
THE F.A.C.T. SHEET



October 1999

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

Editorial Remarks

Last month was ArmadilloCon, FACT's annual convention. A large crowd of writers, artists, and discerning readers was there. A few new faces turned up to enjoy the gaming and the expanded writers' workshop. I enjoyed seeing old friends, and I got to meet a few recent FACT members for the first time.

Next month John Gibbons resumes the editorial duties of this newsletter. He comes in fresh off a successful run as ArmadilloCon 21 co-chair. John's so eager to get back to *The FACT Sheet* that he even contributed an article this month.

Take care!

--- A. T. Campbell, III

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 the address on page 7.

Author News

On October 17, Texas writer Aaron Allston will participate in an Online Talk Show at Jeditalk.com. For details, see "<http://Jeditalk.com/live.html>".

Award News

Winners of the 1999 Hugo Awards were announced Saturday evening, September 4, 1999, at Aussiecon Three in Melbourne, Australia. Winners are listed below.

Best Novel: *To Say Nothing of the Dog* by Connie Willis (Bantam Spectra)

Best Novella: "Oceanic" by Greg Egan (*Asimov's* Aug 1998)

Best Novelette: "Taklamakan" by Bruce Sterling (*Asimov's* Oct/Nov 1998)

Best Short Story: "The Very Pulse of the Machine" by Michael Swanwick (*Asimov's* Feb 1998)

Best Related Book: *The Dreams Our Stuff Is Made Of: How Science Fiction Conquered the World* by Thomas M. Disch (Free Press)

Best Dramatic Presentation: *The Truman Show* (Paramount)

Best Professional Editor: Gardner Dozois

Best Professional Artist: Bob Eggleton

Best Semiprozine: *Locus*, edited by Charles N. Brown

Best Fanzine: *Ansible*, edited by Dave Langford

Best Fan Writer: Dave Langford

Best Fan Artist: Ian Gunn

John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer of 1997 or 1998 (not a Hugo): Nalo Hopkinson

Winners of the Chesley Awards for outstanding accomplishment in science fiction and fantasy art were announced at the NASFiC in Anaheim, California. Here are the winners:

Artistic Achievement: Bob Eggleton

Best Cover Illustration, Hardback: Kinuko Y. Craft, for *Song for the Basilisk* by Patricia A. McKillip (Ace, September 1998)

Best Cover Illustration, Paperback: John Jude Palencar for *Tales of the Cthulhu Mythos* by H.P. Lovecraft & others (Del Rey, October 1998)

Best Cover Illustration, Magazine: Bob Eggleton for *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* (May 1998)

Best Interior Illustration: Brian Froud for *Good Faeries/Bad Faeries* by Brian Froud & Terri Windling (Simon & Schuster, October 1998)

Best Product Illustration: Donato Giancola for *Archaengel* (Magic card package art)

Best Gaming-related Illustration: Todd Lockwood for *Dragonlance Classics 15th Anniversary Game Module*

Best Three-Dimensional Art: Lisa Snellings for *Short Trip to October* (mixed media)

Best Monochrome Work, Unpublished: Beryl Bush for *Bottom & Titania* (black chalk)
Best Color Work, Unpublished: Marc Fishman for *Salvation*
Best Art Director: Arnie Fenner and Cathy Fenner for Spectrum Design and Underwood Books
Contribution to ASFA: Jeff Watson, for creation and maintenance of the ASFA website (www.asfa-art.org)

The British Fantasy Awards were announced at Fantasycon 23, on September 19th. Winners include:

Karl Edward Wagner Award (British Fantasy Special Award): Diana Wynne Jones

August Derleth Fantasy Award for Best Novel: *Bag of Bones* by Stephen King (Hodder & Stoughton)

Best Anthology: *Dark Terrors 4*, edited by Stephen Jones and David Suttons (Gollancz)

Best Collection: *Ghosts and Grisly Things* by Ramsey Campbell (Pumpkin Books)

Best Short Fiction: "The Song My Sister Sang" by Stephen Laws (*Scaremongers 2: Redbrick Eden*, edited by Steve Saville (Tanjen))

Best Artist: Bob Covington

Best Small Press: The Third Alternative, Andy Cox, editor.

Gaming News

On September 9, it was announced that Hasbro, Inc. would be acquiring Wizards of the Coast, the publisher of *Magic: The Gathering* and several other well-known games. The purchase price is approximately \$325 million.

Sierra has announced that it has cancelled its previously announced computer game *Babylon 5: Into the Fire*. The game had been under development for two years, and *Babylon 5* creator J. Michael Straczynski had been working on it personally. For details: <http://www.firststones.com/>

Media News

The new computer animated television series *Roughnecks: Starship Troopers Chronicles* is in trouble. The series started airing five times a week last month, even though less than ten episodes were complete. Each episode has now been aired several times, and viewers are tuning out. Blame seems to lie on several fronts: production took longer than expected, one of the two studios contracted to do animated pulled out, and the series was simply sold before it was ready. Sony, the owner of the series, claims that the show is now on track and that they have ramped up production so they can deliver 40 new episodes by January 2000.

The trailer for *Toy Story 2* has been posted online at <http://www.toystory2.com>, in advance of its October

8 theatrical release. The film itself will hit theaters on November 24.

Bruce Campbell has been cast in the lead role in the Studio USA/Renaissance Pictures half-hour action series *Jack of All Trades*. Campbell will play Jack Styles, a spy of the Elizabethan era who fights pirates in the Caribbean. The series will shoot in New Zealand, with the first episode slated to air in U.S. syndication in January 2000. *Jack* is half of the *Back 2 Back Action Hour*, which will replace *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*.

Obituary

Author Marion Zimmer Bradley died of a heart attack in Berkeley, California on Saturday, September 25th. Born in 1930, Bradley began publishing professionally in 1953. She wrote the popular Darkover series, which started in 1962 with *Sword of Aldones* and continued through *Traitor's Sun*, published earlier this year. *The Mists of Avalon* (1983), an Arthurian novel, was Bradley's single most popular work, achieving enduring bestseller status. *Marion Zimmer Bradley's Fantasy Magazine*, founded in 1988, and anthologies such as the *Sword and Sorceress* series provided publishing venues for new authors. Memorial donations may be sent to her church: Saint Mark's Episcopal Church, 2300 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, CA 94704.

Publishing News

HarperCollins, which acquired Avon Books in July, announced layoffs on September 21. Among the 74 people let go were Avon publisher Lou Aronica, HarperCollins editor John Douglas, and HarperPrism creator John Silbersack. Jennifer Hershey, appointed Vice President, Associate Publisher and Editor-in-Chief, will have editorial oversight of the Morrow/Avon science fiction imprint, Eos.

A new publisher, Speculation Press, has gone into business. It plans to publish six to ten science fiction and fantasy novels per year. The first two books will be *Tribute Trail*, a fantasy novel by Terri Beckett and Chris Power; and *To Kill an Eidolon*, a speculative fiction novel by Winifred Halsey. Prospective writers should note that this publisher is actively seeking new books to publish. Submission guidelines are available from their web site: "<http://speculationpress.com/>".

Upcoming Events

Meetings & Gatherings

October 5, 7PM: **FACT Reading Group**. Adventures in Crime & Space. 609-A W. Sixth St., Austin, TX. (512) 473-2665. Topic: *The Alien Years* by Robert Silverberg (also pick books)

October 10, 1 PM: **FACT Board Meeting**. 3801 Hawkshead Dr., Austin, TX. (512) 833-5269.
October 19, 7PM: **FACT Reading Group**. Adventures in Crime & Space. Topic: *Stardust* by Neil Gaiman
November 2, 7PM: **FACT Reading Group**. Adventures in Crime & Space. Topic: *Newton's Cannon* by J. Gregory Keyes
November 14, 1 PM: **FACT Board Meeting**. 3801 Hawkshead Dr., Austin, TX. (512) 833-5269.

Bookstore Events

Several signings are scheduled at Adventures in Crime & Space Bookstore (609-A W. Sixth St, Austin, TX 512/473-2665). Gonzo writer **Joe R. Lansdale** will sign his new mystery novel *Freezer Burn* on Thursday, October 7, 5:30-6:00 PM. **Carolina Garcia-Aguilera** will sign her Florida mystery novel *A Miracle in Paradise* on Thursday, October 14, 3:00-5:00 PM. Artist/writer **James Gurney** will sign *Dinotopia: First Flight* on Tuesday, October 19, 4:00-5:00 PM. **Ben Mezrich** will sign his mystery novel *Fertile Ground* on Saturday, October 23, 3:00-5:00 PM. **Charles Meyer** will sign his Episcopalian mystery *Deathangel* on Saturday, November 20, 3:30-5:30 PM. **Neal Barrett, Jr.** will sign the trade paperback of *The Hereafter Gang* and the paperback of *Bad Eye Blues* on Saturday, November 27, 3:00-5:00 PM. On December 4, **Elizabeth Moon** and **Lois McMaster Bujold** will sign their latest books for the store's fifth anniversary.

Movies

This list provides release dates on upcoming SF&F movies. Dates are subject to change.

October 8: *Lost Souls* (d. Janusz Kaminski) Horror film starring Winona Ryder and Ben Chaplin. (<http://www.lostsoulsmovie.com/>)
October 15: *The Omega Code* (d. Robert Marcarelli) Thriller about scholars who decode the Bible Code, which allows them to foretell the future. Starring Casper Van Dien, Michael York, and Catherine Oxenberg. (<http://www.theomegacode.com/>)
October 15: *Fight Club* (d. David Fincher) Rich yuppies have fist fights for recreation. Starring Brad Pitt, Edward Norton, Meat Loaf, and Helena Bonham Carter. (<http://www.fight-club.com/>)
October 19: *Cold Hearts* (d. Robert Angelo Masciantonio) Vampire film starring Marisa Ryan and Robert Floyd. (<http://www.shiftworld.com/index2.html>)
October 22: *Bats* (d. Louis Morneau) Lou Diamond Phillips and Dina Meyer fight mutant bats. (<http://www.batsthemovie.com/>)
October 22: *Bringing Out the Dead* (d. Martin Scorsese) Paramedic horror film starring Nicolas

Cage and Ving Rhames. (<http://www.bringingoutthedeath.com/>)
October 28: *Godsend: The Evil Decimation* (d. Rocky Costanzo) Religious horror about a serial killer on a mission from God. Starring Alexandra Munroe and Jim Swanson. (<http://ocactors.com/godsend/>)
October 29: *The House on Haunted Hill* (d. William Malone) Horror remake starring Geoffrey Rush and Famke Janssen.
October 29: *Princess Mononoke* (d. Hayao Miyazaki) Japanese animated adventure by the creator of *Kiki's Delivery Service*, with an English screenplay by Neil Gaiman. (<http://www.ntv.co.jp/ghibli/>)
November 5: *Last Night* (d. Don McKellar). What people in Toronto do thinking the world will end at midnight. (<http://www.lionsgate-ent.com/lionsgatefilms/night.htm>)
November 12: *Dogma* (d. Kevin Smith) Angelic comedy from the maker of *Clerks* and *Chasing Amy*, starring Matt Damon and Ben Affleck. (<http://www.dogma-movie.com/>)
November 12: *Scream if You Know What I Did Last Halloween* (d. Keenen Ivory Wayans) Horror spoof starring the Wayans brothers, Cheri Oteri, and Jenny McCarthy.
November 12: *Pokémon the First Movie: Mewtwo Strikes Back*. Parents, beware! (<http://www.pokemon.com>)
November 19: *Sleepy Hollow* (d. Tim Burton). Johnny Depp and Christina Ricci star in adaptation of Washington Irving classic. (<http://www.sleepyhollowmovie.com/>)
November 19: *The World Is Not Enough* (d. Michael Apted) Pierce Brosnan and Denise Richards star in 19th James Bond picture. (<http://www.jamesbond.com>)
November 24: *End of Days* (d. Peter Hyams) Supernatural thriller starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and Gabriel Byrne. (<http://www.end-of-days.com>)
November 24: *Toy Story 2* (d. John Lasseter) Computer-generated sequel. (<http://www.toystory2.com/>)

Conventions

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

October 2-November 14: **TEXAS RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL** Open each Saturday and Sunday 9 AM until dusk. FM 1774 between Hwy. 105 in Plantersville and FM 1488 in Magnolia. website: <http://www.texrenfest.com/>
October 7-10: **AUSTIN FILM FESTIVAL & HEART OF FILM SCREENWRITERS**

CONFERENCE. Austin, TX.

website: <http://www.austinfilmfestival.org/>

October 7-10: **INT'L EDGAR ALLAN POE**

CONFERENCE The Jefferson Hotel, Richmond VA. Guests: John Dunning, John Astin & the Poe Performance. Memb: \$75 student, \$130 others.

Info: Conferences & Institutes Registration, Pennsylvania State U, Box 10850, State College PA 16805; fax: (814)863-5175; website:

<http://www.outreach.psu.edu/C&I/EdgarAllanPoe/>

October 22-24: **HUBCON III** University Center, Texas

Tech University Campus, West Broadway and University, Lubbock, TX; 806-742-3636. GoH:

Jeremy Bulloch, Eric Kristiansen, Lucid Press, Dr. James Whitlark. Theme: Halloween. Memb: \$25 until 9/1/99; \$35 at the door. Info: HubCon III, c/o Legion West, MS 2031-76, TTU, Lubbock, TX 79406; 806-789-1501; e-mail:

chairman@hubcon.org. website:

<http://www.hubcon.org/>

October 22-24: **MILEHICON 31** Sheraton, Lakewood

CO; rms \$79 sngl/dbl, \$89 tpl/quad. GoHs: Lois McMaster Bujold, K.W. Jeter. AGoH: Robert Daniels, Jr. TM: Kevin J. Anderson. Memb: \$24 to 9/31/99, \$26 to 10/10/99, \$28 at door. Info: MileHiCon 31, Box 101322, Denver CO 80250; (303) 657-5912; e-mail: lindanel@-ix.netcom.com; website: www.econet.-com/milehicon

October 22-24: **TUSCON 26** Executive Inn, Tucson

AZ. GoH: Laurell K. Hamilton. AGoH: Lee Seed. Memb: \$30 to 10/1/99, \$35 at door. Dealer table: \$45 (incl 1 memb); contact Cristi (520) 881-3709. Info: TusCon 26, Box 26822, Tucson AZ 85726.

November 4-7: **WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION**

1999/VOYAGES Rhode Island Conv. Ctr., Westin Hotel, & Biltmore, Providence RI. GoHs: Patricia A. McKillip, Charles de Lint, Robert Silverberg. AGoHs: Leo & Diane Dillon. Special Guest: Samuel R. Delany. TM: John M. Ford. Memb: \$125 to 10/15/99, then more (limit 850); \$35 supp; Banquet: \$42; payment to MCFI. Info: World Fantasy Convention, Box 1010, Framingham MA 01701; fax (617) 776-3243; e-mail: wfc@mcfi.org; web: www.mcfi.org/wfc

November 5-7: **TEXAS BOOK FESTIVAL** The State

Capitol, Colorado Street between 11th and 14th streets, Austin, Texas. SF/F Authors: Octavia Butler, Joe R. Lansdale, James Stoddard, Don Webb, Martha Wells. website: <http://www.austin360.com/entertainment/books/features/bookfest/>

November 19-21: **EXOTICON 2** Quality Hotel, Metairie LA; 2261 N. Causeway Blvd., Metairie, LA 70001; 504-833-8211. rms \$89 dbl. MGoHs: Tom Savini, James Hong. GoHs: Spider & Jeanne Robinson. AGoH: Carl Lundgren. Theme: Cult.

Memb: \$30 to 10/1/99, \$35 at door. Info: Exoticon 2, Box 9431, Bridge City LA 70096; (504) 436-3378; e-mail: rfontenot@earthlink.net

Magazine Review

Asimov's Science Fiction

(Gardner Dozois, ed.), October-November, 1999

Reviewed by John K. Gibbons

A review of a magazine issue?

I haven't done this before, but this isn't just any magazine issue. If you don't have a copy, go out and buy one. If you're like me, and subscribe but sometimes don't get around to reading every issue, move this one to the top of your reading list. I rushed to get this review into the October *FACT Sheet*, even though A.T. had graciously agreed to do one more issue, just so you might have a chance to read this while the issue is still on the stands. I intend to buy a couple more copies myself.

I'll stake my reputation as an editor (Now, there's a risk-free wager...) that there are at least three Hugo nominees in this issue.

I do think that's a safe bet. In truth, I would not be surprised to see *six* nominees from this issue, two in each short fiction category.

Novellas: "The Winds of Marble Arch", by Connie Willis. Strong characters, Connie's inimitable humor, vivid rendition of a setting (London) which is apparently popular to SF readers and certainly is to me. Connie deals with strong themes: death and decay, pain and loss, and beneath it all, irrational but quintessentially human, hope. This is not her best work, but we're talking about one of the most popular writers in the SF world, whose best work is truly stratospheric, transcending awards. The last time I went out on a limb with public predictions was to forecast that her "Last of the Winnebagos" would win both Nebula and Hugo.

"Argonautica", by Walter Jon Williams. Walter Jon turns to the Civil War for this alternate history piece. He also turns to Greek legend, specifically to the Golden Fleece. The section headings retells the Greek story for those of us who don't remember the details, but like any successful literary device, the use of the mythological structure adds resonance to the story without getting in the way. The story itself is delightful, as are the characters. Steamships on the Mississippi touch a chord deep in the American soul. Add the intensity of the Civil War, a national trauma so deep that it still shapes the political discourse a hundred

and forty years later, and Walter Jon has plenty of material to work with. This isn't your usual "what if" alternate history, though. For starters, although the events plausibly could have had a significant impact on the outcome of the war, the main characters – and the author – are not particularly concerned about that effect. They have other interests, and those interests are more than enough to captivate the reader.

Novelette: "A Martian Romance", by Kim Stanley Robinson. Quite unusually for *Asimov's*, this piece has already seen print, in KSR's *The Martians*, a few months ago. It could easily be called "White Mars", as it takes place some years after *Blue Mars*, when the terraforming has collapsed, leaving the Martian oceans frozen and surface life dead. The main characters of the story are Eileen Monday and Roger Clayborne, who are introduced early in *The Martians*, in "Exploring Fossil Canyon", which in turn first appeared in *Universe 12*. More readers may have encountered them in the novella "Green Mars" in *Asimov's*, back in 1985. That novella is not part of the novel of the same name, but it also appears in *The Martians*; the three stories form a triptych that anchors the volume. I'll quote part of the blurb under the title in *Asimov's*: "Our breathtaking cover story ... is a bittersweet coda to the author's romance with the fourth planet." It is extremely difficult to judge this story entirely on its own, and to deny the weight and the resonance of the most award-winning series of novels in recent SF. I think that this story, with the powerful and poignant metaphor of a dying planet to address personal loss, death, and failure, would still be a legitimate nominee. With that context, however, I feel this third of my bet is safe. The cover, by the way, is by Jim Burns. If it's what held up publication, Gardner probably won't complain too much.

Short Story: "In From the Commons", by Tony Daniel. I'm proud to say that my first sale benefited from a critique by Tony, back before he was published (although he may have already had a sale by then, shortly after he went through Clarion West). This piece has wonderfully poetic fantasy / dream imagery, including a map hand-drawn in ink distilled from moon-light, which must be weighted down lest it float back up to the moon. The main character gives up his quest to touch the moon, and leaves the Commons in answer to the Call, which comes first as a sound, and then as a green flash: "Light travels more slowly than sound in the Time River mountains, of course." Yet this is SF rather than fantasy, and arguably hard SF at that...

"Riding the Gigantosaur", by Michael Swanwick. As you can read elsewhere in this issue, Swanwick survived the threat of self-competition (being the first

author to have three Hugo nominees in the same category) to win another Hugo last month in Melbourne. "Gigantosaur" presents a ruthless predator of the corporate jungle who buys the chance to be reincarnated as his ideal self-image. Both parties to this deal have a lot to learn, though. Has this Mephistopheles met his match in this Faust? Given Swanwick's popularity, and the highly memorable imagery in this story, the only risk I face here is the likelihood that he will get enough nomination votes to again place more than one story, and that Chicago will (as Melbourne didn't) offer him the chance to withdraw all but one. I trust that *when* that happens, Swanwick will leave this one in the running.

Ah, yes, that adds up to 5. Did I leave one out? Actually, I'm skipping a few as being lesser contenders, including a Resnick, believe it or not. Some of you may like one of those more than one I do mention. My last choice, however, is the pick of the lot: Novelette "A Knight of Ghosts and Shadows", by the editor himself, Gardner Dozois. I won't try to do it justice, other than to say that it achieves a novel's worth of Egan, and you know I like Greg Egan. Maybe I will talk about it next month, if I get around to writing an editorial on a panel topic from 'DilloCon: "Can SF be Great Literature?"

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New Used Out of Print Rare British American

Reading Group Report

by A. T. Campbell, III

September 7: *Secret Realms* by
Tom Cool

Nine people showed up to discuss *Secret Realms*, the second science fiction novel by US Naval Commander Tom Cool. Several of us had met the author and been impressed by him at his recent appearances in Texas (at LoneStarCon 2 in San Antonio

and at the Turkey City Writers' Workshop in Austin). Additionally, Tor editor David Hartwell had been praising *Secret Realms* at last year's ArmadilloCon, so we felt we needed to discuss this book.

Secret Realms is about a military experiment where a group of people is raised since birth in a virtual reality world designed to teach them to be warriors. The story is largely told from the viewpoint of the experimental subjects, who initially think their VR training camp is the "real world" but gradually come to suspect that something more is out there.

We found that this book offered a fascinating examination of a horrifying yet believable premise. The political motivations to for the experiment rang true, and Cool's depiction of the technology made it seem feasible. The virtual reality world was well developed, with a cleverly thought out set of stylizations of our own world. It had different social patterns that made sense in context. We liked the hybrid fantasy/SF tone the author used to describe the world and what happened in it. The characters raised in the VR world to be great warriors actually seemed extremely smart.

We all thought the story started off strongly. The actions in the VR worlds were interesting, and we cared about the characters. Somewhere in about the last third of the book, the story seemed to change direction and turn into more of a standard technothriller. While the fast-paced ending was effective and well written, we felt that it didn't fit will with the beginning and was less special than the earlier parts of the book.

The military/VR aspects of this novel brought up obvious comparisons to two famous books that won the Hugo and Nebula awards: *Ender's Game* and *Forever Peace*. We thought that much of *Secret Realms* held up well against these books. Some folks even said that they enjoyed *Secret Realms* more than *Forever Peace*, which we read earlier this year. We feel that Tom Cool is a skillful writer with interesting ideas, and we're looking forward to his future books.

September 21: *The Death of the Necromancer* by Martha Wells

The discussion of Martha Wells's third novel drew eight participants. *The Death of the Necromancer* is a dark fantasy set in a world much like 18th Century Europe. The main character, Nicholas Valiarde, is a nobleman secret plotting revenge against the evil Count Montesq, who had Valiarde's godfather executed on false charges. While attempting to steal a treasure and frame Montesq for the crime, Valiarde encounters a dark supernatural evil. Distracted from his mission of vengeance, Valiarde decides to find out to find out more about the evil force try to stop it.

We found this book told an exciting, page-turning adventure story. The plot kept taking unexpected turns,

but we were enjoying it so much that we gleefully went along for the ride. As one member put it, this is a "cracking good yarn."

This book has a cast of genuinely interesting characters. Although superficially they fit many of the standard archetypes from regency romances (the fallen noble, the kindhearted actress, the evil count, etc.), Wells imbued them all with a uniqueness that made us care about them and what happened to them. Many of them seem truly clever. Nicholas Valiarde is an amazingly complex creation. At times reminding us of such classic characters as the Saint, Moriarty, and Batman, he seemed a truly original character created specifically for this story.

The characters and setting worked well together to evoke a proper mood. The city's long history, large ancient castles, and dank sewers provided a suitably dark and mysterious background for the strange events and horrifying menaces of this tale.

There were so many exciting and interesting scenes in the book that we were hard-pressed to name a favorite. Memorable moments included the chilling seances, the break into prison, the break out of prison, and the confrontation with evil in the sewer.

It should be noted that *The Death of the Necromancer* is set in the same world as Ms. Wells's first novel, *The Element of Fire*. The stories in the two books are unrelated, and they feature none of the same leading characters. *The Death of the Necromancer* takes place several generations after the events in *The Element of Fire*, and it only occasionally refers to plot elements from the first book as history. These references were so interesting that many of us wanted to buy and read *The Element of Fire*. We were disappointed when Willie told us that it is now out of print.

Many of us felt that *The Death of the Necromancer* was one of the most entertaining books we'd read in quite a while. Even those who don't normally read much fantasy liked it quite a bit. This book seems to offer a wonderful new direction for fantasy. We felt that Wells shows a tremendous level of accomplishment for only a third novel, and we're anxious to see her next book.

Since this was the second Martha Wells book our group had discussed and liked, we plan to take the author to dinner soon. We're lucky to have so many good and accessible writers who live in Texas.

The Fandom Association of Central Texas, Inc.

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How to Join FACT

FACT membership benefits include regular issues of *The F.A.C.T. Sheet* and the opportunity to participate in many social events (see the "Upcoming Events" column).

To become a member, please send membership dues to the FACT mailing address. The time of year in which you pay for membership determines the amount, so that in subsequent years your membership will come due in April or October.

If you join in:	Your dues will be:
May or November	\$29.75 (17 months)
June or December	\$28.00 (16 months)
July or January	\$26.25 (15 months)
August or February	\$24.50 (14 months)
September or March	\$22.75 (13 months)
October or April	\$21.00 (12 months)



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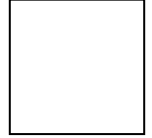
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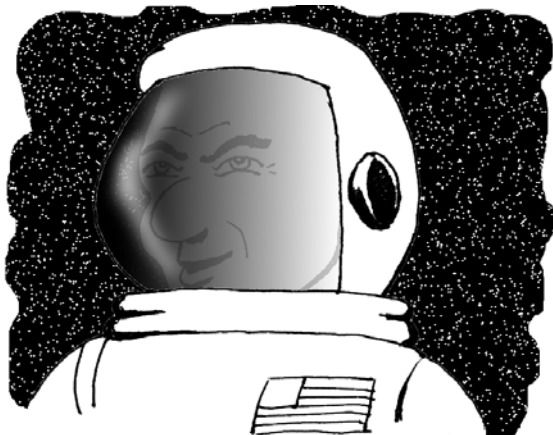
FACT Member Birthdays

October

- 2 Cathy Beckwith
- 12 Kennedy Poyser
- 21 Betty Hall

November

- 12 Cathleen Leseten
- 17 Sonia Santana
- 27 Lori Wolf



Celebrity Birthdays

October

- 2 Avery Brooks (*ST: DS9*), Persis Khambatta (*ST: The Motion Picture*)
- 4 Charlton Heston (*Planet of the Apes*), Susan Sarandon (*Rocky Horror Picture Show*)
- 5 Clive Barker (*The Books of Blood*)
- 9 Miguel de Cervantes (*Don Quixote*)
- 20 Martin Landau (*Space: 1999*)
- 21 Ursula K. Le Guin (*The Lathe of Heaven*)
- 23 Michael Crichton (*The Terminal Man*)
- 26 Elsa Lanchester (*Bride of Frankenstein*)

November

- 9 Carl Sagan (*Contact*)
- 20 Sean Young (*Blade Runner*)
- 24 Frances Hodgson Burnett (*The Secret Garden*)
- 25 Ricardo Montalban (*ST II: The Wrath of Khan*), Jeffrey Hunter (*Star Trek*)
- 26 Frederik Pohl (*Gateway*)
- 29 C. S. Lewis (*Out of the Silent Planet*)
- 30 Jonathan Swift (*Gulliver's Travels*), Mark Twain (*A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*)