



**NOTES FROM THE
UNDERGROUND
APRIL 2007**

NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND

Notes from the Underground is a bi-monthly newsletter published by Several Unlimited. Dues are \$12.00 per year in the US, \$16.00 overseas, payable September 1. Submissions of articles, reviews, and artwork are welcome. All written submissions should be typed (or very legibly handwritten). Please don't send original artwork by regular mail. The deadline for submissions is the first of every month.

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Back issues of Notes from the Underground are available by written request to the Several Unlimited's P.O. Box. The cost is \$1.00 per issue, including postage.

In Hoc Signo Vincas,
Dee
Editor, *Notes from the Underground*

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Meeting Announcements

The March meeting will be held at Steve Dial’s house. The Video Party will be held at David Forbus’ place.

April Birthdays

- ❖ Will Massey April 6
- ❖ Carol Schorn April 14
- ❖ Lauren Keeper April 19

Editor’s Announcement

We are exchanging newsletters with the Prydonians of Prynceton as PDFs (via email). If any Several member would like a PDF instead of, or in addition to, their paper newsletter, please email me (Erika Frensley). The PDF of each newsletter is also posted on the Several Unlimited website.

Message from the President

Jamie Ritchey

April. The month of April showers, income tax, and the Internet Zine Sale. This is our last big project of the year and I want to thank Erika and Dee for all their efforts. I know after this month, we will all need a summer of relaxation. Happy Spring everybody!

Veepster Message

Dee Beetem

So far the Internet Zine Sale seems to be going well—I really enjoy pulling fanzines to send off to destinations like Spain. It's almost like touring! Just don't ask to look inside the garage until the project's completed....

Orphan Zine Sale Ringmaster Sez...

Erika Frensley

Simply put, THANK YOU SO MUCH for helping out at RevelCon. I know many members put in time at the table – the large crowd allowed everyone to attend programming at RevelCon. Although there were some mishaps (as usually happens)... last year it was the MacGyver computer, this year it was the printer-killing laptop. Somehow we managed, even though we left the corpses of discarded printers in our wake...

The Internet Sale is underway as we speak. The sale went live at 10pm March 31, and by 10:40pm we had our first order. So far we have 23 orders, three from overseas, and the second week of the sale has barely started.

Upcoming Events

Anime Matsuri 2007, April 27-29, 2007

The Festival of the Future <http://www.animematsuri.com>

George R. Brown Convention Center, Hilton Americas Houston Hotel
1001 Avenida de las Americas, Houston, TX 77010

Anime Matsuri is not only an anime convention, it is a celebration of all things Anime. Our goal for Anime Matsuri is to give guests, anime and game fans alike, a new experience in celebrating Japanese culture and anime festivities. Will include dealers room, gaming, karaoke, contests, panels/workshops, dance, video room, and much more!

A-Kon 18: Giant Robots Attack, June 1-3, 2007

The Southwest's Largest Anime Convention <http://www.a-kon.com/>

Adam's Mark Convention Center and Hotel (downtown Dallas)

400 North Olive Street, Dallas, TX 75201

Dealers Room, Guests, Seminars & Workshops, Multiple Video Rooms, Gaming & Tournaments, Premier Film Showings, Art Show & Auction, Autographs, Banquet, Costume Contest, Goodie Bags&Freebies, and Musical Concert

For more information write:

Phoenix Entertainment

3352 Broadway, Suite 470

Garland, Texas 75043

Or send email to info@a-kon.com

SoonerCon 2007, June 8-10, 2007

Science Fiction, Fantasy, Gaming Con <http://www.soonercon.com/>

The Biltmore Hotel, 401 South Meridian (1-40 and Meridian)

Oklahoma City, OK 73108

❖ **GOH:** Stephen R. Donaldson

❖ **Artist GOH:** Keith Birdsong

❖ **Toastmaster:** Selina Rosen

Additional Guests: Bill Allen, David Lee Anderson, M.T. Bonham, Gary W. Babb, Peter Bradley, James K. Burk, Kimber Chessmore, Tim Chessmore, Deborah Chester, Sherri Dean, William Eakin, Rhonda Eudaly, Jan Sherrill Gephardt, Lazette Gifford, Bennie Grezlik, Talia Gryphon, Beverly A. Hale, W.J. Hodgson, Kevin Hopkins, K. Hutson-Price, Gary Jonas, Mike Kennedy, Julia Blackshear Kosatka, William Ledbetter, Lee Martindale, Mel Odom, Cary Osbourne, Jeff Provine, Ray Roberts, Susan Satterfield, Rie Sheridan, Brad Sinor, Sue Sinor, Glenn Sixbury, Shanna Swendson, Rachel Vincent, Steven Wedel, K.D.Wentworth, Craig Wolf

This incarnation of SoonerCon is deliberately designed to celebrate all aspects of fandom. We don't intend to have a solely "books" or "TV" or "art" emphasis. The emphasis is on FUN. Events include: Film Festival, Art Show, Gaming, Cosplay and Masquerade. Charity. Panel and Workshops. Video Rooms.

For more information, write:

SoonerCon
6006 S. Western
Oklahoma City, Ok 73139

ApolloCon 2007, June 22-24, 2007

Houston's Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Conference
<http://www.apollocon.org/>

DoubleTree Hotel Houston Intercontinental Airport
15747 John F. Kennedy Blvd.
Houston, TX 77032

- ❖ **GOH:** C.S. Friedman
- ❖ **Editor GOH:** David G. Hartwell
- ❖ **Artist GOH:** Jeff Sturgeon
- ❖ **Filk GOH:** Graham and Becca Leathers
- ❖ **Fan GOH:** A.T. Campbell, III

A single event for fans of speculative and imaginative fiction of all kinds, including literary, media, and interactive.

Panels, Art Show, Masquerade, Dealers Room, Gaming (including LARP), Filking, Book Exchanges, Short Film Contest, Media Room. Writer's Workshop.

For more information, write:

ApolloCon
P.O.Box 541822
Houston, TX 77254-1822
Or send email to info@apollocon.org

Sponsored by the Houston Science Fiction Association, a 501(c)(3) organization.

News and Reviews

AggieCon 38

By Dee Beetem

The week after Revelcon they hold AggieCon in College Station. As usual, Erika and I made it a round trip on Saturday. This gave us plenty of time to buy way too many books in the dealers' room (Erika found *pulp*) and take in a few panels.

The most memorable panel was probably “Con Etiquette/Anime Fandom”. The panelists had no idea what the title meant. You may have heard of one of them—Johnny Yong Bosch (I hadn’t!)—his first acting job was the Black Ranger in the “Mighty Morphin Power Rangers”. His first voice work was for Vash the Stampede in the anime “Trigun”. Most of them are anime voice actors and they had interesting stories about cons (signing miscellaneous body parts) and voice acting (do not fart in sound booths). Johnny told us that he was just heading off to college when he got the part, and did the show instead of college. I hope that the choice was worthwhile for him.

I also went to “Magic in RPG”—the panelists showed up late so we started without them. Mostly it was Dungeonmaster shop talk—how do you make magic plausible and interesting for your players, do you really want your Magic Users to have tactical nukes, why is magical fantasy the most popular genre in RPGs?

There were other panels that sounded interesting, like “Paranormal Romances” and “How to Draw Hentai” but we had no intention of driving back at 3 a.m. so those were skipped.

By Erika Frensley

A pretty good AggieCon, though we didn’t see too many panels. One panel I went to was “Manga vs US Comics”. Since folks didn’t show up on time, we had a great conversation with the manga artist Tony Salvaggio, who does the [Calling Manga Island column](#) for Comic Book Resources (www.comicbookresources.com). One thing we discussed was why manga seemed so much more fun than comic books (US comic books have a deadly seriousness about them that’s lacking in manga, or even European comics). One speculation was that since manga and European comics are accepted as valid types of literature, there’s no stigma to being the reader or creator of a comic or manga, so you can actually have fun with it.

The rest of the panels were good, but to my downfall, the dealer’s room offered a pulp dealer. One of the dealer’s tables was hosted by ADV Films (they’re the Houston anime studio). I talked with them about the anime “Ghost Stories” and how much we enjoyed the Houston references. (For those who weren’t inflicted with this anime series, in its original form it was equivalent to a sub-standard Scooby Doo. When it was brought to the states, the studio got permission to have creative license with the story and voiceovers, and they turned it into a regional

Buffy/Adult Swim anime. Absolutely hysterical!) They said that they loved doing it, but for some reason, it didn't sell well outside the East Texas area. Must be those Joel Osteen jokes...

Wondering what may be good to watch on video or TV? Tom Wells has some suggestions..

Dexter

Comments on the Morgan family's Lemonade-Making traditions

By Tom Wells

Likely few of us really understand the will-breaking, mind-numbing, raw power of real compulsion. Marc Summers, author of "Everything in its Place", has experienced, and largely overcome, a fairly benign form called *obsessive-compulsive disorder*, but even such is not the stuff of what Harry Morgan (no known relation to Joe Friday's partner in "Dagnet, 1968") saw in his young adopted son. They say ancient Oriental artisans intentionally built a flaw into each of their pieces to avoid offending the Divine. (Then there's the competing note in the story of the Potentate asked to distinguish a real bouquet from a clever artifact simulating one.) Almost inevitably, every parent refers to their own child as "absolutely perfect" at some point. Imagine the pathos of recognizing, based on many years of experience with South Florida's homicidal element, that the flaw in the truly Good Boy you'd adopted was homicidal mania (and emotional inaccessibility).

You know well enough that Justice and the legal system are at best kissin' cousins. Could you bring yourself to sacrifice a human being's entire potential to an insensitive system whose most measured reaction to probable threat amounts to complete annihilation? Can you ethically raise and nurture a time bomb who'll eventually snap and annihilate OTHER "innocent" people? Or can you find a way to make lemons into lemonade?

We get to watch the results of Poppa Morgan's balancing act between good parenting and good citizenship in Showtime's new series "Dexter". We observe Dex's careful maintenance of a facade of emotional normalcy, while he serves his community as a police pathology expert. We're a fly on the wall as he exorcises his personal demons by expunging some of the mistakes who've slipped past the reach of the justice system. We observe his interactions with his dear sister Deborah,

an ambitious police officer in her own right, and with single mom Rita, who just might be the closest possible thing to a perfect match for our boy. And we get to watch him sweat, as he finds himself stalked by an equally cunning, if differently focused, fellow serial killer the whole department is desperate to stop.

This series is enjoyable in every way I can tell. I can hardly wait to see what satisfactions and surprises Dexter will come up with next!

The Illusionist

By Tom Wells

"Once long ago in a Faraway Kingdom, a Highborn Lady fell in love with a Wizard, who eventually rescues her with his magic from an Evil (Crown-) Prince." -- M. R. Whittington

O.K., I'll admit it; I'm just a sucker for a pretty Special Effect. But when they're so impressively matched with suspenseful storytelling and skilled acting, the result is an engaging and impressive film which deserves to be enjoyed by a WIDE public. So what if the "long ago and far away" is pre WW1 Vienna? The same principles still apply!

After Crown Prince Leopold is seen brandishing his ceremonial sword while following Sophie into the stables and she rides to the woods collapsed in the saddle, we suspect The Worst! When her wounded body is found in a creek, the stage magician Eisenheim weeps over it in the hearse. They were childhood sweethearts, and we can only expect his revenge to be irresistible.

We watch spellbound as he pursues the question of "What is Death?" and calls up the images of wronged souls, including Sophie's, to condemn Leopold from the Beyond. Chief Inspector Uhl can't quite unravel the stage magic. His loyalty to truth and country gets tested against that demanded by the prince, who seeks to shut down Eisenheim and salvage his own nefarious political ambitions.

This Crown Prince will surely come to no good end! Watching how Uhl and Eisenheim resolve their conflicts, calling into play powers even Leopold must bow to, is a thrill in many more ways than one.

Uncle Alfred would be right well pleased!

Calendar and Maps

<p>April 13, 2007</p>	<p>Several Unlimited Meeting Steve Dial 4729 Kinglet 713 771-6297</p>
<p>April 27, 2007</p>	<p>Video Party David Forbus 10100 Clay Road Suite G (Clay Road @ Gessner) (713) 895-0115</p>



