



LAMBDA SCI-FI



DC Area Gaylaxians

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E-MAIL: info@lambdasf.org WEBSITE: http://www.lambdasf.org/

Final *Torchwood* (and *Sarah Jane Smith Adventures*) Party

announced by Peter Knapp



The final *Torchwood* party is coming this month! Come join the fun!

For those that don't know, the *Doctor Who* revival in 2005 has been a phenomenal hit in the UK - 28 episodes have been shown, with 13 more to premiere (in the UK) in April. Two spin-off shows have been commissioned. Now that the first spinoff, *Torchwood*, has finished its run in the UK, and the pilot for the second spinoff, *The Sarah Jane Smith Adventures*, has also aired, I thought it'd be fun to see them again with a group. The fourth and final afternoon of *Torchwood* viewing (with *The Sarah Jane Smith Adventures* tacked on to the last set of *Torchwood* showings) will occur at Rob's and my

(continued on page 2)

April LSF Meeting

The next Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will be held on the **Sunday, April 8th**, at James Crutchfield's apartment (1414 17th St. NW, #413). 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 LBG 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 April 26th.

Here are the details on the next few book discussion meetings:

April 26th - *Carnival*, by Elizabeth Bear; questions by Carl; discussion moderated by Rob.

May 17th (NOTE: May meeting moved to 3rd Thurs.) - *Spin Control*, by Chris Moriarity; moderator: Krista.

June 28th - *Fledgling*, by Octavia Butler; moderator: Rob.

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Happy (Belated) Birthday, LSF!!!



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Happy birthday to us!
Happy birthday to us!
Happy birthday, Lambda Sci-Fi!
Happy birthday to us!

Yes, indeed, LSF is another year older! To be precise, LSF turned 17 years old last month! Attendees at the March LSF meeting celebrated the event with apple pie and ice cream (and NASA-related candles!). And that means we'll be 18 years old ("all nice & legal") when we host Gaylaxicon 2008 next year!

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Gaylaxicon 2008

"Twenty years of fun!"



For details, see the Con Calendar on page 6, or go to: www.gaylaxicon2008.org

WHAT'S INSIDE? March Game Party Write-Up (pg. 2); R2-D2 & USPS? (pg. 2); March LSF Meeting Minutes (pg. 3); Lambda Literary Awards Finalists Announced (pg. 3); *Bertram of Butter Cross* (book review - pg. 4); *Star Trek: New Voyages to Produce "Blood and Fire"* (pg. 5); U.S. Post Office DC Super Heroes Stamps (pg. 5); About Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians (pg. 6); Con Calendar (pg. 6)

**March Game Party
Write-up**
by Krista Park

Thirteen people attended the non-LambdaSF (but LSF-focused) game party on Sunday, March 4th in Krista Park's College Park home.

The first six people to arrive settled into a round of *Metro*, by Queen Games, at around 1:30 PM. Peter, Rob, Eleon, Krista, Wes, and Helgi fought to connect stations on the Paris 1898 Metro via the longest possible rail tracks. In the end, Krista edged out Wes in creating the least efficient connections.



A second group of people started trickling in around 4 PM, and people sorted themselves into two games. At one table, Rob, Peter, Wes, and Randy simultaneously menaced and protected America in Avalon Hill's *Monsters Menace America*. In the end, Rob prevailed. At the other table, Eleon, Jack, and Helgi conquered Europe in *Catan Histories: Struggle for Rome*, by Mayfair Games. In the end, Eleon revealed himself to be the leader of the most efficient conquering tribes.



A slightly later set of arrivals had a light dinner and then settled in to create efficient rail networks across the United States in Rio Grand Game's *Trans America*. (No relation to the movie!) Although Berel led for many rounds, Krista eked out a win at the end. Tanya, Eric, Bill, and Rodney also played the game.

Last Torchwood Party

continued from page 1

place.

The final party will be held on Saturday afternoon, April 28. Meals are not planned, but bringing snacks and non-alcoholic drinks to share is encouraged.

What: *Torchwood* Party.

When: Saturday afternoon, April 28.

Where: The home of Peter and Rob, 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC 20009.

For directions, please see:

<http://lambdasf.org/lfsf/club/PeterRob.html>

Time: 1:00 PM (doors open at 12:30 PM).

Schedule: See below.

For more information, please contact Peter at:

PeterKnapp@wavelengthsonline.com



or call him at 202-483-6369.

Saturday, April 28

1:00 PM - Episode 11 - "Combat"

2:00 PM - Episode 12 - "Captain Jack Harkness"

3:00 PM - Episode 12 - "End of Days"

4:00 PM - *The Sarah Jane Smith Adventures* (not *Torchwood*)

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Since *Monsters Menace America* and *Struggle for Rome* wrapped up before *Trans America*, Jack, Wes, Randy, and Peter decided to revisit the French Revolution and chop off people's heads with *Wizards of the Coast's Guillotine*. In the end, Jack knocked off the most people to win the game.



Most people departed at roughly 8 PM, but the final few stuck around for the horror movie spoof *Betrayal at House on the Hill*, by Avalon Hill. Rodney, Eric, Bill, Krista, and Jack valiantly explored the creepy old mansion until Bill triggered the haunt. But, in the end, the heroes (Rodney, Bill, Krista, and Jack) defeated the Ouroboros (run by Bill) and escaped from the house.

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R2-D2 & USPS?

info passed along by Carl



The famous little droid (or, more precisely, his facsimiles) is working for the U.S. Postal Service. R2-D2 collection boxes will temporarily replace mailboxes in various "highly visible locations across the country," as part of the USPS's celebration of the *Star Wars* 30th anniversary. I have no idea where they're located in the District, but I just happened to stumble across one of 'em near work – at the entrance to The Shops @ 2100 on Crystal Drive in Crystal City (Arlington, VA). It's really kind' a cool.

To find out more about the USPS *Star Wars* celebration (including an upcoming issue of *Star Wars*-related postage stamps), take a look at their website: www.uspsjedimaster.com

(The web address is also printed on the R2-D2 mailboxes.)

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March LSF Meeting Minutes

taken by Scott

Business Meeting

Rob briefly reviewed the proposal made at the last LSF meetings to amend the bylaws by removing the text regarding alcohol prohibition at official LSF events, followed by general discussion. Rob stated that if the LSF bylaws are amended to delete this section, it would be at the discretion of the host of an LSF event to determine if alcohol consumption would be permitted. Carl and others responded that removing this section from the by-laws (and allowing the host/s to make the decision about alcohol) could increase the potential of LSF (as an entity, and as its officers or members) being held liable for alcohol-related accidents/injuries caused by an attendee at such an official LSF event. Barrett reminded us of the additional responsibility of a host to “card” attendees at an event to ensure that they are over the age of 21.

Speaker Norman indicated that he had received nine “aye/yes” absentee ballots and one “nay/no” absentee ballot. The results of the vote: 16 in favor of amending the by-laws (9 absentee + 7 attending member votes); 7 opposed (1 absentee ballot + 6 attending member votes). The proposal passed. The LSF bylaws will be amended to delete the section regarding alcohol prohibition at official LSF events.

Social Meeting

Carl commented that the new movie *Tears of the Black Tiger* features cowboys in Thailand (the *Washington Post* referred to it as a “pad thai” Western, in distinction from a “spaghetti” Western) – and that no English subtitles appeared in the trailers. Another new movie, *The Host*, is described as centered upon family values, with a monster thrown in. Something for the Pax channel?

Norman asked what everyone thought might be classified as the best “alternate history” book. Some suggestions: *Bring the Jubilee*, by Ward Moore (aftermath of the South winning the Civil War, the book that inspired the Sidewise



Awards for alternate history F&SF); *How Few Remain* by Harry Turtledove (the Confederacy and its allies kept the USA from winning the Civil War; 1997 Sidewise Award winner); *Lion's Blood* and *Zulu Heart* by Steven Barnes (North America was settled by Africans instead of Europeans; Europeans are slaves & Africans are masters). For more information on the Sidewise Awards and alternate history SF, check out the following website:

<http://www.uchronia.net>

On to *Battlestar Galactica* – so Starbuck ostensibly committed suicide? Is she perhaps one of the Final Five Cylons?

Michael passed around the “Men of Mortuaries” calendar – hunky men who are morticians. Everyone agreed that some of the calendar scenes with the selected men are truly “just not right!” Michael also reported the magician James Randi (“The Amazing Randi”) will be lecturing next week in the Metro area on the topic of debunking pseudoscience. Check out his website (for the James Randi Educational Foundation) at: <http://www.randi.org>

Peter passed around the March 2002 issue of *Parsec*, the F&SF newsletter of the Pittsburgh sci-fi group.

Rob reminded everyone that tonight will be the two-hour premiere on the Lifetime Channel of *Blood Ties*, a fantasy series based upon Tanya Huff's “Vicky Nelson/Blood” books. Rob said that tonight premiere episode is based on the first book in Tanya's series and mentioned that Tanya has written the screenplay for one of the *Blood Ties* episodes herself.

Michael said that the movie *Invasion* – yet another rendition of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* – starring Nicole Kidman and Daniel Craig, filmed in 2005 – will be released this summer. This movie is being produced by the Warshawski siblings — formerly the Warshawski brothers; but one of them is apparently undergoing gender reassignment. [Ed. Note: I looked it up, and I

Lambda Literary Awards Finalists Announced



Finalists for the 19th annual Lambda Literary Awards were announced on March 1st. Awards are presented in 25 categories; and winners will be announced on May 31st, at the Lambda Literary Awards Ceremony in New York City.

This year's finalists for the Sci-Fi/Fantasy/Horror category are:

Carnival by Elizabeth Bear
(Bantam Spectra)

Mordred, Bastard Son
by Douglas Clegg (Alyson)
A Strong and Sudden Thaw
by R.W. Day (Iris Print)

Izzy and Eve by Neal Drinnan
(Green Candy Press)

Spin Control by Chris Moriarty
(Bantam Spectra)

For more information and a complete list of this year's finalists in all categories, check out their website:

www.lambdaliterary.org Λ Ψ Φ

believe Joel Silver is actually the producer of *Invasion*.]

Peter will be sponsoring a LSF movie outing to see *Spider-man III* (details to follow, when available). More upcoming LSF events: *Torchwood* party at Peter and Rob's on March 31. The LSF book discussion group will discuss Tim Pratt's *Strange Adventures of Ranger Girl* on March 26. There will be a gaming party on April 7, the monthly LSF meeting on April 8 (Easter), an LSF book discussion group meeting on April 26, and the showing of the last set of *Torchwood* episodes (along with *The Sarah Jane Adventures*) on April 28. Have you entered all of these events in your PDA?

Carl brought on an apple pie (with ice cream and NASA candles) to celebrate LSF's 17th anniversary! Happy Birthday to us! Norman blew out the candles.

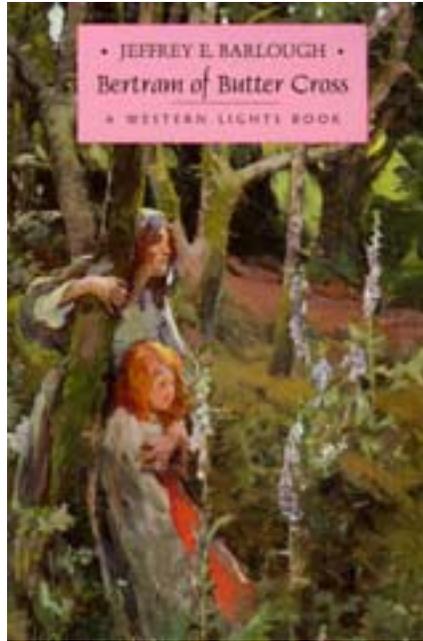
And the meeting wrapped up with a visit to the brand-new Big Monkey Comics store, just around the corner on 14th Street NW. Λ Ψ Φ

Bertram of Butter Cross
by Jeffrey E. Barlough
(Gresham & Doyle, 2007)
a review by Carl Cipra

At a recent LSF Book Discussion Group meeting, Rob passed to me an advance review copy of Jeffrey Barlough's latest "Western Lights" book, *Bertram of Butter Cross*. The accompanying letter from the new publisher announces that Gresham & Doyle has taken up where Aces Books left off; and it seems that our reviews of the three previous Barlough novels were in fact "appreciated by the author." Cool. In case you don't remember those reviews, Colleen Cahill reviewed *Dark Sleeper* (issue # 135, June 2001) and *The House in the High Wood* (issue # 139, Oct. 2001) — with "ditto" addenda by me — and I reviewed *Strange Cargo* (issue # 175, Oct. 2004).

Now comes *Bertram of Butter Cross*. It takes place in the same "Western Lights" universe as Barlough's three previous novels, but (also like them) it's a completely stand-alone novel. (Start with any of 'em; the order doesn't matter. They're all good.)

Welcome back to the world of "The Sundering." In 1839, some sort of major cataclysmic event happened (a comet/asteroid strike? something else?), and (as far as the reader can tell) most of the world (and *all* of the Old World) was wiped out. Civilization — and perhaps the sole remnants of humanity — have survived only on the west coast of North America (the *northwest* coast?), probably saved by the protective barrier of the Rockies and the Sierra Nevadas. In the 150 years since The Sundering, there has been no contact with anyone beyond this coastal enclave. And society in the Sundered Realm (as the enclave is known) has changed very little either. Hence, Barlough's stories are all set in a delightful Dickensian, Austen-esque world; and his grasp of the style, humor, naming-conventions, speech patterns, etc. of the mid-to-late Victorian period is masterful. (Having just re-read *Great Expectations* a few weeks ago, for the first time since high school, it was quite obvious to me just



how skillful Barlough is.) And this Victorian sensibility all fits in very well with the gloomy, cold, misty climate of his post-cataclysmic, glaciated world of The Sundering. Oh, and what would an Ice Age-style world be without Ice Age-style megafauna? Not to worry. *Bertram of Butter Cross* (as with the previous novels) is filled with appearances by mastodons, sabre-toothed cats, glyptodonts, giant ground sloths, and so forth. (I've been intrigued with prehistoric life ever since I was a kid, so Barlough has pandered to another of my vices.)

Each of the four "Western Lights" novels has had its own unique "tone." *Bertram of Butter Cross* is, I think, the "lightest" of the four — perhaps "the most whimsical" would be an appropriate description. (Come to think of it, a comparison of the four different titles should be the tip-off in this regard.) It's not "shallow" — no — it's not "slapstick comedic" — it's just "gentler," less "brooding" or "gloomy" than the others. This is not to say that *Bertram* doesn't have its darker moments, however. There's a haunted forest filled with predatory felines, a great snake-necked beastie of some sort, mysterious lights, trees filled with glowing severed heads that issue terrible warnings, and a ghostly Hunt that gallops about on moonlit nights. And then there's old Mother Redcap, "the witch of Goblin

Mere," who disappeared some 50 years ago — but might not be so safely "dead and buried" after all.

The story is set in and around the small southern town of Market Snailsby, on the verge of the marshes of Fenshire — and in nearby Marley Wood itself, the haunted forest aforementioned. Spring is here, and construction is set to resume on the new coaching road leading northwards out of Market Snailsby. Mrs. Chugwell and son — and her herd of domesticated shovel-tusked mastodons — are arriving in town. Within the next year or so, they will have bull-dozed the new coaching road entirely through Marley Wood, thus allowing the enterprising folk of Market Snailsby to avoid the much-longer, circuitous, and inconvenient journey *around* Marley Wood to the larger towns of Ridingham and Newmarch to the north. But now Things Begin to Happen. On those rare moonlit nights, a phantom host rides through Marley wood — strange lights are seen and hunting horns are heard. A Hunter Dressed in Green appears to unwary citizens at the edge of town of a night; he makes threatening gestures with his quarterstaff and then promptly disappears into thin air. A weird monster — with a human-like face atop its long snakey neck — has frightened several people and their pets. And a little boy named Bertram (the title character) has re-appeared; he disappeared into Marley Wood 30-something years ago — but he doesn't seem to have aged a day! Has construction of the coach road somehow disturbed the dark heart of Marley Wood? Are all of these strange happenings somehow connected with the ancient lost hunting lodge of Godfrey de Clinkers, reputed to be somewhere in Marley Wood — possibly quite near the leading edge of the road construction project? Come join the doughty citizens of Market Snailsby — the Hathaways (Jemma and her scholarly brother Richard, with their horse Rosie and their coach-dog Snap), Miss Ada Henslowe (Jemma Hathaway's friend), Dr. Chevenix (the town physician), the Reverend Mr.

(continued on page 5)

Bertram of Butter Cross

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cover for *Dark Sleeper*
(painting by Jeff Barson)

Ludlow (vicar of the Church of All Hallows, with his pet glyptodont Miss Hortense), and Sir Hector MacHector of Mickledene Hall — as they investigate these strange and mysterious events.

I have only one quibble with this book — something which I would perhaps label as its “cuteness factor” and which (to the best of my memory) is missing from the other three “Western Lights” novels. To put it bluntly, the domesticated animals — dogs, cats, horses, glyptodonts, etc. — talk to each other and understand human speech. However, they don’t talk to humans — or, to be more precise, when they *do* talk to humans, said humans *can’t understand* their various meows, growls, barks, whinnies, etc. [“*What’s that, Lassie?! <bark, bark> “Timmy fell down the well?!”* Sorry, I couldn’t resist.] Again, this is a conceit that’s not unknown in Victorian literature — and, again, Barlough does it well — but it’s just not something I’m overly fond of. That aside, however, I truly enjoyed *Bertram of Butter Cross*; and (as ever) I look forward to Jeffrey Barlough’s next “Western Lights” book.

Oh, and before I forget, Barlough has even set up an “Official Western Lights Website” where you can learn more about his universe — including some previously-untold facts about how that world developed, a gazetteer of places in the novels, a bestiary describing all the types of Ice Age megafauna in the Sundered Realm, etc., etc., etc. Check it out:

www.westernlightsbooks.com

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Star Trek: New Voyages to Produce "Blood and Fire" info passed along by Brian

I don’t think this has been posted yet. From AfterElton (a LOGO blog): Old Star Trek script with gay storyline to be produced by New Voyages. Kirk’s nephew is gay - <http://tinyurl.com/yukl9n>

“...One of the most successful of those websites is Star Trek: New Voyages which has set itself the ambitious goal of shooting an entire new season of the original Star Trek series. They’ve already shot three episodes (available free online; the last episode has been downloaded 30 million times) and have managed to attract quite a bit of talent including appearances by original Star Trek cast members George Takei and Walter Koenig.

“Yesterday New Voyages announced their fourth episode would be Blood and Fire, the very script originally turned down twenty years ago by Berman. They also announced that the script has been re-written and was to be directed by Star Trek Veteran David



Gerrold who wrote the original episode. Also working on the script is Carlos Pedraza.”

Hidden Frontier is up to Season 7 I think, and still was the first to create non-televised Star Trek stories featuring LGBT content, but the production values of New Voyages are higher (of course they’re only on episode 3) and have had more involvement with actual Star Trek writers and actors.

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U.S. Post Office DC Super Heroes Stamps



At the March LSF meeting, it was mentioned that the U.S. Post Office has issued a set of DC Super Heroes stamps. In case you haven’t seen them already, here they are!



****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, April 8th**, at James Crutchfield's apartment (1414 17th St. NW, #413). 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. 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



April 20-22, 2007 **RAVENCON 2007**. Doubletree Inn at the Richmond Airport (Richmond, VA). Author Guest of Honor: Robert Sawyer, Artist Guest of Honor: Steve Stiles, Fan Guest of Honor: wombat (jan howard finder). Membership: \$30 until 12/31/06; \$35 from 1/1/07 to 4/19/07; \$40 at the door. Make checks payable to "RavenCon" and send to: RavenCon, 9623 Hollyburgh Terrace, Charlotte, NC 28215
Website: <http://www.ravencon.com>

May 25-28, 2007 **BALTICON 41**. Marriott's Hunt Valley Inn (Hunt Valley, MD). Guests of Honor: Larry Niven & Jerry Pournelle; Artist GoH: Joe Bergeron. Membership: \$50 from 3/1 thru 4/30/2007; \$58 thereafter & at the door. Make checks payable to "Balticon 41" and send to: Balticon 41 Registration, PO Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203-0686
Website: www.balticon.org E-mail: balticoninfo@balticon.org

Aug. 2-5, 2007 **ARCHON 31 (2007 NASFiC)**. (St. Louis, MO). Featured Guest: Barbara Hambly; Artist GoH: Darryl K. Sweet; Media GoH: Mira "Delenn" Furlan. Membership: \$45 (currently). Make checks payable to "Archon 31" and send to: Archon 31/2007 NASFiC, PO Box 8387, St. Louis, MO 63132-8387. Website: <http://www.archonstl.org/31/>

October 5-8, 2007 **GAYLAXICON 2007**. Sheraton Midtown Atlanta at Colony Square (Atlanta, GA). Publisher GoH: Steph Pagel; Author GoH: TBA. Membership: \$50 thru Labor Day, 2007; \$60 after that; memberships available online via PayPal. Website: <http://gaylaxicon2007.org/>

"A Mid-October Weekend," 2007 **CAPCLAVE 007** ("Dodo Noir, Neo-Pulp"). Hilton Silver Spring (Silver Spring, MD). Author GoH Jeffrey Ford; Editor GoH: Ellen Datlow Membership: \$40 thru 6/30/07; \$50 from 7/1 to 9/30/07. Make checks payable to "Capclave 2007" and send to: Capclave 2007 c/o Barry Newton, PO Box 153, Sandy Spring, MD 20860-0153.
Website: <http://www.capclave.org>

August 6-10, 2008 **DENVENTION 3 (The 66th WorldCon)**. Colorado Convention Center & nearby hotels (Denver, CO). Guest of Honor: Lois McMaster Bujold; Artist GoH: Rick Sternback. \$130 thru 05/31/2007 (will go UP after that!). Make checks payable to "Dvention 3" and send to: Dvention 3, PO Box 1349, Denver, CO 80201
Website: <http://dvention.org> Information at: info@dvention.org

October 10-13, 2008 **GAYLAXICON 2008**. Hotel: to be announced (Washington DC area). Membership: \$50 at present (will go up). Guest of Honor: Geoff Ryman. Artist Guest of Honor: Alicia Austin.
Information at: www.gaylaxicon2008.org

