



**NOTES FROM THE
UNDERGROUND
JULY 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 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 July meeting will be held at Elizabeth and Virginia Knauel's house. The Video Party will be held at Erika Frensley's house.

July Birthdays

❖ Sanjay Mediwala July 28

Editor's Announcement

Due to the rising costs of postage, we are changing to sending out newsletters electronically. If you want a paper newsletter, please email the editor and you will be mailed a newsletter paper newsletter, please email me (Erika Frensley). The PDF of each newsletter is also posted on the Several Unlimited website.

Club News

Message from the President

Jamie Ritchey

Sorry I didn't get a President's message in last month. I claim exhaustion and senior memory as an excuse. But it's a new month and a new message.

MediaWest was a blast for me. I didn't attend any panels, but the vid contest and dealer's room are my favorite activities anyway. The vid contest was excellent as usual, but ours at Revelcon is its equal in quality and talent. There were fewer vids this year, but just as enjoyable, with Supernatural dominating to the point of overkill. The dealer's room was just as big as in the past, but it didn't seem to have the frenetic activity that it had before. It has been discussed here before that zines just don't seem to have the grip on fandom they used to.

I've added a screened-in back porch to my house that is really nice. I'd love to show it off at a meeting.

Website Improvements

We've got quite a few changes to the club website:

❖ **Several Unlimited FanFic Archive**

Spotlighting the writing from members, the FanFic archive contains stories by Several Unlimited members. If you have a story you want to submit, send it to webmaster@severalunlimited.com, with the following information: title, author name you want it posted under, rating, Fandom, and a description.

❖ **Obscure Shows List**

Do you have a show you'd love to find, but no one else seems to have heard of it? Post a message on the Obscure Shows List. Even better, check out the list to see if you have shows that people are looking for!

❖ **Newsletters now posted as HTML and PDF**

Club newsletters are now posted in HTML and PDF on the website.

Upcoming Events

Star Wars: Where Science Meets Imagination, 6/9–9/3/07

Margaret McNickle

Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, 1501 Montgomery Street,

Fort Worth, Texas 76107.

It combines costumes, artwork, film clips, documentary footage, and props from the movies with real world robotics and transportation. Two test labs let visitors build and test speeders and robots.

Fort Worth is as close to Houston as this exhibit gets, so plan on an overnight trip. Package prices including the Star Wars exhibit are \$15.00 (without IMAX film), or \$20.00 (includes IMAX). I would go for the full package.

September 3rd is the last day, and advance purchase is recommended. You can call: 817-255-9540 or go online (48 hours in advance) <http://www.fwmuseum.org/>.

I think this would be a good trip for Several this year. Two or more fans could share a hotel room and get the cost down to something reasonable.

Conestoga 11, July 20-22, 2007

Oklahoma's largest literary science fiction & fantasy con
<http://www.sftulsa.org/>

Radisson Tulsa, HWY 169 & 41st St.
10918 E. 41st Street
Tulsa, OK 74146

- ❖ **GOH: Laurell K. Hamilton**
- ❖ **Artist GOH: John Picacio**
- ❖ **Toastmaster: Elizabeth Moon**
- ❖ **Fan GOHs: Richard & Michelle Zellich**
- ❖ **Special 1632 GOH: Eric Flint**

Art Show, Writers' Conference, Dealers' Room, Short Film Contest, Gaming, Filksinging, Author Readings, Masquerade, Charity Auction, Panels, Podcasts, and Penguin Playhouse Theatre! Of course, this is only some of the many activities and events we have planned.

Conestoga is proud to be host to 1632 Minicon 6. The 1632 fans have been gathering annually at the site of the Ring of Fire for five years. This year, the fans plan a trip to Germany to visit the landing site. Meanwhile the US is not forgotten and the US 1632 minicon will move to Tulsa, Oklahoma in an alternate programming track at Conestoga.

For more information write:

Conestoga, Inc.

PO Box 700776
Tulsa, OK 74170-0776
Or send email to conestoga@sftulsa.org

ArmadilloCon 29, August 10-12, 2007

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

Doubletree Hotel North
6505 N. IH-35
Austin, TX 78752

- ❖ **GOH: Louise Marley**
- ❖ **Artist GOH: Gary Lippincott**
- ❖ **Editor GOH: Sharyn November**
- ❖ **Fan GOH: Patty Wells**
- ❖ **Toastmaster: Howard Waldrop**

Panels, Art Show, Gaming, Charity, Writer's Workshop, Dealer's Room, and more!

ArmadilloCon is a literary science fiction convention held annually in Austin. The primary focus of ArmadilloCon is literary science fiction, but that's not all we do -- we also pay attention to art, animation, science, media, and gaming.

For more information, write:

ArmadilloCon 29
P.O. Box 27277
Austin, TX 78755
Or send email to dillochair@armadillocon.org

Realms Con August 24-26, 2007

<http://www.realmscon.com/>

Omni Corpus Christi Hotel Bayfront Tower
900 North Shoreline Blvd., Corpus Christi, Texas 78401
Phone: (361) 887-1600, Fax: (361) 887-6715

Anime Music Video Contest, Anime Karaoke Contest, Anime Bikini Cosplay Contest, Cosplay Contest, Lisa Furukawa Ray Concert, Scavenger Hunt, Lingerie, Swimwear, & Evening Gown Model Walk, Rave, Hall Cosplay, Vic Mignogna Presents FULLMETAL FANTASY (A Realms Con Exclusive), Dead Texas (A Realms Con Exclusive), 24 Hour Game Rooms (With Your Favorite Tabletop Games, Video Games,

and Tournaments), 24 Hour Movie Rooms (Anime & Japanese Horror), Question And Answer Panels With Anime Celebrities

For more information, write:

Realms Con

4730 Sea Island Drive

Corpus Christi, TX 78413

Or call 361-658-7446

Or send email to info@realmscon.com

Re/Max Ballunar Liftoff Festival August 24-26, 2007

NASA Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas

Visit this exciting and educational family-oriented event at NASA/Johnson Space Center and enjoy hot air balloon competitions, evening balloon glows, skydiving exhibitions, commercial exhibits, concession booths, food from local restaurants, arts & crafts exhibits, entertainment and various aviation equipment displays.

Ballunar Liftoff Festival, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Its mission is to help the public learn about aviation and space exploration, and to sponsor and fund educational activities that encourage young people to learn about aviation and space and to study mathematics and the sciences.

News and Reviews

Fred Saberhagen, 1930-June29, 2007

From Locus Online

SF and fantasy writer **Fred Saberhagen**, born 1930, died June 29, 2007, at the age of 77. He began publishing in 1961 with short stories in *Galaxy* and *If* magazines, and published collection **Berserker** in 1967, first in a series about interstellar killing machines programmed to destroy all life. Saberhagen's 60+ books also included the Empire of the East sequence, beginning with **The Broken Lands** (1968), the Dracula sequence, beginning with **The Dracula Tape** (1975), and two books co-written with Roger Zelazny, **Coils** (1981) and **The Black Throne** (1990). His last book was **Ardneh's Sword** (Tor, 2006).

The family will announce a date for a Memorial Celebration later this year. Donations would be appreciated to Doctors without Borders, Catholic Relief, SFWA Emergency Medical Fund, and John 23rd Catholic

Church in Albuquerque.

ApolloCon 2007 Reviews

My trip to Apollo Con 2007

by Parul Mediwala

The first time I heard about role-playing games was when my husband, Sanjay, and I were dating. I still remember how Sanjay went into vivid detail about the game, and it left me wondering whether he would beam me into this sci-fi world he spoke about. Well, he did! Since March, I've been joining Dee, Erika, Anita, Karen, Margaret and Sanjay in thier bi-weekly adventures. At first, I wasn't sure how to proceed with my character. However, as time went on, each adventure seemed to get more exciting, and I was beginning to understand the game. I also attended a Japanese anime film party, hosted by Erika and Dee. If role-playing and anime was fun, I wondered what else science fiction was about. And then, one day:

"Let's go to ApolloCon!," suggested Sanjay, as we planned our to-do's for June. Three years ago, I would have scratched my head and thought ApolloCon was the latest planet to be discovered, however, thanks to Sanjay, I was aware of what "cons" were all about and we jotted down June 22-24/ ApolloCon in our calendar. Unfortunately, he wasn't able to make it, so I ventured off han-solo to my first convention on Sunday, ready to have a great time. As the celebrated science fiction author, Philip K. Dick, once wrote, "This is an illusion. Make good use of your time, buddy boy."

Upon registering, I was steered toward the souvenir shop, where I met Dee and Erika. Now, I had a dungeon master and a hobbit, respectively, to help me navigate this island of sci-fi movies, book readings, ethnic demonstrations, art shows, and on and on! I learned about filking and picked up a Tom Scott CD and an ApolloCon tshirt. Just when I thought I was healthy and ready to leave the souvenir room, I was faced with disease and bacteria. Not just one, but many. There were stuffed diseases on sale! Everything from furry white and red blood cells to black, leathery polio and dusty red salmonella. I ended up taking the fork and knife-studded salmonella home and placed him in the kitchen where he's made himself at home.

The Art Show featured fresh and original works of art. There was jewelry, photo art, paintings and mini sculptures. Having only 15 minutes to shop

before it closed down, I quickly toured the gallery, and settled on a beautiful piece entitled "The Lemon Tree". It's a picture of a lemon tree, but when examined closely, one can notice graceful, mythical creatures perched on the tree limbs, reflecting the blossoms around them. Finally, I had found something meditative to place in our guest bathroom!

Then, it was off to the sari demonstration. The sari is a woven piece of fabric, worn like a toga (draped), and is one of the most comfortable clothes to wear, if worn properly. The presenter of the workshop wore an orange sari, with a glittering gold border, paired with gold shoes, and an auspicious bindi (decorative and adhesive dot) on her forehead. Three clever ladies had brought their own saris for practice. The presenter took us step by step through the process. There was a lot of turning around, tying, folding and pleating. The audience learned three ways to wear a sari, and places in Little India (Hillcroft and Southwest Freeway) to buy them. I think everyone in the room left feeling a little more comfortable about wearing nine yards of shimmering, colorful cloth to their next convention or masquerade!

At the end of the day, I wish I had come on Friday and spent the whole weekend.. like any new place, there's so much to do, and so little time. We might be setting our sights on a convention in Austin this coming August...

ApolloCon Review

by Dee Beetem

Apollocon really seems to be taking hold as Houston's general SF convention. The dealers' room was small but enticing. I managed to limit my purchases to few books, first and foremost being 'Brave New Words'—a dictionary of SF terms that have become part of the English language. (What, you thought NASA invented 'spacesuit'?)

Panels are Apollocon's strong suit. As a fanfic writer who doesn't expect to go pro, I enjoyed hearing John Moore say at one writing panel, "Writing novels is my hobby. When you create a quilt, nobody asks you, 'When are you going to quit your job and make quilts for a living?' I could never make the money as a writer that I do as an engineer."

My favorite panel was 'A Long Time Ago, In a Theatre Near You', in which two of my old friends Erika Frensley and Margaret McNickle reminisced about how the Star Wars movies affected their lives thirty years ago in the wilds of El Paso, Texas. It's staggering to realize that I

might never have met either one of them if it hadn't been for George Lucas.

On Sunday our new Several Parul Mediwala showed up at the con. In the dealers' room, I helped talk her into buying a disease germ plushie for her husband (Sanjay, a fellow Several, is a doctor.) She finally settled on 'Salmonella.' Later we both went to the 'Sari Demo'—it's too bad that Parul didn't bring one of hers to show off. Maybe at her next con...

I got the impression from time to time that Apollocon could have used a few more gophers (couldn't we all?) Is there any chance that the Several might be interested in gophering as a club project? Unlike other convention jobs, it wouldn't stretch out before or after the con, and it could help to connect us to other Houston fans.

Websites of the Month

Several Unlimited

www.severalunlimited.com

I'm spotlighting our own website this month. Come check out the Several Unlimited FanFic Archive and the Obscure Shows list.

Calendar and Maps

July 13, 2007	Several Unlimited Meeting Elizabeth and Virginia Knauel 13438 Harpers Bridge Dr 713-937-3306
June 29, 2007	Video Party Erika Frensley 4701 Kinglet St 713-729-7211

