



Lambda Sci-fi

DC Area Gaylaxians

(202) 232-3141 – Issue # 427 – October 2025

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LSF 'Come Out and Play' Gaming Party - Saturday October 11th! announcement from Rob & Peter



To celebrate National Coming Out Day we're throwing our next LSF Gaming Party!

LSF Gaming Parties are an opportunity to share your favorite board/card type games, or to just come and play games you know and love or learn new ones. Peter and Rob have plenty of space, so multiple games will be underway at any given time. We'll start at 2:00 PM and run through to 11 PM or so.

Please Note: This event will replace our normal Second Sunday Social. There will be no Second Sunday Social on Sunday October 12th.

What: It's a gaming party. There will be plenty of room for gaming, so please bring your favorite games (cards, board, etc.).

When: Saturday, October 11 - 2:00 PM to 11 PM or so.



What to Bring: Bring your favorite table game (or two or three). Also, please bring munchies and/or soft drinks to share (non-alcoholic please).

Dinner: For those who are interested, we'll order pizza for dinner. To get in on the pizza order, please bring \$10 in exact change. If you don't want pizza, you can order take-out or go forage for food. There are a lot of food choices in the Midcity (14th and "U") Corridor.

Where: Home of Peter and Rob, 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC. Their home is in the Midcity (14th and "U") neighborhood between Dupont Circle and Logan Circle. Directions (with Metro and parking advice) at:

<https://www.lambdascifi.org/peterrob>

Questions: Contact Peter at:
peter@lambdascifi.org

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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 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 October 23, 2025.

Here are the details for the next couple of discussions:

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

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

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***** October 11, 2025 Meeting *****

Instead of the regular second-Sunday meeting in October, LSF is hosting a gaming party on Saturday, October 11th. (See article on this page.) *There will be no LSF meeting on Sunday, October 12th.* The gaming party will be held at Peter and Rob's home, 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC. The party will begin at 2:00 PM. Hope to see you there!



What's Inside?

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Minutes of the September LSF Meeting taken by Scott

TV News

Derrick watched and enjoyed the 2000 movie *Pitch Black*.

Peter is watching the FX's *Alien: Earth* series, the events of which occur two years before the 1979 movie *Alien*. This series includes androids, augmented humans, and intelligent monsters. One of the sub-plots centers on hybrid prototypes created from terminally ill children. Peter also described the 8-part Korean Netflix series *Silent Sea*: near-future Earth suffers from desertification and a team pursues a plan regarding potable lunar water.

Rob and Peter were satisfied with the finale of the Netflix series *Resident Alien*. A shout-out to the series star Alan Tudyk.

Peter advised that Season 3 of the AppleTV+ series *Foundation* just aired its season finale. A Season 4 has been greenlighted.

There was a lengthy discussion of the British 1970s live-action series *UFO*, created by Gerry Anderson and Sylvia Anderson. (These were the folks behind *Supercar*, *Fireball XL5*, *Thunderbirds*, and *Space: 1999*.)

Katya advised that Season 5 of the Netflix series *Stranger Things* is in the works. This season will be shared in three segments. The character of Will has been gay-coded leading up to Season 4. The big question is: will Will be gaining a power?

The HBO Max series *Peacemaker* might be portraying the main character as bisexual in Season 2.

Other News

Andy reported that he is enjoying *A City on Mars: Can we settle space, should we settle space, and have we really thought this through?* by Kelly Weinersmith and Zach Weinersmith. It's an often-humorous read making serious points about the apparent impossibility of settling Mars in the near future. It won the 2024 Hugo Award for Best Related Work

Carl and Peter will be attending the upcoming Gaylaxicon in Minneapolis, with guest authors Lyda More-



**Rob and Peter meet Chuck Tingle
at Powell's Bookstore
(Portland OR)**



house and Naomi Kritzer. Note: Attendees are required to wear masks.

There was much discussion about the role-playing video game *Baldur's Gate 3*, which is available on Steam. (Says Scott: I have no idea what anyone was talking about.)

Rob announced an upcoming LSF gaming party set for the 2nd Saturday in October (National Coming-out Day) and that there would be no regular 2nd-Sunday LSF meeting. (See announcement on page 1.)

Upcoming LSF book discussions: September, *The Daughter of Doctor Moreau* by Silvia Moreno-Garcia; October, *Bury Your Gays* by Chuck Tingle; November/December (Dec. 4th), *The Bright Sword* by Lev Grossman.

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Sidewise Awards for Alternate History



2025 Sidewise Awards info passed along by Carl

The Sidewise Awards for Alternate History were created in late 1995 to honor the best alternate history publications of the year. The award takes its name from Murray Leinster's 1934 short story "Sidewise in Time," which explores a world in which a strange storm allows people to travel between alternate worlds. The first Sidewise Award was announced at LACon III (Summer of 1996). Each year, two awards are given: the Best Long Form Award presented to the best novel or complete series; and the Best Short Form Award presented to the best work under 60,000 words.

This year's Sidewise Awards were presented at the Seattle Worldcon on the evening of August 15th, following the panel "Alternate Histories of the Space Program." The 2025 Sidewise Awards (for works published in 2024) are:

- (Best Long Form) – *Sargassa* by Sophie Burnham (DAW, 2024)
- (Best Short Form) – "A Brother's Oath" by L. Briar (*A Bit of Luck*, Wordfire Press, February 2024)

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**Happy Halloween to
everybody at LSF!**

Weird Stories, Part 1

reviews by Carl

It's that time of year again. The nights are getting longer; Halloween and *Día de Muertos* and the Winter Solstice are approaching. As in previous years, I have enjoyed reading "weird," "creepy," "scary," or "dark" books in honor of the season.

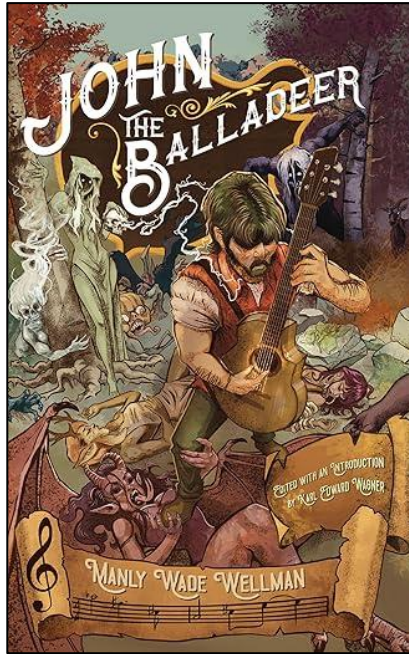
As it turns out, almost all of the "weird" stories I've read this year are considered to be works of "folk horror." "What's 'folk horror'?" you ask. It's a horror subgenre that blends rural settings and isolation with ancient folklore, superstition, and paganism to create an atmosphere of fear and foreboding in a clash between "old ways" and the "modern world." Frequent key features of folk horror stories are remote landscapes, isolated communities, and ancient traditions such as witchcraft, diabolism, or human sacrifice. The focus is on the psychological horror of forgotten cultural elements. The term "folk horror" was used in a review written by Rod Cooper (*Kine Weekly*, 1970) to describe the film *The Devil's Touch* (aka *The Blood on Satan's Claw*).

Without further ado, here's the first review of one of the weird books I've read this year.

John the Balladeer by Manly Wade Wellman (Valancourt Books, 2023)

I think this book isn't necessarily "folk horror" – but it's definitely "weird."

Manly Wade Wellman's writing career spanned over half a century, from the late 1920s to the early 1980s. He is sometimes referred to as "the dean of fantasy writers," although he wrote in a wide variety of other genres, including historical fiction, detective fiction, western fiction, juvenile fiction, and non-fiction. He's perhaps best remembered for his contributions to *Weird Tales* magazine. Some of his weird fiction stories have been adapted for television, including "The Valley Was Still" (*Twilight Zone*, 1961, as "Still Valley"),



"The Devil Is Not Mocked" (*Night Gallery*, 1971), and "Rouse Him Not" (*Monsters*, 1988).

I've always enjoyed Wellman's fantasy and horror stories that draw on the folklore of the Appalachian region – particularly his so-called "Silver John" (aka "John the Balladeer") stories. I particularly enjoy his ability to incorporate the tenor and rhythm of Appalachian language and expression. Imagine my delight when I finally ran across a collection of *all seventeen* Silver John short stories in one volume!

John (last name never revealed) is the typical loner hero. He's a wandering singer who carries a guitar strung with pure silver. The time period is never mentioned in any of the stories, but it appears to be the mid-Twentieth Century. In his travels throughout the lesser-known backwoods of the Appalachians, he relies on his courage, wit, and essential goodness to triumph over various malignant creatures and folk-tale monstrosities of the mountain people. (The silver strings of his guitar often come in handy, too.) Here are some examples of his supernatural opponents: the Ugly Bird (a supernatural raptor), the Desrick (a predatory house), One Other (that haunts the Bottomless

Pool on Hark Mountain), the giant Rafe Enoch (a descendant of the Biblical "giants in the earth"), and various and sundry nefarious practitioners of dark magic.

John is sort of a combination folksy knight errant and wandering minstrel. His personal philosophy of life seems to derive from a form of Gospel-based Christianity; and the songs included in almost every story are a combination of actual folk music "from the hills" (based on Wellman's extensive research and experience) and songs masterfully created by Wellman himself.

As I said, I've been a big fan of Wellman's Silver John stories for decades. It was a delight getting reacquainted with such classics as "O Ugly Bird!" and "The Desrick on Yandro" and "Old Devlins Was A-Waiting." It was a special treat to read several Silver John stories that I'd hadn't run across before, such as "Owls Hoot in the Daytime" and "Nobody Ever Goes There." It was an especial treat for me that, in addition to 17 short stories, this collection *also* includes eleven short Silver John vignettes that haven't been previously collected in any volume that I knew of. Each vignette is anywhere from a few paragraphs to a half-page long; and they all demonstrate Wellman's skill at writing *very* short (but satisfying) fantasy or dark fantasy. I highly recommend *John the Balladeer*.

Note: Wellman also wrote five short novels about Silver John: *The Old Gods Waken* (1979), *After Dark* (1980), *The Lost and the Lurking* (1981), *The Hanging Stones* (1982), and *The Voice of the Mountain* (1984). I've read them all. They're good, but I think Wellman's real skill is in writing short stories like those collected in *John the Balladeer*.

(Part 2 in the next issue)



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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. However, there will be no regular second-Sunday meeting in October. **Instead, LSF is hosting a gaming party on Saturday, October 11th, 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

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](#)

May 16-17, 2026 **HANACON**. "Anime, Art, Asian & Pop Culture Convention." Sheraton Baltimore North Hotel (Towson MD). Membership: \$65 (until May 15, 2026); \$70 thereafter and at the door. Website: www.HanaConAnime.com

May 22-25, 2026 **BALTICON 60**. Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace Hotel (Baltimore MD). Guests of Honor: Jim Butcher, Jennifer Blackstream, Elizabeth Leggett (Art GoH). Membership: \$75 thru Feb. 29, 2026; then \$80 thru April 15; then \$85 thru May 15; \$89 at the door (daily rates available). More details as they become available. Website: <https://www.balticon.org/>

Summer 2026. **SHORE LEAVE 46**. "Celebrate Star Trek's 60th Anniversary." (Lancaster PA.) Details on membership, dates, guests and hotel as they become available. Website: www.shore-leave.com

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/>

October 2-4, 2026 **CAPCLAVE 2026**. Rockville Hilton & Executive Meeting Center (Rockville MD). Guests of Honor: Rebecca Roanhorse, Nino Cipri. Details as they become available. Website: <https://capclave.org>



**¡FELIZ DÍA DE
MUERTOS!**



**HAPPY
HALLOWEEN!**