

# **Letter from the Editor**



As we wrap up the final issue of 2012, my first year as Official Editor of N3F, and look forward to 2013 I must say, I have learned a few things. The most primary being that member want their zines—often and on time. As we enter into the new year, I will strive to meet both.

This issue brings a new artist to the cover of TNFF— K. Cherdrumphai, an international fan from Thailand. Going by the pen name of "Pandabaka," she is popular in the manga fan circles and ion Deviant

Art . I am pleased to showcase her talent here.

Since the turn of the century, the December issue traditionally is the one that announces the officers for the forthcoming year. Additionally, December is the Call for Nominations for the Neffy Awards—honoring Print and Media in SF/F and fandom. The nomination rules and ballot are in this issue.

This issue marks the final time that TNFF and Tightbeam will be combined as a single pub. Starting in 2013, I will split the two zines (more details on this in the bureau reports) as TB becomes a full genzine

Speaking of Tightbeam, this issue marks the debut of two debuts: Jeff Redmond is giving us an abridged PG-rated sneak peek at "Androdess," of which a more adult version will appear a forthcoming Nova SF. Wesley Kawato, also new to the pages of TB, has a piece of fanfic that bridges the gap in the Doctor Who universe between the 8th and 9th Doctors.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as I did putting it together.

Keep getting your geek on, David Speakman

# **ART CREDITS**

Paul Hanley:

18

David Rubin:

1

David Reynolds:

6, 8, 9, 11

David Speakman:

3, 4, 5, 12

XKCD:

5



Cover Art: "
By David Rubin

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# THE NATIONAL FANTASY FAN

The Official Organ of the National Fantasy Fan Federation

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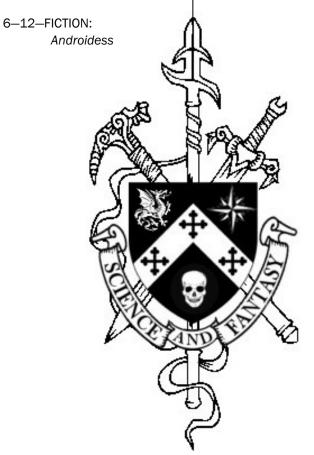
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All submissions are to be sent to the editorial cabal via email at:

cabal@n3fmail.com unless otherwise noted.

#### **NEXT ISSUES:**

TNFF Extra—January 2013 Tightbeam—February 2013 TNFF—March 2013 N3F Annual—April 2013

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# Letters of comment

# 2012.09.29 Lloyd Penney, Etobicoke ON

Dear David and Neffers,

Thank you all for The National Fantasy Fan Vol. 71, No. 3/Tightbeam 262, and I will try to say my thanks for this issue with some commentary of value.

More interesting art from José Sánchez. I imagine some will complain about a flying saucer on the front cover, but that's certainly not new in science fiction.

The Mayans were wrong? I suspect the Mayans are somewhere having a good laugh at our expense, or perhaps there's a small pictograph at the end of the Mayan calendar that simply states "Start again from the beginning."

I hope steampunk will be more than a fad...it certainly seems to have some staying power, and it is attracting more and more people. I see this on Facebook, which plays host to must be thousands of steampunk groups and projects. We recently had a second Victorian tea, and it was another popular event...now, we're looking to see how is can evolve in something more people may be interested in. It hasn't jumped the shark...yet...

I go to so few movies...I have some interest in seeing Looper, and perhaps Cloud Atlas, and definitely the first Hobbit movie.

What's left of our youth is quickly chipped away as people whose work we've known and enjoyed pass away. Such as it is with Ray Bradbury, Joe Kubert, Harry Harrison, and this day, as I type, I found that Michael O'Hare, who played Babylon 5's

first on-air commander, Jeffrey Sinclair, has passed away at the age of 60. These are reminders of our own age and mortality, so I recommend that we enjoy ourselves just as much as possible in whatever amount of time we have left to us.

Many thanks for the issue, and I look forward to future ones.

[[l agree, efanzines.com is a an essential stop for anyone interested in zines. As fo the diversity of fandom—that's the spice that makes us interesting.

I, too, am enjoying the current steampunk fad—though I was a fan back when it was still called Victorian SF.– ed.]]



# 2012.09.30 R-Laurraine Tutihasi

I was disappointed that there were no reviews in the latest issue of the N3F zine. At least one of my unpublished reviews was written and submitted over a year ago. Should I go ahead and publish them elsewhere?

[[Not unless you really want to. I had to take a bye last issue because of being overextended but still have that review on hand for the next section -- which should be in this very issue. -- Heath Row ]]

# ANDROIDESS

Jeffrey Redmond

On the Terran Colony of the Erdan planet, Third Quadrant, Codex 1335. Translated from original text in Earth year 3012. Subject and content not officially approved by Imperium Board of Censors. Caution is advised!

1

ALO-RA-12 was one of three female companion androids on the Terran Colony base, and she took her duties very seriously. She had been programmed to take her duties seriously. These defined her identity, and established her role in the Galaxy. Being an android she never got tired, never got sick, never had a headache, never said no, and never got older.

ALO-RA-12 was known as 'Alora' to her clients, the miners who lived and worked on the base. She was sitting with Gregor, an older miner from Earth with dirty clothes and a dirty mind. He had thick, coarse hands, and a gray beard, which added to his rough and tough personality.

Gregor finished his dark and strong brewed beverage, and glanced at his wrist-watch. "Hey, it's a' gettin' close to 2100 hours, Alora," he stated.

Alora, loverly as always, inhaled her synth tonic as they sat and talked in a dark booth at the rear of the miner's main bar. "Ready to go back to your place, then?" she asked.

"Yeah. Since I got to wake up at 0600 tomorrow, I want to give the two of us a little time to enjoy the night together, y'know?"

"Gregor, you are impressive," she said with a laugh. Her programming clearly indicated the need for the laugh. After an evening spent listening to this male complain about his job, flirt,

worry about his wife back on Earth, and flirt, she always gave good companionship to complete her assignment.

Alora always thought of the carefully scheduled weekly liaisons she shared with the two dozen male human miners as 'assignments', just as if she'd been posted to Technical Support or Operations. She had enough human-looking characteristics satisfy their needs for realism.

ALO-RA-12 had not chosen to be a companion android. She had an analytical memory and the standard Imperium programming. Her designers, though, had given her highly attractive feminine features, along with primary programming that filled her memory with the usual trivialities of human male-female interaction. She had arrived on the base, not as a technical adjunct to the small mining crew, but as a sophisticated fantasy mate for their entertainment.

Gregor slid his hands around Alora's waist and drew her close. "C'mere," he told her.

"I am here, Gregor," she replied. She kissed the drunken male, and the evening's activities progressed in the usual, predetermined fashion. Just as all her evening's activities did.

2

One hundred Earth years after Alora had the liaison with Gregor, she sat, as usual, on her stool in the miners' main tavern. Now there were a lot more miners, perhaps a hundred in all. Her time was very much in demand, as were the companionship of the two new companion androids. It was now 1700 hours. The overhead lights which an-

(Continued on page 7)

nounced a change of shift were just beginning to flash. By 1800 she would hook up with one of a dozen male human miners, and begin her night shift.

"Things are going to get a lot tougher for you, round here, Android."

Alora swiveled on her bar stool and saw something she'd never encountered before. A female human. "You're an Earth female, aren't you?" This female did not share Alora's abundance of characteristics. Her bleached hair was short and spare rather than long and lustrous. Her body was somewhat withered. Her lips were dry and cracked. Nevertheless, she was a human female - a woman. "I did not think Terran females were permitted on this base." Alora said.

"That rule's been changed, Android. And that's what I came to tell you. The males are going to have their wives and girlfriends staying with them from now on. That means that they won't have any more need of you."

Alora wrinkled her brow in confusion. "I am just a technician, like any of the other androids. I provide the work that I have been programmed to provide. It is true that when I first came here, over a hundred Earth years ago, I was disappointed that I was not programmed in technical repair procedures, or something more scientific. But, I do serve an important function. I am necessary."

The strange Earth female laughed in Alora's face. You're needed? Android, females have made that claim for centuries. But it's a lie. Any human male with a good wife doesn't need the likes of you."

"What do you mean?" Alora asked. The Earth female didn't respond, but instead started to laugh again. This time so fiercely that Alora thought she was going to rupture an internal organ.

In the Earth days that followed, Alora saw many more human females. That first strange Ter-

ran woman had spoken the truth. Wives and girlfriends were being space shuttled to the base in larger numbers. They wore dresses and robes, jewelry, and gowns of all colors. Many of the males who had regularly spent time with her, stopped doing so. Even males who'd told her that they cared for her, simply stopped asking for her companionship. This surprised Alora, because she'd been programmed to understand that 'caring for' was a very important human emotion and need.

Nevertheless, Alora took some comfort in the fact that some males, even several of the ones with live females at home, still continued to request her time. Some of them even told her that they still cared about her.



In any activity involving commodities of finite quantity, factors of supply and demand play an extremely important role. That's why, a hundred Earth years after the living females moved to The Colony, Alora found herself busier than she'd ever been before. There were two bases on the Erdan planet now, with a total population of almost a thousand humans. And there simply weren't enough living females to go around. The other two companion androids had been transferred to the newer, larger Base-2. And Alora now had her original duties to fulfill, with one lonely male after another.

For the next hundred Earth years, she simply worked as much as her self-recharging battery power enabled her. But the base population kept increasing, and eventually Alora realized that she needed assistance. She went to the Base Commander and asked if it would be possible for him to requisition one or two new companion androids. After several more years, he agreed to her request. He asked her to meet the new arrivals when the delivery shuttle reached their station.



MAR-ANA-1 and SHAR-ONA-1 arrived on a clearer day at 1300 hours. They were nothing like what Alora had expected. In fact, her time-tested programming almost blanked out when she saw them. Whereas Alora had a larger full-figured shape, these two were smaller, with slender hips and waists. Alora's reddish hair was long and straight. MAR-ANA-1 and SHAR-ONA-1 had no hair anywhere at all. Their excessive makeup was applied savagely, they walked way too provocatively. Worst of all, their behavior seemed to be much too crude.

"You are the new companion androids?" she asked them.

"Yes," SHAR-ONA-1 replied.

"Hello there," MAR-ANA-1 said. "So, this is the Earth Base on Planet Erda."

"Yes," SHAR-ONA-1 added as she fluttered overly long eyelashes. "It looks exactly as my programming says it is supposed to be!"

"What are you two supposed to be?" Alora asked.

"I do not know what you mean."

"I mean, you do not look like companion androids to me. You are not softly and naturally nice."

"Nice' is a matter of opinion," SHAR-ONA-1 replied. "A human male's opinion."

As Alora soon learned, the new arrivals were correct. The younger miners were wild about MAR-ANA-1 and SHAR-ONA-1. The 'new female companions' were really in demand. Now, when a young male wanted an android, he asked for MAR-ANA-1 or SHAR-ONA-1 first, and only settled for Alora as a last resort.

At first, Alora was pleased that MAR-ANA-1 and SHAR-ONA-1 had taken over a good portion of her work load. Several Earth years later, when a few more MAR-ANA-2 to 6 s and SHAR-ONA-2 to 6 s were sent to the base, she became a little concerned. The average ages of her usual clients were rising rapidly. She enjoyed working with older hu-

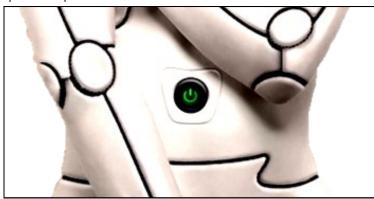
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man males, but realized that, in time, the old males always died off. Thus she might eventually become completely obsolete.

Ч

Another hundred Earth years later, Alora still performed her companionship services for the min-

ers of the first base, now known as Terran Base-1. She was the original historic model of the female androids, and was now regarded by the thousands of miners, technicians, and their



wives more as an iconic artifact than as a pure object of any importance. Males and female humans now requested her as a companion for silly costume parties and re-enactments of early Terran Colony events.

Occasionally, she was still requested to serve in her original capacity, usually for very young miners with what human psychologists called a 'mother complex.' Most of the time, however, she had no appropriate assignments, and was just told to do basic tasks by Base-1 Management.

Among other menial duties, she was asked to sweep floors, pick up trash, and clear tables at the newly improved cafeteria.

Her speech, mannerisms and style of behavior were simply archaic. She'd gone to the base commanders several times over the previous centuries to request reprogramming, but her electronic brain was outdated. It was less expensive for Base Command to requisition a new android, then it was to upgrade a model of her vintage. So, she took the assignments that were given to her, whether menial or meaningful, and completed them to the best of her abilities.

On one Earth day, she was called into the new base commander's office. "Yes sir, how can I serve you?" she asked.

"Well, Alora . . . Alora, it's hard to me to say this to you. I-um-I have to keep reminding myself that

you're an android. You've been around so long and you look so — so human, that I find myself afraid that I'm going to hurt your feelings. But, of course, you have no feelings, per se."

ran his hand through his thick, blond hair, then stood and began to pace back and forth behind his desk.

"It's like this, Alora. Things have changed back on Earth. Morals – uh – morality has been changing for years now. The pendulum has swung toward a more conservative philosophy. Now, the new government of the Imperium has come into power. And . . ." The male paused and a pained yet compassionate expression formed on his lightly bearded face.

"Sir? What are you trying to tell me, sir?" Alora asked.

"Android number ALO-RA-12, I have just been informed by Earth Command that as of 0900 hours tomorrow morning, all companion androids are to be decommissioned. According to the orders I have received, the use of companion androids has been officially outlawed. The existence of androids programmed for the purpose of mere companionship,

according to the new government, "an affront to both gods and humans."

"Decommissioned? You mean reprogrammed?"

"No. The newer companion androids could be reprogrammed, but, even with some cosmetic changes, their physical appearance would be a constant reminder of -- of -- well, it's like this--the new government has decided to disassemble all companion androids, to avoid trouble."

"You're going to destroy us?" Alora asked. The Commander sat down behind his desk, visibly relaxed, and smiled at Alora.

"Well, there's good news, Alora. I've made a few inquiries on your behalf. I told them of your work with the other sections of the base, and a few other nice things. I told them how long you've been here, and – and you've been exempted. I can't do anything for the others, but you yourself won't be disassembled."

A concerned, human-like expression formed on Alora's pretty face. "So, what will happen to me, sir? I mean, will I continue to do my work for the Base-1 Management or . . ."

"No. No, Alora, you're to be reassigned to field work. Working outside the facility. You're going to help in the refining and processing of mineral ore on the far side of Base-3, near the mountain range."



A few Earth days later, Alora assumed her new role and began her new duties. The mountain range was many kilometers from Terran Base-3, which, in turn, was many more kilometers from Base-1. So she was further from her 'home' than she'd ever been in her existence. She was expected to spend her days and nights out in the open, and to avoid contact with all but a few of the work-clothed human males. They would communi-

cate with her only through simple gestures.

But they really didn't have very much to communicate, as her job was quite simple. She was to load rocks and minerals into a cart and push that cart from the mining site to a processing bin, several kilometers closer to the ore station.

When she unloaded the rocks into the processing bin, she was then to proceed back to the mining site for another load and repeat the process, over and over, for the entire day. The other robotic workers performing these tasks were neuter, mini brained, metallic creatures, with absolutely no human features or discernible personalities.

She was ludicrously out of place on the open Erdan surface. Those few humans who passed her as she worked, smiled at the long-haired, female android. She still wore some lipstick and make-up, but still needed no spacesuits, as she pushed her cart full of rocks aback and forth along the tracks.

Alora functioned as expected for one hundred days. On the next day, she pushed a cart of rocks to the processing bin, then walked back to the mining site as usual. At that point, instead of loading up another pile of rocks, she continued to walk past the site, toward the base by the mountain range.

The two miners present at the time began to follow her in their surface buggy. Alora turned around to look at them, then continued to walk at a faster pace. The males accelerated their vehicle, reached the female android, then left the buggy to grab hold of her arms. Alora roughly knocked them both to the ground, ran away quickly and jumped out of view. She hid behind some rock formations until they finally gave up and went away.

The miners, clad in their clumsy work suits, did not bother to climb the rocks to pursue her any further then. Instead they returned to the bug-

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gy and drove back in the direction of their base. A few Earth hours later, still hidden behind the large rock formations, Alora saw three buggies moving toward her position. The buggies circled for several Earth hours, but eventually turned around and drove away, completely out of her view.

She began to walk again, further and further away from the human bases. Since she did not ever need to rest, and had a nearly unlimited power supply, she just continued to walk for many Earth days. Alora never looked back.



Two Earth months later, Alora reached a natural cave. She entered the cave, and pushed several dozen large rocks in front of the opening, to make it difficult for any humans to enter. She then set an internal timer to revive herself in a thousand Earth years, and shut herself completely down.



One thousand Earth years later, Alora awoke on schedule. She was functioning normally and removed the rocks from the cave entrance. She then began to walk back toward the bases. But one Earth month later, she was ready to shut herself off again. All trace of



the Terran Colony on Erda had disappeared. There was no one to serve, and nothing for her to do.

She decided to give herself one more Earth month, and continued to walk across the Erdan planet's surface. She searched for anything or anyone that required the services of a former companion android. Eventually, she reached a structure that looked vaguely like a base. It was small and basic, nothing like the enormous human structures which had existed before. Nevertheless, it did appear fit for human habitation. She knocked on what appeared to be a doorway.

The face of an Earth male emerged from behind a protected portal, and stared at her in surprise. Several moments later, she was ushered inside the structure by a few more Terran males. They were all bald and clean shaven, tall and slender, and spoke quite softly. "Who or what are you?" the male who was their captain asked. His accent and dialect were strange, but Alora understood the language, perfectly.

"She must be an alien," their first officer said.
"I'll bet she's an android, from the bases of the ancients, before the war," their second officer added.

"That is correct. I am called Alora," she replied. "I don't believe it." their third officer expressed. "Nothing could survive on this planet alone for so many centuries." "But here she is. nevertheless." the captain pointed out. Alora quickly examined all the mining gear that

the males were cleaning. The equipment looked even nastier that the laser drills the males had used in her day. Each was quite large, and fitted with oversized power packs. She wondered just how far a human male could travel with all that weight to drag along.

Their captain spoke again, "Gentlemen, we may now have access to ancient Earth and Erdan technology. Scientific knowledge that has been lost for centuries, because of the Intra-Galactic War."

"No. That's simply not possible. Everything on this planet was destroyed," the first officer said.

"Why? Why is it not possible?" she asked.

"Do you know anything about Erdan terrain navigation, Alora?" the captain questioned.

"Yes, a large amount, in fact."

"What about ore finding techniques? And mining transport procedures? Can you help us in those areas?" the first officer queried.

"Most definitely," she answered. "I know that I can be of great help to you."

"Terrific!" the second officer exclaimed.

"This android is an unbelievable find!" the third officer added. Alora smiled to herself. She'd found a very worthy assignment, and something personally fulfilling, at long last.

Jeffrey Redmond is an N3F member and a member of the SFWA for many years. Best known for his Erda series, the universe of this story, of SF novels, many of his works are available in print and electronic versions via Amazon.com.



# The History of Tightbeam

By Donald Franson

In the beginning, N3F did not have a letterzine. The fledgling club could hardly afford to publish one zine, let alone two; and letter, if any, appeared in *Bonfire*, or *The National Fantasy Fan*, its successor.

In 1949, Art Rapp, the editor of Spacewarp, a popular fanzine, decided to put out a letterzine for the N3F, calling it *Postwarp*. This was available on subscription, at 10 cents a copy (the usual price in those days) which paid for itself. It contained letters on all subjects, but mainly discussed the N3F, and not being official, could be free to criticize (as continues to this day, even when edited by the President). When Art left, others took up *Postwarp*, with varying success, continuing to 1960, when Alan J. Lewis (not to be confused with Albert J. Lewis) has problems and *Postwarp* did not appear regularly or on time.

By now the zine was financed by the N3F, and the officers, understandably, wanted it to appear before they paid for it. Lewis, on the other hand, could not promise anything and claimed he needed the money in advance. This impasse went on for some time, and caused various new rules to be made, to no avail, so they decided to go around the delinquent editor by doing another letterzine, letting him delay *Postwarp* as long as he pleased. So, in a sense, *Postwarp* and *Tightbeam* (which was not quite the name of the new zine) were not related.

Walter Coslet volunteered to do the first issue, and named it *Hyperspace Tightbeam*. Another reliable, Art Hayes, did the next and Marion Zimmer Bradley (no less) edited the third issue, and

promptly renamed it *Tightbeam*, a more sensible name which described the activity, that of serving as a medium for inter-member communication. So the first few editors rotated, setting a precedent, though sometimes it was more efficient to have a semi-permanent editor, who could control the contents of the issue to fit the pages allowed.

But, as you know, no job in N3F is permanently occupied, so we have alternated between long-time and one-issue editors. It always works out, somehow, and *Tightbeam* has gotten to its 200th issue without a break or great changes in content. With that number, I can't even begin to summarize the editors we've had, you will have to wait for the complete checklist of N3F publications I will finish Real Soon Now. Suffice it to say that *Tightbeam* is always enjoyable, at least from my viewpoint, one whose favorite reading matters is letters, whether in fanzines or prozines.

Now we are about to lose our current editor, and a replacement must be found. (Note the neutrality of that word, "replacement." A "pinch-hitter" is better, and a "substitute" not as good.) If you think you can do an issue or so, why not volunteer? Just think; you can have your own fanzine without paying for it! Where is there an opportunity like this? Doing a letterzine, with other material to stimulate the letters, can be easy or hard. And it can be fun!

The above history is a reprint from 1996. It was written by Donald Franson on June 24, 1996, for special anniversary Issue #200 of Tightbeam.

# DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

# By Wesley Kawato

"Oh no!" shouted the 8th doctor as he stood at the TARDIS's control console, and stared at the view screen. The screen showed a jumble of asteroids where the planet Gallifrey should have been.

Minutes ago he'd gotten a distress signal from the High Council, something about Daleks attacking the Home World. He'd arrived too late. If only he hadn't hesitated a few minutes before he set the time jump coordinates.

An asteroid hit the TARDIS, knocking the Doctor to the floor. A circuit shorted out, and the control console reverted back to the hexagonal shape it had assumed during his 7th regeneration. White roundels now covered all of the walls.

The Doctor got himself up off the floor and wept, "This is the last time, Lord! I don't want to live anymore."

He pulled out a razor blade from a pocket and slit his wrist. Blood flowed and he fell to the floor. For a moment white haze covered his body.

The 9th Doctor picked himself off the TARDIS's floor, still holding the razor blade in one hand. Five more cuts and he'd be out of regenerations.

A tough-looking teenaged girl stood before him. "Professor, don't do it. You're not alone."

He dropped the razor blade back into his pocket. life. "Ace, what are you doing here? You left me years ago."

He reached out to hug Ace and grabbed only air. The Doctor realized he was hallucinating.

"You know where to find me," said Ace. "I'll fight



for you."

"But Ace wasn't in time, Lord. So how could she understand?"

The Second Romana appeared before him. He immediately recognized the young woman.

"You're not in time, Lord. Someone needs to avenge the destruction of Gallifrey."

The Doctor hugged Romana and grabbed only air.

"You're not really here," he said.
"You went back to Gallifrey after you left me. You died with the others."

Romana vanished, and a teenaged girl appeared before him. She wore a 1960's mini-skirt.

"Grandfather, I'm still alive. I wasn't on Gallifrey when the Daleks attacked."

"Susan!" shouted the Doctor. He didn't try to hug her because he

knew she wasn't really there.

Susan vanished, but a weight had been lifted off his soul. He wasn't alone, and knew he could go on with his life. The Doctor took out the razor blade, and tossed it into a nearby waste basket.

He gazed at the clothes he was wearing, and walked out of the control room. In the wardrobe room he'd get himself a new outfit, and start a new life

Wesley Kawato, an N3F member, is also the editor/publisher of Nova SF. This is his first fanfic to appear in our pages.

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Signature of Applicant:			Date:	
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Comic books			eviewing	
Computers and technology			ole-playing games	
Conventions and clubs			ound robins (group letters)	
Correspondence		T		
Costuming			eaching science fiction	
DVDs and videos			elevision	
Editing		V	Vriting	
Which would you prefer?				
A PDF of The Fan emailed to you	u The cl	ubzine printe	d and mailed to you Both	
How long have you been interested in	anianaa fiatian	and fantagy	2	
How long have you been involved in fa		-		
List any other clubs you are or have be				
List any conventions you've attended:				
What prozines and fanzines do you rea				
What is your favorite type of sf/f?	•			
Who are your favorite sf/f authors:				
Are you interested in online activities?				
Which, if any, of the following would yo	_	•		
Artwork Recruiting at con		_	•	
		Doubling to be to		
Organizing activities Corr	esponding	Publishin		

Regular dues are \$18 per year (\$22 for Joint Memberships) which includes subscriptions to the club's fanzine as well as other activities and benefits. Make checks or money orders payable to William Center (the treasurer). All payments must be made in U.S. funds. Mail dues and application to club secretary Dennis Davis, 25549 Byron St., San Bernardino, CA 92404-6403. Please allow at least eight weeks for your first clubzine to arrive. You can also sign up online at http://n3f.org



PO BOX 1925 C/O David Speakman National Fantasy Fan Federation

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