

## And Now It's Time to Nominate

Now that it's summer, it must be time to get your nominations in for the 2010 Pegasus Awards. Of course, this is dependent on getting the website working, but we trust that will happen shortly. (Actually, we **do** still accept paper nominating ballots, so please feel free to send them in.)

In the meantime, please take note of the following important public service announcements that our friendly Pegasus Evangelista has asked us to pass along:

1) Nominations will close on July 31<sup>st</sup> at 11:59:59 PM Pacific Time. If you haven't sent your nominations in by then, you'll be too late!

2) Although the website stubbornly insists that one of the floating categories is "Best Fantasy Song", the website is wrong. The **correct** floating category is "Best Magic Song". We are positive that these are not the same thing. And after the whole Science vs. Mad Science thing, we are not going to let some little wording problem on the website stand in our way.

Bwa-ha-ha!

### Easier on the Eyes

Those of you who have carefully saved all of your issues of *Wing Words* and preserved them in a binder for future reference will note that the font size of this issue is slightly larger than in previous issues. This is because the editor is tired of using her reading glasses. And her arms are just not **that** long.



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### Ask Peggy!

As we dip into our mailbag, we pull out the following question from "G.H. Filker in Chicago, Illinois" who asks, "What the heck is the difference between fantasy and magic?"

A good and uniquely timely question, G.H.

At a first cut, we're tempted to say that magic is a subset of fantasy. Of course, a fantasy doesn't necessarily need **any** magic in it at all. Like the Cubs winning the World Series. (As opposed to *The Year the Yankees Lost the Pennant* which has a great deal of devilish magic going around the old ballpark. On second thought, magic **may** be needed for the Cubs...)

But consider the *Toy Story* films. They're clearly fantasy, but once you concede the central conceit that the toys come to life when they're not being watched, there are no magical elements in it at all. They're action-adventure films. Got it, G.H.?

## What is Mad Science?

By Erica Neely

Our esteemed editors have asked me to take a shot at explaining the difference between science and mad science; since that's a really good excuse for putting off grading, I said I'd be delighted to do it.

What distinguishes mad science from sane science, I believe, is the implausibility of either the methods or the aims of a mad scientist. Sometimes mad science just involves crazy ways of trying to accomplish what would otherwise be a perfectly reasonable goal. So, for instance, trying to develop a rocket ship is science. Trying to develop a rocket ship that runs on green Jell-O is mad science. (I look forward to the letters explaining why this is a perfectly sane goal. Why do I say this? Because I know fans.)

Another way a project can be mad science is when the goal itself seems ludicrous. Why would you want to develop a 100 gigawatt death ray? If you answered "Because it's cool!" you're probably either a mad scientist or an engineer. Mad scientists try things that saner people don't dare. They try to stitch together body parts to make a new person. They create plagues capable of wiping out the human race without wondering whether this is a good idea. They experiment on themselves by eagerly drinking untried potions and elixirs.

Basically, they're kind of nuts.

Of course, what counts as mad science can change over time. I'm guessing a lot of people found those Wright boys pretty

crazy for thinking humans could fly. These days, just being an aerospace engineer wouldn't be enough to qualify you as a mad scientist – trying to stay ahead of the sanity curve is hard work! Fortunately, there's a nice, easy test for determining whether what you're doing is mad science: if you find yourself pursued by angry mobs, chances are it's mad science. After all, mad science might be hard to define, but they sure know it when they see it.

## The Brainstorming Poll

The results of the brainstorming poll should be available on the Pegasus website soon. In the meantime, you may find a paper copy sitting near this issue of *Wing Words*. Or not.

You may **also** find a nominating ballot sitting in approximately the same location. We're keeping our fingers crossed right now.

## Send Us Questions

We're always happy to try to answer your questions about the Pegasus Awards. If you've got a question, send it to us at:

[wingwords@ovff.org](mailto:wingwords@ovff.org)

## Next Issue

It'll be voting season. Trust us.

And the website will be updated.

Really.

Trust us. We're mad scientists.