



The National Fantasy Fan

Cras ad Stellas— Tomorrow to the Stars

Volume 79 Number 12

December 2020

In this issue

Elections — we came, we voted, and candidates won.

Neffies — It is time to speak up on possible areas for our Neffy awards, the N3F Speculative Fiction Awards. Propose Awards or suggest awards that should be dropped.

FAAn Awards — A club that publishes nine fanzines has members who know about them. Please read Nic Farey's article on the Fanzine Activity Achievement awards and consider voting for excellence in fanzine production.

Presidential Message: Many members do good things! New activities.

Letters of Comment from Bob Jennings, Heath Row, Jon Swartz, Lloyd Penney, and Jose Sanchez

Sercon: The Comic Strip Mark Trail; an interview by Tamara Wilhite with Allen Goodner; Arthur Machen's novel.

Treasurer: We have a new Treasurer. He reports. We have money. And members.

Bureau Reports — We have a bunch of active bureaus. There's a new Mangaverse Editor. Read what they are doing.

Elections

Our elections for 2021 are complete. Official Tabulator Jon Swartz reports the vote for each candidate. There were no write-in votes.

President

George Phillies — 14

Directorate

Judy Carroll — 14

Heath Row — 14

Jefferson Swycaffer — 14

John Thiel — 14

Kevin Trainor — 14

Congratulations to the winners! Many thanks to all those of you who voted! It's one of the few ways we have of showing our thanks to our fellow officers. (For the curious, that's about a 25% turnout among the voting members.)

Awards

Neffies

For many years the N3F has, not with perfect regularity, given member-selected awards to meritorious fen and pros. It is now time to begin the selection process. The first step is to choose topics. A provisional list of topics is

Best Novel or Anthology (over 100,000 words)

Best Shorter Work (under 100,000 words)

Best Fan Writer

Best Fan Artist

Best Fan Editor

Best Fan Web Site

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Art

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Mark Trail ... 7



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Continued Next Column, Middle

Best Non-N3F Fan Publication (electronic publication is allowed)
 Best N3F Fanzine
 Best Animation (anime/cartoon)
 Best Manga/Comic Book/Graphic Novel
 Best Book Editor
 Best Pro Artist, cover or otherwise
 Best Television Show
 Best Film or Video
 Please send your topic recommendations to George Phillies, phillies@4liberty.net by February 1, 2021. Recommendations may be additional topics, or suggestions that a topic be dropped. As last year, N3F Officers are ineligible for works they produce for the N3F other than the N3F Fanzine Award.

2021 FAAn Awards

Nic Farey (FAAn Awards Administrator)

[If you are interested in fanzines, you can vote for the (continued next page)]

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WANTED-WordPress & Web Help

Join or Renew

We offer four different memberships. Memberships with TNFF via paper mail are \$18; memberships with TNFF via email are \$6. All other zines are email only. Additional memberships at the address of a current member are \$4. Public memberships are free. Send payments to Kevin Trainor, PO Box 143, Tonopah NV 89049. Pay online at N3F.org. Our PayPal contact is treasurer@n3f.org Send phillies@4liberty.net your email address for a public membership.

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FAAn Awards. Read below to learn how. Ed.]

The Fanzine Activity Achievement (FAAn) awards, fanzine fandom's own honors, will once again be voted for and presented in 2021 for work first published in 2020. Typically the awards have been announced after the Sunday banquet at the Corflu convention, which for 2021 was due to be held in March in Bristol, UK. However, due to we-all-know-what, the convention won't take place at that time. The organizers are committed to an in-person rather than a virtual event, with the exception of the awards announcement (and consideration of future bids for the con).

The timeline will be as follows:

Saturday January 9, 2021 On, or perhaps even a little before this date, *The Incomplete Register 2020* will be issued, containing the ballot form and voting instructions, as well as listings of qualifying zines, fanwriters, fanartists, loccers, etc. known to the administrator. (See below for further explanation.) This marks the start of the official voting period.

Friday March 12 2021 (midnight PST) Voting ends. Ballots submitted must be received by this point, by whatever means they are sent.

Sunday March 28, 2021 (time TBD)

Awards ceremony, which will occur online (via Zoom or similar means), hosted by Jerry Kaufman, after which the "results issue" of *TIR* containing full voting numbers will be distributed.

The Incomplete Register

Apart from the official ballot, this is also a voters' guide listing the fanzines and contributors for 2020 *that I'm aware of*, and hence will inevitably be "incomplete". Voters are in no way restricted to the contents of these lists - all votes received will be taken in good faith.

Voting is open to *anyone* with an interest in fanzines.

Ballot categories are:

Best Genzine; Best Perzine; Best Special Publication/One-shot; Best Fanwriter; Best Fanartist; Best Letterhack (the Harry Warner Jr. Award); Best Fanzine Cover; Best Fanzine-related Website.

Good arrers!
Nic

Presidential Message George Phillies

Thank you all for responses on a cloud server. I appear to have found a better solution, namely a new phplist mailer. It turns out we had been losing large numbers of members, in the sense that they were not receiving their zines. The new mailer fixes this, and eliminates the 2 Mb size restriction under which we had been laboring. We have now gone overnight from a mailing list of barely over 200 to a list of nearly 250. A tip of the hat to Jeffrey Redmond, who recruited a good number of them. The additional folks are almost all public members. We were also able to identify several spam blockers who were blocking our zines, and negotiate with them. A specific tip of the hat to the spam service in the Russian Republic for unblocking our member there, even though I was writing in a foreign language and alphabet so far as they were concerned.

I am going to propose a new member recruitment drive. You will read about it soon.

As a further matter, we appear after my five years as President to have gotten many things into better working order, thanks to the fine volunteers listed on page two of this issue.

It is time for new volunteers and new ideas to come to the fore! Please speak up with your ideas and how we may put them into place!

Letters of Comment

Hi George;

Received the latest issue of TNFF. I'm glad the club finally has a new Treasurer. I am sending along my dues via the PayPal link, and I will send along a confirmation email to new treasurer Trainor.

The annual ballot seems sort of trivial to me; i.e., the same people are running for the same offices in the club yet again, but I will make a copy of the ballot and get it into the mail tomorrow anyway. As a recent national election clearly demonstrated, it is vitally important for everyone to vote in elections, at every level.

I support your common-sense amendment to the club constitution, altho at this time I am not aware of any member(s) who have children who are also active fans.

Some interesting ideas in the letter column this time round. Justin Busch presents some thotful comments about the club, but I feel his suggestion to somehow delay posting the regular N3F club zines for a year or more would be a bad move. I don't think the club should make itself more inaccessible to fans anywhere, at any time.

The reality of fandom today is that most fans do not want to write articles, do artwork, or even write LOCs to assorted fanzines. Even in the past when fans were connected only by the postal service, there was always a sizable percentage of fans, including the membership of the N3F, who did not do those things. They were glad to receive the zines, and maybe participate in a few of the club bureau offerings (such as the assorted round robins). but like it or not, most fans have never been very active in the ways that a lot of us were, and that certainly has not changed these days when the internet and nine zillion TV channels offer an endless array of entertainment options to compete with what SF fandom and a club like the N3F has to offer.

In addition, with social media such as Facebook, Twitter and all the rest of it, fans who want to communicate with each other can do so easily, and in real time over the internet. Most of these folks will never be interested in joining a club like the N3F, but, there is a certain percentage that would like to join a group that offers as wide and diverse a series of services and interconnected interests as the club offers, and I believe ongoing efforts to reach these individuals should continue.

Unfortunately, one of the better potential recruiting tools, N3F rooms/tables and free handouts at conventions has gone away this year due to The Plague, and I don't see this valuable resource coming back in the near future either.

I think Justin's second suggestion has a lot more merit. Producing special objects unique to the club seems like a reasonable and doable idea. In the recent past a club produced anthology of stories written by club members has been presented, and currently I believe Eldritch Science is only available to club members. Special print editions of art or author works could be very useful in making the club more attractive to potential members.

So far as physical editions go, the age of the computer

had meant that printing and setup costs have dropped considerably as compared to the prices in even the recent past, so this sort of thing could be done without breaking the bank for the club financially. Perhaps the club officers might consider setting up a volunteer committee to solicit suggestions for projects and check out the potential costs.

I read E.A.'s second letter with more alarm than interest. While I agree it is a tragedy that Uncle Hugo's SF Bookstore in Minneapolis was destroyed by the recent rioting in that city, I believe it is absolutely inappropriate for the N3Fas a club to contribute any money at any level toward helping the store rebuild. It is not the purpose of this club to subsidize any kind of private business, no matter what kind of unfortunate circumstances may have contributed to their current situation. Don Blyly and the store are currently running a GoFundMe campaign, and I believe that any N3F member interested in this cause should go there and contribute whatever they believe is appropriate, but I certainly would oppose any effort to use our club funds to subsidize a privately owned book store in a city very few of our club members will ever visit. Making a contribution in this case will invariably open the flood gates to other appeals from other business, who feel they can tap the club treasury for whatever difficulties they may currently find themselves in. That is beyond the scope of the club's mission or activities, and I sincerely hope that the club officers and the membership will reject this well meaning but inappropriate appeal.

Jon Swartz provided a nice overview of the Blue Beetle comic character. I wrote a long article on Blue Beetle and the Fox Publishing enterprise in *The Comic World* #18 back in 1978 (copies still available for \$13.00).

Victor Fox would probably have initiated a Blue Beetle fan club if he had thot it would have been profitable. However at the time he had other things to worry about, such as the lawsuit DC Comics launched against him for making his premiere comic book charter, Wonder Man a direct initiation of Superman (he lost, handily, and was hammered a couple of other times by DC when they thot one of his slightly later characters was a direct rip-off of their Batman & Robin characters).

His other man effort at that time, besides the syndicated 15 minute Blue Beetle radio program and the comic strip, was in trying to create Kooba Cola, a bottled soft drink that would be sold primarily at newsstands and news kioshes that carried comic books, and would have paid a higher profit margin than traditional soda brands such as Coke and Pepsi. That idea fizzled out (no pun directly intended), and Joe Simon, who was the primary editor at

Fox Comics during that period, wrote to tell me that so far as the staff and editors went, they barely heard about the stuff, mostly thru the full page ads for the product run in most of the Fox comics for about eight months.

I think the fact that Blue Beetle has survived so long thru so many different changes in his appearance, his powers, and his background speaks for the resilience and appeal of the character. Plenty of pivotal creators in the history of American comics have worked on the character as artists and writers. Or maybe it was just the fact that he wore blue chain mail, and later on had other interesting costumes. Or maybe, at the most basic level, readers just like a super guy wearing a blue colored costume. Never underestimate the appeal of primary colors.

---Bob Jennings
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There are three kinds of men. The one that learns by reading. The few who learn by observation. The rest of them have to pee on the electric fence for themselves.

---Will Rogers (1879-1935)

Dear Neffers:

Are there any other fans of old-time radio in the N3F? I also belong to the Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio, Drama, Variety, and Comedy—yes, SPERDVAC—and reading several issues of its newsletter Radiogram from last year, I found a few items of potential interest to members.

Uncle Oddball's Twisted Tales of Terror is a program created by Mike Arnett on an iPad in his bedroom. You should be able to find it on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4_UtYfv08E. He was in part inspired by listening to the 1970s CBS Radio Mystery Theater as a child, as well as a horror host public access show he made with his sister: Brainwashed by Professor Nitro. It's a neat example of more modern-day radio, or audio, drama.

More interesting, however, is Alfred Bester's connection to old-time radio. Not only did Bester write comics for DC, including stories for The Green Lantern and Superman, he also wrote scripts for The Shadow, Nick Carter: Master Detective, Charlie Chan, The New Adventures of Nero Wolfe, and later, CBS Radio Mystery Theater. Bester's Shadow scripts include "The Destroyer," "The Little Man Who Wasn't There," and "Death Is Just Around the Corner." His Nick Carter scripts include "Drums of Death."

One of his later CBS Radio Mystery Theater scripts, "Now You See Them, Now You Don't," even drew on his 1953 short story "Disappearing Act" and his 1956 novel The Stars My Destination. If Jon Swartz hasn't yet done a historical profile of Bester, that might be an idea worth exploring!

Yesterday and today I also listened to a couple of programs others might be interested in. The Creaking Door episode, "The Cat Woman," aired in 1964—relatively late for OTR!—and focuses on a woman whose brother is trying to trick her into believing that she turns into a murderous feline. Now, why would he want to do that? And Inner Sanctum Mysteries's Oct. 2, 1945, airing, "The Shadow of Death," tells the tale of a man who believes that he kills people by dreaming about their deaths. Another interesting fantasy-mystery.

What science-fiction, fantasy, and horror old-time radio do you enjoy and appreciate? Let me know what you've been listening to.

Sincerely,
Heath Row

George:

An interesting thing happened to me recently, and First Fandom president John Coker wants to write it up in Sci-entifiction: The First Fandom Report. I'm telling you in the event you feel it is interesting enough to mention in one of the N3F zines. Anyway, a friend emailed me that I should check one of my old-time radio books being sold on eBay. I did, bid on it, and won the auction. The book, Handbook of Old-Time Radio, published in 1993, is from the private library of Hugh Hefner, and has his bookplate in it. Apparently, when he wasn't chasing playmates around the Playboy Mansion, he was listening to old-time radio programs. My kids got a kick out of it.

John Coker reports that he has sold all copies of the 2020 First Fandom Annual.

...Jon Swartz

Dear Neffers:

Many thanks for continuing to send out the N3F zines, and right now, I have two of them, Volume 79, Nos. 10 and 11, and comments shall issue forth, as soon as I can think of something. Any moment now...

Ah, okay, October...congratulations to the N3F on Kevin Trainor as treasurer, and congrats to Kevin for step-

ping up. It's always difficult to take the time to volunteer, and volunteers are so rare these days.

The letter column... To go with what I described in my letter, the City of Toronto, plus our westerly neighbor, the Region of Peel, are under a partial lockdown, which means no indoor dining, lots of small shops are closed, and lots of big chains are open; we're not sure of the logic in that. Also, the weather has gone from cold to colder, and then warmer, which has melted the snow on the ground here.

The Shadow...some years ago, Yvonne made for a friend of ours a copy of The Shadow's greatcoat. I remember it was double-breasted above the waist, and single below. It wasn't the easiest to make, but our friend, when he wasn't being Lamont Cranston, it kept him warm in the winter. And do you think I can find a photo of it? Of course not!

November... Good idea on the WAHF (We Also Heard From) file. I had to wonder about the listing of Blood in the Snow for Toronto, mostly because I'd never heard of it. It was a horror film festival, which explains everything; I am not a fan of horror.

Good luck to all who are planning to run in the club elections... participation is vital, and necessary for continuing the efforts of all those who have gone before you. I had every hope of writing a better letter, but it is late, and it's getting tough to keep my eyes open. It's cold and rainy outside, and very dark. About all I can do now is wish all of the membership a wonderful Christmas. And, the best thing about New Year's is that it won't be 2020 any more. May 2021 be our year of recovery, of getting back to normal, and then going beyond it. Take care, everyone.

Yours, Lloyd Penney



Kylo Ren by Jose Sanchez

George,

Glad my art could help and phenomenal that you've acquired two more artists for our zines ! I think that the more art styles you have to present, the better for your publications and the N3F as a whole.

... Jose Sanchez

SerCon

Mark Trail

by

Jon D. Swartz, Ph.D.

N3F Historian

Mark Trail is an adventure newspaper comic strip created by Ed Dodd in 1946. The strip deals mainly with environmental and ecological issues. As of this year, King Features has syndicated the strip to about 150 newspapers worldwide.

When the strip began, it was syndicated through the New York Post (Post-Hall Syndicate) to only 45 newspapers. The main character is based on the life of Charles N. Elliott (1906 - 2000), a U. S. forest ranger who edited Outdoor Life magazine from 1956 to 1974. Dodd has said that the physical model for Mark Trail was a former neighbor of his in Atlanta.

Cartoonists/Writers/Letterers

Cartoonist Dodd (1902 - 1991), employed in the mid-1940s in advertising, met Jack Elrod when both were associated with the Boy Scouts. In 1950, Dodd hired Elrod to work as the strip's background artist and letterer. During the late 1940s, the famous cartoonist Jack Davis (1924 - 2016) worked one summer inking the strip. Others who worked on the strip over the years included Tom Hill, Barbara Chen, and Jim Allen.

Main Characters

Mark Trail. Wildlife photographer and writer, forever aged 32; honest and upright. Lives in his country house in the Lost Forest Game Preserve.

Rusty. An orphan with a special knack for getting into jams. Rusty was lost in the woods when he was found by Mark; formally adopted into the Trail family when Mark and Cherry married.



Andy. Mark's faithful St. Bernard dog, who has rescued Mark many times.

Cherry Davis. Longtime girlfriend of Mark's who literally grew up in the Lost Forest National Park. She and Mark married in 1993.

Doc Davis. A veterinarian, Cherry's father, an active outdoorsman, and a long-time

resident of Lost Forest.

Johnny Malotte. A French-Canadian adventurer who lives in the north country, and is a friend of Mark's.

Kelly Welly. Pretty wildlife photographer who often flirts with Mark, and frequently lands him in trouble.

Bill Ellis. Mark and Kelly's editor at Woods and Wildlife Magazine.

Ranger Rick Rogers. Wildlife ranger, one of Mark's friends and contacts around the country.

Radio Appearances

Mark Trail is the title of two different network radio series, based on the newspaper comic strip -- both airing in the early 1950s -- and one of the last comic strips to appear on network radio.

The first series, on Mutual (1950 - 1951), had 30 minute episodes, and aired three times each week. Actor Matt Crowley (who had played Buck Rogers, Dick Tracy, and Batman on earlier radio programs) starred as Trail. Jackson Beck, of Superman fame, was the announcer, and the program was sponsored by Kellogg's cereals. Mark Trail was described as being over six feet tall, with black hair and blue eyes . . . whose character combines the well-known traits of J. Edgar Hoover and Robin Hood! He and his friends lived in Lost Forest, but Trail traveled all over in his adventures.

The second series, on ABC (1951 - 1952), originally also had 30 minute episodes and ran three times weekly. Staats Cotsworth (of Casey, Crime Photographer fame) starred. Glenn Riggs, who also announced on Jungle Jim and Hop Harrigan, was one of the announcers. For a time radio, TV, and movie actor John Larkin played Trail. The series changed to a 15-minute format

in mid-1951 and aired until June, 1952, for a total run of 125 episodes. Science fiction author Max Ehrlich wrote some of the episodes.

The episodes were announced with the following, to the accompaniment of loud organ music and appropriate background sound effects:

“Battling the raging elements!
Fighting the savage wilderness!
Striking at the enemies of man and nature!
One man's name resounds from the snowcapped
mountains down across the sun-baked plains:
MAAAAARRRRKKKKK TRAILLLL!!!”

From 1991 through 2002, the Minneapolis-St. Paul public radio station KFAI aired a series titled Mark Trail Radio Theatre. Each Friday evening a new weekly episode was aired, for a total of 228 weekly installments.

Television

A television pilot for a Mark Trail series was filmed in Canada and Australia in 1969. It starred Todd Armstrong as Trail, with Robert Dunlap, Michael Pate, Gordon McDougall, and Susan Lloyd in supporting roles.

Comic Books/Books/Magazines

Between 1955 and 1959, Mark Trail's adventures were reprinted in comic books by Standard/Pines. There were also several books and coloring books based on the series, including Mark Trails's Book of Animals (1955) and Mark Trail's Adventure Book of Nature (1958). The 1950s magazine, Mark Trail: The Magazine of Adventure for Boys, later merged with The American Boy and Open Road for Boys. Some Mark Trail stories were also reprinted in Dell comic books, such as Tarzan.

Awards/Recognitions

The strip has won more than 30 conservation awards from private organizations and governmental agencies. An annual Mark Trail Award is given to individuals, organizations, or corporations that recognize “courageous effort in saving lives during weather or civil emergencies.” In 1991 Congress allocated 16,400 acres of former logged forest along the Appalachian Trail in Georgia to be designated the Mark Trail Wilderness.

Concluding Comments

Jules Rivera, a cartoonist who specializes in adventure and science fiction, recently took the place of Jim Allen

as the artist-writer on the strip. While her drawing differs considerably from that of Allen and other past artists, she has promised to add more action to the strip. Reactions to her work so far have been mixed.

The characters and plots on Mark Trail have changed a lot over the years, but the strip is still popular. After nearly 75 years, Mark Trail promises to be with us for years to come.

Sources

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Swartz, Jon D. & Robert C. Reinehr. *Handbook of Old-Time Radio*. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1993.

Walker, Mort (comp.). *The National Cartoonist Society's Album*. Greenwich, CT: Fairview, 1972.

Note: In addition to the sources cited above, several Internet sites were consulted, including Wikipedia.

An Interview with Allen Goodner By Tamara Wilhite

Allen Goodner writes modern fantasy and what I'll call classic fantasy novels. His bio reads: "Allen Goodner has been telling stories for entertainment since he was 10. Now he shares those stories with the world. Allen enjoys reading (what writer doesn't?), writing, watching TV, playing with his dogs, and playing table-top Role Playing Games (D&D is merely the tip of the iceberg, friends). He lives in a travel trailer wherever in whatever city he wants with his patient wife, exuberant children, and a sometimes-well-behaved dog."

I had the opportunity to interview him about his work.

Tamara Wilhite: What have been the biggest influences on your writing?

Allen Goodner: Dungeons and Dragons (well, lots of role-playing games, really), and my Christianity. I've been playing D&D since I was little and I grew up in a very conservative Christian household. In fact, a lot of what Michael believes in the Angels' Executioner books is based heavily on my own faith - modified for the fictional world in which he lives, of course.

Tamara Wilhite: I like the premise of your fantasy novel "Heaven's Hitman", an executioner working for God. How does someone end up with such a job?

Allen Goodner: In his case, it was sort of the divine equivalent of joining the Army or Marines to avoid jail time. I may get into this in some sort of prequel, but Michael went through some very dark times after the death of his wife and got into some very destructive habits. As you might imagine, the "destructive habits" available to a mostly-immortal, nigh-invulnerable half-angel are rather more extreme than are available to others.

Tamara Wilhite: What else can you tell me about the book?

Allen Goodner: *Heaven's Hitman* is an Urban Fantasy thriller book with a lot of western flare. Michael was born in pre-Civil War Texas, and because of his nature, fought in the Spanish-American War, WWI and WWII; his attitudes and mannerisms reflect some of that.

It is also unapologetically geared toward men. Don't get me wrong, I know women who like the book and I hope more do so, but - especially for Christian men - it gets very hard to find books that are geared toward us anymore - especially in Urban Fantasy, where the tropes so easily turn into Paranormal Romance. Basically you've got Larry Correia and Jim Butcher, and that's about it for authors with active series. Correia's MHI is a fun ride, and Harry Dresden is freaking awesome, but I think there's room for more.

Also unique, as far as I can tell, is that its cosmology and the rules of the fictional world embrace the idea that God is real and the Bible is real (if sometimes misunderstood or misinterpreted) history. That idea has consequences that play out in the book, and will continue to unfold as the series continues.

Tamara Wilhite: You've also written what I call classic fantasy, namely your novel "Fire and Frost". What is it about?

Allen Goodner: *Fire and Frost* is my first novel, and the premise is fairly weird. The world is an alternate dimension-type world into which humans were accidentally pulled hundreds of years ago. Attached or anchored to the main world are six elemental realms - though humanity only knows about four of them. Long ago a demonic entity tried to take over and nearly did, but the magic of the people who lived in the world at that time bound him in mystical chains which were supposed to last for eternity. It was their final act, more or less.

As always happens in these things, those "eternal chains" turn out not to be eternal. The story centers on Alaric Dell as he's just trying to protect his home, the Barony of the Fire March along the border with the elemental plane of fire, called Ignus. Along the way, he brushes against the plans of the demonic entity.

Tamara Wilhite: What else have you published? I know you contributed to the planetary anthology / short story collection "Pluto".

Allen Goodner: Yep, my only other published story currently is "A Clockwork Dragon" in the Pluto planetary anthology. It's a steam-powered mecha retelling of St. George and the Dragon. That was fun to write.

Tamara Wilhite: "Heaven's Hitman" is described as book one in a series. When does book 2 come out? Or are you working on a sequel to "Fire and Frost"?

Allen Goodner: Book 2 is in the works right now. I'm hoping for an early summer release. Beta-readers have it now, and we'll see what feedback they've got. The title is Grave Injustice, and it pits Michael against zombies. Because who doesn't love some fun zombie action?

The sequel to Fire and Frost is the Book Which Will Not Be Written. I've tried to start it like five times now, and I always throw away what I've got. I'm hoping that after I've got a few Angels' Executioner books out, I can come back with some better ideas.

Tamara Wilhite: What else are you working on?

Allen Goodner: Mostly, I'm just trying to be a good husband and father. That takes a lot of thought, attention, and effort. Worth every sleepless second, but it does mean there's not a ton of time for extra pursuits.

Tamara Wilhite: Is there anything you'd like to add?

Allen Goodner: Whether it's Heaven's Hitman, Fire and Frost, or someone else's books, nothing is more important to those of us who write than reviews. Please, please, please review books you read, especially when the author is independent or lesser-known. Beyond the business side of it - and that's important to us, let me assure you - there's the fact that radio-silence inhales with great vigor. I'd rather know you hated the book because X, Y, and Z than just not know. If I know something isn't received well, I have a chance to fix it. When we don't hear anything, we don't know if you

liked it, hated it, or just dropped it in your TBR pile.

Tamara Wilhite: Thank you for speaking with me.

Allen Goodner: Thank you.

The Great God Pan by Arthur Machen Review by Will Mayo

And what is this but the obscure novel that made so much of today's sciencefiction and horror possible. The reader passes through different intervals in this short novella until at last he comes to a glimpse - just a glimpse, mind you - of life beyond the grave in which all horror transcends the hells of our Earth's religions with none of the pleasures of the assorted heavens. What can I say except that the reader is faced with the most bizarre afterlife in which all men and women of the heretofore living find themselves in the land of the dead serving as slaves to gigantic worker ants on an eternal backbreaking toil marked by sight of a yet more alien creature clawing open the sky from the darkness of space for its satisfaction. As the reader puts down this once forgotten tale of lore he knows this and this only, Arthur Machen is the true champion of weird fiction. Hands down, there is none like him. Five stars.

Bureaus

Birthday Card Bureau

I'm supposed to send in a report of birthday cards mailed. Here it is: Seven birthday cards were mailed in November (although possibly Laurraine sent a few others in late October which would count for November).

Thanks,
Justin E. A. Busch

Correspondence Bureau

Because there have been few responses I have decided to change the setup of the Correspondence Bureau.

If You wish to join you need to do the following:

1. Send me your name and either email address OR postal address,
2. If you wish to correspond with a member already listed with the Correspondence Bureau include their name.
3. If you have a postal address and wish to correspond with someone listed "by email" let me know and I will contact them. I will let you know their reply.

Depending on your preference you will receive an email or postal mail with the contact information of the person you wish to contact, and they will receive your contact information.

The following members are interested in corresponding. .

Jeffrey Redmond - by email

John Thiel - by email

Judy Carroll - by email or postal mail.

Send email requests to:

Judy Carroll BlueShadows2012@gmail.com

Send postal mail requests to: Judy Carroll 975 E 120 S Spanish Fork, UT 84660

Eldritch Science

Indeed, Eldritch Science published its second issue of the year, with short stories, poems, and artwork.

Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau

Tamara Wilhite's interviews have been a welcome addition to the reviews we print in Ionisphere. Others are welcome to do fan and pro interviews and send them to us. We have an interview with the redoubtable Thai-American sf writer Somtow Sucharitkul coming up in the February issue. I see the authors we've interviewed on Facebook and am in contact with them there. Ionisphere is now in the Fanac Project's fanzine collection, which is generally accessible; as a good resource it has probably gotten a lot of discussion of our publication going. I assume that work done in the N3F got that there, and I thank them for accomplishing it.

– John Thiel

History and Research Bureau

I think I can say that we now have this bureau in good working order. I'd say each issue of Origin has been without fault recently except that just last issue I had reprinted an article without having permission to do so and there was objection to it. I'll be taking greater care in future issues. Otherwise the bureau is functioning very regularly and giving and getting its results.

– John Thiel

Mangaverse

We have a new Editor for Mangaverse. He is Patrick Ijima-Washburn <patokon.com@gmail.com>. Please

send him your manga/anime/comic material so he can bring out an issue soon

Pro Bureau

In collaboration with the Writer's Bureau and the Book Review Bureau, we continue to publish The N3F Review of Books Incorporating Prose Bono. We continue to have good articles on writing from people who actually make money by selling their books.

Recruitment Bureau

There was a lot happening in the bureau bulletin this month. Kevin Trainor's becoming the new treasurer was of interest because it placed him in closer proximity to new members, which makes for better track being kept of recruiting activity than we have been keeping. Jeffrey Redmond said he was going to quit advertising the N3F on his Facebook group because he was not getting good results, but in talking this over decided to resume the advertising. We sent our bulletin this month to the Welcomittee because it was right next door to our own activity and establishing a contact was a plus. The bureau is becoming more active due to all of this.

– John Thiel

Tightbeam

We have added two new artists. One gave us the cover of the January issue.

Welcomittee

We would like to offer greetings to the newest members of the N3F, Matthew Asnip, Michael Hegg, Patrick Ijima-Washburn, and John T. Sapienza. May your journey with the N3F be a long and happy experience. John T. Erb is a renewing current member. We are glad you will be with us for another year, John. We hope there will be many more!

The purpose of the Welcomittee is to welcome new members to the club. A letter is sent, by email or postal mail, to new members informing them of club activities they may be interested in joining. Those members with email addresses are also sent attachments with the current TNFF and other publications the N3F has to offer.

If you have questions about the club or are interested in helping, please contact Judy Carroll at BlueShadows2012@gmail.com

Writers Exchange

Welcome to the Writers Exchange! If you are a new writer, a professional writer, or someone who dreams of being a writer - this is the place for you. If you love reading unpublished work and find it exciting to do so, this place is also for you. I think it would be fun, exciting, and informative if our writers would actively participate in the monthly Writers Exchange article. We could get to know one another and help with writing questions and problems.

Question for December:

Is there any particular time of year that sparks your writing creativity more than others?

Jefferson Swycaffer writes:

I don't find any relationship between the calendar and writing or creativity. I benefit a *little* from cold weather, because I'm trapped indoors, and what else is there to do? (Answer: I *read* a lot!)

I suspect that holiday good cheer might instill a small propensity for happy endings. Also "food" scenes, like a dinner table or royal feast.

The novel "The Two Georges" by Harry Turtledove and Richard Dreyfuss is notable for its exacting detail on dining scenes, often explicitly listing everything on the menu. My theory is that the authors were hungry at the time.

By the same logic, I'd guess that authors who have just broken up with sweethearts are somewhat more likely to write tragic scenes and sorrowful endings. Writing is "caloric," you get out in proportion to what you put in. This is another reason we should all read a lot!

We have two related questions for January:

Question #1: Do you have any writing regrets for this past year?

Question #2: Do you have any writing goals for 2021?

Answer to #1: My regret is that I didn't start writing earlier in the year. I have a tendency to write only when an idea slaps me in the face. Unfortunately, that usually happens between 3-5 am when all I really want to do is sleep. Sometimes I try to ignore the tugging of the words and the floating images that fill up my mind, and go back to sleep. But, the nagging continues until I mentally and physically throw up my arms and cry, "Ok, ok, you win!" Then I grab my phone and begin logging in the words and describing the images and feelings that have taken over my entire being. (I never turn on the light and grasp a paper and pen. I am under the impression that turning on the light will definitely

be a sign of defeat and that I accept and welcome these interruptions and are inviting them to happen frequently.) At first everything comes easily. The words tumble over one another, the images become clear, and the feelings are strong and personal. After a while, things slow down and everything becomes difficult. Then, and only then, am I given permission to go back to sleep. Of course, now I can't.

What happens to these partially written stories? I transfer everything from my phone to my computer. Each story has its own document.

Here's where my regret moves in. I rarely visit the documents and the stories they contain. I always tell myself I will come back to them later when things have calmed down and I have the time. Of course, things rarely calm down and time doesn't get any longer. I have over fifteen story ideas waiting in documents. In 2020 I have written only two stories and six poems. The rest are waiting for my attention.

Answer to #2: My writing goal is to visit my writing documents frequently - resulting in at least twelve stories and/or poems for the year. Send answers to Judy Carroll blueshadows2012@gmail.com

Treasury

Total funds: \$2828.89. Most of this is in the old Wells Fargo account waiting to be transferred to the new account at Nevada State Bank, which has the \$50 in it I opened the account with; I am considering that a prepayment of the next six years' worth of electronic memberships.

Thanks to Rogers Cadenhead, John Erb, and Patrick Ijima-Washburn for renewing and to Michael Hegg & John Sapienza for joining! Net of members who have dropped out/died/vanished into cyberspace, this brings our membership to 44 voting and 215 non-voting members for a total of 259. So we are making some progress on the recruiting & retention front. *puts on membership bureau hat* While there are three of us in the Membership Bureau, I'd like to remind everyone that recruiting and growing the N3F is something everyone can help with. Talking to people one on one and/or dropping hints on social media about what the N3F can do for your friends will probably have more effect in the long run than any kind of advertising campaign we can put together. You don't even need to be a Big Name Fan or famous professional author - you, too, fellow rank & file Neffer, can inspire someone to join.

Until January...



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Treasury

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