The Beacon Society

Minutes of Annual Meeting for Calendar Year 2024

8:00 PM EST January 6, 2025

I. Call meeting to order by Headlight Rob Nun 1/6/2025 7:03 PM CST

II. 2023 General Meeting Minutes - The minutes from last year's meeting are available on the Beacon Society's website.

III. Committee Reports

A. Treasurer's report - Richard Kitts, Bursar

1. 4th quarter report - 12-31-24 Balance $40,368.73
2. Annual report 2024 – 12-31-23 Starting Balance $45,758.99

12-31-23 Balance $45,758.99
Income Donations $11,219.19
Pin Sale 10.00
Total Income $11,229.19

Expense J. Stauber Grants (15) $13,093.91
S. Diamond Award 287.00
N. Springer Contest 800.00
N. Springer Plaques 110.61
J. Senter Prize (8) 1,900.00
J. Senter Plaques 287.00
Postage 63.37
Printing 49.01
PayPal Fees 28.55
Total Expense $16,619.45
12-31-24 Balance $40,368.73
CD $15,312 3.85% due 5-8-25

B. Grants Committee – Cindy Brown

Financial Report for the Jan Stauber Grant-2023

This year was a very successful year for the grant program. We awarded 14 grants, totally $10,771. This amount was more than the allotted $10,000 for grants each year, but because of the terrific response to the grant award program we received permission from the Beacon Society to increase the award amount for the year 2023. We have an additional 10 grant applications that have been put on hold until 2024, and more requests coming in, to date. The influx of grant applications was mainly due to the effort of one Sherlockian who made an announcement at a national librarians meeting about the award availability. This effort shows what a huge difference a small effort can make when you have the proper avenue. Our grants covered areas from a virtual academy, to middle schools, and a Christmas House putting books in the hands of children who would otherwise not own a new book.

Cindy Brown indicated that These numbers included one grant that was awarded by an anonymous donor for an amount of $1,000. We could have awarded nearly 30 more grants. But we were restricted by financial limits. This also includes an extension by the Beacon Society board that we got last year. This was an extension of $2,093 above our allotted amount of $10,000. We decided to lift the time constraints for application. Remember, we had a time constraint of about three months or four. You had to apply during this time frame And that was it. Well, we lifted it. You could apply for a grant throughout the year because we always had money left over. Now the applicants can apply all year round, all year long. I suggest that we reestablish time limits for applications to be accepted, possibly from January through March through the end of March. Each year, and this will allow people to have 90 days to submit a grant proposal The committee can then review the grants

and award the money. By doing this, we hope to reduce the number of grants coming in throughout the year that we have to turn down and still keep the grant process manageable and thriving.
Let me see. I sent I've heard from the four of us have submitted our opinions. Three people said, I'm all for that, making it a limited time where they can apply. And one person said, no, I think they should apply all year round. After many opinions were voiced, it was decided that it would remain as is for now, that there is no specific deadline.

C. Awards Committee – Ann Andriacco

Inaugural Nancy Springer Pastiche Contest

One entry for last year. So one winner!

This year we have three entries: Two in the Upper Age Group and one in the Younger. Judging is underway now.

Susan Diamond Award

This year's winner is Andy Solberg. We had two nominees to choose from. He will receive his award in NYC at the Baker Street Weekend. He is donating the $221 award back to the Beacon Society.

R. Joel Senter Winners 2024

10-12 First: Thomas Hérbert, 11th grader, Fairview, TX

Second: Alexandra Thomas, 11th grader, Folsom, CA

Third: Ryan Foley, 10th grader, Cincinnati, OH

7-9: First: Kingston Loehrer , 7th grader, Maderia, OH 45243,

Second Cecelia Goedde, 7th grader, Cincinnati, OH

Third: Madeline Mozlin, 7th grader, New Richmond, OH

4-6: First**:** Juliana Foley, 5th grader, Cincinnati, OH

Second: Meaghna G. Shanmugan, 6th grader, Calgary, Alberta

D. Communications Committee – Steve Mason

As always, the committee focused on two main objectives during 2024: getting the word out about the various activities of the Beacon Society, including the Jan Stauber Grant, the Joel Senter Essay Contest, the Nancy Springer Writing Contest, the Fortescue Scholarship, the Sherlockian Spotlight Gazette for younger Sherlockians, and the Beacon Award, and the website, www.beaconsociety.com. For the first objective, approximately a dozen separate e-mailings concerning the Society were distributed. The mailout went to all members of the Society, as well as the email list of all Sherlockian Societies in the U.S. and Canada. In addition, the announcements were posted on our Facebook site, the Stranger's Room Facebook page, as well as our beaconsociety.com website.

The website continued to be explored and used by hundreds of Sherlockians each week. The Communication Committee continued to maintain the site, adding new information on a regular basis. The Facebook site is maintained by the Committee as another means to distribute meeting announcements, solicitations for submittals, and general information concerning the Society. The Committee continued posting weekly a set of puzzles based on the Canonical stories for the entertainment and enjoyment of Beacon Society members. This year we continued to add to one of our most productive pages, "The Comprehensive Look at the Stories" webpage, which includes over 20 elements for each of the 60 stories of the Canon, which Sherlockians, young and seasoned, can use as a reference source. We continue to use the website as our primary source of information, backed up by email to all members.

The Communications Committee was able to compile the winning essays of the Joel Senter Essay Contest into a booklet that we

published and sent to all essay winners for 2024. The booklet can be found on our website as a free .pdf. The Communications Committee was able to publish the winning story of the Nancy Springer Contest into a booklet that we placed on the website and sent to the winner for 2024. The booklet can be found on our website as a free .pdf. The Communications Committee continues to administer the Fortescue Scholarship. Over 50 Sherlockian students participated in the exam process this year, and over 150 Sherlockians have completed all the required exams, reaching the level of ShD. In 2024, an optional Re-Certification exam was developed and administered for those wanting to continue the Fortescue experience. This was the 5th re-certification exam we have provided. In 2024, there were two re-certification exams. In 2024, The Communications Committee issued 4 editions of the *Sherlock's Spotlight*, a gazette for younger Sherlockians. The Program Committee is supporting the effort, which will be continued in 2025. The Gazette, which is issued quarterly to over 700 recipients, contains Sherlockian articles, mysteries to solve, puzzles to unravel, and general information relevant to younger Sherlockians. The Gazette is distributed to all scion societies, Beacon Society members, posted to our website and announced on our Facebook page.

E. Fundraising Committee – David McCallister – not in attendance at the meeting, no report submitted

F. Programming Committee – Derrick Belanger stepped down as chair, replaced by Max Magee

The program committee spent the year laying the foundation for several Sherlockian projects we will continue to develop in 2025 and beyond. These projects are being spearheaded by our newest committee member, Max Magee.

1. Sherpa Sherlockian Talks - This will be a series of talks angled towards a younger audience to build interest in Sherlock Holmes.

The idea would be to make these talks available to the public either in person or virtually.

2. Sherlockian Siblings - a program that matches newer Sherlockians with a Sherlockian Big Brother or Big Sister. This would help the newer Sherlockians have a friend and mentor in the Sherlockian world and help bring them into the community.

These two projects are in the drafting stage. We hope to work on them more in 2025 and possibly have our first Sherpa Sherlockian talk at an event this year.

G. Junior Sherlockian Committee – Beth Gallego – not in attendance at the meeting,

On August 9th, the 221st day of the year, the Junior Sherlockian Society celebrated its seventh birthday. The program continues to invite children and youth to complete Junior Sherlockian Training- an in-depth study of Sherlock Holmes's character traits, observational skills, capacity for critical thought, and inductive and deductive reasoning. Promoting the Junior Sherlockian Society (JSS)

A small number of wooden promotional coins remain. They continue to be distributed at events, including the American Library Association Annual Conference (San Diego, CA) in June.

New cards and stickers were printed in December.

The new cards include the updated URL at beaconsociety.com.

440 JSS stickers and 220 cards were submitted for the
2025 BSI packets.

2024 Expenses

Vista Print: JSS Stickers (500) and Promotional Cards (500) $188.08

Total $188.08

2025 Budget

JSS anticipates expenses in 2025 of approximately $250 to replenish promotional

materials.

IV. Old Business - none

V. New Business - none

VI. Closing Remarks – Rob Nunn -So I'm closing out my second year as headlight. I've got one more after this. And just after this year, I just continue to be impressed by the support that the Beacon Society receives from Sherlockians to help us continue this mission of introducing Sherlock Holmes to students. This year I've been able to write articles for each issue of *Sherlock's Spotlight Gazette*, as well as the forward to the special section in *Steel True Blade Straight*. But more importantly, as headlight, I get to see behind the scenes of how hard every one of these officers and committee chairs works to keep society running. As you've seen from all of these reports, the Beacon Society continues to be a huge force and that is solely, solely because of the hard work of all the officers, committee chairs, and committee members. If and when you see any of these folks from tonight's meeting. Please take time to do just like Bob did and personally thank them for their contributions to the society. Anybody that's given a report at tonight's meeting, I can promise you, they have really put some time in. And for those of you who are not active participants in the Beacon Society, there is always room. We would love for you to contribute, whether it be financially or contribute with your time. We have plenty of committees and plenty of legwork that needs to be. You don't have to get on and spearhead anything. We're always looking for people to back us up with our stuff. I do want to publicly say thank you to all the officers, they are absolutely the ones doing all the work. So thank you very much for that.

VII. Adjournment 7:48 PM Central Standard Time

Addendum February 4, 2025 - Dear Board Members, For the third year in a row, the Jan Stauber grant program is nearly out of money for the calendar year. This year it happened even earlier. We have received a total of 17 grant requests and most of them are for the full amount of $1,000. In 2024 we received

approximately 60 grant applications and were able to fund 17 of them. This number of grants is far and away more than previous years, especially considering this was the count for January 2025 only. Our yearly budget is for $10,000. In the past, the board has just given us a one-time additional amount, but I'm not sure that's the best way to handle this issue. I would like to suggest that we raise the grant budget to perhaps $15,000 to $20,000 on a permanent basis. Please give this your consideration and feel free to make suggestions on better ways we may manage this issue emailed by Cindy Brown 2/4/2025.

Addendum Feb. 14, 2025 – Rob Nunn as Headlight wrote the following via email to the Board Members: I will close the voting and it looks like the Grants budget has been increased to $15,000 for this year!