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Gaylactic Network Spectrum Award Winners



by Rob



The winners of the Gaylactic Network Spectrum Awards were announced in the first-ever Spectrum Awards Ceremony at Gaylaxicon: 1999. The Gaylactic Network Spectrum Awards were created to honor works in science fiction, fantasy and horror that deal positively with gay characters, themes and issues. Nominations are open to everyone, and winners are selected by a small final judging committee.

Regular awards were presented, in two categories, for works originally released in 1998.

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In the Best Novel category, two works were selected as co-winners. They were:

Accidental Creatures, by Anne Harris (Tor Books)

Dark Water's Embrace, by Stephen Leigh (Avon Eos Books)

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In the Best Other Work category, the winner was:

Bending the Landscape: Science Fiction, edited by Nicola Griffith and Stephen Pagel (Overlook Press)

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In addition, to honor works released prior to the creation of the

(continued on page 3)

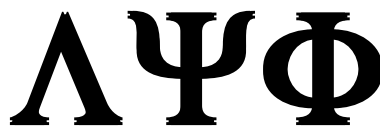
LSF Party at Darkover?



Hey, gang, do you want to host a room party at the upcoming Darkover Convention?

We've talked about it off-and-on for a while now; but we've never really made a definite decision on it. (We'd probably want to host it some-time on Saturday night, Nov. 27th.) Well, it's gettin' kind'a close - Darkovercon is only a few weeks away - Thanksgiving weekend (Nov. 26-28). So, how's about we vote yea/nay on this at the November LSF meeting?

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November LSF Meeting

The November Lambda Sci-Fi meeting is scheduled for Sunday, November 14th, at James Crutchfield's apartment: 1414 17th St., NW, Apt. 413 (near DuPont Circle) - 1:30 PM for business meeting; 2:00 PM for social meeting. Please bring some munchies or soft drinks, if you can. Hope to see you there!

Upcoming Sessions of the LSF Book Discussion Group



If you're interested in lively discussions on F&SF books, with an emphasis on elements of interest to our les/bi/gay/transgendered community, then drop in on one of Lambda Sci-Fi's monthly book discussions. Every month we conduct fascinating round-table discussions of another work by a significant F&SF author. Attendees also decide on the novels and discussion facilitators for succeeding months.

The LSF Book Discussion Group usually meets on the 4th Thursday of every month, starting at 7:00 PM. The next meeting, a *combined* November/December meeting, will be held on December 2nd at the home of Rob & Peter, 1425 S Street, NW, Washington, DC (within walking distance of the "U" St./Cardozo [Green Line] or the Dupont Circle [Red Line] Metro Stations). For detailed directions, contact Rob at: Klaatu01@aol.com

Here are the books to be discussed at the next few meetings:

Thursday, Dec. 2nd - *Was*, by Geoff Ryman; facilitator: Mike P.

Thursday, Jan. 27th - *Maximum Light*, by Nancy Kress; facilitator: Keith W.

Thursday, Feb. 24th - *The Golden Compass*, by Philip Pullman; facilitator: Carl.

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WHAT'S INSIDE?

The Harvest (book review - pg. 2); *Douglas C. Jones, an Author to Look For* (pg. 2); *Cube, I Still Know What You Did Last Summer in That Wonderful Ice Cream Suit (Part 2)* (video reviews - pg. 3); *Gaylaxicon: 1999 - What A Ride!* (pg. 4); *Ye Old Editor's Corner* (pg. 4); *Far Beyond the Stars* (book review - pg. 5); *Information About Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians & Con Calendar* (pg. 6)

The Harvest
 a novel by Perry Brass
 a "review" by Scott

Do you need stress in your life? If you do, then you should read this paperback book from Perry Brass. I read the first few chapters and wondered if I should continue or just deposit the book in my Goodwill bag for the next LSF book exchange.

Plot summary: In a poorly-defined near future, our protagonist, Chris Turner, a lower-class gay man, is adopted by a wealthy and influential gay man who runs a corporation. Chris even gets a new name - Edgar Devereaux. On occasion, Chris/Edgar sneaks out of the mansion to Pikeville, a seedy area where a sleazy gay bar is located. Drugs, twinks, older men looking for younger action. Zzzz. Lots of sex all littered throughout the chapters to keep the reader's pulse up, I guess. Chris/Edgar encounters a large distraught man out by the beach down the road from the Pikeville bar who, at first, is loathsome in appearance. But, actually, he's a "vacco" - a person who is created for the sole purpose of harvesting his organs for others who desperately need (and can afford) organ replacements. This vacco, whose name is Hart, has escaped the nearby vacco farm where other vaccos live until they are harvested. Chris/Edgar decides to save this "piece of property" from his fate. Then the action/adventure part of the story commences. Gosh, does Chris/Edgar leave trails all over the place, while trying to shield Hart's true identity and location? The two of them are eventually discovered and Edgar's rich adoptive father claims that the vacco must be returned to his role as organ supplier. At the operating table where Hart's organs are to be harvested, Chris/Edgar secretly kills his adoptive father, then inherits the family business and fortune and gets away with murder. In the last few pages, Chris/Edgar transforms into a detestable man, running a corporation that condones the vacco farms. Oh please.

There's more to *The Harvest* than this, but so what? And I thought

Douglas C. Jones,
 an Author to Look For
 by Carl Cipra

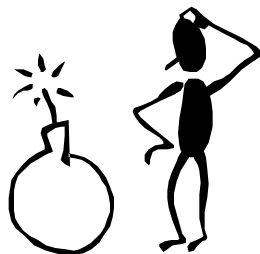
I'm not exactly a big fan of Westerns - you know, stuff by authors like Louis L'Amour and Zane Grey. However, there is one author in that genre whose works I *do* enjoy: Douglas C. Jones, author of some 18 novels about the American West.

Whoops! I can hear the objections now! "*Westerns!* Why the heck are you writin' an article about *Westerns*, you ditz?! LSF folks are interested in science-fiction, fantasy, and horror!" Well, just hold yer horses fer a spell, pardner; I'll get there! Now, as I was saying...

I just finished reading my fourth Jones novel, *A Spider for Loco Shoat*. It's a fascinating murder mystery set in Ft. Smith, Arkansas, in 1907. Ft. Smith is just across the river from the Indian Nations, which are soon to become the State of Oklahoma. The main character is a retired U.S. Marshall

that reading Joanna Russ' *The Female Man* was painful!

P.S. Okay, I *won't* wrap *The Harvest* in Christmas wrapping paper and use it as my LSF book exchange item. It's better suited for one of our 25-cent paperback book sales.



[Ed. Note: I was certainly glad to read your P.S., Scott, since the LSF book exchange was designed as a method of introducing others to *favorite* novels, not as a means for getting rid of unwanted trash. By the way, Dear Readers, if you're interested in a *really good* novel about organ-harvesting, then try Norman Spinrad's *Bug Jack Baron*. It has the distinction of having been banned in Britain!



named Oscar Schiller, a curmudgeonly old coot with real savvy when it comes to frontier law enforcement. As with two other Jones Westerns that I've read (*The Search for Temperance Moon* - also featuring Oscar Schiller - and *Arrest Sitting Bull*), this latest novel also contains some of the finest historical fiction I've ever read. Besides telling an enjoyable, action-packed story, Jones really gives his readers a feel for what it was like in a "frontier town" around the turn of the century.

It was, however, while reading *A Spider for Loco Shoat* that I was reminded of the *first* Jones novel I'd read, back in the mid-70's: *The Court-martial of George Armstrong Custer*. And (*ta da!*) here's the connection to the F&SF genre: *Court-martial* is, in fact, an alternate history novel. As with all good alternate history stories, it's based on that age-old conundrum: "What if?" (That's, in fact, the basis for *a lot* of good F&SF literature!) What if, Jones asks, Custer had been found *alive* (although grievously wounded) after the Battle of the Little Big Horn? The answer: Custer is hauled off to New York City to be court-martialed for his military blunders. (Well, *and* for the fact that he was a political liability who'd managed to piss off lots of the Powers That Be in President Grant's administration!) Jones' same literary strengths are here: fascinating subject, lots of action (by flashbacks to the battle), and *incredible* historical research. In this case, the reader gets a real feel for what politics and society were like in New York City during the late 1870s.

If you're a fan of alternate history, then you definitely want to get your hands on a copy of *The Court-martial of George Armstrong Custer*. And, frankly, if you like well-researched, well-written historical fiction in general (Western-themed, in particular), pick up a copy of *any* novel by Douglas C. Jones. As far as I can tell, you just can't go wrong there!

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Cube, I Still Know What You Did Last Summer in That Wonderful Ice Cream Suit From Dusk to Dawn 2!! (Part 2)

video reviews by Joseph Parra

[Ed. Note: This is a continuation of Joe's lengthy video review article. It began last month with his reviews of *Cube* and *I Still Know What You Did Last Summer*. Thus, we rejoin our program, already in progress...]



Prequels are always difficult to carry off, because a production tries to lay out a series of events which will lead us to the initial film viewed. In *From Dusk to Dawn 2: Texas Blood Money*, this is not exactly the case. This film is more like a previous chapter in the history of "the Titty Twister vampires." As with the original, this film starts off as a more-or-less straight-forward gangster movie. Robert Patrick (the T-1000 in *Terminator 2*), Duane Whitaker (who co-wrote the screenplay with director Scott Spiegel), Muse Watson (the mad Gorton fisherman of the *I Know What You Did...* series), and Ray Cruz (very pretty to look at) set off on a bank robbery in Mexico, chased by sheriff Bo Hopkins (of umpteen movies and TV shows). Along the way, one of the hoods stops at the Titty Twister bar, which (you may recall) is the vampire haven from the first *Dusk* movie. Before long, it's the bank job as planned by vampires!! At the bank, there is a big shoot-out/bite-out between the cops and the bats - er, hoods - and, of course, the traditional falling out of thieves. This is a much leaner affair than its predecessor. The special effects and make-up are again provided by the KNB Group, but much more scaled down. Normally, this tends to make for so-so tidings; but in this case the producers (Robert Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino) have made the most of the effects by relying on vampire lore,

being even a bit more traditional than they had been in the initial *Dusk* film. The acting is up to snuff and the screenplay is good, even giving nods to other seminal horror fare, such as the shower scene in *Psycho* and the vampire shoot-out in the seldom-seen but excellent *Near Dark*. Scott Spiegel's direction is good; but how much influence did Rodriguez and Tarantino have on him? A great many scenes were direct copies of style. Or were Rodriguez/Tarantino simply presiding over those scenes? Danny Trejo repeats his role of the vampire bartender and is hilarious. As direct-to-video sequels go, this is a gem. No it's not as polished as a theatrical release; but then it isn't intended to be. It's always nice to have a vampire sequel you can sink your teeth into!!



Several years ago, sci-fi master Ray Bradbury wrote a story (and play) entitled *The Wonderful Ice-Cream Suit*, in which four men of no means pool their resources to purchase a white suit that is tailored to fit all of them. They, of course, are all exactly the same measurements. The suit seems to have miraculous powers, because when each man wears the suit, he becomes the man he would truly like to be. With this simple premise, a beautiful tale unfolds; and the men become better persons than they were. Bradbury also wrote the screenplay for this film version, produced by Roy Disney and directed by Stuart Gordon. The movie is a joy to behold! The acting is very tongue-in-cheek, with Joe Mantegna, Esai Morales, Clinton Gonzalez-Gonzalez, and Edward James Olmos (in a tour de force performance) all providing wonderful portraits of these ne'er-do-wells who become good folk. The special effects are kept purposely to a minimum, save for the interesting (yet not eerie) luminescence of the *Wonderful Ice-Cream Suit*. Liz Torres, Sid Caesar, and Howard Morris all provide

Spectrum Award Winners

continued from page 1

Spectrum Award, a special Hall of Fame category was available for works originally released prior to 1998. Two works were selected as co-winners in the Hall of Fame Category. They were:

China Mountain Zhang, by Maureen McHugh (Tor Books)

Uranian Worlds, by Eric Garber and Lyn Paleo (GK Hall Books)

**

Finally, a special People's Choice Award was given to the single work receiving the most nominations from members of the Gaylactic Network. The People's Choice Award winner was:

Shadow Man, by Melissa Scott (Tor Books)

**

As the administrator and one of the final judges for the award, I can say without a doubt that all of the judges were tremendously impressed by all of the finalists. Selecting the winners was a real challenge. But the quality of the works that we had on our list of finalists speaks volumes about how far we've come!

A big thanks to everyone who has helped to support the Spectrum Awards through donations, publicity or nominations. We're looking forward to next year's awards - and you can expect to see nominations opening soon!

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marvelous cameos. Try on *The Wonderful Ice-Cream Suit*; you'll be a better person for it!

So, try not to square off with seasons past, but take a bite out of a great flavor. You'll be glad you did. Enjoy!!!

Ratings:

From Dusk to Dawn 2 - 3 out of a possible 4

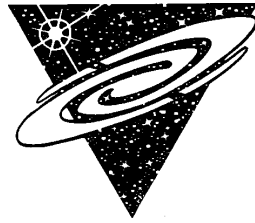
The Wonderful Ice-Cream Suit - 3½ out of a possible 4

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Gaylaxicon: 1999 What A Ride!

by Rob

GAYLAXICON 1999



I can't believe it's over. After three-plus long years of planning and hard work, Gaylaxicon: 1999 finally happened just a few weeks ago. It seemed to be over so quickly though, like waiting in line for an hour for a two-minute roller coaster ride. Despite all of our hotel struggles and the long nights of hard work and the worries over finances, when everything came together it really came together. I half expected to spend the weekend rushing about from one crisis to the next, putting out fires, dealing with disasters, holding things together, pulling my hair out. What I never expected - and was amazingly delighted about - was that the ConComm had done such an amazing job that I actually got to enjoy the convention!

One of the highlights for me was finally meeting and having a chance to chat face-to-face with many of our professional guests. These were people I had conversed with via e-mail for months and even years. Many had become acquaintances or even friends online, but there's nothing like meeting someone in person to cement a friendship. I had many wonderful opportunities to chat with some of these folks - about the genre and about life in general and even about baseball. Among these wonderful folks were people like Lynn Flewelling (whom I had recruited to come after reading her marvelous fantasy novels with two male lovers as main protagonists), and the folks from *Scarlet Street*, and so many others. Of course, there were also all of the old friends to catch up with - both guests and attendees alike. I don't think I've talked so much in years!

Three of the most wonderful new friends I finally met in person were Jean-Pierre Dorleac and Diane Duane and her husband Peter Morwood. Jean-Pierre was an amazingly articulate and entertaining speaker, with a sharp wit and a lot of insight into Hollywood. And Diane was rip-roaring funny and

thought-provoking all at the same time, everything I expected her to be and more. Her speech on Saturday night summed up a lot about what makes the genre so special for me, and she never seemed to slow down: panels all day, chatting and partying and telling stories all night. Both singly and together, she and her husband Peter had people in stitches for hours on end, with anecdote after anecdote (and in Peter's case, a complete collection of sound effects on demand). For two people who had just crossed the Atlantic, they had more energy than I think I could have mustered.

I sat on panels, all of which were filled with intelligent and well-spoken panelists and attendees. I wandered through the art show and bought a present for my honey. I explored the Dealers Room and spent over a half hour talking about the state of horror publishing with the Borders Books guy. And I spent a lot of time just being around in our function foyer. I met with reporters; I ate regular meals; I even got enough sleep.

The most nervous part of the weekend was the first ever Spectrum Awards ceremony. The Spectrum Awards had been a personal obsession of mine for many years, and I had spent a lot of time and energy getting them off the ground. To see the culmination of many years of personal drive pay off in one night was exciting, but also a little nerve-racking. In the audience were many people whose works had been nominated, and everyone was looking to me to make the awards a reality. The ceremony went off without many hitches (one wrong envelope wasn't so bad) and was a tremendous success. To hear the authors/editors/creators of the winning works express such sincere joy at being a part of what we had created was great.

And it was touching to be able to award *Uranian Worlds* a Spectrum Award five years from the exact weekend when Eric Garber (one of its creators) had passed away.

I guess, though, when all the notes are tallied and checked, and the feedback forms are analyzed, and the bills are paid and the accounting is made, what will stay with me for a long time are the smiles and the sound of people having fun. The whole atmosphere was one of great revelry and enjoyment, from start to finish. And to have people come up to us, professionals and fans alike, to tell us that this had been the best-run and the most fun they had ever had at a convention made every minute of every hour spent worthwhile.

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Ye Olde Editor's Corner

Well, it's certainly been a long time since I've included (or had room to include) one of these Editorial monologues! There are just a few items I'd like to insert here:

THANKS!

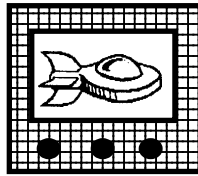
Thank you to everyone in LSF who's contributed articles to the newsletter! If I do say so myself, the content of the LSF newsletter has really been great! Keep up the good work, everyone!

Also, big thanks to Peter (Deputy Editor) and Rob (Asst. Deputy Editor) for their fine work on those issues of the newsletter where Ye Olde Editor hasn't been around or available! (Don't relax and rest on your laurels, however, guys! Y'all will probably get *more* chances to demonstrate your editorial skills in future!)

CALL FOR GAYLAXICON ARTICLES!

Rob's article on Gaylaxicon 1999 is really nifty - but it's only *one* person's view! I have it on good authority that *lots* of LSFers were present at Gaylaxicon 1999 -- I'd love to get some articles from *them*, too! It doesn't have to be anything long or complicated. Just send in a short article on your impressions about people, events, etc. at Gaylaxicon 1999; and I'll print 'em!

Far Beyond the Stars
a Star Trek novel
by Steve Barnes
reviewed by Carl Cipra



I'm sure everybody who's been to an LSF meeting is aware of the fact that I'm not a big fan of Star Trek novels. As much as I enjoy the various ST television series (except *Voyager*) and the ST movies, I've never really been enthralled with the books. I find the "novelizations" to be too derivative - they add nothing to the TV episodes or the movies they're based on. For example, I read *Unification* (by Jeri Taylor) hoping to find out more about the inhabitants and the political situation on the Romulan home planet - no good, nothing new, pretty much a direct novelization of the screenplay. And on the other side of the coin, I've generally found the *original* ST novels to be disappointing, even when written by an author whose other, non-ST works I admire. Julia Ecklar, for example, is a brilliant SF author - I was absolutely blown away by her stories featuring Rahel Tovin, interplanetary ecologist/environmentalist (now collected in one volume, *Regenesis*). But I found her ST novel, *The Kobayashi Maru*, to be a major disappointment. In fact, until recently, the only ST novel I *really* enjoyed reading was Melissa Scott's DS9 novel, *Proud Helios*.

And then along comes *Far Beyond the Stars*, by Steve Barnes. Wow! What a powerful novel! There is no question that it is now my favorite ST novel -- and, beyond that, one of my favorite F&SF works, period!

If I was so set on not liking ST novels, why'd I read it? A couple of reasons. First, of course, was the incredible DS9 episode it's based on. Second, a passing comment in a column in *Science Fiction Age*, where an SF author (Stephen Baxter? Allen Steele? I don't remember.) complimented the book for its portrayal of writing science fiction for the pulps.

As a reminder, *Far Beyond the Stars* (teleplay by Ira Steven Behr and Hans Beimler, story by Marc Scott

Zicree) is the episode where (through some sort of hallucination?) Benjamin Sisko experiences life as Benny Russell, a struggling pulp science fiction writer living in Harlem in the 1950s. In this (alternate?) version of reality, Benny has been writing science fiction stories based on his dreams about the space-faring adventures of such characters as Kirk and Picard. The juxtaposition of the various DS9 characters with their 1950s counterparts on the staff at *Incredible Tales* is, of course, amusing - but the real power of the story, for me, is its depiction of the mind-numbing racial bigotry that Benny has to face, especially when he dares to write a story about a space station called Deep Space Nine and its heroic commander, Ben Sisko, a black man. Powerful stuff; good acting - it impressed me so much that when I found out (from a passing comment in that column in *Science Fiction Age*) that a novelization existed, I just *had* to get a copy.

And here's what I found: a Star Trek novelization that *far* exceeds the TV episode it's based on! True, Steve Barnes has preserved all the humor and power of the TV episode - but he doesn't stop there. His novel is a fine piece of SF literature. It's a work of recursive science fiction that allows the reader to get a sense of what it takes to write about "the Other" -- and, as with the best ST episodes, it uses SF themes and situations to illuminate and explore the human condition in "the real world." The novel's depiction of the black experience in America in the 1940s and 1950s is, if anything, even more powerful than that shown in the TV episode. *And* (thank you! thank you!) Barnes doesn't limit himself to a simple recapitulation of the televised story -- there's more *story* to his novel! I don't want to spoil the experience for other readers, so I'll confine myself to saying

that "the Barnes version" of *Far Beyond the Stars* has far more "cosmic" implications and connections than the TV episode -- Barnes links the 1939/1940 New York World's Fair, Benny's 1950s writing career at *Incredible Tales*, and the Star Trek universe in a truly ingenious and satisfying manner. (And I *highly* recommend reading the Author's Note at the end of the novel, in which Barnes relates why he jumped at the chance to write this novelization.)

Suffice it say, I've got a new "favorite Star Trek novel" -- not to mention the fact that Steve Barnes is now an SF author whose non-Trek works I plan on reading.

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Oscar Wilde said:

Agitators are a set of interfering, meddling people, who come down to some perfectly contented class of the community and sow the seeds of discontent amongst them. That is the reason why agitators are so absolutely necessary.

A red rose is not selfish because it wants to be a red rose. It would be horribly selfish if it wanted all the other flowers in the garden to be both red and roses.

(both quotes are from *The Soul of Man Under Socialism*)

**** 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 \$20, 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 Sunday, November 14th, at James Crutchfield's apartment: 1414 17th St., NW, Apt. 413 (near DuPont Circle) - 1:30 PM for business meeting; 2:00 PM for social meeting. 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.

The Gaylactic Network has the following primary goals:

- to promote science-fiction, fantasy, horror and other related genres in all forms, with particular attention to materials of interest to gay males, lesbians, and bisexuals.
- to provide forums for gay males, lesbians, bisexuals and their friends to share their interest in science-fiction, fantasy, horror and other related genres.
- to promote the presence of gay male, lesbian and bisexual elements within science-fiction, fantasy, horror and other related genres and within fandom.
- to promote science-fiction, fantasy, horror and other related genres within the gay male, lesbian and bisexual communities.



Con Calendar

by Carl, Peter, Rob and James



November 12-14, 1999 **PHILCON '99**. Adam's Mark Hotel (Philadelphia, PA). Guest of Honor: Katherine Kurtz; Artist GoH: Jill Bauman. Hotel: \$100-S/D; \$114-T/Q. Membership: no mail-in registrations after Oct. 24th.; \$45 at the door. Make checks payable to "Philadelphia Science Fiction Society". Email: registration@philcon.org
Web:<http://www.philcon.org/>

November 26-28, 1999 **DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL MEETING XXI**. Holiday Inn, Timonium (Timonium, MD - just north of Baltimore). Guest of Honor: Barbara Hambly; Special Guest: Katherine Kurtz; Artist GoH: Halla. Hotel: \$76/night (sgl/dbl/tpl/quad). Membership: \$30 until Nov. 1st; \$35 at the door. Make checks payable to "Armida Council" and send to: Armida Council, PO Box 7203, Silver Spring, MD 20907. This is a *very* les/bi/gay-friendly con, almost a "mini-Gaylaxicon within a con."

April 21-23, 2000 **BALTICON 34**. Baltimore Omni Inner Harbor Hotel (Baltimore, MD). Guest of Honor: Octavia Butler; Artist GoH: Wendi Pini; Editor GoH: Richard Pini. Membership: \$35 until 12/31/99; \$40 from 1/1/2000 to 3/31/2000; \$45 at the door. Make checks payable to "Balticon 34" and send to: Balticon 34, PO Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203-0686. e-mail: bsfs@balticon.org website: <http://www.balticon.org>

May 26-29, 2000 **COSTUMECON 18**. Sheraton Hartford (Hartford, Conn.). The 18th annual volunteer-run convention for costumers and all who love costumes. Membership \$70 thru 4/23/2000; \$80 thereafter & at the door. Make checks payable to "CostumeCon 18" and send to: CostumeCon 18, 11 Winter St., Amesbury, MA 01913-1515. For more information: e-mail: info@cc2000.org website: www.cc2000.org

June 30 - July 2, 2000 **ANTHROCON 2000**. Hilton Valley Forge Hotel (251 DeKalb Pike, King of Prussia, PA). The East Coast's largest Anthropomorphics Convention. Theme: "Furries of Myth & Legend." For hotel reservations: 610-337-1200, or 800-TRY-VFPA. Membership \$30 thru 2/1/00; \$35 thru 6/15/00. Make checks payable to "Anthrocon, Inc." and send to: Anthrocon, Inc., PO Box 270, Devault, PA 19432-0270.

