

BRING ME THE HEAD  
OF

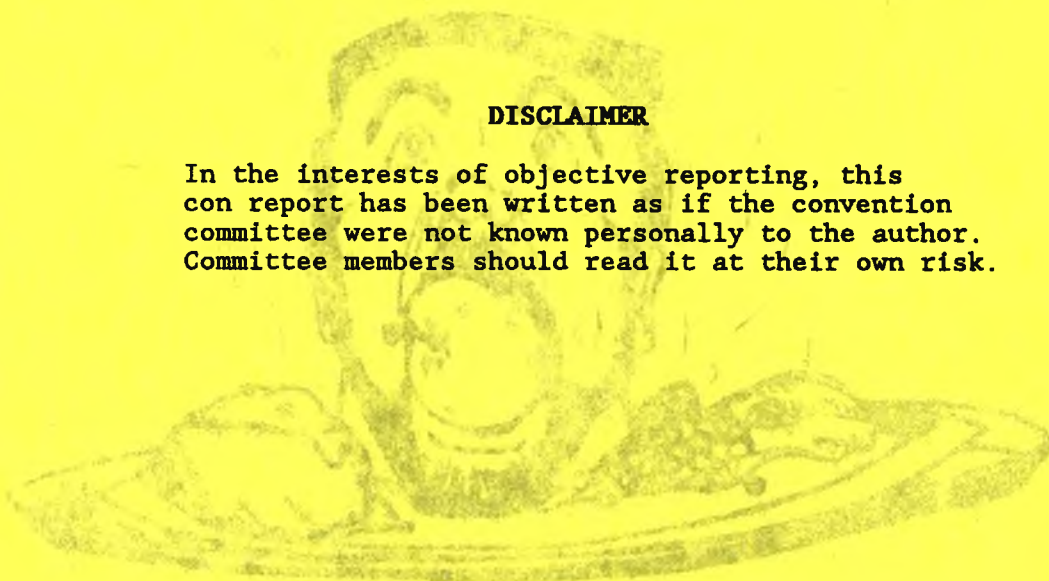


DENNIS DOLBEAR

Text by Janice Gelb  
Cover Art by Jerry Gelb

**DISCLAIMER**

In the interests of objective reporting, this  
con report has been written as if the convention  
committee were not known personally to the author.  
Committee members should read it at their own risk.



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\* BRING ME THE HEAD OF DENNIS DOLBEAR - A Tragedy in Six Weeks \*  
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\* PROLOGUE \* Before we get into the main con report, a little background.

\*\*\*\*\* There I was, buried in the final push to get the dBASE IV documentation to the printers after two years of work. I'd been told that I'd be doing Programming troubleshooting at NolaCon by the Programming Chair, Dennis Dolbear. Then I mentioned to Mike Glycer in mid-June that since I'd known the committee since the beginning, I'd hoped for once to be doing something more important. He said, Rick Foss and I may be helping on Programming - do you want to help? And (fool that I am), I said, sure.

At meetings at Westercon, I discovered that the only programming done for the convention had been done by those who did smaller tracks outside the main body - fan, space, science, art, and costuming. As for the main programming tracks: nada. In a year-and-three-quarters!!! And no explanation as to why.

With much cursing, we set to work. Mike heroically went through all of the copies of the questionnaires received from Debbie Hodgkinson (one of the few people in New Orleans who was both trustworthy and reasonably efficient), to use their suggestions as an early skeleton program. Meanwhile, I was setting up the participants database, based on the questionnaires and a mailing list from the reliable Debbie. Then came the fun part. We decided to use the databases we had gotten from Ben Yalow, which resulted in my giving Rick and Mike a quick training in dBASE basics.

I won't go into details about the next few weeks - the late nights at Rick's house, the long phone calls from Debbie regarding changes in participants appearances or arrival or departure times; the committee's idea that despite last-minute programming, someone in Indiana should compile the program book . . . well, you get the idea.

The capper for me was dealing with a technoid flake named Jim Mulé. Tom Hanlon (another unsung hero) and Dennis were sending a disk of files FedEx to arrive on Monday. I didn't get the disk, but I did get a phone call from Mulé at 11 p.m. LA time. He said Dennis told him I was the person to whom he was supposed to send convention files via modem. I told him I was supposed to receive a disk FedEx from the con Real Soon Now and asked if the files on that disk were the same as the files he had. If so, I'd rather wait for the disk than try to set our computers up for direct hook-up, which I'd never done before. He said he didn't know, but he'd check with Dennis and get back to me.

Tuesday, no FedEx disk. Tuesday night, another phone call from Mulé. Had I checked the disk to see which files were on it? I explained that I still hadn't received the disk. He said, "I'm sure you told me you had the disk already." I said no, if I'd had the disk when he had called the previous night, I would have been able to tell him right away whether the files he had were the same as the files on the mystery disk. He said, "I must have woken you from a deep sleep last night because I'm sure you said you had the disk." I didn't appreciate practically being called a liar, so I carefully explained that not only was I sure of what I had told him the previous night, but that logically it didn't make any sense either. He said, "Well, that's in the past" and proceeded to discuss something else entirely !!!

Well, you get the idea. After much heartache and not much sleep, we managed to send the files to the committee (via Jim Mulé and my company's Telemail) a mere six days before the start of the con!

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\* ACT I \* The day before my departure for NolaCon, I worked from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. with a short break for dinner, not having packed yet, and with the taxi to the airport picking me up at 6 a.m. the next morning \*sigh\* As if I'd gotten a lot of rest and had a stress-free existence for the weeks before that!

The flight was relatively uneventful, except for a strawberry yogurt taking a swan-dive off the food trolley and splashing both Gail Selinger and my Ashton-Tate jacket. After getting a replacement tow-strap for my suitcase, which had mysteriously arrived without its own, I caught up with Gail, who had considerably waited for me before getting a cab. We were much entertained by our native Nawlins cab driver, who discussed in no particular order: the Republican convention, the Saints, and the humid weather. I had noticed the latter and remembered why I'd left the South: my hair frizzed immediately upon arrival!

\* *Intermission #1:* The one good thing about my killing myself in the weeks previous to the con was John Guidry's generously offering to comp my hotel room. I'd already arranged to stay at the Marriott with Eve Ackerman (member of LASFAPA and MYRIAD, and my friend since college) and two of her friends, since I'd figured my food budget was going to at least quadruple thanks to the French Quarter. On finding out that my room would be paid for, I tried and by some miracle managed to get a room at the Sheraton from Friday night on - while still paying for one-fourth of a room, I'd have one to myself.

And who should be the first person I see on my way in to the Marriott but our very own OE, Stven Carlberg. A few other familiar faces popped by before I found out what room Eve was in and checked in. Shortly after that, I made my way to the Green Room in the Sheraton to register as a program participant.

\* *Intermission #2:* I'd decided that as long as I was killing myself to help put together the program, at least I could use the opportunity to put myself on a panel! I'd never been an official program participant before, but Mike managed to put me on a panel in the Fan Track after checking with Dick Lynch, the track's organizer. More about that later.

The Green Room volunteers, who were handing out my printouts to the participants, had me listed as a participant, but didn't have my badge. A quick check next door in Program Ops revealed that I was listed as Staff, and Staff registration was (of course) in the other hotel. Retracing my steps, I found the Trouble Desk, staffed by new redhead Sue Phillips. Lucky for me, too, because my badge wasn't in the first four places she looked, but on further investigation, was in the bottom of an unmarked envelope.

I retired to the room to examine the tacky pocket program book. (Mulé struck again: he'd handed in a printout so unusable that poor Debbie and George Alec Effinger had worked 15 hours straight to type up the program from scratch to get it into shape to hand to a printer.) While I was chortling over George's restaurant guide, by far the best I've ever seen at a con, Eve walked in and we caught up on family and fannish news for a while. I left for a Programming Staff meeting at 5. Ross Pavlac, the co-chair of Chicon IV, had been convinced to save NolaCon Program Ops, and was holding forth as I arrived. His pep talk featured a flattering but false introduction of me as a "dBASE expert," and an explanation of some of the difficulties under which we'd be working, for those who hadn't had forewarning of the disaster in store.

Mike had been working hard in rearranging the program to accommodate the unexpected arrivals, no-shows, and departures of scheduled program participants. That resulted in our working until about 8:30 when, after repeated proddings, I got almost everyone to agree to go to dinner. Mike was the holdout, deciding he needed sleep more than food. He gave me the key to the room and on the way out, I bumped into JoAnn and Ruth. Our reunion was short-lived because Seth Briedbart grabbed me pleading for dinner. He, I, and the Fosses (Rick, wife Jace, and brother Wolf) wandered the French Quarter until we found a moderately priced seafood place recommended by Tony Lewis. It had been rated mediocre but acceptable by George, and so it was.

Back at Program Ops, we found Glycer already at work. I tippy-tapped away until 11 or so, accompanied by various people making original comments like "Aren't you glad you went away for vacation and are sitting in front of a computer?" and curious persons choosing our door at which to lodge their complaints. (At one point, Wolf had to leave the room for a few minutes and we told him the secret knock was to be the drum solo from Ina Gadda da Vida, which he managed to comply with!) I finally gave up and decided to see at least one party to prove I was at the con.

On the way out of the lobby, I spotted Philadelphia fan David Axler, who had been one of the few bright spots of last year's NASFiC. He invited me up to catch up on news and watch him unpack. True to his rep as a Party Puppy, he hadn't been in town 30 minutes, but already had a complete party list from his spies! He also told me he'd been asked to do the music for a surprise 40th birthday party for George R.R. Martin, which was invitation-only by George RR's girlfriend. I decided to find out more about this, as I've been a friend of George RR's since a disastrous CoastCon many moons ago (which Cliff and Mike may recall). David went off to a publisher's party, while I decided to go the fannish route. The parties were so-so except for long-lost buddies I found here and there. I snuck back in the room around 1 or so.

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\* ACT II \* Early the next morning we woke to the sound of Eve, conditioned by \*\*\*\*\* the early risings of her kids. My breakfast plans with George had been postponed since they'd decided not to let the Pro Liaison out of their sight until most of the protests in the Green Room had been calmed down, so I decided to join Eve in her excursion to Cafe du Monde, for a breakfast of beignets and French Quarter scenery.

\* *Intermission #3*: Before the con, I'd made an offer to George to treat him to a meal in whatever restaurant he'd always wanted to eat at but couldn't afford. I'd expected a New Orleans native to come up with a little-known jewel; instead, I got a request for breakfast at Brennan's, the tourist's delight. He said he'd eaten there a while ago and never gotten back. \*sigh\*

Cafe du Monde was all I remembered from my previous visit there. I gave in to temptation and had the chicory cafe au lait, which resulted in headaches and uneasy sleep for the next two days, but which was almost worth it. While waiting out a rain storm, we were joined by LASFAPans Genny Dazzo and Craig Miller (he'd been suckered into heading Ops, through what means I'm still not sure!). While the four of us walked back to the hotel, we traded Jim Mulé stories. Eve and I went up to Program Ops for me to turn in my key and declare myself officially off duty. Mike and Rick were still hard at work, but I decided that while they were sorely needed, there were enough people to do what I'd been doing that I wasn't indispensable.

Eve and I wandered the art show and bumped into Melinda Snodgrass (with whom I broached the subject of an invite to George RR's party, which was a combination WildCards bash) and friends. We faunched at some lucite paintings for a while and Eve checked out the print room for suitable stuff for the kids room. I spotted a few prints I thought I'd come back for later. We then decided to grab some lunch. Eve had passed a Greek restaurant that was having an eggplant special, so we headed there. As we ate the incredibly mediocre food (the eggplant was so underdone the manager gave us some money back on our tab!) and watched the storm clouds gather, we caught up a little bit on each other's lives. Then we rushed back for George's scheduled reading. He did the first two chapters of the sequel to *Gravity (A Fire in the Sun)* and although I could see he was fading toward the end, it was still a good reading and was well-attended and well-received.

I decided I'd better take care of moving hotels, so I wandered over to the Sheraton check-in and braved the line that was there night and day thanks to the decision by some members of a Black Baptist Missionaries convention to stick around past their room registration ends. (I never did figure out why black Baptists would want to have their convention in the Big Easy!) I ran into old friend NY fan Bob Benson and arranged to eat with him that night. When I finally got to a clerk, I discovered I wasn't on the convention freebee list. Invocations of Guidry's name were to no avail, and even miraculously spotting John and dragging him over to the desk was ineffective (I should have known!) I ended up going up to Program Ops to try to find someone with influence there. I finally got through the gopher levels in Ops to the person in charge - LA fan Bobbi Armbruster - and frantically convinced her to get in touch with the hotel liaison for me, since I had been magically placed on a last-minute panel on apas at 3 p.m. and it was close to 3.

Attendance was fairly good given the last-minute nature of the panel. I spotted someone in the audience sitting next to Dick Lynch and laughing at Stven's and my jokes - afterward, I discovered it was fellow-SFPAn George Inzer, whom I'd never met.

\* *Intermission #4*: I realized just how innovative an OE Stven has been for SFFA during this panel. It was surprising how many of his innovations were relevant to the difficulties or qualities of apahacking we discussed.

After the panel, I went back down to hotel registration and discovered that competent and trustworthy Bobbi had straightened out my problem and gotten the hotel liaison to add my name to the comp list. I checked in, and got ready for dinner. Bob Benson and wife Miriam Schlinger were in the lobby, with some Golden APA members. The expedition amoeba that coalesced was huge, and Bob and I decided to split for dinner on our own. Once again, I ended up in a decent but not exciting seafood restaurant (named after our own JoAnn). Well, not exciting except for Bob's appetizer: BBQed alligator ribs. \*feh\* A definite entry in the category of food Seth Briedbart had been telling me he'd vowed to eat in New Orleans - food that he couldn't get in New York (which, as he said, is a narrow list!) Bob said the gator was okay but nothing special.

I headed back to the Program Ops room and found Mike on the verge of total Brain Death. Outside the room, I saw Diana Pavlac headed toward it. I urged her to use her wiles to have Mike and Rick tell the other people in the room whatever only the two of them knew, and to get Ross to forbid them to enter Program Ops. Then I headed up to the Chicago in '91 party to give Ross the same message. Later that night, he told me he'd forbidden them to come into the room until at least noon the next day.

I had bumped into Chris Kostanick, a fellow former LASFAPAn, in the art show (after embarrassingly not recognizing him earlier that day!) and he'd invited me to a party in his room. This turned out to be the best party of the con for me, with lots of interesting people to talk to. Fellow SFPAnS wandered in and out, and we ended up at a truly bizarre Trek dance, complete with strange folks in costumes and a live band who at one point played a Christian medley of "Amazing Grace" followed by "Down By the Riverside"!

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\* ACT III \* I'd decided to contribute at least a little time to Program Ops  
\*\*\*\*\* to justify my green Staff ribbon, so I'd volunteered to do a shift as a track manager. (Another great thing about being a program participant was being able to grab some breakfast in the Green Room, where I got to chat a bit with Teddy Harvia, whom I'd inexplicably never met at a previous con.) The shift was fairly easy, as the panel in one of the two rooms I was assigned to turned out to have been moved to the afternoon! I hung around Program Ops for a while longer and then wandered the huckster room. I bumped into Eve, who reminded me about the LASFAPA party, and then decided to unfanishly take a nap!

Feeling somewhat more human after my nap, I headed up to David and Kay's room for the LASFAPA party, saw some old friends, and got to threaten Dennis Dolbear with defenestration in person, after threatening it while he was in *absentia* for practically the entire con. Braving the rain, I went across the street to the WildCards panel, and got to see some of the WildCards crew I hadn't bumped into thus far (and was surreptitiously handed a surprise party invite by Melinda). The first "two-tier" panel ever (there were so many participants they had to put the chairs in double rows) went well. All the participants introduced themselves (including Stephen Leigh, who wins my vote as Con Cutie). When the mike came back to George RR, he modestly introduced himself as the editor of the series. Vic Mil n, in row two, grabbed the shoulders of George RR and Melinda, who were sitting side-by-side, and said, "If you've forgotten which TV show he writes for, look at this picture!" Due to having my own panel at 5, I was only able to sit through part of the WildCards panel (long enough to see the results of vote for the Wimp [Melinda's Dr. Tachyon] vs. the Pimp [Lew Shiner's Fortunato]).

\* *Intermission #5*: You could easily tell the true Southerners from the Yankees just by their attitude towards the rain. Two Northerners in the lobby were watching the rain and worrying whether they had enough warm clothing. I explained that it might be wet out there, but it wasn't cold. And besides that, it probably wouldn't last more than an hour or so. It did rain off and on throughout the con, but never steadily for a whole day, so it was possible, as I did, to go through the con without ever getting significantly wet.

My own panel on The Electronic Fanzine turned out to be somewhat of an embarrassment despite Arthur Hlavaty's able moderating. Turned out there were a few people in the audience who knew more about the subject than the panel members! It was still enjoyable and informative, thanks to the audience's willingness to participate. After voicing far and wide my desire to have a snazzy expensive dinner that night, I'd managed to coerce David Axler into the idea, and when I met him in the lobby, we were joined by D Potter and Leslie Smith, both fellow ALPS members with David, and D a fellow MYRIADdian with me long ago. We had a nice dinner with a fabulous dessert table at Le Meridien hotel, and went back to the con in a satiated frame of mind ~~and stomach~~.

Eve had considerably come over to the Meridien to tell me where the Discordian Business Meeting (Arthur's annual party) was taking place, and I got to say howdy to Bernadette and some other folks, participate in a one-shot on David's rapidly fading typewriter, and unsociably read the latest Bloom County book. Then came one of the best moments of the con for me. I wound up at the NESFA party and when I entered, I passed someone who was headed towards the door and noticed that his name tag said Jim Mulé. I said, in the most cutting tone of voice I could manage, "Oh, you're Jim Mulé." He said, "why, yes, I am, but I'm afraid I'm at a real disadvantage." At that perfect straight line, I replied, "You sure are!" and strolled away.

Next, I went to probably the strangest activity I've ever done at a science fiction convention (okay, you dirty-minded people, stop salivating!) The Saturday before Rosh Hashana (the Jewish New Year), a service is held at midnight. Eve and I had noticed on the message board a small announcement that services would be held in a room at the Sheraton! I had a guess about who might be hosting it, but there was no name on the notice. This opportunity was too good to be missed, so we went up there at ten to midnight. No answer to our knock. We decided to wait until 12:15 before leaving, and amused ourselves by standing at the elevators and guessing which people getting off might be candidates for the service. Finally at ten after, a couple of Brooklyn fans I'd known through Neil got off the elevator - my guess had been right about the hosts of the service. Two other people showed up, and we conducted a service using one book among us. We sat and talked for a little while longer before hitting some more parties, and going off to bed.

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\* ACT IV \* Sunday morning was the long-awaited brunch with Eve, David and \*\*\*\*\* Kay. Eve had arranged this long before the convention, on a tip from her local rabbi, who's from New Orleans. He'd recommended a hotel dining room called Windsor Court, and it was one of the most fabulous dining experiences I've ever had. The atmosphere of the room was perfect, as was the service and the food. Even the Ladies Room was a trip, featuring puffed real-material walls, comfortable chairs and sit-down vanities with mirrors, and real hand towels. We decided we could live a perfectly happy existence living in the Ladies Room and eating in the dining room.

After brunch, we parted company, David and Kay back to the hotel and Eve and I to go shopping at the Jackson Brewery despite threatening skies. I was looking for a birthday present for George RR and Eve was just browsing. I finally found a book on historic steamboats for George RR, and some wrapping paper with lipstick marks that said "Kiss Another Year Goodbye." By then the rain was really coming down. Eve and I, with the patience of Floridians, calmly decided to wait the storm out. We thought of going to the food court for some coffee, but brunch had been so filling that neither one of us could stand to even smell more food, so we just browsed until the rain let up.

I managed to get to the SFPA suite in time for the end of the Saints/49ers football game. I was pleasantly greeted by a good-looking stranger, who turned out to be Cecil Hutto, whom I hadn't seen for \*gulp\* 9 years. Soon the SFPA party heated up; a cheerful group despite the Saints' defeat. A surprise appearance by Lester Boutillier gave me a new idea for determining True Southerners vs. Yamdankees - anyone who cringes when Lester's name is mentioned is a true Southerner!



The Program Ops staff meeting at 5 proved to feature another "inspiring" speech by Ross, who lamented the fact that he hadn't had the dBASE programs in time to show everyone what to do (Glyer and I later lamented the fact that we hadn't just dumped the whole thing in his lap five weeks earlier!) We got the great news that Staff members were to have special seating that night at the Hugos, and then I went off to get ready for the ceremony.

The seating for the Hugos was just as badly organized as the rest of the con. Fans were herded to two or three different doors and made to wait nearly forty minutes past the time they'd been told to gather before they were allowed in. I spurned the Staff seating when I spotted Mike seated by himself in the nominees section, near Arthur and Bernadette as well, with a birds-eye view of George RR - with WildCards nominated, he'd gone all out and was resplendent in a rented grey suit of tails, complete with tall grey velvet hat.

The ceremony seemed to drag on thanks to my concentrated interest in the Best Novel Hugo, despite Mike Resnick's terrific MC job, including tales from worldcons past. My tension was broken somewhat when Mike won the first Hugo out of the chute for Best Fan Writer.

\* *Intermission #6*: We finally got to see what George had been warning the nominees about - one of the ugliest and most ungainly Hugos ever. The description of "the Hugo rocket in flight" had seemed to more than one person to imply a somewhat horizontal rocket, but instead the rocket was perched on a column of some black resin material meant to resemble the smoke under a recently launched rocket, but more closely resembling the peanut-butter costume Mike Resnick told a story about, representing a character called "The Turd." The original conception worked better when the Hugo was viewed from above (Mike finally put it between his legs after joking about the danger of standing up too quickly to applaud).

Finally, it was time for the Best Novel Hugo which, true to the Locus poll, went to (ridiculously dressed) David Brin - a classic case of name pro vs. book quality. After Mike helped console me, I rushed to console George and then hurried back to my room to get my birthday present for George RR. The surprise party was great - the guest of honor was truly surprised, the presents were fun, and the entertainment (both the music by David Axler and impersonations of well-known science fiction awards by Pat Cadigan) was tops.

I was sorry to leave, but "the other George" was hosting a win-or-lose party that I'd also promised to attend. The guest of honor had been dragged away by his publisher for a while, and I passed the time chatting with Martha Soukup about the perils of being on the Nebula jury. The party turned out to be fairly okay if a bit melancholy, and the present I'd brought (a freestanding flamingo and a comforting card) was well-received. I went off to do my duty at the Chicago party, taking my licks after not having presupported (there didn't seem to be much need for that) and having mysteriously forgotten to vote in the Site Selection (the first time at any worldcon I've neglected to vote). After a few other parties, it was time to call it a night (morning?).

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\* ACT V \* Monday morning was the long-postponed breakfast at Brennan's with  
\*\*\*\*\* George. I decided to try to get to the Art Show before meeting  
him in the lobby so I could pick up the print I'd spotted. The Art  
Show was closed, but I passed Registration and stopped there to pick up a full  
kit, which I hadn't gotten when I first picked up my badge. Tom Hanlon and  
Mary Wismer were inside, and after getting my large program book, Tom showed  
me a work of art by Mary, which you can see on the back cover of this report. I  
tried to convince her to make about 100 copies to bring to the Gripe Session.

I found George waiting in the lobby. We had a nice stroll to Brennan's and  
an enjoyable, leisurely breakfast despite crummy service and truly abysmal  
decaf coffee - incredibly twice as expensive as the sumptuous brunch I'd had  
the day before. (We also bumped into Don Markstein, Rick Norwood, and Joe  
Celko in the lobby.) It was great spending time alone with George - we got a  
chance to catch each other up somewhat on our lives. It made it a little  
harder to leave, but it was nice to make the connection again.

In the Art Show I finally got the print I'd wanted, and found a harlequin  
print for my brother the mime (and found they didn't take credit cards!). A  
trip to the Huckster Room resulted in a purchase of more buttons, and a  
classic Kelly Freas signed and numbered print from a huckster who did take  
credit cards!

From there I headed off to the Gripe Session, where I showed off Mary's flyer  
artistry to an appreciative audience (she hadn't brought any). As we might  
have expected, Rick and Mike were on time, but of the NolaCon committee only  
Guy was brave and noble enough to attend on time. They fielded as many  
questions as they could, until finally John and Justin arrived. Dennis, of  
course, was nowhere to be seen (as might also have been expected - hence, the  
title of this report). I got to sit next to Ben Yalow and Diana Pavlac and  
make appropriate cynical and sarcastic comments throughout the proceedings.

The typical committee response to questions about convention glitches was,  
"Well, it was last-minute and we did the best we could." Answers to the  
reasonable next question ("Why was everything last-minute?") didn't get very  
straightforward responses. There were exceptions: we did get detailed if  
fuzzy explanations of how the printer screwed up the badge printing, how the  
printer screwed up the printing of the last Progress Report, and how screwed  
up the hotel contract was (with no concomitant explanation of why they'd  
signed such a screwed up contract).

As usual, the session provided more of an opportunity for people to unload  
frustrations than a useful exercise for the committee (although the suggestion  
of "trouble tables" to give on-the-spot answers about the ever-changing  
schedule was a good idea). Unfortunately, Rick and Mike were on the spot  
undeservedly - defending a last-minute schedule that was last-minute through  
no fault of their own. Guy seemed to be the only one willing to take  
responsibility for his actions, and even he seemed to think that explaining  
how hard everyone had worked to pull things together was sufficient response.

Luckily, the session ended on a light note when a misguided fan decided to  
defend the committee. One of the arguments he used was that everyone running  
the convention was a volunteer, and "it's not like they were professional  
travel agents." Rick Foss, who is a professional travel agent, stalked out of  
the room with a mock scowl, and fans who knew him collapsed laughing.

After the Gripe Session, I bumped into Vic in the lobby, who volunteered to watch me pack and gossip for a while, since we hadn't seen each other much during the con. He entertained himself with my Westercon report and asked about my work, and caught me up on his doings over the past year. We walked to the other hotel to pick up the staff T-shirt Glycer had ascertained were up in Guidry's room (and then the committee had the gall not to send anyone to help pass them out)! I went back to pack the staff shirt and Vic helped me lug my stuff down to the airport shuttle. The flight back was made pleasanter by the company of Ulrika Anderson (who'd also been part of the LA Save NolaCon Programming from Itself staff) and fellow LASFSian Michael Donohue).

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\* **EPILOGUE** \* This was the most irresponsible and inept worldcon committee  
 \*\*\*\*\* I've ever seen or heard of. They seemed to have no sense of responsibility, no sense of what it would take to plan or run a worldcon, and no sense of what they'd done wrong! Had various experienced worldcon-running folks and friends not felt a strong-but-inexplicable desire to pull it out of the fire, the convention would have been a disaster. Had the con been in a city like Phoenix or Denver without close recreational activities and restaurants, the committee would have been lined up against the wall and shot. As it was, most people just went to the French Quarter and had a good time in spite of the program and running of the con, and the committee managed to escape nearly scot-free, which is undoubtedly what they were counting on all along. As for me, the convention was worthwhile if only for the opportunity to spend some time with George and Eve and see fellow SFPAns. However, it's the first worldcon ever that I was not sorry to see end.

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 \* JANICE'S NINTH (SORT OF ANNUAL) WORLDCON AWARDS \*  
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\* **BEST BUTTON** \* In a stellar year for Nancy Lebovitz, the winner is:  
 "This life is a test. It is only a test. Had this been an actual life, you would have received further instructions as to what to do and where to go. You may or may not receive an actual life later."

\* **BEST T-SHIRT** \* [In Coca-Cola lettering]:  
 "Trek Classic. The Original Generation"

*Special non-SF T-shirt award (shirt spotted on the street):*

[under a drawing of a bush]:  
 "George Bush: Vegetable or noxious weed?"

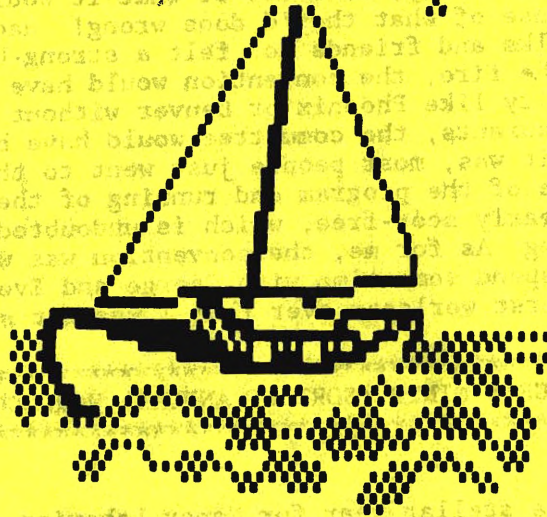
\* **BEST HUCKSTER ARTIFACT** \* Padded backpacks in the shapes of dinosaurs

\* **BEST OVERHEARD CONVERSATION** \* [In a discussion of the Zagreb bid:]

Philadelphia fan David Axler:  
 "I don't want to go to Zagreb. Serbo-Croatian's one of those languages where r is a vowel!"

\* Lists of previous winners available on request

# THE BOAT



## IT'S STILL NOT TOO LATE!!

(SEE JOHN GUIDRY, JUSTIN WINSTON  
GUY LILLIAN, III, DENNIS DOLBEAR  
AND OR JIM MULE TO REGISTER YOUR  
CHANGE OF VOTE)