

Notes from the  
Underground  
December 2006

# 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 Vincens,  
Dee  
Editor, *Notes from the Underground*

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## Meeting Announcements

The December meeting will be held at Amy Denton’s house. Because of the Christmas holidays, we will not have a video party.

## December Birthdays

Margaret McNickle

December 31

## 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*

The holiday season is upon us. It's time to kick back with family and friends, enjoy the spirit of the season while enduring the commercial madness that tends to take center stage, and appreciate all that is good in our lives. One good thing that I appreciate the most is the friends I have made through my fannish endeavors. I have known some of you in Several Unlimited for over twenty years. I wish you all health, happiness, and peace for the holidays and throughout the new year.

## Upcoming Events

### Downtown Aquarium

*By Dee Beetem*

Okay, gang, do we want to go to the Downtown Aquarium in December, or wait until next year? We can discuss it at the meeting, or email me.

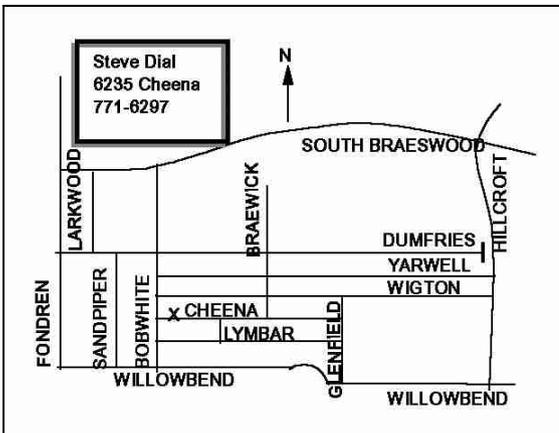
410 Bagby                                      Tickets 9.25 (rides separate)

### New Year's Open House

*By Steve Dial*

You are invited to Steve Dial's New Year's Day open house. No need to RSVP; just come if you can make it.

- ❖ Date:                                      Monday, January 1, 2007 (When else would it be?)
- ❖ Starting Time:                            Not definite yet; between 12:00 noon and 2pm
- ❖ Ending Time:                              Approximately four (4) hours later
- ❖ Place:                                        6235 Cheena Drive, Houston, Texas 77096-4616  
(713) 771-6297



## Christmas Charity

By Carolyn O'Neal



Our primary Christmas charity is the Houston SPCA. We will collect checks at the December meeting (or mail them in!) Make them out to Houston SPCA (they're tax-deductible). The SPCA gets no funds from government or the United Way so they really need the money.

<http://www.spcahouston.org/spcahouston/Default.asp>

Last year the club made the following contributions to charity:

Freedom Alliance Scholarship Fund	250.00
Adopt a Cat	250.00
March of Dimes	250.00
SPCA	150.00
Humane Society	150.00
LVNA (help for Katrina pets)	200.00
	\$1,250.00

This year we'll be donating to the following charities:

Operation Gratitude	250.00
CAP (Citizens for Animal Protection)	200.00
Adopt a Cat	250.00
March of Dimes	250.00
SPCA	150.00
Humane Society	150.00
	\$1,250.00

**Operation Gratitude** ([www.opgratitude.com](http://www.opgratitude.com)) is a California-based grass roots organization that sends packages to the troops over seas. The Boy Scouts and other organizations help to ship out thousands of packages, but they need money to mail them. (You can donate "stuff" but you would have to ship it to them).

**Citizens for Animal Protection** (<http://www.cap4pets.org/>) is a nonprofit organization that shelters, rescues, and finds homes for homeless animals.

Carolyn: I'm in favor. (They are Hannah's alma mater.)

Dee: Just what I need! Another website with cute adoptable animals.

## News and Reviews

### New email addresses

FYI: Since Everyone's Internet is not a dialup ISP any more, some members' email addresses have changed:

- ❖ Erika Frenley: [EEKfrenzy@houston.rr.com](mailto:EEKfrenzy@houston.rr.com)
- ❖ Margaret McNickle: [mmcat@hal-pc.org](mailto:mmcat@hal-pc.org)
- ❖ Amy Denton: [mizdenton@earthlink.net](mailto:mizdenton@earthlink.net)

### VHS, 30, dies of loneliness (from variety.com)

The home-entertainment format lived a fruitful life (Wed., Nov. 15, 2006, Los Angeles)

By *DIANE GARRETT*

After a long illness, the groundbreaking home-entertainment format VHS has died of natural causes in the United States. The format was 30 years old.

No services are planned.

The format had been expected to survive until January, but high-def formats and next-generation videogame consoles hastened its final decline.

"It's pretty much over," concurred Buena Vista Home Entertainment general manager North America Lori MacPherson on Tuesday.

VHS is survived by a child, DVD, and by Tivo, VOD and DirectTV. It was preceded in death by Betamax, Divx, mini-discs and laserdiscs.

Although it had been ailing, the format's death became official in this, the video biz's all-important fourth quarter. Retailers decided to pull the plug, saying there was no longer shelf space.

As a tribute to the late, great VHS, Toys 'R' Us will continue to carry a few titles like "Barney," and some dollar video chains will still handle cassettes for those who cannot deal with the death of the format.

Born Vertical Helical Scan to parent JVC of Japan, the tape had a difficult childhood as it was forced to compete with Sony's Betamax format.

After its youthful Betamax battles, the longer-playing VHS tapes eventually became the format of choice for millions of consumers. VHS enjoyed a lucrative career, transforming the way people watched movies and changing the economics of the film biz. VHS hit its peak with "The

Lion King," which sold more than 30 million videocassettes Stateside.

The format flourished until DVDs launched in 1997. After a fruitful career, VHS tapes started to retire from center stage in 2003 when DVDs became more popular for the first time.

Since their retirement, VHS tapes have made occasional appearances in children's entertainment and as a format for collectors seeking titles not released on DVD. VHS continued to make as much as \$300 million a year until this year, when studios stopped manufacturing the tapes.

## **Website of the month**

### **SF Quotes Make TV's Top 100**

<http://www.tvland.com/originals/catchphrases/>

Cable network TV Land announced its list of the 100 greatest TV quotes and catchphrases of the past 60 years, featuring recognizable lines from popular science-fiction series from Star Trek to The X-Files. The selections will be counted down in a weeklong series of specials beginning Monday, Dec. 11, at 10 p.m. ET/PT. Guest stars include Batman's Adam West and Burt Ward, who discuss the origins of their classically cheesy exclamations, and William Shatner, whose opening narration from the original Star Trek series made the top 20.

An alphabetical list of quotes from SF series follows. Their ranks will be revealed on Dec. 6.

- ❖ "Danger, Will Robinson!" from Lost in Space
- ❖ "De plane! De plane!" from Fantasy Island
- ❖ "Don't make me angry ..." from The Incredible Hulk
- ❖ "Holy [blank], Batman!" from Batman
- ❖ "Live long and prosper," from Star Trek
- ❖ "Resistance is futile," from Star Trek: The Next Generation
- ❖ "Space, the final frontier ..." from Star Trek
- ❖ "The truth is out there," from The X-Files
- ❖ "You rang?" from The Addams Family

# Calendar and Maps

<p><b>December 8</b></p>	<p><b>Several Unlimited Meeting</b>  <b>Amy Denton</b>  <b>3510 La Costa</b>  <b>Missouri City</b>  <b>281 499 2455</b></p>
<p><b>January 1, 2007</b></p>	<p><b>New Year's Day Open House (tentative)</b>  <b>Steve Dial</b>  <b>6235 Cheena</b>  <b>713 771-6297</b></p>

