

N'APN 232

The Official Organ

#232

Next deadline: March 15, 2017

The official collator is George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net.

N'APA is the Amateur Press Alliance for members of the National Fantasy Fan Federation (N3F). As it is distributed in PDF format, there are no dues or postage fees. It is open to all members of the N3F. If there are members interested in joining who have no computer access, special arrangements may be possible. People who only want to read are welcome to ask to be added to the email list. Check with the official collator, who is George Phillies, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester MA 01609; phillies@4liberty.net; 508 754 1859; and on facebook.

To join this APA, contact the Editor, George Phillies, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester MA 01609.

I occasionally send a copy of N'APA to the accessible (email address needed) N3F membership, in the hope that some of them will join N'APA.

Currently the frequency is every other month, with the deadline being on the fifteenth day of odd-numbered months. The mailing will normally be collated in due time, as the collator is retired. Publication is always totally regular, though some readers question my interpretations of "is", "always", "totally", and "regular". N'APA has been in existence since 1959, but has transitioned from being a paper APA to an electronic one.

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The Murdered Master Mage
For N'APA 232
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Welcome to 2018! I hope my fellow N'APAns are all well and looking forward to the New Year. I am now very close to finishing the novel I've been talking about, *Against Three Lands* is getting the final reader pass and cover. After various alternatives, I am following the example of Ryk Spoor and seeking a cover from the Japanese anime artist Morinekozion. The best cover choice appears to be well drawn human figures, namely a Scotsman in kilt drawing his sword, a Frenchman who appears to have escaped from the Musketeers, and the Japanese-appearing young lady who is in fact a samurai. There actually were a very small number of such people, the well-known name being Tomoe Gozen. I will then return to *The Girl Who Saved the World* which at 127,000 words is about half done.

Lorien Rivendell: I can assure you that asking people not to submit PDF documents is not your fault. The difficulty you are describing seems to be commonplace. People take a file in some format, convert it to a PDF file, and have a file that is much larger than the file they started with, rather than being smaller as would reasonably have been expected. I have no idea why this is happening, or what should be done about it.

I saw your note about missing an issue, and sent you what I believe is the issue you are missing. Your description of the Verizon and email businesses sounded confusing. I hope the change eventually worked out well for you. Sympathies also on your cat passing away. I will eventually have the same fate.

Pounce has been with me for 5 years, and is probably about 10 years old, though I really am not sure.

I hope that National Novel Writing Month actually brought you to a novel.

With respect to Chris Nuttall, I suggest you start with the first book in his *Schooled in Magic* series. Emily is a plausible character. If you are not already certain of it, you may correctly infer that Chris was subject to an English boarding school and has an exceedingly dim opinion of them. Emily, who by-and-by will become Emily Necromancer's Bane, is an interesting character. The world is well-worked out.

We do in fact send out every so often a list of all members. However, there is a definite proposal from Jon Swartz that we should send out a membership directory, including interests. This would be a fair bit of work. The hard part is working through the membership list and the membership information roster and finding out what people are interested in. Some people actually do fill out membership forms. Those forms are now being retained, something that did not used to happen, alas. However, many people do not have an extant membership form. For those people, we really do not know what their interests are, so someone would need to contact each of them and find out.

The count of members has gone up even more. From what I can tell, at least some of the credit should go to fellow N'APAn John Thiel, and some credit should go to Jeffrey Redmond. I have recruited very few members myself. My contribution has been, to a very limited extent, to revive club activities so that there is more reason to join the National Fantasy Fan Federation.

Indeed, I am running another national conference, and it has been a nightmare. It was going to be a joint conference with another group. They were handling the site, so all I would have to do is generate speakers and panels. Unfortunately, both sides had a series of folks who were appointed, agreed to do work, and then failed to deliver.

With respect to losing power, a couple of years back there was an ice storm in Québec. Large parts of the province were without power. The last people did not get their power back, these being people in remote rural areas, for a year.

John Thiel: Sympathies on having your house vandalized. That is a dreadful, and very strange, thing to have happen. What did the Tape Bureau do? What sort of tape was in question? It's good to know that the Short Story Contest goes back at least to the early 1980s. I remember entering it in the late 1980s. I am not sure that I ever won. I do recall getting a letter of comment from the judge that was entirely about the matter that I had put an estimated number of stamps on the outside envelope, as opposed to taking time off from work to take the envelope to a post office and having it weighed exactly. That comment and rant went on for a page. I think that was the last time I submitted anything to our contest.

Pournelle wrote a great deal on computers, and occasionally wrote an SF novel. His Janissaries series needed one more book to complete. Apparently that one was largely finished when he had passed away, so it may yet see the light of day from someone. I am reasonably sure that future history can also be traced back to a time line in some of Heinlein's 1950s books. One of the peculiar features of that was a list of people and when they lived and died. However, I was

never quite able to figure that part of the graph out, because one of the people — I think the name was Libby — went on for the full top to bottom of the graph, as though it were really a line dividing 2 parts of the graph. It did not occur to me at the time that Libby was an immortal.

Jefferson Swycaffer: The person being banned from Worldcon appears to have led to controversies in parts of fandom. I continue to be reminded of the debate over the Great Exclusion. Fortunately I am now a retired professor, so I will not have students asking me if I was one of the people who had been excluded.

I am happy that my contribution to the short story contest, namely recruiting contributors, turned out well. We appear to have had a lot of entries.

Kevin Trainor: the notion of doing a celebration for the 60th anniversary of this APA is a fine idea. Alas, we are spread out across the United States, and some Neffers are from far further away, so actually getting together might be a bit challenging.

My telephones continue to work reasonably well. I concede that the local phone network does not seem to be smart enough to handle a rotary dial phone delivering inputs, but that is unlikely to be the telephone from which I would attempt to dial. I do on some of the others have to be a little careful about the pushbuttons, which can be a bit finicky.

Campbell did take a position against the Amazing Magazine approach to science fiction in which you had to explain everything in great detail. Of course, this was a long time ago, and most readers could not be assumed to recognize the tropes that we would all know. If we see a very short television clip of a city skyline and flying

across it is a young man wearing a cape with no visible means of support, we would immediately think of superheroes. In the 1920s, people had never heard of these things. To some extent, the Buck Rogers book said to explain anti-gravity and rocket belts and rocket pistols, because otherwise people would be baffled by what they were. On the other hand, some moderns underestimate 1930s technology. The first Olympic Games to be televised were the 1936 Berlin games, at least within Germany, though most people watched by going to television theaters. Period TVs used flying spot methods, so huge screens were much easier, and much brighter, (if not as good) to create. A 1930s TV display could be three or four yards on a side, using the back-projected flying spot method. On the same line, the first American president to make a televised address was... Franklin Delano Roosevelt, opening the 1939 New York World's Fair.

I was unaware of hidden manuscripts buried in strange places, other of course than the Necronomicon, which will hopefully remain buried. I am not sure what to say about pink wave SF, since I have never heard the phrase before. I am not sure I want to know, but I suppose it was my moral duty to ask what pink wave SF is, as opposed to, for example, New Wave.

I will send you the manuscript of *Against Three Lands*. You are welcome to suggest a better title. Chris Nuttall was kind enough to write an introduction.

With respect to Jules Verne, there is a modern translation of *20,000 Leagues under the Sea*. The original translator had no scientific training, as a result of which the novel includes some hysterical bloopers in its translation. Verne's science was actually quite up-to-date. There are a few points he

did not get right. Putting the diving plane on a submarine square in the center, next to the center of buoyancy, is not an ideal solution. If a ship sinks, it does not reach a depth at which its specific gravity matches the specific gravity of the water, because even in the deep ocean the density of water does not change that much. I am not sure where Verne got that idea from. His description of the classification of fish is astonishing. Large segments of text omitted from the old translation appear in the new one. These make the book much more coherent. In particular, Captain Nemo has the opinion that the Nautilus can always surface for air and therefore arrangements for removing carbon dioxide from the ship's atmosphere are unnecessary. He then takes the Nautilus under the Antarctic ice and manages to get trapped. Verne carefully has mounted the shotgun on the wall well in advance of the disaster, from which the heroes barely escape.

I am told that modern readers of Jane Austen largely do not understand what she is saying, because the book is full of cultural references that we do not have. For example, she drops in a few words describing a piece of furniture in a room, and her readers in period would immediately know very much what the room looked like. Modern Americans, not so much. I gather this is why Georgette Heyer did well, in part, namely modern readers needed the description of works that she supplied.

The Girl Who Saved the World, continued

"In addition, the American Republic would view it to be an act of war for any foreign power to insert their persona teams into the territory of any of the Canadian Dominions, unless Her Majesty's government had invited them, in which case the situation would be taken under advisement. As an

exception, any effort of the IncoAztec government to insert its persona teams or armed hordes into the territory of any other country in the Americas will be taken to be a declaration of war on the American Republic, a declaration against which the American Republic will respond in full. I believe that Ambassador Featherstonehaugh is the next to speak, and I yield to him.”

Buncombe wondered how long would be needed for other powers to deduce that the Republic had discussed his anticipated remarks with Her Britannic Majesty and her Ministers. Some ambassadors, he considered, would doubtless need to have it explained to them.

“On behalf of Her Majesty’s government,” Featherstonehaugh responded, “I will say that we are grateful for the offer of the American government to support the independence and liberty of each of Her Majesty’s Canadian Dominions against foreign invasion, with the clear understanding that has already been negotiated between our Minister of State and Speaker Ming that at such time as we request our American friends to depart that they will do so as expeditiously as possible given the potential need to assist the sick and injured, extinguish fires, and support the detention of foreign prisoners of war pending their fair trials and prompt executions. Potential needs were in fact discussed at some length; we are quite sure that the British Empire and the American Republic are in complete agreement on the notion of potential needs and expeditious withdrawal. Also, Her Majesty’s government views the independence and security of other nations in the Americas to be a critical matter for the security of the British Empire. There is no possibility that Her Majesty’s government would consider being responsible for the consequences if the independence or security of any of these

nations were to be infringed upon. The longstanding alliance between her Majesty’s Realm and the Empire of the Brazilians is viewed as particularly sacrosanct. Having said that, I believe that Ambassador Davout had signaled a desire to speak, perhaps even before I did, but he graciously offered to allow me to speak first.” Featherstonehaugh passed the Speaking Stone to Davout.

“On behalf of his Most Placid and Serene Majesty, the Sixth Napoleon, may His House endure forever, I must most emphatically indicate that the French Empire categorically and completely rejects the suggestion that foreign powers are entitled to besmirch the name of the Empire and the honor of the Legion of Glory by claiming a right to enter our territory and attack our citizens, as though we were unable to protect ourselves.” Davout closed the case from which he had been reading his remarks. The Legion of Glory, Buncombe, thought, was the French Military Persona Host.

Holmgren, fearing what was about to happen, nonetheless was obliged to recognize Ambassador Smoking Frog. “The Living Sun, The First Speaker,” Smoking Frog said, “has anticipated the outrageous statements of the American Ambassador and his foreign toadies.” Featherstonehaugh and Davout looked at each other and rolled their eyes. “The right of the League of Nations to take possession of the Namestone is beyond question or doubt. It is totally forbidden and contrary to the League Charter, the votes of this body, and the votes of the World Council for any nation to take any other stand. Furthermore, it is the privilege and duty of the persona leagues and military forces of every nation of the world to enforce these votes anywhere on the planet without begging leave of the local governments, including the local government that charters and funds the

persona league in question, all of which are entirely subordinate to the League of Nations and therefore must be brought to heel if they fail to obey the League's righteous edicts. The people of the world may be assured that so soon as the Bearer is located, the Jaguar Knights and the Eagle Legion will descend upon her, strip her of the Namestone, and prepare her to be food for the Gods, or such other form of extended dying as this body may choose to specify."

Holmgren steeled himself for what would undoubtedly be the extended remarks of most of the remaining ambassadors, some saying that their countries were entitled to pursue the Namestone wherever it was found, and others saying that there was no such entitlement. On one hand, he considered, only a minority of Great Powers would claim their right of intervention. On the other hand, Manjukuo and the IncoAztec Empire would both claim ~~the~~that alleged right ~~of intervention~~. Alas, they were probably the two most populous nations in the world, and both of them were vigorous about seeking out and training persona talents wherever found. Holmgren told himself that he had wisely packed several large flasks in his vest and suitcoat pockets, and suspected that very soon he would be managing to drain them of their fine beverages, all of which had begun their lives as grain, variously American, Scots, and Russian in extraction.

At long last, the argument over foreign intervention ran out of steam. "What do we tell our citizens?" Lars Holmgren finally responded prayerfully after finishing another sip at his American flask.

"Perhaps," Buncombe said, "you could tell the people of the world that you eventually reached this meeting's agenda." It wasn't always necessary to lead Holmgren by the nose, he thought, but it seemed to be

necessary more and more often. Perhaps that reflected Holmgren's need to fortify himself, more and more often.

"Ah, yes, the original agenda. Eclipse and how she escaped. Is there an issue here?" The Ambassadors glowered. "Valkyria," Holmgren said, "Can you add anything to what happened afterward?"

"Rolf," she answered, her use of the first name reminding her audience of the ill-kept secret that she was also Lindgren's mistress, or perhaps the other way around, "there is a written report with video support, which hopefully all of you have had time to study- Let me, however, -"

Buncombe nodded in agreement. Nonetheless, he knew, Valkyria would insist on giving her report, or at least a precis of it, rather than asking for questions. "Let me," she continued, "note that the broadcast video of my conversation with the Bearer does not completely agree with what I remember her saying. The actual events appeared to be a scenario that we'd examined very thoroughly, namely the 'politepolitely declines to cooperate' option. The plan was not perfect. I believe one of Markgraf Moeller's excellent volumes on tactics treats plan failure." She smiled in Moeller's direction. He glowered. "The first failure was that the Bearer does not look like all the drawings we are distributing. She's considerably shorter than I am, enough that at first I thought she was not the Bearer, and could not imagine who she was. It did not help that the Maze was doing time distortion, so that my teleport to St. Brendan's Isle took some hours to complete. Based on Eclipse's actions in the Maze, we thought we had a good estimate of her gifts, namely she had close to none. We appeared on Atlanticea with what should have been overwhelming strength. The ancient American aphorism is 'If a company seems

enough, send in a division. That way no one gets hurt.' We've had time to do a complete reconstruction. Eclipse was a solid target, not an illusion. Most attacks on Eclipse found their target. All six of my team drains were drawing at full capacity. Lady Sylph is emphatically certain: The Screaming Skull hit Eclipse with his death command. I hit her with the Katana of Justice. All that, and Eclipse's defenses did not go down."

Buncombe stared at one of the walls in seeming boredom. A part of Valkyria's remarks had not been in the written report, namely that Eclipse did not resemble her wanted posters. That was going to raise certain challenges for anyone trying to capture her.

"She used the Namestone?" Elizaveta Romanoff asked. The Russian Ambassador's interruption was only almost a question.

"The *Copper Book of Harvest Stars* is completely clear," Valkyria answered calmly. "The Wizard of Mars agreed, a very expensive question to have had answered. The Bearer needs several days to mesh with Namestone's powers. Until then, Namestone supplies a few cosmetic tricks, no more. Observe that Eclipse's garb was immaculate, and her face was unmarred. That was all the Namestone did for her. No, Eclipse stood up to us using her own shields. If she had a team backing her, they did a darn fine job of remaining invisible the whole time, not to mention fooling six Drains and a Seer. I am less bothered that we didn't take her down, and more bothered that the Screaming Skull didn't appear to have

discomfited discomfited her. Perhaps I should also be bothered that she did not give the Martyr her private persona name. The *Copper Book* says that that is a requirement for being given the Namestone. Somehow she managed to dodge answering his Martyr's question."

"Someone who stands up to the Skull? Is there such a person?" Legate Hong asked. "But which appearance is false? Which image was falsified? The one you saw or the one the world saw? Or both?"

Valkyria rested her chin on her fingertips. "Someone else? Other Lords of Eternity. A few personas from ancient history. Ambassador Featherstonehaugh's illustrious ancestor, Morgan La Fey. The Goetic Knights wore enchanted armor, armor superior to mine. The Marik Master of Parades supposedly wore the Invincible Sigil of the Eternal Procession. This Eclipse person is none of the above. However, manifestly, there is such a person, because I hit her square on with the Katana of Justice, and during the explosion her force field did not waver. Having said that, while her mind screens were also quite solid, her thoughts leaked very slightly out to where they could be read. She was clearly operating a Medico rules engine. When the Katana of Justice struck her, she was at the edge of taking lethal damage. We also got the slightest impression of her emotions. She was utterly focused on something, too focused to consider that she ought to be scared out of her wits. I infer she was focused on summoning power levels. Or gifts. Though if you told me she is a descendant of the legendary Girl Without Fear, I could believe you."

"If I may?" Prince Wang, ambassador of the Celestial Republic of the Han, rarely spoke. "We are not, Valkyria excepted, masters of the art of battle strategy. We should give those who are masters of battle our thoughts, and let them tell us the answers, not spend time chatting about tactics as the amateurs we are. However, I believe I see why we missed the range of her gifts. She neglected to use them. She did not quite attain the ultimate feat of brilliancy 'defeat your enemy without doing anything',

but she was parsimonious in her choice of methods. While in the Maze, she never teleported, mostly showed human resistance to heat and cold, played City of Steel well but not brilliantly. Except for that one move, of course. Until we attempted to kill her, she could have been a very well-trained ungifted woman. Twenties perhaps sounds young. She might have a touch of the gift of agelessness. Perhaps Valkyria can explain what I am missing.”

“The *Copper Book* explains this,” Valkyria answered. “The Lesser Maze tests determination, purity of thought, cleverness, strength of mind, and physical and mental training, not enormity of power.” Unless, Valkyria thought, you cheat by presenting the Maze with an artificial construct that has no mental weaknesses. Alas, the construct had not been quite ready to enter the Maze before ~~his~~this Eclipse showed up. “Thus Cortez and Fisher, the latter’s fleet being infinitely more powerful than the former’s, could come equally close to victory. Your description may explain how Eclipse escaped. The capture strategy, in the few hours tactical support teams in Europe had to insert fine detail, inferred her gifts from her acts in the Maze. We hit her vastly harder than should have been needed, given the gifts she had shown. After all, everyone who has ever tried to walk the Maze, whether ~~the~~those two chess grandmasters or any of the World-Class personas, has while in the Maze used all of their talents to their uttermost limits. She didn’t.”

“She cheated!” Lord Featherstonehaugh interjected.

“A different answer.” Saigo Shigetoshi, Legate of the Satsuma Daimyo, did not officially represent his country. The Shogun’s Court could deny responsibility for what he said. “Do not fear. At the end, as foretold by the *Harvest Stars*, Eclipse had

a choice. She could reach out and take the Namestone. Or she could ask, and be given it if she was worthy. I am totally confident. She asked. She received the Namestone freely.”

“Asked? When she could have taken it? She shows she is weak!” Markgraf Moeller grumbled.

“Then I must humbly pray that we never have to contend with a strong persona bearing the Namestone,” Legate Hong whispered. It was a shame, Buncombe considered, that the Manjukuwan Empire could never forgive America for buying Alaska for a few mills on the dollar. Hong was a remarkably sensible conversationalist, but if he ever chatted with Buncombe Hong would likely be ordered to commit suicide, probably after being ordered to murder all his descendants.

“Thus,” Saigo continued, “she is as worthy as the Martyr, who read her soul before granting her the stone, she is no danger to anyone. However, she may defend herself. Such acts might have less than ideal consequences to nearby places, for example ~~the~~ neighboring ~~continent~~continents. Accordingly, the Satsuma Domain will not find it entirely convenient at this time to participate in attempting her capture.”

“We must mobilize the people of the world,” Holmgren said, “to turn their united talents to capturing this person. Wherever she is – yes, I agree the very limited evidence suggests somewhere in Europe – we must find her. In particular, we must capture this Eclipse person and free the Namestone before it falls into truly wrong hands. Can you imagine what the League of Terran Justice would do with it?” The League of Terror and Injustice was a permanent thorn in Holmgren’s side. Buncombe perched his chin on his hands. The League of Terran

Justice clearly had secret objectives, objectives that no one had yet divined. Those were the objectives that drove its disciplined yet incomprehensible behavior.

“All the power of all the world’s investigatory agencies, from the Okhrana to the fabled Pinkertons, are hot in her pursuit,” Elizaveta Romanoff said. “There can be no doubt. We shall find her. Of course, what we do when we find her is another question.”

“Should you not have some plan for dealing with her before you find her?” American Ambassador Buncombe allowed that it was time to remind foreigners of the practical nature of all Americans. “Lest you find yourself like the miniature poodle that treed the pride of lions? How do you plan to match the Namestone’s power? Not to mention, of course, that a person who can stand up to that range of attacks without flinching is no mere milquetoast, no little girl pretending to be her older brother. This Eclipse is a persona of no slight power. The most obvious demonstration of this is the dog that did not bark.” Hopefully, Buncombe thought, these people or their political masters will recognize that attacking the Bearer may prove to be less than safe.

“Ahh, the Great English Detective Helmesham,” Legate Saigo said.

“Precisely,” Buncombe said. “This person is being attacked by our League’s most powerful Strike Team, not to mention a Lord of Eternity. What does she do? Nothing. Not a thing. Most people, seeing what was about to happen to them, would at least try shooting back, piously hoping that they might possibly fire a silver arrow. Eclipse just stood there. Of course, you could claim that she has no combat gifts, just a sharp knife, but no combat gift is an exceedingly odd match to at least twelfth-level screens, not to mention effective second-order defenses. You could also propose she was so slow-witted that she did not recognize what was about to happen to her, but someone so dull could never have solved the Maze. No, this Eclipse person was confident that her gifts would shield her from the League and the Skull. A list of known

personae who are that confident in their gifts is very short.” Indeed, Buncombe considered, he should ask the State Department to generate that list for him.

“Yes,” Singh said, “As she is clearly not a Lord of Eternity, there is one obvious possibility. While she is shorter than history books report, it is possible that the Namestone is now in the hands of the Silver General.” Looks of horror crisscrossed the room. “Some would feel surprise that the Supreme Mistress of Terror and Treachery was found worthy.”

“Mercifully,” Featherstonehaugh responded, “I can rule out that inspired and sensible inference. The Silver General appeared regularly in London in Queen Victoria’s declining years. My great-grandfather, who was something of a lady’s man, became, how shall I put it, her very close friend, and noted in his diary that they were of a height, that height being five feet, ten inches, much taller than the Bearer who Valkyria encountered.”

“Perhaps we should ask those who have so far remained silent if they had anything useful to add?” Elizaveta Romanoff made her grandmotherly smile, knowing the Special Peace Executive would hear effusive promises of support, promises that she knew to be of dubious reliability. It was possible, she thought, that some of the Great Powers did not plan to keep secret their capture of the Namestone, at least until they had used the Namestone to conquer the world. She hoped that no one would press her to name a Great Power that was so strangely run. It seemed far less possibleplausible that any Power would voluntarily hand the Namestone over to dear Lars. Nonetheless, the promises would be extensive, time-consuming, pointless, and last until an appropriate hour for recess had been reached.

Synergy 10 *January 2018*



Napa mailing 232

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Cover by Bruce Pennington

EDITOR SPEAKS

I have dug even deeper into the hyborian depths of my collection and have found several more issues of my earlier N'APAZine ROCKET FUEL, two of which I will quote from here, as I expect it to add somewhat to the history of N'APA.

In those days new members of N'APA would send introductory letters and then get accepted and receive a full mailing, and were expected to add their own fanzine to the next mailing. Prior OEs had been Frank Denton and Lola Andrews. Denton sent me an earlier mailing to show me what the apa was like. Lola Andrews was just turning the apa over to Tom McGovern when I entered it, and Gertrude M. Carr and Augustin' Guaba were just leaving it. The introductory letter was to be printed in 23 copies and sent along with the next mailing. My introductory letter was titled NEVERMORE. There were seventeen members of N'APA at that time. I spoke of some complaints I had about the NFFF, such as sending a check to a department that sent out fanzines and then receiving nothing back; a new department head explained the situation in some way and said everyone who had sent money would receive fanzines, but they still did not come through. I mentioned that I had been suggesting in the Round Robins department that material from the RRs be printed in order to give the discussions wider circulation, and said I might do this in Rocket Fuel if nowhere else. I also pointed out in reference to the Harlan Ellison RR that was being circulated that Ellison should be able to read it, as otherwise it was sort of conspiratorial.

In Rocket Fuel #1 my editorial lists ways by which I, a new member, was able to understand what was being discussed in the various publications in the mailing. A lot of the talk in the issue is about problems in the NFFF—trouble with the constitution, comings and goings and disappearances of members, irregularity of mailings, and there's discussions of various aspects of the NFFF. I mentioned reading of the South Gate in California in an article by John Rechy, that's the place that Rick Sneary was promoting as a convention site for the year 1958. They had to move that location because South Gate had no facilities for a convention.

A few members of the time are mentioned in my mailing comments—Keith Williams, Sally Syrjala, Lola Andrews (she had just become a director), Mark Blackburn, and Fred Jakobcic, whom I had met at a Windycon and mentioned it in the mailing. The issue has a reprint of a newspaper article about the Purdue Society for Creative Anachronism, Purdue being Purdue University in Lafayette. The society was also known as the Purdue Medieval Society. We had them, fantasy wargamers, and the SS Voyager Society at Purdue. The article was accompanied by photographs of a tourney. The heading of the article is ESCAPE TO THE MIDDLE AGES, as if they were suggesting that science fiction and fantasy was escape literature and implying that the Medieval Society were engaged in escape activity, though in the case of fantasy, the escape would be a regression.

In issue #2's editorial there's a discussion of whether mailings of N'APA should be sent to new NFFF members. I suggested that THE ALLIANCE AMATEUR would be a better thing to send than the whole mailing.

I mentioned sending Steve Sneyd an application form for the NFFF and I see his name still lurks on our roster.

Various fan clubs in various areas were discussed in the issue, which had a letter column.

I mailing commented an editor named Derek about troubles with the Canadian Post Office and the difficulties of contacting some fans in Canada.

I spoke of Bob Dylan appearing at Purdue with a concert, and how we had a visitor at the SS Voyager Society who looked a lot like him. I took a photo of him and printed it in Ionisphere.

I mentioned being the editor of Fapa's SHADOW FAPA. Apparently someone had gotten the idea to include TNFF in a Fapa mailing. That was in reference to franking zines through organizations, a matter of big discussion at the time. There's an exchange of criticism on the way round robins are being conducted and the things that go on around them—one point was that people weren't asked how long they wanted to continue them and no one knew how long they would go on.

The third issue has a cover trumpeting FANDOM ASSEMBLE by an artist I got from Harry Hopkins' FANDOM DIRECTORY, that seems to go into the spirit of the Facebook group FANDOM UNITE...but I'll go over that issue in the next mailing. Anyway, I'll say of the N'APA of the time that it was doing what apas do, discussing fandom, and N'APA was doing considerable discussion of the NFFF, which might be what was making it a complicated matter to get into it.

Mailing Comments

Lorien Rivendell, **NOTES FROM A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY**: Computer problems, you can't open N'APA 220. I don't believe the computer system consistently provides us with reliable, faultless service. Every once in a while something George Phillies sends me winds up in the junk email file with no visible explanation for its having done so, and I have to vouch for the reliability of the source to return it to the inbox; that voucher is not continuously respected.

I'm keeping N'APA in back files too.

efanzines seemingly requires pdf, rather than not accepting submissions in that format. Reading this mailing out of my files, the file heading says "NAPA 231 complete.pdf—Adobe Acrobat Reader DC". Is there some confusion out of all this?

George Phillies, **THE MURDERED MASTER MAGE** (Rather sinister title, that): I'm surprised to see you typing up so much material from your novel-in-progress for just the few people in this APA. I keep thinking I should give the writing some feedback, but what's going on in the story has me confounded. I'm not much familiar with governmental workings. But I might comment anent that, that it's very ambitious to take up matters of such scope. I'm now also reading Swycaffer's **REVOLT AND REBIRTH** and find an enormous scope in that one too.

My own **SYNERGY**: I'll bet people were surprised to see the Shutterstock label on my cover. They do all sorts of imprinting of their work. Sometimes it's written across the photographs and art. The Dell magazines use Shutterstock for their covers sometimes.

Jefferson Swycaffer, **ARCHIVE MIDWINTER**: I recall looking at the Retief stories on the stands. I never picked up the magazines that had Retief in them to see what the stories were about; my knowledge of Laumer was that he was a UK writer who had appeared on the American scene when all the British science fiction started coming across the seas instead of just being in **NEW WORLDS** or something like that. I was thinking Retief might just be a flash in the pan, based on this, and in fact after a lot of sound and fury they did seem to go out of style, which I don't like, so it's good to see you noting them.

Didn't know Roger Dee had been part of San Diego fandom, but I look again, and you haven't said he was. Perhaps George Wetzel moved out there? I was in San Diego once and visited with Colin Cameron and Vowen Clark, SF fans of earlier

times, who perhaps did not have enough of a society to be remembered, the same way earlier Berkeleyites are not much referred to by later Berkeley fan residents.

I suggested to John Polselli that he submit something to the short story contest—hope he came through.

Regarding the Christian princess in the swashbuckling novel, in CONAN THE CONQUEROR Mitra is spoken of as if he were the One True God by a character thankful to him for a victory at war.

Kevin Trainor, THE SILVER STATE AGE: I wonder if you have been receiving any information on having recruited a new member from anyone. You know, don't you, of the membership extension that is given to those recruiting new dues-paying members? Has anyone been trying to claim the incentive reward?

You seem to be doing pretty well electronically.

I imagine all sorts of things have always gone on among magazine editors. Ray Palmer used to practically feud with other editors.

Campbell's enthusiasm for Dianetics came from a close relationship with L. Ron Hubbard, the founder of Dianetics.

You describe Arkham House as obscure, and I'm sure that has its foundations, but a lot of things are coming up out of the Arkham basement these days.

I remember huckster lists highlighting Merritt and Haggard; perhaps we were both looking at the same lists at one time. The lists I had came either from Frank A. Schmidt or the Werewolf Bookshop, I think.

WAR OF THE WORLDS was a mighty piece of writing, its title based on the concept of referring to widespread warfare as World Wars.



LETTERS

JOE NAPOLITANO: Hey, I really enjoyed the latest issue of Synergy, now that brought back memories. Has it been that long? I guess so. Now, John, I've said it before, but the reason why I don't want to re-join N3F is that I don't think fanzine fans need a "government" in the first place, and, secondly, I don't want to give some organization control over my fanac. And you know about as much about the situation as I do. I guess I could be coaxed back in if I could be sure I wouldn't wind up being censored again? Is that even possible? Your thoughts appreciated. The N3F roster reminds me of Congress. If it can't make an accurate roster how would it accomplish anything else? Fortunately there are a few fans like you who do most of the work and that keeps things going.

Well, you want things kept going, I think you could be a lot of help at doing just that. I don't know about any censorship you've experienced, but I know you wouldn't be left out of Ionisphere and Synergy. I think the organization regrets the members it has lost and would welcome having them back.

Here's another letter from a former member who has returned, but hasn't returned to N'APA, of which he was once OE:

TOM MCGOVERN: Thanks! Good reading and a bit of nostalgia to boot!

I never received a Kaymar Award that I am aware of, and I think this is the first I knew of anybody nominating me for one. I have no recollection at all of even being in the running. I think that I have copies of the OOs from when I was OE; if you want, I could scan some of them for you. I don't have the whole mailings, unfortunately, only the zines that I personally published, which would have been the Alliance Amateur, my own N'APAZine, Down the Back Roads and a few one-shots, some of which may have also been distributed to other apas.

Scanning is like photocopying, except that instead of the output being a paper copy, it's an electronic file. I've scanned the Alliance Amateur 91-100 into a pdf file, which can be read (and printed out, if you choose) by Adobe Reader

For the record, I continued as OE through N'APA mailing 101, but for some reason, I don't have a copy of that OO. It took me awhile to figure out why I only produced 11 Official Organs in two years as OE, but in reviewing the zines themselves, I was reminded that we changed the apa from quarterly to bi-monthly during that time.

THE ORMUS LIGHTS by Joanne Tolson

The mysterious orbs that fly—
lake in Peru, created from the alchemy
of certain chemical properties
of Gold and Iron
that cause the lights to fly
like protons and electrons
around the earth.
Not aliens.

TIME MACHINE by Cardinal Cox

We have a machine to travel in time
Uses reversal of quantum decay
Go back to hear an earlier hour's chime

We'd visit the past and invest a dime
And enjoy the compound interest today
We have a machine to travel in time

Tourist trips to watch life evolve from slime
Clap those first fins slithering over clay
Go back to hear an earlier hour's chime

Witness the truth of an old unsolved crime
Drink whiskey with cowboys in Santa Fe
We have a machine to travel in time

See all our ancestors living in grime
Find the facts for those folks with faith who pray
Go back to hear an earlier hour's chime

Lend hand to civilization's slow climb
Whisper in the ear of those who soothsay
We have a machine to travel in time
Go back to hear an earlier hour's chime

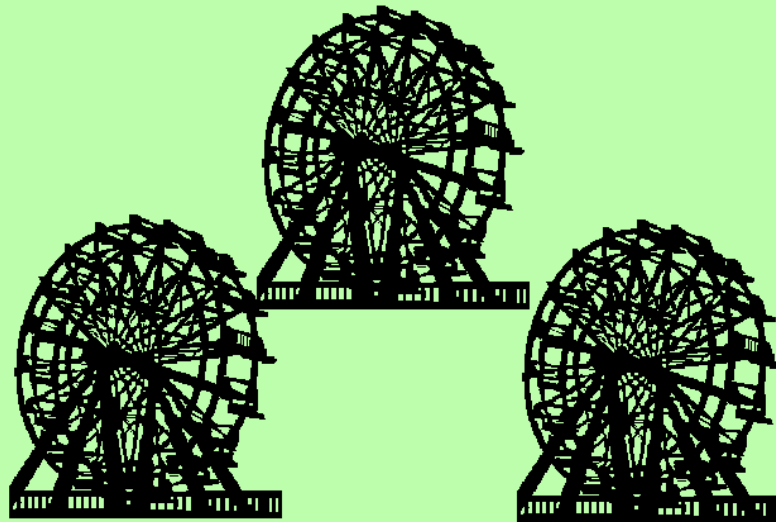


ISSUE ACCOMPLISHED

Archive Midwinter
a zine for N'APA 232

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1 Jan 2018

Comments:

Cover: While the theme of the art is "science," the tone is still wonderfully fantastic. Those big SETI receiver dishes have always seemed "science fictional" to me; they look like they belong in a sci-fi flick as created effects. Sometimes, the real world achieves the "sense of wonder" we love so much in our fiction!

Loren Clough: Grin! I, too, have forgotten, at times, to update my header info, and duplicated a previous issue's attributions. All part of the Information Age!

Sympathies for the passing of your cat. Cats are a really big part of people's lives, very notably throughout fandom, and it is a cruel reality that their life-spans are brief. Do you have plans to adopt a new one?

How did NaNoWriMo go? Did you write a novel? I'm a (frustrated) novelist, but it takes me about nine months to write one. The notion of sprinting through one in a single month is kinda beyond any realistic hope. But you've done it -- or, as you say, at least you've hammered out the word-count -- and lots of other people do it, so I guess it "can be done." Wow!

rect me, I cannot possibly praise Project Gutenberg highly enough! They're wonderful, and, as you note, they're really good at keeping us from going broke. Free books and an e-reader: if that isn't heaven-on-earth, it's about as close as we're gonna come! These days, I'm on a Mark Twain binge, and loving every minute of it!

rect me re plant names, "the orange flower" or "that pink thing over there" is about the limit of my skill, too. My sister and b.i.l. drive me crazy, knowing both common names and the Latin binomials for a great, great many plants. They're gardenin' fools, and Kevin (my b.i.l.) recently excavated a big gulch/gully, ran drip-lines to it, roofed it over with netting, and planted the dickens out of it, to make a lovely little garden hollow. He lost me at the first shovel-full of dirt!

George Phillies: rect me, A.E.W. Mason is, perhaps, most famous for "The Four Feathers," a story of cowardice and heroism. It's been made into movies several times. My favorites of his are the "Inspector Hanaud" mysteries. Hanaud was actually an inspiration for Christie's Poirot: Hauaud, too, is fussy and French and speaks with charming malapropisms. Mason's plot-lines are astonishingly complex, and I will always wonder how he wrote them. Did he sit down and draw up the plot in full detail first? How?

Fun segment of The Girl Who Saved the World. I got a happy grin out of the observation that the Lords of Eternity were sometimes distracted from reality. I love the introduction of Great Tomes -- the Copper Book, the Goetica Arcana Stella Magnus, and so on. The great Lovecraftian game is a good one, and lots of fun to play!

John Thiel: Fun cover! It has that "draftsman" style that makes the Tintin books so much fun to look at. (A style that was captured rather well in the Tintin movie.) I've always been amused that the French (and other Europeans) have both this very concrete, very crisp style of cartooning...as well as the very loose, abstract, fluid style seen in the Asterisk books, Peyo's Smurfs, and notable others. Europe has given us both Wake and Barbarella -- totally different art styles!

Fun notes on N'APA and the N3F of thirty-five years ago. There has certainly been a lot of history! I heard, via email, from George Wells, who participated in the past, and whom we might hear from again! Ever so long ago -- has it been twenty years? -- I mentioned something vulgar about a split stream of urine, and he wrote "The Ballad of the Split Pee," one of the cleverest and funniest and wittiest doggone things I've ever seen. And...I've lost it since. Threw out my old paper-and-staples copies of N'APA, and I'll never enjoy the Ballad again! Mighty sorry, George, but thank you for the memory thereof!

re Kevin Trainor, re "This Page Left Blank," I can usually find something goofy worth clipping and pasting in as filler. You don't collect trivia as long as some of us have without a big "swipe file" of cool stuff. Or "stuph."

Your closing art piece is also intriguing; it looks like an ice castle, which is a very "fantastic" concept. Really pretty!

Kevin Trainor Jr.: Congratulations on being a student at UNLV. What's your major?

I don't know enough about the history of SF to have any valuable opinion on the Conspiracy Theory you describe, but my instincts are that it's hooey. John W. Campbell Jr. was very good for science fiction, blasting it out of the small ghetto and into the greater world. Yeah, he was highly opinionated -- so who ain't? He was a "great man" and that usually comes with a price. Strong personalities are very often associated with strong opinions. Campbell suffered, a little, from the "price of success," which often manifests itself in the form of refusing to accept criticism.

(I first heard this effect called the Steven King syndrome, wherein he became so famous and powerful, he didn't have to let anybody edit him anymore...to the detriment of his published quality. J.K. Rowling is a more recent victim.)

So: Campbell, a bit of a jerk? Yes, absolutely. But part of a conspiracy? Nah.

re me, I, too, wandered into RPG gaming from wargaming: I was an old AH Grogard, and an SPI addict. I still have most of my old SPI games, but haven't actually opened one up for play in...um...decades.

re H. Rider Haggard, excellent point re his writing to deadline for serialization. That might also (in part) explain his use of spoilers/foreshadowing. It's a way of reminding the reader what is going on, when the reader picks up a new installment after two weeks or a month.

I definitely agree that many, many, many older novels are, indeed, very tough for us, as we constitute the readership today, to read. I kinda bombed out on Benjamin Disraeli, after his stuff grew too tedious. (I praised him lastish, but, alas, I've since dropped him.)

I read Thackeray's "Barry Lyndon," and, frankly, the movie was quite a bit better than the book. The book was slow, repetitive, episodic, and grating. A.E.W. Mason, of whom I have become very fond, is slow and uses complex sentence structures, slowing down reading-speed and encumbering comprehension.

There are wonderful exceptions! Mark Twain is crisp and clear, and so is Kipling. Talbot Mundy is one of my very favorites, and his style, while not as clear as Kipling's, is still very comfortably clear. (I like to describe him as an Americanized low-cal Kipling.)

Think of the contemporaries, Lovecraft and Howard. Lovecraft is complicated, thick, heavy, and slow...and Howard is sharp, light, crisp, and just thunders along with the speed of adventure! And then there was Burroughs, sort of in the middle between these other two.

I read "The Great Gatsby" and was bored stiff. And I can't even start reading Hemingway, whom I consider one of the worst writers the English Language has ever produced. I once counted seven (7!) different sentences Hemingway wrote, linked together with "ands." That is one of the most useless and childish structures in our literature!

Agreement re "Ben Hur." I'm glad I read it, but...as you say, it's slow and awkward and difficult. I recently gave a try to the famous English essayist Thomas DeQuincey...and was bored out of my skull. How he ever became a "schoolboys' favorite," I cannot guess, but this schoolboy, at least, is giving him a big miss from now on!

Back Cover: As with the front: those radio-telescope dishes are so incredibly nifty!



Cannabis and Cannibals

A bit of snuff, a bit of puff,
A touch of resin in the smoke,
Reefer, bong, or sniffed as snuff,
A silly little toke;
A silly little bloke,
With loincloth, otherwise in the buff,
A noose about the neck to choke,
And in the cauldron: that's enough:

Are you in the pot, or is the pot in you?

The Silver State Age #9
an apazine for N'APA 232
January 13, 2018

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OBLIGATORY NATTER

Well, here I am on the verge of going back to college, broke and immobile; the two are closely related, since in order to work (whether for Uber or H&R Block) I need a functioning car, and mine has been in the shop at Pep Boys and then at AAMCO with what turned out to be a dead transmission. Fortunately, that's still covered under the manufacturer's warranty, so it shouldn't chew too big a hole in my currently-empty wallet. The lack of funds stems from the lack of car, and also from UNLV's Financial Aid office being utterly swamped and unable to communicate to me that since I was attending $\frac{3}{4}$ time and not full-time, my loans needed to be tweaked. This and other administrivia was dealt with on Thursday at the new student orientation, whose motivational school spirit nonsense /valuable information & services ratio was entirely too high. So I may get the proceeds from my student loans next week, and a check from H&R Block for the work I did last week, and hopefully we can get the warranty paperwork shuffled so I can get the transmission replaced and be about the business of doing taxes and driving to class.

Healthwise, I'm in decent shape. My weight and waking blood sugar have been slowly decreasing, which is a Good Thing, because it helps my leg ulcers shrink & heal. I'm looking forward to the additional walking I'll have to do while attending classes, or I would be if my damned knee didn't hurt so much. Something to bring up to my primary care doc when I see him next month, or maybe to the health clinic on campus.

BOOKS

Since lastish, I've read Henry Vogel's The Recognition Run, which was a decent little tale of a previously unknown heiress suddenly thrust into the snakepit of Imperial society and the tramp starship captain who gets sucked in with her. A pretty good read, and now the sequels are on my "to-read" list. The Girl With Seven Names by Hyeonseo Lee, on the other hand, is a tale about growing up in an all-too-real snakepit, the "Democratic Republic" of (North) Korea. I haven't been able to finish it, since I got into the section of the book where bad things are beginning to happen, and, well, I'd prefer not to go there. Also bought and re-read Heinlein's Starship Troopers, which Penguin had on sale for the Kindle at \$1.99. Again, it's a book I know I have at least one copy of around here somewhere, but I wanted to read it now, and for \$1.99, why not?

I am currently in the middle of re-reading David Drake & S.M. Stirling's The Steel, which is the fourth of the Raj Whitehall novels loosely based on the life of the Byzantine general Belisarius. These are the books (along with the Helot War novels Stirling co-wrote with the late Jerry Pournelle) that got me interested in reading Stirling's solo work again after I had finished the Draka novels and resolved not to read anything of his again...not because I actually thought Stirling thought the Domination of the Draka was a good thing - Larry Niven says there's a word for such people, and I am not one of those - but because it was grim, horrific, depressing, and the good guys lost.

OTHER MEDIA

Not strictly related to SF, though I suppose you could do a songfic based on the title track...many years ago, my good friend Richard Butler was raving to me about an Irish rock band called Horslips, and their album *The Man Who Built America*. For some reason (maybe I was noodged by his spirit after all these years) I looked it up on Amazon, and behold, there it was. If you like rock based in folk, then this is very much your cup of tea; after listening to it, you'll remember songs by Thin Lizzy, U2, and the Pogues that can clearly trace their lineage back to this band.

COMMENTS ON N'APA 231

Notes From A Galaxy...

(natter) I find it interesting that the ranks of the tech companies are thinning again after a few years when it looked like everything would be stable for a while. Having witnessed the suffering of many Verizon customers, I'm hoping they do better by their AOL and Yahoo customers, but that's not the way to bet. ☒☒ Condolences on your kitty's demise. It's always hard losing pets. ☒☒ I don't know that I've ever had a laptop whose batteries lived up to the advertising, which is why if I take the laptop anywhere, I always be sure to pack a power strip and the power cord. As for Chromebooks, I never trusted this notion of web appliances (or thin clients, or whatever this year's buzzword is) and given the way Google has been acting of late toward people who don't toe the Party line, I trust them even less. I would migrate all my e-mail to Outlook, except that UNLV uses Google Mail. Feh.

(RYCTo Jefferson) (228) My dad used to warn me about time speeding up as one got older, and damned if he wasn't right. (229) Project Gutenberg has a lot of good stuff in it, and is well worth the visit. ☒☒ I have both a Kindle Paperwhite and a Kindle Fire. The Fire is adequate as an e-reader, but where it really shines is with comic books/graphic novels. Both Kindles are terrible with PDF documents. I miss my old Palm/HP ThinkPad; it was great for reading PDFs.

(RYCTo me) (228) Thank you. The injuries weren't too serious, and I seem to have recovered completely. Though the Kia has fewer electronic bells and whistles than the Hyundai, I am happier with it, perhaps because it is a simpler car. (229) Truth to tell, I spent more time with friends and family at Balticon than I did attending programming, but since they were the main reason I was there to begin with...☒☒ I used to build my own computers back in the days when they were all 386/486/586 machines, but when the Pentiums came out I lost the knack and don't bother with it any more. The same is true of software. I used to get into the guts of Windows and mess around in the registry to make things run smoother and cooler, and for a while I was experimenting with Linux, but I got distracted by real life.

(RYCTo John) (228) I suspect the reason we don't see groups like N3F so much in our feeds is precisely because there's so little activity, and it gets lost in the roar of friends posting cat pictures, memes, and what have you. Also, I think author pages suck a lot of attention away from groups like ours. (230) RYC and RCT mean exactly what you think they do.

The Murdered Master Mage

(RYCTo me) I too am pleased to have dodged the bullet from the NHP, and hope to never deal with them again. ☒☒ I have not yet picked up a copy of The Sea Peoples, money being tight and some publishers being greedy, but I plan to soon. It seems to be getting a mixed reaction from the Emberverses fans, but I for one am looking forward to seeing how Prince John deals with the King in Yellow, especially if he winds up in Carcosa...or Yhtill. ☒☒ Taxes are indeed onerous, but it looks like the recent bill is a step in the right direction, clearing away a lot of little exemptions and credits in return for lower marginal rates. We may not be able to get everyone's return onto a postcard, but we've taken a big step toward at least getting a lot of people onto one sheet of paper. ☒☒ I would be very happy if the FDA would just get out of the way and allow phage therapy to proceed. Those antibiotics aren't going to work forever.

(RYCTo John) Seconding the kudos for the art. ☒☒ I for one would be very grateful if somebody put together an informal history of the N3F. I'm ashamed to say I know very little about the past of our organization.

Synergy

(natter) There was a lot going on in N3F in the 1980s, it seems. Somebody should write it down before the people who know what was happening forget and/or die off.

(RYCTo me) I think the bulk of Jerry Pournelle's SF stories was published in ANALOG, with some in GALAXY (where his science column "A Step Farther Out" appeared) before it died in the 1970s. He also wrote for BYTE, the computer magazine, and I suspect more people knew him from his writing on computers than for his SF. As for being off in his own section away from mainstream SF...well, this is probably true. His politics annoyed a lot of people in fandom, and the combination of poor hearing from his days in the artillery with an excessive fondness for the drink made for some loud, hostile conversations, I am sure. Still, those of us who preferred positive, realistic SF to the New Wave and its Pink Goo successors looked up to him as one of the founding fathers of the military SF subgenre.

☒☒ Fandom in Vegas is a bit odd and disorganized, and I've had difficulty finding out more about it since I've spent most of the last year and a half working nights. There are a couple of plain vanilla SF clubs, the Vegas Science Fiction Association and SNAFFU, which I can't remember what it stands for. There are also anime groups and Klingons and gamers, and I hope I can figure out how to get in touch with all these people. ☒☒ If I have an odd number of text pages, I'll add that notice so that people don't think they're missing anything. I suppose since this goes out as a PDF and not in actual hardcopy, I can stop doing that, but it feels weird not to have it there.

Archive Midwinter

(RYCTo me) I liked King David's Spaceship myself and can't decide whether I like its original version (A Spaceship For The King) better or not. On the one hand, an awesome Kelly Freas cover – on the other, the complete story. ☒☒ Trying to shoehorn all the Retief and Bolo stories into one timeline is bad enough; attempting to shoehorn all the other tales like “Worldmaster”, “End As A Hero”, “Of Death What Dreams”, and “Once There Was A Giant” is indeed more effort than it's worth. Some people have odd hobbies. As for *League Of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, I thought the graphic novels were better than the movie –as they usually are- but the movie was okay eye candy. Still, there were a lot of characters and references that I didn't get because I wasn't willing to immerse myself in British comic books from the 1950s and 60s, and that was annoying. I didn't waste a lot of time on Farmer's Wold-Newton universe either. ☒☒ Ah, so that's the deal with SoftKeys. Thank you for the explanation.

(RYCTo George) Apparently fans in the Bay Area are less tolerant than y'all are in San Diego. It seems the Worldcon disinvited Jon Del Arroz for what appears to be “pre-crime”, which is to say they believe he's going to violate their Code of Conduct. I don't think they refunded the difference between his attending and supporting membership, either.

Games & Stuff

So, I was looking for free stuff on Steam, and came across a game called *Doki Doki Literature Club*, which appeared to be one of those visual novels about relationships. The art looked nice, but I really should have read the plot summary before I downloaded it. It's actually more of a psychological horror thriller, and that's not exactly what I was looking for. Going to delete it and save some space on my laptop's hard drive, I think.

On the other hand, Fate: Grand Order is much cheerier, even though its topic is about saving the world from an apocalypse foreordained by the course of human history. (Wasn't there a Keith Laumer time-travel novel about that?) Nice art, interesting character progression and combat, and so far I'm having a lot of fun with it.

NOTES FROM A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY #11

November 2017

For N'APA 232

Lorien Rivendell

(Lauren Clough)

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My supervisor at work lasted 3 months when she got an offer she couldn't refuse from her previous employer and left us. We are now getting ready for a big inspection (if we ever get the letter saying when it will be) and are finding out how much she didn't do in the short time she was with us. We have a new supervisor who was supposed to start in the middle of December and then kept getting bumped back until she finally started the last week. Since she is currently in her new employee orientation (NEO) period, I am asked to fill in a lot of the slack. I don't mind, as I know it's temporary.

I have joined the 21st Century and have purchased an Instant Pot. For those who have never heard of this, Facebook would have one believing it's the best cooking innovation ever. So far, I've managed to hard cook eggs and make chili and mac & cheese. There is a bit of a learning curve figuring out what button does what, but if you actually follow a recipe made for the IP, it's pretty easy, as the directions tell you what to press.

We are having rather insane weather the past 6 months or so. We had a hot summer and fall and then we had temperatures well below 0 just after Christmas and a couple of snowstorms.

In the interest of making the deadline this time around, I'm keeping this mercifully short.

COMMENTS ON N'APA #231

George Phillies, The Murdered Master Mage #13: Assuming you don't have more leaf-shedding trees than your neighbors, they probably *are* dropping - or blowing - leaves into your yard when you are not looking. Or the wind patterns just manage to deposit all the leaves into your yard.

I'm pretty sure I annoy the Infernal Revenue Service by insisting on filing my taxes on paper through the mail.

John Thiel, Synergy 9: Quite the blast from the past! I graduated from high school in 1983 and was in N3F in the early-to-mid-1990's.

Jefferson Swycaffer, Archive Midwinter: I don't know much about formatting for Kindle or other e-readers, but I was informed recently that email and text exchanges don't translate well to e-readers. I had questioned why a particular book would not be made available for Kindle. That book contains actual emails and texts as examples, and it just cannot be formatted to show the text exchanges correctly on all e-readers.

Kevin Trainor, The Silver State Age #8: So...N'APA (and you) turn 60 next year? That certainly is a milestone. Perhaps we *should* do something to celebrate.

Congrats on returning to college. What are you studying?

I had a Galaxy Note 4 before upgrading to a Galaxy S7. While I tended to forget about the S-pen when I had the Note 4, I find I miss it now. I think when I'm eligible for another upgrade, I may go with whatever Note is current at that time.

