



PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044 - (202) 232-3141 - Issue #168 - March 2004  
 E-MAIL: info@lambdasf.org WEBSITE: http://www.lambdasf.org/



(The first LSF meeting was held on March 14, 1990.)

## Happy 14th Birthday to Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians!!!



### LSF Gaming Party announced by Peter Knapp



**What:** LSF Gaming Party

**When:** Sat., March 6th (3:00 PM - ??)

**Where:** Rob and Peter's Home (1425 "S" Street, NW Washington, DC)

**Details:** Bring your favorite games that can be played within a few hours. For example, Rob will run a *Settler's of Catan* game if enough people are interested in playing. Peter will host *Cosmic Encounters* if enough interest warrants it.

Please bring a non-alcoholic drink and/or munchie to share. If people are interested, we'll order pizza for dinner, so bring \$5 if you want to have pizza for dinner.

For more information, please send email to either Peter at: PeterKnapp@wavelengthsonline.com

or Rob at:

rgates@wavelengthsonline

Directions to our house can be found at:

http://www.lambdasf.org/lsf/club/PeterRob.html

Hope to see you there.

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### Next LSF Meeting - March 14th -

The next Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will be held at James Crutchfield's apartment (1414 17th St., NW, #413) on Sunday, March 14th. The business meeting will begin at 1:30 PM; and the social meeting will begin at 2:00 PM.

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

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### 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, we conduct 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 March 25th.

**REMINDER:** Now that renovations at Rob & Peter's house have been completed (Hooray!), the LSF Book Discussion Group is once again being held there: **1425 "S" St., NW** -- for directions or more details, call 202-483-6369).

Here's the schedule for the next few months:

- **March 25th** - *Across the Nightingale Floor* by Lian Hearn; moderator: Greg.
- **April 22nd** - *Solitaire* by Kelley Eskridge; moderator: Krista.
- **May 20th** (NOTE: date change to 3rd Thursday, due to Memorial Day Weekend) - *Perdido Street Station* by China Mieville; moderator: Michael M.



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**WHAT'S INSIDE?** Awards, Awards, Awards (pg. 2); Minutes of the Feb. 8, 2004 LSF Meeting (pg. 3); A Cartoon by Chris Browning (pg. 3); A Couple of Recent Reads (book reviews - pg. 4); *Coalescent* (book review - pg. 5); About Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians & Con Calendar (pg. 6)

## Awards, Awards, Awards from Rob

Well, it's that time of year again: award nominations season.



First up: the finalists for the **Lambda Literary Award** in the Sci-Fi/Fantasy category:

- *Elf Child*, by David M. Pierce (Southern Tier Editions)
- *Necrologue*, Helen Sandler, ed. (Diva Books)
- *The Red Line of Yarmald*, by Diana Rivers (Bella Books)
- *The Substance of God*, by Perry Brass (Belhue Press)
- *Vampire Thrall*, by Michael Schiefelbein (Alyson Publications)



Next: the **British Science Fiction Association Awards**. The BSFA Awards are presented annually by the British Science Fiction Association, based on a vote of BSFA members and – in most recent years – members of the British national SF convention (Eastercon). Nominations for the 2003 BSFA Awards have now closed; and the shortlists have been announced as follows:

- Best Novel:
- *Pattern Recognition*, by William Gibson (Viking)
  - *Felaheen*, by Jon Courtenay Grimwood (Earthlight)
  - *Midnight Lamp*, by Gwyneth Jones (GollanczSF)
  - *Absolution Gap*, by Alastair Reynolds (GollanczSF)

– *Natural History*, by Justina Robson (Macmillan)

– *Maul*, by Tricia Sullivan (Orbit)

Best Short Fiction:

– “Dear Abbey,” by Terry Bisson (PS Publishing)

– “The Wolves in the Walls,” by Neil Gaiman & Dave McKean (Bloomsbury Children’s Books)

– “Entangled Eyes are Smiling,” by John Meaney (*Interzone* 190, July/August 2003)

– “Birth Days,” by Geoff Ryman (*Interzone* 188, April 2003)

– “Nightfall,” by Charles Stross (*Asimov’s*, April 2003)

Best Artwork:

– Judith Clute, cover of John Clute’s collection *Scores: Reviews 1993-2003* (Becon Publications)

– David Frankland, cover of Philip Reeve’s novel *Predator’s Gold* (Scholastic)

– Lee Gibbons, cover of Tricia Sullivan’s novel *Maul* (Orbit)

– Colin Odell, cover of *The True Knowledge of Ken MacLeod* (SF Foundation, edited by Andrew M. Butler and Farah Mendlesohn)

– Steve Stone, cover of Justina Robson’s novel *Natural History* (Macmillan)

Best Non-Fiction:

– “Nothing is Written: Politics, Ideology and the Burden of History in the Fall Revolution Quartet,” by John H Arnold & Andy Wood (in *The True Knowledge of Ken MacLeod*, edited by Andrew M. Butler and Farah Mendlesohn; SF Foundation)

– “The Profession of Science Fiction #58: Mapping the Territory,” by Mike Ashley (*Foundation* #87)

– “Reading Science Fiction,” by Farah Mendlesohn (Introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction*, edited by Edward James and Farah Mendlesohn; Cambridge University Press)

– “A Sick Mind,” by Cheryl Morgan (Review of *The Thackery T Lambshead Pocket Guide to Eccentric and Discredited Diseases*; in *Emerald City* #97)

– *Hitchhiker: A Biography of Douglas Adams*, by M J Simpson (Hodder & Stoughton)

The BSFA awards will be

presented on Sunday, 11 April 2004 (Easter Sunday), during the British national science fiction convention, Concourse, at the Winter Gardens in Blackpool. The shortlists for the awards are compiled from nominations submitted by members of BSFA; they will be voted on by BSFA members and by attending members of the convention. Ballot forms will be distributed to BSFA members shortly and will also be available at Concourse. The deadline for receipt of postal ballots will be Tuesday, 6 April 2004.



Next: 2004 **Philip K. Dick Award**, to be awarded at Norwescon 27 (Seattle, WA) on Friday, 9 April 2004. The judges are: Stephen L. Burns, Suzy McKee Charnas, Craig Jacobsen, Richard Parks, Janine Ellen Young. Finalists:

- *Altered Carbon*, by Richard K. Morgan (Del Rey)
- *Clade*, by Mark Budz (Bantam Spectra)
- *Dante’s Equation*, by Jane Jensen (Del Rey)
- *Hyperthought*, by M.M. Buckner (Ace)
- *Spin State*, by Chris Moriarty (Bantam Spectra)
- *Steel Helix*, by Ann Tonsor Zeddies (Del Rey)



And now the 2004 **Arthur C. Clarke Award**. The judges are: Mark Bould (for the SF Foundation), Iain Emsley (for BSFA), Carol Ann Kerry Green (for BSFA), Paul Kincaid (chairman), Dave Palmer (for the Science Museum), Geoff Ryman (for the SF Foundation). Shortlist:

- *Coalescent*, by Stephen Baxter (Gollancz)

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**Minutes of the Feb. 8, 2004  
LSF Meeting**  
taken by Scott

**Business Meeting**

Because many LSF members will be attending the upcoming Gaylaxicon 2004 convention in San Diego over Easter weekend, Peter suggested moving the April LSF meeting from April 11 to April 18 (a week later). All attendees agreed.

**Social Meeting**

Carl noted that the separation of Disney and Pixar, which initially appeared to be cordial, has become unpleasant, with each company making snarky comments about the other.

Michael reported that Peter Jackson was nominated for best director for *Lord of the Rings: Return of the King*.

Carl recommended tonight's *Chased by Sea Monsters* on the Discovery Channel. It's a documentary about dangerous prehistoric sea life and appears to have some promising CGI animation.

Michael said that the Asian horror movie *Ju On* is being remade in English.

Peter promoted a grab bag of LSF and various other SF items for purchase – *Farscape* caps, T-shirts from prior Gaylaxicons, old LSF T-shirts, etc.

Michael recently watched the original version of the movie *The Haunting*. The additional commentary indicates that an early scene in the movie was cut, one that clearly indicates that the Claire Bloom character is indeed a lesbian – she scrawled “I hate you” on a mirror while thinking of her female ex-lover.

The Sci Fi Channel's movie *Dragon Storm* received thumbs down from everyone who tried to watch it.

Alice told everyone about an on-line video called *Star Wreck*, which includes space ships, characters, etc., from *Star Trek* and *Babylon 5*. The video can be downloaded from the Internet.

Michael promoted the May 1st LSF outing to see the opera *Tales of Hoffman*, which includes such genre themes as robots, ghosts and the devil.

**A CARTOON BY CHRIS BROWNING**



**“When you said you were into bears,  
I never took it quite *that* literally...”**



Look for more info in the LSF newsletter! Michael also described the witchcraft-oriented “Secret Spells Barbie” and expressed his surprise that there has not been a Conservative outcry against it.

Carl reported on the upcoming LSF book club selections – *Women Writing Science Fiction As Men* (February), *Across the Nightingale Floor* (March), *Solitaire* (April), and *Perdido Street Station* (May).

It is rumored that Rick Berman may be replaced as one of the *Star Trek: Enterprise* producers.

And finally – these sound painful! A remake of *The Lion in Winter*, with Glenn Close and Patrick Stewart!? A film version of *Bewitched*, with Nicole Kidman!?



**April 8 - 11!!!**  
**Don't miss out on all the fun!!!**  
**For more details, see the**  
**Con Calendar on page 6,**  
**or check out:**  
**[www.gaylaxicon.org/2004](http://www.gaylaxicon.org/2004)**



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**July 1-4, 2005**  
**It's only a little**  
**more than**  
**a year away!**  
**Don't miss out**  
**on all the fun!!!**



**For more details, see the**  
**Con Calendar on page 6,**  
**or check out:**  
**[www.gaylaxicon.org/2005](http://www.gaylaxicon.org/2005)**

**A Couple of  
Recent Reads**  
by Michael Cornett

*A Trip to the Stars*  
by Nicholas Christopher

In 1965, ten-year-old Loren, newly orphaned, is attending a planetarium show in New York with his young aunt, Alma. In the confusion after the show, he's abducted by a mysterious woman, who whisks him away despite his protests. Fearing the worst, he's taken to a man who claims to be his great-uncle, Junius Samax. Junius insists that Loren's name is really Enzo and takes him away to live with him in Las Vegas. Alma, meanwhile, madly searches for her young charge and eventually gives up in despair, changing her name and fleeing the city.

Sounds like a normal domestic drama, eh? It is, on the surface; but things start getting weird. Junius Samax's world is a bizarre one. A billionaire art collector who lives in a hotel, he surrounds himself with eccentric people: oddball musicians, artists, and scholars seeking ancient knowledge, such as the lost continent of Atlantis. Alma, now Mala, briefly works for a scientist studying spiders and, hearing a myth about a spider whose venom helps to clear the mind and find one's purpose in life, allows herself to be bitten.

Mala enlists in the Navy nursing corps and goes to Vietnam; she rarely sleeps, rarely eats, and has ten times the energy of her compatriots. She falls in love with Geza Cassiel, a hunky pilot with secrets of his own. Enzo, meanwhile, grows up and becomes more accustomed to his odd new family, including his resentful aunt and his troubled cousin.

Mala loves, and loses, and finds herself able to read minds, but only at the full moon. Enzo falls in love with a girl who slowly turns into a vampire. Lots more mysterious things happen in an atmosphere one normally finds only in a Jonathan Carroll novel.

*A Trip to the Stars* is magical-realism and a lot of fun. The real thrust of



the novel is how Enzo and Mala eventually find each other (and Mala finding Geza again), after a long series of near-misses. But the roads that take them there are full of magic, mystery, and surprise. Highly recommended for those interested in something different.

*Fogheart*  
by Thomas Tessier

Oliver is a hard-nosed businessman, who has no time for the supernatural; naturally he's upset when his wife Carrie claims to have been visited by her father's ghost. Charley, a college professor (whose specialty is Lord Dunsany!), is skeptical himself; but his wife Jan is claiming to be receiving communications from their daughter Fiona, who died in infancy. Her claims are bolstered when a friend passes on a mysterious message that could have only come from Fiona. Both couples end up consulting Oona, a volatile medium who is managed by Roz, an odd woman who may be either Oona's sister or her lover.

There's a lot of questions in this novel: Is Oona a real psychic, or is she insane? What is her true relationship with Roz; and what are the dark secrets in their mutual past? And what secrets, besides his philandering, is Oliver hiding? Why are he and Carrie both so attracted to Oona? Why is Fiona's spirit calling out to her mother? What is Carrie's father trying to warn her about?

*Fogheart* is good, spine-chilling fun, with moments of haunted-house horror and others of real grue. Tessier is a talented and often overlooked author who has a substantial cult following. Reading this novel, I can see why. *Fogheart* is an absorbing read, but not for the faint of heart.

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**Awards, Awards, Awards**  
continued from page 2

- *Darwin's Children*, by Greg Bear (HarperCollins UK)
- *Maul*, by Tricia Sullivan (Orbit)
- *Midnight Lamp*, by Gwyneth Jones (Gollancz)
- *Pattern Recognition*, by William Gibson (Viking)
- *Quicksilver*, by Neal Stephenson (Heinemann)



The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA) has released the final ballot for this year's **Nebula Awards**. Winners will be announced at the Nebula Awards banquet in Seattle, Washington, on Saturday, April 17, 2004.

Novel:

- *Chindi*, by Jack McDevitt (Ace)
- *Diplomatic Immunity*, by Lois McMaster Bujold (Baen)
- *Light Music*, by Kathleen Ann Goonan (Eos)
- *The Mount*, by Carol Emshwiller (Small Beer Press)
- *The Salt Roads*, by Nalo Hopkinson (Warner)
- *The Speed of Dark*, by Elizabeth Moon (Ballantine)

Novella:

- "Breathmoss," by Ian R. MacLeod (*Asimov's*, May 2002)
- *Coraline*, Neil by Gaiman (HarperCollins)
- "The Empress of Mars," by Kage Baker (*Asimov's*, July 2003)
- "The Potter of Bones," by Eleanor Arnason (*Asimov's*, Sept 2002)
- "Stories for Men," by John Kessel (*Asimov's*, Oct/Nov 2002)

Novelette:

- "Ownz0red," by Cory Doctorow (*Salon*, Aug 2002)
- "The Empire of Ice Cream," by Jeffrey Ford (*Sci Fiction* 02.26.03)

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**Coalescent**  
by Stephen Baxter  
(Del Rey, 2003)  
a review by Colleen R. Cahill

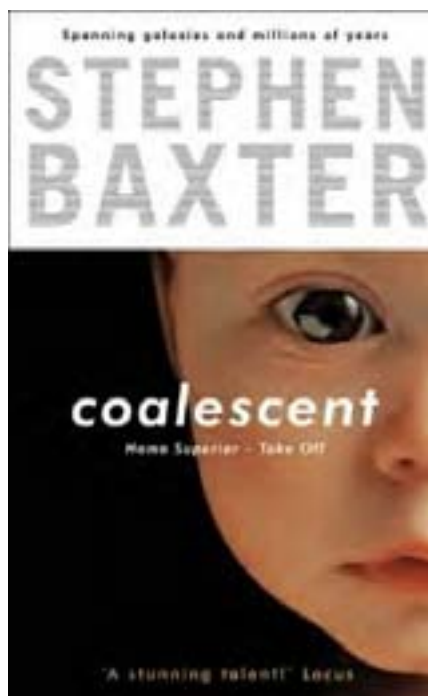
Science fiction is often classed as hard or soft; and this leads to arguments about definitions of each, arguments about which is superior, and people camping on each side of the question. It is wonderful when an author can write a work that goes beyond those boundaries. Such is the case with Stephen Baxter's *Coalescent*, which gives us a look at human society and what possible alternative evolutionary paths exist.

While going through his recently deceased father's house, George Poole discovers he has family he never knew: not a distant cousin, but a twin sister! When very young, his sibling was sent to be raised in a religious group in Rome known as The Order. George is pulled into a deep family secret, one that extends back into the past – to the era when the Roman Empire was losing control of Britain.

As we follow George's investigation, the life of his ancestor, Regina, is revealed. This daughter of a Roman noble watched the last vestiges of the Empire in Britain disappear, while society slipped further and further into barbarism. We find a strong, determined, and confident person in Regina, but also one who is sure she (and only she) knows the right way. Her experiences of living on the edges of civilization led her to find a new way for her family to survive, regardless of what the individual members wanted. And this new society is the heritage that George is facing.

I found the chapters of this book that deal with Regina especially intriguing. She was present at many historic turning points: the last Roman troops at Hadrian's Wall, the rise of King Arthur, the fall of Rome. What is believable about this is that she was never a major force or key player. What Regina *did* do is survive, as did those who followed her.

This is not to understate George's hunt. He deals with the legacy Regina has left, because she is the one



who started The Order. What is seemingly a Catholic religious group for women is actually much, much more. The Order is a different type of society, with elements more like a hive, complete with queens and drones. Not only has their way of life changed, but members are altered at a basic level making them biologically different, a difference that could be a threat to humanity.

Baxter gives us much food for thought. *Coalescent* delves into the nature of how humans live, grow, and interact, while exploring alternative paths to community, reproduction, and evolution. Through the story of one family, both in the past and present, we see how this extraordinary society was created. From the pressures of poverty, violence, and an unstable civilization, a new set of survival rules shapes a group into something that is dramatically different.

This is the first book in *Destiny's Children*, a three-volume look at human evolution and where we might be going in the far future. Hopefully the next two works will be as interesting and original as this one. If you are a fan of Baxter, you will enjoy this new book. It is also not a bad starting place for a new reader of his work. Whether hard or soft science fiction is your preference, there is something for you in *Coalescent*.

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**Awards, Awards, Awards**

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– “The Mask of the Rex,” by Richard Bowes (*F&SF*, May 2002)

– “Of a Sweet Slow Dance in the Wake of Temporary Dogs,” by Adam-Troy Castro (*Imaginings*)

– “The Wages of Syntax,” by Ray Vukceвич (*Sci Fiction* 10.16.02)

Short Story:

– “The Brief History of the Dead,” by Kevin Brockmeier (*The New Yorker*, Sept 8, 2003)

– “Goodbye to All That,” by Harlan Ellison (*McSweeney's Mammoth Treasury of Thrilling Tales*)

– “Grandma,” by Carol Emshwiller (*F&SF*, March 2002)

– “Knapsack Poems,” by Eleanor Arnason (*Asimov's*, May 2002)

– “Lambing Season,” by Molly Gloss (*Asimov's*, July 2002)

– “The Last of the O-Forms,” by James Van Pelt (*Asimov's*, Sept 2002)

– “What I Didn't See,” by Karen Joy Fowler (*Sci Fiction* 07.10.02)

Script:

– *Finding Nemo*, by Andrew Stanton, Bob Peterson & David Reynolds

– *Futurama*: “Where No Fan Has Gone Before,” by David A. Goodman

– *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*, by Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens, Stephen Sinclair, & Peter Jackson

– *Minority Report*, by Scott Frank, & Jon Cohen

– *Spirited Away*, by Hayao Miyazaki, Cindy Davis Hewitt, & Donald H. Hewitt

[Ed. Note: Whoops! I ran out of room, so this article will be continued next month! Stay tuned for the finalists of the International Horror Guild awards!]

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**Those who write clearly  
have readers;  
those who write obscurely  
have commentators.**

**-- Albert Camus --**

(excerpted from *The Cynic's Lexicon*, by Jonathon Green, St. Martin's Press, 1984)

**\*\* 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 \$10, for which you will receive an e-mailed this monthly newsletter and a membership directory. (Hard copies of the newsletter cost an additional \$15 per year.) 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, March 14th**, at James Crutchfield's home: 1414 17th St., NW, #413 (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, and Rob



April 8 - 11, 2004 **GAYLAXICON 2004 - SANDIEGO**. The annual national GLBT science-fiction/fantasy/horror/comics/gaming convention. Red Lion Hanalei Hotel (San Diego, CA). Author Guest of Honor: David Gerrold; Artist Guest of Honor: Joe Phillips. Membership: \$50 until 2/29/2004; and \$60 at the door. Make checks payable to "Gaylaxicon 2004 - San Diego" and send to: Gaylaxicon 2004 - San Diego, 1010 University Ave., PMB #946, San Diego, CA, 92103-3395. Membership forms available on-line.

Information at: [www.gaylaxicon.org/2004](http://www.gaylaxicon.org/2004)

E-mail: [Gaylaxicon2004@aol.com](mailto:Gaylaxicon2004@aol.com)

May 28-31, 2004 **BALTICON 38**. Wyndham Baltimore Inner Harbor (Baltimore). Guest of Honor: Lois McMaster Bujold; Artist Guest of Honor: David Seeley; 2003 Compton Crook Award Winner: Patricia Bray. Membership: \$42 until 2/28/04; \$47 from 3/1 thru 4/30/04; \$52 thereafter & at the door. Make checks payable to "Balticon 38" and send to: Balticon 38, PO Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203-0686

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

E-mail: [balticoninfo@balticon.org](mailto:balticoninfo@balticon.org)

July 9-11, 2004 **SHORE LEAVE 26**. Marriott's Hunt Valley Inn (Hunt Valley, MD). Guest include: Cirroc ("Jake Sisko") Lofton, Thom ("Hawk") Christopher, Brian ("Lt. Klag") Thompson. Membership: \$50 (higher at the door). Make checks payable to "Shore Leave" (and enclosed 2 SASE's) and send to: Shore Leave 26, PO Box 6809, Towson, MD 21285-6809

Email: [information@shore-leave.com](mailto:information@shore-leave.com)

Website: [www.shore-leave.com](http://www.shore-leave.com)

December 10-12, 2004 **PHILCON 2004**. Marriott City Center Philadelphia (Phila., PA). Principal Speaker: Brian Aldiss; Artist GoH: TBA; Special Guests: Kevin J. Anderson & Rebecca Moesta, Tom Purdom. Membership: \$40 "until at least 3/31/04." Make checks payable to "Philadelphia Science Fiction Society" and send to: Philcon 2004 Registration, PO Box 3, Oreland, PA 19075

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

Email: [info@philcon.org](mailto:info@philcon.org)

July 1-4, 2005 **GAYLAXICON 2005**. Hyatt Regency Cambridge (Boston, MA). Membership: currently \$40 (will go up!). Make checks payable to "Gaylaxicon 2005" and send to: Gaylaxicon 2005, PO Box 1059, Boston, MA 02103. (More information as it becomes available.)

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

Sept. 3-6, 2005 **CASCADIA CON (NASFiC 2005)**. SeaTac Airport Hilton (Seattle, WA). Author GoH: Fred Saberhagen; Artist GoH: Liz Danforth; Editor GoH: Toni Weisskopf. Membership: \$75 until 4/30/04 (will go up after that). Make checks payable to "Seattle NASFiC" and send to: Seattle NASFiC, Box 1066, Seattle, WA 98111. URL: [www.CascadiaCon.org](http://www.CascadiaCon.org)

