

Bouchercon Standing Committee

Baltimore, Maryland, USA

Friday, October 10, 2008

1. Welcome by the Chair

Meeting called to order by Chair Sally Fellows, who then welcomed all attendees.

2. Introduction of the Standing Committee

Al Abramson, Chair Past Bouchercon 2006, Madison, Wisconsin

Dee Ford, Co-Chair Past Bouchercon 2007, Anchorage, Alaska

Ruth Jordan, Co-Chair Current 2008 Bouchercon, Baltimore, Maryland

Jim Huang, Co-Chair Future Bouchercon 2009, Indianapolis, Indiana

Members-at-large: Sally Fellows

Sarah Weinman

Jodi Dabson Bollendorf

3.A. Report of Past Bouchercon Co-Chair

Dee Ford stated there were approximately 600 attendees at Bouchercon 2007 in Anchorage and that their committee forwarded \$5000 to Baltimore within two weeks of the end of their Bouchercon.

3.B. Report of Current Bouchercon Co-Chair

Ruth Jordan gave the report on behalf of Bouchercon 2008. She stated they took in approximately the following amounts:

\$200,000 registrations

\$ 35,000 from Bouchercon 2006 in Madison

\$ 5,000 from Bouchercon 2007 in Anchorage

\$ 8,500 from sponsors

In addition, she expected approximately \$220,000 in expenditures.

3.C. Report of Future Bouchercon Co-Chair

Jim Huang spoke on behalf of Bouchercon 2009 to be held in Indianapolis, IN. Huang asked that the attendees recognize all of the Indianapolis volunteers present at the business meeting. He provided a handout to the attendees and addressed their anticipated budget and progress thus far. A copy of the budget is provided at the end of the minutes. Indy has 90 rooms booked at the Hyatt and 250

registrants to date. Their Guest of Honor will be Michael Connelly, Toastmistress S.J. Rozan, Fan Guest of Honor Kathryn Kennison and Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient Allen J. Hubin.

4. Bouchercon 2011 Bid and Presentation

Jon Jordan and McKenna Jordan presented a bid to host Bouchercon in 2011 in St. Louis, along with David Thompson in absentia. They propose to hold Bouchercon September 15 – 18, 2011, at the Renaissance Grand Hotel. The hotel offers excellent convention space, restaurant, 3 times the dealer space of Baltimore, is a smoke-free hotel, has an underground tunnel to additional convention space, and is within walking distance of downtown St. Louis. The hotel has offered a convention room rate of \$161 including four days before and after the convention. They avoided all holidays in choosing the dates. They anticipate a registration rate of \$125 through 2008, \$150 from January 1, 2009 until 12 months from the convention, then \$175. They plan to offer a daily registration rate as well. They are working closely with the tourist bureau and have a library liaison. Their confirmed Honorees will be: Robert Crais and Charlaine Harris as U.S. Guests of Honor, Val McDermid and Colin Cotterill as International Guests of Honor, Sara Paretsky as the Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient, Kate Stine and Brian Skupin of Mystery Scene magazine as Fan Guests of Honor, and Ridley Pearson will be the Toastmaster.

The floor was opened to questions by attendees. Al Abramson moved approval of St. Louis bid as the host for Bouchercon 2011. The motion was seconded. By acclaim the bid for St. Louis for Bouchercon 2011 was accepted.

5. Bouchercon 2010 Bids and Presentations

A. Presentation from Rae Helmsworth, representing the San Francisco bid.

Rae Helmsworth indicated that Jon and Ruth Jordan and Judy Bobalik encouraged her to make a bid to host Bouchercon in San Francisco in 2011. She indicated she had many people wanting to help, including Mark Allen Miller, Eddie Muller and Louise Ure. The conference would be held October 14 - 17, 2010 at the Hyatt Regency, which avoids holidays. The Hyatt Regency convention room rate will be \$249/night, and the hotel is located on the Embarcadero. The second hotel is the Grand Hyatt, which is located on Union Square within walking distance, about 10 blocks from the Regency, and the room rate there will be \$240/night. The Regency has 650 rooms and the Grand 250 rooms. Bouchercon will have the entire Hyatt Regency hotel for the convention with plenty of meeting space. The layout will allow for the book room to be amid the panel rooms. The registration will be \$175 before December 31, 2009 and \$195 after. Eddie Muller is confirmed as the Toastmaster.

B. Presentation from Mike Willmoth, representing the Tempe bid.

Mike Willmoth distributed a bid packet to the membership. The proposed dates for the conference in Tempe, AZ are the same as for San Francisco—the week of Columbus Day, October 14 - 17, 2010. Leprecon Inc., an Arizona volunteer non-profit corporation is sponsoring the bid. The primary location for the conference would be the Tempe Mission Palms Hotel, which has 300 rooms available at the convention rate of \$196/night. Official overflow hotels would be the Scottsdale Resort and Conference Center which has 326 rooms and a rate of \$169/night single and is about 10 miles north of the Tempe Mission Palms and the Phoenix Marriott which is offering a rate of \$119/night. Shuttles would be provided between the conference and the overflow hotels. He indicated there are also overflow sites at the Courtyard by Marriott .2

miles away and the Best Western Tempe 1 mile away. They would offer a conference rate starting at \$120 until the end of the year, then increasing quarterly by \$10, topping out at \$190. The Tempe Mission Palms offers 24,000 square feet of convention space and a 9,400 square foot ballroom.

C. The floor was then opened to the membership for any questions from both bids. Questions were asked about parking, overflow distance and transportation. Barbara Peters spoke regarding the Tempe bid and the appeal of the area and Arizona in general.

D. A vote was then taken of the general membership by a show of hands. San Francisco was the winning bid for 2010.

6. Amendment to Standing Rules

Jim Huang spoke to the proposed amendment by the Indianapolis committee for an immediate expansion of the at-large membership of the standing committee, from three members to six. The new positions will follow the model of existing positions – limited to two terms of three years each. The initial holders of these new positions will be elected immediately during this business meeting and be staggered, so that the initial term for one position is one year, the initial term for position #2 is two years and the initial term for position #3 is three years. As a result, two at-large positions will come vacant each year.

Jim Huang moved approval of the amendment to expand the at-large membership of the standing committee. The motion was seconded. A question was asked if this was within the by-laws to do. Jim Huang indicated it was. A vote was taken of the membership and the amendment passed unanimously.

7. Election of New Members At-Large

A. Three Year Members

Three people were nominated for the new three-year member as well as to replace Sally Fellows, whose term ends at this Bouchercon:

B.G. Ritts (37)

Steele Curry (50)

Charles Burton (41)

Each nominee spoke briefly as to why s/he would like to be on the standing committee.

A vote was taken of the general membership and counted by Al Abramson (number of votes received by each nominee is indicated in parentheses after their name above). The two people with the highest number of votes were Steele Curry and Charles Burton who are then each named to three-year terms on the standing committee.

B. Two Year Member

Two people were nominated for the new two-year member position:

B.G. Ritts (33)

Mary Jane Sheffet (24)

Mary Jane Sheffet spoke briefly as to why she would like to be on the standing committee.

A vote was taken of the general membership and counted by Al Abramson (number of votes received by each nominee is indicated in parentheses after their name above). B.G. Ritts was named the new two-year member of the standing committee.

B. One Year Member

Two people were nominated for the new one-year membership position:

Kate Stine (42)

Judith Cross (17)

Each nominee spoke briefly as to why she would like to be on the standing committee.

A vote was taken of the general membership and counted by Al Abramson (number of votes received by each nominee is indicated in parentheses after their name above). Kate Stine was named as the new one-year member of the standing committee.

At this time the meeting was adjourned to move to the Hospitality Room across the hall, as the room was needed for a previously scheduled panel. Chair Sally Fellows reconvened the meeting in the Hospitality Room.

8. Committee To Explore Reorganization

Mike Bursaw, co-chair of Indianapolis, spoke to the proposal of Madison and Indianapolis together for the formation of a committee charged with an overall restructuring of Bouchercon governance. Please see a separate statement from Mike Bursaw detailing the rationale for this committee and its scope to be found at the end of these minutes. They proposed that the committee consist of three at-large members of the current standing committee, Al Abramson (parliamentarian and chair of past Bouchercon 2006 Madison) and Mike Bursaw (to represent future Bouchercons). This committee would consult with all stakeholders in the coming year, and prepare recommendations to be voted on during the business meeting at Bouchercon 2009.

Attending members moved acceptance of the proposal, which is seconded. The floor was opened to comments. Sarah Weinman agreed as acting chair-elect to appoint members to the committee. A vote was taken of the membership and the proposal passed unanimously.

9. Creation of a Bouchercon Archive

Al Abramson, chair of Bouchercon 2006 Madison, spoke to the proposal of Madison and Indianapolis together for the formation of a committee that will work to establish a permanent Bouchercon archive that will document the history of Bouchercon. Once the committee is able to determine the nature of and what materials are available, the Indianapolis Bouchercon committee will approach the Lilly Library in Bloomington, Indiana, to ascertain whether the Lilly would be a good home for this collection.

Attending members moved acceptance of the proposal, which is seconded. The floor was opened to comments. Al Abramson offered to temporarily store all items until the archive is established. The options of a digital and/or physical library were discussed, with the hope that both could be achieved to some degree, particularly with regard to future programs being available both digitally and physically. There was discussion of the Lilly Library and its appropriateness as the host of the Bouchercon Archive. A vote was taken of the membership and the proposal passed unanimously.

10. Amendment to Standing Rules

Jim Huang spoke to the proposed amendment to the standing rules to insert new: "IV.B.3 If no bid has been approved under IV.B.2 for a Bouchercon to take place in either of the following two years, or if an awarded bid is withdrawn for an event during that same period, the Standing Committee may, by a two-thirds majority of committee members voting, award a Bouchercon bid without a vote of the membership. The award shall be announced at the next Bouchercon business meeting."

Attending members moved acceptance of the proposal, which is seconded. The floor was opened to comments. Rick Kovalcik addressed the membership indicating he felt the committee was rushing it and their power to name a bid, feeling the standing committee was railroading this through. More comment was taken. Jim Huang proposed amending the above amendment to read: "IV.B.3 If no bid has been approved under IV.B.2 during a two year period or if an awarded bid is withdrawn for an event during that same period, the Standing Committee may, by a two-thirds majority of committee members voting, award a Bouchercon bid without a vote of the membership. The award shall be announced at the next Bouchercon business meeting." A vote was taken of the membership and the proposal as amended passed unanimously.

11. Appointment of a Treasurer

Jim Huang presented a proposal by the Indianapolis committee that the standing committee immediately appoint an interim treasurer (who may or may not be a member of the committee). The interim treasurer will be charged with investigating and opening a bank account for the standing committee as soon as is feasible. They further proposed that the treasurer work with the restructuring committee to formulate a plan to levy a small fee on each annual Bouchercon committee based on number of registrations.

Attending members moved acceptance of the proposal, which is seconded. The floor was opened to comments. Dee Ford stated she has a \$50 check from when Bouchercon was incorporated in Alaska as a non-profit organization and has nowhere to deposit the check. Moni Draper stated she is a lawyer and works with non-profit organizations and volunteers to help anyone appointed as treasurer. A vote was taken of the membership and the proposal passed unanimously.

12. Motion on Author Eligibility for Bouchercon Panels

The motion was presented by Sally Fellows who was part of a committee appointed by then chair Dina Willner in Anchorage, AK to explore and draft a proposed rule to define criteria which must be met before an author is eligible to be on a panel at Bouchercon. The proposed rule was: ""We will offer author assignments only to traditionally published authors of crime fiction or those who have been nominated for established mystery awards. We define traditionally published authors as those who:

a) Did not pay any of the costs associated with the publication of their books.

b) Are published by a company that :

1) publishes at least three authors other than the publisher, members of the publisher's family, or staff of the publishing company.

2) does not guarantee publication of all submissions.

3) provides editorial support to its authors.

Established mystery awards include the Edgar, Anthony, Agatha, Macavity, Shamus, Lefty, Hammet, Arthur Ellis, Barry, Dilys and the Dagger Awards presented by the British Crime Writers' Association."

Sally Fellows moved for approval of the criteria, which was seconded by Doris Norris. The floor was opened to comments. Sarah Weinman commented that we don't know what the publishing industry may be like in the near future or what will be the nature of "traditionally published authors." Doris Norris spoke in favor of the rule. Jon Jordan and others were opposed. Rick Kovalcik stated the rule doesn't cover short story writers. Ruth Jordan and Ayo Onatade both stated we should trust the judgment of the individual programmers. They stated that if we are going to trust them to host a Bouchercon, we should trust their judgment in programming. Jim Huang expressed concern that he is a self-published author and by definition could be excluded from being on a panel. Kate Buker stated what she wants is good panel which means good conversation and has little to do with whether a person is an author or in what manner they are published. Another member indicated we shouldn't be using the word "ban" when we are talking about anything related to books. Jim Huang moved to kill the motion to set such criteria which was seconded. The motion to kill the rule setting the above criteria for author eligibility for being on a Bouchercon panel overwhelmingly passed.

Ruth Jordan thanked Sally Fellows for her service as member of the standing committee and chair this year.

Meeting Adjourned.

Bouchercon 2009 Inc. Profit & Loss Budget Performance - through 8/2008

	<u>Jan '07 - Aug 08</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>%</u>
Income			
AUCTION PROCEEDS	0.00	7,000.00	0%
BOUCHERCON 2006 DISBURSEMENT	35,000.00	35,000.00	100%
DEALERS ROOM TABLES BADGES	0.00	5,000.00	0%
MEMBERSHIPS	27,600.00	220,000.00	13%
PROGRAM ADVERTISING	0.00	12,000.00	0%
SAVINGS INTEREST INCOME	368.56	1,000.00	37%
SPECIAL EVENTS	1,800.00	6,000.00	30%
SPONSORSHIPS	0.00	25,000.00	0%
Total Income	64,768.56	311,000.00	21%
Expense			
ADMIN/SUPPLIES/PHONE ETC	503.53	5,000.00	10%
ANTHONY AWARDS SCULPTURES	0.00	3,000.00	0%
BANK CHARGES	1,128.76	10,000.00	11%
BUS TRIP SHUTTLES EXPENSE	0.00	20,000.00	0%
CHARITABLE DONATIONS	0.00	10,000.00	0%
COMMITTEE HOTEL EXPENSES	0.00	10,000.00	0%
COMMITTEE POST CON DINNER	0.00	3,000.00	0%
EQUIPMENT/AUDIO VISUAL	749.55	25,000.00	3%
FACILITIES	0.00	13,000.00	0%
FOOD/BEVERAGE	0.00	50,000.00	0%
GUEST OF HONOR COSTS	0.00	10,000.00	0%
INSURANCE	0.00	3,000.00	0%
IRS/TAXES	757.14	1,000.00	76%
MARKETING	1,711.15	40,000.00	4%
OPENING RECEPTION	0.00	18,000.00	0%
POSTAGE	84.14	15,000.00	1%
PROGRAM BOOK/BOOKLETS	0.00	15,000.00	0%
REGISTRATION SERVICES	1,360.00	7,000.00	19%
RESERVE APPROX 10%	0.00	30,000.00	0%
SIGNAGE	0.00	3,000.00	0%
TOTE BAGS, PINS, GIVEAWAYS	0.00	8,000.00	0%
TRAINING	2,450.52	10,000.00	25%
WEBSITE DESIGN AND OPERATIONS	144.50	2,000.00	7%
Total Expense	8,889.29	311,000.00	3%

Net Income

55,879.27	0.00
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What might Bouchercon look like in ten years without necessary changes and restructuring

We might have to miss having a convention if no one wants to step up and pull a team together because they lack local people and resources, or understand how to negotiate a contract with a hotel and/or convention center to meet the needs of the fans in terms of affordable costs and adequate space.

We might find no convention chair to personally sign for the hotel's guaranteed rooms because they lack the knowledge to set up a not-for-profit entity and/or the funds to cover any shortfalls without the not-for-profit entity.

We might have no start-up/pass-on funding because the standing committee has no power to make previous convention chairs give a full accounting of how the registration, auction or advertising funds were spent. Currently your registration money does not go through the standing committee because they have no bank account or checkbook. The standing committee does not always even receive a profit/loss report.

We may have a much smaller convention because there is no marketing plan to advertise our convention, to reach out to people who are not aware of it and might love to come. Our membership is growing older and there is no plan in place to pursue or grow our membership.

We need to appoint a committee to review the bylaws and rules, and restructure the standing committee to give them the authority to safeguard our future.

We need to centralize administrative functions and use the same administrative tools and guidelines for each of our conventions, including registration services, mailing list management, maintenance of a not-for-profit designation, communication to all stakeholders, advertising and marketing , financial management (including bank accounts), negotiation of convention costs with hotels and convention centers, etc.

All of these are currently done differently by each convention with little or no pass along of timely information or reports on successes or failures.

I have been a fan for over 20 years who does not want to see this convention fade away.

I urge you to agree to a resolution giving the standing committee the authority to appoint a group to review and make recommendations to institute changes that will insure our future and protect our funding.

Mike Bursaw

Bouchercon 2009 co-chair