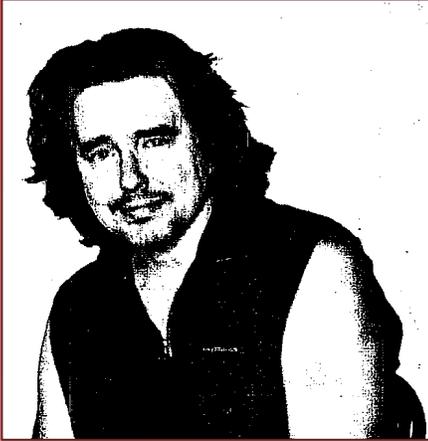




# Tied-In

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



## Renauld Executes

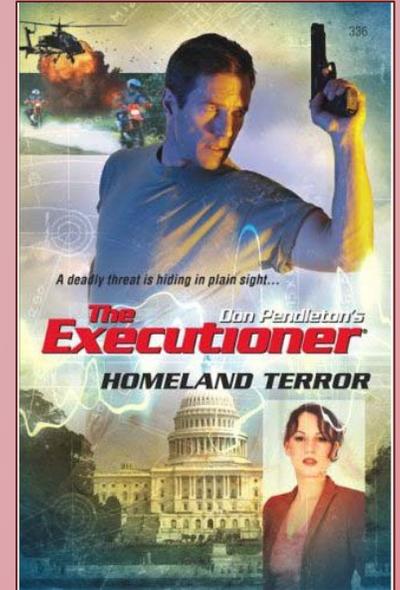
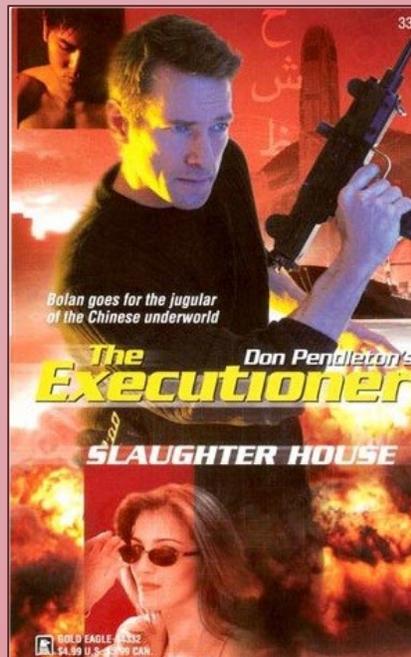
IAMTW Member Ron Renauld just signed a three-book deal with Gold Eagle, Harlequin's imprint for male-oriented escapist fiction, to continue the 40-year legacy of Don Pendleton's Executioner franchise. When completed, Renauld will have 27 books in the series, which he calls "a decent enough output, but still well short of the 39 books Pendleton wrote before selling the rights to the series back in the late 1970s." See [www.mackbolan.com](http://www.mackbolan.com) for more information on the series.

*Hostile Dawn* is expected to hit the shelves next April, with an as-yet-untitled book coming out in late 2009.

Renauld says: "I've had an association, one way or

another, to the tie-in industry going back my days as a Waldenbooks store manager in Southern California. There, in 1976, I helped set up display racks for what is widely-acknowledged as the first bonafide blockbuster novelization, David Seltzer's *The Omen*. I went from selling books to writing them and got my start with Pendleton's original publisher, Pinnacle, writing tie-ins for *Fade to Black*, *Table for Five*, *Visiting Hours*, and novels based on episodes of *The A-Team*, *Airwolf* and *Street Hawk*."

The experience led Renauld to further work in



the genre . . . Kidco and the first two Porkey's movies.

"It was this body of work that actually got my foot in the door at Gold Eagle," he says, "as they hired me for what turned out to be their one-and-only attempt to crack the novelization market, *Jake Speed*. Long story short; they moved up the release date for the movie to six months before the book was to come out, so Gold Eagle scrapped publication plans and said 'Never again.' *Speed* was a Bolanesque character and while the book was never published, it served the writing sample that landed me a six-book contract to write entries for the Executioner spinoff series *Able Team*."

## Super Updates from John Muir

---

John Muir announces that McFarland has just published his updated second edition of his award-winning reference book, *The Encyclopedia of Superheroes on Film and Television*. The new edition is expanded to cover film/TV efforts from 2003 – 2008, including *Heroes*, *Iron Man*, *Hellboy*, *Catwoman*, *Elektra*, *Sky High*, *Ghost Rider*, *Batman Begins*, *Superman Returns* and more.

In addition, his low-budget, independently produced Internet sci-fi series, *The House Between* ([www.thehousebetween.com](http://www.thehousebetween.com)) was recently nominated for the 2008 Sy Fy Portal

Award for "Best Web Production."

John says: "Our second season premiere, 'Returned,' was the nominee. Ultimately, we placed second in the awards, and even beat out the Sci-Fi Channel's *Sanctuary*. We placed less than a 100 votes behind the eventual winner, *Star Trek: Of Gods and Men*, out of 50,000 viewer votes cast."

## Jeanne Cavelos Goes Scientific

---

Jeanne Cavelos was interviewed for Scientific American's Web site in August. The article, titled "The Science of Star Wars: The Clone Wars—Q & A with Author Jeanne Cavelos," is accompanied by excerpts from her book, *The Science of Star Wars*.

In more news: Berkley Publishing Group this month is releasing a mass market paperback edition of the anthology *The Many Faces of Van Helsing*, edited by Jeanne Cavelos.

The anthology, originally published in 2004, was nominated for the highly-coveted Bram Stoker Award for Superior Achievement in an Anthology. Contributors

include Joe Hill, Christopher Golden, Tanith Lee, J. A. Konrath, Thomas Tessier, Steve Rasnic Tem, and Melanie Tem.



## Forbeck Mutates

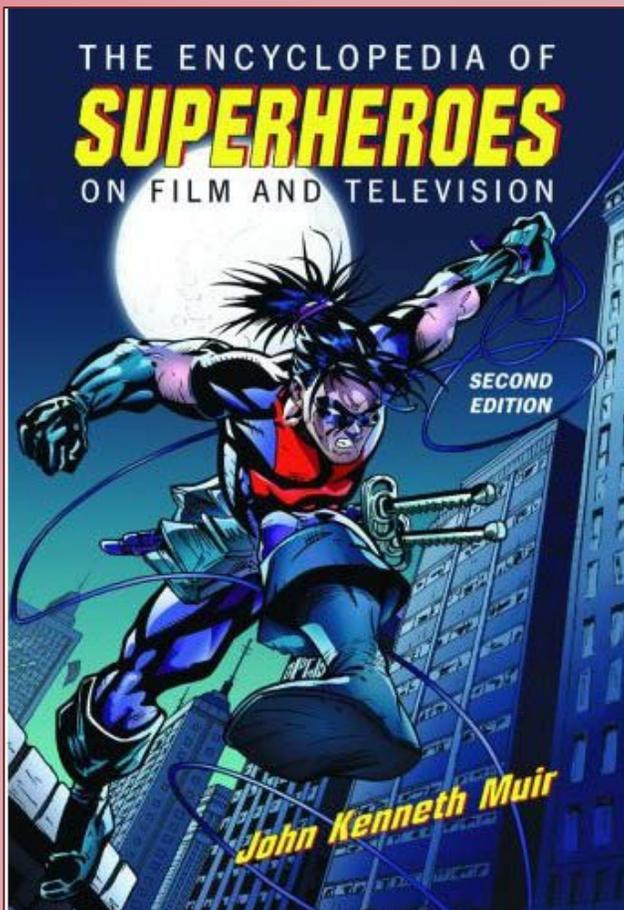
---

Matt Forbeck reports that at long last his *Mutant Chronicles* novelization is on sale. He says: "Run on down to your friendly local bookseller and pick up a copy of your very own—or download an eBook version from your favorite online purveyor of such marvels. As I've said here before, I had a wonderful time working on this book. Fred Malmberg, Jay Zetterberg Leslie Buhler, Leigh Stone, and Thommy Wojciechowski at Paradox were, as ever, a true pleasure to work with, and the same goes for Keith Clayton and Sue Moe, my excellent editors at Del Rey."

## Nancy Drew Holder Haunts the Shelves

---

*Nancy Drew: Ghost Stories* was released just in time for Halloween. The four ghostly tales inside were written by IAMTW's own Nancy "Drew" Holder.



# Spotlight on Donald J. Bingle

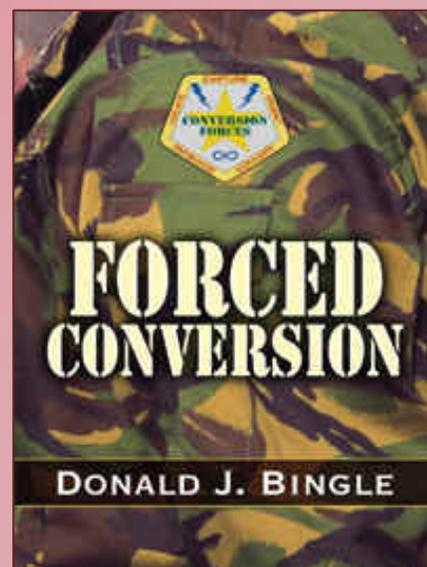
From Gaming to  
Adventures, Stories, and  
Novels on Demand

I don't know about the rest of the membership of IAMTW, but I got my start as a writer by writing for shared worlds—and I don't mean writing fan fiction (for my opinions on copyright theft, see my short story “Hell to Pay”). No, I started as a roleplaying gamer. You know, *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*, *Top Secret*, *Boot Hill*, *Chill*, *Timemaster*, *Paranoia*, *James Bond*, *Cthulhu*, etc., playing in the many convention tournaments put on by The Role-Playing Game Association Network. In my career, I played more than 600 different characters (orcs, spies, goblins, paladins,

dwarves, wizards, clones, dragons, gamblers, Jedi knights, elves, maidens, assassins, bards, gnomes, cowpokes, university professors, shape-shifters, superheroes, bugs, sentient weapons, gypsies, and on and on) in 460 (sometimes multi-round) sanctioned tournaments, winning more the half the tournaments I played. For more than 15 years, I was the RPGA Network's highest ranked player of classic roleplaying games.

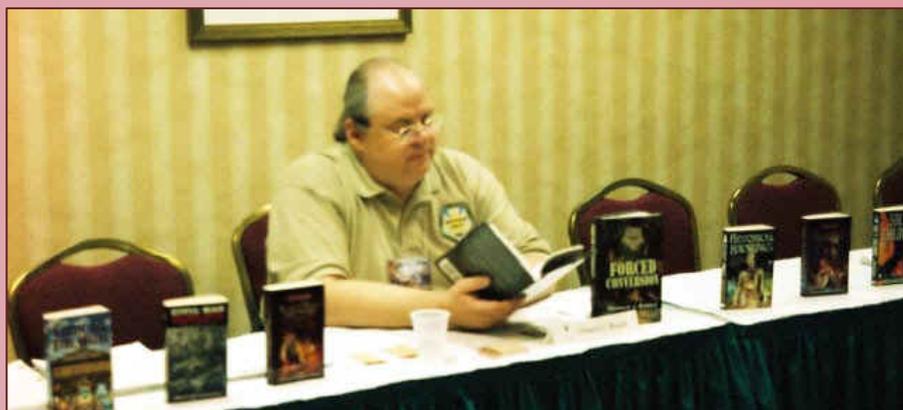
So, naturally, I wanted to give back to the hobby by game mastering (around 150 rounds) and authoring or co-authoring tournaments (23 scenarios in seven very different game systems/worlds).

In many ways, I am the



poster child for someone who has moved to writing from roleplaying gaming. What's that mean, except that somewhere is an old, huge, scary-looking poster?

Well, it means that much of what I know about writing I learned from playing, running, and writing roleplaying games. When you are handed a character sheet at a roleplaying game tournament describing a character you have never seen before (with only the basics of its statistical abilities, its skills and equipment, a two or three paragraph synopsis of its personality and background, and three or four sentences each on what your character thinks of the other four or five player characters in the game) and then have to think, act, and talk like that character (syntax, knowledge, accents, goals, etc.) in real time for the next four hours without hesitation or dithering, you learn how to make a character come alive in a hurry.



Don at a reading at WindyCon in Chicago.

You learn to generate dialogue that matches the character and the setting without being cliché, and how characters interact with one another. When you are running a tournament, you learn how to direct the action of your characters in an overall plotline without being obvious, how to maintain a proper pace, how to drop clues, hints, and red herrings in a way that is interesting and fun, how to set the scene and the mood by narrative description, and how to manage fighting and action sequences that are exciting and heroic. When you are writing tournament scenarios for classic roleplaying games (and, thus, writing the characters and their backgrounds, personalities, and their summary attitudes and thoughts about each of the other characters), you learn something about developing plots and subplots, about avoiding story arcs that are too simple, too obvious, too linear, or even too complex, about matching the characters to the story, about using secrets and character conflict to drive the story, and about reaching a satisfying conclusion.

Lastly, because all of these adventures occur in worlds and game systems created by others, you learn to write in compliance with the setting, rules, background, and mood established by other writers.

On the writing side, you also learn about having your work reviewed, edited, and ultimately controlled by the authors/publishers who created that world.

The other thing that makes me a poster child for becoming a writer through roleplaying gaming is the progression of my writing career. First scenarios for RPGA sanctioned play, then monsters, dungeon crawls, and background and source book material for various published game systems/worlds (*Forgotten Realms*, *Paranoia*, *Timemaster*, *Chill*), then short fiction for shared worlds (*Dragonlance*, *BattleTech*), then short fiction in non-shared worlds, and on to longer works—screenplays, novellas, novels, etc. Along the way, you learn to write quickly, both for game material (like when another author failed to deliver a *Dragonlance* adventure tournament for a charity convention at which opportunities were being auctioned off to play with Margaret Weis playing *Tasslehoff*.) I had to generate in two hours a four-hour adventure that a guest game master ran later that afternoon. And for themed anthologies—my best is seven hours from concept to submission for a DAW themed anthology.

I firmly believe that being a gamer helps me write both fast and creatively. In a roleplaying game, if your

Both this experience and my experience in writing for themed anthologies in general has shown me how limitations (of the scene, of the character, of the shared world, or of the writing assignment) can prompt and focus creativity and generate stories that never would have existed otherwise.

character dithers—doesn't know what to do or say—the game goes on without the character getting to do or say anything and consequences flow from that fact.

So whenever the specter of writer's bloc rears its head, I ask what I would do if I was in a game. For example, in my near future military sci-fi novel, *Forced Conversion*, I had a situation where a character needed to surreptitiously communicate with another, hidden character, without a companion noticing. When I was initially stumped, I literally looked back to see what the character had on her (sorry, no pen or pencil, but she did have a hiking map with ads on it) and fashioned what I would have done in game to solve the problem.

It ended up as a much more fun and creative scene than if I had simply gone back and given the character a writing implement. Both this experience and my experience in writing for

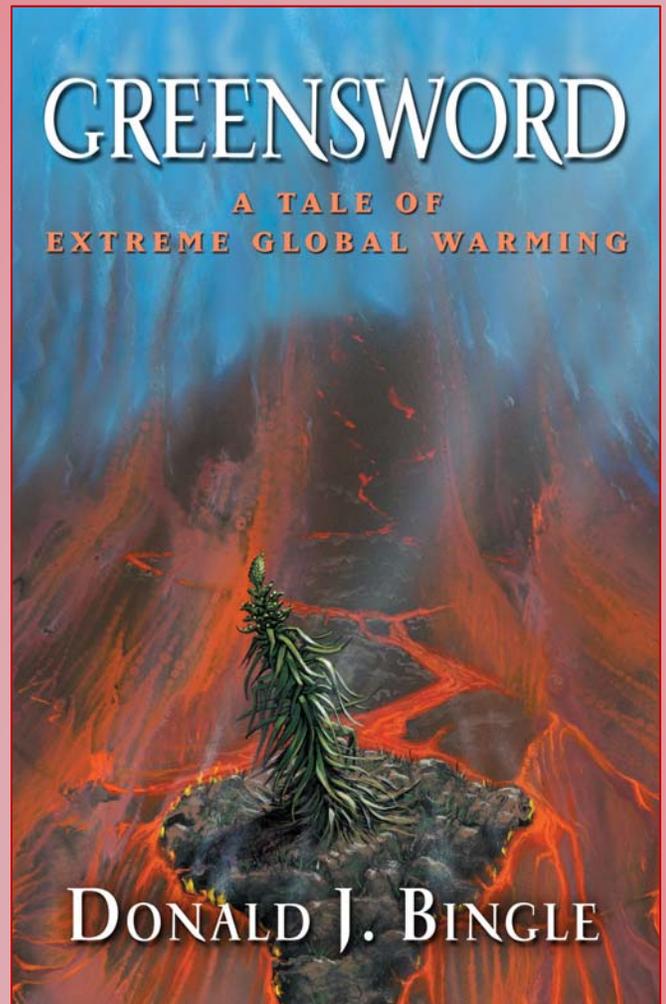
themed anthologies in general has shown me how limitations (of the scene, of the character, of the shared world, or of the writing assignment) can prompt and focus creativity and generate stories that never would have existed otherwise.

Believe me, I have written plenty of tales (BattleTech and Transformer tie-ins, stories about sentient animals, stories about particular historical events, and on and on—twenty-four published pieces of short fiction for themed anthologies, and counting, almost all of them on demand), that I never would have thought to write had there not been a request or an open anthology posting or a need to build my resume' to forward my writing career.

Gaming has also introduced me to writers, editors, and publishers that my non-gaming writing friends covet. My most recent novel, *GREENSWORD*, a darkly comedic eco-thriller

about global warming, is getting published in January because of contacts I made through gaming and tie-in writing. I am currently, like several other IAMTW members, ghost-writing a spy thriller for the Room 59 series, a mass market paperback novel opportunity and paycheck that would not otherwise have been available without the contacts I generated through gaming, shared world, and themed anthologies.

And, despite the ego-centric nature of the paragraphs above, I don't think that I am the best or the fastest or the hardest-working or the most creative writer in the world, in the



IAMTW, or even in any random group of two. But I do think that gaming, shared world/tie-in writing, and writing on demand for themed anthologies has given me the skills and the discipline to meet the opportunities and deadlines that may arise in the future to author original and adapted short fiction, novels, screenplays, and teleplays in worlds of my own or someone else's making. (For more shameless self-promotion, see my website at [www.orphyte.com/donaldjbingle](http://www.orphyte.com/donaldjbingle).)

I am proud to be a member of the IAMTW.



## Literary Works

Literary Agent Jacqueline S. Hackett approached Lee Goldberg at the South Carolina Writer's Conference recently, saying she is eager to add tie-in writers to her list of clients. She was referred to Lee by Emmy Award winning TV writer Ken Levine, who is one of her clients.

From her site: "Literary Works is a full-service boutique literary agency with a focus on books with a wide commercial appeal that both enlighten and entertain." <http://literary-works.com/>

In addition, it says: "Agent Jacqueline Hackett is a member of the Association of Authors' Representatives and she is an attorney, which helps her negotiate the best deals for her clients. Her style of representation is aggressive, comprehensive and innovative. She tailors her representation to the needs of each client and the peculiarities of their project. Although she received her training from two prestigious New York agencies, she is based in the Southeast, which ultimately helps her to spot some trends and talent that New York centric agents might miss."

Special room rate of \$99/night Hotel phone: 630-719-8000.

Events: Seminars, movies, costume competition, filking, dealer's room.

For more information:

[www.windycon.org](http://www.windycon.org)

## Orycon 30

Nov. 21-23, Portland, OR  
Portland Marriott Waterfront  
Guests: Harry Turtledove, Ginjer Buchanan.

Registration: \$50 to Oct. 31

Events: Art show, writers' workshops, seminars, filking, dealer's room.

For more information:

[www.orycon.org](http://www.orycon.org)

## Love is Murder

Feb. 6-8, 2009, Chicago, IL  
Westin Chicago North Shore  
Guests: IAMTW's Raymond Benson, as well as Alex Kava, Steve Berry, Jeffrey Deaver.

Registration: price varies based on food options.

Events: Agent meetings, pitch sessions, seminars, banquets, and more.

For more information:

[www.loveismurder.net](http://www.loveismurder.net)

# IAMTW

President—

Max Allan Collins

Vice President—

Lee Goldberg

Website: [www.iamtw.org](http://www.iamtw.org)

E-mail: [tieinwriters@yahoo.com](mailto:tieinwriters@yahoo.com)

Send Tied-In submissions to:

[jeanrabe@hotmail.com](mailto:jeanrabe@hotmail.com)

IAMTW

PO Box 8212

Calabasas, CA 91372

entertained at the awards ceremony, on the beach, at the bar, and in the elevator, is IAMTW's own Vice President Lee Goldberg.

One of the highlights of the convention will be the premiere of: "The House Without a Key," a new play based on Earl Derr Biggers' Charlie Chan novel.

LCC will also feature a luau, talks about Hawaiian flora and fauna, pre- and post-convention trips, and fun and informative interactive panels.

For more information about Left Coast Crime, visit: [www.leftcoastcrime.org/2009](http://www.leftcoastcrime.org/2009)

## Convention Calendar

### WindyCon

Nov. 14-16, Chicago, IL

Westin Lombard

Guests: John Ringo, Walter Koenig, David Mattingly.

Registration: \$45 by Oct. 1

### Left Coast Crime

Left Coast Crime 2009 will be held on the Big Island of Hawaii from March 7-12, 2009. The conference's toastmaster, who is charged with keeping the crowd

All articles in this issue are copyright 2008 by their respective authors.  
All other content copyright 2008 IAMTW.