



# The National **84** Fantasy Fan **Years**

Fandom's Second Oldest Print Publication  
Cras ad Stellas — Tomorrow to the Stars  
Volume 84 Number 5 May 2025

## Director's Commentary From Kevin Trainor

During this last fortnight-plus of the Death March to April 15, I was reminded that our membership situation could be better, and that both the membership and active participation in things such as N'APA has been worse than it currently is. These things are true. However, let us look around at the current fannish scene. Traditional fandom, as we knew it in the past fifty years, has become as moribund as the traditional SF publishing houses, which cannot be bothered to cater to readers who are not female, not atheist, not politically leftists, nor interested in pronouns and the associated gender politics. Many conventions have dwindled in membership; some have shut down completely. This is unfortunate, because it accelerates the shift of fandom from in-person gatherings to online discussions, which tend to be afflicted by trolls, vituperative arguments, and just plain bad behavior.

"Social media made y'all way too comfortable with disrespecting people and not getting punched in the face for it." - Mike Tyson

I think when we talk to other people about what the N3F has to offer, we should stress that what we offer is slow fandom for fast times. We offer the opportunity in our zines and in our APA to kick back a little, let the steam stop coming out of our ears, and think a little bit before we comment on what it is

that has us riled up. We offer the possibility of collaborative, positive discussions with people we may not like very much, and by doing so, increase the amount of reasoned discussion as opposed to online poop-flinging. We offer continuity of thought, which isn't something often found online, and a certain amount of reverence for history, which is occasionally found online, but more often not, because what's on the front page of Facebook or Reddit or X today tends to be gone tomorrow...while all our zines are archived for people to look back at and learn from.

I'll be making a point of stressing "slow fandom" to the attendees at this year's Son of Silvercon; hopefully if you're an N3F member from the Pacific or Mountain states, you can join us there.

## Reminder: Discuss Laureate Awards

The list of nominees appears on page 8. Some people have started voting, and those votes will be counted, but N3F zines are open to discussions of nominees for the next month. The official ballot will appear in the June issue of this zine.

## Presidential Notes

I endorse Kevin's proposal that we offer slow fandom, with monthly and bimonthly magazines offering people a chance to think before they comment, and a chance to craft carefully and thoughtfully a letter of comment rather than emailing a heated re-



Art

6...Jose Sanchez "The Girl Who Never Was"

For all our old zines, Go To [N3F.org](http://N3F.org)



## Your Volunteer Team

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Continued Next Column, Middle

sponse before there has been a consideration of proofreading your immortal words. I am gradually writing old members, asking them what fannish activities they are performing these days. Those who are not currently dues-paying are being encouraged to pony up the needed \$6.

I was extremely happy to see that Jean-Paul Garnier has taken over publication of Ionisphere, and that Jason and Mindy Hunt have taken on publishing FanActivity Gazette and Films Fantastic. I hope to have good news about Eldritch Science in the near

## Your Volunteer Team

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 Writers Exchange: Judy Carroll BlueShadows2012@gmail.com

## 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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 Send material for this zine as electronic files (txt or rtf preferred, images as jpgs, please do not send PDFs) to the Editor: George Phillies, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester MA 01609, phillies@4liberty.net The submission deadline for each issue is the 15th of the month.

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future. It is not true that I am considering resigning as N3F President. However, when you reach my age sometimes there are sudden changes that force you to drop many activities with more or less no notice. I would like to be in the position that, if I suddenly leave the N3F, will still be in good hands and will be able to continue in my absence.

## A New APA

The N3F may have a new fanzine, an APA, tentatively titled The Rhodomontadulous Promenade (The Boasters and Braggarts Parade) or perhaps The Gentle Search. The APA will specifically cover role-playing games. As TRP is an experiment, contributors will not be called upon to become dues-paying members for the first year. Many people wisely will not risk \$6 on an experiment.

Why a role-playing and other games APA? Gaming is certainly an important part of SF fandom, broadly defined. Roleplaying games, beginning with Dungeons and Dragons, have captured the interest of many people in worlds of fantasy, people whose interest in books may have been more limited. For fifty years, the premier roleplaying games APA was Alarums and Excursions, but A&E ceased publication without advance notice at issue 593. There is now a significant gap in the hobby, waiting to be filled. The N3F can fill it, incidentally bringing into the SF&F world people whose interests would otherwise be more remote.

There is some question in my mind as to whether issues of TRP should be sent to all N3F members, same as our other zines, or whether you should need to ask to be made a subscriber. I do this because we have not in recent times had a lot of members who show signs of interest in this branch of fandom. Perhaps people would rather not be sent zines, rather than needing to tap the delete key. On the other hand, when we circulate a wider variety of zines, we expose our members to new and different fannish activities. Which do you prefer?

That subscription by request option is significantly more complicated than what we do with our other zines, too much to do more than once.

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## Letters of Comment

Dear George and Jon:

Many thanks, George and Jon for Vol. 84, No. 4 of The National Fantasy Fan, always welcome, and a good read. And, congratulations to this year's Kaymar winner, Jean-Paul Garner! I am sure there will be more to celebrate, as soon as I can get past the front cover.

My loc... I wasn't able to get the time to nominate, but like I said, I agree with Jean-Paul nomination, and his win, too. May I announce the fact that Amazing Stories: Best of 2024 is indeed out and available through Amazon and independent bookstores. Let me know if you'd like the official press release and cover art if you don't have it already.

Right now, I am getting more stories to go on the Amazing Stories website. I wanted to write more, but these days, AS is my main concern, outside of responding to fanzines. There are a few events for us to go this summer, but nothing like a fannish convention, which is definitely our loss.

Thank you for this issue, I will try to do better the next time! Famous last words...

Yours, Lloyd Penney

Readers:

We are approaching time to vote on the Laureate Awards, so I shall put in an endorsement in a few categories. For Best novel, I would rank S.M. Stirling's *To Turn the Tide* first and Declan Finn's *The Neck Romancer* second, though to my eye they are something of a tie.

Stirling's novel is a masterpiece of rich literary description, with wonderful details to transport the reader back into a truly different historical place. The description is not limited to a few images, but

instead appeals to every sense, including hearing, smell, taste, and touch. In a sense, the novel echoes L. Sprague de Camp's *Lest Darkness Fall*, which the protagonists have all read, but the author has thought carefully about how prepared travellers from the 21st century — well, preparations made without their knowledge — might endeavor to bring 2nd-century Rome forward technically. Amusingly, the people doing the preparations overlook the obvious, because of their own cultural background, which will surely lead to significant challenges as this series of novels advances.

*The Neck Romancer* is indeed a novel with romance. The hero was a werewolf until he was cured. The heroine is a vampire. However, she is also a good Roman Catholic who has confessed her multitudinous sins and takes Holy Communion very regularly.  
... George Phillies

Hi George and Jon:

I haven't been ignoring your email of two days past; I've been thinking about the situation with the N3F and how the club could be made more accessible and more interesting to potential members.

To some extent the club is trapped in a past window, a time when the activities we offer were important and relevant to science fiction fans because there wasn't much out there to connect interested people with others having similar interests.

Times have changed, for the better so far as science fiction and fantasy are concerned, at least in my opinion. Instead of being a nerd ghetto limited to double feature monster movies, shock theater TV smaltz, the monthly magazines, the SF Book Club, and whatever paperbacks (mostly anthologies, come to think of it), that the publishing industry decided to toss our way, and the only way fans could connect was thru the mail with fanzines being the main conduit, and conventions being few and expensive to attend for most fans.

Today we have the internet, with thousands of sites devoted to stf, along with chat rooms, podcasts, hundreds of new books, movies, and TV shows coming out every single month, more stuff than anybody could possibly keep up with.



If the club is going to compete with all that, it needs to offer personalized service, and make sure members understand and can easily access the services. Yeah, yeah, they are already out there for anybody to try, but we need to do a selling job to point out what we as a club are offering.

Just to bounce a few ideas off the wall, one of my favorite club zines has always been Eldritch Science, which only came out a few times a year, and was, to be kind, uneven in its fiction presentation, but it was always fun to read and some of the stories old and new were surprisingly good. But, the club has never really publicized this zine, beyond running an announcement in the 0-0 when the newest issue was available.

Why not treat this zine as a product, something the club can push for its members as both a showcase of longer fiction, and also a venue that readers can be comfortable with and become a part of.

The next time an issue of ES comes out, why not run a half page ad in TNFF treating it as tho it were a commercial venture, with a shot of the cover, some hype to go with it, a listing of some of the authors and/or story titles, and NOW!! available to non-members at the N3F web site, OR, sent direct to your email address as a personal zine just by sending your email to the zine's editor. Think of those 1/3 page ads in the older comic books about their companion issues coming out that month, that's the kind of ad hype we should try.

I think having sample issues sent direct to non-members on request would be a good feature. Those who want to access the club site can do so, but a personalized email with the issue attached might be something people would notice and appreciate.

Who would work out the ad? Not me, alas. I know how to develop print ads, by hand, but not how to do that sort of thing on a computer. You certainly have a lot more computer graphic skills than I have. Pretty much anybody has more computer graphic skills than I have. Jason Hunt, Mindy's hubby is a computer whiz, and he might be able to do it.

At the same time it should be stressed that ES is always looking for fiction to publish, any length, any style, subject to editorial approval, of course, and it should be stressed, repeatedly, that stories run in ES remain the personal property of the author, with all rights retained by the writer.

The same technique could be used for the club's Films Fantastic zine, which apparently only comes out quarterly these days. This is a zine that many members should be able to get into, because most fans these days are ardent movie and TV buffs. Members need to be encouraged to write reviews for this zine, and it really needs to be hyped as one of the club's premiere publications because it would and should have the broadest appeal. The key is to cajole members to write reviews of movies new and old to be posted in the issues. Reviews of old movies might also contain a link to where the movie could be viewed for free, either on YouTube or some other spot.

Another way to make our club and its activities more widely known and available to fans is to post a couple of our publications on Bill Burns' fanzines.com site. I don't know what went wrong between you and Bill, or why our stuff is not even mentioned there any more. But we should try to get this resolved. I think copies of FanActivity Gazette ought to be presented there at least. It is easily one of the most popular zines the club puts out, and it offers a genuine service to fans everywhere whether they are member or not, with its listings of conventions, clubs, upcoming movies and books, and more. This is a selling point to get it listed on Bill's site. My choice for the second zine to go would be Films Fantastic, if it gets back into a regular schedule of some kind. Third choice ES simply because there are so few fictionzines being put out any more, that this one would stand out.

For that matter, I looked all thru the latest TNFF and only found a single mention of the N3F.org site where all of our material past and present is stored. It would seem to me that an eye catching announcement block should be run every single issue telling members about our website and all the goodies they can find there. Maybe that info block could be run in the other club zines as well.

I am not sure what the club's art department is doing these days, but in past times, members were offered an opportunity to artwork that the club stored and made available to fanzine editors. Do we do that any more? In the past there was a subdivision for cartoons and humor. Do we do that any more?

One of the difficulties of the club is that while we offer a lot of things members can do, but we don't push the opportunities. As mentioned before, we really need hype, in your face pizzazz to call attention to various departments and their activities. Right now we have a monthly listing, in neat, sedate columns, with department heads saying a few words about what they do. Very prim and proper, and very easy to skim right over and ignore. Instead, pick a fanzine and a department each month and run promo ads and hype to let members know this is something that they might really be interested in if they just took the time to check it out.

---Bob Jennings

"The secret of life is to enjoy the pleasure of being terribly, terribly deceived."

---Oscar Wilde (1854-1900)



## Treasurer's Report

Paypal balance \$279.63

In: \$10 for membership (less fees)

NSB balance:

2532.34

2 life members

17 electronic + 10 regular + 1 household = 30 voting members

8 archive members + 265 public members = 273 non-voting members

Voting memberships expiring this month: None!

Welcome to Abby & Bill Buhler!

Neffers are reminded that preregistration for Son of Silvercon III has begun! The \$5 discount for N3F membership is available again. Attending memberships are \$40 (through June 15), supporting memberships are \$20, vendor tables are \$50, and sponsorships \$100. Mail checks & money orders to Friends of Fission-chan, PO Box 143, Tonopah NV 89049; PayPal payments go to fission.chan@gmail.com

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## The Rhomantadulous Promenade

What I told the few A&E Readers I could reach:

In any event, Lee Gold has ended Alarums and Excursions, but surely there is some interest in continuing with some rolegaming APA.

I have a tentative proposal, neither side has agreed to yet, which former A&E contributors find of some interest.

I am President of an SF club, the National Fantasy Fan Federation, founded 1941, which among other things publishes a variety of electronic fanzines, including its own apa, N'APA, first published in 1959. You can read about us at N3F.org.

We would readily be able to publish a new rolegaming APA, under some title such as The Gentle Promenade\*, that would be distributed electronically as a merged PDF. Lee Gold is retaining Alarums and Excursions as a title for her

own use. You would need to cover the costs by joining the N3F, at \$6/year. For the \$6 you would get all issues of

The Gentle Promenade (or whatever title readers finally settled upon), all issues of our monthly newszine The National Fantasy Fan, and could opt in to receiving all our other zines, including El-dritch Science (fiction), The N3F Review of Books, Tightbeam (reviews, all fannish areas), FanActivity Gazette (SF news), Films Fantastic (videos), Mangaverse (Japanese SF, rarely published), Ionisphere (author, editor, and fan interviews), and, of course N'APA.

A volunteer to be collator would be good. Collator would generate the cover(s), the contents page(s), collect all files as .docx or the like, convert them all to PDF with quality software e.g. Adobe, and send them to the N3F for linking and distribution. We have a stock of cover art.

This is a tentative proposal. Please advise as to what you think of it. Also, my list of emails of A&E contributors is a bit limited, so please circulate this inquiry further.

\*sort of like The Wild Hunt, but that title is in use.

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## 2025 Laureate Award Nominees

Nominations for the 2025 N3F Laureate Awards, for activities that occurred during 2024, have now been completed. We now allow a couple of months for discussion. The ballot is currently planned for the June issue of TNFF. The nominees are:

Best Fan Writer: Heath Row

Best Fan Artist: Tiffanie Gray

Best Fan Poet: Pedro Iniguez

Best Fan Editor: George Phillies

Best Fan Web Site:  
Galactic Journey  
File 770  
eFanzines.com

Best Non-N3F Fan Publication  
This Here...  
Lofgeornost

Best N3F Fanzine  
Tightbeam  
FanActivity Gazette  
Eldritch Science

Best Novel  
To Turn the Tide by S.M. Stirling  
The Neck Romancer by Declan Finn  
Cosmic Widow by Jonathan Nevair  
City of Dancing Gargoyles by Tara Campbell

Best Shorter Work or Anthology  
Wave IX (anthology)  
The Dragonfly Gambit by A.D. Sui

Best Magazine  
Radon Journal  
Utopia Science Fiction

Best Book Editor:  
Toni Weisskopf  
Eric Fomley  
Eugen Bacon

Best Pro Artist  
Alan White  
Dante Luiz  
Bob Eggleton

Best Historical Work:  
The Martians by Emilie Prochazkova, translated by  
Carlton Bulkin  
History of the Sam Moskowitz Award from First  
Fandom

Best None of the Above:  
Best Podcast - Simultaneous Times

Multiple Awards may be given for 'Best None of the Above'; this award is voted on as 'Yes' or 'No'.

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## Writers Exchange Bureau Correspondence Bureau Welcommittee

Judy Carroll advises us that she will be momentarily absent from her Bureaus, but plans on being back soon.

## Writers Exchange Bureau

For the nonce, send fiction wanting review to Jefferson Swycaffer aboutides@gmail.com. It would be polite to contact him first to ask how busy he is.



2025 N3F Amateur Short Story Contest  
Story Contest Rules and Entry Blank

To enter a story, on a separate page, please supply the following information, followed by your story:

- 1) Title of story (for identification): Author's name and address: Author's email address:
- 2) Answer DO or DO NOT I do/do not wish to become a public (no dues, no vote) member of the N3F and receive for free all N3F magazines.

Testify: I have read the above rules for the 2025 N3F Amateur Short Story Contest, and I agree to them.

Signature/Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Jefferson Swycaffer, P. O. Box 15373, San Diego, CA 92175-5373 ; or email [abontides@gmail.com](mailto:abontides@gmail.com)

We are here to encourage new writers, to reward the new kids on the block. we want writing that is not that good. We want stories from people who don't know their object from their subject, who don't know where commas go, and who use apostrophes to denote plurals -- but who have a story to tell. We want stories from guys and gals nobody's ever heard of...but in the years ahead, we will.

1. This contest is open to all amateur writers in the field, regardless of whether they're members of the National Fantasy Fan Federation. For the purposes of this contest, we define an amateur as someone who has sold no more than two (2) stories to professional science fiction or fantasy publications.
2. Stories entered in the contest must be original, unpublished, not longer than 8,500 words in length—and related to the science fiction, fantasy, or similar genres in the opinion of the judge.
3. Email attachments of Word documents are acceptable for submission. Manuscripts on paper should be typed, single sided on 8 1/2"-by- 11" white paper, double spaced, with pages numbered. The name of the author should not appear anywhere on the manuscript to ensure impartial judging. Photocopies are acceptable, if they are of good quality. Computer printouts must be legible.
4. Contestants can enter up to three stories. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) if you would like your story returned at the end of the contest. Stories will not be returned without an SASE. Do not send your only copy in case of accidental loss. We are not responsible for lost manuscripts.
5. Email entries will be accepted. Send to Jefferson P. Swycaffer at [abontides@gmail.com](mailto:abontides@gmail.com). No guarantee can be made of email receipt. Privacy and property rights will be absolutely respected. No one other than the Short Story Judge will ever see the submission.
6. There are no entry fees.
7. Cash prizes totaling \$100 will be awarded as follows: First prize is \$50, second \$30, and third \$20. Honorable mentions and semi-finalists will receive a certificate of award.
8. Send all manuscripts to the contest manager: Jefferson Swycaffer, P. O. Box 15373, San Diego, CA 92175-5373; [abontides@gmail.com](mailto:abontides@gmail.com). Emails with the story attached in word format are preferred. Paper manuscripts are acceptable. All entries must be received or postmarked no later than Dec. 31, 2025.
9. The Short Story Judge is a published science fiction professional, and also a loving fan of the sf and fantasy genres. All comments and critiques are solely the Short Story Judge's opinion, but he promises to be constructive and polite.
10. Stories will also be reviewed by the Editor of the N3F Fiction zine Eldritch Science; authors of suitable tales will be invited to submit their tales for publication in our zine. This review and invitation will only occur after contest winners have been announced, so it can have no effect on the contest outcome.
11. The NSF may want to publish an electronic book including top entries from one or more years of publication. You will not be contacted about this until after the contest is over and prizes have been awarded. If we want to publish your story, you will have to sign over to us first world serial rights. Your willingness to sign over rights cannot affect whether or not you win the contest. Winners will be notified as soon as the judging is completed. Announcements and notifications of winning entries will be made by March 2026. Please take your time and submit your best work. You can resubmit stories previously entered if they did not win previously. All entries will be kept confidential and will be judged fairly and anonymously. The deadline for all entries is Dec. 31, 2025. Good luck!



Director's Commentary From Kevin Trainor  
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