



The WSFA Journal

April 2008

Adrienne Ertman, Secretary Steve Smith, Editor

Comments? Contributions? Contact editor at wsfa dot org!

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Minutes

April 4 2008, First Friday

Minutes by Adrienne Ertman, WSFA Secretary

Meeting called to order at 9:12 PM. Minutes read.

Treasurer's report: \$12,420.50 in checking.

Capclave Present: Sam Scheiner announced an organizational meeting at the Scheiners' Saturday, April 5th at 1 PM.

Capclave Future: Bill Lawhorn delivered his report in verse form:

Listen one and all
I have a report you see
For Capclave next fall

The guests we do have
Our committee fills slowly
But will be soon done

I have spent some time
And not said really a thing
Nothing to report

So what should you do
Now I have shared my Haiku
That is all I have

Datclave: Received a survey from the Hotel Gettysburg and a letter from “Filthy” Pierre, read by Sam Lubell, saying he’d enjoyed Datclave 2 and looked forward to Datclave 3.

Publications: Steve Smith had a new *WSFA Journal*. No news from the webmasters. Mike Walsh had *Future Washington* numbers: 36 copies were sold through Amazon in 2007, translating to \$276.25 net profit in calendar year 2007.

Trustees: Skipped announcing the slate. John Pomeranz reported on the incorporation situation: appropriate documents have been sent in for tax-exempt status and revival; the revival people “are still sort of thinking about it.” John also found certified copies of the 1982 club articles of revival. Revival/”clear!” jokes ensued.

Awards: Sam Scheiner expects to have a set of nominees for the club in early May. Paul Haggerty asked about the meeting schedule; people were directed to talk to Paul after the meeting.

Entertivities: No news.

The Committee to Actually Discuss Science Fiction also had no news.

Old business: Following up on discussion of the Yahoo mailing list, the Secretary called for the formation of a New Rules committee. Lee Strong, Elizabeth Twitchell, and Charles Abel volunteered. The *File 770* situation is ongoing.

New business: It was brought up that Capclave needs \$500 for hotel insurance. Sam Lubell moved that the club allocate \$500 to Capclave for that purpose. The motion was seconded and passed with many ayes and no nays and one abstention.

New people: WSFA welcomed Charles and Feaorg Stross to their first WSFA meeting, and Emily Whitten to her second meeting.

Announcements:

- Sam and Judy Scheiner reported the passing of their cat as a consequence of intestinal cancer.
- Colleen Cahill reported that Stephen Segal and George Scithers of *Weird Tales* would speak at the Library of Congress' "What If..." program on Friday, April 11th.
- Mike Walsh had books for sale.
- Rebecca Prather announced a performance by Heart's Ease, a wind band, in Fall's Church on Saturday April 19th.
- Cathy Green reminded WSFA Fans that the Stone Ridge and Arlington County Public Library book sales were being held the first weekend in April.
- Elizabeth Twitchell announced she would be in Chicago by May 10th, since she had tickets to the Chicago Crowded House concert.
- Steve Smith reminded WSFA Fans that Yuri's Night would be held April 12th at Art Whacko in Alexandria – cover \$20 or \$25 including three drinks.

Meeting unanimously adjourned at 9:44 PM.

Attendance: Christina Abel, Charles Abel, Mike Bartman, Drew Bittner, Elaine Brennan, Colleen Cahill, Adrienne Ertman, Fluff the Plush Cthulhu, Paul Haggerty, Bill Jensen, Bill Lawhorn, Brian Lewis, H. P. Lovecraft, Sam Lubell, Sandra Marshall, Bob McIntosh, Sarah Mitchell, Barry Newton, Judy Newton, Kathi Overton, John Pomeranz, Rebecca Prather, Judy Scheiner, Sam Scheiner, George Shiner, Steve Smith, Lee Strong, Charles Stross, Gayle Surette, Michael Walsh, Eva Whitely, Emily Whitten, Ivy Yap, Madeleine Yeh

April 18 2008, Third Friday

Minutes by Adrienne Ertman, WSFA Secretary

WSFA April 3rd Friday Minutes (April 18, 2008)

Meeting called to order at 9:25 PM. Minutes summarized.

Treasurer's report: \$12,210.50 in checking.

Capclave Present: Not present. Bill Lawhorn reported on the Saturday April 5th Capclave meeting: Sam Scheiner wants to send flyers and postcards to members of previous Capclaves who haven't bought membership for the 2008 Capclave "very soon".

Capclave Future: Bill Lawhorn reported that the Hilton Washington DC/Rockville, the hotel used for the 2007 and 2008 Capclaves, is increasing the service charge on function space from 5% to 21%. This and other taxes increase a \$5,000 bill for function space by \$2,300. The hotel also is changing the way they calculate room nights toward the con room block: rooms *must* be reserved at the con rate, and no members who have other deals – AAA, etc – will be counted. They're willing to reduce the room block, but the hotel isn't backing down on the 21% service charge, which is a corporate policy instituted by their management company. Bill's run the numbers, and says that if the con scrimps a bit and gets membership comparable to Capclave 2007 numbers, it should "about" break even. Bill asked for a sense of the club about looking for a different hotel for 2009, with the understanding that he had to give the Hilton Washington DC/Rockville a final answer by Wednesday, April 23rd. Staying with this hotel means the

convention is in the same location three years running, but many of the people Bill asked for advice – Sam Pierce, Ben Yalow, Elspeth Kovar – disliked the contract offered. The question is not if the 2010 convention should do a search for a new property, but if the 2009 con should. Bill pointed out that for a smooth transition, he’d need to find a hotel by September.

Adrienne Ertman asked who would be doing the heavy lifting on the hotel search. Bill said he didn’t want to, but it fell on him as con chair. Barry Newton didn’t want to move the con. Chris Neumann asked about prospects in our price range so far. Discussion of “plus-plus” taxes and service charges ensued; Adrienne asked if the 21% service charge was standard for the hotel industry. Bill said no, but it’s standard for the HOTEL’s management company, which owns several other properties in the DC area. Extensive discussion ensued, which Candy Madigan summarized as “blah blah blah Bill make a decision”.

Entertivities: Steve Smith asked if anyone had been to Yuri’s Night? Charles Devine said he had, describing it as “a party aimed at DC singles in the techie sector” in Greenbelt. No one attended the Art Whacko Yuri’s Night for a comparison perspective. [The Secretary wishes to note that parties for techie DC singles doesn’t sound in the least bad to her, especially if eligible 20something men are paying her bar tab.]

Publications: Steve Smith has WSFA Journals and is “still soliciting”. Jokes about street corners and fishnet stockings ensued.

Awards: Paul Haggerty reports nominee reading is in progress. The committee is waiting on two members’ final picks, then will narrow the nominees down to the six to seven they will present in early May.

The Committee to Actually Discuss Science Fiction planned to discuss the April edition of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* after the business meeting. They plan to try to discuss the April/May *Asimov’s* double issue after the May First Friday business meeting.

Trustees: Report they’re still waiting to hear from Maryland on the incorporation issue.

Old business: Adrienne asked the New Rules committee to meet after the business meeting. Lee Strong reported that the current issue of *File 770* has printed the last statements the editor intends to publish on WSFA-related interpersonal politics. “No more WSFA war in *File 770*” says Lee.

New business: Someone made a motion to amend to the bylaws in regards to language NATURAL PERSONS. Someone seconded this. Elizabeth Twitchell proposed an amendment to the moderation: that the non-natural persons should count only for making quorum. The amendment did not carry. The motion failed with three ayes, 10 nays, and a possible abstention by the Crystal Pepsi.

New people: None.

Announcements:

- Bill Lawhorn shared some Capclave membership numbers for local memberships:

	Maryland	Virginia	District of Columbia
2005	175	76	21
2006	172	80	23
2007	157	82	19

- Carolyn Frank saw “The Singing Revolution” at the Landmark Theater and recommends it. “The Singing Revolution” is a documentary about Estonian activism leading to its peaceful break with the USSR in 1991.
- Elizabeth Twitchell announced that this would be her last WSFA meeting before her move to Chicago, and bequeathed the Crystal Pepsi to Lee Strong. Elizabeth, you’ll be missed.
- Charles Devine announced Artomatic <<http://www.artomatic.org/>> dates and location: May 9th through June 15th at Capitol Plaza I, 1200 First Street, NE DC. He also announced that he would be showing at Artomatic. Adrienne enthusiastically recommended the event to WSFans.
- Terry Somerville announced his new job as a copy editor for america.gov. Congratulations to Terry!

Meeting unanimously adjourned at 10:09 PM.

Attendance: Christina Abel, Charles Abel, Mike Bartman, Adrienne Ertman, Carolyn Frank, Erica Ginter, Lydia Ginter, Karl Ginter, Paul Haggerty, Bill Lawhorn, Bob McIntosh, Walter Miles, Sarah Mitchell, Chris Neumann, Barry Newton, Judy Newton, Crystal Pepsi, Steve Smith, Lee Strong, Laura Somerville, Terry Somerville, Mike Taylor, Elizabeth Twitchell, Ivy Yap

In Memoriam: Judy Fetter

From The Washington Post, 4/9/08:

FETTER JUDITH R. FETTER On Thursday, April 3 at Seasons Hospice in Baltimore. She is survived by her husband, Ronald Leonard and brothers David and Stanley Fetter. She was predeceased by her parents, Theodore and Lillie Fetter of Arlington, VA. A memorial service will be held on Saturday, April 12, 2008 at 1 p.m. at the Church of the Covenant, 2665 N. Military Rd., Arlington, VA 22207.

Judy was a long-time Washington and Baltimore fan. The most recent WSFA meeting that she attended that I have a record for is November 1988. I definitely remember seeing her at the Ginters’ at least once, which would put her most recent meeting sometime after mid-1991. She is listed as attending Capclave 2007; I think I remember seeing her there.

We’ll all miss her. Our condolences to all of her family and friends.

Reviews

***Little Brother*, by Cory Doctorow. Reviewed by Steve Smith**



This book is, on one level, a YA action-adventure novel set in an all-too-plausible near future San Francisco, where we have enough security cameras that we should all be really, really safe. Unfortunately, somebody blows up the Bay Bridge anyway and the Department of Homeland Security goes berserk. Seventeen year old hacker and gamer Marcus Yallow, aka W1n5t0n, is in the wrong place at the wrong time and gets caught in a roundup of “terrorist suspects”. His tendency to mouth off does not go over well, and he becomes a “person of interest”. San Francisco becomes a police state, and Marcus decides to do what he can to get his city back.

It’s a YA novel. Simple linear narrative, single point of view, some sex & violence, everything mostly works for the main characters. Most adults are either clueless, ineffectual, or downright evil. There is no motive or goal or characterization for the DHS bad guys; they might as well be Saturday morning cartoon villains. There are even a couple of *dei ex machina* to move things along. In a novel with an adult point of view, these would be problems, but *Little Brother* doesn’t have an adult point of view.

On another level, this is a textbook for hackers. The “future” elements are straight-line extrapolations from current technology (fancier cellphones, school-supplied laptops, many more “security” doodads spread all over). Everything else is real. Xnet? Yup. TOR? Plug 'n play. Key signing parties? Of course. Virtual press conferences? Old stuff. Does the textbook part get in the way of the story? I don’t think so, but I’m a computer geek; I had a great time figuring out all the techie references. I’ll be interested to see reviews from the non-techie crowd.

On yet another level, the book is a polemic against the current police-state mentality, where the measures taken against “terrorists” cause more terror than the terrorists do. The “real” aspects of the book include the “PATRIOT II Act”. Yes, the real DHS can do everything that the DHS in the book does, legally.

Highly recommended. If you buy this book, pay in cash; cash can’t be traced. Yet.

Little Brother, by Cory Doctorow. Tor Teen (April 29, 2008) ISBN-10: 0765319853, ISBN-13: 978-0765319852.

WSFA History

Ten Years Ago

April 1998

At March First Friday, the Trustees seemed to be a problem getting a candidate for President. Somebody nominated the bottle of Crystal Pepsi (see the current Third Friday minutes, above), on the grounds that it would never be drunk.

At the March Third Friday we had the announcement of one of the biggest disasters in WSFA history. The hotel for the 1998 Disclave cancelled our contract, less than six weeks before the convention. Supposedly, this was because of a bad recommendation letter from the Sheraton Armpit, site of the Great Flood of '97. The flood wasn't WSFA's fault except through a very loose association, but that butters no parsnips with hotels.

Twenty Years Ago

April 1988

Both meetings were pretty quiet (other than the usual raucosity). People were getting ready for Disclave, and the Discon III (the bid for the 1992 Worldcon) folks were holding a meeting at Kent Bloom's house. Kent had to wait a bit for his Worldcon; he's the chair of Denvention III.

Letters

From the Editor

With all of the old WSFA Journals on-line, it's easy to put a History section together (Kudos to Keith Lynch for doing all of the work.) In August, we'll be able to add a Thirty Years Ago section. Scary.

Would anybody out there like to write up something about Judy Fetter? I didn't know her all that well.

— Steve Smith, Editor, *The WSFA Journal*