior naval officer, and so on. The results lead to some cosmic considerations of travel . . .

But one of the striking parts of McDevitt's work is his worldbuilding. (I have raised this point before, but it should be made.) He presents a universe with its own culture; no "the great musical works of Haydn, Cage, and Kornblatz of Vwopingdorp IV." And losses, as with a reference to the only surviving volume of Churchill's *The Second World War*.

The "Pawn Stars" bit builds the world in its own way. People will still be interested in things associated with the great and famous. (Note, for example, the trade in Lincoln relics described in Andrew Ferguson's *Land of Lincoln* (2007; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 6 #3).) This gives McDevitt an opportunity to hint at the greater world out there, to present a world that is not just what is going on in the events of the novel.

The book ends on a quite moving climax, where the consequences of Chris Robin's theory of black holes and FTL travel make an appearance in a time-dilatory fashion. The universe is larger, and stranger, than we can imagine, and you never know what is gonna come through that door.

The Gold and Silver Pawn Shop

<http://www.gspawn.com/>

*Pawn Stars*

<http://www.history.com/shows/pawn-stars/>

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1492088/>

### COTTINGLEY

Review by Joseph T Major of Jo Walton's

**AMONG OTHERS**

(Tor; 2011; ISBN 978-0765331724; \$14.99;

Macmillan [Kindle]; \$9.99)

**Hugo Nominee**

**Nebula Nominee**

Morwenna has problems. Whether it's the terrible accident that left her literal other half (her twin) dead and her crippled, the bizarre and contorted family life, or being sent away to a dreary and constrained English boarding school (if that doesn't contain redundancies), her life is not of the best.

Her escapes involve reading science fiction (appealing to the audience there) and talking to the fairies. But the fairies don't go to England.

Her personal experiences are not marked so much by cruelty. There's no Harriett Flashman or Draca (Drakka?) Malfoy tormenting her, it's just the mere drudgery and weight of the system.

To Morwenna, her two escapes are of comparable realism and value. It would be all too tempting to get into a book-by-book analysis of her reading habits — well, if you insist. She started reading by alphabetical auctorial order, yet managed to miss Brian Aldiss and J. G. Ballard. Maybe someone didn't like the New Wave. She doesn't read the older works; no Verne, no Wells (!?), no Burroughs, no Doc Smith, no Weinbaum, no . . . just books written by authors being published at the time (1979-1980). And no media obsession; no references to STAR TREK™ and only a passing comment to *Star Wars*, not then *Episode IV: A New Hope* (and indeed, the book ends before *The Empire Strikes Back* came out).

The more relevant issue is Morwenna's attempt to find some emotional stability. Her chaotic personal life has become more chaotic due to events both supernatural and otherwise, and then there's the problems of physical maturation.

There is a surprise that isn't a surprise at the conclusion. Those who like reading of the little match girl breaking the glass ceiling in a world without gender roles, or the survivor killing the twenty-three other hostages, or the like, likely won't be satisfied here.

### FATSO IN SPACE

Review by Joseph T Major of Ric Locke's

**TEMPORARY DUTY**

(2011; Amazon Digital Services; \$2.99)

John Patrick "Fatso" Gionnini considered himself as patriotic and as loyal to the Navy as any other sailor. However, he also thought he had put in his time (surviving two carrier sinkings and receiving the Navy Cross twice for saving lives) and was owed a break; which was why he had caged his way into being incinerator operator on a carrier. However, this couldn't last forever and he was put in charge of a landing craft, which enabled him to indulge his fund-raising . . . that is, service duties to the fleet. Only, the Six-Day war blew up and Things Happened.

If space aliens came down and Fatso found himself packed off to prepare for a trade mission to unknown worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no swabbo had gone before — I think the Navy would survive but I'm not so sure about the aliens.

But this isn't by Daniel V. Gallery. Except the two junior petty officers who find

themselves on this mission are about as exuberant and able. John Peters, our principal character, will be glad to sit down and knock back a few beers with Fatso and share stories.

However, he seems to have had a worse command structure. Far too many of the offices sent out on this mission seem to have indulged in the wisdom of Captain Morton of the USS *Reluctant*.

What they're doing is even stranger; they're selling old technology. However, the buyers seem happy enough to get it. And as the interstellar voyages continue, the nature of their hosts turns out to be a little stranger than one can imagine. There are hints that their connection with their technology may be more casual than appearances make it.

The strains aren't just with the command structure. Peters has to discuss of all things tax liability. This is a problem that turns out to have deeper consequences.

Then there was the problem of the space pirates and their unusual attributes. Which was why Peters came back with friends with benefits.

And once home again, having survived discharge, kidnapping, losses, new life and new civilizations, boldly going where no human has gone before . . . we get a glimpse of the society at home, and it isn't a pretty one.

There are a number of openings for follow ups; the story is nevertheless completed, at least in the sense that there is a resolution. One can argue that there is a certain lack of extrapolation in the society and technology, though Locke has set up an explanation. The price won't break you (you can get free Kindle applications for your computer and smart phone if you don't want to buy the e-reader) and it's worth a look.

### TO GIVE THE DEAD LIFE

Review by Joseph T Major of  
**THE GIRL WITH THE CROOKED NOSE:  
A Tale of Murder, Obsession, and Forensic  
Artistry**

by Ted Botha  
(Berkley; 2008; 212;  
ISBN 978-0425246832; \$15.00;  
Penguin; \$9.99 [Kindle])

In *Gorky Park* (1981), Martin Cruz Smith (author of the alternate-history work *The Indians Won* (1970)) writes about Mikhail Mikhaylovich Gerasimov [1907-1970], a Soviet forensic sculptor. For some reason, Smith believed that Gerasimov was the *only* practitioner of this art.

Eight years later, Smith and the rest of us would have had reason to know otherwise. In 1989 the crime-fighting show *America's Most Wanted* featured the case of John Emil List of Westfield, New Jersey, a man who had wanted to spare his family the shame and humiliation of his going bankrupt, so on November 9, 1971 he killed his mother, wife, and their three children, then disappeared.

A woman in Colorado was shocked to see a realistic sculpture of her former neighbor, Bob Clark. Clark was tracked down in Virginia, where he had moved and married, and sure enough, he was John Emil List. But the sculptor

had never seen him.

In an artistic era where the mounting pin for a sculpted mask can be separately displayed and hailed as a highly meaningful and significant artistic statement, a realistic sculptor like Francis Augustus "Frank" Bender should expect not to do well. Indeed, in his later years he was doing maintenance on ships in order to survive.

What is more aggravating is that the police agencies which used and appreciated his forensic reconstructions did not always, or apparently even often, pay him for his work. The List case wasn't the only one. Some, of course, are mentioned in connection with the Vidocq Society, as described in Michael Capuzzo's *The Murder Room* (2010; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 9 #5).

Botha describes a number of both forensic reconstructions of skulls and age-advance sculptures that Bender constructed. While the List one was the most famous, the topic Botha discusses in the most detail is Bender's attempt to recreate the faces of a number of young women found dead in Chihuahua. This was the most frustrating, because of the different attitude towards governance exercised by the local police forces.

All this is set in the greater context of Bender's strange and adventurous life. Instead of the outré nature of his personal life, which as has been said seems to be more that of a murder victim than a murder investigator, Botha focuses on the financial hardship. His style was out of touch with the modern era, and as said his forensic efforts went financially unrewarded. (This should have been looked into.)

The personal incidents were at least emotionally rewarding, in some cases. Describing the closure afforded to the family in the reconstruction Bender called "The Girl With Braids", for example. But there was often no closure.

There might be criticism of his means. Why were so many of his reconstructions titled "The Girl" instead of "The Woman"? Bender's reasoning was that this was someone who was unfulfilled, who never could find a full life.

On July 28, 2011, Frank Bender died at his home in Philadelphia of pleural mesothelioma. *Ars longa, vita brevis*.

Frank Bender's website:  
<http://www.frankbender.us/>

### VIEW TO A DATADUMP

Review by Joseph T Major of  
**IAN FLEMING'S COMMANDOS:  
The Story of the Legendary 30 Assault Unit**  
(Original title: *Ian Fleming's Commandos:  
The Story of 30 Assault Unit in WWII*)  
by Nicholas Rankin  
(Oxford University Press USA; 2011;  
ISBN 978-0-19-978282-6; \$29.95;  
Amazon Digital Services; \$12.07 [Kindle])

Bond lit a Senior Service and stared at the data chip, and at the image projected from it. So this was the fabulous weapon that had destroyed Alderaan! A thousand million lives snuffed out in one blow, only to be

destroyed itself through a fluke shot. And now they had acquired the data chip with the specifications in a raid. He had lost two good men in the process, but learned that the Emperor was building on his failure.

— Not from *Star Wars: A View to a Datadump*

There are some writers who are alchemists; who take the events of their lives and transmigrate them into their fictions, plundering the records of mere (or perhaps not so mere) life and turning them into fictive gold. (A lot, of course, don't do anything of the sort, making their dull but self-important experiences into fictive dross.) This is why, for example, Bill Patterson's biography *Robert A. Heinlein: In Dialogue with His Century* (2010; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 9 #5) will be significant when gushy praise of TV shows by academics trying to justify their likes is the embarrassment to them that it was to others.

Yet when these events were going on, the Fleming everyone knew was Peter, the famed travel writer, whose worldwide experience was being formed then. On the basis of these exploits across the lands, he could easily and speaking with experience call into question strange stories of escapees from Siberian prison camps (as was carried on in *Looking for Mr. Smith* (2010; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 10 #3)).

Nowadays, of course, the perspective is reversed. Carrying on recounting the history behind the history, as done in his *A Genius for Deception* (British title *Churchill's Wizards*; 2008; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 8 #5), he tells here of the history behind both history and writing.

Ian Fleming grew up against a background of both affluence and service. His grandfather had risen from nothing to riches; his father had died in the Great War to End All Wars. Peter had been both the protector and the envied one. So, when the Great War to End All Wars II: This Time It's Personal! broke out, Ian was able and wishing to find something to make his own name at.

The something was the Naval Intelligence Department. The biography of the director that Fleming first served under, John Henry Godfrey, may be found, only slightly fictionalised, in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1963); he himself said that Fleming "turned me into that unsavoury character M". (Another contributor to the character, Sir Stewart Graham Menzies, the actual Chief of the Secret Intelligence Service, had a less negative response.)

The Naval Intelligence Division found it had to do technological investigation. The matter of the Enigma cryptographic device is too well known nowadays to need more than mention, but for another example, after *Kapitänleutnant* Gunther Prien of the U-47 sank the *Royal Oak*, divers recovered one of his torpedoes and it was taken to be analyzed, where it was discovered to have an electric drive.

Fleming continued to participate in various intelligence matters during the war, some of which were less interesting than watching Dusko Popov bet \$50,000 to shut up a bacarrat player who was calling for "no limits" bets



whenever he got the deal. It's perhaps a bit too much to say that he kept the Naval Intelligence Division running after John Godfrey was sent down to be commander of the Royal Indian Navy in September of 1942, as Rankin does.

However, in the summer of that year, Fleming finally got what he had wanted, the topic of this book. What was then called the Intelligence Assault Unit was founded on July 27, 1942, and in action at the Dieppe Raid on August 19.

Its mission was to collect intelligence — technology if possible, but documents when available — on enemy actions. The IAU was to get into a captured headquarters and grab the documents before other soldiers used them as kindling.

They served in Sicily and Italy first, and Rankin describes all sorts of events from the gruesome (the soldier who picked up what he thought was a dud grenade) to the movingly tragic (the captured SOE officer who so impressed the Italian firing squad set to execute him that they refused to shoot).

After working in the ruinous Aegean campaign, the unit was reorganized and sent into Europe during the Normandy Invasion. They entered Paris and followed the army into the Low Countries and Germany.

After the fighting ended, 30 Assault Unit was sent to recover rocket parts and papers, both of which they did in abundance. The British, understand, had an interest here, since said rockets had been shot into there. They also uncovered material related to the *Elektroboote*, the high-tech Type XXI and XXIII U-Boats, which could have been a serious threat.

Throughout, Rankin footnotes relationships between the facts Fleming encountered and the fictions he wrote. For example, the IAU was sent to find "typewriters" in the German offices in Algiers. These were, of course, Enigma cryptographic devices. Which became the Soviet *Spektor* machine in *From Russia, with Love* (1957) [and the *Lektor* in the movie (1963)].

Like most of the "mobs for jobs", 30 Assault Unit was disbanded when the war was over. Recently, the government have decided that such a capability may be needed again, and on 13 December 2010 the 30 Commando Information Exploitation Group, Royal Marines, was formed. Alas, neither the few surviving veterans of 30 Assault Unit nor Fleming's descendants were invited. Seeking you for a view to a datadump . . .

## KEEP LOOKING OVER YOUR SHOULDER

Review by Joseph T Major of

**ADIEU FAREWELL**

[FAREWELL:

*The Greatest Spy Story of the Twentieth Century*]

by Sergei Kostin & Eric Raynaud

[Translated by Catherine Cauvin-Higgins]

(Éditions Robert Laffont; 2009;

[AmazonCrossing; 2011:

ISBN 97816110902060; \$13.95;

Amazon Digital Services; \$4.99)]

In June of 1982, American reconnaissance satellites detected an enormous explosion in Siberia. There was concern whether this was an unannounced nuclear weapons test, a missile launch, or the deployment of some even more powerful new weapon. Yet the higher ranks of the Agency seemed manifestly unconcerned about this event.

In the evening of February 22 of that year, a Soviet officer went for a drive with his mistress and stopped in a parking lot. There may have been words; he attacked her with a knife, attempting to stab her to death, and did stab and kill a volunteer security guard. He was arrested, tried, and sentenced to fifteen years in prison.

There is a connection between these two events.

*Red Horizons* by Ion Mihai Pacepa (1990) describes a sustained effort by the Romanian intelligence service to steal technological information from the west. As the author was chief of the intelligence service until his defection, he should be considered to have some knowledge about the matter.

But, perhaps, the particular department was not quite the best-staffed. Vladimir Ippolitovich Vetrov had been on a respectable track to advancement in the KGB until he made a blunder. While not sufficient to justify his demotion or punishment, he was clearly marked as Not Suitable, and from a life of socialist prosperity in trading capitalist goods was downgraded to a office bound bureaucrat.

The office was Department T of the KGB, which handled the acquisition and distribution of foreign technology. In a sense, the existence of such an office, never mind the scope of its efforts, shows a significant failure in the Soviet system. To take one plainly obvious feature, Department T ran a program to acquire space technology. The glory days of Korolev and Glushko were long gone, and now the Soviet space program ran on imitation and acquisitions. They had no idea of what to do with the Buran space shuttle, which may not be unconnected with its having flown only once.

Someone who is supposed to have foreign contacts and has a grudge has a easy way to deal with it. Vetrov got into touch with an unusual partner; the French DST (*Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire*) — their internal security service!

For about a year, Vetrov passed information back to the French, and in return, was paid — not staggeringly well (nothing like John Walker's \$2 million) but substantially. Which inspired him to consider relocating. That he could openly discuss the matter with his son shows a certain looseness in internal security.

Vetrov did not have the most stable of marriages. He was a womanizer, but it seems possible that his wife started having affairs first. Which shows how well open marriages work.

In spite of interviews with the surviving participants (Vetrov's wife, son, and mistress) Kostin still seems to have been unable to penetrate his reasonings. Except, perhaps, to note an unusual functionality in the Soviet legal system; those accused of heinous crimes will often intentionally commit lesser ones, be caught, and go to prison. Thus being safe from

the investigation of the real crime.

Vetrov gained about a year and a half of comparative safety by this ploy, but in the end it didn't work. He was found out, tried for this crime, convicted, and executed.

Vetrov's revelations had repercussions abroad. Knowing how technologically backward the Soviets were made a big advantage in how the US handled relations with them. Also, that this came from the French, from a French government that had Communist ministers in it, averted problems in relations.

This insight into Soviet technological problems empowered the U.S. The Strategic Defense Initiative ended up overstretching the Soviet technological capacity. All those heated papers about how the Soviets could easily baffle the system through simple technical means (i.e., "rotating the warhead" to dissipate laser beams) turned out to be ascribing to them abilities they did not possess.

On a lesser note, it was now possible to pass to the Soviets control software for pipelines (the Siberian gas pipeline was a significant concern of the administration) that contained a whacking great Trojan. If you remember what happened when Clifford Stoll found *The Cuckoo's Egg* (1989), one of the points was that the KGB had paid the German hackers a substantial premium for a UNIX operating system that was available on the open market. This software wasn't overpriced, unless you count the repair expenses and lost income from when the pipeline exploded.

Vladimir Vetrov was not a particularly admirable man; yet his actions in this case were admirable, and he did expose the real standing of Soviet science and technology. And so his life was for something after all.

## DEATH TO SPIES

Review by Joseph T Major of

**SMERSH:**

*Stalin's Secret Weapon. Soviet Military Counterintelligence in WWII*

by Vadim J. Birstein

Introduction by "Nigel West"

(Dialogue; 2012:

ISBN 978-1-84954-108-4; \$29.95)

*Appendix B.*

*Subject:* SMERSH

*Sources:* Own archives and scanty material made available by Deuxième Bureau and C.I.A. Washington

SMERSH is a conjunction of two Russian words: 'Smyert Shpionnam,' meaning roughly: 'Death to Spies.'

Ranks above M.W.D. (formerly N.K.V.D.) and is believed to come under the personal direction of Beria.

— Ian Fleming, *Casino Royale*, Chapter 2 'Dossier for M.'

CMEPIII, or SMERT' SHpionnam, or "SMERSH" was out to get James Bond, in the early books. Later on, as the Cold War calmed down, it was replaced with SPECTRE, but that's another story (and then there was TOOTH, The Organization Organized To Hate, but that's yet another).

When a real organization of Soviet assassins was revealed, its sometime leader, Pavel A. Sudoplatov, had to deny he had been the head of SMERSH (*Special Tasks* (1994), Page 3). And he hadn't been.

The real story of SMERSH is briefer, and more sinister, than Fleming's or even Sudoplatov's. And it all began in 1943.

The Soviet Union was going on the counteroffensive after the victory at Stalingrad. With this change of affairs, Stalin felt free to indulge on one of his favorite hobbies; reorganizations. The combined People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (Народный комиссариат внутренних дел [*Narodnyu komissariat vnutrennikh del*], NKVD) was divided. The espionage and security departments were spun off into a People's Commissariat of State Security (Народный комиссариат государственной безопасности [*Narodnyu komissariat Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti*], NKGB).

But more to the point, the Military Counterintelligence Directorate of the NKVD was made yet another separate organization, and one that reported directly to Stalin. And it was given the dramatic and striking name of "Death to Spies" — SMERSH.

The task of SMERSH was military security, very broadly defined. This did not only mean investigating the troops, but providing counterintelligence efforts in the newly liberated territories. To some extent, therefore, it could be said to be parallel to the efforts of the U.S. Army Counter Intelligence Corps.

Unlike the CIC, SMERSH acted with the traditional Bolshevik ruthlessness. Unlike the NKGB and NKVD troops, SMERSH members wore regular army uniforms; they blended in with the ordinary troops, and as a result were feared more than the others. Anyone might be a SMERSH operative. There are descriptions of a number of high-ranking Soviet officers arrested on various charges.

Birstein describes how SMERSH conducted field security against the German line-crossers with considerable success. Even granted the predisposition to recount successes and ignore failures, it would appear that German efforts to establish agents in the Soviet Union were as successful, or unsuccessful, as they were in Britain.

As the Soviet army moved west, SMERSH arrested individuals in the Soviet-occupied countries of Eastern Europe who were likely to organize opposition to Soviet domination. Stalin had said that every occupier got to impose its own system on the countries it liberated, and he meant it.

The only director of SMERSH was a veteran state security officer named Viktor Semyonovich Abakumov. He was not under the personal direction of Beria and not surprisingly had become a rival of his. As has been pointed out, Abakumov and SMERSH reported directly to Stalin. Not surprisingly, by the end of the war Abakumov was in a position of power, and a rival of Beria's — another situation that served Stalin's purposes very well.

The participation of the Soviets in the Nuremberg trials was not entirely in keeping

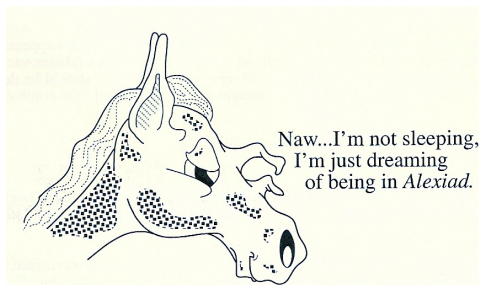
with western norms of jurisprudence. One of the Soviet prosecutors seemed not entirely clear on the concept of "cross-examination", for example. And far too much of the evidence provided by the Soviets was gathered in the traditional Chekist fashion. Which resulted in such issues as the inability to get the Germans prosecuted for the Katyn Massacre. (Holocaust historians seem curiously uninterested in this, but then their legal counterparts were uninterested in Ion Mihai Pacepa's statements that he had provided forged evidence to them while head of the Romanian intelligence service.)

A year after the war ended, Stalin did another reorganization. This time, since the revolutionary phase had ended, the government departments that had been styled "People's Commissariats" became "Ministries". SMERSH was absorbed into the Ministry of State Security, the former NKGB. And the new Minister of State Security was Stalin's new favorite, Viktor Abakumov; he was not under Beria, they were rivals. Stalin liked rivalries.

The brief introduction by Rupert "Nigel West" Allason gives a view of the western perception of SMERSH. The book itself could have stood some closer editing, for example the references to "Friedrich von Paulus". The commander at Stalingrad was not an *Adelman*, he was just "Friedrich Paulus".

This dark era in the history of the war has needed explication for many years. Facts are better than nightmares.

## HORSE REPORTS



### Monday, January 16, 2012 Jonabell Farm, Lexington, KY

Bernardini was back from Australia, and with him had come the Australian champion Lonrho, so we went to the Darley Farms stallion farm Jonabell Farm in Lexington. Jonabell is the burial site of Triple Crown winner Affirmed. Inconveniently, Lane's End had scheduled its open house for the week before, on weekdays, so we didn't get to see A. P. Indy and Curlin. Or even Aragorn.

The morning was at first very pretty, and we saw it because we had to get our around sunrise, since our tour was at 9:30. The drive was unexceptionable (perhaps replacing the brake master cylinder on Saturday for \$\$\$ helped) and we got there in time.

It was raining occasionally, which made our tour somewhat hasty. The first horse we saw was Street Sense, famous for being the first and

so far only horse to win both the Breeders' Cup Juvenile and the Kentucky Derby. Early achievers often don't pan out.

Bernardini was on the back lots, and Lonrho was still adjusting to being halfway across the world. So we saw, for example, Holy Bull, their senior horse. And Zenyatta's sire, Street Cry.

The tour guide also took us through the sheds, where she explained the breeding procedure. As we had found out seeing Glidemaster (the Trotting Triple Crown winner), thoroughbred stallions have a more personal relationship with their mares.

Our thanks to Darley and Jonabell for their hospitality and courtesy. They are a young stable, with less tradition and honors than (say) Calumet Farms, but they honor and respect their horses.

Afterwards, we went to Joseph-Beth, one of the last few physical big bookstores in the area, saw my cousin Billy, who had been out of touch because he had given up his land line, visited two of the used bookstores in downtown Lexington, and had dinner at Columbia Steak House. Drove home in a very windy evening, and when we got home, the power went out four times in an hour.

### Saturday, March 24, 2012

The Horse Park goes over to the summer schedule on March 15. Since we'd be engaged later, we decided to go now.

There had been rain the night before, sometimes heavy, but it was over by morning. We got to the Park in time to see the morning parade of breeds. Among the horses being shown were two different kinds of white horses; a Lippizan and a genuine white Thoroughbred.

The Hall of Champions show was shorter than usual. They did show trotting great Mr. Muscleman (we had seen his retirement at The Red Mile a few years ago) and 1994 Kentucky Derby winner Go for Gin, the second-oldest living Derby winner (Sea Hero, 1993, being the oldest) as well as Cigar and Funny Cide. Go for Gin was a bit active, but he has just been retired from stud. ("Bit active" meaning he nearly clipped my head and brought back memories of John Henry at his worst. LTM)

We did our usual post-park activities and got home before sunset.

March 29 marked the 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foaling of Man o'War, perhaps the greatest racehorse in history, although there are those who would claim that honor for Secretariat, foaled on March 30.

Zenyatta has foaled a Bernardini colt and Rachel Alexandra is now expecting a Bernardini foal.

It is now official. My Derby horse, Alpha, has secured his Derby slot with a second in the Wood Memorial. I picked him for sentimental reasons. He's a son of Bernardini.

The other night I actually watched a basketball game. It was a Final Four game, U.K. against U.L. and perhaps the first time two Kentucky teams have ever played each other for a national championship. As a Louisville resident I was naturally on the side of the



Louisville team. I even bought a Louisville t-shirt at a local grocery to show my team spirit and I wore it on Game Day.

Sure, I knew I'd probably picked the losing team but they were my team and I was going to show my pride in them for getting as far as they had. Underdogs have won before. It was not to be but they made the victors work for the win. It was kind of fun watching but it would have been more interesting had I understood what I was watching. It wasn't as much fun as watching a horse race but in the horse race I have some idea of what I am watching.

— Lisa

## TRANSIT OF VENUS

by Joe

On June 5-6, 2012, there will be a transit of Venus across the sun. This will be the last such event until December 2117.

The beginning of the transit will be observable in North America during the evening of June 5. Its end will be visible in western Australia, western Asia, eastern Africa, and most of Europe during the morning of June 6. The entire transit will be visible in the Pacific, including eastern Australia, and in Alaska. In Louisville, the transit will begin at 22:04:12 UT (6:04 EDT).

<http://www.transitofvenus.org/>

The big Magnavox stereo which sits atop my dresser has finally refused to power up. It's been with me more than twenty years. I can't say Magnavox didn't make durable stereo equipment. I have been listening to radio online. I looked at potential replacements last night but wasn't sure what I was looking at. I may just get an ordinary radio. An Evansville store had another record player which recorded to CD but the price tag was \$170. ? For that money I could probably buy a whole new set of digital albums. The last time I bought record player needles they were pretty pricey things. I paid twenty-five dollars for one. I don't know where to buy them anymore. I'm sure that somewhere on the Internet there is an online seller of these exotic dinosaurs. I just prefer a modern machine.

— Lisa

## HIGH ANXIETY

A Report on

Grant C. McCormick's Health Problems  
by his landlord Joseph T Major

Grant came to live with us in 2007 partly because of health problems. He had been in the hospital having an infected foot treated, and his trailer had been insufficiently winterized. It was unlivable.

Our agreement was mutually convenient. He had a roof over his head and in return we got every computer in the house tuned up to 110% of maximum efficiency, the cats fed while we were on vacation, and so on.

His health was up and down. He had spent some time in hospital or nursing home after this or that breakdown. It would take some persuasion for him to consent to going.

## Saturday, February 11, 2012

Grant slept in a lot that day. We had been hoping he would go out to dinner with us, but he was complaining of an attack of vertigo. So he slept. Otherwise, he seemed all right.

## Sunday, February 12, 2012; Lincoln's and Darwin's Birthday

Lisa didn't go to church that morning, she was worried. When I went down to start the laundry, I also had to replace a number of books that had toppled off their stacks. The cats at play, or perhaps "Tiptree" the raccoon again, I had thought.

In the afternoon, Grant woke up. He was still feeling vertiginous; he had already called in sick at work. (He works a Sunday-Thursday shift.) If he could hold on to something, he said, he could get to the bathroom. Well, I was a little more reliable than stacks of books.

By the time we got to the main room it was clear he was a little worse off than that. I was having trouble holding him up. In fact, he fell into the litter box outside the bathroom.

In the bathroom it got worse. He knocked things off the top of the toilet, bent one of the handles in the bathtub, and fell into *another* litter box. This was definitely serious.

I told him he should go to the hospital. He said if he got some more sleep it would be all right. Then I barely got him to his feet, and out of the bathroom into the main room, where Lisa had a chair. We got him dressed and argued he should go to the hospital again. He said he just needed to sleep, and could we get him on his feet so he could go back to bed?

We got him out of the chair, he promptly fell to the floor, and I could not get him to stand up. I finally called the Emergency Medical Service to send an ambulance. He had wanted to check whether Jewish Hospital was on his medical plan, but it was simply impossible to get him to his computer.

The EMS people came very quickly. It took two men to get him to his feet and walk him out of the house to the gurney.

We picked up some clothing and his laptop and netbook, then went out to dinner. It was after seven and we were hungry.

When we got to Jewish Hospital, it was eight-thirty, and he was in a room in the intake section. Grant was coherent and covered with various wires. I left the items and we went home and to bed.

## Monday, February 13, 2012

I had posted on Facebook that Grant was not well. We went to Jewish Hospital after dinner. He was in the Dot Patterson Stroke Center. Since he could not use his left arm or leg, that diagnosis was probably worth pursuing. As a matter of fact, he was taking a MRI test when we got there, but he arrived about twenty minutes later or so.

Carolyn Clowes had called me, but I did not hear the cell phone ring. We left and apparently just missed her. We had had to park on the street outside the hospital, since the parking structure was charging for the night.

## Tuesday, February 14, 2012: Valentine's Day

We could at least park in front of the hospital, more or less. Carolyn arrived not long after we did.

Grant was out for another test and it was the same as last time. He had called asking about his glucose meter and I brought it and his glasses. Those he had broken. He wanted me to bring the superglue so he could fix the frame.

Carolyn was more than a bit worried about his condition. She agreed that he was neglecting his health.

## Wednesday, February 15, 2012

Grant's co-worker Charley May called just as we were getting near the hospital, wanting to know where the glasses were. Lisa had to handle the call, since unlike every hip cool modern exec I don't talk and drive very well. (On the other hand, a hip cool modern exec all too often ends up dead in the wreckage of his Lamborghini, while the guy on the other end of the connection wonders why a cell phone can't survive a 90-mph collision with a semi.)

The glasses were in a ziploc bag in the closet with the glucose meter. I've had some experience with the latter, and after handing Charley the glasses, which he took to get new frames, I helped Grant test his blood sugar, which was too high.

As if that weren't enough, Grant said the rounds of tests had shown he had a hole in his heart. Carolyn showed up in time to hear this news, which she too found unpleasant. She also opined that if it had not been for us, Grant would have been a lot worse off.

Charley left first, then we had to follow. It had started raining.

When I got home, I looked up this new problem they had found, and to be technical it's a "septal defect". The fetal heart is more reptilian than mammalian, it has openings between the chambers. Usually these close up as the fetus develops.

In adults, they usually don't try surgery to close these holes. Another medical condition for Grant to monitor.

## Thursday, February 16, 2012

The cats have been taking the change in events very hard. I came down for breakfast and was besieged by five felines uttering **Piteous Mews™** and leaving the observer with the impression that they were absolutely certain they would all be cast out onto the streets to make their own way. I fed them.

We needed a break, so when I got home from work I called Grant and informed him we wouldn't be coming by. He said he happened to be eating at the moment. I went down to eat, except I first had to feed five felines uttering **Piteous Mews™** and acting desperately starved and otherwise bereft of care. (There is a certain lack of variation there.)

Lisa has been picking up nonstop. I took a bag of trash out to the trash bin and there is still more to come.

## Friday, February 17, 2012

We had dinner with our other patient. Tim Lane had been to the hospital in January. It turned out he had congestive heart failure. The

doctors put him on diuretics, and by that day he had lost fifty pounds, with hopes of losing sixty. Having noticed that (for example) the skin of his legs was no longer shiny, I think there was definitely an improvement. But he had to take medicines of various sorts.

They had said they would visit Grant Saturday afternoon, so we begged off for the night and went home.

#### **Saturday, February 18, 2012**

At the NOTA meeting, everyone wished Grant well. In addition, I got an email from Alice, Elizabeth's sister, and had to write her a long note of explanation. So Grant had good wishes all around.

The parking structure was not charging on weekends, so we parked there instead of on the street. Grant was beginning to get back some motion in his left arm. The doctors were trying to find a rehab center that had room. Carolyn had been dubious about what had seemed to be the most likely place, the Frazer Rehab Center. Frazer Rehab is in the same complex, and indeed on Monday night we had gone through it to get to the hospital. They do recovery from sports injuries very well, but other places are another matter.

Charley had picked up Grant's glasses; he now had new frames and could actually see. Grant asked if we could bring some of his lactose-free milk. He is lactose intolerant, you understand.

#### **Sunday, February 19, 2012**

I took Lisa to church in the morning, brought her back afterwards, and we went to the library downtown. About the time it closed, we went over to Jewish Hospital.

Grant was feeling better, he was pleased to get the milk, and he was definitely going to be moved. He just didn't know where or when.

#### **Monday, February 20, 2012: Presidents' Day** "Godspeed, John Glenn" + 50 years. Sigh.

Grant was moved to a rehab center, Mount Holly Rehab. A nurse called us to inform us of this, and then around nine Grant himself called with the news.

#### **Tuesday, February 21, 2012**

When I called to see how Grant was doing at the rehab center, it turned out he had been moved back to the hospital. Many calls ensued, some while I was getting *Alexiad* ready to be mailed out (finally!).

#### **Wednesday, February 22, 2012: Washington's Birthday**

Grant had been having nausea, so they moved him out of the nursing home. Charley came when we were there, and we discussed various issues. Grant can't shave, because he is on blood thinners (for obvious reasons) and a cut might be serious.

Charley wanted to eat and there was a choice between the McDonald's at Kosair, and the café in Jewish. The latter is open late; so much for that book.

It was getting on and we left; however, all the doors except for the emergency room door

were locked, and those are on the far side from where we were parked. We didn't mind the walk — except that it was beginning to rain.

#### **Thursday, February 23, 2012**

Grant was moved to Christopher East. We already knew the place from going to see Robley. Carolyn had investigated and thought the facilities to be suitable, but Grant had had one demurrer. But I checked and it did have wifi.

He has been able to get out of bed and to get around with various forms of assistance.

#### **Friday, February 24 — Sunday, February 26, 2012**

This was ConCave weekend, so we went off to that, informing various people there of his condition. And of course keeping in touch with him. Modern communications technology has made us more unsettled, since we can keep touch on a minute to minute basis.

#### **Monday, February 27, 2012**

Grant had wanted some particular items of clothing. So we took them out to Christopher East. But when we got there, he was asleep. Not wanting to disturb his rest, we left the clothes and slipped out. It didn't help that we had nearly been hit twice on the way there by drivers, one anticipating a stop sign and another not quite clear on the concept of "turn lane".

#### **Wednesday, February 29, 2012: Bissextile**

Grant was awake this evening. He described the various means of therapy. One of them demonstrated the utility of e-readers, for while various electrodes were stimulating impaired nerves, he was reading. It was better than boredom.

The prospect is that he will be able to return home. Perhaps, even return to working.

#### **Saturday, March 3, 2012**

Spent some time with him, discussing various elements of his future existence. For example, if he starts feeling unwell like that again, there will be no argument about hospitalization or dawdling in getting there.

The doors to the rehab center were locked when we wanted to go out, and we had to find a nurse to let us out. I understand security but this is getting profoundly restrictive.

#### **Sunday, March 4, 2012**

When I came in for a brief visit (they were having an Orthodox Prayer Day meeting at church in the afternoon), Grant was sitting upright in bed and eating. He has also graduated to using his regular laptop instead of the netbook. There is still no timetable for him to get out, but the indications are that he will go home again.

#### **Monday, March 5, 2012**

Grant and a social worker discussed his future, as I found out when I called him this evening. The social worker will have to come and see what needs to be done in the way of accommodations for Grant's condition. I don't think we will need labor, just parts. I hope we

can enlist help with some of the work, but this we will have to see.

#### **Friday, March 9, 2012**

We went by after dinner with Tim & Elizabeth, but Grant was getting ready to have his shower, so I handed him the bill I had and we left precipitately. He can get into the bathroom by himself.

#### **Saturday, March 10, 2012**

We came down after a complicated morning (vet visit for Slim, lab visit for me). He discussed his situation; he is looking forward to getting home, and it seems likely he will be able to drive. They delivered lunch a little early and we left.

I'll note that although he talks of speech therapy, he doesn't seem to have memory loss, and his speech is almost totally normal. Given the location of the stroke and the speech centers this would appear to be a positive sign.

#### **Wednesday, March 14, 2012**

Another complicated day, and we dropped in after our dinner. What I find problematic is that he doesn't walk while we're there. However, when I asked him to touch his left thumb to the fingers on his left hand in order from index finger to little finger, he did that without any trouble, which indicates that he has some control over it.

#### **Sunday, March 18, 2012: Happy Birthday**

A very bad week for Lisa, since her cousin Jim Shelton, a good and decent man, had died of liver cancer a week before. The funeral was crowded and I expect many more could not make it.

We got home on Saturday (thanks to Elizabeth for feeding the cats) and on Sunday went out visiting the shut-in. First off was Lisa's old friend Mrs. Mellen, who lives not too far from where we do.

Grant was pleased to see us, particularly since we brought the walker Lisa had bought for \$10 at Nearly New. Now if we can only get together with the social worker!

Carolyn had brought him a birthday present, and he commented that once upon a time he would have been annoyed at getting clothes for his birthday, but now he was pleased.

#### **Wednesday, March 21, 2012**

I had talked to the social worker, Ms. B. Ms. B. was concerned about Grant's diet, or problems thereof. We discussed this and other matters. The walker turns out to be too low for Grant to easily use.

His speech and cognitive therapy is concluded now, and Grant seems to have returned to more acceptable levels. He doesn't seem to be impaired, but more observation may be in order in the future.

The physical therapy continues. One disturbing issue was that he said he was advised not to get out of bed without help.

#### **Friday, March 23, 2012**

Couldn't stay long because Grant was scheduled for a shower. He needed some

generic Q-tips, which we had but didn't bring. Earlier that evening we had had dinner with Tim and Elizabeth, when such matters as the fact that they were both taking rat poison came up.

### Sunday, March 25, 2012

We were talking mostly about what he would do at home. Lisa has been cleaning out the front two rooms so he can get around. If he goes back to work soon, he might have to use a wheelchair; certainly he would have to switch to a daytime schedule. He could take the TARC 3 handicapped access bus. (TARC, the Louisville bus system, used to have a "Hurstbourne Circulator" bus that ran up and down Hurstbourne Lane. Though it is one of the busier streets here, they discontinued that bus.)

### Monday, March 26, 2012

Talked to Grant and he said that the physical therapy has now switched from strength to agility. That is, they are satisfied he can stand up but now he needs to practice getting his feet properly placed.

### Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Lisa's cleaning-up had gone apace, and we brought Grant a basket of things, clothes, various papers, and whatnot. When we got to the nursing home, he was up and around, albeit in a wheel chair. I had to get the ball which had fallen out of his trackball holder.

He could use his left hand, if not quite as much as before, and as I've said his speech and memory have recovered. We spent the night talking about various matters, showing relevant pictures, and so on.

### Friday, March 30, 2012

R-Laurraine Tutihasi and Mike Weasner were passing through on the way to a wedding in New Jersey, so we had dinner with them. Then, we went down to see Grant, and to our surprise Tim & Elizabeth were there, as were Lee Harris and Dale Yocom! It was quite the fannish get-together. Grant was out of bed, in a wheelchair, and I got a group picture.

(Had to bring in a tripod, and it being Christopher East. . . but no one at first got the joke about when the tripods came.)

Tammi discussed the prospects of FandomFest, which is getting in literary guests to go with its media and comic activities. This might be an alternative venue, but their attitude disturbs me.

On Saturday, I put the picture up on Facebook, so everyone who has access can see how Grant looks now.

### Sunday, April 1, 2012

Coming home from church, we saw direly dark clouds and resolved not to go to U of L. Went home instead, and the weather cleared up to make a magnificent day.

Instead, we went to see Lisa's friend Mrs. Mellen, and then after dinner to see Grant. Charley May came by and we discussed phone and car problems.

We are grateful to all the people who have shown their concern and interest for Grant.

## THE JOY OF HIGH TECH

by Rodford Edmiston

Being the occasionally interesting ramblings of a major-league technophile.

### Technology and Medicine

#### Part One: The Bit Between Your Teeth

The requirements of medicine have frequently driven technological development. Dental tools alone have stimulated major accomplishments in stainless steel and similar materials, because of the strength, elasticity and corrosion resistance needs involved. When you consider that some of these have to actually operate at high speed with great precision while cutting away something as hard as tooth enamel, then be sterilized for subsequent use...!

Most people are wary of modern, air-driven mini-turbine dental drills. Trust me, the old, mechanical ones were far worse. Especially before electric motors were added, and they had to be bowed, pedaled, cranked or wound. Often by the dentist, while he was working! The essential difference is speed. Typical modern drills spin at up to four hundred thousand RPM, with some specialty drills going as high as 800K! Just getting something to hold together at such speeds is difficult.

The oldest dental drills were likely small bow drills with tiny flint chips for bits, probably adapted from bead drills. There is evidence for these and other custom tools being used for dental work in the Indus Valley going back about nine thousand years. (Said evidence including teeth which have obviously been drilled, some of them as deeply as 3.5 mm.) Then as now, not all dentistry was for health reasons; there are multiple examples from that era of human teeth which are artistically modified. Some of the decorations are very fine and intricate. Likely, the practice of drilling out decay evolved from this.

The myth of tooth worms sprang up in multiple locations around the world in antiquity. That is, toothaches were thought to be caused by tiny worms which dug into the teeth and made them hurt. (Actually not far from the truth. Just substitute microscopic single-celled organisms for worms.) Drilling out cavities may have begun as an effort to find and remove these "worms."

However drilling out decayed spots was developed, it was long recognized that when drilling teeth, faster was better. Bow drills were replaced by cranked drills, which gave more control but speeds of only about 15 RPM. Throughout the second half of the Nineteenth Century inventors worked on ways to increase the rotational speed of dental drills. There was a proliferation of cranked, pedaled and even spring-wound engines of dental care, many of them intimidating constructions of ironmongery. Dental offices of the period sometimes resembled torture chambers, despite such decorative touches as fringes on the velvet-covered seat cushions.

The first electric powered dental drill patent was filed in 1875, and things began looking up. By 1914 drills were turning as fast as 3000

RPM. In 1868, American dentist George F. Green came up with a pneumatic dental drill. Unfortunately, it was powered by a pedal-operated bellows. This made it little better than the purely mechanical drills of the time, though it showed the way to something much better.

Practical air turbine drills came along in the Nineteen-Fifties, and were much improved in the Sixties. The modern incarnation of the dental drill is the air turbine handpiece, developed by John (later Sir John) Patrick Walsh and members of the staff of the Dominion Physical Laboratory in Wellington, New Zealand. Dr. Walsh was granted a provisional patent for the now-typical handpiece in October 1949. He based it on an existing miniature angle grinder, though the actual patented design used a different angle. The first commercial air-turbine dental drill was manufactured in the US in 1957.

Then there are the dental burs. These are usually made of high-strength stainless steel, tungsten, or some similar material, and coated with tungsten carbide or diamond. Some burs are made entirely of tungsten carbide. These are cutters, rather than grinders, which operate more slowly.

One reason for using cutters is that slicing tiny chips out of teeth generates less heat than grinding with an abrasive. Even with water cooling of the burr and tooth, this is an important concern. The water also serves to flush away material which might obstruct the dentist's view of the work. You definitely want people working on your teeth to be able to see what they're doing.

Today, for some work lasers (which explosively ablate tiny bits of tooth with short, intense bursts of light) and what are essentially miniature sand blasters are used. There is even exploration of the use of tiny jets of plasma for the job. Whether any of these will provide a significant improvement over the high-speed cutting burr remains to be seen. Regardless, once the excavation is completed, the filling must begin.

Gold — along with some of its alloys — is in most respects an excellent material for dental work. It is soft enough to be shaped easily, doesn't corrode, and holds up surprisingly well (a gold crown might last more than thirty years). However, gold conducts heat very well, which can cause discomfort or worse, and the metal is expensive. Historically, other materials used for fillings include: gold alloys, silver, platinum, lead (!) amalgams, tin, aluminum, asbestos (!!), steel, chromium alloys, porcelain, thorium (!!!) (this was found in a number of Civil War era teeth by later researchers, the metal has physical and chemical properties close enough to tin that under the circumstances it was probably mistaken for that metal), mercury amalgam and titanium. Current amalgam fillings use less mercury than older compositions and are more chemically stable, with very little loss of mercury, at least while intact. Composite fillings are less durable than amalgam, but improving. Glass composite fillings are used for temporary work, and may soon be used for permanent filling.

Gutta percha — a particular form of latex from a specific genus of tropical trees — wouldn't make a good permanent filling, but it has been used as a dental material for well over a century. Today it's most common application is in root canals, to fill the spaces left by the living tissue which is removed. Gutta percha has a number of interesting properties, one of the most useful being that it is biologically inert. Gutta percha is different enough from standard latex that the modern consensus is that someone allergic to the latter is very unlikely to have a reaction to the former.

Drilling and filling are, of course, remedies. Prevention may be much older. People have been picking and flossing their teeth for thousands of years. We know this because museums have old teeth with grooves typical of picking and flossing. Numerous materials have been used for picking, including porcupine quills. Likewise, many plant and animal fibers have been used to clean between teeth, with silk thread being among the most successful.

Exactly when people began brushing their teeth is unknown. Primitive peoples today are known to chew certain types of twigs and use the altered end to clean their teeth. This sort of brush wouldn't preserve very well, of course. However, there are known examples. A chewed stick almost certainly used for oral hygiene has been dated to about 3000 BC. We also know the Chinese were making for-purpose tooth brushes centuries ago.

The Chinese probably also invented the practice of scraping plaque from teeth to prevent cavities. Indeed, among the services performed by the first Chinese in the New World was cleaning the teeth of the Europeans who conquered that land.

The first real Chinatown in the New World grew in Mexico City in the early Seventeenth Century. Most of the inhabitants were Christians who came to the New World with the Pacific trade (which largely consisted of silver heading west and silk and porcelain heading east, but there was also a substantial movement of people). They brought many things with them, among those advanced (for the era) dental care.

At this time, barbers were the primary providers of basic medical care, including dentistry. (Tooth care and hair cutting may seem to be disparate services, but both are hygiene related. Also, I'm certain most readers of this are aware of where the red stripes in the barber's pole come from.) Chinese medicine was arguably the most advanced in the world then, surpassing even that of the Arabs. Moreover, those who came to the New World often learned from European practice and combined the best of that with their own. The resulting dental services they provided — which included scraping plaque from teeth — gave both immediate aid and long-term benefit far beyond what was typical in Europe. Their success rates were higher for extractions and surgery, due in large part to an herbal paste which is today known to have both antibiotic and anti-inflammatory properties. Their knowledge included radical (from the European viewpoint) concepts in dental care. Finally, they were often cheaper (for better work) than their

European counterparts.

Having this resource available was so obviously beneficial — and became so popular among wealthy Spaniards and others — that even when segregation laws were passed in Mexico City to control Chinese merchants, barbers and so forth, the dentists were effectively exempted.

Repeatedly, materials and methods developed specifically for dentistry have driven both materials science and engineering generally. Even when dentistry didn't drive technology, it has often been an early adopter. Nylon was first used for toothbrushes in 1938. Dr. Charles C. Bass adapted nylon for use as dental floss shortly after the wonder material was developed. However, due to World War Two it wasn't widely adapted until after the War.

Before nylon, most toothbrushes used things such as hog bristles, mounted in handles of wood or perhaps bone or ivory. These were understandably less durable and less sanitary than modern brushes. Today the majority of bristles are still made of nylon. This has multiple physical and economic properties which make it as close to ideal as we're likely to get any time soon. With nylon, even the stiffness of the bristles can be adjusted, to make a brush soft, medium, or firm.

The evidence for toothpaste doesn't go back quite so far as that for tooth brushing. The ancient Greeks used a mix of crushed bones or sea shells as a tooth powder. Later formulations of tooth powders involved chalk, pulverized brick, salt and pulverized charcoal. As might be imagined, some of these did more harm than good. How much harm was likely not realized in full, due to short life spans from other causes. By the beginning of the 20th Century a mixture of hydrogen peroxide and baking soda was being recommended. The first manufactured toothpaste in a tube was invented in 1892, when Dr. Sheffield's Creme Dentifrice went on the market. Dr. Sheffield (yes, he was a real, medical doctor and dentist) was inspired by artist paints in tubes. His product was developed and marketed by Colgate & Company.

Regardless of how well people brush and floss and how good the brushes and floss are, some folks are going to need work on their teeth. That means dealing with sensations ranging from unpleasant to agonizing.

Novocain — a brand name of procain — was first introduced in 1905, and probably used in dentistry immediately afterwards. Millions of people still sigh with relief after the shot starts working, no matter how much they cringe as the needle approaches.

Nitrous oxide has an even older history of alleviating dental pain. Horace Wells used it on a patient on December 11, 1844. However, due to difficulties in administering the gas, a patient would often get too little or, worse, too much. Today Nitrous is most commonly used as an adjunct to relax patients, with the actual pain relief coming from a local injection.

There is one area of dental technology which keeps promising much but somehow never delivering. Every few years, I read a breathless announcement that researchers have developed

a coating for teeth which will seal them and eliminate cavities. Then nothing, until the next breathless announcement of a remarkable new development which will et cetera, et cetera.

Oddly, I never hear why the previous development didn't work out.

## FANZINES



*Askance* #26 March 2012

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Not available for The Usual; \$15/year, \$20  
foreign, \$10/year electronic.

*The Drink Tank* #306, #307, #308, #309, #310,  
#311, #312

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*Fish Out of Water* #469, #470, #471, #472,  
#473, #474, #475, #476, #477  
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*The Knarley Knews* #142 March 2012  
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*Lofgeornost* #106 February 2012  
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*MT Void* V.30 #32 February 3, 2012 — V. 30  
#40 March 30, 2012  
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<http://lepers.us/mtvoid>

*Opuntia* #71.5 St. Urho's Day, #248 April 2012  
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*The Reluctant Famulus* #86 March-April 2012  
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*Space Cadet* #18  
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## WORLDCON BIDS

2014  
London  
<http://www.londonin2014.org/>  
NASFiC:  
Phoenix  
<http://www.leprecon.org/phoenixin2014/>

2015  
Spokane  
<http://spokanein2015.org/>  
Proposed Dates: August 19-23.  
  
Orlando  
<http://orlandoin2015.org/>  
Proposed Dates: September 3-7.

2016  
Kansas City  
<http://kansascityin2016.org/>  
Proposed Dates: August 18-22.

2017  
Japan  
<http://nippon2017.org/>  
  
New York

2018  
New Orleans  
[neworleansin2018@gmail.com](mailto:neworleansin2018@gmail.com)

2019

2020  
New Zealand

<http://nzin2020.org/>

## NEBULA NOMINEES

### Novel

*Among Others*, Jo Walton (Tor)  
*Embassytown*, China Miéville (Macmillan  
UK; Del Rey; Subterranean Press)  
*Firebird*, Jack McDevitt (Ace Books)  
*God's War*, Kameron Hurley (Night Shade  
Books)  
*Mechanique: A Tale of the Circus Tresaulti*,  
Genevieve Valentine (Prime Books)  
*The Kingdom of Gods*, N.K. Jemisin (Orbit  
US; Orbit UK)

### Novella

"Kiss Me Twice," Mary Robinette Kowal  
(*Asimov's Science Fiction*, June 2011)  
"Silently and Very Fast," Catherynne M.  
Valente (WSFA Press; *Clarkesworld*  
*Magazine*, October 2011)  
"The Ice Owl," Carolyn Ives Gilman (*The*  
*Magazine of Fantasy and Science*  
*Fiction*, November/December 2011)  
"The Man Who Bridged the Mist," Kij  
Johnson (*Asimov's Science Fiction*,  
October/November 2011)  
"The Man Who Ended History: A  
Documentary," Ken Liu (*Panverse*  
*Three*, Panverse Publishing)  
"With Unclean Hands," Adam-Troy Castro  
(*Analog Science Fiction and Fact*,  
November 2011)

### Novellette

"Fields of Gold," Rachel Swirsky (*Eclipse*  
4, Night Shade Books)  
"Ray of Light," Brad R. Torgersen (*Analog*  
*Science Fiction and Fact*, December  
2011)  
"Sauerkraut Station," Ferrett Steinmetz  
(*Giganotosaurus*, November 2011)  
"Six Months, Three Days," Charlie Jane  
Anders (Tor.com, June 2011)  
"The Migratory Pattern of Dancers,"  
Katherine Sparrow (*Giganotosaurus*,  
July 2011)  
"The Old Equations," Jake Kerr (*Lightspeed*  
*Magazine*, July 2011)  
"What We Found," Geoff Ryman (*The*  
*Magazine of Fantasy and Science*  
*Fiction*, September/October 2011)

### Short Story

"Her Husband's Hands," Adam-Troy Castro  
(*Lightspeed Magazine*, October 2011)  
"Mama, We are Zhenya, Your Son," Tom  
Crosshill (*Lightspeed Magazine*, April  
2011)  
"Movement," Nancy Fulda (*Asimov's*  
*Science Fiction*, March 2011)  
"Shipbirth," Aliette de Bodard (*Asimov's*  
*Science Fiction*, February 2011)  
"The Axiom of Choice," David W.  
Goldman (*New Haven Review*, Winter  
2011)  
"The Cartographer Wasps and the Anarchist  
Bees," E. Lily Yu (*Clarkesworld*  
*Magazine*, April 2011)  
"The Paper Menagerie," Ken Liu (*The*

*Magazine of Fantasy and Science*  
*Fiction*, March/April 2011)

### Ray Bradbury Award for Outstanding Dramatic Presentation

*Attack the Block*, Joe Cornish  
(writer/director) (Optimum Releasing;  
Screen Gems)  
*Captain America: The First Avenger*,  
Christopher Markus, Stephen McFeely  
(writers), Joe Johnston (director)  
(Paramount)  
*Doctor Who*: "The Doctor's Wife," Neil  
Gaiman (writer), Richard Clark  
(director) (BBC Wales)  
*Hugo*, John Logan (writer), Martin Scorsese  
(director) (Paramount)  
*Midnight in Paris*, Woody Allen  
(writer/director) (Sony)  
*Source Code*, Ben Ripley (writer), Duncan  
Jones (director) (Summit)  
*The Adjustment Bureau*, George Nolfi  
(writer/director) (Universal)

### Andre Norton Award for Young Adult Science Fiction and Fantasy Book

*Akata Witch*, Nnedi Okorafor (Viking  
Juvenile)  
*Chime*, Franny Billingsley (Dial Books;  
Bloomsbury)  
*Daughter of Smoke and Bone*, Laini Taylor  
(Little, Brown Books for Young  
Readers; Hodder & Stoughton)  
*Everybody Sees the Ants*, A.S. King (Little,  
Brown Books for Young Readers)  
*The Boy at the End of the World*, Greg van  
Eekhout (Bloomsbury Children's Books)  
*The Freedom Maze*, Delia Sherman (Big  
Mouth House)  
*The Girl of Fire and Thorns*, Rae Carson  
(Greenwillow Books)  
*Ultraviolet*, R.J. Anderson (Orchard Books;  
Carolrhoda Lab)

## HUGO NOMINEES



Ah . . .  
It's Hugo  
voting time  
in Fandom!

### Best Novel (932 ballots)

*Among Others* by Jo Walton (Tor)  
*A Dance With Dragons* by George R. R.  
Martin (Bantam Spectra)  
*Deadline* by Mira Grant (Orbit)  
*Embassytown* by China Miéville (Macmillan  
/ Del Rey)  
*Leviathan Wakes* by James S. A. Corey  
(Orbit)



**Best Novella (473 ballots)**

Countdown by Mira Grant (Orbit)  
 "The Ice Owl" by Carolyn Ives Gilman (*The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* November/December 2011)  
 "Kiss Me Twice" by Mary Robinette Kowal (*Asimov's* June 2011)  
 "The Man Who Bridged the Mist" by Kij Johnson (*Asimov's* September/October 2011)  
 "The Man Who Ended History: A Documentary" by Ken Liu (*Panverse 3*)  
 Silently and Very Fast by Catherynne M. Valente (WSFA)

**Best Novelette (499 ballots)**

"The Copenhagen Interpretation" by Paul Cornell (*Asimov's* July 2011)  
 "Fields of Gold" by Rachel Swirsky (*Eclipse Four*)  
 "Ray of Light" by Brad R. Torgersen (*Analog* December 2011)  
 "Six Months, Three Days" by Charlie Jane Anders (Tor.com)  
 "What We Found" by Geoff Ryman (*The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* March/April 2011)

**Best Short Story (593 ballots)**

"The Cartographer Wasps and the Anarchist Bees" by E. Lily Yu (*Clarkesworld* April 2011)  
 "The Homecoming" by Mike Resnick (*Asimov's* April/May 2011)  
 "Movement" by Nancy Fulda (*Asimov's* March 2011)  
 "The Paper Menagerie" by Ken Liu (*The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* March/April 2011)  
 "Shadow War of the Night Dragons: Book One: The Dead City: Prologue" by John Scalzi (Tor.com)

**Best Related Work (461 ballots)**

*The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction, Third Edition* edited by John Clute, David Langford, Peter Nicholls, and Graham Sleight (Gollancz)  
*Jar Jar Binks Must Die... and Other Observations about Science Fiction Movies* by Daniel M. Kimmel (Fantastic Books)  
*The Steampunk Bible: An Illustrated Guide to the World of Imaginary Airships, Corsets and Goggles, Mad Scientists, and Strange Literature* by Jeff VanderMeer and S. J. Chambers (Abrams Image)  
*Wicked Girls* by Seanan McGuire  
*Writing Excuses, Season 6* by Brandon Sanderson, Dan Wells, Howard Tayler, Mary Robinette Kowal, and Jordan Sanderson

**Best Graphic Story (339 ballots)**

*Digger* by Ursula Vernon (Sofawolf Press)  
*Fables Vol 15: Rose Red* by Bill Willingham and Mark Buckingham (Vertigo)  
*Locke & Key Volume 4, Keys to the Kingdom* written by Joe Hill, illustrated

by Gabriel Rodriguez (IDW)  
*Schlock Mercenary: Force Multiplication* written and illustrated by Howard Tayler, colors by Travis Walton (The Tayler Corporation)  
*The Unwritten (Volume 4): Leviathan* created by Mike Carey and Peter Gross. Written by Mike Carey, illustrated by Peter Gross (Vertigo)

**Best Dramatic Presentation (Long Form) (592 ballots)**

*Captain America: The First Avenger*, screenplay by Christopher Markus and Stephan McFeely, directed by Joe Johnston (Marvel)  
*Game of Thrones* (Season 1), created by David Benioff and D. B. Weiss; written by David Benioff, D. B. Weiss, Bryan Cogman, Jane Espenson, and George R. R. Martin; directed by Brian Kirk, Daniel Minahan, Tim van Patten, and Alan Taylor (HBO)  
*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2*, screenplay by Steve Kloves; directed by David Yates (Warner Bros.)  
*Hugo*, screenplay by John Logan; directed by Martin Scorsese (Paramount)  
*Source Code*, screenplay by Ben Ripley; directed by Duncan Jones (Vendome Pictures)

**Best Dramatic Presentation (Short Form) (512 ballots)**

"The Doctor's Wife" (Doctor Who), written by Neil Gaiman; directed by Richard Clark (BBC Wales)  
 "The Drink Tank's Hugo Acceptance Speech," Christopher J Garcia and James Bacon (Renovation)  
 "The Girl Who Waited" (Doctor Who), written by Tom MacRae; directed by Nick Hurran (BBC Wales)  
 "A Good Man Goes to War" (Doctor Who), written by Steven Moffat; directed by Peter Hoar (BBC Wales)  
 "Remedial Chaos Theory" (Community), written by Dan Harmon and Chris McKenna; directed by Jeff Melman (NBC)

**Best Semiprozine (357 ballots)**

*Apex Magazine* edited by Catherynne M. Valente, Lynne M. Thomas, and Jason Sizemore  
*Interzone* edited by Andy Cox  
*Lightspeed* edited by John Joseph Adams  
*Locus* edited by Liza Groen Trombi, Kirsten Gong-Wong, et al.  
*New York Review of Science Fiction* edited by David G. Hartwell, Kevin J. Maroney, Kris Dikeman, and Avram Grumer

**Best Fanzine (322 ballots)**

*Banana Wings* edited by Claire Brialety and Mark Plummer  
*The Drink Tank* edited by James Bacon and Christopher J Garcia  
*File 770* edited by Mike Glyer  
*Journey Planet* edited by James Bacon,

Christopher J Garcia, et al.  
*SF Signal* edited by John DeNardo

**Best Fancast (326 ballots)**

The Coode Street Podcast, Jonathan Strahan & Gary K. Wolfe  
 Galactic Suburbia Podcast, Alisa Krasnostein, Alex Pierce, and Tansy Rayner Roberts (presenters) and Andrew Finch (producer)  
 SF Signal Podcast, John DeNardo and JP Frantz, produced by Patrick Hester  
 SF Squeecast, Lynne M. Thomas, Seanan McGuire, Paul Cornell, Elizabeth Bear, and Catherynne M. Valente  
 StarShipSofa, Tony C. Smith

**Best Professional Editor - Long Form (358 ballots)**

Lou Anders  
 Liz Gorinsky  
 Anne Lesley Groell  
 Patrick Nielsen Hayden  
 Betsy Wollheim

**Best Professional Editor - Short Form (512 ballots)**

John Joseph Adams  
 Neil Clarke  
 Stanley Schmidt  
 Jonathan Strahan  
 Sheila Williams

**Best Professional Artist (399 ballots)**

Dan dos Santos  
 Bob Eggleton  
 Michael Komarck  
 Stephan Martinieri  
 John Picacio

**Best Fan Artist (216 ballots)**

Brad W. Foster  
 Randall Munroe  
 Spring Schoenhuth  
 Maurine Starkey  
 Steve Stiles  
 Taral Wayne

**Best Fan Writer (360 ballots)**

James Bacon  
 Claire Brialety  
 Christopher J Garcia  
 Jim C. Hines  
 Steven H Silver

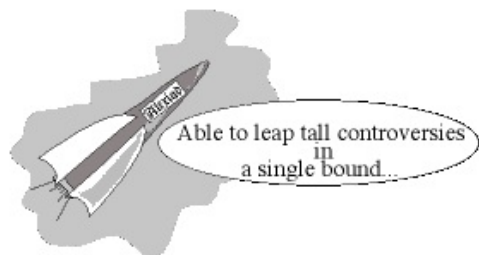
**John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer (396 ballots)** (Not a Hugo Award)

Award for the best new professional science fiction or fantasy writer of 2010 or 2011, sponsored by Dell Magazines

Mur Lafferty  
 Stina Leicht  
 Karen Lord \*  
 Brad R. Torgersen \*  
 E. Lily Yu

Congratulations to Mike, Chris, Claire & Mark, Mike, Chris, Chris, Brad, Taral, Steve, and oh yes Chris. A four-peat! He's up there with Bwana! (And Seanan McGuire/Mira Grant.)

## Letters, we get letters



From: **Richard A. Dengrove** Feb. 10, 2012  
2651 Arlington Drive, #302, Alexandria,  
VA 22306-3626 USA  
[RichD22426@aol.com](mailto:RichD22426@aol.com)

A LOC for December's *Alexiad*. Did I like the same articles I am about to comment on more than the others. I think there is some overlap. It's not 100% because some articles I loved elicited no comments.

Unlike me, some people speak when there is nothing to say. Among those who do this are liars. In fact, lying is big business: whole lives based on lies are common. It's not only Greg Mortenson; an entire type of person does it, or attempts it. Some have actually lied so much that they believe their guff.

In fact, they get morally indignant if you suggest, in any way, that they are lying. When they lie that much, often their criteria for truth becomes whatever it burnishes their reputation. Isn't it, they will wonder.

On the other hand, notions, such as string theory, may not be lies but delusions. Apparently, in their case, the equations work out whereas normal delusions and lies are based on nothing. However, as Taral Wayne points, no one has figured out experiments that will test these theories, which is the sine qua non of modern science. Hence, with the Sasquatch and Atlantis, they remain pipe dreams.

Sometimes such unprovable ideas are insanely popular, though. I recently saw a physicist, a Dr. Lawrence Krauss, speak to an overflow crowd at the National Science Foundation. Not only did he advocate string theory; but that matter keeps getting produced from nothing, and that that disproves the existence of God. See what you have to do to satisfy some of the masses. Of course, other masses have other delusions.

Often times, fantastic ideas are not lies, but fun. You are not even supposed to pretend they make sense. Like your comment, Joe, about a dyslexic devil worshiper who sold his soul to Santa.

That doesn't exhaust the spectrum from nonsensical to sense either. Some things have their own logical sense yet are fun too, like Gail Carriger's *Parasol Protectorate* series. That is what I would like to tell Joy V. Smith who asked about Gail.

In addition, it helps Gail somehow mixes P.G. Wodehouse and Steampunk. So potent is

the whole mixture, which includes other things, that Gail won a place on the New York Times bestseller list, and inspired Fencon VIII to turn Steampunk.

Let's face it, though I love Steampunk, at least Gail's, it's a fad, maybe a several decade fad, but a fad nonetheless. It's not here to stay. The internet, I suspect, is not a fad because it is here to stay.

In a discussion on the [Alternatetheory.com](http://Alternatetheory.com) list someone raised the point that AH might soon become "Twilighted", whereupon the response was "Look at all the time-travel romances." The book market is shifting its target to teenage girls looking for something to wuv.

— JTM

And, yes, Joe, you point out to Rodney Leighton that more and more people assume if anyone is unconnected, they do not exist. I can understand that. The reason is, year after year, the internet has been usurping reality. Ultimately, it may become real reality — until a technology even more fantastic replaces it.

Is Global Warming from human causes inexorable too? Yes. And Tim Lane, though a Conservative, agrees. However, he claims it will engender a tittle of the catastrophe the doomsayers are shouting about? I take a different tact.

I wish to point out we don't have the political wherewithal to do anything about Global Warming. Even the greenest of the green are energy hogs. We will only have the wherewithal when we finally feel the effects of Global Warming, and have to do our best to adapt to it.

Also, though a Liberal, I disagree with Sue Burke, and my Liberal colleagues, on Democracy and Plutocracy. Not that money hasn't ruled. It has, always. However, whether ordinary people get treated decently has nothing to do with whether the plutocracy gets guillotined or not.

No, it depends on whether the plutocrats, the middle class and the poor can get along. The system doesn't wag the dog of people attitudes; no, the dog of people's attitudes wags the system. In fact, democracy, justice or decency cannot even exist where society is polarized.

Going from economics and politics to conventions, I agree with another person whom I often disagree with, Taras Wolansky. Yes, few people read the program book. I didn't until last year — after the convention. I found I missed its whole point. So, this year, I swear to read the program book during the convention to get the convention's gist. Unlike Taras, however, I am completely unbothered by mistakes of grammar, punctuation and formatting.

That does it. My letter has concerned, among other things, Global Warming, democracy, string theory and con reports. Obvious, I have packed a great variety into a comparatively small missive. Of course, what provided the variety was this issue of *Alexiad*.

From: **Christopher J. Garcia** Feb. 21, 2012  
[chris@computerhistory.org](mailto:chris@computerhistory.org)  
**Best Fanzine Hugo Nominee**  
**Best Fan Writer Hugo Nominee**  
**Best Dramatic Presentation Short Form Hugo Nominee**

Good to get *Alexiad*, though sadly I didn't get a chance to read it until I got back from Gallifrey. Such is the way of the world.

I thought of you when I read of the death of the last WWI vet. It's a sad day when the last of anything passes. In my lifetime, there were Vets of WWI, the Spanish American War, Zapatistas, Villaistas, and the survivors of the Titanic. All gone now. All gone.

Why so harsh on *Chicks Dig Time Lords*? It was easily the most readable thing on the Best Related ballot last year, and a great read. True, one of the editors is a friend (who I met in the flesh for the first time at Gallifrey) and the other is a spectacularly good library special collections type. I'd much rather see a book written with readability in mind than another dusty biography or, even worse, another pretty picture book. I can't argue with your choice of *Fantasy Commentary*, though personally I'm hoping that Dan Kimmel's exceptional *Jar Jar Binks Must Die* or Brad Lyau's *Anticipation Writers of 1950s French Science Fiction* make a run for the win.

Just you wait until *Chicks Dig Kajiras: A Celebration of Gor by the Women Who Love It* comes out.

— JTM

Up until the end, I was a big fan of Mark Hodder's third novel. Even after what felt a little pat ending, I can say that I enjoyed it. I still haven't gotten around to buying *Ganymede*. Must try before her next one comes out!

Black Gold is a legendary horse. That's the kind of story that you make a film out of . . . if you can find a horse with the acting chops . . .

You know, I love Shirm's art. This piece, along with the L'il Dino from Brad Foster are real highlights in the issue. As a fan art fanatic, It's always good to see top-notch stuff in top-notch pubs!

OK, short LoC doc, actual work to begin!

From: **Cuyler "Ned" Brooks** Feb. 24, 2012  
4817 Dean Lane, Lilburn GA 30047-4720 USA  
[nedbrooks@sprynet.com](mailto:nedbrooks@sprynet.com)

Your golden age of "hundred-page mimeo'd zines in the mailbox every day" must have happened in some alternate universe. *Niekas*, *Stet*, *Double Bill*, and *Prehensile* all had such large zines — though they were not all mimeo — but hardly enough to supply any mailbox every day. The last dozen issues of *Challenger* average about 100 pages each. The demon fanned Don Miller did produce four 100-page issues of *WSFA Journal* — but it took him three years.

My recollection of the content of these ponderous fanzines, which would have to include Langley Searles' *SF Commentator* and

Bruce Gillespie's *SF Commentary* and *Metaphysical Review*, is that while they did contain blog-like personal natter and anecdotes, the bulk was reviews and literary criticism, particularly long articles on a specific author or editor or sub-genre.

This 24-page *Alexiad* might well have pushed 100 pages with the same content typed in 10-pitch monospace onto mimeo stencils with 1-inch margins. You seem to have about 48,000 words — one of my last mimeoed zines only gets about 750 words to the page, and that's with 12-pitch and narrow margins.

31,548. But in any case, it's what people remember, not what actually happened.

Tsk — "Hevelin", not "Hevlin". Perhaps you watch too many Van Heflin movies . . .

If it were possible and useful to colonize a hostile environment — why is Antarctica, much more accessible than the Moon or Mars, still empty except for a couple of subsidized research stations? Antarctica does at least have air and water!

There are forty-three permanent stations, several more proposed or being reopened, and at least thirty summer stations.

— JTM

Speaking of "steampunk", today's mail also brought a catalog from Bargain Books — they put Vandermeer's *Steampunk Dictionary* in the Fantasy section....

From: **Joy V. Smith** February 27, 2012  
404 E. Beacon Road, Lakeland, FL  
33803-2610 USA  
[Pagadan@aol.com](mailto:Pagadan@aol.com)  
<http://pagadan.blogspot.com/>

Another broad selection of reviews. Monsarrat's premise in *Master Mariner* (both books?) enabling a sailor to experience maritime history was clever. Good ending. *Ordeal by Ice* sounds very thorough! I think it's helpful to have roundups like that available. *Operation Fortitude* is another good overview — this time of the "... Spy Operation that Saved D-Day." What a complex operation that was! And Lynne Cox's *South with the Sun* is another interesting look at history.

Lisa, thanks for sharing the sad story of Black Gold. There's always a lot of history in *Alexiad* that I was unaware of. Oh, another busy vacation for you both. (Mine have always been more leisurely--and don't involve all our relatives as much.) I enjoyed Sue Burke's trip report to the Alhambra also. Cute T-shirt: Where's My Flying Car?!? (from Robert Kennedy's con report).

As always, more history and ideas in the letters column, including John Campbell and Heinlein background. Joe, no, I haven't read *Challenger* lately, so I missed your essay. Thanks to Sue Burke for the news from Spain: I wasn't even aware of the Duchess of Alba. Btw, I never thought of Terry Pratchett as being

P. C., even in *Monstrous Regiment*. And I loved your "Where Do You Writers Get Your Ideas?"

The history of the natural son of James II, James FitzJames, Duke of Berwick and his descendants is interesting. It all began with Arabella Churchill (sister of Marlborough) falling off her horse, whereupon the King said, "Why . . . Mistress Churchill . . . with your skirts up . . . you're beautiful!" Or something of the sort.

— JTM

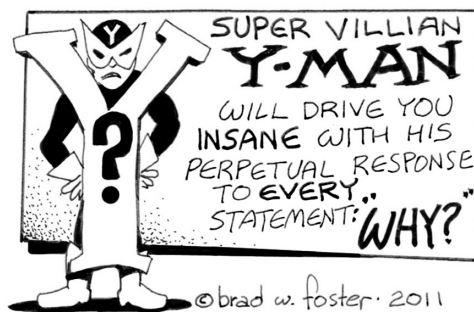
From: **Brad W. Foster** February 28, 2012  
Post Office Box 165246, Irving, TX  
75016-5246 USA  
[bwfoster@juno.com](mailto:bwfoster@juno.com)  
<http://www.jabberwockygraphix.com>  
Best Fan Artist Hugo Nominee

*Alexiad* 11.1, the big triple-one issue. Seems like that particular line-up of numbers should have some sort of weirdly mystical significance, but damned if I can figure it out.

Last year had binary dates: 1/1/11, 1/10/11, 1/11/11. 10/1/11, 10/10/11, 10/11/11, 11/1/11, 11/10/11, and 11/11/11. We shan't be seeing the likes of those again, unless Big Pharma gets cracking and brings out those anagathics.

Lisa, your opening comments about how you would love to have digital copies as backups for pieces of your book collection made me grin, as I do something similar, but in the opposite direction. I have been creating color work digitally the past few years, so the only "original" of the finished piece is the digital file on my computer. I have made backup copies of those files on discs and flash drives. But I also will print out small versions on paper to file away. I figure at some point the equipment that allows me to get to the info on those discs and flash drives will no longer be available, or tough to obtain. (I'm thinking 8 track tapes, etc). But having that hard copy in the file drawer, all I need to do is pull it out and look at it with the ol' peepers. (Of course, even those are starting to be a bit troublesome, but then they are part of the aging original equipment package...)

See you used my Li'l Dino, so attached here is the Y-Man.



Regarding Lloyd Penney's comment on the person who wondered why he didn't know about a party that the person had put on their LiveJournal page. I get that a lot, too. It's like some people seem to assume we are so fascinated with them that we will go out of our way everyday to see what they have posted. I like the ones who put something on Facebook, then can't figure why no one responds. Have they not yet noticed that postings tend to get replaced rather quickly? I like emails — it is sent directly to me, tells me the date and return address of the sender, is there whenever I want to access it, and is easy to respond to. It's like fan editors who send their ezines to eFanzines.com, but can't even be bothered to do a simple email notice to folks letting them know it is there. It's not costing you anything, folks — write us!

The Yahoo FmzFen List does have announcements of the eFanzines updates. But you're right, anyone with a useful Facebook friends list gets useful postings scrolled off the page, particularly if one of those friends likes to post a lot of trivia.

We're slowly moving into the end of the 20th century, tech wise. Were gifted at Christmas through the combined efforts of some family with an Android Phone. (The gift that keeps on giving — someone gets you the tech, but you have to pay up for the monthly service!) However, might turn out to at least pay for itself. Have had a special credit account for years to be able to accept credit card orders for my art sales. Very expensive to maintain, plus the special equipment. Even the months I make no use of it all I have to pay fees. Ordered one of those "square" card readers and have set up an account through the Android. Will try it out through the spring and the half dozen-plus shows and festivals I'll be working, and if it goes well with the general public, will be able to drop the old credit card account, and the savings from that will cover the monthly fees for the smart phone — which has the added advantage of doing more than one thing. Ah, 'tis a brave new world . . .

Mad once did a list of gifts like that. It included such items as a Barbie, a St. Bernard puppy, and Volume "A" of a dictionary.

— JTM

Loved Darrell Schweitzer's logical thought progression on how holy water could spread throughout the world. Having been brought up as a good (good?) little Catholic boy, I remember not quite buying into the whole "holy" and "not yet holy" water stuff. Along with a lot of other equally weird stuff in the church, just a small part of why I've not grown into a good (good?) big Catholic man.

...and that, as they say, is a wrap!

From: **Milt Stevens**

February 28, 2012



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93063-3834 USA  
[miltstevens@earthlink.net](mailto:miltstevens@earthlink.net)

In *Alexiad* V11 #1, Lisa talks about culling books from your collection/accumulation. I realize you have to do things like that if you don't want to end up sleeping in the back yard. Personally, I've been giving away lots of books over the last couple years. I've been giving them to college libraries. Initially, I had to search around the country for libraries that were interested in science fiction and related material. I already knew that Cal State Riverside had the largest collection. By using their on-line catalog, I only gave them items they didn't have already. I discovered MSU in East Lansing has a very large collection of SF and comics. (They've been told they have the sixth largest collection.) Their special collections librarian also happens to be a fanzine fan of sorts who used to be on the File 770 mailing list and was a member of the comics apa. If MSU needed something and Riverside didn't, I would give the item to MSU. Cal State Northridge was another college that was interested in expanding their SF holdings. When I first contacted them they had a complete run of *Planet Stories* and 32 other items that could be considered SF. That's not much for a million volume library.

I donate stuff to college libraries, because it seems like a good thing to do. It also makes things easier for my eventual heirs. Of course, there is a tax advantage to donating things to college libraries, and you can deduct the postage. Even Riverside with its huge collection still needs newer material from about the last ten years. They also are interested in all the various editions of the same book. If you're interested in the idea, let me know, and I'll send more complete information.

I was a bit surprised by Joseph's suggestion that *Fantasy Commentator* should be nominated for best related work in the Hugo competition. I've been seeing issues of *Fantasy Commentator* for several decades, and I've thought of it as a fanzine. It was a very erudite fanzine but still a fanzine. As the years went by, *Fantasy Commentator* became larger and more like a series of anthologies. *Niekas* was another fanzine that went through the same process. As to other large mimeoed zines that dealt with science fiction, there was *Science Fiction Review*, *Outworlds*, *Jan's Lantern* and *Australian Science Fiction Review*. There were also smaller sercon zines like *Amra* and *Riverside Quarterly*.

Of course, fanzines may deal with everything and anything. That may be their main selling point to scholars of future centuries. Fanzines record what reasonably educated people were thinking about in the twentieth century. Think of how much interest there is in Civil War diaries and correspondence from average people of the time.

What to do about self published books is a topic that strikes fear into the hearts of bibliophiles everywhere. We may try ignoring them in the hope they will just go away. It's worth a try. Those of us who believe all books are of some value and should be preserved still

have limits. Even years ago, completist collecting was ill advised. In the new century, you have to be completely out of your mind to consider completist collecting. That doesn't guarantee that no fans will try it anyway.

In the letter column, I've heard that story about worldcon memberships purchased with money orders which were in serial order. I don't really know which worldcon was the one that received those money orders.

NorEasCon 3 in 1989. I still have somewhere the release the committee sent out about the matter.

— JTM

From: Alexis A. Gilliland February 27, 2012  
4030 8th Street South, Arlington, VA  
22204-1552 USA  
<http://www.alexisgilliland.org>



Thank you for *Alexiad* #11.1, which arrived as the first spring flowers were showing themselves unseasonably early, an unlooked for but unsurprising conclusion to a winter in which I have so far (Remember: A February spring doesn't mean a thing.) been spared the need to shovel snow. The mild, wet winter had another effect as well, in that our front lawn, which is on a northern slope shaded by the house and trees, is now mostly covered by moss, so that besides no snow shoveling there is also the prospect of less lawn mowing. Alas, that we should have had the front lawn resodded about ten years ago, when it looked like a standard American lawn for a couple of seasons before going into a predictable decline.

Dainis Bisenieks mentions Murry Leinster's memorable "First Contact" in which two interstellar spaceships with all male crews meet at the Crab Nebula and bond by telling dirty jokes.

George Price suggests that nuclear energy will replace fossil fuels in a timely fashion. Well, currently the abundance of shale gas means that building new nuclear power plants is uneconomic. He also concedes that our reserves of fossil fuels are finite and "could" eventually run out, but that eventually might be a very long time. For human time, yes, for geologic time we are talking about a really brief moment.

Darrell Schweitzer says there was nothing wrong with the Fukushima reactor technology, a topic currently under discussion in Japan. Locating near the ocean provided the needed cooling water, but it had been known for years

that there was precedent for a giant tsunami, and Tepco's management refused to even think about doing anything about it, not even moving their backup power generators to higher ground. In the event, a 15-meter tsunami rolled over their 3-meter seawall, and while the reactor technology may have been okay, the reactor management had been focused on the bottom line rather than safety. On global warming, Darrell asks, "Will this only raise the temperature a few degrees, or cause irreversible global catastrophe?" In geologic time none of the changes would be irreversible, but from the human point of view the answer might well be yes to both his questions.

By way of refuting my silly idea that we might some day run out of fossil fuel, Taras Wolansky invokes Zeno's paradox, which speciously argued that Achilles could never overtake the tortoise, even though common sense knew that he would easily do so. So no, we will never run out of fossil fuel in the sense that the last lump of coal will be the prize of the Smithsonian mineral collection, but we are currently using ~12 billion tons of fossil fuel to support 7 billion human beings, and the world population is projected to increase to 9 billion by mid-century. At some point, the supply of fossil fuel will be unable to meet the population's needs, and people will start to die. It may not be the end of our technological civilization but things will have to change if you want them to stay the same. Deriding the notion of finite reserves, Taras goes on to cite W. S. Jevons' 1865 warning that British coal was finite and running out, and offers a little alternative history to show why it was a mistaken idea. A little real history shows that Jevons was spot on; more than a century later Margaret Thatcher shut down the British coal mines to buy cheaper American coal, provoking the miner's strike of 1984-85. There is still coal in British ground, but it no longer heats British houses, powers British industry, nor supports an Empire on which the sun never sets. Did British coal run out? Not exactly, but they stopped mining it.

Taras then goes on to rebut global warming with a quotation citing an email from the 2009 "Climategate". In the March 2012 issue of *Scientific American* there is an interview with climatologist Michael Mann who is promoting his book *The Hockey Stick and the Climate Wars*, suggesting that he may not be exactly neutral on the subject. Mann makes the points that a) his science was right and has been repeatedly confirmed, b) that climatic changes are happening faster than climatological models predict, and c) that the "trick to hide the decline" quote was bogus, in that it put two different parts of an email together to change the sense of what was being discussed. From which may infer that the authors of Climategate were political in stealing private emails and publishing them in an attempt to influence the Copenhagen summit, and anti-scientific in their disregard for truth. In my letter I suggest that global warming is the result of human activity, so that we are entering a new geological era, the Anthropocene, which comes complete with its own (well documented) mass extinction of

species. While this seems persuasive, it may not be true, and I am open to natural causes being responsible, if supporting evidence is provided.

On the question of a Toba-induced population bottleneck for humans, Taras notes that Wikipedia considers the matter unsettled. Wikipedia is a good place to start looking, but unlikely to have the last word on anything remotely confidential. FYI there are 7.0 billion humans, and only about 0.0002 billion chimpanzees, but the chimpanzees are far more diverse genetically, suggesting that humans but not chimpanzees went through a population bottleneck (estimated at 200 to 2000 breeding humans) "recently", i.e. within the past 100,000 years, and since Toba is dated at 73,000 BP, it seems a plausible if unproven culprit.

What else? We went out to see *Arriety*, an animated feature from the group that brought us *Howl's Moving Castle*, and enjoyed it.

From: **Lloyd Penney** March 4, 2012  
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Hurray for the weekend...it's now the only time I can get things done. That's because I have finally a daytime job! I am working as the proofreader for a major ad agency in Mississauga, just west of Toronto, and I still have the *Globe and Mail* job downtown, so I am busy, and finally making some money. Here are some comments on the recently released *Alexiad* 61.

I understand the need to digitize books and zines. E-versions for practicality and space concerns, and paper versions for the memory and tradition. I truly need to weed my book collection . . . the shelves are nearly full. Physical books crash only when you drop them. Accidentally, of course.

I believe those 100+-page zines you refer to contained fanhistory articles, reminiscences of events and people, reports on fan gatherings, and what appears to be the most fannish of all, articles about nothing at all. How Seinfeldian...

There are always names in the Obituary file, but as time goes on, the namea are becoming better known to me. I am afraid that when the last of us goes, the species will be largely imagination-free. We cannot force people to employ their intelligence, so I hope someone will do so as part of a retro fad. Who know, it might catch on, we can only hope.

I'd like a look at that book on Yuri Gagarin. Yvonne and I have hosted a couple of Yuri's Nights, on as a special event at a downtown bar, and once at our local literary SF convention, Ad Astra. One Gagarin expert said that the brave hero actually panicked after launch, and aborted the flight close to the edge of space, which was good enough for propaganda purposes.

Not quite. The Vostok did not do soft landings very well, so Yuri and the other Vostok cosmonauts had to bail out before the capsule thumped down after its orbit(s).

The last piece of high tech I bought was a Palm Tungsten PDA, and it was on sale. I have tried to keep up with the newest tech without actually buying it, and I have had some success. I think I'd like an iPad 3, which should be released sometime soon. I've read it should be a cross between a tablet and a laptop, so I will wait to pass judgment until it actually arrives, and there are eager consumers lining up in droves to buy it.

Robert Kennedy's Loscon report . . . it's good to read it, for it's good to know what to expect when we go. Indeed, Yvonne and I have been asked to be Loscon 39's Fan GoHs. Again, my thanks to Christian McGuire for such a pleasant surprise. We hope to tour a little bit once we get down there, and we would definitely like to see the new LASFS clubhouse. This will be Yvonne's third visit on her green card, so she will have to buy a membership!

There's been no Graeme Cameron zines lately. . . Graeme is still recovering from a hernia operation, and I gather he is still beating back the pain. Once everything heals, I am sure he will get back to zinewrighting. (Well, that should be the word.)

And sure enough, Space Cadet  
#18, with a piece on herniation, is  
out.

— JTM

Some comments on Pixar animated movies . . . I like them a lot, and movies like *Monsters, Inc.*, *Wall-E*, *The Incredibles*, *Up* (how could anyone not like *Up*?), plus their collected shorts, were a joy. However, I had no interest at all in *Cars* and *Cars 2*, and never saw either. Coming up soon is something I never thought Pixar would do, a prequel to *Monsters, Inc.*, called *Monsters U*. Mike and Sully at university together. Could be a lot of fun.

Stephen King's newest novel *11/22/63* reminds me of a *Twilight Zone* (mid-80s) episode called "Profile in Silver". A descendent of JFK's goes back in time to witness the assassination of his ancestor, lets slip his true identity, and replaces the president in the limousine in Dallas to be assassinated himself and repair time. JFK goes forward in time to become one of the greatest men of letters, humanitarian and scholars of all time. This was one my favorites from the 80s version of TZ, and it starred Lane Smith and Andrew Robinson.

It's getting late her right now, and we have an antique show to go to tomorrow morning, so I think we will soon be seeing the insides of our eyelids. Thank you for more interesting reading, and as always, I will look forward to the next issue.

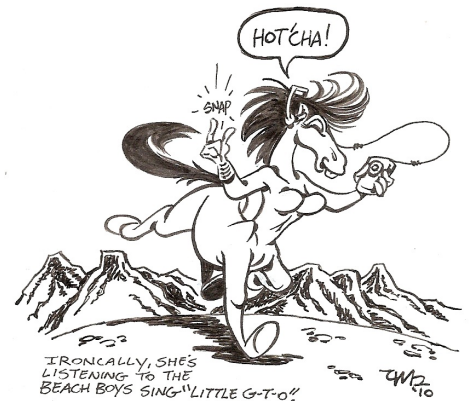
From: **Jerry Kaufman** March 5, 2012  
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I think it's been awhile since the last time I dropped you a note in thanks for many issues of *Alexiad*. Although I don't usually have much to say in response, I do want to let you and Lisa know I appreciate receiving it.

This time around you reviewed several

books I would very much like to read, so I will keep an eye out for copies. I'm a Marx Brothers fan, and *Duck Soup* has long been my favorite. (I need to watch it again and see if I'm tired of it yet.) In fact I've enjoyed the older Paramount movies more than the later MGM ones as a general rule. (*A Night at the Opera* was, despite being MGM, still quite a funny film.) The later ones used too much of the younger actors who played romantic leads, and too much of Chico and Harpo on piano and harp. But it's been such a long time since I've see the later films that I depend on hazy memories.

I have a collection of the later movies, but it doesn't include *Love Happy* (1949, 1950), which apparently was so stressful that Groucho chose to officially forget it had been, and when you realize he got to hug Marilyn Monroe in it, that tells you something about how the production went.  
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0041604/>



The other book that intrigues me is *Operation Fortitude*, although I admit that your synopsis and explanation of the characters involved really got me confused by the end. I never did figure out who or what FUSAG was. But that could be because you expect your readers, most of whom are more interested in history than I am, to know already, or because your parallel discussion of "The Quacker Canyon" is actually where the info lies. (Or was that "The Quicker Canon"?)

FUSAG -> First US Army Group.

In any case, this particular aspect of World War II interests me because I find hoaxes, fakes, scams, and related projects of great interest. And tricking the Germans into thinking D-Day would take place in a completely different place and time fits.

You would like Thaddeus Holt's *The Deceivers* (2004; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 3 #4) which covers the entire war.



— JTM

I have Bill Patterson's book on Heinlein on my to-be-read shelf, and hope I like it enough to share your outrage over *Chicks Dig Time Lords*. If not, I might start to think you're a little obsessive on the subject. I really should also get that issue of *Fantasy Commentator*, especially after Bob Jennings said such interesting things about it in his zine.

Your comment on Zeno reminds me: how many pre-Socratic philosophers does it take to screw in a light bulb? Yes, 1/2 plus 1/4 plus 1/8 . . .

That seems like a good place to stop.

From: **Dainis Bisenieks** March 16, 2012  
921 S. St. Bernard Street, Philadelphia,  
PA 19143-3310 USA

Owning a book means not having to read it at once. Now that I have added *A Dance With Dragons* (from a book-reviewing friend) to the previous four in paperback, might I plunge in? The wordage is "only" about that of the Aubrey/Maturin series, which I have happily read several times . . . though the prospect is of far, far more complex events.

The necessary focus of a tale precludes an overview of those foundations that enable the characters to eat and to be clothed. Nor are most writers lessened by what they disregard. All the critics tell us that there are no hints of the Napoleonic Wars in Jane Austen. In the "world of the Shining Prince" (Genji) the lower orders do not exist at all. We can, in mundane fiction, take those foundations for granted or as given. In tales set in the real world, that is. But what of invented worlds? In the entire Lensmen saga, is there any hint of how all those spacegoing fleets and weaponry were paid for? The writer has invented one stratum of his world but has let all the rest go. How to include more without losing focus? Science fiction (and fantasy too) is about change, but things generally change together.

There was that conversation in Gray Lensman (Astounding, 10/1939 — 1/1940; 1953):

" . . . world-income increased to such a point that taxation could be reduced to a minimum; and the lower the taxes the more flourishing business became and the greater the income.

"Now the tax rate is the lowest in history. The total income tax, for instance, in the highest bracket, is only three point five nine two percent . . ."

Smith seems to have believed in the Laffer Curve before Arthur Laffer was born (August 14, 1940). My thanks to Grant for this observation.

— JTM

In reading *A Song of Ice and Fire* I shall look for what enables the characters to eat and be clothed. Where are the farmers? What portion of the crop must they yield to their lords and protectors? Are there rumblings of discontent? Who is sitting on the safety valve? E. R. Eddison, exceptionally, decreed that in Zimiamvia, a kind of heaven, people in all stations of life should be content with their lot (except, of course, ambitious nobles). This cannot be.

Of Terry Pratchett I would say that he plays with Political Correctness and with received ideas; he does this in *Monstrous Regiment*. In the ideal, utopian society, the words, "You can't, you're a \_\_\_\_\_" would not be heard. Is it merely PC to look askance at all versions of this utterance and underlying mind-set? In all, absolutely all really existing societies, there is some such mind-set. Doesn't Baron Bodissey, in his *Life*, touch on this matter, something about a society consisting of two?

I continue to be pleased with library discards, though for now their major source will be in abeyance. Two books nicely complementary in their titles and content are *London Rising* and *On a Grandeur Scale*, the latter being about Christopher Wren alone.

Sir Christopher Wren  
Said, 'I am going to dine with  
some men.  
If anyone calls  
Say I am designing St. Paul's.'  
— Edmund Clerihew Bentley

From: **Sheryl L. Birkhead** March 16, 2012  
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Man, I still have not figured this out. When I could not bring the laptop, I pulled *Alexiad* out of the zine bag, grabbed a notecard, and prepared to start writing while sitting with a foster — at the referral veterinary practice. Unfortunately (?) everything was running on time and I did not even get a salutation started. So, let's try this again.

With any luck I will have at least one fillo to put in here and may try to go ahead and sent an electronic copy of whatever I end up using — one is done — and a few more started, just need to find the time . . .

I do not get cable but stopped and listened to the story today on . . . um, *Today* about the cancellation of a show called *Luck* after the deaths of three thoroughbreds. Now I just want to hear what the investigation turns up . . . after hearing all the reports of how everything was done the right way. We'll see.

Even though Luck was canceled,  
I keep on getting ads for it on  
Facebook. Gnnn . . .

Given that the horses are Thoroughbreds with their fragile legs I would want to know more facts before I judged the handlers. A Thoroughbred will die of injuries a Saddlebred or a Standardbred would

recover from.

— LTM

I suspect I have located only one of at least several *Alexiads* — but October 2011 it is!

One other advantage I envision for the electronic version of the books is no broken spines or (*shudder/horrors*) dogeared pages.

Uh — I gotta ask — what was between the Krispy Kreme doughnuts to make the burgers? I hate to admit that if it is a slab of dark fudge between . . . Uh, couldn't resist, Googled it, and sure enough, it is listed as the unhealthiest burger in the world . . . with pictures to support that contention! I cannot imagine a burger on a doughnut . . . then again these vegan days I wouldn't.

So far I have not found the extra \$ to get a supporting membership — I guess that is for???? I have lost track of how this works. I have one for Chicago but could not find the \$ to site vote this past year. Guess I'll just wait and see — I seriously doubt the extra money will just appear, but one never knows.

Darn — when I filled out the short form nominations I forgot Chris Garcia's speech!!

I'm glad that Lloyd enjoyed Reno. There have been moments — granted few and far between — when I have considered visiting there for just a day or so — but never truly got the urge. If I could not make the decision to get to a worldcon for a day or so, I doubt I'll find the desire just to go and see what is there. But it is on my list for maybe . . . someday.

I watched a show — *Ballykissangel* that is coming back around on PBS — enough to let me know I never saw that last season. Anyway, the veterinarian in the town had a name that SOUNDED like Jivaughan — givan — but I BET if I go look at the cast names it is the *Siobhan* you mention. Inside my head I can say the name but have no idea of how I would actually spell it! Now I know, but no way on earth I will remember it! So that is one of *Buffy's* twin names . . . A lot of the Irish spellings seem impossible to pronounce without a guidebook.

The Internet Movie Data Base  
is your friend:  
Ballykissangel  
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0115105/>  
And there is a character named  
"Siobhan Mehigan". (If she had no  
children would she be the last of  
the Mehigans?)

— JTM

From: **Robert S. Kennedy** March 20, 2012  
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Thank you for Vol. 11, No. 1. The completion of ten years and the beginning of the eleventh. Where has the time gone?

It was with great trepidation that I went to see *John Carter* in 3D. I had seen a preview and wondered where they had obtained the actor for John Carter and the actress for Dejah Thoris and wondered why they did not send the actress

back. Well, my worst fears were realized. For the first time I rated a movie not on the movie as a whole, but also on special effects, content, actor, and actress. On my scale of 1-5 I gave special effects a 4.0. Content, actor, and actress I gave 0. So,  $4.0/4 = 1.0$ . That's better than the big zeroes I previously gave to *Starship Troopers* (year?) and *Princess of Mars* (2009). The later movie starred Traci Lords. Yes, she did keep her clothes on, it isn't a porno movie. It probably would have been a better movie if she had taken her clothes off. Apparently the director of *John Carter* is a big fan of Edgar Rice Burroughs and his Martian series. So, it's hard to understand how he blew it. Today's newspaper reports that Disney is expected to lose \$200M on *John Carter*.

Paul Verhoven's *Bug Wars* (I will not pretend it's something it's not) came out in 1997. The ocean boiled. (As you know, Bob, RAH was buried at sea.) As for John Carter, the buzz is that the Poopy Panda Pals decided not to do decent publicity for the film. Now if MGM had done Bob Clampett's animated "A Princess of Mars" back in the 30's...

**Sue Burke:** I very much enjoyed your report on your trip to the Alhambra.

**Alexis A. Gilliland:** I have read *At Dawn We Slept: The Untold Story of Pearl Harbor* (1981) by Gordon W. Prange and it is in my collection. Since Prange died on May 15, 1980, prior to the book being published I don't know how much was actually his and how much his associates. I still recall that a strong feeling came over me that it was going to pin on FDR that he knew about the attack. Then it concluded, as you indicate, that FDR did not know the attack was Pearl Harbor. Also in my collection are *Miracle at Midway* (1982), *Target Tokyo: The Story of the Sorage Spy Ring* (1984), *Pearl Harbor: The Verdict of History* (1986), and *Dec. 7, 1941-The Day the Japanese Attacked Pearl Harbor* (1988) by Gordon W. Prange and his Associates. The subsequent books were obviously all his associates.

**Joe Major:** Yes, you are correct that "Wak! Wak! Wak!" is more like it. I was trying to come up with some comment related to Oswald Cobblepot and the best I could do was a sorry Ho-Ho-Ho! By the way whenever I put a smiley face in one of my letters to *Alexiad* the system you are using turns it into a capital J. Apparently your system does not like Microsoft Word. ☺

The Joker Blogs has begun expanding into other characters: they already had Dr. Harleen Quinzel and Harvey Dent but now are getting in Lex Luthor and Oswald "A penguin is a bird, don't call me a bird" Cobblepot. And others.

<http://www.thejokerblogs.com/>

— ☺☼☼☼

From: **George W. Price** March 26, 2012  
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February *Alexiad*:

I see I have something in common with Alexis Gilliland. A few years ago we too had to have a tree removed when it died. It was a blue spruce, and not very tall — maybe 25 feet — but it was the only tree in our back yard. I used to sit under it and read. There's still a big dogwood in front at curbside, but that's not ours. In Chicago the trees in the parkway — the six feet or so of lawn between the curb and the sidewalk — belong to the city, not the householder.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. Gilliland makes a pretty good case for believing in anthropogenic global warming, though I am still a tad skeptical.

For one thing, the famous "climategate" e-mails revealed efforts to prevent peer-reviewed journals from publishing skeptical papers. Is that the reaction of honest scientists serenely confident in the validity of their work? To be sure, it doesn't prove that they are dishonest. Maybe they felt so irritated at having to constantly defend themselves against ignorant and irrational attacks that they just wanted to make the buggers shut up and go away. Which is a very human reaction, if not very scientific.

For another thing, research grants tend to flow to those who produce the findings that the grantors want to hear. And that will often be whatever aggrandizes that institution or agency and shows that it needs more power, more staff, and a bigger budget.

I do not have the technical expertise to pronounce on the issue. However, for what it may be worth, one of my long-time friends has a grandson who recently got his degree in climate science. And she says he is skeptical of global warming.

Alexis is very dubious about Taras Wolansky's optimism "that genetically engineered biofuels will eventually replace fossil fuels." I agree. As Alexis says, it is extremely unlikely that we could ever grow enough biofuels to replace fossil fuels. It is also an inconvenient truth that biofuels are carbonaceous and will produce carbon dioxide when burned. Not as much as coal or oil or peat, but about as much as natural gas — since biofuels will be mostly methane, the same as natural gas. Call them unnatural gas.

Nuclear power seems to be the only reasonable substitute for fossil fuels, but as Alexis also says, it faces increasing opposition since the Fukushima disaster. He notes that "we have not yet come up with any solution for the disposal of spent nuclear fuel." Oh but we have: it can be reprocessed and recycled as the French do. The notion that we must hide it away in caverns for ten thousand years is sheer twaddle. The opposition is primarily emotional, based on little or no physical reality.

I have a story about that. A number of years

ago I had a letter published in *Chemical and Engineering News*, the house organ of the American Chemical Society. I cited a speech I heard Jerry Pournelle give years before. He said we didn't need any deep caverns for nuclear waste. We need only pick a square mile of desert and at its center build a warehouse for the waste. It needn't be a huge building. Then put a cyclone fence around that square mile with signs every few yards reading, "If you cross this fence, you will die."

A few weeks later *C&EN* published a letter in rebuttal, and all it said was "Not in my desert, you don't!" I found that reaction instructive. This fellow apparently believed that he and his ilk are guardians of all the desert in the country, regardless of how the rest of us might feel about it. Well, that's an environmentalist for you. I was tempted to (but didn't) reply that when we build that warehouse we will carefully avoid the part of the desert that is his personal property.

To be sure, this was before terrorism became an issue. I suppose that now we would have to put guard troops around that fence.

\* \* \* \* \*

Martin Morse Wooster disagrees with me that, as he puts it, "FDR Tricked Us Into War." But he doesn't say just what in my argument he finds mistaken. He says, "like it or not, we entered World War II because Japan bombed Pearl Harbor and Germany declared war on the U.S." True but irrelevant; the question is, why did Japan bomb Pearl Harbor? I believe, based on all the evidence I've seen, that Roosevelt correctly recognized the danger that the Nazis posed to civilization, but could not persuade the American people to intervene, so he provoked the Japanese by interfering with their conquest of Asia, expecting that when they went to war with us, their German allies would follow. His expectations were fulfilled.

What I do not say, and do not believe, is that Roosevelt foresaw the attack on Pearl Harbor and let it happen anyway. (The more rabid Roosevelt-haters were certain that he did anticipate the attack, and refused to send an explicit warning to Admiral Kimmel and General Short for fear that the Japanese might intercept the warning, realize that the operation was blown, and turn back their fleet without attacking.) I presume that Roosevelt and Marshall expected a much smaller attack, possibly against the Philippines, or maybe even a gentlemanly declaration of war without a surprise attack.

Like all such conspiracy theories, the explanations require more and more levels of contrivance, creating a plan which could not possibly sustain itself.

— JTM

By the way, there is an interesting alternate-history story in which General Billy Mitchell intercepts the Japanese fleet with a squadron of B-17s and breaks up the attack on Pearl Harbor — with strategically disastrous results ("Billy Mitchell's Overt Act," by

William Sanders, in *Alternate Generals*, edited by Harry Turtledove, Baen Books, 1998).

\* \* \* \* \*

Darrell Schweitzer discusses Christian relics and some points of Catholic doctrine. He says that “theologians are still having trouble with the idea that if you accept the Trinity, and the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the same being, this means that God the Father, creator of the universe, is Jewish on his mother’s side.” That reminds me of the story of a Jewish couple who had a Catholic friend who decided to be a nun. When they went to the church ceremony in which she would become a “Bride of Christ,” an usher showed them to seats on the left side of the aisle. The Jew said, “No, no, we should sit on the right — the groom’s side, you know.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Like Jim Stumm, I fear that the dollar will continue to lose value as the government issues unlimited amounts of money to pay its bills (that’s practically the definition of inflation). If we are serious about ending inflation, we should adopt a rigorously-enforced gold standard.

What I’d like is to restrict the national government to issuing only gold coins, or paper certificates redeemable in gold coins or bullion. And make it a serious crime to issue certificates for any more gold than is actually in the vault. Gold miners would take newly-produced gold to the Treasury and receive gold coins or certificates, and that would be the only way in which the government could increase the money supply.

However, since the need for money will fluctuate, I would also allow private money through “free banking” — let banks or other private institutions issue paper that can circulate as money. But such banknotes must very definitely not be “legal tender.” That is, no one would be required to accept them in payment of debts — one could hold out for gold certificates. It would be up to each bank to keep its money trustworthy by not issuing more than it could redeem out of the gold or silver or other assets it holds as collateral. And when word got out that a bank was issuing more paper than it could stand behind, its notes would be accepted only at a discount, or maybe not at all.

Politicians hate the gold standard with a purple passion precisely because it prevents them from playing inflationary games with the money supply.

\* \* \* \* \*

I am fascinated by the fuss over the “Obamacare” rule requiring Catholic institutions such as hospitals to pay for employee health insurance that covers contraception, in violation of Catholic principles. When this exploded in controversy, the Administration “compromised” by requiring the insurers to offer contraception for free, so the Catholic institutions wouldn’t have to pay for it. This is obvious nonsense — it only means that the cost would be lumped into the insurer’s general overhead instead of

appearing as a listed item. But the customers — meaning the Catholic institutions — would still be paying for it. (Where else would the insurer get the money?)

Why would such a transparently fraudulent “compromise” be proposed, instead of a real compromise that met Church objections? For one obvious example, the insurer might split the cost of insurance, putting most coverage into one contract for which the Catholic institution would pay, and putting contraception into another contract the employee would pay for out of pocket, with the lowest-paid employees being subsidized, if necessary, by private charities or public welfare agencies.

So why was no such obvious solution apparently even considered? My cynical suspicion is that this is not really about the cost of contraception. It’s about forcing the Church to swallow its principles and knuckle under to Progressive policy. In short, it’s about showing the Church who is boss.

From: **Trinlay Khadro** March 20, 2012  
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Still Not Dead Yet: Which is good! Today I have a high pain level (not so hot) so while waiting for meds to kick in I am hoping to catch up on LOCs.

(Enclosed are a couple APAzines so yes, I’ve been busy.)

Been having some silly fun with the dolls (ball jointed dolls), making them costumes, taking photos, and taking them on “field trips” for some fun photos. Most recently dolls costumed at Tardis & Dr. Who went along to the Milwaukee Public Museum.

Getting to WorldCon for the first day & last day (probably by train) and showing in the art show depends on my budget constraints. I definitely can’t handle the cost of a room for the weekend.

I think we can arrange some help.

— JTM

I find I’m fortunate that local (Milwaukee Area) fandom is so active. They’re keeping me relatively sane.

I’m getting active on Etsy again as well as continuing on Zibbet. Happy to do custom-made, too.

From: **Sue Burke** March 28, 2012  
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The ongoing debate about global warming reminds me of the debate about smoking. Despite tobacco industry’s attempt to cover up data for decades, few people today doubt the health dangers of smoking. What effect has this scientific and public agreement had? Not much. Although some governments try to discourage

smoking and protect non-smokers, worldwide more people smoke than ever: one out of three adults, and the number of smokers continues to grow.

Tobacco has now been genetically altered to be more addictive, and additives to cigarettes make them easier to smoke. Tobacco companies aggressively market wherever they can — wherever governments are too weak or corrupt to fight them off. In Indonesia, one in four children aged 13 to 15 smokes, as do more than 60% of men. Periodically cigarette manufacturers are caught providing their product to smugglers as a way to keep prices down and encourage consumption by avoiding taxes: Spain’s police seized 3.5 million smuggled packs in January and February of 2012.

Outside of the US, most people, like almost all scientists, believe the climate is changing. But that doesn’t matter when it comes to public policy or daily life. The mammoth use of fossil fuels, like the massive consumption of tobacco, generates huge profits and involves agreeable short-term consequences.

The US relies heavily on coal for generating electricity: 1 trillion metric tons per year. China produced that much in 1990, but now it digs 3.5 times more. India will equal US production by 2017. Even if everyone agreed about global warming, carbon dioxide levels are going to continue to climb — the future be damned.

Here in Spain, the Madrid region has suffered a warm winter that was the driest on record. We went 45 straight days without rain, although winter should be the wettest period of the year. My neighborhood got .68 inches of rain from December to February, while the average from the 1970s to 1990s was 5 inches. And 120 years of data point to recent decades as the driest.

The winter wheat crop in the Madrid region is lost. Alfalfa, which should be ready for harvest now, did not germinate. Farmers can’t plant, and they fear for their grape vines and fruit, almond, and olive trees. Their livestock has no pasture. Forest fires, a summer phenomenon, have already begun to burn. The snowy mountains of Madrid, which fill our aquifers and supply our tapwater, got less than 2% of the usual amount of snow. Most of the rest of Spain is unusually dry, if not in a drought.

In Madrid, because particulate pollution from car exhaust wasn’t washed away by rain, a brown cap of air pollution covered the sky almost every day in winter, and like many other people, I suffered nosebleeds and a constant hacking cough.

Climate change? “Probably,” says a spokesman for the Spanish government’s meteorology agency. They can only be sure with more years of data, but winter droughts would be “symptomatic” of the expected change, he says, which involves warmer temperatures and less rain in normally dry areas, but more rain in moist areas.

This meteorological disaster comes on top of an economy in recession. Unemployment is up to 22%, and the Catholic Church is promoting the priesthood as steady employment. Oil and

food prices are rising, and governments on all levels are slashing budgets. I'm steadily employed teaching English to Spaniards who need to look beyond the border to get a job. Business is good for me.

Others seize opportunities as they can. One little town in a still-moist area near Barcelona sees agriculture as its savior. Rasquera, with 900 inhabitants and a big municipal debt, wants to grow marijuana to pay its bills. The town council approved that plan in a meeting at which they wore their overcoats because they could not pay to heat the hall.

Private use of marijuana is permitted in Spain, as is cultivation for personal use, and sometimes growing it for a third party under very strict circumstances, but the town's plans might not be acceptable — at a minimum, lawyers will make some money from this. Still, Rasquera immediately received enough offers from smokers' clubs and university researchers to fill greenhouses equivalent to seven soccer fields. The town figures this business venture could pay off the debt in a few years and create 40 jobs, ranging from farmers to security guards.

But this little foray of government into business runs the opposite of what has been happening globally: businesses can overpower governments. I wonder what Friedrich Hayek would make of that? His book *The Road to Serfdom*, which I have, defines liberty as freedom from coercion and arbitrary power (Chapter 2), but the book is really about WWII politics and economics. It doesn't imagine a world a half-century later where corporations, some of them notably unethical, are routinely bigger and faster than governments: financial markets move 11 times the world GNP each year.

By being multinational, corporations can escape legal control. The European Central Bank can't even get full information about euro derivative transactions, let alone exert any regulatory jurisprudence. Now, corporations are able to use coercion and arbitrary power on individuals and even governments and become the tyrants that Hayek so rightly feared.

I'm reminded of the statement Mack Reynolds put in some of his books as proof of how corporations had become the feared tyrants. So powerful were these bodies, he said, that they could order the German army not to shell the French-owned steel mills in the Ruhr. (It sounded to me like a DeLeonist point from the discourse of the disillusioned twenties.) And no one asked, "Do you know where the Ruhr is?"

— JTM

From: **Taras Wolansky** April 1, 2012  
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Hope Grant's better. I had my own brief bout of vertigo in January of last year. I was a

pretty funny sight when the EMTs came over to take me to the emergency room. One guy holding me up from either side as I emulated a rubber-legged movie drunk. They gave me Meclizine to take if I had a recurrence, but I never did.

**"John Christopher" ... best known for his young adult 'Tripods' series [with its] portrayal of a simple rustic society with a frightening subordination . . .** Makes me wonder how much *The Hunger Games* owes to him. (Actually, the movie made me think of the Aztec flower wars and the Spartan *krypteia*.)

They must be kicking themselves over not having put vampires into *The Hunger Games*. Maybe in *Hunger Games IV*.

Living History Dept.: I'm sure you've heard that Pres. John Tyler (of "Tippecanoe and Tyler, Too" fame) still has two living grandsons, both born in the 1920s.

**"Ever read about Williamson County? In the Nineteen-Twenties they had . . . a coal mine strike that ended with the massacre of the replacement workers . . ."** Like the case of Kimberly Bergalis, the Herrin Massacre falls under the heading of "Stories Hollywood Will Never Make Into Movies". Truly, unions are a legal form of organized crime. Actually, after reading about this massacre, I must admit that's unfair to organized crime.

Review of Robert Zubrin's latest Mars book: **"... why so many of the alleged problems of long-term spaceflight are not so problematic. These include both physical (radiation) and metaphysical (isolation)."** You don't say *how* he deals with the radiation problem.

Here's an idea I've been toying with: put a small asteroid in an orbit intersecting the orbits of both Earth and Mars, and use it as a shuttle between the two planets, with lots of nice rocky shielding.



Alexis Gilliland: **"Taras Wolansky waves his hands to discredit the survey of 1372 climate scientists who went with the facts, but doesn't dispute the facts."** No, I merely point out that it wasn't a survey of climate scientists at all, but a survey of published articles by certain scientists. If it had been an opinion survey, then we might argue about whether the questions were slanted or not — but, in fact, there were no questions asked at all, biased or unbiased, just subjective judgments of texts written for other purposes. Furthermore, even if we assume that the editors of the publications did not mess with the texts, the authors will

have written them with an eye to getting them published. (There's a reason why so many stories in *Astounding* had Scottish protagonists!)

We're swimming in fossil fuels, so biofuels are something to think about for the distant future (when we will harvest oil grapes, or whatever). Of course, by then we ought to have good batteries (and fusion power), so the whole issue may be moot.

In the historical record, warm periods are associated with the flourishing of civilizations; cold periods, with their collapse, through crop failure and drought.

George W. Price: **"We never pump a reservoir dry; we only produce the oil and gas until the rising cost of pumping out more is greater than the price we can get."** According to an article in *Scientific American*, 65% of the oil is still there when a well "runs dry". Of course, the oil bidness, being profit-oriented, is learning how to tap into that.

Here's a similar idea: one of the illicit schemes for getting uranium ore from Niger — yes, Bush was right about that — was to secretly reopen mines that had been closed because they couldn't make money at the current price of uranium. There was still plenty of uranium ore in there, for anyone who was willing to pay a premium.

I had previously cautioned Darrell Schweitzer about confusing the issues of global warming and anthropogenic global warming. Also, GW or AGW as a problem for the world to deal with must not be confused with more far-fetched disaster scenarios. Warmism as a political movement tries to blur these distinctions for obvious reasons ("Trouble in River City"), but we need to clarify them in our own minds.

As is usually the case with environmentalism, warmism is a movement by and for the rich against the poor. All the proposed solutions involve slowing down economic growth, which doesn't bother the rich because they've already got theirs.

Bjorn Lomborg, a left-leaning (but, unusually, honest) economist who accepts the AGW consensus, makes this point constantly: fighting global warming is an incredibly inefficient way of helping the world's poor — when it isn't actually harming them — whose problems can be directly addressed for a tiny fraction of the cost.

By the way, the fact that anti-GW policies will injure the non-rich is why Democratic policies toward GW have to be concealed behind a smoke screen. They would like to see \$8 a gallon gasoline, as Energy Secretary Steven Chu admitted (prior to his appointment!), but they are forced to fervently proclaim otherwise, even as they quietly work behind the scenes to make gas more expensive.

The Democratic Party is a bimodal distribution: a highly-educated liberal elite and a less-educated, more moderate, more religious, and more patriotic rank-and-file. That's why (for example) the Dems wrap themselves in the flag, and why Obama pretends to oppose gay marriage.

"What happens when the tundras begin to melt and release all that methane? Will this



only raise the temperatures a few degrees, or cause irreversible global catastrophe? The pro-pollution party of course doesn't care."

Darrell usually doesn't read responses to his LoCs, and thus often repeats the same mistakes. (For example, his view of Ronald Reagan froze sometime around 1983.) But reading the passage above, I wonder if he reads his own LoCs: the "pro-pollution party of course doesn't care about" "irreversible global catastrophe". Really? Do Republicans live on Mars?

No, they just don't make the same connection.

Stephen Jay Gould once wrote that when a paleontologist hears about global warming catastrophes, he smiles to himself. Because he knows just how hot and verdant the Earth was in past ages.

*Dainis Bisenieks*: Thanks for explaining the mystery of Bigfoot's non-appearance.

*Martin Morse Wooster*: "Like it or not, we entered World War II because Japan bombed Pearl Harbor and Germany declared war on the U.S. For America, World War II (unlike World War I) was not, in any way, a 'war of choice.'" However, I've read that FDR secretly ordered U.S. Navy ships to try to run down any German U-boats they saw, regardless of America's ostensible neutrality.

I remember seeing Dick Cavett interview Clare Boothe Luce. Trying to embarrass her (she was, after all, a Republican), he questioned her about accusing FDR of lying us into the war, back in the Forties. Why, so he did, she responded placidly, but he was right to do so!

*Robert S. Kennedy*: You disagreed with your FDR-loving liberal friend, who embraced what he believed to be FDR's decision not to warn U.S. forces about the imminent Pearl Harbor attack. This goes well with my view that the left tends toward utilitarianism in ethics; the right, toward traditionalism.

Says the conservative Justice to the liberal: "Why do you lie about the Constitution?" Says the liberal Justice to the conservative: "Why do you permit the Constitution to stand in the way of social justice?" Each is behaving ethically — by different ethical standards.

The paradoxical thing is that, to maximize his effectiveness, the utilitarian's ethics require him to conceal his utilitarianism!

I like TV's *Grimm* a lot, with its ramifying bestiary of were-pigs and were-rats and were-spiders and were-bears, etc. However, I think the fairy tale soap, *Once Upon a Time*, jumped the shark when we learned the Wicked Queen still has her memory and her powers.

From that point on her behavior no longer makes sense: "Instead of being the absolute mistress of a castle, I'll be a small-town mayor who can't get people to do what she says!" "Instead of ripping out Snow White's heart, I'll make her a lonely schoolteacher!"

Then again, "one slayer in all the world" didn't make sense, either!

The Sexy Emo Vampire™ meme

has coherence problems. If just one small town is so overrun by vampires, how many are there in the rest of the world? Not to mention feeding them; I've seen it pointed out for the original *Dracula* but it goes double for (say) the *Anno Dracula* series; at the rate that vampires make more vampires in the process of feeding, humanity would soon be hunted to extinction.

— JTM

From: **John Purcell** April 1, 2012  
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Been meeting to write this loc for the last month or so. Now here it is, the last day (according to page 1) for contributions and I'm finally getting this done. Sorry it's going to be a short loc, but I have papers to grade and doctoral crap to take care of.

I finally acquired a nook back in January; got it for free, and it's the basic nook, but I'm not complaining. Once I figured out how to use the fershlugginer thingie I downloaded a few odds and ends off Project Gutenberg, such as *Dracula*, a couple Jules Verne and H. G. Wells books, and a couple issues of *Astounding Stories* from 1930. That was then. Now I've downloaded research articles from databases so I can read them where-ever I am. Eventually I can see large honking textbooks being replaced by e-readers, which will save many a student's back, and probably won't financially break their bank accounts since many e-texts (I have discovered) cost much less than the paper versions. This makes sense to me, especially since many teachers at all grade levels use course webpages to augment in-class discussions and activities.

Arthur's Bookshelf has a lot of interesting stuff; the entire *Lensman* series and most of the *Skylark*, for example.  
<http://www.arthursbookshelf.com/>

But I still like physical books. In fact, last weekend at Aggiecon 43 here in town, there was a book dealer — which in itself was a rarity — in the huckster room who had a wealth of used books for sale at severe discounts; he was in need of creating room for the trip home, so I did the best I could to accommodate his goal. I wound up buying a total of 20 books — 19 paperbacks, 1 hardcover — for a grand total of \$3.79, including sales tax. That is a mere 19 cents a book. Not bad. Some of them were good finds, too: *The High Place* by James Branch Cabell, both volumes of *The Wood Beyond the World* by William Morris (first edition Ballantine Adult Fantasy Series, no less), an Ace Double featuring *The Winds of Darkover* by Marion Zimmer Bradley, some Asimov titles to fill in holes, and so on. The sole hardcover was *Goa*, by one of my old Minn-stf friends, Kara Dalkey, which I bought for 50 cents. This

haul alone made my weekend.

Joe, I admire your pithy statement that Twitter feeds are distillations of "life for the attention-deficit disorder generation." I totally agree. I have learned to adapt my lesson plans to break down into time chunks due to not only curricular needs, but to keep those dagnabbin' students attentive. Any time you lecture for more than 15 to 20 minutes, they start to lose interest. So what I do is hit them with a beginning activity/lesson hook, brief lecture/demonstration/discussion, then an application phase for that day's lesson. Yeah: definitely designed for the ADD generation. Sad, ain't it? The interesting dividend is that this has made me a more efficient and effective teacher. Works for me.

And we are seeing how blogs are declining. The blogocracy movement may die soon, and instead we'll be seeing a proposal for #BestTweetHugo.

— @JTM

I am still a bit in shock over the passing of Bob Sabella. You made a comment in my loc that Bob also contributed a column to Tom Sadler's fine fanzine, *The Reluctant Famulus*. He also wrote occasional pieces for *Knarley Knews* (Henry Welch's zine), and would pop his head up in assorted other zines. Bob was definitely one of the good guys that I never met. I so feel for his family.

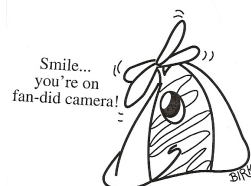
Also in my loc, a follow-up to what I wrote about my father, John W. Purcell, who served aboard the USS *Kitkun Bay*, which was one of the escort carriers in Taffy 3, the unit that fought brilliantly in the Battle of Leyte Gulf and in other South Pacific engagements (the war, that is, not the musical). I think you also noted this in an earlier issue of *Alexiad*, but I don't have the files here at home: my zine files are in my office at school. Funny place for them, I know, but that's the only place I really have the room for them!

I think I shall stop there. Gotta get a class's worth of papers finished early on here today so I can do another class later this afternoon. This is why they pay me the big bucks, you know.

#### WAHF:

**Lloyd Daub**, with various items of interest.

**R-Laurraine Tutihasi**, who read the issue but had no comment. *Feline Mewsings* was delayed due to the death of Bob Sabella.





## IT'S A WONDERFUL . . .

George Bailey thought that perhaps he should have thrown himself into the river after all. Instead, he was here confronting Mr. Potter's nephew Harry.

The old man had abruptly retired to Florida, and brought over his nephew from England to run the bank. Would this stranger be willing to give the building & loan one more chance?

The young woman sitting at the desk said, "Mr Potter will see you now." George didn't take much to married women working and there it was on her desk, a nameplate that said MRS WEASLEY. George got to his feet and went into the office.

Young Potter was . . . different. Had he got that terrible scar in the Blitz? George had understood the bombings there had been bad. He shuffled his feet, looked for a chair, and said, "Mr. Potter. Bailey Brothers Building & Loan has built this community —" He went on like that for a while.

Potter's eyeglasses caught the light as he listened, silently. George finished his plea and slumped, defeated.

"You don't want me to have to send Mr Weasley to look over your books," he said. George didn't think much of hiring brothers-in-law but Ron had seemed a decent enough fellow the one time he had come over.

"Well . . ." he turned to leave.

"Not so fast."

George looked back. A strange feeling took control of him, as if he were flying.

"It is my responsibility to my shareholders to have full financial integrity. Therefore, you will have to have an overseer, as it were. Until this problem is resolved, you will only see him."

He punched the button on his desk.

"Hermione, will you send in Harvey?"

## DOCTOR LAWYER INDIAN CHIEF

The intricate world of fashion design takes on an even more deadly competition when Soviet agents begin undercutting domestic prices — as cover for an even more sinister plot!

The talents of John le Carré and Irwin Shaw have been combined to recount this intricate plot of deception and design, as retired British intelligence chief George Smiley (Alec Guinness) finds himself drawn into the commercial world when fashion magnate Rudy Jordache (Peter Strauss) suspects the new competition of having sinister depths.

The new design associate at Jordache, Patsy "Purdey" Stone (Joanna Lumley) is the first to suspect that the Karla Line is more than it seems. Beguiled by the mystical and exotic chief designer of the Karla Line (Marina Sirtis), Rudy becomes drawn into their toils. Then, the brutal murder of an employee (Diana Muldaur) about to resign and reveal the sinister secrets of the competition brings home to Rudy the depths of the plot. Yet no one in the U.S. will believe him; only this somewhat disdainful acquaintance of Patsy's.

In a slow but inexorably brilliant investigation, the full meaning and intricate schemes of this absolutely fabulous infiltration plan become apparent, yet the burden of proof seems almost insuperable. As the risk grows the tension is almost unbearable . . .

[Somehow, after seeing le Carré's *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* and Shaw's *Rich Man, Poor Man* (he also did *Beggarmen*, *Thief* as his sequel to it) I felt the rest of the poem should get its due.]

by Paul Gadzikowski

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**Art:** What we are mainly looking for is small fillos. Your fillo will probably be scanned in and may be reused, unless you object to its reuse.

**Contributions:** This is not a fictionzine. It is intended to be our fanzine, so be interesting.

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## THE KING'S JUSTICE

