

# P.S.F.S. News

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The Newsletter of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society

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April 1995

*Our April Guest:*

## Jack Chalker

(take 2)

### **Bio: Jack Chalker**

Jack L. Chalker was born in Baltimore on December 17, 1944. He began reading at an early age and naturally gravitated to what are still his twin loves: science fiction and history. While still in high school, Chalker began writing for the amateur science-fiction press and in 1960 launched the Hugo-nominated fanzine *Mirage*. A year later he founded The Mirage Press, which grew into a major specialty publishing company for nonfiction and reference books about science fiction and fantasy. During this time, he developed correspondence and friendships with many leading SF and fantasy authors and editors. He is an internationally recognized expert on H.P. Lovecraft and on the specialty press in SF and fantasy.

After graduating with twin majors in history and English from Towson State College in 1966, Chalker taught high school history and geography in the Baltimore city public schools with time out to serve with the 135th Air Commando Group, Maryland Air National Guard, during the Vietnam War era, and, as a sideline, sound-engineered some of the period's outdoor rock concerts. He received a graduate degree in the esoteric field of the History of Ideas from Johns Hopkins University in 1969.

His first novel, *A Jungle of Stars*, was published in 1976, and two years later, with the major popular success of his novel *Midnight at the Well of Souls*, he quit teaching to become a full-time professional novelist. That same year, he married Eva C. Whitley on a ferryboat in the middle of the Susquehanna River and moved to rural western Maryland. Their first son, David, was born in 1981.

Chalker is an active conversationalist, a traveler who has been through all fifty states and in dozens of foreign countries, and a member of numerous local and national organizations ranging from the Sierra Club to the American Film Institute, the Maryland Academy of Sciences, and the Washington Science Fiction Association, to name a few. He retains his interest in consumer electronics, has his own satellite dish, and frequently reviews computer hardware and software for national magazines. For five years, until the magazine's demise, he had a regular column on science fantasy publishing in *Fantasy Review* and continues to write a column on computers for *S-100 Journal*. He is a 3-term past treasurer of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America, a noted speaker on science fiction at numerous colleges and universities as well as a past lecturer at the Smithsonian and the National Institutes of Health, and a well-known auctioneer of science fiction and fantasy art, having sold over five million dollars' worth to date.

Chalker has received many writing awards, including the Hamilton-Brackett Memorial Award for his *Well World* books, the Gold Medal of the prestigious *West Coast Review of Books* for *Spirits of Flux* and *Anchor*, the Daedalus Award, and the E.E. Smith Skylark Award for his career writings. He is also a passionate lover of steamboats and particularly ferryboats and has ridden over 300 ferries in the U.S. and elsewhere.

He lives with his wife, Eva, sons David and Steven, a Pekingese named Mavra Chang, and Stonewall J. Pussycat, the world's dumbest cat, in the Catoctin Mountain region of western Maryland, near Camp David. A short story collection with autobiographical commentary, *Dance Band on the Titanic*, was published by Del Rey Books in 1988.

# Minutes

## March General Meeting

Minutes of the General Meeting, held on March 10, 1995, 8:00 p.m., in the South America Room at International House, 37th & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 p.m.

**Proxies:** none.

## Corrections to the Minutes

Todd D. said that Sheri S. Tepper's name was spelled with an "i" not a "y". The vote regarding Refreshments in last month's Newsletter should have read, "Passed 33 to 5 with 1 abstention." The 2001 meeting information was incomplete. (*Sorry about that.* — CK)

*Minutes were approved as corrected.*

## Officers' Reports

**President:** Oz introduced Julian May.

**Vice-President:** Not here.

**Secretary:** "I'm done." The 1995 Directory should be available at the May General Meeting.

If you have anything you would like to see in the Newsletter please send or give it to the Secretary in writing.

**Treasurer:** Ed is in California. Pay your dues.

**Senior Two Year Director,** Barb Higgins: "I, however, am not free at last, I have another year."

We finally got status on the pins. Barb needs a check from the Treasurer.

**Special One Year Director,** Todd Dashoff: Philcon will be exchanging ads with Balticon for the Program Book.

"Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, I'm free at last."

**One Year Director,** Mark Trebing: "I'm assimilating the Treasurer."

## Committee Reports

**Philcon 1995:** (Jack Williamson has since agreed to be our GoH.)

**Programming:** April's guest will be Jack Chalker. October's guest will be Fred Pohl. Fred Pohl will also be the keynote speaker at the Banquet.

The Barnes & Noble of Jenkintown representative has told Oz that they would like us to continue our monthly promotional event indefinitely. Oz told the representative he would like to do one in June, July, October, and November. She agreed.

**Book and Movie Discussions:** See "Upcoming Events".

**Special Events:** See "Upcoming Events".

**No Fund:** John Prenis thanked Lew Wolkoff for his donation. He has several bags and a box of good stuff. Please take as much as you want, it's free.

**Publicity:** Pam Fernsler said the flyers on Julian May arrived at the stores last week. We had an ad in The Welcome Mat. (*At least 2 people showed up at the meeting after reading the ad.* — CK)

**Space Sciences:** Hank Smith has information on several upcoming science related events, conventions, and a petition about NASA's Delta Clipper. See him if you're interested.

## Old Business:

**Scapegoat:** Oz brought up the fact that we have to un-table the motion to postpone the motion to abolish the office of Scapegoat. Someone moved, many second, to postpone until next month. The motion to table passed many to few with one abstention.

## New Business:

**1995 Budget:** Joni Dashoff said the place she has been purchasing the donuts from is going out of business. If she is to continue getting the donuts she will have to spend 50 cents more per dozen. Oz said since the projected expenses for Refreshments are \$250 and the actual budget is \$500 we shouldn't have a problem. Lew Wolkoff was concerned that there was no budget for the Education Committee. Oz said the budget for the writing contest was covered under the Philcon 1995 budget.

Seeing no more discussion about the budget Oz called for the vote. Passed unanimously.

**Treasurer:** Gary Feldbaum said that Ed is going to be spending most of his remaining time as Treasurer in California. He also said that the Society will need the books and checks worked on during that time. Gary Feldbaum moved, several second, that Mark Trebing be made Assistant Treasurer for the balance of March. Oz called for discussion and seeing none called for the vote. Passed unanimously.

## Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 pm.

## Philcon Committee Note

### A Message from the Liaison Staff

September will be the cut-off for requests from the hotel. The liaison staff will not guarantee that anything requested after that date will be supplied. Reasonable changes, additions, or new requests submitted after that date will be accepted at the discretion of the liaison staff. It is suggested that people with audio-visual needs try to provide them from alternate sources rather than the hotel. Hotel-provided equipment is very expensive. A prime example: 1 VHS cost us \$75.00 per day, for a 3-day rental cost of \$225. Philcon could have purchased one for this cost.

## PSFS News

The Corporate Minutes & Newsletter of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society  
Rich Kabakjian, Secretary, Editor & Publisher  
Carol Kabakjian, Assistant Editor  
Henry Lazarus & Lee Weinstein, Contributing Editors

PSFS News is looking for articles of interest to the Society, line art or drawings, letters of comment, reviews, or just about anything, as long as it isn't more minutes. Please send all submissions to P.O. Box 8303, Philadelphia PA 19101, or give them to the Secretary in writing. Deadline for any particular month is usually two weeks prior to the next General Meeting of the Society.

PSFS News is free to Active and General Members of the Society in good standing. Non-members or inactive members may subscribe to PSFS News for \$10/year. Other clubs and Societies may trade for their newsletters.

PSFS News is entirely produced on an Apple IIGS using TimeOut-enhanced Appleworks 3.0 and Appleworks GS, printed on a 9-pin dot-matrix Imagewriter II, photo-reduced on a Canon copier, and printed on recycled paper when possible.

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# Board Meeting Minutes

## March Board Meeting

The Board Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, March 15th, at Oz's. Called to order at 8:15 p.m. Present: Oz, Rich, Barb, Mark. Others: Janis, Hank, John P.

## Officers' Reports

**President:** Oz has tried to contact Neil Gaimon about being Special Guest at Philcon. Oz hopes to get a return call tomorrow from Mr. Gaimon.

Nancy Lebowitz, the button lady, is moving to Philadelphia soon.

**Vice-President:** Not here.

**Secretary:** No report.

**Treasurer:** Not here. Mark Trebing said he's trying to get things together for his term of office.

**Senior Two Year Director,** Barb Higgins: said she wants a check. The button people want 50% up front.

**Special One Year Director,** Todd Dashoff: Not here.

**One Year Director,** Mark Trebing: has been asked by the 2001 committee to approach the P.S.F.S. Board about having a table at the General Meetings to sell 2001 merchandise. Oz said we've never assigned tables to anyone. Mark said the committee wanted to see if anyone would object to their setting up a table. Oz said they'd have to comply with the rule of no selling during the meeting or guest speech. They could sell before the meeting, during the break, and after the meeting. Oz asked if anyone present had any objections. There were none.

Mark said that Terry Graybill had contacted him to ask which meeting would be for the Annual Hugo Panel. Mark said she was concerned because the July meeting was changed to the 21st. Oz said he's already scheduled the April and October speakers, but the rest of the months were still open. Oz said to have Terry contact him.

Committee Reports None.

Old Business: None.

New Business: None.

## Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

## Upcoming Events

For details, call Ozzie Fontecchio (215) 342-1672.

### Movie Excursions:

Contact Ozzie if you have any suggestions.

### Book Discussions:

April — Bill the Galactic Hero, by Harry Harrison.  
2:00pm, Sunday, April 23rd, at the  
Rutkowski's, 2315 Carol Lane, Norristown,  
PA, (215) 277-0209.

May — *Towing Jehovah*, by James Morrow. Time  
and place TBA.

June — *Brave New World*, by Aldous Huxley. Time  
and place TBA.

## Announcements

If you have any announcements or reports, the best way to make sure they are reported accurately is to submit them in writing. The Secretary (and his assistant) would greatly appreciate it.

Remember your Dues are due as of April 1. If you haven't paid your dues for 1994 you now owe double dues. The number of meetings you've attended DOES NOT COUNT. Your dues are still due as of April 1 each year. (This is your first official notice from the Treasurer. If you haven't paid your dues by July 1st you will be automatically suspended. — Mark Trebing.)

**Origins '95:** the national gaming convention, is being held in the new Pennsylvania convention center on 13 through 16 of July this year. John Desmond had registration information.

**Nancy Lebowitz:** is moving to Philadelphia, possibly in June. However, she is moving into an apartment that's smaller than her current one and will be sacrificing a large chunk of her book collection. If you are interested contact Ira Kaplowitz.

**Directory 1994:** is being transformed into the 1995 Directory and will be ready "real Soon now". (Hopefully by the May General Meeting.)

**Avi Freedman** is making available to the Society several Internet accounts on Net Access at no charge. Philcon, the Society, the 2001 bid committee, etc. will be able to use the accounts.

**The Millennium Philcon:** The next open meeting of the Philadelphia Worldcon in 2001 bid committee will be held at 2pm, on Sunday, April 30, at Anne Norton's, 609 Cleveland Ave., Riverside, NJ, (609) 764-8294.

**1989 Philcon Program Books** in hard cover are available through Todd Dashoff.

**Philcon T-Shirts** and P.S.F.S. Carry Bags are for sale. See Ed Rutkowski.

**Philcon '93 Masquerade Video** copies are still available.

**Robin's Bookstore** has agreed to give all members of the Society a 15% discount on all regularly-priced merchandise. Bring in a copy of this newsletter, and show them this announcement, to receive your discount. Robin's Bookstore is located at 108 South 13th Street, Philadelphia.

**Membership Attendance:** Please sign the sign-in book yourself. We want your signature, not someone else's in your space. This will help us to verify that you are who you say you are.

**Copies of the By-laws and Standing Rules** will be available at the P.S.F.S. meeting.

**Call the P.S.F.S. Hotline**

**(215) 957-4004**

P.S.F.S. — Philcon — Meeting Info — Leave Messages  
Last-Minute Meeting Cancellation Info (Snow-outs)

# The Lazarus Review

by Henry Leon Lazarus

I look for science fiction and fantasy novels that stand out. I am especially interested in those works that don't clone what others have previously written, but instead diversify into new breeds of fiction. The book of the month (and maybe of the year) is such a work. Walter Jon Williams' latest takes place in an Orwellian, industrial strength, fantasy-based civilization. Magic power comes from plasm, a limited natural resource that is piped through the giant cities that cover this world. When a minor plasm administrator discovers a hidden source, she is thrown into contact with an ex-dictator, revolutionary, *Metroloitan* (hard from Harper Prism) who uses her discovery in his revolution against another government.

Felicity Savage's latest takes place on the world of Salt and is so alien, it is impossible to categorize it as either fantasy or science fiction. The worshipped "gods" of this world have the ability to teleport. The "humans" have the ability to create ghost statues, the oddest art form I've ever read, by killing horribly and quickly. This absorbing first book about *Humility Garden's* (paper from ROC) experiences starts with her arrival at the city as a companion to a man selected to be made into a ghost statue because of his beauty, and continues with her becoming one of those who create such things, rising in their society to its highest levels. Coupled with the growth of atheism and beginning breakdown of a world wide culture, this is a fascinating look at the nature of belief.

New readers of horror and fantasy will find the classic tales in *Between Time and Terror* (paper) worth looking at.

Marion Zimmer Bradley's quite readable love story set in Roman-conquered Britain *The Forrest House* is out in a trade edition. It is more an historical novel than a fantasy, but it is fun.

Marion Zimmer Bradley's latest is her sequel to Black Trillium, *Lady of the Trillium* (hard from Bantam Spectra). In the former, three major authors each had a sister to work with. Now Ms. Bradley's character is two hundred years old and dying. She has to train her head-strong successor to the archmagery, deal with her dying body, and solve the problem of the wild priesthood. The book is well done and a must for followers of the series.

Plotted by a thousand bards, Stephen Grundy's *Rhinegold* (paper) is a well-intentioned-attempt to put the entire Seigfried story in fictional form.

Linda Nagata's first novel is a somewhat confusing view of a nano-technological future in which the gap between rich and poor is so great that the rich could almost be considered gods. With the ability to throw minds not only into other minds, but also into computers, and with the ability to grow new bodies, life and death takes on new meaning. When *The Bohr Maker* (paper) is stolen and injected accidentally into one of the very poor, she gains the ability to make the microscopic machines to do almost anything from changing the way people think and feel, to modifying their bodies.

"Mr. Television" David Gerrold's current *Star Wolf* novel, *The Middle of Nowhere* (paper) is more of a pilot for a series than a real story. The crew has to deal with imps infesting their ship who might send signals to the Morethan

(modified human) enemy while coming to terms with themselves. It would make a better television series than the currently calcified Star Trek.

The Starship Troopers of the nineties are cold and heartless. William Barton's version of that classic story, *When Heaven Fell* (paper from Aspect) has the troopers fighting for the computer civilization that conquered and almost annihilated Earth and are working with allies who suffered the same. The book is dark and deep and so hetero-sexually masculine you can almost smell the semen.

R. A. Salvatore's *The Sword of Bedwyr* (hard) proves that there just isn't enough swashbuckling fantasy. With prose as blunt as the arena fight that starts the story, and as unimaginative as the gold-guarding dragon where the crimson cloak is located, Mr. Salvatore still manages to have fun with two thieves who find themselves at the heart of a revolution against an evil wizard.

Terry Brooks at his worst writes much better than that, and *Witches Brew* (hard from Del Rey) is a fun return to the Magic Kingdom. The evil witch has convinced the king's teenage daughter (born in the last book of the series) to create monsters for the king to fight. The story is routine, predictable, but kept me interested.

With *Profiteer* (paper from DAW) S. Andrew Swann proves himself one of the best of the hard-boiled, action-adventure science fiction writers today. The only human world not a member of the Confederacy, Bakunin, a world without laws or government (you don't sue, you lay siege) has an arms company taken over by Confederacy marines. The cyborg owner of that company has no choice by to go in to recover the cash in its secure safe. Part political novel, part break-in novel with lots of shooting and new types of weapons to drool over, the tale is impossible to put down and will leave you eager for the sequel.

Mercedes Lackey and her husband Larry Dixon return to the Mage War period ten years after the final destruction detailed in *The Black Gryphon* (paper) in *The White Gryphon* (hard). As ambassadors to the only surviving civilization on the planet, the gryphon and his friends have to deal with a multi-murderer who is attempting to arrange blame on them. This is also the earliest appearance of a long-lived villain from a previous book. I enjoyed this a lot and am waiting for the next volume.

John DeChancie tells of a thirteen-year-old *Living With Aliens* (Paper from Ace) in his attic. They give him rides on their flying saucer, smart pills, and help with a date until they are caught by their authorities. Mr. DeChancie missed no chance to have fun with UFO experts and talk show hosts and this light parody is a good cheer-up.

William H. Keith, Jr. concludes his excellent Warstrider series with *Symbionts* (paper from Avonova). Readers who avoided this series because they thought it based on Japanese cartoons missed something special. Sure the giant walking tanks are here, but also real aliens (not Star Trek people in human costumes), solid characters, an important revolution against the Japanese who control human space. In the final one, the two alien species work with humans in their fight against the earth empire.

Since I started with an industrial strength fantasy, it makes sense to end with one. *The Iron Dragon's Daughter* by Michael Swanwick (paper from Avonova), a New York Times notable book of the year, is not for everybody. This tale of a changeling in a fantasy world trying to return to ours

takes place in a nightmarish version of our present with children working in dragon factories, prom queens sacrificed by being burnt in wicker baskets, and college classes tithed, one tenth of the students being fed to the gargoyles every ten years. Horror fans will adore it, but it gave me nightmares.

## Membership Status

(Note: Status changes from Inactive to General or General to Active become effective after the meeting has adjourned)

**First Timers:** Denis Andrzejewski, Jack Mulcahy,

Mark Banash, Jeff Harris, Rina Jurceka,

Jan B. Berends, Cati Coe

**New Members:** Greg Ventura, Sharon Carroll-Ventura

**New Active:** Mitch Marmel, Rick Newswanger,

Ray Rooney, Tawn Stokes

**Returning Inactive:** John DeWeese

**Members at the March Meeting:** 54

(48 active, 5 general, 1 inactive)

**Non-Members at the March Meeting:** 9

## P.S.F.S. Birthdays

If you don't see your name here and you would like to, please send your name and birth date (year not necessary) to: P.S.F.S. Birthday List, Philadelphia S.F. Society, P. O. Box 8303, Philadelphia, PA 19101.

Apr 2 Marian Meschkow	May 2 Mark Poliner
Apr 5 Pamela J. Fernsler	May 6 Leslie M. Wood
Apr 15 Michael Jeffrey Cohen	May 10 David Szent-Gyorgyi
Apr 17 Leonard Carpenter	May 12 Alan Breakstone
Apr 17 Michael Fisher	May 12 Elaine Frank
Apr 18 Frank J. Curran III	May 13 Ozzie Fontecchio
Apr 18 Marie Schwarzl	May 18 Stephen C. Fisher
Apr 21 Jeffrey Kasten	May 19 Sue Dyke
Apr 25 Terry S. S. Graybill	May 25 Jim Wills
Apr 27 Giorgio Lombardi	May 26 Gene Hamill
Apr 30 Peter Hottenrott	May 30 Marguerite Rutkowski

## Wanted: Dead or Alive

**P.S.F.S. and Philcon Archive Materials**

Would you like to clear that back closet of old, moldering Program Books and other Society-related junk?

If the answer is "Yes!" then now's the opportunity you've been looking for!

We aren't asking you to give up your only (and possibly valuable) copies of Society related materials. We would, however, like to talk to you about making copies (at the Society's expense, of course) for Archives.

All you have to do is contact the Society's Archivist, Carol Kabakjian, at (215) 623-1139, leave a message on the Society's Hot Line, or send a brief note to the P.O. Box.

*Especially wanted: any Newsletters or Philcon items (program books, pocket programs, flyers, etc.) printed before 1981.*

## Last Words

"It was the dawn of the third age of fankind... ten years after the 'I'm Gary, He's Larry' war. The PSFS News was a 'zine given form. Its goal: to prevent another war, by creating a place where Con Chairs and Committees could work out their differences peacefully. It's a report of all; a tome produced at home, for birthday lists, minutes, special events, and book reviews. A quarter of a dollar's worth of minutes and articles, trapped in two million, five hundred thousand dots of matrix printing... mailed alone in the night. This is the story of the last of the Rich/Carol Newsletters. The year is 1995. The name of the game is... **retirement!**"

Now that that's out of the way, I'd like to once again thank the following people for their invaluable contributions: first and foremost, to Carol, the other half of The Amazing Two-Headed Secretary team, for nearly five years of transcribing some really boring and sometimes quite irritating tapes of meetings into minutes; Lee Weinstein, for his excellent summaries of the Book Discussion Group's monthly meetings; Henry Lazarus, for his monthly overview of what's out there in the bookstores; and Mark Trebing, for leaving me his legacy: the current Newsletter format, which I adopted completely upon Carol's taking over for him in August of 1990.

Some of you might consider this column to be somewhat self-indulgent. It is. We've earned the right to a little self-indulgence. Four and a half years is a long time to spend in this job; even though the official Wearer of the Hat changed in 1993, the publishing jobs remained constant. New features were added to the newsletter; some have remained, some have disappeared, some have come and gone sporadically. Some features I would have liked to have added never materialized: a regular review of the previous month's Guest Speaker program; a "What's New in the Media" column; the inclusion of spot art to dress things up. I mention them here as possible suggestions to future Secretaries; there is lots of room for improvement.

And for those of you who still don't believe it, this newsletter is *not* laser-printed. It's printed on an 8-pin dot-matrix printer driven by a ten-year-old Apple IIs. Amazing what you can produce with primitive technology, isn't it?

(Apologies to Harlan Ellison for the first paragraph.)

And that's all I have to say.

— Rich Kabakjian

## Board of Directors

President, Oz Fontecchio.....	(215) 342-1672
Vice-President, Tony Finan.....	(215) 739-4918
Secretary, Tim Binder.....	(610) 259-1351
Treasurer, Mark Trebing.....	(215) 943-3462
2 Yr. Director, Barbara Higgins.....	(215) 725-8825
2 Yr. Director, Bridget Boyle.....	(215) 423-2076
1 Yr. Director, Pete Radatti.....	(610) 828-4566

Questions? Comments? Contact any Board Member at the above numbers, or use the Hot Line; please call at a reasonable time.



## Meeting Notices

*Unless otherwise specified, General Meetings of the Society will be held on the second Friday of each month in the South America room at International House, 37th & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA. Business meeting starts at 8:00 p.m. Program starts at 9:00 p.m.*

**April General Meeting** will be held Friday, April 21, 1995. The program speaker will be author, Jack Chalker. *Note date change!*

**May General Meeting** will be held Friday, May 12, 1995. The program speaker will be announced.

**Board of Directors:** next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 25, 8:00 pm, at Mark Trebing's, 1970 New Rodgers Rd #L41, Levittown, PA, (215) 943-3462.

**Philcon '95:** the next meeting will be held on Sunday, May 7, 1995, 2:00 pm, at Mark Trebing's.

## About the Society

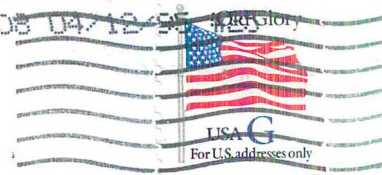
The Philadelphia Science Fiction Society is a non-profit organization that meets monthly to discuss and promote science fiction and fantasy in literature, the arts and popular culture. Meetings are held the second Friday of each month, at the International House, 37th & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia. Meetings consist of business proceedings from 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., followed by a guest speaker involved in some area of science fiction or fantasy, such as writers, editors, artists, publishers, etc...

In addition, P.S.F.S. sponsors an annual science fiction conference, Philcon, and has many special interest subgroups, such as the Book Discussion Group, which meets monthly to discuss a work of science fiction or fantasy, and the Special Events Group, which attends science fiction and fantasy movies and other events.

Membership in the Society is open to everyone. Becoming a member is easy: attend 1 meeting (we'll say, "Hello"). At your second meeting, you can nominate yourself for membership (or ask someone else to nominate you). At the next meeting you attend following your nomination, you're eligible to be voted in as a General Member. Our current dues are \$15.00 for a full year's membership, and attendance at 5 meetings each year maintains the status of Active Member.



The Philadelphia Science Fiction Society  
P.O. Box 8303  
Philadelphia, PA 19101



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