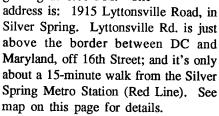
PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044 - (202) 232-3141 - Issue #55 - Oct. 1994

"VIDEO MADNESS" PARTY ON OCT. 22ND

Jeff F. and Philip W. will be hosting a "Video Madness Party" at Jeff's new home (and soon to be Philip's new home) on Saturday, October 22nd, beginning at 6:00 PM. The



The theme of the party will be "Ghosties and Ghoulies and Things That Go Bump in the Night," in honor of the upcoming spookiest night of the year, Halloween! Bring all your favorite films with ghosts, witches, and monsters that you might see on Halloween...or films that are set on Halloween. One of the first films shown will be the namesake of the holiday itself, Halloween I, starring Jaimie Lee Curtis.

We will provide a big pot of something to warm your bellies - you provide the rest. [Ed. note: That means you should bring a dish of some sort for a "pot luck" supper, in case you're not sure.] For additional information, call Philip at (202) 234-3523, or call Jeff at (301) 495-7765. See you there!

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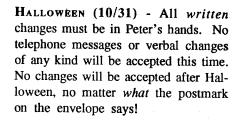
NEW LSF MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY SLATED FOR DECEMBER

by Peter Knapp

It's that time of year again new school year; a new (Federal) fiscal year; and, that's right, time for a new Lambda Sci-Fi Membership Directory!

The creative team of Scottand-Dan have once again agreed to design and publish the directory. To avoid some of the craziness of last time, we have all agreed to the following schedule:

WEEK OF OCTOBER 2ND - Draft directory entries sent to individual members (with this issue of the newsletter, so check your envelope).



DECEMBER 11TH - The new membership directories will be handed out at the monthly LSF meeting. (Those not attending will have their copies mailed to them.)

Once again, a printout of your current entry in the database should have been

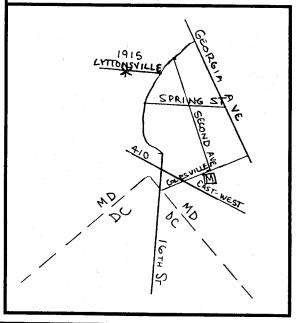
enclosed with this issue of the newsletter. Please review it for accuracy. Provide me (in writing) with any changes by Halloween. By the way, if you prefer, you can always e-mail your chan-ges to me. If you do choose to use e-mail, only use the following address: peter.knapp@glib.org

(My other e-mail address is no longer valid.)

Thanks.

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WHAT'S INSIDE?

Minutes for the Sept. 11th Meeting (pg. 2); Cyteen: The Betrayal, The Rebirth, and The Vindication (Book review - pg. 2); Time Cop (movie review - pg. 3); Tramp Royale (book review - pg. 4); Information about Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians (pg. 6); Con Calendar (pg. 6)

MINUTES FOR THE SEPT. 11TH MEETING

by Philip Wright

The meeting began at 2:09 PM, with Carl calling the meeting to order. He began the meeting by asking Philip to act as secretary.

The first order of business concerned some old Convention business: a company that had advertised in the program book (Space 1999 Memorabilia) demanded that Carl respond about a misprint in its ad in the Program Book. The pettiness of the complaint prompted Carl (and the membership) to consider several possible responses, one of them deliberately offensive. Although many of the membership opted for the offensive one, Carl decided to mull it over yet awhile.

Carl continued with his usual list of TV Guide information, particularly focusing in on the new Science Fiction section. Some of his TV gossip included new cartoons (The Tick, Reboot, etc.), the rumors and saga of Genevieve Bujould as the once-and-never Captain of the USS Voyager, an update on the fannish feud over Samantha vs. Jeannie, and Bruce Boxleitner as the new Commander at Babylon 5. Philip also shared his views of the new cartoon show Animaniacs.

Carl moved on, sharing a copy of the latest issue of Filmfax, particularly emphasizing the article on B-movie female stars. He also shared a copy of a recent issue of Scary Monsters, which contained an article on famous TV horror hosts, including DC's former master of horror-hosting, "Gore DeVol." Also passed around were articles on upcoming genre movies (from Entertainment magazine) and the premiere issue of the new magazine Realms of Fantasy (from the publishers of Science Fiction Age).

At this point, it was decided to (tardily) have everyone in the room introduce (or re-introduce) themselves, so we all would know who we were talking to.

Next on the agenda came a general "show and tell" session. Rob G. started it off with an announcement

CYTEEN: THE BETRAYAL, THE REBIRTH, AND THE VINDICATION A Trilogy by C.J. Cherryh

Reviewed by Loree Cook-Daniels

There are only two things you must know about C.J. Cherryh's *Cyteen* trilogy:

(1) Absolutely, positively ignore the covers. They are horrible and completely misrepresent the tone of the books. It would be best, frankly, if someone else could buy your books and cover them with brown paper before you see them.

(2) Absolutely, positively read the books. They are wonderful.

Although that's all you need to know, I'll tell you a little more. These books are not new or unknown: they were first published in 1988, and won a Hugo Award. Despite that, I stumbled upon them only last week, and spent a week voraciously reading all three.

The "Cyteen" in the title of all three books refers to a planet upon which is the settlement of Reseune. Reseure's main work is scientific, and its main export is azi - genetically-engineered humans that are socialized and trained through carefully-constructed audio-visual tapes, augmented by chemicals. It is also home to Ariane Emory, Jordan Warrick, and other "Specials," whose minds are so valuable the interstellar government has granted them special rights and status. These Specials not only are the ones responsible for designing the azi and their tapes, they are also highly political beings skilled in manipulating everything from one individual's sexuality to internal Reseure politics to interstellar

politics to... well, it's unclear exactly how far their intellectual, scientific, and political influences actually reach.

Of course, these Specials are not always in agreement, which provides much of the conflict that drives the plot. But this is no simple description of political and personal intrigue. Cherryh has taken on the issue of humanity itself: What makes us human? How do we learn our "value-sets," and how can those value-sets be manipulated? How much of our personality, abilities, and even sexuality (there are several gay - no lesbian - couples) is controlled by our genes, by our parents, and by outsiders, known or unknown? Who is writing our tapes; and is it safer for that work to be in the hands of engineers or in the chaos of unpredictable, hormone-fluxed "real life"?

Cherryh has written a rollicking, multi-level, sophisticated story. Its philosophical and scientific underpinnings were sometimes beyond my full comprehension (as were its political maneuverings, although that part is typical for me); but I sensed she was imparting damned deep thought. In the meantime, she kept me thoroughly entertained and on the edge of my seat (after I got through the rather dense beginning). I'm sure I'll be reading these again - probably once more for their entertainment value, and then a third time for their personality theory. I was that entranced. ΛΨΦ

that Hannah Shapero was recently nominated for a Chesley Award; and he continued with announcements about Kenneth Branaugh playing the young Obi Wan Kenobi in the upcoming Star Wars prequel and Joe Dante directing an upcoming film about The Phantom.

Next, Peter K. offered up "Where the Wild Things Are" book-marks left over from Gaylaxicon V. He also briefly discussed and then passed

around a list, given to him by a friend, by someone contending that most of the proper names on any of the *Star Trek* programs employed an excessive amount of "K" or "hard C" sounds.

Carl reminded us all that one of our members, Joe P. is presently appearing (as Dr. Van Helsing) in the play "The Passion of Dracula" out in Winchester at the Wayside Theatre. It was resolved that a bunch of the mem-

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TIME COP, A "SPLITS" DECISION

by Philip Wright



["Asst. Editor" (Peter) note: Readers, if you haven't seen the movie yet, you should beware. This review is full of "spoilers".] [Ed. note: Oh, swell, what choice have I got?!]

Ten years from now, time travel is not only a reality, but a means through which unscrupulous people can go back and alter the past. That is where Max Walker comes in: he is a *Time Cop*. His job is to go back into history and stop those who would alter events so as to alter the present for their own benefit. As is said early in the film, "You can't go back and kill Hitler, as much as you'd like to, because it could cause ripples in time that would be devastating." Too bad Max doesn't listen to this advice.

Jean-Claude van Damme stars in this exciting time travel story about a Time Cop's struggle against a nefarious politician (played by Ron Silver). The politician wants to change the past, to become rich and more popular so that he can become president. When Walker retrieves a felon trying to capitalize on the Stock Market Crash of 1929, he discovers that the perpetrator is working for the evil politician.

Within a few scenes, we discover that history is being changed everywhere by the politician, and that the Time Cops have been infiltrated by the politician's agents, including Walker's new partner. On a mission to stop the politician from altering a bad business deal in his own past, Walker arrives with his new partner and tries to break up the history-altering incident; but he is interrupted by his partner, who sides with her politician boss...much to her regret. (She gets shot by the politician in his quest to get rid of any "loose ends.")



Back in the future, Walker discovers that the politician's tampering has allowed him to win the presidency and to shut down the Time Cops, since he has everything he needs. Walker illegally goes back to find and retrieve his partner, in hopes of having a witness to expose the politician's plans. It so happens that this whole history-altering incident takes place at the time of Walker's wife's mysterious murder, which Walker begins to discover is linked to the politician and his plot to take over the modern world. After finding that his former partner has been killed by a future hitman sent into the past, Walker decides to try to save his wife. After a lot of interesting twists. Walker saves his wife, stops the politician (in a very clever way), and changes the future...supposedly for the better.

The film is a little contrived and somewhat predictable. While not always consistent, it is overall a fun time travel yarn. The effects are sparing, carefully-orchestrated, but wonderful - especially the warping of space when a person appears from the future. Best of all, we get to see Van Damme scantily clad...and doing one of his famous splits scenes, which goes by too quickly.

Overall, this film entertains and is well worth the "twilight" discount price I paid for it. It contains too many little glitches to make it worth full price. At one point, for instance, Walker is driving down the street in his futuristic car and the only cars parked along the street are '70s, '80s, and '90s models. It'll be great on video; and it's diverting, if ony for the splits scene. (Oooh, Mama, what thighs!) But this film falls far short of the high-class scifi we jaded folk have gotten used to. If you are into thighs, however, this may be the film for you. Overall grade: B-

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SEPT. 11TH MINUTES

continued from page 2

bers would be going to see the play at 8 PM on October 1st.

Peter told us all about a new Vampire Card Game, similar to Magic: The Gathering. He also offered up a set of "Marvel Comics Cards" for sale, the proceeds of which would go into LSF's coffers.

Kendall (he of the white cap) announced that a new "comics and CDs store" has opened in Virginia; it's called "The Fortress." Scott S. announced that George Takei would be appearing at the Borders Bookstore in Baileys Crossroads on September 28th to autograph his new autobiography.

Barrett shared his experiences in Winnipeg at the recent 1994 World Science Fiction Convention (Conadian). He passed around the Program Book, described his experiences at several gay parties (hosted by Northern Fey Folk, the new Gaylaxian chapter in Winnipeg), and related his chance meeting with Forry Ackerman.

Scott R's friend Richard sent LSF a "thank you" note. He's moved away from the DC area. Wayne #1 revealed the new on-line comic available on the InterNet, called *Generation X*, plus other related information.

Next, Peter resigned his position as LSF's Treasurer. In a surprising twist, Rob (Peter's partner) volunteered for the post. An informal voice vote was taken; and Rob was confirmed as the new Treasurer for LSF.

Philip and Jeff F. (in absentia) proposed hosting a "theme" video party in October at their new place in Silver Spring - Saturday, October 22nd, was considered as a possible date. [See article on page 1 of this newsletter.]

Carl led a discussion regarding LSF members going to the Maryland Renaissance Festival again this year. It was decided that interested parties would meet at the Festival gates at 10 AM on September 25th.

Jim C. (our host) offered to donate \$35 to the club, in order for Lambda Sci-Fi to participate as a donor to the new Lambda Community Cen-

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TRAMP ROYALE BY ROBERT A. HEINLEIN reviewed by Andrew Garen

During 1953 and 1954, science fiction legend Robert Heinlein and his wife Virginia took a trip around the world. Heinlein's account of the trip is *Tramp Royale*, which was given to me right before I embarked on an international trip of my own. As a huge Heinlein fan and (now) a seasoned world traveler myself, I found the book interesting and educational, but probably not for the reasons the author intended.

Originally planned as one of those "around the world cruises," the vacation almost fell through when the cruise ship was booked. So, instead, the Heinleins, with the aid of their erstwhile travel agent, cobbled together a trip that took them - by ship, train, and automobile - from their home in Colorado Springs around the world, by way of: Panama; most of the countries of South America; Tristan da Cunha, probably the most remote place in the inhabited world at the time; South Africa: Mauritius; Singapore; Indonesia; Australia; New Zealand; the Fiji Islands; and Hawaii.

Along the way, they encountered colorful locals, deposed several ruthless despots, and foiled an attempt to destroy the world, all the while trading witty repartee, expert scientific speculation, and social commentary.

At least, that's how it should have been. Tramp Royale is written in the same fast-moving, plot-driven, opinionated mode that energizes Heinlein's brand of hard SF. Unfortunately, the experiences of a middle-aged couple on vacation, even one as exotic as this one, aren't going to deliver the kind of punch you expect from the action-packed style.

The book is less a travel book than it is an extended letter back home - the kind you could write to friends who don't expect the regular postcard platitudes (meaning those people to whom you could bitch about the dirtiness and inhospitability of New Zealand and the pathos of the beggars in Djakarta, with a liberal dose of social theorizing).



Heinlein does make a halfhearted attempt to do the "travel book thing," such as describing the process of obtaining passports and giving advice on packing. However, he spends more time decrying the fact that countries advertise for tourists and then make it difficult for them to gain entry than he does providing tricks to smooth the way. As far as packing, the advice is fairly pedestrian - don't pack more than you can carry at one time - but Mrs. Heinlein had no intention of traveling for a year around the world with just two bags, so there were a lot of stories about how difficult it was to find porters for their 10 trunks and suitcases.

But travel tips aren't what Tramp Royale is about. What it is about is Heinlein and his opinions about anything and everything. (While this works for the characters in his fiction, it's a tad grating in a memoir of this kind. I got the impression that traveling with the Heinleins would be like taking a trip with Lazarus Long and Jubal Harshaw - interesting characters from Heinlein's oeuvre, but I wouldn't want to get stuck between them on an airplane.)

Unfortunately, from the vantage point of 1994, some of his opinions and attitudes are downright insulting.

Although he was out of the country during most of the McCarthy hearings, he makes an embarrassing attempt to excuse the whole thing: no one really got hurt, and why did those people object to answering questions about their political inclinations unless they had something to hide anyway?

And his opinion that South Africa should do away with apartheid and treat blacks as well as we've treated Native Americans in this country (remember: this was written in the 1950s) is bound to make most readers throw up their hands in disgust.

He also sounds off on global monetary theory, population policy, and everything in between, even explaining why they aren't figuring the heights of mountains correctly. More than once I had to remind myself that this book was written in the Fifties, and probably no one's political ideas are going to hold up well after four decades.

Virginia Heinlein, who is making a disturbing habit of excavating unpublished Heinlein works like this one, doesn't come across in the most flattering light either. Where Robert thought the idea of Customs was counterproductive for countries that wanted tourists, Virginia found Customs a personal insult and didn't hesitate to make a scene any time they had to wait to be processed. Since this happened at every country they visited, Heinlein himself spent a lot of time alternately muzzling her or hustling her through the lines before she erupted.

As if the charms of this little drama weren't enough, she also took a laissez-faire attitude toward import regulations, otherwise known as smuggling. In South Africa, she secreted cigarettes off the boat because she didn't agree with limits that had been set. She took illegal amounts of American currency into Indonesia because she didn't agree with their currency rules. In Singapore, when the customs agent asked if she had anything to declare, she snapped: "Two pounds of heroin." (A similar scene occurs in Podkayne of Mars; but in that book, the culprit is hauled off and subjected to a very rude and inconvenient search, something Mrs. Heinlein might have profited from.)

Even the cover illustrator was intent on making her look bad, it seems. Heinlein himself appears rather Errol Flynn-ish, but Virginia Heinlein looks like a caricature of Bette Davis in Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?

In between misguided political diatribes and Customs contretemps, the Heinleins did manage to have an exciting vacation, believe it or not. They seemed to have an uncanny knack for being in the right place at the right time:

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TRAMP ROYALE

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co-opting the Rockefeller suite in Singapore; chancing upon new friends in Argentina who gave them introductions to the well-connected in many of the countries where they were travelling; striking up a conversation with a shipmate that turned into a chauffered trip across Africa.

But this book wasn't published to quench the public's undying thirst for out-of-date travelogues. It was published because Heinlein wrote it; and the most interesting aspect of the book is the behind-the-scenes peek at the author himself.

The rap on Heinlein has always been that his characters are models of himself at various stages in his own life - either the "Aw, shucks" neophyte or the Old Sage of Cynical Wisdom. In a sense, this is true; and it shows in *Tramp Royale*. However, we see the unvarnished Heinlein, not the idealized hero.

The difference is in the followthrough. Where most of Heinlein's characters are iconoclastic men of action, Heinlein himself comes across as an iconoclastic man who is afraid of getting his glasses broken if trouble starts - sort of a loud-mouthed Walter Mitty. (Part of the reason for the trip across Africa was to get to an optometrist who could make Heinlein new spectacles, because he had broken his back-up pair, which reminded me of those people who make a big deal of keeping the slipcovers clean.)

It was also interesting to catch experiences that served as source material for his later works.

The trip was mainly by ship and train, because Virginia had a dislike (bordering on a phobia) of trans-oceanic flights. As a result, *Tramp Royale* includes a lot of shipboard anecdotes and ambience, which find themselves transmuted into a picture of life on starliners in many of Heinlein's later works. *Podkayne of Mars* is the most notable example; but the influence can also be seen in others, from the juvenile *Time for the Stars* to *Methuselah's Children* and the rather grim novella *Or-*

phans of the Sky (about the mutant descendants of a starship).

Cultural examples and land-bound anecdotes also crop up. For instance, according to sources in Argentina, Paraguay has no penalty for murder because either the victim had it coming and everyone knew it, or the victim's family and friends will rise up against the culprit and avenge the wrong. Either way, the State has no reason to involve itself. The narrator of The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress uses virtually the same words to explain Luna's lack of formalized capital punishment.

If they aren't already, graduate students in a few years will be writing dissertations that attempt to trace the genesis of the ideas and events in Heinlein's novels, so I'll leave the rest of the cataloguing to them with a clear conscience. I had enough fun when a reference caught my eye, without digging deep to find more.

And in the end, those kinds of gems, whether they are references that crop up in later works or just inter-

esting tidbits you wouldn't find in a real travel book, are what saves *Tramp Royale*. In her introduction, Virginia Heinlein - bless her loyal little heart! - says that publishers passed on this book because of a slump in the publishing business in the mid-Fifties. The real reason is probably less charitable.

The title of the book comes from a Kipling poem, "Sestina for a Tramp Royale" - which was not one of Kipling's best, mainly due to the requirements of the sestina format. The same could be said of *Tramp Royale*. The travel book format was obviously not Heinlein's forte, nor was the extended memoir.

But, with all its shortcomings, *Tramp Royale* is fast-paced and fun; and I gained a better understanding of one of my favorite authors. No doubt *Tramp Royale* will be important for Heinlein scholars, or for anyone interested in the major figures of SF.

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SEPT. 11TH MINUTES

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ter. The members agreed and thanked him for thinking of it and for being so generous.

Carl took the opportunity to promote the upcoming Darkover Convention (Thanksgiving weekend in Timonium, MD) and Philcon (a week or so earlier in November).

The subject of updating the LSF phone directory came up at this point. Dan H. and Scott S. once again accepted the task of producing it. Members will have until October 31st to make changes in their current listings. Peter, Philip, and Carl will contact individual non-attending members to confirm listings. [See article on page 1 of this newsletter.]

Wayne #1 announced a campaign for a book drive to help Siberian Gays.

Wayne III then reported on the latest happenings with the Gaylactic Network. A new chapter has formed in Winnipeg, Northern Fey Folk. Other possible groups are forming in Atlanta, Australia, and Florida. When asked about updated information on Gaylaxicon VI, Wayne announced that the organizers are planning several special events, including a pre-convention party and tours of Niagara Falls. It was also announced that the Gaylactic Network can be contacted through InterNet - the contact is Keith Rodwell, whose e-mail address is:

KR@Gaylaxians.Org

Wayne III also announced that the Network is listed in the National Association of Fan Clubs; and he briefly recapped (for newer members) the purpose of the Gaylactic Network.

The final order of business was to wish Carl a "Happy Birthday!" Obviously his 29th. As a birthday gift, Peter gave Carl a *Star Trek* commemorative cup-and-saucer from the *U.S.S. Excelsior*. The only remaining question was whether Carl would get George Takei to sign it.

The meeting ended at 4:17 PM, in time for our host Jim C. to race off to campaign for Carol Schwartz.

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* * INFORMATION ABOUT LAMBDA SCI-FI: DC AREA GAYLAXIANS * *

Lambda Sci-Fi is a Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror fan club for Gay people and their friends. Annual membership fees are \$15, for which you will receive this monthly newsletter and a membership directory. Newsletter submissions are always welcome.

Meetings are generally held on the second Sunday of each month at a private residence. The next Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will be held at 2:00 PM on Sunday, October 9th, at Jim C.'s apartment: 1414 17th St., NW, Apt. 413 (near Dupont Circle). 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, Peter, and Jim C.



October 14-16, 1994 FARPOINT 94: Marriott's Hunt Valley Inn (Hunt Valley, MD). Guests: George ("Sulu") Takei, Nana ("Kira Nerys") Visitor, Jonathan Brandis ("Lucas" from SeaQuest DSV). Cost: \$37.50 for weekend (daily rates available at door). Make checks payable to "Farpoint, Inc." and send to: Farpoint, Inc., 7859 Marioak Dr., Elkridge, MD 21227.

October 28-30, 1994 BIG E CON: Omni International Hotel - Waterside (Norfolk, VA). Guests: Majel Barrett-Roddenberry ("Lwaxana Troi"/"Nurse Chapel"), Bill Campbell ("Trelane"/"Koloth"), James Doohan ("Scotty"), Robert O'Reilly ("Gowron"), Armin Shimerman ("Quark"), Michael O'Hare ("Cmdr. Sinclair"); featuring optional tours of the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise (CVN-65). Membership: \$40 (Enterprise tours \$10 extra). Makes checks payable to "TrekRec Deck, Inc." and send to: Trek Rec Deck, Inc., PO Box 10658, Towson, MD 21285-0658.

November 18-20, 1994 PHILCON '94: The Adam's Mark Hotel (Philadelphia). Principal Speaker: Larry Niven, Artist GoH: Jim Burns. Cost: \$30 until 11/4/94. Make checks payable to "Philcon '94" and send to: Philcon '94, PO Box 8303, Philadelphia, PA 19101.

November 25-27, 1994 DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL MEETING XVII: Holiday Inn, Timonium (Timonium, MD). Guests of Honor: Debra Doyle & James MacDonald; Special Guests: Marion Zimmer Bradley (health permitting) & Katherine Kurtz; Artist GoH: Rikk Jacobs. Cost: \$30. Hotel rooms: \$61/night (up to 4 people in room). For membership, make checks payable to "Armida Council" and send to: Armida Council, PO Box 7203, Silver Spring, MD 20907. (This is a very "gay/lesbian/bi-friendly" con.)

May 19-21, 1995 GAYLAXICON VI: Radisson Hotel Niagara Falls (Niagara Falls, NY). Guest of Honor: Don Sakers; Artist GoH: Heather Bruton. Membership: \$20 until 12/31/94, then \$25 until 5/1/95 (\$30 at the door). Make checks payable to "Gaylaxicon VI" and send to: Gaylaxicon VI, P.O. Box 160225, St. Louis, MO 63116-8225.

July 13-16, 1995 NASFiC (North American Science Fiction Convention)/DRAGON*CON 1995: Atlanta Civic Center & Atlanta Hilton and Towers (Atlanta, GA). Honored Guests: Orson Scott Card, George Alec Effinger, Bjo Trimble, Michael Whelan, Timothy Zahn. Cost: \$45 until 9/15/94 (cost will go up after that). Make checks payable to "NASFiC"95" and send to: NASFiC/Dragon*Con '95, P.O. Box 47696, Atlanta, GA 30362-0696. For additional information, call the 24-hour Atlanta Convention Info Line at (404) 925-2813.

