



OOOOHH!
A MASTER?
YOU SEEK
YO -

NO!

NOT THAT KIND OF
MASTER!

SMOFCON 15

Boston, Massachusetts

December 5-7, 1997

Come explore the diversity of smofdom! Great conventions come in all sizes. Small conventions and large ones share many of the same problems and opportunities—and lessons learned cross all boundaries. Smofcon is about the art of convention running and Smofcon 15 will focus on interactivity and getting *everyone* included.

We promise you new and exciting activities, terrific food, fascinating convention horror stories, a cornucopia of chocolate, an awesome program, a wonderful con suite at the hub of the convention, and great restaurants in a marvelous city. (Did we mention food?) *Come and smof till you drop!*

Smofcon Wants You!

Smofcon is open to *all* fans interested in *all* aspects of convention running. Contrary to rumor, it is **not** invitational! Whether you are helping out for the first time at your local convention or you have been a Worldcon Chair or Division Head, there's something that you can learn (or teach) at Smofcon. Ideas come from the most unexpected sources. Fans will be sharing experiences and exchanging neat ideas in the hospitality suite, over meals, and in the bar, as well as during discussion groups and panel items.

Smofcon Program

This year's Smofcon program will have a single track of general interest items covering "Rules & Procedures", "People", "Creativity", and "Techniques". Alongside the general program will be a second track of focused workshops and discussion groups.

Some of the items we're considering for both tracks are:

- * How to Enjoy Your First Smofcon
- * Copyright Laws and Fandom
- * Convention/Publisher Interfacing
- * Team-building for a Geographically Dispersed Committee
- * What Happens After the Convention? (for both successful and non-successful cons)
- * Growth Control: Making a Con Bigger or Smaller (and Can It Survive?)
- * British vs. American Con-Running Styles
- * Marketing Your Convention
- * Why Don't We Learn from Our Mistakes?
- * Keeping Things From Going Stale (This Old Con—Fix It Up)
- * Sponsorships
- * Fandom vs. the Real World
- * Computers—When Not to Use Them
- * Ghosts and Parasites
- * Blame-Free Solutions
- * The Ins/Outs of Art Show Building/Running
- * When to Cut Your Losses & Start Over—People, Money or Goodwill Points
- * Flyer & Web Design
- * Creating a Convention Program
- * Stocking a Con Suite/Den
- * Securing Convention Items
- * Programming Fringe Interests
- * Creating a FAQ for Smofcons/Conrunning
- * Mutual Dependence (what can cons and artists do for each other?)

These are only **our** ideas. We want **yours**! So—if there are subjects that **you** are interested in, or a problem that **you** want solved, please let us know, and we'll try to accommodate you (if you help us.) We want this Smofcon to cover **your** interests as well as ours.

Tentative Schedule

We plan to start activities late Friday afternoon with introductory items (introducing both Smofcon and fans to each other). We do not expect everyone on site then, but we are planning some fun things to get us started.

For Friday evening's ice-breaker event we are planning *Spin City*. We need your help for this. What problems (or disasters) occurred at your con, or at a convention you attended? We want to collect short (1-2 sentence) descriptions, and we'll be asking people to "spin" them into a better light. Also, if you don't have an actual disaster, why don't you invent one?

Saturday's schedule will start at 10:00 am, include a lunch break, and continue until 5:30 pm. There will be a longer dinner break, and then we will reconvene for our Saturday night event. We are still deciding among several fun ideas for Saturday, so please stay tuned. Note: we are **not** planning a standard "Fannish Inquisition". (This doesn't mean you're off the hook ... come prepared to answer questions.)

Sunday will have additional programming until 4:00 pm, then we'll adjourn to the hospitality suite for Dead Smof Partying.

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Our Hotel

Smofcon 15 is using the Doubletree Suites in Boston, MA: every room is a 2-room suite with a view of the Charles River and Cambridge. Right in the city, it has easy access by car or air. Our con suite is the huge Presidential Suite. The hotel is less than a mile from Harvard Square or MIT, and has a free shuttle to many parts of Boston and Cambridge. Additionally, you get free cookies on check-in! Hotel rates are \$99 per night for single through quad rooms. Reservations should be made separately with the Boston Doubletree by calling 617-783-0090, and mentioning Smofcon or MCFI. There is a \$7 (special reduced rate) daily parking charge at the indoor garage for all of our members.

Our hotel block goes away on November 1, 1997, so please reserve your rooms before then.

Boston, Cambridge, Brighton/Allston, & Somerville

There are plenty of things to see and do in Boston and nearby Cambridge. Museums include the Science Museum, Computer Museum, and Boston Aquarium. Harvard Square contains many stores including, bookstores such as WordsWorth, Schoenhof's, McIntyre & Moore, Pandemonium Books, and the Harvard Coop. The Sunset Grill, in Allston, has over 120 beers on draft. In addition, we are planning a tour of the NESFA Clubhouse for those who wish to see a local fannish landmark.

Climate

Weather in Boston in December can be variable. It can be snowing, or as warm as 60 degrees (or more). Unfortunately, we can't predict what the weather will be, especially as this is being written (September, 1997). We can tell you that under normal circumstances sidewalks and roads are cleared of snow promptly, and those of you who are used to warmer climes do not even need to venture into the cold if you don't wish to.

Directions

By Air: Fly to Logan Airport; most major airlines fly here. A taxicab from the airport should run \$20-\$25. Or you can call U.S. Shuttle (617-894-3100) to be picked up and taken to the hotel. The fare from the airport per person is \$8, plus \$3.50 per group for airport fees, etc.; i.e., two people traveling together would be \$19.50.

By Train/Bus: Take Amtrak or Greyhound to South Station. A taxicab from there to the hotel should run \$15-\$20. Or you can call U.S. Shuttle (617-894-3100) to be picked up and taken to the hotel (no airport fees from South Station).

By Car:

- * From Logan Airport: Take I-93 South to I-90 West (Mass Pike.) for 4½ miles.
- * I-90 West: Follow to exit 20 Allston/Cambridge. After toll plaza, bear right following signs for Cambridge. Keep right, go straight through first traffic light and turn right at second traffic light. Hotel entrance is approximately 100 yards on right at the bottom of the ramp.
- * I-90 East: follow to exit 18 Allston/Cambridge (a left lane exit). After toll plaza, bear right following

signs for Cambridge. Keep right, go straight through first traffic light and turn right at second traffic light. Hotel entrance is approximately 100 yards on right.

- * I-95 North/South: to Mass Pike. (Follow I-90 East directions above)
- * I-93 North/South: to Mass Pike. (Follow I-90 West directions above)
- * Storrow Drive West: From Downtown Boston, keep to right side of Storrow Drive West following signs for Newton & Arlington. Take Mass Pike/Central Square Exit. Keep left on the exit ramp and make a wide U-turn at the traffic light. Hotel entrance will be on your right.

Resource Room

As at many of the past Smofcons, there will be a resource room available for people to see what other Smofcons have covered, and what other conventions have produced. There will also be computers to use, meeting magazines, hotel books, etc. Since one of our planned workshops is "Badge Technology", we would like you to bring samples of previous convention badges. We're also planning to have a workshop on publications in general, so please bring samples of other convention items such as souvenir books, pocket programs, progress reports, flyers, souvenir items, T-Shirts, gifts for volunteers, etc.

Badges, We Do Need Stinkin' Badges

Badges are not only useful for showing who is a member of the convention, but for telling each other about who we are. We have a chance to decide now what should be included besides names. Do you want city, state/country? Area of expertise? Email address? Something else? Please let us know.

*The names themselves **will** be readable from a reasonable distance. We promise!*

Smofcon 16

If you're interested in hosting next year's Smofcon, please let us know. The Smofcon 15 membership will choose the next Smofcon sometime Saturday.

Smofcon 15 Membership

Here's the list of current members. If you're not listed and think you are already a member please contact us as soon as possible.

Bobbi Armbruster	Dale Farmer	Tony Lewis	Kelly Persons
Bonnie Atwood	George Flynn	John Lorentz	Ruth Sachter
Ted Atwood	Pam Fremon	Gary Louie	Robert Sacks
Judy Bemis	Crickett Fox	Jim Mann	John Sapienza
Kent Bloom	Steve Gold	Laurie Mann	Sharon Sbarsky
Seth Breidbart	Lisa Hertel	Bob MacIntosh	Paul Selkirk
Ann Broomhead	Mark Hertel	Karen Meschke	Kurt Siegel
K.I.M. Campbell	Tim Illingworth	Mary Morman	Kevin Standlee
Nancy Cobb	Saul Jaffe	Mark Olson	Tim Szczesuil
James Daugherty	Walter Kahn	Priscilla Olson	Mary Tabasko
Kathryn Daugherty	Deborah King	Tony Parker	Sally Woehrie
Bob Daverin	Alexis Layton	Sara Paul	Richard Wright
Brenda Daverin	Suford Lewis	Peggy Rae Pavlat	Ben Yalow
Gay Ellen Dennett			

Smofcon 15 Mailing List

A Smofcon 15 Mailing list is being set up at smofcon@sflovers.rutgers.edu to discuss ideas for program, schmoozing, and any other interesting stuff that comes up. To sign-up for the mailing list send an email message saying "subscribe smofcon" to listserv@sflovers.rutgers.edu. We will also be contacting people about being added to this mailing list.

Smofcon 15 Membership Form

To purchase a Smofcon 15 membership, complete this form and mail it to: Smofcon 15, PO Box 1010, Framingham, MA 01701-1010.

Credit card purchases may be faxed to 617-776-3243.

Memberships \$35 (US Funds) until November 17, 1997 (and will be \$45 at the door). Make checks payable to MCFI. We also accept Visa and MasterCard. Please don't mail cash.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Country: _____ Phone number: _____

Email Address: _____

~~* Shoe size: _____~~

I am buying _____ membership(s) at \$35 each, total \$_____.

I am paying by _____ Check _____ MasterCard _____ Visa

Credit Card # _____ Exp: _____

Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____

If you want more information about Smofcon 15 or MCFI, please write us at:

Smofcon 15

PO Box 1010

Framingham, MA 01701-1010 USA

Send email to smofcon@mcfi.org or visit our web page at <http://world.std.com/~sbarsky/skofcon.html>

~~* You don't want to know why.~~

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