

# The WSFA Journal

January/February 2013

Minutes – WSFA Meeting, 7 Dec 2012

In the absence of the secretary, notes were taken by Sam Scheiner. Meeting called to order at 9:16 PM by Barry Newton.

## Reports

Secretary: MIA, no reading of the minutes. Treasurer: Our account has >\$\$\$. Trustees: Does anyone want to run for (or from) office? WSFA Press: Borderlands Bookstore in San Francisco has ordered several sets of books; overall the books are still selling. Web & Social Media: Stuff is happening.

Steve sent via email, “Remember that all WSFA memberships have to be renewed at the beginning of the year. As an experiment, I'm going to take memberships in December. This year, we can accept memberships with credit cards and through PayPal, as well as the old familiar cash, checks, and gold coins. Rates are \$20/year, \$15/year for active-duty military and students with ID. Our PayPal address is treasurer@wsfa.org. Our current credit cards are being handled through Square.”

Capclave 2012: We ended up with a surplus of about \$\$\$\$. We donated \$\$ to the SFWA Emergency Medical Fund. Capclave 2013: Will have a Special Guest – Howard Waldrop; There are plans to record and webcast the award ceremony. Capclave 2014: It's happening.

Old business: None

New business: None

Newbies: Ken Kwon and Alma Vatsu

Announcements: Bill and Sarah have a new arrival at their house – another dodo. Bob MacIntosh: Chicon had severe problems with the Hyatt and will never hold a convention there again. There will be a Steampunk Meetup at Mango Mike's on Saturday. Mike Walsh has books for sale. Brian Lewis: Cathy Madigan will have a booth at the Sugarloaf Craft Festival. Mike Walsh: In 2014 the World Fantasy Convention will be held in Crystal City, Arlington. Dates, GoHs, and themes were announced. Steve Smith: Will start taking money for 2013 WSFA dues.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 PM.

Attendance: Barry Newton, Judy Newton, Meridel Newton, Sam Scheiner, Judy Scheiner, Bob MacIntosh, Gayle Surette, Paul Haggerty, Colleen Cahill, Bill Lawhorn, Sarah Mitchell, Mike Walsh, Cathy Green, Brian Lewis, Steve Smith, Sam Pierce, Kenneth Kwon, Alma Vatsu, Ken Byrer, George Shaner, and Ivy Yap.



## Mini-Reviews by Samuel Lubell

*The New Cool: A Visionary Teacher, His FIRST Robotics Team, and the Ultimate Battle of Smarts* by Neal Bascomb

This is a very strong, exciting non-fiction treatment of the FIRST robotics competition by following one team of high school robot builders. They build a very sophisticated robot; I couldn't imagine

doing this back when I was in high school. The reader really gets a sense of the teacher's ambitions and the students feel real; they goof off and make mistakes and face personal problems. The book builds suspense as it follows the students through the contest. One problem is that that it is hard to get a real picture of the challenge the robots must compete in; some explanation at the back of the book would have been better off in the actual text and the book would really have benefited links to online video.

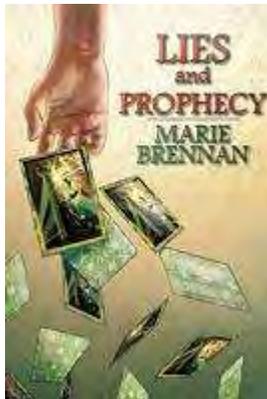
### *Dreamsnake* by Vonda N. McIntyre

In a post disaster future, Snake is a healer trained in using poisonous snakes to heal people. After superstitious villagers kill her dreamsnake, Snake has to return to the healers and hope she can convince them to give her another. This is an early example of the strong female protagonist and has a fantasy feel. It won the Hugo and the Nebula back in 1979 although it was somewhat controversial (Snake has sex! And doesn't rely on a man to solve her problems) in its day, it spent years out of print before being revived by the Book View Cafe, writers' coop. It is very worth the read.



### *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn

I didn't think I'd like this, but I did. It is part psychological thriller part mystery. It opens with first person Nick telling the story of his wife's vanishing alternating with chapters of his wife Amy's journal. The police suspect Nick killed his wife but Nick insists he did not do it, but admits to the reader of a few small lies to the police rather than tell them he didn't have reservations for their anniversary that evening. And then he tells the reader he was having an affair and Amy's journal isn't matching the picture he is telling the police. And then the author throws in the big twist (that I did not see coming). It is a fun, quick read that keeps the pages turning. Yes, it is plot-driven but it also a psychological character study that gave my book group plenty to discuss.



### *Lies and Prophecy* by Marie Brennan

This is my second favorite fantasy novel based on Tam Lin set on a college campus. Considering the first favorite is Pamela Dean's wonderful Tam Lin, that's no faint praise. The book takes a magic as technology approach with characters debating with their college advisers about taking ceremonial magic and pyrokinesis in the same semester. A few humans can do magic, based on their percentage of sidhe genes. The really powerful ones are the Wilders, who have a higher percentage of the sidhe and have their powers from birth and are looked upon with suspicion by the humans and keep themselves apart even from other magic users. But Julian, a wilder, enrolls in college, where he meets Kim, the narrator of much of the book. And then mysterious things start happening that culminate in the return of the Sidhe, both good and bad.

Although based on Tam Lin, there's a twist that I didn't expect. Also, the book would be a lot better if the Welcome to Welton novelette had been included at the start as it explains a lot that the book waits to do in a flashback. It's up on her website.

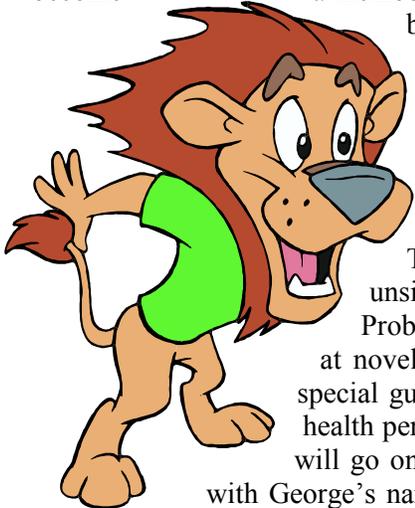
### *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* by Jules Verne

The book sets up mysteries about Captain Nemo's past, how he built the Nautilus, his crew (one of whom speaks French when in danger) etc. that are never answered. And the book ends with the author just tiring and not even bothering to explain how the professor and others survive. Most of the book is a travelogue interspersed with lectures about fish. Yes it is a classic and one of the earliest examples of sf, but it is dull.

Interestingly, the Disney movie makes Ned the hero and adds much more action, a bit of backstory for Nemo, and a better ending.

### Game of Thrones Beer?

The 12-21-12 December Third Friday opened with “All right,” said Prez Barry, “It’s 21:17.” No treasurer. No treasurer report. Brian said, “We do have funds.” Barry said something close to \$\$\$. Bob for trustees said they had no business. “Elections in May. If want to take a position ...” “Run away,” interjected Bill. “See a trustee,” continued Bob. Brian said, “You only have to attend three meetings to become a member and run.” Entertivities featured the Mayan end of the world. Talk SF brought an actual author.



There are no minutes from last meeting yet. Facebook and Twitter has dodo pictures. John for Meetup said we have 143, keeps going up. Capclave 2012 is over. Mike for 2013, said we have a bit of news. Went back and forth with GoH. Sean Wallace got George to agree on a few things for the book, narrowed it down. It will be a 1,000 copy hardcover, George will sign 500 for limited edition. Traditionally the signed one sells more, but we expect at Capclave the unsigned copies won’t remain for long so the unsigned will be rarer. Probably a month from now we hopefully will have confirmed title. Looking at novella, Sean and I are toying with the idea of getting something with our special guest Howard Waldrop. Gardner Duzois said will do his best to be there, health permitting. George, Gardner and Howard together on a panel and the three will go on and on. Don’t give Gardner jellybeans. Bottom line is that anything with George’s name will sell. Capclave will certainly have a significant surplus. Good looking books. Cat Valente is very happy with us, since her book was nominated for the Hugo, Nebula, and several others. Whenever she sees anyone from WSFA she smiles a lot. Be great to have a bunch of past guests at convention.

For 2014, Bill said, Sean is in contact with Holly and Paolo, working on details with Holly Black, Paolo doesn’t have anything available for a book. We have the hotel. There were some issues but that’s done. Willing to try some different things. 2013 new item, will try to make award ceremony more of a ceremony, a late arrival, Eva, is willing to help out there. Coordinate award activities.

Mike said, there is a Game of Thrones beer and so Bob will talk to hotel to see if we can get some. George will sign bottles and the bar would be able to sell the empties. Cathy said the bar honored our request to have more local beers this past year. Bob said, there is the issue of availability. New brew should be out around Capclave time. Google Game of Thrones beer.

Award committee. Small press hasn’t opened until next year. Carolyn said someone has already sent stories. Cathy said becoming known enough that don’t have to do the announcement. Carolyn is administrator. Cathy is chair until the new committee meets and picks a new one.

Old business: none. New business no. Dues due and payable. Bob said can wait until next meeting. Barry said can give it to him. Everyone said but get a receipt.

People here for the first meeting. New dodo, Gwen DodoLyn. The windup dodo. There was an ebay auction and I won. Here are Emmie, Jen, Brian, Jessica and Ben. Brian is the reader tonight. His story, “The Defense of DuPont Circle,” was published in Cucurbit 3, edited by Lawrence M. Schoen. Mike asked if the friends will do an interpretive dance. Jen said, yes if you have enough singles. They are all part of the same writing group. Met through Nano. Jen discovered Capclave through Orson’s boot camp which had some people who said you had to go to Capclave. Bill said Brian sighed up to do a writers workshop at Capclave and round up helping teach it.

Announcements: Have a fire and makings of s’mores. Sam L. said WSFA invited to Fabulous Bungalow New Year and the BSFS 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. George RR Martin not in the Game of Thrones

calendar, especially not in a speedo. Barry announced brought info about a book claimed to be by the TV show character Richard Castle. Science Fiction Research Association published Sex in the Machine, academic article. Move to adjourned. Meeting unanimously adjourned at 21:48.

Attendance: Carolyn Frank, Erica Ginter, Cathy Green, Kindra Gresham, Bill Lawhorn, Brian Lewis, Sam Lubell, Nicki and Richard Lynch, Bob Macintosh, Candy and John Madigan, Walter Miles, Sarah Mitchell, Barry & Judy Newton, Evan Phillips, George Shaner, Mike Taylor, Michael Walsh, Eva Whitley, Ivy Yap, Madeleine Yeh, Emmie Mears, Jenney and Brian O'Callaghan, Jessica Camis, Ben Hirsch, and Monique Clark.

### Science Fiction New Year's Resolutions



I won't miss politicians -- Katniss Everdeen of Mockingjay

No more fighting with Daddy – Luke Skywalker.

Before starting a game, make sure your opponent is playing the same one – Ender

I will not pick up strange women and let them have their will with me – Ivan Vorpatril of Captain Vorpatril's Alliance

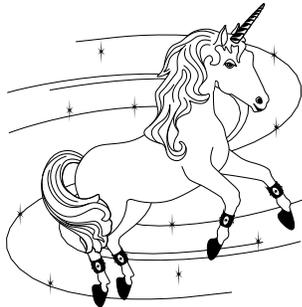
Make better wardrobe choices – The characters of Scalzi's Redshirts

Always make sure you have a way out of a book before you start it – Thursday Next

Keep a notepad of vital information on you at all times in case the universe reboots – Any resident of a DC Comics Universe

### Thankskilling in January

The WSFA First Friday in January, 1-4-13, opened with a “Alright, since we have everyone in the room. Called to order at 21:14,” from prez Barry. Madeleine suggested arguing about it for a minute. Sam L. read the minutes from the last meeting.



No money said Treasurer. There seems to be some problem with the Citibank website. Someone said all the banks were hit with cyberattacks. Steve said then we do have money somewhere. Sam S. said unless they were successful. Steve said dues are due and payable, \$20 per year. \$15 for active duty military and students. Lots of format, even credit card via Square. Someone suggested clams. Clams yes, rocks no. Mad said credit cards can be a deadly weapon. Steve said hovering around the high 30s. Trustees said it is five months from election, will need people for posts. Let a trustee know. Cathy said what positions are open. There was a discussion of small press categories that match the Hugo categories.

Publications: two journals sent to webmaster. WSFA Press has info on new book. Gayle said, book from George, The Skin Trade, a novella, previously published in anthologies, never alone. Rick Berry will do the art including 4 – 5 internal illustrations and cover. 500 signed and numbered, 500 trade. Need to sell 400 to break even. \$\$ counting all costs, since have to pay for overruns, the exact amount is not certain. WSFA Press is in the black. Paul has checks for \$ for books sold. Sold 44 to bookstore in

Colorado, Willis and Vaughn's personal bookstore. Need club to approve. Paul said we don't charge storage, yet. \$35 for limited edition, \$25 for trade. Still have not yet determined at con price. No reprint clause, because we sell as limited edition.

Bob proposed authorize WSFA Press up to \$ for creation of book. No opposed. Two abstentions. (Ernest and Bill). Prez said it passed. Question of whether books will last, only been around 5,000 years.

Gayle said logo up on website, four or five new members on Facebook. Twitter is twittering. Dodos at the tops of their lungs.

Capclave 2013 not here. Bill said this weekend send initial stuff to GoH on programming. Things are progressing. Sam S. said always looking for people to help us run them.

2014. Bill said nothing to report. Did the two year hotel contract, said Cathy. Same dodo time, same dodo place.

Talk SF, Fantasy and SF for Nov/Dec.

No old business.

No new business. Bill said, oo. Since BSFS is having a birthday, should we send them a card or edible arrangement? Cathy said, they didn't send us anything for our 60<sup>th</sup>. Bill said, send them a bill. Mad said put him on a bus.

Prez said for Sam L. to do a birthday card.

First meeting – Eugenia here for first meeting. Married to George.

Second meeting – Jenny and Brian O'Callahan. Jessica Hammis, Ben, All at Capclave.

Announcements: Bill stopped at a food lion, saw SF movies at 50 cents each. Greatest movie ever – Thankskilling. Bill has completed the last book of Wheel of Time and there is an ending.

For February, first Friday will be at Madigans in MD, will have Third Friday here in Virginia, because the Scheiners will be in Florida.

Meeting unanimously opposed I mean adjourned at 21:43.

Attendance: Drew Bittner, Ken Bryer, Cathy Green, Paul Haggerty, Bill Lawhorn, Bob Macintosh, Sarah Mitchell, Barry Newton, Kathi Overton, Judy and Sam Scheiner, George Shaner, Steve Smith, Laura Somerville, Gayle Surette, Ivy Yap, Madeleine Yeh, Jennifer and Brian O'Callaghan, Jessica Camis, Ben Hirsch, and Eugenia Martin.

### **"The Blessings of Piracy"**

**Century Magazine April 1882**

**Courtesy of John Madigan**

In the good old romantic days, when pirates wore top-boots and cutlasses, and bore down upon their victims with ships instead of printing presses, the trading-place of the buccaneers was Jamaica, where they spent in riotous living and the outfitting of their vessels the greater part of the wealth taken from merchant ships and wrung from the inhabitants of captured towns by torturing men and frightening women. There was naturally a party in the island opposed to the suppression of freebooting. That did not seem to Jamaicans so very bad a business which brought gold and silver plate and other precious stuff, rifled from Panama or the coasts of South America, to be sold at low rates to Jamaican traders and which afforded a liberal market for the rum and other commodities



of that favored island. Those planters in Jamaica, if any there were, who opposed this sort of unlawful privateering, were, no doubt, deemed unpatriotic. Great fortunes were amassed indirectly from the trade and to abolish it was to blight forever the golden prosperity of the country. The people who were plundered and tortured were, after all, only foreigners, Spaniards, and, above all Papists. Piracy was not so very bad; it served to depress the Spanish power and to exalt that of Protestant England and so promoted the glory of God, even though the means were most devilish.

One is forcibly reminded of this state of moral and intellectual fuddle into which the church-going English colonists of Jamaica fell through the seductions of trade, by the attitude of some of our publishing-houses on the copyright question. There are prominent publishers who are at length, after so many years of delay, in favor of granting to the foreign author some more definite interest in his book than the courtesy-money paid voluntarily of late years, but even those publishers continue to higggle for certain restrictions. They are not yet willing that literary theft shall be wholly suppressed, though they would like to see it reformed, now that a race of bolder and more predatory publishers are sailing the literary ocean, and disregarding all the traditional rules of genteel buccaneering. But simply to give an author control of the book he has made, as a wheelwright controls the wagon he has built, as a farmer controls the potatoes he has grown, or, to borrow from Mark Twain, as a distiller controls the whisky he has distilled, this our reformed publishers regard as quite out of the question. An unrighteous trade always warps the conscience and the judgement at last. What the old sermonizers used to call a "judicial blindness" has smitten some of the book-sellers.

The English and American publishers are now wrangling over the question of how authors can be in part protected, without giving them a simple property-interest in, and entire control of, the product of their work, such as all other workmen have. This only will satisfy justice, and justice is a horse pretty sure to lead by a length or two in a very long race. In this whole discussion, the intrusion of the book-seller's claims into the question is a curious illustration of the way in which a wrong, when long tolerated, put on the airs of an abstract right.

The most amusing thing that has been said or done in this discussion is not Mark Twain's funny speech. For once, the Hartford humorist has been fairly outdone by a piece of American humor from a publisher. A book-house of Philadelphia, a few months ago, sent to a number of authors a circular, in which it was proposed that they should give countenance to a proposition to forestall the pending book-sellers' treaty on the copyright question by a general law that should be more restrictive (and consequently, less honest) than the treaty. One of the arguments in favor of this barefaced suggestion was that Belgium had lost her "flourishing reprint business" by making a copyright treaty, and it was urged that the same thing might happen to America. Authors were, therefore, solicited to petition against the moiety of justice that this treaty would afford them, with as much suavity as a man in Japan is asked to commit hari-kari. No doubt, the South Carolina Legislature, in colonial time, felt about piracy just as this patriotic Philadelphia book-firm feels about reprints. The Carolina proprietors wanted the colonists to chase away the pirates who flocked into Charleston to buy sea-stores and sell booty, but the Colonial Assembly refused. The Carolinians, no doubt, said as the Philadelphians do now: "See what will come of driving away a lucrative trade." The proposed treaty will not seriously restrain the reprinting of foreign books—in fact, it leaves open a wide door for plunder, but even if it were calculated to break up the business of reprint, it would be no worse than some of our existing laws. Some people on Long Island a while ago carried on a most "valuable reprint trade," which would have made money more plentiful, and enriched some of the islanders, if the Treasury detectives had not rudely seized the plant and sent the printers to prison, from a prejudice against counterfeiting. It seems hard to deal thus with men who were only

trying to get other people's property without paying for it,—a thing perfectly legal in another branch of the reprint business.



It is worth while to repeat and emphasize the fact that the greatest damage from any system of pillage, or complicity in pillage, is that it confuses the moral judgement and tends to retard the general enlightenment of a people. No amount of “cheap literature” can atone for the disturbing effect on the public conscience of a dishonest system. I have heard a gentleman of culture and usually clear ideas talk about “the great heritage of cheap literature,” which the pirated “libraries” had brought to the American people, Which reminds me of the

saying of a West Virginia chaplain, when recounting his capture by bushwhackers: “They cast lots, to decide who should inherit my horse.”

Entering a shop in London, in 1880, I found the book-seller in a rage against America and Americans. He was resolved on vengeance and was swearing, in round old-fashioned Saxon oaths, that he would reprint some valuable American illustrated work—no matter whose—to revenge himself on America in general for the piratical act of one of the American book-houses,—perhaps the one in Philadelphia which esteems so highly “our valuable reprint trade,”—or, possibly, some other firm, composed of church-going and entirely respectable buccaneers,—deacons, as likely as not, and pillars in the church. The American book-lifter had robbed the English publisher of the money he had invested in works of art for his book, and had used the result of the toil and talent of the author and the artist without any compensation whatever. I might have blushed for my country's shame, but I knew that all true Americans ought to sustain the valuable reprint trade, and the benefits of cheap literature, which does as much for Philadelphia as the worship of Diana did for Ephesus. I therefore retorted upon the angry Briton that he had not suffered so much from Americans as I had from English publishers. Indeed, our publishers have practiced privateering for so long a period that a sort of ‘honor among’ themselves prevails with the more prosperous ones, which is unknown to English book-sellers who do not even rifle your pockets politely, as bandits always do, in romances.

The chief sufferers by the reprint trade are not British publishers, for whom I have no great sympathy, not even British authors whom I should like deeply to see righted. The American Author suffers more than either. While other forms of industry are protected in this country by an almost prohibitory tariff, it marks the lowness and materialistic character of our civilization that the highest kind of production is discouraged by being subjected to direct completion with stolen wares. The wonder is that we have any literature. The wonder is that we have any literature. A reader must pay a dollar and a half for a novel by an American, while he can buy “Middlemarch” or “Daniel Deronda”—incomparable offsprings of genius—for twenty cents.



“But the public gets the benefit,” says some hasty philosopher. Public-spirited people are always willing to have the public benefited at the expense of others. But does the public get benefit from this literary loot? For what is the office of literature? To refine our daily life—to show us the ideal aspects of the world in which we live. Foreign literature, drawing its materials from foreign life, cannot do the work of American letters. It is important that we see our own life idealized and analyzed in literature. Our

aspiring people seek in Europe relief from the rawness of our new country, and feel when they land in England that they are walking in a country whose highways or hedge-rows are consecrated in works of genius. We ought by this time to have had a literature ennobling our thoughts of home and field and shop; and indeed, if we had had an honest and equitable copyright law, we might have had more than reaping and sewing machines with which to mark the advance of our civilization...

### BSFS Visits WSFA

The WSFA Third Friday (1-18-13) began with a shortage of officers. Bill Lawhorn is chairing. "It's 9:16 and I'm in charge," he said with an evil laugh. "I object," said Sarah. "Someone has to," Bill said, "And who better than my wife?"

Sam read minutes and passed a card around. There was a motion to reimburse the cost of card. One abstention.

Capclave present was not here. Bill said we are attempting to improve our award ceremony. BSFS people here. Alexander, the face of BSFS is here. Announced Baltimore amateur writing contest for those never published in professional venue (SFWA decides) who is a Maryland resident. 1 thou to 5,500 words. No drabbles. March 1 to June 15<sup>th</sup>. Top three will be invited to Capclave. Final five get invites to Balticon and will do a reading then. Winner will be announced at Capclave. BSFS and WSFA members can enter. Blind judging. Since Capclave is about short stories.

2014 nothing to report

John for Meetup, said last count was 144. Comes and goes. Sarah for twitter said she posts funny pictures of dodos in costume. Say we're working on things.

Publications. Submit to editors.

Podcast discussion after the meeting. Jimmy puts together his list. Scienceismagic.com Has a shirt with the logo. Podcast discussion will be third Friday.

Steve Smith walked in. But Bill said since he was running the meeting, he doesn't have to turn the gavel over. Steve said Bank has website back up. Said amount. Call for a worldcon. Steve said that wouldn't pay the paperclip bill. Bill asked about Bills. Insurance all paid up, too soon for tax bill. Just a matter of sending form. No trustees. Election in May. Corner a trustee to run for office. Mark asked when dues are due. Steve said now. Will collect after meeting.

Small Press Award. Meeting for members next Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup>. Carolyn is already getting submissions. Doesn't open until Feb 1<sup>st</sup>. Anyone can nominate a story.

26<sup>th</sup> BSFS discussing Jack Chalker's *Midnight at the Web of Souls* at 5:30 followed by a SFWA Gala at Columbia MD. Mingle with the writers.

Old business: Meeting swap.

George for Capclave past said not fully closed yet. Still waiting for some ads not paid up.

Bill asked who is reminder.

Sam L. is supposed to remind them. Bill said George should do it. Sam L. said he had sent info to Sam S. so thought he was taking care of it. Carolyn said Bill was getting authoritative with waving the gavel around.

No new business.

First meeting – Kirsten Minzer, student of library science at Wide Oak public library. Attended Capclave. Had been intending on coming, finally here. Jimmy bugged me to going.

Holly, lives nearby but never got here. Work in Tacoma park in vintage clothing. Went to Capclave. Sat in a panel. Jimmy and Charity roped me in.

Second meeting: Julie, PhD student in linguistics. Found us through Jimmy.



Jimmy said he's the community growth officer. Bill said they all have someone in common. Carlos, reading SF since high school. Really elementary school. Never outgrew it. Ran into BSFS at anime social. Now a board member. Congratulations sucker.

Alexander, born and raised in Baltimore. First SF novel was trumps of doom. Said this was cool. Haven't stopped since. Almost finished Wheel of Time. Discovered BSFS a couple of years ago, didn't like it. Came back a few months ago and said this has potential. Like Roger Zelazny, works for social security officer. Trying to get published. Run a critic circle, organize writing events. Really enjoyed Capclave.

Third meeting. No.

Announcements: Shirl bought a house that is large enough to host fifth Friday, very close to here. Mark attacked acting chair. Eva said brought BSFS cake here. Madigans have a room to rent. Motion to adjourn. Unanimous.

Attendance: Carolyn Frank, Charity Helton, Michael Ikeda, Bill Lawhorn, Sam Lubell, Candy & John Madigan, Walter Miles, Sarah Mitchell, Shirl Phelps, Jimmy Rogers, Mark Roth, George Shaner, Steve Smith, Laura Somerville, Mike Taylor, Thomas Woldering, Ivy Yap, Kirsten Unttzel, Julie Gerard, Christel Gesterling, Holli Mintzer, Karlo Yeager, and Alexander Harris.