



lambda Sci-fi

DC Area Gaylaxians

(202) 232-3141 – Issue # 342 – September 2018

E-MAIL: info@lambdascifi.org

WEBSITE: www.lambdascifi.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.

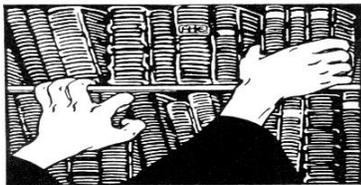
The LSF Book Discussion Group usually meets on the 4th Thursday of every month, starting at 7:00 PM, at Peter & Rob's home: 1425 "S" St., NW – for directions or more details, call 202-483-6369. The next book discussion will be held on Sept. 27.

Here are the details for the next couple of book discussions:

Sept. 27 – *The Prey of Gods* by Nicky Drayden (moderator: Rob W.).

Oct. 25 – *Theory of Bastards* by Audrey Schulman (moderator: Carl).

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August LSF Minutes

taken by Scott

Star Trek News: Rob reported the sad news that *Star Trek* actress Nichelle Nichols has been diagnosed with moderate progressive dementia. Everyone is eager for more details on the reported "Picard-centric" new *Star Trek* series. The trailer for the second season of *Star Trek: Discovery* with Captain Pike (and Mr. Spock?) looks promising. It was noted that actor Wilson Cruz will be back – but will he be back as Dr. Hugh Culber?

Shark News: *The Meg*, the newest shark movie, looks ridiculous. Reports are that *The Last Sharknado Movie* will include time travel. Why not?

TV News: David reported on some upcoming new genre TV shows: *Charmed*, *Three Sisters*, *God Friended Me*, *Legacies*, *Manifest*, *The Passage*, *Roswell New Mexico*, and *The In-Between* (about a medium who is not from Long Island). He also noted the hilarious *Saturday Night Live* "alien abductee" skits, featuring Kate McKinnon.

Worldcon News: Rob reported on some protests apparently planned for this year's Worldcon in San Jose; and he briefly reviewed the history of the Gamergate, Sad Puppies, and Rabid Puppies movements. Carl then mentioned some discussion



panel topics for this year's Worldcon that sound really interesting, including quite a number of LGBTQ-related topics.

August LSF Events: The LSF book discussion topic (Aug. 23rd) will be *Station 11* by Emily St. John Mandel. An LSF gaming party is scheduled for Aug. 25th at Peter and Rob's house.

Then we watched previews for Season 2 of *Star Trek: Discovery*, Season 2 of *The Orville*, and the newest *Dr. Who* series. Fascinating! ΛΨΦ



<<<<< September 2018 LSF Meeting >>>>>

The next LSF meeting will be held on **Sunday, September 9th**. The meeting will be held at Peter and Rob's home, **1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC**. The meeting will begin at 1:30 and the "group watch" will begin at 3:00 PM. Hope to see you there!



What's Inside?

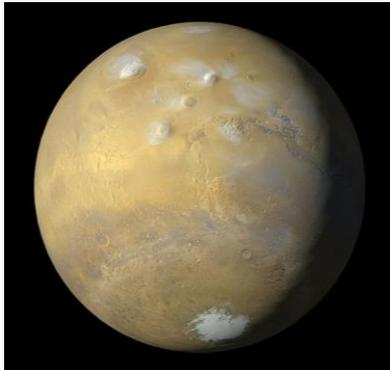
Page 2: Lake of Liquid Water on Mars; Gardner Dozois (obituary).

Page 3: Smithsonian Natural History Museum Fossil Hall Reopening; Jupiter's "New" Moons.

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Lake of Liquid Water on Mars

info passed along by Carl



It's long been suspected that there is liquid water at the base of the Martian polar ice caps. Now, astronomers have discovered clear indications of a large underground lake of liquid water trapped below the ice of the South Polar Layered Deposits. Their findings were published on July 25th in the journal *Science*.

Low-frequency radar pulses were launched by MARSIS (Mars Advanced Radar for Subsurface and Ionosphere Sounding) aboard the European Space Agency's *Mars Express* spacecraft (which first reached Mars about 15 years ago). Twenty-nine radar profiles were collected between March 2012 and December 2015, mapping the subsurface of the Planum Australe region near Mars's southern ice cap (which is composed of water ice covered by frozen carbon dioxide).

Andrea Cicchetti (on the MARSIS team) stated: "We'd seen hints of interesting subsurface features for years, but we couldn't reproduce the result from orbit to orbit." However, they found a new way to operate MARSIS that avoided processing data on the aging *Mars Express* and instead sent observations back to Earth, which allowed a higher sampling rate. The newly discovered lake is down about a mile below the surface and appears to stretch about 12 miles from end to end.

The temperature below the Martian south polar ice cap is about 205 Kelvin (-68° Celsius, -91° Fahrenheit).



Gardner Dozois 1947 – 2018

Gardner Dozois was an SF author and award-winning F&SF editor. He is perhaps best known as the former editor of *Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine* (1984-2004) and founding and long-time editor of *The Year's Best Science Fiction* anthologies (1984-2018). He stated that he turned to reading fiction partially as an escape from the provincialism of his home town: Salem, Massachusetts.

After a stint in the U.S. Army, Dozois moved to New York City to work as an editor in the SF field. One of his stories was published by Frederik Pohl in the 1966 issue of *If*; and his next four stories appeared in 1970 (three of them in Damon Knight's *Orbit* anthology series).

As a writer, Dozois worked mostly

in shorter forms. He won the Nebula Award for Best Short Story twice: for "The Peacemaker" (1983) and "Morning Child" (1984). His novelette "Counterfactual" won the Sidewise Award for Best Alternate-History Short Story. His short fiction has been gathered into six collections between the years 1977 and 2011.

Dozois won the Hugo Award for Best Professional Editor 15 times in 17 years (1988-2004) for his work with *Asimov's*. During the 1970s, he also worked as an editor for several other magazines, such as *Galaxy Science Fiction*, *If*, *Worlds of Fantasy*, and *Worlds of Tomorrow*.

He was also a prolific short fiction anthologist. After resigning from *Asimov's*, he remained editor of the anthology series *The Year's Best Science Fiction* (1984-2017).

Dozois also co-edited a number of themed anthologies with Jack Dann (*Aliens!*, *Dinosaurs!*, *Magcats!*, etc.). With George R.R. Martin, he co-edited eight massive F&SF and cross-genre anthologies, including *Warriors* (2010), *Dangerous Women* (2013), and *Rogues* (2014).

He often expressed his particular interest in adventure SF and space opera, which he collectively referred to as "center-core SF".

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How come the subpolar lake is *liquid* at those temperatures? It's theorized that the water is saturated with "brine" composed of magnesium, calcium, and sodium perchlorates, which lower the freezing point of water. (The *Phoenix* lander's Wet Chemistry Lab discovered substantial amounts of these perchlorates in the soil of the northern plains of Mars.) Does this "briny water" preclude the presence of life? Not necessarily. On Earth, bacteria and other microorganisms have been found in all kinds of seemingly "hostile" environments (deep sea vents; deep underground in mines; subglacial lakes in Antarctica; etc.). Thus, it's distinctly possible that there's life of some sort in this subpolar Martian lake. In fact, this might not be the *only* subsurface lake on Mars.

MARSIS has only explored a small percentage of the Planum Australe region and is only able to detect relatively large bodies of water. There is thus no reason to assume that subsurface water is limited to a single location on Mars.

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*Back off,
Earth
creatures!
The water
is ours!!*



**Smithsonian
Natural History Museum
Fossil Hall Reopening**
info passed along by Carl

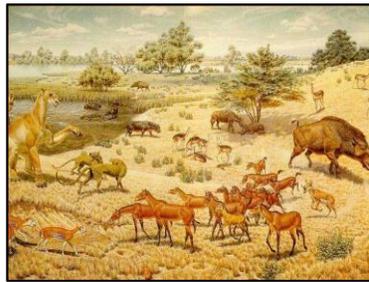
This is sort of a follow-up to the “Prehistoria” book reviews in the July LSF newsletter.

As you know, the Smithsonian Natural History Museum’s 31,000-square-foot Fossil Hall has been closed since 2014 for a five-year, \$129 million renovation. It has been officially announced that the redesigned Fossil Hall will reopen on June 8, 2019. The hall will appear in all its original 1910 architectural grandeur: soaring ceilings, ornate molding, and skylights that have been hidden for years. It will also incorporate the newest science and discoveries. (Before the hall closed for renovation, some of the skeletons had been on display in positions unchanged since 1923.)



The focal point of the hall will be a skeletal display of a teenaged *Tyrannosaurus rex* attacking a triceratops that it has pinned down under its foot. The 66-million-year-old T-rex fossil – nicknamed “the Nation’s T. rex” – was discovered in Montana in 1988 and is on loan from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It’s the first new dinosaur to be added to the Fossil Hall since 1981. The T-rex skeleton is one of the most

complete ever found for that species, with missing pieces reconstructed from models.



Agate Fossil Beds Mural by Matternes

The renovated hall will also feature more than 70 murals of prehistoric life, including photographic reproductions of the original murals created by American paleoartist Jay Howard Matternes between 1960 and 1975. Matternes was one of the best-known scientific illustrators of the 1950s and 1960s; the 85-year-old artist currently lives in Fairfax, VA. His Smithsonian murals – painted on canvas and bonded to the plaster walls – recreated the world of prehistoric mammals during the Oligocene, Miocene, and Pliocene Epochs. When museum renovations began, these murals were photographed piece-by-piece, then removed and conserved. They’ve been stored in the Museum’s collection; but they’re “too fragile to return to view”. Instead, large-scale prints of the photographic images will be displayed on the walls, so that we’ll all get to see these wonderful murals *in situ* again.

The renovated Fossil Halls will also feature newly-commissioned works by Julius Csotonyi, one of the younger generation of talented paleoartists. I’ve long admired his work in *Dinosaur Art: The World’s Greatest Paleoart* and other beautiful “coffee table books”.

I can hardly wait for the Fossil Hall to reopen!



Prosauropods by Csotonyi



**Jupiter’s
“New”
Moons**

info passed along by Carl

We all know that the planet Jupiter is circled by an astonishing number of moons, including Gany-mede (which is bigger than the planet Mercury). On July 17th, the International Astronomical Union’s Minor Planet Center published the orbits for 12 more newly-discovered Jovian moons – bringing the total to 79!

Scott Sheppard (a scientist at the Carnegie Institute for Science, Washington DC) – along with his collaborators at the University of Hawaii and Northern Arizona University – was hunting for new possible planets and dwarf planets in our Solar System beyond Pluto. But during their March 2017 survey, Jupiter and its moons moved into their field of view; and since their telescopes were already equipped with cameras that can spot very faint objects in space, “we were able to find these new moons.” The 12 newfound Jovian moons are all tiny (less than two miles in diameter) and have orbits outside those of the other 57 Jovian moons.

Gareth Williams (Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, director of the Minor Planet Center) says: “The only thing that we know at the moment are the orbits and the approximate size... We know nothing, really, more than that.”

One of the smallest of these new moons has been named Valetudo, after a daughter of Jupiter (the Roman goddess of hygiene, personal health, and cleanliness). Valetudo and two of its nearby “sisters” have prograde orbits (circling in the same direction as Jupiter’s rotation), while the other nine all have retrograde orbits (circling in the opposite direction from Jupiter’s rotation). And those orbits intersect, with the potential for moon-moon collisions.

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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 trans-gendered (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 copy of 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, **September 9th, at Peter and Rob's home, 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC.** 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

Sept. 28-30, 2018 **CAPCLAVE 2018**. Rockville Hilton & Executive Meeting Center (Rockville, MD). GoH: Nancy Kress & Alyssa Wong. Membership: \$65 from Aug. 1 to Sept. 30. Use the on-line registration form (using Paypal or processing your credit card thru Paypal).

Website: <http://www.capclave.org/capclave/capclave.18/>

Oct. 5-7, 2018 **CREATURES, CRIMES & CREATIVITY CON** ("for readers and writers and fans of all genre fiction, including mystery, suspense, romance, thriller, horror, sci-fi, fantasy, and paranormal"). Sheraton Columbia Town Center (Columbia MD). Membership \$245. For more information: www.creaturescrimesandcreativity.com

Nov. 1-4, 2018 **WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION**. Baltimore Renaissance Harborplace Hotel (Baltimore, MD). Guests of Honor: Kaaron Warren, Scott Edelman, Michael J. Walsh. Artist Guest of Honor: Tom Kidd. Special Guest: Aliette de Bodard. Membership: \$200 (current rate; will go up). On-line registration or print out registration form & send to: WFC2018 c/o Baltimore Science Fiction Society, Inc., PO Box 686, Baltimore MD 21203-0686

Website: <http://www.wfc2018.org/>

Nov. 23-25, 2018 **CHESSIECON 2018**. Radisson North Baltimore Hotel (Timonium MD). GoH: Jo Walton; Music GoH: Dr. Mary Crowell. Membership: \$55 until Nov. 1; \$60 at the door (checks payable to "Thanksgiving Science Fiction Society"). To pre-register, print out the registration form & send to: TSFS, Inc., PO Box 83032, Gaithersburg, MD 20883-3032 – or register on-line via PayPal Website: www.chessiecon.org Information: info@chessiecon.org

Feb. 8-10, 2019 **FARPOINT** ("Your FAN-RUN CONVENTION for 26 YEARS!"). Delta Hotel by Marriott (Hunt Valley, MD). Guests: Wallace Shawn, Peter David, Keith RA DeCandido ("more to come!"). Membership: full weekend (3-day) pre-registrion: \$85. Website: www.FarpointCon.com

October 2019 **GAYLAXICON 2019**. Crown Plaza Aire Hotel (Minneapolis MN). During Outlantcon-Gaylaxicon 2018, the Gaylactic Network Board approved the bid by the North Country Gaylaxians to host Gaylaxicon 2019. More details as they become available.

