

THE WSFA

JOURNAL

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For February, take the blue pill. For March, take the red pill.

Contents

- From the Editor
- Essays, Musings and Diverse Stuff
- MEETING MINUTES PALOOZA! Minutes of January meetings and February First Friday Meeting
- Reviews

From the Editor...

Hello, all!

It's a two-fer this month, as the long-delayed February Journal collides headlong with the nascent March Journal. Poor beggars never saw it coming.

However, this does catch us up in one swell foop with all the meeting minutes for the past two months. Given how many column inches they occupy, meeting minutes are a godsend for your editor, who struggles mightily (and without much assistance *hint hint*) to fill these pages for your amusement and edification.

Now let's wait and see how long it takes for someone to mention “global warming” in the context of the nice weather we had on Friday the 2nd.

See you all soon!

Drew



Essays, musings and diverse Stuff

Why March?

I really have nothing to say, which means this essay won't amount to more than a couple thousand words.

March-the month of "spring forward" as of 2007, not to mention the proverbial "coming in like a lion and going out like a lamb"- is here. I'm sure the people who've endured the storms in the deep South and Midwest can't wait for this month to be over already.

To me, March is notable because it's one of only a few months without a federal holiday. That seems like a terrible shame. Why not declare St. Patrick's Day a national day of celebration?

Ah well. Maybe we'll have to make do with the start of spring and the imminence of Easter.

But as a final thought: isn't it odd that this month's name is the only verb in the bunch? Where are we to "march" and why? I do not know...

WSFA Meeting Minutes

WSFA Minutes

First Friday

Scheiner's home, Virginia

January 5, 2007

CONVENED: The meeting convened at 9:14pm.

ATTENDEES: Drew Bittner, Katherine Bittner, Will Frank, Cathy Green, Paul Haggerty, Elspeth Kovar, Sam Lubell, Nicki Lynch, Rich Lynch, Bob MacIntosh, Barry Newton, Judy Newton, Meridel Newton, Rebecca Prather, Judy Scheiner, Sam Scheiner, George Shaner, Steve Smith, Lee Strong, Gayle Surette, Elizabeth Twitchell, Michael Walsh, Ivy Yap

SECRETARY'S REPORT: The Secretary summed up the minutes of the third Friday meeting in December.

TREASURER'S REPORT: WSFA has \$10,061 and change in its account, plus approximately \$15,000 in CDs and Capclave money (c.\$1500)

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Capclave Past: Elspeth reported that there were 378 memberships (and 87 comps, which was higher than last year). She thanked Cathy Green for publicity help and noted that the magnetic poetry board in the con suite was well received. The fancy dress reception was also well received and went later than planned. She noted that the hotel was very professional and helpful in resolving issues, adding that the profit from the convention was roughly \$2300 thanks to Sam Pierce and the Hilton Hotel. There was appreciation for the Capclave staff. Elspeth suggested that the Capclave profits should be put into an account specifically to pay for Capclave activities,

rather than making Capclave chairs request money from WSFA. It was not brought to a motion at this time.

Capclave Present & Future: really nothing new to report. Hotel bills are paid, Will Frank is going to Marscon in Williamsburg and will take Capclave 2007 flyers.

Capclave Far Future, DC 2012 and WFC: no report.

Publications: The January 2007 WSFA Journal was produced.

Entertainment: Will asked for members to join the committee. He mentioned Games Day in Brunswick, MD (Saturday, January 6), to which he thought of taking flyers.

Rules Committee: no report.

Trustees: no report.

Committee to Talk About Science Fiction: The committee intended to discuss the January issue of *Asimov's*.

Awards Committee: Cathy re-read Colleen's draft proposal. There was a motion on the award, followed by discussion. There appear to be enough interested parties for a vote on filling five places on the committee. Questions were raised regarding the award budget, accordance with WSFA election procedure, nominations must have "fewer than" 20,000 words and not "less", and no sunset provision is currently envisioned—if the award falls by the wayside, no action need be taken to cancel it formally. There was some consensus around the name "WSFA Small Press Award." One possibility discussed was to solicit input from past Capclave GOHs.

OLD BUSINESS: Martin's motion is still tabled. There is no progress on incorporation or on the club's tax situation.

NEW BUSINESS: The website has the old (Gilliland) address, which must be fixed ASAP. Paul agreed to change the address to the Scheiners'. The motion to get a WSFA post office box was tabled, pending discussion with designated agent Erica Ginter. Elizabeth Twitchell brought a six pack of Belgian beer for a quick auction and raised \$14 from George Shaner.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: send email announcements to Drew. Nicki Lynch's quilt auction had not yet concluded. A dark blue fleece jacket was found, owner unknown. Rebecca Prather seeks a female roommate for Balticon. Lee Strong recommended *Apocalypto* and *Curse of the Golden Flower*. Meridel Newton was attending her last WSFA meeting (for now), as she's off to Japan. Mike Walsh mentioned books for sale and that the next Old Earth publication would be at Boskone.

Finally, it is membership renewal time again. See Bob with your \$10 if you haven't already.

ADJOURNED: The meeting was adjourned at 10:30pm.

WSFA Minutes

Third Friday

Madigan's home, Maryland

January 19, 2007

CONVENED: The meeting convened at 9:14pm.

ATTENDEES: Drew Bittner, Katherine Bittner, Abraham Brody, Carolyn Frank, Cathy Green, Paul Haggerty, Bill Lawhorn, Sam Lubell, Nicki Lynch, Rich Lynch, Bob MacIntosh, John Madigan, Barry Newton, Judy Newton, Evan Phillips, Steve Smith, Bill Squire, Lee Strong, Elizabeth Twitchell, Michael Walsh, Ivy Yap, Madeleine Yeh and sundry others who didn't sign the sheet.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: The Secretary summed up the minutes of the first Friday meeting in January.

TREASURER'S REPORT: WSFA has \$10,003 and change in its account, plus approximately \$15,000 in CDs and Capclave money (c.\$1500)

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Capclave Far Past: Mike Walsh read Paul DiFilippo's review of the Waldrop chapbook from Capclave (strongly positive).

Capclave Past: nothing new.

Capclave Future: Steve Smith reported (in Colleen's absence) that there appears to be a fair amount of money in the account for Capclave 2007.

Capclave Far Future, DC 2012 and WFC: no report.

Datclave: As there will be a fifth Friday in February 2008 (which happens roughly once every 28 years), discussion was raised about the prospects for holding a Datclave. The last Datclave was in 1980. There is no programming, guest of honor, or other formal activity, just a hostile takeover of a hotel and random terrorization of sundry hotel employees and locals by WSFAans (sorry, just your humble Secretary projecting a bit). There are numerous possibilities for locations and limited dealer space *may* be provided. A committee was proposed; Bob MacIntosh, Candy Madigan, Mike Walsh, Barry Newton and Bill Lawhorn volunteered.

Publications: Mike Walsh is making progress on finding WSFA Press books and will report at the next meeting.

Entertainment: no report.

Rules Committee: no report.

Trustees: the Trustees are looking for candidates for WSFA's elected offices. Nominate now, vote early and vote often.

Committee to Talk About Science Fiction: Bill related his misadventures regarding a trip to Chicago and an encounter with their version of the Red Line.

Awards Committee: no report.

OLD BUSINESS: Martin's motion is still tabled. There is no progress on incorporation or on the club's tax situation. The motion on the award is tabled until Colleen's next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: It was suggested that the three dodos be made guests of honor at Datclave, though this requires actually naming them. A vote was held to name the dodos, and passed with two abstentions. The snail mail address for WSFA's web domain has not yet been changed, but has been changed for the Capclave and WSFA websites. A post office box for official business was proposed and discussed, in terms of where such a PO Box would be optimally located, who would collect mail and on what schedule. Elizabeth T volunteered to research this for the club.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: send email announcements to Drew. Nicki Lynch mentioned that green tea muffins would be available after the meeting. Mike Walsh has books and will bring the new Waldrop collection next time.

ADJOURNED: The meeting was adjourned at 9:49pm.

WSFA Minutes

First Friday

Scheiner's home, Virginia

February 2, 2007

CONVENED: The meeting convened at 9:22pm.

ATTENDEES: Drew Bittner, Katherine Bittner, Colleen Cahill, Will Frank, Marcin Garbowski, Jerry Gieseke, Cathy Green, Paul Haggerty, Elspeth Kovar, Bill Lawhorn, Sam Lubell, Bob MacIntosh, Jim Maiwurm, Barry Newton, Judy Newton, Kathi Overton, Sam Pierce, Rebecca Prather, Jennifer Rosenbaum, Judy Scheiner, Sam Scheiner, George Shaner, Steve Smith, Gayle Surrette, Elizabeth Twitchell, Michael Walsh, Ivy Yap and perhaps a few others...

SECRETARY'S REPORT: The Secretary summed up the minutes of the third Friday meeting in January.

TREASURER'S REPORT: WSFA has \$10,287 and change in its account, plus approximately \$15,802 in CDs

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Capclave Past: A check in the amount of \$520.84 was presented to the Treasurer, representing profit from the recent convention. A hearty round of applause was offered to the organizers.

Capclave Present: there are additions to the website, with a date of October 13, 2007, "penciled in." There is no contract yet. There is a possible alternate site in Rockville, MD, which may give us leverage with the hotel—it is near a Metro stop, is newer and more spacious than the current location. No advertising deadlines have been set yet but there is still time to make that happen.

Capclave Future: awaiting the contract.

Capclave Far Future, DC 2012 and WFC: no report.

Datclave: scheduled tentatively for the fifth Friday in February (2008), a committee is sorting itself out.

Publications: The February 2007 WSFA Journal is overdue. Mike Walsh noted that there's a "bunch" of Future Washington still in storage. Archival copies of WSFA Press publications are in

hand, despite the temptation to put them on eBay. Colleen announced that Ed Lerner would be speaking at the Library of Congress in March (date TBD).

Entertivities: Will asked (again) for members to join the committee. Jonathan Coulton, many of whose songs are sf-friendly, will be back in the area on 3/11.

Rules Committee: no report.

Trustees: no report.

Committee to Talk About Science Fiction: The committee intended to discuss a couple issues' worth of *Asimov's*.

Awards Committee: see Old Business.

OLD BUSINESS: Marcin is working on his motion independently.

The Awards Committee moved to vote on creating the WSFA Small Press Award (as described in previous minutes).

In consecutive votes:

- the motion to establish the award passed, with no negatives and one abstention;
- the motion to name the award "The WSFA Small Press Award" passed (again, one abstention);
- the motion on voting for awardees, after considerable discussion, approved a vote by the WSFA membership over a panel of professionals by 11 to 7, with three abstentions.

Volunteers for the first nominating board include Paul Haggerty, Gayle Surette, Sam Scheiner, Bob MacIntosh, Colleen Cahill, Barry Newton and Cathy Green. Sam has volunteered to manage the process.

A set amount to create the award (\$250) was tabled.

The committee will shoot for a 2006 award to be presented at Capclave 2007.

The post office box suggestion was tabled, as was naming the dodoes.

NEW BUSINESS: An email from a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) staffer was introduced. Will Frank volunteered to coordinate responding to an invitation to a conference March 21-24 in Washington DC.

Jerry G is attending his first WSFA meeting. He hails from Seattle and ran conventions there, and has been in the area for four months.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: send email announcements to Drew. Hostess announcements. Colleen announced author visits to the LOC: Ed Lerner, 3/20; Robert Sawyer, 4/19; Barbara Hambly, 5/7. Kathi O announced that her friend is doing a documentary on the release of the final Harry Potter novel (7/21). Gayle S announced Hugo nominations are open, please visit the site to nominate your favorites. China Mieville's autograph session at Politics & Prose was announced (Drew and Katherine attended- it was great). Bill Lawhorn noted that George R.R. Martin has sold rights to his *Song of Fire and Ice* mega-series to HBO. Barry N said that Tanya Huff sold her *Blood* series (vampires in Toronto) to Lifetime. And Mike Walsh announced that in addition to his usual box o'books, he had copies of the new Waldrop anthology on sale for \$15 and \$45.

ADJOURNED: The meeting was adjourned at 10:21pm.

Editor's Note: there would have been minutes from the Third Friday meeting as well but your editor did not attend that meeting.



REVIEWS

Please email reviews to editor@wsfa.org with the word “submission” in the subject line for consideration.

Lady Friday: Keys of the Kingdom Book 5 by Garth Nix

Review by Drew Bittner

I got into this series of YA books largely by accident. A roleplaying game I’d bought online listed the series in the appendix as an inspiration, so I sought them out during a business trip to Washington state a few months ago.

In brief, it’s the story of Arthur Penhaligon, accidental and improbable Heir to a godlike Architect who built a fabulous otherdimensional House that controls the universe... and then walked away. She left a Will that states her intentions, but the seven Trustees left to enforce that Will broke it into pieces and hid them away. Once that was done, they each indulged their own peculiar brand of mortal sin, allowing the House to fall into neglect and ruination.

Arthur and his friends are trying to undo the damage but are forced to work from the bottom up. By dint of courage, hard work and cleverness, Arthur has defeated four Trustees, taken their Keys (which represent their authority in the House) and secured four parts of the Will. Now he is going up against Lady Friday, who spends her time culling human patients through a hospital in the real world, then draining off their fondest memories so that she can experience them herself. The end result? Living but empty husks.

Lady Friday has announced to her rivals (including Arthur) that she is giving up her responsibilities and leaving her objects of power for the first to reach them. This triggers a race between Arthur, Superior Saturday (who will be Arthur’s next target, assuming he survives) and the Piper (son of the Architect and enemy of Arthur). Accompanied by Suzy Blue and Fred Gold Numbers, as well as a monstrous New Nithling—all three ensorcelled to serve the Piper—Arthur sets off to acquire the objects first and free the fifth part of the Will. It’s an uphill battle, literally, as Lady Friday’s home lies at the very top of a tall and inhospitable mountain.

Meanwhile, Leaf, Arthur’s friend from the real world, is drawn into Lady Friday’s prison-hospital. With the help of a cowardly male nurse, she tries to obstruct Lady Friday as much as she can, lest her beloved Aunt Mango be drained of her memories.

The adventurers come together at the fateful climax, but realize that even all four keys together may not tip the balance against Lady Friday and her mind-stealing powers. And even if Arthur wins, he may yet lose, because using his own magic risks imprisoning him inside the House forever!

Garth Nix is one of the foremost YA authors working, and *Lady Friday* shows why. Arthur is a hero but he’s also a boy, with all the uncertainties and longing-for-home that comes with youth.

His friends are loyal and stalwart companions but there are elements of doubt that must inevitably creep in; when you have a choking line of text around your throat that binds you to the Piper's will, can you be trusted? Are the cardinal virtues strong enough to overcome the mortal sins embodied by the treacherous Trustees and the dark, unknown enemy who's manipulating them?

Fans of young adult high adventure in a strange but compelling world are almost sure to enjoy Arthur's adventures... but start with *Mister Monday* and work your way forward. Arthur's certainly having one of the worst weeks ever...

Strongly recommended.