

## Explanation of the Voting System

(Disclaimer: this info is provided just in case you're interested in the mechanics of the process. If you merely want to know what will be required of you as a judge, just take a look at the Sample Ballot.)

### Category Voting

We will be using a preference-voting ballot. Basically, this type of ballot compares every eligible title against every other eligible title. The end result is that all of the titles will be ranked. This system is superior to a majority-vote system, because we now will compensate for split votes (so that we will never have a situation where two major contenders will split the vote, leaving the third choice to accidentally win).

As you can see from the Sample Ballot, you will be asked to compare every title against every other title, deciding which of those two titles you think is most deserving of the Whitney Award. The Whitney Committee will then take your votes and apply them to a matrix such as the example below:

	Mahonri	Stagecoach	Caesar	Tuesdays	Hunt/Gather
Wilford	M	W	W	T	H
Hunt/Gather	M	H	H	T	
Tuesdays	M	T	T		
Caesar	M	S			
Stagecoach	M				

(So, for example, when the judge compared *Hunt and Gather*, *Hunt and Gather* against *Tuesdays With Genghis*, you can see that the judge chose *Tuesdays With Genghis*.)

The books receive one point for each comparison that they win, which leaves us with the following rankings:

*The Life and Times of Mahonri Moriancumer*: 5 points  
*Tuesdays With Genghis*: 4 points  
*Hunt and Gather, Hunt and Gather*: 3 points  
*Wilford Woodruff To The Rescue!*: 2 points  
*Stagecoach of Destiny*: 1 point  
*Caesar Dearest*: 0 points

Once points have been assigned by every judge, they will all be combined into one overall rank. This rank will be the final ranking which will determine the finalists.

## Nominations For Overall Awards

After you have done your category voting, you'll be asked to list the books in your category that ought to win the overall awards (Best Novel of the Year, and Best Novel by a New Author). You can list as many or as few books in your category as you would like. On the flip side, you will also be asked to list the books that you think should definitely not win an overall award.

Every book that gets a vote will receive one point. The books that receive the most points, across all categories, will be finalists for the overall awards. In the event of a tie—if, for example, six books have received five points—then the negative votes will be taken into consideration to sort out the tie. In the event that there are still any ties, the books' voting score (the percent of possible votes they received) will be used.

## Nominations For Lifetime Achievement

Lifetime achievement awards are not given out based on voting; the decision will be made by the discussion of the Whitney Committee. However, we would love to hear your suggestions.

## Important Dates

Nominations will be closed on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008. Your voting will need to be done on January 31<sup>st</sup>.