



Lambda Sci-Fi

DC Area Gaylaxians

(202) 232-3141 – Issue # 390 – September 2022

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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 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. The next book discussion will be held **in person on September 22nd**. **All attendees MUST be fully vaccinated.**

Here are the details for the next two discussions:

Sept. 22, 2022 – *A Psalm for the Wild-Built*, by Becky Chambers (moderator: Andy).

Oct. 27, 2022 – *Spear*, by Nicola Griffith (moderator: Carl).

Note: The Virtual Book Club also meets (via Zoom) on the same evening as the face-to-face discussion group: same book, same questions, *different* attendees. Look for the Zoom link in the usual book club notice or on the LSF web page.

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Wanna Buy a Gorgosaurus? info passed along by Carl

Looks like you missed your chance. On July 7th, Sotheby's (the internationally-famous auction house) announced a "natural history auction" to be held on July 28th in New York City; and the highlight of that auction would be a huge Gorgosaurus skeleton. On July 28th, the skeleton sold for \$6.1 million. Sotheby's did not disclose the name of the skeleton's previous owner or of its purchaser ("a wealthy collector").

Gorgosaurus was an apex predator that lived during the Late Cretaceous Period, about 76 million years ago (about 10 million years before its more famous relative, Tyrannosaurus rex). Adult gorgosaurs could grow to a length of about 30 feet and weigh about 3 tons. This particular specimen was discovered in 2018 in the Judith River Formation near Havre, Montana. (Dur-

ing the Cretaceous, it was on the western coast of a massive seaway that divided North America in half.)

The sale of this Gorgosaurus skeleton revived a long-standing feud in the paleontology community. For years, they have decried the increasing commercialization of the field, including the sale of fossils to private buyers.

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***** September 11, 2022 Meeting = IN PERSON! *****

The next LSF meeting will be held on **Sunday, September 11th**. The meeting will be held at Peter and Rob's home, **1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC**. **All attendees MUST be fully vaccinated.** The doors open at 1:30 PM and the meeting will begin at 2:00 PM. Hope to see you there!

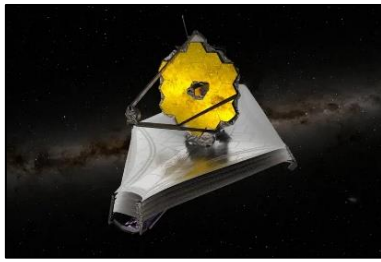


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James Webb Space Telescope

info passed along
by Carl & Wayne #1

At a White House press even on July 11th, NASA revealed the first full-color image from the James Webb Space Telescope. This image is of a cluster of galaxies called SMACS 723. It's what is known as a "deep field" observation, a look into deep space and back in time, capturing the faint light from incredibly distant galaxies as they formed during the infancy of the universe more than 13 billion years ago. It's the equivalent of staring at a "patch of sky approximately the size of a grain of sand held at arm's length by someone on the ground." The White House press event was a preview of more comprehensive images shown at a news conference held on July 12th at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center (Greenbelt MD).

The images are the culmination of a decades-long project that cost about \$10 billion. In the 1980s, scientists began advocating for "the Next Generation Space Telescope," saying that an infrared space observatory would be able to see deeper into the universe (and further back in time), to an era just a few hundred million years after the Big Bang. Construction of Webb's parts began in 2004; and assembly and testing started in 2013. The telescope was repeatedly delayed, and its price tag soared. At one point Congress nearly killed the project. For many years it was unclear if Webb would ever get off the ground. The telescope was finally launched on December 25, 2021 – a partnership composed of NASA, the European Space Agency and the Canadian Space Agency.

The Webb Space Telescope's took almost a month to reach its current solar orbital position approximately a million miles from Earth. It features 18

Minutes of the August LSF Meeting

taken by Scott

TV News

Teresa is enjoying Amazon Prime's *Outer Range* (starring Josh Brodin). There was a lengthy discussion about Apple TV's *For All Mankind* – alternate history of the space program: a female NASA scientist is elected president and is a closet lesbian; the Soviets land on the moon first; and the North Koreans land on Mars first. Peter cannot follow the plot of *Westworld* Season 4; Teresa loved Season 3. Dan advised us about *Tales of the Walking Dead* one-off episodes; the first episode stars Terry Cruz. Rob is giddy over the new Disney+ *She-Hulk* series (starring Tatiana Maslany). Peter reported that David Tennant and Catherine Tate will be returning to *Dr. Who* next year for a special BBC mini-series; and, ostensibly, Neil Patrick Harris will be playing a role of a villain from the 1960's with Q-like abilities.

Film News

The Indigenous cast of *Prey* (the new *Predator* movie) has produced quite a buzz; the film is set in the Northern Great Plains of North America in 1719. Rob shrieked over the screaming goats in *Thor: Love and Thunder*. Why is the *Batgirl* movie not going to be released? Rob indicated that it is horrible, although it is likely to pop up somewhere at some point. Peter listed some genre movies coming this Autumn: *Black Adam*, *Wakanda Forever*, *Avatar: The Way of Water*, and *Shazam! Fury of the Gods*.



hexagonal gold-plated plates: individually-maneuverable mirrors that function like a single mirror about 21 feet across. The "giant light bucket" is open to the universe like a flower, protected from the Sun's radiation by a five-layered tennis-court-sized sun shield. (The shield and other components were folded up at launch and had to be deployed during the telescope's journey to its orbital position.) The Webb is designed to observe in the infrared portion of the electromagnetic spectrum, gathering

Other News

No one at the meeting will be attending this year's World Con in Chicago, aka ChiCon 8.

Rob listed the upcoming LSF events. LSF Book Discussions: *The Extraordinaries* (first book of the series) by T J Klune (Aug. 25); *A Psalm for the Wild-Built: Monk & Robot* by Becky Chambers (Sept. 22). Finally, we watched trailers for *She-Hulk* and *Wakanda Forever*.

Addendum from David K (as posted in Facebook)

I won't be at the meeting today, because I'm attending a friend's wedding. But this is when I would normally do my little Fall preview of genre programming, so I wanted to post some info about what's coming up.

There are very few new genre shows coming to network television. However, one of them is extremely exciting for me: *Quantum Leap!* The *Quantum Leap* continuation/reboot/sequel series premieres September 19 on NBC. Did I mention I'm very excited?

There's also *The Winchesters*, a *Supernatural* prequel, coming to the CW on 10/11. DC Comics adaptation *Gotham Nights* will air on CW, date TBD. And FOX will air a pair of animated sitcoms: *Grimsburg*, which is some kind of *noir* or something; and *Krapopolis*, from *Rick and Morty* creator Dan Harmon, set in ancient Greece.

Meanwhile, there's been a veritable bloodbath at the CW, with the following genre shows cancelled (or ended): *4400*, *Batwoman*, *Charmed*, *Legacies*, *Legends of Tomorrow*, *Naomi*, *Roswell New Mexico*, *Tom Swift*, and genre-adjacent game show *Legends of the Hidden Temple*.

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light at wavelengths inaccessible to the Hubble Telescope. (Most of the Hubble images are not infrared and are often clouded by dust and gas that Webb can see through.)

Despite being "dinged" by a micrometeoroid recently, the Webb's performance has exceeded expectations. For the next 5½ years or more, the Webb will study the formation of the earliest galaxies and the evolution of the universe as it has expanded. It will also

(continued on page 4)



Nichelle Nichols

1932 – 2022

Here's what David Betancourt said in his "Appreciation" article in the August 2nd *Washington Post*: "Nichelle Nichols boldly went where no Black woman had gone before—and gave sci-fi fans of color a bridge to the stars."

Nichols was born in Robbins IL (a suburb of Chicago) and was educated in the Chicago area, New York City, and Los Angeles. Between acting and singing engagements, Nichols did occasional modeling work. It was while she was acting in *Kicks and Co.* (a not-very-successful musical satire) in Chicago that she was spotted by Hugh Hefner; and he promptly booked her for his Chicago Playboy Club. She toured the US, Canada, and Europe as a singer with the Duke Ellington and Lionel Hampton bands; and she was frequently a stage actress (which she said she preferred to television work). In 1964, Nichols was a guest actress in the TV series *The Lieutenant*, which was Gene Roddenberry's first television series – the episode dealt with racial prejudice.

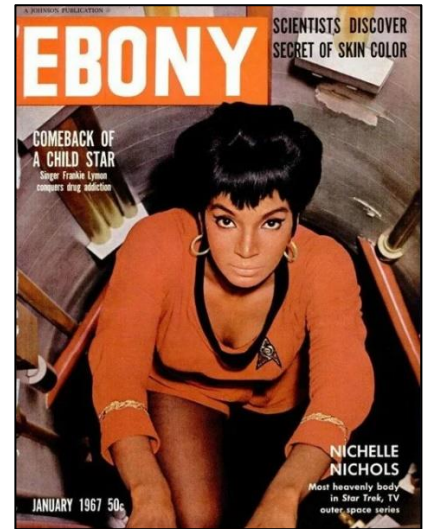
From 1966 to 1969, Nichols appeared in the iconic role of Nyota Uhura during the original *Star Trek* series. Two episodes ("Charlie X" and "The Conscience of the King") even featured her singing talents. Toward the end of Season 1, Nichols contemplated leaving *Star Trek* in favor of a Broadway show business opportunity and (famously) was talked out of it. While attending an NAACP banquet, she was told that a fan really wanted to meet her – the fan turned out to be Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. King told her that *Star*

Trek was the only show that he and his wife Coretta would allow their three little children to stay up and watch. When Nichols admitted to him that she was thinking about leaving the show for a Broadway role, he is reported to have said: "You cannot, you cannot... for the first time on television we will be seen as we should be seen every day, as intelligent, quality, beautiful people..." He encouraged her to stay with the series because she was providing a vital role model for Black children and young women across the country, as well as for other children who would see Black people appearing as equals. And, of course, she stayed with *Star Trek*. Actresses such as Whoopi Goldberg ("Guinan" in *ST:TNG*) and Sonequa Martin-Green ("Michael Burnham" in *Star Trek: Discovery*) – as well as former NASA astronaut Mae Jemison – cited Nichols's role as Uhura as an inspiration for their careers. And, in 2012, Nichols met President Barak Obama in the Oval Office, and he admitted that was "definitely a Trekker" and that he "had a crush" on her when he was younger.

After the cancellation of *Star Trek*, she reprised the role of Uhura in *Star Trek: The Animated Series* (1994, voice work), six *Star Trek* films, and the fan-produced *Star Trek: Of Gods and Men* (2007). Archival footage of her was included in the *ST:DS9* episode "Trials and Tribble-ations" (1996); and archival audio of her was included in the *Star Trek: Prodigy* episode "Kobayashi" (2022).

In between all her *Star Trek* work, Nichols continued to work on stage and television, including voice-work for such animated series as *Batman: The Animated Series* (1994), *Futurama* (2 episodes, 2000-2002), and *The Simpsons* (2004). She also had a recurring role as "Nana Dawson" during five episodes of *Heroes* (2007).

After the cancellation of *Star Trek*, Nichols volunteered her time in a special NASA project to recruit minority and female personnel for the



agency. The program was a success, including among its recruits Dr. Sally Ride (first US female astronaut) and Guion Bluford (first African-American astronaut). Starting in the mid-1980s, Nichols served on the board of governors of the National Space Institute (today's National Space Society), a non-profit educational space advocacy organization. In 1994, she published an autobiography, *Beyond Uhura: Star Trek and Other Memories*. Nichols's work with NASA is heavily featured in the documentary about her life: *Woman in Motion* (2021).

In 1982, Robert A. Heinlein dedicated his novel *Friday* to Nichols; and Asteroid 68410 Nichols is named in her honor. In 1992, she was awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame; and in 2016 Nichols was the first woman to receive a Life Career Award from the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Films.



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

Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians (LSF) is an organization for gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and trans-generated (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 copy of this monthly newsletter and a membership directory. 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 on Sunday, **September 11th, at Peter and Rob's home, 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC. All attendees MUST be fully vaccinated.** 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, Peter & Scott

Sept. 1-5, 2022 **80TH WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION (CHICON 8)**. Hyatt Regency Chicago Hotel (Chicago IL). GoH: Erle Korshak; Artist GoH: Floyd Norman. Membership: \$240. Webpage: <https://chicon.org/>
On-line registration: <https://registration.chicon.org/>

Sept. 24, 2022 **RAINBOW SPACE MAGIC 3.0** ("an online LGBTQ+ science fiction and fantasy convention to discuss the craft of writing queer SFF"). Free to participants and convention-goers.
To receive further updates, [please sign up for our mailing list here.](#) Webpage: <https://www.rainbowspacemagic.org/>

Sept. 30 – Oct. 2, 2022 **CAPCLAVE 2022**. Hilton Washington DC/Rockville Hotel & Executive Meeting Center (Rockville MD). GoHs: Ursula Vernon, Irene Gallo. Membership: \$60 to Aug. 31st; \$65 from Sept. 1st to Sept. 15th. On-line registration at: <https://www.capclave.org/capclave/capclave22/registration.php>
Webpage: <https://www.capclave.org> Info at: info@capclave.org

Oct. 14-16, 2022 **CONFABULOUS! 2022**. (hosted by North Country Gaylaxians) Crowne Plaza Suites MSP Airport – Mall of America (formerly the Crowne Plaza Aire) (Bloomington, MN). On-line registration available through the website.
Webpage: <http://confabulous.org>

Nov. 18-20, 2022 **PHILCON 2022**. Doubletree by Hilton (Cherry Hill NJ). Principal Speaker: Keith DeCandido; Artist GoH: Charles Urbach. Membership: \$55 thru 7/31/2022. Website: www.philcon.org Registration: www.membership.philcon.org

Nov. 25-27, 2022 **CHESSIECON 2022**. (A very LGBTQ+ friendly con.) Delta Hunt Valley Hotel (Hunt Valley MD). GoH: Danielle Ackley-McPhail; Music GoH: Blibbering Humdingers. Membership: \$50 until 10/30; \$55 after that; \$60 at the door; daily memberships available. On-line registration (via PayPal): <https://johogan.org/chessieconlogin.cfm> OR by mail to: TSFS, Inc., PO Box 83032, Gaithersburg MD 20883-3032 (checks payable to: TSFS, Inc.).
Info at: info@chessiecon.org Website: <https://chessiecon.org/>

Feb. 10-12, 2023 **FARPOINT**. Delta by Marriott Hunt Valley (Hunt Valley MD). Guest: Wilson Cruz (*ST: Discovery*).
For more information: www.FarPointCon.com

James Webb Space Telescope

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look at objects in our own Solar System, such as small worlds beyond the orbit of Neptune.

To see the initial image of SMACS 0723 – and check out subsequent posted images from the Webb – go to this website:

https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/webb/main/index.html

Skymap showing the initial five targets for observation by the James Webb Space Telescope 

