

# IONISPHERE 31



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**Published for the National Fantasy Fan Federation Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau**

***Our Motto: Closer relations for a better and more united fandom***

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## EDITORIAL



### Way to Go, It's A Very Good Show

Net Fandom, at least, has been livening up considerably over the past year. Your pessimist will say that it's because they've been having to stay at home more, but I think they have acquired just a trace more of that fannish spirit, due perhaps to the long duration of internet life fandom has been experiencing. Friction from networking has been building up fannish energy. I notice the Analog Facebook group has become more like the Forum they once were when Analog's forums went down (they were being hacked by trolls and nothing could be done about it; that's being tried here but without success). The Asimov's group is always good for conversation, the F&SF group is doing all right (so is the magazine, which has developed an editorial and continued with it and they are well-written ones), and Jeffrey Redmond's Facebook sf group SCIENCE FICTION has just about everything fandom could want—tips about what's going on, where-to-find-it postings, writers describing their books and pointing out where they may be found, general back-and-forths among fans, displays of SF art and magazine covers, discussions of earlier and up-to-date science fiction—yes, it's become a very fannish location, and in contact with the professionals. George Phillies has become one of the administrators at Jeffrey's huge group, and I have become one myself, which puts the NFFF in very good contact with that group and that's good for fandom's solidarity. You might call that doing business, and I'm pleased to point out that you see Jeffrey at work on Fan-Pro Coordination matters there...this is achieving closer contact and contact possibilities. That's in case you were wondering what Jeffrey is doing outside of writing material for Ionisphere.

Virtual happenings are taking place, and FAPA has a location (though it is a paper-only apa). Garth Spencer's eApa and online work is very active, and inquisitive about

things happening.

The Fanac project now being connected with the NFFF is a real plus in togetherness in fandom. People here have a good link to the Fan Encyclopedia by this means, and can also view a large quantity of earlier fanzines, as well as recent ones. One of the fanzines they are showing copies of is Ionisphere, so a hello to the gang out there from its pages. I assume they read what they post themselves, but they are probably too busy to return my wave.

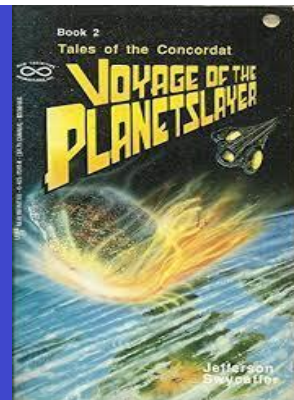
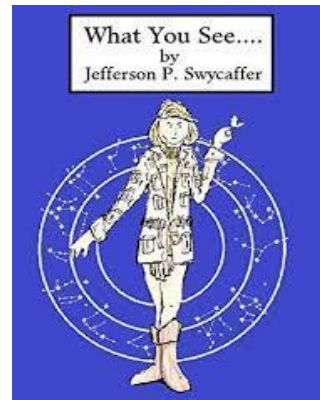
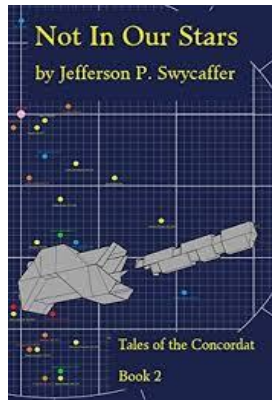
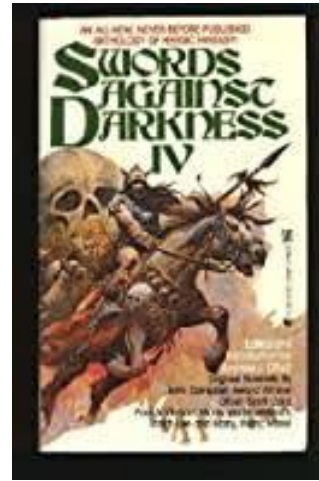
The business we are starting to do in this bureau seems to me a whole lot like what I have read (some of it at the Fanac collection) from earlier days when fandom was getting started. They got things rolling back then and I think we are kind of starting to get it re-started, and I am being imitative of the business being done back then.....not to lose track of the past in our present doings. Will we be as successful as they were?

So, here's a little note on getting going in my editorial, and I think you will be seeing more motion and motility in coming issues of IO (as I call the zine for short) as well as a step-up in this one. The thing to do is to tell fandom in general what we've got going, and I'm doing that by way of business in the Recruitment Bureau. An aware fandom is what we're searching for, and the business of a fanzine, if it has a business, is to keep people aware. Sometimes a fanzine is just talking out at people, but in the NFFF we're also doing things. How's that grab you people out at Fanac?

I like to think I'm achieving something in every issue of IO as it comes out, and that's because I am devoted to progress, as is this bureau. We want to establish and meet goals, all for the improvement of science fiction fandom.

Why have a science fiction fandom? To keep things going. Science fiction itself keeps looking forward, and its fandom likes to take that look with them, and perhaps even contribute something to its progress in thought and in realization in the world of literature and affairs. I have been engaged in this since re-entering fandom a long while back, and have presented my case at every convention I have attended. (Three Windycons, the Autoclave, the Hoosiercon, the Ohio meet, one Worldcon, Starbase Indy, and the Wabashcon.) I'm just starting to luck now; this new N3F position has given me the opportunity I need. When I get things clicking, as I hope will happen, I will have done my business in this world. Everything else I've done has been perhaps too mundane.

## Introducing the Staff Members: Jefferson Swycaffer



*Jefferson Swycaffer contributes this description of himself and his past activities:*

Jefferson P. Swycaffer has been a member of the N3F for quite a long time, dating to when a friend proposed him as a joke candidate for President. The ballot had some typos, and he was "Jotson P. Soycoffer" in the election. Needless to say, he did not win!

He has been instrumental in the Amateur Short Story Contest, first as Donald Franson's assistant, then on his own. He holds a strong fondness for the contest, because it showcases brand new talent, younger writers and beginners whose imaginations are unfettered and enthusiasm undimmed.

He has also served on the N3F Directorate for the past few years.

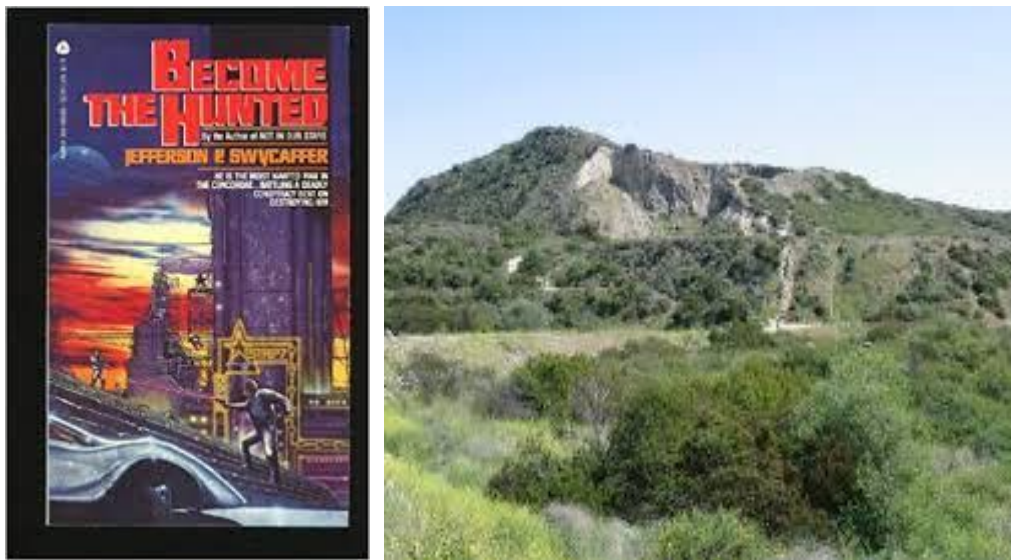
Jefferson is a frustrated writer, having published nine SF and fantasy novels....but having written thirty! Still, as batting averages go, that isn't too awful.

Jefferson lives in sunny San Diego, and grew up on a horse ranch, where he learned

to ride, string barbed wire, shoot, and blast with dynamite. It's probably a miracle he survived.



Jefferson Swycaffer at home



Nearby territory

## Introducing the Staff Members: Jon D. Swartz



*Jon Swartz writes the following:*

## **My N3F and Other Life Experiences**

I've been a member of the National Fantasy Fan Federation (N3F) for a long time. During that time I have been privileged to serve our club as Historian, President, Member of the Directorate, Election Teller, Reviews Editor, Lord High Proofreader, and co-editor of both The National Fantasy Fan and Tightbeam (due to the generosity of George Phillies, our president, and editor of the two zines).

For those interested, my current N3F activities are listed under Your Volunteer Team in each issue of The National Fantasy Fan. In addition, I have written four N3F Handbooks, a history of our club, and made contributions to some of our other publications, including our New Member Handbook. Moreover, I have written for most of the current N3F fanzines, some of them on a regular basis.

In return, the N3F has seen fit to award me with Kaymar, Franson, and Life Membership Awards. Moreover, because of the N3F, I have made many new friends over the years. On the other hand, I have never won a Neffy Award for my writing, only shared them for editing with George Phillies (for Tightbeam) and with John Coker (for the 2020 First Fandom Annual, in which we celebrated the life of Robert Madle). Madle is the 101-year-old science fiction fan from Philadelphia who was the first president of First Fandom, founded in 1958.

In science fiction and popular culture fandoms at large, I have been a participant in many activities. These are spelled out for those who are interested in FANCYCLOPEDIA 3, available on the Internet.

I have had many surprises during my science fiction/popular culture activities. Years ago, my older son sent off for some Golden Age facsimile science fiction and superhero comic books that he had seen advertised in a fanzine. Both of us were flabbergasted to discover that my Captain Marvel Club materials were featured in one of them, along with my 10-year-old signature, on one of the club items.

Later, my other son discovered that some of my Hop Harrigan club materials were being sold on eBay, including my Hop Harrigan Observation Corps certificate with my 11-year-old signature on it. The price was high, but he was kind enough to buy these items for me. I hadn't seen these materials since I left home to attend college in the early 1950s.

The membership items from the various clubs I joined as a child (Superman, Justice

Society, Green Lama, Captain America, Captain Midnight, The Shield, Captain Marvel, Hop Harrigan, etc.) were stored in a little cardboard suitcase in my parents' garage. I have never discovered how they disappeared, or how some of them reappeared in various places over the years.

When I was in graduate school in the 1960s, and corresponding regularly with Jerry Bails, "the father of comic book fandom", I routinely picked up my monthly check at the bursar's office in the University of Texas Tower. One day, on the check stub, that one keeps as a record of the monthly payment, were the words: "Jerry Bails is alive and well in Detroit, and sends his regards". Neither Jerry nor I could figure out how someone who was involved in issuing my monthly checks at the University could know me in Texas and him in Michigan, and also know that the two of us were friends. At the time, Jerry was teaching at Wayne State University.

In 2010, I bought a copy of *FOUNDERS OF COMIC FANDOM* by Bill Schelly, and found that Jerry was featured in it. Listed in a reproduction of "The 1964 Who's Who List" (pp. 209-216), was yours truly and Bob Jennings, another current N3F member.

Other fans listed included Jim Harmon ("Mr. Nostalgia"), with whom I have co-authored some articles and short stories. He and I were writing a book on radio science fiction when he died before we could finish it. I still have a draft of this book around somewhere, along with other partially completed writing projects. On the other hand, I have over 1,000 signed publications, 500+ on psychology topics, and 500+ on popular culture topics. These publications include more than 50 books, monographs, and other separate publications.

Jerry and Jim both were very helpful when I wanted to have copies of my comic book club materials, so I could properly display them in my Collectibles Room (no way I could buy original items since their prices had skyrocketed over the years). For example, Jim made a copy of his Superman of America club certificate for me, with Jerome Siegel's autograph on it. And Jerry sent me copies of his several Justice Society of America certificates.

Other interesting events have happened to me primarily because of my involvement with science fiction and popular culture fandoms. The various fandoms and sub-fandoms are related, of course, and participation in one can lead to participation in others. For example, my membership in the N3F led to my membership in Big Little Book fandom, headed up at the time by Lawrence F. Lowery, a retired professor at the University of California, Berkeley. Larry and I found we had much in common and ended

up writing articles and a monograph together.

The monograph, "The Buck Rogers Big Little Books and Other Collectibles", published in 2013 and nearly a hundred pages in length, immediately sold out. Jim Harmon and others were also involved in this work, that could be said to be the result of efforts by members of science fiction, old time radio, television, comic strip/comic book, and big little book fandoms.

Undoubtedly, some of the interesting things that happened to me over the years were because I had a Ph.D. in psychology—especially a few of the remarkable phone calls I have received—one in particular in the middle of the night by a would-be rodeo performer who wanted me to hypnotize him so he could become a bull riding champion!

Just last year, I learned that a copy of my first book on radio, HANDBOOK OF OLD-TIME RADIO, published in 1993, had been one of the books in Hugh Hefner's private library in the Playboy Mansion. Although published nearly thirty years ago, I still receive royalties on this work.

Most recently, I was sent a translated copy of TEXAS STAR, a book by the award-winning Danish author, Mathilde Walter Clark. Her book is described in reviews as a "fictional memoir". Much to my surprise, I'm a character in it, described as a popular culture expert! She even mentions my Handbook of Old-Time Radio.

It's my belief that unusual things happen more frequently to people who write and who are active in clubs like the N3F. I write every day, and at any one time have ten or so items in press with various magazines and fanzines. And I'm always working on a book or monograph of some type.

I have enjoyed almost all of my N3F experiences, especially the ones related to writing and editing. Probably my least favorite club experience was serving as president (2010-2011). I endured the responsibilities of the office for two years, however, because I was asked to do so.

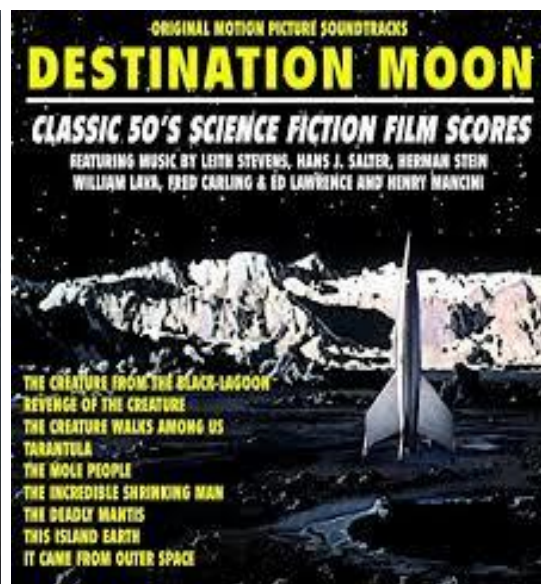
I urge all N3F members to become more active in our club's many interesting Bureaus. There is literally something for the most discriminating member.

As my 87<sup>th</sup> birthday rapidly approaches (on December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021), I look forward to even more interesting events in my life, especially ones related to my N3F activities.

## **BEHIND THE SCENES:** Science Fiction Movie Soundtracks

by Jeffrey Redmond

*continued from last issue*





Where do the music composers get their ideas from? Different musical instruments and noises create different emotional impacts, so a lot of their work is already done for them. Music has power to affect the visual field and the imagination.

Synthesizers are almost always used in SF and horror films because they can produce otherworldly sounds. But for straightforward emotion, horns are used too. These are associated with pageantry, the military, and the hunt, so they are used to suggest heroism. Movies featuring death-defying heroes such as STAR WARS and ROBOCOP use a lot of horns. Such triumphant music implies certain guarantees, however. Carpenter says that for his version of THE THING, he insisted on grim music. "If we had made the audience feel that we were in a heroic situation, that movie would be a cheat...When they hear that heroic sound they go, Oh, okay, everything's going to be all right. But it's not going to be all right...!"

The length of a sound from its beginning to its peak is called attack, which may be fast (like a door slamming) or slow (like a dog growling). Fast attack sounds loud. Loud sounds are more frightening than soft sounds, and sudden loud sounds are the most frightening of all. If you are shooting a scene about a woman alone in a house on a stormy night and you want to show how terrified she is of the situation, one way is to use loud claps of thunder. When old radio mystery shows wanted to suggest someone alone in a dark house with a killer on the loose, what did they use?

Sounds with eerie attack: The ticking clock, the thunder and rain beating against the window, the howling wind, the shutters banging against the side of the house, and—creepiest of all—the sound of steps coming slowly up the creaking stairs. These are still

very popular in films today, not because we need the audio clues, but because they are such familiar shorthand for this clichéd but still exciting situation.

Bernard Herrmann's theme for the PSYCHO shower scene uses high-pitched string instrument notes with very fast attack. Strangely enough, the theme nearly didn't get written, as this was another scene for which Hitchcock didn't want any music. But Herrmann wrote it anyway, and Hitchcock agreed that it was too good to throw away. Herrmann also uses mostly strings and percussion to build suspense in the movie FAHRENHEIT 451. Lots of movies use high-pitched music to build fear.

In Jerry Goldsmith's score for PLANET OF THE APES, after the three astronauts see the bizarre scarecrows up on the scaffolds, "Goldsmith introduces high, exotic percussion sounds—metal twangs produced by stainless steel mixing bowls". Again in that movie, when the female astronaut is discovered in a state of advanced decomposition, the strings seem to scream. The 1951 version of THE THING features brass and high strings, though horns play along with the howling winds when the alien saucer is discovered in the ice—this version was heroic. High strings seem ideal to express stress and tautly stretched nerves (like in THE OMEN). Or, they can evoke weird psychic goings-on (like in POLTERGEIST or for the theme to THE X-FILES).

The sound mixers for the Michael Crichton movie CONGO found that even high organic noises can build suspense. In the jungle, the birds and insects create a high ambient whine that pretty quickly gets on your nerves. As one of the mixers said, "When they want to create a real feeling of anxiety, these insects are going to be played loud".

The violin in Psycho is so effective because it is used as percussion, suggesting the knife strokes. Deep sounds also sound percussive, and in fact you can feel them literally penetrating your body if the volume is strong enough. JAWS uses a sinister but very simple double bass which begins in long, heavy notes gradually acquiring a much faster attack. Another example of low music for suspense occurs in the opening of the Malcolm McDowell vehicle TIME AFTER TIME. A prostitute stumbles past a London pub. We hear garish popular Victorian music from within. Then this switches to a deep, ominous double bass as the prostitute looks up and sees...Jack the Ripper. But she thinks she sees just a well dressed gentleman, so the soundtrack cleverly switches back to the pub music. The music is sinister just long enough for the audience to register the threat, but it doesn't insult us by playing on and on during the murder of the prostitute.

In the star wars movies, the appearance of the villains onscreen is likewise accompanied by deep or military sounds. What most audience members don't notice is

that most protagonists also have their own theme music. The main Star Wars theme, written by John Williams, plays whenever Luke Skywalker and Princess Leia face important decisions, and when Obi Wan Kenobi dies.

The same was true of the old Star Trek series, when the soundtrack used to be composed by a live orchestra watching the film footage. Each character had his or her own individual theme music, which was always played whenever they were on screen. Mr. Spock's theme, for example, is played by "an instrument that couldn't possibly be romantic, a bass guitar, down in the low register, with no resonance. It just clunks out the theme." Star Trek Classic also played with the voices of alien characters. They would electronically raise or lower the voices of these actors to create an inhuman effect. A dangerous cat woman in STAR TREK V: THE FINAL FRONTIER has a voice made of real cat noises mixed with distorted James Brown screams. To make "alien" languages sound real, they are sometimes made from spliced together bits of exotic Earth languages, such as Gikuyu and Nepali. This causes much hilarity when the movies play in countries where these languages are spoken.

Just as live characters are accompanied by mechanical effects, sometimes machinery is given a soundtrack that contains the sounds of living beings. "High tech is boring", says effects mixer Adam Jenkins, who worked on the movie STAR TREK GENERATIONS. "And I don't mean that high tech sounds are a bad thing. They're just boring over time, and fatiguing on the brain. Which is why we would consistently pull back on the telemetry tracks, meaning the computer noises and high tech looking equipment. Otherwise, it would begin to sound like a phone is ringing through the entire scene."

For this reason, the effects on Generations are surprisingly organic. Editors used natural sounds—birdsong, human voices, wind noises—all processed and mixed into the backgrounds, which is critical on Star Trek, since so much of the action takes place on the same ship, and if the backgrounds aren't diverse enough, it will sound too homogenous and claustrophobic. Of course, sick bay sounds different from the bridge, which sounds different from the more intimate confines of Whoopi Goldberg's quarters or Captain Picard's stateroom.

The definitive rumble of the starship Enterprise was invented by sound effects creator Alan Howarth, who has worked on every Star Trek film. He created the ship's sound from a white noise generator, plus an exhaust fan, plus the air conditioner at Paramount Studios. Howarth says, "The bridge background of the 60s was electronic music with sonar beeps. And our challenge was to take these musical instruments and make sound

effects—without having them sound like a series of filters and oscillators. They wanted the tracks to be organic, to be more emotional and appealing. So, something like the ship's phasors was a difficult effect, because it has to be pleasing, which we normally associate with high end, and it has to be full bandwidth. It has to have that low end to give it size. It just so happened that for Star Trek Generations we got two days of an electronic storm in Southern California, which is unusual in itself, and we recorded some very good lightning, which works as phasors”.

The noise of the Klingon bird of prey spaceship contains the songs of whales, ironically enough. The mysterious Nexus energy wave which appears at the climax of Generations combined more than thirty elements, including animal cries, to give it a subliminal sense of a living, deadly creature. When the Klingons destroy the Voyager probe in Star Trek V, the explosion contains the sound of a woman's scream and the cartoon character the Tasmanian Devil. Another unexpected organic quality can be found in THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, in which a large door was given no mechanical sound basis but does have a lion's growl buried subliminally in it.

There are plenty of other surprises to be found in the sound studio, where a sound effect is very often not what you think. More information that Trekkers might like to know about their favorite show is that the transporter's beaming down sound is made by piano wires strung across a literal beam. When you see the sliding doors opening and closing, what you hear is a bunch of different sounds including an air gun reversed and somebody's sneakers squeaking on the floor to give it the rubber seal effect. The photon torpedo blasts don't sound like what they really are—the recording of a Slinky.

RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK opens with Indiana Jones fleeing a runaway boulder. That noise was actually the sound editor's Honda Civic rolling down his driveway. The light sabers in Star Wars are the sounds of a TV picture tube and an old 35mm projector. Luke Skywalker's land cruiser is the noise of the Los Angeles Harbor freeway traffic heard through a vacuum cleaner pipe. Star Wars goes for gritty sounds, which is why those movies sound like our world and Star Trek sounds like a better one.

The crew on CONGO found that the gorilla's natural cries weren't scary enough—gorillas actually make a soft, hooting noise, whereas the director wanted a booming, Jurassic Park effect. So the post production men recorded the sound of howler monkeys, which do have a low, throaty growl. Does that seem deflating? At least the sounds were made by wild animals. The sound director for JUMANJI had to come up with vocalizations for unusually intelligent and mischievous monkeys from a wild, exotic,

para-dimensional world. What did he use? His eight-year-old son.

Though horror films can often feature supernatural creatures and events, ironically enough what they need is an uncomplicated sound that will disturb the audience viscerally rather than interest them intellectually. You might think I'm talking about sound effect libraries, of wolves growling or boots stalking down an alleyway—and you're right, soundtracks do use these. But they also use much more mundane sounds. For instance, the sound studios of horror movies are frequently littered with fruits and vegetables to make various body snapping sound effects. The recent HELLRAISER IV went through a lot of melons.

Another interesting monster sound was achieved in the made-for-TV movie based on Stephen King's THE LANGOLIERS. The langoliers are nearly all mouth, so they needed to have a predatory effect. But King had described the sound of their approach as being reminiscent of Rice Krispies. Although the langoliers, who literally eat the world, would realistically require combinations of grinding, screeching, scraping and the crunching of metal, pavement, and earth, the executive producer was adamant that they should not sound mechanical. Sound editor Ray Palagy says, "We actually spent an entire day recording cereal sounds—dry cereal, wet, mushy, in a bowl, in a tub..." They took all of these sounds and made processed versions of all of them. Then they added effects such as Velcro, car doors, subway screeches and lion growls to yield "signature" sounds that are hard to categorize as animal or machine. Because supernatural creatures such as the Langoliers are based on no equivalent in the real world, they have to sound unique.

Another example of sound design ingenuity can be found in the opening of TERMINATOR 2. The camera pans across burned-out car bodies and a devastated playground from the year 2029 A.D. We hear a desolate wind...and then, CRUNCH! A robotic foot crushes a human skull. The sound of the wind actually comes from the crack of an open door to the main mix room at Skywalker Sound, combined with the sound artist vocally going "Whooooooo". The sound of the crushed skull is actually a pistachio being crunched by a metal plate.

The Terminator 2 sound crew got very inventive. They had to design the sound of the T-1000 Terminator moving into and out of liquid metal, the quality that makes him virtually indestructible. "It's not really liquid..." sound man Gary Rydstrom says. "It doesn't have any bubbles in it. It doesn't gurgle. It doesn't do anything visually except flow like mercury..." So Rydstrom gathered a number of sound elements and played them while watching the screen to see what sounded good. When the T-1000 is just sort

of flowing and transforming, that's Rydstrom plunging a microphone covered with a condom into a mixture he made of flour and water with Dust Off sprayed into it. "It would make these huge goopy bubbles," he says. "And the moment when the bubble is forming, it has this sound that's similar to a Cappuccino maker...Funny enough, it has this metallic quality to it, so I believed it for the transformation."

For the sound of bullets hitting T-1000, Rydstrom slammed an inverted glass into a bucket of yogurt, getting a hard edge to accompany the goopy sound. In the psychiatric prison where Sarah Connor is held prisoner, the T-1000 flows around and through a gate of steel bars. That sound is actually dog food being slowly sucked out of a can. "A lot that I would play backward or do something to," Rydstrom says, "but those were the basic elements. What's amazing to me is...Industrial Light & Magic using millions of dollars of high tech digital equipment and computers to come up with the visuals, and meanwhile I'm inverting a dog food can."

So far it sounds like fun and games, but sound mixers face a lot of difficulties beyond inventing new sounds. One problem is trying to read the film director's mind. Directors usually don't know anything about music scoring and don't know how to articulate what kind of soundtrack they want. For example, the producers of the Star Trek: next Generation TV show wanted the Enterprise transporter to sound like its old recognizable self, but at the same time to sound more high tech and intense. And Gene Roddenberry ordered them to "add a sense of mystery". So the sound mixers took the basic musical chord and added a series of tri-tones, performed on the Synclavier. By the time Generations rolled around, the sound has changed quite a bit, always finding some new high end sparkle to match the new opticals.

There is also the eternal problem of the "sound of space", an important point because technically, there is no sound in space. "But it's a film, and you have to have something, so Howarth recorded a couple of spring reverbs for that bwwoiiiiingg, and played it back to create a crawling effect." We scientifically literate movie viewers will have to put up with these things.

The sound crew of Generations must have been amused when told that they were going to have to create the sound of the Enterprise crashing into a planet, destroying hundreds of feet of terrain, and yet not totally self-destructing in the process. What is the sound of a starship hitting a planet? The basic noise is a recording of "dry ice on bare metal, which gives this annoying moaning, groaning, wrenching, metallic sound." Then they added noises like earthquake rumbles, cars skidding through gravel, tree

cracks, and explosions. "The idea is to introduce variety to sustain interest" in the audience, who subconsciously expect a variety of sounds to match the changing picture on screen.

The Terminator 2 sound crew faced a lot of challenges. In one scene, Arnold Schwarzenegger participates in a major shootout with the police outside the Cyberdyne building. Sound man Gary Rydstrom says, "The difficulty was that Arnold is so in control of shooting this gun, that the destruction he creates has to be within reason. It has to be such that you don't believe any cops are dying. So we couldn't use ricochets, because standard Hollywood ricochets would imply that the bullets are flying out of control and killing somebody. And we couldn't use explosions of the cars, which look like they are exploding, because they weren't exploding. They were just being demolished to the point where they would collapse. It was tricky to just use hits on metal, and glass breaking...and ricochets that sounded like thuds."

Another major problem is trying to get a clean recording of dialogue when your background is noisy. The production sound mixers for Cargo found that "few shooting locations on the planet can be more challenging...than a tropical rain forest. It's wet, even in the dry season. It's hot. And the insects are big and loud, making it difficult to pull clean dialog tracks out of the backgrounds". Mixer Ron Judkins, who won an Academy Award for Jurassic Park, described it as "the most strenuous working situation I've ever been in." And one location was right on the edge of an extinct, but still hissing volcano crater.

The sound effects team for The X-Files needs a sense of humor too. "The biggest difference between this show and other shows," says production mixer Michael Williamson, "is that UFOs never land in the middle of the city during the daytime. They always land in the middle of mountains or out in the water, and it has to be raining, and it has to be muddy, and it has to be windy, so those are the problems we have. If we're out in the bush and they decide they want to have wind blowing through the trees, we have to try to isolate the dialogue to a point where you don't hear the wind machine." He adds, "Another thing is that it never fails that our lead actor David Duchovny gets beaten up, and...that brings a whole host of new problems. If you're in a very wild environment and there's lightning machines going off and rain towers spreading rain all over the place and wind machines going nuts, and the only way you can really get good, solid, clean sound is by putting a wireless on a guy, and he's got to go into a fight, then all of a sudden, the wireless isn't going to be any good. Everything is a challenge."

So next time when you go to the movies, give the sound effects a round of applause. Rydstrom, sound designer for Terminator 2, says, "Your first thought when you see a lot of special effects is that sound's job is to not only do something as fantastical as the visual, but also to make it real. It's not competing with the special visual effect, because people perceive the visual and the sound differently. Sound Designer Walter Murch had a way of putting it: "The eyes are the front door, and the ears are the back door."

But one thing is certain. As visual effects for movies become more and more sophisticated, we can be sure that sound effects will need to be more and more inventive—even if it's only to think of things to do with a condom, yogurt, or a dog food can. As Tamara Rogers, a sound expert in Hollywood, puts it, "audio is the last frontier."

### **Meet Redmond (photos)**



**Redmond at a deserted industrial site. Picture three, the benevolent expression of Mr. Redmond, our publicity expert.**

Jeffrey Redmond writes pretty close to Hollywood in the above article. He really gets in there among the doings. I think Hollywood people are like editors and publishers, you have to get in there and meet them. When Steve Davidson was doing Amazing Stories in paper, and trying to get a kickstarter going to finance it, I suggested to him that Hollywood SF producers might come across with some support. He said he would take the suggestion. I didn't hear back from him about the results, and he had become a busy man, but I did notice that the kickstarter was limping toward the end and it looked like it was not going to be successful, when suddenly a couple of large donations came in and took them over and across, and the first issue of Amazing was on its way. The kickstarter had a lot of people getting together and doing, anyway, and there were several paper issues of Amazing. It seems to have stopped publishing, but while it went on it was a novaic display. Cooperation achieved a lot there, and more cooperation among people involved in science fiction could achieve a lot more. I had links to amateur science fiction movie productions in Surprising Stories, and I wouldn't be surprised if a lot of people were to be found who had followed the links to view these films. That's keeping things happening, not just looking at it. Get together with those who make science fiction! Let them know you read it and view it, and say what you think of it. That's getting active about things and involved in what you are interested in. SF fans are already doing this on the computer, but not in very great depth or very meaningfully, as yet.



art by Vargas

## Interviewing Garth Spencer, head of eAPA.

*Garth spencer is a particularly active science fiction fandom name of the present time. He has taken parts of some fan doings that were losing ground and worked at getting them back together and having an effect upon fandom, and works particularly with Net Fandom online. Here he speaks of his career with fandom.*



**Garth Spencer**

**IO:** When and how did you enter science fiction fandom?

**GS:** I entered fandom in about 1980 or 1981 while I was a student at the University of Victoria. There were three SF clubs in Victoria (Canada) at the time, a Star Trek club, a general SF club, and a student club at the University. They were all in contact, and often people had dual memberships, and I think the total number of fans was about fifty. The SF Association of Victoria held meetings in a room at the Oak Bay recreational center, where I found a fanzine library.

**IO:** What activities have you participated in and what positions have you had in organized fandom?

**GS:** In time, I became editor of the SFAN club zine. When the clubs held some one-day conventions, I participated.

**IO:** When did you start reading science fiction and what did you think of it when you first discovered it?

**GS:** I first discovered science fiction almost as early as I started reading. I collected a series of Tom Swift Jr. books. I regularly visited the public library and devoured most of the books available there. Curiously, I didn't discover bookstores until much later. The

science fiction on television didn't impress me—this was the age of Irwin Allen productions—but I watched it anyway.

**IO:** Did you leave Victoria and move elsewhere when you finished college? If so, was there any science fiction activity thereafter and if there was what differences might there have been in the further sf activity?

**GS:** I didn't finish university but dropped out in the mid-80s. While delivering papers and mowing lawns, I produced a newszine for and about Canadian fans. Finally, in 1987, I moved to Vancouver and joined the BC Science Fiction Association. The big difference between my home town and Vancouver was the number of fans, and the level of fan activity, both in fan pubbing and in convention running.

BCSFA members have been holding VCONS, with some breaks, since 1971. At the time I moved to Vancouver fans published the clubzine, a few personal zines, and BCAPA. I became involved in VCON, and for a time edited BCSFA-zine.

I did have a sense that something was ebbing away in BCSFA. Many of the better known, more active fans had left BCSFA; some of them, like William Gibson and Lisa Smedman and Don DeBrandt, have gone on to professional publication. By stages the zines and BCAPA stopped appearing. VCONS struggled more and more with the increasing cost and inflexibility of hotels, and with the chronically insufficient level of volunteer manpower.

Note: This interview is incomplete due to a breakdown of contact. As I had set this much of it to type I am leaving it in and hope to be presenting the rest of the interview, which hasn't been conducted, in the next issue of Ionisphere. The interview is supposed to go on to center around Garth's work with eAPA and the effort he is putting into his newest fannish projects. He is an ideal fan contact, who always has plenty of things going on. I am still trying to find out what has caused the communications failures between him and myself. Sometimes his emails to me work and get through, and at other times I don't receive them. And my own emails to him get through occasionally. The above interview was done through his Facebook page messenger, which was working, but he cancelled the rest of it in favor of email and I was unable to achieve a single score through that medium.

Garth is well worth interviewing, and let us all hope and pray that this disturbance will have been eliminated by the time the next issue of IO is produced and that we will get to know him better via the interview medium.

## Viewing the Membership



Looking over the N3F's roster, its membership list, I find quite a few names I know nothing about; in fact, I know nothing about most of the names on the total list. When I've seen them in other fan publications, I have some idea of them, but there are a lot of names I haven't seen anywhere else. This is especially true of the large public membership (which I was part of for awhile); I assume that they are less than active, which is their prerogative, but I would like to see them being more active. (Note that I take it to be my prerogative to say what their prerogative may be. Active bureau member, folks.) (If I sound like I'm stretching myself a little, I will add that I'm also one of the directors. Here I'm stating a better introduction to myself than I have been making in Ionisphere, and I would like to get members in closer contact with the other people in this bureau as well.) A whole lot of members have not yet made themselves known even by way of letters of comment to the various fanzines the NFFF publishes. I am not criticizing them or complaining by saying this, for there is no law saying they have to do anything to be members of the NFFF; they can simply "enjoy", as the saying apparently originated by Harry Golden in his book of that title puts it. The NFFF is here for them. But perhaps it would make the NFFF even more enjoyable if we started hearing from the membership and got some idea of who they were, just as I am trying now to give members some idea of who I am. The personal element should be part of the N3F.

With this issue I am starting this column which is devoted to closer relations among members (just as the name of the bureau suggests there should be). I have the idea that if we started discussing the membership, we might start hearing back from them. The Welcommittee has had a few words to say to them, but after that, they've been on their

own. I could start out by mentioning George Wells, whom I remember from way back when we were both members of the Cosmic Pen Club. He explained to me that his name coincided with that of H.G. Wells (George's middle name begins with an H) and that that was what had led him into science fiction, seeing his own name on a book—so he read the book, WAR OF THE WORLDS, and was into science fiction. He and I were corresponding with a lot of other people of our age, and the other people got to corresponding with one another too, by way of hearing about the others, and we had our own little part of fandom going. We'd discuss what we were reading in the science fiction and fantasy magazines. George is somewhat active, but I haven't heard that much from him yet. There is also Owen Laurion, who was in the NFFF when I was in it earlier, and he had more to say back then than he seems to be saying now. Say, we'd like to hear more from an earlier NFFF member, Owen! At one time I was in correspondence with Carol Klees-Starks, who has rejoined the NFFF after a hiatus, and I waited to hear from her, but didn't—which of course shows that I was inactive at contacting her myself, but now, in hopes that she reads IO, I am mentioning her; she used to do a lot of writing. I'd like to ask Charles D. Ward, if he is reading this, whether he knows there is a story by H.P. Lovecraft called "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward"? He's not said much; I haven't seen anything from him at all. Ray Nelson has been a foremost fanzine cartoonist and a very popular one; he was interviewed for IO but I wonder if he is interested in contacting us other than being in the NFFF. I'd like to hear from him if he has the time.

I suppose Steve Fahnstalk is very busy indeed with all the things he is doing, including his column in Amazing Stories on the net, but hasn't he any time at all for doing things in the NFFF? It works like this: he's a very active fan, so one might expect him to be active in the NFFF, but here he isn't being active. There are some who say the Neff is a good place for a rest; maybe that's why he's not active here.

Patrick Ijima-Washburn has been heard from, but with all the interest he shows in fandom I'd expect to hear more from him; could we ask him for some comments? He's done art for my netzine Surprising Stories.

Kent McDaniel used to be in contact with me and has appeared in my paper fanzine Pablo Lennis, and has done a spot of promotion for that zine; I am wondering why I'm not hearing from him in the N3F, moreover, why we don't hear from him. He seems interested enough in fandom doings.

Nathan Warner has been doing something in the NFFF. In the N3F Facebook page he

has been displaying his art, all of it of professional quality. He's done a cover for IO. So we've heard from him. But we don't hear anything else, he just displays his art. I tried to write to him and find out his home address, which is not given in the membership list, because I wanted to send him an issue of Pablo Lennis where I mentioned him, but I did not get an answer to this, though I emailed him twice. Using the same email address, I requested art from him and got an answer and permission to use some of his displayed art as covers. Perhaps he will read more about it here if he gets Ionisphere—and I assume he got the issue with his cover.

Diane Crayne was in the Cult when I was and I was pleased to see her again here but have not heard from her. I'm wondering how she likes it in the NFFF. I did not write to her when she came in because I am not on the Welcommittee. Arthur Hlavaty does a regularly appearing fanzine and is talkative on the net, and I am surprised at seeing him in the NFFF writing nothing to Tightbeam or TNFF. Why's he so silent here? Joseph T. Major has not expressed great interest in the NFFF but he is on the membership list; doesn't he find time to communicate? He's a voluble speaker in his own fanzine, which is an official science fiction group fanzine, but maybe that very group is taking up too much of his time and attention to be heard from much on the net. William Center has been in the NFFF for a long time and used to do things; why is he not doing things any more considering that he is still an NFFF member? Gary Mattingly makes himself known with his fanzine and also in Facebook, but why not here? We'd like to hear from him here too.

And one question for Gary Anderson: are you the same person of that name who wrote fiction for Pablo Lennis in times past? If you are, I'd like to give you a pleasant "Howdy".

As you can see, I am trying to broaden the NFFF's inter-awareness and get things going in the open, perhaps getting up a correspondence/discussion publication sometime in the future. That's what TIGHTBEAM used to be, except that as its name suggested it was pretty in-groupish. (Here I speak from a director's viewpoint.) This feature, which discusses the NFFF and also its membership, gives our bureau fanzine some substance, I think, beyond its mere existence. I and we will continue with this policy, as this issue of Ionisphere indicates.

And so I conclude the feature by saying, "Yours for a better N3F!"

Let us make what we are doing work.



“Everybody ready to get up a bit of a show?”

**FINAL PAGE**