



the stellar cavalcade of
Chicago conventions, camaraderie,
and the glory days of fandom...

delphic woods copyright 1991

1991

1991

"6 in 60"
edited by Marcy Lyn-Waitsman

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An Incomplete Look at 60 Years of Science Fiction Fandom in Chicago ..and beyond
1940 1952 1962 1982 1991 2000

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Many thanks go to many people for their help and patience. Thank you to everyone who responded to our requests by sending a story. You are the ones who really put this together. Thank you Chicon 2000 for underwriting it. I especially want to thank my husband, Barry who has put up with papers scattered all over the house, and who took over all household duties including taking our two kids for school supplies and starting our son on driving practice. *I LOVE YOU BARRY!*

Illos., some of which were taken from old Windycon Program Books.

Delphyne Woods	Front & Back Cover
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filed at 7/1/00 (Queen)

Welcome to Chicago

We have here a long and glorious history of looking toward the future here. The second Worldcon was held here in Chicago in 1940, 60 years ago. Chicago, with this, our Sixth Worldcon, will have hosted more than any other city -even New York! Therefore we call our Journey Through Time, 6 in 60, for 6 Worldcons in 60 years.

Yes, this is the 58th Worldcon, but that is because of minor interruptions like WWII.

Anyway, some of these tales are about conventions, some about clubs and all about people. With lots of personality.

You may ask, who are you, Marcy, to put all this together? When I was ten, I read Madelyn L'Engle's book, "A Wrinkle in Time", and I was hooked. When I entered high school (as part of Lane Technical High school's first class of females) they had a Science Fiction society that I immediately joined. (I recently learned it was started in the 1920's!) There I made friends that I still see today at conventions. Well, one of our members was a huge astronomy fan (big surprise) and met members of the University of Illinois Chicago Circle Campus SFS. Well, we high school kids started going to their meetings after school on Fridays. At one of these meetings, Doug Rice, a regular club member, came in and made an announcement. "Some people I know, Mark and Lynne Aronson are going to put on a local Science Fiction convention. Would anyone like to help?" Hands shot up. So, my first convention was Windycon I in 1974, where I worked registration. And I've worked every one since in some capacity. Also various Worldcons and regionals. Oh, yeah, I was in SCA too. Founded the Shire of Far Reaches in Carbon-dale Illinois. I guess I have trouble saying no.

My husband and I have also integrated fandom into much of our life -FIAWOL- and have noticed that our main core of friends, if not met in fandom, have entered it with our encouragement. Our wedding, our son, Paul's, Bar Mitzvah and our yearly New Year's Eve Parties have been hailed as fannish events, by sheer percentages. Probably our daughter, Shaina's, Bat Mitzvah, March 17, 2001, will also be so acclaimed.

Unfortunately, I've always been too lazy to do fanzines, but I have finally been forced into it. As Keeper of the Windycon Archives, my basement holds dubious treasures, which I encourage to you to enjoy at the Fandom in Chicago Exhibit which is part of Planet Chicago.

Just to warn you, I couldn't resist adding occasional comments. You will know it's me as it will appear as (blah, blah, *ml*) or *blah, blah *ml*. I have also semi-randomly bolded and underlined names, etc. that people might be interested in, since there is no index, but lots of info. Unfortunately I was not able to collect all the info I wanted, but who knows? There may be a part 2.

I guarantee that you will find out something new in these pages.

Marcy Lyn-Waitsman
Editor, "6 in 60"

SIXTY YEARS -- THAT'S NOT TOO MANY!

Bob Tucker

(The late Charles Burbee would have declared this so.)

The change in world conventions over a sixty year span is tremendous. Amazing, yes; wondrous, yes; astounding, yes; and perhaps weird as well, but stupendous overall. I was on the sponsoring committee for the first Chicon in 1940 and two sharp differences between when and now stand out in mind: money and mobs.

In 1940 there was no charge, no fee of any kind to attend our convention--you needed only to come to the door and walk in. The convention took place in a rented hall in a downtown (Loop) hotel and we had 128 attendees. One of my convention jobs was to stand by the door with a registration book and ask each newcomer to sign in with name, city, and state. Afterward I counted the 128 names and realized that **Ray Palmer** (then editing **Amazing Stories**) had signed five times--his own name followed by four of his pseudonyms. But all fandom was not plunged into war.

I don't remember seeing more than a hundred people in that hall at any one time; most often there would be from forty to seventy fans present. Always present for every session was an articulated skeleton seated on a chair on stage, a skeleton owned by an Indiana fan club and brought with them to the convention as a surprise guest. It did not make a speech. Another Indiana fan, **Claude Degler**, made his first public appearance at Chicon.

The meeting hall was paid for by a giant auction of artwork. **John W. Campbell** of *Amazing Stories* and **Ray Palmer** had donated great stacks of artwork to the convention, interior illustrations as well as front and back covers. We had so much art, and 1940 prices were so low, that scores of black and white interiors sold for fifteen to thirty cents each while color covers sold for two to five dollars each. The top price that weekend was five dollars paid for a Frank R. Paul cover.

We held a banquet to honor our guest of honor, **Dr. E.E. Smith**, he of the *Lensman* novels. Not everyone present could afford a banquet ticket but about fifty people met the stiff price of \$1.25 per plate and dined on the traditional rubber chicken.

It wasn't necessary in 1940 to bid for future world conventions several years in advance. The Chicago committee and myself won the right to hold the 1940 meeting by traveling to Philadelphia in October 1939 and asking for a vote of confidence from the fans attending the Philcon that year. It was as simple as that. **Olon F. Wiggins** and **Lew Martin** rode to Chicago from Denver by hitching rides on freight trains because they couldn't afford bus tickets. Why? Because they wanted to sponsor the 1941 convention in Denver. We gave it to them on a floor vote and they did the following year.

The 1940 committee consisted of five high school students in Chicago, and myself in downstate Illinois. I was the graybeard of twenty-six and the students wanted a doddering oldster on the committee for balance. We had a free gate.

Sixty years -- that's not too many!

George Price, "is" Advent

written from a chat with George by Marcy Lyn-Waitsman

Many of us who grew up in Rogers Park remember going to the monthly Saturday night Price party. George Price was our host for this friendly gathering. Before the parties though, George had already been busy.

Around 1954, George came home from the Army (an officer, of course) and enrolled at University of Chicago. U. of C. had a Science Fiction Society, which he joined. He soon became president of the club in 1960. After being president for 4 years, he sent out an announcement. He would resign as president —enough is enough— and started holding monthly Saturday S.F. get-togethers. Parties were held regularly at 1439 W. North Shore starting in 1965 and all the college kids came. Unfortunately the club died soon after, but hey, the party was still on.

If you were looking for Chicago fen, his place was **the** place to be. You would find, among others; Phyllis and Alex Eisentein, Mark and Lynn Aronson, Louie Grant, Neil Rest, etc. In the mid-70s many new faces showed up from UICC and DePaul: Phil Foglio, Doug Rice, Ernie Marrek, etc, etc.

In 1994 he moved away from Rogers Park to Jefferson Park, as his employer had moved to Des Plaines.

What else does George do besides throw parties?

He edits. In 1951 George was hired by Advent Press to join their fledgling born in 1949.

*In the late 1960s, Osten, with other Baltimore SF fans drawn from the Baltimore Science Fiction Society co-founded by Chalker, started one of the first "service bureau" type computer typesetting companies and this made Press typesetting easy. George Price of Advent provided a great deal of early support and advice to Chalker's operation and was a guiding spirit behind the scenes, as well as Ed Wood and others and this provided a great deal of continuity from the old to the new.

Advent Press has recently acquired the publishing rights to **E.E. Doc Smith's** only non-Science Fiction stories. The estate has given Advent all rights and it should be out in around three months.

KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN FOR IT!

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from Mike Resnick

"The Chicago fan group met at George Prices on the 3rd Saturday night of every month for years. When George got into comics and SCA fandoms, a number of us decided to hold a rotating party once a month. The hosts were us, the Stopa, the Becks, the Passavoys, the Aronsons, the Eisensteins (though they never once hosted one), Ben Solon (ditto), and perhaps one or two others that I'm forgetting."

Sam Mosquitoewitz Ripped My Flesh

by Jon Stopa

Hi, I'm your **Wilcon** host, and I want you to volunteer! Sound familiar? I've been asked by the Chicon committee to assemble a fan history devoted to Wilcon. If you have reminiscences or tales, please write them up. If you have photos, please send me a copy.

The first Wilcon was a one-day-long picnic in **1963**, the year Joni and I got married. I was due to hold the rotating Chicago group party, and, living out in the country, a picnic seemed a good idea. It grew into a convention where the committee (The Stopas and many, many dearly beloved volunteers) supplied the space, the accommodations, the food, the social interface, and sometimes the entertainment.

The next year (we were living upstairs in the ski lodge, at the time) we held a Fourth of July weekend party. A whole 3 days! People (like Bill Malardi) came from as far away as Ohio and slept on couches in the ski lodge. At that time, before the advent of mowing machines at Wilmot, the grass at the area was eaten by herds of cattle. Malardi, a city person, slept on a built-in couch next to a wide strip of lodge windows. Bright and early in the morning he awoke to a herd of mawwing cows pushing up against the glass, just inches away from his face, staring at him. He said he stared right back.

Dean Grinnel, then living somewhere in upper Wisconsin, came down with a mundane neighbor, who proceeded to get so drunk that he was unable to find his way out of the lodge men's room. We had noticed he was missing, and had searched for him for several hours. We were starting to talk about dragging our swimming hole, a deep pond we used for snow making in the winter, when he was finally found, pounding on the restroom wall, calling for help.

A moment must be spent on the pond to give you the true flavor of the early Wilcons: picture, a deep spring fed pond, 150 foot by 150 foot, and up to 18 feet deep. It has diving board high enough above the water to allow you to make truly heroic dives, and a wonderful raft that rode high in the water because Styrofoam was used for its flotation. This enticed swimmers to play king-of-the-raft because it tipped over easily. A great place on a hot day. it's fortunate that evolution does not allow people to acquire gills by living in the water. Our daughter Deb hardly ever left it.

When we moved into our house, several years later, people slept on couches, chairs and on 3 inch thick foam pads laid on the floor. I can remember a fan arguing with my dog Blacky about who had ownership of the space under the dining room table. Clever people decided that it was better to sleep out in a tent, and soon the lawn was covered with a sea of tents of every description. Some even kept the owners dry when it rained. Killer poker games went on in the basement, vying with killer games of Frisbee out among the tents.

One year Debby, who was about ten years old, organized the some two or three dozen fan kids, creating a theater company that mounted a production of a play she had written. This was a mercilessly, hilariously, funny twitting of Larry Propp, the Chicon Worldcon co-chair. Super Plop, was the production's name; it was the story of the wealthy Lawyer, **Larry Propp**, who puts on his magic body girdle to be-

come Super Plop. Larry was, well, stout. Super Plop, like Batman, answered calls for help by the Commissioner, who used a 911 search-light to get in touch with him. Larry took it like a good sport, which goes to show that being a fan politician is a lousy job. True, the production did help make Larry a legend in his own time, something that I'm sure he relished.

Breakfasts and suppers were amazing. As Wilcons broke the 65 attendees level we started using the ski lodge's fully equipped restaurant kitchen. Teams of volunteers created advanced culinary masterpieces. (Well, usually.) Lunch was the traditional brats and burgers, prepared on charcoal grills by circles of male fans exhibiting bonding behavior. It was like a three day summer camp, with everyone cheerfully volunteering to do everything from cooking to clean-up. Ahem. Some had to be assigned tasks.

The **Society for Creative Anachronism's Middle Kingdom** was created on our back porch. David Friedman became its king upon wining the joust held in our back yard under an oak tree. We, ourselves, lost interest in SCA when we became aware that SCA people had no sense of humor. Royal touts, who made wagers on the winners of the jousts, and crooked bishops who sold indulgences, etc., were not appreciated. They rejected my taken name, Sir Beetle of the Bailey.

Many a fannish legend, like **Bob Tucker, Gardner Dozois, Andy & Jody Offutt** etc. attended. **Mike Glicksohn** came from Canada with his cards, his Scotch, and his fuzzy beard. Some females said he was cute. The **Lessengers, Scott Imes, Chuck Holst, Cat Ocel**, etc., were part of a big contingent from the twin cities. The **Becks** came from Indiana. **Dana Siegel** came from Detroit, Chicago, Minneapolis, Boston, etc. **Elan Litt** came from New York. Others came from Kentucky, Michigan, Iowa, Ohio, etc. **Mark Riley** we almost always had with us. Alas, we got older and tired and we shrunk Wilcon down to one day. (Also, alas, we have lost access to the lodge kitchen.) People still come from distances and we welcome them. Wilcon parties on! (One 4th of July, Barry flew in from Australia and decided to drive up from Chicago to Wilmot after he landed! ml)

Below are the responses that have come in. If I cruised by you, or haven't told the story with precision, set me straight. Give me the date if I didn't get it right. Don't be excluded because you didn't write it down! Eventually it will be corrected.

Neil Rest: Wilcon stuff

I arrived into Chicago Fandom near the perigee of Wilcon. The backyard tent city and the lodge kitchen were already institutionalized.

Without Jon's prompting, most of my memories were of the food. Crews would be organized months in advance, and serious menus created. (That last sentence ought, perhaps, to have several words capitalized.) There was the Middle Eastern dinner, served by sexy women in harem costumes (some of whom were so high they had trouble getting into them). There was the time **David Emerson** stayed up half the night making a gross of croissant, put them in one of the

walk-in refrigerators, and in breakfast line, everyone had croissant 60 seconds out of the oven. There was the time I made gado gado (an Indonesian salad). It came out very well, but I got the measures wrong, and had half a refrigerator of leftovers.

One of my favorite kitchen experiences was the Great Minneapolis Fruit Salad Breakfast. Ben Lessinger and I pitied (*sic*) a flat of cherries. There were a flat of apricots, two flats of peaches, and I don't remember what all else, served in hollowed out watermelons, garnished with an ornamental presentation carving of a quarter pineapple I'd learned at a little Japanese restaurant. There were, uh, morale aides circulating, and Nate Bucklin was politely refused a place at the work table and forced to just sit on a stool playing.

Officially, there were two rules: Work one cook crew per day, and work one cleanup crew per day. In reality the two rules were: Work one cook crew and one clean-up crew per day; and keep Joni happy (not a challenge, but occasionally jumping to attention when something needed attending to.)

There was the summer Larry Tucker shot some of FAANS at Wilcon. The movie never did explain what had gotten Jon behind the bar. The scene with the ladies in white summer dresses drinking water out of vodka bottles and managing to get shitfaced anyway was pretty funny.

But back to the "rules". There was the summer Joel Lessinger did absolutely nothing except play poker. The next year, courtesy in part of Dana and Midge, his lover, his ex-wife, and each of his children got personally addressed invitations, but he did *not*.

And Riley managing to crash into a tree at least once a summer, chasing a frisbee. Heck, Wilcon is the reason I own a tent! The odd path through the brush at the back of the back yard and across the parking lots led to the lodge. One year, I got a bike carrier for the back of Susan's car, and we brought our bicycles. It helped a lot with quick little trips to the lodge.

Yeah, Elan Litt had special privileges: she had a permanent reservation on a long chair on the back porch to sleep. I recall, too, one of my earlier years, helping Scott Imes with some of the (pre? post?) house cleaning. (Incidentally, a great way to get one's invitation renewed!)

And the years with rain! Real tests of tent-pitching. My own favorite spot is off to the side, where the morning sun shines directly on the tent the latest!

It may be just as well that this is just about Wilcon. I'm not sure how, or what, or how much to write about certain other parties up there . . . The time Susan and I set off Jon's brand new burglar alarm, and I finally disabled it with my Swiss Army knife is not the top of the list. And fireworks, too! Being just over the Wisconsin border from Illinois, all the fireworks barns are right on the way! There's a convenient quarry over which to shoot them, too.

--Neil

Gay and Joe Haldeman

Ah, reminiscences! I have a strong memory of waking up in our

tent, wanting to kill Mark Riley because he put loud music on at dawn and started loudly to play frisbee around our tent.

I also remember helping out in the kitchen, washing lots of dishes. Joe wished his kitchen was as big as the one in the lodge.

Joe remembers skinny dipping in the pond and being nibbled by fishes. {The fish had sharp little teeth and were intrigued by human sexual characteristics. (J.S.)}

Never played cards so much in my life. Can't remember what we were playing, except that I did play poker.

Oddly enough, I don't remember being bothered by the mosquitoes. I do remember having lots of good conversation and many laughs with Joni and you and many others. Thanks for the good years.

--Gay

Marie Bartlet-Sloan

Favorite memories of Wilcon -- there are so, so many. Thoughts of Hillarie and Mark remind me of the time Mark passed out drunk and the ladies did him up in eyeliner, eye shadow, lipstick, the whole nine yards. I have photos somewhere as proof. One sterling memory is of staying up all night talking on the porch, then going out at dawn with Joni to pick and eat raspberries right off the plant. She taught me so much about gardening.

--Marie

Mark and Lynn Aronson

I guess that Phyllis and I came to the first Wilcon because I had access to a car. In it was Phyllis, Louie Grant and me and maybe George Price, who remembers.

I'm afraid that my most vivid memory involves the summer that Louie died. I had to go down to the end of the road to make sure the ambulance found the house. He had been such a lovely part of Chicago fandom. The man knew the answers to everything. I recall his business card which read "Louie Grant, genius". I supply my own pencil." He read more than any other person I knew and would have been a part of our wedding but did not live into 1969 (the year we married).

At the next Chicago fan meeting in Hyde Park, the elevator kept coming up to the 9th floor (or whatever floor we met on) with no one in it. He had a strong personality.

Many of you never had the pleasure of being friends with this delightful man. Alas, your loss.

Of course, food took on major importance at Wilcons and Joni's prowess in the garden, which provided such wonderful produce, was legendary.

We did feel privileged in that we often had the guest room reserved for us. I never knew why we were the lucky ones.

--Mark and Lynne

Dana Siegel

I have so many memories of Wilcon, and I can never distinguish

one Wilcon from another, so here's a few of my favorites.

My favorite memories of Wilcon didn't happen at Wilcon, they happened while Midge and I helped Joni work on the guest list. I was living in various places, and didn't get to visit Jon and Joni much. When I did, as soon as dinner was over, we'd sit down at the dining room table, pull out Joni's rolodex, and systematically go through it, from A to Z, talking about every person in it, who they were or won't living with, doing address changes, and should they be invited back (or for the first time) to Wilcon. The more scurrilous the gossip, the better. We generally would skip relatives, and the plumber, and discuss everyone else. It would take hours, and we'd have a great time catching up on all the people. One year, Bob and Ann Passovoy came by, when we had almost finished. We had been up very late the night before, finally all went to sleep, and then had just restarted our "work". Ann asked what we were doing, and when we told her, she said that sounded like fun. So we said we'd do it again, and we restarted a the beginning so she could join in the gossip fest. The whole rolodex (when we only had to do it once) usually would take about 6 hours during which time we'd catch up on everyone we knew.

Memories of actual Wilcons: (in no particular order)

The year that the addition was put on the house, and anyone who arrived early was put to work tiling the bathroom! I can't say that I've ever done that again, and I wasn't very good at it.

The year Mark Riley ran straight into a tree (he said he was catching a Frisbee, but we never really knew) and got knocked out. Marie Bartlett-Sloan referred to the time we did his makeup and nails (I remember she did take some great blackmail photos). The reason we did it was that he had the nerve to pass out at the dining room table where we'd usually hang out. He was in the way of our talking, and we figured we'd make him look better. How he could have slept through the hysterical laughing I couldn't ever figure out. Of course, one Wilcon I was so tired, and sleep deprived that I slept through Gardner Dozois's very funny storytelling in the basement. I wanted to listen, but I couldn't.

The Wilcons that I spent the entire weekend in the lodge kitchen. One meal would be finished up, and it would be time to start another meal. I certainly remember David Emerson's croissants (that Neil Rest refers to), they were some of the best croissants I've ever eaten. The only cool place when it got really hot was the large walk-in refrigerator. I would run in there and cool off (and not always alone).

We'd have just woken up, and were eating breakfast when Jon Stopa would come in and talk about firing up the grill for lunch. He'd been up early, it was lunch time, and whether or not anyone else wanted lunch was irrelevant. He'd fire up the grill, and suddenly everyone would be famished! So breakfast would melt into lunch, which would last until dinner time. Late night snacks were always welcome.

The all-day bridge games and poker games, on the porch. Anytime of day you'd walk by, and there'd be people playing cards. The game almost always included Mike Glickson, but the other players would change every time I walked by.

The tents became an important part of Wilcons, when they got really big. Some people would have parties in their tents, and invite people to come by. Sometimes I was sure Wilcon was really a regular convention, not a little relaxacon. You had the con suite in the

house, the parties in the tents, the card games on the porch, the people coming and going, and the thrill of seeing people whom you hadn't seen in years just show up for the day.

No one has else has mentioned one extremely important feature of Wilcons: The wait for the bathrooms! Especially before the addition added another bathroom, everyone would line up for their turn. And the lines would be very long and very slow. If someone seemed to be taking an unduly long time, people would start knocking loudly on the door and screaming at them to get out. Often there would be more than one person in the bathroom, and washing up wouldn't necessarily be their prime intent. We'd have a lot of fun then harassing them. We were cruel and pitiless. I'd usually sneak into Jon's room and use his bathroom when I got desperate (which was usually at least once per day).

I remember having some of the best times of my life at Wilcons.
--Dana

Ann Cass

I found Wilcon in, I think, 1970. I had gotten into the SCA that spring, and much to my delight, the Chicago group was almost entirely composed of fans, a group which I'd heard about but never encountered. Since I'd been reading SF for 20 years before that (Burroughs at age 4 counts, doesn't it?), they gave me no choice but to come along with them to Wilmot.

I have a few clear memories of that Wilcon, mostly of me saying 'Nobody gets any bacon until it's on the table!' about 500 times. (seems to me that got repeated for the next 4 years or so....). Ruffles (Joni's cat) getting acquainted with my dog Flicka and deciding not to kill her... Joni saying - "You've got to come to Worldcon" and "Why don't you do a costume for the Masquerade?" (a convention? what's that?)

After that, I'm not sure which memories to put with which years. Larry Nichols diving into the pond starkers and finding out the hard way why swimming trunks are useful to break the impact on certain tender portions of the body. An incredible trifle (I think by Neil Rest, but I couldn't tell you for sure) {Everyone who had that trifle remembers it! Pounds and pounds of freshly picked wild black raspberries. Yum! J.S.}

The Offutts and the Offuttspring, Bob Tucker, Bob & Anne Passovoy, Al & Penny Tegan, Jim Hansen, always Larry Propp, Riley alternating between poker and frisbees, Martha Beck, Jackie Causgrove, Alex and Phyllis Eisenstein, Mark & Lynn Aronson, Roland Green and Frieda Murray (now Green), Bob and Penny Tredray, perennially David Friedman, it goes on and on and on and no way to remember them all.

A badge I bought that says "We are not alone, there is always Bruce Pelz." Some fantastic displays of the Northern Lights - no way to see them in Chicago, but going out to the tent at 2 in the morning - wow!

--Ann

Earl Kemp

Of the Wilcons, I especially remember how children were always welcomed, and treated with care and attention. Having been a prolific babymaker, that was always a problem since there was no chance in hell of leaving even one of them behind. And, too, they thoroughly enjoyed the events as well.

One particular non-Wilcon comes to mind. I can't put a date on this but it was definitely after Jon and Joni had been married for some time. (The four of us, Jon, Joni, Nancy and myself, became very close friends and spent many an evening together going to nightclubs...the old No. 1 Playboy Club...around the "Gold Coast" and elsewhere...out to dinner, shows, etc. I at least thought it would never end.) I was having a party in Chicago and for some reason Jon and Joni were not attending it, and they were severely missed. They came up frequently in conversation during that alcohol-fogged night. Consequently, as the party was closing down and numbers of the guests were being ushered out, a separate party began forming.

Sometime after midnight, decidedly legally drunk, some three car loads of revelers took off for Wilmot, determined to party with Jon and Joni. The guest list is not available, but it did include, among others, Fritz Leiber (dignified, classy, even while drunk), Martha Beck, and I don't know who else. In the pre-dawn hours we arrived at Wilmot. Jon and Joni were living above the lodge at the time. Everything was locked up, of course, as it should have been. No amount of noise making, banging on doors, tossing rocks at windows, etc. could arouse anyone around the whole place.

There was nothing left for us to do but strip off our clothes and have a skinny-dipping session in the "pond" which was enjoyed by everyone. Naturally we pissed in the pond as well, mostly because despite all our efforts Jon and Joni continued to ignore us completely.

To this day Jon still has his doubts that that rump (and that's was certainly the word for it) Wilcon ever happened...only it did.

Wilcon is Gertrude Stine and Alice B. Tolkas making hash brownies for little Earnie Hemingway before he turned queer in their Paris salon.



Wilcon is Tom and Terry Pinkert's intellectual salon in California.

Wilcon is all the writers and artists who populated Ajijic during the halcyon years.

Wilcon is...Camelot...for a day...for a weekend...for...ever. Even long after it disappears and becomes only a fragment of a perfect dream, brought to you by Jon with Joni still watching and approving from...up there? from...wherever.

--Earl

Phyllis Eisenstein

My first Wilcon must have been in 1964 because Bill Mallardi was there and Jon and Joni's house was not, and the drunken mundane couldn't get out of the men's room in the lodge. I was eighteen and had driven up for a single day with some other fans, and we whiled away the sunny weather by playing badminton among the cowpats, being nibbled by fish in the swimming hole, and hiking up and down the mountain (which was a lot shorter in those days). In the evening, after we loaded the picnic furniture and ourselves into the back of a pickup truck for return to the lodge, Mallardi kissed me. He was a really good kisser.

It must have been the next year that we picnicked near the newly-dug foundation of the house, which was surrounded by a wire fence to discourage the cows from falling into it. Alexei Panshin, observing small porcelain spheres on the wires, suggested I touch the wire to see if it was electrified. No, of course I didn't, and I still don't know if it really was...(It was. J.S.)

And then the house was built, complete with state-of-the-art sound system and an endless supply of recordings. I can still see Mark Riley dancing to Innagoddadavida, clad only in ragged cut-offs, the sweat streaming off his magnificent torso (ah, the days of our youth!) to form an ever-widening puddle at his feet.

We did a lot of dancing in those days, to work off all the food we ate. Breakfast of killer omelets made by Rick Gelman, accompanied by industrial-strength trays of bacon, and then, just as the clean-up of breakfast was finished, the REAL food would begin -- burgers, brats, mass quantities of spaghetti, chicken, clove-spiced meat-and-something concocted by Dana Siegel and Yale Eidekin, Mother Joni's baked beans (yes!), potato salad, macaroni salad, and more, a vast and dizzying Midwestern smorgasbord of food, food, food as lunch blended imperceptibly into dinner. And all washed down by cases and cases of ancient authentic Terran Coca-Cola or perhaps by your beverage of choice (which you brought along), which had gotten buried in some cooler someplace. Newcomers learned swiftly that Wilcon tap water was undrinkable.

Attendees pretty much divided into two groups -- cooks and cleaners. Alex and I cleaned. Late night would always find me in the kitchen, filling the dishwasher, scrubbing the pots, wiping up spills, while Alex crept about the house gathering scores of empty pop cans and other detritus. And when the multitudes finally settled down for the night, many was the time that I sat at the dining room table with Joni and a couple of die-hards and we would talk and talk until the die-hards gave up and went to bed, and then Joni and I would keep going. And we would try to laugh quietly so as not to wake anyone. That's the way I always remember Joni -- sitting at the dining room table at 3 A.M., gossiping about fandom. Oh, we were cruel. But then, we were charter members of the **Lascivious Ladies League**, founded at one of those early Wilcons, and cruel fan-nish gossip was part of our sacred oath. I still have the leather LLL badge and miniature cat-o-nine-tails that identified us.

Eventually, because Joni kept inviting people she met at conventions, it all became untenable -- 20-some cats, over 100 people, and countless mosquitoes (one year I had 42 mosquito bites, and I never even went outside the whole weekend!). The bathroom lines alone

were worthy of a saga. But in its day, Wilcon was a fannish nexus, even a SMOF nexus. The movers and shakers of Midwestern fandom moved and shook there, sometimes even to the music. Windycon and WorldCon planning went on. And oblivious to it all was Jon's lovable dog, Blackie, whose greatest desire in life was to play fetch. When I think of Wilcon, I think, too of Blackie, the Kerry Blue terrier, dragging a gigantic tree bough out of the slough and up the lawn in the hope that Alex would throw it so he could fetch it back.

But for pure goshwow entertainment, nothing could top the night of the aurora borealis, which streamed out of the northern sky in wedge-shaped swaths, giving the impression that we were all standing inside a giant, dimly-illuminated beach ball. The fireworks at the county fairgrounds just couldn't compare!

And I can't forget loaning Chris Offutt my silver plastic jacket so he could look Cool for the fireworks, and Bob Tucker being led around by Ann Cass before (after?) his cataract operation, and Debby keeping the kids busy with games that always required almost running into every adult in the house, and Lynne Aronson leading theater games in the basement, and Electric Leather! And Jon recruiting Men to Take Out the Garbage, and other people climbing the mountain (which was getting higher every year), and Jon driving me down one of the ski slopes in his Pontiac Firebird while I simulated nonchalance, and Sam the cat lying on my waist-length hair and purring in my ear as I relaxed on a mattress on the floor. And sunshine, and Joni's plants, and my first attack of pollen allergy, which made my eyes and nose swell shut. Oh, there was never anything else quite like Wilcon!

-- Phyllis

Mark Gisleson

My first Wilcon was nearly my last. Something about spending all my time in the basement playing poker and not spending enough time above ground enjoying non-card-oriented vices. This was 1977 or thereabouts, and thanks to our excessive card playing the **Poker Troll** was instituted. After the troll nearly bankrupted all of us in 1978, we mathematically demonstrated that the tariff was too high, and that as a result any long-term game would result in the troll having all the money. We were told that WAS exactly the goal the powers that be had in mind.

I took to this philosophy and in subsequent years helped to stack auctions* so as to pit husbands against wives for the good of the communal pot. Riley and Hillary alone contributed far more to the auction kitty than would be possible now in these days of their having reproduced. Of course, this would have been a pittance had we ever gotten the goods on Bill Hebel, but the one time that happened I squandered the precious intelligence by mentioning the Pink Floyd tickets to Alexia without realizing that Bill would have taken out a secret mort-

I remember the auctions. If you left anything behind that was not perishable, there was a good chance that after some meal as the gang was gathered in the lodge, brown paper bags were pulled out. In those bags could be your favorite towel, or more personal stuff. Our hosts, or their designates, would recite a poem or riddle. You then had to decide if you wanted to bid on that bag. Now some items were common and since you didn't see it until you had won there was always a chance you bought something belonging to someone else. Proceeds went to a fannish charity, I think usually **DownUnderFanFund** or **TransAtlanticFanFund**.

gage to have kept her from finding out (at least not without careful advance preparation).

Technically, I suppose I have gaffed, but the truth be known, I was never much of a science fiction fan. I drifted off into the dark speculative works of Disch and Delany long before I stopped reading fiction altogether in the early '80s. Wilcon was always a challenge for me because of the high fannish quotient, which is what drove me out of fandom more than my not reading SF. I always found, however, that exceptionally high levels of inebriation (or polyinebriation if you want to be technically correct) is a great social leveler, and in that regard, Wilcon was always a great place for great minds to meet so long as you avoided the inevitable morning chirpers and hard core sober types, and weren't a great stickler for factual accuracy, prescient forecasting or unslurred speech.

It's hard not to digress into Riley stories, but the best thing about Wilcon is/was that it was about more than just retelling how the Madman ran into whichever tree on any one of a number of occasions. Wilcon was and is about friends, and the friends you only see at great intervals are some of the best friends to have. Jon and Joni will always be remembered as just that kind of friends by countless hundreds of fans, and Chez Stopa is like a second home for more of us than Jon would like to think about. Who hasn't secretly yearned for a wall sized picture window looking out at a sloping yard with a big rock right in the middle of it? If ever a house deserved a name, this is that house. Fans have been negligent in not naming our Taliesin, our Castle Keep, our Shangri La hidden away in the valley of the shadow of Chicagoan exurbia.

Wilcon will always be a celebration of that other place you dream of when you're doing what you do but wish you were somewhere else.

--Mark

Phil Foglio

Dear John,

If you're ever in town, rest assured that you've got a guest room waiting for you.

As for my WilCon memories, I arrived at WilCon in the mid seventies with a batch of the newer fans; Doug Rice, Alice Insley, Jim Fuerstenberg, Marcy Lyn, Marty Coady.

We found a large, happy community that cheerfully accepted us within their ranks as long as we did our share of the work and didn't snore too loud. WilCons were eagerly looked forward to, and there was a definite fear that if you 'screwed up', and weren't invited, you were in serious trouble with your social set.

A Few Memories

Wilmot Mountain itself

A manmade mountain that I'm told people skied upon in the winter.

There were several of us who made a point of toiling to the top of this damn thing every year, to convince ourselves that we weren't terminally out of shape.

We were, but none of us died doing it, so there.

We were worried because it seemed to get harder every year, until we found out that the Stopas kept dumping dirt on it to make it taller.

Very funny.

The weekend had a running soundtrack provided by the Stopa's extensive record collection and big-ass stereo system.

Marc Riley claimed to have accepted payola or something once, so he usually had the job of DJ. While perusing their record collection, I noticed that there was a lot of stuff that looked interesting, but wasn't getting played. Ever. In a mad fit of recklessness, I put on some Vivaldi.

Screams erupted from the tents outside as dozens of drug trips veered into uncharted waters.

Inside, dozens of older fans shed tears of joy as they realized that they weren't listening to the Moody Blues for the 76th time that weekend.

A minor confrontation let to an executive fiat from the owners of the equipment, and I shared DJ duties at my remaining WilCons.

One of my favorite memories wasn't at WilCon, but involved getting there. Every year WilCon was over or close to the 4th of July.

Fireworks were relished, as it took place in Wisconsin, where fireworks were legal, as opposed to Illinois, where they were not.

Well one year I had a big batch of fireworks that I had picked up at a con down south somewhere. My roommate, Chip Bestler, and I had arranged to ride out to WilCon with Bob & Ann Passovoy. We were to take the 'El' down to where Bob worked, so we would be there when he quit for the day and off we'd go.

Unfortunately, we were a little fuzzy on the actual stop we were to get off at, and therefore, got off at a very bad stop indeed. Bad enough that even two stupid college-age whiteboys from the suburbs could figure out within half a block that they had dropped themselves into a war zone. Without breaking stride we gracefully executed a 180 degree turnabout and headed back to the station.

At this point a large nondescript auto accelerated up next to us and paced us at the curb.

A burly voice called out. "Hey. Kid."

I whispered to Chip, "Ignore them". We shifted into second.

"Hey kid, c'mere." The voice was sharper.

The other denizens of the car chuckled.

Technically, we were still walking, but it was a very brisk walk.

"GODDAMN IT, I'M A POLICE OFFICER!!"

Eek.

They got out of the car.

They had us open our suitcases. They exclaimed at the magnificent diversity of fireworks contained within mine. With stone like faces they listened to our explanation of how we were attending a party in Wisconsin and were most certainly not planning on setting them off in Chicago and sweet Jesus no intention at all of trying to sell them to the locals.

They told us to get in the car.

Once inside the car, they accelerated away and told us that they believed us, because nobody who knew enough to try to sell fireworks in that neighborhood, would be stupid enough to go in unarmed.

They dropped us, and our fireworks, off at a local station house and told us to have a happy fourth of July.

We did.

I have always believed that the police are our friends, and that's my proof.

WilCons were just parties. Parties where people could relax and enjoy themselves. And when you've got that, interesting things happen.

Or could have happened. Or should have.

A good party lasts far longer than the party itself, and is a success if people remember it, and talk about it and get mad or laugh about things that happened at it years later. Jon & Joni threw a giant, successful time-lapse party that spanned years, was always enjoyable, and will be remembered for decades to come.

Thank you for inviting me to your party. I had a very nice time.

Phil Foglio

*The one person whose memories I would like to include, of course, is Joni's.
When time travel is perfected, I guarantee they'll be included.*

Jon Stopa

--This is how many fans were introduced to Wilcons--

Wilcon had its roots in the spirit of Midwestcons of the '50s and a special place at 110th street on Manhattan, called Riverside Dive. A huge, down-at-the-heels apartment, the Dive was the home to four **Fanarchists**; Bill Donahoe, Art Saha, Chuck Friedenthal and Danny Curren. Every Friday we would gravitate there after work and the party would start. We drank wine, beer, and (Ugh) apple wine. Music--classical, show tunes, folk and filk--came from great big speakers, and candles gave it atmosphere. The speakers were capable of blowing out the candles. The parties lasted until everyone finally collapsed. Since the standard couch there was a cot or old bed, many stayed until things started again on Saturday. This often went all night, and I can remember returning home, sleep deprived, Sunday evening.

ISFiC aka WINDYCON

by Mark and Lynne Aronson, taken from a letter sent July, 1976

As the result of a meeting of ISFiC, Inc. — an organization created for the sole purpose of preventing Windycon from becoming the source of contentious politics we send this letter.

I'd like to refresh your memories regarding the creation of both Windycon and ISFiC. Windycon was Lynne's idea — solely, originally and completely. It evolved as the result of a conversation with an East Coast fan of a long acquaintance at the 1974 MiniCon.

But Lynne and I were both aware that it is much easier and safer for a convention to be run as a legally incorporated entity than as a large private party held in a hotel by a few people. Accordingly, we consulted Larry Propp who, as both an attorney and a fan, seemed the most appropriate person to talk to.

Larry ultimately suggested the formation of ISFiC, Inc., or Illinois Science Fiction Conventions, Incorporated. Its structure incorporated Windycon into an organization that could serve as a sanctioning body for other conventions. And also removed ultimate control of Windycon from Lynne and me.

To this last we readily assented. The argument, proposed by Larry and others, was that a great deal of personal resentment would rise against us if Windycon were to remain our personal "property." That such a situation would lead inevitably to an acrimonious political division among the members of Chicago fandom, which had not staged a convention in a dozen years. And that if we were to retain indefinite control, none of the other fans, especially those brought "out of the closet" by the first Windycon, would ever have the chance to chair a convention.

ISFiC's role was to be that of a neutral sponsor, supplying the necessary legal structure for Windycon and other conventions, especially after we stepped down as co-chairman.

So just why the hell did Lynn and I decide to start Windycon, if not for personal gain or prestige or whatever else?

It's a little hard to explain — but be easy to understand.

Windycon 3 will have attending members from England, Canada and Australia — some of whose schedules have been planned around attending Windycon. Not because of us, but because of the convention.

I can't adequately express how that makes Lynne and me feel.

But that sense of personal satisfaction is reward enough. There are no Fan Achievement Awards for building an unknown convention up to the point where it is far more famous than its founding chairmen. Which is just as well, for we have always believed in giving credit where it is due.

At many conventions, we are approached by fans who, recognizing us, compliment some aspect of Windycon — the huckster room, art show, programming, whatever. That's very flattering, I suppose, but we are very careful to make sure he knows who, by name, was in charge of that aspect of the convention. But if they have a bitch, we take responsibility for it and try to find out how to correct it.

Winycon has always been something we wanted to do for our friends, for fandom in general — a kind of payment for the years of enjoyment we had.

Windycon Highlights

Over the years, our concons have devolved into extreme silliness and attempted to "theme" the Windycons and /or add something "a little different" to grab attention. Following is a partial list of Windycons with their particular silliness factor. *ml*

I	The Shape of Things to Come	XI	Bizarre Bazaar
II	Play It Again, Urgfhtjyk	XIII	ISFiC Writer's Contest Begins
IV	Latvian Logenberry Festival	XIV	Frederick Pohl 50th Anniversary Roast
V	Case of the Maltese BEM	XVII	Uncle Lenny's Polka-Rama
VI	Touch of Klass	XX	20th Anniversary-Class Reunion
VII	Tucker for President	XXIII	Twister 30th Anniversary Tournament
VIII	A Holiday Party	XXIV	Scotts in Space
X	Inklings	XXV	Silver Windycon

and this year, 2000 C.E.... Windycon XXVII, The Worldcon is Not Enough.

******Some Memories, but by No Means All******

Lewis Grant, Jr. Memorial Award

Lewis Grant was a fan whose life resembled the literary genre he loved. He was the first of the "blue babies" to survive beyond infancy, a research chemist and Mensa member, an avid collector of fanzines and worldcon program books, a member of the Chicago Rocket Society and a cheater of death. His doctors told him he could take life easy and live a fair span, or continue his mad fannish social whirl and die at any time. Despite his chronic heart disease, he remained a fan.

He was a regular at the old "Tuesday Night Group" that used to meet on the South Side and one of the most incorrigible punsters in fandom.

He died in his early forties - at a convention (the 1966 Wilcon) - and reportedly haunted the memorial meeting that the Tuesday Night Group held for him. His seemingly lost collection of fanzines and vintage Astoundings was recovered several years after his death. According to legend, Louie's ghost directed the finder to the collection's hiding place.

In memory of this valued, loved and possibly not quite departed friend, Windycon has established the Lewis Grant, Jr. Memorial Award for the art show entry judged "best in show" by vote of the attendees. The award has been given annually since 1974 and includes a small monetary prize.

--Robert D. Passovoy

[Adapted, with permission, from the Chicon IV Program Book; © 1982, Chicon IV, Inc.]

IN MEMORIAM CLYDE S. KILBY 1902-1986

Clyde Kilby passed away in his sleep on the evening of Friday, October 17. A Professor Emeritus at Wheaton College, he is best known for having founded Wheaton's Wade Collection, which is the world's largest collection of works and memorabilia by and about J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, Dorothy L. Sayers, George MacDonald, G.K. Chesterton, and Owen Barfield.

In addition to being Curator Emeritus of the Wade Collection, Kilby was a scholar of the first rank, and one of the foremost authorities in the world on C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien. He wrote a number of books, most notably *Tolkien and the Silmarillion*, which was based on the summer of 1966, which Kilby spent with Tolkien. Other books include the beautiful photo book *C.S. Lewis: Images of His World* (with Douglas Gilbert), *Images of Salvation in the Fiction of C.S. Lewis*, and *The Christian World of C.S. Lewis*. He edited some of C.S. Lewis' letters in *Letters to an American Lady*, Lewis' brother's diary in *Brothers and Friends* (with Marjorie Mead), and compiled an anthology of C.S. Lewis' more pithy quotes in *A Mind Awake*.

More than a Scholar, Clyde Kilby was a dear friend, one with whom we spent all too little time — it's sad how that happens all too often in life. His constant warmth and cordiality were accompanied by one of the most brilliant minds we have ever encountered.

We wish that all of you reading this could have met him and shared in some of wonderful chats we had in his living room. We'll miss him very much.

—Ross and Diana Pavlac

WHAT IS AN ISFiC?

by Ross Pavlac

'What's an ISFiC?' may not be the most popular party question at WindyCon, but it does make for an excellent trivia question. Most fans, even in Chicago, are only vaguely aware that ISFiC exists.

ISFiC is *Illinois Science Fiction in Chicago*, and is best known in its role as the parent body of WindyCon.

But there's more to ISFiC than that.

ISFiC was formed in the early 1970's—a period of great change in convention-running in SF fandom. The number of regional conventions was exploding, and it seemed every couple of months a new city would announce that henceforth they would be hosting an annual regional convention. In the course of about five years, the number of SF cons more than tripled.

WindyCon was one of the conventions that led this surge. In 1973, Chicago fans felt frustrated at being in the second largest city in the country, right in the center of the Heartland, and nothing resembling a regional con existed nearer than Minneapolis. Since the Chicon III WorldCon in the early sixties, Chicago fandom had splintered, and there wasn't really a strong local club to serve as a focal point for a con committee, as was the case in Boston, Los Angeles, and other cities.

The Chicago fans then hit upon an idea — if a coalition of people from the various factions and clubs could work together on a local con, then a single large local club wouldn't be needed. Thus was born WindyCon. ISFiC was created as part of this process, to provide continuity in leadership and overall guidance.

But the vision for ISFiC and Chicago fandom went far beyond creating a regional con. Though the initial thoughts were vague, the idea was that ISFiC would act as a sort of clearing house organization for fan activities in Illinois, and do things to support fandom in general.

As with many fannish actions, there was also an ulterior motive. ISFiC's founders, notably Larry Propp, Mark and Lynn Aronson, and Ann Cass, very carefully crafted things as a staging ground to prepare for a WorldCon

bid. Their idea was to have WindyCon not only publicize Chicago's name, but also to act as a training ground for local fans in preparation for a WorldCon bid. The other ISFiC founders, including Jon and Joni Stopa and Mike and Carol Resnick supported the idea. Chicon IV, the 1982 World Science Fiction Convention, came to fruition as a result of this (though Chicon IV and Chicon V, the 1991 WorldCon, as well as Chicon 2000, are separately incorporated and are not directly affiliated with ISFiC). The early WindyCons grew rapidly under such chairmen as Mark and Lynn Aronson, Larry Propp, Doug Rice, and Midge Reitan. Most of the WindyCon staff worked on Chicon IV, and learned even more from that.

After Chicon IV, there was a lot of reassessment of both WindyCon and ISFiC. Having attained the goal of building an ongoing committee that could run WindyCon from year to year (at least, as much as any local group can be said to do that), ISFiC thought about what could be done to make WindyCon a better convention. One factor in this was that WindyCon's excess funds were starting to pile up. As a 501 c(7) corporation, ISFiC is supposed to use excess funds for the benefit of fandom. So rather than let the money pile up or buy clubhouses, ISFiC decided to put the money back into WindyCon in creative ways. One way was in providing grants to WindyCon to bring in special guests over and above the normal guests of honor. In this manner,

WindyCon was able to compensate for the fact that most SF authors and editors live on the East and West coasts. Once we started bringing in authors and editors, many liked WindyCon so much that they have continued coming back of their own accord. Another successful ISFiC project is the ISFiC Writers Contest, which is to encourage new writers. It is unique in offering as first prize a coin of gold, thanks to the brainstorm of former ISFiC board member Curt Clemmer. Once each summer, ISFiC sponsors a picnic in a Chicago park as a gathering for Chicago fandom.

WindyCon is not the only activity ISFiC is involved in. Support has been provided to other Illinois conventions that have an SF, fantasy, or space travel theme. In some cases, the WindyCon art show hangings are rented for a nominal fee (to cover maintenance and upkeep costs). In other cases, grants are provided to bring in special guests. ISFiC is always interested in hearing from groups running Illinois conventions who have a specific project they would like some assistance with. The ISFiC board of directors has nine members, with three directors coming up for re-election each year for a three year term. Any Illinois fan is eligible to be elected; come to the ISFiC board meeting at WindyCon (held on Sunday afternoon) and nominate yourself. Meetings of the ISFiC board are normally held at WindyCon and Capricorn. The meetings are open to the public.



Cheesecake, Fandom, Windycon and the Irregulars

A Faanish Non sequitur, by Bob Passovoy

I guess you have to pick which of these doesn't fit, but you'd probably be wrong.

Windycon was the brainchild of as motley a collection of fans as ever walked the earth. It's success over the years has as much to do with tradition and perpetuating good memories as it does with the desperate need of Chicago Fandom to have one last rippin' good party before having to do all the official family stuff later on in the month. Windycon also had a lot to do with what is probably the second most sinful chocolate dessert ever created.

'Ricia Mainhardt was at that time (and in some sense still is) the single most faunched-after lady in Chicago Fandom. Tall, graceful and stone gorgeous. Ask John Donat if you think I'm kidding. I already had my trophy wife (still got her, too!) and so was relatively safe from the lure of her unspeakable beauty. This became important when, through a series of unforeseen and unpleasant events, she spent several weeks as our house guest.

'Ricia was the second most comfortable guest we have ever had (the most comfortable was 'Becca, but that's another story, and besides, she's off living happily ever after.) but we were not prepared for her absolute devotion to the Dark (brown) Side of the Force. Chocolate, that is. Brown Gold. Swiss Tea.(twang twang yup yup).

We'd been tinkering around the edges of dessert making for years, but with 'Ricia's arrival, we moved into high gear. Multi-layer mousses, Dobosh Tortes, and the Infamous "First One is Always Free" truffles ('Ricia calls them the "Buy My Client's Book and You Can Have Another"truffles) were some of the results. The Ultimate Chocolate Cheesecake, however, seemed forever beyond our grasp.

We had stumbled across a promising base recipe by an obscure pastry chef (Jolene Worthington) in an obscure publication (the Chicago Trib, I think) and for the lack of anything better to do one weekend (remember having weekends like that?) we built one. Sweet? That unreconstructed block of saturated fat could have given diabetes to a stone idol. The substitution of sour for whipping cream came as a result of extensive research and endless late-night sleep. The result is the recipe you see below.

'Ricia and I worked out the truffle recipe together. I could give it to you, but then I'd probably have to kill you. 'Ricia insists.

Recipe to follow..

Dorsai Irregulars

Windycon is also responsible for transforming an attempted practical joke into an organization that has survived 26 years and served Fandom in one capacity or another all that time, and it was all Joni Stopa's fault. At TorCon in 1972 the unthinkable happened. Some FakeFan stole a Kelly Freas cover proof from the Art Show. The whole "Fans are Slans" concept went into the shredder. Everyone was angry, especially Bob Asprin. The following year, at Discon, there was Bob, followed by a bunch of two-left-feet Green Meanies in GIs and berets. "These", announced Bob"are the Dorsai Irregulars. They are the core of a fannish security group offering knowledgeable security services to any convention that sees the need to have something guarding the Art Show smarter than a Rent-a-Cop". The crowd went wild. We found out later (much later) that Bob thought this up as a one-shot. A way of alerting fandom to the need for better monitoring of their vulnerable areas. Poor Bob. Anne and I met him as he came off the stage steps and signed up on the spot. Can you say "Stuck?" I thought you could!

Joni Stopa had just been given responsibility for the Art Show and auction for Windycon 1, to be held later that year. Joni grabbed Bob just as Anne and I finished and said:"Windycon 1 needs your services. Are you for real, or just screwing around?" Bob had no choice. To his eternal credit, he stuck with the idea and it grew. We have not done badly over the years, I think, and, at the beginning, it was **all WindyCon's fault.**

Chocolate Cheesecake

Our signature dessert. Robin insists that it is the only confection noble enough to be considered as a "One True" birthday cake. Powerful enough to stop even the most rabid chocoholic, this puppy can clog coronary arteries at fifty paces.

Crust:

1 package of Famous Chocolate Wafers - 8 1/2 oz.
Pinch salt + cinnamon
1/3 C melted butter

Crush wafers to consistency of meal. Add salt, cinnamon, butter and mix well. Press firmly into 9" springform and chill 30 minutes.

Filling:

12 Oz. semi-sweet chocolate (Maillard's, Lanvin, Tobler, Blommer's, or Ghirardelli)
1 1/2 lb. cream cheese at room temp
1C sugar
3 eggs
2 T unsalted butter, melted
1C whipping cream
1C sour cream
1t vanilla

Preheat oven to 350

Melt chocolate in open double boiler over low heat- set aside.

Beat cream cheese with sugar till fluffy. Add eggs one by one, just incorporating each before adding another.

Add melted chocolate, butter, creams, and vanilla. Pour into springform- do not overfill- smooth top.

Bake for 45-60 min till sides are firm, cool, then chill overnight in springform.

*Just one slice is both too much and never enough. This makes a world-class birthday cake.

Sour Cream Cheesecake Topping

This is kinda fun to slather over the top of the chocolate cheesecake. It's like camouflage. From the top, just another Eli's clone; dig into it and WHAMMO! Chocolate Armageddon!

Cool cheesecake to room temperature and preheat oven to 425.

Mix:

1 1/2 C Thick cultured sour cream
2 T sugar
1/2 t vanilla
1/8 t salt

Mix well and pour over cheesecake. Bake 5 minutes to glaze and then cool, and refrigerate 6-12 hours before serving.

*Never tried it myself- but it sounds good!

Moebius Theatre

by E. Michael Blake

Moebius Theatre is a Chicago-area troupe devoted to live performance of science fiction. Launched in 1976, the troupe has operated steadily since then, with considerable turnover in personnel but overall continuity in its purpose. SF convention attendees in the Midwest know Moebius Theatre mainly for its bare-stage shows of troupe-written sketch comedy, and if the troupe has a lasting legacy, it may be the body of SF sketches created by participants. When opportunities arise, however, Moebius Theatre also works to adapt well-known narrative SF for performance (as with the 1999 audio-only adaptation of H. G. Wells' *The Island of Dr. Moreau*) and to present what has already been adapted for the stage (as with the production of Ray Bradbury's *The Martian Chronicles* here at Chicon 2000).

The troupe grew out of the frequent fannish gatherings that sprang up in Chicago in the mid-1970s. *Windycon 1*, in 1974, gave local fen an awareness of their own numbers, and college SF clubs at DePaul and the University of Illinois-Chicago began mingling with one another, and with more established social fen groups, like the one that met at George Price's apartment. From this ongoing meet-and-greet process eventually grew the quasi-institution of **Thursday Night**, which presumably is covered in more detail elsewhere in this 'zine. From the Moebius standpoint, suffice it to say that these gatherings revealed that a handful of extroverted, audience-hungry convention fen and another handful of more withdrawn, but no less ego-driven, writerly types shared an interest in putting science fiction on stage. This being Chicago, they were all inspired by the improvisational comedy of Second City. These fen being young and not very well-heeled, they followed that inspiration to develop SF for the stage that ran counter to the trend in movies of ever-more expensive special effects. Appealing to the audience's imagination through cleverness in writing and acting was both satisfying to creator and observer alike, and extremely cheap.

The first three shows were small-scale affairs involving adaptations of dialogue-heavy short stories, SF improvisations, and the first few finished sketches. The fourth show, at *Windycon 4* in October 1977, was *Stage Wars* (or, "*Who's Biggs?*"), a parody of *Star Wars*. This show, reprised the following spring at *MiniCon*, gave Moebius Theatre a large and enthusiastic audience in fandom that the troupe has generally managed to retain in the years since. The show had a large effect within the troupe as well, before it was even performed; the many participants who assembled the show (17 the first time, 20 the second) approached the script writing and staging with an eagerness and teamwork that carried over to other projects, months and years later. While it was tempting, however, to switch entirely to film parodies the post-*Star Wars* attitude of the major studios could have made that possible the troupe ultimately chose to continue exploration of new, original SF specifically for live performance, and fortunately the audience (within and beyond SF fandom) went along with it. In the years since then, Moebius has parodied existing SF works from time to time, but not on as large a scale as in *Stage Wars*.

For an outfit that often exists on a bare stage (and the "stage" is often a few hotel risers at one end of a ballroom), Moebius Theatre has not lacked ambition. The troupe moved beyond its usual geographical limits by performing and hosting at fan cabarets at World Cons in Phoenix and Boston. It similarly jumped its sub cultural limits by performing at colleges, in bars/night-clubs, at gatherings of MENSA and the Space Development Conference, and at Chicago Public Library branches (including the old Cultural Center, in a show which we dubbed "*The Dame Myra Hess Memorial Comedy Revue*," which probably means something to you only if you've listened to WFMT for a long time). It broadened its definition of what constitutes a performance through SF-based "environmental theatre" (including murder mysteries, one of them at a World Fantasy Convention)

and deadpan bogus programming at SF cons. It ventured outside the comedy comfort-zone with serious SF efforts, including Moreau (see above), Karel Capek's play *R. U. R.* at **Chicon V** (1991), and *Four Hundred Years Out*, performed both within fandom (**CapriCon 8**) and without (in a directors' showcase at the Theatre Building). It even blurred its supposed amateur status by staging four long-running sketch shows in storefront theatres in the early 1980s (garnering reviews showing that Moebius belonged there at least as much as many other troupes did) and by putting various troupe works on broadcast-quality video through Chicago Public Access. (Laugh all you want about public access, but this outfit kept inviting us back, re-broadcasting what we'd done, and letting us use terrific equipment for free. Where's the downside?)

As is appropriate with any group effort that's this old, there's a mythic vagueness about Moebius that makes it difficult to reduce what the troupe has done to raw numbers. There have probably been as many as 160 participants, about 80 separate productions, and around 150 performances, though it's not always clear what one should count as a "show", especially in the old days when a gathering of three people swapping improvised lines for ten minutes in a semi-public place at a convention was sometimes later thought of as a "show" by participants and audience alike. The troupe has managed to be more scrupulous about the actual written material (including improvised-line-swaps that were later considered good enough to write down), as shown in the accompanying chronology: Moebius participants have created eight plays, nearly 300 sketches, two murder-mystery scenarios, more than 30 song parodies, and at last count about 15 hours of bogus convention programming.

The troupe's success may have as much to do with the acuity and eagerness of the audience as it does with the same traits in the participants. The Midwestern fannish audience is probably as hip to bare-stage and improvisational techniques as the performers are, and it is willing to support whomever will put on a good show. This has helped the development of another troupe, **Spacetime Theatre**, which was organized by former Moebians who chose to explore performance improv more than Moebius has done.

What's next for Moebius Theatre? Depends on who's around and what they want to do. The troupe has always been steered by its most active participants, and so should it be. Nit-pickers could probably separate Moebians into about fifteen generations, most of which are at least on speaking terms, but all of which eventually face being seen as irrelevant in the eyes of those who come later. Doom has been predicted for the troupe many times in the past, but somehow it has endured—clinging to that core idea of creating science fiction for live performance—and continues to be ambitious. There hasn't been a webcast yet . . .



Some Notes by Phil Foglio

Chapter 1 -Spontaneous Generation

When I first moved to Chicago, in 1974, there was no real regular fannish get-togethers. Organized fandom was practically nonexistent. The only remnant was a party that was held once a month at the book-choked apartment of a fellow named **George Price**.

The new crop of fans pieced together the story that Chicago had once been a hotbed of dynamic Fannish activity, until it had hosted the Worldcon. This would have been **Chicon 3**, which was in 1962. What happened at that time was never made clear, but apparently running the convention drove the Fans of Chicago mad. We heard rumors of divorce, insanity, cannibalism and blood feud. The damage done to Chicago fandom was total. It self-destructed entirely and simply did not exist for close to twelve years, until new science fiction readers went to college, and discovered school records that told of organized science-fiction clubs, once active and now dormant.

Of these new groups, the clear leader was the **University of Illinois, Circle Campus**. They actually published a fanzine (**Tesseract**) and had an office and everything. The Group I belonged to, (**The DePaul University Society of Science Fiction Freaks and Armchair Speculators**) consisted of four people and when we met on Friday in the cafeteria, our first and only order of business was to head out to Circle Campus for their meeting.

The people I remember from those days were, in no particular order, Chuck Ott, Jeff Duntemann, Ernie Merrick, Alice Insley, Doug Rice, Jim Fuerstenberg, Chip Bestler, Marty Coady, Marcy Lyn, E. Michael Blake, Talia St. Louis, Elliot Grunberg, Steve Johnson, Dave Johnson and a batch of happy, smiling people who I leave to others to name. Sorry folks.

That was also the year that Windycon I happened. Naturally, we were thrilled. A science fiction convention in our own city! What a neat idea!! The convention was put on by Mark and Lynne Aronson. Two very nice people who went out and founded a great convention. Just like that!

We went that first year, and were exposed to the happy menagerie of older fans and pros that inhabited the Chicago area, and like tiny mammals who had begun to realize that what with that meteorite and all, those horrible dinosaurs really were gone and it was A New Day, were starting to climb back out into the light and look around to see who else was still around.

Chapter 2 -The Thursday Night Irregulars

The Thursday Night Irregulars started because Jim Fuerstenberg was a Driving Fool. There were a small group of us; Jim, myself, Chip Bestler and Steve Johnson, to name the core group, who thought nothing of driving to far off conventions in Columbus OH, Nashville, TN, Louisville, KY, Minneapolis, MN, Kalamazoo, MI, etc. We were in college, and therefore felt free to not show up on Fridays whenever the fancy took us, and like I said, Jim's idea of Heaven was a fast car and a strip of pavement stretching off in front of him as far as the eye could see. Naturally, if we were going to make this marathon trip, we wanted to squeeze the most out of the experience, which meant we left Thursday night/Friday morning, so we'd arrive when the con was just starting.

We began getting together on Thursday night before the trip. We started telling people that there was going to be a party. Why not? we weren't going to bed, so let's get an early start on the festivities. These were fun. At the time, Doug Rice and I were living in a wonderfully large apartment in Rogers Park. The address was **7660 N. Sheridan**. This made a great venue to hold said parties, as we could fit in a lot of people.

The next step came because I am, at heart, a lazy person. Left to our own devices, Doug and I lived like a pair of wild boars, and the apartment reflected this. However, when people were due

over, the specter of my mother (still alive and doing fine as I write this, thank you) would rise before me and force me to clean up. I found I liked living in a clean apartment. I could find things, our cockroach problem was pretty minuscule, and it totally amazed and impressed people of the female persuasion. The next step was simple; *If We Have a Party Every Week, We Will Forced To Clean The Apartment Every Week.*

This was the driving Force behind the Thursday Night get togethers.

Theoretically anyone could host a Thursday, but in actuality, this was pretty rare. Perhaps one of the reasons it stayed at this location was that that I lived in this apartment for over four years, until 1980. During that period it seemed like people moved to a new apartment almost every year, and 7660 was a rock of permanence.

During my tenure, I remained while a number of roommates after Doug Rice came and went, amongst them were Ben Zuhl, Doug Price, and a mysterious man known only as Captain Jetsam.

In 1980 I moved to New York City. The apartment passed on to two femmefans, Amy Schaeffer and Martha Soukup.



Jeff Duntemann's Semiamnestic History of General Technics, or the early parts that I can remember, at any rate. Or maybe not.

History is written by the victors—except, of course, when the victors forget to take notes. Then history is anybody's guess. What I'm saying here is that **nobody thought** anything momentous was happening in 1975 when GT began to coalesce out of 555 chips and the usual fannish social misfits. Nobody took notes, and here we are, 25 years later, and **nobody's quite sure** exactly what went on.

So I'll do my best, and feel free to correct me. That's the **nice thing** about the Web—I can rewrite history and HTTP it back up in 90 seconds or less. Nero **should have had** it so good, right?

The First Age

As best anybody can remember, the earliest triggering incident that led to GT was Jim Fuerstenberg coming up to Tullio Proni at some con in the summer of **1975 and saying**, "There's this guy in Chicago that you just gotta meet!" The guy thus mentioned was **Steve Johnson**, who had simultaneously and independently invented what I tried to call Trekkie Blinkers and everybody else called Blinkies. (I'm not much for jewelry or other ornamentation, whether wrapped around, stuck into, or hung from my mortal carcass.) But they were all the rage in 1975, to the extent that some yahoo (was his name Kleiner? (*I remember Klein, ml*)) actually got a patent on jewelry that **blinks** and thus gave me my first convincing evidence that government functionaries were idiots. I haven't changed my mind.

It may have been Windycon 1975 at which Tullio finally walked into a room, his blinkie blinking away, and saw Steve blinking similarly at the opposite end of the room. The two of them started talking, and Steve began mentioning other names from the Chicago community who were into the hands-on technology culture: Gus Flassig, Bill Colsher, Mike O'Brien, ... and of course me. I had been Steve's entry port into fandom while Steve was still at DePaul University, from which I had graduated in June of 1974. We had caravanned to Discon '74 in my mom's '65 Biscayne along with Ernie Marek's celebrated '64 Chrysler Newport, which had in 1972 led our (mostly) successful techie solar eclipse expedition to the mouth of the St. Lawrence and by then had been dubbed "Time Enough to Rust."

My guess, though I don't remember many specifics, is that we had our first GT meeting at Windycon in October 1975, in downtown Chicago at some ratty hotel on the south end of Michigan Avenue whose name now escapes me. I believe we met again later that year at Chambanacon, and most people remember a meeting at someone's house at which we **actually got down to some specifics**. Nobody agrees on whose house it was, but my guess on that point is Fuerstenberg's. We discussed what to call ourselves at some length. I remember arguing that we should be "Norlamin," after Doc Smith's planet full of crackpot techies (and I confess I didn't care much for *Stand on Zanzibar*) but I was voted down, and General Technics we became.

I do know that GT was off and running by the time Chip Bestler held his New Year's Eve party in Wheaton on December 31, 1975. Most of the founding GT community was there, and I distinctly remember Tullio giving me stamps on behalf of his friend Sarah (whose last name I have forgotten) for the upcoming first issue of PyroTechnics.

We had discussed many things that fall, from membership cards to a newsletter to whether or not we should actually ask John Brunner if we could use the term "**General Technics**," which was the name of the faceless global conglomerate from his novel *Stand on Zanzibar*. Steve wrote to Mr. Brunner, who most graciously responded by postcard and said it was **fine by him**. Most of us, myself included, consider that event the formal Point of No Return. We were **committed**. (Or should have been.) We were an Organization.

Or maybe not. Nobody wanted to handle Real Money, **but printing** and mailing a newsletter was not a zero-cost endeavor. So I had the notion that I would **simply collect** first-class stamps from people who

wanted the newsletter and keep their stamps in an envelope. Each time I would print a newsletter I would pull one stamp from each GTer's envelope, and it was the responsibility of all concerned to keep their envelopes from running out of stamps.

Postage was really the only cost we had. In the fall of 1975 I was a Xerox repairman, and the Xerox machines up at the Xerox offices at 222 South Wacker *had no meters on them*. I had to be discreet, but in truth for the small quantities I was printing nobody much cared. The downside was that the copier maker's children often go barefoot...er, get stuck using copiers that weren't in the best possible shape. The machines up at the office were in need of work, but as they weren't revenue producers nobody bothered until they practically melted down. So the first issue of PyroTechnics isn't dazzling in terms of reproduction. But it was free, and it was Ours. I mailed it from my mother's basement in mid-January 1976.

The Second Age: Going National

GT's First Age was short, and I define it as the formative period when things consisted mostly of the Chicago techie crowd plus Tullio. Things began to happen quickly in late winter and spring of 1976. I moved out of my mom's house on February 1 to an apartment in Rogers Park, where I had been spending a lot of time anyway at the homes of several notable fans, first George Price and later Phil Foglio, the man who inaugurated the long running Chicago custom of **Thursday Night Meetings**.

More importantly, I had worked up the nerve to formally ask my management if I could run "a little newsletter for my science fiction club" on better-maintained machines up at the Xerox offices. I had not expected to be given *carte blanche* to the Biggest Xerox Machine Of Them All, the astonishing model 9200 duplicator, which not only printed a rip-roaring two sheets per second using a novel, shiny toner that looked (as someone later commented) as though it had been polished with Turtle Wax, but it could reduce large originals onto 8 1/2" by 11" paper. Still, John Moritz pointed at the monster machine (which was literally the size of a small car) and said, Hey, go ahead, just don't break it, OK?

Whoa.

I huddled with Mike O'Brien, who worked somewhere downtown that gave him free access to Unix systems, and we created a new design for PyroTechnics that played to the strengths of the 9200 duplicator. I gave edited articles to Mike, and he (God love 'im!) re-keyboarded them all into nroff. Mike then printed the articles out in 5" wide columns, justified on both sides, and gave them back to me. (Later on I was to coin the mnemonic phrase "Five inches wide, and justified!" so that other people who had Unix systems could send me pre-formatted text and save some wear on Mike's poor fingers.)

I spent a day or two on my roommate's big dining room table in our apartment, sticking column-inches of copy to 11" X 17" construction paper sheets using little loops of Scotch tape and occasionally mucilage. Headlines were typeset with Mekanorma rub-down letters. Our end-bug was a DataK printed-circuit resist pattern for the 741 op amp. I created whole new departments, like the Mob List, Quarks, and It May Or May Not Come In The Mail. The vision was coming together, and without realizing it, I was laying the foundation for a whole new career for myself in publishing that would not manifest for another nine years.

Pyro #2 was an astonishing thing to all of us. Nobody had anticipated an odd effect of reducing pasteups when reproducing them: Small errors got even smaller and mostly vanished. The pasteups looked hasty and amateurish to my over-critical eye, but once the reduced 'zine rolled out of the 9200, it was *gorgeous*. The 9200 had been designed to do justice to artwork, even artwork with continuous tones and large black areas. Photographs were no problem. Fan art looked terrific. And *PyroTechnics* took on the look it would have as long as I continued to produce it.

But more than anything else in that season, GT was going national. Word was getting out fast, and I was receiving envelopes full of stamps from every corner of the country. From being a local Chicago con suite phenomenon, we quickly were becoming a national fannish commonplace and force to be reckoned with.

At every con we attended, we picked up members. The gadgets got better: Tullio and Steve were making all kinds of blinking whimsies, including circles with LEDs that ran around the edges, 7-segment displays that blinked blockish letters, little warbling noisemakers Steve called Annoyatrons, and who knew what else. Steve and especially Tullio were becoming secret masters of acrylic in that time period, and each time we saw them they had some new marvel made of black and/or transparent polymer.

The Second Age reached its apex at MidAmericon in Kansas City, Labor Day 1976. It was the first truly national meeting of General Technics, and many faces appeared who had theretofore been no more than names scribbled on envelopes full of stamps.

Sometime in 1976 we got the idea of creating our own custom walkie talkies for communication at cons. Dubbed "Techie-Talkies," they were much anticipated, as they would have DTMF encoded calling and some other novel features. (In other words, pound in Tullio's numeric code on the keypad, and only Tullio's radio would break squelch.) Alas, my own RF skills were not up to the task. Whereas I had been a ham radio guy since 1973 and had built several decent transmitters, they were all for the shortwave spectrum. I was attempting to design something for 49 MHz, which is VHF and much fussier about a great many small points of construction, even though the circuits I was using were lifted whole from various ARRL publications like their excellent *VHF Handbook*.

Were I a better-educated engineer I could probably have done it. I still have a couple of abandoned Techie Talkie prototypes in my scrap bins, none of which worked especially well. I do take some pride in our having anticipated the Family Radio Service, which has yielded good, cheap low-power handheld radios for unlicensed short-range communication—like at cons. It just took another 25 years is all, which makes me feel a little less bad about having failed to pull it off in 1976.

The Third Age: Michigan Tech Invades

After seven years of courting and an agonizing engagement spent entirely apart while Carol was at grad school in Rochester, Minnesota, we married in October 1976 and got our own apartment in on Albany Avenue just north of Devon in West Rogers Park. Numerous GTers and other fans were in attendance, including the late Sharon Bloom. (Phil Foglio drew cartoons in our guest book. It was wonderful.) We attended Chambanacon in November of '76, and that's where we first met Mike Bentley and Alice Insley, and probably a few others, who were almost immediately absorbed into the GT community.

But a sea change happened at the Ann Arbor Michigan convention in early 1977, probably February (I forget which one it was—ConFusion?) when we were invaded by techies from the Frozen North. They must have felt right at home; Carol and I took Amtrak to the con, and the train froze to the tracks on more than one occasion. It was at that very cold ConFusion that we first met Al Duester, Bill Higgins, Todd Johnson, and Barry Gehm, and others. Many or most of them hailed from Michigan Tech, and the Permanent Floating Rict Club (PFRC) the Michigan Tech SF society.

From that point on, Michigan Tech fandom came to have an ever-growing presence in GT, to the point where they eventually sort of absorbed it. (My own eventual gafiation in 1984 didn't help.) This was not a bad thing, and GT has done reasonably well since then.

As for *Pyro*, 1977 and 1978 were a sort of golden age. I never again published as many issues per unit time as I published in those two short years—nor did anyone else, as best I know. Having a low-stress job with ready access to copiers helped, of course. I got promoted at the end of 1978, and Carol and I moved to Rochester, NY in late February 1979. Programming computers was *way* harder than fixing copiers, and much of my creative energy was siphoned off to work stuff that might otherwise have fed the 'zine.

Nonetheless, we continued being GTers at a distance, and introduced Jo Anselm Gehm to fandom in 1984, just before I got a much more demanding job in technical magazine publishing and found my energy well drained to almost nothing. After 1984, GT saw a lot less of me. After the Atlanta Worldcon in 1986, it saw almost none of me.

Time to come back. Damn, it's been awhile.

(We agree!! ml)

Star Trek '75 at the Hilton

by Randy Kaempfen

Our group, **Starfleet Command**, was very involved in the promotion of Star Trek '75 at the Hilton. The slides used in the TV commercials were from my collection. Three of us, myself, **Dean Calin**, and **Rudy Linke**, went to WDAI-FM and were interviewed for a promotional radio program. We also spent several days before the convention in Star Trek uniforms, selling tickets at the Hilton.

On the day before the convention, we were doing the same thing. We were supposed to go to Rudy's house to spend the evening before the convention began. In the afternoon, **Lisa Boynton**, the main force behind the convention, came down and asked if one of us would volunteer to hand out press kits at the press conference. I volunteered. I asked her if I could go inside after I handed them all out and she said, "Sure". After I handed out the press kits, I went inside. I was 17 years old and I had never been in this kind of events. There was free food, free drinks (which didn't do me any good), and hundreds of press people. The entire cast of Star Trek was reunited on stage for the first time since the filming of the show. There were easels behind the stars with pieces of artwork (by Kelly Freas, I believe) on them. I listened to all of them talk and took a lot of pictures. Afterwards, since I was the only one in the conference wearing a Star Trek costume, I got interviewed several times. I wound up on the radio and in at least one major Chicago newspaper.

When I left, I returned to where our group had been selling tickets, only to find that they had left for the day. Not only that, but they took my suitcase with them! I had nowhere to stay and no clothes other than the uniform I was wearing. I started hanging around by the bridge set, designed by Mike McMasters, being set up in the International Ballroom. After a while, I got drafted to help. The buttons for the bridge were being cast out of acrylic plastic into trays for mini ice cubes. They were being cast in Mike's room, popped out of the tray when hard, and relayed downstairs to the bridge set for installation. After hours, the Hilton locked several stairways with gates, so getting up and down stairs became a gauntlet to run. By the end of the night, the bridge had taken shape, but I was exhausted.

At the morning gopher meeting, they needed someone to go to O'Hare airport and pick up Jeff Maynard's Andromeda Light Show. I was old enough to drive, but not old enough for the rental truck, so I was picked as the navigator. I had to guide a guy from New York from the Hilton to the cargo area at O'Hare (where I had never been) and back. Needless to say, we made it.

The convention itself was a busy three days. There were many interesting stories: William Shatner getting mobbed on the way in, George Takei going for a lakefront jog with a trail of fans behind him, James Doohan running up and down the aisles of the ballroom giving 'high fives' to everyone who could reach them, Walter Koenig crouching behind the bridge doors waiting to go on, William Shatner getting hesitantly into the bridge set command chair and then pointing forward and commanding "That way!", and the Klingon baggage squad escorting James Doohan onto the bridge.



Queen To Queen's Three

Queen to Queen's Three was formed in October of 1975. It was begun by a small group of Star Trek fans from Rosary College and a few new friends they met at the 1975 Star Trek Convention at the Chicago Hilton. Twenty five years later, only one of the "founders" is still in the group, but the Club they founded is alive and vital and shows no sign of ever ending.

In the early years, QQ3 had lots of grand ideas and plans. The early members had no money and no experience in convention organizing, but they didn't know that so they did it anyway. QQ3 held a Star Trek Mini-Convention at the Playboy Towers Hotel on May 8 & 9, 1976. This convention basically consisted of an exhibit of Star Trek Memorabilia, a continuous slide show, a few dealers, and a masquerade on Saturday night.

About 200 people attended. The club gained about 20 members and lost about \$150 on the project. After much discussion and more planning, we held another Mini-Convention in August of 1977 at the same hotel. We again pulled it off and only lost a little money in the process.

The next few months were interesting. Members came and went. The first Captain of QQ3 resigned while saying she was "dissolving" the club. The remaining members, however, had other ideas. They agreed to continue the group, reorganized the bylaws, and named Mike Jencevice as Captain (twenty-two years later, he is still the Captain).

During the next two years, the club went through highs & lows; at one point we were down to seven active members. But the resurgence of science fiction brought on by the release of Star Wars and the first Star Trek movie helped QQ3 rise from its doldrums. With the folding of the "other" Chicago Star Trek Club (Starfleet Command/UFP) we gained some members (Brendan Lonehawk, Bill Krucek, Randy & Sandy Kaempfen) who have been the backbone of the group for twenty years.

It was during this period that the members of QQ3 began attending "mainstream" science fiction conventions (Windycon, XCon, and Iguacon in Phoenix in 1978, and hundreds of other since then). By 1980, members of QQ3 were becoming management at Windycon and were intimately involved with the Chicon IV bid. At Chicon IV six active members (and two honorary members) of QQ3 were department managers or above.

QQ3 has been an active group. At various times we've had group outings to restaurants, theaters, museums, Great America, and the Bristol Faire. We've published hundreds of issues of our newsletter (The Herald) and three issues of a fanzine (Trilevel). We've traveled together to conventions across the country. We've held hundreds of parties for holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, moving, and just for the heck of it! We've held "Games Nights" so the members can just get together and relax with each other. We provided the entire staff for Spycon for two years and for the Chicago Comicon once. We organized the weddings of several of our group (and even provided the catering for one!). For several years we held our own relaxacon (for QQ3 members and their families) at a hotel near Chicago. We've had dealer tables at many local conventions; for almost twenty years we took a space at the "World's Largest Garage Sale" in Evanston and raised thousands of dollars for club activities and the treasury.

Our members have run departments at many local conventions; At Windycon we have had at least one department manager every year since 1980 and as many as three in a given year. At Chicon V in 1991 we had two Directors, a division manager, and several department heads.

Queen to Queen's Three has become more of a social group with the passing of the years. We now feel no desire to hold our own conventions. The core of the group are special friends who would still get together even without the structure of the group. We've gotten married, had children, and mourned the deaths of fellow members together. The meetings and activities we hold give us opportunities to get together with our good friends and enjoy each other.

This is not to say that we don't have activities. We have monthly meeting and parties at Xmas and after the holidays. We travel together to conventions like Marcon and Chambanacon. We occasionally still have a yard sale to dispose of unwanted stuff and beef up the treasury. Each year at Windycon we have a dealer table.

Members of Queen to Queen's Three are actively involved in "presenting" Chicon 2000 to fandom. Our members include an associate chairman, three division managers, two assistant division managers, several department managers, and a cadre of staff at Chicon 2000.

To quote a line: *"The Adventure Is Just Beginning"*

It started at the '84 Worldcon in L.A.

by Neil Rest

There were 8,000 people there. LASFS had been very aggressive selling all the tickets they could. (Their previous Worldcon had made enough money to buy a clubhouse. This one air-conditioned it.)

One peak experience I had was shared by many other people. The con was in a giant hotel across the street from a giant convention center. On Hugo evening, I went out to cross the street to the Hugos, and . . . there was a line of people the length of the building, up and down the sidewalk. (Damn! Am I even going to get in?!) It turned out the Hugos were in the other direction (and only filled two thirds. I got a fine seat). The big line was people who'd been standing there the entire day to watch all three Star Wars movies end-to-end all night.

Well, sorry, those people don't belong at my Worldcon. (Take the flames, arguments, indignation, &c. offline. That's my feeling)

So I started joking about ways to shrink attendance. Like, have an admission test: You're not physically admitted to the Worldcon until you've shown that you know how to read. In the course of the evening, several people made **more** suggestions for questions for the "test".

Later, I started doing jokes on the old notion of a con on a cruise ship. Like, the big fund-raiser would be the Bermuda Triangle Joke Book: Whenever anyone made one of the stupid, inevitable jokes, we could show them that it was in our joke book, and they were violating our copyright, and we'd charge them a quarter!

The first step over the abyss was running into Larry Todd, the cartoonist. I'd loved his work for a long time (his most famous is probably **Doctor Atomic**), and he has solid fannish credentials. (**He and Vaughn Bode are credited with originating the Worldcon Art Show.**)

A couple of weeks later, I got an envelope of artwork from Larry in the mail. A couple of pages of cartoons, and a full-page little poster which was just beautiful: the classic **cruise ship** poster looking up at the bow of the Normandy, except ~~this~~ one had rocket fins at the bottom, over the lettering, Bermuda Triangle in '88.

So I did up a nice little hoax flyer, and mailed a couple hundred, postmarked Breckenridge Colorado (site of an earlier hoax bid). By return mail, I got two one dollar bills, from Minneapolis. This was not good, but I didn't yet know how bad. My **figurative** fingerprints must have been all over that flyer; my real ones weren't!

People kept saying, "That's great!", and I said, "I'm glad you like my stuff." They said, "I want to go!", and I said, I was kidding. It's a joke." They said, "I'll work." I said, "Oh, shit." Then came the one episode which I can never forgive. Unfortunately, it was pivotal. Someone went to a travel agent and tried to find out how much it would really cost to take a major cruise ship for a week. Much later, much too much later, when it was way too late, we found out that his figure was just over half of the real price . . .

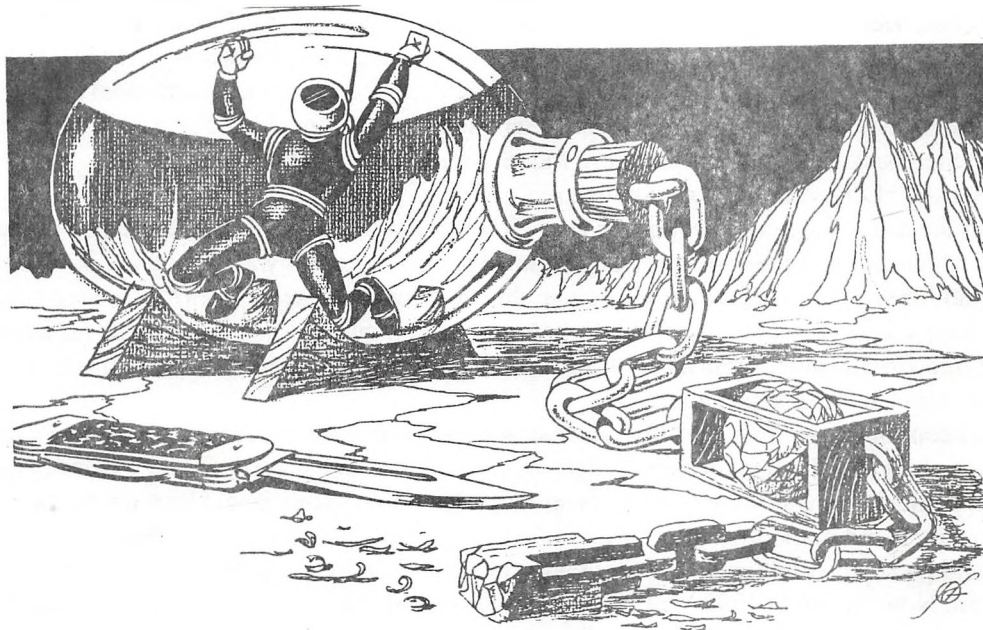
That made it look actually doable. Alexia wanted to do it; Hillarie wanted to do it; we became the triumvirate. Lanny and John wanted to do publications. Patrick and Ben and Rose helped. Marcy not only helped, but gave her dining room once a week for two years! We even had a token real SMOF, Ross. One of the developments I was proudest of was Neil's Rules of Order.

The reason the Bermuda Triangle bid worked so well (please don't rehash your complaints or outrage with the concept of a limited, expensive Worldcon — we know it all by heart, and that's not what I'm talking about here, just the bid) was that while there was a central triumvirate and an central committee, if you asked anyone who was in charge, they'd tell you someone else. I had the rare pleasure and privilege of "chairing" a group of people who were each there to do their jobs. All I had to do was coordinate a little. (I quickly accumulated a cluster of titles like Figurehead and

Scapegoat.) So running the meetings was pretty much a breeze. Sometimes we'd just go around the table. Sometimes, I'd go 'round first and ask each person how much business they had. Neil's Rules of Order, which grew out of this, and is actually how we worked, are: "Anyone can say anything. The two restrictions are that you may only get to say it once, and I decide when it's your turn."

This is somewhat in keeping with another official policy: in the case of any decision that doesn't make any difference, I get to do what I want. Like, we had to incorporate a 501(c)3 &c. So I got to name our corporation (though Alexia did the work). The joke about so much of Chicago fandom living up in Rogers Park was still pretty current, so I chose the old joke, "**The Forty-Ninth Ward Regular Science Fiction Organization**". (For non-Chicagoans, the Democratic "machine" runs at the ward level with the ward organizations.) It was the longest name incorporated in the state of Illinois. The seal-maker had a hard time fitting all the letters into the circle. There had once been talk of getting T-shirts made up, but no one had gotten their act together; I'd once gotten one with iron-on letters. Bill knows a lot of people who've incorporated themselves. He moves in some of those kinds of circles. It's a rite of passage, sort of. And He said he'd seen people pick a lot of kinds of names for their corporations, but never had he seen anyone name their corporation for an old T-shirt.

We'd given Bill another good laugh, a little earlier. I was sort of the Authority on how to do this, since I'd gone to more cons than anyone sane. I had a clear impression that one of the things going on in bidding was Signature Drinks. So we had to have one. Well, with a tropical motif, some sort of rum punch seemed to be it, so we decided to invent one. One night, Hillarie and I went over to Bill and Alexia's (Bill was out somewhere), and the three of us started mixing things. Each had supplied a variety of whatever they thought might help. I was taking the notes. When Bill got home, he thought we were in pretty funny shape, but I could still read my notes, and we ended up with a drink which developed quite a reputation. This is the official **Bermuda Triangle Punch**: two cans of *red* 5-Alive frozen juice concentrate; fill the cans half to two-thirds full with rum (depending); a 2-liter bottle of Seven-Up; and the Secret Ingredient: a dash of tamarind. The tamarind (well, I have it just lying around my kitchen) really cuts the excessive sweetness of the Seven-Up and darkens the color interestingly. Serve in small cups already filled to the top with ice (portion control). Served best by a sexy woman, but fortunately we had several.



"Security" - Oct. '55
ASF

THE SAGA OF BEN ZUHL AND LOWRY TAYLOR

By Barry Lyn-Waitsman

Ben Zuhl, editor of **Benzine** and a well-known Chicago fan, married **Lowry Taylor**, an SCA fan, in the mid-80s. Lowry is the daughter of a career diplomat and she also decided to work for the State Department. This is the story of where they have been for the past 14 years and the events that occurred during that time. Even if you don't know either of them I think you will find this a fascinating story.

In 1986, Lowry was informed that she would be getting a security check prior to being given an assignment in a foreign country. After some time had passed, the FBI contacted them. They were about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way done with the security check on Lowry when they discovered she had a husband (is anyone surprised by this?). Ben, of course, also had to have a security check done before they could be approved. As part of this process, they interviewed Bill Hebel, who was a V.P. at J. Walter Thompson Advertising Agency in downtown Chicago (another good story) and my wife, Marcy who was then working for the Social Security Administration. Well, they ~~footed~~ impressed the interviewers. A few months later, they were accepted and moved to Washington, D.C. where they underwent diplomatic training. Ben, who can be described as a "big bear of a man", took the courses they give to the diplomat's spouse – usually a wife. This included serving tea into small, delicate teacups. Oh, if we only had a camera for that one.

So, the first country that they went to was Poland. At that time, the Communist Party was still in control of the government but we did have an embassy there. About one year after they arrived, the Solidarity movement overthrew the Communists and took control. Ben and Lowry were fine and did not have to leave the country. At the end of the three years they decided they would stay in Poland. A few months later we got the happy news that Lowry was pregnant. Then, a few months later, news came from the Soviet Union that there had been a "small problem" with the reactor at Chernobyl. It wasn't such a small problem – there was a meltdown and the radioactive cloud moved to the northeast – directly toward Poland! At that time no one knew how dangerous it would be or what the long term effects were. Luckily, they and the baby, now a strapping lad of 14 years, were fine.

After they finished their three years, they came back to the U.S. and had to decide on their next "port of call". Since they had been in a hazardous situation they got to choose from a different list than they normally would and decided to go to the Philippines, where they would have another boy. At that time Marcos was in charge. But that would change during their time there. Marcos was overthrown and kicked out of the country. Once again, they had been in a country undergoing a revolution. But they finished that term and then back to D.C. again for more training for their next assignment.

This time, Lowry said, "Let's pick a country with a real stable government." Well, since they had been in a hazardous situation, they got to choose from a different list of countries than normal. The one on that special list which fit that criterion was Yugoslavia. They thought that was a good choice. They even figured Bill and his wife, Alexia, would visit since she was from that area. So, off they went with both kids in tow. Have you been keeping track of the years? Can you guess what comes next? Of course – Yugoslavia split into Croatia and Serbia and war broke out. They were in the first limo to the airport, with Alexia's sister who had been visiting family.

Now if you have been following this carefully, you can see they had gone to three countries and had four major incidents – three of them involving changes in government. What is the saying? Once is happenstance, twice is coincidence and three times - conspiracy! We immediately asked Ben where they were assigned to next. He did not know, but suspected that they would be staying in the States for some time. We begged and pleaded with them to quickly leave the country since we liked living in a democracy. But to no avail. Now we are in 1992 – an election year. George Bush is in the White House and enjoying a high popularity rating. Then, just a month or two after Ben and Lowry return to D.C. his ratings take a nosedive. This leads to Bill Clinton being elected and now we are convinced. Ben tells us he

is just doing computer work at the embassy, but we know better.

Things stay quiet for a few years and they stay in the States until 1998. Worldcon was in Baltimore that year and Marcy and I decided to go and take our children with on a historical tour. We went to D.C. about ten days before the con and visited with Ben and Lowry who were getting ready to leave on their next assignment. Lowry told us all about the driving course she was taking on how to react if you were attacked while in the car. She was having a lot of fun ramming her car into the "attacking" cars and really surprised the instructor. He thought she would not be too good at it since she was a woman and because of the car she drove. Part of the reason she was taking this course was because they were assigned to the embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan. They were leaving right after Worldcon, which they could not attend, and expected to be there for the normal three years.

After we returned from Baltimore, the news was filled with stories of the U.S. attack on two suspected terrorist sites, one of which was in Afghanistan. Due to the mode and area of attack, the U.S. planes had to over fly Pakistan. Since they were on a secret mission to a country allied to Pakistan, they could not tell them about it. Pakistan closed the embassy and Ben, Lowry and the boys who had been there for only three days had to come back to the U.S. and find a place to stay for the short term. About three months later, Lowry returned to Pakistan and in February of last year Ben and the kids joined her. Then in the middle of 1999 the ruler of Pakistan would not let one of his general's land in Islamabad. A few days later the government was overthrown and the general took charge.

We thought we might see the Zuhl's again but they were able to stay and are still there. Earlier this year, Lowry was sent to Korea to take some classes in, I kid you not, "Governmental Acquisitions". They were there at the same time as the presidents of North and South Korea were meeting. During that time, Ben came to Chicago to attend a wedding. He stayed at Bill's house and we visited him to find out the latest to the story. Of course, we joked with him about how the two Korean leaders were being nice to each other. As I put it, "They must have known you were there, Ben." He has returned to Korea, and Islamabad now, but I am sure the saga is not over. Why the government has not decided to open relations with Cuba, Iraq and a few other nations we could name and then send Ben and Lowry there, we have not been able to figure out. But then again, look how long it took them to figure out Lowry was married!

PS: This was emailed to Ben for his comments and review. No reply was received...



PICNICON

by Barry Lyn-Waitsman

Picnicon started for a few different reasons. The first was "location, location, location". In the late 70's and early 80's, much of active Chicago fandom lived in Rogers Park. Chicago is divided into neighborhoods, many of which are named for people who owned the land or were important to the area. William H. Rogers, owned much of the land at what is now the north end of Chicago and the area named after him stretches from Devon on the south to Howard on the north and the lake on the east to Kedzie on the west. Ridge Blvd. bisects Rogers Park on an angle and divides it into East Rogers Park and West Rogers Park (or West Ridge to some, but that is another story). Phil Foglio and Doug Rice lived in East Rogers Park and hosted "Thursday's" while George Price lived about a mile south of them and hosted a gathering a fans every third Saturday (which is still going on). Mark and Lynne Aronson, who started and ran the first three Windycons, lived in Edgewater (just south of Rogers Park on Ridge Blvd.) and many other fans lived in the area.

Marcy and I had lived on Ridge Blvd. (on the east side of the street, which put us in East Rogers Park), and one day on the way out to the northern suburbs, took a detour off Touhy because of slow traffic. As we headed north we saw a large park in front of us and, having to turn left to avoid driving into the park, we went west and saw the sign showing the name - **Rogers Park**. Though I had lived in the area for six years I had not realized there actually was a Rogers Park. Marcy and I then discussed having a picnic there, since it was such a large park with a baseball diamond, tennis courts and a playground.

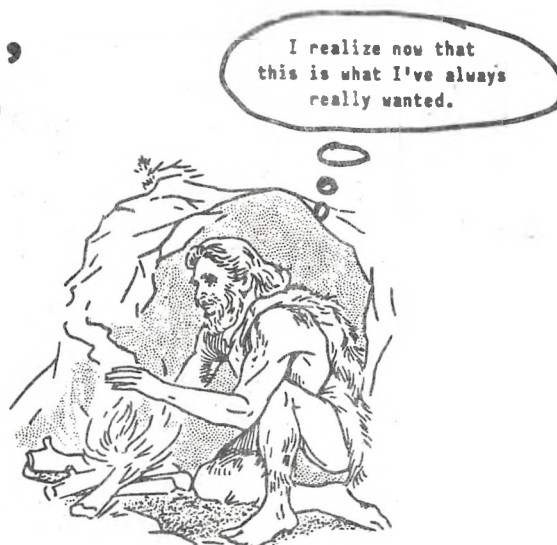
A few years later, Marcy and I had bought a home two blocks west of Rogers School, which is at the northeast end of Rogers Park. Our son Paul had just been born and we talked about having a picnic with him. We were reminded of our idea of having a picnic for all the Chicago fans and decided to bring the idea to the ISFiC board.

The board not only liked the idea, they approved some money for food and drinks and Chicon offered its office, also in Rogers Park, as a rain site. But we did not need it. **On September 27, 1986** Marcy and I brought two grills, a small Weber, and a paper grill. Other fans brought baseball stuff and frisbees and a great time was had by all. The next year it was decided to move the picnic further west since many fans had moved north and west. Over the years the picnic has stayed mostly on the north side with some sojourns to places south-west (the Old Red Schoolhouse) and west to Schiller Woods by O'Hare airport. For the most part we have had good to great attendance and usually great weather. If you live in Chicago or move to Chicago in the future, look for flyers in June or July and join us for fun in the sun.

CHICAGO FANS'

Get-back-to-the-simple-life

PICNIC!



DucKon, DuPage County Konvention

Submitted by Lindalee Stuckey & Mary Lynn Skirvin Johnson

DuPage Science Fiction and Fantasy has been on-going for over 14 years. It is an organization with no officers and no dues but lots of parties. There is a monthly flyer mailed to subscribers who wish to know where the next party is, and directions to get there. **DPSFFS** is a monthly party (we haven't missed a single month!) held at a member's home. Occasionally members get together to attend movies or attend conventions or eat at restaurants. The party rules are bring your own beverage and a snack to pass.

The group was born on a bulletin board at what was called the Purple Hyatt during **Capricon**. **Phil Kotula** posted a message saying he wanted to start a group similar to the Rogers Park Thursday Science Fiction Meeting. **Larry Cole** and I (**Lindalee Stuckey**) were living in Forest Park and looking for an apartment in DuPage County. We spoke to Phil and promised that as soon as we had an apartment, that we would agree to hold a meeting.

We found an apartment in Glen Ellyn in the **Hillcrest Apartments**. It turned out to be a microcosm of fandom. (*slanshack? ml*) One day as I was taking out trash, I met **Angela Karesh** who happened to be wearing a convention T-shirt. We started talking about fandom and it turned out that her boyfriend (**Dave Iverson**) had made the cibochrome print that Larry and I had purchased from **Mary Lynn Skirvin Johnson** at **Capricon**. Then we met **Bill and Trudi Puda** who lived in the next building who had been introduced to fandom by **Nick and Jan DiMasi** who formerly lived in the apartments.

Phil had warned us that we could have anywhere from 25-50 people at the party. We lived on the first floor with a patio outside, so we figured we could handle the overload.

We had 24 people at the first party and all signed my autograph book to commemorate the occasion.

The first several parties were at our apartment, then **Candis Gibbard** (now **King**) agreed to hold the next one at her town home. We started a tradition of rotating at members homes with volunteers. Whenever no one would volunteer, the party was at Larry and Linde's.

This is a group that likes to get together. They threw me a baby shower (very gratifying neither my relatives or Larry's threw me a baby shower.) Jan and Trudi as the only married females in a group of mostly single males, called the men and explained what happens at baby showers. We have had several baby showers and wedding showers since then but only mine was a surprise. Robert King proposed to Candis on one knee at another party.

This group became the core group of volunteers and staff for **DucKon**. Candis was involved in **Windycon**, and gave my name to **Chicon 5** as a person to tap for Children's Programming. Kathleen Meyer interviewed me, asking me who I knew in fandom. When I answered, "**Bill Higgins**," she informed me that everyone knew **Bill Higgins**. Trudi and I went on to create a Children's Programming / Baby-sitting that was so great—we were mentioned at the Hugo Ceremony. Our loving husband's were laboring with us. Bill made wooden wands and Larry designed a T-shirt Logo. So too was connections to DuPage fandom. When we had no soda, Barbara Darrow smuggled us some in her baby carriage. Jan DiMasi helped us find filkers for the children. Mary Lynn Skirvin Johnson helped us with a button workshop and connected me to other artists. Bill Higgins also helped us find people to do interesting things with the children.

Having helped with a **Worldcon** gave us ambition to try our own convention. At Paul's house we joked about a DuPage Convention. We came up with ideas for panels based on the typical white suburban mentality of DuPage County. Panels on shopping, nail painting, and golf attire were humorously considered. Then the talk changed to "Yeah we really could run a convention." And we (actually **Helene O'Neill**) finally came up with a name for it - "**DucKon**", short for "**DuPage County Konvention**".

Jennifer Stevenson once told us that our strength lay in the friendship bonds that the club formed. We had a group that could get along with each other and had a wide variety of interests. And by making almost everyone a concom member, enough people to have a pretty good room block.

Today, DuPage Science Fiction and Fandom still parties on. We generally have our party on the third

Saturday of the month, unless there is a convention to attend or the host and hostess have a reason to pick another day. You don't have to live in Dupage County, all you need to do is to bring your beverage and snack! Kids are usually welcome if well behaved, but please check with the hostoids first.

— Lindalee Stuckey

Sponsored by SuperConDuckTivity DucKon is about to be ten years old. Its name comes from Helen O'Neill as an easily punnable name that was better than the alternative name of DUPCon suggested by Phil Kotula.

We were at Paul Stinchfield's house when we started joking about having a Dupage Convention. Golf fashions, nail painting, power shopping were some of the panel ideas we were throwing around. At the next party at Candis and Robert's house, we started saying how we really did have enough talent in the group to throw our own convention. We had polo shirts printed up and put together incorporation papers to start the idea. We advertised at **Chicon** and threw a party there for our fledgling convention. We did ask ISFiC for some starting capital which they provided in the form of mailing labels and postage and use of art boards.

Candis King became chairperson. She had done guest liaison and green room work for Windycon. Robert King did Special Events. He had worked on special events for Windycon. Phil Kotula and I (Lindalee Stuckey) did Programming. Phil had worked the movie room for Windycon and I had done children's programming for Capricon, Worldcon and Windycon. We asked Fred Pohl to be our guest but he was going to Russia that year. So we had Lois Tilton as our guest of honor. Mary Lynn Skirvin Johnson coached Trudi Puda on how to run an art show and was our artist guest of honor. Her husband, **Todd Johnson** became our first mad scientist guest of honor. They brought in some artifacts from a new show, "MST3K". We even picked a Fan Guest of Honor with the last name of "Johnson" so it became the **Johnson Family Reunion!**

Nick DiMasi agreed to do operations. He volunteered at Confusion and Capricon to get some experience. Helen Gbala agreed to be treasurer and run registration. Bill Puda became hotel liaison. Baby sitting was done by the wonderful teenagers I trusted my OWN daughter with and later became Candis King's baby sitters. Chuck O'Neill helped us line up a Rocky Horror Live Show and did his famous milkshakes at parties.

DucKon was a home grown effort. To make the consuite different and keep costs down, we had the "red headed baking league." (Candis, Helen, BJ Staehlin, Trudi, Jan and Lindalee.) We would gather at my house and make cookies and muffins assembly style. We found cookie cutters shaped like ducks to use for parties at conventions and in the consuite. A girlfriend of mine worked for a food marketing firm and got us grocery store samples. One year it was thirty pounds of turkey bacon. Candis had a friend, Pepper, who ran food frenzies for MENSA, who ran our first consuite.

Phil Kotula is responsible for our trademark **Klingon Love Poetry**. Like Heinlein said in "The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress," some things are funny once, some are funny twice and some are funny forever. We happen to think Klingon Love Poetry is of the last category. It is amusing to see Klingon or human women throwing heavy objects, well OK so they are mostly stuffed animals, at men DUCKing them. Yes, there are prizes for the most forceful throwing, most accurate throwing and most seDUCKtive throwing. The men who survive win prizes for best original poetry, best reading and best DUCKing. Our second year we had a real Klingon wedding at the convention. Almost every year since, someone becomes engaged during this part of the convention. (Yes, I used up my pun quota in this paragraph.)

Our first hotel was not kind to us. Then we came to the Lisle Hyatt, a fannish heaven that we are sorry we outgrew. (It is a dream of ours to build them a new ball room and rent it out during the year as a way to fund the convention.) DucKon flourished there for four years. The Hall of Hucksters (dealers dealing out of rooms) was another way of guaranteeing room block. To keep the dealers happy, **Frank and Barb Darrow** would supply the dealers with soda and donuts from their little wagon.

Perhaps the funniest DucKon story is from **DucKon II**. Two mundanes were having a drunken brawl

in the bar. The fight was broken up by Marty Bergard who was dressed as a Vulcan ambassador and another fan dressed as a Klingon. Marty is tall (about 6 foot 4) and he told them. "Fighting is not logical!" The Lisle Police thought this was hysterical. They even got into the fun and ran over the Barney doll for the first **Barney Bash** in the parking lot.

Candis was chairperson for our first three years. I became chair for the next two. Barb Darrow was chair in year six. We left the Lisle Hyatt for the much bigger Oakbrook Hyatt. Then John Ferarro chaired the two years we spent at the Ramada. Now we are located at the Arlington Park Sheraton with Ron Oakes as chair. We even spun off our own convention: **Midwest Fur Fest**.

RUNNING A CONVENTION IS A GREAT WAY TO MEET NEW PEOPLE AND MAKE NEW FRIENDS. Along the way we have to thank Michele Jaye Solomon, Danielle Ostach, Sally Jones, Stan Howell, James Brown, Joseph Stockman, Larry Ahern, Curtis Taitel, Angela Karash, David Iverson, Pat Palm, Penn Skrzynski, Mike Fortner, Brent Warren, Jim and Marcia Colsmith, Mark Roth-Whitworth, Natalie Silk, Beth Kobe, Brandi Martin, Beryl Turner, Brendan Lonehawk, Jim McAdams, Kevin Price, Robert Alley, Richard Price, Marti Dunston, Rob Deprez, Ron Randis, Rick Soden, Ted Koransky, David Kummerow, Jan Kummerow, Richard Sheves-Bien, Allen Downs, Doug Drummond, Carol Mitchell, and Tim Allison. If I have omitted your name, please forgive me.

We hope to stay a summer convention with a different slant on science fiction than other Midwest conventions. After all fen need more than one convention a year! Besides throwing a heck of a party for our friends and fen, DuckKon is a fund raiser for the **Golden Duck Award** for Excellence in Children's Science Fiction. We also donate money for SciTech, an Interactive Science Museum in Aurora, IL. Party hardy and give freely.

Addition to the History of DuPage Science Fiction

Todd and I first moved to the area...Ghods...back in May of 1983. We had been used to having SF clubs as part of our routine and at that time, the only one that existed in the Chicagoland area was the bunch that runs Windycon. They were a stodgy lot and far too prone to smoffing (something Todd can't abide much of). Prior to this, I had chaired the first InConJunction (did their club logo too), ran security for X-Cons, and we'd been a very active part of both the Permanent Floating Riot Club of Upper Michigan and of General Technics. So, I decided that maybe I could put together a west suburb group to fill the obvious need. I knew my apartment was just too small for such a group so I scouted around for a clubhouse that would be comfy and inexpensive. I found the Easton Park Community Building in West Chicago fit the bill nicely and signed it out. Then I made up flyers, and posted them at all the libraries I could get to, plus handed them out at cons. (I still have a copy of that flyer, it gives the date of the first meeting as **July 24, 1984**.)

That's when I ran into Phil Kotula. He mentioned that he'd been thinking of putting a group together, but hadn't gotten round to it. He was into movies for cons then and volunteered to bring some vids to watch. That meeting was very small, and I was not encouraged that a substantial group could be formed.

Shortly thereafter, Todd and I decided to get married, and I turned all my energies to getting a much bigger event planned. Phil and I discussed it and he wanted to carry on the efforts to get a group going so I let go, and he took the ball and ran with it. He can be quite proud of all the the DuPage Group has become over the years.

As time went by, it was apparent that our participation in the DuPage SF group would be largely limited because Todd worked a grueling rotating schedule that 9 times out of 10 did not match up with the weekends the group met. Our visitations have, as a result, been sadly few. Given this, I turned to GT and threw myself into reviving Pyrotechnics, their publication. We did well for a few years, (until the internet later became the media of choice for sharing stories). I could at least do this asynchronous with

any schedule Todd had.

I think we can safely say that while I provided the spark, Phil vigorously fanned the flames to life since the DuPage group has become quite an institution.

A side note, I am also happy to see the blinkie panel do so well at Duckon. (The blinkie I made last year is in the exhibit. *m*) That's something I started many, many years ago at X-Con in Milwaukee. Back then, we used wire-wrap tools to make the connections. I did three or four of those before I moved north to live with Todd in the UP in '81-'82. Mike B and I were talking about it over dinner once not too long ago, and he's kicked that project back to life, and with Dave Iversen at it too, it's become as big if not bigger than it was way back then, with a likelihood of expanding to new and different blinkies and annoyatrons.

— Mary Lynn Skirvin Johnson

Klingon and Vulcan subdue rowdy Mundanes

Here is my story about the drunks at Duck-2.

There are a few more details that I am not sure about such as the name of the Klingon.

I have included details that I am sure about, and

I recently discussed and verified these with Marty Bergard at Capricorn and Duckon.

— Doug Drummond

Duckon-II, held in 1993 at the Lisle Hyatt, was at the same time the Chicago Bulls basketball team was in the playoffs.

In the hotel bar, located in the main lobby, most of the patrons were of the Klingon species, with a few Mundane basketball fans. The scene looked so much like Quark's bar on Deep Space Nine, during Klingon shore leave, a wonderful sight for a dedicated SF fan.

This Klingon invasion was expected; the convention invited Klingon clubs to participate in "Klingon Love Poetry," suggested by dialog in Star Trek the Next Generation. Mr. Worf said to Wesley Crusher: "I can't advise you about your love life; in my culture, the men read love poetry and the women throw heavy objects." This popular Duckon event gives awards to the men for "Best Reading" and "Best Ducking," with extra credit for the best use of the Klingon ~~Language~~ judged by members of the "Klingon Language Institute." Awards for the women are for "Most Forceful Throwing," "Most Accurate Throwing," and "Most Seductive Throwing."

Most people might be intimidated by all these big guys in alien makeup and military costumes, but nevertheless two drunken mundane sports fans started a shoving match that escalated into a fist fight.

Hotel security was called, but before the security staff arrived, the fen had the situation under control. One mundane was grabbed by Vulcan Ambassador T'Rom, who is almost two metres tall (Six feet ++) with cloak, ears, etc. He stays perfectly in character and lectures the mundane drunk "Fighting is not Logical...." This is in character in his mundane job; Marty Bergard's is a psychiatric nurse so he's used to handling unruly people, and is big enough to do a good job.

The other mundane was grabbed by a very large Klingon in a flamboyant costume. He stayed in character: "Today is a good day to die!" The Klingon gentleman was also over six feet tall.

The situation was well under control when hotel security arrived and recovered sufficiently from ROFL. {Rolling On Floor, Laughing.} Dealing with the mundanes gave hotel security an excuse to call the Lisle Police.

The local police were quite curious about the Con, especially since our Con Security team had visited and briefed them before the Con. The Lisle Police, Hotel security and the convention handled this situation very well, helping establish an excellent relationship on security matters that was maintained over the several years that Duckon was held in Lisle.

As Klingon liaison I, Commander Dunyazade Tai Chimera (Patt Palm)
feel it is my duty to write the history of the event called
Klingon Love Poetry
that is held each year at DuckKon.

First let me say that to our knowledge, and by our I mean the massive conglomeration of Klingon phen, Duckon has the ONE, the ORIGINAL, the LONGEST RUNNING, KLINGON LOVE POETRY EVENT in the nation, perhaps even in this world. And I take great pride in having been a party to this massive insanity since the second year of DuckKon.

Since the start we've had a basic idea, to bring the fun side of the Klingon world out. What could be more fun than courtship? The premise of the Klingon way of courting was covered on two chapters of Star Trek the next gen. It's simple. The male recites poetry, which inflames the female, and she hurls heavy objects at him. OK, the modern men of this world have gotten far from the practice of spouting poetry to their lady fair. And as for writing, forget it. Well, all that has changed due in part to the event. Now men are not only reciting the written word, but are now actively writing again! And as for Ducking! Well, they don't call it DuckKon for nothing.

We've always taken pride that we were one of the events of the convention where no one who entered left empty handed. From the sashes in the beginning, to the pins, and lollipops, and the certificates stating that they survived. And of course in the last two years the gag prize box.

Now part of the history of the event is the matter of someone constantly being proposed to.
(so OK, I'm serving on the Klingon Love Boat).

So bring on Duckon X and Duckon XI and so forth! I'm armed! And I will survive.

Stars Our Destination

by Alice (Insley) Bentley

1988: I come to the dawning realization that I do not, in fact, want to spend the next 40 years as a physicist, maybe not even an engineer. I felt it was time for a drastic change in career - but was very open to ideas of what I should I try next. Meanwhile my very good friend **Greg Ketter** has been lamenting the absence of an SF specialty shop in Chicago. He figures that if Minneapolis, MN can support *two* excellent long-lived shops, managing one in a population five times the size should be a cakewalk.

I agreed, but, noticing the high failure rate of new businesses and the near infinite things that lead to their downfall, suggested that we form a partnership to start this new store. Division of labor was simple: Greg provides all the initial setup: paperwork, vendor accounts, procedures for running the shop, and I do all the hands-on stuff: running the shop, placing orders, hiring as necessary, everything that one couldn't do from 500 miles away. This setup worked well for both of us for the first six years, after which I bought out his share with a loan (thanks Mom!) and we remain the best of friends.

The name is indeed based on the famous novel by Alfred Bester, slightly modified to be less selfish. The goal of stocking every SF book in print turned out to be like running the Red Queen's Race, you have to run just as fast as you possibly can just to stay where you are - but the pursuit of the unreachable ideal has kept me as busy as I might wish and has provided Chicago with an SF specialty bookstore matched by only a few others in the world.

This month brings us to a new crossroad - changes in the city and in the industry have led to a lot of drastic changes in the shop. We are (right now as you read this!) relocating several miles north of our long established base of operations. I'll miss many things about the Lakeview neighborhood - but I'll willingly trade for available parking and a business environment that doesn't change out of all recognition every couple of years. The new print on demand technology that's sweeping through the book selling industry is also driving some changes. Expect to see some new stuff showing up at the shop once we settle down from the move.

THANKS FOR A GREAT TWELVE YEARS, AND WELCOME TO ANOTHER!

1991

1982

1972

1982

60

11

60

1946

the stellar cavalcade
Chicago conventions, a parade,
and the glory days of fandom...



and the glory day of
Chicago convention
the stellar cavity
...morbidity