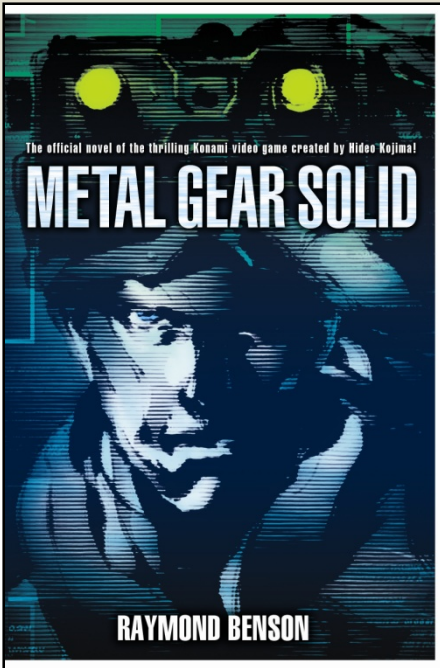




# Tied-In

The Newsletter of the International Association of Media Tie-in Writers



## Benson Adds to His Tie-In Resume

*Tied In* recently caught up with charter IAMTW member Raymond Benson to ask about his new novelization of the internationally-popular Konami videogame, METAL GEAR SOLID (to be published in trade paperback on May 27 by Del Rey). Benson was about to depart the country for a week in London and a weekend at Lake Garda, Italy to attend a couple of Ian Fleming centenary events and also promote his new original novel, *A Hard Day's Death*.

*Tied In:* Tell us about METAL GEAR SOLID, Raymond!

**Benson:** METAL GEAR SOLID and its subsequent sequels were created by Hideo Kojima, a videogame designer who is something of a god in Japan. Konami published the games worldwide and they're hugely successful. The games are in the stealth/action genre, and most of them feature a character named Solid Snake.

Many characters will also often have special abilities or powers that aren't considered normal. There is definitely a Japanese sensibility to the whole thing . . .

Snake is a lone operative for FOXHOUND, a super secret government intelligence organization. Snake is always sent in to heavily-fortified enemy strongholds to extract information without being seen or caught—so there is an emphasis on getting in and out without firefights. Of course, that rarely happens! The stories are set in what is best described as an alternate present or near-future in which military technology is farther advanced than what we have now.

Many characters will also often have special abilities or powers that aren't considered normal. There is definitely a Japanese sensibility to the whole thing, much like a good manga or anime.

Snake is a terrific protagonist and I had a great time writing him.

*Tied In:* How did you get the job?

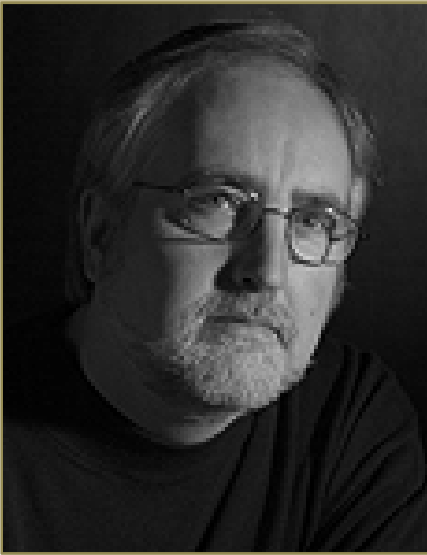
**Benson:** Surprisingly, I learned that Kojima-san is a fan of my James Bond novels! Several were published in Japan, and I have something of a presence in

that country. I am an official Goodwill Ambassador for Kagawa Prefecture, and there is, believe it

or not, a permanent museum dedicated to my 007 novel *The Man With the Red Tattoo* on the island of Naoshima! I had set much of that book there, so the prefectural government decided to honor it with a Bond museum. At any rate, Del Rey contacted my manager and asked if I'd be interested. I was apparently on a short list of authors that Kojima-san wanted. I just had to convince them that I was the right man for the job!

*Tied In:* What's it like adapting a videogame to a novel?

**Benson:** It's really not that much different from adapting a movie script or TV series, as long as you have an adequate supply of materials from which



to work, such as dialogue scripts, maps, and walkthroughs. Playing the game helps, too, but I have to admit that I find the games extremely difficult and can't get very far!

One must also have a massive amount of free time to play the games, as they take hours and hours to complete. I also had access to people at Konami who could answer any questions that came up. Working with them was one of the better tie-in experiences I've had.

*Tied In:* Will you be doing more?

*Benson:* I'm hoping I'll be contracted to do a sequel (*Metal Gear Solid 2—Sons of Liberty*), but beyond that I don't know.

*Tied In:* You've done other videogame tie-in work, haven't you?

*Benson:* Yes. I wrote the first two *Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell* novels, based on that videogame franchise from Ubisoft. In those two cases, the publisher and Clancy's people insisted that I use the pseudonym "David Michaels." Two more *Splinter Cell* books have been published

by a different "David Michaels," and a new book based on the game *ENDWAR* is by yet a *third* "David Michaels." Apparently the name David Michaels is a brand pseudonym that they're continuing to use for Clancy's videogames-to-books series.

But come to think of it, the very first tie-in work I ever did was related to computer games. I was once a computer game designer (in the late eighties and early nineties). The first game I wrote and designed was a text-adventure called *Stephen King's The Mist*, based on his novella. This was published way back in 1985. Last year a film was finally made from the story. It was great fun seeing the movie; it brought back memories of the game and the various characters. The second and third computer games were also text-adventures based on James Bond properties—*A View to a Kill* and *Goldfinger*. So I was already doing tie-in work before I became a full time novelist.

*Tied In:* Speaking of James Bond, what's going on with that?

*Benson:* 2008 is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ian Fleming's birth, so there are all kinds of events planned throughout the year. The family and estate invited me to attend the opening of a Fleming/Bond exhibit at the Imperial War Museum in London, so I thought I should go. I stopped doing the Bond books in 2002, and there hasn't been an adult 007 novel until this year. It's written by

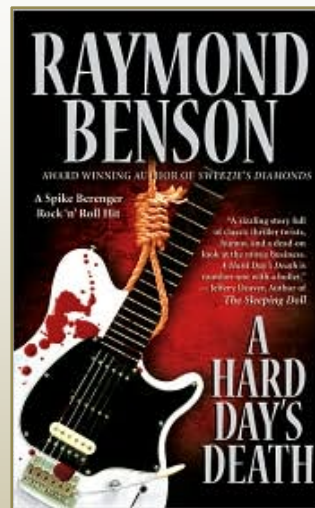
British writer Sebastian Faulks. In the interim, Charlie Higson wrote a series of "Young Bond" young adult books featuring a teenaged Bond in the 1930s, and Samantha Weinberg has penned a series of "Miss Money Penny" novels. But my Italian publisher, Alacran Edizioni, is still publishing my James Bond novels, so I've also been invited to attend a 007 memorabilia show and weekend at Lake Garda and be a guest speaker. Part of the new film, *Quantum of Solace*, is being filmed there at the same time. And even though my books are all out of print in the USA and Britain, an anthology containing three of the novels and one short story will be published by Pegasus in October of this year. The collection is called *The Union Trilogy*. So, in the words of Al Pacino in *The Godfather Part III*, "I tried to get out, but they just keep pulling me back in!"

*Tied In:* What is *A Hard Day's Death*?

*Benson:* It's not a tie-in! It's the first in a series of "rock 'n' roll thrillers" featuring a private investigator who works in the rock 'n' roll milieu. I've written the sequel, which is called *Dark Side of the Morgue*. Obviously, the books are tongue-in-cheek and have a lot of rock music references. They're meant to be fun, fast reads for the music fan in all of us.

*Tied In:* Thanks, Raymond!

*Benson:* My pleasure!







Keith R. A. DeCandido

## Keith Claims Space

Keith R.A. DeCandido will be doing a Star Trek novel to be published in February 2009 that will be a follow-up to David Mack's epic Destiny trilogy, showing the fallout in the Trek universe from the events of that trilogy.

Keith is also returning to the world of Starcraft with two sequels to his Starcraft:

Ghost novel *Nova*, published in 2006. That novel was originally intended as a prequel to the Starcraft: Ghost game, but Blizzard Games wound up never releasing the game.

The first sequel will be a manga trilogy for TokyoPop called *Ghost Academy*, which will detail Nova's time at the titular organization; the second is a novel that will be based on the game story for the never-released Starcraft: Ghost game, and has the tentative title of *Spectre*. These projects are both currently scheduled for print in 2009.



## Russell Davis New SFWA President

IAMTW member Russell Davis has been elected president of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America.

Lee Goldberg, IAMTW vice president called Davis' election important for writers in many genres.

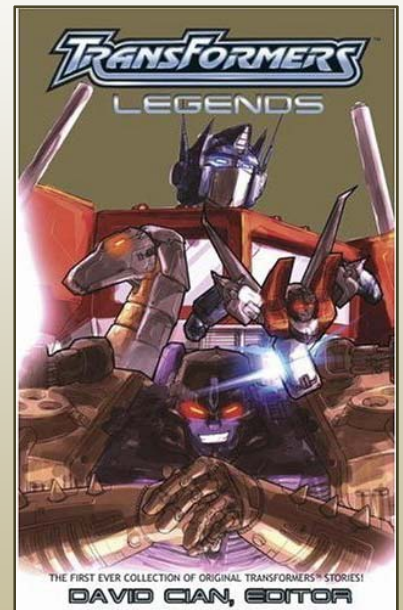
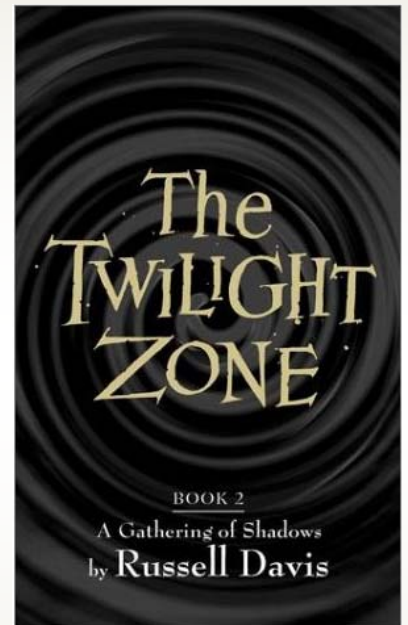
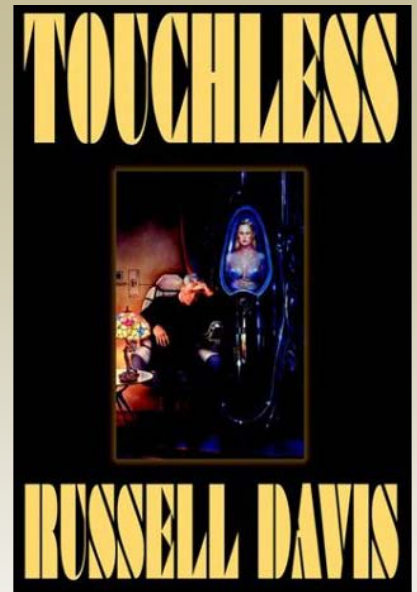
"This is a great step forward for SFWA and for the IAMTW as well," Goldberg said. "Russell has experience on both sides of the desk . . . as a writer and an editor . . . and has detailed knowledge of how the industry works. More importantly, he

wants to work to unify the various professional writing organizations on issue of common interest to make things better for writers of all genres.

Davis, the author of more than a dozen novels, has several tie-in titles, as well as editing credits—including numerous anthologies with Martin Greenberg of Tekno Books. Under the name David Cian, he edited an anthology of Transformer

stories called *Legends*, which is out of print and considered highly collectible. He began editing while at the University of Wisconsin in Green Bay, where he worked as the Managing Editor of the student literary magazine. He also spent a few years editing for Five Star Publishing and developing their lines.

Among his novel credits are *Touchless*, and a *Twilight Zone* tale. He also has a film novelization under another name.



# Spotlight on Nancy Holder

*In Which Belle Holder Reports from the Front*

Belle Holder, while not a member of IAMTW, is the co-author of someone who is: her mom, Nancy Holder. Belle and Nancy have sold two short stories about a magical time-traveling mouse named Lightning Merriemouse-Jones, to IAMTW newsletter editor Jean Rabe and her assorted co-editors. "The Further Adventures of Lightning Merriemouse-Jones" appeared in *Furry Fantastic*; and "Another Exciting Adventure of Lightning Merriemouse-Jones: A Touching Ghost Story" appeared in *Pandora's Closet*, both from DAW.

Belle created the character of Lightning; and Nancy took extreme liberties with their first story. For this she was soundly

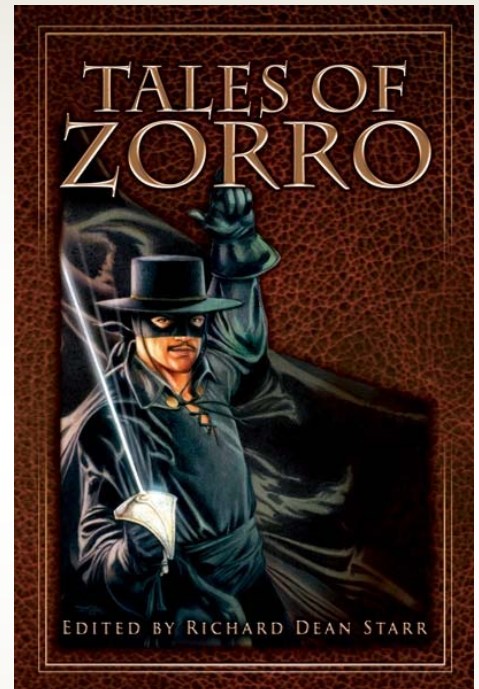
chastised and will never do it again. They have come up with a lot of other ideas, and Belle consistently helps her mother brainstorm her way out of plot problems usually while sitting in a very hot bath drinking green tea (when Nancy was a little older than Belle, she lived in Japan.) However, they haven't found the time to do much more collaborating together, and hope to do so when school is out for the summer.

Nancy has also written tie-ins for *BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER*, *ANGEL*, *SMALLVILLE*, *HELLBOY*, *HIGHLANDER*, and *WISHBONE*. Jeff Mariotte, Christopher Golden, MaryElizabeth Hart, and Keith DeCandido have all worked with her on the official companion guides to *BUFFY* and *ANGEL*

and/or collaborated on fiction. She has written essays on *FIREFLY/SERENITY* and *THE GOLDEN COMPASS*, and salutes Browncoats everywhere.

Belle is currently working very hard on a multi-genre project for school about being a responsible pet owner. Nancy has a number of tie-in projects soon to hit the stands: a short story in *Tales of*

*Zorro*; the entire four ghost stories in the aptly titled *Nancy Drew Ghost Stories*; and a story in *Sex as a Weapon*, which reintroduces the pulp noir character, Domino Lady, in preparation for the debut of the comic book series, which Nancy is writing. Nancy was also the writer of the middle grade *Pretty Freekin Scary* tie-series from Grosset & Dunlap for American Greetings. Her nom de plume was Chris P. Flesh.



She has also written for the middle-grade series *Camp Confidential* under the house name Melissa J. Morgan; and for the YA series, *Flirt*, as Nicole Clarke.

In addition to her comic book, Nancy is currently writing two YA horror novels for Razorbill and will soon return to the *Wicked* saga, which she writes with her former student, Debbie Viguie. *Son of the Shadows*, a paranormal romance from Silhouette Nocturne, will be out in August; and *Athena Force: Disclosure*, the last novel in a three-year shared-world

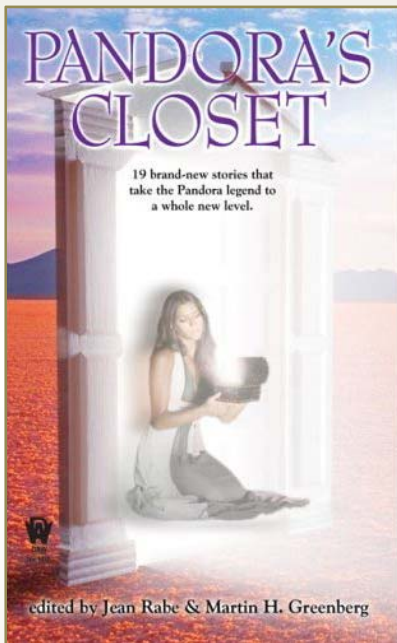


**Belle and Nancy Holder at a book signing**



“continuity” from Silhouette, will come out in July. She has a short story in *The Mammoth Book of Vampire Romances*, out from Running Press in August. She also has a story in an anthology of vampire fiction, title TBA, which will be published by Borders.

Belle accepted an invitation to become a card-carrying member of Persephone, a woman horror writers’ organization; and is close to achieving professional membership status in SFWA and the Horror Writers Association. Belle has done several signings



with her mom, and she has participated and/or attended a number of cons, (preferring the children’s programming at LA Con in Anaheim to going across the street to Disneyland.)

In addition to writing, Nancy teaches. She is finishing a guest lectureship at UC San Diego; her class is “Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Irrealism.” Belle has been a guest speaker at her mother’s classes about short story writing for UCSD Extension. They are co-owners of the AKC registered Cardigan Welsh Corgi, Kevyn’s Bare Necessities, AKA “Panda;” and the motley cats David and Kittnen Snow Vampire.



Domino Lady cover final

## Convention Calendar

### Soonercon

June 6-8, Oklahoma City, OK  
The Biltmore Hotel  
Guests: John Ringo Tom Kidd,  
Walter Koenig  
Registration: \$20-\$40  
For more information:  
[www.soonercon.info](http://www.soonercon.info)

### Origins

Columbus, OH  
June 25-29  
Greater Columbus Convention  
Center  
Events: games, seminars,  
activities for spouses  
Registration: \$60  
For more information:  
[www.originsgamefair.com](http://www.originsgamefair.com)

### Westercon 61

July 3-6, Las Vegas, NV  
JW Marriott Resort  
Registration: \$60 to April 26  
For more information:  
[www.westercon61.org](http://www.westercon61.org)

### Comic Con 2008

July 24-27, San Diego, CA  
San Diego Convention Center  
Registration: \$75, no on-site  
badges will be sold.  
For more information:  
[www.comic-con.org/cc/](http://www.comic-con.org/cc/)

### Archon 32

August 3-5, Collinsville, IL  
Gateway Convention Center  
GoH: Laurell K. Hamilton  
Registration: \$50 from April 1  
until July 31; \$55 from August 1  
until September 15;  
\$60 from September 15  
Main convention hotel: Holiday  
Inn: 1000 Eastport Plaza Drive,  
Collinsville, IL 62234-6104;  
1-800-551-5133 (\$119.95 single-  
quad, \$189.95 for parlor half of  
Junior Suites).  
For more information:  
[www.archonstl.org](http://www.archonstl.org)

## Star Trek Vegas

August 6-10, Las Vegas, NV  
Las Vegas Hilton Hotel, home  
of Star Trek: The Experience  
3000 Paradise Road  
Guests: John deLancie,  
Malcolm McDowell, and  
others.

For more information:  
[www.creationent.com](http://www.creationent.com)

## Denvention, the 66th World Science- Fiction Convention

August 6-10, Denver, CO.  
Colorado Convention Center  
GoH: Lois McMaster Bujold.  
Events: Masquerade, Hugo  
Awards Ceremony, Critter  
Crunch robot battle.

For more information:  
[www.denvention.org](http://www.denvention.org)

## Gen Con Indy

Aug. 14-17, Indianapolis, IN  
Indy Convention Center  
Guests: Several IAMTW  
members will be in  
attendance, presenting  
writers' workshops and  
signing books. A special Scribe  
Awards ceremony will be held  
to honor the best in game-  
related fiction.

For more information:  
[www.gencon.org](http://www.gencon.org)

## Foolscap X

Sept. 26-28, Bellevue, WA  
Bellevue Sheraton  
GoH: Esther Friesner  
Registration: \$45  
Events: Art show, banquet,  
panels, and more  
For more information:  
[www.foolscapcon.org](http://www.foolscapcon.org)

## Bouchercon

World Mystery Convention  
October 9-12, Baltimore, MD  
Sheraton City Center  
GoH: Lawrence Sanders  
Registration: \$175 to July 15  
For more information:  
[www.charmedtodeath.com](http://www.charmedtodeath.com)

## World Fantasy Convention

October 30-November 3  
Calgary, Canada  
Guests: Tom Doherty,  
Barbara Hambly, David  
Morrell, Tad Williams, Todd  
Lockwood  
Registration: \$125  
For more information:  
[www.worldfantasy2008.org](http://www.worldfantasy2008.org)



## Escape Velocity Seeks Writers

The Science Fiction magazine,  
*Escape Velocity*, recently  
featured IAMTW member Sonny  
Whitelaw in their fourth issue.  
It is published by Adventure  
Books of Seattle and co-edited by

Robert Blevins in the US and  
Geoff Nelder in the UK.  
Nelder says the magazine is open  
to submissions.

"*Escape Velocity* is looking  
for original short stories and  
articles, poetry and other  
features," Nelder says. "It is a  
paying market, and please read  
our submission guidelines.  
Better still, buy a copy of the  
magazine and savor the style  
and flavor. An ebook version is  
less than the price of a coffee."  
Guidelines can be found at:  
[www.escapevelocitymagazine.com](http://www.escapevelocitymagazine.com).

Nelder reports that the  
magazine includes a media focus.  
For example, Stefan Arngrim,  
who played Barry in the TV  
science fiction drama *Land of the  
Giants*, is featured in an  
interview.

"Although filming of the  
*Land of the Giants* ended in  
1970, many countries didn't see  
it until the 1980s or the 90s."

# IAMTW

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