

# The WSFA Journal

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The past 31 years of *WSFA Journals* are online at <http://www.wsfa.org/>.

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## Sci-Fi Silver Spring

Former WSFA member Martin Morse Wooster sent us a clipping from the Montgomery Gazette. The article is also temporarily available online at that newspaper's website. Reprinted by permission.

### Sci-fi Silver Spring

**Wednesday, Oct. 19, 2005**





Dressed as a Quidditch player from the Harry Potter novels, Reston, Va., resident Sarah Mitchell (left) and Silver Spring resident J.F. Bideau, dressed as Madmartigan from the movie "Willow," play the board game "Goa, Destinations: Spice Islands" Saturday at the Capclave science-fiction convention, held over the weekend at the Silver Spring Hilton on Colesville Road. (Below) Greenbelt resident Candy Madigan of HourGlass Creations (left) works on a cape while visiting with 14-year-old Alie Winfield of Rockville, who shops for an HourGlass Creations scrunchie

Saturday.



## Dodo Redux (Con Wrapup)

### Capclave 2005

In previous years, this event has been called the debriefing or the gripe session.



This is from the secretary's hurriedly scribbled notes, after he had been up since 9 am the *previous* day -- notes that he then didn't look at or think about for over two weeks -- so please excuse any errors or omissions.

He noticed others taking notes, and one person recording the event, and hopes that their information finds its way into the right hands.

It was held in the Council Room on the Mezzanine level of the Silver Spring Hilton at 2 pm on Sunday, October 16th, the last day of Capclave '05, the Fifth Capclave. Present behind the table were Barry Newton, Capclave '05 Chair Mike Walsh, Capclave '06 Chair Elspeth Kovar, and Capclave '07 Chair Colleen Cahill. About 30 people were in the audience.

Elspeth said we will return to this hotel next year, and maybe the year after. She's aware of the lack of hot water in many sleeping rooms; she wanted to know who, and in which rooms. Kathi Overton said the water went from too cold to too hot very quickly.

Lee Gilliland said the service in the Capital Bleu restaurant was far too slow. Dan Hoey said the pie in that restaurant was moldy. Ernest Lilley said it was key slime pie. Someone replied that the other hotel restaurant, Sergio's, is better, but you need a reservation.

Colleen said the hotel has down pillows, and some people are allergic.

Kip Williams wanted to use the piano, but the hotel wouldn't let him unless he paid lots of money.

Inge Heyer was pleased that the wedding party in the Maryland Ballroom turned down the bass on request.

Judy Newton had a leaky toilet, but was able to arrange for late checkout because of it.

Paul Parsons liked the readings and the rest of the program.

Rebecca Prather asked if she could get a signed Howard Waldrop chapbook, given that it won't be available until weeks after the con. WSFA will look into sending sheets to Howard to sign before they are bound into the chapbooks that will be mailed to all members.

Marilee Layman was pleased by the handicapped access. But she complained about typos in the con publications. She had also wanted to know the single-day rates sooner.

Erwin Strauss (aka Filthy Pierre) asked if we could get larger rooms.

Gary Blog said the con suite worked well. He suggested combining the green room, prep, and con ops into a single room to free up more space. He said that in comparison the Albacon programming felt like a SFWA meeting. He also suggested more Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings next year. Marilee suggested this be balanced with Charlie Stross.

John Pomeranz said we had 290 preregistered members. Barry said we had at least 325 warm bodies on site.

Someone complained that the program guide wasn't available until Saturday.

Sam Lubell suggested bringing back kaffeeklatsches.

Someone said Howard Waldrop was good, and hadn't been overused.

Elspeth mentioned that there's a Capclave LiveJournal: <http://www.livejournal.com/community/capclave/>.

Alexis Gilliland said the blogger panel was excellent. Dan Hoey objected that blog is a drink, not a discussion board. Gary responded that he was the only true Blog.

## The Blind Men and the Fan

© 2005 by Kip Williams

[ Inspired by a lengthy and still ongoing discussion in the rec.arts.sf.fandom newsgroup about what a fan is. Reprinted by permission.]

Six learned men were at a con  
To logic much inclined,  
And by strict observation  
(Though lacking vision, mind),  
Each KNEW in his own words and way  
How "FAN" should be defined.

So they descended on a fan  
Relaxing in a chair  
As THE example to define  
All fans, be they so rare.  
And they set out, these learned souls,  
To do so, then and there.

The First man, groping near his hand  
A book encountered then,  
And quickly made his own conclusion  
Re: the tastes of fen.  
And claimed in accents clear,  
"All fans are LITERARY MEN."

Rejecting this, the Second's hand  
In's pockets then did fall  
And pulling out a ticket stub  
Did his deduction call:  
"These fans, you see," asserted he,  
"Love MEDIA, that's all!"

The Third heard this impatiently,  
So eager to decide,  
And rummaged in his satchel.  
Finding music there inside,  
He made his mind up, thusly:  
"Why, 'tis MUSIC that's their pride!"

The Fourth then felt around him;  
And a bag of dice did find.  
And from their polyhedral forms  
A thought came to his mind  
And straightaway he said "FANS are  
To GAMING much inclined."

The Fifth detected fingers  
Fast IM'ing as they spoke,  
Put two and two together  
And asserted, "Okey doke--  
He doesn't watch OR read the stuff,  
He's just a SOCIAL bloke."

The Sixth man came to take his turn  
 And happening to pass  
 His hand against his spectacles  
 Deduced from out his ass  
 "From observation, I've confirmed  
 A fan's a LOOKING GLASS."

And in this like, these mighty men  
 Did argue through the night  
 Though they could not see anything,  
 To each, 'twas black and white.  
 And to this day, they shout away  
 Each claiming to be RIGHT.

-- after John Godfrey Saxe (1816-1887)

[Hat tips to Matthew B. Tepper, Harold Groot and Martin DeMello for, you know, stuff]

## First Friday Minutes

Note that there's a brief summary at the end.

The regular First Friday meeting of the Washington Science Fiction Association was called to order by President Samuel Lubell at 9:32 pm on October 7th, 2005, in the downstairs of the Gillilands', at 4030 8th Street South in Arlington, Virginia, the usual First Friday location.

The meeting started late since some people had been delayed by heavy traffic on the Beltway.

In attendance were President Samuel Lubell, Secretary Keith Lynch, Treasurer Bob MacIntosh, all three trustees (Lee Gilliland, Ernest Lilley, and Barry Newton), Capclave '05 Chairfan Michael Walsh, Capclave '06 Chairfan Elspeth Kovar, Mike Bartman, Alexis Gilliland, Paul Haggerty, Scott Hoffmann, Bill Lawhorn, Don Lundry, Candy and John Madigan, Keith Marshall, Walter Miles, Judy Newton, Lance Oszko, Kathi Overton, Sam Pierce, Rebecca Prather, Judy Scheiner, George Shaner, Gayle Surette, Elizabeth Twitchell, and Madeleine Yeh. 28 people. Jim Kling and Ivy Yap were marked present, but weren't seen by the secretary.

[ All references to "Keith" below are to Keith Lynch, not to Keith Marshall, who didn't say anything. ]

The president asked the secretary to summarize the previous meeting. The secretary replied that the previous meeting was on Friday, September 16th, at the Madigans' in Greenbelt, Maryland, the usual Third Friday location, and:

- Some people arrived late due to an accident on the Beltway.
- The *Future Washington* anthology was available for sale, with a discount for WSFA and PRSFS members.
- Capclave had made its room block, but still needed party buffers.
- Lee withdrew her motion to donate club money to Katrina relief. She was still collecting clothing for the effort, however.
- Alexis will produce a 70th anniversary card to send to PSFS in October.



*Whose reality are you calling "theoretical"?*

It was announced that we would be attending a Fifth Friday showing of *Serenity* at a time and place Lee would inform us of later. Instead, she obtained enough free tickets for every interested WSFA to go on Wednesday the 21st.

The secretary then called for a round of applause for Lee's good work, and got it.

TREASURY: The treasurer said we have \$7,194.47 in our main account and \$15,113 in CDs, for a total of \$22,307.47, now that a large amount of money has been given to Ernest for the anthology project. Ernest asked how much income had been received so far from sales of *Future Washington*. Lee replied \$325.

#### CAPCLAVE PRESENT:

Mike Walsh said if we get 70 at-the-door members, we will break even. If we get none, we will be \$3500 in the hole.

Bob said we have been running a three-line classified ad in the *Washington Post Book World*.

[ The ad says:

#### **SCIENCE FICTION LITERARY CONVENTION**

Capclave · October 14-16 · Hilton Silver Spring

Authors · Editors · Panels · Readings · Books!

[www.capclave.org](http://www.capclave.org) or (301) 468-7744

]

Mike Bartman said Capclave was listed on OkCupid. Keith asked if there would be something in City Paper. The president said yes.

Bob said it's a small convention, and in a few years it will be bigger.

Elsbeth spent six hours in a hotel meeting today. Bob said the hotel people were surprised that Judy's diagram of the hotel was to scale. Keith said that there had been a recent posting in [rec.arts.sf.fandom](http://rec.arts.sf.fandom.com) about con committees not just producing to-scale maps of hotels, but selling them to the hotels. Mike Bartman said Arisia has produced such charts, but he didn't know if they'd sold them to their hotel.

Barry is in charge of registration. Judy is in charge of the dealer room. Kathi is in charge of volunteers. Colleen and Ernest are in charge of programming. Gayle said the program grid is up on the Capclave website. Barry said gofers are needed starting around 2 pm, and that registration should open between 2 and 3.

Lee is in charge of the town square or con suite, and wants help in decorating it, starting at 1 or 2. Kathi asked if she needed any tools. She didn't.

Paul asked for times to put on the website, especially the time when non-volunteers should start arriving. He already has the dealer room times. Mike Walsh said members can arrive anytime, and hang out at the bar. Elspeth asked him to mention the reception on the website.

Lee was thinking of producing a button saying "No stupid flood is going to stop my convention." Mike Walsh said the threat wasn't flooding, terrorism, a sniper, or a hurricane, but rising gas prices. Elspeth said another concern was the force majeure or act-of-God clause, which says that under some circumstances the hotel can cancel and not reimburse us.

Rebecca asked when free parking is available across the street. Mike Walsh and Bob both said 6 pm. Bob said the cost before then was only nominal.

Elsbeth has the membership list and housing list. The latter included people using various discounts, and included one member paying more than the con rate. Our room block is technically closed, but is really still open, but act fast. Party buffers are still needed. Sam Lubell is a party buffer. Elizabeth said she and Cathy were hosting a party, and could act as a



buffer for larger parties. Two Worldcon bids are hosting parties. The Kansas City bid withdrew their plans for a party. Barry said KC had had three people coming. [Elspeth later said she was mistaken and there would be a KC party.]

Mike Walsh said the hotel gave us two more function rooms. Keith suggested doing filking in one of them. Lee suggested gaming. Mike Bartman suggested a quiet meditation room. Elspeth said the hotel's catering department doesn't know about single malt scotches or microbrews, but were willing to learn.

#### CAPCLAVE FUTURE:

Elspeth said she is busy with this year's Capclave. Mike Nelson will do fliers. Cathy Green is doing registration. Jan Price is in charge of facilities. Barry is in charge of publicity. Mike Bartman asked if we have rates yet. Paul said he'll put the new rates on the website as soon as they're known, and that he will make the main Capclave page point to '06 as soon as the current con is over.

Keith asked if we would have a guest of honor in time to put it on fliers at this year's Capclave. She has approached someone at Interaction. Keith said if it's Charlie Stross, that he no longer travels to the US. Elspeth isn't announcing who the guests are until they accept, but she also has backup guests in case they don't.

CAPCLAVE FAR FUTURE: Capclave '07 Chairfan Colleen Cahill wasn't present, and nobody else had anything to report.

PUBLICATIONS: Keith said the October *WSFA Journal* was available, as were various back issues, both here and upstairs. Also, there's a sign-in sheet circulating.

ENTERTAINMENT: Alexis said the baby panda at the National Zoo would take one step then fall over. Lee said two steps. Madeleine said it used to be kept in a small Tupperware container, now it's kept in a medium-sized one.

#### ACTIVITIES:

Lee handed the secretary the following, after reading from it:

A few notes from the Activities Committee

1) Be aware when I announce I *may* be able to get free review passes for a movie, this mean I **MAY** be able to get free review passes for a movie. This is an iffy concern, especially if no reviews of said movie are forthcoming. (On a related note, please write a review after these things if you get a ticket. Send it to me and I will forward it to the correct place. The reason for these freebies is reviews and word-of-mouth, that's why we get them.)

2) The number of tickets is most likely limited. I have set up a group [WSFAfreebies@yahoo.com](mailto:WSFAfreebies@yahoo.com), for this express purpose. If you are interested in these freebies, the [WSFAfreebies](mailto:WSFAfreebies@yahoo.com) gets first crack at the goodies, so it behooveth thee to belongest.

3) When I get tickets, I try to announce that I do to as broad an audience as possible. However, I am not everywhere. I am especially not on the WSFA list. Therefore, if you see an announcement of freebies tickets posted there, please write me personally. My e-mail is [leeandalexis@hotmail.com](mailto:leeandalexis@hotmail.com). My phone is 703/920-6087. I will be asking for a volunteer to please notify me of replies on the list as well. The name of this person will be posted.

[Sam Lubell volunteered.]

4) When I have freebies, and someone expresses an interest, it has always been my policy (five years now) to personally assure that person he/she has scored a ticket. If you do not hear from me, e-mail me again. Or call. If you do not hear from me, don't make assumptions. It's bad for the liver.

5) When I state the movie starts at such-and-such a time, the movie ***STARTS*** at such-and-such a time. This

is not when I want people in the foyer, this is not when I want those expecting a ride to show up at my house, this is *when the movie starts*.

6) While I am probably very sad that you were caught in traffic/made a mistake and took the wrong train/didn't notice the time, it is not my responsibility to get you to the theater on time, nor is it my responsibility to stand outside the theater because one of the party has not shown up yet. I want to see the movie too, or I wouldn't have organized the darn thing. You are all adults, you can figure out how to make it to an appointed place in a timely manner.

7) If you are, for unforeseen reasons, late and I have your ticket (although I really prefer you all buy your own tickets, in advance, on line) my cell is 571/643-2842, and I will have it with me theater nights.

Narnia and King Kong are coming up in December, and she may be able to get tickets. She circulated a sign-up sheet to find out how many people are interested, and when their preferred times are. If she can't get free tickets, she may organize a theater party anyway. Narnia opens on Friday, December 9th, King Kong on Wednesday, December 7th.

[ The following is transcribed exactly from the secretary's tape. He is willing to play it, or the tape of any other meeting, for any WSFA member. ]

Lee: On a related note, at the WSFA list, unfortunately, there was a situation where my temper got the better of me, and I made a statement that I shouldn't have, and I regret that statement.

Keith: Uh, yes. I have two questions for Lee in response to her apology. Are you apologizing for calling me a liar?

Lee: I am apologizing for making injudicious remarks.

Keith: Are you apologizing for calling me a liar?

Lee: I am apologizing for making injudicious remarks.

Sam Lubell: Okay --

Keith: Do you believe I am a liar?

Sam Lubell: -- Keith, I think --

?: This is not appropriate for --

Keith: I am sorry, but this is going to be answered tonight. Do you believe I am a liar?

Alexis: Yes.

Keith: Very well --

Alexis: I believe you are a liar.

Keith: This will be --

Sam Lubell: -- not --

Keith: Yes, this is the time. This is my last day ever in this house. What the club will do about this -- I won't necessarily leave the club. It depends on how the vote of confidence comes out. But frankly -- let me -- I won't bend your ear any more after tonight so if you can give me just a couple minutes here. 28 years ago, something terrible happened to me. Ever since then I've been trying to rebuild what's most precious to me, and what I think is most precious to everyone, because even a billionaire can't earn a nickel unless people trust him. My -- I value WSFA greatly; I've been involved with WSFA,



even if only as a Disclave volunteer, for over half my life. I've been coming to this club for eight years, which I know is not long compared to some of you, but it's been a significant part of these past eight years, and I think I've put a lot of work into this club; I think I've done a lot of good things. And I've had a lot of support from people in these past two weeks, and I'm thankful for it. And -- you know, a lot of these supporters were private, because they were afraid of publicly coming out because of what's happened to them if they were known to be on my side. Anyway -- imagine if you had worked on something for decades, say a piece of beautiful beadwork -- that, to me, is what my integrity, my honesty, my honor -- that, to me, is what that is. And suppose someone who you'd never offended -- someone just came along and threw it in the mud, and spit on it, and pissed on it, and said, you know, you're such a loser, I bet you're just going to keep back for more abuse. Well, if anybody thinks that, they are wrong. I am not going to put up with it any more. I will, out of courtesy to the many people, probably about half the people in this room, who have pled with me to stay, I will wait until adjournment. And as soon as this meeting is adjourned, I will leave this house, and I will never return to this house. This is a beautiful house, but it is filled with hate --

Sam Lubell: Keith --

Keith: -- it is filled with misery, and we can worry later about whether I'm going to stay secretary. I will stay secretary through the end of the month. I will be at Third Friday unless I lose the vote of confidence, which I will, as promised, call for when we come to New Business. I will be at Capclave; I promised a number of people I'd be there, and I do keep my promises. And, by the way, Lee also made an allegation about what I said on Third Friday, and if anybody doubts it, I've brought the Third Friday tape, as I said I would, and I'll play that for anybody --

[ This is a reference to Lee's 9/28 message saying "Keith warned me that if we didn't do a theater party to go see Serenity fifth Friday, (at the Madigan house during the meeting) there might be problems." ]

Alexis: Just because it isn't on the Third Friday tape doesn't mean you never said it. I've heard you say it.

Sam Lubell: Okay, let's not get into an argument here. Keith, you're done.

Keith: I am indeed done.

Sam Lubell: All right.

**BOOK:** Ernest had copies of the *Future Washington* anthology for sale, \$10 for a paperback, or \$20 for a hardback. He also had plastic bags for them. [It was raining heavily.] The money should be given to Bob. He wants everyone in the club to read it, even if they have to share a copy. It had been getting good buzz. Brenda Clough got a copy. All the anthology's authors have gotten their copies. He will be putting books into envelopes with press releases to send to reviewers right after the meeting. He expressed gratitude for being allowed to produce the book.

**WORLD FANTASY 2003:** Chairfan Mike Walsh said no money had been received. Some advertisers are claiming to have paid in advance. He'll go over the books with Bob. The president said he wouldn't bug him since Capclave is imminent, but would raise it next month.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Alexis has not yet worked on a card for the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society's 70th anniversary. The president asked for the exact date. Keith said he only knew it was sometime this month. Mike Bartman suggested something to do with *The Philadelphia Experiment*. Alexis will have it at Capclave, so that we can all sign it.

Before asking for New Business, the president noted that it's Jewish tradition this time of year to ask for forgiveness. He did so, and encouraged others to do so. Elspeth, Madeleine, Ernest, Mike Walsh, and Paul did so.

The president said he didn't mean to turn the club into an encounter group. Elizabeth suggested we declare it an alien encounter group.

The president said we should remember we're here to have fun, but we all have feelings, and sometimes we can get a little too intense and forget that.

Mike Bartman and Paul both said that email is a medium in which misunderstanding is especially likely.

### NEW BUSINESS:

Keith called for a vote of no-confidence on himself, by secret ballot so nobody would feel intimidated, saying he needed to know whether he still had the support of the club. He said it would determine whether he only leaves the Gillilands', or leaves the club completely. The motion was seconded but not voted on.

Sam requested that it be postponed. Bill moved that it be tabled. His motion was seconded, and passed. Judy Scheiner said that she for one had no idea what the issues were. [ Keith will write something up, at his own expense. Others are free to do the same. ]

NEW TRADITION (as it was once called): Nobody noticed or thought to ask, but it was Don Lundry's third meeting. Nobody else present had been to WSFA fewer than 18 times.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The secretary made the usual first announcement: Announcements should ideally be submitted in writing or via email if you want to make sure he gets them right. Especially tonight, since he's been under a lot of stress, and has not been sleeping or working well.

Scott won't be at Third Friday, since he's getting married that weekend. Lee said several other WSFAns are likely to miss the meeting to attend his wedding, so she suggested that Keith's business be postponed. The president said someone can make a motion then.

Elsbeth's cat Fribble has diabetes. Elsbeth spent nearly all day either at the vets or at the con hotel.

Walter said his first First Friday WSFA meeting was 29 years ago this week. At that meeting he discussed an *Analog* story with Avery Davis. He met Dan Joy that night. He had dinner with Dan Joy just last night. Tonight would probably be his last First Friday meeting. He apologized to Alexis.

Alexis said "There's a certain amount of aggravation that WSFA provides, that you just put up with because you have to. We have a cat-shaped cutting board up in the kitchen that's called the Walter board."

Candy said her dog is currently a conehead, because the dog had had surgery on Tuesday to remove lumps to be biopsied. She made \$1000 at Balticon last weekend, even though Balticon wasn't this past weekend, and she wasn't a dealer this year; she had given her card to someone who saw her cutting out appliques in Balticon's con suite, and she got lots of business from that person. She has Shirl's old part-time job of reading to a blind patent attorney at NASA during afternoons. Someone else is needed mornings.

Ernest asked if the mourning reader has to dress in black.

Lance gave away a copy of *Star Wreck #6*, a DVD from Finland. It's a DivX format parody of *Star Trek* and *Babylon 5*, in Finnish with English subtitles. It's also on the net, and had been downloaded 300,000 times in the week it's been online. He gave it to Judy Scheiner.

Mike Walsh had an Advance Reading Copy of *The Separation* by Christopher Priest. It will be produced by Mike's Old Earth Books. It was published in the UK in 2002, but no US publishers were interested, even though it won both the British Science Fiction Association award and the Arthur C. Clarke award. He gave it to Ernest. Mike mentioned that Christopher Priest uses WordPerfect. The book should be out at the end of the month.

Kathi wasn't prepared for a discussion of the latest issue of *Asimov's*, and suggested it be done at Capclave instead. She said Terry Pratchett was on the *Fast Forward* cable TV show, and Robert Jordan would be on next month.

Lee said everyone should move their chairs after adjournment. She broke her foot and isn't very mobile. She asked Bill, Elizabeth, and Scott to bring the platters from the refrigerator they were sitting next to.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:31 pm. 59 minutes. [23 seconds of tape were left on the secretary's recorder.]

It rained all day, all night, and all the next day.

Summary of 10/7/05 meeting:

- The meeting started late since key members were stuck in traffic on the Beltway.
- Capclave gofers are needed starting at 1 or 2 pm.
- It was Secretary Keith Lynch's last-ever meeting at the Gillilands.
- Keith Lynch called for a vote of no confidence on himself. It was tabled.
- Alexis had not yet worked on the 70th anniversary card for PSFS. He planned to do so at Capclave, so we could all sign it.
- There may be a low turnout at Third Friday since it's opposite Scott Hofmann's wedding.



## This Month in History

### From the Secretary's Archives

November 1995:

First and Third Friday Meetings at the Gillilands' and Ginters', with 38 and 10 people present. Treasury \$7,300.17. Disclave '98 Chairfan Joe Mayhew announced that Terry Bisson would be his guest of honor. (That con was never held, as the hotel reneged one month out.) Third Friday was opposite Philcon, and no officers were present; George Shaner took the non-minutes. Two *WSFA Journals*, twelve and eight pages, were published in November. (Two issues were published almost every month from early 1995 through mid-1996, ending only when editor Joe Mayhew had a heart attack.) The federal 55 mph speed limit was repealed.

November 1985:

First Friday at the Gillilands'; Third Friday at the Olivers'. Treasury \$9,241.29. Cat Slusser took the First Friday minutes, as Secretary Ginny McNitt was absent. There was a Disclave '86 meeting at Jack Heneghan's house on the afternoon of Sunday the 17th. Alan Huff proposed bylaw changes to make us a 501(c)(7) organization. [As of 1998, we're a 501(c)(4) organization.] The November *WSFA Journal*, published by Ginny McNitt, was just four pages.

November 1975:

No *WSFA Journal* (that I can find a copy of, anyway) was published between December 1974 and September 1978, nor do I have any other non-Disclave WSFA information from most of that time. Anyone with such information please contact WSFA's new archivist once one is chosen.

November 1965:

Meetings on First and Third Friday at Elizabeth Cullen's in Washington, DC, with 21 and 13 (not a quorum) attending. Treasury \$105.09. Don Miller suggested that some honorary members be made life members. There was discussion of whether Disclave should have a program or not, and who the guest of honor should be. Don Miller published one *WSFA Journal* in November: Issue 12, totaling 10 pages. The planned PSFS 30th anniversary celebration at the upcoming Philcon was mentioned. There was a report on Boskone by Jay Kay Klein. There was a review by Alexis Gilliland of Homer Eon Flint's *The Devolutionist and the Emancipatrix*. (There was a review by Lee Strong of the same novel earlier this year.) There were short reviews of several magazines by Banks Mebane, discussion of a play-by-mail Diplomacy



game, and much more.

November 1955:

Meetings on First and Third Sunday at the new meeting place, Nelson Grigg's in Wheaton, with 15 and 13 attending. Treasury \$62.65. Ted White read letters from Ray Palmer and Walt Willis. It was decided to leave the club library at Dot Cole's, but to move the chairs and fan to the new meeting place. Ted White urged support of Ray Palmer's magazine "Other Worlds." The club voted to pay the phone company 50¢ a month to have the Bergs' phone number listed in the phone book under WSFA and under SFA. W. Tape recordings of the radio program "X Minus One" featuring Murray Leinster's "First Contact" and Kurt Vonnegut's "The Barnhouse Effect" were played.

## Bitwise Palindromes

By Keith Lynch

We're all familiar with palindromes, phrases that read the same forward and backward. For instance "A man, a plan, a canal: Panama." Former WSFA Dan Hoey has done original research on them.

But standard palindromes treat letters as indivisible entities. The reversal of a letter is the same letter. That was fine in the old days, but today letters are usually considered, at least by computer people, to be made up of bits.

So I set out to explore bitwise palindromes.

There are numerous possibilities, since there are numerous character codes, and since there are variants on each of them, e.g. start, stop, and parity bits.

The most common character code is ASCII. Unfortunately, ASCII palindromes don't work very well. With 8-bit ASCII, four uppercase letters map into uppercase letters. Seven letters map into letters if you ignore case. With 7-bit ASCII, seven uppercase letters map into uppercase letters. Thirteen letters map into letters if you ignore case. If you include start and stop bits, the situation is even worse.

The DEC SIXBIT subset of ASCII is slightly better, but still only eleven letters map into letters. The closest thing to a palindromic sentence I was able to construct was "YES GAS SEMIS SAY SIG".

At least in SIXBIT, the space bar maps into itself. (When doing bitwise palindromes, the usual convention of adding or removing spaces and punctuation at will feels very wrong.)

Morse Code palindromes work much better. Every letter maps into a letter. Space maps into itself. Common letters map into common letters (since they tend to be shorter). I explored Morse palindromes several years ago.

Even more promising is the old five bit code that I think is still used by deaf people, radio hams, and possibly by newsrooms and Telex. (There's a telex.com, so I guess Telex is still around.) This code is usually called Baudot, but is more properly termed Murray or ITA2. (Baudot was a completely different five bit code that hasn't been used in about a century.)

This code seems tailor-made for palindromes. Space maps into itself. Every letter maps into a letter. Common letters map into common letters at a rate that can't possibly be coincidence. The most common letters in English language text, in order, are ETAOIN SHRDLU. The ITA2 palindrome mapping is E<->T, A<->O, I<->N, S<->H, R<->L, D<->C. As if this weren't remarkable enough, <CR> maps into <LF>, so the standard teletype linebreak sequence, <CR><LF>, maps into itself!

A little online research explains this in two ways. One, wear on equipment was proportional to the number of 1 bits, so they were minimized by giving the most common characters the fewest 1 bits. Two, punched paper tapes were sometimes accidentally loaded reversed in one or both dimensions, and they wanted this to be at least somewhat recoverable.

(Of course this means the letters are in a weird order if you arrange the codes in the usual binary sequence (E A SIU DRJNFCKTZLWHYPQOBG MXV). You can't have everything.)

So there's an even richer pool of words that map into other words than in Morse Code. I almost immediately found:

SCOW IN BAD SHORE TRASH LOW IN BACH

LOP TUNE IMP PAR FOR FUN TIME FAD

YORE O LIMP MAY YOU FUND A TRAY

VOTE IONIAN TEAK

DANK BARROW VIOL

Shakespeare it ain't. But it's a lot better than anything you'll get by reversing ASCII, EBCDIC, or Hollerith. And it doesn't appear that anyone else has ever played with this. Someone willing to put a little more time into it than I have can do far better, I'm sure.

It might be considered cheating to make up a new code for the sole purpose of maximizing palindromes. But it's an interesting challenge. How would one go about doing this? By trying to get the most common digrams (pairs of adjacent letters, such as "th" or "qu") to map into other common digrams, perhaps? How many possible codes are there, anyway? Is it feasible to test all of them?



TUCK EVERLASTING



## Films You May Have Missed

by Michael Nelson

### Tuck Everlasting

Walt Disney Pictures, 2002

Directed by Jay Russell; Novel by Natalie Babbitt;

Screenplay by Jeffrey Lieber and James V. Hart

I thought I would try starting a series of short reviews of some interesting science fiction/fantasy movies you may have overlooked when they first came out, as I did.

When I first saw the television ads for *Tuck Everlasting* in 2002, I quickly dismissed it as yet another sappy teen flick. The ads showed a young couple splashing around in a pool at the base of a pretty waterfall. *Yuck... teenage mating rituals!* It wasn't until very recently that I found out this was actually a serious science fiction movie. Yes, you see, the girl in that scene is 15 years old, but the "boy" is 104. A family of immortals living in the 1900s and their encounter with a girl who learns their secret. Sounds a little like Clifford Simak's *Way Station* doesn't it?

And the cast! William Hurt, Sissy Spacek, Ben Kingsley, and Amy Irving along with Alexis Bledel (the daughter from *Gilmore Girls*), Victor Garber (Sydney's father from *Alias*), and a screenplay by Jeffrey Lieber, the creator of *Lost*.

Honestly, I was surprised to see this serious attempt at examining the questions of human immortality coming from Disney. What are the benefits? What are the shortcomings? (And they raised some interesting ones, which I won't reveal

to avoid spoiling your possible viewing.) Would you choose to become immortal if given the opportunity? It's a very short film, only 88 minutes long. So put *Tuck Everlasting* in your Netflix rental queue and give it a spin some quiet evening.

## Upcoming Events

This is excerpted from our online calendar of upcoming events, at <http://www.wsfa.org/calendar.htm>. I recommend you check it frequently, in case of last minute additions or corrections. Also, it contains links to more information about the events, including directions to our meeting places.

**Friday, November 4th: WSFA First Friday Meeting**

Regular WSFA meeting. At the Gillilands', as usual. Newcomers welcome.

**Sunday, November 6th: Michael Crichton at Lisner**

Michael Crichton speaks at 2:30 at the Lisner Auditorium, 730 21st Street NW, near the Foggy Bottom Metro station on the Orange and Blue lines. A Smithsonian Associates event. \$15 - \$25. (202) 252-0012.

**Thursday, November 10th: Talk on Plant Cells**

Talk by David Ehrhardt on "The Dynamic Architecture of Plant Cells: Molecular Machines and Biological Organization", at the Carnegie Institute, 1530 P St. NW, near the McPherson Square Metro station on the Blue and Orange Lines, and the Dupont Circle station on the Red Line, at 6:45 pm. Free. 202-328-6988.

**Monday, November 14th: Kim Stanley Robinson at White Flint Borders Books**

Kim Stanley Robinson introduces his new novel *Fifty Degrees Below* at the Borders Bookstore at White Flint Mall, near the White Flint Metro station on the Red Line at 7:00 pm.

**Tuesday, November 15th: Kim Stanley Robinson at Bailey's Crossroads Borders Books**

Kim Stanley Robinson introduces his new novel *Fifty Degrees Below* at the Borders Bookstore at Bailey's Crossroads Virginia at 7:30 pm.

**Wednesday, November 16th: Kim Stanley Robinson at NSF**

Kim Stanley Robinson introduces his new novel *Fifty Degrees Below* at the National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd., one block south of the Ballston Metro station on the Orange Line, during "lunchtime." Open to the public.

**Thursday, November 17th: John Grant speaks at LoC**

John Grant (Paul Barnett), author of *Take No Prisoners*, speaks at the Library of Congress, Madison Building, 3rd floor, Pickford Theater, at 12:10 pm. A book signing will follow. Copies will be available for purchase. No reservations are needed; open to staff and the public.

**Friday, November 18th: Philosophical Society of Washington talk**

The Philosophical Society of Washington presents *Beyond The Edge of the Sea: Volcanoes and Life in the Deep Ocean* by Cindy L. Van Dover at 8:15 pm in the John Wesley Powell Auditorium, Cosmos Club, 2170 Florida Avenue NW DC, near the Dupont Circle Metro station on the Red Line.

**November 18 - 20: Anime USA 2005 Convention**

At the Sheraton Premiere at Tysons Corner VA (the hotel where Disclave '94 was held).

**Friday, November 18th: WSFA Third Friday Meeting**

Regular WSFA meeting. At the Madigans', as usual. Newcomers welcome.

**November 25 - 27: Darkover Grand Council Meeting XXIX**

A convention in Timonium, Maryland.

**Friday, December 2nd: WSFA First Friday Meeting**

Regular WSFA meeting. At the Gillilands', as usual. Newcomers welcome.



**Friday, December 9th: Philosophical Society of Washington talk**

The Philosophical Society of Washington presents *Einstein's Warped Universe* by Ted Jacobson at 8:15 pm in the John Wesley Powell Auditorium, Cosmos Club, 2170 Florida Avenue NW DC, near the Dupont Circle Metro station on the Red Line.

**December 9 - 11: Philcon 2005**

The Philadelphia Science Fiction Society (PSFS) brings you another Philcon, in Philadelphia.

**Friday, December 16th: WSFA Third Friday Meeting**

Regular WSFA meeting. At the Madigans', as usual. Newcomers welcome.

**Friday, January 6th: Philosophical Society of Washington talk**

The Philosophical Society of Washington presents *Retiring President's Lecture: Energy Trade-Offs* by Robert L. Hershey at 8:30 pm in the John Wesley Powell Auditorium, Cosmos Club, 2170 Florida Avenue NW DC, near the Dupont Circle Metro station on the Red Line.

**Thursday, January 26th: Cosmic Inflation Talk**

Talk by Alan Guth on "Cosmic Inflation and the Accelerating Universe", at the Carnegie Institute, 1530 P St. NW, near the McPherson Square Metro station on the Blue and Orange Lines, and the Dupont Circle station on the Red Line, at 6:45 pm. Free. 202-328-6988.

**April 21 - 23: Ravencon**

A "Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror" convention in Richmond, Virginia.

**May 26 - 29: Balticon 40**

The Baltimore Science Fiction Society (BSFS) brings you another Balticon. At the Hunt Valley Marriott.

**August 23 - 27: 64th World SF Convention: L.A.con IV**

Anaheim California, same place as the 1996 Worldcon and the 1999 NASFiC.

**October 20 - 22: Capclave 2006**

WSFA is putting on a convention! In Silver Spring, MD.

## Third Friday Minutes

Note that there's a brief summary at the end.

The regular Third Friday meeting of the Washington Science Fiction Association was called to order by President Samuel Lubell at 9:17 pm on October 21st, 2005, in the downstairs of the Madigans', at 102 Julian Court, Greenbelt, Maryland, the usual third Friday location. There was a fire in the room's fireplace.

In attendance were President Samuel Lubell, Secretary Keith Lynch, Treasurer Bob MacIntosh, Trustees Ernest Lilley and Barry Newton, Capclave Past Michael Walsh, Capclave Present Elspeth Kovar, Capclave Future Colleen Cahill, Mike Bartman, Mark Fischer, Erica and Lydia Ginter, Kindra Gresham, Candy and John Madigan, Keith Marshall, Bill Mayhew, Walter Miles, Judy Newton, George Shaner, William Squire, Diana Swiger, and Madeleine Yeh. 23 people.

TREASURY: The treasurer said we have \$8,134.22 in our main account, plus \$15,113.01 in CDs, for a total of \$23,247.23.

CAPCLAVE PAST:

Capclave was last weekend. We had 388 members, of whom 337 showed up. Mike Walsh said our fan guests of honor, Patrick and Teresa, plan to return next year, and that a "slight amount of Disclave spice" was thrown in. Howard Waldrop enjoyed the programming and thought he was on just the right number of panels. The programming was well-attended.

We don't yet have financial results, but they're unlikely to be bad. It will cost something to print and mail the Waldrop chapbook, which wasn't ready in time for the con, to all members, but that's likely to be compensated for by the people who joined just to get the chapbook. Mike said "Only Howard Waldrop could write a story combining vaudeville and the Da Vinci Code." The chapbook should be ready for mailing in about a month or so. The vaudeville story will be available online at Ellen Datlow's site in November. Sheets might be sent to Howard for him to sign before they're bound into the book. We may save on postage by handing them out at Philcon to Capclave '05 members who are there. One person in Australia joined Capclave to get the chapbook.

Elspeth said we had three Worldcon bid parties, which is remarkable for a startup convention our size.

Sam thanked Ernest for printing a backup print run of the program booklet in the middle of Friday night in case Mike Nelson didn't show up on Saturday. [Mike Nelson did show up on Saturday.]

Mike Walsh asked Sam whether his phone number, which was printed in an ad in the *Washington Post Book World* [and in the *Washington Post Express* and in the *City Paper*] had gotten many phone calls. Sam said "zero." Elspeth said we did get some people because of it, including a bookstore owner.

#### CAPCLAVE PRESENT:

Elspeth is "honored and rather terrified to be referred to as Capclave Present." She is "greatly looking forward to building on what we did this year." 30 to 35 memberships were sold at Capclave last weekend. Sam suggested having more information about WSFA at the con than we did this year. She will make Capclave letterhead with a dodo. She hopes to get the Annapolis and Severn rooms again. [We got them free "at the last minute" this year.] The hotel has a standing commitment to University of Maryland basketball, but she hopes to solidify things by January.

Elspeth said Barry did a good job with a formal and well-organized database, and that we've needed something like that for a long time. She hopes he will also do publicity work. Jan Price will be hotel liaison. Elspeth spoke with Lee about the con suite, but Lee said she would most likely be busy. The con suite and programming are both up in the air. Ernest's creativity is needed. People with ideas are encouraged to send email. Steve Smith will be treasurer. Mike Nelson is doing publications again.

The website is also up in the air. Elspeth wants it to look like our World Fantasy website.

There has been discussion of function space on the email list.

Sam said he won't bug Elspeth about a guest of honor until the next meeting.

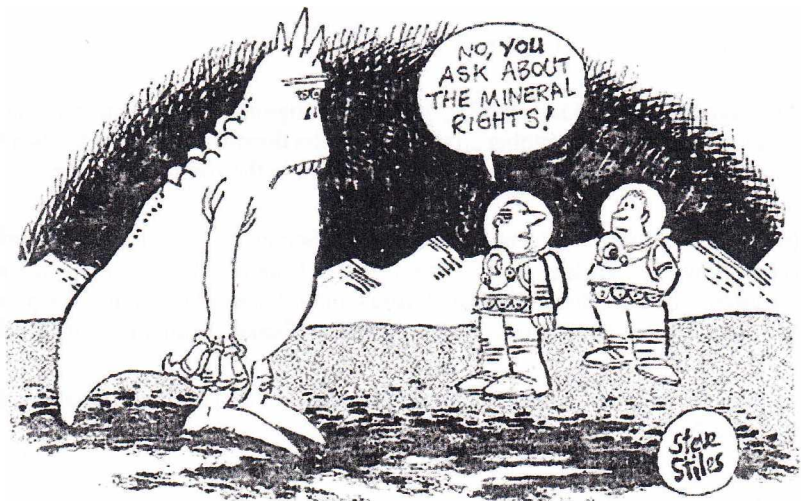
Elspeth hopes to have fliers and a table at Philcon [December 9 - 11 in Philadelphia].

CAPCLAVE FUTURE: Colleen hopes to get a committee together and have a first meeting in January, and to meet with her hotel liaison before that. She hopes to be able to start selling memberships a couple weeks before Capclave '06 takes place.

ENTERTAINMENT: Alexis Gilliland wasn't present.

ACTIVITIES: Lee Gilliland wasn't present.

PUBLICATIONS: Keith Lynch said the October *WSFA Journal* was available, for anyone who didn't get a copy at First Friday or at Capclave. No back issues were available; they all went to good homes at Capclave. 30 years and 11 months of



issues are available online. [By the end of the evening, four copies were taken. Five more remain. The print run, as usual, was 42.]

BOOK: Bob said our total cost to date has been \$12,937.40. So far we've collected \$1239.75 back. Mike Walsh explained that lots of money was in the pipeline, due to how the publishing industry works. Larry Smith sold lots of them, and was very pleased.

WORLD FANTASY 2003: Chairfan Mike Walsh said no money had been received. He hasn't worked on it since he was busy with Capclave, but expected to get to it soon. Mike Bartman suggested charging interest.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

The secretary said the last meeting was October 7th, at the Gillilands', and:

- The meeting started late since key members were stuck in traffic on the Beltway.
- It was Secretary Keith Lynch's last-ever meeting at the Gillilands.
- Keith Lynch called for a vote of no confidence on himself. It was tabled.
- Alexis had not yet worked on the 70th anniversary card for PSFS. He planned to do so at Capclave, so we could all sign it.
- There may be a low turnout at Third Friday since it's opposite Scott Hofmann's wedding.

Nobody present had been asked to sign a 70th anniversary card for PSFS, so it was assumed Alexis didn't get around to producing one. Elspeth suggested sending one to PSFS's president during Philcon or during a regular PSFS meeting. Sam will remind Alexis about the card, and report back on the email list.

Keith Lynch had called a no confidence vote on himself at the previous meeting, but said that it's now moot, since with the current situation he can't stay in the club. This will be his last meeting. He was going to present a written, footnoted, defense against Lee's accusations, but since they keep changing, it would be like trying to nail Jello to the wall. He just can't take it any more. He does plan to attend next year's Capclave, and may attend John Pomeranz's New Years Eve party. Sam thanked him on behalf of the club for all the work he had done, and said he would definitely be missed.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

Keith Lynch said the club will have to find a new secretary, Journal editor, webmaster, and point of contact. The same person doesn't have to do all these tasks. Our bylaws say that the secretary appoints the Journal editor, and don't even mention the webmaster. He will remain as listmaster; the list has always been for both past and present WSFAns, so there's no reason it can't be run by a past WSFAn.

Nobody volunteered for any of these positions.

He will produce the minutes of this meeting, but no future meeting. He will produce a November *WSFA Journal*, place it online, and make copies available for someone to take to First Friday, but will not produce a December Journal. He will continue to maintain the WSFA website until someone is willing to take it over, or until the end of the year, whichever comes first. He will hold onto the club archives until a new secretary is willing to take them, or until the end of time; he will not throw anything away no matter what.

Elspeth said, "Some of us think that WSFA needs to make a couple of decisions, and that he's removing himself in part so that any decision made is not predicated or thought to be predicated on Keith, and, as I said, it's the honorable and the incredibly difficult thing to do."

Walter Miles gave praise so effusive that the secretary can't bring himself to transcribe it.

Elspeth moved a vote of appreciation for Keith Lynch by a show of hands. Sam asked if it could be phrased "WSFA officially thanks Keith Lynch for all the help he has done." Elspeth preferred it be stronger than that. Ernest called for three huzzahs for Keith. Elspeth preferred a vote that shows the percentage of support for Keith. Bob said that that does no good since half the membership wasn't present. Judy said some who weren't present weren't present because of this



issue. Colleen said she'd prefer a non-political thank you. Elspeth withdrew her motion. Ernest again called for three huzzahs for Keith, and got them.

Bob said we need a new merchant card service. We're currently using Bucconeer's, but that will go away in six to ten months. We could buy a terminal for \$750, in which our bank would process transactions for 1.89% plus 20¢, which is about one full percentage point less than what we are currently paying. Alternatively, we could rent a terminal for \$50 per month, with the same per-transaction charges. Either way, it would no longer show up as a charge to "56th Worldcon."

Mike Walsh asked if this would make it easier for us to sell WSFA Press books online. Bob said there would be an additional charge for keeping it active all the time, and he didn't think it was worth it.

Elspeth asked how this related to PayPal. Barry explained how they differed.

Elspeth asked if we could activate it just once every two months or so, and process accumulated transactions then, and explain the delay on the website. She said Larry Smith does it that way. Mark thought batch processing was a bad idea. Barry said an email receipt can be sent immediately to mitigate the confusion. Sam asked whether real-time processing can be added later. Bob said yes. Bob moved that we spend the \$750. His motion passed unanimously.

Mike Bartman raised the question of whether the First Friday meeting would be held at the Gillilands' due to the number of people saying that they would not attend a meeting there. He said Sam Pierce had volunteered his house, but it was 45 miles from DC.

Sam said that the Gillilands are willing to continue hosting, and have said that no paid-up member will be excluded from the business portion of the meeting.

Ernest suggested the Old Presbyterian Meeting House in Alexandria, which allows beer and wine, but not red wine. Its senior pastor, Jon Smoot, is an SF fan. [Their website says Gary W. Charles is its senior pastor.]

Mike Bartman suggested a restaurant or a library. Keith Lynch said restaurants are too noisy. Mike Bartman replied that he meant a private room in a restaurant. Mike Walsh said BSFS used to meet in restaurants before they bought a clubhouse.

Someone said another concern is that churches, restaurants, and libraries don't tend to remain open late enough; we might need to meet earlier and curtail our social hour.

Ernest said LASFS meetings often adjourn to a nearby diner. He also said that a problem with meeting in houses is that some members are allergic to pets.

Bill Squire asked if anyone believed that we would still be meeting at the Gillilands in ten years.

No vote having taken place, the next meeting will be at the Gillilands', as usual.

NEW TRADITION (as it was once called): It was obvious that it wasn't anyone's first, second, or third meeting.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The secretary said that announcements should ideally be given in writing or via email, especially since his one-hour tape had long since run out.

Candy, our hostess, made several announcements: The white bunny bites. You can feed the dog anything except chocolate. There's a lost & found basket under the sewing machine table upstairs. She redid the foyer.

Bill Mayhew said that the tree planted in Joe Mayhew's memory at the Beltsville Library was doing well. He said that it, like Joe, was flamboyant but prickly.

Elsbeth's cat has brittle diabetes.

Erica has a new cat. It's black and white, nine weeks old, and has no name yet.

Colleen said Maria Snyder would be speaking at the Library of Congress on Thursday.

Mike Bartman read the following email, then handed it to the secretary:

Date: Fri, 21 Oct 2005 18:26:49 -0000  
From: spaceupdate@SPACE.COM  
Subject: SPACE.com Exclusive Invitation: Take a Ride on a Zero-G Flight on November 5 at Kennedy Space Center!  
To: SPACECOM-TEXTJ@LISTSERV2.SPACE.COM

Fly weightless with ZERO-G out of NASA's Kennedy Space Center

This is a last minute opportunity to go weightless on November 5th, 2005

History will be made next month when Zero Gravity Corporation (ZERO-G) and Space.com invite the public to launch and land on a Weightless Flight from NASA's Shuttle Landing Facility (SLF) at the Kennedy Space Center. On November 5, 2006, ZERO-G has been given permission by NASA to operate G-FORCE ONE, its specially modified Boeing aircraft from the same location the Space Shuttle uses to land at the Kennedy Space Center. This offer is made exclusively through a marketing partnership with Space.com. Details are available at:

Book your seat NOW: Online at <http://www.space.com/zerog/> or by calling (800) ZERO-G-800.

This once in a lifetime opportunity is available for \$4,500 plus tax and will include:

- Weightless Flight from NASA-Kennedy's Shuttle Landing Facility with 15 Martian, Lunar and zero gravity parabolas
- Ground training in a VIP facility at NASA-KSC's Apollo/Saturn V Center
- Participation by three Space Shuttle Astronauts
- ZERO-G flight suit, log book, and weightless certification
- Personalized photographs and DVD/Video
- Post-flight "Regravitation" celebrations
- Admission into the Kennedy Space Center Visitors Complex

Book Now at <http://www.space.com/zerog/>

This pilot program is being sponsored by the Kennedy Space Center and is supported by NASA's Office of Space Operations.

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Walter said Avedon sent a photo.

Mike Walsh said something about a starred review in *Publishers Review*, and about *The Dodo and Mauritius Island: Imaginary Encounters* by Harri Kallio, a book containing photos of life-sized dodo puppets in lifelike poses on that island.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:54 pm. 97 minutes.

A few people were still present when the secretary left at about 1 am.

There was cold drizzle and mist all day and all night.

Summary of 10/21/05 meeting:

- Capclave got 388 members, including 337 warm bodies onsite.
- The Howard Waldrop chapbook should be ready for mailing to Capclave members in about a month.
- Keith Lynch is resigning as secretary, Journal editor, and webmaster, and intends to attend no more meetings. Nobody volunteered to take over any of these tasks.
- Retiring secretary Keith Lynch got three huzzahs.
- The *Future Washington* anthology has cost the club over \$12,000. So far, we've gotten about \$1200 back.
- We voted to spend \$750 on a device for processing credit cards.
- Sam Lubell will follow up with Alexis Gilliland about the PSFS 70th anniversary card.
- There was discussion of moving our First Friday meeting place, but nothing came of it.
- Joe Mayhew's tree is doing well.

## Free Access to Smithsonian Global Sound

Newsgroups: rec.arts.sf.fandom  
Subject: This was posted to a list for librarians  
Date: 24 Oct 2005 10:29:20 -0700  
From: Marty Helgesen

Some of you might be interested in listening to some of them during the free month.

Alexander Street Press Announces One Month of Free Access to Smithsonian Global Sound(R)

To let librarians, students, and educators everywhere enjoy all 35,000 audio tracks from around the world, Alexander Street Press is opening free access to Smithsonian Global Sound (R) for one month.

No passwords or trial sign-ups are necessary-users simply visit <http://glmu.classical.com> and they are immediately connected to the entire database. The free access period will begin on Monday, October 24th, and run through 17:00

<http://www.wsfa.org/journal/j05/b/index.htm>

10/30/05





GMT on Wednesday, November 23rd, 2005.

"People around the world should get online, grab their headsets, and turn on their speakers right now!" said Eileen Lawrence, Vice president of Sales and Marketing for Alexander Street. "There's something for everyone here-music from every country and ethnic group, songs for every musical taste and every age, literature readings, political speeches, freedom and protest songs-even the sounds of the rainforest. We're very excited to partner with Smithsonian Folkways Recordings to bring this free month of access to libraries and scholarly institutions everywhere."

"The breadth of this collection is very impressive," said Tim Lloyd, Division President for Music and Video at Alexander Street. "Its unique nature will make it a valuable addition to libraries that want a complete world music archive. We think that the free trial month will make that decision an easy one."

For more information, visit [www.alexanderstreet.com/products/music](http://www.alexanderstreet.com/products/music), or send an email to [sales@alexanderstreet.com](mailto:sales@alexanderstreet.com).

Marty Helgesen

Bitnet: [mnhcc@cunyvnm](mailto:mnhcc@cunyvnm) Internet: [redacted]

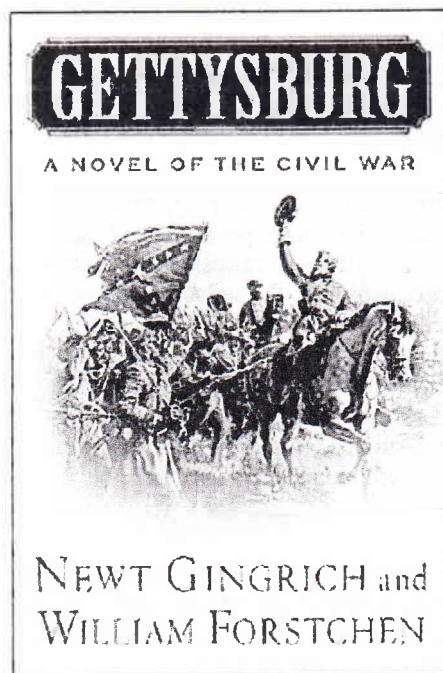
"Hopefully I use English correctly. Disgustedly I watch others massacre it." Steven Brust

Help outlaw spam. For further information see <http://www.cauce.org/>

## Future Washington on Amazon

*Future Washington* editor Ernest Lilley notes that it briefly reached a rank of about 4700 on Amazon.com.

## Three Reviews by Lee Strong



[ Editor's note: Lee Strong has resigned from WSFA, and prefers that no WSFA member except Sam Lubell contact him for any reason. However, he has not rescinded his permission to print the material he had previously submitted to the *WSFA Journal*. Six unused Lee Strong submissions remain for the *WSFA Journal's* next editor.]

### Gettysburg: A Novel of the Civil War

By Newt Gingrich and William R. Forstchen

Albert S. Hanser, Contributing Editor

New York: St. Martin's Press/Thomas Dunne Books, 2003

Reviewed by Lee Strong

The Battle of Gettysburg, 1-3 July 1863, was the bloodiest battle fought in the Western Hemisphere and is often known as the "high water mark" of the Confederacy. As such, it is also the most often written about battle in history and alternate history. Here, a master politician and a master writer combine

forces to shed fresh light on this American epic.

As an amateur historian and student of the battle itself, I found this a powerful and deeply moving book, well researched and well written. Shortly before the battle begins, Robert E. Lee decides that he has to push his corps commanders hard to

secure a decisive victory over the battered but tenacious Federal Army of the Potomac. He does so, nearly winning the battle on the first day with a savage assault on Cemetery Ridge. When that fails, he first thinks to try a historical "right hook," punching into the weak defenses anchored on the Round Top hills. Instead, his "old warhorse," James Longstreet, persuades him to attempt an alternate long, deep flanking maneuver to capture a position on Pipe Creek at Union Mills, Maryland. This sets up two new and bloodier battles, one en route and one at Union Mills. Old friends clash and die in an fiery struggle to buy freedom for themselves and many, many others.

It's hard to say enough good things about this story. The authors have truly taken a new approach to an oft-told tale, but a well researched, historically realistic one. Lee's bold southern sweep is carefully justified by knowledgeable glances backward at his real successes. The writing is direct and deeply touching, vividly showing both the heights of human gallantry and the depths of human compassion. Others might not be as moved as I was -- two of the characters are relatives of mine -- but I think that every human can respond to this alternate epic of the days when our freedom was bought in blood.

I rate Gettysburg: A Novel of the Civil War as \*\*\*\* on the five star scale. -- LS

## Northwest Smith

Written by C.L. Moore

Ace Book Publication 1981

Reviewed by Lee Strong



"Here is the mystery and glory of the universe." "Here is a legend come to life." "Here is Northwest Smith."

Yeah!

Now this is the way to run a universe: lots of habitable planets inhabited by ancient races chock full of mysteries, treasures, beautiful women, and, of course, daring heroes!

The eponymous outlaw-explorer inhabits a space pulp system originally set down in the 1930s (before those pesky astronomers rewrote the universe). In a series of 10 short stories, he explores dusty Old Martian cities, gods-haunted asteroids, the seductive mazes of Venus and the Jovian moons, the dead mysteries of Luna, and stranger spaces beyond. Typically, Smith stumbles into the mystery and glory, not to mention the soul searing danger, of the universe while dodging the law. Which means that he has to depend on his trusty sidekick, Yarol the Venusian, his blazing raygun, and, more often, his animal instincts to survive, much less profit from his discoveries.

In "Shambleau," Smith rescues an exotic woman from a Martian mob only to discover the truth behind the legends of Medusa. On Venus, he meets an alien being whose "Black Thirst" feeds on beauty itself. "The Dust of the Gods" is good, solid weird tech exploration fiction in which Yarol and Smith hunt for a truly divine residue. And later Yarol arranges for Smith to destroy the entire planet of the "Lost Paradise."

Smith's universe is not without its faults: There's very little character development amidst the gee whiz, and many of the plot devices repeat from story to story (vampires, gods, exotic women). However, Ms. Moore ably sketches out the theme that the universe is fundamentally an interesting and beautiful place to live in, much less to explore. And that makes these



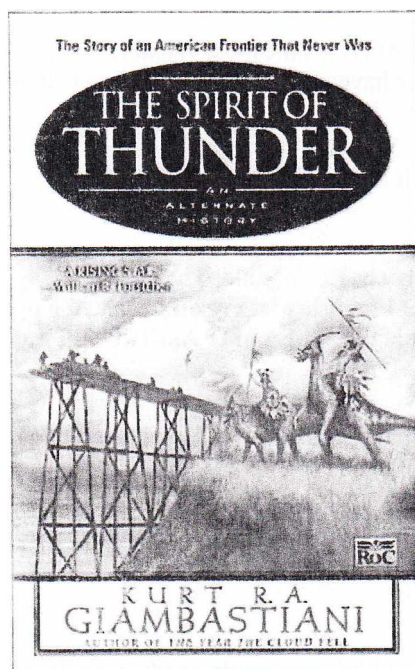
tales from distant days worth revisiting.

I rate *Northwest Smith* as \*\*\* on the five star scale. -- LS

## The Spirit of Thunder: An Alternate History

Written by Kurt R.A. Giambastiani

Reviewed by Lee Strong



I got this book free at the public library (TANSTAAFL) and it was worth every cent. Mr. Giambastiani appears to be a reasonably good author. The problem is that he cuts his heroes so many breaks that suspension of disbelief breaks down for anyone who knows the subject.

The author's "American Frontier That Never Was" is a very alternate universe in which Cheyenne Indians ride dinosaurs across Central Plains constricted by a major northward extension of the Gulf of Mexico. Mr. Giambastiani never explains either factor and they appear to be some of the multitude of breaks that he is handing his pets. The basic story is a reasonable tale of Indian resistance to "bluecoat" expansion told from the viewpoints of the Indians, US President George Custer, and pro-Indian turncoat George Custer, Jr. However, in telling his tale, Mr. Giambastiani has the Indians doing multiple impossible things like firing arrows thru the solid walls of Army forts and starting house fires in the rain. Other things like riding dinosaurs thru fortified military zones undetected and unscathed and transforming a light cavalry raiding force into a scientifically proficient army in ten months are technically possible but wildly implausible. If Mr. Giambastiani knew more about the historical Indian Wars, he would know that incidents similar to his actually happened, but with results opposite to his. After a few chapters, it becomes clear that the author is spinning politically correct fantasy, not telling a realistic story. Every Indian is noble, wonderful, brilliant and sweet smelling while every "bluecoat" is venal, political, stupid and stinking. People who romanticize

the Noble Native American will enjoy Mr. Giambastiani's elves versus orcs story. Those who actually know something about American Indian history and culture will not.

I rate *The Spirit of Thunder: An Alternate History* as \*\* on the five star scale, equivalent to a "D" in the high school A-F system, because good storytelling cannot overcome multiple intellectual dishonesties. -- LS

## RASFF Summary

The rec.arts.sf.fandom newsgroup continues to be dominated by political discussions, but there has also been a lengthy discussion about cons and about what it means to be a fan. And there's been a recent thread about Discon II, WSFA's most recent Worldcon, held in 1974. The thread was started by David Dyer-Bennet on October 26th. He wanted more information about the con, and help indentifying people in the photos of the con he has placed online at <http://www.ddb.net/ddb/SnapshotAlbum/data/1974/08300-Discon-II/>. I was pleased that one person, Bill Higgins, used some of the archival material I have placed online to answer some of David's questions. It's good to know that my work for WSFA wasn't a total waste of time.

## Goodbye

By Secretary/Editor/Webmaster Keith Lynch



It is autumn, a time of endings. It is also a quiet time for WSFA; our anthology is published, Capclave is over, we don't have a pending SMOFcon or World Fantasy Con, our next Capclave is nearly a year away, and our next Worldcon is over five years away. So this is a good time for me to say goodbye to WSFA.

That is not why I chose this time, however, as most of you know. The situation with one of the club officers and hostesses has become intolerable. Over the past month my sleep, work, and digestion have all suffered. When reading new novels by my favorite SF authors, I've found that I haven't remembered a thing I've read. Joy has gone out of my life.

"He who steals my purse steals trash. 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been enslaved to thousands. But, he who steals my good name takes something that enriches him not, and leaves me very poor, indeed."

The most valuable thing I own is a well-deserved reputation for total honesty and integrity. It's the most valuable thing anyone owns, whether they know it or not. Even the wealthiest billionaire could never have earned a nickel if people didn't trust him. I learned first-hand, 28 years ago, what it's like to be unjustly stripped of it.

WSFA has been an important part of my social life. I've been involved with WSFA, if only as a Disclave gofer, for well over half my life.

I have been put in a position of having to choose between these. I have made the only choice possible: The choice I should have made three and a half years ago, the last time this happened. At that time I foolishly let myself be talked into staying, and pretending that nothing was wrong. I haven't told any lies, but by remaining in WSFA after April 2002, I was living a lie.

This is my last *WSFA Journal*. If there is to be a December issue, someone else will have to produce it. Upon completion of this Journal, I resign as secretary, journal editor, webmaster, archivist, and point of contact.

When considering my successors for these tasks, please note that these jobs don't all have to be done by the same person.

I will:

- Attend no further WSFA meetings, take no further minutes, produce no further *WSFA Journals*, produce no further sign-in sheets, proofread no further anthologies or other WSFA or Capclave materials, provide no further publicity for Capclave or other WSFA events, sell no more copies of *Future Washington*, cease mirroring the WSFA.org website on KeithLynch.net, and place no more back issues of *The WSFA Journal* or other WSFA materials online.
- Not renew my WSFA membership when it expires at the end of the year.
- Make this *WSFA Journal* available for someone to pick up copies of, either at my home in Vienna or at my workplace downtown, a day or two before November's First Friday. Some October issues also remain. (Earlier back issues all went to good homes at Capclave.) At the same time, the tape recorder and blank tapes can be picked up, for use by the new secretary at First Friday and subsequent meetings. I have also produced a final sign-in sheet, which can also be picked up, or can be printed out from the Web.
- Continue to minimally maintain and to mirror the WSFA.org website until the club selects someone willing to take it over, or until the end of the year, whichever happens first.
- Continue to act as point of contact until the club selects someone willing to take over this task, or until the end of the year, whichever happens first. (Please be aware that whatever email address is placed on the WSFA.org website *will* be spammed.)
- Forward any email or postal mail intended for WSFA to the appropriate WSFA member.
- Continue to maintain this email list for past and present WSFA members indefinitely, as long as people keep using it, and as long as it doesn't become intolerably unpleasant for me. Archives will be on KeithLynch.net, where they've been mirrored all along. The address on KeithLynch.net will continue to work, as it has all along. Whether the address on WSFA.org continues to work will be entirely up to the new webmaster. The new webmaster is also welcome to mirror the archives from KeithLynch.net onto their present location on WSFA.org. If anyone prefers that the list be under WSFA control, they are welcome to clone it onto a platform of their choice; I will provide them with the list of subscribers. Subscribers can then "vote with their feet" as to which list to use. (If it's cloned onto a Yahoogroups list, please check with each subscriber first, since several of us refuse to have anything to do with Yahoo.)
- Work closely with the new secretary, journal editor, webmaster, archivist, and point of contact, for a few days or

weeks, either directly or through an intermediary, to ensure a seamless transition, unless they'd prefer otherwise.

- Arrange a time for the new archivist to pick up the archives from my apartment, some time in November or December, either directly or through an intermediary. If nobody acceptable to the club is willing to be archivist, I will hold onto the archives forever -- I will not discard anything, ever. They fill a bookcase. See the photo in the March issue (<http://www.wsfa.org/journal/j05/3/>). The bookcase itself is mine, not WSFA property, and will remain in my apartment.
- Retain my tapes of past meetings for two years, after which I will donate them to WSFA's archives, if WSFA wants them. Until then, I'm willing to play any of them for any interested WSFA member, either over the phone or at a mutually satisfactory time and place.
- Remain open to one-on-one discussions with WSFA members via email.
- Attend next year's Capclave.

Our bylaws say that the secretary can be any member other than the president, vice president, treasurer, or a trustee, and that the Journal editor must be appointed by the secretary. There are no other restrictions. Obviously the secretary should attend nearly all the meetings and should know the names of nearly everyone present, and the secretary, journal editor, webmaster, and point of contact should all have public email addresses, and should also be willing to make their street addresses or P.O. boxes public.

I suggest that all WSFA members pledge that they will not accuse anyone who takes any of these jobs of lying or otherwise acting in bad faith, unless there is overwhelming evidence, and unless the accuser first discusses this evidence privately with WSFA's president.

If people are not willing to make such a pledge, I wouldn't be surprised if nobody is willing to volunteer. These jobs are a lot of work to do right, and have few rewards other than the knowledge that they are being done right. If the jobs also come with a near-guarantee that the people doing them are going to be viciously attacked, then WSFA had better find a way to get by without these jobs being done.

I apologize for bugging out in the middle of my term, but at least it's not my first term. I think I've done more than my fair share of work for the club. Here's how I stack up in terms of numbers of issues of the *WSFA Journal* produced:

1 Dan Joy  
 1 Rosa Oliver  
 9 Somtow Sucharitkul  
 10 Ginny McNitt  
 10 Mary Morman  
 10 Marianne Patrino-Schaad  
 11 Rachel Russell  
 12 Erica Ginter  
 17 Keith Lynch  
 18 Beverly Brandt  
 22 Jane Wagner  
 55 Joe Mayhew  
 55 Lee Strong  
 84? Don Miller  
 92 Sam Lubell

Or by page count:

4 Dan Joy  
 4 Rosa Oliver  
 34 Ginny McNitt  
 39 Somtow Sucharitkul  
 40 Marianne Patrino-Schaad  
 46 Erica Ginter  
 52 Mary Morman  
 68 Rachel Russell  
 101 Jane Wagner  
 102 Beverly Brandt

369 Joe Mayhew  
370 Keith Lynch  
626 Lee Strong  
1153 Sam Lubell  
???? Don Miller

Of course this doesn't speak to quality, only quantity. But if you do prefer some previous editor's journal, they're all online (except for most of Don Miller's; his output was so prodigious that I have not been able to inventory all of it, much less read it or place it online).

Once again, I thank everyone who contributed to the current issue. The deadline for the December issue depends on *The WSFA Journal's* next editor. Please treat him or her gently. Thank you and good night.

