

THE HEINLEIN SOCIETY

February 2026 Newsletter



Cover: Robert and Virginia being interviewed on a local television show.

Editor: Walt Boyes

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Letter from the Chairman

Dear Members,

I hope everyone had a happy and healthy holiday season and the beginning of a great new year. I wanted to speak with you today about a serious issue facing The Heinlein Society. We have been suffering attrition in our committee ranks lately, some due to health issues and some due to personal / business issues. Organizations like The Heinlein Society depend on our volunteers to chair committees and to carry out the tasks necessary to fulfill our projects. By the way, all of these roles are part time and require only minimal monthly engagement.

Please consider volunteering to help us “Pay it Forward.” These are some of the areas in which we need assistance:

- Blood Drive volunteers at SF/F conventions or libraries in your area
- Education Committee
- Membership Committee
- Newsletter Editor
- Nominations and Elections Committee
- Public Relations /Social Media Committee

If you have expertise in any of these areas or would just like to help, please reply to me by email and we can discuss ways you could possibly assist. I know we don’t say this enough, but thank you for being members. You make the Society possible.

Kindest personal regards,

Ken Walters

President and Chairman

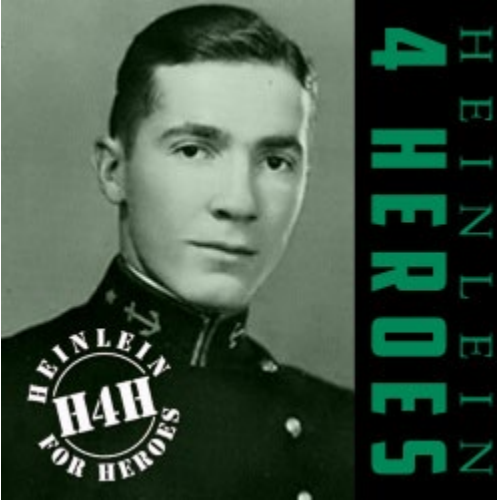
The Heinlein Society

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FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Heinlein For Heroes



Our program to deliver books to serving military, veterans, and their families has been doing great things.

We have shipped 157 boxes full of 3832 Books since September 2025, for a running total of 63,473 books since the program started.

Your donations of gently-used SF&F paperbacks or the money to buy them make this program possible.

Thank You

Sent: October 23, 2025

Your Operation Paperback donation box was received today in Okinawa, Japan. We have a small community library in our family housing complex that really needed some new material. Our resident science fiction fans are about to have the best day ever! Thank you for your generosity.

—Sharon Toland

Sent: October 26, 2025, 9:44 AM

Thank you for the books that you sent me. I am overwhelmed with gratitude. I am cataloging the books you sent and feel passionate to soon share them with the residents at the Missouri Veterans Home in Mexico, MO. I volunteer there as their librarian and assist in other duties as well.

Your books are going to add to the residents' reading materials. Days can become long and TV can soon become background noise. We offer day trips (Go Cardinals...Go Royals), drives through the countryside, plays at our local theater group, vocal groups, daily activities, exercise programs, quality health care and a family feel to our home. Books can take veterans back in time, to distant destinations and imaginary characters.

Our library is bursting at the seams, so please share with other veteran groups. Your gift will be a lasting tribute to the kindness from strangers and the appreciation for their military service.

Thank you.

—Joe Vittone



Blood Drives



From the Blood Drive Chair: The Gift of Life—Why We Need You on the Front Lines

To my fellow Heinlein Society members,

Robert A. Heinlein once noted that the capacity for humans to swallow nonsense is infinite. But here is a hard, undeniable truth: **Blood saves lives.** It is the most literal way we "pay it forward" to our society.

For decades, The Heinlein Society has championed blood drives at science fiction conventions, collecting thousands of pints. Yet, we face a constant and chronic shortage of blood products. Hospitals are often on the brink, and the only way to fill those shelves is through the dedication of those who give.

The catch? The blood doesn't just show up. We need coordinators to make it happen. Please contact me at the email link below if you are interested.

Passing the Torch: The DragonCon Legacy

Our impact is nowhere more evident than at **DragonCon**. As one of the largest convention-based drives in the world, its success is a testament to the tireless leadership of our long-time coordinator, **Alan Koslow**.

Working with LifeSouth Community Blood Centers, Alan has turned a chaotic holiday weekend into a life-saving machine. However, every great leader needs a succession plan. **Alan is currently looking to mentor and train a couple of dedicated coordinators** to learn the ropes of this fantastic operation. If you love DragonCon and want to ensure its legacy continues, this is your chance to learn from the best and prepare to take the helm.

The Hero in the Shadows: The Coordinator

Whether at a mega-event like DragonCon or a local regional show, the **Blood Drive Coordinator** is the essential bridge between fandom and phlebotomy.

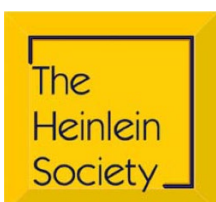
- **The Liaison:** You secure space with convention committees and coordinate staff and equipment with local blood centers.
- **The Advocate:** You provide the "Heinlein spirit" and visibility that turns a casual attendee into a life-saving donor.
- **The Logistician:** From managing time slots to ensuring there are enough cookies, you handle the vital details behind the scenes.

You don't need a medical degree, just a passion for the cause and a bit of organizational grit. Robert Heinlein lived with a sense of duty to the future. By stepping up now, you ensure that when a crisis hits, the surgeons have the tools they need to prevail.

In gratitude,

Joe Smiddie-Brush

The Heinlein Society Blood Drive Chair—blooddrivechair@heinleinsociety.org



Scholarships

The application period for the 15th Annual Heinlein Society Scholarship Program opened January 2, 2026. The program has grown over its lifetime and now awards four \$4,000 scholarships. In 2026, we will be awarding a bonus fifth scholarship thanks to the generosity of some long-time donors and evaluating whether we continue that many.



The scholarship committee under the direction of Mike Sheffield, Past Society Chairman and a current Director, has overseen the awarding of more than \$103,000 to more than 40 recipients.

The complete rules are posted on the Heinlein Society website, Students must be sophomores through seniors in college, pursuing a STEM education.

One of the scholarships, the *Virginia Heinlein* Scholarship, is entailed and must be awarded to a worthy student who is a woman. The *Dr. Jerry Pournelle* and *Dr. Yoji Kondo* scholarships, along with the *Robert A. Heinlein* scholarship may be awarded to any of the applicants, regardless of gender.

Help us increase the reach of the program by contacting your local undergraduate institution and sending them the link to the Scholarship page on our website.

The application period closes on April 1, 2026, and the scholarship award winners will be announced on July 7, 2026.

More information can be found at <https://heinleinsociety.org/scholarship-program/>

The Heinlein Journal



Dr. C. Herbert Gilliland, the Editor-in-Chief of *The Heinlein Journal*, reports that the next issue is in final preparation and will be released in the next few weeks.

Authors are always sought after and welcomed to write for the Society's scholarly journal. Our submission guidelines are linked at:

<https://heinleinsociety.org/submission-guidelines/> .

Regular and Lifetime members can use their coupon code to download issues of *THJ* from our website.

Browse our back issues here: <https://heinleinsociety.org/purchase-issues/> .

Mike Sheffield Interview

Recently, Mike Sheffield was interviewed by the Writers & Illustrators of the Future Podcast.

Mike Sheffield is a 35-year Senior Software Engineer at Northrop Grumman Space Systems and a former U.S. Air Force Electronic Warfare Specialist. A passionate sci-fi fan, Mike joined the Heinlein Society in 2001, chaired its blood drive committee until 2010, has led the scholarship committee since 2012, served on the board from 2006–2014, and was the fourth Chairman and President for four years. After a short break, in 2018 he was re-elected to the board as a Director.

He discusses his love for science fiction, the origins of Heinlein-inspired blood drives at conventions (starting 1999 NASFiC), participation tips, the Heinlein for Heroes veteran book program, connections between L. Ron Hubbard and Robert A. Heinlein, thoughts on *Final Blackout* and *Battlefield Earth*, his favorite Heinlein works, the Writers of the Future legacy, and a message for global listeners.



To listen to the interview, go to <https://writersofthefuture.com/podcast/episode-366/>

Heinlein in the News

Recently, we have received several questions asking when The Heinlein Society will allow movies or TV shows to be made from Heinlein books. Also, people have inquired about making some of Heinlein's later novels available in E-book format. The easy answer is we don't own the copyrights so therefore have no say in the matter. Here is the actual answer.

The Heinlein Prize Trust is the entity that owns the copyrights to most of Heinlein's published works. They are represented by Eleanor Wood of The Spectrum Literary Agency. To acquire the rights to a book for media production, a producer typically contacts HPT or their literary agent and negotiates to "option" the film



rights, which means they purchase the exclusive right to adapt the book into a film for a specific period of time, usually with a set fee, allowing them to develop the project before fully committing to buying the rights outright; this process often involves a legal contract outlining the terms of adaptation and creative control. I'm sure this has happened on several occasions, but that doesn't mean a film or TV show will actually come to fruition.

A good example of this is *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress*. In 2015 Fox acquired an option to Moon and planned to make a movie entitled Uprising based on the book. Bryan Singer was hired to be the director, and a script was developed by Marc Guggenheim. For some reason, the movie was never made.

Another example is *Stranger in a Strange Land*. In 2016 the SyFy channel optioned the rights to make Stranger into a TV series. Obviously, that hasn't happened either.

I'm sure the Heinlein Prize Trust / The Spectrum Literary Agency would be pleased to entertain any offers from producers concerning Heinlein's books. The Heinlein Society would also be pleased, mainly because it would bring Heinlein's name to a new generation and hopefully also bring them to his written work.

That being said, there are two new projects in the works:

A new *Citizen of the Galaxy* animated film is in development at Lex+Otis Studios, directed by Jay Oliva with a script by Luke Lieberman. The film aims for a 2027 release and is a direct adaptation of the 1957 novel.

Also, a new feature film of *Starship Troopers* is being planned. Neill Blomkamp, *District 9* director, is writing and directing a new adaptation of the classic novel for Columbia Pictures. It has been reported that the film is not a remake of the 1997 Paul Verhoeven film, but instead will be closer to the Heinlein novel.

We have been in communication with the Heinlein Prize Trust about Heinlein's later novels being made available in E-book format. They assure us that they are pursuing the issue with a publisher.

<https://heinleinsociety.org/heinlein-in-the-news/>