



# LAMBDA SCI-FI

DC Area Gaylaxians

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E-MAIL: [info@lambdasf.org](mailto:info@lambdasf.org) WEBSITE: <http://www.lambdasf.org/>

Gaylaxicon 2000



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## The Hauntings of Ellicott Mills

As an early kickoff to the Halloween season, Lambda Sci-Fi will be taking a trip up to Ellicott City, Maryland, to take one of their popular ghost tours. Ellicott City is an old mill town with lots of history and lots of charm; and it is now a Mecca for antique dealers, many of them along the Main Street Historic District.

We'll be taking the 9/16/00 tour. Reservations are required. Call 800-288-8747 or 410-313-1900 to reserve your own spot. (As of this writing, the 9/16 tour was completely open; tours in October are already booked solid.) Tours are \$7.00 per person. Be sure to reserve as soon as you can if you want to go.

The tour begins at 8:30 PM and is a walking tour of the town's spooky sites, so dress appropriately. Rain will not stop a tour, but a serious storm will. The tour meets at the Howard County Visitor Information Center, at the side entrance of the Main Street Post Office. Those attending can, if they want, go earlier to explore the town on their own and shop the many antique shops. We'll also meet for dinner at 6:30 PM, before the tour, at the Phoenix Emporium (8049 Main Street).

DIRECTIONS: Ellicott City is about 22 miles north of Washington,

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## Changes to LSF Meeting Schedule for Sept./Oct.

Warning! Warning! Aliens approaching! Danger, Will Robinson! Ooops! I mean: pay attention, everyone; there'll be some slight alterations in the LSF meeting schedule for the next couple months!

### For September:

No change in date/time; but a change in venue. The Sept. LSF meeting will be held on Sunday, Sept. 10th, as planned - BUT it'll be held at Peter & Rob's home: 1425 "S" St., NW (on "S", between 14th and 15th Sts.). It's still 1:30 PM for the business meeting and 2:00 PM for the social meeting. **Remember:** Several many club proposals will be voted on at the meeting. (For details, see the article on the "Aug. LSF Minutes" -- starting on page 2 of this issue.)

Please bring some munchies or soft drinks if you can. See you there!

### For October:

Hey! October is Gaylaxicon-month! We'll be having way too much fun at the convention to feel like stopping for the monthly LSF meeting! So, it's been proposed that there be *no LSF meeting in October!* (A proposal to be voted on at the September meeting.)

See you at Gaylaxicon 2000! (And back to same bat-time, same bat-channel in November!)

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## WHAT'S INSIDE?

The "Proposed" Minutes of the August LSF Meeting (pg. 2, etc., etc.); A Cartoon by Chris Browning (pgs. 2 & 3); *Cowboy Bebop* (video review - pg. 3); The LSF Book Discussion Group (pg. 3); *Dumas and the Devil* (book review - pg. 4); *The Hollow Man* (movie review - pg. 5); Gaylaxicon 2000 Guest List (pg. 5); About Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians and Con Calendar (pg. 6)

## Ellicott Mills Tour

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DC. There are two major ways to approach it:

1) From the Beltway (or inside the District), take Rt 29 (Colesville Road) north, past Columbia, to where it intersects with Rt 40. Take Rt 40 East, turn right at the first light (Rogers Avenue), and follow the signs to the Main Street Historic District.

2) Or you can take I-95 north to Exit 43, and get on Rt 100 West, which then intersects with Rt 29 North. Then follow the directions above.

Please feel free to contact Michael C. for further information at 301-589-7725 or at Stenbock@aol.com.

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## A Cartoon by Chris Browning (Pt. 1)



"I know you said our love would take us higher....."

[continued on pg. 3]

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## The "Proposed" Minutes of the August LSF Meeting

by Rob

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At 1:30, we got right down to business. Rob gave a quick Treasurer's Report: \$3069.86 in the bank, with a few new bills likely to drop us below \$3000. Speaking of bills, the website bill has come due and was passed to Rob. The G'Con 2000 Committee reported that all was well, and that Programming was the heavy work right now. A quick report was made regarding the canceled movie event at The Game Edge - no future events are scheduled (or likely to be) there. The Network Rep reported that a few Network officers had recently resigned, but that filling the positions was on hold as the Network Board worked out some details. There has been much *Angst* regarding clubs trying to become active again and whether they would be granted Full Affiliate status. North Country Gaylaxians (Minneapolis) appears to be trying to resurrect. Both proposals regarding the authority of the Network Rep failed; and Kay suggested and got a green light to have a separate open meeting/forum to discuss the Network, so that the club can concentrate during its monthly meetings on its own business and on having fun.

The September meeting will be

at Peter and Rob's house (because our regular host James has another commitment that day). Please see the "next meeting" announcement for address and information. Rob made a proposal that the October meeting be canceled, since Gaylaxicon 2000 coincides with the regular meeting date and we'll all be tired. **A vote will be taken on this proposal in September.** Kay proposed that all proposals being brought up for vote under our new procedure (announced at one meeting, voted on at the next, and posted in the newsletter in between) be given in writing both to the minutes-taker and to someone else, to ensure that proposals are entered into the minutes exactly as proposed. The exact proposal (modifying our existing proposal procedures) is:

*"A written proposal for vote must be provided to the "secretary" and an exact copy to the Speaker at the meeting where the proposal is made."*

This proposal will be voted on at the September meeting.

Information on Montgomery Pride was discussed, and the Gaylaxicon

2000 folks asked if LSF was interested in sharing the table costs (and benefits) with Gaylaxicon. A friendly amendment/alternative was proposed (for vote at the September LSF meeting), as follows:

*"LSF will pay for a table at Montgomery Pride 2000 at a cost of \$25. The table will be used to distribute information and recruit for both LSF and Gaylaxicon. Gaylaxicon will provide the core volunteers needed to staff the table, though additional staffers from LSF are welcome."*

This proposal will be voted on at the September meeting.

Another proposal was also made, by Rob, regarding outreach for LSF. Given our current positive financial status and the number of people we've recruited only in the digital realm, Rob proposed the following, for vote at the September meeting:

*"LSF will enact a membership drive by offering current participants in all LSF and Network email lists an opportunity*

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## Cowboy Bebop

a short rave  
by Carl Cipra



One of the really great things about attending various LSF functions is that you can learn about wonderful works of F&SF you might never have discovered for yourself. It happens all the time for me in the book discussion group -- Geoff Ryman's *Was* being a case in point. I've also learned about great videos at the "Video Madness" parties -- Norman brought *Late for Dinner* to show at a party several years ago, and it's been a favorite of mine ever since.

Well, it's just happened again! This time, the venue was the "LSF Animé Club" party that Kay and Tim sponsored on July 15<sup>th</sup>. Kay included a couple of episodes of *Cowboy Bebop* among that evening's entertainments, and I was instantly hooked!

*Cowboy Bebop* is a successful SF animé series originally made for Japanese TV; and each episode runs about 22 minutes (*sans* commercials, apparently). It all takes place in our Solar System in some future time when some sort of stargate-accelerators make interplanetary and interstellar travel as easy as driving on the Interstate highway system. The androgynously-cute Spike Spiegel and his partners (the bionically-enhanced Jet Black and the sexy-and-reckless Faye Valentine) operate a bounty-hunting business from aboard their ship, the *Bebop*, and wander around the Solar System trying to make a living. That's the whole premise -- beyond that, it seems that anything goes! I've seen six episodes so far, and they've included adventures with drug-runners, space pirates, a bizarre killer called Mad Pierrot, an ageless child prodigy, a Syndicate killer with ties to Spike's past, and a runaway Welsh corgi. And there are *at least* 14 more episodes I *haven't* seen yet! Each episode is campy space-opera of one sort or another, with really good animation, more than a touch of *film noir*, and a great musical score. (And, needless to say, they're all kind'a -- um -- violent.)

Like I said, I'm hooked! Give 'em a look - you might be, too! *Cowboy Bebop* is available in VHS, with 2-episodes per tape; and there are 2 formats available out there, either Japanese-with-English-subtitles (issued by Anime Village) or English-language (issued by Bandai). As far as I'm concerned, you can't lose either way. Stand ~~aside~~, *Buckaroo Banzai*; here comes *Cowboy Bebop*!

(Addendum: Subsequent to writing this article, I've gone on a buying spree and am now the proud & happy owner of 11 *Cowboy Bebop* tapes! That's 22, count 'em 22, wild & fun-filled episodes! But wait, *there are still at least 4 more episodes out there!!!*)

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## A Cartoon by Chris Browning

(Pt. 2)



## The LSF Book Discussion Group



If you're interested in lively discussions of F&SF books (with an emphasis on elements of interest to the LBGT community), we invite you to join the LSF Book Discussion Group. Each month, for over a year now, we've been conducting fascinating round-table discussions of works by significant F&SF authors.

The LSF Book Discussion Group generally meets on the 4th Thursday of every month, starting at 7:00 PM. The next meeting will be held on July 25th, at Peter & Rob's house, 1425 "S" St., NW. (For directions or more details, call 202-483-6369.)

Here's the Discussion Group's schedule for the next couple of months: -- **Thurs., Sept. 25** - *Lions of Al-Rassan*, by Guy Gavriel Kay (a "historical-fantasy") & "Brooks too Broad for Leaping", by Charles Sheffield (in the anthology *Bending the Landscape: Science Fiction*); facilitator: Mike P.

--- **Thurs., Oct. 26** - *Weaveworld*, by Clive Barker; facilitator: Carl.

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## August Minutes

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*to provide us with a postal address to which we will send a membership information packet to include a current newsletter, LSF membership forms, and other LSF materials. Estimated cost will be approx. \$100."*

This proposal will be voted on at the September meeting.

Finally, one last proposal was brought forward by the Organizational Discussion Group. The proposal offers a special method of dealing with emergency situations where a vote may be needed at the same meeting a proposal is made. (Our newly-adopted regular procedures directs that proposals must be made at one meeting and voted on at the next). The proposal is:

*"An emergency vote may occur to accomplish club business at a regular club meeting under the following circumstances:*

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**Dumas and the Devil**  
 a review by Colleen R. Cahill  
 of *The Club Dumas*  
 written by Arturo Pérez-Reverte,  
 trans. from Spanish by Sonia Soto  
 (New York: Harcourt Brace &  
 Company, 1996)

What is real and what is fiction? This is hardly a new theme in literature. Pérez-Reverte handles it in a unique way, mixing real books and history with those from his imagination. Known as a mystery/thriller writer, Pérez-Reverte has added elements that justify calling this work a fantasy. Even if you have no interest in the occult or in *The Three Musketeers*, this book has the atmosphere, plot and characters to hold your attention.



Lucas Corso is a book hunter. For a price, he will find the rarest of the early printed books; and as a “mercenary of the book world”, Corso will do anything short of murder to obtain any title a client wants. In *The Club Dumas*, he takes on two missions: to determine if some manuscript pages are actually originals from Alexandre Dumas’ *The Three Musketeers* and to decide if a client’s copy of *The Book of the Nine Doors of the Kingdom of Shadows* is, in part or whole, a forgery.

The two threads of the story lead Corso to various locations in Europe and to some fascinating people. The Dumas manuscript was the property of a wealthy cookbook publisher who collected nineteenth century serial fiction; he recently hung himself. Hired by a book seller who owns the pages, Corso attempts to authenticate the manuscript while the dead publisher’s beautiful widow tries to regain the pages. The tension between Corso, the widow and her chauffeur is raised, as Corso is constantly reminded of various scenes from *The Three Musketeers* by other two. The surreal quality of this

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1) *The proposer must make a good faith effort to inform the membership of the upcoming vote and must document their efforts at the time of making the proposal.*

2) *A 3/4 majority of votes by members must be cast in favor at the meeting to allow the emergency vote.*

*An emergency vote passes if a 3/4 majority of votes cast on the issue are in favor. Absentee ballots will be accepted with the same restrictions as for regular votes. A minimum of 10 members or 25% of the current membership, whichever is fewer, must cast votes on the issue for the vote to be valid.”*

This proposal will also be voted on at the September meeting.

With business out of the way, we shuffled quickly into our usual social chaos. Peter passed around various stuff from the PO Box, while Dan regaled us with tales from Anthrocon. Apparently there was a lot of gay-positive stuff (and people) there, and Dan had much fun. (According to Dan, “there was a lot of Spandex involved.”) A number of genre films were looking to be on people’s “must see” lists - including *The Cell*, and *Godzilla 2000*. After much lambasting of the Sony *Godzilla*, we all agreed that this one had to be better. Wayne passed around a little “growing alien” toy and an article about how Robert Howard was pretty much an outcast in his small town when he was still alive.

A name circle was conducted, and Michael again reminded everyone of the “coffee can o’ ideas,” which he passed around - offering everyone an opportunity to suggest LSF events without being automatically expected to run them. Attendees of the previous day’s museum outing reported that the Oz exhibit was cool and that the Viking exhibit was fascinating. Highlight of the Oz exhibit was the tape loop with clips from various Oz films (including an animé one). Highlighting the Viking exhibit were the hoaxes regarding proof that Vikings had been to America. An upcoming museum trip will hit the American Visionary Art Museum on August 26<sup>th</sup> in Baltimore. (Contact Michael for more info at [stenbock@aol.com](mailto:stenbock@aol.com) or 301-589-7725.)

Dan reported that “Vulcan” (a planet circling Eridani) has been discovered. Michael reported on a *Blair Witch*-related series of YA horror books, with an appropriately-named website, [www.theblairwitchfiles.com](http://www.theblairwitchfiles.com). Casting buzz is still aflutter regarding the Harry Potter film - new rumors include Alan Rickman as Snape and Richard Harris as Dumbledore. Michael gave the film *Cecil B Demented* a huge thumbs up, while various folks gave *What Lies Beneath* mediocre marks and complained that the advertising/commercials give away important plot secrets.

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investigation increases as he discovers ties between Dumas and the occult.

*The Nine Doors* search leads Corso to eccentric book binders, a psychotic book collector and a best selling occult author who is also a Baroness. The book is a text for summoning the Devil and includes nine illustrations. (These illustrations are included in *The Club Dumas*. Reminiscent of tarot cards or of Renaissance wood cuts, they add greatly to the story and are a key to the mystery.)

Corso is followed and sometimes aided in his searches by a young woman who will only give the name Irene Adler of 221B Baker Street, London. The mystery surrounding this character, who seems to protect and ignore Corso in turn, is accentuated by the interesting bits of knowledge she will occasionally throw his way.

*The Club Dumas* mixes a streetwise detective novel with the rarified world of antique book collecting and the dark edge of occultism. Nominated for the 1998 World Fantasy Award, it is also now a movie release, *The Ninth Gate*. Since I have not seen the film, I will refrain from commenting on it and point the readers to <http://www.ninthgate.com> for more information, including a plot synopsis.

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**The Hollow Man**  
**(More than**  
**meets the eye!)**  
 a film review by Joseph

In 1933, Universal Pictures filmed H.G. Wells' classic science-fiction cautionary tale of obsession, madness, and horror, *The Invisible Man*, directed by our own James Whale. The film itself is a classic in its own right and, in the ensuing years, spawned sequels and take-offs and rip-offs -- even occasionally an homage. Though Columbia Pictures' new sci-fi/horror film neither acknowledges H.G. Wells nor the classic Claude Rains film, it is indeed intended as a salute to its predecessor(s).

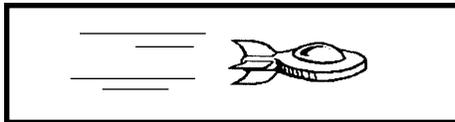
Kevin Bacon portrays a research scientist involved with a government project re: invisibility. No, not to find a way to make living things invisible (he and his team have *already* solved that problem) -- but a way to make them *visible* again. Complicating matters is the fact that the scientist's ex-wife (played by Elisabeth Shue) is on the research team and he is still in love with her -- but she isn't interested in *him* any longer, other than as her boss on the project. Complicating things further is the fact that the government is breathing down the scientist's neck for results *and* that this scientist is a man obsessed. Not only is he obsessed with his project to the point of madness, he is also obsessed with being a voyeur, obsessed with controlling the lives of those around him, and obsessed with finding a way to get his ex back, no matter what. Though the project team has found a way to bring animals to a state of invisibility and back, they have not experimented with a human subject; and Uncle Sam is getting nervous. What is a self-respecting, possibly mad, scientist to do? Why, experiment on himself, naturally! Getting him to invisibility: no problem. Getting him back, however... There is a further complication: the invisibility serum tends to drive its subjects slightly mad; and our dear doctor is already well on his way.

Director Paul Verhoeven (*Robocop*) puts his actors through their

paces at paranoid speed. He has quite a knack at directing tense science-fiction; and this film greatly benefits from his presence. His fine direction makes up for what is lacking in the narrative, as do the good performances by Bacon, Shue, Josh Brolin, William Devane, and the rest of the cast. Jerry Goldsmith's score is always an asset to any film, particularly fantastic films; and this one is no exception. However, the real star of any "invisible" flick is/are the special effects. Scott Anderson and his team at Sony Image Works have outdone themselves, utilizing CGI to its best advantage, along with the old tricks of the trade for invisible movies (such as rear projection and blue-screening) in ways that John Fulton (special effects wizard at Universal in the 1930's and 1940's and at Paramount in the 1950's) never would have dreamed of. Also adding to these are the make-up effects by Alec Gillis and Tom Woodruff. Yes, even an invisible man needs make-up, as becomes evident in this film. I must say, when I walked into the theatre, I was expecting to be only, at best, mildly entertained, given the fact that the latest go-round of invisi-movies and TV shows are pretty crummy plotwise, with nice effects. I was very pleasantly surprised with this A-movie that tackles a B-movie subject with the same care and dedication as the old Universal classics. See *The Hollow Man*, if you can. If you can't, don't let him find out! Enjoy!!

Rating: 3 out of a possible 4.

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**Gaylaxicon 2000**



**OUR DISTINGUISHED GUESTS**

Tristan Alexander, Robert Angell, Catherine Asaro, Don Bassingthwaite, Joshua Bilmes, Brenda Clough, Colleen Doran, Kurt Erichsen, **Nan Fredman (AGoH)**, Rob Gates, Carolyn Ives Gilman, Melissa Good, Jeff Dylan Graham, Jim Grimsley, John Hall, Keith Hartman, Tanya Huff, Nancy Janda, Toby Johnson, Shariann Lewitt, Ciaran Llachlan Leavitt, Richard Mandrachio, Susan R. Matthews, Farah Mendlesohn, James Morrow, Lee Moyer, Stephe Pagel, Severna Park, **Fiona Patton (GoH)**, C.K. Penchant, Carrie Richerson, Hanna MG Shapero, Joan Slonczewski, Laura Underwood, Jan Whiteley

**August Minutes**

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In con reports, Michael raved about the recent Classic Horror Film Fest in Crystal City, while Nan and Kay gave mixed marks to Otakon, the big Baltimore animé con. They thought much of the material was stale, though they enjoyed the live-action Hong Kong-action stuff. In TV news, Mainframe (creators of *Reboot*) has a new cartoon called *Action Man*, while another cartoon *Cyber Six* appears to be another case of animé invading the US. Finally, a new version of *Voltron* (called *Voltron 3D*) is coming...be prepared. And a new USA Network movie entitled *The Darkling* is set to premiere during August.

In other bits, Phil Jimenez (openly-gay, well-known comics creator) is taking over *Wonder Woman*. Michael is leading an outing to a Ghost Tour of Ellicott City on Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup> (see his contact info above). Nan and Kay are thinking of attending a local gaming gathering on the weekend of September 1<sup>st</sup> - info at [www.barkingmad.org](http://www.barkingmad.org). Rob reminded everyone of upcoming LSF Book Discussion Group gatherings; and Peter and Rob passed around a souvenir from their journey to Vermont to get civil-unioned: a marvelous teddy bear with a removable face that reveals the teddy bear's true nature as an alien. Finally, one of our new visitors shared his adventures at the Sci-Fi Channel's recent Exposure Film Festival in New York. The material was basically all stuff he had seen on the show; but the filmfest was fascinating, with lots of creative people and innovative stuff.

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**\*\* INFORMATION ABOUT LAMBDA SCI-FI: DC AREA GAYLAXIANS \*\***

**Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians** (LSF) is an organization for gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered (GLBT) people, and their friends who are interested in science fiction, fantasy, horror and related genres in all forms (SF/F/H). LSF's primary goals are to have fun, to provide a community, and to:

- promote SF/F/H, with particular attention to materials of interest to GLBT people and their friends;
- provide forums for GLBT people and their friends to share their interest in SF/F/H;
- promote the presence of GLBT elements within SF/F/H and within fandom; and
- promote SF/F/H within the GLBT community.

Annual membership fees are \$20, for which you will receive this monthly newsletter and a membership directory. Newsletter submissions are always welcome.

Meetings are usually held on the second Sunday of each month at a private residence. The next Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will be held on **Sunday, Sept. 10th, at Peter & Rob's house**: 1425 "S" St., NW, (near DuPont Circle) - 1:30 PM for business meeting; 2:00 PM for social meeting. Please bring some munchies or soft drinks, if you can. Hope to see you there!

Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians is an affiliate of **the Gaylactic Network**, an international organization for gay people and their friends who are interested in science-fiction and fantasy.



## Con Calendar

by Carl, Peter, Rob, Mike, and Helgi



Aug. 31 - Sept. 4, 2000 **CHICON 2000 (the 58th World Science Fiction Convention)**. Hyatt Regency & environs (Chicago). GoH: Ben Bova; Artist GoH: Bob Eggleton; Editor GoH: Jim Baen. Membership (as of 7/15/2000): \$195. Make membership checks payable to "Chicon 2000" and send to: Chicon 2000, PO Box 642057, Chicago, IL 60664.

E-mail: [chi2000@chicon.org](mailto:chi2000@chicon.org) Web site: [www.chicon.org](http://www.chicon.org)

Oct. 6-9, 2000 **GAYLAXICON 2000**. Arlington Hilton & Towers (Arlington, VA). GoH: Fiona Patton; Artist GoH: Nan Fredman. Membership: \$45 until 9/8/2000; \$55 at the door. Hotel rate: \$99/night (sgl/dbl), +\$20 for each add'l guest. Make membership checks payable to "Gaylaxicon 2000" and send to: Gaylaxicon 2000, PO Box 1862, Annandale, VA 22003-9862. Web: <http://www.lambdasf.org/g2k>

Nov. 17-19, 2000 **PHILCON 2000**. Adam's Mark Hotel (Philadelphia). GoH: Vernor Vinge; Artist GoH: Bob Walters; Special Guest: Poul Anderson. Membership: \$40 until 10/25/00; \$45 after that & at the door. Hotel rate: \$101 (sgl/dbl), \$115 (tpl/quad), until 10/1/00. Make membership checks payable to "Philadelphia Science Fiction Society" and send to: PSFS, PO Box 8303, Philadelphia, PA 19101-8303. E-mail: [Info@philcon.org](mailto:Info@philcon.org) Web site: [www.philcon.org](http://www.philcon.org)

Nov. 24-26, 2000 **DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL MEETING XXIII**. Holiday Inn Select - Baltimore North (Timonium, MD). GoH: Diane Duane & Peter Morwood; Special Guest: Katherine Kurtz; Musical GoH: Clam Chowder. Membership: \$35 until 11/1/2000; \$40 after that (and at the door). Hotel rates: \$70/night (sgl - quad); res. cut-off date 11/10/00. Make membership checks payable to "Armida Council" and send to: Armida Council, PO Box 7203, Silver Spring, MD 20907. Web site: [www.darkovercon.com](http://www.darkovercon.com)

