

WSFA JOURNAL

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2025

MINUTES OF JANUARY FIRST FRIDAY MEETING

Attendance: Frances Holland, Cathy Green, Kathi Overton, Gary Blog, Carolyn Frank, Elizabeth Twitchell, Judy Newton, Michael Ikeda, Jim Thomas, ZenLizard, Sam Lubell, Aaron Pound, Angela Pound, Sophie Pound, Bob MacIntosh, Kim Hargan, Bill Lawhorn, Mark Roth, Rodger Burns, Courtni Burleson, Sam Scheiner, Sarah Mitchell, Judy Scheiner

Meeting called to order at 8:15pm. Secretary read the minutes from the last meeting.

Treasurer said we has 89k+, up 2K from last year this time. Dies are due and are \$25. Can do cash, check, square, PayPal. Discussion was held about how to increase membership, both new and gafiated, possibility of more in person meetings vs virtual meetings, where to look for new people

Capclave Present: (1) box of knives from the con suite came home with him after 2024 Capclave. No none claimed them, Sam now owns box of knives. (2) Needs GOH liaison. Treasurer said GOHs should buy their own tickets and send receipts to treasurer for reimbursement

Capclave Future and DodoCon: Nothing to report of Capclave Future. For Dodocon, they're checking on the updated pricing from Zoom. Kathi Overton is looking into zoom events with simultaneous events for 100 attendees. Cost based on # of attendees. No breakdown between 100 and 600, therefore not cost effective. Looking at \$1200 total. Salesperson admitted can go over and then they charge \$2.50 per person, \$2.25 person at 100. Rodger envisions inviting 20-25 program participants. Cathy Green commented we should have more participants and not just regular Capclave program participants

Committee to Actually Discuss SF and Book Club: After meeting in breakout room will discuss Nov/Dec Asimov's. 3rd Friday will discuss December issue of Lightspeed. First Friday February will discuss Jan/Feb issue of Asimov's. 3rd Friday February will discuss Feb. Clarkesworld. Book club will discuss Orbital by Samantha Harvey on Thursday January 9. Sam asked for ideas for future books.

WSFA Small Press Award: nothing to say other than Press release will drop on Monday January 6.

Entertivities: Carolyn said Appletv+ is free this weekend for everyone via the app. Elizabeth Twitchell said wicked is 3 hours long and is now available to rent and has a pause button.

No old business.

New Business: Discussion about getting new members. Sam S. suggested emailing the recently gafiated about rejoining and/or asking why gafiated and what would you like to see if you came back. We need a strategy for the longer term gafiated. For the gafiated from last year, maybe just a reminder email. No other new business

Gary Blog was present for his first meeting.

Annoucments: Secretary made usual annoucement. Sam S. retired as of this past Sunday from the NSF. They've bought a lot in Charlottesville and are building a house. Hoping to move in late May.

Meeting adjourned.

MINUTES OF THIRD FRIDAY JANUARY MEETING

Attendance: Cathy Green, Rodger Burns, Jim Thomas, Bob MacIntosh, Mark Roth, Ellen Montgomery, Aaron Pound, Angela Pound, Sophie Pound, Judy Kindell, ZenLizard, Carolyn Frank, Elizabeth Twitchell, Mike Taylor, Kim Hargan, Sarah Mitchell, Courtni Burleson, Perrienne Lurie, Michael Ikeda, Frances Holland, Sam Lubell

Meeting called to order at 8:15pm,
Secretary read the minutes of the previous meeting.
Treasurer made his report and reminded people to pay their annual dues.

Capclave Present: Has been in contact with the GOHs. Also Sherin Nicole about designing the rack cards and bookmarks. Has been in contact with Perrienne Lurie regarding programming.

Capclave Future: nothing to report

Dodocon: Nothing to report

WSFA Small Press Award: 1st short story was submitted on January 6. @0 more on January 7. 35 have been processed and webmaster has put up the first 20 for the committee to read. 42 more emails have come in. It's around the same pace as last year – 4-5 a day. So far submission have come from 13 authors, 21 publishers/editors, 1 WSFAn.

Courtni has set up the membership committee and is looking at the suggestions from the previous meeting.

Entertivities: Perrienne said that AppleTV+ had dropped the last episode of Silo and started up the new season of Severance

Committee to Actually Discuss SF: in a breakout room after the meeting will discuss the December 2024 issue of Lightspeed. 1st Friday February will discuss Jan/Feb issue of Asimov's; 3rd Friday February will discuss February Clarkesworld; 1st Friday March will discuss Analog unless F&SF shows up.

Zoom book club is this Thursday February 6. we will be discussing Carrie Vaughn's The Naturalist Society

No old business.

New business: 5th Friday this month. Sam will host a zoom party.

No people present for 1st, 2nd, or 3rd meeting.

Announcements: Secretary made usual announcement. Sam Lubell said that the BSFS book club will discuss Way of the Argosy by Sebastien de Castiel January 25 at 6:30pm in the BSFS building and on zoom. Sam Lubell also said that BSFS gives out the Compton Crook Award for best SF/F first novel and other SF clubs in MD are eligible to nominate. Perrienne said that BSFS will have a memorial for Jul Owings in person and on zoom January 25 at 8pm.

A condolence card will be sent to BSFS from WSFA

Motion to adjourn was made. Meeting adjourned at 8:43pm

First Friday, February 7, 2025

Attendance: Substitute secretary did not take attendance.

Meeting start 8:15

Treasurer: Have ~\$90K, about \$3K more year over year. Reminder to pay dues.

Capclave Present: Sherin Nicole suggested a postcard illustration for every year that Capclave has had guests. Told her that is overkill, and wants a t-shirt and cover. Will be tabling at Farpoint tomorrow, if someone wants to help Sunday they could use the help. Will table at Boskone in a week, any WSFAns there could help out. Per Treasurer: Registration is down by about 30.

Capclave Future: Not here.

Dodocon: Cancelled.

Small Press: Overwhelmed with entries. Last year, at this time 127 stories. This year, about 140. This year is going to have more stories than last year. About half are from authors, one from WSFA, the rest from publishers. About half are fantasy. About 25% horror. The rest are SF. Most are from the U.S. or Canada. One from Nigeria. Wants WSFA's to nominate stories.

Committee to Discuss SF: Will discuss Jan/Feb Asimov's. 3rd Friday will discuss current month's Clarkesworld. 1st Friday in March will discuss Jan/Feb Analog. Book club met yesterday, about 5 attendees. Next three months for book club: Service Model by Tchaikovsky, Pavane by Roberts, Empire of Shadows by Benson. Per Bill Lawhorn - tried to get Carrie Vaughn to attend, but could not coordinate it, will try for future.

Committee on Membership: Report is on EWSFA list and wants it to be an agenda item for 3rd Friday.

Intertiviess: None

5th Friday Reported: Good crowd, chatted for a long time.

No old business

No new business

Jennifer Knox first meeting. Would love to join WSFA.

Announcements: Secretary announcement. Sam is moving to Charlottesville and they have broken ground on their new house, Judy is injured.

Adjourned at 8:43

Minutes of Third Friday February WSFA Meeting

Meeting called to order at 8:15 by the president.

Aaron Pound read the minutes of the previous meetings

Treasurer reminded everyone to pay their dues. If you have PayPal, you can do it through our Capclave account, which is capclave [at] yahoo [dot] com.

Otherwise you can mail me a check or we can set up a phone conversation, and we can run a credit card over the phone

Capclave present: we've done tabling at Farpoint and Boskone. No membership sales but handed out lots of flyers. Noted that at some point before Capclave, the mail in address for reg forms will need to change because Sam S. is moving to Charlottesville. Carolyn agreed to do the restaurant guide again, but said she wouldn't even look at it until after the submission period for the WSFA Small Press Award closed. Sam is still looking for someone to do at con registration. Elizabeth twitchell agreed to do mass mailings for the con. Perrienne is doing programming. Cathy Green is doing publicity. Sam needs someone to do program book and someone to be GOH liaisons. Zenlizard indicated that the person who did at con registration last year, Kim Schlereth, is willing to do it again. Cathy Green made arrangements with Kim Hargan and Sam L. to get the table kits back so it could go to Convivial next weekend.

Capclave Future has nothing to report.

Trustees: Need to have a slate of officer candidates by April. Please get in touch with them if you are interested in being a WSFA officer or Capclave chair.

Committee to Discuss SF will meet in a breakout room after the meeting to discuss Clarkesworld Magazine. First Friday March will discuss Jan/Feb Analog. Third Friday March will discuss Lightspeed Magazine because F&SF doesn't seem to be putting out issues. First Friday April will do March/April Asimov's. Third Friday April will do April Clarkesworld.

Book Club will meet virtually on March 13 to discuss Service Model by Adrian Tchaikovsky. In April will discuss Pavane by Keith Roberts and in May we will be discussing Empire of Shadows by Jacqueline Benson.

WSFA Small Press Award: Admin said so far 151 stories have been submitted. Only 10 more than last year at this time. Webmaster has put up 135 so far. Also, so far only 2 WSFAns have nominated. You're eligible to nominate a story. This year, the number of fantasy stories has gone up and the number of horror stories has gone down.

Webmaster and WSFA Press: Has sold some books. Having some email issues, so the putting up of WSFA Small Press Award stories has been going a bit slower as Carolyn needs to keep re-sending emails. Also working on cleaning out the Capclave programming database so we can start fresh again this year.

Entertivities:

Cathy Green:Hugo nominations are open. Recommended we use the eswfa email list and WSFA Facebook to discuss what we think is nomination worthy.

Sam Lubell: amazon now has control of the James Bond franchise.

Elizabeth Twitchell: Murderbot starts on AppleTV+ in March.

Bill Lawhorn: Bill Lawhorn: if anybody would like to do dinner before 3rd Friday, and then we decamp to 3rd Friday in March, to Casa de Mark. So somewhere up kind of in the you know the area near where Sam lives and where Mark lives. We just plan to get together, probably at. 6:30, quarter to 7 and then we have dinner and a bunch of people actually go in person to the meeting not just a couple people at Mark and Ellen's.

No Old Business

New Business: The committee to examine membership growth that I kind of foisted on to Courtni, who kindly accepted it.

Courtni: The notes that I circulated are in the chat if folks want to play along. But I'll just do a really brief overview. And really the idea is to get feedback from folks and that we can take back to the second discussion of the committee to you

know, to mull over and make any other recommendations or insight or guidance that we can. So I'll just do a really brief overview. Afterwards we will have some discussion. I will warn you that, if you want to have like a comment out there, please use the raise hand function, or if you're in the room over there, just kind of shout, and we'll put it in the queue. But I wanted to flag that first.

So essentially, this came from a conversation that Sam Sheiner started by sharing some data about our membership numbers over the years. And so it spawned the question about whether we needed to be proactive whether it's Capclave or wsfa. You know, thinking about our membership, retention, and growth. So the committee met in early February and we really talked about 3 main subjects. One, we identified kind of what the stagnation points are, so that we knew what we actually wanted to brainstorm about. And then we kind of split the conversation into more like short term things that we can think about doing now and then more long term things that are, you know, really subject to the input of the club and what they want to do, and but to give some recommendations about the things that we brainstormed about. So in terms of like what we identified as driving stagnation is kind of the challenges of our main, WSFA event being predominantly a business meeting and a hybrid meeting at that. So that presents, you know, difficulties with entry points of people coming in and socializing within the group and engaging on that level. And so we've tried to have other things to spur more activity, engagement. So maybe doing more of that. But that is a challenge. And also, you know, any kind of work to grow. A membership really involves a lot of intentional kind of focus on it. Intentional long term focus on it. And that's something that we're not being proactive about necessarily now. So, in terms of the short term suggestions, we thought that forming some kind of activities or outreach committee, and Kim Hargan volunteered to chair. That would be a good 1st step.

The point of having that committee would be just like any other standing committee at our meeting. They would report out, you know, people would be able to contribute. But it's really just to have like a calendar of things that we're sharing with folks. People can bring ideas and anybody that volunteers for the

committee. We're not saying it's a heavy lift, but just it's a resource for folks that want to organize things. So real life example of Bill offering to have this dinner. It's like, maybe we have an institutional memory that we build up that have restaurants that are really hospitable to the group. If people want to help Carpool, we'll have like, build those resources up. But that outreach committee really is to kind of report out and collect information, flag things that we might want to do, but just be really proactive about calling out things that we could be doing to engage our membership more

In the notes you'll find some things we brainstormed. I won't go over it. People can kind of see what those things are. Anybody can offer activities. You don't have to be on the committee to do that. But the committee is kind of in charge of keeping a collection of of those ideas.

Not only collecting them that, but when the idea comes in, then putting it around for everybody else. and getting people volunteers, whatever whatever might might that that activity might involve. We put a couple of ideas in the document of proactive things we can do with the meetings now that folks can see and then we moved into more long term ideas that we might want to think of, and we kind of examined what we are doing now, which is not a lot of proactive work. So we have Capclave, which is proactive. But it's once a year. We have our social media. We have meet up, we have our website. But those are really passive outreach. It's not actually going out engaging folks, and then we have kind of word of mouth. What we do at conventions, and all of those things have the challenge of we're not really kind of getting ourselves out there. But also there is the issue of once you kind of get out there, you really have to do the work to make sure that you're creating an environment in which people can feel welcome and inclusive. And and that kind of thing, and there's work around that, too. So we that's more we offered the brainstorming ideas that we had of things that we may want to think about long term. So, working on our web page and making that something that's more proactive, that's more up to date. But that involves creating content because we're not asking Paul and Gayle to create content, being more intentional with our outreach, making sure that we're using

those vehicles. We have, like Sarah's great about the social media, but everything else is more passive kind of outreach, meaning that you have to tell us to do something in order for it to get on Meetup, for it to get on the web page, and we often could be doing, maybe, with our events with libraries, with author groups. There are ways in which we could do more active outreach in that way. So the idea, the recommendations that we have would be to have, to get some of your ideas now, and then we'll take that back to the membership committee to see if there's something that we can move on and make other recommendations, and then we also took into the feedback that came before of doing a membership survey. We talked about 2 different surveys, one for Capclave that will go under the purview of Capclave. So I'm not really going to touch on that.

But one being that we do for the membership, and we identified some issues about timing around that. But that is something that would be valuable for us to think about either doing sooner, so that we can bring people in. Or maybe we want to wait and get some of this other stuff going. So we have things to plug people into. So that is the that's the general recap. We shared the information out with folks. We'll get feedback, and then we'll come back and circulate ideas. So if anybody wants to be a part of that conversation, it's not too late. Just let me know. Shoot me an email or tell me tonight, or whatever, and we'll include you.

So with that I will be quiet, and I will open it up 1st to Judy because she raised her hand. And I appreciate that. And then really, just think about any kind of feedback that you have on this issue or reactions to this or anything else that you want to share.

Judy Newton: 1st of all, let me say that this is a wonderful effort, and I thank you for doing it. It's great. A lot of this stuff is what we used to do as a club. We would organize dinners, outings. We all went out to the Air and Space Museum out by the airport in a bunch and got a tour, and I wrote about it in the WSFA Journal. Things like that could happen. And second, let me really think, really emphasize that having a carpool formal kind of structure would be a wonderful idea. As a person who hates to drive. I'd be all for that. And also I noticed here

you have a bullet point for gaming sessions. Years ago there used to be a regular poker game at WSFA meetings.

Ginny Schneider: My main question is actually, what is the intended targeted audience. Who are you we collectively trying to reach? And the reason I ask this is because I don't know how many of, you know, but I am no longer in the United States. I am, in fact, in Taiwan and I'm particularly interested; I know it's called WSFA, right like Washington, but many people who were in WSFA, I'm sure, have scattered, and because there is a hybrid option, I was wondering whether or not collectively, we'd be open to expanding it more geographically. Part of it, of course, is because I still like the group, and would still like to be a part of it, and would like to come back occasionally, you know, when time and inclination permits.

Elizabeth Twitchell: So because I like spending other people's money, I think seriously part of this is our communications infrastructure. We have for a very, very long time relied entirely on volunteers and the platforms and services they have, which is awesome. Do not get me wrong. But we've reached the point over the last 25 years, where we have some money, and it might be a good use of it as a part of this outreach, to pay a designer to make us templates of new flyers that are up to whatever the current design standard is paying for an email, you know. Get an email template a logo file. Basically, once we've decided our audience and what we're doing, we should genuinely invest a couple thousand in the infrastructure of what we use to present us as the club to other people. It could be as basic as getting getting that done and getting new table drapes or something. But we're trying to present ourselves to outsiders as this thing you want to join, and we should kind of look professional and upgrade it as we do it. And I think as a part of this, we should budget to do that and just commit to that once we decide what the goal. Because we don't have to use volunteers, which are awesome. We all volunteer our time, but there's stuff we don't have to volunteer on.

Sam Scheiner: You have lots of great suggestions in the document. One that really resonated with me is, we don't need 2 business meetings a month. We barely have enough real business for one meeting and we need more social activities. Just like Bill suggested for 3rd Friday meet for dinner ahead of time. In the before times we had a lot of socializing both before and after the business meeting, which we now don't do. And yeah, less business, more social.

Gary Blog: you need to promote the meetings more.

Mark: When I lived in Philadelphia, PSFS always had speakers at their meetings. So they would start with business, then table it for a speaker at a set time, and then go back to business. We might not be able to do that every month, but we should be able to do it 4 times a year.

Gary Blog: It doesn't have to be an author speaker. You guys have a lot of universities, you could do science speakers or someone from NASA, something like that.

Courtnei: These are really great ideas, and I think there is a lot of stuff for us to talk about. But I also want to flag that like going back to Elizabeth's point is like, this is a volunteer organization. So I think that we also have to think about the long term commitment to the infrastructure of this and what that looks like, given the way in which we operate. So I'm not saying that to discourage us, but I think that we have to think about that aspect of our planning as well. What is the role of community for WSFA, like there is kind of a fatigue. I certainly feel fatigue in lots of ways, but I think that that's also an opportunity. And if we're having these conversations now, we can really think through like, what can kind of jump start us out of inertia? I do say as somebody that is newer to WSFA like there is a lot of inside baseball that I think that we have to examine if we are opening up and wanting to get that engagement. And so that is going to be one of those conversations that we think about when the world is hard and we want to create community and a lasting community, and that will help take over after we're gone. Then how do we need to think about shaping the ways in which we reach out and the ways in which we interact with people once they are here.

Ginny Schneider indicated interest in working with the committee. Also noted that first impressions are of a mostly white, mostly older, male demographic.

Gary Blog said once we start doing author talks we need to start promoting ourselves to schools, colleges, universities.

Bob: The number one recommendation from the committee is to create a standing Activities Outreach Committee. Does anybody have any objections to forming that particular subcommittee that will be essentially a committee that is separate from the membership committee but associated with it, whose purpose

is to run the calendar for the activity. Basically, does anybody have any objection to the formation of said committee. Okay, hearing none. I'm going to appoint Kim as he volunteered for it to be the head of this committee, and we will have it and reporting on a regular basis.

It was also noted the our brochure/flyer needs updated as it was written pre-covid and is no longer accurate about a bunch of things. Issue was referred to the committee as well.

Bob noted that going to one full business meeting a month and one primarily social meeting with lightning abbreviated business meeting requires a constitutional amendment/bylaws amendment.

Announcements: secretary made usual announcement. Mark noted you only have a week to download kindle books onto your computer before that ability goes away. Sam Scheiner said Judy was home and doing better. Sam L. said BSFS book club was tomorrow and was doing the Daughter of Dr Moreau by Silvia Moreno Garcia. Elizabeth Twitchell: Elizabeth Twitchell: I was just going to say that what's happening is I don't know how many people actually did this previously. You could plug your kindle into your computer and download directly off it to the hard drive of your computer, your files. What they're doing is taking that away. What they are not doing is taking away your ability to sideload things onto your kindle, which for me at least, is a much bigger deal. Supposedly to stop people from pirating. Carolyn had successful cataract surgery. Gary Blog noted that Seattle worldcon wasn't doing a con suite. Eva Whitley offered to host a 5th Friday.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25pm