



# THE F.A.C.T. SHEET

A monthly publication of the Fandom Association of Central Texas, Inc.

2007

November

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**Join us! All FACT members are invited to all of these events!**

Dec. 9 (Sunday), 2-4 PM: **FACT Board Meeting**, Austin Public Library, Carver Branch, 1161 Angelina

Dec. 15 (Saturday), 7PM – 12 Midnight: **Annual FACT Holiday Party! All FACT members are welcome!** Location: home of Joi Chevalier & Jon Elkins, 2600 Pegram Avenue, Austin. Bring (1) something yummy\* and (2) a gift everybody is going to want (suggested price \$10 but nobody pays any attention to that). \* Joi says if you can't figure out what kind of goody to bring, give her a buzz: 512-371-9442. **We hope to see you there!**

Dec. 18 (Tuesday), 7 PM: **FACT Reading Group**, *The Android's Dream* by John Scalzi. Contact reading@fact.org for details.

Dec. 28 (Friday), 7-10:30 PM: **Ursa Major Social Meeting/Party** Lynn Ward's apartment, 3711 Medical Dr. #1614, San Antonio. FACT members welcome. Call Lynn for directions and to confirm location 210-218-2800.

## E-MAIL FROM FACT

Submitted by Kimm Antell

We periodically hear from people that they are not receiving e-mail messages from FACT. In order to receive e-mails from our mailing list, **please add factlist@fact.org to the safe senders list in your e-mail program.**

## JOIN THE FUN AT FACT'S HOLIDAY PARTY!

This year's FACT Holiday Party will take place on Saturday, December 15, from 7 PM to midnight. It will be held at the home of Joi Chevalier and Jon Etkins. Please do come! It will be a great evening of holiday cheer, friends, food, and fun.

**Date:** Sat., Dec. 15, 7 PM to midnight

**Location:** 2600 Pegram Avenue, Austin 78757  
512-371-9442

Please bring (1) your favorite food and (2) a gift everybody is going to want (suggested price \$10 but nobody pays any attention to that). If you can't figure out what kind of goody to bring, call Joi at 512-371-9442.

## FACT READING GROUP PROGRAM EXPANDS

FACT has started a second reading group for those people who want to meet further south. FACT is trying to grow, and the Reading Group has long been one of our most effective activities for bringing people into the local science fiction community. The original group is going strong, and is now an official program at the Austin Public Library North Village Branch. This new group is an experiment in extending that success.

How did this come about? A FACT member who lives in south Austin suggested starting another reading group in her neighborhood to serve people who live in that area. If you have ideas for FACT programs you'd like to see, let us know!

For the first few meetings, the South Austin Reading Group will read the books on the original group's reading schedule. After the group gets going, they will likely start picking books on their own.

### FACT Original Reading Group

**DAYS:** Monday of 1<sup>st</sup> week of the month, Tuesdays of 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the month

**TIME:** 7-9 PM

**LOCATIONS:** North Village Branch of Austin Public Library (1<sup>st</sup> week of the month), TBD (3<sup>rd</sup> week of the month)

**BOOKS:** Tuesday, Dec. 18: *The Android's Dream* by ArmadilloCon 30 Guest of Honor John Scalzi

- Monday, Jan. 7: *The Demon and the City* by Liz Williams
- Tuesday, Jan. 22: *The Stars My Destination* by Alfred Bester
- Monday, Feb. 4: *Mothers and Other Monsters* by Maureen F. McHugh
- Tuesday, Feb. 19: *Glasshouse* by Charles Stross
- Monday, Mar. 3: *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* by Robert A. Heinlein
- Tuesday, Mar. 18: *Farthing* by Jo Walton

### **FACT South Austin Reading Group**

**DAYS:** 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays; first meeting will be Jan. 10

**TIME:** 7-9 PM

**LOCATIONS:** Pleasant Hill branch of the Austin Public Library, 211 E. Wm Cannon Drive

**BOOKS:** Thursday, Jan. 10: *The Demon and the City* by Liz Williams

- Thursday, Jan. 24: *The Stars My Destination* by Alfred Bester

D.J. Harris, Library Branch Manager at this new location, is very excited about the project and is enlisting the help of their PR person to get the word out. We invite all FACT members in the vicinity to join us for that first meeting. Please spread the word to friends and fans. As with the original reading group, FACT membership is *not* required for attendance.

## **INSTACON 7 COMING TO SAN ANTONIO!**

*Submitted by Fred Duarte & A.T. Campbell III*

InstaCon 7, a convention for Texas fans who run conventions, will be held January 25-27, 2008, in San Antonio. This convention offers an opportunity for fans to meet, network, learn, and trade ideas with other con-runners from across Texas.

The program is currently under development. It will include a tour of the River Walk and convention center on Saturday. Other topics will likely include hotels, publicity, masquerades, art shows, and programming. Program participants will be drawn from the convention's membership. If you have ideas for a program item or want to volunteer to be on programming, please let us know.

We're expecting attendees from Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio, and likely several other places. InstaCon is sponsored by ALAMO, Inc., a statewide fan organization.

You can purchase a 3-day attending membership for \$40 from the convention website: [www.alamo-sf.org/instacon7](http://www.alamo-sf.org/instacon7).

The convention hotel is the Holiday Inn Downtown. Its address is 318 West Durango, San Antonio, Texas, 78204. The room rate is \$95. Cutoff

for this rate is December 25, so consider booking your room early. The phone number for reservations is 210-225-3211.

For more information, point your browser to: [www.alamo-sf.org/instacon7](http://www.alamo-sf.org/instacon7).

## **OWLCON UPDATES**

**Pre-registration Is Open:** Just go to [www.owlcon.com](http://www.owlcon.com) and click on "Preregistration." There are two methods of registration -- mail-in and electronic. Electronic registration requires electronic payment via PayPal. Mail-in registrations should be accompanied by a check or money order. Do not send cash. Aside from getting the lowest admission prices, you are allowed to pre-register for up to three events for a weekend pass or one event for a one-day pass. Pre-registrations will not be considered valid until payment is received. Sign up for events will be on a first come (form and payment received), first served basis.

**Gamemasters Needed:** OwlCon has put out a call for Gamemasters. They have many excellent RPG submissions, and we are likely to have more LARPs than ever this year. However, they still need submissions in the areas of Board & Card and Miniatures games. GMs are asked "to run two slots of a four hour game for six or more players, preferably games that are still being actively supported by their publisher and/or are established enough to attract players." In return, you get free admission to the convention, a chance to help your hobby, and a cool commemorative OwlCon T-shirt featuring that new logo. Get details and see the new logo at [www.owlcon.com](http://www.owlcon.com).

**Volunteers Needed:** OwlCon is also looking for volunteers to help run the con. Volunteers will receive a FREE Weekend Special Events Pass, a FREE OwlCon T-shirt, and FREE drinks and snacks while working your shifts. Act now as pre-registration is starting up, and get the chance to pre-register for up to three games before we open the convention doors. To become an OwlCon Volunteer, fill out the online form:

[www.owlcon.com/Formz/volunteer\\_signup/index.php](http://www.owlcon.com/Formz/volunteer_signup/index.php)

**LIVING ON EARTH IS EXPENSIVE,  
BUT IT DOES INCLUDE A FREE TRIP AROUND  
THE SUN EVERY YEAR.  
- UNKNOWN**

## **ADVENTURES IN CRIME & SPACE - UPDATE**

*Submitted by Willie Sirois*

As many of you know, with the death of Lisa Greene, Adventures in Crime and Space is shutting down. I do, however, intend to keep selling books as

I can at conventions and to people who continue to need me to help provide them too much reading material.

**The FACT discount I have been offering is discontinued.** However, **through the end of the year I will continue to give the discount for books ordered in advance.** I will even encourage people to prepay, such that **through the end of 2007, I will give a 20% discount for prepaid advance orders.** After the end of the year, I will see how this goes.

To assist with this, you can review the list of books I am in the process of ordering for a number of FACT members. This will be updated regularly as new books come out:

[www.crimeandspace.com/xmas2007.htm](http://www.crimeandspace.com/xmas2007.htm)

## LASER TAG FOR BROWNCOATS

On Wednesday, December 12, 2007, Blazer Tag Adventure Center will be exclusively Browncoat territory from 7-9 PM. Join other Austin Browncoats as they re-enact The Battle of Serenity Valley to the not-actually-at-all-bloody end. Don't want to play tag? No problem! There will be side games, a full arcade and even a rock-climbing wall. Come in costume! There will be prizes for costumes and tag and game play including \$25 gift certificates to Target and iTunes, free Blazer Tag game passes, gift baskets and more! Free Serenity posters for everyone! There are only 33 player spots available for laser tag but anyone can come for the party. There will be free food, plenty to do. Laser tag player tickets are \$20. Non-player suggested donation is \$10. Forty percent of the proceeds will go to the local charity Emancipet. For more information and to purchase laser tag tickets, go to [austinbrowncoats.com/blazer.html](http://austinbrowncoats.com/blazer.html).

## CONDFW UPDATE

ConDFW is coming up February 22-24, 2008. Peter S. Beagle will be Author Guest of Honor, and Donato Giancola will be Artist Guest of Honor. The con will again be held at the Radisson Hotel Dallas-North Richardson. Stay updated by checking at [condfw.org](http://condfw.org).

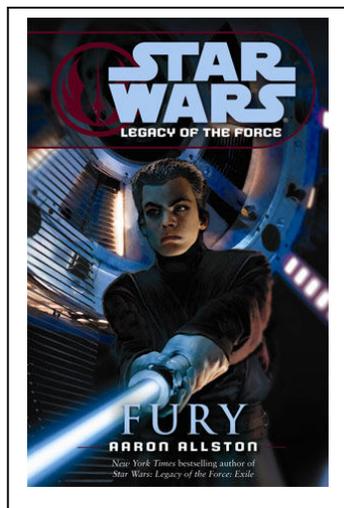
## FACTOIDS & FRIENDS

*This column is for news about FACT members, their friends, Texas writers, and important events in the SF&F community. If you have any such news, please contact the F.A.C.T. Sheet Editor at [publications@fact.org](mailto:publications@fact.org).*

## AUTHOR & PUBLISHER NEWS

Novelist and FACT Board Member **Aaron Allston** has a lot going on. On November 27, his next novel,

*Fury* (#7 in the *Star Wars: Legacy of the Force* series), was released by Del Rey. This is the third of three novels Allston is doing for the series. Mr. Allston will be the subject of a sidebar in the books column of the December issue of *Texas Monthly*, which reached the stands on November 22. Finally, he is also featured in an interview you can view on YouTube. See it at [tinyurl.com/2kmtq2](http://tinyurl.com/2kmtq2).



**Steven Gould** noted online that a computer game based on the film *Jumper* is currently in development. The film is set to release on February 12, 2008.

**Martha Wells** has a story, "Holy Places," in *Black Gate*, issue 11. Read an excerpt at [tinyurl.com/2mz54z](http://tinyurl.com/2mz54z). The French edition of *The Ships of Air* is now available from Amazon: [tinyurl.com/2vk7lk](http://tinyurl.com/2vk7lk). Finally, *The Element of Fire* is available as a free e-book at [tinyurl.com/2hhzye](http://tinyurl.com/2hhzye).

## MEDIA NEWS

The **Austin Browncoats** now have an online forum. Join up, if you are interested, select "Forums" at [austinbrowncoats.com](http://austinbrowncoats.com).

From SerenityMovie.org: A few months ago, **Joss Whedon** met with **Eliza Dusku**, who played Faith on *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*. Somewhat by accident, he has created a new series, *Dollhouse*, with her. There are plans to produce it for Fox, but it is currently on hold due to the Writer's Guild strike. Find out more, while you wait, at [www.dollverse.com](http://www.dollverse.com).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### OTHER GROUPS

Dec. 12 (Wed), 7 PM, Flight Path (corner of 51<sup>st</sup> and Duval): The **Dark Forces Reading Group** will discuss *The Best of Lady Churchill's Rosebud Wristlet* edited by Kelly Link and Gavin Grant

Dec. 17 (Mon), 7 PM, Bookpeople: **The Ludicrous Speed Book Group** will discuss *Atrocity Archives* by Charles Stross

Dec. 28 (Thurs), 7 PM, Barnes & Noble Arboretum Café, **Science and Religion in Fiction Book Club** (Center for Inquiry) will discuss *Good Omens* by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett

Jan. 21 (Mon), 7 PM, Bookpeople: **The Ludicrous Speed Book Group** by Robert Heinlein

Saturdays, 12-8 PM, Great Hall Games: **Austin Board Gamers**

## MOVIES & TV

### Alamo Drafthouse Downtown

- Wed., Dec. 12, 11:55 PM: *Weird Wednesday: Sex Demons*
- Thurs., Dec. 13, 11:55 PM: *Terror Thursday: The Exterminator*
- Wed., Dec. 19, 11:55 PM: *Weird Wednesday: Magic Christmas Tree*
- Thurs., Dec. 13, 11:55 PM: *Terror Thursday: Silent Night, Deadly Night*
- Wed., Dec. 26, 11:55 PM: *Weird Wednesday: Drunken Wu Tang*
- Thurs., Dec. 27, 11:55 PM: *Terror Thursday: Dead Kids*

**University of Texas Anime Club** (Fridays, 7 PM, UT WEL 1.316). Series being viewed this semester include: *Nodame Cantabile*, *Kyo Kara Maoh*, *Le Chevalier D'Eon*, *Claymore*, *Legend of the Galactic Heroes*, *Princess Tutu*, *Sayonara Zetsubou Sensei*, and *Speed Grapher*.

## CONVENTIONS

Here are details on conventions that FACT members, associates, and Favorite Authors will attend.

Jan. 18-20: **Fangoria's Weekend of Horrors**, Creation Entertainment, Renaissance Hotel Austin.  
[www.creationent.com/cal/fangotx.htm](http://www.creationent.com/cal/fangotx.htm)

Feb. 8-10: **OwlCon XXVII**, Rice University, Houston, TX. Gaming, fantasy and science fiction. GoH is novelist and FACT Board member Aaron Allston.  
[www.owlcon.com](http://www.owlcon.com)

Feb. 22-24: **ConDFW VII**, Richardson, TX. Author GoH Peter S. Beagle, Artist GoH Donato Giancola.  
[www.condfw.org](http://www.condfw.org)

Mar. 14-16: **ChimaeraCon**, Crossroads Convention Center, San Antonio.  
[www.chimaeracon.com](http://www.chimaeracon.com)

Mar. 27-30: **AggieCon 39**, College Station, TX.  
[aggiecon.tamu.edu](http://aggiecon.tamu.edu)

Apr. 25-27: **Nebula Awards Weekend**, Omni Austin Hotel, Austin, TX.  
[www.sfw.org/awards/2008/index.html](http://www.sfw.org/awards/2008/index.html)

Apr. 25-28: **Corflu**, Las Vegas, NV.

[www.corflu.org](http://www.corflu.org)

Jun. 6-8: **SoonerCon 2008**, Biltmore Hotel, Oklahoma City, OK. GoH John Ringo; Artist GoH Tom Kidd; Toastmaster Selina Rosen.

[www.soonercon.com](http://www.soonercon.com)

Jun. 27-29: **ApolloCon 2008**, DoubleTree Hotel Houston Intercontinental Airport, Houston, TX. GoH Allen Steele; Artist GoH Brad Foster; Editor GoH Lou Anders; Fan GoH Anne K. G. Murphy.

[www.apollocon.org](http://www.apollocon.org)

Jul. 18-20: **Lazy Dragon Con**, McKinney, TX.

[www.lazydragon.com/con](http://www.lazydragon.com/con)

Jul. 25-27: **Conestoga 12**, Tulsa, OK. GoH Diana Gabaldon; Artists GoH Stephen Hickman; Fan GoH Tim Miller.

[www.sftulsa.org](http://www.sftulsa.org)

Aug. 6-10: **Denvention 3/WorldCon 66**, Denver, CO. GoH Lois McMaster Bujold; Artists Guest Rick Sternbach; Fan GoH Tom Whitmore; Toastmaster Wil McCarthy.

[denvention3.org](http://denvention3.org)

Aug. 15-17: **ArmadilloCon 30**, Austin, TX: GoH John Scalzi; Artist GoH Dean Morrissey; Fan GoH Kelly Persons; Toastmaster Bill Crider.

[www.armadillocon.org](http://www.armadillocon.org)

Oct. 3-5: **FenCon V**, Addison, TX. **NOTE NEW DATE!** GoH Gregory Benford; Music GoH Three Weird Sisters; Fan GoH Gerald Burton; Special Guest Jay Lake

[www.fencon.org](http://www.fencon.org)

## READING GROUP REPORT

### AUGUST 21: HURRICANE MOON BY ALEXIS GLYNN LATNER

Submitted by Elze Hamilton

Ten people attended the discussion of Alexis Glynn Latner's debut novel *Hurricane Moon*. Four people had read Latner's short stories. Seven people had started the book; four had finished. Some others didn't finish it because they got it too late. This book had not been in stores for long at the time of the discussion. Some of these people were planning to finish it, if for no other reason then because they know Alexis personally (she has been coming to ArmadilloCons for many years).

*Hurricane Moon* is a story of an interstellar mission to find a habitable planet for humans to colonize. Finding the right planet takes longer than expected, and having spent a thousand years in a stasis, the colonists wake up with significant gene damage. Unless the damage is somehow fixed, they'll be unable to procreate; hence, the mission will have failed. The only person capable of coming up with a way to fix the damage is Joe, a brilliant geneticist who is somewhat of a difficult character. The other protagonist is a ship doctor named Katharin. Joe and Katharin feel attracted to one

another despite disagreeing on just about everything.

People's opinions on the romance thread varied. Two people commented that the book lost their interest when the courtship of the two main characters took the central stage. Some others said the romance wasn't done very well: it wasn't as sophisticated as, for example, the kind of romance you find in Lois Bujold novels. "Those two people seemed to forget they were scientists, they didn't behave like scientists," said a reader. Other readers argued that the love story didn't dominate the novel; this was still hard SF, not a romance novel with a spaceship thrown in. The love story was merely part of the character development.

Some people had quibbles with the science in the book. One reader said it's strange for an Analog writer like Alexis to have pools of anaerobic bacteria on the surface of the planet (where they are presumably exposed to oxygen). Then he thought the explanation why the plants on the planet were blue was scientifically infeasible. These two perceived errors ruined his enjoyment of the book so much he put it down. Regarding the blue color of the plants, another reader tried to convince him he misunderstood the explanation.

Somebody also thought Latner played fast and loose with deceleration. The numbers didn't add up - the engine didn't have enough power to slow the ship down over a short period of time. Others, including readers well versed in science, did not see serious problems in that respect. They found the science plausible, and they liked how the book started out as a classical hard SF story. The decision making that went into selecting the right planet, the weighing of the risks -- to stay at the originally selected planet, even though it turned out to be much worse than expected, or to travel further in search for a more suitable planet and risk greater gene damage -- all of this caught their interest. However, some of those who were initially impressed, thought the story lost focus in the second half. When the crew settled on the planet, it seemed the author didn't always know what to do with them. A reader said: "I could tell it was the first really long thing Alexis has written, because the plot was in some places, OK, I don't know what I should do next, so let's let Joe [one of the two main characters, the brilliant geneticist] wander around and get lost. It happened two or three times. One time I could have handled, but two or three times? And he's the only guy who can figure out how to fix the genome so that the people could reproduce? And they let him get lost? And the plot depends on him getting lost?"

There were other indications that the plot wasn't well thought out. One reader said: "I would have wished that they would have done more exploration of Green, Blue and the other planet, sending drones

or something, before settling down. Particularly because Blue is in the title of the book. They never go there, and yet it's in the title." Another reader reminded him that the mission had only enough drones for one planet. This led to an observation that the expedition seemed rather poorly equipped. They only had one doctor and one person with training in first aid, which is rather strange for an expedition that has landed on an unknown planet. (Not counting, of course, hundreds of doctors and people of all specialties that were in the stasis, waiting for their turn to wake up -- perhaps decades after the first colonists have landed. Those people were "passengers," not the crew.) This led to an interesting discussion of what is an optimal crew composition for an expedition exploring an alien planet. One reader, after thinking about it for a while, concluded it was a rational idea to have just the absolute minimum of people awake until they determine what other crewmembers they actually need. The more people you wake up, the more demands you have on resources, and then it becomes a challenge to find out what combination of human resources you need to wake up in order to support all those additional people that have been awakened.

So it seems there are readers in this group who have given more than a passing thought to the logistics of running an interstellar mission. They've also read enough books in which there is a spaceship with colonists in a stasis. Despite the debatable flaws of logic, *Hurricane Moon* came out ahead of many books in this subgenre.

Other readers focused more on culture. The new culture the colonists are trying to build in this new world, the rituals they create, was seen as some of the more interesting things of the novel. One reader, though, was thrown off by the characters changing their last names, as it made it difficult for him to keep track of them. He also found the motivations of the colonists not very credible. Not just the motivations for taking on the names of their home cities ("if they are forever cut off from Earth, why are they holding on to the geographical areas that have divided us for a long time?"), but also the fundamental reason for leaving the Earth. Several main characters seemed to be driven by the notion that the Earth society was too screwed up, so they had to go somewhere else to establish a better society. But the colonists are only human, and human society is not going to be all that much better elsewhere, the reader pointed out.

Overall, most readers thought all of these flaws could be attributed to this being Latner's first novel. They think she has potential, and that her subsequent books are bound to be better.

For me this book was less than satisfactory for several reasons. The pacing is, to borrow a word from another FACT reading group member, a bit

"pedestrian." From the time the mission lands on planet Green, nothing much science-fictional happens. There are no interesting scientific discoveries until the very end. Instead, the pages are filled with interpersonal drama. Also, without revealing too much, I'll say that even though the colonists in the end make two significant discoveries that challenge their assumptions about this planet, those discoveries play no part in solving the main problem they are facing -- healing the damage to their genes. They are almost a side note. When I pointed this out, one reader said maybe the implications of those discoveries will be explored in a sequel. Another way the resolution of the book was unsatisfactory is that the ending depends on a protagonist's psychological transformation rather than scientific / technical ingenuity. That's not what I would expect from a classic hard SF tale.

**OCT. 1: THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS BY URSULA K. LE GUIN**  
*Submitted by Elze Hamilton*

Eleven people attended the discussion of *The Left Hand Of Darkness* by Ursula Le Guin. All but two had read this novel before. Some had read it when it first came out in 1969.

In this book, a human named Genly Ai who is an Envoy from the Ekumen, a multi-world union, is sent to the planet Gethen to convince its government to join the union. The most unusual quality of Gethenians is that they don't have two sexes, at least not permanent ones. Most of the time they are sexless, but for a couple of days each lunar cycle, they go into kemmer, during which they acquire either male or female characteristics and are able to reproduce. Their ambisexuality influences Gethenian social and political life in ways unpredictable for Genly. Fate brings him together with Estraven, a local political figure, and they embark on an unexpected journey.

Most people liked the book, and some felt profoundly influenced by it. One reader regretted there was no Tiptree award at the time *The Left Hand Of Darkness* came out, because, in his opinion, Le Guin pushed the gender-bending envelope way harder than some recent winners. He said, "Le Guin made an incredibly clever choice in the sexuality of the Gethenians. She truly understands that the alien is us, far more than the aliens I've ever read in any SF story."

Somebody remembered attending a panel at ArmadilloCon a couple of years ago at which this book was discussed. Women had said things like, "this book changed my whole life," and "this book is the reason I'm writing." One reader said her favorite line from the book is "you are only judged as a human being. It is terrifying." "It captures the longing that a lot of us had," she said, "when we first became aware that we women were not been judged

as human beings, that we were not judged on our work. [We had a longing for a world where] everybody is in the same boat, where five-sixths of the time sex doesn't matter."

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**"You are only judged as a human being.  
It is terrifying."**

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A few people were not as impressed by this book. One reader said he vaguely remembered *The Left Hand Of Darkness* as a novel where "nothing really happens in the end. It's just describing the alien culture that goes through it." Another reader said while he admires what Le Guin is doing and the way she's dealing with important issues, for some reason her work doesn't connect with him.

Some people reminisced about their favorite scenes from the novel. One reader's most memorable part was the one where Estraven went into kemmer during the ice trip. Up until then Estraven, despite his sexlessness, was perceived by Genly as a man. Having entered kemmer, he temporarily becomes a woman. This happens against Estraven's will, as neither he nor Genly want the complications of changing gender perceptions, but now they have to deal with them. It is especially hard on Genly, who, despite the years spent among the Gethenians, is still not used to thinking of gender as fluid. This reader found that episode really mind-twisting. Another reader thought the scene where Genly teaches Estraven to "bespeak," or communicate telepathically, was especially vivid. The mind communication between them had a strong erotic aspect, even though their relationship remained platonic. Yet another reader found the foretelling scene especially interesting, and wished there was more about it in the book. He liked the comment of the futility of getting the correct answer to the wrong question.

It was interesting to see how people's opinions about the protagonist reflected their own notions about gender. I pointed out that Genly, despite his mission to bring a more enlightened era to Gethen, harbored a few backward stereotypes about women. For example, he sees Estraven as feminine because Estraven is indirect, devious, and scheming; later he says that women don't have much capacity for abstract thinking. Shouldn't an Envoy see beyond such stereotypes, especially if you keep in mind that the book is set in a much more enlightened era of far future? He was sent by Ekumena to bring progressive attitudes to the little "backward" corner of the universe that was Gethen, to convince the Gethenian states put aside their little petty differences, to open their minds and become part of a greater whole; but on the other hand, his own attitudes towards women are backward. So I wondered if Ursula Le Guin deliberately meant to

create a character with these contradictions, or if she thought Genly's views of women were accurate.

Two readers pointed out to me that Genly's attitudes towards women were far more generous than those of most men in the US today. I replied that this may be true of men of our era, but the book is set in far future; the fact that Ekumena is succeeding at its improbable mission to bring peaceful cooperation to all alien races, must mean this world is based on far more enlightened attitudes than ours. And Genly, an Envoy to an alien planet, must be even more enlightened than most! So I see a contradiction here. Nonetheless, the other two readers insisted that Genly's views make him a saint, especially as compared to an average man of today. One reader even said this saintliness makes Genly not a credible character, definitely not as a young man. He also wasn't clear on whether Genly was straight or gay, because he thought Genly behaved in ways we associate with gays. However, he concluded Genly was straight, "because Le Guin is trying to write a strong male character." This elicited laughter from several women: do you have to be straight to be a strong male character?

So, while the discussion never degenerated into a war of the sexes, there were a few opportunities for that, which I guess is more than you say about most books.

## **FACT BOARD MINUTES**

*Submitted by Elizabeth Burton*

### **SEPTEMBER 2007**

The monthly meeting of the board of directors for the Fandom Association of Central Texas was called to order by Board Chair Brian Price at the Carver Branch of the Austin Public Library, 1161 Angelina St., Austin, Texas, United States of America, at 2:09 p.m. Present in addition to the chair were Directors Liz Burton, Aaron Allston, Jennifer Juday, and Dan Tolliver, Board Officers and Committee Chairs Kurt Baty and Renee Babcock. Director Charles Siros and Board President William Siros arrived at 2:15 p.m.

The secretary presented the minutes of the August meeting. Mr. Tolliver noted information was included in the Historian's report that had been intended for this meeting; Ms. Burton advised she would remove it. It was moved by Mr. Allston, seconded by Ms. Juday that the minutes be approved as amended. Aye: 4; Nay, 0; Abstain, 1.

Correspondence: None

### **OFFICER REPORTS**

#### **CHAIR**

Mr. Price reported open gaming was held the previous night with a record number of people in attendance--twelve in toto, ten who remained for

the duration of the session. He then responded to concerns expressed by Ms. Babcock regarding handling of financial matters pending appointment of a new treasurer.

### **PRESIDENT**

Mr. W. Siros reported moving has been stressful. Mr. Price asked whether Mr. Siros had heard from Jonathan Miles regarding his willingness to serve as vice-president. Mr. Siros advised he hadn't.

### **TREASURER**

- The former Treasurer being in flight to Seattle, there was no formal report. The bank statements for the FACT and World Fantasy accounts for the period ending 8/31/2007: FACT: Deposits, \$10,697.49; Withdrawals, \$6,363.53; Balance Remaining, \$11,285.35. World Fantasy: Deposits, \$50.00; Withdrawals, \$5.00; Balance Remaining, \$24,849.91.
- Ms. Babcock advised Mr. Sugarbroad had sent her a preliminary ArmadilloCon report; however, it appeared he hadn't transferred the credit card transactions from the FACT account to the ArmadilloCon account.

### **SECRETARY**

Ms. Burton provided Ms. Babcock with a CD containing the list of libraries compiled by Karen Meschke for Bouchercon.

### **CONVENTION EVENTS MANAGER**

No one has had any communication with Ms. Martinez since ApolloCon. The board expressed concern at her continuing silence that all might not be well with her.

### **SOCIAL ACTIVITIES MANAGER**

Ms. Ward provided an email report citing several activities in San Antonio, including the monthly Ursa Major gathering.

### **REGISTRAR**

Ms. Cooper again provided no report, citing a sudden illness in the family during her attendance at DragonCon. She had earlier advised having received the updated membership list. Mr. Allston recommended Mr. Price appeal to Ms. Cooper to deal with the outstanding issues by a week before the October meeting, and if that isn't done the position may need to be reconsidered. Expiring members not being advised their memberships are due, and Ms. Juday has no current list of valid members.

### **HISTORIAN**

Mr. Tolliver advised he attended ArmadilloCon and took many photos. He noted he had found a box

containing a large quantity of fanzines. Mr. W. Siros advised he had found four FACT directories while packing that could be used both for historical purposes and as templates for a new edition.

## **NEWS**

- Mrs. Carrillo reported via email that she has redesigned the FACT website and has been actively updating it. Her next project is to create a log-in function for members that will take them to a members-only portal. She advised she needs the names and email addresses of any new members from ArmadilloCon so she can add them to the website.
- Mrs. Carrillo advised she has changed the historian's email forward in an effort to cut down on the amount of spam he's receiving. However, she cautioned this is likely only a temporary solution, and recommended all those having forwarded FACT addresses add a spam blocker to their email program. The alternative, she said, is to do away with the forwarded addresses altogether, as most aren't really used enough to balance the annoyance factor.
- She has also spent days deleting the huge amounts of spam accumulated to the default address, there being no other way to do it except manually.
- Finally, Mrs. Carrillo noted it's time to renew the domains for ArmadilloCon, which she will do this date.
- Ms. Juday asked if new FACT memberships from ArmadilloCon were available. It appears the ArmadilloCon 30 pre-registrations are also missing; Fred Duarte may have them. Mr. Baty has contacted him regarding the hotel contract, and advised he will inquire about that matter when he gets in contact again.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

Ms. Juday advised the FACT Sheet had been emailed to all those on the membership list as of June, although her information may be more up-to-date than that as she believes she may have added new members with information supplied by Mr. Sugarbrood.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS LIAISON**

Ms. Burton confessed she had still not made contact with Ms. Chevalier but that she is determined she will do so before the next meeting.

## **QUARTERMASTER**

Mr. C. Siros reported that the second cart isn't done yet. Mr. Baty said he could likely pick it up and arrange to do that. Mr. Siros noted he is still waiting on the library list, which Ms. Burton advised him was

delivered. Meantime, he will be given a check to renew payment on the extra storage locker. Mr. Baty inquired regarding scheduling a work session to clear it out. Mr. Price asked when one would be held to get the books packed, and Mr. Siros agreed it was likely necessary to do that before planning a clean-out. Ms. Burton advised she can provide shipping materials if they're needed in short order. Mr. Baty recommended paying for two additional months because it's unlikely the job will get done before the end of this September. He also agreed to coordinate getting the work session started. Everything already packed will be shipped as soon as possible, and we will start sending out individual copies of CPU and Paul Park. Mr. Allston moved to approve payment of two additional months rental, seconded by Mr. Tolliver. The motion passed unanimously.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **ARMADILLOCON 28**

Mr. C. Siros moved to remove this item from the agenda. Mr. Allston suggested tabling it instead until the board could confer with Mr. Sugarbrood and Karen Meschke to ensure business is concluded and address removing it next month. Mr. Siros advised that's not necessary. Mr. Allston then seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

### **ARMADILLOCON 29**

- Ms. Babcock reported she has the artists' payments ready to mail; however, we need to determine whether the credit card receipts have been moved from the FACT account to the convention account, which she doesn't believe is the case. She stated the hotel bill has been received, which is just under \$6,000, but that she has not yet reviewed it. In speaking with the hotel, they were general well pleased; their only complaint was that signs were posted advertising room parties, which is prohibited.
- She advised she needs to send the check to the charity auction recipient—approximately \$875 was collected. The hotel bill needs to be paid, but all other expenses have been seen to already, so there should be a healthy balance remaining. People reported they had a great time. She advised total attendance may have been up from last year.
- "I couldn't have done it without my committee," Ms. Babcock stated. "They were the reason it was so good. It was a lot of fun, as usual." Mr. Allston extended thanks on behalf of the board to Ms. Babcock and her committee. A breakdown meeting will be held at the Paul and Kimm Carrillo residence on Saturday, 15 September.

### **ARMADILLOCON 30**

Ms. Babcock estimated approximately 50 memberships were sold during the convention weekend. Mr. C. Siros advised he will check with Fred Duarte, because the committee needs to know if we have a contract with the hotel. We may definitely need to change hotels for 2009, even if we don't have to do so next year. Mr. Baty advised he has encouraged friends from Europe coming for WorldCon to include ArmadilloCon in their plans for next year, and that he has invited special guests and is awaiting confirmation. He advised they hope to complete their line-up within the next two months. Mr. W. Siros advised he has information on a grant from the University of Texas Library that could be applied for to bring in writers.

#### **WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION**

- Treasurer Kimm Carrillo advised that all program book ad receivables have been paid, giving a final balance in the account of \$24,804.91. She noted that doesn't reflect reimbursements still to be made to volunteers, which amount would be \$1,020 if they receive all but their \$50 admission fee. She requested a response on that matter as soon as possible.
- Ms. Babcock advised she will confer with Mr. Duarte to decide the amount of volunteer reimbursement. She also noted checks originally thought to belong to ArmadilloCon 28 were, in fact, for WFC.
- Mrs. Carrillo advised she needs a check in order to pay for a membership at the 2007 World Fantasy Convention for one of the artists who was unable to attend last year, this having been the refund arrangement made. She will meet with Ms. Babcock to attend to that matter as well as the volunteer reimbursements.

#### **READING GROUP**

Ms. Juday reported she had attended the last session, which was well attended. Books were selected through December.

#### **HOTEL COMMITTEE**

Nothing to report

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

**1. Book Project:** Mr. C. Siros resurrected a proposal from Joe Lansdale and Scott Cupp regarding publishing an anthology branded for ArmadilloCon 30. He advised he had obtained comparative information from Chris Roberson based on another, similar book and provided a report with estimated initial cost of \$14,600 for 4,000 copies. The estimated profit fell between \$1500 and \$2000. It was noted, however, that this amount didn't

reflect any payment made to the editors or for design and layout services, and would only result if the entire print run sold.

Mr. Allston suggested additional numbers for smaller print runs might be in order. Mr. Baty recommended letting an established press handle the project, co-branded with ArmadilloCon. However, the feeling of the majority was that the project was a bit expensive for FACT to assume costs, with any actual financial receipts dependent on factors that are too unpredictable, and that resources could be put to better uses.

Mr. Allston then noted there are actually two separate issues: (1) the project being pursued by Joe Lansdale and Scott Cupp, (2) a co-branded book for ArmadilloCon 30. However, it was noted the project was advanced as the co-branded book. There was a consensus that the project sounds like an excellent one, but it's too expensive for the current budget. Brian summarized that while we find the project interesting and would love to take part we need to look for alternative ways to pursue it.

**2. Utility Cart Alterations:** Mr. Baty will pick up the remaining cart and take it to be finished.

**3. Director Vacancy:** A list of eligible candidates needs to be compiled to replace JP Sugarbrood. However, Mr. Baty agreed to accept the appointment for the remainder of Mr. Sugarbrood's term. It was so moved by Mr. Tolliver, seconded by Ms. Juday, and approved unanimously.

**4. Treasurer Replacement:** Mr. Price noted Jonathan Miles had been suggested, but that he has already been named as a candidate for vice-president. Mr. Tolliver noted there is nothing to prevent him from serving in both offices, but the balance of the board felt that would be an imposition. Ms. Babcock suggested approaching Karen Meschke. Ms. Burton advised she has someone she can approach who isn't currently a member. A notice can also be sent out to the FACTList. Mr. Tolliver noted Mr. Sugarbrood had unilaterally changed our accounting method and registered it, so we need to continue using that method. The president authorized Mr. Price to advertise for a replacement.

**5. Appointment of Vice-president:** Jonathan Miles has been suggested. He has been approached and has not refused. A motion to appoint him to that office was made by Mr. C. Siros, seconded by Mr. Tolliver. Aye, 5; Nay, 1; no abstentions.

**6. Austin Social Activities Manager Vacancy:** There has been no response to the first ad in the FACT Sheet. The matter was tabled, and the board requested Ms. Juday send an ad to the FACTlist.

**7. Storage Locker:** Previously addressed.

**8. Relax-a-Con:** The president advised he had talked to John Gibbons about the possibility of holding such an event, and John said he would get back to us.

## NEW BUSINESS

**1. New Statutes for Businesses:** Mr. Tolliver explained the statutes governing business organizations are changing, effective 2010, so we need to decide whether to accept the changes prior to the deadline. Mr. Siros noted the bylaws committee needs to meet to determine action. It was suggested Jonathan Miles be added to the committee pending his acceptance of the vice-presidency. The committee will meet and report back in November, then return with recommendations by the January meeting in case bylaws changes are necessary.

**2. Survey Results:** There were 48 responses collected at the convention; Ms. Juday suggested posting the form online to get more feedback from members, as there were only 18 of those. None of the members showed interest in assisting with operations, although several non-members did. Monthly talks by experts were particularly mentioned as desired: science, philosophy, even erotica. She noted we need to select the winner of the free membership. Mr. Allston used a computer program to select a number from 1-48. The winner was #33.

**3. FenCon Party:** Mr. Baty has a large room reserved, he and Chuck will host the party.

**4. InstaCon:** Mr. Baty noted there's an InstaCon on January 19-20 in San Antonio. [*Editor's note: The correct dates are January 25-27, 2008.*] He explained that at the Ft. Worth event local clubs provided breakfast both days, and recommended FACT contribute to the San Antonio function. Mr. Tolliver advised he would be willing to coordinate if the board agreed. A discussion ensued regarding suitability of approving scholarships which may be used by directors. In rebuttal, it was pointed out that FACT makes money from conventions, so ensuring members, regardless of position, can attend a training session on learning to run conventions benefits the organization, and some members, including directors, aren't financially able to cover all the costs. It was also noted that need is a factor in applying scholarships. Mr. Baty noted Alamo had funds available for the last event that weren't used, and Mr. Price requested he advise the board when those are again available so we can ensure the information is disseminated.

**5. SmofCon:** Ms. Babcock advised we need to publicize the availability of scholarships next month if they are to be offered to allow people time to

make reservations. The next SmofCon will be held in Boston December 7-9.

There being no other business before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

## THE FANDOM ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL TEXAS, INC.

The Fandom Association of Central Texas, Inc. (F.A.C.T.) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit literary/ educational corporation. To contact the board and officers as a group, send an e-mail message to **board2007@fact.org**.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Aaron Allston** (512) 388-7873  
allston@aaronallston.com

**Kurt Baty (AC 30 Co-Chair)**  
kurt@wsfdb.com

**Elizabeth Burton (Secretary)** (512) 707-2694  
zumayapublishing@sbcglobal.net

**Jennifer Juday (Publications)**  
publications@fact.org (512) 821-3544

**Brian Price (Chairman)** (512) 733-8376  
tbrianp@sbcglobal.net

**Charles Siros (Quartermaster, AC 30 Co-Chair)**  
csiros@austin.rr.com (512) 527-3471

**C. Dan Tolliver (Historian)** (512) 944-9948  
history@fact.org

### OFFICERS

#### Jonathan Miles (Vice President)

**Kimberly Carrillo (MIS)**  
kantell13@yahoo.com (512) 989-5585

**Renee Babcock (AC 29)**  
rbabcock@alumni.utexas.net (512) 587-4299

**Kimberly Carrillo (MIS)**  
kantell13@yahoo.com (512) 989-5585

**Sara Cooper (Registrar)**  
casacooper@satx.rr.com (210) 508-5277

**Willie Siros (President)**  
acs@crimeandspace.com (512) 383-1376

**Lynn Ward (Social Director-San Antonio)**  
(210) 462-9625

### ABOUT THE FACT SHEET

**Editor** Jennifer Juday

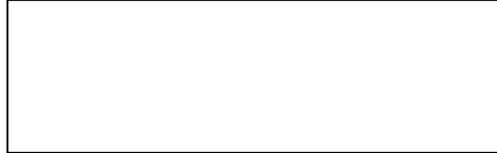
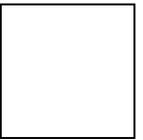
**Contact Information:** The F.A.C.T. Sheet, PO Box 26442, Austin, TX 78755, publications@fact.org

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The F.A.C.T. Sheet  
The Fandom Association of Central Texas, Inc.  
PO Box 26442  
Austin, TX 78755



## First Class Mail

**Join us! All FACT members are invited to all of these events!**

Dec. 9 (Sunday), 2-4 PM: **FACT Board Meeting**, Austin Public Library, Carver Branch, 1161 Angelina

Dec. 15 (Saturday), 7PM – 12 Midnight: **Annual FACT Holiday Party! All FACT members are welcome!** Location: home of Joi Chevalier & Jon Elkins, 2600 Pegram Avenue, Austin. Bring (1) something yummy\* and (2) a gift everybody is going to want (suggested price \$10 but nobody pays any attention to that). \* Joi says if you can't figure out what kind of goody to bring, give her a buzz: 512-371-9442. **We hope to see you there!**

Dec. 18 (Tuesday), 7 PM: **FACT Reading Group**, *The Android's Dream* by John Scalzi. Contact reading@fact.org for details.

Dec. 28 (Friday), 7-10:30 PM: **Ursa Major Social Meeting/Party** Lynn Ward's apartment, 3711 Medical Dr. #1614, San Antonio. FACT members welcome. Call Lynn for directions and to confirm location 210-218-2800.

### CELEBRITY BIRTHDAYS - NOVEMBER

- 1 Zenna Henderson (The People stories), Gordon R. Dickson (*Dorsai!*), Mark Budz (*Clade*)
- 2 Lois McMaster Bujold (Miles Vorkosigan series)
- 6 Catherine Asaro (Skolian Empire series)
- 7 R.A. Lafferty (*Past Master*), Linda Nagata (*Memory*)
- 8 Bram Stoker (*Dracula*), Ben Bova (editor of *Analog Science Fiction* and *Omni Magazine*)
- 10 Neil Gaiman (*The Sandman & Neverwhere*)
- 11 Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., (*Cat's Cradle*)
- 12 Michael Bishop (*No Enemy But Time*), Michael Capobianco (*White Light*)
- 13 Stephen Baxter (*The Time Ships*)
- 15 J.G. Ballard (*The Atrocity Exhibition, Crash*)
- 16 Robin McKinley (*Beauty*)
- 17 Raymond F. Jones (*This Island Earth*), Christopher Paolini (*Eragon*)
- 18 Margaret Atwood (*The Handmaid's Tale*), Alan Dean Foster (Pip and Flinx series), Michael Swanwick (*Stations of the Tide*), Alan Moore (*V for Vendetta*)
- 19 Suzette Haden Elgin (*Native Tongue*)
- 21 Vincent di Fate (*The Science Fiction Art of Vincent di Fate*), Lisa Goldstein (*The Dream Years*)
- 23 Steven Brust (Vlad Taltos series)
- 24 Forrest J. Ackerman (short stories, cameo in the *Thriller* video), Spider Robinson (*Stardance*)
- 25 Poul Anderson (*Fire Time*)
- 26 Frederik Pohl (*Gateway*), Tracy Hickman (co-author of Dark Sword trilogy)
- 27 L. Sprague de Camp (*editor and writer of Conan novels*)
- 29 C.S. Lewis (*Chronicles of Narnia*), Madeleine L'Engle (*Kairos series, incl. A Wrinkle in Time*)
- 30 Jonathan Swift (*Gulliver's Travels*)