



The WSFA Journal

May 2008

Adrienne Ertman, Secretary Steve Smith, Editor

Comments? Contributions? Contact editor at wsfa dot org!

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MINUTES

May 2 2008, First Friday

Minutes by Sam Lubell

Meeting called to order at 9:16 PM by WSFA President Cathy Green and Sam Schiener's watch, as it was digital.

Treasurer's report: \$12,210.50

Capclave Present: There was stamping and labeling after the meeting. Sign up sheets were passed out to help out at Capclave and Balticon. These will circulate each meeting until Capclave. Bill interjected, "Or until we fill them." Sam continued, "We're firming up a schedule. We have at least 20 program people. We handed out flyers at Ravencon but had no one to hand us money." Barry Newton said no change in preregistration; bout 90 people. Bill said we need 300. Colleen's convention had 250. Bob said this is doable with any luck.

Capclave Future: Bill lawhorn, Capclave Future, said he wants to leave the room. He's had no more dreams. He is decided to accept the hotel contract since otherwise we would have only six months to search for a new hotel or deal with it now and try to grow. He bit the bullet and stayed. We had a great deal the last two years. The new price is not much different from what Mike Walsh had budgeted at the last hotel. We need to grow by about 50 members. If we do, this won't be an issue. Colleen said the word is getting out. Authors say how Capclave is a wonderful con. But Bill pointed out that he ran into someone at Ravencon who lived in the area but didn't know of the convention. Cathy said it is hard to get into listings in the DC area. Bill said Ravencon had a high school they are linked to and Richmond news is not like DC. We have a contract, locked in for 2009. Time to move forward. We'll have extra room for programming which will allow us to do more.

Entertivities: Will Frank said his life operates on a two month schedule. Captain Chris Christopher tried to get in touch with us with a new crop of writers. He wants to know about doing a bookstore event. The security event will take place on the 2nd to 6th of June. Sam Lubell volunteered to take charge of WSFA's part of the event. The book signing will be for members of Sigma, a bunch of SF writers. The purpose of the conference is to come up with wacky SF stuff for the military. Will also said that tomorrow is free comic day. He's heard excellent things about the Iron Man movie. Lee said he saw it and it was good. Drew Bittner's review was picked up by Marvel Comics and it has been passed around. There was some questions as to whether this made Drew a published author but Ernest said that Drew's work on the sfrevu site made him a published author.

Publications: Ernest doesn't want to speak about *Future Washington*.

Awards Paul Haggerty said the committee reduced the load down to six stories out of 69. Bob said there was a better crop of stories than last year. He read the list of finalists:

- Bufo Rex
- Harry the Crow
- Mask of the Ferret
- Orm the Beautiful
- The Third Bear

- The Wizard of Macatawa

Paul is surprised by some names that are not on the list of official WSFA members. Some names not on it surprised me. If not a member can pay \$10 and join. So you can get on site, read stories, and vote. There was a debate over the deadline. People finally settled on July 15 which is early enough that we can notify the winner to try to get him or her to show up at Capclave. Cathy promised fudge if 70 percent of WSFA participates, chocolate cheesecake if 80 percent vote. If we get 95, everyone gets their own fudge. Paul said last year only 48 percent participated.

The **Committee to Actually Discuss Science Fiction** will discuss the Asimov's double issue.

Trustees: John Pomeranz showed WSFA's official paperwork. WSFA's charter has been revived and Sam Lubell has become its official registered agent <The name is Lubell, Sam James Lubell> The next step is getting it right with the IRS. This is necessary to have a corporate shield.

Trustee Lee Strong said we are going to have an election. Ernest Liley has withdrawn from the trustees' slate and Colleen Cahill substituted. Only enrolled members can vote.

Old business: Sam Scheiner said that First Friday in July will be July 4th, the day of the annual John Pomeranz and Kathi Overton's annual BBQ extravaganza. So the WSFA meeting will be there.

New business: None

New people: Danny Birt was here for his first WSFA meeting. He heard about us at Raven con. He said "You guys are one amusing bunch, a convention in mini" No Second or Third meeting people.

Announcements:

Will Frank announced he has going to NYU law school to become a _____ <fill in blank>. He will be moving at the end of August.

Bill Lawhorn announced that he, Cathy, and Elizabeth won an award for best party at Ravencon for both last year and this year. The rules have been changed so the same party <pun intentional> cannot win more than two years in a row.

Colleen is doing programming for the Library of Congress' annual book festival. Last year 130,000 people showed up. In the first year only 20,000.

Judy said there will be a quilt show, Sunday Olney Farms Market.

Meeting unanimously adjourned at 9:58

Election: Lee Strong gave the rules. There will be a trustee's slate and people can nominate from the floor. Abstentions don't count.

For President, the trustees nominated Cathy Green. There were no other nominations so she was elected by acclamation.

For VP, trustees nominated Adrienne Ertman. There were no other nominations so she was elected by acclamation.

For Secretary, the trustees nominated Steve Smith. There were no other nominations so he was elected by acclamation.

For Treasurer, the trustees nominated Christina Abel. There were no other nominations so she was elected by acclamation.

For Capclave chair, the trustees nominated Gayle Surrette. Eva Whitley nominated herself. Ballots were handed out and counted. Gayle won. There was vote for the bottle of Crystal Pepsi.

For trustees, the slate of Judy Newton, Colleen Cahill and Lee Strong was elected. New officers will take office at the first regular meeting in June. D-day. Meeting unanimously adjourned.

Attendance: Not available

May 16 2008, Third Friday

Minutes by Steve Smith, Editor, WSFA Journal

Meeting called to order at 9:16 PM. Minutes not present, so not read. (Sam Lubell took them and will provide them anon.)

Treasurer's report: \$12,260.50 in checking.

Capclave Present:

- Lee Strong has signup sheets
- Cathy Green has flyers. People are encouraged to distribute them where they will be useful
- Sam Lubell asks for people to run the Capclave table at Balticon

Capclave Future: Bill Lawhorn e-mails:

Sorry I can't be there tonight. Sarah and I are going to a birthday party for one of her friends.

The only major issue before 2009 is getting the credit approval so that we don't have to pay up front.

Announcement: As previously noted, we have a suite at Worldcon for Wednesday-Sunday morning. There will be parties. The Suite is on the 22nd floor. The current list:

- Wednesday Evening: 1984 BNW
- Thursday Afternoon: Nippon thank you party
- Thursday Evening: Peggy Rae's House in 2010
- Friday Evening: WSFA/SFREVU
- Saturday Morning: Bloody Mary Breakfast (muffins and bagels) for Capclave/Disclave/past, present, and future GOHs and regular attendees and participants...
- Saturday Evening: Warren Buff's "bid to be named later" party
- Sunday Morning: sleep

Don't forget to find us at Balticon next weekend...

Capclave Far Future:

- She's working on it
- She's filling her committee
- She's thinking about guests, hotels, etc

Entertivities: will soon need a new committee chair. Capt. Chris Christopher reported via Sam Lubell that there will be a book signing at Reiter's Books, 1990 K St on Tuesday, 2 June. Authors will include Michael Swanwick, Doug Beaton, Arlene Andrews, and others.

There is a humanist conference at UM College Park with Phillip Pullman (The Golden Compass)

Publications: Editor Steve Smith announced that all outstanding WSFA journals are now on the Website.

Awards: We have four votes so far, all members of the committee. Paul Haggerty has sent e-mails to everybody that he has e-mail addresses for; if you haven't gotten your e-mail, send him a note at webmaster@wsfa.org. Everybody should vote and force Cathy to make fudge and chocolate cheesecake for us.

The **Committee to Actually Discuss Science Fiction:** may or may not be discussing the stories nominated for the WSFA Small Press award.

Trustees: John Pomeranz is still working on Constitutional issues. Lee Strong reports that we've sent our IRS paperwork in and haven't heard anything back yet.

Election results:

- President: Cathy Green
- Vice President: Adrienne Ertman
- Secretary: Steve Smith
- Treasurer: Christina Abel
- Capclave 2010 Chair: Gayle Surette
- Trustees: Colleen Cahill, Judy Newton, Lee Strong

Rules: Asked for and got an extension until the next meeting.

Old business: No old business.

New business:

- Sam Lubell pointed out that there is a Fifth Friday in May. There were no volunteers, but it was pointed out that there will be parties at Balticon, even though it's one Friday short.
- John Pomeranz has offered the Fabulous Bungalow as the site for the First Friday meeting in July, concurrent with the 4th of July party.

New people: None

Announcements:

- Adrienne is looking for a place to live near a Metro station in Rockville. She has decided that living in filth is not for her.
- Lee Strong is back on the Internet. Iron Man, Speed Racer, and Prince Caspian are all good, in different ways.
- Barry and Judy Newton are in Oz, visiting Dorothy.

Meeting unanimously adjourned at 9:44 PM.

Attendance: Charles Abel, Christina Abel, Mike Bartman, Adrienne Ertman, Carolyn Frank, Will Frank, Erica Ginter, Lydia Ginter, Cathy Green, Paul Haggerty, Sam Lubell, Nicki Lynch, Rich Lynch, Bob Macintosh, Candy Madigan, John Madigan, Sandra Marshall, Evan Phillips, Laura Somerville, Terry Somerville, Steve Smith, Lee Strong, Mike Taylor, Ivy Yap, Madeleine Yeh.

Small Press Award Finalists

The six finalists for the 2008 WSFA Small Press Award are:

- Bufo Rex
- Harry the Crow
- Mask of the Ferret
- Orm the Beautiful
- The Third Bear
- The Wizard of Macatawa

Reviews

Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull Reviewed by Lee Strong

Lucasfilm/Paramount, 2008
Directed by Steven Spielberg

Yah gotta love a movie that's been officially condemned by the Russian Communist Party! Apparently the Russian *people* love it since *they've* been packing the theaters to see the return of everyone's favorite hit 'n' run archeologist!



Our story begins in 1957 Nevada where an Army convoy delivers Indiana Jones (Harrison Ford) and his World War II sideman Max to an area where “special weapons” are tested and numinous artifacts stored. However, it is quickly revealed that it's the *Russian Army* or Ministry of State Security that wants Indy to locate a mysterious box found at Roswell, NM 10 years earlier. Soviet psychic Colonel Spalko (Cate Blanchett) – in a really good Ilsa She-Wolf of the SS imitation – wants the box so she can spy on American military plans, teach the “truth” about history and generally think our thoughts for us. Once she has her hands on the box's secrets, she plans to take them to the lost city of gold – Akakor in the Brazilian rainforest –

where she *will* learn *everything* that she wants to know. Naturally, Indy sets off in pursuit puzzling out the riddles of the insane and dodging the dangers of two sets of the living dead, Amazon army ants, whip fights with Soviet gunmen, Sunday drivers, Washington bureaucrats, and *academic committees!* Along the way, he is joined by a new protégé, Mutt Williams (Shia Le Beouf), and an old flame, Marion Ravenswood Williams (Karen Allen). But can he survive nuclear blasts, a flying refrigerator, ultraterrestrial technology and *the fury of two women scorned?*

I liked Indy's latest outing for the action, color, and fringe science or pseudo-science. The story is fairly obvious once Lucas and Spielberg present enough clues but they keep things moving along in the best Jones tradition. The characters are vividly conceived and acted, and the filmmakers manage to obscure the fairly obvious relationships until well into the story. The settings, ranging from the Nevada desert to Marshall College's sedate 1950s campus and the timeless Brazilian rainforest, are certainly picturesque and dramatically posed. The camerawork is well done and the special effects splendid. I very much liked the way that the script accounts for the 19 year gap since the last Indy movie by simply accepting that 19 years have passed in the Indyverse. And I especially enjoyed the way that Lucas expanded the original Indiana Jones trope by adding 1950s science fiction motifs to the original 1930s exotic action adventure fiction. All in all, it's a well told tale.

That said, the film is not without its weaknesses. Thematically and dramatically, this tale is *very* similar to the previous outings with Soviets substituted for Nazis. Changing uniforms and key words – such as substituting “paranormal” for “occult” for example – doesn't disguise the basic similarity. We even have a fistfight with a hulking ubermensch and cliffs' edge car and jeep chases about two thirds of the way thru the epic in close imitation of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Where's the giant Arab swordsman when you need him? We could use him to execute the traitor that Indy insists on dragging across half of South America. One touch of anti-anti-Communist paranoia was particularly out of place given the reality of both Indy's 1950s and the real 1950s. And, even if you haven't seen the earlier chapters in Indy's epic, a lot of the elements are easy enough to figure out, especially since the film repeatedly tips its own hat to its several predecessors. Still, as an action-adventure flick with a science fictional underpinning, Indy's latest is a worthy addition to a popular universe.

I rate *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* as 4.0 stars on the 5 star scale. But not red stars! – LS

Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull Reviewed by Steve Smith



For the last nineteen years, since *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, Indy addicts have had nothing but fanfic to keep themselves going. Fans of Marion Ravenwood have had an even longer dry spell; the female leads in the second and third movies just don't measure up. Well, the wait is over – sort of. *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* is a real movie, with Spielberg and Lucas and Harrison Ford and special effects and everything. It is also the biggest, most expensive fanfic in history. This is not so much a movie as an appreciation of what everybody wanted to see happen in an Indiana Jones movie (with the

exception of sex. Yeah, that leaves out most “real” fanfic.) There are dozens of references to other movies, especially Lucas’s and Spielberg’s (the opening is right out of *American Graffiti*, for example).

As Just Another Movie it’s disappointing. Plot? Who needs one? Indy gets captured by bad guys. Fight. Escape. Chase. Capture. Repeat as needed, up to the Grand Finale. Wisecrack *ad lib*. Tie up with a pretty bow at the end. Fortunately, the movie is enough of a roller coaster ride that it simply doesn’t matter. There isn’t any one place that’s calm enough for your disbelief to get unsuspended. (Actually, my disbelief never got suspended in the first place. I just laughed like a loon all the way through. So did everybody else in the theater.)

The atmosphere was good; very 1957. It was the heyday of the flying saucer cults. Joe McCarthy was long gone, but his House Unamerican Activities Committee (HUAC) and J. Edgar Hoover still made things unpleasant for “persons of interest” with Communist cooties. The Soviets were, in fact, experimenting with psychic warfare. The US conducted several atmospheric nuclear tests in 1957 in Nevada, although the “fake village” test (“Annie”) was in 1953. The technical term for Mutt’s fashion statement was “Greaser”, referring to the hair. (Yes, Coca Cola can be used as a stone-age styling mousse.) The natural enemies of the Greasers were the Jocks (see the malt shop scene), and they were loosely allied with the Hot Rodders (see the first scene).

Leave your brain at home and enjoy the ride.

Highly recommended if you’re a fan of the first three movies.

Speed Racer Reviewed by Lee “Slowpoke” Strong

Warner Brothers and Village Roadshow, 2008

Written and directed by the Wachowski Brothers

“It’s *Tron* on speed!” – Team Tuna Fish

“*Rollerball* with cars! Ninja cars!” – Racer X



Actually, it’s not a bad movie of action heroes fighting corporate corruption set in a cartoon-like “world built for speed.”

Our story takes place in the not too distant future where over the top – *very much* over the top – automobile racing is a major world sport. Speed Racer (Emile Hirsch) only cares about racing and winning despite several strikes against him including family ghosts and independent (i.e. vulnerable) status in a world of corporate giants. When Speed earns his way into the big leagues, one giant, benevolent seeming Royalton Industries, offers to take the family business, Racer Motors, under its wing. When Speed declines, the oily mask comes off and the fix is in! The action accelerates and the plot twists as Speed and his new found allies battle corporate racing thugs

Snake Oiler and his smarmy boss E. J. Royalton in incredible combat thrill rides set in exotic locales.

Speed Racer is only marginally science fiction. The gee whiz science is mainly restricted to the cars – some of which can move at 800 kilometers per hour powered by electric batteries. In

addition, many cars incorporate *really* over the top special features such as pistons that enable them to leap, cavort and kick box in mid air! It's very much "over the top" action but it's *well done* over the top action. You haven't lived until you've seen cars jumping like rabbits and battling like birds!

I found the film generally good. The plot was rather clichéd and the climax was telegraphed hours in advance. However, again, it was well done with solid if obvious characters, a time honored struggle of honesty against power politics, and a vivid if cartoon-like world. Each of the major characters, Trixie (Christina Ricci), Mom and Pops Racer (Susan Sarandon and John Goodman), and Racer X (Matthew Fox), was well drawn and contributed to the fight for freedom and sports integrity. On the weaker side, Speed's back story could have been trimmed *a lot* and the flash and dash often obscured the action rather than highlighting it. Still, a nice little story on a timeless theme.

I rate *Speed Racer* as 3.0 stars on the 5 star scale. Go, Speed Racer, go! – LS

In Memoriam

Paul Parsons (1953-2008)

PARSONS PAUL N. PARSONS (Age 55) On Sunday, May 18, 2008, of Silver Spring, MD, in Adams County, PA. Born on September 19, 1952 in Columbus, OH, he was the son of the late Nicholas L. and M. Leslie Parsons. Survived by his wife, Susan W. Parsons and a sister, Leslie Regan Keys of Detroit, MI. He recently retired from the U.S. EPA, member of PCSWDC and PRSFS, graduated from Hiram College and earned a Masters Degree in Environmental Policy from the University of Maryland. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.

From *The Washington Post* on 5/22/2008

<<http://www.legacy.com/washingtonpost/DeathNotices.asp?Page=LifeStory&PersonID=110148170>>

Robert Asprin (1946-2008)

On May 22, 2008, Bob passed away quietly in his home in New Orleans, LA. He had been in good spirits and working on several new projects, and was set to be the Guest of Honor at a major science fiction convention that very weekend.

He is survived by his mother, his sister, his daughter and his son, and his cat, Princess, not to mention countless friends and fans and numerous legendary fictional characters.

He will be greatly missed.

From <<http://www.mythadventures.net/>>

WSFA History

Ten Years Ago

May 1998

Fallout continues from the cancellation of Disclave 1998.

John Pomeranz is leaving his job at Georgetown and joining the Alliance for Justice. He never did get around to modeling his new tights and cape for us

Twenty Years Ago

May 1988

Mary Morman is receiving her master's degree summa cum laude (Which is Latin for Summer is coming, Loudly or something nice like that -)

George Shaner is receiving his master's degree from George Mason University in Conflict Management. Joe Mayhew wants to know whether he will now seek a post of the boxing commission or plan a nice little war for the Reagan Administration?

Letters

From the Editor

Awright, I've had about enough. You out there *cut it out*. You know who you are. **STOP DYING**. I hate doing obituaries.

— Steve Smith, Editor, *The WSFA Journal*

A Worldcon in Reno? You Bet!

The intergalactic travel agents of Reno Convention Fandom, Inc. are delighted to announce a bid to host the 69th World Science Fiction Convention in 2011 (August 17-21) in the "Biggest Little City in the World," Reno, Nevada.

A 2011 Worldcon in Reno would use a combination of the Reno Convention Center, the Atlantis Resort, and the Peppermill Hotel -- one convention center, one directly connected hotel, and a second hotel a short walk (or even shorter shuttle ride) away.

Reno is situated just east of the Sierra Nevada mountains, on the edge of the Great Basin at an elevation of about 1300 meters above sea level. Its temperate climate and low humidity make Reno a delightful location for a summer Worldcon, with average high temperatures in the 80s Fahrenheit and lows in the 50s.

Just who is Reno Convention Fandom, Inc., you ask? We are a group of fans with a desire to host fandom's annual family reunion: a desire that requires just the right facilities. RCFI, an Oregon-based non-profit corporation, considered several cities before hitting the jackpot with Reno. Our group includes experienced convention runners from nine states and two countries.

Our goal is to work with our fannish friends and colleagues around the U.S. and the world to build a 2011 Worldcon that would be inclusive, exciting, fun, and with a healthy dose of "gosh!wow!"

The Reno in 2011 bid opens this weekend from Atlantic to Pacific: at Balticon in Maryland, at Marcon in Ohio, at Wiscon in Wisconsin, at ConQuesT in Missouri, and at Baycon in California. Come chat with us -- see what we and Reno have to offer.

You will find us online at <http://www.rcfi.org>, or you can write us at info@rcfi.org. We'd be pleased to add you to our list of presupporters and friends. Online options are available to join our happy band.

Oh, and don't worry about getting to Reno. Come by planes, trains, and automobiles -- the Donner Pass is safe, now.

Science Fiction and Fantasy Writing

I'm emailing you to let you know about a workshop the Writer's Center is hosting. Brenda Clough will be teaching a Science Fiction and Fantasy Writing Workshop. Have you ever wanted to write science fiction or fantasy? The Writer's Center is offering a workshop for the aspiring Sci-Fi/Fantasy Novelist. This workshop will help you through emphasis on plot and character-oriented fiction and on what makes a story suited to be science fiction or fantasy. We will work on revising and rewriting our stories to hone them into their best form. This workshop is open to both teenagers and adults. Bring 10 copies of your manuscript to the first session.

"Writing Science Fiction and Fantasy" meets on Tuesdays at 7:30 PM until 10:00 PM from June 17 until August 5. The Writer's Center is located at 4508 Walsh St. Bethesda, MD 20815.

Thank you,

Janel Carpenter
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