



Lambda Sci-Fi DC Area Gaylaxians



PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044



(202) 232-3141 - Issue #223 - October 2008

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

Gaylaxicon 2008 - This Month!!

"Twenty years of fun!"

October 10-13, 2008

Hyatt Regency - Bethesda, MD



See Con
Calendar
on page 6
for more
details.

Don't miss out on all the fun!



Author Guest of
Honor:
Geoff Ryman



Artist Guest of
Honor:
Alicia Austin



Membership
can also be
purchased
on-line via
PayPal.

And check out our website: www.gaylaxicon2008.org

Capclave 2008



Where
reading is
not extinct!



If you're going to be in town the weekend following Gaylaxicon, then why not attend Capclave 2008, too? As an added incentive, the Capclave folks are offering a \$10 discount on weekend memberships to all members of Gaylaxicon 2008! What a deal! To get the discount, simply show your Gaylaxicon badge at the Capclave registration desk. The Capclave hotel is located right next to the Twinbrook Metro Station (Red Line). For more details about Capclave, turn to the Con Calendar on page 6 of this newsletter.

October LSF Meeting Combined with Video Party!!

(see article on this page for details)

Just a reminder to everyone that there will be no regular "second Sunday" Lambda Sci-Fi meeting in October. (*We will all be very busy at Gaylaxicon during the second weekend of October!*) Instead, we will be hosting a combined LSF meeting and Video Party on Oct. 25th. (See article on this page for details.)

The next regular LSF meeting will be held on the Sunday, Nov. 9th. The meeting will be held at James Crutchfield's apartment (1414 17th St. NW, #413), near Dupont Circle. The business meeting will begin (as usual) 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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Combined October LSF Meeting and Video Potluck Party

info passed along by Peter

Because Gaylaxicon 2008 lands on the second Sunday of October, the LSF monthly meeting has been moved in time and space to Saturday, October 25, at Julian's Georgetown house. As a bonus, the meeting will be followed by a video potluck party.

What: LSF October meeting and science fiction/fantasy/horror video potluck party.

When: Saturday, October 25.

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Halloween's a'comin'!! Bwa-ha-ha-ha-ha!!



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**Minutes of the
September LSF Meeting**
taken by Scott



At 1:30 PM, the business portion of the meeting began.

Since the regular second-Sunday date for the October 2008 LSF meeting falls during the weekend that LSF will be hosting Gaylaxicon 2008, it was decided not to try to hold an LSF meeting at that time. Instead, Julian has kindly offered to host the October LSF meeting at his Georgetown home, combined with a video party. For more details, see the announcement on page 1 of this newsletter.

Teresa advised everyone that the scheduled gaming party at her home (which was canceled at the last moment because of stormy weather) occurred anyway. The few attendees had a wonderful time; and Teresa said that she would like to host another party sometime soon.

Barrett reported that LSF is a Community Partner at this year's Reel Affirmations film festival for two zombie movies to be shown on Saturday, October 18th. For more details, see the article elsewhere in this newsletter.

At 2:00 PM (or so), the social portion of the meeting began.

Speaker Teresa held a few name circles to introduce meeting attendees as they appeared.

Rob said that he liked the first episode of the new HBO *True Blood* series, which is based upon a series of novels by Charlaine Harris. It was noted that there is a comic book version online. *Sanctuary*, a new genre TV show, premieres on October 3. It appears to be about a sanctuary for metaphysical beings.

There was general agreement that the *Babylon AD* movie is horrible. Some films coming out soon: *The Day the Earth Stood Still* starring Keanu Reeves (yes, can you believe it?), *Strange Case of Benjamin Butter*, and *Blindness*.

Some genre TV news: This will be the last season of *Supernatural*. *Heroes* returns – the first half of this season is titled "Villains." *Middleman*

and *Life on Mars* are remakes of BBC series. The Justice League members will be featured during this season of *Smallville*. *Pushing Daisies* is returning. (What else?) The premise of *Primeval* is that there are portals that allow creatures from the past and the future to enter our time period; the show is recycling CGI dinosaurs and other creatures featured in various BBC/PBS documentary series.

A TV show about Eros and Aphrodite taking human form and taking up in a small town was briefly discussed – but no one could recall the title of the show.

In a straight-to-video "Wonder Woman" animated feature, Carrie Russell will provide the voice of the Amazing Amazon.

Rob reminded everyone of the upcoming LSF book discussion titles and dates. In September, it's *Howl's Moving Castle* (book and/or movie). In October, the book is Steve Berman's *Vintage*. (Note: Steve Berman is a guest at Gaylaxicon 2008.)

Alex commented that a new online game called *Spore* is has been released and that he is totally addicted.

Peter passed around the latest issue of *Parsec*, the newsletter of the Pittsburgh area sci-fi group. $\Lambda\Psi\Phi$



**The LSF Book
Discussion
Group**

If *you're* interested in lively discussions of F&SF books (with an emphasis on elements of interest to the LBGT community), we invite you to join the LSF Book Discussion Group. Each month, we conduct fascinating round-table discussions of works by significant F&SF authors.

The LSF Book Discussion Group *generally* meets on the 4th Thursday of every month, starting at 7:00 PM, 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 October 23rd.

Here are the details on the next few discussion meetings:

Oct. 23rd - *Vintage*, by Steve Berman; moderator: Bob A.

Dec. 4th (NOTE: This is a *combined* Nov./Dec. meeting): *Wicked Gentlemen*, by Ginn Hale; moderator: Carl.

Jan. 22nd (2009) - *Altered Carbon*, by Richard K. Morgan; moderator: Randy.

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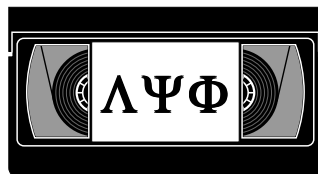


**Combined
October LSF Meeting
and Video Potluck Party**
continued from page 1

Where: The home of Julian, 2462 Tunlaw Road NW, Washington, DC (Georgetown).

Directions at:
<http://lambdasf.org/lfsf/club/Julian.html>

Time: 3:00 PM - ??



What to Bring: Bring science fiction/fantasy/horror DVDs/videos to watch and snacks, dinner food, and/or non-alcoholic drinks to share.

For more information, contact Peter at:

PeterKnapp@wavelengthsonline.com or call him at 202-483-6369.

On the day of the party, call Julian at 202-306-1497. $\Lambda\Psi\Phi$



“Star Trek: The Experience” Closes Down

info passed along by Mike C.



After a decade at the Final Frontier, “Star Trek: The Experience” has gone where no Las Vegas Strip attraction wants to go. With a decommissioning ceremony – as befitted any great vessel – the exhibit and its replica of the Starship *Enterprise* have closed. Thousands of trekkies “beamed up” from across the United Federation of Planets, the United States, and around the world one last time, according to exhibit spokesman Chad Boutte. Some sought a final encounter with the Borg. Others just wanted to share a farewell drink – likely a stiff Warp Core Breach, with 10 ounces of rum – with fellow fans at the attraction’s restaurant. More than 3 million people have come through since the Experience opened in 1998. In the end, the *USS Enterprise* couldn’t breach an earthly frontier – the attractions owner (Cedar Fair Entertainment Co.) and the Las Vegas Hilton (its landlord) couldn’t agree on a new lease. They worked as a typical landlord and retail tenant, with Cedar Fair keeping all revenue from the attraction, said hotel spokesman Ira David Sternberg. Trekkies were incensed. They scrawled reminiscences about the exhibit on the walls inside, and they called Cedar Fair and the hotel to complain. But the on-line rumor that the space the exhibit occupied will become a theater for pop star Michael Jackson is unfounded, Sternberg said. He said nothing’s decided.

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Have You Bought Your Gaylaxicon 2008 T-Shirt?

The Gaylaxicon 2008 T-shirt is now available for purchase. It features artwork by our artist guest of honor, Alicia Austin.

Orders can be placed through PayPal. You will then be able to pick up your T-shirt at the registration desk during Gaylaxicon 2008. T-shirts cost \$15 each. They are available in sizes Small through 5XL. Small through 3XL T-shirts are light blue in color; 4XL and 5XL T-shirts are white.

To order, go to the Gaylaxicon 2008 T-shirt web page:

<http://www.gaylaxicon2008.org/tshirt.html>

Select the T-shirt size you want and click the “Add to Cart” button. On the PayPal Shopping Cart, you can update the quantity if you want to order multiple T-shirts of the same size. If you want to order *different* sized T-shirts, add the first T-shirt to your shopping



T-Shirt Design by Artist Guest of Honor Alicia Austin

cart, click on the “Continue Shopping” button to return to the page, and choose the next size of T-shirt.

Note: You can order your T-shirt and purchase your Gaylaxicon 2008 membership in the same order. After adding your T-shirt, click the “Continue Shopping” button, and visit the Registration page to add your convention membership to your order.



News About Gaylaxicon in 2009

passed along by Carl



Here’s the scoop about *next year’s* Gaylaxicon:

Dates: October 9 - 11, 2009

Site: Doubletree Hotel Minneapolis-Park Place (Minneapolis, MN)

Guests of Honor:

Margaret Weis (co-author of the original “Dragonlance” stories and collaborator with Tracy Hickman on several other F&SF series)

Andy Mangels (author, journalist, editor)

Lawrence Schimel (Lambda Literary Award-winning author)



Membership:

\$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

Visit their website at:

<http://www.gaylaxicon2009.org>

Books go out into the world, travel mysteriously from hand to hand, and somehow find their way to the people who need them at the time when they need them . . . Cosmic forces guide such passings-along.

quoted in *The Quotable Book Lover* (MJF Books, 2002)
edited by Ben Jacobs & Helena Hjalmarsson

-- Erica Jong (1942 -)

**The Word of God
or, Holy Writ Rewritten
by Thomas M. Disch
(Tachyon Publications, 2008)
a review by Carl**



Thomas Disch

I read Disch's first book when it came out four decades ago; and now I've read his last (posthumous) book. How often can you say that about an author? Oddly enough, I haven't read any of the works in-between, including some of his most famous ones: *Camp Concentration* (1968), *On Wings of Song* (1979), and *The Brave Little Toaster* (1986) - and I had't read any of his poetry either.

Thomas Disch was one of those New Wave science fiction writers who rocked the genre back in the 1960s. I read his first novel, *The Genocides* (1965), soon after it came out. (I was into my "apocalyptic sci-fi" period; and Disch's book really satisfied me.) I never knew he was gay until I prepared an obituary article for the LSF newsletter following his death in July of this year. It was then that I also heard about a new Disch book to be published posthumously by Tachyon. When I spotted it in a local Borders - purely by accident; it was mis-shelved - I picked it up. Good thing, too - I quite enjoyed it.

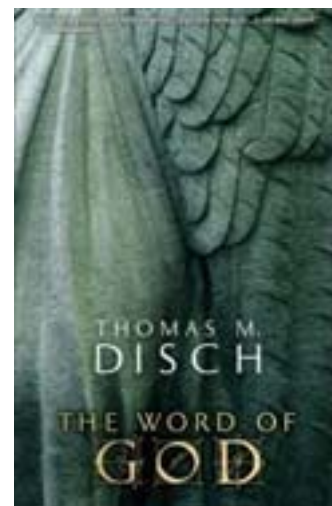
How to describe this book? Hmm... that's a tough one. It's sort'a like The Bible in some respects: God tells you stuff; there are some stories to illustrate various points of divine truth; and there's some poetry. But I suppose that's to be expected, isn't it? After all, look at the title of this book. If you haven't read any of Disch's short fiction, then there are ten or so of 'em in

here, including: "The Second Coming of Christ," "A Man of Mystery," "A Ranch House on the Styx," "The School for Traitors," and "The New Me." And there are also about a dozen of his poems in here, including his famous "How to Behave When Dead" (1981). It would seem that most (if not all) of the poetry in *The Word of God* has appeared in previous publications - but if, like me, you've never read any of it before, this is a great way to do some catching-up.

But, you ask, how does the Divine Voice sound when It's not telling stories or reciting poetry? Let me give you a couple of excerpts from Chapter One:

As to the revelations I mean to unfold, many will be of that traditional High Utterance that lays down laws and offers delectable provisions of heaven and saber-rattling fantasies of enemies horribly revenged, but there will also be talks of a friendlier locker-room character (the more American side of the vision), with homespun scriptures sometimes verging on whimsy. But nowhere will there be irreverence. Indeed, it's precisely in the more playful and paradoxical passages that seekers may find the touchstones of a perfected faith, for faith is never more perfectly rooted in the soul than when one can truly believe in something one knows to be preposterous, like Noah's Ark...

So is this Holy Writ or isn't it? Am I being serious? Yes, and then some. What I propose to write about in these sacred pages is what the whole God-business looks like to someone who not only doesn't believe in God but who, moreover, doesn't believe in the belief of those most aggressively pious, most loudly devout. The only way effectively to convey my own sense of the matter is to arrogate to myself the same absolute authority, the same more-than-Papal infallibility, the same maddeningly smug chutzpah that True Believers of all varieties have armed themselves with: the Jesus freaks and Jehovah's Witnesses, the Tartuffes and Elmer Gantry's, the imams and ayatollahs, the redneck judges with two-ton Tablets of the Law



they want to plunk down on the courthouse lawn and the archbishops campaigning against abortion, all the while they play three-card monte with their cadres of pedophile priests. To paraphrase a popular song, if they loved God half as much as they say they do, they wouldn't do all the things we can see them do.

Shocking? Hey, isn't it the Divine Prerogative to shock us poor mortals? And, speaking of "shocking," one of the biggest eye-openers for me was the absolute river of vituperative bile that Disch unleashes against another deceased SF author by the name of Philip K. Dick. Hokey Smoke, Bullwinkle! No love lost there! It runs like a bloody stream through several-many of the short stories! On the other hand, I suppose one can understand Disch's anti-Dick animus - after all, Dick *did* report Disch to the FBI in 1972 after *Camp Concentration* was published. (No lie. Dick apparently suggested to the FBI that the book contained coded information "to be read by the right people here and there.") Juicy!

Put it all together, and I wholeheartedly recommend *The Word of God* by Thomas M. Disch. Read it and I think you'll see why Disch is sometimes referred to as an "unsung science-fiction master." Oh, and by the way, it appears that there will be yet another posthumous Disch collection coming out from Tachyon later this year: *The Wall of America*. I guess I've got something to look forward to.

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LSF & Reel Affirmations
info passed along by Barrett



Once again, LSF is a Community Partner for a couple of F&SF films during Reel Affirmations 18, "The Nation's LGBT Film Festival." Here are the details:

Saturday, October 18

11:30 PM - Lincoln Theatre - \$10
1215 "U" Street NW, Washington, DC



Otto, or Up With Dead People

Otto, or Up With Dead People features a newly zombified young thing – teetering into the world of the undead on still unsteady feet. Otto, played with gothic glee by Jay Crisfar, wanders the streets of Berlin, briefly recalling snippets of his pre-zombie life. (At one point, compelled to eat the entrails of a small animal and finding it somewhat of an acquired taste, he wonders if he was a vegan in a former life.) Otto eventually finds work as, well... a zombie... on THE epic political-porno-zombie movie to end all political-porno-zombie movies. Ridiculed for remaining in character, Otto remains consumed by the memory of his ex-boyfriend. He tracks him down, with predictably disastrous results, but not before remembering the love they once shared. Aaaaawww... *Otto* features all the LaBruce flourishes we love so well – sexy boys being naughty, bursting

politically correct bubbles left and right, and a cinematic style that is at once both breathtakingly daring and slyly low-rent. [LaBruce, Germany, 2008, 95 minutes]



Zombie Prom

While *Otto* is a subversive look at European mores and politics, *Zombie Prom* is as all-American as apple pie and comic books. Apple pie dipped in radioactive waste, that is. Good-girl Toffee and Jonny-with-no-H are in love, but she dumps him at the insistence of principal Miss Strict (RuPaul). Devastated, Jonny jumps into a nuclear cooling tower, only to emerge a still handsome atomic waste-ridden TEENAGE ZOMBIE! He returns in hopes of still escorting Toffee to the prom, but the whole town is thrown into turmoil at his radioactive hunk in their midst. The media is called in, adding to the furor and hysteria behind the Zombie Civil Rights struggle. Will Jonny win back Toffee? And what of the shared past between Miss Strict and sleazo-o TV personality Eddie Flagrant? It all comes to a boiling head amidst some rousing dance numbers, state-of-the-art comic book animation and not-so-veiled look at the lives of gay teenagers today. [Vince Marcello, US, 2006, 36 minutes]

Purchase tickets on-line at:
www.reelaffirmations.org

You can also pick up tickets/ passes at Universal Gear (1529 14th Street NW) and festival passes at Lambda Rising (1625 Connecticut Ave. NW).

For complete information about Reel Affirmations (films, schedules, locations, etc.), check out their website:
www.reelaffirmations.org

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Olsson's Closes!
info passed along by Carl



Olsson Enterprises, Inc., trading as Olsson's Books & Records, Record & Tape Ltd., and Olsson's Books announced today [Sept. 30, 2008] that it has closed all of its locations and petitioned the U.S. Bankruptcy Court District of Maryland for conversion of its current Chapter 11 protection to Chapter 7. The reasons given for the petitioning were stagnant sales, low cash reserves, and an inability to renegotiate current leases, along with a continuing weak retail economy and plummeting music sales.

Olsson's was granted Chapter 11 protection on July 11 this year in order to work on an aggressive reorganization plan involving selected store closings and large cuts in overhead costs. At the same time the Lansburgh/ Penn Quarter location on 7th Street, NW was shuttered to make way for a new London-based restaurant.

Olsson's was established in 1972 and grew to as many as nine retail stores in the Washington, DC metro area, with sales over \$16 million a year and as many as 200 employees. Olsson's earned its reputation as a locally-owned community-oriented retailer with a knowledgeable staff selling a wide selection of books, music, video and gifts.

Stephen Wallace-Haines, Olsson's general manager stated: "In the end, all the roads towards reorganization led to this dead end: we did not have the money required to pay for product in advance, to collect reserves to buy for Christmas, and satisfy the demands of rent and operational costs. We were losing money just by staying open."

And here are a couple of quotes from LSF members:

Kendall: "Aw, MAN! ;-(I remember even as a kid, going to Olsson's...."

Peter: "It's unfortunate that another local book (and record) store chain has gone under.."

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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. **For October, however we will be hosting a meeting/video party on Oct. 25th.** The next regular Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will be held on the **Sunday, Nov. 9th**, at James Crutchfield's apartment (1414 17th St. NW, #413), near Dupont Circle. 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!

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

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: \$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: \$60 after Oct. 1. 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

Nov. 21-23, 2008 **PHILCON 2008**. Crowne Plaza Hotel (Cherry Hill, NJ). Principal Speaker: Tim Powers; Artist GoH: John Picacio. Membership: \$50 thru 10/31; \$60 at the door. 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.) Website: www.philcon.org/2008

Feb. 13-15, 2009 **KATSUCON 15**. Hyatt Regency Crystal City (Crystal City, VA). Washington's Premiere Japanese Animation and Manga Festival. Membership: \$45 until Dec. 31, 2008; \$50 at the door. Make checks payable to "Katsucon Entertainment" and send to: Katsucon Entertainment Inc., PO Box 3354, Crofton, MD 21114 Website: www.katsucon.org

Feb. 13-15, 2009 **FARPOINT 2009**. Crowne Plaza Baltimore North (Timonium, MD). Guests: Harve Bennett, Marc Okrand, Peter David, and more. Membership: \$60 pre-registration; daily rates available at the door. Make checks payable to "Farpoint 2009" and send to: Farpoint Enterprises, Inc., 11708 Troy Ct., Waldorf, MD 20601. You can also register online. Website: www.farpointcon.com E-mail: trekcontact@comcast.net

Feb. 13-15, 2009 **KATSUCON 15**. Hyatt Regency Crystal City (Crystal City, VA). Washington's Premiere Japanese Animation and Manga Festival. Membership: \$45 until Dec. 31, 2008; \$50 at the door. Make checks payable to "Katsucon Entertainment" and send to: Katsucon Entertainment Inc., PO Box 3354, Crofton, MD 21114 Website: www.katsucon.org

October 9-11, 2009 **GAYLAXICON 2009**. Doubletree Hotel Minneapolis - Park Place (Minneapolis, MN). GoHs: Margaret Weis, Andy Mangels, Lawrence Schimel. Membership: \$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.gaylaxicon2009](http://www.gaylaxicon2009.org) Register on-line at: <http://www.gaylaxicon2009.org/index.php/registration>