



**Notes from the
Underground
June 2009**

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 sent online or typed. Please don't send original artwork by regular mail. The deadline for submissions is the first of every month.

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Erika

Editor, Notes from the Underground

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Meeting Announcements

The June meeting will be held at Amy Denton’s house ([Map of 3510 La Costa](#)). The June Video Party is preempted by ApolloCon.

Birthdays

❖ Anita Haddock June 4

Editor’s Announcement

Because of postage costs, we are sending out newsletters electronically. For a hardcopy, email EEKfrenzy@gmail.com. The PDF of each newsletter is also posted on the Several Unlimited website and on the Several Unlimited Yahoo group.

Club News

Prez Mez June 2009

The Summer Party has had a few hiccups, but we've decided on a location – Pappas Barbeque (same as last year). Unfortunately the Black Lab didn't work out, but Pappas will be a good compromise.

The Summer Party will be on July 18, from 12 noon to 3pm, at Pappas Restaurant, Southwest Freeway just south of Hillcroft.

What's planned should be easy and fun: Consuming barbecue, talking to friends, and swapping books. (Just trading, not flea market.)

We'll put out Summer Party/Several Unlimited flyers at Apollocon and send emails through the Several group, Hou-SF group, ILSBook, the Revelcon group, and any other fan group we can find.

June 26-28 is ApolloCon—who's going to be attending? At the very least we need to put out flyers –and if anyone's planning to rent a room, maybe a party.

Several Unlimited Fanfiction Archive

We would love to receive and post your fanfic in our web archive. We would love to receive electronic copies of them—send them to fanfic_archive@severalunlimited.com. We can scan hard copy too--email us first before you send us anything on paper.

News and Reviews

MediaWest*Con Reviews

By Jamie Ritchey

For me, this year, MediaWest started out as an anxiety fest. My roommate, Jan Meek, and I didn't have a room at the hotel until the week before the con. We like to sell from our room, and having to stay at another hotel would have been a huge inconvenience. Fortunately, we got in at the last minute.

The hotel has undergone big changes. The Holiday Inn was bought by Causeway Bay and they are doing some remodeling. One old Holiday Inn fixture I missed was Richard, the manager of Hummingbird's, the hotel restaurant. He really got into the spirit of MediaWest with his movie posters, but the new management let him go. Another fan

tracked him down at his new job as a cook at a place called Grumpy's Diner. He was very happy to see all the MediaWest fan that traveled to his new job to see him.

I was a panelist for the first time this year. I helped moderate two Sentinel panels, *The Senses, the 800-lb. gorilla of fanfic, is it a sentinel story without them* with Sue Wells. And *Is The Sentinel a forever fandom like ST or Starsky and Hutch* with Judy Echezuria. I was also on a beginner's vidding panel with Kat.

All were well attended and lively.

Whether it was the economy or other factors, my impression of this year's con was that it seemed more subdued. There were fewer dealers, fewer Fan Q nominations, fewer vids, less art, and membership felt much less. Thought there were still enough dealers both downstairs in the dealers room and in the halls to satisfy most fans, and lots of art to ogle, I was disappointed that the vid contest was changed to a vid show because the organizers decided they didn't get enough entries.

By Dee Beetem

MediaWest Con 29

I don't know whether it was because of the terrible economy, the graying of fandom, or the room lottery, but MediaWest was a lot smaller this year. The zines were fewer too—I was able to pack everything I bought (including DVDs!) into my hand luggage.

This year I signed up for a couple of panels. I do this every other year, allowing time for the scars to heal.

Writing original characters: One problem in fanfic OCs, we agreed, is that someone is going to say “Mary Sue! Mary Sue” no matter what the character is. So your original characters need to be extremely plausible, engaging, and well-motivated. I argued that every character in a story, no matter how minor, would benefit from a little motivation and description, but I don't think I convinced everybody.

It's not easy being gen: I finally figured out what people now mean by ‘gen’—it means ‘nothing significant happens to any of the characters.’ With that definition, no wonder it's not real popular... The panelists and audience had a heated argument on the topic of ‘warning labels.’ Apparently some fans don't want to waste time reading summaries. Using categories like ‘slash’ is okay, but I loathe content labels--

deathfic, songfic, horsefic. Calling Poe's "Cask of Amontillado" a 'deathfic' would have really killed the story, wouldn't it?

Could slash be canon in Lord of the Rings? This panel was a very pleasant surprise to me, because no daggers were drawn either way by anyone in the room. We all agreed that slash wasn't canon in LOTR, then considered where it might be plausible. For example, Sam is definitely straight—but I'm not so sure about Frodo. We also examined the unmarried, forty-plus, childless heir of the Steward, Prince Boromir. What does your 'gaydar' say about that? No final conclusions were drawn.

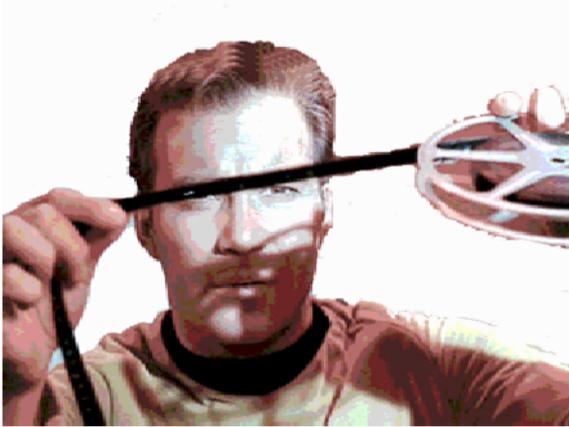
Star Trek 2009 was red-hot at MediaWest. Everyone had seen it and mostly everyone loved it, although I heard complaints like, "but...but why did they have to kill Amanda?" Somebody else didn't like 'Scotty's aquatic Habitrail.' And one fan said the movie confused her because she kept wondering how they were going to bring back Vulcan. Reboot, people, reboot. Obviously, it was bloody well time.

Prior to MediaWest Erika and I toured for a few days, and one place we went was the special Star Trek exhibit at the Detroit Science Center. (We have a photograph of us 'beaming up' to the transporter room.) It was great to see the ships, the set re-creations, the costumes and the props, but what really hit me the most was a science fact that I read from a placard next to a spaceship display.

The fact is, Earth's first starships were launched in my lifetime. Voyager may never arrive—but it's headed to the stars.

By Erika Frensley

MediaWest was good, but subdued, with a markedly lower turnout than in previous years. The panels were good, but nothing earth shattering. I did manage to get a few pieces of art into the art auction, including one that everyone loved:



I'm...not in...this...real ether!

Figure 1 Shatner's Review of Star Trek (2009)

The Detroit Star Trek Exhibit was very well done – with costumes and props from all the Star Trek series nicely displayed. The halls were faithful replicas of the Next Gen's Enterprise hallways, complete with fun descriptions for the panels and buttons (sorry, no pictures allowed!) The Exhibit is a travelling exhibit, but so far no news whether it will hit Texas or not.

Upcoming Events

Cinema of George Lucas at Space Center Houston

The Cinema of George Lucas, a giant visual biography of the life and career of *Star Wars* mastermind George Lucas, shows nearly 50 props, costumes and awards from his blockbuster films, as well as the *Live the Adventure!* experience, where visitors can shoot, run and climb their way through scenes from some of the world's legendary movies including *Star Wars*, *Indiana Jones* and *American Graffiti*.

The Cinema of George Lucas, is an exclusive new exhibit which showcases a wide array of priceless artifacts that span Lucas' iconic movie career, some never before seen by the public! Some of the items include: Bail Organa's airspeeder and General Grievous' starfighter from *Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith*; a draft of the original screenplay from *THX 1138*, Lucas' first feature-length film; Mutt's motorcycle from *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*;

the original screenplay from *American Graffiti* and the original *Star Wars*, the full size automobile from *Tucker: The Man and His Dream*, plus much more! Several of Lucas' awards will be transported directly from his home to be displayed as part of the rare exhibit including his AFI Lifetime Achievement award, Cannes Film Festival award and Irving Thalberg award.

Plus, be the star of your very own action adventure! Space Center Houston and LucasFilm present ***Live The Adventure!*** a massive one-of-a-kind interactive experience where fans can feel as if they have stepped into a dramatic movie scene to become one of their favorite characters such as Luke Skywalker to skillfully speed through the *Death Star Laser Maze Challenge*; join a team of fellow warriors in a galactic battle by shooting down villains in the *Clone Wars Blaster Training*; catch an adrenaline rush like Indiana Jones by running and jumping through the *Temple of Doom Obstacle Course* and put their physical limits to the test from 12 feet above the ground as they attempt to make it across the *Indiana Jones Mayan Ropes Adventure!*

Hours: Most days 10AM-7PM

Admission: adult tickets are 18.95 at the door, 16.95 online, and one year passes are available online for 22.95. The pass includes free parking and 10% off food and souvenirs.

For more information, go to:

<http://www.spacecenter.org/CurrentExhibit.html>

[ApolloCon 2009](#), June 26-28, 2009

Houston's Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Conference

<http://www.apollocon.org/>

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

- ❖ GOH: Wil McCarthy
- ❖ Artist GOH: Pat Rawlings
- ❖ Music GOH: Amy McNally
- ❖ Fan GOH: Al Jackson

Celebrating speculative fiction in Houston and the 40th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing. Panels, Art Show, Masquerade, Dealers Room, Gaming (including LARP), Filking, Book Exchanges, Short

Film Contest, Media Room. Writer's Workshop.

Babelcon 2009, July 17-19, 2009

General science fiction, fantasy, & horror con

<http://www.babelcon.org/>

Cook Hotel & Alumni Center, 3838 Lakeshore Rd., (next to the lake on the LSU campus), **Baton Rouge, LA 70808**

- ❖ **Celebrity Guest: Kandyse McClure (Lt. Dualla)**
- ❖ **Anime Guest: Tiffany Grant**
- ❖ **Paranormal Guest: Patrick Burns**

Anime Track, Horror track, an Author's track, and the Scinema Film Festival (various categories). This will be in addition to the Kids track, Indoor Ren Fair track, Sci-Fi track, Fantasy track, Science track, Paranormal track, and Games track (video and tabletop).

Calendar and Maps

June 12 Several Unlimited Meeting	Amy Denton, (281) 499-2455 3510 La Costa Dr Missouri City, TX 77459
June 26-28 ApolloCon	The DoubleTree Hotel Houston Intercontinental Airport 15747 John F. Kennedy Blvd. Houston, Texas 77032 USA

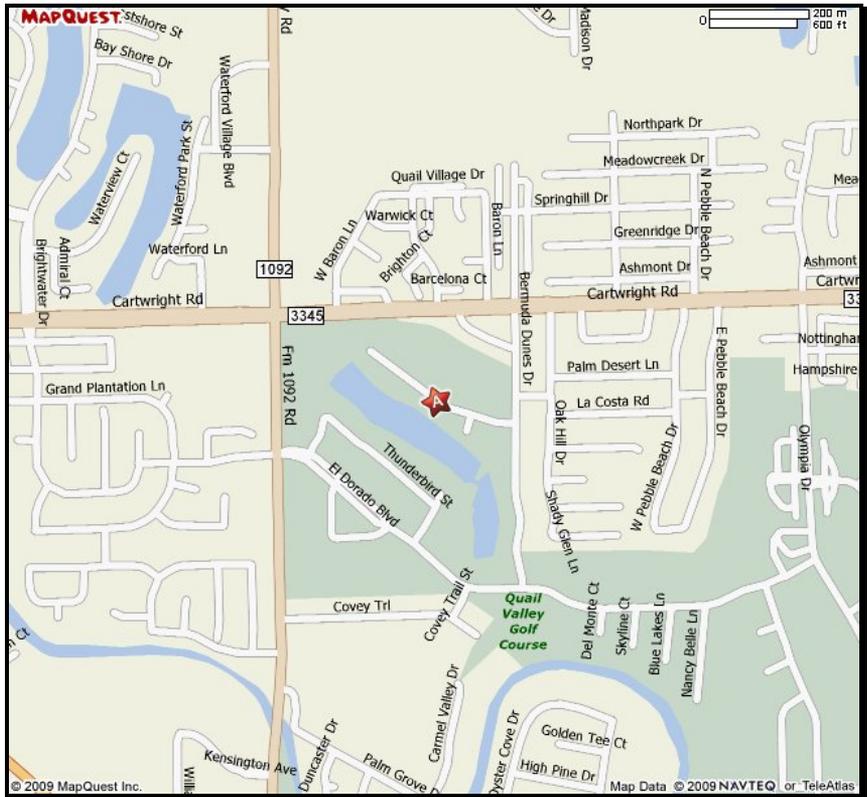


Figure 2. 3510 La Costa Dr

Note: 1092 is known as Murphy Road north of S. Main (US 90)



Figure 3 DoubleTree Hotel, 15747 John F. Kennedy Blvd.