



Lambda Sci-Fi DC Area Gaylaxians



PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044



(202) 232-3141 - Issue #216 - March 2008

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



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 LGBT 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, 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 March 27th.

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

March 27th - *Hammerfall*, by C.J. Cherryh; moderator: Randy.

April 24th - *World War Z*, by Max Brooks; moderator: Krista. **Λ Ψ Φ**

March LSF Meeting

The next Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will be held on the **Sunday, March 9th**, 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.

Remember: we have a Pride Day proposal to vote on (see details on pg. 3).

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

Happy 18th Birthday to Lambda Sci-Fi!!!



That's right, gang! Lambda Sci-Fi is 18 years old and going strong!

The first LSF meeting was held on March 14, 1990, at Loree & Marcelle's house in Takoma Park. There were nine attendees: Barrett, Carl, Peter, Jim W., Loree & Marcelle Cook-Daniels, Al W., Bruce G., and Tom H.

Here's an excerpt from the minutes of that first meeting: "After talking about what interested each of us in the field of science fiction and fantasy, we threw out some ideas on what we might like to do at a meeting of like-minded fans..."

The first issue of the newsletter (named "Lambda Sci-Fi" by the editor, Al W.) came out the following month (April 1990). LSF also hosted its first DC Pride Day table in 1990. **Λ Ψ Φ**



2007 Gaylactic Spectrum Awards for Short Fiction and Other Work announced by Rob Gates



February 7, 2008 – Washington DC

The Gaylactic Spectrum Awards Council is pleased to announce the winners of the 2007 Gaylactic Spectrum Award for Short Fiction and Other Work. (Novel winners were announced in October 2007.)

The Gaylactic Spectrum Awards were created in 1999 to honor works in SF/F/H that deal positively with gay characters, themes and issues. The Gaylactic Spectrum Awards Council was created in 2002 to manage and further the mission of the Awards, which is to educate and raise awareness of GLBT content in SF/F/H. Nominations for the Gaylactic Spectrum Awards are open to everyone. Winners and a short list of recommended works in each category are selected by a jury.

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Gaylactic Spectrum Awards

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For 2007, Awards were presented in three categories. The Novel category recognized works originally released in 2006 in the US/North America. The Short Fiction and Other Work categories recognized works released in 2005 or 2006 due to a one year jury break.

Three stories were selected by the judges as the best science fiction, fantasy or horror short fiction with significant positive GLBT content from 2005 and 2006. "In the Quake Zone" by David Gerrold (from the anthology *Down These Dark Spaceways*), "Instinct" by Joy Parks (from the anthology *The Future Is Queer*), and "The Language of Moths" by Christopher Barzak (from the magazine *Realms of Fantasy*) were identified as the three winners in the Short Fiction category. In the Other Work category, the jury also identified three winners. They were the anthology *The Future Is Queer* edited by Richard Labonte and Lawrence Schimel, the television series *Torchwood* created by Russell T Davies, and the film *V for Vendetta* directed by James McTeigue.

The jury for each category also identified a Short List of Recommended works. The complete Short List for each category is below. The short lists reflect the remarkable diversity in the speculative fiction arena, with titles from a variety of publishers and distributors, publishing technologies, authors, genres, literary styles, and GLBT content. "The judges were extremely impressed with the variety and quality of the works considered. Indeed, one judge commented that the difficulty was not in finding quality works, but whittling a pool of quality works down to a Short List," reported Rob Gates, Executive Director of the Gaylactic Spectrum Awards Council. The juries encourage readers to seek out not only the Short List titles, but all of the nominated works.

Nominations for the 2008 Awards are open, and the 2008 Awards will be presented at Gaylaxicon 2008 in Washington DC (October 2008).

For more information about the Gaylactic Spectrum Awards, including a complete listing of all nominated works from 2007, a handout listing winners and short list recommendations with brief descriptions, or to nominate works for the 2008 Gaylactic Spectrum Awards, visit the website at:

<http://www.spectrumawards.org/>
or send email to:
info@spectrumawards.org

Short Fiction Winners and Short List

Winners:

- "In The Quake Zone," David Gerrold (*Down These Dark Spaceways* - SFBC)
- "Instinct," Joy Parks (*The Future Is Queer* - Arsenal Pulp)
- "The Language of Moths," Christopher Barzak (*Realms of Fantasy*)

Short List:

- "The Beatrix Gates," Rachel Pollack (*The Future Is Queer* - Arsenal Pulp)
- "Bones Like Black Sugar," Catherynne M Valente (*Fantasy Magazine* #1 - Prime)
- "The Captive Girl," Jennifer Pelland (*Helix SF*, Issue 3, Fall 2006)
- "Caught by Skin," Steve Berman (*Sex in the System* - Thunder's Mouth)
- "Facing Down Your Demons," Alexander Potter (*All Hell Breaking Loose* - DAW)
- "Fairy Tale Ending," L-J Baker (*From The Asylum* - March 2006)
- "Obscure Relations," L Timmel Duchamp (*The Future Is Queer* - Arsenal Pulp)
- "Plums," Camilla Bruce (*Shifting Again* - Torquere)
- "Sleeping Bears Lie," Alex Draven (*Shifting Too* - Torquere)
- "The Specter of Sin," Kristina Wright (*Call of the Dark* - Bella)
- "There's a Hole in the City," Richard Bowes (*SciFiction* - SciFi.com)
- "Voce," Kimberly DeCina (*Sleeping Beauty, Indeed* - Torquere)
- "We Recruit," Julia Watts (*Stake Through the Heart* - Bella)

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Author Reading at March LSF Meeting announced by Peter Knapp



Author Warren Rochelle will deliver a reading at the March 9th LSF meeting.

Warren Rochelle is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Mary Washington, Fredericksburg, Virginia. He has had his work published in several journals, including *Foundation* and *Extrapolation*. His critical work, *Communities of the Heart: The Rhetoric of Myth in the Fiction of Ursula K. Le Guin*, was published by Liverpool University Press in 2001. His creative works (short fiction and poetry) have appeared in *Forbidden Lines*, *Aboriginal Science Fiction*, *Beyond the Third Planet*, *Crucible*, and *Romance and Beyond*. He is also the author of two novels: *The Wild Boy* (2001) and *Harvest of Changelings* (2007). Λ Ψ Φ

Gaylaxicon 2008



"Twenty
years
of
fun!"

See Con Calendar
on page 6 for details.



A Companion to Wolves
 by Sarah Monette and
 Elizabeth Bear
 (TOR, 2007)
 book review by R.R. Angell

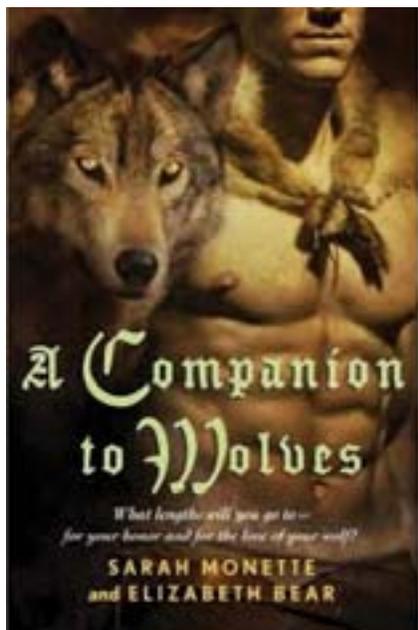
There are very few times that I wish I was a straight man, but reading this book was one of them. I found this new book, a joint effort by Sarah Monette and Elizabeth Bear, fresh and exciting.

The setting is the world of Iskryne, ruled by regional Keeps, where the townspeople around each Keep are tithed to the Jarl, their ruler. The towns are most like tribes that have settled down around a chief; and the feel is one of mildly impoverished medieval villages — a little dirty, with a hint of straw and wenchens everywhere. This is a harsh world with bleak winters and no technology to speak of, beyond basic metallurgy for weapons.

The chief threat to existence are the trolls that range down from the north; and the villages are protected from them by the *Wolfheallan*, bands of men each of whom is bonded psychically to a wolf. No women are bonded to wolves. There could be a feminist cry here, but I'll leave that to others or perhaps to a sequel.

Each town is tithed to their own *wolfheal* of men, the equivalent of a pack — sometimes called a *wolfthreat*, ruled by a *wolfcarl* and a *wolfsprechend*. When all the *wolfheallan* come together for a war, they are called a *Wolfmaegthing*. There is a term for the wolf part of a *wolfthreat*, as well as one for just the men. The population grows as the wolves have pups; and the tithes from the villages consist of boys, enough to allow the pups to pick their man-brother.

So here's the story. A Jarl's first-born is chosen by the local *wolfthreat* as part of a tithe. The sixteen-year-old is delivered, against his homophobic father's wishes, and is bonded to a bitch that is slated to be a queen's queen among wolves, an *uber konigenwolf* (to use their terminology), with echoes from Anne McCaffrey's "Dragon Riders of Pern" series. Hold that thought. The trolls are invading from the north, and all the *wolfheallen* and men must band



together to save their existence. Good stuff.

In the leading author's note, the writers say, "We have chosen to [render] the language of the people in this story in a melange of Norse, Anglo-Saxon, and other Germanic Languages ... in the hopes that this alien familiarity and familiar alienness will help readers as they enter into this cold and perilous world." And boy do we need help. The terms are often confusing, but I forgave them because the story was so darned compelling.

But let's talk about names for a moment. When a boy bonds with a wolf, he changes his name, just as you've gotten used to it. Then you have to deal with the new name and the name of the associated wolf. I found this to be unnecessarily confusing, as there were ways they could have helped us. (They did lead the story with a two-page list of *dramatis personae* that I often needed.) This, and a surprising dearth of description, bugged me the whole way through and made for a slower read.

A *wolfheal* is ruled by the pack hierarchy, a *konigenwolf* and her mate. Remember that wolves only bond with men? Our hero, called Njall-cum-Isolfr after bonding with his wolf, Viradectis, is put into some very compromising positions for a straight boy when his wolf goes into heat several times over the course of the novel, because the

**LSF February 2008
 Meeting Minutes**

taken by Rob



The humble guest secretary offers his apologies for not producing the minutes in haiku form. I know everyone was looking forward to it, but time was of the essence.

We began with a business meeting. We discussed Pride and whether LSF has any interest in participating in any of the Pride celebrations other than our traditional Capital Pride. After discussing Black Pride, Youth Pride, Montgomery County Pride, and other smaller local pride celebrations, we decided that we're interested in perhaps participating in Baltimore's Pride celebration, which will take place a week after Capital Pride. Enough interest in staffing the table was expressed, and David offered to provide details on costs and such; but he mentioned we'll need to be aware that Baltimore's Pride does not provide tents — just tables. Rob offered a formal proposal for voting at the March meeting.

Proposal: that LSF pay for and run a table at Baltimore's Pride event.

(*Note: David has provided the promised details: it would cost LSF \$85, and the event is on 6/22/2008. We can also rent a canopy from them for \$100 if we don't have one on our own.*)

In additional business, we reviewed the list of upcoming LSF events: movie outing for *Jumper* on Feb. 15; Book Discussion Group on Feb. 28;

(continued on page 4)

mating by wolves is followed exactly by the men. The scenes are graphic, raw, and sometimes as violent as the fights with trolls.

As a gay man, I loved this book as much for the plot as for the intense relationships between wolf and man and the male-male relationships that this spawned. I couldn't help wonder how it would read to a straight man and whether the story and its ending effectively resolved a heterosexual man's need for rationalizations.

ΛΨΦ

February Minutes

continued from page 3

special reading by Warren Rochelle at the March 9 LSF meeting.

We also discussed making sure announcements of events go out via e-mail. We'll be making more use of the yahoo group calendars and will also set up a G-mail calendar for anyone who wishes to utilize it.

After such a hearty round of business it was on to social things.

We discussed the very successful movie outing to *Cloverfield*. Over a dozen LSFers showed up. Though a few people had some difficulty with the shaky-cam style of the movie, a good time was had by all. The relative merits of the film were discussed, with the majority seeming to have found the film good.

In additional movie related bits, we discussed the sad passing of Heath Ledger and the connection between his disturbing role as The Joker in the upcoming Batman film and his mental state. We also discussed how Heath's death seems to continue Terry Gilliam's film-making bad luck, as Heath's next role was to have been in a Gilliam film.

In TV news, the likely end of the writer's strike was all the buzz. We bantered about what we might expect this to mean for various series, with the general consensus being that we'll see a few episodes of some of the hotter series, but that it might be too late for many series

for this season. In other TV news, we mentioned the recent appearance of Black Canary on *Smallville* and the upcoming premiere of the non-vampire immortal series *New Amsterdam*.

On the fandom front, we spent some time discussing *New Voyages*, one of the fan-produced *Star Trek* series. *New Voyages* is currently working on an episode based on David Gerrold's script "Blood and Fire." While the acting has been weak, the stories and production values have been quite good for *New Voyages*. For *Doctor Who* fans, Gallifrey (the big annual event) is about to take place in California. We all expect Peter will come back with interesting stories and tidbits.

Gaylactic Spectrum Awards

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Other Work Winners and Short List

Winners:

The Future Is Queer (anthology), Richard Labonte and Lawrence

Schimel *et al* - Arsenal Pulp

Torchwood Season 1 (television), Russell T Davies *et al* - BBC

V for Vendetta (film), James McTeigue *et al* - Warner Bros

Short List:

"The Dance of Uzume-no-Ama" (poem), Catherynne M Valente - *Prime*

Doctor Who: "The Empty Child"/"The Doctor Dances" (television), Russell T Davies *et al* - BBC

Drawn Together (television), Comedy Central - Comedy Central

Eerie Queerie (manga), Shuri Shiozu *et al* - TokyoPop

Gaylaxicon 2006 Sampler (anthology), Don Sakers *et al* - (Speed-of-C)

Hard Pill (film), John Baumgartner *et al* - (Baumgartner)

Sleeping Beauty, Indeed (anthology), Joselle Vanderhooft *et al* - (Torquere)

Young Avengers (comics), Allan Heinberg, Jim Cheung *et al* - (Marvel Comics)

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Finally, we passed around various newspaper clippings: reviews, odd stories, and comic strips. We also talked about Fox News getting caught with its pants down when it turned out that the reviewer who gave a nasty review to the new game *Mass Effect* had never actually played the game.

With that we ended for the day and settled in for the usual nattering.

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Garden Spells by Sarah Addison Allen (Bantam, 2007) a review by Carl

Now *here's* a pleasant little fantasy novel that probably sneaked by your radar. It most assuredly almost slipped by me; I just happened to notice it a couple of months ago on the "Staff Recommends" shelf in a local Barnes & Noble and picked it up on a whim. I finally got around to reading it. Very nice.

What's the book like? Well, that's not so easy to say. I was reminded of *several* different stories as I read it. It has the leisurely, comfortable, small-town feel of Ray Bradbury's *Dandelion Wine* (although this novel takes place in North Carolina, not the Midwest). It features a gently transformative kind of magic, magic that influences people via ingestion — somewhat similar to the gentle magic featured in the film *Chocolat* (2000, starring Juliette Binoche). There's a sense of the "magic of place" similar to that depicted in *Tuck Everlasting* (both the 2002 film version and the original 1981 novel by Natalie Babbitt) — although "immortality" is *not* one of the benefits of this particular garden. *Garden Spells* even contains echoes (believe it or not) of the Biblical Genesis — there's a magical apple tree in this garden, but eating its fruit doesn't, as such, grant knowledge of good and evil. (It does, however, provide insights that are more than a little mind-blowing!)

Seems as how there's this little town of Bascom, North Carolina; and (as is usual in this sort of place) various families tend to have their own particular notoriety. The socially-prominent Clark women "were never afraid of sex" — in fact, they rather enjoyed sex and used these skills for attracting and keeping good husbands. The Hopkins men tended to marry women older than themselves. And so on. But the Waverley women... well, now, they're something *special*. "Everyone knows" those Waverley women are all a bit odd; but they each seem to have their own "special gifts," too. Old Evanelle Frank-

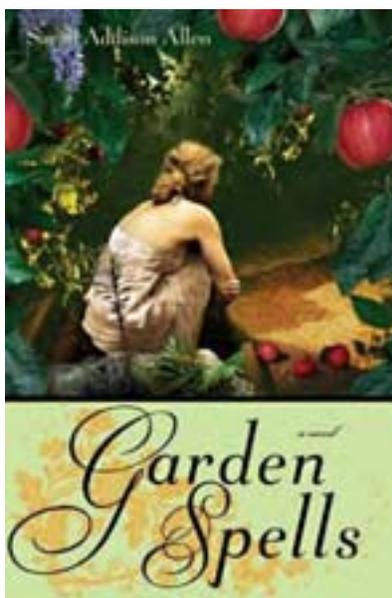
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Garden Spells

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lin (“a distant relation, a second or third or fourteenth cousin”) feels compelled to wander around town giving small presents to people, things they’ll “surely need” at some (unspecified) future time — and they inevitably *do* need them. Sidney Waverley has an incredible talent for hairstyling; her clients are literally enhanced and transformed by Sidney’s haircuts and hairdos. Bay (Sidney’s daughter) has an unerring sense of “where things belong.”

But the star of the Waverley family is Claire, current owner of the Waverley house and its magical garden that has been “tended by generations of Waverleys.” Claire was literally “born on the road,” daughter of the runaway Lorelei Waverley. But, when Claire was a little girl and Lorelei became pregnant again, they returned to Bascom and the Waverley house. Lorelei gave birth there to Sidney and (a few years later) inexplicably ran off again and left both girls behind. Thus, Claire was raised by Grandma Waverley and taught all the secrets of the Waverley garden and the herbal magic to be derived from its plants (including the powers of its “temperamental” and *very* unusual apple tree). Sidney, on the other hand, idolized her absent mother; and, as soon as she was old enough, Sidney also ran away from Bascom. Over the course of time, Claire inherited the Waverley house and garden. Now she is the proud proprietor of “Waverley’s Catering,” a thriving one-woman business offering very special edible delights for garden parties, club meetings, and other local social events. (Here’s an example: “The nutty flavor of the dip made from hyacinth



bulbs made you feel moody and think of the past, and the salads made with chicory and mint had you believing that something good was about to happen, whether it was true or not.”)

Suddenly, the outside world starts to intrude on Claire’s settled and comfortable routine. The house next door has been purchased by a handsome art teacher from the local college. He seems quite smitten with Claire, but her spinsterish life has left her unprepared for (and confused by) his attentions. Then Sidney returns to the Waverley homestead, with her young daughter Bay in tow. Sidney says she wants to settle down and provide a safe, settled life for Bay in the family home. But Claire and Sidney have grown into two very different women — each with her own flaws and peculiarities — and they have a very hard time adjusting to each other. The ripples of Sidney’s return are also being felt throughout the town, particularly by one Emma Matteson (nee Clark).

You see, back in their highschool days, Sidney Waverley and Emma Clark were rivals for the affection of big-man-on-campus Hunter John Matteson; and Sidney seemed to have been the odds-on favorite. Granted, Hunter John eventually dumped Sidney in favor of Emma (whose social standing in Bascom — and sexual prowess — far outweighed his teen-aged crush for Sidney), and he married Emma shortly after Sidney fled from Bascom; but Emma has never forgotten (or forgiven) her old rival. Emma’s prominent social standing in Bascom guarantees unpleasant consequences for the newly-returned Sidney — as well as for the oblivious Claire.

And, also unknown to Claire, Sidney has fled from an unspoken but terrible secret hidden in her 10 years away from Bascom — a past that may, in fact, be hot on her trail even now. Throw in an increasingly “difficult” apple tree in the Waverley garden — and let the fireworks begin!

Oh, and — surprise! surprise! — *Garden Spells* even has GLBT content! Fred, the town grocer, is an older gay man. Yes, he’s a secondary character; but his lovelorn travails are a major theme throughout the course of the book. And the Waverley women hold many pleasant surprises in store for him. I think the author has handled his character quite well.

I was actually surprised how much I enjoyed this pleasant little fantasy. If you want a copy, however, don’t look for *Garden Spells* in the F&SF section of your favorite bookstore. Odds are that it’s been shelved in amongst all the other undifferentiated fiction. But *do* see about hunting up a copy. I really recommend it. ▲ΨΦ



Tyrannosaurus rex gets all the fame, all the glory, all the street cred. But the truth is that the largest carnivore ever to walk the earth was *Giganotosaurus*. No kidding, giganotosaurs are bigger. But because giganotosaurs are South American and tyrannosaurs are North American, they just can’t get the recognition. The Anglos are more media-savvy. They control all the museums.

Don’t think the giganotosaurs aren’t aware of this, either. In seedy taverns scattered across the wind-swept pampas of Argentina, giganotosaurs gather in small groups to pop a few beers, down a gaucho or two, and complain about the injustice. “If only,” one will inevitably grumble, “there were a connection between the Americas—a land bridge or something—then we’d fix those pipsqueaks! And their little mammals, too!”

excerpted from *Field Guide to the Mesozoic Megafauna*
by Michael Swanwick (Tachyon Publications, 2004)

**** 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, March 9th**, 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 25-27, 2008 **RAVENCON 2008**. Crowne Plaza Richmond West (Richmond, VA). Author GoH: C.S. Friedman. Artist GoH: Stephen Hickman. Download membership form from website. Membership: \$35 until 4/18/2008; \$40 at the door. Make checks payable to "Ravencon" and send to: Ravencon, 43031 Elk Place, Chantilly, VA 20152 Website: www.ravencon.com

May 23-26, 2008 **BALTICON 42**. Baltimore Marriott Hunt Valley Inn (Hunt Valley, MD). GoH: Connie Willis; Artist GoH: June Palencar. Membership: \$51 to 3/31; \$59 thereafter & at door. Make checks payable to "Balticon 42" and send to: Balticon 42, PO Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203-0686 (On-line registration also available.) Website: www.balticon.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. Membership: were \$175 thru 05/31/2007 (has gone UP since then!). 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**. Hyatt Regency - Bethesda (Bethesda, MD). Guest of Honor: Geoff Ryman. Artist Guest of Honor: Alicia Austin. Download PDF membership form from the website. Membership: \$65 from 01/01/2008; \$70 after 09/30/2008. Make checks payable to "Gaylaxicon 2008" & send to: Gaylaxicon 2008, c/o Lambda Sci-Fi, PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044-0656. Membership can also be purchased on-line via PayPal. Information at: www.gaylaxicon2008.org

October 17-19, 2008 **CAPCLAVE 2008**. Rockville Hilton (Rockville, MD). Writer GoH: James Morrow; Critic GoH: Michael Dirda. Membership: \$35 through the end of 2007 (will go up after that). Download the form from their website, with check payable to "Capclave 2008," and send to: Capclave 2008, c/o Barry Newton, PO Box 53, Ashton, MD 20861. (On-line payment options also available.) Online at: www.capclave.org

???? **PHILCON 2008**. ("Philcon 2008 has come unstuck in Time and Space!") Membership: \$40 as of 11/19/07; \$45 as of 6/1/08; \$50 as of 10/1/08; \$60 at the door (where/whenever *that's*!). Make checks payable to "Philcon 2008" and send to: Philcon Registration, PO Box 8303, 30th Street Station, Philadelphia, PA 19101-8303. (Online registration is also available.) More details as they become available. Website: www.philcon.org

October 2009 **GAYLAXICON 2009**. (Minneapolis, MN). Details to be announced as they are available. Membership: \$60 until 09/01/2009; then \$70 until 10/01/2009; \$80 at the door. Make checks payable to "Gaylaxicon 2009" and send to: Gaylaxicon 2009, P.O. Box 2412, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402
Website: www.gaylacticnetwork.org/gaylaxicon2009

