



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

Fandom's Second Oldest Print Publication  
Cras ad Stellas — Tomorrow to the Stars  
Volume 84 Number 6 June 2025

## 2025 Laureate Award Ballot

The final Ballot for the N3F Laureate Awards is on page 8. Please vote.

### Director's Viewpoint from G. Steven Condrey

Okay, here's my crack at a column. Please be gentle; this is my first time...

This is my first year as part of the Directorate, and in fact the first major leadership role I've held in any traditional science fiction or fantasy fan organization.

Recently I took over editorship of Eldritch Science, which I've come to understand has a distinguished pedigree among the fanzines distributed by the N3F. Perhaps I would have thought twice had I known the task I was about to undertake. But having chosen my path I am honor-bound to walk it and I will do so to the best of my ability. This past issue was delayed by multiple external challenges including my wife having surgery but I was pleased to find a wealth of excellent stories that will provide excellent content to readers for many issues to come.

A Letter of Comment was submitted to me that raised an important issue I encountered years ago during my ill-fated attempt to start a local club: what exactly is science fiction? It's a question that's been

debated since First Fandom over a century ago and probably won't be resolved anytime soon. The earliest stories that would be considered science fiction were not thought of in those terms by their authors. H. G. Wells was far more interested in political commentary, and we see that in abundance in his most famous works: The Time Machine contains a not-so-thinly veiled attack on class divisions that was actually banned in many countries as socialist propaganda. In a similar vein, War of the Worlds is an attack on colonialism. Jules Verne considered his prose fiction a sideline to what he considered his more important work as a playwright. Mary Shelley considered Frankenstein a morality play (which indeed it is). George Orwell would have been horrified to find Nineteen Eighty-Four categorized as science fiction (and as a mainstream journalist and essayist, would have considered it potentially career-ending) although if he'd seen how the genre had evolved even by the titular year of that book he would have been far more receptive.

Even as late as my high school years in the mid-1980s one of my English teachers refused to consider science fiction as 'legitimate' literature (even though Fahrenheit 451 was on the school's recommended reading list!) Not long after that I had my first contact with a major writer--a call-in radio program featuring Greg Bear. I mentioned this to him; he set me straight on the matter and put me on the path that led to me writing this essay to you at 3:20 AM.



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## Your Volunteer Team

### Directors

Jean-Paul Garnier spacecowboybooks@gmail.com  
 G Steven Condrey gscondrey@gmail.com  
 Judy Carroll BlueShadows2012@gmail.com  
 Jefferson Swycaffer abontides@gmail.com  
 Kevin Trainor wombat.soho@gmail.com (Treasurer)

### Officers

**President** George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net  
**Treasurer** Kevin Trainor wombat.soho@gmail.com  
**Membership Secretary:** G Steven Condrey gscondrey@gmail.com

### Editors

TNFF: George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net; Jon Swartz judgeswartz@gmail.com Artists Jose A. Sanchez, Angela K. Walker, Alan White, Nathan Warner  
 N'APA: Jefferson Swycaffer abontides@gmail.com  
 Tightbeam: George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net, Jon Swartz judgeswartz@gmail.com  
 Eldritch Science: G Steven Condrey gscondrey@gmail.com  
 Mangaverse: Patrick Ijima-Washburn patokon.com@gmail.com  
 The N3F Review: George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net  
 FanActivity Gazette: Mindy Hunt mindyhunt@scifi4me.com  
 Films Fantastic: Jason Hunt <jphunt@scifi4me.com>  
 Origin: Jean-Paul Garnier spacecowboybooks@gmail.com  
 Keeper of the Passwords: Jessi Silver belindabird@gmail.com  
 Keeper of the URLs: George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net  
 Host of the Web Site: George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net

### Bureau Heads

Anime: Kevin Trainor wombat.soho@gmail.com  
 Art Bureau: Jose Sanchez jose77sanchez@yahoo.com  
 Birthday Cards:  
 Book Review Bureau: G. Phillies phillies@4liberty.net  
 Comics:  
 Convention Calendar: Mindy Hunt  
 Club News:  
 Correspondence Bureau: Judy Carroll BlueShadows2012@gmail.com  
 Election Teller: Jon Swartz judgeswartz@gmail.com  
 Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau:  
 FanZine Review Editor:  
 Film Bureau: Jason Hunt <jphunt@scifi4me.com>  
 Forwarder Jefferson Swycaffer abontides@gmail.com  
 Franking Service: George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net  
 Games Bureau:  
 Gourmet Bureau: Cedar Sanderson cedarlila@gmail.com  
 Historian: Jon Swartz judgeswartz@gmail.com  
 History and Research Bureau:  
 Information Technology: George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net  
 Kaymar Award: Jon Swartz judgeswartz@gmail.com

Continued Next Column, Middle

This isn't even getting into the sorting algorithm of hard versus soft science fiction. An acquaintance of mine refused to accept anything as science fiction that didn't have a picture of a spaceship on the cover. Never mind that much of the great science fiction today doesn't involve space exploration except maybe as a background motif: genetic engineering and artificial intelligence have fueled many works universally regarded as science fiction classics (Dune and its many associated works come immediately to mind). Anne McCaffrey's outstanding Pern series is disregarded as science fiction because it features

## Your Volunteer Team

Laureate Awards: George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net  
 Lord High Proofreader: Jon Swartz judgeswartz@gmail.com  
 Lady High Proofreader: Jean Lamb  
 Membership Recruitment: Kevin Trainor wombat.soho@gmail.com Jeffrey Redmond redmondjeff@hotmail.com  
 Outreach Bureau:  
 Pro Bureau: George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net  
 Round Robins Inactive  
 Short Story Contest: J. Swycaffer abontides@gmail.com  
 Social Media:  
 Video Bureau: Heath Row, kalel@well.com  
 Welcomittee: Judy Carroll BlueShadows2012@gmail.com  
 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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dragons in a quasi-medieval setting (never mind that the dragons themselves were later revealed as the product of extensive genetic engineering; the humans were the descendants of interstellar colonists; and the setting was the result of part-societal regression and part-deliberate response to a civilization-ending disaster). How much of fantasy overlaps with science fiction? Does horror figure into the equation?

The point of this whole discussion is this: there are as many definitions of science fiction, fantasy, etc. as there are readers of these genres. Perhaps it's more appropriate to categorize them collectively as 'fantastic fiction'. The whole category of fantastic fiction has expanded over the past century to include film, television, animation (both Western animation and anime), comics and manga, cosplay, etc. And more voices besides the traditional reader and writer of science fiction and fantasy are joining the conversation, potentially enriching and expanding the traditional plots we all know and love. Lots of hardcore old-school fans dismiss these latter additions, but if we don't evolve and adapt, we're certain to die out (especially as more of the old-school fans head for that Great Con Suite In The Sky).

If we want to see our beloved fandom grow, we need to understand and accept what newer fans are getting into and provide space for them without peeing in someone else's cornflakes because they're not the brand we like. It's a big universe, and we have a lot of stories to tell about it.

## Letters of Comment

Hello, folks.

I liked Kevin Trainor's bold approach to the issues confronting science fiction and fandom in these troubled times. People have not been speaking up enough about the troubles SF has been having. The N3F is perhaps where such matters should be discussed. Kevin pulls no punches, and his writing in his Directors' Commentary is a relief from the avoidance I've been seeing about such matters. I hope this direct writing keeps up.

—John Thiel

Dear Neffers:

I have here a printout of The National Fantasy Fan, Vol. 84, No. 5, and I cannot find the e-mail that brought it to me. Mysteries that are unexplainable, but then, I have been housekeeping. Oh, well, here's my loc, and I hope that doesn't go awry...

The discussion of lost conventions...Canada has lost almost all of its fannish literary conventions. I have to wonder, when we see how mediacons, animecons, gaming cons, and other such events seem to be carrying on as usual, I wonder if the fannish literary cons had the most expensive format...guests from far away, expensive hotels and function space, a high level of hospitality? The only fannish literary convention I can think of left is Keycon in Winnipeg. They are about to have Keycon 41, and they have already announced a date for Keycon 42.

Amazing Stories continues on as does the regular discussion...do I edit another chapter of a book, or another short story? Often, the answer is 'yes!, and hurry up.' (I got about 50 pages edited for the newest Captain Future book today, and I am pretty happy with that.)

There seems to be more discussions as to what the N3F could do for its members, especially those furthest away. One suggestion I could make is ask other clubs like LASFS, NESFA, BASFS, and many more, what they do for their distant members, and shamelessly steal.

We finally have some heat here, and all the air filters and air conditioners work, so we are staying comfortable. As the summer arrives, we wish you all a happy season, and get out there to get some sun and relax. That's #1 on our ToDo lists. Party on, and see you next issue.

Yours, Lloyd Penney

Hi George & Jon;

Anyway, a few random comments about the latest issue, starting with Kevin Trainor's opening essay. While I agree, in the broad context, that modern sf publishing has gone overboard by injecting

LGBTQ themes into almost all they produce these days, at the same time I cannot agree with his suggestion that conventions have suffered much, either in quantity or by major drops in attendance figures.

If anything, there are more conventions related to the hobby and its immediate offshoots than ever before. Even a courtesy glance at the many pages of convention listings in the N3F Fan Activity Gazette would show that there thousands of conventions out there every month, and if Kevin is having a hard time finding conventions in his neck of the woods, he may need to look again. While in-person attendance suffered during the COVID crisis, the numbers have bounced back nicely since then, with many conventions providing an on-line option for those still leery of close contact, or who happen to be too far away to afford physical attendance.

I do think that the N3F offers services and features that can appeal to a variety of fans, and we need to do a better job of publicizing what we have and give fans a chance to sample the club's zines and features freely. (Am I repeating myself, yet again? That's because I believe that is something the club needs to focus more on).

On a different subject; I will again not be voting in this year's Neffy/Laureate Awards. Last year I read significantly more science fiction & fantasy than I had in previous years, but I notice that yet again I have not read a single one of the novels, or the short work/anthologies, and I am only barely familiar with one of the magazine titles nominated for the Neffy this time round.

More to the point, none of the nominations for best novel correlate with the titles nominated for this year's Hugo Awards. This is concerning, but not, perhaps, as much as it would have been a decade or two ago. The reality is that there is simply far more SF/F being produced these days than anybody can possibly keep up with. A lot of it happens to be excellent material too, but there is such a flood of printed matter coming out that nobody can read it all, even if anyone had enuf money to buy it all.

This is one of the reasons that I think the club should find a way of better promoting its book review fanzine, and solicit more book reviews, including reviews that point out the bad stuff as well as worthwhile titles. Fans need reliable guides on how to allocate their time and money, and well written, focused book reviews are a service most fans appreciate, a service the N3F is certainly able to supply.

Good luck with the new games zine/reader participation/apa publication, whatever you wind up calling it. Do not bother sending me a copy. I am cutting way back on my role-playing gaming activities these days and don't want to receive gaming fanzines that I will probably not get around to reading. I suggest you send some sort of pithy promo pitch about the new mag to all N3F members and let them decide whether they want to opt in or not.

---Bob Jennings

## Fanactivity Gazette

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## Welcommittee

We have three new members to greet this month: Morbus Iff, Joshua Kronengold, and James Eckman. Welcome to the N3F. We hope you have a Wonderful Adventure.

Morbus's fannish interests are: "Fanzines, all forms of East Asia culture, etc., etc. Curious about filking, but know effectively zero about it, past its name."

Where did you find us? "Panic after the death of Alarums & Excursions (A&E) and frantic Google searching. I probably knew about this already in the back of my mind but, obviously, it never made it to the front."



Joshua's Fannish interests are: LOL. See my zines in A&E. But in short: Conventions. Con-running (a bit). Worldcon BM. Dance. Novels, TV, Anime, APAs (but mostly for game-related things), rpgs, larp, tabletop board games, filking.

Where did you find us? : I know George via A&E

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## A Gentle Stroll

George Phillies writes: Our new rolegaming APA launched successfully. Issue 1 went out a week ago. Based on mail, we expect considerably more contributors for issue 2.

Remember, A Gentle Stroll has opt-in subscriptions. To receive future issues, email [phillies@4liberty.net](mailto:phillies@4liberty.net) and ask to be added to the subscriber/contributor list.

## Writers Exchange Bureau

Judy Carroll writes:

I hope all is well with our current and new N3F members. The N3F has a lot to offer. We just need to make an effort.

We are making changes within the Writers Exchange. If you have a story you would like read and critiqued you no longer have to contact me. You need to contact Jefferson Swycaffer - [abontides@gmail.com](mailto:abontides@gmail.com)

If you are a new writer, a professional writer, or someone who dreams of being a writer - this is the place for you.

Published or unpublished - all are welcome. If you have any questions, ideas or concerns: please contact: Judy Carroll. [BlueShadows2012@gmail.com](mailto:BlueShadows2012@gmail.com) OR if you prefer postal mail, Judy Carroll 975 E 120 S Spanish Fork, UT 84660

Jefferson Swycaffer writes:

The Writers' Exchange Bureau is open for business. If anyone has a story, or even a novel, that you would like read and gently -- GENTLY! -- critiqued, this is the place. Our readers are writers too, and we know how it feels to be critiqued. There's no comfortable way to say, or to read, "This part ought to be shortened," or "this part was unclear." But it's something we need -- we NEED! -- to hear. I would no more write a story single-handed than I would go for a long walk in the woods all alone. A companionable reader is a wonderful thing, and the Writers' Exchange Bureau provides accomplished and qualified readers who can offer constructive criticism and an outside viewpoint. We're happy to do this, because, in addition to all this, we love to read! Check out the Writers' Exchange Bureau. Send an inquiry -- or just send a story! -- to [abontides@gmail.com](mailto:abontides@gmail.com).

This is the same email address as the N3F Short Story Contest, so, please, indicate in what capacity you wish your story considered. There is a ton of talent out there -- if it is not being too rude to con-

sider gross tare weight of talent! Show off your writing to someone appreciative and cheerful, happy to read and to opine.

Cheers!  
Jefferson

## Correspondence Bureau

People, where are you? The Correspondence Bureau has members who have been waiting to make new friends and discuss all things N3F and Beyond. Join in a conversation and make new friends.

"In a very real sense, we are all Aliens on a strange planet. We spend most of our lives reaching out and trying to communicate. If during our whole lifetime, we could reach out and really communicate with just two people we are indeed very fortunate."

Gene Roddenberry

Following are the names, interests and contact information of members seeking correspondence:

Jeffery Redmond - by Email - redmondjeff@hotmail.com  
by Postal Mail 1335 Beechwood St NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505-3830

Interests:

Star Trek - original TV series

Fantasy and Science Fiction

Favorite author is me

Hobbies - reading, writing, watching TV, meeting with friends

Books and memorabilia collections

John Thiel - by Email - kinethiel@outlook.com

Interests:

Magazines: Reader's Digest, Future Science Fiction, Space Stories, Startling Stories and Thrilling Wonder Stories

Television shows: Tales of Tomorrow, The Sid Caesar show, Roy Rogers, Sky King, Masterpiece Theater

Books: mysteries of Mary Roberts Rinehart, Groff Conklin's anthologies, Tales of the Supernatural, the writings of Sigmund Freud, The Big Push by Mickey Spillane, Theodore Sturgeon's work

Television: Leo Margules' anthologies, Peyton Place;

Movies: Voyages of Ulysses, The Life of Omar Khayyam, The House of Wax, Kiss Me Deadly

Comics: Dick Tracy, Little Orphan Annie, King Aroo;

Radio Shows: Sky King, Boston Blackie, Marty Faye.

Interesting Places: Venice, California, the Florida Everglades, Valparaiso, Indiana

Steve Condrey - By Email - gscondrey@gmail.com

Interests:

Favorite genres: science fiction, fantasy, true crime and historical fiction.

Favorite authors: Robert Heinlein, Ray Bradbury, Isaac Asimov, Robert E. Howard, Octavia Butler, Andre Norton, Anne McCaffrey, Frederik Pohl, Harry Turtledove, Larry Niven, Robert Sawyer, David Weber, and S. M. Stirling.

Movies and TV shows: Star Trek, Babylon 5, Star Wars, Doctor Who, Aliens, Blade Runner, Conan the Barbarian (1980).

I do like to write, but haven't worked up the nerve to publish something. Maybe getting more involved here will help me get to that point (I hope!) I am active in my local astronomy club. I edit their newsletter and occasionally do outreach activities. I also volunteer at my church. Most of all, my wife, two kids (ages 16 and 12), and a fluctuating menagerie of house pets.

Judy Carroll - By Email BlueShadows2012@gmail.com

Interests:

Favorite Genres: Science Fiction and Murder Mysteries.

Favorite Authors: Shirley Jackson, Ray Bradbury, Dean Knootz, and Julie E. Czerneda.

Likes: Writing short stories and poems, working with young children.

If you would like to join the Correspondence Bureau and have your name and interests listed please contact me at

Send email requests to : Judy Carroll BlueShadows2012@gmail.com

## An N3F Activity — N'APA

Our second oldest fanzine.

N'APA, the Neffer Amateur Press Alliance, founded 1959, is the N3F's older APA. It has recently been joined by A Gentle Stroll, the N3F's roleplaying-games APA. For the past six decades, it has been our club APA. APAs are filled with art, comments on other contributors and their writings, fiction, reviews, and more. The earliest extant issue of N'APA, at least on our web pages, is issue 220. I recently discovered that I have a few slightly earlier issues that need to be posted.

The Table of contents of issue 220 reads:

Cover Art... The cover art is the interior art, a photograph from Jefferson Swycaffer. We thank him for sending artwork.

The Official Organ #220 George Phillies - 1 page  
Archive Midwinter Jefferson P. Swycaffer - 3 pages

Notes From a Galaxy Far, Far, Away #2 Lorien Rivendell - 2 pages

The Murdered Master Mage #3 George Phillies - 2 pages

With the slow passing of the years, N'APA has changed size, from some pages to many pages down to two members exchanging letters, and back again. At one time, it was apparently on hiatus for three years. In its most recent revival, the collator wrote: N'APA rises again from the dead. Like the Vampire Nostradamus, it just keeps coming back.

And what did we have in the latest issue of N'APA? We have 96 pages from 10 authors. Garth Spencer opens with bad news, the end of OryCon, a Canadian Fan Fund, and the zine Broken Pencil. Ahrvid Egnholm covers a wide range of topics, including the war in Ukraine, Swedish light films, and an early Swedish digital computer.

Mark Nelson's Brandy Hall has page after page of mailing comments, comments to other contributors about the zines they published in earlier issues. A second issue of Intermission gives us bizarre quotes from a mundane writing about SF Fandom and more fannish history. We then reach Jefferson

Swycaffer and Adrian Kresnak, with fiction from Adrian Kresnak and Garth Spencer.

Heath Row's zine has components on all sorts of fandoms, not to mention a review of an odd book identifying the Los Angeles zodiac killer as a former N3F Bureau Head, now deceased. (There are other suspects.) Samuel Lubell gives fine mailing comments, a bio-bibliography of SF author Michael Swanwick, a list of Hugo nominations, and much more. The issue closes with Kevin Trainor's Esmeralda County line on his reading, mailing comments, and a short Con Report on Confinement, an SF con in Lebanon, Tennessee.

Aside: How do APAs work? Technology has advanced; the basic structure of an APA has not changed. In a modern Amateur Press Association, each contributor generates her or his own zine, a set of pages as an electronic file. The contributors mail their zines to the Editor, who puts the zines into order, prepares the Cover and Front Matter pages, and sends the material to the Collator, who converts everything to a single PDF file, and mails the APA to N3F members.

The title "Collator" exists because once upon a time the pages were printed on paper, either by the individual members or by the collator, shipped physically to the Collator's location, collated by the collator and friends into copies of the issue, and physically shipped to back to the contributors.

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## 2025 Laureate Award Ballot

We have reached voting for the N3F Laureate Awards. If you have already voted, your votes will be counted. I have corrected two errors. As President, I am not eligible for an award. However, Mindy Hunt was nominated for Best Fan Editor; I missed the message.

To vote, mail your ballots to George Phillies, [phillies@4liberty.net](mailto:phillies@4liberty.net). Give your first choice 10 points, your second choice 9 points, etc. Please have your ballot arrive here by July 14. Results will be announced in the next issue of The National Fantasy Fan.

The nominees:

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'. The None of the Above Award is voted on as 'Yes' or 'No'.



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!



2025 Laureate Award Ballot  
Director's Viewpoint from G. Steven Condrey

Letters of Comment  
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An N3F Activity — N'APA --Our second oldest fanzine.

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2025 N3F Amateur Short Story Contest

N3F TNFF  
c/o George Phillips  
48 Hancock Hill Drive  
Worcester MA 01609