

Pulsar

A publication of the Portland Science Fiction Society

Issue 302



Issue 302

April 2004

Pulsar Table of Contents

Pulsar	1
Cover Notes.....	2
(Still) President's Notes	3
From the Editor	4
Member Services	7
alt.PorSFis Location Schedule	8
"Crystal Tears" by Susan Jarvis.....	9
The Klingon Korner	9
PORSFIS Informational Calendar	10
Convention Calendar	13
Gamestorm 6	15
Journal of an Evil Security Chief	15
1632 and 1633: A Review of Two Books	19
Party Hardy at Orycon	20
Join the Portland Science Fiction Society!	21

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Cover Notes

We are fortunate this month and next to have some special artwork given to us by a friend of a friend of the editor. Susan Jarvis is not a member of PORSFIS but, like all of us, is a part of the larger SF and Fan community. Cover piece is titled "Spaceman". If you would like to get in touch with her, please email the editor at editor@porsfis.org.

(Still) President's Notes

Imagine my surprise—I've been reelected! Again! ☺ I'm going to take that as a show of confidence in the work I (and my fellow officers) have been doing, rather than confirmation of President-for-Lifehood (See Debra, fingers in ears, shaking her head, singing "La la la la la, I can't hear you!") ☺

So, it's April and the start of a new year...what does the New Year hold for us? Well, we have new officers for one. John Andrews is still an officer—though not the Treasurer! Congratulations, John! ☺ He's my new VP! Matt Picio is also returning, but exchanging his VP (and Webmaster) duties to be the Secretary. Coming on board is Kris Picio—she was Editor last year, and this year is taking on the responsibilities not only of Webmistress, but also—Treasurer! ☺ I know we are going to have a good year—but remember, you don't have to be an officer to participate! If you have a thought or idea that would make our Society better, or even just more fun, jump right in and let us know! ☺

We are still collecting books for school libraries (SF for Schools)—and I'd like to remind people that garage sale season is coming up—If you see a few SF/F books on the nickel table and they look in good shape, snap them up and donate them! You have all the fun of making a good find, the warm fuzzy of doing a good deed, and last but not least, still have that comfortably full wallet sensation! ☺

The Annual Picnic this year will be the second Saturday of July—why, do you ask? Well, PSU is doing their New Student Orientations that weekend and we can't get a room...so we would have needed to find somewhere else to hold the meeting in July anyway, so why not? ☺ It will be at new members' Dan and Emily Thompson's new house. (Yes, these are friends of mine who have joined PorSFiS. I'm trying to lead by example here—convince your friends to join PorSFiS, too!)

Plans are already underway for our Orycon room party...the committee, headed up by Kier Salmon, has chosen a Retro-Post Apocalypse theme ☺ If you want to help with decorations or party supplies—feel free to

volunteer! We're hoping for another wildly popular party <grin>

Speaking of Orycon—we'll be doing another chocolate tasting, too! The last one was quite popular and so much fun! And it's never too early to toss something into the Raffle Prize pot!

I hope you all continue to enjoy being members of PorSFis—we exist because of you!

Happy New Year!
Debra Stansbury
Still President ☺



From the Editor

Why be shy? The PULSAR is a safe haven for those who wish to write but are a bit unnerved by the concept of being published. We have submissions from people you know personally, and we have submissions from people who you'll never meet—many times because they do not exist! If you feel the urge to write or produce art, and you're just not sure about having your real name attached, give me a fake one! As editor, I have the right to never tell anyone your dirty secret or about your private dream to be published. If, on the other hand, you want to revel in glorious attention and possible criticism, submit your piece openly, and enjoy seeing your name in print.

I hope everyone notices some of the beautiful new art we're featuring this month. Susan has been a real pleasure to work with and very generous in giving us pieces to improve the look of the PULSAR. She's provided a piece for the cover (see cover notes on page 2) and a full-color piece I am totally enraptured by, on page 10. For those of you still receiving the

PULSAR in print, you're missing something special!

I thank Debra for always having something for us, and a special thanks to Kier for submitting a review this month. Mike, as always, keeps us organized and happy with the calendar. Ed, where the heck are you? I'm hoping to build the PULSAR into something we all go to not only for current PORSFIS information, but intellectual stimulation as well. Enjoy!

Lisa Goodwin

editor@porsfis.org



**Book Review: Lud-in-the-Mist (1926)
by Helen Hope Mirrlees (1887-1978)
A Review by Kier Salmon**

I should start with the phrase: "This charming little fantasy...." At least that's how one would expect to begin the review of a fantasy novel written by a wealthy English heiress in the roaring twenties.

However, Lud-in-the-Mist isn't "charming" by any stretch of the imagination. It's a vividly colored, highly spiced novel replete with sexual innuendos, serious drug use and abuse, perversity and the troubling questions of death and social acceptance and social stolidity. Mirrlees' Lud-in-the-Mist reminds me of the English Channel town of Rye in its sixteenth and seventeenth century heyday. Full of bustling burghers, rich

men with a pompous self-satisfied exercise of power and riches obtained by trade from far flung lands, it squeaks of social decorum and restraint. But early in the novel we learn that not all is in Paradise as Adam and Eve would like to show it.

The lead burgher; both by heredity and money, Nathaniel Chantecleer, has been suppressing his true nature for decades. To his deep dismay, his young son has demonstrated much earlier than he that he is a round peg in a square hole. The young Chanticleer's misfit-ness has manifested itself in various socially inappropriate ways. And like all societies (ours included) his actions reflect directly on his family; causing a decrease in the moral power they exercise in the township.

The drugs, eagerly ignored and covered up by the euphemism "silk," are key to the cure for the young child. But the very rumor that such might have been used would destroy, permanently, the power base the Chanticleers have enjoyed for several generations. Mist covers the fictional landscape and permeates the words. One gets a sense of a much larger and complex world surrounding Lud-in-the-Mist, but they, the focus of the action, are insularly uninterested in anything else. And the use of the drugs is as ambivalent and subject to abuse as are all the psychotropic drugs in our present society.

Ultimately this is the novel of a father's commitment to his son and his daughter's welfare above and beyond the political and economic realities he must destroy to achieve their very life. And in the doing he finds himself facing death unflinchingly as he searches for his son and forces his fellows to reconsider their careful cover-up of both the problem and the true nature of the drugs.

Note: Michael Swanwick's biography of Hope Mirrlees (<http://www.infinityplus.co.uk/introduces/mirrlees.htm>) calls her a "strange creature." Published, feted and friends with the great literary figures of her day, she does not seem to have published anything after Lud-in-the-Mist. Swanwick attributes that to her inherited money and laments her lack of poverty that might have forced her to continue to write. Had she lived today, I can easily believe she'd give Mary Gentle, Laurell Hamilton, and Charles de Lint a good run for their money as a premier author in the mystic, dark fantasy writing arena.

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Member Services

John Bartley is **GEEKING FOR DOLLARS**

He is offering to perform computer consulting and related services—and to donate the proceeds (when referred by a PorSFis member) to PorSFis. TFN, of course. ('Til Further Notice)

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alt.PorSFis Location Schedule

Every month Portland Science Fiction Society Members volunteer to host alt.PorSFis at their home. Here is the schedule as of this month.

2004

April 24 th	– Lisa & Chris Goodwin
May 22 nd	– Matt & Kris Picio
June 26 th	– Marc & Patty Wells
July 24 th	– John Bartley & Lea Rush
August 28 th	– John Bartley & Lea Rush
September 25 th	– John Bartley & Lea Rush
October 23 rd	– Mark & Sharon Parker
November 27 th	– To Be Announced
December	– To Be Announced (This won't be on our regular weekend due to Christmas)

Updates and changes may occur. Check www.porsfis.org for the most up to date information.

Thanks to Matt and Kris for hosting in March!!!

If you don't see a month filled i.e. "To Be Announced" you are welcome to volunteer to host alt.PorSFis. Just contact Debra Stansbury at president@porsfis.org

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"Crystal Tears" by Susan Jarvis



The Klingon Korner

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ngech

ngech = A woman's cleavage

PORSFIS Informational Calendar

Thanks to Mike Parker!

April 2004



1 PorSFis New Year

Deadline for filing application for Clarion West Writers' Workshop

Publication of "Mystic Warrior (The Bronze Canticles, Book 1) by Tracy and Laura Hickman

2 Birthday of writer Joan Vinge

Premiere of movie Hellboy

4 Start of Daylight Savings Time (Spring Ahead)

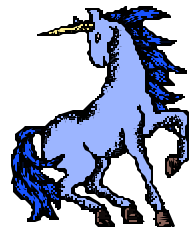
End of Nikon Small World exhibit at OMSI

5 Planned end of primary mission of Spirit Mars Rover

6 Release of Freaks and Geeks (the Complete Series) and The Matrix Revolutions on DVD

Science Fiction Book Group at Powells Books in Beaverton - 7:30 p.m.

8-11 Norwescon 27 at SeaTac, WA



9 Premiere of movie Ella Enchanted

10 PorSFis Meeting at Portland State University (two p.m.)

13 Release of Kill Bill (Volume One), Alien Factor 2 and Babylon 5 (Fifth Season) on DVD

16 Asteroid 2001 HJ31 closest approach to Earth (0.006 AU)

Premieres of The Punisher and Kill Bill (Volume Two)

Release of Highlander, The Series (Season 4) on DVD

17 Last day for \$35 ORYCON 26 registration cost. Cost goes to \$40 on Apr. 17

Release of the Hammer Horror Collection (The Curse of Frankenstein, The Horror of Dracula, The Mummy, Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed, Dracula Has Risen From The Grave and Taste The Blood Of Dracula) in a six disc set DVD.

Tony Wolk, author of Lincoln: A Novel Life, and Dennis Stovall, the Director of the Portland State publishing house, Ooligan Press will talk about their work with the publishing program at the PSU Millar Library at 7:30 p.m. Library will be closed, but those standing outside will be let in.

19-25 Astronomy Week



19 TMA-4 Soyuz launch to International Space Station

20 Birthday of actor George Takei (Sulu - ST)

Release of The Haunted Mansion and The Lost World (Season Two) on DVD

22 Birthday of actor Jack Nicholson

Lyrids meteor shower peak

23-25 Sakura-Con 7 - Anime Convention in SeaTac, WA

23 Premiere of Disney's 13 Going on 30

24 Astronomy Day - Star Party at Rooster Rock State Park
(weather permitting)

25 PULSAR Deadline



TMA-4 Soyuz FG launch to International Space Station

26 Planned end of primary mission of Opportunity Mars Rover

Alt.PorSFis

27 Publication of "A Feast For Crows", fourth book in the Song of Ice and Fire series by George R.R. Martin

Release of Big Fish, Timeline and the Frankenstein Legacy Collection

(Frankenstein, Bride of Frankenstein, Son of Frankenstein, Ghost of Frankenstein and House of Frankenstein) on DVD in full screen.

28 Birthday of writer Terry Pratchett

29 Birthday of Kate Mulgrew (Katherine Janeway - ST - Voyager)

30 Birthday of writer Larry Niven
Premieres of Godsend and The Mask 2



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Convention Calendar

NORWESCON 27

Date: April 8-11, 2004

Location: SeaTac Double Tree Hotel, Seattle WA

E-Mail: info@norwescon.org

Website: www.norwescon.org

WESTERCON 57/CONKOPELLII

Date: July 2-5, 2004

Location: The Wigwam Resort, Litchfield Park, AZ

Guests: C..J. Cherryh, David Cherry, Heather Alexander, John Hertz,
Diana Gabaldon

Theme: Mythology of the Southwest

Membership: \$65 to 10/31/03, \$70 to 1/31/04, \$75 to 5/31/04. .

E-Mail: info@conkopilli.org

Website: www.az-sf.org

WORLDCON 62/NOREASCON 4

Date: Sept. 2-6, 2004

Location: Hynes Convention Center/Boston Sheraton Hotel/Boston

Marriott Copley, Boston, MA.

Guests: Terry Pratchett, William Tenn, Jack Spears, Peter Weston

E-Mail: info@noreascon.org

Website: www.noreascon.org

FUTURE CONVENTIONS:

Worldcon 63/Interaction

Glasgow, Scotland

Aug. 4-8 2005.

(Note: NOT over US Labor Day.)

2005 NaSFic/CascadeCon

Seatac, WA

Sept. 3-6,2005

Worldcon 64/LACon 4

Anahiem,CA

August 23-27. 2006

John Andrews, that's right the Portland Science Fiction Societies very own Treasurer, puts the Convention Calendar together every month. If you know of a convention coming up but don't see it listed send the information to John at john.c.andrews@att.net or to the editor at editor@porsfis.org for inclusion in the list.

All species, races, creeds, colors, and planets
of origin are welcome!

GIFT MEMBERSHIPS AVAILABLE

Introductory Memberships are still just \$10 a
year! What a deal!

Gamestorm 6

a very limited review by Debra Stansbury

How was Gamestorm 6? I really couldn't tell you. I didn't play in any of the games, I went to only one panel, and barely made it to the Dealer's Room before it closed on Sunday. But yes, I did have fun! ☺

Fun? You ask? Well, I did something that no sane person ever should—I volunteered to run Hospitality at a con. ☺ As this was a small gaming con, however, that had never had a hospitality suite before, I figured that it would be pretty hard to screw it up too badly, and so I leapt in!

Then I had my moment of brilliance—I roped my Mom into helping me. ☺ We plotted, we planned, we pre-priced items and then we shopped! Then the convention started...we had good food, a nice clean and (except for once or twice when we had to rush to get food out) neat prep area, fun little cups full of individual servings...and Mom and I had a blast. We got to spend time together, we made new friends, we got compliments! It was a good weekend. ☺

And yes, we've already signed up to do it again next year. Guess we just don't learn from our mistakes, huh? <wink>



Journal of an Evil Security Chief

Part 6

By `Dancer-chan Yomochi

Day 242, a little after 11pm: Some crazy redhead, an Englishman, a snotty dark haired young man and some guy with a shocking Kiwi accent claiming to be a vampire all showed up ten minutes ago and were terrorizing the henchfolk wanting to know the whereabouts of the Ladies. Since they were disturbing the peace I flamethrowered the lot of them. Feel a bit bad about the Brit, I know Evil Witch would have liked to chat

with him. Ah well, what they don't know can't hurt them. Cat got sick again.

Day 243: The piranhas have died from food poisoning. Have placed a request to restock the pool.

Day 244: A very angry blond swan into the airlock this morning. Couldn't hear what she was screaming about over the water as I flooded the airlock, with her inside. Pity about the piranhas, I guess I'll just feed her to the giant sharks Mad Scientist has bred. Best not mention this to the Ladies either. Cat finally hacked up a hairball, and seems to be doing better.

Day 245: The Ladies are all feeling much better this morning, although the cat still looks a little sick. Evil Witch says that travel by rake makes the furred one airsick. Poor kitty.

Day 246: Had a meeting with the Ladies. Seems all the sunken ships around here are making it hazardous to get in or out of the base. Time to move. In other news Mad Scientist sold her special sharks and the secret base to another lady scientist for research purposes. (Cancer research maybe? I really should have asked.)

Day 257: Have been sent ahead to set up security in the new base. Am impressed, hadn't realized that Versailles was up for grabs. Wonder tho', what the French are going to make of all this.

Day 258: Trouble. We're suppose to leave the ground floor open to the public as a museum. Must find out how much the Ladies want to charge for admittance.

Day 260: Dam*. The staff is expected to act as tour guides. Everyone has one week to learn everything there is to know about the room assigned to them, me included. Fooy. I hate Baroque Art. But I really don't want to have to feed the lions.

Day 264: The Ladies say I don't have to give tours anymore, which is just as well. Some whiney guy named Louis showed up today just after sunset. He tried to attack one of the bishonen with some nifty retractable teeth. A chair got broken in the fight, and I jabbed him good with one of the

snapped wooden legs. Piranhas got fed tonight.

Day 265: Piranhas acting funny, sleeping all day, circling mindlessly at night.

Day 271: Don't know where the Ladies are, but going through their e-mails I found an e-receipt for train tickets to Leon, France. Wonder if they'll remember to bring me back a bottle of wine.

Day 274: Really need to learn more French. Watched the news and while I don't understand much I did hear the word "Interpol" used a lot. Huh, I hadn't realized that Interpol's headquarters was in France.

Day 275: Some guy in a tuxedo showed up today, seduced three of my henchwomen and one bishonen, before having the audacity of drawing a gun on me. Broke his neck as he leaned in to steal a kiss. What an idiot. He had a nice British accent tho'.

Day 275, a little before midnight: Turns out that there are such things as vampires. Went to staple an intruder to the wall and he turned to dust on me. Had to go back through the security cameras to get a good look at him. Tallish, clean shaven, a haunted look about him, long billowing black trench coat - nobody I recognized.

Day 289: The world is in chaos. Nations fall before the Ladies' growing army and the few that try to take a stand are crushed swiftly. Mastermind wants to know what country I'd like to have for retirement.

Day 291: I asked for the moon, but it looks like Evil Witch already has a claim to that. So I asked for Tibet. Accidentally opened the curtains in the room with the piranha tank today, they all turned to ash.

Day 292: Request for more piranhas was deigned.



Day 298: Things have calmed down recently, the assassination attempts have dropped to only two a day. Which is good, because the lions are going to get fat at this rate.

Day 309: The world has been completely taken over. The Ladies

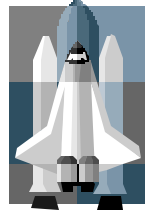
voted that Mastermind should be in charge, so as to free up Mad Scientist and let her use her considerable talents to kick start the space program into hyper drive. Evil Witch is so happy these days, she's all over the place, getting supplies together. I think her plan is to set up the moon as a stepping stone for human colonization through out the solar system. Hope she doesn't expect me to set up security for her Moonbase as well. I'm up to my eyeballs with work as it is. Note to self, invite the Dali Lama back to Tibet. Figure it can't hurt my image any with the locals if I do that.

Day 325: Am starting the security checks one all the folks to be part of the space program. Wish I had a little warning. Started the lions on an exercise program.

Day 346: The Space program is up and running.

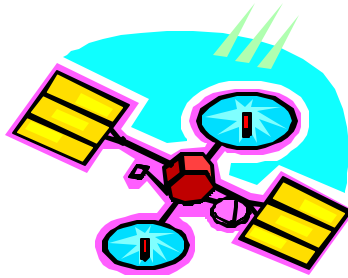
Day 349: Have taken a vacation to move into my new home.

Day 356: Back to work tomorrow.



Read the next exciting entries in the May Pulsar!

Read the previous entries in the Pulsar Archives at www.porsfis.org



Next Months *Pulsar* Topic:

"Did he say what I think he said?"

1632 and 1633: A Review of Two Books

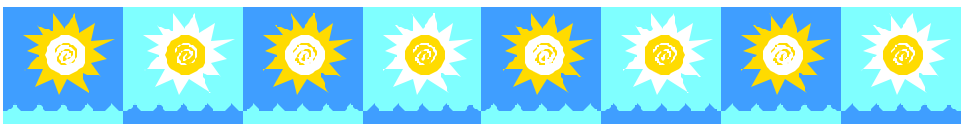
1632 by Eric Flint and 1633 by Eric Flint and David Weber

A book review by Lisa Goodwin

Upon reading 1633, the sequel to 1632, I immediately had to go back and reread the much-earlier published 1632. Why? Because 1633 was so good, I needed to go back to 1632 to get more good feeling, as well as to savor Eric Flint and David Weber's ability in taking extremely minor characters from the first book and making them fully developed important-to-the-plot characters in the sequel.

I was originally drawn to these books for two reasons: they are SF, and they are set in one of the most interesting and, I believe, most critical times in the development of the modern Europe that we know today. As a history buff myself, I found the books a delightful journey through the middle of Europe during the Thirty Years War, but it was more than that. Both authors know their facts and their interpretation of the facts, and they are two of the most avid historical researchers I've come across among SF writers. And they have help! At Baen's Bar on the web (www.baen.com/bar) anyone who is interested has the opportunity to comment, share fact, and discuss the books, the historical time period, whatever! And even more exciting, other writers are beginning to write in this alternate reality.

The premise of the story involves the town Grantville, West Virginia being completely lifted, as part of a six-mile sphere, and being displaced into 1631 Germany. Sound good? It only gets better. Imagine repeated phrases like "rednecks, you have *no* respect" and "it's called rate of fire" and you'll get a sense of some of the cultural and technological conflicts that occur. But it's not just about hillbillies going to court or Big F-ing Guns, it's about a group of Americans melding with those they find, falling in love and starting families, as well as reproducing democracy in a war-torn feudal society. I highly recommend both novels!



Party Hardy at Orycon

Kier Salmon

Well, the job is on. We will be having another Porsfis party at Orycon, this coming November. The theme was brainstormed at a business meeting and is: "Retro Post-Apocalyptic." Thanks to some very dedicated members, lists of movies and TV series await our dedicated attentions. The idea has been mooted to call the party room "Sanctuary." While we might do so; we will carefully refrain from anything that will provoke a "Logan's Run" through the hallowed halls of our convention. Oh, yes, and this party will be "Waterworld lite."

Killer tomatoes, On the Beach mural, flashy acrylic buttons for palms of hands and mood rings have been mooted as party favors. I could do with some work help in July and August to start putting together the decorations.

Party invitations/posters, with a retro post-apocalyptic flavor now need to be brainstormed. Sound tracks (if obtainable) of these movies and etc. will be needed. In addition I possess 4 CD's crammed with VERY danceable music from the 70's.

All members are summoned to make the party most fun one yet. Food will be kept on the leaner side than last year's; with soylent green crackers, tied-died tofu, fried cthulhu, and a few other dishes we haven't completely decided. Drinks will be soft, with I hope a punch that will deserve the name of "A-Bomb" flavor. Costumes; yes I KNOW a lot of you aren't into it, but think about some glad threads to wear (I won't insist on beehive hairdos) and any ideas to make the party very fun, please pass them on the list to Kier or Debra.

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Any way you want to join is OK by us!

Yes, I want to be a member of the Portland Science Fiction Society, Here is my information:

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Portland Science Fiction Society
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Pulsar, the newsletter of the Portland Science Fiction Society, comes free with membership. It is also available in trade, and can be purchased at Future Dreams/Burnside and Looking Glass Books, both in Portland, Oregon.

The Editor is Lisa Goodwin.

The Deadline for Pulsar contributions is the 25th of each month. Contributions are always welcome, and may be sent to the PO Box above, or to the editor direct at editor@porsfis.org

PorSFIS meetings are open to everyone. Check the Calendar of Events for meeting times and places. Membership per year: \$20 individual, \$30 family (1 newsletter per family membership)

Current PorSFIS Officers:

- President Debra Stansbury president@porsfis.org 503-620-3068
- Vice President Shava Nevard
- Treasurer John Andrews john.e.andrews@att.net 503-771-2894
- Secretary David Moreland dmoreland57@cs.com
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