

ALBACON 2014.5



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Lisa Hertel
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Theresa Mather

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Program: Chuck Rothman
Writer's Workshop: Debi Chowdhury &
Chuck Rothman
Teen Events: Robin Kraus
Gaming: Cherie Livingston
Art Show: Bonnie & Ted Atwood
Dealers: Joe Berlant
Souvenir Book: Lisa Hertel
Cover Art: Elisabeth A. Gundlach,
"The Wombat King"
Registration: Jenny Kraus
Hospitality Advisor: Jen Sternfeld
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Treasurer: Joe Berlant

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Harold Feld
LASTSFA
MCFI, for tech equipment
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ALBACON 2014.5

FEATURING

MUR LAFFERTY & JAN HOWARD FINDER (THE WOMBAT)

BEST WESTERN ALBANY AIRPORT
MAY 8 - 10, 2015

WELCOME TO ALBACON

ABOUT LASTSFA

This year Albacon is pleased to be honoring Mur Lafferty, a shining star in the new generation of authors, who are so much more than just writers. We are also honoring one of our own who passed from our midst, Jan Howard Finder, a.k.a. The Wombat.

Beyond the loss of Wombat, Albacon has had a rough few years. In 2011 the convention had to be cancelled due to a host of reasons. In 2012 we had to change venues at the last minute. During Albacon 2012, it was decided that Albacon would go on an alternating rotation; full conventions would alternate with relaxacons. Our first relaxacon was in 2013, in Saratoga Springs. Now Albacon 2014 (and a half) has a new venue and a new date. It is the rebirth of a convention with a history going back almost twenty years; more than that, if you count the predecessor conventions run by our parent, LASTSFA. (See our history on the inside back pages.)

We are trying new things, but keeping things that make us who we are. The old AlbaKids has grown up into Teen Events, but would it really be an Albacon without the Ice Cream Social on Friday night? Let us know what you like, and what you don't. If there are things you want to see at Albacon, tell us about them, and we'll see if we can make them happen. You can always reach us via our website (www.albacon.org) or by emailing the chair directly at chair@albacon.org. In the end, all of what we do, we do so



that you, our attendees, can have a fun weekend.

Enjoy.

*Paul Kraus, Co-Chair,
Albacon 2014.5*

AlbaKids, 2008

LASTSFA, the Latham-Albany-Schenectady-Troy Science Fiction Association, has been around for nearly 35 years. A non-profit organization that celebrates and promotes Science Fiction, Fantasy, Mythology, and related genres and sub-genres in the Capital District region of New York State, LASTSFA is a diverse group, among whom you will find fans of hard science fiction, epic fantasy, urban fantasy, steampunk, anime, gaming, costuming and everything in between. Mainly known for running local science fiction conventions, especially Albacon, LASTSFA has also sponsored national conventions, such as hosting the Science Fiction Research Association (SFRA) Conference in 2001 for an academic audience, and the 2007 World Fantasy Convention, celebrating Revenants and Ghosts. This year, LASTSFA will be hosting its second World Fantasy Convention in November, based at the Saratoga City Center and the Saratoga Hilton on November 5th – 8th. The Guests of Honor are Chelsea Quinn Yarbro and Steven Erikson, and Special Guests are past Albacon guests Glen Cook and David Drake. A capped convention, World Fantasy memberships may still be available via a waiting list. Information can be found at www.wfc2015.org, and on Facebook.

LASTSFA also sponsors readings, signings, and a book club. We meet at Flights of Fantasy bookstore on the second Sunday of the month, from 3 to 5pm. We rotate between SF and Fantasy books. Past books have been *Midnight Riot* by Ben Aaronovitch, *Mission of Gravity* by Hal Clement, and *Sweet Silver Blues* by Glen Cook. Future books will be Allen Steel's *VS Day*, *American Gods* by Neil Gaiman, and *Hammer's Slammers* by David Drake. Get more information from meetup.com or the LASTSFA group email. Joe Berlant leads the group, and gives updates of our group and in the world of SF and fantasy. We welcome all ages to join us, enjoy the worlds of sci-fi and fantasy the fantastic, and tell us what you think.



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FEATURING

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ONCARDIA

The engaging convention card game



MUR LAFFERTY



industry (we know because many, many of them have said so) through her award-winning *I Should Be Writing* podcast. “You’re allowed to suck,” is one of the most important lessons Mur and ISBW have imparted to their audience, and it’s that kind of simple, vital wisdom that has gotten many aspiring writers through when they might not otherwise have made it to the end of their own stories.

Mur is also a celebrated author in her hometown of Durham, North Carolina, where she resides with her husband and daughter. She’s the creator of the popular #Sansaball hashtag combining *Game of Thrones* with the local minor league baseball season. You can

Mur Lafferty may very well be the ultimate test case for persistence overcoming the creative and professional pitfalls of this mythic dungeon we call the publishing industry.

She began writing short stories and roleplaying games around the turn of the century (that is a true statement of fact, albeit not nearly as impressive or depressing as it sounds). She was also an early adopter of using digital distribution to build her own audience, more specifically by releasing her *Afterlife* series of novellas and novels and creating popular podcasts such as *Geek Fu Action Grip*. Mur made her small press print debut in 2008 with her novel *Playing For Keeps*, the story of people with seemingly useless abilities in a world filled with superheroes who rise to save their city.

In 2013 Mur was the recipient of the prestigious John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer. That same year her novel *The Shambling Guide to New York City* (Orbit Books) was released followed in 2014 by a sequel, *Ghost Train to New Orleans*. Perhaps Mur’s greatest gift as an author of fiction is creating genuine contemporary characters and settings we all recognize and to which we can relate and combining them seamlessly and believably with the utterly fantastic.

As a ten-year veteran and pioneer in the medium of podcasting, Mur has inspired and informed countless thousands of writers at every level of the ALBANY NY

find her tweeting observations by the Westeros noble every time the Durham Bulls take the field. Because it’s not always about money and literary recognition, nor should it be.

More than any single piece of fiction or writing advice Mur illustrates one of the essential truths of the modern working writer; that they are never just one thing. Whether it’s slogging her guts out as a freelance games writer, self-publishing her own popular fiction, winning awards as a mainstream novelist, or interviewing other authors for a podcast, Mur is willing to do the work, whatever it takes, for as long as it takes.

That is a quality worth celebrating, and a lesson worth learning.



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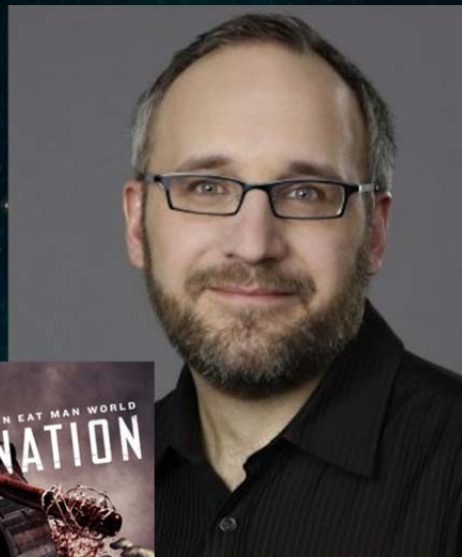
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JAN HOWARD FINDER (THE WOMBAT)



The Wombat, aka Jan Howard Finder, started reading SF as a kid in Chicago, and became active in SF circles in his late 20's. He chaired two Tolkien conferences, in 1969 and 1971 in Cleveland, and held a third many years later in 2012 in Westford, MA. After finding fandom in 1972 and cons a year later, in the UK, he ran two SF cons: one in 1977 and again in '79. In 1993, he was accorded the genuine honor of being named as an Honored Guest at Confrancisco, the 1993 Worldcon.

He came out of retirement in '96 to chair Albacon '96, creating the (in)famous "mini-flyer" to promote it, along with his tagline, "We give good con." Still brain dead from Albacon, he successfully chaired SFRA

ALBANY NY

2001, an academic conference on SF sponsored by the Science Fiction Resource Association. He survived chairing another Albacon in 2008.

Wombat participated in, judged, and MC'd masquerades for various conventions, including Arisia and Lunacon. He was one of the best art auctioneers found at cons, and one of the few with professional training. He also collected art.

More than just a fan, Finder was a writer, too. He put out an award-winning fanzine, *The Spang Blah*. He sold a short story in '81 to *Microcosmic Tales*, edited an SF anthology, *Alien Encounters*, in '82, and published his incredible *Finder's Guide to Australterrestrials*.

He acquired the name "Wombat" because he was a marsupial groupie and an Australiophile. In 1999 he attended Aussiecon 3, the Australian Worldcon, and afterwards he drove about Oz for a total of 174 days looking for wombats. He put out an irregular fanzine on Arthur Upfield, an Australian mystery writer. Wombat visited Middle Earth (New Zealand) in 2004 and again two years later, and tried to save the World with SUTs.

He also liked aerobics, learned to scuba, tried sailing, learned how to play cricket, and had a budding film career. According to backs that know, he gave the best backrubs north of the South Pole. He was a neat guy, and fond of Pepsi. He died in February, 2013 after a long bout with cancer, and is greatly missed.



WOMBAT STORIES

We asked the world to tell us the stories of their encounters with The Wombat, our own jan howard finder. Here are those tales, in their own words. As Wombat would say, "There are no innocents to protect."

Brush with Marsupials

jan howard finder organized the first science fiction convention I ever attended, Novacon 9 West in Albany in 1979, but I didn't meet him then. I think that was at a Lastcon in 1982; I remembered seeing a guy in a red shirt and Australian style hat who seemed to be at the center of everything.

It was in 1996 when jan started organizing Albacon that I got to know him outside of conventions. jan was the very definition of *bon vivant*, always on, always cheerful, always having plenty to say on any subject.

But let's face it: jan could be a pain in the ass. Not in a nasty or unpleasant way. But if he needed you to do something, he'd turn on the charm until you eventually gave in. He was something of a force of nature when he wanted a job done. He would call me and ask for computer help, or to work on a cover for a book he was republishing, and by sheer dint of repetition, got me involved. And he always was extremely grateful for your help.

He was surprisingly thorough when he wanted to get something done. I remember him talking about an upcoming trip to Australia, and how he was first going to learn auto repair, so he could buy a recreational vehicle there and go anywhere without worrying about breakdowns.

jan was one of a kind, the type of person who was happy to talk about anything, from Arthur Upfield to how to turn a washcloth into a slipper. He was one of the most memorable personalities in fandom—and that says a lot.

Chuck Rothman

I was not especially close to Wombat, but I remember his welcoming demeanor to new people to conventions. I met him at my first ever convention, Albacon 1998, and I was a bit overwhelmed by how friendly and welcoming he was to someone he had never met before. As I saw him more and more over that first weekend, and over other weekends at Albacon, Arisia, or Lunacon, I realized that he really was that friendly to everybody, and no one wasn't a friend. And in my case, being a big fan of koalas and Australia, I immediately noticed his Australian bush hat.

Deborah L. Coombs



I first met The Wombat at Flights of Fantasy when it was located on Albany-Shaker Road.

I was browsing the shelves, and he just came over and struck up a conversation. I don't recall what we talked about, but I will never forget how he introduced himself.

He said, "Hello. I'm The Wombat, but you can also call me jan." I told him that my name was Gretchen, and I extended my hand, expecting him to shake it. Instead,

he took my hand gently in his own, bowed slightly and kissed it. Then he looked up at me, his expression sweet and mischievous and goofy, all at the same time. I know I blushed, and probably stammered. He didn't seem to mind, and just launched back into the conversation as if it was the most ordinary thing in the world.

This was long before I knew anything about him from anyone else. Long before I knew anything about Albacon or LASTSFA. In fact, it was long before I really knew anything about fandom at all. My first impression was that he was an odd, clever, and strangely charming man.

And every encounter I had with him after that day, and every story I ever heard about him from anyone else, only reinforced that initial impression I had of jan. And although I can't say that I knew him very well, or for very long, I miss him.

Gretchen Persbacher

The Very First Albacon

When Wombat first approached me to attend the first Albacon, he already had an Artist GoH. I asked him, "Hey, how about an Pornographer GoH, because I could do that." He said, laughing, "That's a great idea, but we'll have to call it "Erotic Artist GoH!"

And so the day came... Friday night, and just before I was getting ready to do "the Erotic Art Demo" at 11 pm, Wombat comes up to me and says, "We have a problem. The local news is interviewing me with you in the background, and it's a *live feed*..."

I improvised for 30 minutes.

D. Cameron Calkins
ALBACON 2014.5

Fans Because of jan

Tina and I had been reading SF for decades. We'd heard of cons; however, we'd never looked into going to one. Then the con listing at the back of one of the SF mags included one to be held in Albany. We called the number in the listing. jan answered. He told us about Novacon 9 West, which he was running at what was then the Turf Inn, and talked us into going. Before the con took place, jan also took us to our first con, Hexacon, in Lancaster, PA, where the three of us had dinner one evening with a young pro named C.J. Cherryh. The next con we went to was Noreascon II. It's been downhill all the way since then.

Byron Connell

I first encounter jan in 1961 when he was a student teacher in Mr. Berlin's chemistry class at Von Steuben—a tough gig for someone from Roosevelt. Two years later we were both living in Hitchcock Hall at the U of C where jan was pursuing a Masters. I had read some sci-fi, but it wasn't until jan saved my ass that I became a real fan. I was working for a physicist who wanted to buy a laser. Forget about the little thing in your Blu-Ray; we're talking about a machine that filled a garage. We needed to justify the cost. At the time we had a small computer (again, relative) that punched paper tape. The idea was that using a laser to burn holes in the tape would be faster than a mechanical punch. It was my job to determine how powerful a laser we needed, so I needed to know at what temperature paper ignites—you see where this is going. I had no idea how to go about measuring this, and casually mentioned it to jan. He immediately said “451 degrees”.

Josh Margolis

Tolkiening

I can't remember when I first met jan, but it wasn't long after moving to Albany. He immediately decided I was worth knowing because I was a medievalist like JRR Tolkien, and studied a lot of the same things, like Beowulf and Gawain. Somehow—almost before I knew it—he had arranged a panel on Tolkien at the Colonie Library, and I was on it. I had a hard time convincing him that I [sotto voce] didn't really like Tolkien's fiction, and had never managed to get through *Lord of the Rings*. Unlike most of the medievalists I know, that wasn't my route to the field. jan took the news with good humour and told me to share what I knew about the texts that the great scholar had loved. That was easy enough to do. jan was always a tireless advocate for the writer, and I loved seeing all his photos from the trip to New Zealand, and later, all his cross country travels in that shiny red car.

He was always such a fixture of Albacon. I know I'll be expecting him to come around the next corner, or I'll be sure I heard his voice in the noisy din of the hallways. He's still with us. He always will be.

K. A. Laity

Route 66 and Albuquerque

In 2011, the 85th anniversary of Route 66, Wombat did a Route 66 trip in his new car. I met him one afternoon at the Hotel Albuquerque, a historic hotel in the “Old Town” part of town—a magnificent hotel that happened to be having an antique and fine car show.

We happened upon a couple who had just moved into town. Since I had been living in town for almost a decade, I was able to share various tidbits—drink lots of water, where to find things, etc. That took ten minutes. Then Wombat took up the thread—for the next few hours he regaled us with story after story (and beer after beer). Most of the stories were Route 66 related—the history, the people, places of interest, and so on. (Albuquerque is the site of several Route 66 re-routings. There is one intersection of Route 66 and Route 66, from various eras.)

The poor couple—when Wombat finally wound down, they were an interesting combination of shell-shocked, amused, entertained, and not sure how they had started all of this. Wombat, at his story-telling finest. I do wish I had recorded it.

I happen to live in a rural area outside of Albuquerque. Part of my drive into town is on Route 66. I often think of him on that part of my commute. I miss you, old friend.

Bandit

I first met jan at Arisia in 1996. I was wandering through the Art Show and this oddly dressed guy walks up to me, introduces himself, hands me a piece of paper about twice the size of a business card, and noticing that I am from Schenectady, asks if I want to work on a convention in Albany, NY. I later learned that those small pieces of paper were what he called “mini flyers” and you would find them all over the place during Arisia ... I even found small stacks of them in the stalls in the Men's room! jan was not shy about promoting his convention.

A few weeks later I found myself sitting in his living room, part of the “committee” for the first Albacon. What had I gotten myself into? I am still working on conventions, especially Albacon, today.

Paul Kraus

He was a good friend to both me and Solomon for many years (and one of the few people who knew us independently before we met). jan (lowercase!) was my Fan Guest of Honor when I chaired Arisia in 2001—he was my first choice, and I was delighted when he accepted. His ever-present warmth, joy, and sense of adventure served as an inspiration to all who knew him, and we always looked forward to his annual summary of the year's exploits and explorations. He will be greatly missed.

Elka Tovah Davidoff

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PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

As an active SFWA member, **Ken Altabef**'s short fiction has appeared in *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, *Interzone*, *BuzzyMag*, *Abyss & Apex*, and others. His first short story collection *Fortune's Fantasy* was released last year. *Alaana's Way* is his 5-book epic fantasy series with an arctic twist. Visit his website at: www.KenAltabef.com.

Anatoly Belilovsky is a Russian-American author and translator of speculative fiction. His work appeared in *F&SF*, *Unidentified Funny Objects* anthology, *Ideomancer*, *Nature Futures*, *Stupefying Stories*, *Immersion Book of Steampunk*, *Daily SF*, *Kasma*, *Kazka*, and has been podcast by *Cast of Wonders*, *Tales of Old*, and *Toasted Cake*. He was born in a city that went through six or seven owners in the last century, all of whom used it to do a lot more than drive to church on Sundays; he is old enough to remember tanks rolling through it on their way to Czechoslovakia in 1968. After being traded to the US for a shipload of grain and a defector to be named later (see wikipedia, Jackson-Vanik amendment), he learned English from Star Trek reruns and went on to become a pediatrician in an area of New York where English is only the fourth most commonly used language. He has neither cats nor dogs, but was admitted into SFWA in spite of this deficiency.

D. Cameron Calkins had been active in the SF/F community since the early 1980's. He has been creating art in the genre and displaying it at conventions since Noreascon 3. He has won numerous awards and published from time to time. He was the Fan Guest of Honor at Albacon in 2009. Cameron speaks on a variety of topics and is frequently in the company of Dagnir, his dragon.

James L. Cambias grew up in New Orleans, and studied ancient lore and forbidden science in Chicago. He currently lives in the eldritch hills of western Massachusetts and is married to a cyborg mad scientist. He is the author or coauthor of a dozen roleplaying game sourcebooks, including *GURPS Space 5th Edition*, *GURPS Mars*, and *Star Hero*. In 2005 he founded Zygote Games, and created two card games: Bone Wars and Parasites Unleashed! His first fiction sale was "A Diagram of Rapture" in 2000, and his first novel was *A Darkling Sea* (2014). His most recent book is *Corsair*, just published by Tor Books.

Debi Chowdhury was too busy working for Albacon to give a bio. In her spare time (hah!), she grows daylilies.

Debra Doyle was born in Gainesville, Florida, in 1952; her father was a civil engineer and her mother a school librarian. Her family—herself, her parents, and a younger brother—moved to Texas when she was twelve. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Arkansas, and went on to graduate school at the University of Pennsylvania, where she earned her doctorate in English with a concentration on Old English poetry. In addition to writing both fiction and nonfiction, she currently teaches fiction writing at the annual Viable Paradise Writer's Workshop on Martha's Vineyard.

J.A. Fludd, a native of Albany, is a writer, artist, and former Screenwriting Intern for Star Trek Voyager. His work has been seen in *Gay Comics*, *The Jack Kirby Collector*, and *Pacesetter: The George Perez Magazine*. Look up his extensive online writings and his creations for a future comics brand at quantum-comicsblog.com and [the-quantum- blog.blogspot.com](http://the-quantum-blog.blogspot.com).

Carl Frederick is theoretically a theoretical physicist. After a post-doc at NASA and a stint at Cornell University, he left astrophysics and his first love, quantum relativity theory (a strange first love, perhaps) in favor of hi-tech industry. He attended the year 2000 Odyssey Writers' Workshop and subsequently took first place in the Writers of the Future contest. He is predominately a short story writer, having sold a couple of stories each to *Asimov's* and *Baen's Universe*, and over forty to *Analog*. Details are at his website, www.frithrik.com He fences epee, learns languages, and plays the bagpipes. He lives in rural Ithaca, New York, which is good if you play the bagpipes. He has since returned to his aforementioned first love.

John Grant is author of some seventy books. His nonfiction includes *The Encyclopedia of Walt Disney's Animated Characters*, *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* (with John Clute), and a series of books begun with *Discarded Science*
ALBANY NY



THE SICK

PUPS

The nom du masque of

The New Jersey–New York Costumers' Guild

A chapter of the
International Costumers' Guild

Who Are the Sick Pups?

We're fans interested in wearing, making, displaying, researching, photographing, and documenting costume in all its forms. We are drawn to all types of costume, from the fantastical to the historical. We take costuming seriously; we don't take ourselves seriously. Spaz, the original Sick Pup, is on our logo.

What Do We Do?

We make costumes to wear ourselves and for our spouses, offspring, or friends. As we make them, we learn new techniques, use new fabrics or materials, or try new embellishments. After we make them, we display them at conventions and other events by presenting them in masquerades or competitions or by wearing them in the halls. We may use them in Cosplay or wear them on Halloween or other public occasions.



And Besides That?

We help run costume competitions and masquerades. We serve on panels and present demos and workshops relating to costume design, construction, display, photography, history, sources, and similar topics, particularly in the New Jersey-New York area. We may do group trips to costume-related museum exhibits.

We meet every other month to plan future activities, discuss costumes we're making; conventions and events we've attended and upcoming conventions and events; show and tell new sewing techniques or books or materials; discuss theatrical, media, and fashion shows; and socialize. We often have workshops to learn new skills or techniques. We welcome visitors and new members.

For More Information:

Contact us at:

corsecretary@sickpupsnot.org,

Go to our Website:

<http://www.sickpupsnot.org>,

or follow us on Facebook.

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

and continued most recently with *Denying Science*. His fiction includes novels like *The World, The Far-Enough Window* and *The Dragons of Manhattan*, as well as numerous short stories, some of which have been collected as *Take No Prisoners* and, in late 2014, *Tell No Lies*. For his nonfiction work he has received the Hugo (twice), the World Fantasy Award, and various others. For a number of years he was an editor at the fantasy artbook publisher Paper Tiger, for this work receiving a Chesley Award as well as a World Fantasy Award nomination.

David Hartwell says he is old and knows a lot. He is an anthologist, reviewer, essayist, book collector, and even, long ago, got a PhD in Comparative Medieval Literature from Columbia University. His biggest problem is the 40,000 hardcovers in his home. He is a senior editor at Tor Books. There is more about him at www.davidhartwell.com.

Herb Kauderer is an associate professor of English at Hilbert College. He has an MFA in screenwriting, and is currently writing a doctoral dissertation on Robert J. Sawyer. He was the main screenwriter on the fan-based feature 'Beyond the Mainstream' (2013), as well as several short films. His 2014 poetry chapbook 'The Book of Answers' provided first publication of four poems nominated for the Rhysling Award as best speculative poem of the year. He has also co-hosted more than forty episodes of an occasional genre related podcast titled *Orthopedic Horseshoes*.

Matthew Kressel is a multiple Nebula Award-nominated author whose work has appeared in *Lightspeed*, *Clarkesworld*, *Io9.Com*, *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*, *Interzone*, *Electric Velocipede*, and the anthologies *Naked City*, *After*, *The People of the Book*, *The Mammoth Book of Steampunk*, and other markets. His novel *King of Shards*, the first in an epic fantasy trilogy, is coming out in October from Arche Press. He co-hosts Fantastic Fiction at KGB reading series in Manhattan with Ellen Datlow, and is a long-time member of the Altered Fluid writing group. His website is www.matthewkressel.net.

K. A. Laity is the award-winning author of *White Rabbit*, *A Cut-Throat Business*, *Lush Situation*, *Owl Stretching*, *Unquiet Dreams*, *À la Mort Subite*, *The Claddagh Icon*, *Chastity Flame*, and *Pelzmantel*, as well as editor of *Weird Noir*, *Noir Carnival* and *Drag Noir* (as well as writing under other names). She spent the 2011-2012 academic year in Galway, Ireland where she was a Fulbright Fellow in digital humanities at NUIG. Dr. Laity teaches medieval literature, film, gender studies, social media and popular culture at the College of Saint Rose. She divides her time between upstate New York and Dundee.

Andre Lieven has been an avid SF fan for more decades than he wants to admit. From Supermarionation, through Star Trek, and loads of the written stuff, short stories to novels, he loves a lot of it. So much so that he also got into helping work and run SF cons, like running the masquerade at MediaWestCon for over 20 years now.

James Douglas Macdonald was born in White Plains, New York. After leaving the University of Rochester, where he majored in Medieval Studies, he served in the U. S. Navy. Macdonald left the Navy in 1988 and moved to northern New Hampshire in order to pursue writing full-time. With his wife and co-author, Debra Doyle, he has written numerous novels. These days, when not writing novels or running as an EMT with the local ambulance squad, he does stage magic and teaches at the annual Viable Paradise Writer's Workshop on Martha's Vineyard.

Mercurio D. Rivera has been nominated for the World Fantasy Award. His short fiction has appeared in a variety of venues, including *Year's Best SF 17*, *Asimov's*, *Interzone*, *Nature*, *Black Static*, *Solaris Rising 2*, *Unplugged: The Web's Best Science Fiction and Fantasy*, and elsewhere. His stories have been published in China, Poland and the Czech Republic, and studied in courses taught at the University of San Francisco and the Instituto Pedagógico de Caracas, Venezuela. His collection *Across the Event Horizon* has been called "weird and wonderful," with "dizzying switchbacks"; "a revelation" with "twists followed by more twists heightening a powerful sense of alienation."

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PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Chuck Rothman's first story appeared in *Asimov's* in 1982, and he has been publishing SF and fantasy ever since, with over fifty short stories and two novels: *Staroamer's Fate* and *Syron's Fate*. His work has appeared in *Analog*, *Fantasy and Science Fiction*, *Realms of Fantasy*, *Strange Horizons*, *Daily SF*, and other magazines, plus anthologies such as *Futuredaze*, *Unidentified Funny Objects*, *Temporally Out of Order*, and others. He has been a part of Albacon since the beginning, usually foolish enough to run programming, and lives in Schenectady with his wife, Susan Noe Rothman.

Kenneth Schneyer received a Nebula nomination, and was a finalist for the Sturgeon Award, for his 2013 story, "Selected Program Notes from the Retrospective Exhibition of Theresa Rosenberg Latimer." His work appears in *Analog*, *Strange Horizons*, *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*, *Clockwork Phoenix 3 & 4*, *Daily Science Fiction*, *Escape Pod*, *Podcastle*, *The Drabblecast*, and elsewhere, and has been translated into Russian, Chinese, Czech, and Italian. In 2014, Stillpoint Digital Press released his first collection, *The Law & the Heart*. A lawyer and actor by training, a teacher by profession and a writer by inclination, he attended Clarion in 2009 and now works with the Cambridge Science Fiction Workshop and Codex Writers. Born in Detroit, he now lives in Rhode Island with one singer, one dancer, one actor, and something with fangs.

Alex Shvartsman is a writer, translator and game designer from Brooklyn, NY. Over seventy of his short stories have appeared in *InterGalactic Medicine Show*, *Nature*, *Galaxy's Edge*, *Daily Science Fiction*, and many other magazines and anthologies. He won the 2014 WSFA Small Press Award for Short Fiction. He is the editor of the *Unidentified Funny Objects* annual anthology series of humorous SF/F. His collection, *Explaining Cthulhu to Grandma and Other Stories* released in February 2015. His website is www.alexshvartsman.com.

Al Sirois is an illustrator, cartoonist, graphic artist, musician, developmental editor, and author. He has had fiction published in *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*, *Amazing Stories*, and *Thema*, and online at *Electric Spec*, *Every Day Fiction* and *Perihelion SF*, among other publications. He contributed "Bugs in the System" to *witzend #12*. His story "In the Conservatory" was nominated for the Pushcart Prize. Other works include a children's book, *Dinosaur Dress Up* (Tambourine Press / William Morrow). He lives in rural Bucks County, Pennsylvania with his wife and occasional collaborator, author Grace Marcus. He plays drums for The Acoustic Bite Trio.

Ryk E. Spoor has been a fan of SF and Fantasy for most of his life; the Oz books by L. Frank Baum were some of his first inspirations (and eventually led to his self-published novel *Polychrome*). A battered old copy of *Second-Stage Lensmen* introduced him to the world of Doc Smith's space opera when he was eleven, and from there he consumed almost everything science-fictional he could find. A Usenet flamewar led to the publication of his first novel, *Digital Knight*, and he now has a total of twelve published novels. Ryk lives in Troy, NY, with his wife, four children, one poodle, and several chickens.

Allen Steele was a journalist before turning to his first love, science fiction. Since then he has published nineteen novels and nearly a hundred short stories. His work has received numerous awards, including three Hugos, and has been translated worldwide. A lifelong space enthusiast, he has testified before Congress in hearings regarding space exploration and flown the NASA space shuttle simulator. He lives in Massachusetts with his wife Linda and their dogs, and is a past Albacon Guest of Honor.

Catherine Stine's novels range from sci-fi to paranormal to contemporary. Her futuristic thriller companion novels *Fireseed One* and *Ruby's Fire* are indie award winners. Her paranormal-horror YA, *Dorianna*, won Best Horror Book in the Kindle Hub Awards. She also writes new adult fiction as Kitsy Clare. Her love of dark fantasy came from her father reading Edgar Allen Poe to her when she was a child. She teaches workshops in writing spec fiction at The School of Visual Arts and is a member of SFWA, RWA and SCBWI. Visit her at www.catherinestine.com.

ALBACON HISTORY

Convention, Date	Chair, Hotel, Theme	Guests
Novacon 9 West November 2-4, 1979	Chair: The Wombat	Bob Shaw (GOH), Jack Cohen (Fan), Wilson "Bob" Tucker (Toastmaster), Flying Karamazakov Brothers (Special)
The First LASTCon (1981)	Chair: Marla Baer Hotel: Ramada Inn, Albany	Hal Clement (GOH)
LASTCon Too (1982)	Chair: Tina Connell Hotel: Ramada Inn, Albany	Lee Killough (GOH), Wilson "Bob" Tucker (Toastmaster)
LASTCon T'ree October, 1985	Chairs: Patrick Kennedy, Byron Connell; Hotel: The Americana Inn, Colonie	Robin McKinley (GOH), Clam Chowder (Music) ("Special Order" cassette released in honor of the con)
LASTcon Fore October, 1986	Chairs: Byron Connell, Patrick Kennedy; Hotel: Desmond Americana Hotel, Colonie	Christopher Stasheff (GOH), Jack Gaughan & John Schonherr (Artist; Gaughan was too ill to come)
Albacon 1996 (#1), October 11 - 13	Chair: jan howard finder; Hotel: Howard Johnsons, Washington Ave, Albany	Nancy Kress (GOH), Jill Bauman (Artist), Shirley Maiewski (Fan), Bruce the Conqueror (Special)
Albacon 1997 (#2), October 17 - 19	Chair: Kevin Allen; Hotel: Ramada Inn, Schenectady	Melissa Scott (GOH), Charles Lang and Wendy Snow- Lang (Artist), Wayne Brown (Fan), The Don't Quit Your Day Job Players (Musical), Bill! the Starship Captain (Special)
Albacon 1998 (#3), October 9 - 11	Chair: Danielle Allen; Kevin Allen & Joe Berlant, Regents; Hotel: Ramada Inn, Schenectady	Esther Friesner (GOH), Jael (Artist), Joe Mayhew (Fan), The Don't Quit Your Day Job Players (Musical), Bruno the Hamster (aka Captain Bruno) (Special)
Albacon 1999 (#4), September 17 - 19	Chair: Paul Kraus; Hotel: Ramada Inn, Schenectady	Hal Clement (GOH), Vincent DiFate (Artist), Seth Breibart (Fan), Barlennen (Special)
Albacon 2000 (#5), October 6 - 8	Chair: Deb Atwood (Allen); Hotel: Ramada Inn, Schenectady	Glen Cook (GOH), Joe DeVito (Artist), The Wombat (Fan)
Albacon 2001 (#6), October 5 - 7	Chair: Joe Berlant; Hotel: Ramada Inn, Schenectady	Larry Niven (GOH), Bob Eggleton & Marianne Plumridge (Artist), Bonnie & Ted Atwood (Fan)
Albacon 2002 (#7), October 4 - 6,	Chair: Chris Ford; Hotel: Ramada Inn, Schenectady	Mike Resnick (GOH), Tom Kidd (Artist), Sharon Sbarsky (Fan), Steve Miller & Sharon Lee (Special)
Albacon 2003 (#8), October 9 (Writers Workshop), 10 - 12	Chair: Jennifer Sternfeld; Hotel: Roaring Brook Dude Ranch, Lake Luzerne	Lois McMaster Bujold (GOH), Allen Koszowski (Artist), Oz Fontecchio (Fan), Leslie Fish (Filk)
Albacon 2004 (#9), October 8 - 10	Chair: Steve Sawicki; Hotel: Crowne Plaza, Albany	David Drake (GOH), David Kyle (Fan)
Albacon 2005 (#10), October 7 - 9	Chair: Chuck Rothman (or Travis Tea?); Hotel: Crowne Plaza, Albany	Terry Brooks (GOH), Rowena (Artist), Byron & Tina Connell (Fan), Travis Tea (Special)

Albacon 2006 (#11), October 6 - 8	Chair: Joel Lord; Hotel: Crowne Plaza, Albany	Peter David (GOH), Omar Rayyan (Artist), J. Jacques (<i>Questionable Content</i>) (Web Comic)
Albacon 2008 (#12), October 10 - 12	Chair: The Wombat (jan howard finder); Hotel: Crowne Plaza, Albany	Anne* & Todd McCaffrey (GOH), Gary S. Blog (Fan), Barclay Shaw (Artist), D. Cameron Calkins (Erotic), Travis Tea (Special), Eric Flint (Special)
Albacon 2009 (#13), October 8 (Writers Workshop), 9 - 11	Chair: Rick Ralston; Hotel: Best Western Sovereign, Albany	Elizabeth Hand (GOH), Alan F. Beck (Artist), D. Cameron Calkins (Fan), Igor's Egg (Musical)
Albacon 2010 (#14) October 7 (Writers Workshop), 8 - 10	Chair: Rick Ralston; Hotel: Best Western Sovereign, Albany	Allen Steele (GOH), Ron Miller (Artist), Lisa Ashton (Fan)
Albacon 2011	canceled	
Albacon 2012 (#15) October 18 (Writers Workshop), 19 - 21	Chair: Christopher Ford; Hotel: Holiday Inn Express & Suites, Latham	Julie Czernada (Editor), Jody A. Lee (Artist), Erwin Strauss (Filthy Pierre) (Fan), Roberta Rogow (Filk), Keith R. A. DeCandido (Media), jan howard finder (The Wombat) (Special)
Albacon 2013 November, 2013	Chair: Joe Berlant; Hotel: Saratoga Residence Inn, Saratoga Springs	(no guests, a relaxacon)
Albacon 2014.5 (#16) May 7 (Writers Workshop), 8 - 10	Chair: Paul Kraus & Kevin Allen; Hotel: Best Western Albany Airport Inn, Albany	Mur Lafferty (Writer), jan howard finder (The Wombat) (Ghost of Honor)

*Anne could not attend due to health reasons.

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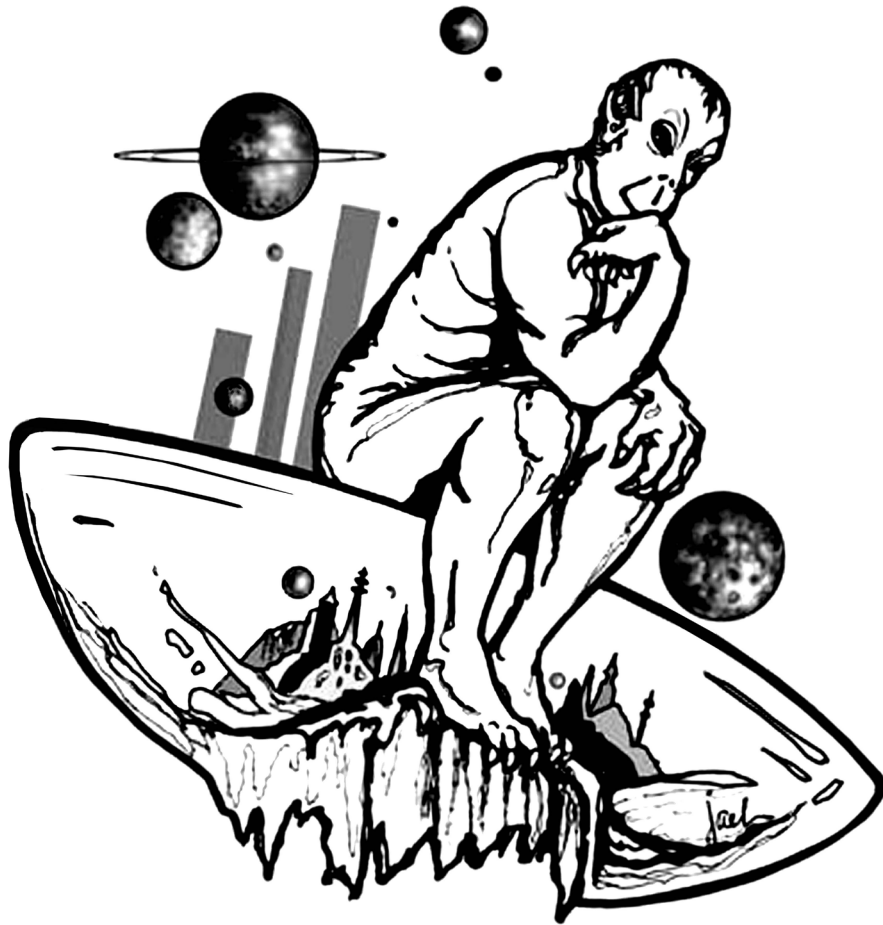
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