



August 2011 Newsletter

Conspiracy Theories: Sometimes They Are Out To Get You: Oh, what a tangled web we weave, when we first practice to deceive...truer words were never spoken, as the protagonists of this month's tales of intrigue and twisty plot developments are all liable to find out...eventually. The art of the grand conspiracy has been a recurring trope in the genre for a long time, but what if they really are out to get us?

That's Science Fiction
Tuesday August 2, 2011 - 7p
Hillsdale Public Library
X-Files episodes

Suspense Central
Monday August 8, 2011, 2010 - 8p
Panera Bread Restaurant
165 Rt. 64 West
Paramus, NJ - 201.368.0752
The Physick Book of Deliverance Dane
by Katherine Howe

Drawing A Crowd
Wednesday August 10, 2011 - 7p
Fantasy Games & Hobbies
9 Miller Rd - Mahwah
Conspiracies in comics
www.fantasygamesandhobbies.com

Face the Fiction
Saturday August 13, 2011
Fantasy Games & Hobbies
King of Games Day
*Full details on p. 2

Films to Come: 4-Star Movie Discussion Group
Wednesday August 17, 2011 - 7p
Mahwah Library**
100 Ridge Road
Mahwah, NJ 07460
This group discusses the world of cinema and entertainment. If it deals with entertainment, our Master of Entertainment Moderator will cover it.
**We will meet in the newly completed downstairs

area of the Mahwah Library for August and determine whether we like the location/area for the meeting.

Themes of the Fantastic
Tuesday July 23, 2011 - 8p
Wayne Public Library
Sometimes they are out to get you!
www.waynepubliclibrary.org

Modern Masters
Tuesday August 26, 2011 - 8p
Panera Bread Restaurant
1300 Rt. 17 North - Ramsey Square Shopping Center
Ramsey, NJ 07446
Event by David Lynn Goleman

Rogue Trader: Wolves in the Fold
Saturday August 27, 2011 - time TBA
Fantasy Games & Hobbies
9 Miller Road, Mahwah, NJ
Rogue Trader is a game of space adventure, set in the grim darkness of Games Workshop's Warhammer 40000 universe. Are we the wolves in the fold, or merely the sheep?

please visit www.sfsnj.com for full details

SFSNNJ Face the Fiction presents:

When: Saturday, August 13, 2011

Where: Fantasy Games & Hobbies - www.fantasygamesandhobbies.com

9 Miller Road

Mahwah, NJ 07430

201.252.8421

King of Games Day returns for a fun-filled bloody battle infused day! Todd has a fun way for us to compete this year...

What is King of Games Day? Well, it is an entire day devoted to nothing but playing games, learning games, and teaching others about the games we like best. Board Games, Role Playing Games, and Wargames feature heavily, in the event, and it is a pretty laid back and casual affair. 😊

Why is it called King of Games Day? It has to do with one of the first events of the first Open Gaming Night of the SFSNNJ, during a King of the Hill match. I cannot reveal details, but will say that it involves a bad Charlton Heston impression. 😬

Who is Charlton Heston? Is he a member of the SFSNNJ? Charlton Heston is an actor. Please check IMDB for details. Why am I answering questions about Charlton Heston? Oh, right: Page Views! 🙄

How can I participate? Show up. Simple as that. There are no fees, dues, subscriptions, human sacrifices, or other obligations required other than the desire to play games, have fun, and meet people. If you want to play: show up ready to play. 🙄

Wargames:

Warhammer 40,000

Infinity

Warpath

and more

Classic Monopoly & Risk

Space Hulk

Horus Heresy

Samurai

Apples to Apples

and more!

Roleplaying Games:

Warhammer 40,000:

Deathwatch

Pathfinder

Personae

and MORE!!

Board Games:

This year's Special

Operations Scenario:

Warhammer 40,000 The Battle

of Space Station

Xenoclastrum

***Face the Fiction: Where imagination lives!
Only at the SFSNNJ***

July Meeting Recaps

Face the Fiction Comics Documentary & Laws & Licenses Panel– Saturday, July 9, 2011

(1) Marvelous meeting, cool film. Great discussion as always. Party on! **(Gene McGrath)**

(2) I concur - the amount of fun we had was almost...almost...sinful..LOL!

The documentary was informative, interesting and entertaining. It was great hearing audience members saying things like, "I had that issue." "I remember that" Even panel members saying, "I did not know that." The panel was fantastic. Rob, Peter and Ken worked well together, and told some funny stories (Peter with his really bad Ali and Oprah books - lmao!)

Talking outside after the meeting...me, Gina and Gabrielle trying to decide if telling the officer, "She's not soliciting, she's giving it away" would hold up in court..... the benefits of pedicures discussion...Gina announcing in bullhorn fashion "Diner...Diner"

The diner following.....where to start...Todd's "I could've danced on the table? Why didn't someone tell me!!" Gina was even more of a live-wire than me...I know, hard to believe, but true...Bill's hilarious confusion with "patsies" and the look on every ones face...sonic screwdrivers...

Good stuff **(AM)**

(3) Indeed. While I am sad that I wound up missing out on Barbecon, I got to exercise my super-controllingness at the event anyway, lol.

The DVD was really interesting, and it was really well done. I think that a lot of folks forget that these small productions are often really well put together with excellent production value. The way it was cut, too, made for some fun sequences and scenes. One really neat bit was the fact that basically, Todd Loren was talking to us from beyond the grave. Some of the animated cut-scenes and short bits and reactions were just too funny to believe. I want to especially give shout-outs to Mojo Nixon and Cynthia Plaster Caster (especially Cynthia, who had some very impressive 'decor' in the background of her shots).

So, basically, to begin at the beginning: we started the evening with a somewhat raucous documentary *Unauthorized and Proud of It* which chronicles the life and times of Revolutionary Comics creator and chief First Amendment defender Todd Loren. In spite of many similarities between Todd Loren, and myself it bears repeating that I am not, in point of fact, him. I kind of wish I were, though, since his life seemed pretty darned awesome... well, except for the murder.

After we screened the film, we turned and pounced on our brilliant panelists. While all three were veterans of previous SFSNNJ events, I think that Peter, Rob, and Ken were all quite stunned at the volume of 'class participation'. Kate Landis led the charge with questions about art and content, and Peter, Rob, and Ken bravely endured a fun bout of Q&A that threatened to last until Sunday Morning. Some of the nifty things we talked about included questions on the legality of "Check Contracts" (i.e. the practice of rubber stamping the contract on the reverse of the check so when the artist endorses the check they are signing the contract as well); rights retention and trademark abandonment; fair use and best practices; Creative Commons Licenses vs. Public Domain; the Almighty Wikipedia; the difference in perception of Comics in the 1980s through today; the state of distribution; the differences between freelancing and writing for spec; why do Mohammad Ali and Oprah Winfrey look terrible in their comic book bios; and soooooo much more.

The Land & Sea Diner was almost as much fun at the meeting, and Chaos reigned supreme at the table as we all went a bit bonkers with about 200 discussions raging all simultaneously. It was like being in the Tower of Babel without earmuffs at times. I am totally not doing this event any justice!

I greatly enjoyed the opportunity afforded us by Rob's continued awesomeness in getting this screening set up in such a short amount of time, and Peter and Ken stepping up to the plate to make such a fun panel is more evidence of the absolute cool of our friends in the world. I cannot thank everyone involved enough :)
(Todd Ehrenfels)

Suspense Central — Monday July 11, 2011

So I started writing this about five times this week, and am only now getting around to actually finishing it, lol. So here goes...

Monday, 11 July 1917... er, I mean 2011. The Huns had us pinned down in the Community Room at the Panera on Route 4 in Paramus, their extensive use of Mustard was causing the lads more than a bit of discomfort, but we knew we would soon be going over the top and beating the Bosche at their own game. As it turned out, their own game was that of Trivial Pursuit and we won handily... this time.

OK, so as you likely guessed from the silly intro, this month's selection has something to do with WWI. Yes, the Great War, the War to End All Wars, was the focus of our Stranger in a Strange Land/Fish Out of Water theme for Suspense Central, and my what an odd scenario Pat Kelleher spun for his readers with *No Man's Land Book 1: The Black Hand Gang*. So interesting was the subject that in spite of the fact that only two of the members had a chance to read it (I am reading it right now myself), we still managed to stay on topic for more than 2 hours (we started early and continued chatting in the parking lot after).

Aurelia and Kathleen started the discussion off by giving us a good amount of background on several of the characters. They explained that Kelleher introduced a character early on, and focused exclusively on a runner, only to kill him off on page 15. It was pretty interesting how the killing was done, and the fact that it was used to introduce a Jack-the-Ripper type serial killer who was apparently trying to use magic to summon forth his god 'Croatan'. Amusingly, the murder and the murderer are integral to the plot, and a lot of the issues that would develop later in the book are entwined with these characters, and fairly deftly so.

Anyway, after several chapters of the war in France, the book really takes off as the characters and their stretch of No Man's Land are transported from the field of battle to an alien world. The alien world, however, is no safer than the fields of the Somme, and thus the doughty doughboys are forced to fight flora, fauna, and sentients of all stripes to survive. Luckily for them, they have a tank and one and a half aeroplanes. It was at this point that I professed my love of the term Aerodrome, and my desire to see it returned to the common lexicon. Everyone agreed (mostly they agreed that I was nuts, but why split hairs) and thus we have all decided to try to use Aerodrome whenever possible.

We discussed the contrast between the battlefields of France and the Alien world for a while, and Aurelia and Kathleen explained that the British were not the first humans to arrive on the planet. Previous human settlements appeared to have been enslaved by the local Insect race in a situation very reminiscent of William Forstchen's Lost Regiment series. The indigenous humans (referred to as ermans) helped the British figure out what was edible, and provided a lot of useful survival skills. Of course the soldiers first attempted to make drinkable liquor, rather than the far more import things like edible food or distilled water for tea, and they were quickly sickened by the results (though apparently the results made decent aviation fuel). In another scene the soldiers fight off worms and dog-men, showing the effectiveness of the Mark IV Tank and its nasty Vickers Machine Guns. We also learn how to chap our pants to kill off lice and other useful trench tricks and tools.

The fact that everyone spoke English, including the Insect-men, was a bit strange, but again was explained by the fact that the native Ermans were obviously human, and the word Croatan comes up frequently

leading one to believe that the ermans are descended from the Roanoke settlers. All told, the story appears to have been well thought out, did not reveal over-much of the concept too quickly. The sequel is due out later this year, and Aurelia already has plans to do that one at a later date.

Join us in August when we discuss *The Physick Book at Deliverance Dane*. **(Todd Ehrenfels)**

That's Science Fiction! – The Thirteenth Warrior - Tuesday July 12, 2011

The 13th Warrior, starring Antonio Banderas was the feature this month. Bill was the only one who had seen it before, and Liz had read the Michael Crichton book it was based on quite a while ago. Everyone enjoyed the film. We all went to the Ridge Diner and continued the merriment. **(Chris H)**

Drawing A Crowd Strangers In Strange Lands – Wednesday July 13, 2011

Once again Mike P and Haywood provided an entertaining and informative meeting. Mike and Haywood are a great team quickly becoming the juggernauts of the comic universe. This time we covered the topic of Fish Out Of Water: Strangers in a Strange Land.

Mike P provided handouts, cartoons and other details, while Haywood brought it all to life with visual components. We always enjoy watching the clips Haywood had cued up - many times, we're reluctant to stop watching and want to see the entire clip...lol!

Mike would start the discussion off by presenting a character, providing background on that specific character and then he would pass the baton to Haywood who would bring the character to life with strong visuals. Those of us that aren't as strong in our comic book knowledge enjoy this aspect. It truly makes it more cohesive to be able to put together what we've been told with the visual. Now, Silver Surfer is not just statistics being read to us, he's a character we can see and internalize.

As always, Mike put a good deal of effort into the research. He gave attendees several handouts. One handout was a cartoon showing a little fish laying on a psychiatrist's couch telling the psychiatrist, "Sometimes I feel like a, like a..." The psychiatrist fills in with, "Fish out of water?" Very nice opening!

Up next was a handout listing various "fish out of water" characters. Some of these 'strangers in strange lands': Frankenstein's Monster, Ka-Zar, Lord of the Hidden Jungle, the Inhumans, Captain America, Valkyrie, Conan the Barbarian, Man-thing, Dr. Strange, Werewolf by Night, Supergirl, Hulk and several more.

As you see from the list, many of these characters are known outside of the comic book universe - this meeting is more than comics. Both Mike and Haywood do a wonderful job of injecting more than 'comic book' characters.

Mike would present a 'stranger in a strange land', fill in background and explain what made this character the proverbial fish out of water and then Haywood would show the group either a picture or a short animated clip of the character.

One interesting character was Frankenstein's Monster. Mike first read how the Monster and his creator, Victor Frankenstein, were adversarial and how the poor monster was feared and shunned...loathed by his own creator. The Monster's only friend was a blind man. Mike then explained that in the twentieth century the Monster fared better and became sort of an anti-hero.

Poor Hulk. You couldn't help but feel how out much a fish out of water Hulk was. Big, green and a fashion victim.

Animated clips of Batman, Superman, Silver Surfer and more helped keep things interesting and lively. It'd always fun to see attendees go through the handouts and start picking names of characters they want to see or hear about. Aurelia has an obsession with costumes - her take on some the costumes is hysterical.

Great meeting, fun time. Mike and Haywood ensure that everyone has a good time and leaves learning at least one new fact!

Join us next month for Conspiracy Theories: Sometimes They Are Out To Get You!

Films to Come – Wednesday July 20, 2011

Oh boy...where to begin...what to say. Hmmm, suffice it to say there was a plethora of "oy gevalts" moaned by our beleaguered moderator. It was that kind of night - hilarious as all get out...for some of us...informative - when Barry got a word in (forcefully when necessary)...and downright fun.

Things started off relatively quiet enough. Barry - excitedly holding the latest issue of The Years Best Science Fiction, 28th Annual Collection, by editor Gardner Dozois - read to us the section about this season's recent TV offerings: what's been canceled (The Cape, The Gates), what's returning (Arthur, Eureka, Warehouse 13, The Walking Dead), what's yet to arrive (i.e. Terra Nova). So far, so good. We enjoyed discussing favorites, speculating on new series, and taking some potshots at Lost.

A smooth transition into the Top Box Office - very nicely done. First up was films topping \$100,000,000 in the USA. Sixteen (16) movies had that honor. This is when things started on a downward spiral...slowly at first, barely noticeable. Very funny had-to-be-there 'disagreement' between Liz and Barry over Harry Potter's take at the box office. Liz had "seen" a different amount than what Barry's list had.

Only 13 movies made the cut out of the USA. Oddly, and surprisingly to some, both lists had Adam Sandler movies! Even more odd was the fact that Battle Los Angeles made the foreign Box Office but not the USA. Liz attributes this to foreign countries wanting to see CA get destroyed...lol.

A brief aside discussing Peter David and the upcoming John Carter movie. Barry invoked Bill by chanting three times Bloody Mary-style...John Carter, John Carter, John Carter. we all looked to see if Bill would appear..he didn't (actually Bill was sick and felt it best to not infect us..thank you Bill).

We moved onto Entertainment Weekly's Summer Movie Preview and the infamous list. Here's where the spiral picked up some speed.

This time Barry had May, June, July and August. Very ambitious of him and by golly he finished the entire list with time to spare even with the shenanigans. He's that good.

May:

The Hangover Part II, Thor, Kung Fu Panda 2, Midnight In Paris, and There Be Dragons were a few of the titles discussed. Some were recommends, some bombs. There Be Dragons had Larry telling the group a 'story' about a 'bacon tree' and ending with a 'hambush'....you had to be there! Funny and that spiral was picking up speed.

June:

Super 8 (Barry not crazy about it, Todd enjoyed, both Chris and Alesia agreed with Todd).
Judy Moody and the Not Bummer Summer - as Larry put it, "even the kids didn't want to see that one."
Bad Teacher (Barry liked, Larry not so much).

Cars 2 (Barry's least favorite Pixar movie, Chris liked it although it appears he saw a different movie 'cause his movie had a main character named Tater...not Mater. Keep this in mind, it came back to haunt us.

July:

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hollows - Part 2. Liz still questioning that Box Office \$\$ amount. Chris had seen it and recommended it.

Cowboys and Aliens looks promising.

Transformers: Dark of the Moon. yeah, here's where things not only spiraled but derailed and went to hell in a hand-basket. Mike P, who up until that point was 'relatively quiet' asked Barry if there was a colon missing (Barry's handout did not have a colon between Transformers & Dark of the Moon. Barry grabbed a pen and filled it in on his list and replied, "a semi-colon."

Zookeeper - Barry not crazy about this one, and to top it off during the movie a kid in the audience was apparently coughing and retching distracting Barry. Todd told Barry that it was because the kid had a frog in his throat. Get it...frog...zookeeper. Told you things rapidly declined!

Larry Crowne - Barry asked Debbie if she knew who was in this movie. Her answer was a very funny, "Larry Crowne?" And he thinks we don't listen.

Captain America: The First Avenger - it was pointed out that this one had a colon which led to a twisted aside about colons to which Todd quipped, "It's like six degrees of colon." Full steam ahead...I kept hearing Ozzy Osbourne saying "All aboard...hahahaha"

August:

The Help, Rise of the Planet of the Apes, Conan the Barbarian, Don't Be Afraid of the Dark, Fright Night were all anticipated and talked about. Todd saw the "totally legal reviewer's copy" of the Iranian indie film Circumstance...yeah, we'll be baking him files in cakes real soon. The final mention was, as Barry put it, "Clearly abusing the definition of final" Final Destination 5!!

List complete. Borders closing. Thought we were done. Just to show who is indeed boss, Barry announced, "Lest you think we were done..." and pulls out an Entertainment Weekly with Comic-Con previews! The Raven (starring John Cusack as Edgar Allen Poe), Total Recall, Immortals, and Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn pt 1, were among the titles mentioned. Larry said if you put Cars 2 & The Raven together, you'd get 'Poetater'...I told you to remember Chris' alternate Cars 2 with Tater...badabump.

Todd and Larry will be sorry. I'm sure retribution is coming ;) Great job, fun meeting and we'll probably be quizzed next time - or tossed into a pit. (AM)

Modern Masters -Fallen Dragon by Peter F. Hamilton- Friday July 22, 2011

Friday night was a sad night for us all. For some, the voracious and somewhat crazed shoppers swarming over the Borders Books and Music in Ramsey saddened us. For some, we were saddened to lose a favorite space (though realistically we had been preparing ourselves to move well in advance of the announcement). For others, they were saddened that the discussion was going to be abbreviated because they just finished a mammoth 600+ page tome by Peter F. Hamilton and they were looking forward to a fun discussion.... but WAIT a moment, we quickly relocated to Panera Bread on 17N had had our discussion in spite of the sad tidings of the impending demise of Borders.

Yes, I arrived at 7pm to mill about the Borders in anticipation of redirecting our faithful stalwarts across the street to Panera. Why not send an email, you ask. Well, simply put: we found out so late that it would have been well-nigh impossible that anyone would have seen the advisory (it was already after 5p when I found out), so I determined that it would be easier to snag folks as they were coming into the store. Much like a

trap door spider, I waited in the vestibule and pounced upon the unwary passersby. We grimly stood vigil in that vestibule, gradually accreting a small crowd and watch with dismay and disgust as the customers callously complained of long lines, failing to empathize at all with the massive number of people who were about to be rendered jobless by the failure of the retail giant. Around 8:15 we began the process of extricating ourselves from the Borders and heading over to Panera.

Thankfully, in spite of the Community Room being book by the Toastmasters Club, we managed to snag some comfortable chairs and tables at which we could sit and discuss the book in relative peace. We started off with a simple question of: Who read the book. Surprisingly, everyone save Ann-Marie affirmed that they had, in fact, read the book. Strangely, after a few moments, when I described one of the opening scenes, the redoubtable Ann-Marie realized that she actually **had** read the book back at the beginning of the year. It is a testament to how well put together the book is that anyone who had read it in the past can immediately put it back into mind with just a few passages.

Before we hacked into the book, though, we started with a brief discussion of Hamilton and his overall works. I brushed quickly past the Gregor Mandel series of psychic-noire stories, stopping on the series long enough to discuss it as both the origin of Hamilton's SF work and one of the first supernatural detective stories (Simon Green, Jim Butcher, Charlaine Harris, Anton Strout, and others all owe Peter for breaking the trail). Moving from Mandel to the Confederacy Universe, which has the distinction of being some of the longest novels in a trilogy (each novel weighs in at 1000+ pages), I waxed nostalgic over the cool concepts and the exciting manner in which they were presented. After a decent amount of lavishing praise on the Night's Dawn Trilogy, I turned to the equally weighty Commonwealth series (which is really actually two series), and I decried the denouement of the final book in that series (I really hated the payoff).

Fallen Dragon is the story of a future where corporate raiding has taken on an entire new dimension. Earth colonized the planets of the nearby galaxy, and the Corporations, like Zantui-Braun are busily raiding those worlds for any assets that are not nailed to the floor and on fire. They call the practice Asset Realization, and the raids follow a certain pattern, which is explained in a conversation in the beginning of the book. Hamilton does a great job of sketching out the character of William Lawrence... so well drawn is he that it takes readers a bit of time to realize that he is, in point of fact, one of the *bad guys!* We all laughed as the discussion ranged over the high and low points of the book.

Here is a brief overview of a few things that we discussed in relation to the book:

Hard Science Fiction vs Space Opera: Chris brought up an excellent point about the question of where *Fallen Dragon*, specifically, and Peter Hamilton, in general, fall on the spectrum. Peter tends to split the difference by adding a lot of good hard science to his stories, which are very character driven. Chris compared the novel to *Flight of the Eisenstein* by James Swallow, which he really liked a lot, in that they both contained a lot of great character development, but felt that *Fallen Dragon* may have had a bit too much science for its own good.

Asset Realization: Liz felt that the concept was really unworkable as an economic force, and we discussed the relationship to our own history and the idea of the Viking culture of raiding and pillaging, as well as the privateer culture of the Colonial Age. While it might not be a fair comparison, I think that we managed to shine a bit of light on what Hamilton might have been thinking.

Expository Expansionism: Several of the attendees felt that there were large sections that could have been abbreviated or cut altogether. Ann-Marie, Alesia, and I all felt that these interludes were very important because they explored aspects and facets of the personalities of the primaries in the story. Mainly they helped make William Lawrence far more realistic. In addition, they gave a good view into the psychology of Denise and how she fits into the society she is infiltrating as a member of the resistance. Also, let's face it, the break-up with the dizzy 'organic eater' girlfriend was funny.

The Dragon: Liz was wondering when the titular 'Dragon' would show up, and was surprised by the fact that we really don't actually get to see the alien until nearly 500 pages in to the book. The Dragon, we determined, really serves more as a McGuffin to provide a connection point between William, Denise, and Simon, who are really three characters who would never connect otherwise.

Fish Out of Water: At some point I was asked why I chose this book for this month, whose theme is Fish Out of Water/Strangers in Strange Lands. My reply was fairly complicated, but in essence it boils down to the fact that William Lawrence, the primary of the three main characters, is a fish out of water in all of his interactions. As a youth, he is totally out of place and cannot connect with family or peers due to his obsession with space exploration. When he gets older, he joins Zantui-Braun only to discover that he is

totally ill-equipped psychologically to be the sociopath that the company needs for its Asset Realization projects, not is he able to mesh with the politicking of the corporate culture of Z-B. The odd thing is that the other two protagonists are also fish out of water. Denise is a rebel from the hinterlands trying to infiltrate the city of Memu Bay in the hopes that when the invasion comes she can wreak all kinds of harm on Z-B's goons, and is hiding out in the city as a nursery school teacher. Simon is a Corporate Clone (literally, not figuratively) and is trying to come to grips with the fact that he alone of all the Simons out there understands what is actually going on, making him unique (if somewhat disturbed).

All told, we spoke about Hamilton and *Fallen Dragon* for nearly two hours, before being chased out of the Panera Bread. Next month join me for a rare roasting of an author whose initial books I really liked, but who managed to incense me to such a degree that I am completely baffled by his later bad books. Read *Event* by David Lynn Goleman and join us in August at the Panera on Route 17N in Ramsey for the discussion and see why. (Todd Ehrenfels)

Heroes & Rogues: Rogue Trader Session – July 23, 2011

Chapter 15: The Darker Paths to Profit

From the Journals of Wencisia Tremnar, Executive Officer of the *Lady Malbec*, 493.861,M38

A wise man once wrote, "Be careful where you place your feet, for a single misstep can lead to ruin." I can see the wisdom in that, and the fact that we are being so cautious on our own path relieves me. Sadly, no amount of caution on our parts would prepare us for the strangeness of the Lupus Cluster.

While I was not down on the surface with Sarvus, Lorn, Micro, and the rest of the away team, their report was disturbing to say the least. The fact that this machine has indicated that it can track our renegade kinsmen through the Immaterium is welcome news. The fact that to obtain this information we must vanquish a beast of the Warp living in the Crystal Belt here in Yois is less so. It appears that the creature we detected a scant few days ago is some manner of threat to the system, and if left unchecked will cloak the system in an impenetrable Warp Storm, likely transforming Yois from resort planet to daemonworld in one fell swoop. As this would prove disastrous for our holdings, and because tracking the Tremnar's Profit is a high priority for us, we have determined to make our way to Zama to obtain the assistance of the Inquisition. As both Domenica and Lilith have pointed out, though, time is of the essence and is not on our side.

While our Navigators, Lilith and Ramhat, had some trouble adjusting the course out of the Yois System and shaping a way to Zama, we were able to make the transit with only a bit of extra time added to the journey. Upon arrival at Zama, a small Inquisitorial Raider commanded us to hold position while it ferried our command staff to the planet. Although our hosts were not inhospitable, we were still not permitted off of the shuttle upon which we arrived. Eventually a shuttle crew returned to the shuttle and brought us to the surface of Zama.

Zama, a world commanded by the Inquisition to become their great bulwark in the Lupus Cluster, a shield of Imperial faith against the heretics of the Commonwealth. If only they knew. Liana masterfully, and by masterfully I mean with my deft assistance, negotiated aide from the leader of the Inquisition on Zama. The Inquisitor Lord, a harsh fellow named Fortius Mandragorin, questioned us deliberately on our past involvements in Inquisitorial affairs, including our roles in both the incidents at Iol and Sutherland. Luckily I was able to maintain my composure with the officious buffoon, and using Inquisitor Lord duMorne's cover story as a shield, proved our ability to maintain their secrets. Mandragorin stated that he believed that he could deal with the beast, but would need some days to prepare the weapons he would need to defeat this creature. In the mean time, he enjoined us to take our ease on the planet and try not to get into any trouble.

Liana, of course, already had a plan. Seeing as how this rare opportunity to explore Zama was unlikely to be repeated, especially with the burgeoning paranoia of the Inquisition reinforcing system traffic control, we took advantage of the lax planetary oversight to explore Daka Isle, as it was the location indicated in the new map of the next step on the Path. Deep into the desert isle we drove, Domenica and Lilith leading the way with Navigator sight and Astropathic vision, until we arrived at a small stepped zigurat. Knowing a little of the Eldar as we do, and relying on the visions of our Psykers for

guidance, we were eventually able to penetrate the Ancient structure. What we found beneath was astonishing.

We have grown used to stepping in the footsteps of giants over the last few months of our journeys here in the Lupus Cluster, and the fact that we were standing in some sort of ancient Xeno mausoleum was not lost on us. Imprisoned in some manner of energy field that Samuel was unable to penetrate were eight large reptile-like creatures. Large and vicious looking, these frozen sentinels created a dread air in the chamber. Domenica, on orders from Liana, used her ability to Compel the tiles to point in to the center of the room, activating some manner of hologram or psychic communique. We learned of the next step on the path, and were abruptly attacked by more Eldar for our trouble. Though the battle was vicious, we emerged victorious.

Now it remained for us to fulfill our bargain with the thinking machine that called itself TASU and proceed further down the Path. Whether this will be to our profit or our damnation remains to be seen...(Todd Ehrenfels)

Themes of the Fantastic – Fish Out Of Water - Tuesday July 26, 2011

Our moderator Bill Wagner did a fine job (once he realized that the topic was Fish Out Of Water - LOL). New attendee William was a welcome addition. Examples brought up were The 13th Warrior (our movie shown at That's Science Fiction!), ET, Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure, and of course ERB mentions, Tarzan and especially John Carter. Others please add any authors, books, movies television shows and the like. Fun discussion. Come next month and talk about Conspiracy Theories. (Chris H)

SFSNNJ Member Reviews Books, Movies, TV

Gene McGrath reviews:

Cave of Forgotten Dreams -recommended film

Saw this captivating film yesterday at the IFC Center in Greenwich Village... in 3D!

<http://www.ifcfilms.com/films/cave-of-forgotten-dreams>

Tree Of Life: Saw Terrence Malick's esoteric master work today. I could see why some critics have said the film's style is evocative of Kubrick's 2001.

I thought it was a visual gem - the lingering close-up shots of the actors' faces were intriguing; the interspersed scenes depicting a dramatization of the formation of the universe and life on earth were curiously appealing. I thought that the whispering existential narration was sometimes difficult to pick up, and it was not due to any shortcoming of the theater's audio equipment - I saw it at the AMC Empire 25 on 42nd street, not at the Cedar Lane Cinema in Teaneck. lol

I was impressed overall - Malick is a brave man to unleash such an unconventional, non-linear narrative work on today's movie-going audiences, whom we know (as Todd has told us) prefers Action, Adventure, Romantic Comedy, or Teen Angst films. :)

All this being said: keep in mind this review comes from someone who has not seen any of the previous versions Todd mentioned.

Steve Spinoso reviews:

Last night (7/23/2011) the film Secretariat aired on the Starz Saturday Premiere program. It tells the story of Penny Chenery Tweedy, an suburban housewife & mother who returns to Virginia to take over her ailing father's horse farm after her mother's death, and comes to raise a big red horse named Secretariat, who would go on to become a Triple Crown winner in 1972-73. Trainer Lucien Laurin, Jockey Ron Turcotte, Groom Eddie Sweat & Miss Elizabeth Ham, her father's secretary & chief business assistant help Penny. This is an excellent film with solid performances by Diane Lane as Penny, a strong stand-up female in the all-male world of horse racing, and John Malkovich as the equally strong willed Lucien. AJ Michalka has a minor role as one of Penny's daughters who writes her own protest pageant against the Vietnam War while still in High School. This is highly recommended, even if you're not a fan of horse racing. Grade: A+

Transformers: Dark of the Moon - Jim and I saw the film this afternoon at the Clearview Cinema 12 in Parsippany (my brother Joey's adopted son Paul was a big fan of the original Cartoon series back in the day). Master Chris is correct about it being long & loud. The prologue helped explain the REAL reason for the Apollo missions: to keep the Russians from getting their hands on the alien (read Decepticon) ship that crashes on the moon in 1961 (or are both of these events false? -NO DON'T GO THERE AGAIN!!!) At this point Jim says (and I quote): "There are just as many plot inconsistencies in this picture as they are in the REAL Apollo missions-but just barely!!!" Nice use of shots of the real Kennedy and the real Nixon along the fictional ones in this sequence. Flash forward to the future where poor Shia (who's quite a screamer in this picture) is trying get a meaningful job but ends up in the mailroom when the Decepticons make their move against their arch-rivals the Autobots, & the decepticons are helped by Autobot turncoat the Sentinel (voiced by Leonard Nimoy, who steals a phrase from Spock in TWOK) There's also another quick reference to Star Trek when the smaller Autobots are watching CST episode "The Naked Time"(the scene where Spock smashes the monitor in his room). I also enjoyed with John Turturro's character interviewed by (wait for it...) Bill O'Reilly!!!
All in all a solid B here.

We saw trailers today at Clearview Cinema for the following films:

Cowboys Vs. Aliens-with Daniel Craig & Harrison Ford. Looks like fun!

Money Ball-You know I'm seeing this picture!!!

Harry Potter & The Deathly Hallows Part 2-No wonder Voldemort is so mean-he has no nose and only two slits for nostrils (Cocaine problem, perhaps?...lol)

Rise of the Planet of the Apes-A reboot I gather (with real apes!!!)

The Twilight Saga-Forgotten Moon-the trailer was cut short!!!

Captain America: The New Avenger-Also looks like fun!!!

Last night the ABC Family channel ran the new TV Movie **Cyberbully** starring Emily Osment (formerly "Lilly" of Hannah Montana) as Taylor Holdridge, a 17-year-old who is bullied on the social network site "Clickers" after her younger brother Eric hacks in to change her profile (as a joke, supposedly) and her best friend Samantha (Kay Pennebaker) creates a phony profile for a boy named "James" and uses it to spread false rumors about Taylor (in order to teach her a lesson about flirting online). Unfortunately things spiral out of control when Lindsay (the REAL bully of the story) and her clique keep piling on the insults (and a very "viral" video) that drive poor Taylor to almost commit suicide (luckily her mother and Samantha stop her in time). The rest of the film deals with Taylor's recovery, joining a self-help group & using the local media to call attention to the problem, ending with Taylor & her friends standing up to Lindsay and her clique. This is a good story with an important message for teens. Highly recommended. Grade: A-

Sister Wendy's Story of Painting part 9: A New Pair of Eyes - We were watching on DVD the other day part 9 of "Sister Wendy's Story of Painting part 9: A New Pair of Eyes"(which deals with the progression from Picasso & Matisse to the surrealists) and we learned that one of Paul Klee's paintings had the word "TOD" in it (at least twice by our count) and that "TOD" is the German word for death. Now surely this doesn't apply to OUR Todd...or does it? lol

Thom Purdy replies: They're onto you Ehrenfels...

Chris Hasselkus reviews:

Cowboys & Aliens: Entertainment Weekly gave it a C+. Stephen Whitty gave it 2 1/2 of 4 stars. All I can say is to leave your brain at the door. It makes little to no sense, but it's fun with a lot of action. Daniel Craig is cool, Harrison Ford poignant (not to mention old). Grade: B.

Tree Of Life: As far as the film was concerned, pretty weird describes it. Grade: B.

I saw **Harry Potter and the Deathly Hollows Part 2**. It was a little more deliberate than I thought it would be, but wonderful nonetheless. The three kids were great and really carried the film. Grade: A

Transformers: Dark of the Moon - Well, all I can say it was LONG and LOUD! Entertainment Weekly gave it a "B" and I agree. A little more meat to the story. AMC was packed.

Stephen Whitty from the Record / Ledger gave both Green Lantern and **Captain America** 3 of 4 stars. Captain America had a snappier pace and generally ran smoother. Tommy Lee Jones was the best thing about it acting wise. Cool special effects. Grade: B+

Summation: Just to sum up the movies I've seen in May, June, July of 2011:

Message #, date, grade, name of film.

24111 05/06/2011 B+ Fast Five
24172 05/18/2011 A- Thor
24213 05/20/2011 B- Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides
24688 06/10/2011 A- Super 8
24861 06/17/2011 B+ Green Lantern
25066 06/25/2011 B+ Cars 2
25261 07/02/2011 B Transformers: Dark of the Moon
25586 07/18/2011 A Harry Potter and the Deathly Hollows Part 2
25699 07/23/2011 B+ Captain America: The First Avenger
25845 07/30/2011 B Cowboys and Aliens

I think the best of the bunch was Harry Potter. I remember when the Academy made Lord of the Rings: Return of the King its Best Picture. I thought they were paying tribute to the whole trilogy. I wonder if they will do the same thing with the last Harry Potter film by honoring it but again paying tribute to the whole franchise.