

N'APA 228



Reincarnate as a Daisy?  
Next Time, I Want to  
Come Back as a Triffid!

# The Official Organ

## #228

**Next deadline: July 15, 2017**

The official collator is George Phillies [phillies@4liberty.net](mailto: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](mailto:phillies@4liberty.net); 508 754 1859; and on facebook.

Please do **not** submit PDF files of your contributions without prior discussion.

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 has always been totally regular, though some readers question my interpretations of "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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## NOTES FROM A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY #8

March 2017

For N'APA 228

Lorien Rivendell

(Lauren Clough)

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### Time

*Time keeps on slippin', slippin', slippin', into the future....* - The Steve Miller Band

*Time, flowing like a river, time, beckoning me...* - The Alan Parsons Project

There are so many things demanding my time lately. I forget to take the time just to do something I enjoy. *Days* go by without reading for pleasure. What am I becoming?

But today. Ahhh, I can sit on the porch and relax and watch the traffic drive by and read and write.

I have moved since my last issue of NFAGFFA. It was only 3 miles, but it was quite the project, with paring down 20+ years of stuff. Still, it was a good opportunity to declutter. I had a lot of stuff I hadn't seen in nearly 20 years. It's not likely I'll miss it. Not all of it. Every once in awhile, I'll think, "where is...did I keep it?"

My mom had a stroke in early January. I stayed with her for two weeks in February after she was discharged from the hospital to help her out around the house until she could do things for herself again. Fortunately, as strokes go, it was minor and she has been recovering nicely. She has been driving short distances, and fortunately, she lives in a small town, so there aren't many streets to navigate and not much traffic to dodge. She has progressed from using a walker to a platform cane to a regular cane, and she doesn't need to use anything at home.



## **Technology**

All things technology continue to vex me. I find I can't live with them and I can't live without them.

It's not all bad, though.

I have found that I can email N'APA (and all N3F publications) to my Kindle to read at my leisure. Most of the time, they load seamlessly.

When I moved, I canceled Verizon. I assumed everything would go away, including the email. However, the email hung on. And eventually, they announced they were leaving the email business and that we could choose to migrate our email to AOL and keep our Verizon addresses or migrate to someplace else and not keep our Verizon addresses. I opted to migrate to AOL as long as it was free (it seems to be, at least for now), as I haven't managed to get everything switched over to my Gmail or Yahoo emails. The migration happened just a couple of days ago.

Verizon seemed not to know what to do with spam emails. I could mark them all as spam, but they'd multiply and continue to show up in my inbox. With AOL, messages from senders I've marked spam will now go to the spam folder. AOL is a quick study.

As yet, I haven't replaced my Chromebook. I don't know if I really want to go back to Windows. I've heard that Windows is being retired after 10, but I've found no information on what will come next. Given Microsoft's track record, it will probably be bad, or at least something everyone loves to hate.

Meanwhile, my Chromebook continues to freeze up on a regular basis, and I must restart it to get it going again.

## Comments

### **On N'APA 226**

George Phillies, The Murdered Master Mage #9: That N3F has survived for 75 years says a lot. It must be hard attracting new members when there's so much *stuff* out there.

John Thiel, Synergy 4: I think fandom and technology have the potential to live together quite nicely. In fact, I think it would be rather ironic if fandom were to completely shun technology.

N3F has a Facebook group, so I know we've joined the 21st century. However, sadly, it's not all that active. There's a Yahoo group, also, but mainly I just get notifications of deals on books I don't have time to read.

I think it comes down to time for a lot of us. We just don't have the time to do all the things we want to do.

Numbered fandoms?

### **On N'APA 227**

John Thiel, Synergy 5: I'll take photos of things evoking the past and post them on Instagram with the hashtag "timemachine." There's a candlepin

bowling alley around here that looks much like it must have in the 1950s. It feels like stepping back in time to before I was born. The ATM in the corner, which charges \$2.95 per transaction, reminds me I'm really in 2017, though.

Yep. Time seems to be spinning out of control.

I haven't had much time to read for pleasure the past few months. I'm going to have to defer all reviews to the next issue of NFAGFFA if I'm going to get this out on time. I actually have at least one book written by several N'APA members on my "must read" list for 2017.

Nope, I've never read *Dark Secret*. I'll have to look for it.

Jefferson Swycaffer, Archive Midwinter: A few decades will get the menace of flying cars out of *my* lifetime.

Roku is my way to get TV. I meant it to be less expensive than cable, but if I add too many more services, it won't be.

One would think that a lot of rain would cure the drought, but it apparently doesn't work that way.

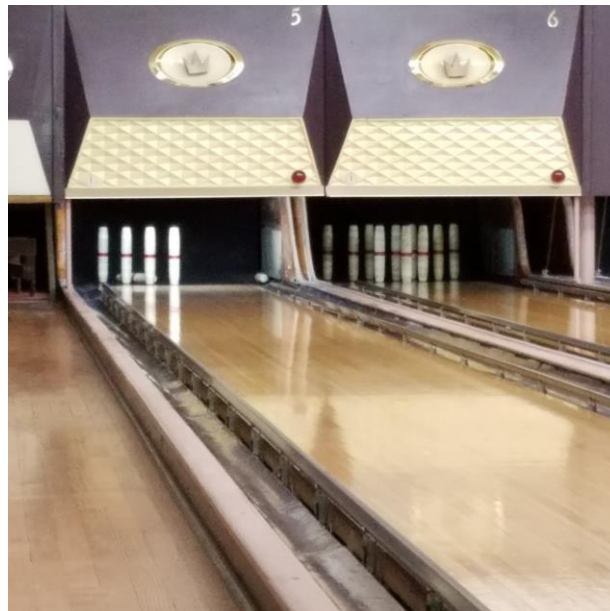
I've never been to California to see their rivers, but your comment on the San Diego River called to mind the Beverly Hillbillies seeing the river in Los Angeles for the first time.

Kevin Trainor, The Silver State Age: I'm sorry to hear of your loss. Funerals, for my family, serve the same function they do for yours. They become an excuse for the family to get together. My family may or may not be unusual, though, as we tend to turn them into rather festive gatherings.

George Phillies, The Murdered Master Mage #10: It is my understanding that self-driving trucks are already a thing somewhere. One distinct advantage of a driverless truck is it can drive all night and not get tired. It

will run out of gas (or diesel or battery power or whatever it runs on), eventually, but not get tired. It might overheat, though. That would be kind of bad if a driverless truck shut down on the highway.

I still do my taxes the old fashioned way, with pen and paper. I refuse to buy a computer program or pay someone to do something so simple. And my taxes *are* simple. I don't own property or have children, so they are very straightforward. I ended up owning Uncle Sam and I'm still waiting for a refund from the state (a call to inquire this afternoon told me that I can expect it in 8-10 *weeks*).





Archive Midwinter  
a zine for N'APA 228

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06 May 2017

### Mailing Comments:

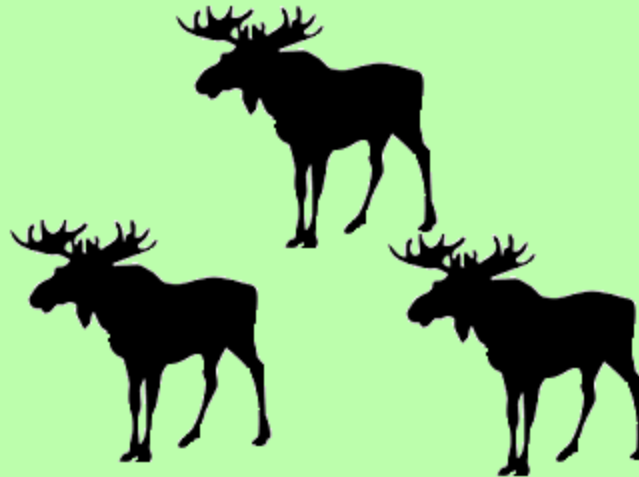
**Cover:** Love the Eldritch Science cover art! And yay that there will be another issue!

**OO:** Astonishing to find an old trove of N'APAs! There's actually some stuff in some oldies that I would like to see, and so I will be very happy to be able to see the scans!

**John Thiel:** Very pretty cover art!

re time...alas, yep; time is in terribly short supply. Also, the older you get, the faster time goes by. Remember being a kid, and mailing in ten cents and four box-tops for a Tony the Tiger mask? Two weeks seemed like absolutely forever! Now, I can watch two months pass, and scarcely even notice it. Time is most precious to we who are no longer young...and it is (most unfairly!) moving away more rapidly!

Thank'ee kindly for your kind comments on my books. I'd never heard of Dark Secret by Edward Lerner. I just looked it up on Amazon, and saw the first review was by Jack McDevitt; that, plus



your recommendation, were impossible to resist, so I glommed a Kindle copy mas pronto, and will have read it by the next N'APA. Thank'ee again!

More pretty (and funny) art! Very nice!

**Kevin Trainor Jr.:** Condolences on the passing of your Godfather. I was also kinda sad when you said that funerals were the principal reason for family gatherings. That oughtn't to be! Be sure to fight against that trend, and make a visit just for grins and hugs! (And it's making me very certain to visit my sisters as soon as possible.)

re the tax business, that's gotta be one of the king-hell jobs for seasonal variation in busy-ness! (I know a bloke who hires people to work the phones at FTD, the flower-delivery people. Valentines and Mothers Day are explosive, and the rest of the time it's fairly slow. Temp workers: he hires 'em and he fires 'em.) For many years I did my own taxes...until I found out I was doing it wrong. Cost me a little in penalties, but not too awfully much. Since then, I've been going to a very nice independent accountant.

re flying cars, I'm totally amazed at how fast progress is being made toward self-driving cars. To be honest, I'd have guessed, if asked ten years ago, that we'd see flying cars before driverless



cars! Someone pointed out one of the scary things about AI technology: it's getting better, sure, but it's only getting better. It learns. We're in the realm of technology that only ever makes a mistake once. This is so very unlike people, where every single high school class of students has to learn to drive; the lessons their elders have learned have to be learned again. But driverless systems will be born knowing the full and total state-of-the-art. The "learning curve" effect does not apply to AI systems, save only for the very first implementation.

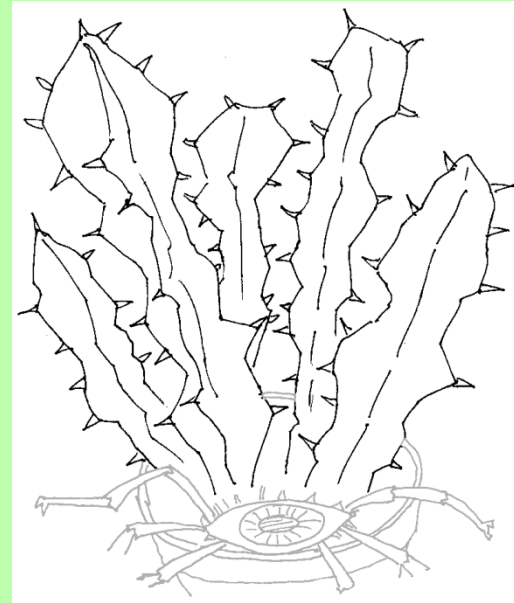
Certain airports already have driverless parking-lot shuttle buses. The future is here!

**George Phillies:** I could have addressed that comment to you, too! Consider it a shared oration!

re stereo and vinyl, have you begun the great migration of vinyl to computer? I went on that odyssey, and it took me three years. I systematically played every LP (and some 45s) I own, slurping the music over an USB cable to my PC. If anyone here takes that trek, I recommend the Ion USB turntable and Audacity software. The turntable is affordable, and the software is free. Audacity has some nice features, including click-and-pop removal, and volume-balancing. Also, it has speed alteration functions, so you can record your 45s or 78s and convert the result to 33 equivalent.

Another fun segment of The Girl Who Saved The World, again abutting the ordinary with the fabulous, in a nifty kind of contrast. That's one way of making the mythic feel "real." It's a fun kind of story!

**Here's Another Bit From** "How to Tell the Horror from the Flora" by Nodding Somewood.



### Euphorbia and Your Phobia

One is pretty, one's a pity  
One's a dainty little ditty  
One leaves you feeling gritty  
One is florid, one is horrid  
One grows in greenhouse torrid  
One is a shriek behind the forehead  
One is nice, one's a spice  
One is spiders and asps and mice.

The Silver State Age #5

an apazine for N'APA 228

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## OBLIGATORY NATTER

Well, this is another fine mess I've gotten myself into, although most of the responsibility for the current situation lies on the scumball who rear-ended my poor Hyundai last month while I was out Ubering for the first time since tax season. Fortunately, Uber's insurers have been doing their best to do right by me - they have already totalled out the Hyundai and assisted my credit union in getting me into a 2015 Kia Forte, which is the Hyundai Elantra's cousin (Hyundai and Kia are both part of the Hyundai *chaebol*) and in fact I think I've gotten a better car, since the Forte has doors and a trunk that lock with an actual key. This means I no longer have to worry about coming downstairs in the morning and finding my trunk's been opened by some passerby's random radio signal. My neck is better after a couple weeks of muscle relaxants, the insurers will be covering my emergency room bill and paying me a bit extra for pain & suffering, and hopefully after I finish wading through all this vile paperwork, I'll be able to make enough money to cover all my bills and still manage to get to Baltimore in a couple of weeks for Balticon. We shall see how that goes.

As for tax season, the less said about it the better. I'm glad it's over. Having serious second thoughts about whether I want to work for H&R Block next season; much will depend on whether they want to make me another insulting offer or accommodate my desire to move into a busier office.

One bright spot since last disty: Anime Detour, which is both ~~a dessert topping and a floor wax~~ an anime convention and a family reunion. I've sent a convention report to George for the next TNFF, so most of the details about the convention itself are in there, but my part in it was fairly modest. I do an annual panel discussion on Postwar Politics in Japan, and another with longtime guest Kyle Hebert (perhaps best known as the dub voice of Gohan in *Dragonball Z*) about Diet and Diabetes. I also worked for about ten hours in the Gaming Department, where I passed out controllers and games from the department library while making sure nobody did anything to damage the equipment or the other players. My son also works in Gaming, so for part of the weekend we spent time hanging out together and getting caught up on stuff. This is Detour's last year at the Doubletree Bloomington; next year we're moving downtown to the Minneapolis Hyatt, which has even more space to accommodate all our panels, cosplay, dealers, raves, and video rooms, to say nothing of our 6000+ members, staff, and guests.

Didn't see any movies since lastish, and still haven't watched the second season of *The Man In The High Castle*. I am such a slacker.

## COMMENTS ON N'APA 227

**Synergy 5** Nice art! 🌟🌟 Congratulations on your rapid ascent, Mr. Chairman. I think it's good to have someone with energy to devote to the N3F and encouraging its growth. I do what I can in between bouts of scuffling furiously to cover my bills, and hope to be able to do more when I'm not having to scuffle as much.

RYCTo Lorien: It seems to be a truism that if you want something done quickly, give it to somebody who's already busy. Conversely, somebody with time on their hands tends to dawdle and procrastinate.

RYCTo George: I think in any organization there are people to take charge and lead, while others are content to sit back, and still others are waiting to be called to follow. Hopefully you are right, and people attracted by the ads will be active contributors as opposed to being consumers of our various publications who can't bestir themselves to so much as send a languid LoC through the intertubes.

### Archive Midwinter

RYCTo Lauren: I don't think the self-driving cars are coming soon either, especially not in urban areas...and especially not any place where there's a lot of bars. They would be a disaster here on the Las Vegas Strip.

RYCTo George: ConDor sounds like a nice little convention. As much as I love Detour, it is on the verge of being Too Damn Big. I daresay I liked it better when it was just me, my friends on staff, and about 1500 of "our close personal friends", if you'll forgive me quoting former Minneapolis sportswriter and legendary schmoozer Sid Hartman.

### The Murdered Master Mage

RAEBNC

## SORTING THROUGH THE STACKS

I've been (mostly) giving my Kindle a rest lately and reading some of the many softcover SF novels I have piled up about the place. Most of my time has been spent on David Weber's Honor Harrington novels up through Ashes of Victory. I was quite fond of the Harrington novels at first, but after At Any Cost I gave up on them because they seemed to be going in three different directions with an ever-expanding cast of characters that would have made the late Tom Clancy gape in disbelief. There also seemed to be a shift in the balance between talky conferences and gripping space battles to the detriment of the latter, but I could be wrong about that. In any case, I enjoyed them for what they were, and they provoked me to do some thinking about my own novel, which I am making glacially slow progress on.

One book I did read on the Kindle was Marko Kloos' latest novel, Fields of Fire, which lives up to the high standards set by the first four books in the series. In this novel, the combined forces of Earth attack the alien Lankies who have taken Mars, to take back the planet if they can and at least liberate thousands of trapped humans even if they can't. Kloos is good at writing both space and surface battles, but his protagonist's ongoing agonizing over whether humanity is really worth saving is starting to get on my last nerve. I cut my fannish teeth on Heinlein juveniles, and I find this sort of attitude really, really, annoying.

Speaking of Heinlein, I re-read his The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress, which was my introduction to his non-Future History novels (I'd already read The Past Through Tomorrow while in the process of moving from Florida to Maryland a couple years previous) and it holds up very nicely. So does Niven and Pournelle's The Mote In God's Eye. I was surprised to see that my copy of that is forty years old, which means I must have bought it in high school or community college. I'm surprised it's held up this well.

**The Murdered Master Mage #11  
for N'APA 228  
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What I am doing: I was at first the operational facilitator and I'm now the national chair of a major national group. We elected a full set of officers last Memorial Day. We have now gone through almost all of those officers, in some cases replacing them twice. We are running our yearly convention this Memorial Day. I am doing much of the work. Among the other misfortunes, the fellow who was our chair who was going to be setting up the electronics for us, and assured it would be easy, disappeared completely for five of the first nine months of his term, and then resigned without telling most of us. I am still trying to get the webpages and other IT parts set up.

I have been working on *The Girl Who Saved the World*, and am writing the way I usually do. For example, I just finished inserting a substantial new thread, showing that the Wells family is not nearly as happy as you might have hoped, in that the parents when you get down to it really do not like their oldest daughter, for reasons they should not be taking out on her. When she does something that was actually completely innocent she is in an impossible amount of difficulty with them, in ways she simply does not understand. Naturally, because they are absolutely positive that she understands what she did and why it was wrong, they refused to tell her what she did.

Having said that, I have regularly been negotiating with Chris Nuttall about collaborating on a book. He has not liked my ideas, and we have very different styles of writing. However, we finally found a plot that seemed workable, based on a place that is really not Japan and nearby places that are really not China, Indonesia, the Philippines, or Aztec America, not to mention foreign blue-skinned invaders (yes, that is how Americans in the 1850s were painted in Japanese art) who are causing all sorts of difficulties. It is alternative world science fiction, on a world that definitely does not have our map, with various not quite historical references in it. With the use of voice to text, I can dictate about a thousand words an hour, so I do 3000 words a day.

Chris of course views this as being terminally slow. He does about 10000 words a day, typed, day in and day out, and therefore views a month in which he only completes one novel as mediocre. However, he has more than fifty published novels, and curiously I have only four.

I am also continuing to do physics research, which competes for time with writing, taking care of my house, and taking care of the gardens. I have replaced almost all of my lawn with flowering gardens; we are currently midway between daffodils (almost all gone), tulips (almost all gone), geums (full flower), and iris (the first few are open).

Comments:

**Cover:** that was the cover from an old issue of *Eldritch Science*. However, we have now after a quarter century revived the zine, so I brought back a cover.

**Synergy 5:** Thanks for becoming active in the N3F. We need many more members like you, and someday we will have them. You do not need to worry about the editor of *Tightbeam* having too many letters. If he gets more letters, he may simply publish an issue more often. Your artwork is as always wonderful. Would you be willing to become the Tightbeam Covers Editor?

Apologies that your poem will be in the next issue of *Eldritch Science*.

**Archive Midwinter:** Your comments about self-driving cars are most interesting. However, they also point out the limitations of human drivers. My reaction to a mystery object drifting across the road is indubitably an emergency braking operation coupled with a weave if I am able to pull it off. "Mystery object" includes tumbleweeds, since I have never seen one that I remember. Human drivers have their own flaws. They can become impatient. There was an English study showing that for older drivers, much older drivers, the largest single dangerous operation was a right turn, because the driver would be sitting there waiting for an adequate space, some half-wit behind him would start honking vigorously, and the driver making the turn would make a turn that not only was not safe but did not work. You are probably familiar, if I recall correctly, with the great California flood of, if

I recall correctly, 1861, in which the San Diego River overflowed its banks by a great deal. The Central Valley flooded to a depth of 20 feet, so that oceangoing paddlewheel steamers were brought up the river and into the Central Valley to rescue people, which they did for some time.

Your reference to role gamers and power gamers has a historical base, namely the division was originally proposed by the late Glenn Blacow in an early issue of *The Wild Hunt*. Several later groups appear to have found the article reissued modest rewrites of it as their own work without giving proper credit. The idea and those particular divisions may also have been invented by other people. My good friend Jon Peterson, whose first book is *Playing at the World*, on the early history of role-playing games, is now working on another book on the same topic. He quotes me in his book at some modest length, because I was the fellow who pointed out that Dungeons & Dragons was not simply a peculiar set of miniatures rules. It really represented the creation of a new branch of the hobby. In a certain sense, my good friends Gary Gygax and David Arneson invented fantasy role-playing games, but my claim is to have discovered it. I have the same claim as the late Amerigo Vespucci, the fellow who did not find America but after whom the two continents are named. In any event, Jon Peterson's next book will deal with the history of these types of gamers, ideas on gaming, and much more, referring in substantial part to back issues of *The Wild Hunt*, in which much of this discussion first took place.

**Silver State Age:** someplace there is an organization which will sell a dolled up laptop computer made to look like it is Victorian, including the wind-up key in one corner of the keyboard, clearly positioned there so you can charge up the spring that drives all the gears. There was also the acquaintance who at one point soon after World War II owned a very small car, one which nominally could carry two passengers if they were thin, on which his wife attached, to the rear hood, what appeared to be a large wind-up key.

Sorry that your job is not being more productive on a regular basis. As someone who recently retired, I can assure you that someday you will be here too, and you will almost certainly be happier about it than you are now. My only advice, which you

doubtless already know, is that you really, really, really do not want to retire and try to live on Social Security.

## The Girl Who Saved the World

### Part 11

"I was more worried about Trisha. Flying faster than sound could be dangerous. What if you accidentally left the Earth's atmosphere? I told Patrick that she needed specialist coaching, but he assured me that everything was in good hands," Abigail said.

"Ummh, I think we all agreed that so long as she was not doing anything dangerous, I would be trusted with my professional judgement on coaching her," Morgana said. And I talked it over with Patrick; I'm sure he understood what that statement meant. And Trisha, she thought, actually is too cowed by her parents to talk to them about how wonderfully good she actually is. I should have leaned harder on her, so I could find out what she'd told her mom and dad. "So I am the specialist." Morgana paused. Abigail stared at her. Trisha hadn't even told them that.

"You're the specialist?" Abigail asked. "But, then, I inherited grandmother O'Rigamy's second sight. I saw what you had on the table, Morgana. You are no mere hedge witch, are you? That was a full ritual casting."

"I think I'd better go back a step, Abigail, since you have absolutely no idea about my other public personas," Morgana said. Abigail nodded. And I dodged the question, Morgana thought.

"I try not to tell people this," Morgana said. "The tenure committee agreed to a memory shield block, meaning that if anyone tried to read their minds about this, the block would use up the memory before the shield was worn through. They could remember what I told them, but no one else could extract the information from them. I'd rather you agreed to the same, it being much for your own safety." Abigail nodded. There were a few moments of silence.

"First, notwithstanding that half of the grad students in my and several other departments have what is supposed to be a secret betting pool on which of

them will be the first to seduce me, the woman who is obviously the youngest female Professor at RTI, I am not a young woman. My persona name is not Sunsword, the Boston Post notwithstanding. It is Sun's Sword, because I was, once upon a time, the Golden Warrior, the Living Sword of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu. That was when I was living in the Nipponese capital, which at the time was Heian-Kyo. I'm not at all offended you thought I might not be up to coaching your children, since you had no idea who I am.

Second, we really need to talk more about what it means that Trisha and Brian and Janie are all really first line personas. It's not just they have a few gifts. Yes, Brian ignores machine gun fire. Janie reads minds. Trisha flies really, really fast. We'll get back to that in a bit," Morgana said. She paused to finish part of another croissant. This was going to be more difficult than she thought. She hadn't realized quite how carefully Patrick and Abigail supervised their children, or how little they respected their own children's judgement, poor Trisha's in particular. No wonder Trisha was short on self-confidence.

"They're all in good health. They may catch the flu, but they recover in a hurry. Janie and Brian, in very different ways, can focus very deeply on what they're doing. That's why Janie has her Highly Respected by the Lords of the Hexagon, and Brian's models sell for enough to pay for his hobby, the extra books he buys Janie, and Trisha's sewing supplies and books and extra athletic equipment. Trisha is a physical fitness fanatic, except...really, please stop telling her she'll hurt herself if she works too hard. Please? She can't, not to mention she'll recover in a bit if she overdoes things. Your feedback is confusing her." Actually, Morgana thought, it's hurting her very deeply, but she'll never say a word about it, and I can't be telling her parents that.

"That's just what mothers say," Abigail countered. This was going to be a mess, Morgana thought. Trisha is taking her literally, and I am not going to be able to explain to Abigail what that means when she talks at Trisha. Nor can I tell Trisha not to pay attention to her mom.

"Absolutely," Morgana said. "The two feet of snow and plow curl she removed from your drive...she

wasn't vaguely close to her muscle and bone limits. For her, that was just a healthy bit of exercise. She knows it. Please keep in mind that superspeed passes normally for her. She actually had to shovel your driveway of two feet of heavy snow, one scoop at a time. And catch her breath when she needed to." Hopefully, Morgana thought, I have made a dent in the problem. I can't very well tell Abigail that she is absurdly overprotective in ways that are hurting Trisha. "However, there is also the third thing."

"Third?" Patrick asked. To Morgana's eyes, Patrick looked deeply thoughtful. She had no idea what influence he had on his wife, who seemed to be the source of the issues Trisha was facing.

"Trisha does fly faster than sound," Morgana said. "Faster than light indeed being faster than sound. And all three kids have full deep space gifts, so flying to the moon was not an issue."

"Faster than light?" Abigail asked. "That means that in a few minutes Trisha could be millions of miles from Earth, and get lost. We go to the supermarket, and she gets lost, can't remember where we parked the car."

"Has Trisha actually flown a very far at high-speed?" Patrick asked. "I'd hate to think she tried flying to the Moon and ran out of steam part way there."

"We were going to discuss this," Morgana said, "because she had this really neat photograph she wanted to show you, admittedly taken with one of my cameras, of the Milky Way galaxy. The picture is from well to the Galactic South, so you can see all the spiral arms. That's about 300,000 light years out from the Galactic center, which she covered in under half an hour, notwithstanding the need for acceleration and deceleration and being careful not to fly through anything large and solid along the way. Oh yes, she has the safe form of superspeed, so she isn't getting any older if she spends a couple of subjective hours shoveling the driveway, the way she just did." Morgana pulled a bitstick from her blouse pocket.

"Socket under the table," Patrick said. "The screen comes down from the ceiling when in use." The three waited a few moments. Up on the screen

came an image, a huge photograph of a galaxy, multiple spiral arms all clearly visible.

“Furthermore,” Morgana continued, “Jessamine Trishaset has true deep space navigation. She cannot get lost, up to local hazards that she can fly away from, anywhere in our universe. She knows exactly where home is. And her other gifts would let her make that flight, all the way across the universe, though she might want a nap at the end.” Abigail swallowed deeply.

“That’s our galaxy?” Abigail asked. “My specialty is computational astrophysics, not observational astronomy.”

“That’s ours,” Morgana answered. “Trisha took it. She did want me along, half to kibitz on camera setup, half because...she could do it by herself, it’s perfectly safe, but she doesn’t trust herself.” Mostly because people don’t trust her, Morgana thought, and people keep telling her that she has bad judgement and will hurt herself if she tries anything challenging. “We did a timed flying run. Trisha is undoubtedly the fastest persona in the world, including any of the Lords of Eternity.”

“To finish the grades,” Morgana continued, “Brian has a first rate set of screens, not to mention several plasma attacks that did a fine job on Lord Roxbury’s robots. If he were a grownup, he’d be welcome in Stars Over Boston, though it would be a waste of his time. His model building is a gift, but a very rare one. He’ll probably develop other gifts as he goes on, but he’s the type that develops a few things deeply rather than many things broadly. Janie is an absolutely first-rate mentalist. Besides telepathy and screening, she is one of the few personas I know who can read machine minds. Very recently, she developed a mentalic attack, something that will kill things. I emphasize that she has a very well developed sense of gifttruth, so she is safe with the gift in question, but if she is driven to the point that she decides that she has to kill someone, they will be very dead very quickly.

“Brian and Janie between them have an additional gift, perhaps because they’re almost identical twins, because the random sort of chromosomes for fraternal twins managed to give them almost the same set of chromosomes, though obviously not quite the same, namely they can trade their gifts.

They did. It was Janie using shields and plasma torch who took down the last of Lord Roxbury’s robots. As we’ve said, Trisha has ultrafast flight, deep space navigation, life support, meaning she can breathe for the people she’s carrying through space, this invisibility which she just mentioned, and telescopic vision. On a clear night, especially if she goes above the atmosphere, she views a fair number of stars as having obvious discs. And planets. Questions?”

“I did say,” Abigail said, “that we should respect my children’s privacy so long as they were not going to get into any trouble or do anything dangerous. From what you’re saying, Trisha is perfectly safe flying places, and my twins are safer with their gifts than they would’ve been without. What am I missing?”

“There was the issue I learned about yesterday, which is alarming but not dangerous,” Morgana answered, “and there is the issue I learned about tonight, which may be dangerous. The alarming but not dangerous issue is that on rare occasion the Wizard of Mars invites people for tea. The people are very well advised to go. That’s totally safe for the people involved, as opposed to visiting the Wizard of Mars and playing trade questions. Trading questions with the Wizard of Mars rates up there with flying to the center of the sun... as a suicidal act. For reasons I do not know and am not about to fly to Mars to ask, the Wizard of Mars has been inviting Trisha and Janie and sometimes Brian for tea. He asked that they not tell everyone, because it would be dangerous to the whole world but not them, and they fortunately had the wisdom to honor his wishes. He indicated that they could tell their sensei, and I could tell you. So far as I can tell, he has been asking them completely innocent questions, and telling them educational stories. I think he’s why Janie got over her issue with gifttruth. I would strongly urge you to rely on the Wizard of Mars having good intentions. He always has in the past. Also, the warning ‘dangerous to the world’ should be taken extremely seriously. If someone had given the Lords of Eternity that warning, they would’ve had conniptions.”

“Brian is selling his models?” Patrick said. “He never mentioned. Wait! My taxes!”



"I checked," Morgana said. "Harry Truman's Lemonade Stand exemption. It's strictly Brian's work...he might get audited...but there's no tax,"

"Before we go farther," Abigail asked, "how is it that I've ended up with you sitting in my kitchen? It would be like discovering that you are Solara in disguise. I'm not complaining. I'm truly grateful for what you do for my children, but the coincidences seem strained."

"Why am I here? Far before you reach my actual age, you realize that you want to live in Athens. The most civilized, cultured, sensible place there is. In the tenth Century, that was Heian-kyo. At another time, Byzantium, Baghdad, and Cordoba were perhaps more civilized, but less welcoming to women. Once upon a time, it was the Leviorkianu Domain, and others it was Marik-on-the-Sea or Gaia Atlanticea or Sarnath. And now it is Cambridge, the American Athens. Why am I having dinner here? That returns us to the issue I learned about tonight."

"Joe. Janie mentioned she had a regular playing partner of that name, which is perfectly reasonable at her age. It's a very common name. I didn't connect with the persona who saved her a few years ago. I don't think the geas -- the one I just removed -- would have misled me. I'm very good at spotting geases that try to bother me. However, the Joe who plays Janie seems to have been very careful to make sure that I never met him. After all, I'm the only person other than your daughters who knows what Joe-the-Public-Persona who saved your daughters looks like. I'm significantly impressed if this Joe, whoever he is, is actually as strong as Trisha, given that neither of them have strength as a gift...and Trisha would know if Joe had that gift. Two years ago, no one else got a good look at him. However, I would've innocently assumed that if Janie had run into the fellow who saved her, she would've talked about it. She did, except for not saying that they were the same person. Do Janie or Trisha ever talk about what happened to them, two years ago?" Morgana kept trying to fit the puzzle pieces together in her mind. They refused to cooperate. Janie had this remarkable City of Steel innovation. She had this boy who had saved her, a boy with remarkably potent gifts. Someone was casting geases. Hopefully not Joe. The thought of a child who

understood third or fourth level work was seriously alarming.

Patrick and Abigail looked at each other. "We've told both of them," Patrick said, "that if they ever want to talk to us they can. If they want someone else to talk to, we can arrange that. They both said they were entirely comfortable talking with you. What I didn't expect, though maybe I should've, is that Janie shared mind to mind with Brian what she remembered. Brian wanted to be sure he understood what his sisters went through. And they all said that Joe's mom did something so they remember what happened, but they don't remember being frightened, and they are not frightened when they think about it. Or did you help with that?"

"I would've done that for them," Morgana said, "but Joe's mom did it first. She did a very good job of it." Morgana looked down at the table. "Actually, she did a truly fine job of it, and I can't imagine who she is, either. I could've taken care of their minds if they needed it. Goddess only knows I've had enough practice healing people with after-combat mental distress. What I meant to ask about was not what must to you have been a horrifying few hours, but the physical details of the persona combat."

Abigail shook her head. "Trisha was out cold almost the whole time, and Janie said she didn't see very much except occasionally things got bright. She was very busy shouting for help. She did pull Trisha over the edge of a sand dune."

"Janie shouting for help is how I got involved," Morgana answered. "If the two of them hadn't been persona, the kidnappers would have ignored them. If Janie hadn't been so good at mentalics back then, the kidnappers might have gotten away with it. Unless Joe stopped them. One of the kidnappers had a very strong mind screen, strong enough that Janie had to be really loud to be heard outside. Fortunately, we heard her. But when I met Janie and Trisha I could tell they were very deeply gifted, and would be better off with a practiced hand guiding them. That was me. I just had to arrange things."

"In any event," Morgana continued, pausing once and again for more chicken, "the press coverage of Joe saving Trisha and Janie made it sound like the villains teleported out to Sand Crab Island, and in

the middle Joe somehow separated them from their pistol, following which Stars Over Boston came to the rescue. Then Joe got your daughters back to you. The miscreants must've been seriously injured while resisting arrest, because they all died that evening. None of that is false, but there are some minor details left out." Morgana paused to finish off another croissant.

"Janie described Joe teleporting them to someplace in northern Canada and then to Frog Pond Park," Abigail said. "They were both worried about Joe, because when they left him he was shivering."

"Chills are common if you go way too deep into your gifts," Morgana explained. "And I really mean way too deep, not just a bit too deep. That's not surprising, given what he did. Fortunately, he or they moved the whole thing to Sand Crab Island. That combat was not a couple of guys wrestling over possession of a knife. Joe was the good-guy side of the deepest level persona combat in New England since Crittenden's War. Joe is in the power range where he could easily level a city block of brownstones with one blast, which is truly unusual for a boy his age. The people on the other side were probably about as good. The pistol that did not quite take down Joe's shields was indubitably a Krell disruptor pistol. It's a starcore weapon. If the villains had fired it at Boston, they would have torched everything on the ocean side of Beacon Hill with one shot. Assuredly it hit Joe's shields, and his shields did not collapse. Joe won by himself, and on the way out grabbed the pistol and a Krell shield bracer that had been protecting one of the miscreants. Until Joe killed the fellow. Joe seems to have no compunctions about killing people. Stars Over Boston got there after almost everything was over. I am morally certain. Joe teleported out with your daughters because he saw me appear, not because he thought he was escaping the villains.

"Then, afterward, something broke into Castle Island Prison, put the guards to sleep without their noticing anything, hid its presence from the three members of the Stars Over Boston who were also guarding the place, and exfoliated the memories of the surviving villains, incidentally killing them. The villains were very deeply tranquilized and being given medical care. Mighty Mind was going to search their memories carefully, but was waiting for

the needed court order. Something else did not wait. You may have heard about the ring of perverts in our country's southern neighbors, the ones who were kidnapping persona children and torturing them to death? The people captured in Boston were their strike team. The same night that the prisoners died, something appeared above their main base, smashed down a very high power set of force fields, killed the personas defending the place, and rescued a bunch of children. The political aftermath, when the detailed records were made public, is still reverberating. People have heard the parts, but not connected the dots."

"Are Trish and Janie safe near Joe?" Abigail asked. "Isn't it dangerous to have personas that powerful wandering around in their vicinity? I'm not counting you, of course."

"The only time I've seen Joe use his powers, that from a distance, he was protecting Trisha and Janie at what I hope he realized was a considerable risk to his own life. Trisha and Janie have nothing to worry about, so far as I can tell. Joe took a big chance to fight that crew. I'm not sure whether or not he knew he was taking a chance. He may have thought he would just stomp the people attacking Trisha and Janie into the ground. I would've liked to speak to him. With that sort of power, unless you have good training, your slight errors can get large numbers of people killed. Including you, if you make a mistake. Also, someone put a geas on your house. I find that bothersome. There aren't a lot of people who can do that, and none that I can name appear to have a motive."

The wind gusted, hard enough that the shutters rattled. "However, I am keeping you up late," Morgana continued, "I still have a paper to write, and I've given your children their grades. They are all Excellent. Your meal was wonderful, and most appreciated. So far as I can tell, you five are not in any particular danger. I should be on my way." Morgana stood, hugged Abigail, and took Patrick's hand. "Next time, I should bring some of my cooking. I have, after all, had a few` years to figure out how to recognize boiling water."

"Thank you for everything, Morgana" Abigail said. "You're sure you don't want to borrow a coat for the flight back? And you do get a box of my cookies. And some of the fudge, for all that the silly

betting pool that Patrick told me about is foredoomed to failure.”

“I’m not planning on flying,” Morgana said, “but I would love some of the cookies, and some of the fudge.” Abigail, Morgana thought, really doesn’t recognize that I’m quite entirely weatherproof.

“Thank you for backing up Janie, Morgana,” Patrick said. “Matters could have been much worse. However, the Tenure Committee really does look at publications.”

“Yes, Professor Wells. Publish or join the glorious dead. Patrick, call at once if Janie disappears. She won’t. And if she does, I’ll know instantaneously. Krystal North had the fear of the Goddess put into her. So did the Tsarists. It was a delight to have dinner with you, and your children are wonderful as students. With that I must bid adieu.” Her figure became transparent and vanished from sight.

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# SYNERGY 6



**NATIONAL AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATION 228<sup>th</sup> Mailing**  
**May-June Collation**

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*front and back covers by Morris Scott Dollens*

Synergy: The way you get together, it's different than something else.  
-Sturgeon

Let that stand for the N3F in my lexicon...we should get together more.

### **EDITORIAL**

I've been looking over the way things are in the NFFF. Here where we're talking about things in an apa which George Phillies says keeps rising from the dead like Nostradamus might be an appropriate place to take on the topic of things not going too well generally. We see a lot of falling away from the organization's former magnificence around us, and wonder if things will continue to go downhill, as some might put it. Well, I have a suggestion to make which may put a lot more oomph in the organization, and that is an expansion in the amount of written material produced. Would this idea be an invitation to members to circulate their unrelated fanzines among the membership? On the whole, no, that belongs in fandom at large. But it is my reckoning that the various bureaus would find a profitable expansion in having a publication of their own to represent their activity. Take the Welcomittee as an example. Presently its activity consists of sending information to new members and a brief letter of welcome. But suppose it had a publication of its own devoted to entrance into the NFFF. It would have fuller information on new members and give them a chance to reply to their welcome publicly. I visualize a publication called GATES OF EDEN. It might be, say, ten pages in length and published monthly to welcome new members each month, There could be a standard description of the NFFF included, a sort of navigation guide.

Similarly, the correspondence activity could have their own zine in which doings were summarized and the contents of round robins discussed. I visualize a zine called POSTIE to have this function. I know, sometimes a great notion remains just that, a notion taking the place of an actuality. But if it does, it could inspire enough interest to be realized some day.

A games magazine could have essays about gaming, a "Town" magazine is a creative possibility, and a magazine surveying fandom and presenting news could fit in somewhere.

We already have advances in the form of Eldritch Science and the resurrection of Tightbeam; why not keep it up?

As to there not being talent, I think the interviews coming up in the June issue of Ionisphere suggest otherwise.



*Synergy? Why not?* This concept, brought forth by Theodore Sturgeon, is just the thing for the NFFF, and may be what the NFFF village is striving for. Synergy is togetherness, the science of striving to get together. Lately in the N3F, things seem to be coming apart, the center seems not to be able to hold members within the N3F format, or so it appears to me. There are other interests taking them away from the NFFF, almost like Gafia. But the NFFF is well worth anyone's time; why not an abstract or ideal activity? This brings us out of the sordid everyday activities and into the realm of thought. It doesn't pay, no, and I'd point out that you also can't buy it, just as money can't buy happiness. I would say we should spend a little more time relating to one another and to the organization we're in.

### *Comments on the Fanzines*

**Archive Midwinter:** Regarding the Maltese Falcon, sometimes a writer is after an existential or all-encompassing commentary in what he writes. That no real purpose was served could describe an attitude toward life, especially considering that the Falcon itself is not of great interest to the average reader.

**The Silver State Age:** It's a rarity, I'd think, for a conscientious objector to win a governmental medal of honor. It goes kind of contrary to the Lyndon Johnson regime. # Well, did the ads ever get in print? I'm not presently getting SF magazines and can't get a look. Perhaps you didn't get the magazines either and I should ask David Speakman. # Noting Mike Glyer on a roster, I asked him about his activity and he said he said he had no interest whatever in the National Fantasy Fan Federation.

**The Murdered Master Mage:** I'm glad to hear A SEA OF STARS LIKE DIAMONDS is selling, and I hope it continues to make this kind of impression. (Pauses for a cup of Hawaiian punch and a pipe of Largo regular, resumes) I've seen your advertising of it at the Facebook SF sites. # A progress over self-driving cars could be the same without passengers. That would make people safer and the vehicles could do all the roadwork that was necessary. As it progressed the only humans on the road would be teams of joggers. Around here the roads look as if this were already the case. # I've seen a similar student objection, when I was in high



school, to Poe's "The Masque of the Red Death". Though it was well written, the students were not favorably disposed to a plague and the supernatural touches did not improve it for them. The Lovecraft story you mention would have been even less liked, I feel.



I've brought in four new members this year, Will Mayo, Lawrence Dagstine, Daniel Slaten, and today I got Celine Rose Mariotti to say she'd send in her membership form. It shows I have an N3F spirit, and also it's my duty as a recruiter to not let things slow down. I helped persuade Steve Fahnstalk to join also.



### **TRAVELER by JT**

I think I dream of other worlds when looking at my own.  
Our world contains most anything that can be seen or known.  
To realms obscure I hence may hie reliving other days  
When passing glimpses give me clues suggesting other ways.  
Imagination's eye may bring transcendent revelations,  
Which following may realize in other situations.  
So, harvest moon, shine on for me, though little have I given  
Which can impress a harvest moon as it rolls through the heaven.  
Yet I have given you a look, it's more than others do  
And so shine on, you harvest moon, shine on for me and you.  
Shine on, it's all you do.





*The Ende of The Issue*