

**IFWA MEETING**  
**Thursday, March 3, 2016, 7:00 PM**  
**Sentry Box**  
**MINUTES**

**Information Items:**

**New Members:**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Person</b>
7:00 PM	<p><b><u>Crits for March</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crit 1: Christa – urban fantasy Crit by Richard C, Lesley W</li>   <li>• Crit 2: Keith H Crit by Daniel W, Kale</li> </ul>	<p>Shannon Richard / Lesley</p> <p>Daniel / Kale</p>
	<p><b><u>Crits for April, 2016</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crit 1: Lesley W (Juvenile Science Fantasy Crit by Shannon, Swati</li>   <li>• Crit 2: Kevin (Fantasy Ch 1) Crit by Ed, Richard C.</li> </ul>	<p>Shannon</p>
8:00 PM	<p><b><u>Skills Session</u></b></p> <p><b>The Literary Community</b>  (See Notes attached to these Minutes)  <b><i>Participation in Awards and Events in the writing community</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most people will never read most books. When you get your book out there, you are sharing that ocean with a lot of other fish. Who is going to read your book.</li> <li>• Discoverability is biggest problem. Even big publishers don't know how to get the word out.</li> <li>• Hard to get anyone to find your book.</li> <li>• To do that, you have to build a <u>fanbase</u>.</li> <li>• Fans are waiting for your book.</li> <li>• When you do get first book out, you have no fan base – need to find people to read them.</li> <li>• <b>Local people</b> – people you can talk with in person.</li> <li>• <b>Events</b> – writers community – as authors and aspiring authors, if we write second greatest story ever written – no one knows you, you don't have rep. Have to start somewhere – easiest place to start is people you meet.</li> <li>• Calgary has thriving literary community. Edmonton is jealous of us.</li> <li>• Ideally, you want to headline those events. You want people to find you and find out about you. You want to read from your novel.</li> <li>• That does not happen in a vacuum.</li> <li>• You want to speak on topics.</li> </ul>	<p>Randy McCharles</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You want to do signings. Encourage readers to read books.</li> <li>• <b>Event Organizer</b> – attend events and be recognized as part of the community</li> <li>• If organizers don't know who you are, they won't ask you to headline</li> <li>• Events where you can socialize are more profitable than events where you do not socialize.</li> <li>• Attending events – you can see headliners and see what they do</li> <li>• Tons to do in Calgary – too much, in fact.</li> <li>• <b>Conventions</b> – WWC</li> <li>• <b>Book Launches</b> in your genre – happen a lot in Calgary</li> <li>• Good thing about book launches – support author and they will support you.</li> <li>• Many of the most avid readers are writers.</li> <li>• Book stores have lots of events – Pandoras</li> <li>• <b>Signings</b> at book stores.</li> <li>• If you have something published, try and find event organizer for book store and let them know you have a published book.</li> <li>• <b>Writers Retreats</b> (Rocky Mountain Retreat) – meet other authors</li> <li>• Initial fan base will be authors.</li> <li>• <b>Swapping</b> books with other authors – build your fan base – more likely to read</li> <li>• <b>Robert J. Sawyer</b> – best example of author who has done all of this</li> <li>• <b>Challenge</b> people to attend some kind of event once a month. Don't see many IFWits at events.</li> <li>• <b>Aurora Awards</b> – once get on the eligibility list or ballot, get to know other authors. They are very important because huge brand recognition. Getting on that ballot is a coup – gets your name out there.</li> <li>• All awards are only as valid as those participating.</li> <li>• Last year, majority of ballot in Toronto and 60% of voting from Ontario</li> <li>• Often awards are popularity contests or it is political. The Canadian awards were not good last year (and US ones were horrid).</li> <li>• <b>Challenge</b> IFWits to get involved in Aurora awards</li> <li>• This year, Auroras are in Calgary – so more westerners will participate</li> <li>• But does not want to see regional representation – get good work and recognize good work</li> <li>• <b>Book Reviews</b> – if published author – they are the most important thing in your life – more reviews, then more trust in reviews and higher on Amazon algorithm – even bad review is better than no review.</li> <li>• Need a <b>BRAND</b> as well – if you are shameless and over the top, that is your brand. Decide what you</li> </ul>	

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	<p>want your brand to be. No matter what your brand is, don't say "buy my book." That annoys people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NEXT MONTH:</b> Craig DiLouie – Plot Structure</li> </ul>	
8:30 PM	<p><b><u>Call for Agenda Items</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	Michael
8:35 PM	<p><b><u>Brag</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lots of Enigma Front sales</li> <li>• Celeste Peters – “When the Suit No Longer Fits” – sold to antho with Margaret Atwood</li> <li>• Sandy Fitzpatrick – reading at Noir at the Bar</li> <li>• Catherine Sakalay-Stevens - Emergency Hashtag Property – getting to safe zones – got attention of people in Ottawa</li> <li>• Richard Pearman – survived 3 week trip in Europe</li> <li>• Randy McCharles – successfully uploaded second self-pub novel to Amazon (Day of the Demon) – dark space opera</li> <li>• Ron Friedman – got positive rejection from contest</li> <li>• - passed first round of Neo-Opis</li> <li>• - on Campbell Award – Hugo Awards</li> <li>• Brent – sold novel to Bundoran – Stars Like Cold Fire</li> <li>• Kevin fixed his Computer</li> <li>• Steve Swanson – finished first draft of novel</li> </ul>	Michael
8:40 PM	<p><b><u>Discuss / Decide</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Short Story Contest – Fundraising:</u></b> Avenues of raising funds will be presented.</li> <li>• Want direction from IFWA – Ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literary Pub Crawl – pub crawl to pubs with literary names – possible readings</li> <li>• Grants – few we may be eligible for some</li> <li>• Raffles – because we are non-profit – can run a raffle – just make application</li> <li>• 50/50 Draw (see raffles)</li> <li>• Crowd Sourcing</li> <li>• Outside Private Donations</li> <li>• Brag Jar – contributing to a brag jar as it goes around the table</li> <li>• Showcase Events – 1) is an artist's night – not paid, but love their art – 2) event day at Century Downs Racetrack – per person ticket – flat rate gate fee – charge a bit more and that is fundraising</li> <li>• Barbecue – but need venue for low overhead and amenities – somewhere like Boomtown Pub</li> <li>• Theme Party with 50/50 (or other social)</li> <li>• Will Crystalize this for April</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Short Story Contest –</li> <li>• Richard C. – will set up next time</li> <li>• Ron Friedman – Darlene Poier, of Pages of Stories (Publisher) wants to organize book fair – she may</li> </ul>	Michael Shannon

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	<p>be contacted at:            Phone: (403) 831-8264  <a href="mailto:info@pagesofstories.com">info@pagesofstories.com</a>  <a href="http://www.pagesofstories.com">www.pagesofstories.com</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renee – Poor Man’s Workshop – 10-12 people crit each other’s work – with 2 people at table – get 24 crits a year – not paying much - \$10 or donate to Short Story Contest – interest – use Co-op Community Centres – have 1-2 months</li> <li>• Les – swap books and do more book reviews on Amazon – proposal – reviewing published books – view exchange?</li> </ul>	
8:55 PM	<p><b><u>Announcements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hugo Awards</b> - Robert J. Sawyer said: Hugo nominating has now opened, and that means nominating for the <b>John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer</b> is open, too! Check out these awesome new talents, including (in their first year of eligibility) my writing student <b>Ron Friedman</b> and my friend Kelly Robson.</li> </ul> <p>Here is the complete list of who is eligible:  <a href="http://www.writertopia.com/awards/campbell">http://www.writertopia.com/awards/campbell</a></p> <p>The Campbell Anthology can be found here:  <a href="http://www.badmenagerie.com/up-and-coming-stories-from-the-2016-campbell-eligible-writers/">http://www.badmenagerie.com/up-and-coming-stories-from-the-2016-campbell-eligible-writers/</a></p> <p>Anyone who is/was a member in 2015/2016 Worldcon, can nominate. Deadline - March 31, 2016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Aurora Awards:</b> 2016 Nominations began on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and will continue until March 19, 2016. This year, IFWA participation is important because the award ceremony will be held at WWC. Aurora Eligibility List:  <a href="http://www.prixaurorawards.ca/aurora-awards/eligibility-lists/">http://www.prixaurorawards.ca/aurora-awards/eligibility-lists/</a></li> <li>• <b>More Robert J. Sawyer News:</b> On Friday, March 10, Robert J. Sawyer will be reading from and talking about his 23rd novel <b>QUANTUM NIGHT</b> at 7:00 p.m., at <b>Pages</b> on Kensington, 1135 Kensington Rd NW, Calgary. Show your support and be there.</li> <li>• <b>A Taste of Local Authors</b> - Thursday March 10, 2016 at Owl’s Nest Books. IFWits such as Randy McCharles and Robert J. Sawyer will be there.</li> </ul>	Michael

### **1. Show of hands:**

- Who here is or would like to be published?
- Would you like someone to read your published work?

### **2 Questions:**

- How many English language novels are published each year?
  - a lot
- How many novels do you read in a year?
  - more than 5, 10, ...

### **Conclusion: Most people will never read most books.**

- Given the wide selection of books available, who is going to read your book?
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### **3. To gain readers, published authors need to develop a fan base.**

- When you publish a book, you need to have an audience waiting for it.
- As a new author, that audience will be small and you need to grow it over time.
- The easiest audience to build is among people you come in contact with directly. This means putting yourself out there.

### **4. Be an active part of the literary community.**

Calgary has a thriving literary community. Edmonton is envious.

- When Words Collide
- Calgary Public Library events
- Book Store events
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Ideally you want to headline literary events.

- Reading from your book.
- Speak on a topic so that potential readers get to know you.

The Literary Community 2

- Do signings.

To headline, you need to come to the attention of the event organizer.

- Get your name and face known by attending events and being recognized as part of the community.
- socialize with the community; talk to authors and readers.
- Observe how headliners do it so that you have some knowledge when it's your turn.

There is too much going on to do all of it, so be selective.

- Conventions. eg. When Words Collide.
- Book launches in your genre that include social time.
- Literary open houses.
- Book store signings (speak with the store events person if you can.)
- Writers Retreats.

Participate in at least 1 literary event a month.

## **5. Writers are readers too**

- Your initial core fan base will like consist of local writers you know.
- Attending another writer's event is the best way to get them to consider trying your book.
- Swap books with other authors & commit to writing a review.

## **6. Robert J. Sawyer**

Rob is the best example I know of an author building a fanbase by participating in the community.

- He launched his career by speaking with community members wherever and whenever he could and has hardly slowed down.
- Because most of his travels are in Canada, his Canadian fanbase is disproportionately large compare to the US.
- He had to leave Tor for Penguin Canada because Tor discounts Canadian royalties.

**Upcoming events:**

Saturday March 5th: 11 am - 4 pm Beware the Ides of March Mystery Celebration

Westhills Indigo [www.facebook.com/events/976079589096331/](http://www.facebook.com/events/976079589096331/)

Thursday March 10th: 7 - 9 pm A Taste of Local Authors

Owls' Nest Books [www.facebook.com/events/174970592858119/](http://www.facebook.com/events/174970592858119/)

Friday March 11th: 7 - 8:30 pm Quantum Night - Robert J. Sawyer

Pages on Kensington [www.facebook.com/events/589009534588659/](http://www.facebook.com/events/589009534588659/)

Wednesday March 23rd: 7 - 9 pm The Courier - Gerald Brandt

Owls' Nest Books [www.facebook.com/events/1771785433049602/](http://www.facebook.com/events/1771785433049602/)

Wednesday March 30th: 7 - 9 pm Noir at the Bar

Buffalo Bobs [www.facebook.com/events/1121653097854270/](http://www.facebook.com/events/1121653097854270/)

Sat/Sun April 16/17 11 am - 11 pm Writers in the House

Delta Calgary South [www.facebook.com/events/870105463109487/](http://www.facebook.com/events/870105463109487/)

May 6-8 Creative Ink Literary Festival

Burnaby, B.C. [www.facebook.com/events/1563386743904242/](http://www.facebook.com/events/1563386743904242/)

June 1-5 Rocky Mountain Writer Retreat

Baker Creek, AB [www.facebook.com/events/477306809124367/](http://www.facebook.com/events/477306809124367/)

August 12-14 When Words Collide

Delta Calgary South [www.facebook.com/events/762769987160930/](http://www.facebook.com/events/762769987160930/)

## Aurora Awards

As writers of speculative fiction, it is important that we participate in defining and celebrating our community. Canada is fortunate to have the Aurora Awards, not only as a means to recognize contributors to the field, but as a means of promoting quality work.

Unfortunately, all awards be they juried or public, are only as valid as the decisions of those participating. Public awards especially may be skewed as popularity contests or even political statements. Last year, for instance, the majority of winners and finalists were from the Toronto area. While it is possible that Toronto outshone the rest of Canada in 2014, the result is more likely due to the fact that 60% of the votes came from Ontario.

Ontario	60 %
Alberta	19 %
British Columbia	7 %
Manitoba	7 %
Saskatchewan	2 %
Quebec	2 %
Other	3 %

Having read the voters package last year, I was disappointed to see some excellent novels and short stories that I had read from outside Ontario not on the ballot.

I wish to challenge members of IFWA to improve the quality of the awards by reading speculative fiction by Canadian authors and voting for what you feel has been the best contribution. Perhaps one year that will be a novel from Toronto, but perhaps another year that will be a novel or short story from right here in IFWA. Your vote should reflect your honest opinion of Canada's best.

This year's nomination deadline is March 19<sup>th</sup>. That isn't much time, but you can use the eligibility list to help you:

<http://www.prixaurorawards.ca/aurora-awards/eligibility-lists/>

It is important that this year's ballot contain quality works. You can help make that happen while at the same time including your opinion in the outcome.