

# The WSFA Journal

June 2001

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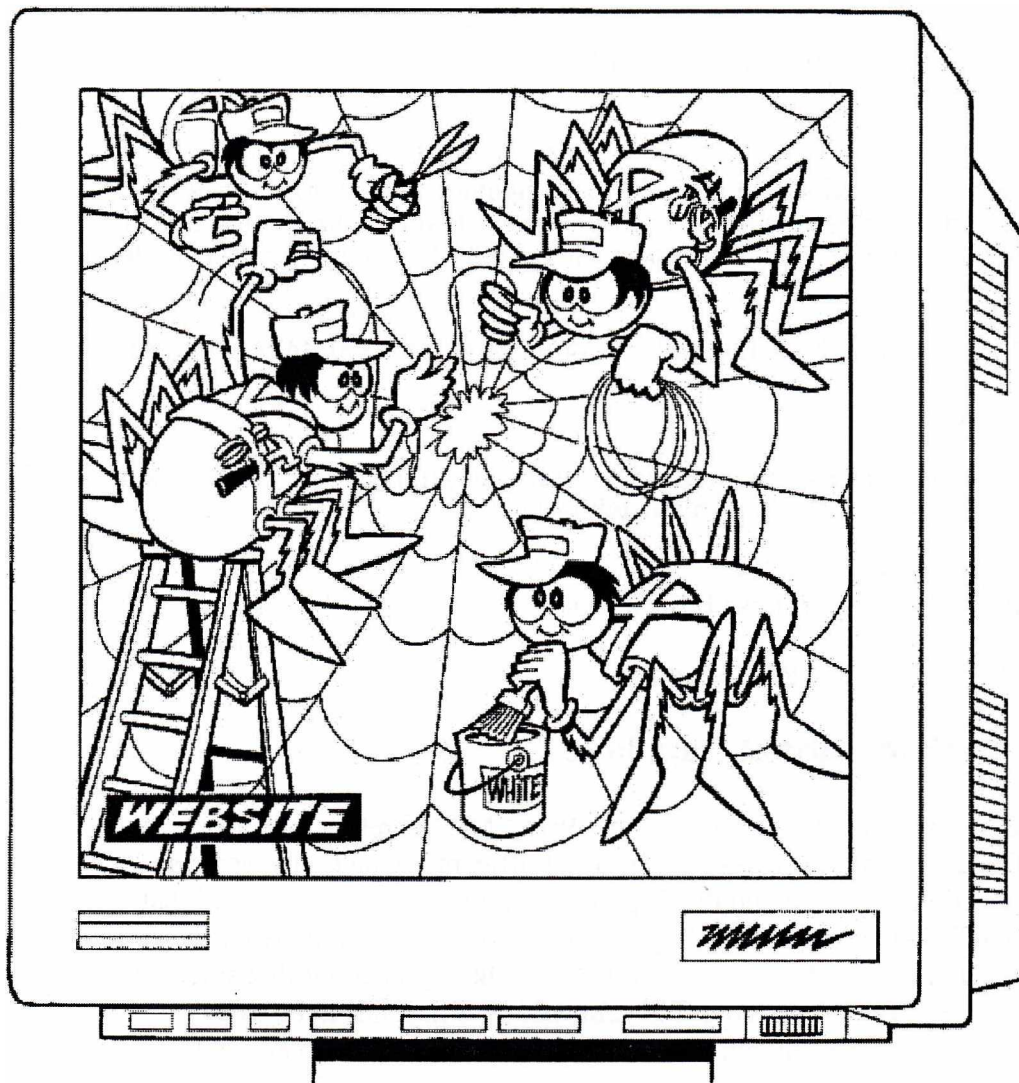
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## The One OS

from the Internet via Colleen

Recently one of my friends, a computer wizard, paid me a visit. As we were talking I mentioned that I had recently installed Windows on my PC, I told him how happy I was with this operating system and showed him the Windows CD. Too my surprise he threw it into my micro-wave oven and turned on the oven. Instantly I got very upset, because the CD had become precious to me, but he said:

'Do not worry, it is unharmed.'

After a few minutes he took the CD out, gave it to me and said:

'Take a close look at it.'

To my surprise the CD was quite cold to hold and it seemed to be heavier than before. At first I could not see anything, but on the inner edge of the central hole I saw a inscription, an inscription finer than anything I have ever seen before. The inscription shone piercingly bright, and yet remote, as if out of a great depth:

12413AEB2ED4FA5E6F7D78E78BEDE8209450920F923A40EE10E510CC98D444AA08E1324

'I cannot understand the fiery letters,' I said.

'No but I can,' he said. The letters are Hex, of an ancient mode, but the language is that of Microsoft, which I shall not utter here. But in common English this is what it says:

One OS to rule them all, One OS to find them,  
One OS to bring them all and in the darkness bind them.

(With humble apologies to the great and rare J.R.R.Tolkien)

## Ask Me About Capclave

The May 4<sup>th</sup> First Friday began with Prez Judy saying, "It's 9:18. Mr. Secretary is there anything?" Sec. Sam replied. "There is no old business. The slate of officers is exactly the same as the current officers. We have an election if Florida and the Supreme Court let us." Bob reported that the treasury is "\$1,028.28, not much." Judy commented, "If you want to vote, you can increase the treasury." Eric suggested a "pledge drive." Lee Strong said, "I want to talk to you about that since the *Journal* says I will match contributions." Bob said, "And if the *Journal* says it, it has to be true." <That's right, I'm writing holy writ.> The Entertainment Committee, "pledges \$2 just to annoy Lee."

Bob for Capclave thanked those who were at Third Friday who labored long into the night to do the mailing. He said we have 58 members. Alexis showed a letter asking us to remove a dead man from our mailing list (and giving his current address, presumably a cemetery?) Alexis pointed out, "We already have a ghost of honor." Elspeth protested, "Joe was never stiff." A fan said this letter provided evidence that Purgatory is in Baltimore. Alexis said that 18 flyers came back unstamped, he stamped them and sent them back.

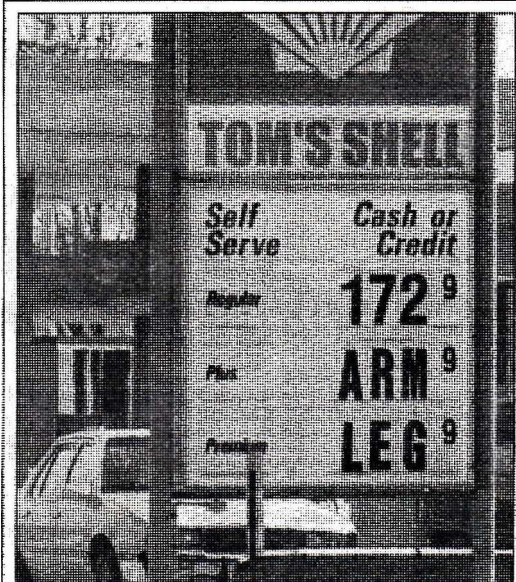




<But will the post awful accept a shoeprint as valid?>

Bob said, "At Balticon on Friday night we have a room for WSFA meeting so Capclave will be holding its party. What else should we do to promote Capclave? Ribbons? A banner saying Capclave? What?" John P suggested a bondage party. Eric replied, "I was waiting for it." Madeleine asked, "Are you volunteering?" Judy said, "I know how to torture him. Make him president!"

14 POST-TRIBUNE, Jefferson City, Missouri, Thursday, April 26, 2001



#### Truth in marketing?

Tom Jones, owner of Tom's Shell, in Madison, Wis., posted a catchy gas price sign Wednesday. He said he got the tongue-in-cheek gas price idea from a customer who brought in a cartoon. Jones says customers complain about the prices but he just wants to make them smile.

AP

Bob continued, "I won't be at the Third Friday so someone else has to take the ball and run with it. <But how do you run with a dance?> The party is something I can handle." Judy protested, "You've had no experience throwing parties." Bob replied, "Never done it before in my life. But if we do a table someone has to organize it." Someone said, "How much are we willing to do?" Alexis said, "Friday party should be fine." Elspeth said, "I don't think so. It is mostly WSFans who show up." Someone suggested T-shirts that say "Ask Me About Capclave" Bob thought that ribbons would be better. Eric suggested a large format poster, Elspeth added "Other than the usual flyers."

John said, "I think that Hal would give prime position to a banner. Also, since not a WSFA meeting, what about a traditional party on Saturday." Bob said that he isn't on the party floor but that we could hold it later on Friday. Judy said, "We'd get a larger crowd on Sat." Bob said, "I'd have to ask about a room on Saturday." Elspeth said, "Banner or poster getting people used to the idea of Capclave." Eric suggested "Flyers for everyone and their

brother." Elspeth said, "If have them at freebee table with 100s of others, they'll get lost." John said, "We could do ribbons saying What's Capclave?" Keith said, "Or ask me about Capclave." John said, "There'd have to be some money to spend." Bob said, "Spending money to promote the convention is something I'm willing to do." Lance suggested Backrubs for Capclave but Alexis threw a crick into the plan, "Not for a little regional." Sam Lubell said, "And a little too close to the bondage idea."

Bob said that the WSFA banner is too bid. "We need something heavy duty that can be used for all future capclaves." Judy called it a capital expenditure and added, "If you want to volunteer see Bob." Elspeth clarified, "If no one volunteers, it doesn't get done." Bob said "Fraid so" Judy Schier <check spelling> said, "I can spell it out in cloth." Bob asked, "By the 25<sup>th</sup>" "I can do it" <My notes say Capclave Future at wedding but I don't know what I meant by that.>

Eric for the austerity committee reminds you to bring food and donate money. "At our last meeting Erica said she wasn't taking money because getting so much in donations." Lee Gilliland for the trustees said, "After the meeting we have an election if you don't run away." Eric threatened "Or you'll be nominated." Publications committee has a slight correction to a previous issue. At the request of Madame Gilliland, WSFans are instructed NOT to use paper towels in the toilet.

Announcements. Bill Mayhew is doing story telling. NAS does lectures. There is a SF discussion group on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in the Manassas library, email Elspeth for details. Keith has indexed articles to the Journal online. Keith announced there would be a meeting of the local Life Extension and Cryonics group in Arlington on Sunday the 6th.

Election: At the election Lee Gilliland announced the trustee's slate consisting of all the current officers and trustees. No one else was nominated from the floor and everyone was re-elected

by acclamation in about five minutes. President – Judy Kindell. VP – Sam Pierce. Secretary – Samuel Lubell. Treasurer – Bob MacIntosh. Trustees – Lee Gilliland, Eric Jablow, Nicki Lynch.

Attendance: Prez Judy Kindell, Sec. Samuel Lubell, Treas and 2001 Chair Bob MacIntosh, Trust. Lee Gilliland, Trust Eric Jablow, Trust. Nicki Lynch. Bernard and Sheri Bell, Alexis Gilliland, Elspeth Kovar, Bradford Lyau, Keith and Richard Lynch, Walter Miles, Lance Oszko, Rebecca Prather, Judy and Sam Scheiner, George Shaner, Michael Taylor, Madeleine Yeh, Ivy Yap, Cathy Green, Robert Thornton, Victoria Smith, Adrienne Ertman.

### Fan On the Run



Keith Henson, a California SF fan, Worldcon program participant, non-fiction author, extropian, cryonicist, and founder of the L5 society and of the Last Proton Club, had been convicted of harassing Scientologists and was to be sentenced on May 16th. He had previously been sued for copyright infringement by the Scientologists, for posting their secret scriptures to the net, and declared bankruptcy after losing that suit. Keith Henson didn't show up for his sentencing, and was seeking asylum in Canada. He was arrested in Canada on Sunday the 28th, and is expected to be deported back to California. On June 8, 2001, Henson was released from maximum security. Details, and the developing story, can be followed at <http://operatingthetan.com/>

### Touched by the Gods by Lee Strong

"Is this 'time spanner' or 'time voyager' inside?" Behind the speaker, brilliant sunlight splashed down on the pyramids and canals of the greatest city in the One World.

"Yes, my lord curer. As your lordship has commanded, he has been confined to the grounds of the temple of Quetzalcoatl, but treated in a dignified, even comfortable, manner. We await your lordship's judgment."

"Very good. I will see him now."

The priest bowed his obedience. The noble swept past, instantly dismissing his inferior from his mind. He was preceded by a guard.

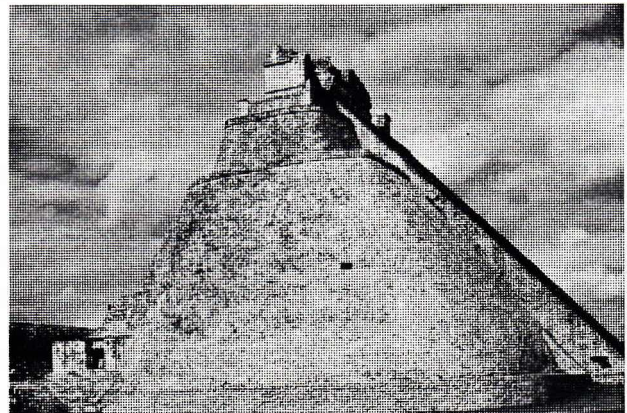
The room where the guest was kept was indeed comfortable. He had food, fresh water, a woolen sleeping pallet, a woman, and even tobacco (which he hadn't touched). The paleskinned guest rose courteously when the guard entered, and bowed his head when the noble followed.

"His lordship Itzcoatl, curer of the Chief Speaker of the Tenocha People will see 'Jaymz Ah-mil-toon', the guest of the Chief Speaker," barked the guard. He stumbled over the outré foreign name.

"Sit," commanded the noble, "and tell me your story."

The priests of Quetzalcoatl had evidently taught the foreigner some manners for he bowed again and waited for the noble to seat himself first. He drew a deep breath and began his story.

"Is kind to hear my tale your lordship. A traveler across the sea of time am I. James Hamilton am named I." The priests had evidently been only partially successful in teaching the



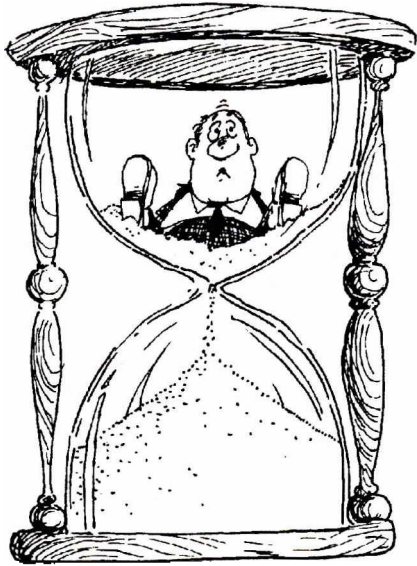


guest the "beautiful tongue." Still, by listening carefully, the noble made out the story that the priests had conveyed to him. As he listened, he observed the stranger carefully.

"Came I from another time world. In the time world from which came I, the Tenocha (or 'Aztec') peoples are not the proud masters of the One World. Instead are all the peoples of the One World downtrodden peasants ruled by peoples unknown to you called 'English' and 'Spanish.' From another world across the Eastern Sea came the English and Spanish and conquered your ancestors the Tenocha peoples in the reign of Montezuma the Second.

"In this other time world, sympathized with the Tenocha peoples many peoples. Was one of them I. Fought great battles we in councils and courts but were defeated we.

"Finally, in the year of our lord god 2023 which is the same as this, your year One Reed, but in the other time world, invented a time traveling palanquin a great magician. This stole I to better the plight of your peoples." The guest's eyes shone brightly.



"Used the time traveling palanquin I to travel to the year of our lord god 1476 August 13 where killed I a man 'Christopher Columbus' and his clan. A tragedy was this for that clan but a happy hour for all the peoples of the One World. In the other time world, now gone away, opened the paths of the sea between the Old World of the Spanish and English and the One World of the Peoples did Columbus. Created a new time world did his death. Now here this time world is the one of my envisioning. Now here rules a great empire the Tenocha Chief Speaker Montezuma VI."

In spite of his instruction, the guest rose without permission, waving his arms. The Dinsi guard stepped forward, but the noble gestured him back. The guest continued, louder and louder. "Now here are free all the peoples of the One World. Rises to the gods does the smoke of the pyramids. Glides peacefully thru the canals the produce of the farms. Does reign now here peace without the white

man." His face shone with pride.

There was a moment of silence before the noble spoke, "I thank you, Jaymz Ah-mil-toon, for your story. I must now go and render judgment.

The guest sighed in satisfaction. "Your lordship, when go may I? Wish to see great city Tenochtitlan and the other wonders of the Anahuac realm I."

The noble smiled thinly, "I promise you that you will see Tenochtitlan soon."

"Thank you, thank you, lord Itzcoatl," bubbled the guest. Impulsively, he grasped the noble's hand and pumped it vigorously. The guard leapt forward again, and was again restrained by a noble gesture. In his joy, the guest seemed not to notice.

Once the visitors had left the guest's room, the guard began to speak angrily, but his master waved him to silence. The waiting priest bowed deeply and asked, "Has your lordship reached a decision already? Is this foreigner touched by the gods?"

The noble curer replied softly, "No. He is too rational and his story is merely a traveler's wonder tale camouflaged as 'time worlds.' At first, his skin color confused me, but I recalled that our scouts have found a paleskinned Ainu people on an island in the Western Sea. He is no divine messenger. You may enslave him."

## CONJOSÉ ANNOUNCES BEST WEB SITE HUGO

ConJosé, the 2002 World Science Fiction Convention, has announced that it will be presenting a special Hugo Award for Best Web Site. The Award will be open to any web site primarily related to

the fields of science fiction, fantasy, or fandom and will be given for material displayed on the World Wide Web during the calendar year 2001.

The Hugo Awards are presented for achievement in the fields of science fiction and fantasy literature, both to professionals and fans. They are given by the World Science Fiction Society (WSFS) and are presented at the Society's annual convention (Worldcon). Past winners include Isaac Asimov, Robert Heinlein, Ursula Le Guin, William Gibson and, of course, the film "2001: A Space Odyssey". The Awards are named after the pioneering science fiction magazine editor, Hugo Gernsback.

The 2002 Worldcon, known as ConJosé, will take place at the McEnery Convention Center, San José, California from 29 August through 2 September 2002. Over 5,000 science fiction fans are expected to attend the event. San José is the capital of Silicon Valley, and therefore an ideal venue to introduce an award for excellence in publishing on the World Wide Web.

More information about the Hugo Awards can be obtained from the WSFS web site (<http://www.wsfs.org/>) or from this fan-run site ([http://www.emcit.com/hugo\\_home.shtml](http://www.emcit.com/hugo_home.shtml)). More information about ConJosé, including current membership rates, is available from its web site (<http://www.conjose.org/>) or by writing to [info@conjose.org](mailto:info@conjose.org).

How is the award defined? Best Web Site. Any generally accessible world wide web site whose subject is primarily related to the field of science fiction, fantasy, or fandom, and which had content generally available during the calendar year 2001.

Will the web site award be presented in other years? ConJosé is presenting the Best Web Site Award under a provision of the WSFS Constitution that allows individual Worldcons to add a single extra category to the Hugo Awards for one year only. Other Worldcons may also choose to present the web site award if they feel it appropriate. To make the award permanent it would be necessary to amend the WSFS Constitution. This is a fairly complex process that will take at least two years. If you would like more information about amending the WSFS Constitution please write to [wsfs@conjose.org](mailto:wsfs@conjose.org).

ConJose also announced an increase in their rates to \$160 after July 10<sup>th</sup>.

## fanzine REVIEWS by ted white

Each year fans interested in fanzines hold a convention called Corflu. Corflu 18, held in Boston, is only recently over (next year's Corflu will be in Annapolis, Maryland), and, as usual, I was handed a bunch of fanzines. Here are a couple:

NIEKAS (Ed Meskys at Niekas Publications, RR#2, Box 63, 322 Whittier Hwy., Center Harbor NH 03226-9708; e-mail to [edmeskys@worldpath.net](mailto:edmeskys@worldpath.net); subscriptions: \$19 for four issues, \$37 for eight; also available for trades or contributions)

Niekas is a big (64 pages plus covers) photo-offset fanzine. It's "standard" letter-page-sized, but printed on sheets twice that size and "saddle-stapled." Ed Meskys is the "Editor-in-Chief" with Anne Braude and Todd Frazier his "Associate" and "Assistant" respectively, while Jim Reynolds handles "Design, Typesetting, Layout and Production." Ed needs these helpers because he has been for several decades too visually impaired to handle all the



chores of a large fanzine himself. Ed started *Niekas* in 1962, while he was still sighted – originally for a small apa (amateur publishing association). Within a few issues he picked up Felice Rolfe as his coeditor and his fanzine exploded into a fat genzine which won the Hugo Award for Best Fanzine in 1967. Felice has left the fanzine, but with the current issue, #46, it's still going strong.

*Niekas* is a type of fanzine which is called "sercon" these days. That means it approaches SF from a serious, sometimes academic, point of view. This issue highlights "An Address by Our Technology Guest of Honor," by Dr. Raymond Kurzweil, a keynote address to the fourth US/Canada [blind] Technology Seminar, reprinted from *Braille Monitor*. There are seven columns (in addition to Ed's editorial), notable among them Diana L. Paxson's "Patterns: Sharing a World with Marion Zimmer Bradley" and Ray Nelson's "On Liking Clark Ashton Smith." This issue is a special "Strange Sports Stories" issue, with eight contributions to "The Sports Section." In addition there are two "Extremely Short Science-Fiction Stories," several works of poetry, a section of book reviews by a variety of writers, and what amounts to two letter columns, the first arranged by topics under discussion. The art and visual presentation of *Niekas* is looser and more "fannish" than one might expect in a fanzine of its nature; *Niekas* is not an imitation professional magazine. It will be appealing to a broad range of fans, including those mostly unfamiliar with fanzines.

AZTEC BLUE (Murray Moore, 1065 Henley Rd., Mississauga, ON L4Y 1C8 Canada; e-mail to [mmoore@pathcom.com](mailto:mmoore@pathcom.com); available for trade, contributions, letters of comment and single-issue requests)

*Aztec Blue* #3 lies at the opposite end of the fanzine spectrum from *Niekas*. It runs 22 pages and is warm and informal, half of its pages taken up with the letter column. The remainder of the material is Murray's editorial, which opens the issue, and the conclusion of John Berry's report on a 1988 trip to Albania, the first two parts of which appeared in issues 1 and 2. Murray knows how to make his fanzine look good. Grant Canfield's cover, a drawing of a "man with a bionic backhoe for an arm," is brilliantly conceived and rendered in a style not unlike that of French comics artist Moebius. Grant's back cover drawing, a study of a "light fixture at the bridge over the Truckee River, downtown Reno, Nevada," reminds us that his day gig is as an architect. Between the covers, *Aztec Blue* is neatly but informally presented and is an excellent example of an unpretentious fanzine that deserves your attention.

### Cybele, with Bluebonnets

by Charles L. Harness (Old Earth Books, 2001)

A review by Colleen R. Cahill

Many of us have experienced feelings of fate; that something was destined to happen. These moments are often enigmatic, emotionally charged and rare in the normal pattern of our lives. This is the feeling captured by Charles L. Harness' *Cybele, with Bluebonnets*. The work shows day-to-day life, with its joys, sorrows, work and play, but has gentle touches of the fantastic, so subtle that they catch the reader off guard.

The story is narrated by Joe Barnes, oldest son of a poor widow. He grows up during the 1930's in Fort West, a small town in West Texas. Joe has a strong interest in science, especially chemistry. It seems natural that he also has a crush on his high school chemistry teacher, Cybele Wilson. Cybele is an attractive, intelligent young woman and voted the most popular teacher in the school. But being a female science teacher in that era is radical and Cybele is viewed by the town as a possible revolutionary, atheist, or most damning, of Yankee descent. Her background is mysterious. Raised as a broader at St. Joseph's, a non-denominational monastery and school

that claims to house the Holy Grail, most believe she is an orphan. After attending college in Washington, DC she returns to Fort West, but never fits in the society. Joe's crush borders on obsession and it is only strengthened as his life continuously retouches Cybele's, sometimes without his being aware of it. Harness makes these seem like coincidences, but as they pile up in the story, the reader becomes more sure there is something more behind this.

A large part of what makes this book as successful is the descriptions of daily life. Joe is a average person with no magical abilities or great powers. He struggles with regular problems: finding a job (a challenge in the Great Depression), making choices that will not upset his very religious Mother, and desiring to study chemistry when there is little money or hope for college. Joe's inventiveness and steady determination create some of the best scenes in the work. In one, Joe seeks revenge on a Junior High School principal who confiscated several issues of *Amazing Stories* and other such literary treasures. With great resourcefulness, Joe uses a Ford ignition coil to exact a delightful retribution, and it is equally amusing in the way he is found out. The Ford coil reappears twice more in the story, following the cyclical theme of the work.

Harness's strength is in the realistic reminiscences of his main characters. He grew up in West Texas during the 1930's and was a chemical patent lawyer for many years. But this would just be a coming-of-age story if not for the elements of fantasy the book includes. At first seeming like happenstance, the continuous meeting of characters eventually dispels all feeling of coincidence. The Holy Grail and the monks, the enigmatic Cybele and her ability to attract Joe, and subtle twists in the story make this a intriguing and unique literary work, both a reminiscence and a fantasy. Those familiar with Harness's earlier work, such as **The Paradox Men** will definitely want to check out this new title. For those who have not, this is a wonderful introduction to a writer whose work deserves much more attention.

### Previously Owned

May 18<sup>th</sup>. Brad took the gavel. "Okay" said President Judy. "Let's have a meeting," said Sam P. "It's 9:16" Judy clinched it. Sam L. said, "Last meeting we elected the same old officers." People in the club preferred to call them "previously owned, recycled, and broken-in." Sam said last meeting's balance in the absence of the treasurer who Judy said "has run off". The entertainment committee put gutter guards on their gutters." Steve said, "Does that mean that our minds won't fit?" Someone said, "They will if they're small."

For Capclave Alexis announced 65 memberships. Colleen had a sign-up sheet for the table. Sam Pierce volunteered to take pile of returned flyers to Baltimore for updating their list. Elspeth said World Fantasy is still negotiating with hotel. She went over an electronic copy of the contract with Ben Yallow, one of the best hotel negotiators in fandom. He saw a new clause in the contract he had never seen.

For old business. Sam L. asked about how many copies of the flyer were needed. He was told a couple of hundred since some people would want to take it.

Announcements. Keith said Rebecca Prather asked about roommates. Douglas Adams died. Keith said that he had indexed all of the articles in WSFA Journal issues that we have online, May 1996 through May 2001. "I have all articles indexed by author and by title. I have reviews indexed by author of the work reviewed, and by title of the work reviewed. I also have an index of obituaries, and an index of meeting minutes. These indexes are all at <http://www.wsfa.org/>." Unanimous adjournment at 9:37.

Attendance. Pres. Judy Kindell, VP Sam Pierce, Sec. Samuel Lubell, Trust Lee Gilliland, Eric Jablow, Nicki Lynch, Bernard and Sheri Bell, Colleen Cahill, Arthur Dent, Adrienne Ertman, Alexis Gilliland, Erica Ginter, Elspeth Kovar, Will Ludwigsen, Bradford Lyau, Keith Lynch, Richard Lynch,



Keith Marshall, Walter Miles, Barry and Judy Newton, Ford Perfect, Evan Phillips, George Shaner, Steven Smith, Michael Taylor, Michael Walsh, Ivy Yap, Madeleine Yeh, Ron Kean, Ron Taylor, Andrew Williams, Sally Hand, Joe Vallin, H.P. Lovecraft.(at least it wasn't Cthullu).

### Treasurer's Report

#### Expenses:

First Friday	\$25.00
WSFA Journal	\$41.90

Total	\$66.90
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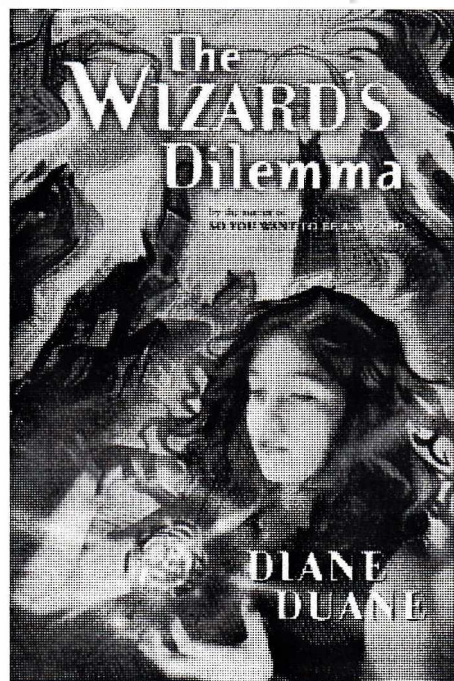
Dues Collected (Ivy Yap) \$10.00

### Review of Diane Duane's *The Wizard's Dilemma* (Harcourt, \$17 HB)

By Samuel Lubell

YA Fantasy lately has been doing some pretty innovative stuff. While Harry Potter has been grabbing the headlines and the bestseller spots, other authors, especially Diane Duane, Diane W. Jones, and Phillip Pullman have been showing that YA Fantasy can handle fairly sophisticated concepts, certainly more adult in theme and tone than the endless quests that dominate so much of the trilogies for supposedly more adult readers. (And at 403 pages, this book is closer to adult length than the usual shorter YA books (if that distinction means anything in an age of 700+ page Harry Potter doorstoppers.))

Diane Duane has a fairly involved system of magic. The purpose of wizardry is to stop to entropy from causing the death of the universe. This forces the wizards into conflict with the "Lone Power" that seeks to destroy life. All creatures can become wizards (Duane has a related series about wizard cats one of whom makes a cameo here) and wizards have the most power when they are young.



In this book the young wizard Nita and her longtime partner in wizardry Kit appear to be growing apart as they grow up, just when Nita needs support the most. When the two disagree on how to perform an important magical working, Kit does it without her. Then, due to an unusual discovery, he spends much of the book out of Nita's ability to contact him. At the same time, Nita's mother becomes deathly ill and Nita, seemingly unable to save her by conventional magic, is faced with a dilemma of whether to cooperate with the Lone One which promises to cure her mother if Nita gives up the fight against it. This dilemma and Nita's growing realization that magic may not be enough to help her elevate this book beyond standard fantasy fare. And the book neatly handles an issue that bothers many an adult reader of books about younger characters – namely what are the adults doing while their children are saving the universe.

The best book in the series was the second, *Deep Wizardry* in which Nita and Kit go underwater to recreate an

ancient ritual binding the power of the sea and Nita's parents begin to worry about her relationship with her wizard partner Kit. The first and third books were very good but not quite up to that level. And the fourth book *Wizard Abroad* (and the most recent cat book) were fairly pedestrian. Fortunately, *The Wizard's Dilemma* is nearly as good as *Deep Wizardry* (and may become as good upon re-reading it.) This one isn't quite as enjoyable as some of the others (the problem of a sick mother hits home the way the problems of silicon intelligence do not) but is extremely powerful and interesting.

### Letters to WSFA.

Nick Pollotta sent an email complaining that "There's nothing special about *Special Unit 2*" complaining that the premise of a special police unit fighting the supernatural is similar to his fantasy/horror trilogy about "Bureau 13," a covert branch of the FBI that handles supernatural criminals, copyright 1988, a very long time before *The X-Files*, *Men in Black*, *Buffy*, or *SU2*.

*Editor: Oh come now, you can hardly think that the idea of an organized force of good guys fighting monsters is original to you. And even if it hadn't been used all the way back to the ancient Greeks, if not earlier, general concepts cannot be copyrighted. Otherwise we'd be stuck with only one First Contact story, one Robots Run Amuck story, one Quest for the Magic Object story (which would have saved a lot of trees) etc.*

### Honor Harrington and Her Worlds Created by Dave Weber A universe review by Lee Strong

Reviewing an entire universe is a big job, but I'm a big being. I'm tackling this job because Dame Harrington has now starred in 12 books, and the newcomer might benefit from a short orientation tour before setting sail with Honor.

Dave Weber's future universe is a conscious updating of the classic Horatio Hornblower novels set during the Napoleonic Wars. The Star Kingdom of Manticore represents the stalwart British while the hostile People's Republic of Haven is an intelligent and nasty blend of Napoleonic France and 20th Century totalitarian states. Other nations, such as the gigantic but indolent Solorian League, the pious Graysons, the wonderfully wacky Andaman Empire and the chaotic Silesian Confederacy, enliven Weber's universe.

In keeping with the future Napoleonic theme, technology also mimics 18th Century naval science. Starships have energy "sails" to propel them thru hyperspace which has currents equivalent to Earthly ocean streams. Naval architecture has produced force fields that cover the tops and bottoms of ships, making the main tactic a laser and missile version of 18th Century broadsides! Genetic engineering is fairly common, but limited to medical upgrades in most cases, including our heroine.

In this universe, alien races are rather few and far in between. The vaguely humanoid inhabitants of Basilisk are briefly glimpsed in the first book, but only barely. Except for the treecats of Sphinx, other races go unmentioned. However, the 'cats more than make up for this lack as we get several stories from their point of view as well as portentous statements about the human/'cat alliance. The 'cats are highly telepathic hexapods that hang out with humans because of our brilliant mind glows and genuine affection for small, furry creatures. Unfortunately, almost all humans are telepathically "deaf" to the 'cats, and must judge our furry friends based on poorly understood empathy. This is complicated by a 'cat racial decision to mask their true intelligence for reasons not fully explained. Fortunately, we are informed that the 'cats are changing

their minds and will inform us of their new status in the near future. In the meantime... they ARE cute, aren't they?!

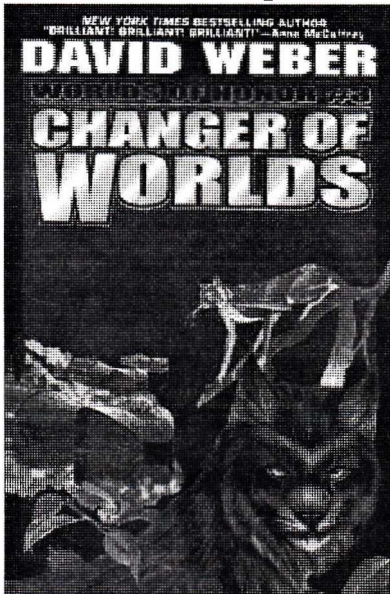
The overplot of Weber's series is the Havenite drive to conquer and loot Manticore and its allies. Honor herself is a Naval officer, climbing the ranks while valiantly and skillfully fighting for Queen and Country against enemies both foreign and domestic. Most novels revolve around the incidents of future naval life, including military and police operations, diplomacy, and the perks and pains of life in the Queen's Navy. Even stories set under distant Chicago revolve around the "Peep" versus "Manty" conflict. Along the way, Honor meets numerous friends, allies, enemies, and neutrals whose agendas complicate her life. Among the best realized characters are her ally and patron Benjamin Mayhew, Protector of the religious planet Grayson, her vicious Manticorean enemy Lord Pavel Young, and her pet/companion, the alien treecat Stinker... pardon me, Nimitz. Other delightful characters include her lover Paul Tankersley, a selection of her opposing Peep admirals, and her Queen the redoubtable Elizabeth Winton. Weber's characters are seldom subtle, but always interesting.

I like Honor. Like Hornblower before her, she earns her victories the hard way... thru skill, knowledge, dedication, and lots of hard work. It turns out that she is a "genie" – a genetically engineered superior human – but this is no panacea, and sometimes proves to be a handicap! Basically, Honor is every woman (and every man) who succeeds by giving her best to her fellows and directing their energies to the common good. If she has a flaw, she seems rather emotionally cool. We seldom get into her head or those of any other characters. Instead, we watch their actions from outside. However, this is scarcely a disabling factor to generations raised on Mr. Spock. Huzzah, huzzah, huzzah!

Other features of Honor's universe worth mentioning are the aristocratic nature of Manticorean society, the true sexual and racial equality and harmony, and a serious technical orientation. The equality is skillfully underplayed, while the technical material occasionally overwhelms the action. More controversial, and more interesting, is Weber's positive portrayal of the Manticorean nobility and their political

machinations. Outright aristocracy is out of fashion these politically correct days, and Mr. Weber has done an excellent job at showing its virtues and vices. Not bad for a commoner!

Like all good universes, Honor's is slowly expanding to include other worlds, nations, and characters. Prospects for more and more Honor appear excellent. I rate Dave Weber's Honor Harrington universe as a satisfying "B" on the high school A-F scale. – LS



### **Worlds of Honor #3: Changer of Worlds (Riverdale, NY: Baen, 2001)**

**Created by Dave Weber  
A book review by Lee Strong**

Shiver me timbers! The King's Men be after us, maties!

This book includes 4 novellas by creator Weber and newcomer Eric Flint showing us various aspects of Honor's universe previously unseen. "Ms. Midshipwoman Harrington" is our heroine's back story, showing her "snotty cruise" (i.e., her first professional assignment out of the Academy). "Changer of Worlds" gives us a look at the Sphinxian treecats as they decide to reveal their true intelligence to "their" humans. "From the Highlands" by Eric Flint revolves around an espionage plot set in Chicago's future



underworld. "Nightfall" adds details to a previously related military coup attempt in the poisonous People's Republic.

This is good stuff, but, frankly, not the best I've seen. "Nightfall" is unnecessary filler since we read the original incident elsewhere. "From the Highlands" is good, but rather preachy and foreordained. Is that really how people date in the future? "Changer of Worlds" is also good, but depends on the reader having read the rest of the series to make sense. "Midshipwoman" is the best of the lot, with nasty enemies conspiring and helpful mentors perspiring to help our heroine either down or up the ladder of success. As a result, Honor takes command at a critical moment, and makes her mark for both good and ill. Read it and cheer a truly noble person.

I rate Worlds of Honor #3: Changer of Worlds as a solid "C" on the high school A-F system. — LS

### **Peggy Rae's Email Change**

By Samuel Lubell

After Peggy Rae announced she would be sharing John's email address (Peggy Rae e-mail address to JTSapient@bellatlantic.net), Elspeth protested that Capclave had just sent out flyers with the old email address. Sam decided that this worth a top ten list of reasons for Peggy Rae's email change.

10. Practice for her impending real-world address change.
9. Trying to escape the throngs of people who are still trying to join Bucconeer.
8. Well, it's traditional for a bride to take on her husband's name and address.
7. Cuts down household spam in half.
6. Old email address distributed to hundreds of people on Capclave flyers.
5. Still getting tech support queries from former coworkers.
4. Changing her email name a couple of weeks after volunteering at Balticon -- coincidence? I think not!
3. Three capital letters in email address foreshadows future decision to attend the Jewish Theological Seminary to become a Rabbi.
2. Old address known to most deadly group of people with computers -- science fiction fans.
1. Worldwide email address shortage.

Meanwhile, moving in the opposite direction, Alexis Gilliland has gained an email address of his own at wizenbeak@excite.com

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