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ARE YOU UP FOR THE CHALLENGE?

AVAR PRESS ANNOUNCES XEN CRYPTOGRAM COMPETITION BEGINNING DECEMBER 1, 2007

Avar Press is delighted to announce an international competition, seeking solutions to the cryptogram in XEN (Avar Press; ISBN: 0976066009) by D. J. Solomon, awarding up to \$2500, equivalent to the Poe cryptographic challenge solved in 2000. The encrypted message is a continuous text cipher, without boundaries between words, like the solved Kryptos sculpture ciphers at the CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia. The competition will be open for five years, beginning December 1, 2007.

Cash awards will increase up to \$2500 depending on how long it takes for a solution to be reached. The minimum award will be \$500 and will be granted to a solution reached in the first week of the competition. Thereafter, the value of the prize will increase as follows: \$750 for an answer received after the first week and before the end of the first month; \$1000 after the first month and before the end of six months; \$1250 after the first six months and before the end of the first year; \$1500 after the first year and before 18 months; \$2000 after the first 18 months and before the end of the second year; \$2500 thereafter, up to 5 years.

The contest winner shall be determined by the first correct solution to the encrypted message contained in the novel Xen. The text of the puzzle and hints are available on the Xen website, www.xenbook.com, and may be copied and used in any fashion desired so long as appropriate attribution is provided to the author. No purchase is necessary and there is no entry fee. The Competition is open to the international community. The answer as well as the maximum cash prize have been deposited with legal counsel.

As the "last testament of mankind," XEN recounts the tale of the 21st century misanthropic scientist who banished evil from the world, marking the end of hate and prejudice. The novel has become the foundation for a highly successful literary scholarship competition for high school students in the US and Canada that is entering its third year in 2008; a competition for college students is also being offered world wide for 2008.

D. J. Solomon is a Stanford M.D., Brandeis Phi Beta Kappa, and Westinghouse Science Talent Search Scholarship winner. He has a private practice in rural North Carolina. Xen is his first novel, second book, the first published in 1979 by W.B. Saunders. The complete rules are available at the Avar Press website: www.avarpress.com