



# LIBERTYCON 17

JULY 23-25 - CLEVELAND, TENNESSEE

GUESTS OF HONOR  
LARRY NIVEN  
JERRY POURNELLE

ARTIST GUEST OF HONOR  
STEVE HICKMAN

MASTER OF CEREMONIES  
DAVID M. WEBER



# LibertyCon 17 Convention Rules

**ATTENDEES 17 YEARS OLD AND UNDER:** All convention attendees who are 17 years of age or younger must be accompanied by a **LEGAL GUARDIAN**. A Legal Guardian is a person 21 years of age or older who will take financial and legal responsibility for the minor and will sign for each minor person for which he/she is responsible. A parent or Legal Guardian must accompany children under 7 years of age at all times.

**BADGES:** Badges must be worn in plain sight above the waist at all times.

**BATHING:** Remember, **"If in doubt, take a bath!"** Your fellow attendees will appreciate your courteous actions.

**DRINKING AGE:** To get a drinking badge you must produce a **VALID** military ID or Drivers License with your picture on it to prove that you are at least 21 years of age. Minors caught drinking at LibertyCon will be hung, drawn, quartered, and thrown out of the convention. Also, **WE WILL CONTACT YOUR PARENTS AND YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO FUTURE LIBERTYCONS!**

**EJECTION FROM THE CONVENTION:** If you are ejected from LibertyCon 17 because of violation of the convention rules or Tennessee State Law, your attendance fees will not be refunded.

**HOTEL RULES:** THE HOLIDAY INN DOES NOT ALLOW DRINKING OR EATING IN THE HOTEL CONVENTION CENTER. ALSO, YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO CARRY DRINKS INTO THE CONVENTION CENTER.

**LOST BADGE POLICY:** If you lose your badge at the convention, you will have to purchase another one at the full admission price of \$45. We are sorry to take this rough stance, but incidents with people (Not Fans) purchasing a replacement badge to give/sell to a friend at a reduced price only increases the cost of the convention for real fans and this is the only way we can curb it.

**SPECIAL MEDICAL NEEDS:** If you have a medical condition, please ask the registration staff for a sticker for the back of your badge. This sticker should contain the nature of your medical condition and any special steps to be taken in an emergency, including the name and phone number of the person to contact should the need arise

**WEAPONS POLICY:** All weapons and models of weapons must be "Peace Bonded" by one of our security staff before they may be worn with your costume or normal wearing apparel. This weapons policy will be strictly enforced.



## Welcome to LibertyCon 17 the Titanic Adventure.

By Titanic, I don't mean how big the convention is the year. I mean that it almost didn't find a safe harbor to dock in. Because of circumstances totally beyond our control, we lost our hotel in East Ridge [Get a few drinks into me this weekend and I'll tell you the whole story.] and scrambled around for almost two months hunting for a new property. As you can see, Chattanooga was full up and we were lucky enough to find "The Holiday Inn on the Hill" here in Cleveland. I think y'all will enjoy the. Just look out the window and take in the beautiful view.

We are very proud to bring the writing team of Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle as our Co-Literary Guests of Honor. I have had the good fortune of knowing these two esteemed authors for over 20 years and have been reading and enjoying their work for more years than that.

Our Artist Guest of Honor is Steve Hickman. Steve is one of the leading artists in the field of SF&F and has 350 book covers to his credit. His artist creations have been used as cover work for a number of contemporary writers. You ought to take a few minutes to check out his artwork in the Art Show.

Our last featured guest is our Master of Ceremonies, David M. Weber. When writing about David, I have to be careful. He is a good friend of mine, but, I can say that he is a very successful. David and I have a whole lot in common - he and I are both voracious readers and we are both obsessed with beating each other at Killer Cutthroat Spades. ♣

I could keep on going down the list talking about all pros attending the convention this year but I would surely get in trouble because I would forget to mention someone. Just look for the blue badges at the convention and see whom you can identify. LibertyCon is very fortunate to have a large number of professional friends and I want to thank all of them for coming.

What can you expect to see this year? At least two tracks of programming with Main Programming in the Tennessee Room on Friday and Saturday and in the Bradley Room on Sunday. The 2nd Track of Programming will be in the Garden Room behind the hotel's restaurant on Friday and Saturday and in the Ocoee Room on Sunday. A 3rd Track of Programming will be held at the grassy area under the canopies. Check the programming schedule in the center of this book to see who, what, when, where, and why.

Friday and Saturday, the Ocoee Room will have open gaming in the back, videos will be shown in the front, and tables will be set up for the Spades. Please check the schedule on the front door of the Ocoee Room for gaming tournaments' times. In the Halle Room, across from the restaurant entrance, will be a terrific Art Show with some of the best artwork that will appear at a southern convention.



Because of the lack of function space, we had to move the dealers over into rooms 102 through 111 just off the lobby. This excellent Huckster's Alley will delight your buying needs.

We rented the largest suite in the hotel and turned it into our Consuite. Room 208 will be the site for your gastronomic delight and is located just above the lobby.

Once again we will be dancing to the weeeeeee hours to the best boogie around in the Tennessee Room. Even though food and drinks are not allowed in the convention area, feel free to take your beverages out to the LibertyCon Green area near the pool. This is a great place for guests to relax and to meet their friends.

This is your weekend and we are here to help you relax and enjoy yourselves. But before I let you go, let me point out the most important part of our convention. OUR STAFF! Every member of the staff from the Chairman on down to the newest member pay the same membership as you do. They have volunteered their time, effort and energy to bring you one of the best cons in the south. Please take a moment to thank them. As I said many times before, without these wonderful people, there would not be a LibertyCon. They are all just simply MARVELOUS!

**NOW, LETS PARTEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!**



# EMPIRE OF MAN

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I understand that the game is being printed now, and will be available by the end of October 2004.



Larry Niven



Larry Niven (Laurence van Cott Niven) was born on April 30th 1938, in Los Angeles, California. In 1956 he entered the California Institute of Technology, only to flunk out a year and a half later after discovering a bookstore jammed with used science-fiction magazines. Larry finally graduated with a B.A. in mathematics (and a minor in psychology) from Washburn University, Kansas, in 1962, and completed one year of graduate work in mathematics at UCLA before dropping out to write.

From his first publication, *The Coldest Place*, he set his mark on the US sf field, winning four short-fiction HUGOS, and both Hugo and NEBULA in 1971 for *Ringworld*, a capstone title in his seminal Tales of Known Space sequence, which he began with "The Coldest Place" and has added to ever since. In the novels and stories of this sequence, and in some of his other work, he was seen for some time as hard SF's last best hope; and there can be no doubt that hard-science fiction writers dominant in the 1980s and some of those reaching for eminence in the 1990s owe much to the scope of Mr. Niven's inventiveness, the sense he conveys of technological ingenuity as being ultimately beneficial, and his cognitive exuberance.

Perhaps the most famous of the **Known Space** titles is "**Ringworld**" which earned Larry both the Hugo and the Nebula awards in 1970 and the Australian Ditmar Award in 1972. Ringworld features the alien Puppeteers, who are fleeing the explosion at the Galaxy's core which will within 20,000 years make most of the galaxy uninhabitable, and who enlist human and Kzinti aid to explore the eponymous **BIG DUMB OBJECT** — a million miles wide, 600 million miles around — which circles a distant star. This ring, created by Pak ancestors, houses much life and serves as a final home for Teela Brown, whose genetically programmed good luck is the culmination of a long and secret Puppeteer breeding programme; the inevitability of her good fortune might have significantly reduced the chance of LN's writing any successful Known Space stories set after her maturity, which is perhaps why she is killed off in the sequel. The Ringworld story continued in 1980 with "**The Ringworld Engineers**" and then again in 1996 with "**The Ringworld Throne**". Larry is currently

working on the fourth novel in the series "**Ringworld's Children**" which hopefully should be ready for publication soon. The movie rights to Ringworld were sold to Robert Mandell and despite persistent rumors, of directors producers and actors being assigned to the project fans are still waiting for the official "go ahead" for the movie of the novel.

In the interstices of this joyfully complicated galactic structure, humanity enters space, solves problems in **BIOLOGY** and **GENETIC ENGINEERING**, benefits from local **TELEPORTATION** and the discovery of a **FASTER-THAN-LIGHT** hyperdrive for interstellar travel, copes with **CORPSICLES** and Organlegging and a myriad other new challenges, and by the beginning of the fourth millennium has reached a mature plateau.

Mr. Niven has written several landmark novels with longtime friend and collaborator Jerry Pournelle, including *The Mote in God's Eye*, an outstanding first-contact novel, its sequel, *The Gripping Hand*, *Lucifer's Hammer*, an excellent comet-collides-with-Earth novel, and *Footfall*, a great alien invasion novel. Other collaborations with Pournelle include *Oath of Fealty* and *Inferno*; with Pournelle and Steven Barnes he wrote *The Legacy of Heorot* and its sequel *Beowulf's Children*. Mr. Niven collaborated with Jerry Pournelle and Michael Flynn on *Fallen Angels*

Larry Niven will perhaps be best remembered for the Tales of Known Space, the most energetic future history ever written, for his bright and profligate technophilia, and for his astonishingly well conceived aliens.

### Larry Niven's Books

#### Known Space

Ringworld  
The Ringworld Engineers  
The Ringworld Throne  
A Gift From Earth  
Protector  
The World of Ptavvs  
The Patchwork Girl

#### Non Known Space

The Integral Trees  
The Smoke Ring  
A World out of Time  
The Magic Goes Away  
Destiny's Road



## Jerry Pournelle

by Larry Niven



Jerry Pournelle was the core of space medicine back when it was being formed. It may be that my father got twelve extra years of life because of Jerry's work with astronauts. The non-invasive machinery that surrounded Dad after his heart attack was descended from widgetry designed to monitor an astronaut at distances of hundreds or thousands of miles. I had not yet met Jerry when Dad died.

In 1970 Jerry tracked me down and proposed a collaboration. "I'll make you rich and famous." "I'm already rich." "I'll get rich, you get famous." Ringworld was selling well by industry standards, but Jerry thought we could do better. He was right.

In the late '70s he and Tony Pietsch put together a computer system dedicated to the needs of writers. When they had it perfected, Jerry ordered me to pay Tony to duplicate his system. I bought two sets. I figured Marilyn, who was a computer tech before I married her, could have the spare, and it was a source for spare parts whenever something went wrong. Yes, computers were that flaky then.

You can imagine the rumors. Pournelle and Niven have a system that will write books without help.

I have watched him generate an ecological niche out of pure nothing. Jerry created the User's Column for Byte Magazine. It gave him the opportunity to play with computers and be paid for it. He's been Chaos Manor for decades now.

In 1980 he made me another proposition. "Reagan's going to be elected," he said, "and his Science Advisor was one of my best students." If we could write a policy paper, we could put it in front of the President, guaranteed. We needed a place to hold a gathering, and Jerry suggested my house. Marilyn was willing.

We called it the Citizens Advisory Council for a National Space Policy.

Thus, over four weekends in the 1980s, fifty or sixty invited guests and volunteers formulated Space Defense Initiative, the plan that drove the Soviet Union bankrupt. The Cold War was won by a science fiction story written mostly at my house in Tarzana, edited and final-drafted by Jerry Pournelle.

Last weekend we watched a rocket ship take off and land. SpaceShipOne performed almost as expected. Thing is, I was dithering about going. Jerry had a motel room with a spare bed, and the X-COR building (where they're building another rocket ship) would serve as a home base. I went. It's a character flaw, this need to be persuaded to do something wonderful.

Research for BURNING TOWER was like that. When we're going a long way,

Jerry does the driving. We drove all the way to Chaco Canyon from LA, because Chaco Canyon is our best guess for the origin of the Aztecs. We stopped at the Petrified Forest because it's magical.

When we met, Jerry was writing the science column for Twin Circles, a Catholic magazine with a circulation of two million. He took me along to interview Robert Forward. Bob had called Jerry to tell him that Jerry had beaten Bob into print on the subject of gravity storms around a black hole. ("He Fell Into a Dark Hole", by Jerry Pournelle.) That was how I met the late great Robert Forward, and how I first heard about mini (then "quantum") black holes.

When Stephen Hawking changed his mind about quantum black holes, he lectured on the subject at Cal Tech. Jerry took me along. Hawking was saying weird things. Black holes evaporate. Anything at all can be emitted by a mini black hole. "Lovecraft should be writing this article," I said.

We used to get together and plan books over coffee and brandy. Today we plan while we hike. It's healthier. Jerry theorizes that hiking pumps blood to the brain, temporarily increasing our intelligence.

God knows it's worth a try.

—Larry Niven—

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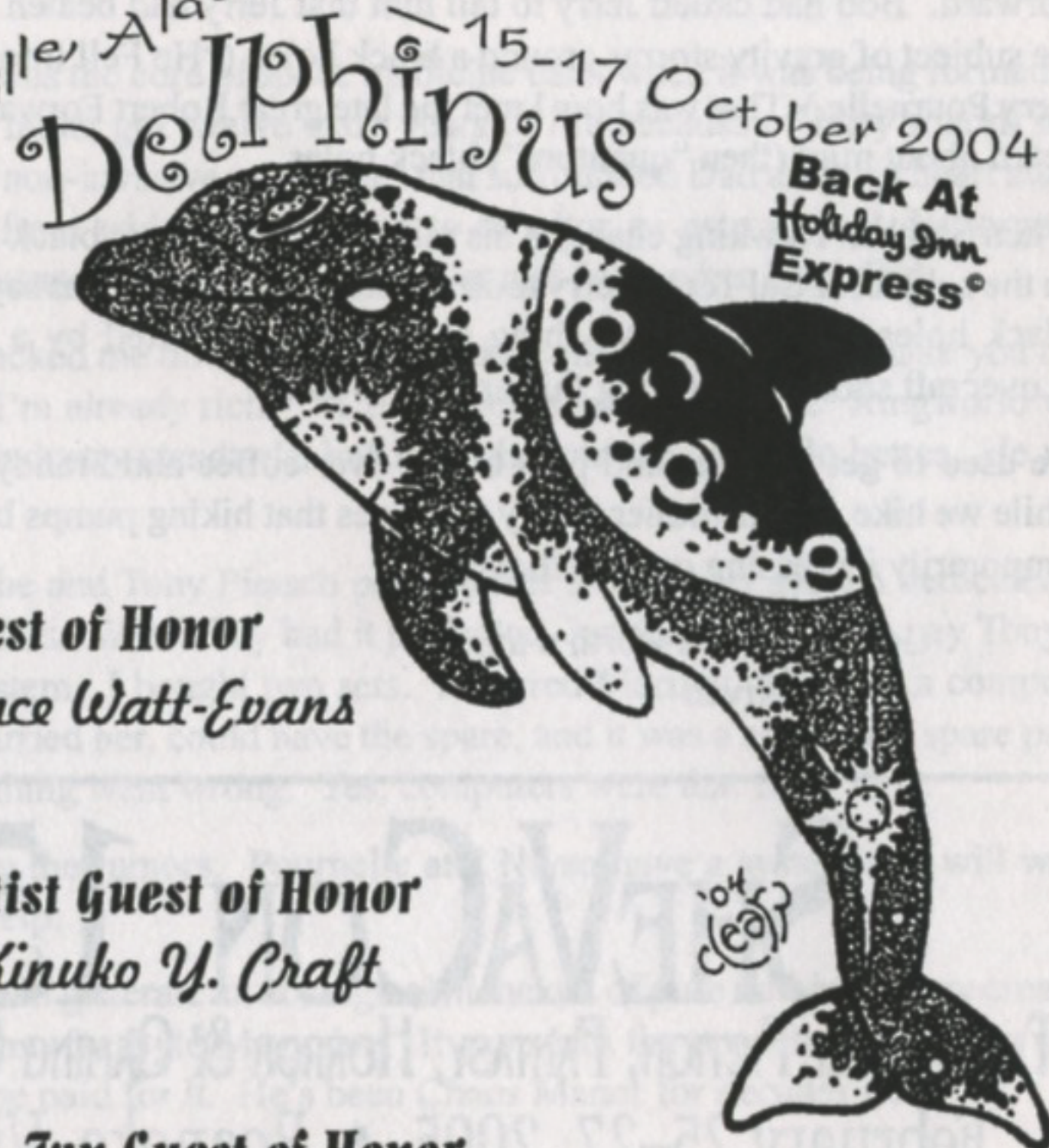
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# June 2004



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## PROGRAM SCHEDULE

<b>Friday</b>		
<u>Time</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Panel</u>
Art Show and ConSuite open at 3:00 pm		
6:00	Tennessee	<b>OPENING CEREMONIES</b> Come on in and meet everybody. Time to see what your favorite authors and artist really look like.
	Halle	<b>ART SHOW CLOSES</b>
6:30	Tennessee	<b>MASS AUTOGRAPH SESSION</b> Get all of those first editions signed.
7:00	Tennessee	<b>GETTING PUBLISHED FOR THE 1<sup>ST</sup> TIME</b> Discover the tricks of making that first sale. Toni Weisskopf., Stephen Cobb, Elizabeth Barrette
8:00	Tennessee	<b>THE CARE AND FEEDING OF PROFESSIONALS</b> While the authors work all day setting up new universes somebody has to make sure the check gets to the electric company. The author's support staff (families) tell all. Mrs. Niven, Mrs. Pournelle, Peggy Sue Cobb Gregory
	Garden Room	<b>READING BY SHARON GREEN</b>
9:00	Tennessee	<b>WHERE WILL SCIENCE TAKE US NEXT</b> The airplane, the water bed, and the cell phone were first discussed in SF. What can we look for in the near future? Dr. Pournelle, Greg Matloff, Travis Taylor
	Garden Room	<b>READING BY STEPHEN COBB</b>
10:00	Tennessee	<b>DANCE 'till ??</b> Its been a long day but the night is still young. Come on out and try your boogie shoes.
	Garden Room	<b>READING BY DAVID M. WEBER</b>
	Halle	<b>ART SHOW CLOSED</b>
11:00	Ocoee	<b>FIRST ROUND OF SPADES</b>
3:00	Consuite	<b>CONSUIE CLOSES</b>
<b>SATURDAY</b>		
Art Show and ConSuite open at 10:00 am		
10:00	Bradley	<b>MAKE IT AND TAKE IT</b> playtime with the fabrics and tapes. Keep the ideas flowing
	Garden Room	<b>FUN SCIENCE WITH DR. LES</b> Aimed at the younger fans who want to discover how much fun science can really be.

11:00	Tennessee	<b>REAL CHARACTERS, NOT CARDBOARD CUTOUTS</b> What is the secret of bringing characters to life? Larry Niven, Stephen Cobb, Sharon Green
Noon	Tennessee	<b>STORIES OF THE PAST LEGENDS</b> Relive memories past Grand Masters of Science Fiction. Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle, Toni Weisskopf
	Garden Room	<b>MUNDANE PROBLEMS ON A SPACE COLONY</b> We all know "we have to have air" but what about the little things, like where do we put the garbage? Les Johnson, Greg Matloff, Travis Taylor
1:00	Tennessee	<b>GLORY OF GOD(S) IN THE HEAVENS RELIGION IN SPECULATIVE FICTION</b> From the fantasies to science fiction there have always been Gods. Elizabeth explains how religion in the fictional world changes from one area to another. Elizabeth Barrette
	Bradley	<b>DAVID AND LORI DETRICK SLIDE SHOW</b> Past LibertyCon Artist Guests of Honor show some of their works.
	Garden Room	<b>ADVANCES IN GEEK-DOM: DAY JOBS WHICH ARE OFFICIALLY GEEKY.</b> Can you imagine a world without computers and the people who program them?
	Art Show	<b>WALK THROUGH WITH STEVE HICKMAN</b> One of the most important parts of an artist is his eye, he must be able to see art in a way that most of us can not. Walk with our Artist Guest of Honor and let him tell you about the pieces in the art show.
	Outside Tent	<b>AN HOUR WITH SHARON GREEN</b> Mrs Green has written everything from fantasy to romance to hard science fiction.
2:00	Tennessee	<b>HOW DO I GET RID OF THIS GUY? WORKING WITH ANOTHER AUTHOR</b> What happens when authors become too well known as a pair? Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle, David Weber, Eric Flint
	Bradley	<b>CHILDREN'S SF, BOOKS WHICH WE ARE OVERLOOKING</b> Most SF readers started reading it as a young child. Why have we put the childrens books to the side? Klion Newell
	Garden Room	<b>AN HOUR WITH STEVE ANTCHAK</b> Mr. Antezak will be showing his new science fiction short movie.
	Outside Tent	<b>DSC BID FOR ATLANTA PARTY</b>



- 3:00 Bradley STEVE HICKMAN SLIDE SHOW  
Relax and enjoy an hour of Mr. Hickman's beautiful art.
- Friday Garden Room SAVING OF STAR WARS MOVIE DEBUT  
New Movie dealing with the Star Wars universe.
- 4:00 Bradley IS EDITING REALLY NECESSARY?  
Mark Twain once said he shot at an editor and hit a publisher but his heart was in the right place. Why do editors chage our novels?  
Toni Weisskopf, Elizabeth Barrette
- Outside Tent READING BY ERIC FLINT
- Halle ART SHOW CLOSED
- 5:00 Tennessee BANQUET The Theme is the 70s 'till 7 pm  
Lets do the time warp and go back to the 70s for the guest of honor speeches.
- Garden Room PROBLEMS OF MAKING A LOW BUDGET MOVIE  
Making a motion picture on a limited budget.
- 7:00 Tennessee SET UP FOR ART AUCTION
- Garden Room RAISING A FAMILY IN FANDOM  
What extra problems (or fewer problems) do parents have when they expose their children to fandom? David & Lori Detrick
- Outside Tent HANKS SLICE 'N DICE DEMO  
These people are professionals so don't try this at home - or at least not until you get home.
- 8:00 Tennessee ART AUCTION  
Art for your office, home, birthdays or Christmas...at great prices
- 9:00 Tennessee PRE-JUDGING FOR MASQUERADE  
Surprising the audience is great, but not it's not nice to fool the judges (or the Masquerade head).
- 10:00 Tennessee MASQUERADE  
Come see the beautiful costumes.
- 11:00 Tennessee DANCE 'till ??  
Its DISCO night so don't even think about going to bed. Come party with us like its still the pre-Reagan years.
- Bradley BAEN SLIDE SHOW  
Baen Books editor, Toni Weisskopf, gives us a look at what's "Coming Soon" from Baen.
- By the Pool WEIRD SCIENCE PANEL  
Our Mad Scientist, Dr. Johnson, and his friends explain where science ends and fantasy begins.
- 3:00 Consuite CONSUITE CLOSES

**SUNDAY**

- Art Show and ConSuite open at 10:00 am
- 10:00 Bradley FURRY FANDOM: NEW AREA TO EXPLORE  
Fandom is growing and expanding, but, who are these strange creatures and why do they have tails?
- Halle ART SHOW open for 2 hours only for artist teardown and pickup of purchased art work
- 11:00 Bradley CON ECONOMICS 101  
There's a reason why most cons limit the number of guests and the goodies in the con suite. Money. How much does it cost to run a con? Bring your questions and suggestions for running a con
- Noon Bradley WHEN WILL THE FUTURE GET HERE?  
I still want my flying car and robot maid!!! When will some of the toys we were suppose to have in the future finally get here?  
Travis Taylor and Greg Matlock
- Halle ART SHOW CLOSED
- 1:00 Bradley WHAT IS A WORLD CON & WHY GO  
reps. from different bids pontificate
- 2:00 Bradley BITCH AT TIMMY  
Tell us what you think we did right, or wrong. The only way to make the con better is to advise us.
- 3:00 TH-TH-THAT'S ALL FOLKS!!!  
The con's over, everything's closed, go home now - but come back next year!

**Gamming Schedule**

Friday Afternoon	Open Gaming & Rifts
Friday Night	D&D 3rd Edition (NC15)
Saturday Morning	Open gaming
Sat. Afternoon	Open gaming & Vampire
Sat. Night	D&D (NC15)
Sunday	CLOSED

Games are subject to change due to supply and demand!

No Children under 12 allowed without parent or guardian present at all times.

Games are first come first serve - pregened charactures - GDM rules.





## David M. Weber

from Fantafiction.com

David M. Weber was born in Cleveland, Ohio and studied military and diplomatic history at college. He was drawn to science fiction at an early age, seeing it as “the technical civilization’s fairy tale” and cites his early influences as His Beam Piper, Keith Laumer and Robert Heinlein. David Weber was one of the most prolific SF authors of the last decade and is the author of over 20 novels which include the cult Honor Harrington series and the epic fantasies Oath of Swords and The War God’s Own. In 1999 he suffered a series of misfortunes which were like something out of a science fiction novel! He caught viral pneumonia, was the victim of a car crash, suffered a cancer scare, badly ruptured a shoulder and was then invaded by the pneumonia again. David is looking forward to a more auspicious new millennium and has just finished the final draft of a new novel, Heirs of Empire. He lives in Greenville, South Carolina. David Weber on Military SF

“Something that Steve White and I feel strongly about is that sanitized military science fiction is in many respects the worst form of pornography: military fiction in which people are hit by high powered weapons and either die instantly and cleanly or suffer minor wounds, and only the characters that you didn’t care a lot about were killed. I don’t agree with the thrust of a lot of Vietnam and post-Vietnam fiction, which is that all wars are of necessity sordid and somewhat corrupt processes. I do think that it is important to realize that wars are ugly and vile and that there better be a damned good reason for getting involved in one. Because the price for somebody is going to be very, very high. It is the responsibility of the author to show that war is not just an exciting thing. There are two ways to impress the reader with the reality of what is going on in war. One is to hit him with the tremendous emotional and physical overload that comes at a front line soldier. The other is to adopt a minimalist style, which is what I try to do, where, rather than detailing every splash of gore that comes along, you hit the reader with the occasional gory incident. I find this style more comfortable because I have been turned off by some of the splatter fiction.

While I don’t have any military experience myself, Steve served in the Navy during

Vietnam. As he put it to me one time, the really horrible thing about war is all of the conversations that you never finish. You’re talking to someone at breakfast and he goes out and never comes back. He didn’t say “I can hardly wait to see another Dodgers game in Brooklyn,” or “Gosh it’s great to be alive”: at which point in a World War II movie you know he’s going to be killed. One of the reasons that I kill a lot of the good people in my books is because, to me, the great tragedy of war is the destruction of so much human potential.”

### David Weber’s books

<b>ASSITI SHARDS</b>	<b>PRINCE ROGER</b>
1633	March Upcountry
<b>CROWN OF SLAVES</b>	March to the Sea
Crown of Slaves	March to the Stars
<b>DAHAK</b>	<b>STARFIRE</b>
Mutineer’s Moon	Insurrection
The Armageddon Inheritance	Crusade
Heirs of Empire	In Death Ground
<b>HONOR HARRINGTON</b>	The Shiva Option
On Basilisk Station	<b>WORLDS OF HONOR</b>
The Honor of the Queen	More Than Honor
The Short Victorious War	Worlds of Honor
Field of Dishonor	Changer of Worlds
Flag in Exile	The Service of the Sword
Honor Among Enemies	<b>STANDALONE NOVELS</b>
In Enemy Hands	Path of the Fury
Echoes of Honor	The Apocalypse Troll
Ashes of Victory	The Excalibur Alternative
War of Honor	<b>OMNIBUSES</b>
<b>OATH OF SWORDS</b>	Empire from the Ashes
Oath of Swords	<b>ANTHOLOGIES</b>
The War God’s Own	The Warmasters







## Steve Hickman: An Interview with SF's Fine Artist

by T.K.F. Weisskopf

I've worked with Steve in my capacity as an editor with Baen Books, and he's done some of my all-time favorites: *Sassinak*—the one I refer to as "The Mona Lisa of Science Fiction." The entire Man-Kzin Wars series, with fighting cats in cool armor. The one for *Hoka Hoka Hoka* by Poul Anderson & Gordon R. Dickson that is a pastiche of his own Man-Kzin Wars covers, with a cuddly teddy bear in the cool armor. *Fallen Angels*, with its swoosh and movement and perfectly integrated typography and art. Lately he's been doing intricate fantasy covers for Mercedes Lackey's collaborations with Rosemary Edghill. My favorite is the latest one, for *Mad Maudlin*, released in August 2003. The list goes on. Steve is a painter very conscious of geometry, as well as one with a firm sense of the romance and narrative strength of science fiction. And he's a science fiction reader and lover, too, as the interview below that I conducted via e-mail with him for Libertycon indicates. To find out more about Steve's artwork, check out *The Fantasy Art of Stephen Hickman* (Donning, 1989).

**TW:** How did you get your start in painting professionally?

**SH:** While I was doing T-shirt designs for a firm in Maryland, the shirt explosion, I was doing up some paintings to use as portfolio pieces. I took these around for awhile, until Neal Adams, a well-known Marvel Comics artist, was good enough to take the time to look through the work I had then, and recommend me to Charles Volpe at Ace Books, the outfit that published the Burroughs books with the outstanding covers by Roy Krenkel and Frank Frazetta. Charles bought the rights to one painting which was used on the cover of (for the reference of archaeologists) *lady of the bees* by Thomas Burnett Swann. Then there was a second one which had some green in it which was used on *The Green Millennium*. But my big break was an actual reprint which I got to read and do a cover for specially—*The Brain Stealers*, by Murray Leinster. I must have worked on that for months.

**TW:** Why did you pick sf in particular as the center of your career?

**SH:** Well, it was actually fantasy covers that compelled me to go into cover painting—the Burroughs covers I mentioned a few lines ago. I still regard these as among the best works of fantasy ever painted. I think my favorite of all time is the Krenkel cover for *The Mastermind of Mars*. But I started reading sf when I was about 12, and somewhere in there I got ahold of a copy of *Have Space Suit, Will Travel* by Robert A. Heinlein, and my life was changed forever. I've read a lot of sf since, but I still love that book with my other favorites in the field. When we moved to Northern Virginia, I happened to go to an exceptional high school, and I found all of Heinlein's books in the library, and read them immediately. This high school, incidentally, was where I received all of the useful artistic training I use in my work

now—Mr. Fletcher Proctor, a man of great integrity and ability, was the art teacher, and I took classes in the summer as well as during the regular school year. I ended up with so many extra school credits I could have skipped my senior year in high school and gone straight into partying through art school in Richmond, VA.

**TW:** Where do you think sf is going from here?

**SH:** That's up to the writers and moviemakers, for the most part. A lot of the best art goes into movies now, which is an anonymous way to make a living (unless you are a visually oriented director like James Cameron or Ridley Scott, in which case you are making moving paintings) (come to think of it, that's what cinematographers do for a living).

**TW:** What's it like balancing a career in the arts and a family?

**SH:** Now that's a trick—in the twenty-five years I've been married my wife has never learned not to interrupt me when I'm painting. But in a pinch I can always work at night, nyah-ha-ha. Come to think of it, I generally work a lot a night anyway, because I like to. I think it was the late Joe Orlando that defined a hack as an artist who hadn't worked all night in three years (so I'm safe for at least another three years).

**TW:** Who are your favorite authors? Artists or schools that've influenced you at different times in your career?

**SH:** Whoo, this will end up as a list of names—the guy in sf (ostensibly) that I'm really impressed with right now is Neal Stephenson. *Snowcrash* and *The Diamond Age* are brilliant sf books, but my favorite, *Cryptonomicon*, is more mainstream literature. The writers I'm most familiar with (through the medium of unabridged recordings) are authors like Patrick O'Brian and John LeCarre, Charles Dickens and Mark Twain, Harlan Ellison and Donald Westlake, Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler, Booth Tarkington and Georgette Heyer and Dorothy L. Sayers, Stephen Coonts and Dick Francis, Carl Hiaasen (this guy is truly a hoot), Robert Louis Stevenson and H.G. Wells, H.P. Lovecraft and the best fantasist of all time Clark Ashton Smith, H. Ryder Haggard and A. Merritt, and Robert E. Howard, and so many others that I will have to stop here for lack of space (including several books I have read which haven't been published yet)—the best of the stylists, in other words, which I have fairly well memorized by now. And *Cryptonomicon* features right up there at the top. Next in line is one of those that hasn't been printed yet, written by Larry Hama.

But in the mainstream sf genre, there are many authors and books that I can't do without—the Dune series (with the exception of the last two) by Frank Herbert, *The Mote in God's Eye* and *The Gripping Hand*, by Niven and Pournelle: these are milestones in sf. David Drake is always great, with a talent for taking sf into bizarre fantasy-nightmare situations. And Hal Colebatch, who has done some outstanding stories for the Man-Kzin wars series—and considering the fine level



of these stories this is a real distinction. Tolkien, of course—I've lost count of the times I've read the trilogy and *The Hobbit*. I've even read *The Silmarillion* twice. But this is another list I will have to simply stop writing for lack of space—I have a cold at the moment and can't think straight (that gives me an excuse for the time being), so I will just include Manly Wade Wellman, Orson Scott Card, E.E. Smith, Ray Bradbury, Tom Cool (my personal recommendation) and Kim Newman—and I reserve the right to add to this list when my cognitive enhancers kick in.

**TW:** Favorite of your own covers are....

**SH:** Here's another list—and I can feel your readers getting fidgety by now—so to keep is really short, maybe I can mention a few of the most rewarding or challenging ones—The *Farnham's Freehold* cover (Robert Heinlein, the most challenging author bar none I've ever done covers for), and *Expanded Universe* (same author)—the John the Balladeer cover (Manly Wade Wellman—and there's a story behind that one [note this will be available on the CD-ROM included in the first edition of *The Far Side of the Stars* by David Drake, November 2004]—*The Toxic Spell Dump* cover (Harry Turtledove—and it took me literally two tries to do this)—*The Dracula Tapes* cover (Fred Saberhagen), *The Cardmasters* cover—*Lacey and His Friends* (David Drake—and I spent five weeks on this one)—and the Man-Kzin wars covers. The tales of the Cthulhu mythos cover (for this cover I actually did a sculpture that I intended to take a photo of for the cover—an odd story behind what happened here, but it ended up as a painting). By the way, the Cthulhu statuette edition is sold out now. And not necessarily in that order, please note.



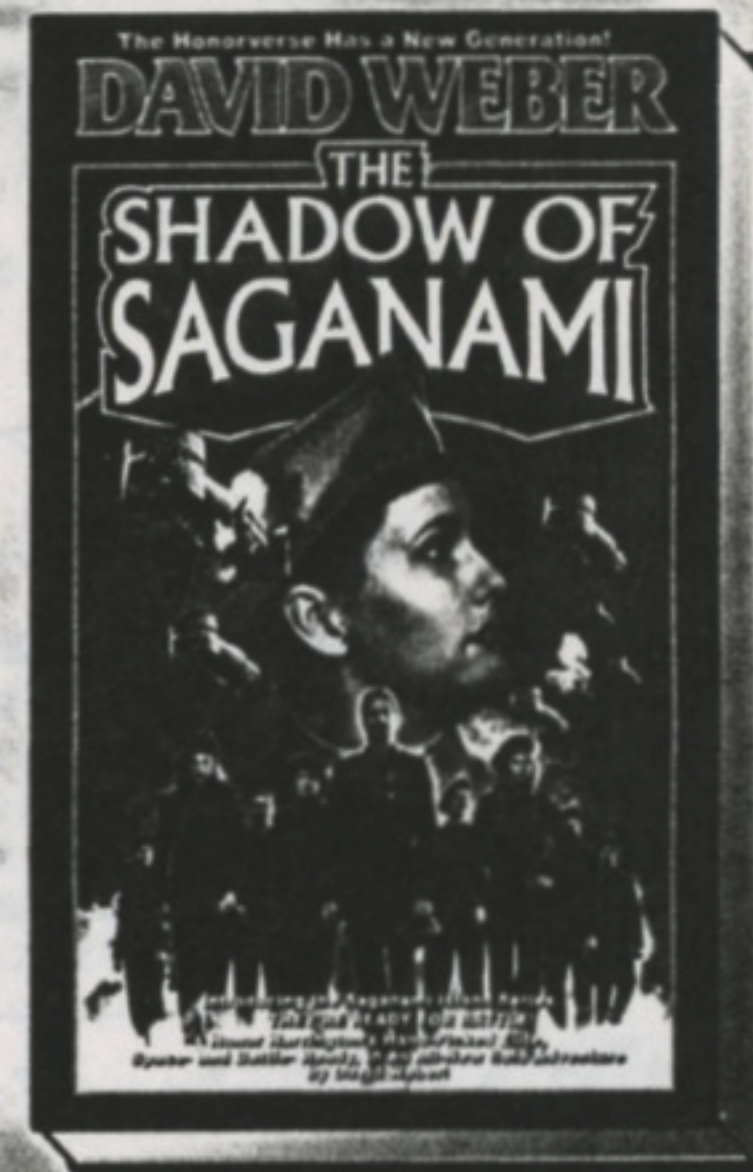
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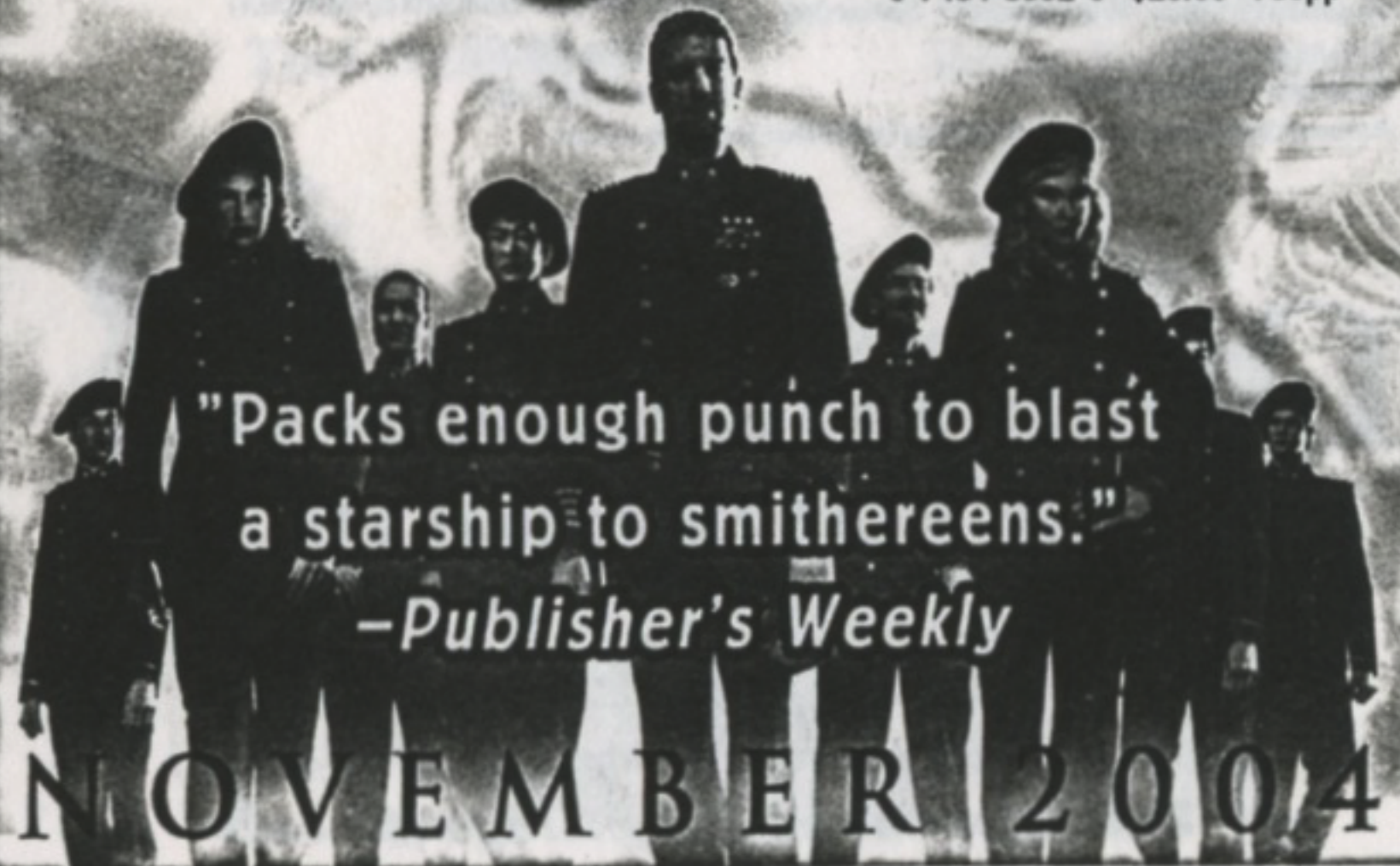
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