

LAMBDA SCI-FI

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DC Area Gaylaxians

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2004 Gaylactic Spectrum Awards Update

from Rob



Well, the 2004 Gaylactic Spectrum Awards process is well underway, and the judges certainly have their work cut out for them!

A plethora of nominations have been received in each category, from publishers and sources well known in genre circles and from small presses and more unusual sources. In the Best Novel category, for instance, we received 27 nominations. There are former Best Novel finalists (Robert Sawyer, Steven Harper, Lynn Flewelling and Jane Fletcher), a total of 8 books from traditional major genre publishing houses, and even a book only released electronically. Eight of the novels are written by men, 18 by women, and the last is by an author whose gender I do not know. One of our finalists was written by an openly transgendered author.

If you think that's a lot of nominations, what would you say to 64

Spectrum Awards

Short Fiction nominations? The nominees again come from a mix of sources - from traditional pro genre magazines, to traditional genre anthologies, to gay and lesbian press anthologies, to more unusual outlets. Again, the list includes former finalists, a broad range of genres, and a mix of men and women authors.

Our Best Other Work category is perhaps the most wide-ranging. Though there are only 14 nominees, they run the gamut of television series, miniseries, comic book, gaming book, anthology, a choose-your-own-adventure book, and even an ongoing audience interactive novel. Perhaps of most interest is the fact that there are 4 "media" (television/movie) nominations -- the most we've ever seen for a single year.

Unlike in previous years, where nominees have been whittled down to a list of finalists and then whittled down again to a winner in each category, this year the process has combined the two phases. Like the Tiptree Awards (the original model for the Spectrum Awards), the judges will be announcing winners and a short list of recommended works at the same time (instead of announcing an intermediate list of finalists). Winners will be announced in September at the World Science Fiction Convention.

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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 roundtable 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, at Peter & Rob's home: 1425 "S" St., NW -- for directions or more details, call 202-483-6369. The next meeting will be held on August 26th.

Here's the schedule for the next couple of months:

Aug. 26th - *The Curse of Chalion* by Lois McMaster Bujold; moderator: Michael M.

Sept. 23rd - *Red Thunder* by John Varley; moderator: Carl. Λ Ψ Φ

Next LSF Meeting: August 8th

The next Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will be held at James Crutchfield's apartment (1414 17th St., NW, #413) on Sunday, August 8th. The business meeting will begin at 1:30 PM; and the social meeting will begin at 2:00 PM.

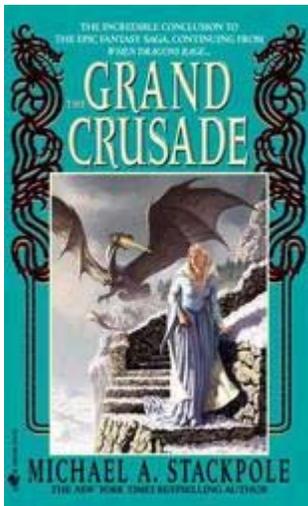
Please bring some munchies or soft drinks, if you can. See you there!

WHAT'S INSIDE?

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The Grand Crusade by Michael A. Stackpole

(Bantam Books, 2003)
a review by Colleen R. Cahill
("Librarian by Profession,
Reviewer by Avocation,
Reader by Addiction")



High fantasy, when it is good, is more than clichés of quests and swords. It should have a familiarity, but not be predictable — and have more than just battles, totally evil villains and powerful wizards. In this book, the conclusion to his series “The DragonCrown War Cycle,” Michael A. Stackpole achieves that blend, making *The Grand Crusade* a complex, interesting and original book.

At the end of the previous book, *When Dragons Rage*, the not-totally-heroic Will Norrington has fallen into a lava lake. His end is not only a tragedy for his friends, but also a disaster for the Norrington prophecy. Many saw Will as the one who would bring down the tyrant Chytrine and end her threat to all living things. Now they fear that nothing will stop Chytrine from gaining all the pieces of the Dragon-Crown. Once she has the crown, she can control the dragons and obtain complete power. Although the alliance of kingdoms fighting her is now shaky and the armies are in retreat, a group of Will’s friends press on against the northern invading forces.

This might seem like old plots, but Stackpole has added elements to make the story his own. One thread

follows Chytrine’s adopted daughter, Isaura, who loves her mother but is beginning to question the methods and motives of southern conquest. Like many of the characters in this series, Isaura is complex: although trusting, she also is bright enough to see that reality does not support what her mother is telling her, and her basically kind nature puts her at odds with cruelty of Chytrine, who is driven to win at all costs. Some characters are harder to sympathize with. King Scrainwood (what a good bad-guy name) has few redeeming traits, but he also has excuses — he witnessed his mother’s being head ripped off while he was young and that would be warping.

In this final volume in the cycle, we finally learn what is the force behind Chytrine and the ultimate goal of the war. Many of the puzzle pieces fall into place, while new mysteries are added. Stackpole has a deft hand with magic and adds elements of supernatural with a delicate sense, not just having things bang into the plot. He also uses a modern language flow, so there is no need to struggle with convoluted dialog. And as a true epic fantasy, there are plenty of battles, court intrigue and quests, with touches of romance for good measure.

One has to admire an author who can actually complete a trilogy in three books. You will need to read the earlier two titles, *Fortress Draconis* and *When Dragons Rage*, to fully understand the story in *The Grand Crusade*, but all three are still in print. If you are a Stackpole fan who has read the earlier works, be sure to pick this up — it delivers a wonderful ending. For those who are new to this author, try this trilogy. If you like Eddings, Jordan, or Feist, you will enjoy Stackpole’s work.

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“Realistic” fiction is about things that have happened. “Fantasy” is about things we are fairly sure don’t happen. SF is about things that might happen.

— Judith Merrill, “Where Do You Get Those Crazy Ideas?” — from author’s notes for *Survival Ship and Other Stories* (1977), a collection of her stories

Report from the DC **Harry Potter Premiere** by Michael Cornett



Well, I got a ticket for a preview screening through my membership in the AFI.

When I showed up at the newly-opened Majestic Theater in Silver Spring, wearing shorts and an old Indonesian shirt, I was fairly dismayed to discover that it wasn’t a mere preview — it was a gala red-carpet premiere! I felt horribly underdressed, but luckily there were others there who were dressing for the heat, and not to impress. I felt grand sweeping through the “Members Entrance” in my grubbies, along with folks in suits and nice dresses. Press and photographers were about, as well as some folks I recognized as prominent locals; but, hell, I was there for the movie. I dodged the champagne and hors d’oeuvres, grabbed a diet Coke, and found my theater.

Four auditoriums were showing the film that night, each predictably named for a Hogwarts house. I was in Ravenclaw. The film started nearly a half hour late, and the crowd was getting restless... but it finally started.

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban is, in my opinion, one of the better books of the Potter series; and it has been made into what I feel is the best movie of the series to date. Director Alfonso Cuarón opens the film in a very

(continued on page 3)

Harry Potter Premiere

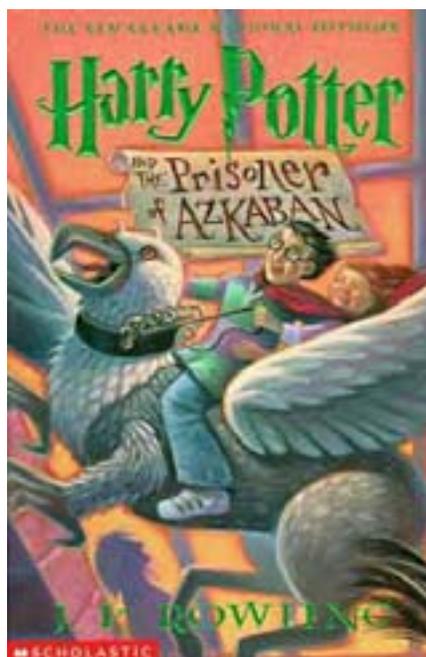
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fluid, naturalistic way, seeming more like a low-budget domestic drama than a big-budget fantasy film – which, of course, gives the special effects more oomph when they kick in.

One of the great things about *HPATPOA* is its look. The first two *Harry Potter* films, as directed by Chris Columbus, often had a very artificially-staged look about them. Cuarón's vision of the Hogwarts world is much more organic and believable. London looks like London, the Leaky Cauldron looks like a slightly shabby old inn, the forest around Hogwarts looks like a forest, and Hogwarts itself looks more like it belongs in its place. We see more of the scenery around it and, as a result, it has more of a sense of location. The actors, instead of being posed on soundstages, look like they really belong where they are.

And, well, let's get this one thing done – it's definitely not a word-for-word, scene-for-scene version of the novel. (But, then again, that probably would have been unworkable.) BUT the film stays remarkably faithful to the spirit of the novel and to its message, which is quite an achievement in today's movie business. There is quite a bit cut from the novel, which was inevitable; but the script was approved by Rowling herself, so we can rest assured that the important stuff survived intact. (Reportedly she told the director and screenwriter not to copy the book, but to take a few liberties as long as they stayed true to the spirit – and they succeeded!)

Daniel Radcliffe is getting older and now presents us with Harry as an empowered teen, tired of his relatives' abuse and fighting back, verbally and magically. In *HPATPOA*, he gives Harry a fire that was missing from the earlier films, a welcome addition to the series. Michael Gambon, who replaces the late Richard Harris as Dumbledore, is superb in the role. He's almost a physical match for Harris, but also gives Dumbledore a much-needed dose of spark and energy that was lacking in Harris' performance and brings the movie version of Dumbledore closer to the Dumbledore from the novels.



David Thewlis, as Remus Lupin, brings an affable almost-goofiness to the role, but also with a serious and determined side, and does justice to a character who is one of the most intriguing in the novels. Gary Oldman, an accomplished actor, brings memorable verve to the relatively small role of Sirius Black.

Emma Thompson is a hilarious standout as Prof. Trelawney, the daffy divination instructor. Series regulars Robbie Coltrane (as Hagrid) and Alan Rickman (as Prof. Snape) continue the fine work they began in the earlier films.

There are a few low points, though. Maggie Smith is so underused as Prof. McGonagall that she might as well not be in the movie at all. Oscar winner Julie Christie joins the series as tavern keeper Madame Rosmerta, but the role is so small that it seems like overkill to hire an actress of her caliber.

The young stars of the film continue to grow and shine. Oliver and James Phelps are a welcome presence as the Weasley twins, showing some deft comic timing. Matthew Lewis, as Neville Longbottom, is servicable but not great; and Tom Felton, as Draco Malfoy, continues to be a rather one-dimensional sneering jerk. Rupert Grint is OK as Ron Weasley; but Emma Watson continues to shine as Hermione and has one of the film's most memorable lines:

“Does my hair really look like that from the back?”

John Williams' score is also good, avoiding some of the bombast that marred the first film, but also repeating the now-worn-out “Hedwig's Theme” that I'm entirely sick of.

The special effects are well done without being overpowering. Buckbeak, the hippogriff, is a well-realized creation, reminiscent of Ray Harryhausen's work. But what lingers in the mind is that this is a film driven by character and plot – not effects – which is a good sign.

It's a very interesting film to watch. There are lots of little references here and there to the time element of the story, with lots of clocks and clockwork imagery. Also, birds and flight are major themes as well. While it still focuses on being family-friendly, there are many little grotesqueries that lurk around the edges of this film – like the grisly cabinet of skulls in Lupin's classroom – and some that occasionally rise to center stage – like the nightmarishly-memorable Dementors and an eerie fight with a werewolf. But the scene I found most satisfying was the memorable confrontation scene that kicks off the film's final third, full of dramatic tension and remarkable acting. It's hardly the scene it was in the book; but in the book it was several chapters long, much too long for a literal insertion in a movie!

This film is also shorter than the first two *Harry Potter* films, which I found a blessing. The first two left me fidgeting and wondering when they would finally be over. By stripping extraneous material from the story, Cuarón's *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* is a much more streamlined and fast-moving story. Surely there will be fans of the book who will grumble and complain; but, hey, you can't have everything. And the film is not meant to be an exact copy of the book.

This definitely ranks as among the better films I've seen this year. Let's see where the series goes from here!



**Minutes of the
July 11th LSF Meeting**
taken by Scott

There didn't seem to be any business issues to discuss at the meeting. However, Rob mentioned that he has attempted to contact Lambda Rising to talk about **linking the LSF website to Lambda Rising's affiliate program** for purchasing books online at the store's website.

Michael opened the social part of the meeting with the traditional name circle.

Some attendees who participated in the recent **LSF movie outing to see *Spiderman 2*** commented that they especially enjoyed the "elevator scene." Plus, there was a good assortment of trailers – *Catwoman*, *I, Robot*, and *The Village*.

Movie Chat: Rob mentioned that *Shrek 2* has some definite GLBT content, plus some cross-dressing characters. Carl is eager to see *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow* [Ed. Note: "Eager" is an understatement!], which is coming out soon. *Stepford Wives* is not doing well at the box office. *Alien vs. Predator* looks like it will have good special effects. Plus – can you believe that the Sci Fi Channel has produced a third *Anaconda* movie? Michael & Rob reported that the *Leeches* movie was absolutely 100% horrible.

The *King Arthur* movie has received vitriolic reviews. *The Village* has received lots of publicity. Michael commented that the cast of the *Fantastic Four* movie is now being selected. From the www.superherohype.com website: *Studio has signed Michael Chiklis to play Ben Grimm/the Thing, Ioan Gruffudd as Reed Richards/Mr. Fantastic and Chris Evans as Johnny Storm/the Human Torch. And Jessica Alba, currently shooting Dimension's "Sin City," has emerged as most likely to play Sue Richards/the Invisible Woman, though Rachel MacAdams and Keri Russell are also candidates.*

DVD Chat: Michael likes the additional commentary in the DVD for *Lost Skeletons of Cadavera*. He also reported that the director's cut of *Don-*

nie Darko is coming out soon. The first season of *Quantum Leap* is due to be released soon. But alas! The *Ed Wood* DVD is *still* not available.

Worldcon News: So who's going to Worldcon in Boston over Labor Day weekend? A number of LSF members are. It was noted that a party would be held at Worldcon for some of the GLBT couples who were married at last year's Worldcon in Toronto.

Michael mentioned that the Hirschhorn Museum is showing a series of "Mexican wrestler" films. Huh?

Book News: James advised that Will Wheaton has written his second book. He also mentioned that Wheaton is now married with two stepchildren.

The title for the next Harry Potter has been announced – *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*.

The upcoming LSF Book Discussion Group titles were announced: C.J. Cherryh's *Cyteen* in July; Lois McMaster Bujold's *The Curse of Chalon* in August; and John Varley's *Red Thunder* in September.

And Michael ended the meeting with a reminder about the upcoming outing to see *Horror of Dracula*.

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Darth Vader Revealed!!



Have you ever wondered what was under the Sith Lord's black space-armor? Well, wonder no more! Above is a picture of actor David Prowse (the guy in the Vader costume) from back when he was a competitive bodybuilder in the late 1950's and early 1960's.

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I, Robot

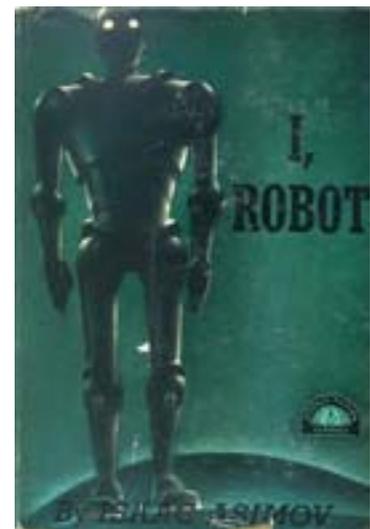
a mini-review by Peter Knapp

I don't want to talk about the details of the story, since it's a murder mystery and discussing the movie might ruin some of the fun as to who did it. But I think it's safe to say (since every ad reveals this plot point) that the prime suspect is a robot in a world where robots supposedly follow Isaac Asimov's Three Laws of Robotics.

I will say that Will Smith did a decent job, and we get to see a lot of his naked body in the first act. (Sidenote: The director, Alex Proyas, also showed off Rufus Sewell's naked body in the first act of his movie, *Dark City*.) The supporting cast, including the prime suspect, hold their own. Digital Domain did a nice job with the effects work, though I couldn't help but think that in long shots the robots look like Micronauts. The composer, Marco Beltrami, created a rich orchestral score. His mentor at USC was Jerry Goldsmith, who I personally think is a master of film scoring. (Goldsmith wrote five of the ten *Star Trek* movie soundtracks).

I'm probably going to get a lot of flack for this, but I'd give this movie an A-. As long as you don't expect anything resembling the Asimov book (the credits read: "suggested by book") and can get past Will Smith playing Will Smith, I think you'll enjoy the movie.

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**Isaac Asimov's book
(which apparently has
little to do with the movie)**

**Retro-Hugo Award
Nominations**
info relayed by Rob

The Noreascon Four con-comm have announced nominations for the 1954 Retrospective Hugo Awards, for work done in 1953. These awards will also be presented at the World Science Fiction Convention this September. Nominations were in ten categories. (Three were dropped for insufficient nominees: Best Dramatic Presentation - Long Form, Best Semi-Prozine, and Best Fan Artist.) The nominees are:



BEST NOVEL OF 1953

- The Caves of Steel* by Isaac Asimov (Galaxy, Oct.-Dec. 1953)
- Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury (Ballantine)
- Childhood's End* by Arthur C. Clarke (Ballantine)
- Mission of Gravity* by Hal Clement (Astounding, Feb.-July 1953)
- More than Human* by Theodore Sturgeon (Ballantine)

BEST NOVELLA OF 1953

- "Un-Man" by Poul Anderson (Astounding, Jan. 1953)
- "A Case of Conscience" by James Blish (If, Sept. 1953)
- "The Rose" by Charles L. Harness (Authentic Science Fiction Monthly, March 1953)
- "Daughters of Earth" by Judith Merrill (The Petrified Planet, Twayne)
- "...and my fear is great..." by Theodore Sturgeon (Beyond Fantasy Fiction, July 1953)



BEST NOVELETTE OF 1953

- "Sam Hall" by Poul Anderson (Astounding, Aug. 1953)
- "The Adventure of the Misplaced Hound" by Poul Anderson & Gordon R. Dickson (Universe, Dec. 1953)
- "Earthman, Come Home" by James Blish (Astounding, Nov. 1953)
- "The Wall Around the World" by Theodore Cogswell (Beyond Fantasy Fiction, Sept. 1953)
- "Second Variety" by Philip K. Dick (Space Science Fiction, May 1953)

BEST SHORT STORY OF 1953

- "Star Light, Star Bright" by Alfred Bester (F&SF, July 1953)
- "It's a Good Life" by Jerome Bixby (Star Science Fiction Stories #2, Ballantine)
- "The Nine Billion Names of God" by Arthur C. Clarke (Star Science Fiction Stories #1, Ballantine)
- "Seventh Victim" by Robert Sheckley (Galaxy, April 1953)
- "A Saucer of Loneliness" by Theodore Sturgeon (Galaxy, Feb. 1953)



BEST RELATED BOOK OF 1953

- Conquest of the Moon* by Wernher von Braun, Fred L. Whipple & Willy Ley (Viking Press)
- Modern Science Fiction: Its Making and Future* by Reginald Bretnor (Coward-McCann)
- Science-Fiction Handbook* by L. Sprague de Camp (Hermitage)

BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION, SHORT FORM, OF 1953

- The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* (Mutual Pictures/Warner Brothers); directed by Eugène Lourié; screenplay by Louis Morheim and Fred Freiberger; based on the story by Ray Bradbury

- "Duck Dodgers in the 24th-and-a-Half Century" (Warner Brothers); directed by Chuck Jones; written by Michael Maltese
- Invaders from Mars* (National Pictures/20th Century Fox); directed by William Cameron Menzies; screenplay by Richard Blake; story by John Tucker Battle
- It Came from Outer Space* (Universal); directed by Jack Arnold; screenplay by Harry Essex; story by Ray Bradbury
- The War of the Worlds* (Paramount Pictures); directed by Byron Haskin; screenplay by Barré Lyndon; based on the novel by H.G. Wells



BEST PROFESSIONAL EDITOR OF 1953

- Anthony Boucher
- John W. Campbell, Jr.
- H. L. Gold
- Frederik Pohl
- Donald A. Wollheim

BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST OF 1953

- Chesley Bonestell
- Ed Emshwiller
- Virgil Finlay
- Frank Kelly Freas
- Richard Powers

BEST FANZINE OF 1953

- Hyphen*, ed. Chuck Harris & Walt Willis
- Quandry*, ed. Lee Hoffman
- Science Fiction Newsletter*, ed. Bob Tucker
- Sky Hook*, ed. Redd Boggs
- Slant*, ed. Walter Willis; art editor James White

BEST FAN WRITER OF 1953

- Redd Boggs
- Lee Hoffman
- Bob Tucker
- James White
- Walter A. Willis



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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 \$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 the Sunday, **August 8th**, 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



Sept. 2-6, 2004 **NOREASCON 4 (62nd World Science Fiction Convention)**. Hynes Convention Center, Sheraton Marriott Hotel, Mariott Hotel Copley Place (Boston, MA). Pro Guests of Honor: Terry Pratchett, William Tenn. Membership: \$180 thru 7/31/04 (will go UP!). Make checks payable to "Noreascon 4" and send to: Noreascon 4, PO Box 1010, Framingham, MA 01701
Website: www.noreascon.org Info: info@noreascon.org

Oct. 15-17, 2004 **CAPCLAVE '04**. Tyson's Corner Marriot (Vienna, VA). GoH: Nick Pollota; Artist GoH: Butch Honeck. Membership: \$37 until 5/31/04; \$45 at the door. Make checks payable to "Capclave '04" and send to: Alexis Gilliland, 4030 8th St. South, Arlington, VA 22204.

Nov. 26-28, 2004 **DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL MEETING XXVII**. Holiday Inn Timonium (Timonium, MD). Guest of Honor: Tamora Pierce; Special Guest: Katherine Kurtz; Musical Guests: Clam Chowder. Membership: \$40 until 11/1; \$45 after that & at the door. Make checks payable to "Armida Council" and send to: Armida Council, PO Box 7203, Silver Spring, MD 20907. Contact: members@darkovercon.com or Jaelle@darkovercon.com or Jaelle@radix.net

December 10-12, 2004 **PHILCON 2004**. Marriott City Center Philadelphia (Phila., PA). Principal Speaker: Brian Aldiss; Artist GoH: Joe DeVito; Special Guests: Kevin J. Anderson & Rebecca Moesta, Tom Purdom. Membership: \$40 to 9/15/04. Make checks payable to "Philadelphia Science Fiction Society" and send to: Philcon 2004 Registration, PO Box 3, Oreland, PA 19075
Website: www.philcon.org Email: info@philcon.org

July 1- 4, 2005 **GAYLAXICON 2005**. Hyatt Regency Cambridge (Boston, MA). Guest of Honor: Lois McMaster Bujold. Membership: \$40 at present (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/2005

Aug. 4-8, 2005 **INTERACTION (63rd World Science Fiction Convention)**. (Glasgow, Scotland, UK). Guests of Honor: Greg Pickersgill, Christopher Priest, Robert Sheckley, Jane Yolen. Membership: \$170 to 11/30/04 (will go up!). Make checks payable to "Interaction" and send to: Interaction, PO Box 58009, Louisville, KY 40268-0009
Website: www.interaction.worldon.org.uk Email: info@interaction.worldcon.org.uk

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: \$85 until 11/30/04 (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