

## **REPORT OF MARK PROTECTION COMMITTEE** **August 2022 – October 2023**

### **Membership and Structure**

Members of the Mark Protection Committee (“MPC”) from August 2020 through October 2023 were as follows, with the expiration of membership listed in parentheses after their name: Judy Bemis (elected until 2023), Joni Dashoff (elected until 2023), Linda Deneroff (Secretary, elected until 2024), Cliff Dunn (appointed by DisCon III until 2023), Donald E. Eastlake III (Vice Chair, elected until 2024), David Ennis (appointed by NASFiC 2024 until 2026), Dave McCarty (elected until 2024), Chris Rose (appointed by Chicon 8 until 2024), Linda Ross-Mansfield (appointed by Pemmi-Con until 2025), Chen Shi (appointed by Chengdu 2023 until 2025), Kevin Standlee (Chair, elected until 2025), Alissa Wales (appointed by Glasgow until 2026), Nicholas Whyte (elected until 2025), Mike Willmoth (elected until 2023), and Ben Yalow (elected until 2025). Bruce Farr is a non-voting member appointed to the board of Worldcon Intellectual Property (“WIP”) since WIP requires at least one California resident as a director, and he is also Treasurer. At Pemmi-Con, David Ennis was appointed by the Buffalo NASFiC until 2026.

Unless re-elected or appointed the terms of Judy Bemis, Joni Dashoff, Cliff Dunn, and Mike Willmoth will conclude at the end of the Business Meeting at Chengdu.

Worldcon Intellectual Property (“WIP”) is a California public benefit/non-profit corporation (also recognized as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charity by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service) controlled by the MPC that holds the MPC’s bank account and WSFS’s service marks in the EU. The WIP Financial Report is appended at the end of this document. A report from the Hugo Awards Marketing Committee (“HAMC”) is included as an appendix to this report. The HAMC is a subcommittee of the MPC and is responsible for managing the TheHugoAwards.org, Worldcon.org, NASFiC.org, and WSFS.org websites and social media accounts on Twitter and Facebook.

### **REPORT**

This was another quiet, but busy and productive year. At our first meeting on the Sunday of Chicon 8, we granted Yasser Bahjatt of Yatakhayaloon Co. Ltd. a non-exclusive license to use the Hugo Award logo in conjunction with a series of Arabic translations of works by Hugo Award finalists. Yatakhayaloon Co. Ltd. will pay us \$10/year for a ten-year license to publish such works, and Yassar gave the MPC \$100 at the time the contract was signed.

One piece of housekeeping we did was to split off the MPC Resolutions/Policies from the WSFS Rules of Continuing Effect. Kevin created a separate [MPC Resolutions Page](#). However, of the four resolutions passed in 2011 (and the only ones recorded in the WSFS Resolutions document), only one has any remaining effect. One was explicitly repealed the following year, and two were rendered moot by the creation of WIP. In addition, one of the latter two referred to an organization that no longer exists. Linda provided Kevin with sets of minutes from 2004 to present.

In October we started the process of registering LODESTAR AWARD with the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office (“USPTO”). We were quoted a delay of 8 or 9 months before anything

happens. As of this writing, “Lodestar Award” had been assigned an examiner and the review completed. It will be published on October 3, 2023, a year after registering the mark!

In November, the domain ownership changes for wsfs.org, worldcon.org, and the other domains registered through gandi.net went through, and they now all show as being owned by WIP (instead of Mike Scott).

In addition, we had the opportunity to register worldcon.fr for trademark protection in France. Since their Worldcon bid became defunct, the owner of the trademark was willing to transfer it to us. The transfer went through in December 2022.

Also in November, it was reported to us that the October 2022 issue of Locus (on page 7) reported “the 2022 Seiun Awards (the Japanese equivalent of the Hugo Awards”. We thought we had quashed that usage a decade ago and were surprised that Locus had used that verbiage. The Seiun should be considered the equivalent of the Ditmar (Australia), Sir Julius Vogel (NZ), Aurora (Canada), BSFA (UK), ESFA (Eurocon), and other national/regional awards. The Hugo Awards should be considered to be in a class by themselves. Technically, saying "X is the equivalent of Y" does not infringe on Y as a mark, but we sent a reminder to Locus.

In December Ron Oakes officially notified the WIP directors that he had assigned the rights to the software package he originally wrote for handling the Hugo Award nominations and voting at Chicon 7 (and subsequently used and modified for Loncon 3, Sasquan, MidAmeriCon II, and Worldcon 76) to Worldcon Intellectual Property.

“Rights assigned to Worldcon Intellectual Property, a California Nonprofit Corporation for the exclusive of the World Science Fiction convention for purposes of administering the Hugo Awards All other uses are forbidden without explicit permission from the author and Worldcon Intellection Property.”

He believed Chengdu Worldcon was going to be using this software and placed the most recent version in a repository at GitHub, with the URL <https://github.com/RonBOakes/wsfs-hugo>. He has updated the program with improved comments and other documentation.

On several occasions we were asked by Chengdu about WSFS’s legal identity. We responded that “WSFS is an unincorporated tax-exempt organization and does not file any paperwork with the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") because our income is under \$5,000. That income is held by the Mark Protection Committee/Worldcon Intellectual Property, which is a 501(c)(3) organization registered with the IRS and a Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation registered in the state of California, USA. Our California corporation number is 3272229. We sent them copies of our IRS Tax Exempt Determination Letter, and WIP's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. We stressed repeatedly that WSFS and MPC/WIP do not run any meetings, and that WIP holds the intellectual property that it licenses to bids that become Worldcons. This led to a discussion regarding the scope of a Worldcon license.

This led us to make the following motion:

## Short Title: Marks Authorization

Moved, to [add](#) and ~~delete~~ material in Article II of the WSFS Constitution as follows:

### Article 2 – Powers and Duties of ~~Worldcon~~ [Convention](#) Committees

#### Section 2.2: Marks.

**2.2.1:** [Selected Convention Committees are authorized to use the WSFS Marks to the extent necessary and customary to run their Convention. The Mark Protection Committee may provide more detailed guidance.](#)

**2.2.2:** Every ~~Worldcon and NASFiC~~ [selected Convention](#) Committee shall include a notice in each of its publications that clearly acknowledges the service marks of the Society. The Mark Protection Committee shall supply each ~~Worldcon~~ [selected Convention](#) committee with the correct form of such notice.

**Commentary:** This amendment to the WSFS Constitution strengthens and clarifies the traditional and essential but limited ability of Worldcons and NASFiCs to use the WSFS marks by documenting it in the Constitution. It also provides an editorial wording and consistency update.

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In January, we were reminded that there is an @Worldcon Twitter account that we do not manage. It wasn't doing much and it may now be moot, but at that time Kevin registered @Worldcon10 as a stop-gap. Earlier, he had submitted an "impersonation" complaint to Twitter. They finally got back and said that it should be a "trademark" case, so Kevin tried to submit one. They rejected his first attempt because he wasn't filing from the owner's email domain. Kevin then created the account "kevin.standlee@wsfs.org" and tried once more. Since USPTO mark registration 1283680 not only is listed as being owned by the World Science Fiction Society, but also that the contact shown in the address was Kevin Standlee, we hoped this was sufficient. Twitter subsequently suspended the @worldcon account for impersonation, but refused to transfer ownership of the account to WSFS. Due to changes at Twitter/X, we do not expect to take any further action on this matter.

In March, the law firm that had been managing our UK intellectual property planned to transfer our IP portfolio to another law firm unless we wanted it moved elsewhere. We saw no reason not to approve the transfer.

Also in March, Linda reported that NPR had mentioned "the Lodestar Foundation". As long as they don't give out literary awards, there shouldn't any problem.

In April, we had an opportunity to register [hugoaward.org](#) at [gandi.net](#) for ten years for \$172. But between the time Kevin put [hugoaward.com](#) into the [gandi.net](#) shopping cart and the time he pressed "purchase," someone else scooped up that domain for one year. If the squatter lets it go in 2024, maybe we'll be able to grab it.

In June our attorney informed us that our marks for WORLDCON and WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION must be renewed within the year and asked us if we wanted to renew them. We said yes and asked her to file the paperwork.

In July, we welcomed David Ennis as our latest member. He is the representative from the Buffalo in 2024 NASFiC and is appointed until 2026.

Later that month our attorney informed us that while reviewing our THE HUGO AWARD mark, she found a mark similar in name (called the VICTOR J. HUGO JR. AWARD), but the award is for a different purpose, and she didn't believe we would be successful if we challenged it. (The new mark was registered on July 25.)

Kevin reported in August that in reviewing our marks our attorney concerned that since some of our marks are in the name of WIP in the EU/UK, our ability to renew them in the U.S. might be in jeopardy. She recommended we get everything under a single legal entity. The MPC reaffirmed in a letter to WIP that:

for \$1.00 and other valuable consideration, the World Science Fiction Society (WSFS) has transferred its ownership of and the rights to any and all federal and international trademark registrations of the service marks "World Science Fiction Society", "WSFS", "World Science Fiction Convention", "Worldcon", "NASFiC", "Lodestar Award", "The Hugo Award", the Hugo Award Logo (two dimensional rocket design), and the distinctive design of the Hugo Award Rocket to Worldcon Intellectual Property (WIP), a California non-profit profit corporation recognized as a tax-exempt, charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) by the US Internal Revenue Service. This further acknowledges that Worldcon Intellectual Property's primary responsibility and purpose is to manage the service marks and other intellectual property on behalf of the World Science Fiction Society.

## Domain Names

Domain	Domain Agent	Handle to Renew	Renewal Date
Worldcon.org	World Science Fiction Society	KS2182-GANDI	2028-08-02
Worldcon.co.uk Worldcon.org.uk Worldcon.com Worldcon.uk	Mike Scott, Kevin Standlee, Bruce Farr on behalf of the World Science Fiction Society	KS2182 – Gandi.net Gandi.net	2028-10-17 2028-10-17 2028-10-09 2031-06-17
Nasfic.org wsfs.org hugo.org	Mike Scott, Kevin Standlee, Bruce Farr on behalf of the World Science Fiction Society	Gandi.net	2029-05-09 2028-06-14 2028-08-31
Worldcon78.org Worldcon2020.org	Andrew Adams purchased both on behalf of NZ in 2020	<b>LAPSED</b>	
Worldcon.ie	Dublin in 2019		
wsfs.us	Donald Eastlake	godaddy.com	2025-06-19
wsfs.info	Donald Eastlake	godaddy.com	2025-07-25
worldcon.us	Donald Eastlake	godaddy.com	2025-08-11
worldcon.info	Donald Eastlake	godaddy.com	2024-07-05

## U.S. Marks

Mark	Owner	Action	Renewal Dates
World Science Fiction Convention	World Science Fiction Society	Section 8, Section 9	6/26/23-6/25/24
Worldcon	World Science Fiction Society	Section 8, Section 9	6/26/23-6/25/24
World Science Fiction Society	World Science Fiction Society	Section 8, Section 9	7/3/23-7/3/24
WSFS	World Science Fiction Society	Section 8, Section 9	7/17/23-7/16/24
The Hugo Award Reg. No. 1287322	World Science Fiction Society	Section 8, Section 9	7/24/23-7/23/24
3D Rocket Mark Reg. No. 4620505	World Science Fiction Society	Section 8, Section 9	10/14/23-10/13/24
Rocket Mark Reg. No. 4320959	World Science Fiction Society	Section 8, Section 9	4/16/28-4/15/29
NASFiC Reg. No. 3647140	World Science Fiction Society	Section 8, Section 9	6/30/28-6/29/29

## EU Marks

Mark	Owner	Class	Expiry Dates	Trademark No.
Worldcon	Worldcon Intellectual Prop.	Class 16, 35, 41	2025/06/18	<a href="#">014277016</a>
Hugo Award	Worldcon Intellectual Prop.	Class 9, 16, 41	2025/06/18	<a href="#">014278519</a>
The Hugo Award Logo	Worldcon Intellectual Prop.	Class 16, 35, 41	2025/06/22	<a href="#">014270748</a>

**Mark Protection Committee/WIP Financial Report**  
**All U.S. Dollars**  
**Period Ending September 11, 2023**

	Date	Deposits	Payments	Check No.	Account Balance
<b>Book Balance July 1, 2022, at US Bank Less O/S Check 1114 \$825</b>					<b>\$17,577.41</b>
Debit, Pair Networks	07/05/2022		\$43.06		\$17,534.35
Deposit, Misc.	09/19/2022	\$100.00			\$17,634.36
Kevin Standlee, Pair Networks	10/01/2022		\$102.67	1115	\$17,531.68
Esther J. Horwich Atty, Trademark Reg, Lodestar search	11/02/2022		\$778.00	1116	\$16,753.68
Reimb Don Eastlake, Go Daddy, WSFS.US, Worldcon.info domain renewals	11/07/2022		\$142.66	1117	\$16,611.02
Gandi.net Worldcon.fr	06/29/2022		\$15.00	1118	\$16,596.02
Dept of Justice, RRF-1 California filing fee	02/27/2023		\$25.00	1119	\$16,571.02
Secretary of State California, SI-100 Return 2022	02/07/2023		\$20.00	1120	\$16,551.02
Deposit, Chicon 8 Dues 2022 Worldcon	05/01/2023	\$3,000.00		1121	\$19,551.02
Reimb Kevin Standlee for 10 yr reg Hugo Award	05/03/2023		\$172.00		\$19,379.02
Kevin Standlee, Reimb. SSL Certs	05/03/2023		\$16.83	1122	\$19,362.19
Kevin Standlee, reimb domain hosting	7/14/2023		\$55.20	1123	\$19,306.99
Dept. of Justice Annual Filing	7/15/2023		\$25.00	1124	\$19,281.99
Atty General Annual Filing	8/31/2023		\$25.00	1125	\$19,256.99
Esther J. Horwich Atty, Lodestar, other marks	9/7/2023		\$465.00	1126	\$18,791.99
<b>Bank and Book Balance June 30, 2023</b>					<b>\$18,791.19</b>

—Bruce Farr

## WSFS Hugo Awards Marketing Committee September 2022-October 2023

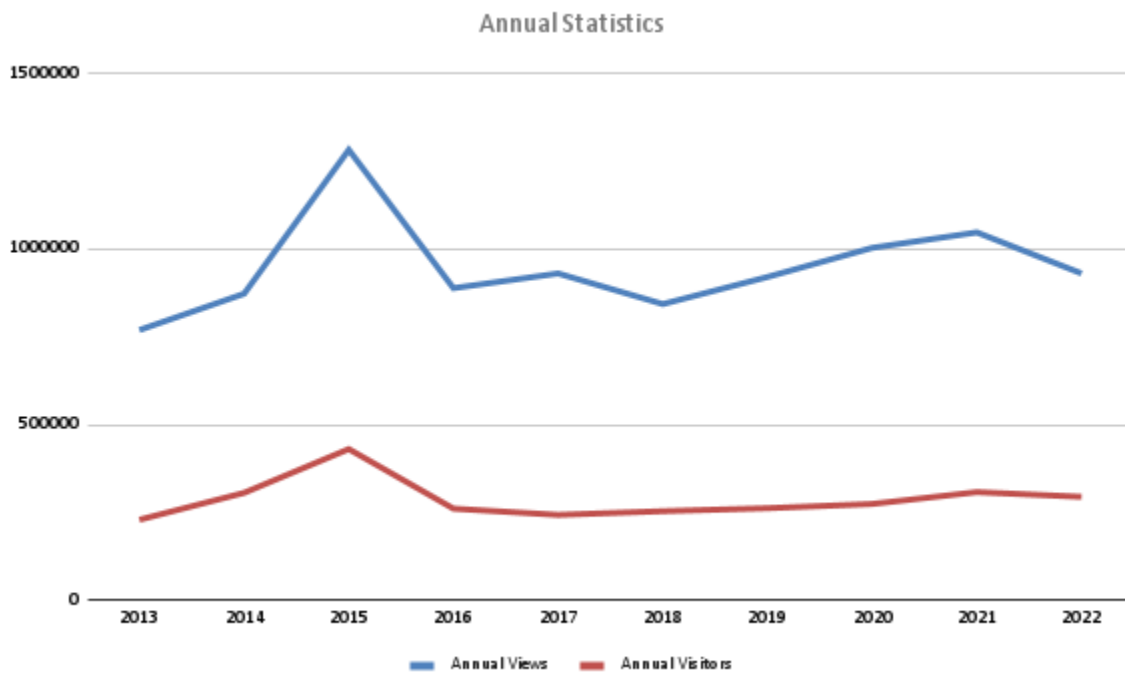
The Hugo Awards Marketing Committee (“HAMC”) members this term were Dave McCarty (Chair), Linda Deneroff, Craig Miller, Cheryl Morgan, Mark Olson, Kevin Standlee, and Jo Van Ekeren. The HAMC was established by the WSFS Mark Protection Committee, and its chair and members are appointed by the MPC annually.

The HAMC continued to work with Worldcon committees to support the marketing of the Hugo Awards, to handle inquiries from the press regarding the Awards as needed, to maintain TheHugoAwards.org, including the list of past finalists and winners, and archiving the “Section 3.11.4” reports of nomination and voting information issued by Hugo Award administrators, and to maintain the WSFS.org, Worldcon.org, and NASFiC.org websites and answer general queries submitted through those sites.

The HAMC will continue to cooperate with Worldcon committees so that we can update the Hugo Awards web site at the first opportunity after the awards are announced as well as to use the @TheHugoAwards BlueSky feed to publicize the announcements of the winners in each category.

Due to changes at the company formerly known as Twitter, we are discontinuing updating the @TheHugoAwards Twitter and will redirect people to the BlueSky account.

We are also evaluating the best way to interact with Mastodon and related “Fediverse” services. Our Facebook account is still active.



We continue to attempt to gather all the recordings of past Hugo Awards ceremonies (including any made before online posting of such recordings was possible or common) and to put copies of

them in a single place, probably the Worldcon Events YouTube channel set up by Kevin Standlee for this purpose. We are specifically looking for a copy of the 2017 Hugo Awards ceremony recording that was deleted when the 2017 Worldcon's YouTube channel was deleted. If anyone has a copy of the 2017 ceremony video that they can provide us, we will upload it to the Worldcon Events channel.

We maintain the list of seated, future, and past Worldcons and the lists of bids for future convention to the best of our knowledge. Multiple members of the committee have the credentials for the web sites. Bandwidth and disk space usage for the web sites we manage were within the allowances for our account. We may see peak loads around the time of the winner announcements, and will work with our hosting provider to minimize extra charges, which are borne by the Mark Protection Committee.

We continue to field inquiries directed to Worldcon.org and TheHugoAwards.org, forwarding them to the current Worldcon or the Mark Protection Committee as necessary.