



# Lambda Sci-Fi DC Area Gaylaxians



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## American Century Theater's Sci-Fi Summer Show info passed along by Kendall



The American Century Theater e-mailed LSF through the web site:

The American Century Theater in Arlington is in its 16th year and focuses on rarely-produced plays from the early "American Century".

We have a fantastic show coming up in July [and early August]: Gore Vidal's *Visit to a Small Planet*. In this comedy set in 1956, an alien lands in the rose bushes of a suburban Washington DC family. Hoping to join the Battle of Bull Run, he soon realizes that though he has landed in the right place, Manassas, he is 100 years too late for the Civil War. But instead of returning to his home planet, he settles in with the family, where he reads minds (including the cat's) and plots to take over the world.

*Visit to a Small Planet* was the prototype for *My Favorite Martian*, *Mork & Mindy*, and *3rd Rock from the Sun*.

*Visit to a Small Planet* opened Friday, July 8, and runs through Saturday, August 6, 2011. Show times are Thursday through Saturday evenings at 8 PM and Saturday/Sunday matinees at 2:30 PM. Tickets can be ordered online at:

www.americancentury.org  
or by calling 703-998-4555.

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### August LSF Meeting

The next LSF meeting will be held on Sunday, **August 14th**. The meeting will be held 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 also bring some munchies or soft drinks, if you can. See you there!

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### Y<sup>e</sup> Olde Editor Laments?

How have the Mighty fallen! *Sic transit gloria mundi!* Alas and alack! And other similar lamentations, accompanied by much gnashing of teeth!

I made an egregious typo on the front page of last month's LSF newsletter – *and nobody said anything about it!* As a reminder, the center of the front page of the July LSF newsletter featured a quote from the novel *Farnham's Freehold* and erroneously identified the author as "Robert E. Heinlein". Of course, it *should* have said "Robert A. [as in Anson] Heinlein".

Is it possible that a club full of sci-fi geeks missed this error? If so, turn in your secret decoder rings! On the other hand, maybe the folks in LSF are simply more polite and forgiving than the stereotypical Fan. If so, Y<sup>e</sup> Olde Editor thanks you for your kind indulgence.

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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 LGBT 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 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 meeting will be held on **August 25th**.

Here are the details for the next several book discussions:

**Aug. 25th** - *Going Bovine*, by Libba Bray; moderator: Rob.

**Sept. 22nd** - *Perks of Being a Wallflower*, by Stephen Chbosky; moderator: Alex.

**Oct. 27th** - *Demon's Lexicon*, by Sarah Rees Brennan; moderator: Claire.

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**WHAT'S INSIDE?** Two Collections from *Planet Stories* (book reviews - pg.2); **Big Planet Comics** (pg.3); **On the Other Hand...** ("Obituary" - pg. 3); **About Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians** (pg. 4); **Con Calendar** (pg. 4)

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## Two Collections from *Planet Stories*

short reviews by Carl

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Several months ago, I raved about the really cool collections of Pulp Era stories being published by Paizo Publishing as part of their “*Planet Stories* Library.” I just thought I’d update you with a couple more of their volumes.



*Battle in the Dawn:*  
*The Complete Hok the Mighty*  
by Manly Wade Wellman  
(Paizo/Planet Stories, 2011)

On any number of occasions, I’ve mentioned how Manly Wade Wellman (1903–1986) is one of my favorite Pulp Era authors, particularly his “Silver John” (or “John the Balladeer”) Appalachian-inspired stories and novels. Well, now, in one of its latest publications, *Planet Stories* offers up a collection of Wellman stories that I hadn’t previously heard of: his “Hok the Mighty” (and related) stories.

The “Hok the Mighty” stories are from a rather earlier part of Wellman’s career. They appeared in various Ziff-Davis magazines (*Amazing* and *Fantastic Adventures* and *Thrilling Wonder Stories*) during the period 1939 to 1942. While they aren’t anywhere near as polished or accomplished as the “Silver John” stories (which were published between 1951 and 1984), the “Hok the Mighty” tales still provide an enjoyable read.

Hok is the embodiment of the stereotypical “noble savage.” He’s a tough, brave, handsome, strong, adven-

turous Cro Magnon, and he’s slightly more intelligent than the typical caveman-on-the-street. On a number of occasions, Wellman mentions that Hok is a part of our racial memory, most likely the source of our Hercules myths.

In the first of the “Hok” stories (“Battle in the Dawn” – 1939), Hok finds his mate and begins his people’s long-running war with the more primitive Gnorrls (Neanderthals). Several follow-up stories recount other incidents in this prehistoric genocidal conflict. “Hok Goes to Atlantis” (1939) recounts our hero’s encounter with a Bronze Age civilization down in the Mediterranean valley, just before the Gibraltar barrier is breached and the Atlantic Ocean pours in. And in “Hok Visits the Land of Legends” (1942), Hok discovers a hidden valley in the far North where pterodactyls and another primitive human race dwell, protected from the surrounding glaciation. The collection also includes a non-Hok story – “Day of the Conquerors” (1940) – in which Cro Magnons face off against an expedition from Mars that’s seeking a refuge from their dying planet.

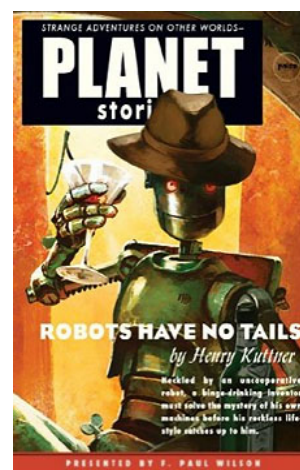
Wellman’s “Hok” stories are, in fact, part of the long and thriving F&SF “prehistoric” tradition: stories recounting the fabulous (and sometimes “realistic”) adventures of primitive humans (or even pre-humans) in prehistoric times. “A long and thriving tradition?” you ask. Indeed. Back in 1907, Jack London wrote his novel *Before Adam*, about an Australopithecine hero. Edgar Rice Burroughs wrote *The Eternal Lover* (aka *The Eternal Savage*, originally *Nu of the Niocene*) in 1913. And the tradition is still going strong! Jean M. Auel began her “Earth’s Children” series back in 1980 (*The Clan of the Cave Bear*), and her sixth novel just came out this year (*The Land of Painted Caves*). From 1990 to 2001, Sue Harrison published two trilogies set in prehistoric Alaska and the Aleutians. And the husband-and-wife team of W. Michael Gear and Kathleen O’Neal Gear has produced 17 novels in their “First North Americans” series (1990–2010).

In the arena of comic books (or graphic novels, if you prefer), you’ll find another of my favorites: the “Tor” stories by artist/writer Joe Kubert. (“Tor” first

appeared in 1953 in *1,000,000 Years Ago!* and has been featured in various publications since then.)

And let’s not forget the movies! There are *The Clan of the Cave Bear* (1986; starring Daryl Hannah; based on the Auel novel) and *Quest for Fire* (1981; starring Ron Perlman and Everett McGill) and – well, OK, I’ll mention it – *One Million Years B.C.* (1966; starring Raquel Welch and John Richardson; special effects by Ray Harryhausen).

And now *Planet Stories* allows you to jump on the prehistoric bandwagon and follow Hok the Mighty on all of his various Ice Age adventures!



*Robots Have No Tails*  
by Henry Kuttner  
(Paizo/Planet Stories, 2009)

In the words of *Monty Python’s Flying Circus*: “And now for something completely different!”

Humorous F&SF has been around for almost as long as the genre itself. Just off the top of my head, I can think of the ironic and satirical novel *Jurgen: A Comedy of Justice* (1919) by James Branch Cabell. Some other famous authors of humorous F&SF are: Ron Goulart (*The Robot in the Closet*, 1981; *Clockwork’s Pirates*, 1971, *A Talent for the Invisible*, 1973; and many, many more); Spider Robinson (the “Callahan’s Cross-time Saloon” stories); and Douglas Adams (*The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* and its sequels). And now the *Planet Stories* Library has made available *Robots Have No Tails*, the complete collection of

(continued on page 3)

## Two Collections from *Planet Stories*

continued from page 2

Henry Kuttner's humorous "Gallegher" stories.

Henry Kuttner (1915–1958) was a prolific Pulp Era writer: he wrote science fiction, fantasy, swords-and-sorcery, horror, adventure, mystery – short stories, novels – whatever would sell. He also wrote under about a dozen pseudonyms, with the two most famous being Lewis Padgett and Lawrence O'Donnell. He often co-wrote stories with his wife C.L. Moore (another *very* accomplished F&SF writer). Kuttner sold his first story – "The Graveyard Rats" – to *Weird Tales* in early 1936. I know of four of Kuttner's works that have been made into movies: "The Twonky" (filmed as *The Twonky*, United Artists, 1953); *Vintage Season* (filmed as *Timescape*, aka *Grand Tour: Disaster in Time*, Channel Communications, 1992); "The Graveyard Rats" (part of *Trilogy of Terror II*, Power Pictures, 1996); and "Mimsy Were the Borrogroves" (filmed as *The Last Mimzy*, New Line Cinema, 2007).

Galloway Gallegher is a scientific genius – when he's drunk (which is quite often). He contends that being drunk allows his subconscious to release its creativity and inventiveness. Apparently lots of clients agree. Gallegher seems to be the "go to" guy chosen by all kinds of people with seemingly impossible problems to solve; and they're willing to throw large sums of money ("credits") at him to solve those problems.

Unfortunately, it's when he sobers up (which happens every now and then) that the problems begin. You see, Gallegher also seems to be totally clueless when he's sober. He can't remember what his ingenious inventions are supposed to do – or even how they work; and he often can't even remember who contracted him

to build these inventions (and why) in the first place. Each of the five stories in this collection is pretty much a sci-fi version of a screwball comedy (to quote F. Paul Wilson), with Gallegher trying to figure out "What happened?" before a furious creditor or some other ne'er-do-well either kills him or sends him to jail.

In "The World Is Mine", Gallegher has apparently invented a time machine that has brought several bunnyrabbit-looking Martians from an alternate future (why?) to conquer the Earth – and the time machine keeps retrieving Gallegher's corpse from some alternate timeline just after someone (who?) has killed him with a ray gun he'd recently invented. In "The Proud Robot", Gallegher finds that he's invented an annoying, narcissistic robot that seems to have no other function than to admire itself (why?).

The "Gallegher" stories aren't great literature, by any means – but they are amusing.

*Robots Have No Tails* has been previously published twice: by Gnome Press (hardback, 1952) and by Lancer Books (mass-market paperback, 1973). If you can find a copy of the Gnome Press edition, it'll probably cost at least a couple of hundred dollars; and the Lancer paperbacks have mostly disintegrated over the course of the last 30 years. Thank goodness Paizo Publishing decided to include it as part of its *Planet Stories* Library.

*Robots Have No Tails* is just about the size of a pulp magazine; the cover painting by Tomasz Jedruszek and the interior line illustrations by Brian Snoddy are delightfully faux-Pulp (as are the format of the table of contents and the last-page Paizo ad); it's printed in the traditional Pulp 2-column format; and the paper even has the look/feel of Pulp Era magazines. It's all calculated to add to the fun of reading Kuttner's classic "Gallegher" stories. Enjoy!

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## Big Planet Comics

info passed along by Carl

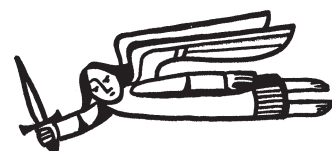
Yes, Virginia and Mary(land), there is still a comics store in the District. Recent economic woes have resulted in the closure of many specialized genre-related businesses (Big Monkey Comics, for instance); and I was afraid that I'd need to trek outside the District from now on every time I wanted to satisfy my occasional urge to buy a comic book. And then I saw a small article in *The Washington Post* about Big Planet Comics in Georgetown.

Big Planet Comics is a small shop specializing in comics, graphic novels, and the like – no toys or "other ephemera." It's located on Dumbarton St., just East of Wisconsin Avenue and several blocks north of "M" Street.

Big Planet Comics  
3145 Dumbarton St. NW  
Washington, DC  
[www.bigplanetcomics.com](http://www.bigplanetcomics.com)

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## On the Other Hand...



# BORDERS®

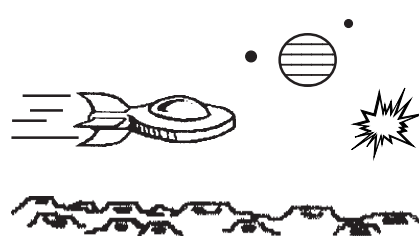
*Requiescat in pace.*



There are two kinds of fool.  
One says, "This is old, and therefore good."  
And one says, "This is new, and therefore better."

-- John Brunner, *The Shockwave Rider* (1975) --

quoted in: *Science Fiction Quotations: From the Inner Mind to the Outer Limits*,  
edited by Gary Westfahl (Yale University Press, 2005)





**\*\* 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 Sunday, August 14th, 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. 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



Aug. 17-21, 2011 **RENOVATION** (69th World Science Fiction Convention). Reno-Sparks Convention Center (Reno, Nevada). Guests of Honor: Ellen Asher, Charles N. Brown, Tim Powers, Boris Vallejo. Membership: currently \$195 until 7/17 (will go up!). Website: [www.renovationsf.org](http://www.renovationsf.org) Membership queries: [memberships@renovationsf.org](mailto:memberships@renovationsf.org)

Oct. 14-16, 2011 **CAPCLAVE 2011**. Hilton Washington DC/North Gaithersburg (Gaithersburg, MD). Guests of Honor: Carrie Vaughn & Catherynne Valente. Membership: \$45 thru June; \$55 July thru September; \$60 thereafter. Make checks payable to "Capclave" and send to: Capclave 2011, PO Box 53, Ashton, MD 20861. Register online at: [www.capclave.org](http://www.capclave.org) Website: [www.capclave.org](http://www.capclave.org) Info at: [info@capclave.org](mailto:info@capclave.org)

Nov. 18-20, 2011 **ANIME USA** ("Of Otaku, by Otaku, for Otaku!"). Hyatt Regency Crystal City (Arlington, VA). Membership: \$38 thru 6/30/2011; \$43 from 7/1 thru 8/31/2011; \$48 from 9/1 thru 10/31/2011. Register on-line at: <https://www.animeusaregistration.org/>

Nov. 25-27, 2011 **DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL 34**. (A very LGBT-friendly convention.) Crowne Plaza Baltimore (Timonium, MD). Guests of Honor: Ellen Kushner & Delia Sherman; Special Guests: Katherine Kurtz, Melissa Scott. Membership: \$50 until 11/1; \$55 thereafter & at the door. Make checks payable to "Armida Council" and send to: Armida Council, PO Box 7203, Silver Spring, MD 20907. Website: [www.darkovercon.org](http://www.darkovercon.org) Info at: [jaille@darkovercon.org](mailto:jaille@darkovercon.org)

April 13-15, 2012 **RAVENCON 2012**. Holiday Inn Select Koger Center (Richmond, VA). Guests: TBA. Membership: \$30 before 12/31/2011; \$35 after that; \$40 at the door. Make checks payable to "RavenCon" and send to: RavenCon, PO Box 36420, Richmond, VA 23235. More info online at: <http://www.ravencon.com>

Aug. 30 - Sept. 3, 2012 **CHICON 7** (70th World Science Fiction Convention). Hyatt Regency Chicago (Chicago, IL). Guests of Honor: Mike Resnick (author), Rowena Morrill (artist), John Scalzi (toastmaster), Story Musgrave (astronaut). Membership: \$175 until 09/30/2011. (Will go up after that!) Make checks payable to "Chicon 7" and send to: Chicon 7, PO Box 13, Skokie, IL 60076. (You can also register on-line.) Website: [www.chicon7.org](http://www.chicon7.org) Info: [info@chicon.org](mailto:info@chicon.org)

Oct. 5-7, 2012 **GAYLAXICON 2012**. Doubletree Hotel Minneapolis-Park Place (Minneapolis, MN). Guests: Gary Russell (writer/producer), Wendy Pini (*Elfquest*), Lyda Morehouse (author), Kyell Gold (furry author). Membership: \$70 - 2011 registration. Register on-line (via Eventbrite). Website: [www.gaylaxicon2012.org](http://www.gaylaxicon2012.org)