



Lambda Sci-fi

DC Area Gaylaxians

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Gaylaxicon 2025 Announces GoHs

info passed along by Carl

The con-comm for Gaylaxicon 2025 (Minneapolis, Oct. 3-5) has recently announced its Guests of Honor.

Nghi Vo is the author of the novels *Siren Queen* and *The Chosen and the Beautiful*. She is also the author of *The Empress of Salt and Fortune* (winner of the Hugo Award for best novella in 2020) and the other novellas in the “Singing Hills Cycle.”

KD Edwards is the author of “The Tarot Sequence,” an urban fantasy series that blends myth, magic, and adventure into a contemporary reimagining of the Tarot legend. His novels include *The Last Sun*, *The Hanged Man*, and *The Hourglass Throne*.

Emma Törzs is a writer, teacher, and occasional translator. Her fiction has been honored with an NEA fellowship in prose, a World Fantasy Award for Short Fiction (“Like a River Loves the Sky,” 2019), and an O. Henry Prize. Her debut novel, *Ink Blood Sister Scribe*, was one of the *New York Times*’ 100 Notable Books of 2023.



Jim Johnson is the project manager and line editor for the *Star Trek Adventures* and *Captain’s Log* roleplaying games (Modiphius Entertainment). He also writes *Star Trek* fiction, the “Potomac Shadows” urban fantasy series, and the “Pistols & Pyramids” weird westerns.

Greg Ketter is the founder of DreamHaven Books & Comics, the oldest continuously-running SF/F/H bookstore in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. DreamHaven specializes in new and used science fiction, fantasy, horror, film, and media books, comics, and graphic novels – and has long supported the SF and LGBTQ+ communities.

For more information about Gaylaxicon 2025, go to:

[Home - Gaylaxicon 2025](http://Home-Gaylaxicon2025) ΛΨΦ

📖 The LSF Book 📖 Discussion Group

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

The 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; but the next book discussion will be held on August 28, 2025.

Here are the details for the next several discussions:

August 28 – *Record of a Spaceborn Few*, by Becky Chambers; moderator: Zena.

September 25 – *The Daughter of Doctor Moreau*, by Sylvia Moreno-Garcia; moderator: Carl.

October 23 – *Bury Your Gays*, by Chuck Tingle; moderator: Rob.

December 4 (combined Nov/Dec discussion) – *Bright Sword*, by Lev Grossman; moderator: Dan. ΛΨΦ

***** August 10, 2025 Meeting *****

The next LSF meeting will be held on **Sunday, August 10th**. The meeting will be held at Peter and Rob’s home, **1425 “S” Street NW, Washington, DC**. The meeting will begin at 1:30 PM. Hope to see you there!



What’s Inside?

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The “Supervolcano” Series by Harry Turtledove reviewed by Carl

It seems like geothermal activity has been on the increase in Yellowstone National Park lately – at least, I think it’s been hitting the news more and more often. Portions of the park have been closed to tourists due to a hydrothermal explosion at Black Diamond Pool, minor eruptions at the Steamboat Geyser, and so on. There was even a recent news item about a bison that died when it stumbled into a pool of near-boiling water at Grand Prismatic Spring. All of this got me thinking about the “Supervolcano” novels by one of my favorite authors, Harry Turtledove. I’d read the first novel in the trilogy – *Supervolcano: Eruption* – when it was first published in 2011. For some reason, I hadn’t gotten around to reading the next two novels in the trilogy: *Supervolcano: All Fall Down* (2012) and *Supervolcano: Things Fall Apart* (2013). So, it was time to dig into my massive “to read” piles.

Most of my favorite Turtledove works are in the “alternate history” genre. They’re generally based on a consideration of “*what might have happened if...*” (What if Nazi Germany had won the WWII? What if Lincoln hadn’t been assassinated? And so on.) The “Supervolcano” trilogy, however, deals with a different “what if” consideration. It asks: What *might* happen to the U.S. (and the world) if the Yellowstone supervolcano erupts?

“What’s a supervolcano?” you ask. Well, it’s a really, really, really big volcano, where the caldera is formed by exceptionally large explosive eruptions. Yellowstone National Park is contained within the Yellowstone Caldera, the largest volcanic system in North America. (Its only rival is the Lake Toba Caldera in Sumatra.) The magma cham-

ber that lies under Yellowstone is estimated to be a single connected chamber about 37 miles long, 18 miles wide, and 3-to-7 miles deep. The current Yellowstone Caldera was created by a cataclysmic eruption that occurred 640,000 years ago; it released more than 240 cubic miles of ash, rock, and pyroclastic materials (what’s called the Lava Creek Tuff formation – *see map below*). This eruption was more than 1,000 times larger than the 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens. There were two earlier Yellowstone eruptions: 2.1 million and 1.3 million years ago. Each of these three eruptions released vast amounts of ash that blanketed much of central North America, probably caused significant impacts on world weather patterns, and led to the extinction of some North American species. Do the math: a major Yellowstone eruption every 725,000 years. This is the geological basis for Turtledove’s “Supervolcano” novels.



(continued on page 3)

The Earth is beautiful, and bright, and kindly, but that is not all. The Earth is also terrible, and dark, and cruel.

Ursula K. Le Guin
The Tombs of Atuan (1971)

Things are always going to be falling apart on Earth, you might as well get used to it.

Kim Stanley Robinson
Red Mars (1992)

Minutes of the July LSF Meeting taken by Scott

Despite the torrential down-pour, 10 people attended.

Rob said he enjoyed Arena Stage’s world premiere stage production of the musical *A Wrinkle in Time*; he loved the scene with Aunt Beast. Peter and Rob plan to see *Dungeons and Dragons - The Twenty-Sided Tavern* at the Kennedy Center. In London, David plans to see a stage production of *My Neighbour Totoro*, based on Studio Ghibli’s 1988 animated film of the same name by Hayao Miyazaki.

Rob just purchased an expansion for the *Never Winter Knights* game from Steam. He also said he might check out the Board Game Geek Convention.

Andy talked about *Accelerando* (2005) by Charles Stross – about humanity heading toward the technological singularity. It received a 2006 Locus Award.

TV News

Rob talked about Disney+’s *Ironheart*, about the Riri Williams/*Ironheart* character from *Wakanda Forever*. Season 3 of Paramount+’s *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* is premiering later this week. There was much banter about Hulu’s animated series *Solar Opposites*. (It has two ongoing plots – wall people and alien family on Earth.)

Rob noted that Apple+’s *Murderbot* series just ended. It was noted that author Martha Wells just published “Rapport: Friendship, Solidarity, Communion, Empathy”, a short story that follows Peri, an AI that Murderbot met in *System Collapse*.

Rob highlighted the Summer genre movies: *Jurassic World: Rebirth*, *Superman*, and *Fantastic Four: First Steps*.

The subject of the July LSF Book Discussion (July 24th) will be *The Fifth Season* by N. K. Jemisin.

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Harry Turtledove's "Supervolcano" Series

continued from page 2

The trilogy is set in "contemporary" times. No dates are mentioned anywhere in the story, but Turtledove probably meant for it to begin in approximately 2011-2012 (the publication date of the first novel in the trilogy). *Supervolcano: Eruption* provides the typical "set-up" for a disaster story – establishing the normal lives of the major characters in the story, etc. Then, one year after the novel begins, the Yellowstone Supervolcano erupts – and the reader becomes involved in the disaster and its immediate aftermath. Wyoming is effectively destroyed, along with other areas within a radius of 300 miles of Yellowstone. The entire Midwest is soon covered in ash and debris, effectively destroying the American breadbasket. Although metropolitan areas such as Denver and Salt Lake City aren't destroyed in the blast, they're soon buried in the ashfall – and people who didn't immediately flee are subject to starvation and lung disease (from inhaling volcanic particulate matter).

The second volume – *Supervolcano: All Fall Down* – picks up the story over a year after the eruption; and it follows the lives of the main characters as they try to survive in the post-eruption U.S.A. with varying degrees of hardship and success. It explores the deteriorating climatological, infrastructural, and social-political conditions in the country. As its subtitle implies (*Supervolcano: Things Fall Apart*), the third volume in the trilogy continues this exploration of deteriorating conditions over the course of a decade, particularly how climate changes put a serious strain on the country. I don't want to accidentally spoil some of the impact of the novels by including too many "spoilers" in this review. However, Turtledove makes it clear that pre-eruption conditions will not return for the foreseeable future, and hard times are on the horizon for all of humanity.

There's not too much actual discussion of how the rest of the world is affected by the Yellowstone eruption, although there are hints. For example,

one character picks up a BBC broadcast that talks about the deteriorating climate in the British Isles, as the effects of the Gulf Stream's warming influence gradually wane. A couple of the international highlights have a certain resonance to what's going on in our current times. The fuel crisis in the U.S. is made even worse by escalating hostilities between Israel and Iran. And Russia invades Ukraine in hopes of hopefully securing better food sources, as well as accessing non-frozen shipping lanes to the south. And the ability of the U.S. to get involved in these conflicts is prevented by all the domestic chaos following the eruption.

As is typical of many of Turtledove's novels, the storyline in the trilogy focuses on a small number of "everyman" characters, and almost all events are interpreted through their points-of-view. Most of the POV characters in the "Supervolcano" trilogy are members of the Ferguson family. Colin Ferguson is a detective in the police department for the town of San Atanasio, California. (I found this to be kind'a cool. Although San Atanasio is fictional, it's located in the South Bay area of Southern California, which is where I lived for a decade or so. There are mentions of lots'a streets, businesses, and other locations that I'm quite familiar with.) At the beginning of *Eruption*, Ferguson is recovering from a divorce from his wife Louise, who left him for another man (who subsequently dumps *her* when she gets pregnant). Ferguson has three grown children. His eldest son Rob plays the bass in a modestly successful traveling band called Squirt Frog and the Evolving Tadpoles. His daughter Vanessa (a tech writer and a prickly, often unlikeable person) is breaking up with her boyfriend Bryce Miller and moves to Denver with a much-older (and wealthy) boyfriend. (Oddly enough, Bryce maintains a good friendship with Ferguson.) Marshall, the youngest of the Ferguson brood, is a "perpetual college student" and a budding short-story writer. And, finally, there's Kelly Birnbaum, a geologist who's studying the Yellowstone Caldera before (and after) the eruption – she meets Colin Ferguson by chance and falls in love with him.

When the eruption occurs, how this cast of characters conduct themselves depends on where they are in the country. Colin, Louise, and Marshall are in Southern California, and the impact on them is (initially) negligible. Vanessa manages to escape Denver in time; but she ends up in a series of miserable relocation camps in Kansas. Bryce has accepted a teaching job in Nebraska and is pretty much stuck there. As conditions worsen and a sort of "nuclear winter" conditions set in, Bryce and his Squirt Frog partners are stranded in rural Maine. As the trilogy progresses, Turtledove focuses on each of these characters as they try to survive in the post-eruption U.S.A. – with various degrees of (increasing) hardship and (occasional) success. Basically, the reader gets to live through it all with each of them. This style of writing has always been one of major reasons I've so enjoyed Turtledove's works.

Each member of the extended Ferguson clan has his/her own personal adventures and minor triumphs. Just don't expect Turtledove to show you how "everything will be just fine" and how mankind will triumph over the worsening climate conditions. It's quite clear that the climate havoc caused by the Yellowstone eruption is long-term. Sorry.

Here's what Bryan Lowry wrote in *Variety*: "The biggest problem, actually, is that there's no action to be taken in response to this 'What if Yellowstone National Park goes kablooeey?' threat, except perhaps to get the hell out of North America."

On a happier note, the Yellowstone Volcano Observatory continually monitors volcanic activity in the area and doesn't consider an eruption imminent. They say that imaging of the magma reservoir beneath Yellowstone indicates a substantial volume of partial melt that "is not currently eruptible." (Try not to cheer too loudly.)

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

Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians (LSF) is an organization for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and trans-gendered (LGBT) 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 LGBT people and their friends;
- provide forums for LGBT people and their friends to share their interest in SF/F/H;
- promote the presence of LGBT elements within SF/F/H and within fandom; and
- promote SF/F/H within the LGBT community.

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 10th, at Peter and Rob's home, 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC.** We 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

August 7-10, 2025 **PULPFEST 2025**. "Celebrating pulp magazines and related materials, vintage paperbacks, digests, men's adventure and true crime magazines, contemporary genre fiction, first-edition hardcovers, series books, dime novels, original art, Big Little Books, Gold/Silver/Bronze age comic books, old time radio shows, gaming materials, film serials, B-movies, and related collectibles." DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Pittsburgh-Cranberry (Mars PA). Weekend membership = \$40 for members staying at the DoubleTree (otherwise = \$50). Webpage: <https://pulpfest.com>

August 13-17, 2025 **SEATTLE WORLDCON 2025**. Seattle Convention Center (Seattle WA). Guests of Honor: Martha Wells, Donato Giancola, Bridget Landry, K. Tempest Bradford, Nisi Shawl. Full attending membership: currently \$250 (will go up). For more information & on-line registration: <https://seattlein2025.org>

September 19-21, 2025 **CAPCLAVE 2025**. Rockville Hilton & Executive Meeting Center (Rockville MD). Guests of Honor: Joe Haldeman, Gay Haldeman, Naomi Kritzer. Weekend membership: \$70 (on-line registration). Website: www.capclave.org

October 3-5, 2025 **GAYLAXICON 2025**. Crowne Plaza Suites AiRE MSP Airport - Mall of America (Bloomington MN). Guests of Honor: Nghi Vo, Jim Johnson, KD Edwards, Emma Törzs, Greg Ketter. Membership: \$80 (register on-line).

Website: [Home - Gaylaxicon 2025](#)

August 27-31, 2026 **LACON V** (2026 World Science Fiction Convention). Anaheim Convention Center, Hilton Anaheim & Anaheim Marriott Hotels (Anaheim CA). Guests of Honor: Barbara Hambly, Ronald D. Moore, Colleen Duran, Dr. Anita Sengupta, Tim Kirk, Geri Sullivan (Fan GoH), Stan Sakai, Ursula Vernon (aka T. Kingfisher). Full attending membership: currently \$200 (will go up). For more information & on-line registration: <https://www.lacon.org/>



August 18, 1920

American Women Gain Voting Rights

The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is ratified.

August 30, 1797

Mary Shelley Is Born

Mary Shelley is the author of *Frankenstein; or the Modern Prometheus* (1818, expanded from her 1816 short story).

