



The Ghostwriter is the official newsletter of the Great Lakes Association of Horror Writers.

Members news/sales/publications/etc. should be sent to Peggy Christie at peggy.christie@comcast.net

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The Ghostwriter

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The Other Side of Normal: A Message from the President

If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck and quacks like a duck; it's a duck, or so the saying goes. So when I read that Joe Hill was upset that his secret was out, I knew I had spotted a duck. For those of you that don't know, Joe Hill is the author of "Heart-Shaped Box," a tale about a washed up rock star who collects ghoulish artifacts. The story revolves around the rock stars latest acquisition: a suit rumored to be haunted. (For a review of "Heart-Shaped Box", see page 7) Oh, and his secret? Joe Hill happens to be Joseph Hillstrom King, the eldest son of Stephen King.

I can appreciate Hill's attempt at trying to make it on his own merits, but I think deep down, he wanted the world to know his true identity. Supposedly, the editor of "Heart-Shaped Box" also didn't know and his agent didn't even know up until two years ago. I guess these people never met Joe Hill. His dark hair and bushy beard is very reminiscent of Stephen King twenty years ago.

Maybe these people even made the referenced that he looked like the horror master, but never made the connection. Okay maybe. But the critics have made the connection between the writing of Hill and his father.

I have a theory and it goes like this: "Heart-Shaped Box" is being offered to publishers as a Joe Hill novel but the agent is telling the publishing houses that this is the son of Stephen King (What publishing house wouldn't love to have a new Stephen King on their list?). The novel, released in February, didn't do as well as the publisher hoped, so out comes the truth. And voila you have a New York Times Bestseller on your hands. At least that's my theory. It may not be true since it does seem that "Heart-Shaped Box" has been on the bestseller list since it's debut, but let me ask something, what first time novelist, especially a horror novelist, get his first book

published in hardcover and reviewed by so many reviewers in big papers?

If Hill had published ten novels over the past several years and they were bestsellers, then okay I can see him being upset. But this is his first novel.

I didn't mean to go on a rant here, but if you're going to ride your famous father's coat tails, at least do it like your brother. Owen King writes as Owen King and we know who he is, but he doesn't write horror so maybe that's why Joe King changed his name. Maybe. But I still smell a duck.

Quack, quack.

I'll see you in Oz folks

Adam Gifford
President

Demon of the Month (from Delirium's Realm)

Tlaltecuhтли

Tlaltecuhтли ("Earth Lord") was a large earth monster in Aztec mythology described as female, who desires flesh and has mouths at her elbows, knees, and other joints.

According to the Histoyre du Mechique, Tezcatlipoca and Quetzalcoatl agree that they can't continue with their re-creation of

the world with her around, so they decide to destroy her.

Transforming into two great serpents, one snake seizes her left hand and right foot while the other seizes her right hand and left foot. They then rip the monster apart - her upper body becoming the earth and her lower half is thrown into the sky to create the heavens.

This act of violence angers the other gods, and in order to console the earth, it is decided that all

plants needed for human life will be created out of her body. The trees, flowers, & herbs come from her hair. The grasses and smaller flowers come from her skin. The mountain ridges and valleys are made from her nose. Her eyes become the source of wells, springs and small caves, while her mouth becomes the source for great rivers and caverns. It is said she still screams for blood during the night & can only be soothed with sacrificial flesh and blood.

The Tomb Keeper Archives

Maybe it is the brief moments of warm weather we are having (in between bouts of snow and freezing rain), maybe it is wave after wave of advertising and interviews related to The Grindhouse, maybe I am just cheap and want to go see two movies for the price of one. Whatever the reasoning may be, my latest unexplained jaunt on the web has been to research the Drive In, a place where many of us have seen many horror movies.

Remember those warm summer nights, sitting in your car, or on a folding chair in the bed of a pick-up truck, or next to the van on the bench seat that you removed with a monkey wrench? Remember the tinny voices coming from the speaker attached to your window? No? Well then you do not know what you are missing. Head over to Evil Sam's Drive-In Theatre Guide (<http://www.waterwinterwonderland.com/evilsam/index.htm>) to check the Open Theatres link for a drive in near you. While you are at the site, read the articles at the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF DRIVE-IN ARCHEOLOGY link. While these articles are specifically about researching old theaters, the tactics they discuss can be applied to other hard research that your writing may require.

If you are an experienced drive-in visitor and you want to relive some of your fond

memories, Drive-ins.com (<http://www.drive-ins.com/>) can not be beat. They have searchable databases, an interactive time-line, and an updated crawl which gives information about theater openings around the country. Of special note for the nostalgic are the photographs of theaters past and present. Look for the small "Open" and "Closed" icons on the left side of the main page. These will take you to area lists which contain the names, histories, and photographs of theaters organized by state. A word of caution--there are some current pictures of closed theaters which may be hard for you wistful reminiscers. Before you leave the site, be sure to check out the merchandise available for purchase. What could be cooler than replacing your boring computer speakers with a set of genuine theater speakers?

To complete our road trip down memory lane, zoom over to Drive-In Theater (<http://www.driveintheater.com/index.htm>). This website is a little more sparse than the others, but it does have a number of entertaining graphics (like a jpeg of the Intermission Time dancing hot-dog). The history link is also engaging. According to this site, Michigan was home to one of the largest drive-ins, the Troy Drive-In which had a capacity of 3,000 cars.

Now to totally change gears

(ok, that's the last car related pun, I promise), let's look at three upcoming events within driving distance. The first is Penguin Con (<http://penguicon.org/>), a three day exploration of Linux code, writing, science, sci-fi and fantasy, and tons of other topics. There are numerous panels and discussions related to writing. It is too late to pre-register, as the con is this month (20 - 22 April at the Troy Marriot), but you can still pay at the door. Where else can you learn about protecting your computer system from wireless hacking, watch some anime, and end the night with liquid hydrogen ice cream? If you are interested in the writing workshops, checkout <http://penguicon.org/wiki/WritingWorkshop>.

While Penguin con focuses on writing, but not specifically on horror, the Hauntcon (<http://www.hauntcon.com/>) focuses on horror but not on writing. Hauntcon, "the haunted attraction national tradeshow & convention" will be visiting the Detroit area this year (3 - 6 May at the Hyatt Regency Dearborn). The convention brings together owners of professional haunts from all over the country. Visit the website to see the vast array of seminars and classes that are scheduled which include everything from creating frightening displays, to make-up, costumes, and even a funeral car parade. Don't miss the chance to have your photograph taken in

one of Jigsaw's traps from the Saw movies.

Finally, Context (<http://www.contextsf.org/>) "is a small, friendly convention focused on speculative fiction literature. If you enjoy manga, anime, science fiction, fantasy, or horror, you'll find plenty to entertain you at this convention." The convention will be held at the Midwest Hotel and Conference Center in Columbus, OH 28 - 30 September. While there is still plenty of time to take advantage of early registration, if you plan to go, go to the website soon. There are a number of writing workshops being held over the weekend, but they will fill up quickly.

If you have any websites you would like to share with the other members, send them to thedragonsroost@yahoo.com. Until next month, I will see you at the drive-in, then at the cons!



Check It Out

<http://www.writerswrite.com/journal/dec97/cew3.htm>

Literary Snobs – by Tom Sawyer

I am a simple writer, not Shakespeare. Nothing fancy, my writing isn't filled with hidden meanings and messages. I may resort to using symbolism when it is appropriate and makes sense. I do not try to write in a certain cadence or have any use for iambic pentameter.

Having said that, I do like a good story. Whether it is a movie, a short story, a long poem or a novel. I know what I like in a story and I like to think I know what it takes to write a good story. Most of us do.

First off, more than anything, I like to be entertained. I know a story is good when it keeps me wanting more and I enjoy reading it.

However, there are people who seem to think that there has to be something more to a story. Some alternative hidden meaning for a precious few. There is that train of thought that believes, and almost arrogantly so, that a story must be more than entertaining. This group arrogantly thinks that if one does not enjoy that particular style or understands the deeper meaning and symbolism, then they are literary troglodytes and therefore beneath them. In other words, we are stupid.

Many of us, have known such people.

These people also frown on such commercially successful writers as Stephen King, Clive Barker, John Saul and others. They seem to look down on these authors for mainstreaming and making horror and other literature vastly popular, where it had been an almost private and exclusive club.

They also wear an elitist badge of honor, while looking down on the rest of us for working towards the same goals as these other commercially successful authors. It's as though they frown on making money from writing. Like it is bad or crass.

Now, I will admit to being a simple writer who writes to entertain others. I love doing it, and will admit, I am not Poe, King, Blackwood, or Bloch. I love a good and entertaining story. I want to be entertained as I am writing it and doubly so, when I am reading it. I

want a book that keeps me reading, not one that takes some great effort to read and understand.

If this reason does not rise to the expectations of the literary and horror snobs and elites out there, I do not care. That is their problem. Not mine. How good can something be, if it takes No-Doze to read?

To me, these literary snobs limit themselves. I also believe they want something to feel good about and the only way to do so is to come off as intellectually and literarily superior than the rest of us. Almost like there is some unspoken pop quiz we don't know about and are trying to get brownie points for sucking up.

They may know about a little known author but there is also a reason that a particular author is little known and little read. Knowing an author such as this does not make one better or more knowledgeable. It is basically trying to be part of the elite crowd or club who thinks they are better than others. Just because one happens to know of some author who is deemed "cool" by the so-called "in" crowd, does not make it so.

Millions of other people would disagree with their conclusions, if you look at the book sales. In my simple world view, it comes down to this: money talks and elitist, little known or heard of bullshit walks. An author is supposed to want to be read by the greatest number of people, not want to be hidden and obscure to only a few. Otherwise, who would know they exist or even care for that matter? The goal of writing is to be published so others can read your work, right?

Putting it simply, a writer writes to be read and to entertain people. Most of us are not out there to enlighten others. If you want that, join Oprah's book club. Most of us just want to entertain voracious readers.

An example of this elitist groupthink is the popularity of H.P. Lovecraft and the Cthulu Mythos that many seem to put on a pedestal. Now don't get me wrong, Lovecraft is one of the all-time greats in horror. He has influenced a great deal of writers throughout the years. Personally, I like many of his stories. However, there are a number I don't care for as well. But, like others of

his era, his work at times can be wordy and over-descriptive in his first person narrative style. Once you get through that, though, at the heart of his writing are some great stories. Lovecraft isn't alone here. Others like Algernon Blackwood, Henry James and others also fell into this with that particular style. In fact, much of Lovecraft does not translate or transfer well to film or television at all. This is mainly because of that style. Lovecraft had very little dialogue and was, as previously mentioned, overly descriptive. One also had to know the mythos of his imaginary world to have some idea of what was taking place in his stories.

I understand that may have been the style of the day and the preferred method of writing by many, but I also understand why many people do not care for the style anymore. It comes down to too much description and an overuse of unnecessary words. This matter of a person's taste is not a comment on their intelligence, even if these literary snobs think otherwise.

Like many things, simplicity is a key. Like the editor William Jones of Dark Wisdom once said, "There are only so many ways you can say it was a dark and stormy night." That also applies to a dark and scary room or house as well.

Simplicity does not mean lack of intelligence like some seem to imply. Quite the contrary. It is an economical use of words and even storytelling to convey the same thing. Sometimes less is more, and not just in action, but words as well. Or more adroitly follow the KISS rule of keeping it simple stupid.

Some times snobs hold their own noses so high they can't even see their own shortsightedness, let alone hypocrisy on these matters. To me, it seems if literary and horror snobs do not like something, it is looked down upon, subject to ridicule or not taken seriously. They may look down on the rest of us for not liking what they view as great. They fail to realize it comes down to a matter of taste and preference.

Look at the way many of the literary snobs view self-publishing. They look down on it as not really being published. Yet, one of the

biggest selling and most popular book series' in history started out being self-published. That book series by the way, was "Chicken Soup For The Soul." It began by being self-published.

Many great authors and books have been turned down by the best publishers in the country. It seems some of the same snobs we deal with are at times publishers and agents. Some well known authors have created some sub-par works that were published only because of their names. If an unknown writer wrote the same thing, just starting out, would have been denied the chance and flat out rejected. Take J.K. Rowling and John Grisham who had both been rejected over a hundred times. Think of the loss literature would have if they hadn't been published.

Being this simple and humble writer, I would much rather be a self-published author than a so-called author with two unpublished books. This, for the record, is really called a manuscript. Calling a manuscript an unpublished book is just a more sensitive name for those who show others none of the same consideration.

I find the fact that the manuscript is still unpublished telling in itself. This to me means that particular individual did not have the intestinal fortitude or the nads to shop it around to a publisher, where he and his work may just have to take their lumps from criticism. Worse, it could have been simply a boring piece of work that was rejected out of hand. So much for having the guts to have your work critiqued I guess.

These literary snobs are just full of themselves when it comes to critiques. To them critique means it is Carte Blanche to ridicule, rewrite, and give personal criticism about others works, when they themselves have failed to subject themselves to the same treatment. Did I hear somebody yell Chicken?! This is also how they keep their tiny group of elites, elite.

My, isn't that brave of them. To them, I say put up or shut up. Because they can dish out the criticism, but sure can't take it. That much is true.

Serial Sacrifice – Mary Makrias

Each month we will spotlight a different member. If you wish to be in the limelight for 30 seconds, please let us know, or you may wish to nominate someone else. If we don't receive any volunteers or nominations, then we will pick a member at random. This month, we will be talking to Mary Makrias.

GLAHW: How long have you been writing? When did you get started?

MM: I've been writing for a really, really long time. I first realized that writing would always be a part of my life in Junior High school.

GLAHW: Why did you choose the horror genre?

MM: I chose horror because it allows me to attack all the monsters of my past. Plus, it's just fun!

GLAHW: Were you inspired by a person or event to begin your writing career?

MM: Mr. Riley at Waterford Kettering really inspired me. He always encouraged me to develop my natural writing skills with my knack for tapping into emotion.

GLAHW: Does your family support your writing endeavors?

MM: Yes and no. I have a big family! My immediate family tends to think it is a nice hobby. They believe I have a talent, but in the next breath say that it is very difficult to get published. Outside of my immediate family and a close group of friends who feel like family, not many people know I am writing fiction.

GLAHW: Where do you get your ideas from?

MM: All good ideas come from life. Whether past experiences, tales others have shared with me or just the bizarre tidbits that show up in the news from time to time, life is rich with material. As for the horror genre, a wise man once told me that although good can exist without evil, evil cannot exist without good. Evil is the perversion of something good.

GLAHW: Do you outline your stories before you begin to write?

MM: Sometimes, though I rarely stick to it. Mostly, my stories take on a life of their own; I just try to keep up. For my current project, I just noted the major events and the timeline of how the story will play out.

GLAHW: Tell us something interesting about your past.

MM: I hear dead people. At least I did when I was involved in the occult. Now that was a dark chapter in my life. Who knows, there may be a story in there somewhere.

GLAHW: Where do you see yourself, as a writer, in five years?

MM: Published and writing the next installment in what I hope will become a series.

GLAHW: Do you believe in ghosts? Have you ever seen one or had an encounter that you would like to share with us?

MM: YES, I believe! YES, I have seen ghosts! YES, read on if you dare! First encounter was in my childhood home. My room was haunted. I was very young, maybe 16 when it started. It began with restlessness and inability to sleep. When I did manage to sleep, I would wake

up tired. Then the nightmares began, really bad nightmares. The chill your bones wake up in a sweat nightmares. One night while tossing and turning, I saw something awful come out of my closet. It came from dark and shadow. Evil emanated from the specter. It approached my bed and bent down toward my face. I could smell its sour breath. It sneered at me, red eyes glowing, and said, "You are mine." My scream should have woke the dead. It barely woke my mother in the next room. When she came to check on me, she attributed it to more nightmares. I knew better. I can still smell its breath, feel its touch. Do you believe?

GLAHW: Are you superstitious?

MM: Not really superstitious in the traditional sense. I believe that things happen for a reason and actions have consequences. I don't believe stepping on a crack will break my mother's back or breaking a mirror will lead to seven years of bad luck.

GLAHW: What do you do for a living, outside of writing?

MM: I'm in marketing, using my way with words to create a need and then filling it. It is great because I get to be creative.

GLAHW: How often do you write?

MM: I write as often as I can. Lately, that isn't enough. It seems there just aren't enough hours in the day.

GLAHW: Do you keep a journal every day?

MM: I did. Then I drifted into a really bad place and stopped. I have just started up again. I have to admit that it is like finding a long lost friend.

GLAHW: What do you prefer to write – short stories, poetry, novels, scripts, etc.?

MM: I'm working on a novel now and that is quite challenging. I think I would enjoy short stories; they give you a more quick result. I'm toying around with an idea for a short story as we speak. Honestly, I believe my writing has its own seasons. I can look back to a time when poetry was it for me. Then came non-fiction and real life took on new dimensions. For awhile, it was strictly journaling, almost to the point of obsession. I hope I finish my current project before the seasons change again, it could be a long time before it comes around again.

GLAHW: What truly scares you?

MM: Creepy, crawling, slithering things. I'm also terrified of being alone when I die.

GLAHW: What sort of hobbies are you into?

MM: In addition to writing, I enjoy going to concerts, reading, playing around on the guitar, photography, home improvement projects and cross-stitching.

GLAHW: Have you had anything published?

MM: Not in any publications you would recognize.

GLAHW: Do you read outside of the horror genre? If so, what else have you read?

MM: Absolutely. I read many different genres. There is rarely a time when you won't find me with a Christian living book – searching for a word from God. I also love mysteries and anything that will make me laugh.

From the Couch: Therapeutic Values of Horror Writing

– by Peggy Christie

As you've all read in the previous months' articles from my colleagues, writing is great therapy to vent anger, rage, or complete disbelief in someone's overblown idea of self importance and how necessary they are for the world to continue rotating on its axis. And I will agree with them. I've written a few stories, and thought of hundred more, that processed my anger in a safe and not-end-in-a-jail-cell type of way. Sure, boxing with a punching bag or running a few miles may give you same relief. But I'd rather imagine myself covered in my enemies' blood than actually be drenched in my own sweat.

However, I'd like to discuss another way writing can be therapeutic. In my life I have a tendency to bottle up my emotions. My family was never the touchy-feely kind and we didn't really talk about our problems – not in public and not with each other, either. My mother's alcoholism, my brother's problems with drugs and his resultant scholastic ineptness, my own insecurities and frustration that no boys ever liked me until I was at least 17. Nothing was said. Nothing was discussed.

Nothing was released.

And this is just crap from my childhood. As an adult, I've had plenty of problems and issues. But I never learned to talk about them. Not really. I've been lucky enough to find my husband whom I can talk to, when my brain finally allows me to open my mouth. But even he doesn't always get the whole story. Part of me always seems to hold something in, even if I don't mean to. It's a learned behavior and one I just haven't been able to un-learn.

Except in stories. I can write anything and everything that's rumbling around in my brain with no fear. A story will never judge me. A story will never think I'm a dork or point and laugh when my skirt blows up on a windy day revealing the granny panties I'm wearing when it's wash day (you see, my humor here is a defense mechanism but that's another article). Stories are a brilliant and safe way to release all the pent up anger, yes, but also frustration, fear, relief, depression, insecurity, shyness, excitement, homicidal tendencies, and any other feeling you might have.

My mother died one month after I turned 21. When I dreamed of her, sometimes

she was alive but still dying of cancer and my father and I had to keep taking care of her. Obviously, as a daughter, I was more than happy and willing to take care of my mother during her illness. But as the cancer spread through her body and into her brain, she used to hallucinate terrible things or ramble incoherently. Her IV machine would 'bing' in the middle of the night when an air bubble got trapped in the tube. I heard that thing for months after her death. Taking care of her wore both my father and I down, emotionally, and when it was over, part of me was glad. So when I say I dreamed she was still alive but sick, those were the worst nightmares I ever had.

It wasn't until 9 years later that I discovered the joys of writing. And the second story I ever wrote was about a young woman having to take care of her dying mother. In the story, the young woman is enraged at having to give up her life and love to take care of her sick mother and ends up killing her in order to release herself from the obligation. Unfortunately, she dies, too, and must relive that murderous night over and over as her eternal punishment. Now, I'm not saying I would ever have done

that to my own mother. But part of me could understand and creating a character on paper that did do it was a partial relief. However, the real therapy in that story for me was describing the sick mother.

I will never forget what my mother looked like as she was dying. Being able to see the bones poking up from underneath her skin, imagining that I would *know* how her skeleton would appear if it were hanging up in some 10th grade science class, was haunting me. But also the vomit, emptying bed pans, the visiting nurses, Hospice care, my mother's pain, her screams, and watching my father weep over her corpse all left a dark stain on my soul. I had to get it out. "Honor Thy Mother" was the perfect vehicle for those images and feelings. The stain hasn't come out completely, but it has faded a bit.

It's been 17 years since my mother died. So much more of life, and death, has happened to me. I've got plenty of issues bottled up in reserve, just waiting for me to pick the lock and cut the chain... and release them.

Literary Snobs by Tom Sawyer – cont'd from Page 3

As long as a story entertains me that is what matters most. I may offer suggestions and ask some questions or even offer help, but the work belongs to the individual. It's for them to change, not the critics to change to their liking. Everybody has their favorite sub-genre.

When offered with the same criticism, they do not handle it well and have said so on their own sites, while belittling us for not being able to handle their harsh and

severe words. Elitist snobs like this seem to have a great lack of courage when subjecting their own works to this. So, what they do is seek out their fellow elitist sycophants to give them a literary hand-job and oral massage on their work.

We will always have to deal with the likes of these people. Much like a hemorrhoid or a boil on your ass, they will hang around and irritate you. Just remember, these literary and horror snobs are not any smarter, better read, or even better

writers. They may act the part, but when it's all said and done, they are jealous. They are simply posers and phonies, who talk a good game, but never seem to manage to play the proverbial game. Until they do, nothing they say will bother me. While they may not admit it, we are as good as they are.

I would much rather be a simple writer who is self-published than have two unpublished novels gathering dust on a shelf. I would also rather be a writer who is widely

loved and known than be critically acclaimed by a few elitist snobs who nobody ever heard of.

Because when all is said and done if somebody isn't entertaining as writer, you will not be read and isn't that why we write in the first place?

Like my friend and GLAHW President Adam Gifford once said. "Do these literary snobs think they get intellectual brownie points for deliberately being out of touch with their own culture?"

Horror Movie Hat Trick – from Adam and Jennifer Gifford

It all started so innocently. We just wanted to have a little fun. We didn't mean anything by it, and besides, everyone else was doing the same thing. I mean, when you got down to brass tax, we were just two out of how many thousands. We never knew what we were getting into, until it was too late.

That being said, Adam and I are proud to present our Horror Movie Hat Trick. We have painstakingly watched, (and yes, actual physical and emotional pain was involved in the researching of this article), and reviewed three new horror releases that promised to put out. Much like the jock on prom night dating the president of the girls chess

club, we were teased.

We were promised death, we were promised blood and gore, and all the sweet crunching that bones of naïve souls tend to make before they die in some horribly gruesome manner. What we ended up with were two DVD's that can be used as target practice, and couch sores. Not even the rhyming nurse in Ferris Bueller's Day Off can

mend the damage that has been done. We lost 181 minutes of our lives that we will never get back. But as we sit nursing our wounds, we managed to muster the strength to warn others, so that they may not share our same fate. But take warning fellow horror lovers, you have been warned. Rent at your own risk.

Number 1: **Rest Stop Review** by Adam Gifford

Movie that sounded good in the horror section at Best Buy: \$9.99
Bag of microwave popcorn: \$1.09
Watching Joey Lawrence get his head blown off not once, but twice: Priceless

But sad to say that was the best part of this movie. When it was over, I was left wondering whether it was wrong for me to be laughing at

a horror movie, but then again how can this be a horror movie if I'm laughing?

Rest Stop is the first--and hopefully the last--release from Raw Feed. It's a story about a young couple going on a road trip from Texas to California, but needless to say, they never make it.

Jesse and Nicole, played by—ah who the hell cares—decide to take a short cut (always a bad idea) and pretty soon Nicole has to use the restroom. Jesse suggests that he just pull over and she can go in the bushes

(smart guy) but then we wouldn't have a movie. They pull into an abandoned rest stop and Nicole bounds out and into an absolutely disgusting restroom (Enter Saw) Does our heroin leave in disgust? No. Instead of taking a squat in some bushes, she plops her bare ass on a cesspool. When she is all finished being lady-like she washes her hands which in this restroom is pointless.

All refreshed now, she walks out only to find Jesse is gone. Walking to find some help might have been a reaction of normal

people, but then we wouldn't have a movie. So she waits for the madman to show up (Enter Wolf Creek), and, as the movie progresses, Nicole learns that Jesse is being held captive and being tortured (Enter Hostel). The supposed twists in this movie, if there are any, can easily be figure out by a five-year-old.

All in all, don't waste your time or money on this movie. I'm giving it a half a hatchet and that's being generous.



Number 2: **Pulse Review** by Jennifer Gifford

I admit it, I'm a sucker for glossy images and eye candy special effects. But from the very beginning, I knew the new horror flick from Dimension films was going to be everything that it promised. Frightening. Spellbinding. Spine tingling. Pulse, starring Kristen Bell, (who you may recognize as Veronica Mars), takes the lead in this hauntingly

all too possible realistic trip towards a futuristic hell. I was intrigued from the very beginning, from the juicy trailers, to the wicked special effects. But I liked the premise that the dead have something to say. The question the movie sought to answer was: do we want to listen.

In Pulse, fear takes us into new territory, at least for the horror genre. There are no zombies, no vampires, no alien mutants that want to suck our faces off and

impregnate us with their diseased unborn. Its undiscovered country with a new twist: its an enemy we can't see, can't touch, and can't stop.

The movie starts off right on pace, with mysterious mass deaths and cryptic clues that don't seem to connect the dots, until its all but too late. New gateways into the freakish darker side of life open, only we aren't aware of it, and forces us to realize that survival maybe not be an option.

I think what made the film really work is that combination of small, little known actors with a fast paced plot. In addition, the ending is off the hook, and really makes the rest of the movie pop to life. I'm banking that if the movie was this good, the book was even better. I give Pulse Four hatchets.



Number 3: **Slither Review** by Jennifer Gifford

Hello, my name is Jennifer, and I am horror cover junkie. I always have been. But I think I can beat this awful affliction, and the new release from Universal films will be my guide. The back cover told me to prepare myself for terrifying, twisted, and a chilling film that will “deliver seat squirming scares”. In reality, the time preparing myself would have been better devoted to getting ready to file my taxes, and after ninety six excruciating long minutes, the IRS is much

scarier than anything that appeared in the film, Slither.

I’ll admit that the promise of an ‘unknown evil’ prompted me to buy the used copy at Blockbuster. I remember thinking, it must be a good movie, and there are only two copies to buy left. I now realize that its because it takes two morons to confirm that something is really stupid.

I should probably talk about the movie, though in all honesty, talking about the new IRS tax codes would be more fun, and way more terrifying. Slither was clichéd from start to finish. I didn’t get scared once, and even

worse, I didn’t laugh either. Usually if a horror movie is bad, it has some laughable quality like Rest Stop did. Sadly slither should have been named, ‘Fizzled,” because there was nothing creepy about this movie. The only few times I managed to crack a smile were from the humorous one liners from the sheriff played by Nathan Fillion, such as “that looks like something that fell off my dick in the war.”

The lame special effects and poor acting from the infected townspeople only managed to put another nail in this movie’s review coffin. As for the trailer

that quoted, “an unspeakable evil is wrecking havoc on a small town,” its probably just gas, and it, like everything else, will pass. Crap is crap, no matter how you dress it up. And Slither, my fellow horror gurus, is just that. I have learned my lesson. I am currently in a twelve step program, and someday, I hope to buy a horror movie based on the content of its story, not the slick and shinny cover. Learn from my life lessons, and remember, friends don’t let friends buy bad horror movies.

Heart Shaped Box – Book Review by Michael Cieslak

I always enjoy discovering a new author.

Sometimes “new author” means someone who has been writing for years but who, for one reason or another, I have never read.

Other times this means discovering someone who has just written his or her first novel. This is especially exciting because it means I get to follow the development of the author’s writing style, plotting, characterization, etc. It can also be frightening, because there is always the chance that the author is a one-booker. Even worse, the book could be a fluke, a brief moment of brilliance followed by a career of mediocrity.

I doubt that these concerns will apply to Joe Hill.

Joe Hill is the pen name of author Joseph Hillstrom King, winner of the A.E. Coppard Long Fiction Prize, the World Fantasy Award for Best Novella and is a recipient of the Ray Bradbury fellowship. He writes under a pen name because of a desire to succeed on his own merits and not cash in on the celebrity of his literary family. He is the older brother of author Owen King (We’re All In This Together), his mother is author Tabitha King (Small World, Caretakers, Pearl, Candles Burning) and his father is author Stephen King (yes, THAT Stephen King).

Comparisons are almost unavoidable (especially if one sees a photograph of Joe who looks eerily like the old dust jacket photos featuring a bearded

King) but unnecessary. I started listening to this book (in unabridged audio book format) before I knew of Hill’s parentage. I had already recommended it to a dozen people before I got 3/4 of the way through it.

Box is the story of Judas Coin, an aging heavy metal musician with a collection of bizarre, morbid objects. When he has the opportunity to add a real ghost to this collection, he jumps at it. This leads to an intricate tale of revenge and pursuit which delves into the dark histories of all of the characters. To say more would mean including an unforgivable spoiler.

Hill’s characters are fully realized and a joy to meet, despite their dark natures

(characterization must run in the family). The story is both suspenseful and emotionally moving, often at the same time. When the reader is finished, there are no loose ends to complain about. Most readers will smile, but the smile will be bittersweet for they can not run out to the store and buy another novel by Hill until the next one is published.

This is an excellent first novel and is highly recommended. We expect great things in this author’s future, whatever last name he chooses to go by, and anxiously look forward to more from him.

A Question to Ponder:

In a recent interview for the movie Grindhouse, Quentin Tarantino stated that Robert Rodriguez' portion of the double-feature is "horror" since it deals with zombies and other supernatural plot devices. He defines the portion he directed as "terror" since it has no supernatural elements and focuses instead on things which are horrible, but which could happen. Do you agree with this differentiation? If so, which category does your fiction fall under?"

Sir Graves Ghastly - by Tom Sawyer

"... Good afternoon, Dear Hearts and welcome once again to that ghastly production, Sir Graves Ghastly. Our movie today is... So. My dears, turn out your lights... Draw the drapes... Pull down the shades... Cuddle up in your favorite spot by the telly, and glue your little eyes to the monitor for today's Tale of Terror! Neeyyaaaaahahahaha"

Anybody who grew up in the 1960's and early 1970's that watched any television then, especially horror and afternoon movies knows immediately who I am talking about. The one and only Sir Graves Ghastly. Who for years was the master of ceremonies when it came to television horror movies on Channel 2 in Detroit.

For us young horror fans and childhood victims of rainy Saturday's, Sir Graves was our savior and for a few hours our babysitter. He was to local horror, what Bozo the Clown was to televised circuses and what Soupy Sales was to local, live comedy.

Every Saturday about 1 p.m. you could count on at least one horror movie and many times a double feature of horror and science fiction that terrified, entertained and at times made us laugh. He was so successful at his hosting duties that Sir Graves lasted for 15 years.

Sir Graves was born Lawson J. Deming in April of 1913. As a child he did stage and theater work. In the 1930's he started his radio career before getting into television.

The birth of Sir Graves came about after the previous late night horror host Morgus the

Magnificent and his Morgus Presents! show left town. It was suggested that Deming take over the role of a character called Ghoulardi, but because the name was already used by a Cleveland horror show host it was dropped.

Deming suggested that he create the character himself. The station agreed and told him to come up with the outline of the show. Thus Sir Graves Big Show was created.

Deming was more than Sir Graves, in a sense he was the show. He created and was a bunch of supporting characters as well. There was the Glob. The Glob was basically Deming lying upside down with a face painted on his chin and lip-synching to parody songs like "I Want to Bite Your Hand" and "The King Kong Stomp".

Then there was Tilly Trollhouse, who was the only 'female' personality on the show. Sir Graves would often refer to her as that gorgeous cookie and that they couldn't stand more than one like Tilly on the show. Which given the dress and clothing, Deming had to put on for the role, it is easy to see why. Tilly usually lip-synched to Florence Foster and Spike Jones song amongst others. This was possibly the scariest of Deming's characters for obvious reasons.

There was the diminutive graveyard caretaker who dug up movies called Reel McCoy and the undead 50's beatnik named Cool Ghoul. Deming also created Baron Boogaloff, who was supposed to be Sir Graves' Bavarian cousin who you to watch and enjoy the film.

Last but not least was the ever present Baruba, a monk-like cowed character, which was

Deming pre-taped, Voice of Doom, a sarcastic skull with hair that told bad jokes, Walter, Sir Graves' prissy cousin who would yell "Your sick graves, sick, sick, sick..." and a hunchbacked gravedigger named Digger Deeper in later years who was played by crewmember Walter Selbman.

While the show did not have a theme song everybody knew it, since it was Disney's Halloween Children's album, "The Chilling, Thrilling Sounds of the Haunted House." This was used as the opening and closing for the whole show.

Occasionally when Halloween fell on a Friday in the early years. Sir Graves would have a Friday night double feature. Later on, such as on Friday the 13th or for some special reason he would be on Friday or Saturday night on occasion as well.

His movies would range from the Universal movie monsters like Dracula, Frankenstein, the Wolfman and the Mummy to cult favorites like Carnival of Souls and Beast From Haunted Cave. There would also be the classic American International films like Day of the Triffids and the Monster That Challenged the World or the B movie monstrosities and drive-in classics like Fiend Without a Face, Giant From the Unknown, Slime People and Robot Monster.

At its Peak Sir Graves Ghastly was ratings gold with the typical amount of viewers weekly being about 235,000 people in the Metro Detroit area and region alone. This loyal following of movies skits, jokes, parody songs and a journey through the Sir

Graves art ghoulery last for 15 years.

The show's last broadcast was on Saturday, November 6, 1982. Even then, with the advent of the Ghoul and sexiness of Elvira the show was a money maker for the Channel 2 studio. Looking back on it, I have to agree with those who have concluded that 15 years is a long time for any show to run local or national. We should be thankful that for 15 years our favorite afternoon vampire was there to entertain us with humor and fun.

For many of us longtime horror fans and just weird kids, Sir Graves was the staple of our weekend television viewing. On rain-filled weekends when others had nothing to do, Sir Graves was a saving grace. I can remember writing my own stories and drawing my own monster pictures as the show was on. I also knew that anywhere from two to four hours a weekend I was going to have fun with horror.

Much of my childhood and positive influence was because of the creativity Lawson J. Deming and his tongue-in-cheek horror show host alter ego, Sir Graves Ghastly.

"I had little kids come up to me and hug my legs and say 'I love you Sir Graves' and I'd tossle their hair and say (in the voice of Sir Graves) 'I love you, too.'"

Thanks for all the great memories Sir Graves, and Happy Hauntings...

"Neeyyaaaaahahahahahaha haha!!!!"

Serial Sacrifice with Mary Makrias

(cont'd from Page 4)

GLAHW: Horror stories can be pretty sick and disgusting at times. Have you ever seen a psychiatrist, or has anyone ever thought you might need one just because of what you write?
MM: Yep. In an effort to help me make sense out of things that go bump in the night. I haven't seen a psychiatrist because of what I write. Actually, I think writing keeps me sane.

GLAHW: What type of horror do you like to write?
MM: Psychological and paranormal. Events that make you stop and wonder if it is truth or fiction.

GLAHW: Do you use a pseudonym?
MM: I haven't yet, but I plan to. My last name is too difficult for many people to pronounce and therefore easily forgotten. Any ideas?

GLAHW: What do you think makes a good story?
MM: For me, a good story pulls you in, makes you feel as if you are part of it. The reader has to be able to connect with and relate to the characters. They have to be believable. I also like a little humor in horror to take away the heebie jeebies.

GLAHW: As a child, what did you want to do when you grew

up?
MM: I don't remember, but I know it wasn't what I'm doing now!

GLAHW: Are you religious?
MM: Not so much religious in the traditional sense. However, my faith and relationship with the Almighty are extremely important to me.

GLAHW: What book, if any, most influenced your life – and why?
MM: The Bible. It is the one place I can turn for advice on anything. It is alive and each time I open it, I find something new. Plus, it is very well-written and has withstood the test of time.

GLAHW: What are you reading right now? Are there any authors (living or dead) that you would name as influences?

MM: Joyce Meyer: The Confident Woman and Kat Richardson: Greywalker Influences: Laurell K Hamilton and Janet Evanovich as well as the usual suspects of Stephen King, Dean Koontz and Anne Rice to name a few. I'll read something, some small little statement and it will spin off into its own tale.

GLAHW: Give us three "Good to Know" facts about you. Be creative. Tell us about your first job, the inspiration for your writing, any fun details that

would enliven your page.

- MM:**
1. I love playing board games - especially those that require you to step out and make a fool of yourself. Songburst for example. Yep, goes way back. One version of the game is the 50s and 60s and another is 70s and 80s. I don't sing well, and sometimes make up my own lyrics but I have loads of fun trying. When we asked my nephew to play once, he asked who would win. It was politely explained that Theresa usually wins, Becky sings beautifully and Mary has fun. He teamed up with Theresa, and yep, they won. In my defense, I come by my tendency to make up lyrics honestly. It must be genetic. I can trace it back to my mother. Growing up, she used to make up her own lyrics because she could never remember or understand the correct ones. Want to giggle? "Puppy Love" was "the beloved".
 2. I know I'll never be any good at the guitar, but I'm too stubborn to let it go. Even if it is just for me, someday I will play a song all the way through.
 3. By the Grace of God, I've had great concert memories: I got moved from an obstructed view, nose bleed seat to 4th row at the Paul McCartney Back in the USA concert and I had the opportunity to meet

Sting backstage at a concert in 2005.

Hmmm, notice a theme? Seems music is more important in my life than I realized!

GLAHW: What else do you want your readers to know? Consider here your likes and dislikes, your interests, your favorite ways to unwind — whatever comes to mind.
MM: I've always been a Disney buff, absolutely love the animation and, of course the songs. In 2005, I went to go to Disney World for the first time — though hopefully not the last — with a good friend. How many 40+ kids get all excited about meeting Mickey Mouse and Ariel? There are a lot more of us out there than you might think.

Another interesting tidbit is in 1999, I sent an e-mail to my brother that got rerouted to Ireland in cyber-space. I know this because I got a response that said: "Who are you, why are you sending me an email and would knowing you somehow enrich my life?" The only thing the two e-addresses had in common was the first letter. Here's the funny part, we've been e-chatting ever since and have become friends, though mostly through the internet. You never know where you'll meet people that impact your life.

Horror Hound Film Festival

Bloody-Disgusting.com and HorrorHound Magazine, in conjunction with the Convention All Stars, are proud to present the first ever HorrorHound Weekend in Indianapolis, Indiana! Set for the weekend of July 6-8, expect to see the most beloved actors and icons in one of the biggest genre celebrations the mid-west has ever witnessed. Still early in the development stages, here is a tentative look at the many faces you, the fans, can expect to see on-hand in Indianapolis, IN during this exciting weekend. Look for more guests to be announced, as well as special activities and contests to be presented by Bloody-Disgusting.com. Be sure to check out our online friends frequently for news updates on this show! Tickets are selling fast and hotel rooms are being booked up - make your plans TODAY!

Go to <http://www.horrorhoundweekend.com/> for more details!

Market Report - by Peggy Christie

ANTHOLOGIES

BOOKS GONE BAD: Secret Lives & Evil Times of Diabolical Books - 1-time print (Dead Letter Press); df/h (fic). Pay: 1¢/word. Words: 4-12k (<4k/>12k query). RT: 6-8 weeks. Reprints: yes. E-sub: [only. Tom English, Editor \(QS\)](#).

Deadline: until filled
PubDate: November 2007 (earliest) to Spring 2008

CHIMERAWORLD 5 - annual POD TP (Chimericana Books); genrelectic (fic). Pay: 50% shared royalty +copy. Words: 2-4k. RT: <1 month. Reprints: no. E-sub: [only. Mike Philbin, Editor \(QS\)](#).
Opens: 1 September 2007
Do Not Submit Before!
Deadline: 30 September 2007
PubDate: 14 January 2008

SPECULATIVE REALM - 1-time POD/e-antho (Lulu); sf/f/h (fic). Pay: shared royalty. Words: 3-8k. RT: 4-6 weeks. Reprints: [query. E-sub: only. Sasha Beattie, Editor \(Q\)](#).
Deadline: 30 June 2007
PubDate: when full

TWILIGHT TEMPTATIONS

- 1-time POD (Simian Publishing); any genre (fic). Pay: \$25. Words: 4-10k. RT: <1 month. Reprints: yes (\$5). E-sub: [only. Jason Andrew, Editor \(QS\)](#).
Opens: 1 July 2007
Do Not Submit Before!
Deadline: 31 August 2007, or when filled
PubDate: Winter 2007

MAGAZINES

GOBLIN READER - monthly print/POD; prefers sf/h (fic). Pay: \$1/mag. sold +pub. Words: 2-5k. RT: 3 months. Reprints: yes. E-sub: [only. Ben Scarlato, Editor \(QS\)](#).

ON THE PREMISES - 3Xyear contest web/e-zine; any genre, themed (fic). 3 Prizes: \$130/90/50 (0-3 HMs@\$20). Words: <5k. RT: 4-6 weeks after DL. Reprints: no. E-sub: [only. Tarl Roger Kudrick, Editor-in-Chief \(QS\)](#).

Submission/Entry Periods: year-round, except Feb/Jun/Oct (check [web site](#) to be sure)

THEAKER'S QUARTERLY FICTION - bimonthly print/web archive; SciFantasy/sf/f/h/adv, pulp (fic/art). Pay: exposure (art/>15k=copy). Words: <27k. RT: <1 month. Reprints: no. E-sub: [yes. Stephen William Theaker, Editor \(QS\)](#).

PUBLISHERS

BACKROOM PUBLICATIONS - 1-time print/e-book (Backroom Publications); dark sf/f/cross-genre (fic/poem). Pay: adv/royalty 10%. Words: 20-50k (collection or novella). RT: <2 weeks. Reprints: query. E-sub: [only. Carmilla Stewart, Editor \(QS\)](#).
Deadline: 30 April 2007
PubDate: Fall & Winter 2007

DOMINION - (Triskelion Publishing) Ebook/print; sf/f/h (fic/art). Pay: advance &/or 39% of list off of Ebook. Words: 75-90k (pref). RT: <2 months. Reprints: known authors. E-sub: [only. Kristi Studts, Publisher \(Q\)](#).

DEAD MARKETS: Shadowed Realms, Walking Bones Ma



Six months after the rage virus has annihilated the British Isles, the US Army declares that the war against infection has been won, and that the reconstruction of the country can begin. In the first wave of returning refugees, a family is reunited -- but one of them unwittingly carries a terrible secret. The virus is not yet dead, and this time, it is more dangerous than ever.

Journey's End

I have another new first line this month. I hope you are all hard at work on your stories for the contest, and if your not . . . well I guess that's okay too. No one here is going to smack your hand with a ruler or make you stand in the

corner if you don't write a story, so don't feel bad if nothings coming. Perhaps you were waiting for this month's sentence. Here it is:

My angst is obtaining a body count.

This is the same sentence I tried to on the "other" group's forum and didn't get far with it. I'm hoping this time we get some good stories.

Until next time,

Adam

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