

THE

FACT.

## SHEET

May 2009

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

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### FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings, and thanks to all who sent content and words of encouragement and support for last month's *FACT Sheet*. Your submissions make this publication, so keep them coming. Now, let's get to it.—Roxanne Bogucka

### UPCOMING FACT EVENTS

Sat., May 9, 1:00-3:00 pm, FACT Board of Directors meeting, Carver Library, 1161 Angelina Street, Austin TX

The monthly meeting of the FACT board of directors is open to all FACT members and other individuals who have business to discuss.

#### North Reading Group:

Tues., May 19, 7:00-8:00 pm, Milwood Library  
The King of Elfland's Daughter by Lord Dunsany

Mon., June 1, 7:00-8:00 pm, A.T.'s House  
Soon I Will be Invincible by Austin Grossman

#### South Reading Group:

Wed., May 20, 7:00-8:00 pm, Pleasant Hill Library, 211 E. William Cannon  
The King of Elfland's Daughter by Lord Dunsany

### CORRECTION

Carol L. Dennis' new book, *Guardian's Choice*, is available for purchase at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) and at <http://www.lar-ryk.com>, not [www.lar-reek.com](http://www.lar-reek.com).

### NEWSY BITS

Busy Persons

Lawrence Persons sold his story "The Dog

Parade" to *Postscripts* magazine. A movie option for his story "Salvation" was renewed for 18 months. And lastly, Persons and Howard Waldrop review *Futurama: Into the Wild Green Yonder* at Locus Online:

[http://locusmag.com/2009/Review\\_Futurama\\_WGY.html](http://locusmag.com/2009/Review_Futurama_WGY.html)

### Aaron Allston Update

Texas writer Aaron Allston is now at home and blogging, after multiple bypass surgery following a heart attack in late March. Read a detailed account of his illness and recovery, at <http://aaron-allston.livejournal.com/1221.html>. Allston also faces daunting medical bills. See how you can help at [http://community.livejournal.com/allston\\_info/4324.html](http://community.livejournal.com/allston_info/4324.html).

### TWEETS TO SUBSCRIBE TO

Send your suggestions of Twitter feed to follow to [factsheetgirl@yahoo.com](mailto:factsheetgirl@yahoo.com).

<http://twitter.com/MarsPhoenix>—"Phoenix is designed to study the history of water and habitability potential in the Martian arctic's ice-rich soil."

<http://twitter.com/MarsRover>—"Primary among the mission's scientific goals is to search for and characterize a wide range of rocks and soils that hold clues to past water activity on Mars. The spacecraft are targeted to sites on opposite sides of Mars that appear to have been affected by liquid water in the past."

<http://twitter.com/ResearchBlogs>—Blogging about peer-reviewed research

<http://twitter.com/woot>—One Day, One Deal<sup>SM</sup>

"... an online store and community that focuses on selling cool stuff cheap."

## WATCH THIS!

### Upcoming Movies

May 8—Star Trek  
May 21—Terminator Salvation  
May 22—Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian  
May 29—Drag Me to Hell, Up  
June 5—Land of the Lost  
June 12—Moon, Imagine That, Dead Snow  
June 19—*Year One*  
June 24—Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen  
July 1—Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs New! on DVD  
May 5—The Curious Case of Benjamin Button  
May 12—Underworld: Rise of the Lycans

## CONVENTIONS

May 22-24: **ConQuest 40**, Hyatt Regency Crown Center, Kansas City, MO. Registration \$55 adults, \$27.50 kids  
<http://www.conquestkc.org/>  
May 29-31: **A-Kon 20**, Sheraton Dallas, Dallas, TX. Anime, anime, comics, cosplay, media, gaming. Registration \$55 adults, \$15 kids 6-12  
<http://a-kon.com>  
June 5-7: **SoonerCon 2009**, Biltmore Hotel, Oklahoma City, OK. Preregistration \$30  
<http://www.soonercon.info>

## BIRTHDAYS

May 15—Roxanne Bogucka  
May 20—Karen Meschke  
May 23—Angela Price  
June 15—John F. Moore  
June 17—Clifton Davis, Carrie Richerson

## NEW SF NONFICTION

Get your scholar on!

Garcia, Frank and Mark Phillips. (2009). *Science Fiction Television Series, 1990-2004: Histories, Casts and Credits for 58 Shows*. Jefferson NC: McFarland & Co., Inc. ISBN [0-7864-2483-2](#).  
Geraghty, Lincoln, ed. (2008). *The Influence of Star Trek on Television, Film and Culture*. Jefferson NC: McFarland & Co., Inc. ISBN [0-7864-3034-6](#).  
Gordon, Andrew. (2008). *Empire of Dreams:*

*the Science Fiction and Fantasy Films of Steven Spielberg*. Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield. ISBN [0-7425-5578-X](#).

Jamilla, Nick. (2008). *Sword Fighting in the Star Wars Universe: Historical Origins, Style and Philosophy*. Jefferson NC: McFarland & Co., Inc. ISBN [0-7864-3461-9](#).

Katerberg, William H. (2008). *Future West: Utopia and Apocalypse in Frontier Science Fiction*. Lawrence KS: University Press of Kansas. ISBN [0-7006-1609-8](#).

McCarty, Michael. (2008). *Modern Mythmakers: Interviews with Horror, Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers and Filmmakers*. Jefferson NC: McFarland & Co., Inc. ISBN [0-7864-3497-X](#).

Meehan, Paul. (2008). *Tech-Noir: the Fusion of Science Fiction and Film Noir*. Jefferson NC: McFarland & Co., Inc. ISBN [0-7864-3325-6](#).

Nama, Adilifu. (2008). *Black Space: Imagining Race in Science Fiction Film*. Austin: University of Texas Press. ISBN [0-2927-1745-8](#).

Paul, Louis. (2008). *Tales from the Cult Film Trenches: Interviews with Actors from Horror, Science Fiction and Exploitation Cinema*. Jefferson NC: McFarland & Co., Inc. ISBN [0-7864-2994-1](#).

Sanders, Stephen M., ed. (2008). *The Philosophy of Science Fiction Film*. Lexington KY: University Press of Kentucky. ISBN [0-8131-2472-7](#).

Telotte, J.P., ed. (2008). *The Essential Science Fiction Television Reader*. Lexington KY: University Press of Kentucky. ISBN [0-8131-2492-6](#).

Weaver, Tom. (2009). *I Talked with a Zombie: Interviews with 23 Veterans of Horror and Sci-Fi Films and Television*. Jefferson NC: McFarland & Co., Inc. ISBN [0-7864-4118-1](#).

## READING GROUP REPORTS

Thanks to A.T. for this Reading Group Roundup!

December 17: *Nine Princes in Amber* by Roger Zelazny

Thirteen people attended this meeting at A.T.'s home, including one first-time visitor. Our topic was *Nine Princes in Amber*, the classic

fantasy adventure by Roger Zelazny. All of us had read Zelazny before. Four were reading this book for the first time, and most of the rest had initially read it many years ago.

The book's clever narrative hook (a man waking up with no memory in a hospital) worked well for most of us. That got us reading, and Zelazny's clever storytelling got many of us through this relatively short book rather quickly.

Many of us thought the book was a good swashbuckler. We liked the dysfunctional royal family with superpowers. We thought the complicated magic system was interesting, and particularly liked inter-dimensional travel through playing cards.

One reader had mixed feelings about the book. He thought there were flashes of good writing and action. He felt that hardboiled/noir fiction was an influence on the storytelling. He appreciated that the book does not follow standard fantasy templates. He felt all the characters were arrogant and selfish, with the protagonist, Corwin, only slightly less so than his siblings. This reader felt the book's ending was disappointing, since Corwin doesn't really accomplish any of his goals, other than staying alive and escaping.

Some remembered the book fondly, but did not think the book wore well upon rereading. One person did not like the book's depiction of women as "helpless sisterly things," and would prefer a modern version where "women kicked butt."

Some of us had such fond memories about the book that we found it hard to discuss critically. One had read the novel many times and just found it to be a "ripping yarn." This book was another's first Zelazny novel; he'd enjoyed it so much that he later read most of the author's work and became a big Zelazny fan. He enjoyed Zelazny's imagination, terse storytelling, and use of words. He particularly enjoyed reading Zelazny's descriptions of Corwin's transitions between worlds.

A few people just did not enjoy the book. They felt the book was just a bunch of pointing, fighting, and running around the countryside, and did not like the main character.

Several of us noted that this book was clearly an influence on current writers, particularly Charles Stross in his Merchant Princes series. Near the end, several people suggested actors we might cast as Corwin in a movie adaptation. Suggestions included Michael Caine, Humphrey Bogart, Clive Owen, Patrick McGoohan, and Sean Connery.

Overall we generally liked the book, and were glad to read another classic in our group. After the meeting, several of us had a nice dinner at Opal Divine's.

January 5: *Axis* by Robert Charles Wilson  
Ten people attended this discussion at A.T.'s house, and three submitted comments by email. Our topic was Robert Charles Wilson's *Axis*, the sequel to the Hugo-winning novel *Spin*. At the end of *Spin*, a gateway had been opened to a strange alien world. The plot of *Axis* takes place thirty years later, featuring various groups of humans who have settled in the new world. It's a complicated story involving government conspiracy, romance, genetic engineering, and attempts to communicate with aliens. All of us had read Wilson before, and all had read *Spin*. We all started *Axis*, but only three finished the book and three more planned to finish.

Our opinions of this book were fairly similar. We think that this book has well-crafted prose, but the story and characters are less engaging than those of *Spin*. The speculative ideas in *Axis* do not generate much emotional impact, and we found it hard to care about the characters. One of the major characters is not completely human, and it's hard for other characters (and us readers) to relate to him. We also felt that this book was clearly the second book in a trilogy, and suffers from having neither a beginning nor an end. Many of us simply found this book too easy to put down.

Since our opinions of the book were so similar, the meeting was fairly short. Afterward, many of us had a nice dinner at Chili's.

February 2: *Sunshine* by Robin McKinley  
Ten of us gathered at A.T.'s house to discuss Robin McKinley's *Sunshine*. The title character is a young woman who works as a

baker. One night she gets kidnapped by vampires, and she discovers unexpected abilities that allow her to free herself. She also discovers that some vampires are less evil than others. This kicks off an intriguing story of personal discovery, set in an alternate world startlingly different from our own. None of us had read McKinley before. All of us started the book, and three finished it.

One person commented that *Sunshine* is an ideal girl: hard-working, conscientious, talented, affectionate, and brave.

We liked the family restaurant where *Sunshine* works. The place is fully described and much of the action takes place here, and it's filled with a rich supporting cast of *Sunshine*'s family and coworkers. The restaurant is almost a character in its own right. It reminded one reader of *Chocolat*.

One reader disliked the book because she felt that it was written for a teen audience. She disliked the book's vocabulary and tone, plus the frequent infodumps. She also felt the book reused the tired "woman as victim" trope from vampire fiction. Mainly she'd expected and hoped for this book to be an urban fantasy aimed at adults, and this is not what she found.

Another had mixed feelings. He felt that the nature of exposition was more like science fiction than fantasy. He disliked this book's absence of chapters. However he did like that this book's heroine makes a living baking cinnamon rolls.

We generally found that the author had a clear prose style and put together interesting turns of phrase. However, several of us found this book hard to read in large chunks, and felt that it was too easy to put down. One person felt that the author did not pull off first-person narrative as well as might be hoped.

A couple of us were simply tired of vampire novels. It was not clear from the cover what the subject of the book was. These readers started the book, but as soon as they encountered vampires, they stopped.

A few of us were intrigued by the alternate America in which this novel takes place. Although we don't see much of the world in this story, it's interesting and it imparts of

feeling of science fiction to the story. There are several humanoid species, and a government agency enforces segregation between them.

The reader who recommended to the book to our group was an enthusiastic fan of *Sunshine*. She felt the characters and setting were charming. And while she does not usually like vampire books, she liked this one.

Overall this book provided us with a nice discussion. After the meeting, many of us had a nice dinner at Culver's.

—A.T. Campbell III

#### MINUTES OF THE MARCH 2009 MEETING OF THE OUTGOING BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE FANDOM ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL TEXAS

The monthly meeting of the board of directors for the Fandom Association of Central Texas was called to order on Saturday, 14 March by Board Chair Brian Price at the Carver Branch of the Austin Public Library, 1161 Angelina St., Austin, Texas, at 1:21 p.m. Present in addition to the chair were FACT President Karen Meschke, Vice-president Jonathan Miles, Directors Charles Siros, Elizabeth Burton and Jennifer Juday, FACT Officers Eric Hollas, Marianne Moul and Kimm Antell, FACT members Renee Babcock and William Siros and guests Brian Murphy and Ian Hollas. Director C. Dan Tolliver arrived at 1:41 p.m. and Director A. T. Campbell III at 1:43 p.m.

The secretary presented the minutes of the February meeting. There being no additions or corrections noted, it was moved by Charles Siros, seconded by Ms. Juday that the minutes be approved provided any errors that might later be discovered be corrected. There being no objection, Mr. Price declared the motion approved.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

OFFICER REPORTS

CHAIR

Mr. Price noted he had not received the storage locker protocols from Mr. C. Siros by the deadline requested at the February meeting. Mr. Siros advised he had them to present at this meeting. Mr. Price reported he had passed

on information received from Bill Parker of ALAMO regarding a special membership rate for fan organization members to attend InstaCon.

#### PRESIDENT

Ms. Meschke noted she had not yet received payment for the SMOFCon membership block; Ms. Moul advised she would mail it immediately. Ms. Meschke stated she had attended ConDFW, where she promoted both SMOFCon and ArmadilloCon.

#### VICE-PRESIDENT

Mr. Miles advised he had nothing to report

#### TREASURER

Ms. Moul reported the account balance as of 2/28/2009 was: FACT, \$16,415.10. Outstanding credits: \$135.00. Outstanding debits: \$201.72.

Ms. Babcock stated she was unable to provide an ArmadilloCon report as she is having difficulty balancing the account information provided for the ArmadilloCon account as she had only received one bank statement. She requested copies of the statements for the previous five months, as she felt several checks noted as still outstanding may, in fact, have been cashed. She also advised she will submit a reimbursement request for FACT's portion of the ConDFW party expenses. She also noted two deposits made to the convention account may have been FACT renewals based on the amounts.

#### SECRETARY

Ms. Burton stated she had notified the membership regarding the availability of scholarships to reimburse InstaCon memberships and placed a request-for-proposal for ArmadilloCon 32. Her other main activity was preparing materials for the annual meeting, including a redesign of the agenda.

#### REGISTRAR

Mr. Hollas reported active members numbered 64. Expired memberships numbered 19, while inactive memberships numbered 75. Expired memberships are those that have not been renewed for more than a year; inactive memberships are those that have not been renewed within a period of less than a year.

Mr. Hollas noted he had sent 8 members

postcards alerting them their memberships are about to expire.

#### SOCIAL EVENTS MANAGER

Mr. W. Siros had nothing to report. Ms. Antell inquired whether it might be possible to schedule an outing to see *Monsters vs. Aliens*.

#### HISTORIAN

Mr. Tolliver noted he had attended a convention but otherwise had nothing to report.

#### MIS

#### PUBLICATIONS

Ms. Juday sent out the necessary paperwork and information in preparation for the annual meeting. She suggested that it might be better to send this particular edition in envelopes. She also noted several artists are having fun doing illustrations for the newsletter.

#### QUARTERMASTER

No report

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

##### ArmadilloCon

Ms. Antell reported the committee met the previous weekend. Mr. Campbell has had some difficulty reaching Guest of Honor Scott Lynch, but that communication with artist guest Stephen Martiniere has been re-established. She will be contacting people individually to volunteer rather than relying on a general call to ensure all jobs are covered. Forty-four people have registered to date, including 7 acquired during the previous month via online application.

##### Hotel Committee

Mr. C. Siros reported the committee has received a second bid and needs to meet to discuss the details. Hotels that have responded are the Omni SouthPark and the Renaissance, both of which are anxious for the business. He advised that changing the date to October isn't an option, as the hotels are too busy then, so the likely date for the future will be the third weekend in August. The committee expects to have a contract by April.

##### Bylaws Committee

The requested changes to bring the bylaws into concordance with state statutes were published in the FACT Sheet and will be voted on during the annual meeting.

##### Membership Committee

Ms. Burton requested her report be deferred to the annual meeting.

#### Reading Groups

The South Group is still trying to build membership. The North Group is now meeting at the Millwood Branch of the public library in addition to Mr. Campbell's house. The last meeting had 15 in attendance, including one newcomer, and the reading list is selected through June.

#### OLD BUSINESS

**Record Storage Protocols:** Mr. C. Siros provided information regarding what records must be kept, in what form and for what time period. Records can be stored electronically provided specific corporate officers have access. There is ample storage space on our hosting server to set up a password-protected site for record storage.

#### NEW BUSINESS

None

There being no other business before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 1:56 p.m.

#### MINUTES OF THE MARCH 2009 MEETING OF THE INCOMING BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE FANDOM ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL TEXAS

The first meeting of the newly elected board of directors for the Fandom Association of Central Texas was called to order on Saturday, 14 March, by FACT President Karen Meschke at the Carver Branch of the Austin Public Library, 1161 Angelina St., Austin, Texas, at 2:40 p.m. Present in addition to Ms. Meschke were Directors Elizabeth Burton, Marianne Moul, Jonathan Miles, Brian Price, C. Dan Tolliver, Charles Siros and William Siros, Assistant Treasurer for ArmadilloCon Renee Babcock, committee chair Kimm Antell and FACT members Jennifer Juday, Eric Hollas, A. T. Campbell III.

There being no minutes to be approved, Ms. Meschke opened the floor for nominations for chairperson. Mr. Miles was elected by acclamation.

#### OFFICER REPORTS

##### CHAIR

None

#### PRESIDENT

On being nominated by Mr. W. Siros, Ms. Meschke agreed to continue in the office of president for another year. There being no other nominations, she was elected by acclamation.

#### VICE-PRESIDENT

Mr. Tolliver nominated Brian Price, who accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations, he was elected by acclamation.

#### TREASURER

Ms. Burton nominated Ms. Moul, who accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations, she was elected by acclamation.

#### SECRETARY

Mr. Price nominated Ms. Burton, who accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations, she was elected by acclamation.

#### REGISTRAR

Mr. Hollas agreed to continue in the post.

#### SOCIAL ACTIVITIES MANAGER

Ms. Babcock agreed to accept the office after being nominated by Ms. Burton with a second by Mr. Tolliver.

#### HISTORIAN

Mr. Tolliver agreed to continue in the office of historian.

#### MIS

Mr. Campbell agreed to accept the post.

#### PUBLICATIONS

Ms. Juday advised she will no longer be able to edit the *FACT Sheet*. However, when asked by the board if she would continue as publications manager, she agreed. Roxanne Bogucka has offered to oversee the newsletter.

#### QUARTERMASTER

Mr. C. Siros agreed to continue in this office.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

ArmadilloCon

See previous

Reading Groups

See previous

Hotel Committee

See Previous

Bylaws Committee

See previous

Membership Committee

See previous

#### OLD BUSINESS

None

#### NEW BUSINESS

**FACT/ArmadilloCon Party Kit:** Mr. W. Siros proposed that Ms. Meschke and Ms. Antell determine what items need to be included so that everything that needs to be there, is. Mr. Miles recommended they work in conjunction with the quartermaster to set up a formal inventory.

#### **ALAMO REQUEST FOR CON SUITE**

**EQUIPMENT:** Ms. Meschke advised ALAMO would like permission to again use the con suite equipment for SMOFCon. It was moved by Mr. Tolliver, seconded by Ms. Burton that the request be approved. There being no objections, the motion was declared approved.

#### **Formal Creation of Scholarship Committee:**

It was moved by Mr. C. Siros, seconded by Mr. W. Siros, that the scholarship committee be created to oversee distribution of board-authorized scholarship funds. The committee

will consist of Ms. Meschke, Ms. Burton, Mr. Price and Mr. Tolliver.

**INSTACON SCHOLARSHIPS:** Awarding of the InstaCon scholarships was tabled until the April meeting to allow time for additional applications. Ms. Burton will repeat the announcement to the membership.

The board agreed to continue holding board meetings on the second Saturday of the month at 1:00 p.m at the Carver Library, except in June, when it will be held the third Saturday, and in August, for which a date, time and/or place will be announced. There being no other business before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:11 p.m.