



The WSFA Journal

November/December 2025

Edited by Samuel Lubell, Secretary



**We're
Gonna
Need
People**

**Paperbacks
Reach Last
Chapter**

**You Are
Being
Entertained**

**A Review of
*The Lord of
the Rings:
The War of
the
Rohirrim***

Who Are The Trustees?

Author Spotlight: John Varley

Reading Older SF

Everyone Can Create Content

We're Gonna Need People

The 9/6/2025 Sept First Friday meeting had Elizabeth, Kim, Cathy, and Bob live. Attending via Zoom were Perrienne, Jim Thomas, Zenlizard, Mark, Greg Key, Michael I, Judy N, Carolyn, Rodger, Frances, Sam S, Sam L, Sarah and Bill.

The meeting started at 8:15. Sam L. read the minutes from last meeting. Zenlizard reported that we had \$\$\$ in various accounts. Registration has picked up. # more members as of the end of August, but that's ** # from last year. That's total, not paid. Total registration is ##.

Sam L. said, now part of the problem is that the usual email to people never went out. We need to get the word out that online registration closes on Thursday of next week.

Sam S suggested we send an email out to past Capclave attendees. Elizabeth said that it is going out this weekend.

Zen and Sam S. tried to figure out the membership database. Sam S said we are somewhere in the range of ## or so total membership.

Sam L for Capclave present said Capclave is 2 weeks from now! We have a schedule and just need to add the gaming stuff and sent it to the participants. They are getting back to me saying I cannot do this or that. So it needs some adjusting and we may have some openings on a couple of panels that we will need to fill at the convention. That's typical. I had trouble getting gmail's mail merge working even though it worked fine when I did the invites a few weeks ago. So I'm not sure what I was doing wrong, but anyway, I had to do it all by hand. That's why it went out... didn't go out until today. Now I really need people to talk up Capclave, Promote it on social media.

Sam S said he will be at Capclave so Sam L said he will add him to the program. Mark offered to do more programming as well. Sam L said that so many people wanted readings that he had to double up on readings and make two readings rooms. If you haven't bought your membership please do so immediately and I need volunteers. Apurva is not here, and she is in charge of volunteers, but we're gonna need people for the con suite, registration, and the green room.

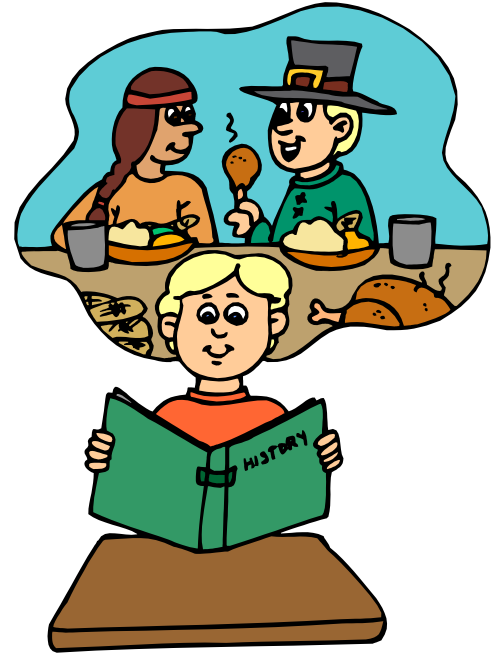
Zen said that we will need people for move in and out. He needs an assistant for the Green Room. Judy suggested a sign-in sheet like last year.

Mark asked about the Baltimore Book Fair. Sam L said he wanted to go. Mark said to bring Capclave flyers.

Michael I asked about when the program would be up on the website. Sam L. said Monday.

Zen said he would take care of the badges and would pre-print them. Paul and programming will do the stickers for the back of badges. Bob said he will send around a list of dealers and their assistants.

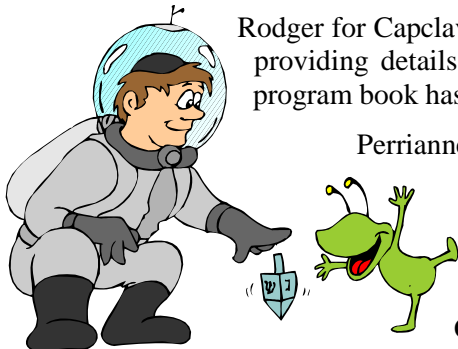
Sam L. said that we would do a Capclave meeting after this meeting.



Rodger for Capclave Future said that he is in negotiation with potential guests of honor. We'll be providing details once we have confirmation. Sam L said that traditionally the back of the program book has an ad for next year so we will need details for the program book.

Perrienne for Far Future had nothing to report.

Sam L. for Committee to Discuss SF said that due to the Capclave meeting, we are postponing the discussion of Asimov's to October's First Friday. Bob asked about scheduling a WSFA meeting at Capclave. Sam said it was on the schedule. There was question about doing a magazine discussion at Capclave but Sam L. said everyone would be too busy. We also have the



bylaws amendment for Capclave. There was a motion to postpone it to third Friday in October.

Intertivities: Library of Congress Book Festival at the DC Convention Center. There are several SF/Fantasy writers. Sunday there is a BWAWA meeting and the Takoma Park Folk Festival. Netflix has dropped the second half of the second season of Wednesday. Perriane said it was very entertaining. There will be a SFWA tent at the Baltimore Book Festival.

Old Business: Third Friday will be at Capclave and will not be on Zoom. In October, both First and Third Friday meetings will be hybrids. Mark will not be available in November since they are traveling to a con.

New Business: Sam L asked to be added to the administrators for the WSFA list.

Announcements: Sam S. said they visited Forks, Washington to see Olympia National Park and didn't know it was where Twilight was set until Judy told him. It's a big tourist thing up there. Carolyn will miss Capclave because she is going to her 55th High School Reunion.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45.

Paperbacks Reach Last Chapter by Samuel Lubell

The pages of the mass market paperback book may have reached "The End".

[Publishers Weekly, on December 12](#), reported that U.S. sales of mass market paperbacks fell 84% in 20 years, from 131 million books in 2004 to 21 million in 2024 (with sales in 2025 through October, just 15 million). Mass market sales were down 13.7% in 2024 when just 4 percent of books sold were mass market paperbacks (according to Circa Book Scan). By contrast ebook sales were up 3% over 2023 and Hardcover 7.4%



Mass market paperbacks started in 1939 as books that could fit in a pocket. For just 25 cents, a reader could get a reprint with the same words as a more expensive hardcover.

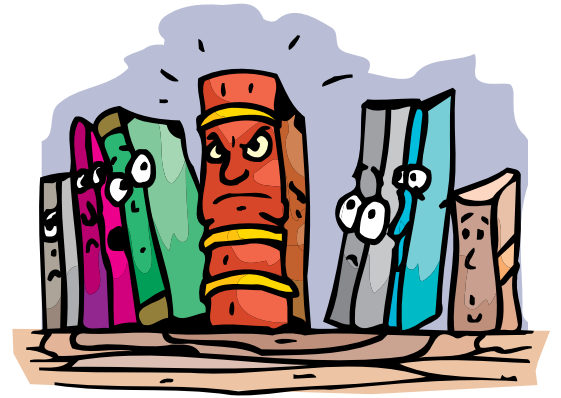
At its height, mass market paperbacks greatly outsold other formats with a few selling in the millions. In 1979, people bought 387 million mass market paperbacks compared to 82 million hardcovers and 59 million trade paperbacks. In 1996, mass market paperbacks sold over \$1 billion copies. Mass market books were not just sold in bookstores but at grocery stores and newsstands and wherever magazines and newspapers were sold (and using the same network of dealers).

At first paperback publishers bought rights from the publishers of hardcovers. Then publishers began publishing both formats with the mass market paperbacks coming out around a year after the hardcover. Many genre books were mass market originals, and, unless they did very well, never came out in hardcover. It was a major milestone for many authors when their books came out in hardcover first, instead of mass market.

So, why the decline? Publishers' Weekly speculates that rising costs hurt the mass market, especially as publishers did not want to raise the price above \$9.99. The already small profit margins grew smaller with the increasing costs of paper. Also, sales declined due to competition from ebooks and other electronic entertainments. People are not reading as much, so there is no longer a mass market for paperbacks. Trade paperbacks are surviving because their higher price point means that they can sell fewer copies yet still make a profit.

ReaderLink, a major book distributor, has announced that they will no longer handle mass market paperbacks starting in 2026. Major department stores like Walmart and Target have decided that the profit margin on books was not worth it as the space could be put to more profitable use (note that many magazines have also died and their spaces near cashiers are now mostly special editions).

This will hurt science fiction and fantasy authors in several ways. First, readers who might have taken a chance on a new author in an \$8.99 mass market paperback will be much more reluctant to pay twice that for a trade paperback or even more for a hardcover. While ebooks remain, it will be a lot harder for new writers to be recognized in the flood of unedited and AI-written ebooks. Second, it will further hurt the backlist as publishers won't have a smaller format to keep books for years after their initial release. Most hardcovers are bought in the first few months with the unsold copies remaindered at a steep discount. Third, readers in their teens and 20s, just developing their adult spending habits, will see the hardcovers and paperbacks as too expensive for them. There will also be fewer opportunities to see books at the grocery or department stores; they would have to make a special trip to the few remaining bookstores (or shop online). Fourth, it will shrink the number of books in print since fewer titles are available in trade PB than were, until recently, in mass market. Fifth, increasingly books will only be available for a brief period in hardcover with only a few going on to trade paperbacks and readers who do not pick up the book during that window will only have the ebook.



You Are Being Entertained

The 9/19/2025, September Third Friday meeting took place at Capclave and was not on Zoom. So there were no recordings. The treasurer was not there because he was busy shutting down registration. Bill moved to waive the reading of the minutes. This passed. Normally we go through the committees said President Bob. Capclave Present (Sam L) said he was busy running the convention and urged people to volunteer. Rodger for Capclave Future said it will take place October 2-4, 2026 in this very same hotel. Guests of Honor are Rebecca Roanhorse and Nino Cipri. Far Future, Perrienne said will have a convention at the end of September 2027. They are discussing

GoH. Sam L gave the schedule for upcoming meetings of the Committee to Discuss SF. Entertivities said we are doing Capclave. You are being entertained.

Old business: At the last meeting we decided not to bring up the bylaw change until next 3rd Friday. We cannot discuss new business without a quorum. A few were here for their first (or 2nd or 3rd) WSFA meeting Joe Burino is a new writer. John Robinson was here for his first. Nicky Gatz was here for his first. He wants to be a writer. Bob Graft was here because a friend told him about it. Elizabeth Wang writes SF and belongs to the Maryland Writers. Lark moved into this area and his checking out the literary scene. Rodger clarified that you don't have

to be a member to attend the meeting, but must be a member to vote. Jim Lyil said Perrienne made him come. Ben wanted to see what a meeting was like. Naomi Rotenhorse was a regular attendee a while ago. She was told she can rejoin by paying the \$25 dues. Someone asked about a discount for volunteers. She was told that even the chair has to buy a membership. Bill said that volunteering was better than organizing and running conventions.

Motion to adjourn passed at 9:18.

A Review of *The Lord of the Rings: The War of the Rohirrim* by Kimberly G. Hargan



To begin with, here is the short, caustic, scathing version of my impression of this animated movie: *The Lord of the Rings: The War of the Rohirrim* is a cheerless, spiritless mashup of Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* media franchise and Disney's movies about spunky, brave princesses (and princess analogues). Part of the lack of cheer and spirit is of course due to the absence of any spunky, catchy songs about hope and progress. Much of the rest is due to the one-dimensional characters and the lack of the magic with which Tolkien imbued his world.

The basis of the movie's story comes from "Appendix A – Annals of the Kings and Rulers" at the end of *The Return of the King*, the third volume of *The Lord of the Rings*. Section I has to do with the lineage of the kings of Gondor, leading to Aragorn. Section II is titled "The House of Eorl" and is a condensed history of the Mark of Rohan. Somewhere around the middle of the section are some twelve or thirteen paragraphs about Helm Hammerhand, the beginning of which I quote here:

"Of the kings of the Mark between Eorl and Theoden most is said of Helm Hammerhand. He was a grim man of great

strength. There was at that time a man named Freca, who claimed descent from King Fréawine, though he had, men said, much Dunlendish blood, and was dark-haired. He grew rich and powerful, having wide lands on either side of the Adorn. Near its source he made himself a stronghold and paid little heed to the King. Helm mistrusted him, but called him to his councils; and he came when it pleased him. To one of these councils Freca rode with many men, and he asked the hand of Helm's daughter for his son Wulf."

Helm says there will be no brawling inside the king's hall of Meduseld, so he invites Freca outside for a one-on-one response to his arrogance, and deals him such a blow that he dies shortly thereafter. The rest of the paragraphs on Helm deal with the ensuing rebellion and civil war led by Wulf against the king.

The sentence at the head of the previous paragraph is the only information we have on Helm's daughter: we don't have her name and whether she even survived the civil war. This of course opens the door for the screenwriters to go to town on imagining a story for her. Personally I would wish that they had hewed more or less to the outline given in Section II, but they play fast and loose with that in order to make the daughter even more heroic and Wulf much more of a villain.

So, the movie opens with Héra, Helm's daughter, on a hilltop where she hurls a haunch of meat into the air to be taken by a fledgling of the great eagles, Tolkien's windlords (foreshadowing! foreshadowing!). Back in Edoras her brothers comment on how reckless this was – the eagle and its accompanying parent could just as easily have taken her for a snack. Her brothers are there in the stable to make sure she



comes to the council hall, as Freca has just arrived and, as a noble of the Mark, has invoked a council. There follows the scene as described above, where Freca arrogantly requests Héra's hand for his son Wulf. This gets shot down twice over – Helm states that he has arranged for her to marry a Gondorian prince (in support of the alliance between the two kingdoms), and Héra herself states that at this time she doesn't intend to marry any man (Helm made the arrangement with Gondor without consulting his daughter). Freca insults Helm, who invites him outside for the mano-a-mano

confrontation. Freca hauls off and slugs Helm two or three times (so he gets in the first hits), following which Helm hits him once, whereupon Freca dies. Wulf declares a purpose to avenge his father, which gets him banished.

Eventually Wulf declares openly for battle, supported by outsider allies. Tolkien leaves these allies unidentified other than to tell us that they are "enemies of Gondor that landed in the mouths of Lefnui and Isen". The movie makes them Haradrim, Southrons with their mûmakil (jumbo-sized war elephants with six tusks, three on each side of their trunks). Some years after Freca's death Héra is out riding with her aunt Olwyn (a chaperone/attendant who is also a rider in the style of the older Shieldmaidens of Rohirrim history). They come across a loose mûmak that has apparently gone rogue and broken free. Héra risks her life to lead it into the forbidden forest where it is taken by "the Watcher in the Forest". This critter is suggested by "the Watcher in the Water" encountered by the Fellowship of the Ring in the pool that had formed before the entrance of Moria and which almost grabbed Frodo before they got through the door.

As the mûmak disappears under the lake and the Watcher goes back to mimicking a small island, Héra runs into Targg, Wulf's commanding general, and he throws a sack over her and drags her off to Wulf's headquarters in the vale of Isengard, where we see that he has become the High Lord of the Dunlendings (traditional enemies of the neighboring Rohirrim). Before escaping she gets a look at Wulf's work table and sees among other things a scroll with a wax seal (foreshadowing! foreshadowing!).

Back in Edoras she and others report that Wulf has completed raising an army and is on the way to attack. The king and his forces go forth to meet them, expecting that one flank will be filled by the men raised by Lord Thorne. In Meduseld Héra sees a list of the coats of arms of the lords under King Helm and recognizes the coat of arms of Lord Thorne as that which she had seen on the wax seal on the scroll on Wulf's desk. Thorne is a traitor, and that is going to mean disaster for the king and his army! She prepares to ride out and warn her father, but Lord Thorne surprises her in the stable. She draws her short sword, but Thorne knocks it aside – Héra is no swordswoman. She grabs a pitchfork to defend herself just as Thorne gets himself behind her horse, which kicks him so that he falls on the pitchfork. Realizing that it is too late to get out to her father, she gives the command to evacuate all the women and children, elderly and invalids, and all other non-combatants to the refuge of the Hornburg. As the enemy troops are entering an empty Edoras, a mûmak rushes for Meduseld, but older brother Haleth leaps up into the howdah on the back of the mûmak, dispatches the Southron troops and finally kills the mûmak with blows to its head with his war axe, dropping it right in front of the doors to Meduseld. As he raises his axe in celebration of his heroic deed, Wulf, who has entered the empty Edoras with his troops, takes a bow and puts an arrow through Haleth's throat, killing him. Héra witnesses this before riding off to join her father in the rearguard as they also make for the Hornburg. Sensitive brother Háma (or artistic – he plays the lyre) has been riding his trusty old horse through the battle, but now during the retreat the horse gives out and the enemy capture him.

Wulf brings Háma below the walls of the Hornburg and slits his throat in full view of Helm and Héra, and both have to be restrained from going down to him. Helm has taken several arrows and other wounds in the battle, and between that and the death of both his sons he falls into an illness intensified by grief. He is tended to while Héra takes over management of the refugees in the Hornburg as Wulf's forces settle in for a siege before the Hornburg as winter comes on.

As this goes on no one realizes that Helm, a tough old bird, has recuperated and taken to sneaking out through a secret passage in his chamber into the camp of Wulf's forces, where he tears enemy soldiers apart with his bare hands. The Dunlendings began to fear him as some kind of wraith, and as he blows the king's horn back up in the gorge that comes to be known as Helm's Deep before setting out on his nightly raids, the Dunlendings begin to develop a terror of the long winter nights as they realizes what the horn signals.

One night when a decision of some sort is needed from the king, they can't find him in his chambers, where they thought he was still convalescing. As they scatter to look for him, Héra accidentally discovers the secret door to the secret passage and follows it to a concealed opening in the mountain slope off to the side of the Hornburg's walls. There she sees a pair of rather cartoony orcs – not the terrifying Uruk-hai



of *The Two Towers*, they gave more the impression of Cruella Deville's doofus henchmen from *101 Dalmatians* – looting any rings they can find from any bodies they come across. One asks the other why it's just rings, and the other replies that it's orders from Mordor (foreshadowing! foreshadowing!). They are accompanied by a troll (perhaps a snow troll – Tolkien mentions that the

Dunlendings came to fear King Helm for having the ferocity of a snow

troll, because his nightly raids took place in the depths of winter, but this reference in "The Annals of the Kings and Rulers" is the only mention he ever makes of such a creature as a snow troll). A landslide closes the exit of the secret passage, the bad guys are alerted, and they detect her by smell. A human girl would probably make a tasty treat, but as they are making their move on her, Dad Helm comes barreling in, crushing the orcs and going toe-to-toe with the troll. The troll has a slight upper hand until Héra picks up a broken lance from the battlefield and hurls the half lance expertly (or perhaps just luckily in desperation) into

the troll's left eye. That's all the advantage Helm needs to knock down the troll. Between the landslide and the ruckus from the fight, the attention of the Dunlendings has been drawn to the spot. With the secret passage now buried, the only thing to do now is make a break for the main gate of the Hornburg. As they run, Helm expresses his appreciation for his daughter and apologizes for not paying attention to her feelings and to her (wise) counsel. With the Dunlendings in pursuit, they try to open the gates with the help of the Rohirrim inside. Unfortunately the gates have been closed since the beginning of the siege and in the depths of winter are quite frozen. They are only able to open them barely enough for Héra to squeeze through and no more; Helm, with his bulky shoulders, just isn't going to be able to make it. He shoves Héra through, forces the gates closed again, and turns to face the Dunlendings. Dawn reveals dead Dunlendings scattered up and down the ramp, and King Helm frozen solid but still standing before the gate.



Time moves on – Spring approaches, conditions inside the Hornburg are dire, and Wulf's forces are nearing completion of a siege tower that will drop a covered bridge onto the top of the wall. In a desperate bid to summon help, Héra scales the cliffs above and behind the Hornburg with her father's armor, regalia and horn in a wicker backpack. She climbs into the nest of what appears to be the great eagle she had thrown the haunch of meat to at the beginning of the movie. She begs the eagle to take the pack to her cousin Fréaláf, and the eagle takes off with it.

The scene changes to night at the base of the siege tower. General Targg tells Wulf that the men are sick of the siege camp and want to go home, and that with the deaths of Helm and his sons Wulf has essentially won, so there is no point in continuing the siege to the end. But Wulf is determined to crush all resistance – in fact he now pulls a dagger and stabs General Targg to death. He orders the siege tower to move forward and drop the bridge. The covering of the bridge is wickerwork, and the defenders cast oil onto it and shoot flaming arrows into it, setting it afire. Even so, Dunlending soldiers rush across it, trying to take the top of the wall as defenders push them back with spears. Héra appears on her favorite horse and charges onto the bridge, scattering the Dunlendings. Wulf sees this from atop his horse (from where he is directing the assault) and he charges up to meet her on the bridge. The fight continues down to the ground, where both are unhorsed. Wulf uses every opportunity to demonstrate his vile, perfidious nature, while Héra, as in her confrontation with Lord Thorne, shows that she is no swordswoman. In the final moment her aunt, who has followed her down to the ground, hurls her shield like a war Frisbee (Captain America-style) which Héra catches, and after knocking Wulf to the ground, uses the rim of the shield to choke him to death. (Shieldmaiden, right?) At that moment the sun comes up and there is a blowing of horns from the ridge line (shades of Gandalf's arriving to break the siege of Helm's Deep in *The Two Towers*). It is Fréaláf and his men! And Fréaláf is dressed in King Helm's armor – the Dunlendings freak and break: it's Helm Hammerhand returned as a wraith! After, we get a scene of new-crowned King Fréaláf being greeted in Medusuld by the new resident of Isengard: Saruman, voiced in a recording of the late Christopher Lee. And we see Héra excited to have received an invitation from Gandalf to meet him and give him a briefing on the ring-collecting orcs. She rides off out of the dynastic history of Rohan.

Now, I have inflicted this rather detailed description of the contents of this movie on you in order to support the points I am going to make below. The very first is that a better name for this movie would be *The Lord of the Rings: The Tale of Héra, King Helm's Daughter*. Yes, it's a different take on the civil war of King Helm's time, but Tolkien's appendix suggests more battles and actions that are simply ignored in this tale. It's one and done in one evening/night on the battlefield, and then it's the siege.

This leads us to my second point, which I mentioned above in the fifth paragraph: with as condensed as the information in the appendix is, the screenwriters still played fast and loose with the story, in some cases bending the action so that it kinda-sorta matches Tolkien's text, in others subverting the story into contradictions with Tolkien, and finally in quite a few places throwing Tolkien entirely out the window. The fates of the characters named in the appendix are perfect examples of these processes. The death of elder son Haleth as described above is a case of bending the action to kinda-sorta match the text of the appendix. The appendix says Haleth dies at Meduseld, "defending the doors" of the king's hall. So yes, he rides the mûmak back into Edoras from the battle and smashes its skull just before it can break down the doors of Meduseld so that puts him where the text says he dies. But to me, "defending the doors" suggests that Wulf's forces had fought their way from wherever the first engagement was into Edoras, which further suggests that "The War of the Rohirrim" was actually a *series* of battles (plural), not a one-and-done battle and then a retreat to the Hornburg. And I would guess that Haleth was at the head of a detachment, all of whom also probably gave their lives in the defense, and not the performer of a solo deed.



Then we have the death of second prince Háma in which the screenwriters throw Tolkien out the window. Instead of the butchering of Háma by Wulf before the walls of the Hornburg, the appendix says that Háma led men "out on a sortie and foray, but they were lost in the snow". So we don't know just how Háma died – could have been exposure in the cold of the deep winter, maybe they ran into the enemy at some distance and the people in the Hornburg just didn't get a report of the action. The text does suggest the former, however. At any rate, Háma was not taken by the enemy

after the one-and-done battle, but was in fact an active warrior up until the fatal sortie. The movie does him a serious disservice.

Next we have the fate of King Helm. The appendix tells us that he was found standing frozen on the wall of the Hornburg, apparently looking out over the enemy forces. Exhaustion from his nightly forays into the enemy camp probably made him vulnerable to the unusually severe cold of this winter, and standing still on the exposed top of the wall was probably not a good idea. I would say the movie version as I described above is a subversion of the story that ends up contradicting Tolkien in the placement and manner of Helm's death.

Finally, the war ends when Fréaláf "with a small company of desperate men surprises Wulf in Meduseld and slays him" (after winter broke). This is perhaps the worst example of the screenwriters throwing Tolkien completely out the window. Wulf is nowhere near the Hornburg when he is slain, and it is Fréaláf and his men who accomplish the deed, not the unnamed daughter of King Helm.

To my mind the screenwriters unconscionably resort to inserting a "deus ex machina" at certain points to "condense" the flow of the story. The *mûmakil* provide two examples of this, with the first one appearing in order to set up Héra for getting captured by General Targg so that she can see that Wulf has completed the gathering of his forces and is preparing to attack, and accomplish the foreshadowing of seeing the scroll with the wax seal that turns out to be Lord Thorne's. The second is the abovementioned delivery of Haleth to the doors of Meduseld so that he can be killed there, far away from where the one-and-done battle took place. Lord Thorne himself is another *deus ex machina*, introduced so that Helm's forces are faced with overwhelming numerical superiority by the enemy because of Thorne's treachery, allowing for the one-and-done battle (you can't really have a war without at least one battle) rather than a protracted campaign of Wulf's forces beating the Rohirrim back to Edoras and the Hornburg.

So, those are my complaints about the scriptwriters messing with Tolkien's tale. Even so, the movie might have been worth watching if they had given us characters we could care about. Unfortunately, all of the characters are essentially one-dimensional. Héra is the character we see the most of—right from the beginning we are shown a rather liberated, free-spirited tomboy who is capable of seeing things clearer than all the men around her. Yes, she is concerned about events, but it is on the unbelievable side that she is always right and always sees what all the men around her miss or dismiss. King Helm is proud and self-confident to the point of always seeing his view/opinion/judgement as right until events force him to accept the opposite. His fatherly moment with Héra after the fight with the orcs and the troll feels really out of character, especially as he has to admit (albeit in a kind of tender fashion) that she has been right the whole way along.

Elder brother Haleth is a stereotypical male chauvinist muscle brain prince, although he does demonstrate big-brotherly affection for his younger siblings. As noted, he is killed while striking a heroic pose on top of the *mûmak*'s head instead of paying attention to the battle situation around him. Second brother Háma is made the sensitive troubadour in order to serve as a contrast to his older brother, I guess. That is all we see of him until he is murdered by Wulf. And now we turn to Wulf. Talk about a one-note character – it seems that every action he undertakes is part of a conscious design to make himself the most villainous figure in all of Rohan's history. We are given a short glimpse of him as a child playing with Héra, so maybe he thought he had a chance as a childhood friend to succeed in his proposal, but once King Helm knocks his father dead, Wulf is unremittently evil. We're not even shown him being kind to his dog or his horse for a different, additional side to his character.



Perhaps the greatest disappointment is that this story is set in Tolkien's Middle Earth, a realm of great and deep magics – and we are shown not a single bit of that. Yes, yes, we do get a few Middle Earthish critters – two instances of the great eagles, a couple of minutes of two showings of the mûmakil, a one-minute glimpse of the Keeper in the Forest, two or three minutes of the two orcs and the troll. But there are no elves, dwarves, hobbits, dragons, or wizards – except for the twenty seconds of Saruman at the end. There are no rings of power, no elven blades that glow in the presence of orcs, no palantíri, no mithril inscriptions that glow to life when touched by a wizard's staff. Except for the appearances of the Middle Earthish critters mentioned above (for a total of between ten and fifteen minutes maximum out of the two hours and fourteen minutes total run time of the movie), this could just as well as have been a movie about a conflict between European kingdoms during the Middle Ages, without needing to be set in Middle Earth.

The Wikipedia entry on the movie notes that it was produced hastily so that Peter Jackson did not lose the rights to Tolkien's trilogy (apparently the contract with the estate requires him to release something every so often or the rights revert to the estate). But rather than “produced hastily” I would say “thrown together hastily”, and in that hasty throwing together Peter Jackson and his associates produced a flat story that does little credit to the corpus of Tolkien's creations. Having watched it once I will never watch it again, and even for diehard Tolkien fans I would not recommend watching it even a first time.



Who Are The Trustees?

October Third First Friday Meeting Attendance: Perriane, Sam L, Madeleine, Jim Thomas, Sarah, Grig Larson, Zenlizard, Courtni, Gary Blog, Mark Roth, Michael I, Carolyn, Judy N, Rodger, Apurva, Kathi Overton, Bill Lawhorn via Zoom. At Elizabeth's place were Elizabeth, Cathy Green, Bob, and Kim.

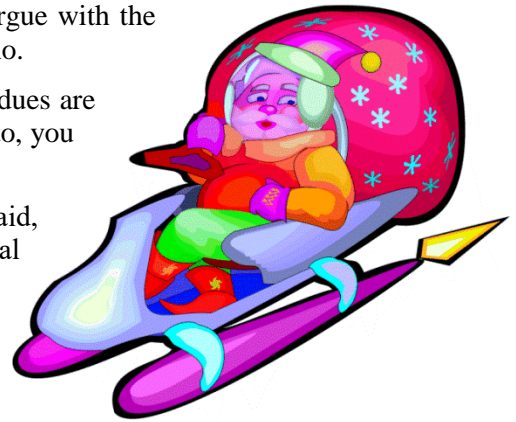
The Meeting opened at 8:15. Sec Sam L read minutes from the last meeting. Sam L. said the mention of the decision not to bring up the bylaws until next third Friday reminds me, I probably should send it around again. Prez Bob said, If you would, please.

Zenlizard, in response to Bob's question of whether he was there, asked, “Am I ever, really?” The monies say we have \$\$ in the bank in various accounts. However, that does not account for several outstanding, Capclave reimbursements, I still have two. And it, of course, does not account for the hotel bill which I am in the middle

of reconciling; I am sending the attendee list to Colette so she can go argue with the hotel about what that should be. Bob said, We're doing it every year, but no.

Zen continued, And of course, a reminder that your WSFA membership dues are \$25, and, they are for a calendar year, and you can pay any time now up to, you know, well, anytime, really.

Grig asked, "How do I pay?" Zen said You can send a check. Sam L said, "Or PayPal." Grig asked about instructions. Zen said, We're in PayPal under Capclave@yahoo.com and then you put in a note that is for your membership registration. For Capclave 2026 memberships, precon registration to the end of the year is \$60. Eventually, we'll have a P.O. box, probably, for physical mail, but in the meantime send it to me. I will leave my address in the chat.



Perrienne Lurie said, "When I checked out of the hotel. They told me that they had accidentally billed every room to Capclave and not to the individuals. I'm hoping they straightened that out, and so we're not being hit with this humongous bill." Zen said, "They told me that they would have that, reconfigured by 5pm that day. I don't know if they met that deadline, but they seem to have gotten it straightened out as far as most individuals are concerned. If they have included any of the guests of honor as an individual, I do not know of it."

Bob said that Colette knows about it, and I'm sure she will make certain that the GOHs are included in our bill. Right.

Zenlizard, Yes, this is one of the reasons I need to get the attendee list to her.

Bob called on Sam for Capclave past saying this is one of the few more meetings, you have to report.

Sam said, "That's right, Capclave is past! I want to thank everyone who volunteered and helped make Capclave successful! We had a good Capclave. There were very few gripes that we had any control over. And people said they had a good time. Our guests of honor were very happy. They loved the convention.

Grig asked about total numbers. Zen said, "I do not yet have an accurate count, and I'm going to try to avoid making a guess, because every time I look at it, it changes." He said there are some duplicate numbers involved. He is in the process of doing the attendee reconciliation. Sam L. said that we will want to know paid, and not paid, and whether we broke even. Bob pointed out that we will not know that until the hotel bill is finalized.

Bob said, 2025 rates were increased slightly and Rodger decided to keep them. The rates have been advertised so we cannot change them. It will be up to Perrienne and Courtni to decide about 2027 rates.

Sam L said, "I just wanted to thank everyone who helped out, and encourage everyone who didn't... well, everyone, to volunteer for next year."

Rodger for Capclave Present said "I would like to go back to being Capclave Future, but understand that's not necessarily feasible. I was pleased to see the progress at Capclave 2025, aside from billing and such, the way the hotel is behaving seems to be a general upswing, so hopefully that will continue on for Capclave 2026. As far as, pricing and billing policies went, I will officially confirm what has already mentioned, that my feeling is to hold prices steady for 2026, and if necessary, take any budget hits that may involve there. The stability, given the state of the economy and the state of employment in Washington, D.C, I think makes this significantly important."

Gary Blog agreed with holding the price steady "Because of, you know, who knows what's gonna happen." There was some political talk.

Rodger continued "The other things that I'm looking at are... at the time, I'd believe that Paul had everything he needed. He indicated that he was capable of



having a website go live. That doesn't appear to have happened yet, so I need to follow up with him and say, can we do this?"

Sam Lubell recommended that we should start programming a lot earlier than we did this year. Rodger agreed, saying "I think the first step is programming. Apurva is online and can chat about what the next steps should be, but we also potentially get a programming database up and running within our system so that we can start taking the initial steps. And there's no reason not to, now that Capclave 2025 is fully concluded, to pull information from the past down and get a new version of a programming database up and running, so that's also a conversation with our webmaster." Apurva agreed.

Cathy discussed publicity and people doing tabling at various cons.

Courtnei for Capclave Future said she and Perriane do not have anything since they need to meet and start the planning process. "I'm starting to put together a project plan to basically track all the different moving parts of Capclave, so there may be some of you that I reach out to just pick your brain for a few minutes about, you know, what's involved in the roles that you've played, and just try to create a kind of a project plan that we can document as we go along, and then...shadow, you know, shadow what Roger's doing this year, and then hopefully be in good shape with all the mechanics, by the time we are in the hot seat."

Cathy brought up that Blertcon is no longer giving free tables and the cheapest booth would be \$425. "So, the issue is, do we think it's worth it?" Courtnei said that we need to think about where we want to invest in that kind of publicity, and analyze the return on investments and try to collect some data to have some correlation about whether it's worth it for that investment. People thought a Blertcon booth was too expensive.

Gary asked about Anime USA at Crystal City, Virginia, and, IllyCon over in Reading, Pennsylvania? Cathy said that she could get flyers out. But Lexicon is art so does not make sense for us. Anime USA is local-ish, so it would be useful if somebody is going. She would be happy to get flyers to them and to give flyers to Balticon people if they have a table there and will put our stuff out.

Sam for the Committee to Discuss Science Fiction said we will discuss the July-August issue of *Asimov's* after the meeting. Apparently, there was a September/October issue but no one with a print subscription has seen it, just people with online subscriptions. They're having problems with their distribution.

Kim said the July-August *Analog* and *Asimov* were both considerably later than what I would have expected. So... Maybe it's just continuing.



Reading is fun!

Sam said that we will discuss this month's *Clarkesworld* on Third Friday and the July/August *Analog* for First Friday in November. On the third Friday in November, we will be doing the October *Lightspeed*. I haven't seen *Fantasy and Science Fiction* for over a year, but technically, they still claim to be publishing. Mark said he saw a cover online. The book club will meet next Thursday to discuss Jane Linskind's *Library of the Sapphire Wind*. And in November is the latest Mary Robinette Kowal's Lady Astronaut book *The Martian Contingency*. And, as always, if people have suggestions for books for future months, email me.

Cathy suggested doing books by the Capclave guests. Sam L said we will closer to Capclave. Everyone should be reading.

Cathy Green said October 16th at East City Bookshop on Capitol Hill, the Traveling SFF Festival is happening. Amongst the authors being featured are Fran Weil, who often comes to Capclave, and Ray Naylor who wrote *Tusks of Extinction* and *The Mountain Under the Sea*, so thought that might be of interest to people. And, also, I believe at October 17th to 19th is the Baltimore Comic-Con in Baltimore.

Bill said he had talked to Elizabeth and we will do a dinner before the First Friday in November at Elizabeth's. We're gonna either order at Elizabeth's, or it's bring your own to Elizabeth's to have dinner in advance. Probably

between 6.30 and 7, just to give people a chance to eat and do that. So, just putting that out there, I will send an email about it to the Wistful List at some point, but I wanted to announce it here first.

Kathy Overton said that Fifth Friday is Halloween. At the fabulous bungalow, we'll be scaring the neighborhood kiddos and giving them treats afterwards, and you are all welcome to come and observe or help us. We're looking for actors, we're looking for behind-the-scenes assistance, we're... this year, we're doing the Telltale Heart. Let us know if you can come. And some of the days preceding Halloween to help build stuff. Still figuring it all out.

Mark said that this coming Wednesday at Politics and Prose on the Wharf at 7pm, will be Corey Doctorow, who's on his Enshitification tour. He will be having a brisket BBQ next Saturday.

Courtnei said Ursula Vernon/Kingfisher is gonna be at Loyalty, a Loyalty Books event in Upper Northwest DC. tomorrow night at 7. Sam L. said tomorrow in Bethesda, they're doing a Taste of Bethesda. And then on Sunday, at Pike and Rose, they're doing, Piketoberfest. Judy N said the Tacoma Park Street Festival is Sunday too.

Someone pointed out that with the government shutdown, the Smithsonian can only stay open until October 11th Perrienne posted the link in the chat for EuroQuest which is the Games Club of Maryland's big tournament event, November 5 through 9, at the Crown Plaza in Annapolis.

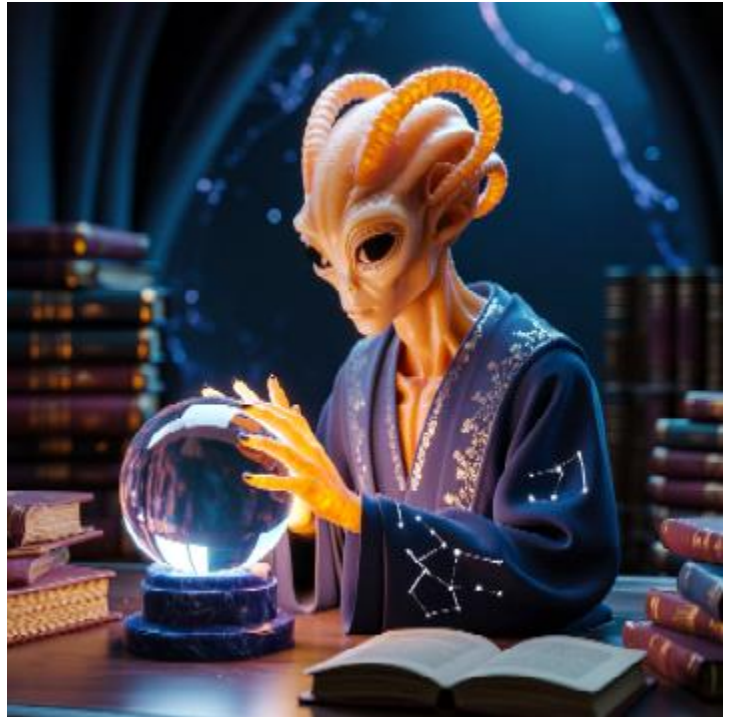
Michael I said he thought the National Gallery of Art's website said they are only staying open through tomorrow. Other local museums are having free admission or discounted admission for government employees. Also this weekend is Bank of America's Museums on Us free weekend for those with their credit cards.

Old Business: Mark Roth said he can host third Friday this month, but not in November because he will be at Philcon. Elizabeth said she can host in November and December (but will check).

Bob said that we have the bylaws amendment for our third Friday meeting, which are technically our Maryland meetings.

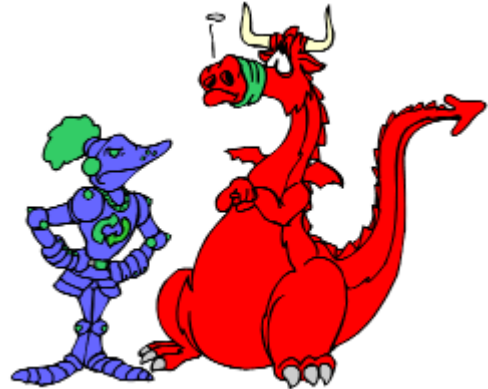
New Business: Rodger Burns said, "So, this is something that I do not think is going to be solved immediately, but I want to put it in the club's attention. From talking with Zenlizard about upcoming budgets, and looking at the state of overall capital finances, especially our hotel, we probably need Capclave to have a membership base of hopefully X to X people more than we have historically had in years where we have not brought in Matt Dineman. Thank you, Bill. But, since I don't think we can rely on this being guests' thing to do, and I think this is a problem bigger than any single Capclave, I would like the club to start considering putting together a effectively standing publicity and recruitment group that would be able to be used to get Capclave into a stronger membership position."

Bob asked Rodger if he would chair this committee. Rodger said this is a long term idea and he is not sure he can chair both this committee and Capclave. Bob asked if anyone else would be interested. Sam asked how this would be different from what Courtnei is doing? Bob said Courtnei's committee is for WSFA, what Rodger is talking about is for Capclave. There are some similarities, but this is different. Rodger said that this would focus on Capclave to attract a broader membership base, not necessarily on having people who are involved in monthly lists for the content outside of Capclave. So, the goal would be to, again, say, can we find ways of having Capclave be at a paid membership base of X to X people? Grig said he had had some conversations with Rodger on this. "Yeah, I did have some ideas based on what we talked about. I don't have anything to present, because I want to start attending these meetings to find out the flow of everything, because I don't want to just,



like, start, you know, spewing out all these things without knowing what the environment's like, but I think there's a lot of opportunity for growth. And so, to confirm, this is for Capclave attendance, not necessarily WISFA membership, correct?" Rodger agreed although there is potentially room for overlap. The goal is to grow the Capclave membership so that Capclave is on a stronger financial footing. Grig said he has ideas but doesn't want to run the committee. But he thinks getting X – X more people is doable.

Elizabeth said that she is not volunteering for this, because she cannot do anything more until she graduates, but agrees that t's one of the things we very much should be doing is budgeting, not just for this, but part of it's a part of a website update, getting an electronic communications plan- you know, getting an opt-in mailing list, we can communicate with people. And spending a little bit of money on upgrading our ability to remain in contact with people, and then we send them to a website, you know, here's the new Capclave site with all of this information." She thinks that devoting some money for this. Will be in our long-term interest. Bob said, "It's not a matter so much of money. We have a sufficient pool of money that we can do these kind of things, but it does need direction. And we need to commit to actually spending it, yes. Once we have the direction, then we can commit to spending. And then we can ask BWAWA for a grant and all of those things." Cathy said BWAWA gives money to BSFS so there's no reason why it shouldn't come to us, too.



Zen said he has some preliminary numbers from this Capclave.

There were ## people counting pre-reg, dealers, and program participants but not including those at the door. At the door is at least another ## or so. There was a discussion about calculating attendance.

Courtnei said, "I'm wondering if this is... because this is an organizational stewardship issue, so... and it's kind of a question of how we think about that as an organization. Like, when I hear this, it's somebody has raised a kind of an overarching long-term problem issue that we're solving for, and is that something where the trustees step in and... and try to... try to organize this and figure out, what that committee structure is? Because it is kind of a committee issue, but it's also, like, there are interested parties that need to be in that conversation. So, you know, it probably should involve people that are leaving... leading Capclave, it should involve the treasurer, it should involve tech people, so... I just throw that out in terms of how we actually get to addressing Roger's question, or from a logistical standpoint, and what makes sense that way. I just throw that out as in our evolving conversations about how we think through the organization's mechanics of how we solve problems. I think that this is an example of where we can imagine, kind of, new roles and positions for the positions that we have now, instead of somebody volunteering to form a committee that's already doing 5 different things.

Bob said that as a rule, I don't like mandating my fellow officers are, you must do this, I'd like to have them agree to do it. The trustees would like to step up and do it, help organize it, I would be happy to have it. Courtnei said "And to clarify, I say that as a trustee, so it's not like I don't have any skin in the game." Bob continued "If you're willing... if you and the other trustees are willing to do it, then yes, I will happily accept that idea."

Courtnei volunteered to contact the other trustees, loop in Roger, and then just talk about how we can effectively have this conversation as a starting point. Rodger agreed. Sam L asked who are the trustees? Courtnei said the trustees are Courtnei, Aaron, and there was a long effort to try to figure out who the third trustee is before figuring out it is Cathy. Apurva, Rodger, and Frances were those elected to the WSFA Small Press Committee.

There was a discussion of Paul being busy and this not being a good time for him. But WSFA agreed to send him a nice little note asking for website updates at his key earliest convenience.

Gary Blog asked about preregistration for next year's Capclave.

Bob said we have about # to # preregistrations. Zen later clarified this to be #, not including dealers.

Grig Larson asked who maintains the website? I keep hearing someone named Paul. Bob said Paul Haggerty. Grig asked “Because, some things have been brought up, like, you know, the list of the trustees and officers that haven’t been updated, but does he handle all digital assets, like the WSFA Facebook page and stuff like that as well?” Bob explained that the Facebook page is run by someone else. The social media is in the hands of other people, not Paul, because that’s too much of a problem. Sarah Mitchell is taking care of our Facebook, Twitter, all that sort of stuff. Cathy said, “I inherited co-admin from Colleen Cahill on the WSFA Facebook page, which is also co-administered by Gayle who does more of the back-end stuff, because trust me, nobody wants me doing the back-end stuff for anything. When we were... when Sam and I were working on Zambia on Labor Day, there was an emergency call to Paul because I destroyed part of the 2024 website by trying to update

something in Zambia that then reached out and touched the Capclave website in a way it wasn’t supposed to, and I have no idea how I did it, so...”

Grig volunteered to help with our Word Press site, not to take over from Paul but to help with a few things like dead links, the email address, consistency, and cleaning up the code. Sam L said that Paul would most likely welcome any help.

Grig also asked about the silent auction for the SFWA Medical Fund and was told this was done at the convention and is not something we do all year round. (There is no point since they can go directly to SFWA to donate).

Grig warned that the WSFA domain expires in February so we need to keep an eye on it but no one should be offering to sell it yet.

No one was here for their first, second, or third meeting.



Announcements: For Mark’s BBQ show up between 1 and 2 next week, Saturday. Sam L said he is continuing his job search, so if anyone knows of a writing job or a policy job, please let me know. I’ve done a lot of communication-type writings, public relations writings.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25

Author Spotlight: John Varley **By Samuel Lubell (Originally in Origins #73)**

John Varley’s recent death (December 10, 2025) prompted me to do this Author Spotlight on him. Born August 9, 1947, Varley became an avid reader of science fiction in junior high school. Although he attended Michigan State University, he decided to follow in the footsteps of Jack Kerouac and ended up a hippie in San Francisco during the Summer of Love where he practiced “your basic sex, drugs, and rock’n’ roll. Works for me.” But, tiring of panhandling and with no job experience, he decided to make money by writing a novel, which he admitted was terrible. But while trying to sell the novel, he wrote his first story “Picnic on Nearside” which was published in *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, August 1974. This was the first of 20 or so works in his “Eight Worlds” universe in which aliens take over Earth and kick humanity out. Humans settle all the other worlds of our solar system, providing the settings for his stories and novels. His first novel, *The Opiuchi Hotline* (1977), is also in this series.

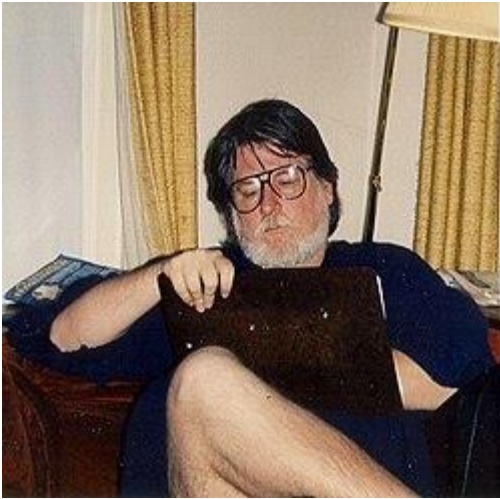


Photo of John Varley in 1992 by Arthur Jene via Wikipedia

His early work was frequently compared to that of Heinlein and often shows Heinlein's influence (as well as that of Arthur Clarke), especially his Young Adult series, *Thunder and Lightning*. His Gaea Trilogy (*Titan*, *Wizard*, and *Demon*) is wonderfully over the top. His Eight Worlds series is very interesting with characters changing sex freely. His 1977 story "Air Raid" about time travelers kidnapping airplane crash victims before the crash, became the 1989 movie *Millennium* which Varley novelized in 1983 based on his version of the screenplay, which a series of directors and scriptwriters heavily modified into what Varley called (in print even) "a rotten movie".

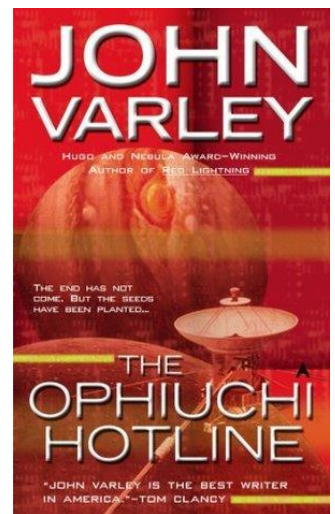
Throughout his career, he continued to write short stories. He has 15 Hugo nominations and nine Nebula Award nominations. He won the Novella Hugo and Nebula in 1979 for "The Persistence of Vision", The Short Story Hugo in 1982 for "The Pusher," and the Novella Hugo and Nebula in 1985 for "Press Enter ■".

Varley rarely concerned himself with continuity. When writing *Steel Beach*, set in his Eight Worlds universe, he decided not to limit himself to what he had established in the previous stories. In his

introduction to the book he wrote: "This story appears to be part of a future history of mine, often called the Eight Worlds. It does share background, characters, and technology with earlier stories of mine... What it doesn't share is a chronology. The reason for this is simple: the thought of going back, rereading all those old stories, and putting them in coherent order filled me with ennui... *Steel Beach* is *not* really part of the Eight Worlds future history. Or the Eight Worlds is not really a future history, since that implies an orderly progression of events. Take your pick." Despite this statement, most people classify *Steel Beach*, *The Golden Globe*, and *Irontown Blues* as part of the Eight Worlds series.

Critics say that Varley was an excellent writer whose later work somehow failed to live up to the potential of his earlier writings. The critic John Clute wrote in the *SF Encyclopedia* "Varley's output of the 1980s was, nevertheless, less strikingly innovative than had been hoped - and, perhaps unfairly, expected - of him."

Readers new to John Varley may want to start with 2004 collection, *The John Varley Reader: Thirty Years of Short Fiction*, which not only contains his best stories, but also has wonderful autobiographical notes about how he came to write each one. I would also recommend reading *The Ophiuchi Hotline* and, if you like it, continuing with the other Eight Worlds novels. His Gaea Trilogy is also worth reading.



Reading Older SF

By Samuel Lubell (Originally in *Origins* #73)

Some people claim that older SF is not readable by modern readers. There's an entire website, <https://youngpeoplereadoldsff.com/>, devoted to having young people read and review older stuff. The claim seems nonsensical to me, since people routinely read and enjoy much older fiction. I personally have a fondness for 19th century literature, while many others read literature from the ancient Greeks going back thousands of years, such as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, admittedly in modern translations. Even in Science Fiction, 19th century works like *Frankenstein*, and the novels of Jules Verne and H.G. Wells are still enjoyed (admittedly frequently adapted into movies).



And yet, there is some truth to this statement, although I'd place the year when the best SF shifted from mostly unreadable by modern readers to mostly readable at 1940 or so (although readers should only read the best from this era). I'm seeing this with my reading of Asimov's *Before the Golden Age*, which has a lot of stories that I find hard to read and had to force myself through. Yet, I enjoy stories from Golden Age of Science Fiction that started just a few years later. The difference is that science fiction in America emerged from the pulp magazines which originally had relatively low standards. It was enough to have an idea and some action. To make a living at the low rates these magazines paid, authors had to

write quickly and rarely edit let alone rewrite. I suspect we'd find the same lack of quality in the pulps of other genres, even while the "slicks" like *Colliers* and *Scribner's* were publishing the likes of Hemingway. As the pulps died out after WWII, editors were able to become pickier about what they published. And editors like John Campbell, for all his faults, had a vision of the quality of stories he wanted to publish and the ability to nurture authors to produce at this level.

And of course, Sturgeon's law still holds. "Ninety percent of everything is crap." A SF story picked at random has a very high chance at being in this 90 percent. Even recommendations do not always help. There's a saying that "The Golden Age of science fiction is 12." Most readers do not develop their adult critical facilities until their mid to late teens. This is why many adult readers are shocked when they go back to books/media they loved as a child/teen and find they have been replaced by the "suck fairy". (Some, however, blinded by nostalgia, may refuse to realize that the work does not live up to their memories.) So, if you get a recommendation from a fellow fan, ask them how old they were when they read it.

Now, how does one find good older SF books? One way is to look at the Hugo and Nebula award winners and finalists. These are not perfect. Sometimes, fads elevate works and things that are popular when published do not hold up later. Awards do miss works whose greatness is only realized later. But they are a good start. For stories, one can look at various Best of the Year anthologies and collections by Hugo winning editors. Also look for works by NESFA Press (although sometimes their academic desires to produce a complete works overpower their more selective impulses).



A good source for identifying high-quality novels is the Library of America. While originally the Library of America saw science fiction is not prestigious enough for its recognition, this has recently changed. Some of their science fiction collections include:

- American Science Fiction: Four Classic Novels 1953–1956 – *The Space Merchants* by Frederik Pohl & C. M. Kornbluth, *More Than Human* by Theodore Sturgeon, *The Long Tomorrow* by Leigh Brackett, and *The Shrinking Man* by Richard Matheson
- American Science Fiction: Five Classic Novels 1956–1958 – *Double Star* by Robert A. Heinlein, *The Stars My Destination* by Alfred Bester, *A Case of Conscience* by James Blish, *Who?* by Algis Budrys, and *The Big Time* by Fritz Leiber
- American Science Fiction: Four Classic Novels 1960–1966–*The High Crusade* by Poul Anderson, *Way Station* by Clifford D. Simak, *Flowers for Algernon* by Daniel Keyes, and . . . *And Call Me Conrad [This Immortal]* by Roger Zelazny

- American Science Fiction: Four Classic Novels 1968–1969—*Past Master* by R. A. Lafferty, *Picnic on Paradise* by Joanna Russ, *Nova* by Samuel R. Delany, and *Emphyrio* by Jack Vance

Those wishing to read the cream of the crop of older SF novels would find these a great starting place and even older readers may find a few that they missed (I see six that I need to read). Bear in mind that the Library of America editions are deluxe hardcovers and most of their contents are available a lot cheaper in used bookstores. They also have single author collections for Octavia Butler, Ursula LeGuin, Kurt Vonnegut, Ray Bradbury, Philip K Dick, and Madeleine L'Engle (as well as Lovecraft, Poe, Shirley Jackson, and others).

Everyone Can Create Content



WSFA Meeting Third Friday in October 10/17
Attendance via Zoom: Cathy Green, Zenlizard, Carolyn, Perriane, Michael I, Grig Larson, Sam S, Rodger, Frances, Judy N, Gary Blog, Greg Key. At Mark Roth's: Mark, Prez Bob, Sec Sam L.

Bob called the meeting to order at 8:15. Treasurer said currently have \$\$ in various accounts. The insurance paid. New company Chubb, charges \$\$ less per year. We do not have the final bill from the hotel. He has not heard from Colette on room block. Total attendance at Capclave **about ##, so we are ** in income but don't know how much. We ** money on this convention. I am doing an audit to find out final numbers and people. The income from registration needs to be separate from books. And if he missed any reimbursements that need to be finalized. WSFA dues for next year are payable already by PayPal or check. Mark asked if one can pay online without creating a PayPal account. Sam

S said you cannot send money without an account. Capclave@yahoo.com. There was a discussion of who paid. Sam S said people can call the treasurer and pay by credit card. When paying by PayPal put a note saying it is for WSFA dues.

Sam L for Capclave past said Total paid membership for Capclave was ## and full present membership, including guests, was ##. So we were down about 100. So we really need to figure out how to get these numbers up. Aside from that, we are waiting on the hotel bill to see how much. Sam S. pointed out that paid membership is only down ##. We may be down some in comps, but that's fine. Perriane said that as long as we made the hotel block, that's not a problem. Zen said the comps are ## compared to ## for last year. We also had ## no shows compared to ## last year. All but two of the no shows were paid. Sam S. said we are ## from 2023 but ## from 2024. Sam L. said 2024 was an exceptional year. Sam S. said in 2023 we had ## paid, ## total. Sam L. said that made him feel better. Sam S. said one reason we were down is that we did not do the usual mailing 6 weeks or so before the convention to past members. Sam L. said we eventually did a mailing but it was later than I would have liked. Mark said the economic conditions were a factor.

Capclave Present, Rodger, was having mike problems. Perriane for Future had nothing to report. Cathy Green said we are looking for people to table at Boskone. We also have two memberships for Farpoint. Also we have a

table at Philcon. People need to post on Facebook. Sarah does our social media, so if you see anything that should go up let her know. Everyone can create content.

Sam L. said he gave the President a WSFA Journal and one for posting. Cathy will look to see about 2023 and 2024 journals. She thinks she sent them to Paul. Committee to discuss SF will discuss this month's *Clarkesworld*. First Friday in November we will do the *Analog* magazine for May-June. For *Fantasy & SF*, they promised an issue but I have not seen it. Third Friday in November, we will be discussing the October issue of *Lightspeed*. For the Book Group, we will discuss for book group, Mary Robinette Kowal's *The Martian Contingency* on the second Thursday of November. And then in December, we will be doing, John Ford's *The Dragon Waiting*.

No Intertivities

Old Business: The president thanked Sec Sam for sending around the bylaw amendment. Bob said the amendments officially allow for the sort of Zoom and hybrid meetings we've been having for the last three or four years. These have been approved at the First Friday meeting on the Fourth of July. We had delays due to Capclave and stuff. The amendments were read.

ARTICLE III: BOARD OF DIRECTORS, SECTION E: Removal of Officers

This proposal is an adjustment to subsection a. This subsection currently reads "A petition for the removal of a member of the Board may be presented to the Board in writing at any time." This proposal is to add the phrase "physical or electronic" between "in" and "writing" so that the subsection would become "A petition for the removal of a member of the Board may be presented to the Board in physical or electronic writing at any time."

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

Establish a new Section A which if approved would read as follows:

WSFA meetings may be in-person, virtual (via an application such as Zoom), or hybrid (including both in-person and virtual participation). All regular WSFA business may be conducted in any of these formats.

If this change is made, the former Section A will become Section B, the former Section B will become Section C, and the former Section C will become Section D.

No one wanted to discuss them. The meeting voted and no one opposed adopting the amendments. Bob said, "I will declare that it is now part of our bylaws"

New business: Grig said he sent an email to the Secretary about helping Paul with website. He posted the WSFA Journal that Sam sent. But the previous one was from 2022. He mentioned the link to the LiveJournal site not working. Cathy said there should be a message on the LiveJournal from Gayle saying that we're no longer using the LiveJournal. Grig said, "There just seems to be a lot of broken links and stuff like that. Like, for instance, the history of WISFA ends with John Madigan's death in 2015, and I'm sure stuff has happened in WSFA in the last 10 years, besides poor John passing away. So I don't know if these things need to be updated, links need to be changed, or archived, or anything like that, and I would definitely like to help Paul with that, if he is unable." Sam L. said Paul has been busy with work but we are sure he would welcome help. Sam L. said that he sent the new officers list to Paul and he did put that up.

Motion to adjourn passed at 8:54.

