

# THE TEXAS SF INQUIRER

"THE BEST LITTLE NEWSZINE IN TEXAS"

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Letters this issue — Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Greg Jordan, Kip Williams.

Art this issue — Guy Brownlee (p.10), S. Fox (p.4), Ed Graham (p.8), Kip Williams (pp.9, 14).

**Editor's Note:** OK, so this isn't an even-numbered month. Tough. However, February is, and that's when we get back onto a regular schedule. (Do I hear cheering in the background?)

So here's the deal. *Deadlines* for each issue is the first of all *odd-numbered* months. Thus, you've already missed the Jan.1 deadline, but that's ok since you didn't know about it. However, you've got over a month to send me something for the next issue — so do something before I have to print fan fiction! —pm

## Lone Star Con Gives Back \$15,000

### Reimburses Memberships of Program Participants, Workers

AUSTIN—Lone Star Con, the 1985 Austin North American Science Fiction Convention, recently wrote over 400 checks totalling more than \$15,000, reimbursing the memberships of those who worked 8 hours or more at the con, as well as those members who participated in three or more programming events.

Lone Star Con is the first NASFIC to have had enough money left over for reimbursements on this scale. In the past five years, only three WorldCons have been able to reimburse their workers and program participants (Noreascon II, '80; Chicon, '82; and LACon II, '84).

The reimbursements averaged \$35 per mem-

bership, and were mailed in time for most people to have received them by Christmas '85. Less than half have been cashed, and several people have used their checks to join F.A.C.T.

In addition to the membership reimbursements, F.A.C.T. has also purchased mimeograph equipment for club use, and to aid in the publication of the club's newszine, *The Texas SF Inquirer*.

F.A.C.T., the non-profit organization which sponsored Lone Star Con, has been thriving as a club now that Lone Star Con no longer hangs over its head. Membership in F.A.C.T. has

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## THE BETTER BOOKS OF 1985

by Willie Siros

Even though it's only early December, I thought I'd comment on what I think are the better books of 1985 — at least, the ones I've enjoyed this year.

It's been a busy year, but not a very outstanding one. We've seen novels by Asimov, Bradbury, Heinlein, Herbert, Le Guin, Silverberg, Farmer, Delany, Zelazny, Niven, Aldiss, Keith Roberts, Pohl, and Vance — not to mention Bishop, Tiptree, Wolfe, Benford, Card and Powers. Sounds like a heavy line-up for an All-Stars game to me. Unfortunately, most of the books they wrote were pretty unremarkable. It's not like most 1985 novels were *bad* — they were just disappointing to unexceptional.

I'm afraid I'm going to digress for a moment, and comment on what I see as a lack of editorial strength in today's market-dominated field. Name alone is often enough to sell, if your name is Asimov, Heinlein, Zelazny, Cherryh, McCaffrey, or Anthony. (OK, of those, Zelazny's 1985 book was the tightest, but it still has the same character as Conrad or Corwin or whatever. There was no suspense since Merlin acted just like every other Zelazny hero ever. No

chances, no growth. Yawn.) (Now, his "42 Views of Mt. Fuji by Hosaki" — that was a great novella!) But then, Heinlein and Asimov are off trying to tie all their novels and all their characters together into some unified field theory. Double Yawn. *Robots and Empire* wasn't as plodding as *Robots of Yawn*, but not by much. (It wouldn't surprise me if the Mule turns out to be a robot, and as for Hari Seldon himself . . .) These guys need an editor with a sharp blue pencil and the courage to use it.

So if this is so bad, what's good?

All right, I'll tell. I think the best of 1985 is to be found somewhere in the voluminous lists that follow. Tomorrow I may decide to make a few adjustments here and there, but . . .

**Near great to outstanding:** Hugo caliber, comparable to outstanding novels of previous years; damn fine writing.

1. *Ancient of Days*, Michael Bishop (Arbor House)
2. *Kiteworld*, Keith Roberts (Gallancz)
3. *Schismatrix*, Bruce Sterling [Texas writer] (Arbor House)

(Continued on page 2)



## BETTER BOOKS OF 1985 (from page 1)

Very good, but not in the same league: Not quite Hugo-caliber (but more likely to win as a result); consistent and certainly worth reading.

1. *Ender's Game*, Orson Scott Card (TOR)
2. *Deep Wizardry*, Diane Duane (Delacorte)
3. *Timeservers*, Russell Griffin (Avon)
4. *Dark of the Moon*, P.C. Hodgell (Atheneum)
5. *Dinner at Deviant's Palace*, Tim Powers (Ace)
6. *Tom O'Bedlam*, Robert Silverberg (D.I. Fine)

**Strong novels, but not strong enough:** Near misses; good books which petered out at the end, didn't quite pull together, needed some work, etc.

1. *Blood Music*, Greg Bear (Arbor House)
2. *Eon*, Greg Bear (Bluejay)
3. *The Postman*, David Brin (Bantam)
4. *The Nick of Time*, George Alec Effinger [regional writer] (Doubleday)
5. *The Memory of Whiteness*, Kim Stanley Robinson (TOR)
6. *Child of Fortune*, Norman Spinrad (Bantam)
7. *In The Drift*, Michael Swanwick (Ace)
8. *The Green Pearl*, Jack Vance (Underwood/Miller)
9. *Knight's Move*, Walter Jon Williams [regional writer] (TOR)

**Biggest disappointments:** Books by authors with good track records — I expected more from them.

1. *Artifact*, Greg Benford (TOR)
2. *Book of Kells*, R.A. MacAvoy (Bantam)
3. *The Moon and The Face*, Patricia McKillip (Atheneum)
4. *Brightness Falls From the Air*, James Tiptree (TOR)
5. *Free Live Free*, Gene Wolfe (TOR version)
6. *Trumps of Doom*, Roger Zelazny (Arbor House)

**Best first novel** (although there were a lot of first novels I was impressed with this year).

1. *Emprise*, Michael Kube-McDowell (Berkley)
2. *Cats Have No Lord*, Will Shetterly (Ace)
3. *In The Drift*, Michael Swanwick (Ace)

**Best short story collection** (I don't read many, but I liked these).

1. *Night Voices*, Robert Aickman (Gollancz)
2. *Viriconium Nights*, M. John Harrison (Gollancz)
3. *Light From a Lone Star*, Jack Vance (NESFA). (Ok, I'm biased.)
4. *Fire Watch*, Connie Willis (Bluejay)

**Not yet read, but might be important.**

1. *Heliconia Winter*, Brian Aldiss (Atheneum)
2. *The Damnation Game*, Clive Barker (W&N, English)
3. *Death is a Lonely Business*, Ray Bradbury (Knopf)
4. *The Dream Years*, Lisa Goldstein (Bantam)
5. *Always Coming Home*, Ursula K. Le Guin (Harper & Row)

6. *Between the Strokes of Midnight*, Charles Sheffield (Baen)

If I didn't mention something, it either means (a) I read it and didn't like it, (b) read enough to know it wasn't worth finishing, (c) read it and liked it OK, but not enough to call it a

"major" novel, or (d) overlooked it (I can't read everything).

Next issue, Jimmy Fred, your editor and no doubt others will respond with their recommended reading lists. I'll also give you a list of 1985 books I've run across which were written by regional authors.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### *Eon*

by Greg Bear

Bluejay (hardcover, 502 pages), \$16.95  
reviewed by Fred Duarte

*Eon* is a perfect example of the old saw, "When you're hot, you're hot." With *Eon*, the versatile Bear has written something more "conventional" than his earlier biological-disaster book, *Blood Music*.

The basic premise of *Eon* is that an asteroid-like object has appeared out of nowhere and is parked in earth orbit. The object contains seven chambers, the first six of which hold abandoned cities. NATO forces are allowed complete access to everything in these chambers — except the library area. The "Stone," as it is called, comes from the Earth's future, and the libraries contain references to the "Little Death," a nuclear exchange between the United States and Russia and the accompanying nuclear winter.

The kicker is that the start of this Little Death is but weeks away; the knowledge weighs heavily on the minds of the handful privy to this secret. Spurred by the knowledge of the imminent war, the NATO forces call upon Patricia Luisa Vasquez, a brilliant physics theoretician, to help find a way to avoid the Little Death.

That is the jumping-off point for *Eon*. To reveal more would be criminal. How the issue is resolved — or not resolved — is the basis for the second half of the book. However, it's safe to say that this brilliant book should be at least a Hugo and Nebula finalist, if not a double winner.

### *The Vampire Lestat*

by Anne Rice

Knopf (hardcover), \$17.95  
reviewed by Fred Duarte

After nine years of writing within other genres, Anne Rice has returned to "occult/horror" with a sequel to her first book, *Interview with the Vampire*.

*The Vampire Lestat* is a very enjoyable book that takes a different view of a few myths about vampires. For instance, popular mythology suggests that those who have had all their blood drained by vampires and die, subsequently become vampires themselves the next sundown. In Rice's world, a supplicant must drink the blood of the vampire himself. This indicates that the person must, to some degree,

want to become a vampire.

In any case, I don't want to give away too much about the book. Written in an autobiographical style, it chronicles the adventures of the vampire Lestat, who rises from the grave in 1984 New Orleans after having been dormant for 50 years. He wants to gather together the power from vampires around the globe — and intends to do it by becoming a rock star. With his 300-year knowledge of past culture, he surmises, the blending of the past and present can fool enough of the people enough of the time.

Ninety percent of the book is told in semi-flashback version, and the events of Lestat's life leading up to his resurrection and transformation into a rock star are varied and fascinating. Here is a vampire whose human morals and values have carried over to his undead life, and the story of how he can compromise them against the "evil" of being a vampire make for some of the best reading ever for a vampire novel. I just hope I don't have to wait nine years for the sequel to *this* book.

### *Forty Minute War*

by Chris & Janet Morris

Baen Books (paperback)  
reviewed by Doug Greenan

Most serious fen will agree that a book should be fun to read. In a conversation I had with Janet Morris, co-author of *Forty Minute War*, she remarked, "If it's not fun to read, it should be a textbook."

Janet and Chris have certainly carried that thought through with *Forty Minute War*. This book has everything: Fast Pacing, A Steady Interest Level, Well Defined Characters, Imagination, Twists, Shocks, Good Technical Background — and it's *fun*, too!

Janet Morris is best known for her *Dream Dancer* and *Silistra* series, and *Forty Minute War* is a far departure from those themes for her. This is Chris Morris' first novel; he had previously co-authored stories with Janet for the *Thieves' World* anthologies.

If anything can detract from *Forty Minute War*, it is the fact that it might be just a little *too* fast-paced. As you near the end of the book, you wish it wouldn't end yet because you're so wrapped up in the characters. It may seem a bit mainstream, but it has enough SF to satisfy most genre enthusiasts. The first two pages get right down to the serious stuff, and it never lets up. A *five-star* book.





*Why see  
a movie  
when the  
retelling  
is more  
entertaining?*

**C**ommando is not a subtle movie. Big Arnie is first seen in parts. First his shoes, an arm holding a chainsaw, a bicep, and then a log. Big Arnie is carrying a tree on his shoulder. The message is, he's tough.

Some baddies are busy blowing up folks, so his old general comes to see Big Arnie (Rambo only got a colonel, so we know we're dealing with a really tough dude here) to warn him, 'cept as soon as the general flies off all hell breaks loose and three bodies pile up and Big Arnie loses his daughter and his cool. So he crashes his truck and gets beaten up by a dozen guys who haul him away and chain him down. Arnie meets Mr. Big, who wants to be el presidente of some South American country. Arnie gets pissed and tells him what he can do, so they bring out his daughter who's all tied up, and gloat over her with large knives and evil grins. The bad guy's henchman is a former Arnie buddy gone bad. He's tough too and wears a dog chain to prove it.

Arnie gets really pissed now. They take him to the airport to fly him south to off the current presidente, but Arnie's already seen the inflight movie so he kills his escort, tucks him in for the duration and goes to use the john 'cept he takes a wrong turn and ends up in the baggage car, er, compartment. He uses his fingers to rip his way through a bulkhead and winds up on the coupling between cars, er, on the landing gear. He jumps as the plane takes off, lands in some weeds; the only thing hurt is his coat so he takes it off.

He decides to follow the dude that left him at the airport. This dude was hassling a stew so Big Arnie grabs her and makes her follow the dude's Porsche in her car. To prove that he won't hurt her, Arnie rips the passenger seat outta her car. But she isn't convinced until Big Arnie proves he's an OK guy by beating up two dozen shopping mall security guards with his bare hands while the baddies use guns on the mall cops. They chase the baddie some more but we know the baddie ain't gonna make it cause he can't drive that Porsche for shit. Instead of having it go off

a cliff, Arnie keeps the car and sends the baddie off the cliff. He had to do that because he had just crashed the stew's car head-on into a tree. ("Are you hurt?" he asks. This shows that Big Arnie can act and express concern for those around him.)

Next they go to a motel to see what's supposed to happen next. There's about three minutes of dialogue in which nothing happens. Then another baddie who's been offing Arnie's pals shows up. The stew gets to answer the door and look like she's just been laid but can't because she wasn't. Big Arnie and the mean dude get to discuss what they eat for breakfast and the dude shoots up the room, then they break all the furniture and crash into the room next door which has the only tits in the entire movie — but if what was going on in there was any indication of what the rest of the motel was doing, it's no wonder nobody noticed all the noise Big Arnie was making. The dude gets his with an endtable and the stew loses her cookies.

Arnie decides he needs more than a grimace, so he goes shopping at a local armory and navy surplus store. It's a good thing the stew's along 'cause she knows how to navigate a shopping cart. Somebody finally notices the circus is in town and Big Arnie is captured with his hand in the mortar jar. The stew saves his bacon by blowing up the police paddywagon with a rocket. Arnie steps out of the smoking wreckage and pats her on the head. Now they're off to save his daughter and to kill about 2,000 extras.

The stew comes in handy again when she figures out where they took his daughter by reading a receipt for airplane fuel. They take a seaplane to the island hideout so Big Arnie can have an excuse to strip down to a tiny black brief and flex his muscles as he rows a raft to shore. "Radio for help when I give the signal," he tells her. "What signal?" "When all hell breaks loose," he says. Arnie lands the boat and starts to don about 85 pounds of hardware, but all we see him do is tie his shoes — I guess so we'll know he can actually do it without a stunt double. He clanks his way

across the island and decides that the best way to begin is by blowing up all the barracks around the big house.

Meanwhile, the plane lands (remember the plane? The one with the baggage car, er, compartment) and the local baddies discover that Big Arnie ain't on board and what's more they gotta pay for all the damage he did, which nobody noticed during the 11-hour flight. They call el presidente collect, which pisses him off, and then they tell him he ain't gonna be el presidente after all and can they watch him slice up the girl. Dog-Chain pulls out his knife and says he'll take care of her and then he'll get Arnie too, for free even. El presidente starts to sweat and looks for a machine gun.

The daughter has been busy doing Arnie Jr. things to her room and she ain't there when Dog-Chain shows up to play mumblety-peg on her body. She leads him on a long chase into the basement, which lasts until Big Arnie is ready for *mano a mano*.

While Arnie is planting his bombs he has to show off all his goodies he copped from the surplus store. First he ginsu's three guys with his expensive knife, blows up the buildings (which must have housed some TNT as well as extras), stops some bullets with his vest, machine-guns some guys, blows up some more with cute little round grenades, shoots some more guys, throws a few punches just for the hell of it, shoots up the hedges and the statues, shotguns a bunch more and then hides in a toolshed where he takes off his vest and eyes all the neat gardening tools. Baddies surround the shed and turn it into swiss cheese, and then make one poor guy open the door. That guy buys it with a pitchfork, three others get it with circular saw blades and a few others lose to an axe or two.

Arnie now has a real big machine gun so he marches up to the big house while mowing down a couple hundred extras. Arnie uses all his ammo on the crowd outside, so he has to hunt el presidente with a 30-round shotgun. El presidente only has an Uzi so he gets killed — a lot.

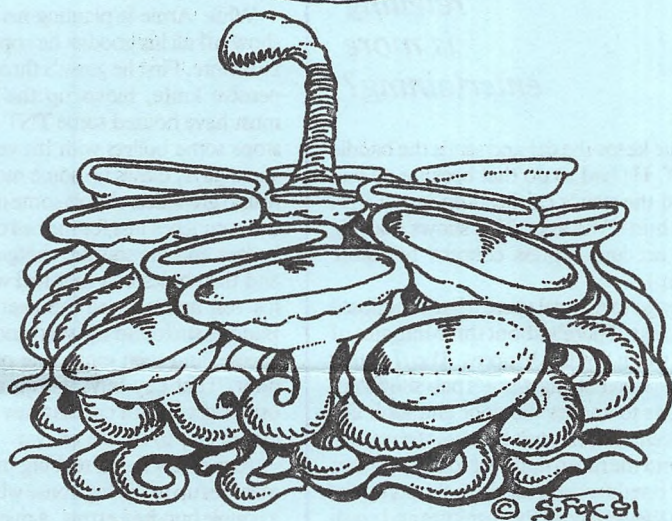
Now it's time for *mano a mano* so Arnie goes in the basement and gets shot in the arm by Dog-Chain who's holding Arnie's daughter. He is major uncool and nervous also. Arnie uses psychology on him so Dog-Chain throws away his gun and decides to see who has the cuter knife. Arnie does, but since his arm is like hurt, he can't win right away. They insult each other a lot and really tear into each other. They punch each other in the face, kick each other and pound on each other's kidneys.

Just when you think Big Arnie has had enough (like when Dog-Chain asks, "Had enough?"), Arnie jumps up and starts pounding away again. Dog-Chain tries to beat Arnie to a pulp with a furnace door but Arnie uses it as a shield when Dog-Chain uses a pipe on Arnie's back. Then they try to push each other into the open furnace while grunting like pigs in heat. But that doesn't work so Dog-Chain remembers his gun and picks it up. Arnie is pissed now, so he wrenches a length of 2-inch pipe off the wall and hurls it through Dog-Chain and through the boiler behind him.

The general arrives in time for the credits and Big Arnie leaves with the stew, but it's OK 'cause all they do is hug. I only hope the new Remo movie is as good.



# CON REPORTS 1985



## WindyCon — *Texans Stranded on Chicago Payway, Eat Chips to Survive (And That was the FUN Part, Folks!)*

Chicago. Con slaughterer of the world.

This is a sad tale of three eager, excited, sleep-deprived Texas femmefans who undertook a 3,000-mile journey in search of a classic Mid-western con that, according to the locals, was good. Nay, great (although these self-same locals allowed as how perhaps this year's was less great than last year's). Instead, we discovered that rumors to the effect that Chicago con-operating fans are bureaucratic, officious, pompous twits were not quite accurate. They're *rude*, bureaucratic, officious, pompous twits!

The convention was named WindyCon. At least the Aggies have the decency to advertise their con as an "Aggie" con. And I owe those Aggies an apology. I have oft complained recently of the boredom found at AggieCon. Folks, you ain't been bored 'til you've been bored in Chicago! Seriously, people — I, who have suffered incessant ribbing for my continued habit of attending programming at conventions, attended nothing — nothing — in the way of standard programming at WindyCon. (I'll get to the ha-ha art auction later.)

Of course, part of my lack of enthusiasm for attending programming may be attributed to the fact that Chicago fandom apparently considers panels to be the extent of programming possibilities. Worse yet, there weren't many of those by Texas convention standards. And still someone tried to explain WindyCon's problems away by claiming that they were doing *too much* this year.

Now, I may have overlooked something exciting in programming. It wouldn't have been hard since the program book and schedule were done either by two people who weren't speaking or by a schizophrenic. I again humbly apologize to Texas cons for past slurs upon their program books and schedules (I still think they could do better, but they're certainly far from the worst!). Finding out when any of the fixed functions opened, closed, and so forth required flipping back and forth between one flimsy piece of paper and one chaotic publication. It was, however, explained to me why most conventions have this problem. Apparently the assumption is made by the con that members will sit down and read this material cover to cover, committing it to memory. Alas, I have always mistaken it for a resource guide to be used to find a particular piece of information, and thus expected it to

be complete and logically organized. I will say this for WindyCon's Joycean stream-of-unconsciousness style of program book/schedule design: it's the first con where I held onto my program book for dear life!

What to tackle next? So many complaints, so little space. Perhaps I should throw in my back pats first. Yes, folks, there were some good things. A Good Thing: the con suite was large and extremely well-stocked. There was a diligent staff member keeping it clean. It would have been nice at a 1,000+ member convention if it had been open 24 hours, and a 24-hour con suite would have prevented some of the uglier scenes with the rude, bureaucratic, officious, pompous hotel management; but, hey — I'll give them the con suite. Someone knowledgeable made the effort.

I'll also give them the fire drill on the 4th and 5th floors. It was different packing all the worldly possessions of a suite full of people and lugging them down the stairs during an evacuation. But as Ben Yalow pointed out, it wasn't original; it'd been done at another con and at least they had a real fire and not just fire extinguisher fumes setting off the alarms. However, the addition of the firemen to the masquerade was certainly the most interesting programming item I found.

But back to the complaints. Let's talk about finding things — like the flyers. The flyer table was placed all the way down at the end of the long hall where the panel and film rooms were. Now, I was assured by the con staff that *every-one* would see the table as they went to the films. But in an informal poll taken in that self-same hallway during the simultaneous running of the masquerade, the art auction, and the fire drill, 4 out of 5 people didn't even know there was a flyer table, and certainly hadn't seen it! The suggestion that it might have been more useful to place the flyer table against the vacant wall downstairs by the registration/bulletin board/lounge area where one *must* pass was met with a stare which implied that fans who offered suggestions to the all-knowing con staff were obviously deranged and potentially dangerous. By that time, the implication might not have been far off target.

For you see, I, like the other two Texans with me, do not take well to piss-poor manners and verbal abuse. "Examples," you say, "examples which illustrate that Chicago con operators are rude, bureaucratic, officious, pompous twits." Well, let's start at registration. There were three — count them, three — of us, and only the three of us, when we dutifully appeared, checkbooks in hand. First Katharine paid and received her disassembled pile of materials. Then I paid for two memberships and received two disassembled piles of materials. I slid down behind Katharine to the only stapler available for securing badges and said materials, thus freeing the space for the young woman who had just appeared behind me. It was at that point that the sour-looking being who had taken our checks and ignored our hellos barked, "You can put your names on your badges on the big table. That's what it's for!" Whereupon Katharine politely pointed out that the only stapler was at the end of the registration desk. This earned us disapproving



stares and frowns, and I'm sure that somewhere in Chicago a file has been started on us as suspicious and probably subversive characters.

Then there was the alleged human being in the dealer's room. Imagine: it is Saturday. The sun doth shine. The dealer's room is closing to the public at 6:00 p.m. At a few minutes before 6, Slugman gooseteps in and bellows beneath his highly conspicuous headset that the dealer's room is closing. (Why he needed the headset I never figured out, since you could reach all the con activities plus the hotel lobby and restaurant in a 5-minute sweep.) This announcement, of course, generates a flurry of fans making purchases and ascertaining which dealers will still be at the con on Sunday and for how long. At 6:00 p.m. on the nose, Slugman returns, doing his impersonation of Hill Street Blues' Lt. Hunter grown squat and fat and even more pompous. As the daughter of a woman Marine, I am unimpressed, but since several folks are waiting for us to close up shop and consider dinner, Katharine and I hurry ourselves. At 6:05 we are clustered between two tables waiting for another dealer apparently known to some of the gathering when the Beast of 20 Tons returns and says, "Take your smoffing out in the hall! We'd like to go eat, too!" Wrong approach! Were it not for the fact that Craig Miller, Jim Gilpatrick, and Ben Yalow began ambling on out, Katharine and I would have immediately organized a sitdown strike and, with the handcuffs from the next table, cuffed the buffoon in with us. As it was, I settled for commenting that I was unimpressed with the con and its staff, and that this would be my last WindyCon, whereupon Moby Fan growled, "Get the fuck out of here!" And Moby apparently was a prominent person on the con staff judging from the amount of time the headset was glued to his head and from his strutting between halls.

We'll skip the hotel's chasing fans out of the lounge/lobby areas next to the elevators, and the bland stares and silence dispensed by con staff in response to such simple questions as "How do you get to the elevators on the dealer's room level?" (This was asked while balancing two boxes of zines and a coat. By standing and waiting long enough, I finally elicited a shrug.) Let's move on to one more classic example of Chicago con "organization."

There was, as I've mentioned, an art show and hence, there was an art auction. Now, the art auction was slated to begin at 9:00 p.m. on Saturday. The masquerade was slated to start at 8:00 p.m. on the same night. Apparently, in the minds of Chicago fandom, people who enjoy masquerades or masquerading don't buy art. Well, for reasons I never could discern, the committee decided to change the art auction to start at 8:00 p.m. also. They did an excellent job of posting notices everywhere of said time change and even I, lost and disgruntled soul that I was, knew of the change. Obviously they did it right, you say. Ah, but wait — let it not be said that these folks missed an opportunity to screw up. They decided that, since some people might say they didn't see the notices of the change, nothing would be brought to auction before 9:00 p.m. unless the bidding parties

were present — both of them — at the same time. And — surprise, surprise — some of the big bidders were \*gasp\* attending or participating in the masquerade!

We were graced with further evidence of Chicago courtesy and hospitality at the auction as fans were alternately ordered to shut up and chastised for failing to call out for runners instead of waving their hands frantically. At one point, it was announced that it would take too long for runners to go all the way to the back of the room (the room held around 75-100 people theater style). As a final insult, any time a piece of media art (which was often superior to the general SF art) came up for bid, these lovely midwestern truefans found it necessary to boo, hiss, and make rude comments about the bidders.

Now, I don't want you going away thinking that Katharine Scarrit, Jeanine Hennig, and I had a miserable weekend. Actually, we had a great time. But it was in spite of the con and the Chicago fans. We shared a suite with some delightful, warm, friendly, fun Wisconsinites who we hope to see again at MediaWest. We

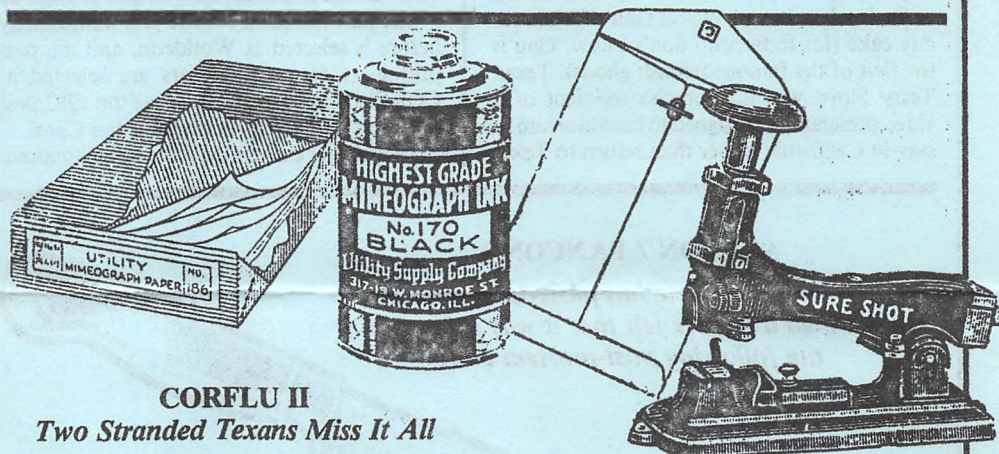
were charmed and entertained by such East and West Coast luminaries as Ben Yalow, Jim Gilpatrick, and Craig Miller. My undying thanks to Rachele DuBey, who held a Lone Star Con party and membership drive despite the fire drill.

So what did you learn, dear? Among other things, a Chicago comic book dealer explained to me why our sales were so slow: we were selling humor, which, we were informed, doesn't sell in Chicago. This may explain many of the con's problems.

I learned that if this is "mainstream" fandom and the "right" way to hold a con, then I want Texas to secede from fandom. I felt as if the paying members were a nuisance to the convention staff and guests at WindyCon, and I certainly don't want that attitude to creep any further into Texas fandom.

I also learned that I'm definitely insulted at being considered a part of the same region as Chicago. They may indeed bear proudly the title "The Wimpy Zone." I only hope they rename their con WimpyCon.

— Carolyn Cooper



## CORFLU II Two Stranded Texans Miss It All

CORFLU, the "fanzine fans' convention," was held the weekend of February 1-3, 1985, in Napa, California, previously famous only for its wineries and its state mental hospital.

Started on an impulse by Bay Area fans Shay Barsabe and Allyn Cadogan, CORFLU I (1984) was a smashing social success and a financial disaster. CORFLU II appears to have been a smashing success on both fronts, due in part to the move from expensive but convenient Berkeley to cheaper but more out-of-the-way Napa. This year's CORFLU had about 80 members (as opposed to approximately 100 last year), plus a number of "party-crashers" from Bay Area fandom who came up to check out the scene.

So far, CORFLU has been the kind of convention where everyone who doesn't know everyone else at the beginning of the weekend does so by the end of the weekend — old time fen get really nostalgic at CORFLU, telling you about when Worldcons were like that. Someday we'll be sitting in our rocking chairs, gazing at thousands of milling people, saying, "I remember when CORFLU was just a small convention — the kind where you knew everybody there . . ."

CORFLU took its commitment to fanzine fandom seriously enough to provide a mimeo

room, mostly courtesy of Dave Rike. At least two good-sized zines were produced at CORFLU — Allyn Cadogan's *Genre Plat #6* and Sharee Carton's *Right Up There #1*. In addition, L. Jim Khennedy distributed *Mondo* and Pascal Thomas handed out copies of *Waiting for the Ricochet*. Many, many other zines were talked about and promised — some will probably even appear. The fanzine history room, put together and overseen by Art Widner, provided a great deal more in the way of interesting fanzines than you could possibly have read in the whole weekend, even if you had chosen not to talk to anyone there. Another longstanding CORFLU tradition, the collate-your-own program book, ensured that all CORFLU members had some fanzine production skills by the end of the weekend.

The only official functionary of CORFLU, other than the committee, is the Mixmaster, who not only introduces the guest of honor at the banquet, but also picks the guest of honor's name out of a hat at the first night's party. This year's Mixmaster was Suzanne Tompkins, aka Suzle, from Seattle, who said she'd never been asked to be a small household appliance before. The guest of honor was Palo Alto fan Allen Baum, who did an absolutely perfect stop-motion freeze when Suzle called



his name out. As guest of honor, he was issued a gold-colored badge (everyone else's was wine-colored, in honor of Napa Country), and told he had 36 hours to produce a speech.

Programming was even more lightly attended than last year — programming took place in the main room, along with a nearly-impromptu art show, a fairly random flea market and the now-traditional surprise basement-clearing. Last year, Lynn Kuehl brought in a dozen boxes of old fanzines for people to plow through; this year Tim Kyger provided us with several trunks of fanzines, magazines, childhood poetry and old socks. Nonetheless, a few of the program items did manage to gel — the secret, it appears, for someone running a program item, is to get two or three of your friends to sit with you and laugh hysterically. Eventually enough people come over to get a good discussion going on the topic, or around the topic, or at least about something fannish.

Saturday night's Hawaiian shirt party brought more than half of the attendees out in gaudy tourist garb, some of it purchased that day in Napa's thrift stores. Fans contributing to the local economy! We cut Ghu's 50th birthday cake (for those who don't know, Ghu is the first of the famous fannish ghods). Texan Terry Floyd was the surprise recipient of a video presentation designed to convince him to stay in California rather than return to Texas

— since almost everyone else at the convention knew about it, and most were in it, the con suite was packed to watch Terry being pleased and embarrassed and the video's director, L. Jim Khennedy, being pleased.

Sunday was mostly marked by the [mandatory] banquet — perfectly edible food served buffet-style made a nice change from last year's remarkably inedible fare. As Mixmaster, Suzle spoke of the re-emergence of the Dreaded WPSEA (Western Pennsylvania Science Fiction Association) Curse, which prevents fans from getting where they are going by means of automobile. The CORFLU business meeting consisted of two things. First, Ted White presented his bid for CORFU 3 in Falls Church, Virginia. "Actually, rich brown is the chair of this bid," said Ted. "I'm the table." Falls Church won by voice vote; Bill Bowers was already circulating flyers for Cincinnati in '87. Threats of a forthcoming Texas bid (for '88) were circulating as well. Second, Ted chaired the fwa (fan writers of america) business meeting. fwa was inaugurated at LACon, and its only official business is the selection of past presidents — the past president for the year immediately before is selected at Worldcon, and the past presidents for earlier years are selected at CORFLU. Suzle was elected as the 1982 past president of fwa, preceding Avedon Carol.

Despite her excitement at being so honored,

Suzle then introduced the guest of honor, using a fill-in-the-blanks method (since, of course, she had no time to prepare an introduction in advance). After getting the audience to supply her with a selection of nouns, adjectives and verbs, she told us the story of Allen's life — no one seemed more fascinated than the guest of honor himself.

Last year's guest, Pascal Thomas, spoke in French (his native language) while the deadpan Lynn Kuehl translated (perhaps rephrased is a better term) his epithets. Not one to be one-upped by previous CORFLU guests of honor, Allen used two official translators for his speech. Pascal translated Allen's speech into French, and Lynn translated it back into "folksy." ("I'm very pleased and honored to be here," for example, came out "Hi!" by the time it got to Lynn.)

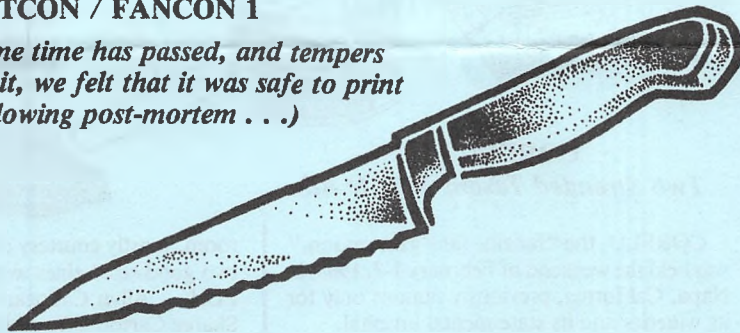
After the banquet, we returned to our exciting social round of programming and parties. A good time was had by all (except the stranded Texans and the uptight security guard). If this con report doesn't make any sense to you, come to Falls Church in '86 — and be confused in person.

(The stranded Texans, by the way, were John Quarterman, author of last year's CORFLU report, and Pat Mueller. Both were stranded in Austin by a blizzard.)

—Debbie Notkin

## ARTCON / FANCON 1

*(Now that some time has passed, and tempers have cooled a bit, we felt that it was safe to print the following post-mortem . . .)*



Why am I — surely one of the least touchy fans around (just ask me) — the one Neil tapped to write this con report? Partly because I was at the con in more than one capacity (huckster, artist, fan editor), and partly because I happened to be near him when I was complaining about a couple of the more obnoxious aspects of the con.

Why, then, am I writing this review? Because there were so many things that went almost right at Artcon I, held March 8-10, 1985 at the Northpark Inn in Dallas, TX. With a little — all right, a lot — of work, Artcon could become a major influence in the SF art field.

The worst thing about Artcon, I felt, was that it was allied with Fancon. Although there are those who would deny it, Fancon was first and foremost a media con. Trekkies and other media fen rarely buy things not related to their area of interest. They also, as a group, tend to be somewhat younger than the average SF fan, with less money to spend. Unfortunately, Artcon cannot afford to be split from Fancon, as non-media cons do notoriously poorly in Dallas

(due partly to management problems, but mainly because the average Dallas fan is not interested in anything but his or her favorite movie or TV show). CreationCon died in Dallas, as did D-Con. Almost all the current Dallas cons are run by the same major con promoter, who makes his living doing it. Perhaps Dallas is not the best place to hold Artcon — it would be an interesting experiment to hold it in a different venue every year, a la Worldcon — but this is a pipedream, since the con's backers are Dallasites.

To be fair, I'll begin by mentioning a few positive aspects of Artcon 1. Bob Asprin did an excellent job as auctioneer, intimidating many people into buying far more than they had expected. There were 77 exhibitors displaying 1104 pieces. Half of the displaying artists sold done or more pieces. Artcon was twice the size of Texarkon (its nearest art-oriented competitor), and brought in 10% more money this first year. The con has received ASFA (Association of SF Artists) accreditation, which will make next year's show much better.

ASFA was taken with the Gremlin awards, and will probably support them and add more categories.

The art auction, I suppose, is a good place to begin with the fault-finding. The show started at 10 p.m., an hour late (the masquerade went way over time). Bob Asprin was his usual blustery self and Bob Daniels, his co-auctioneer, put in a creditable if slightly pedestrian performance (he sold two of my pieces, so I can't complain). All the pieces I liked went for way over my budget except for one by Elissa M. Schob. Two pieces by each artist went into the show, contrary to the rulesheet which had stated that any piece with two or more bids went to auction. The convention organizers said that they made every effort to contact each artist or artist's representative as to the choice of the two pieces, but I know I wasn't asked even though I had three pieces with bids. I'll be charitable and suppose that nobody could find me hiding behind my dealer's table. This revised scheme meant that quite a few — 81, in fact — pieces went to auction.

To the Bobs go the credit that only six pieces up for auction had to be sent back unbought. However, all the surplus meant that the auction ran very late — until 3:15 Sunday morning. And why wasn't there a Sunday auction as had been announced in the schedule? Because the con organizers and the two Bobs agreed that everything saleable had been sold on Saturday. I was told that the reason the auction was continued after all the bid-upon artwork had been sold was that people kept "waving money" — but it didn't look that way to me. Along around 12:30, Bob Asprin asked everyone if they were tired or if they wanted to continue. There was general silence, then finally a



couple of people said "Go on." It is also untrue that everything with bids had been sold by that time. The Darla Tagrin piece I'd bid on was the next-to-last item up (and I still lost it).

It's not accepted practice to interrupt yourself in the middle of a review, but I never claimed to be a conformist. I've shown the above paragraphs to half-a-dozen people for comment, and they are unanimous in saying I haven't been hard enough on the organizers of Artcon 1. To their credit, though, the con organizers already have plans to revamp next year's art auction. Ah well, onward.

The art room itself could have looked much better. The organizers spent \$2,300 on A-frames and 4x8 pieces of pegboard — way too much money for a basically ill-conceived setup. The pegboard was leaned lengthwise on the frames, making the top couple of feet hard to reach and difficult to see. The overhead lights caused glare on glass-covered (or stained-glass) art, since it all had to be mounted at an angle. Almost at the last moment, an extra room was added; when there were several late cancellations, the room seemed too big because some panels were empty.

Most people I talked to — including a couple of artists — felt there was too much not-for-sale art. There's not much that can be done about that, except to remind artists that when somebody likes your work, it doesn't hurt to have something for them to buy. Many artists are now selling prints; this is an excellent idea if you're an artist who wants to keep your originals, or a fan who doesn't have much money.

One group of art provided by the local SCA was not clearly marked — early on in the show, someone stole the sign telling about them. It was the only item stolen, but a replacement was never put up, leading to some confusion. It turned out that all of the art was NFS after all.

Several signs were posted advertising the Gremlins (Artcon art awards), but the ballots were not made readily available. Personally, I think a ballot should have been included with the packet con members picked up while registering.

The con organizers tell me that their art show panels are available to other convention artshows. I don't begrudge them wanting Artcon to recoup some of its losses, but neither will I recommend the displays. They do not look good to me, but perhaps something could be done with them — they might make good flyer racks, for instance. (Write Artcon c/o Fancon, P.O. Box 380297, Duncanville, TX 75138.) They also have program books available (with several pages of art from the artists) at \$1.50 each.

Altogether it was a convention with much promise, which is why I found it so disappointing. I'll look forward to next year's Artcon, though.

— Edd Vick

### Fancon '85 Another Perspective

Herewith are a few thoughts on Fancon '85. Bear in mind that these are my personal opinions, and other of the guests might feel differently.

I was glad to have several panels to do; I'd rather do that than just sit around. My only problems were: 1) I didn't know until I actually arrived at the con when I'd be on; and 2) it was difficult to get some of the panels started on time as the people occupying the room beforehand ran over. For example, a make-up demonstration lasted well into the time reserved for a panel; surely there could have been one room for this kind of show and another for talking/reading.

There also seemed to be some confusion as to who was supposed to be on a panel, and who was supposed to moderate. But since we all knew each other, it never really became a problem. Perhaps some punctilious stranger would have had trouble, though.

The panel rooms were just the right size for the audience attracted: large enough to give us all elbow room, and small enough for worthwhile discussion. The panel audiences, on the whole, seemed to be intelligent and polite. It would have been helpful to designate non-smoking areas, though — my son was driven out of one panel by a cigar smoker — and a little attention to fresh glasses and water would have been nice.

The only problem for me personally was that no one had put the time and place of my reading on the schedule, so that several people who wanted to hear me missed it. Not that these are screaming millions, by any means, but it would have been helpful if *everything* had been on the schedule.

Overall, it was a really good convention. I don't mind at all sharing billing with artists and Trekkies — I like them all.

—Lillian Stewart Carl

### THE GREMLIN AWARDS given at Artcon 1 Dallas, TX — March, 1985

#### Professional Category

**Best Color:** Tim Hildebrand, "Lessa Impresses Ramoth"

**Best Black and White:** Brad W. Foster, "Lady and Tiger"

**Best 3-Dimensional:** Charles Davis, "The Dragon"

**Best Mixed Media:** J.C. Matalon, "Snorkosaurus"

#### Amateur Category

**Best Color:** Cindy R. Carrell

**Best Black and White:** Cindy R. Carrell

**Best 3-Dimensional:** Rene Spahr, "Etched Glass"

**Best Mixed Media:** John Morrisson, "Roger"

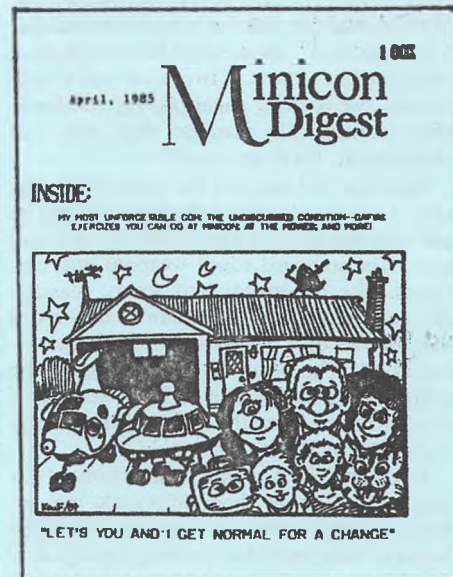
#### Best in Show:

David Cherry, "Man of Prophecy"

#### Lifetime Achievement:

Leo and Diane Dillon

An additional blank plaque was given to Brad W. Foster for designing the gremlin used on them.



### MINICON 20

#### Texans Stranded in Frozen North — Forced to Huddle Together to Survive!

Friday morning I was up before dawn to catch a 7 a.m. flight to Dallas, where I met fellow FACToid Pat Mueller for the flight to Minneapolis. After a hardy breakfast of Airline Eggs, we were ready for anything.

Well, almost anything. Minneapolis was cold, and I was out of practice. The brisk walk across the tarmac to the waiting limo was all the exposure to the raw elements I could endure. During the drive to the hotel, I checked to see if the limo driver's name was "Donner." (It wasn't — whew!)

The Radison South is a stately old hotel with flushometers on the commodes, incomprehensible controls on the lavatory, and beige towels on the racks. The three elevators sync'd at 12:30 p.m. Friday and continued to run together for the entire con. Hotel service was cordial and unobtrusive; the food was good and moderately priced. However, the upper limit for light bulbs at the Radison seemed to be fixed at 40 watts. (Why is it that the people who buy the bulbs don't talk to the folks who buy the lamps? They insist on supplying "one-way" bulbs for "three-way" sockets...)

This was my first MiniCon, but Pat was returning after a long absence. A typical scene Friday afternoon went like this:

"Hey, Fred!" (or whoever) "How are ya!" Pat would scream from the depths of the lobby couch.

Fred (or whoever) would squint and get closer, a blank look fixed upon his face.

"It's me, Pat!" Pat would giggle.

Fred (or whoever) would then fall over, and there would be much How-are-yous, How-you-beens, Gee-you-look-greats and Did-ya-drives? This sort of thing went on for hours. I'd eventually say a few things and Fred (or whoever) would ask Pat, "Is he always like this?"

Stu Shiffman was Artist GoH and we attended a champagne reception in his honor Friday evening. Pat talked to all the neat folks while I kept busy trying to retrieve the straw-



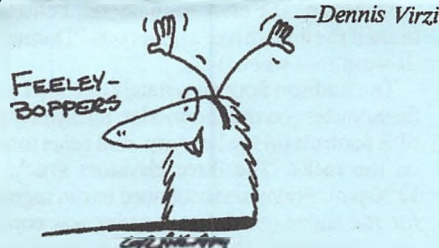
berry from the bottom of my champagne glass. We both had fun, but Pat's fingers stayed dry. Later that night, we attended Da Fred Haskell Song and Slide Show. A two-hour treat of folk singing, twelve-string guitar playing, and timed slide showing. The man can sing, play, and photograph. I was impressed.

Saturday was more of the same lobby silliness. I wandered off into the dealers rooms to see what was for sale. Lots of books, new and used. The standard edged weapons and costumes. The not-so-standard spices, massage oils and cookbooks. The main dealers room had the feel of a bazaar without being claustrophobic. The border collies tied up in the other dealers room were cute, but it was quite a shock to come upon the Irish wolfhound that one dealer had next to her table.

Local artist Erin McKee, who organized this year's MiniCon art show, impressed me into service to help with the art auction. We visited between sales until her painting (which won Best of Show in the art show) came up for sale. Erin was overjoyed when incredibly fast bidding drove the price of the piece up to \$700 before it was sold.

The con suite was the entire top floor of the hotel, half of which was suites set aside for smokers and storage. The other half of the floor was one long room and contained the bar. The decor was old hightech, and it looked like a spaceship. Nobody I knew was in there. And alas, there's no party reports. I came down with a cold Saturday and didn't feel like partying. \*sniff\*

Did I have fun? Yes! Am I going back next year? You bet!



## BAYCON '85

### *Californian Stranded in Texas Escapes to BayCon to Survive!*

BayCon '85 was held over Memorial Day weekend and I, a little lost Cepheid (Cepheid Variable: see *Left Wing Groups at Texas A&M*, usually published on a 3x5 card) was there. My excuse: Why should I need an excuse for living in the San Francisco Bay area?

The con was held at the Red Lion Inn in San Jose, CA — less than a halfmile from the airport, making for some noisy pool parties. Attendance was around 1500, and registration was *smoooth*. Funny how many computer wizards you'll find on a concom that lives and works in Silicon Valley.

The Guest of Honor was David Brin, author of *Sundiver*, *Startide Rising* and *The Practice Effect*. David is a wonderfully dogmatic speaker, both on panels and at parties. He is sure he *knows* what is wrong or right with the world and loves discussions (arguments). I won't go into it all here, but one sample: The dogma of the United States is the dogma that

will eventually win out over all other dogmas because ours is the only culture that despises itself and prefers sushi and enchiladas to native cooking.

Other guests included Michael Whelan (A-GoH), Richard Lupoff (Toastmaster), James Hogan, Janny Wurts, Vernor Vinge, Alicia Austin and Phil Foglio. There were also a lot of comic book artists and writers but I have no idea which ones are the big names. I suppose Richard and Wendy Pini qualify as big names, but I'm not going to bother to mention that they were there.

The Meet-the-Guests Reception was held Friday night, and was well attended by the guests. Algis Budrys and John Varley also showed up for the reception since they were in San Francisco for the American Booksellers Association convention that weekend. I don't know if the concom made an effort, but with an opportunity like that it would have been nice if they had tried to get a few more writers to make the short trip down to the con.

Programming included the Bulwer-Lytton Contest, Baycon '85 Edition, with Dr. Scott Rice as one of the judges (Edward Bulwer-Lytton wrote "It was a dark and stormy night..." and an open reading of both *The Hitchhikers' Guide to the Galaxy* and "The Eye of Argon." If you ever find a copy of the latter, buy some Roloids before attempting to read it. Movies were mostly of the "But I've seen that five times already" variety, but they were shown round-the-clock (yet another tired phrase destroyed by digital watches) on the hotel's own cable channel.

Hard science panels were in abundance. The genetic engineering panel seemed very interesting, although I only heard parts of it since it was opposite the art auction. The Star Wars Plan, artificial intelligence, evolution, the space program and nuclear winter all had their hour-and-a-half in the track lighting, too. Dr. Cary Snider, the technical advisor for *Buckaroo Banzai* and the director of Astronomy and Physics Education at the Lawrence Hall of Science in Berkeley explained how to move through matter and how the jet car is actually a step toward a unified field theory.

From what I hear about the Masquerade Ball (I wasn't there, it was too crowded) — it was too crowded. What the concom tried to do was let the contest entries circulate among the crowd after being announced on stage. They had not anticipated such a large audience attending. The result was ... well ... Phil Foglio's commemorative plate showed a sea of heads and some dots that must have been costumed people far, far away.

I tried some Regency dancing with some people who had been to LosCon where it is very popular. Yes, it was fun. Actually, two of the dances were quite similar to those I had learned from attending SCA events.

Parties were not in tremendous abundance but there were enough to get by on. Westercon 40 bid parties were held by both Oakland and San Jose. The two cities are at least 25 miles apart. How could anyone expect the fans in the two cities to get along? I mean, like gosh, they even have different area codes...

—Yvonne DeGraw



## WESTERCON 38

Here is proof that a con will, if all else fails, "get by with a little help from its friends." Westercon 38 was held in Sacramento, CA on July 3-7. The GoH was James P. Hogan, the Fan GoH was Paula Crist, and Katherine Kurtz was the Toastmistress.

In one word, the con was "unorganized."

In several more words, the program published in the program book had little in common with when, where and what happened. Changes published in the daily bulletin were so numerous that a new schedule should have been printed rather than a list of changes. I also discovered a new cardinal sin: moving a panel to a time slot three hours earlier. This happened at least four times, with panels being moved to 10 and 11 a.m. slots. The panels were over before most people had a chance to pick up the bulletin announcing the changes!

There was no con "ops" until a day and a half into the con, when some fans from elsewhere volunteered to help. Ditto for a greer. room and a hospitality suite. Credit goes to Mary Mason, a SFWA member who helped hold the con together at the last minute. According to rumors I heard, the concom had the nerve to be angry with her for taking public credit for helping them out. How can you expect a con to run smoothly when the con chairman is busy selling things at his table in the dealers' room? (Really, no kidding!)

With that done, programming was decent but as usual it was on the same old topics. William Rotsler's flirting panel was interesting, as were a couple of martial arts demonstrations. The *Bizarro* panel might have been interesting — it featured David Brin, Norman Spinrad and three other guests asking questions of the audience. However, it was one of the panels that got moved to 11 a.m., and I couldn't find anyone who had attended it.

Other items of interest included fireworks "by special arrangement with the State of California," a forum for sharing memories of Theodore Sturgeon, and a couple of staged "Cat Fights" with Paula Crist, who does stunts for *V* and numerous other movies and TV shows.

Costuming was very popular at Westercon. The masquerade was won by four women beautifully dressed as the four seasons (not the musical type). They listed the source of their idea as "axial tilt." Hall costumes were both numerous and elaborate.

There was also another reading of "The Eye of Argon" and a Bulwer-Lytton contest (see BayCon). Movie and video programming was pretty good — a mix of big name movies and old B movies. The dealers' room had only 37 dealers (at least the dealers enjoyed it).



Other guests you may have heard of included Robert Adams, Poul Anderson, Alicia Austin, Steven Barnes, Charles N. Brown, John Brunner, Algis Budrys, Ellen Datlow, Maureen Garrett, Julian May, Larry Niven, Bob Vardeman, John Varley, Connie Willis, and Chelsea Quinn Yarbro. (This list is from the program book, so no guarantees that they were all present.)

A con this size (1500 attendees) should have had an Artist GoH. They did have a very large art show, which was filled with mostly unimpressive illustrations (with two or three exceptions).

The Red Lion Inn in Sacramento was created by a demented airport architect. It broke new ground in spatial relationships, by creating

the longest point from one path to another. Two of the main panel rooms had about 50 seats each, and were always crowded.

The thing that saved Westercon for me was the parties. They were frequent, well-stocked, and for the most part interesting. Oakland, bidding for the Westercon in '87, had the best alcohol — and they also won the bid. Other parties were held by Los Angeles, San Jose, Fantasticon, Gay Fandom (what would the Aggies do to us if we held one at A&M?), Libertarians, various Worldcon and NASFiC bids, and a few other cons and individuals.

Overall? Most people I spoke to gave this Westercon a C+.

—Yvonne DeGraw



"TO EXCESS"

## CARVE-CON IV

*(CarveCon is not a real convention. It's a party held on Halloween weekend, in New Mexico. However, since former Albuquerque fan Dennis Virzi had the audacity to fly from Dallas to New Mexico for a party, and then write about it for the Inquirer so he could try to take the trip expenses off his taxes, I thought I might as well print the damn thing. Besides, it's a wonderful parody of a real convention report... — pm)*

I knew I was in Albuquerque right away. My sinuses dried up, my shoes were dusty, and there were lots of obnoxious jeep-drivers on the road. I was back in the Land of Enchantment to attend CarveCon IV, held this year on the west bank of the Rio Grande river just north of downtown Bernalillo. It felt great to be home again.

Well, pretty good, anyway. I noticed right off that almost every road was under construction. Something like seventeen projects going on at once. The "orange barrel" controversy was even affecting the mayor's race. Seems the city started all these road contracts, without any thought to how they would all be completed. Consequently the construction companies couldn't provide enough workers to cover all

the jobs, hence the hundreds of orange barrels blocking traffic. But some things never change — I was heartened to see that Wyoming Blvd. was still torn up. Somehow, Albuquerque wouldn't have seemed the same if Wyoming was whole.

Try as they might (and they certainly did), Southwest Airlines didn't put a damper on my excitement. I got in about an hour late Friday night, but I was still ready to party. I rented a car, picked up a friend of mine, and went off in search of late supper and nightlife. The "Pillage" Inn was the same; I overdid the green chile, but otherwise the meal was satisfying and the service mediocre. The restaurant was decorated for the occasion with cutouts of witches and black cats taped to their windows (the pumpkin with the knife through it was our favorite).

Since I picked the dinner spot, Robin got even and chose the nightclub. The Launch Site was a two-level bar located in a perennially failing mall. The music was awful and the bar wasn't crowded (the two might have been related) but the prices were reasonable even by fannish standards. It was a nice crowd, too — relaxed and unmundane looking. When we left, it took both of us to locate the car I had rented. I had only had it for a few hours, and had al-

ready forgotten what it looked like. White. It was white.

The highlight of CarveCon is, of course, carving the jack-o-lanterns. This was a BYOP/K affair, but the chair, Patricia Rogers, made an exception in my case. (Getting a sharp kitchen knife through airport security seemed a bit risky, so I was granted shiv dispensation.) Being fan guest had its perks. Fourteen squashes were disemboweled Saturday night. Orange gore, or "pumpkin guts," was everywhere. My costume prop came in very handy. (I was there as Arthur Dent — figuring "Hey, I gotta bring most of this stuff anyway, why not wear it as my costume?" Also, I'd be ready for bed at a moment's notice.) Finished products were placed in Patricia's front yard for judging and display.

Costumes were varied and showed a lot of imagination. The "living" tree was judged Best of Show and Most Annoying (her branches kept getting in the way). The most audacious costume was a towering hulk of a fellow dressed as Tina Turner. Four-year-old Joel was now old enough not to be scared of the goings-on, and was a lot of fun. He was dressed in a red devil's outfit. When I asked him if he knew that cats have tiny zippers under their skins, he matter-of-factly replied that he did. His older brother, who goes to school, had told him all about them. (That was when his parents remembered I was the one who had told Joel about the toilet bowl monster the year before...)

Once all the pumpkins were carved, we gathered around the campfire to warm up, admire our handywork, and dodge marshmallow-roasting skewers wielded by Joel and his brother. Even though it was late, the kids got excited and were soon screaming and running around in the dark. Nobody fell or got burned.

'86 Bubonicon chair Jodi Stinebaugh was there, as was past chair Sal DiMaria. We three sat down and discussed Lone Star Con and Bubonicon. (Smoffing again...) In a moment of nostalgia, I offered to participate in next year's con. A&A in '86! (Albuquerque and Atlanta). It was a good visit.

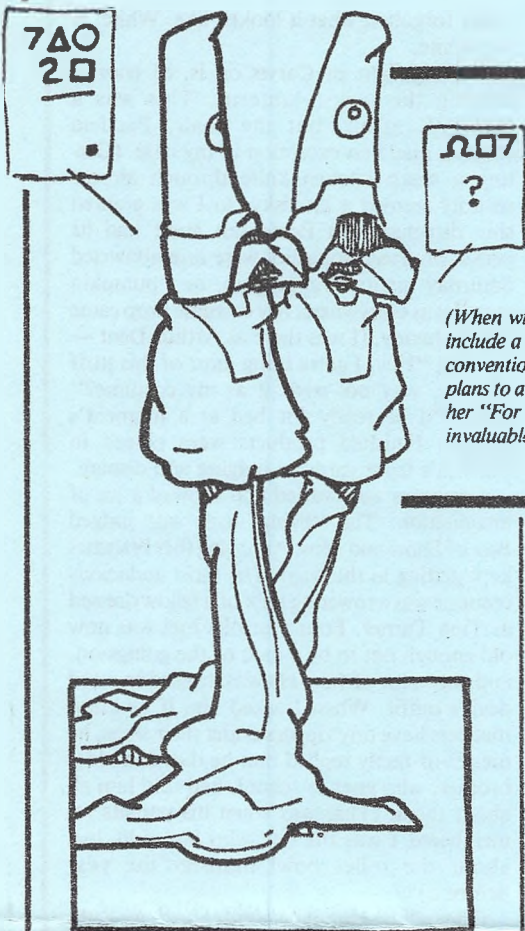
Maybe it was the altitude, I don't know. I had a great time at CarveCon IV, but I never did get a chance to remove my bathrobe. Perhaps next year...

—Dennis Virzi

## REMEMBER!

*Even if you don't know anyone from Australia, that's no excuse not to send in the DUFF ballot included with this issue. Honest. DUFF, the Down Under Fan Fund, needs your support. So send that ballot in by February 28, 1985*





# Convention Calendar

(When writing to a convention for more information, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope.) A ► beside a convention listing indicates that at least one FACT member plans to attend. Special thanks to S.E. Woodard-Vladyka and her "For Your Information" convention listings, which were invaluable in putting together this calendar.)

February 7-9. **Swampcon V. SF convention.** Prince Murat Inn, Baton Rouge, LA. GoH: David Gerrold; Special guest: Robert Adams; Special Fan GoH: Kerry O'Quinn; Fan GoH: Carlotta Barnes; Other guests: Jack Chalker, Jo Clayton, John Steakley, Andrew J. Offutt, The Dalek. Special Starlog videos, SCA event, meet the guest party, costume contest, hall costume contest, art show and auction, panels/readings, NASA exhibit, film/video contest, scale modeling contest, dealers room, more. \$12.50 until Jan. 15, \$15 at the door. Info: P.O. Box 14238, Baton Rouge, LA 70898-4238.

Feb. 8. **Second Saturday Con. "For Buyers and Sellers of Collectable Nostalgia."** Econo Lodge (formerly Ramada Inn), 333 N.W. Loop 410, San Antonio, TX. Dealers in comics, sf, games, related items. Admission \$1; hours 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Info: call 512-896-6050 or write Kerrville Comics, 1205 Broadway, Kerrville, TX 78028.

► Feb. 14-16. **Corflu 3. Fanzine fans' con ("corflu" is fanspeak for "correction fluid").** Tyson's Corner Westpark Hotel, McLean, VA. \$25.25 attending, \$.05 supporting. Info: c/o New Decade Productions, Box 409, Falls Church, VA 22046.

► Feb. 14-16. **Boskone 23. SF convention (biggest, short of an actual Worldcon).** GoH: Robert Bloch; AGoH: Bob Eggleton; Special Guest: Tom Doherty. \$25. Info: NESFA, Box G MIT PO, Cambridge, MA 02139.

► Feb. 21-23. **Contex III. SF convention.** Houston, TX. GoH: Barry Longyear; AGoH: Phil Foglio; FGoH: John Connolly; TM: Steve Gould. Films and video, art show, dealers room, writers workshop, open gaming, wine and cheese party, amateur film and video contest, masquerade, panels and more. \$14 until January 31; \$20 at the door. \$4

supporting. SFWA free. Memberships may be limited. Info: Friends of Fandom, P.O. Box 772473, Houston, TX 77215.

► Feb. 21-23. **WisCon 10. SF convention.** Concourse Hotel, Madison WI. GoHs: Suzette Haden Elgin, Chelsea Quinn Yarbro. \$14 through January 31; \$18 at the door. Supporting \$6 any time. Info: WisCon, Box 1624, Madison WI 53701 or call 608-251-6226 days or 608-233-0326 evenings.

Feb. 28-March 2. **Phoenixcon of Atlanta 1.0. SF convention.** Radisson Inn & Conference Center, Atlanta, GA. GoH: David Brin; TM: Sharon Webb; Special guests: Robert Jordan, Harriet McDougal. Other guests: Orson Scott Card, Brad Strickland, Tom Deitz, more TBA. Extra special guest: Gregory Benford (tentative). Dealers room, video/films, 24-hour con suite, panels, masquerade, art show/auction, more. \$15 by January 5; \$19 thereafter and at the door. Info: Phoenixcon of Atlanta, 752½ N. Highland Ave., Atlanta, GA 30306, phone (404) 875-7326.

Feb. 28-March 2. **Conquistador III. SF convention.** Hotel San Diego, CA. Art show, dealers room, more. \$15 to December 31, \$18 to Feb. 27, \$20 at the door. Info: P.O. Box 15471, San Diego, CA 92115.

Feb. 28-March 2. **Capricon VI. SF convention.** Hyatt, Lincolnwood IL. Films, art show, huckster room, programming, gaming, more. \$12 postmarked by Feb. 1; \$18 at the door. Info: Capricon VI, Box 608020-8020, Chicago, IL 60626-8020.

March 1. **Uthercon 6. Gaming convention.** Palmer Auditorium, Austin, TX. Gaming tournaments; doors open 8:00 a.m. and events run from 9:00 until midnight. Information: University Adventure Gaming Society at UT, 3212 Red River #108, Austin, TX 78705.

March 7-9. **Lunacon '86. SF convention.** Westchester Marriott Hotel, Tarrytown, NY. GoHs: Marta Randall, Dawn Wilson, Art Saha; Special guest: Madeleine L'Engle. Panels, art show, dealers room, films, gaming, book exhibit, more. \$16 through Feb. 26; \$20 at the door. Info: Lunacon '86, P.O. Box 6742, FDR Station, NY NY 10150.

March 7-9. **Concave 7 / Uppersouthclave XVI. SF convention.** Park Mammoth Resort, Park City, KY. GoH: John A.R. Hollis. 24-hour con suite, huxter room, gaming room, art show and auction, buffet banquet. \$7 to February 14; \$9 thereafter. Info: P.O. Box 90962, Nashville, TN 37209.

March 8. **YamatoCon II. Japanese animation festival.** Holiday Inn Park Central, Dallas, TX. Admis-

sion: \$2; festival runs from 10:00 a.m. until midnight. Info: tzi Productions, 1113 Lindhurst, Irving, TX 75061.

March 12-16. **The Seventh Annual International Conference for the Fantastic in the Arts.** Houston, TX. GoH: Brian W. Aldiss; Special Guests: James Christensen, C.N. Manlove, Ray Harryhausen. Sponsored by the International Association of the Fantastic in the Arts, the National Hall of Fame for Science Fiction and Fantasy, and the University of Houston at Clear Lake. Special events include a Stop-Motion Animation Film Festival; annual IAFAs Writers' Workshop with James Gunn (director), Greg Benford, Octavia Butler, Vonda N. McIntyre and Frederik Pohl; tour of NASA and the National Hall of Fame of Science Fiction and Fantasy; and "gala awards banquet with live entertainment." World's largest presentation of academic papers on the fantastic, book exhibit, authors' readings, art and film still exhibition, films, video room, "and the conference's famed conviviality and fellowship." All conference participants must be members of the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts. Conference registration info may be obtained from Donald Palumbo, IAFAs Treasurer, Humanities Division, Lorain County Community College, 1005 North Abbe Road, Elyria, OH 44035. General inquiries should be directed to Marshall Tymn, IAFAs President, 721 Cornell, Ypsilanti, MI 48197, phone 313-482-5151.

Information about the IAFAs Writers' Workshop can be obtained from James Gunn, 2215 Orchard Lane, Lawrence, KS 66044. Enrollments will be strictly limited to no more than eight students per staff writer. Workshop fee of \$200 includes entrance to ICFA programming.

March 14-16. **MillenniCon - 15. SF convention.** The Englewood Holiday Inn, Dayton, OH. GoH: Andrew J. Offutt; FGoH: Bill Cavin. Panels, huckster room, filksinging, late-night video and film room, con suite, indoor pool and sauna, great parties, hall costume awards, more. \$12 to January 31; \$15 thereafter and at the door. Info: P.O. Box 636, Dayton, OH 45405.

► March 20-23. **Norwescon 9. SF convention.** SeaTac Red Lion Inn, Seattle, WA. GoHs: Anne McCaffrey, Kelly Freas & Polly Freas, James Oberg & Cooky Oberg, Gregory Bennett; TM Spider Robinson & Jeanne Robinson. Multi-track programming on science fiction & fantasy literature, art, science, media, gaming, costuming and more. Autograph party, masquerade, stardance, writers & artists' workshops, author readings, book dealers, art show & auction, childrens programs, films, 3-channel 24-hour-a-day video, hospitality and fan rooms, and more. \$20 until March 1; \$25 at the door. Info: Norwescon 9, P.O. Box 24207, Seattle, WA 98124.

March 28-30. **Balticon XX. SF convention.** Hyatt Regency-Inner Harbor, Baltimore, MD. Art GoH: Vicki Wyman; Music GoH: Leslie Fish. Art show, Friday night masquerade, films, gaming tournaments, programming, video, and 'anything else our warped minds can conceive'. \$15 through March 15, \$25 at the door. Info: P.O. Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203.

► April 3-6. **Agglecon 17. SF convention: largest and longest-running in the Southwest.** Texas A&M Memorial Student Center, College Station, TX. GoH: George R.R. Martin; Artist GoH: Frank Kelly Freas; TM: Howard Waldrop; Special Guest: Orson Scott Card; Other guests: Roger Beaumont, Lillian Stewart Carl, Joseph Delaney, Brad Foster, Steve Gould, Joe Lansdale, Becky Matthews, Ardath Mayhar, Henry Melton, Real Musgrave, Doug Potter, Lewis Shiner. Movies, videos, gaming, panels, readings, interviews, slide shows, demonstrations, banquet, masquerade, art show and auction, dealers



room, autograph sessions, parties, sockhop, amateur film contest, more. **ANNUAL FACT MEETING.** \$10 through March 15; \$13 at the door. Info: Box J-1 MSC TAMU, College Station, TX 77844, (409) 845-1515.

April 3-6. **CoastCon IX.** Howard Johnson's, Biloxi, MS. GoHs: Terry Brooks, Ben Bova. Gaming, art show, dealers room, masquerade, more. \$15 until Feb. 28; \$20 at the door. Info: CoastCon, P.O. Box 1423, Biloxi, MS 39533.

▶ April 11-13. **Idicon #3. Slash zine con. No one under 18 admitted.** \$25 to March 5, \$30 to April 1; no at-the-door. Info: W.H.I.P.S., c/o Marnie Strom, 12522 Saracen, Cypress, TX 77429.

April 19-20. **Prism. SF convention.** Hilton Airport Plaza Inn, Kansas City, MO. GoHs: Authors: Richard Pini, Robin Bailey (tentative), Pat & Lee Killough; Artists: Dawn Wilson, David Cherry; Media: Gene Roddenberry, Majel Barrett-Roddenberry, David Prowse, John Nathan-Turner (negotiating); NASA: Jesco Von Puttkamer. Films, video, celebrity breakfast, autographing, dealers room, demonstrations, panels/workshops, art show, gaming, costume contest & ball, trivia, more. \$25 after Jan. 1; \$40 at the door. Info: Prism, P.O. Box 4557, Kansas City, MO 64124.

April 25-27. **Con\*Tretemps V. SF convention.** Omaha, NE. (Write for hotel info.) Hostage of honor: L. Sprague & Catherine de Camp; Hostage artist: Victoria Poyser; Hostagemaster: Rusty Hevelin; Fan Hostages: Jim & Susan Satterfield (OKon); Friends of the con: William F. Wu, M.S. Murdock, David Lee Anderson, Dell Harris, Lynette Meserole. Art show/auction, dealers room, barbarian fashion show, 24-hour video room, free gaming, Saturday nite feast, filksinging, SCA hospitality tavern, more. \$14 until April 1; \$17 at the door. Info: Con\*Tretemps V, P.O. Box 45, Omaha NE 68101.

May 2-4. **Texarkon 5. SF convention.** Texarkana. GoH: Gordon Dickson; AGoH: Kelly & Polly Freas; TM: Robert Asprin. Info: Steve Smith, Rt. 5, Box 708-X, Texarkana, Ark 75502, (501) 645-2459.

May 2-4. **Galacon II. "MultiMedia-MultiLiterary event."** Holiday Inn, Norfolk VA. Author GoH: Joe Haldeman; Musical Guests: John Cog, Robin Welch; Media Guests TBA; Guest artists: Colleen Doran, Allen Rowe. Proceeds to be given to charity. Info: P.O. Box 8626, Virginia Beach, VA 23450, phone (804) 340-9349.

May 16-18. **Conquest. SF convention.** Howard Johnson's, Kansas City, MO. GoH: Tim Powers; TM: Ed Bryant; Fan GoH: Ann Layman Chancellor. Writers panels, gaming, banquet, art show, presentations, hucksters, hospitality suite, artists panels, parties, art auction, video room, masquerade, autographing, filking, trivia and more. \$14 to April 15; \$16 at the door. Info: Conquest, P.O. Box 36212, Kansas City, MO 64111.

May 16-18. **Marcon 21. SF convention.** Sinclair Plaza, Columbus, OH. GoH: Roger Zelazny; TM: Andrew J. Offutt; Others: Jim Gilpatrick, Murray Porath, Bill Maraschiello, Cliff Flynt. Art show, dealers room, masquerade, video, filking, gaming, panels, more. \$18 to April 15; \$20 at the door. Info: P.O. Box 14078, Columbus, OH 43214-0078.

May 23-25. **Who-Tex II. Who con.** Austin Marriott, TX. Eric Hoffman, Jon Pertwee (tentative), others. Info: Who-tex II, c/o F.Z. Productions, P.O. Box 19415, Austin, TX 78760.

May 23-25. **Kubla Silcon. SF convention.** Sheraton-Nashville Hotel, Nashville TN. GoHs: Timothy, Anna and Corwin Zahn, Victoria Poyser; MC: Andrew J. Offutt. Art show, huxter room, maskeraid, khan suite, banquet, film/video competition, video room, game room, art auction, parties. \$14 until

May 1; \$18 thereafter. Info: Ken Moore, 647 Devon Drive, Nashville TN 37220. Memberships: Carol Donaldson, 3017 Towne Valley Rd., Antioch, TN 37013, phone (615) 366-1092 after 6 p.m.

May 23-26. **Mediawestcon #6. Media convention.** Info: 5132 Jo Don Dr. E., Lansing, MI, 48823.

May 24-26. **Amigocon. SF convention.** Holiday Inn Mid-City, El Paso, TX. GoH: Patricia A. McKillip; Special guest: Robert E. Vardeman. Movies, authors readings, wargaming, trivia, medieval combat, dealers, comics, masquerade. \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door. Info: Tom Cagle, 3400 Polk, El Paso, TX 79930.

May 30-June 1. **VCon 14. SF convention.** Info: Box 48428, Bentail Station, Vancouver, BC V7X 1X2 Canada.

▶ June 6-8. **Soonercon-1. SF convention.** Hilton Inn Northwest, Oklahoma City, OK. GoH: Gene Wolfe; Art GoH: Ellissa Schob; TM: Tom Disch; Fan GoH: Mary Wallbank. Gaming, art show and auction, video room, parties, autograph sessions, filking, costume contest, panels, dealers room, more. \$10 until April 1, \$15 at the door. Info: Soonercon-1, P.O. Box 1701, Bethany, OK 73008.

June 13-15. **Ad Astra #6. SF convention.** Howard Johnsons Airport Hotel, Toronto. Info: Box 7276 Stn. A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X9 Canada.

June 20-22. **Lastcon Fore. SF convention.** Americana Inn, Albany, NY. GoH: Robin McKinley; Art GoH: Wayne Barlowe; Also expected: Hal Clement, Chuck Rothman, Prof. Alan Meltzer, Clam Chowder. Masquerade, video rooms, art show and auction, dealers room, panels, readings, filking, more. \$18 to May 31, more at the door. Info: P.O. Box 13002, Albany, NY 12212.

June 21-22. **Fourth Street Fantasy Convention.** Minneapolis Plaza Hotel, Mpls., MN. GoH: Roger Zelazny; Guest Editor: Terri Windling; Guest Agent: Valerie Smith; Godfather: David Hartwell. "Definition of fantasy: Well, uh, it isn't hard science fiction, and it isn't horror, so, er, I guess it must be fantasy." \$20 until June 1st, then \$30. Info: 4880 106th Ave. NE, Circle Pines, MN 55014, (612) 784-2437.

▶ June 26-29. **Midwestcon 37. Relaxacon.** Cincinnati Marriott, Glendale OH. Banquet \$20, reservations must be made by May 29 (pay at con). Convention membership \$13, payable at the door only. Info & room reservation form: Bill Cavin (513/631-2543) or Jackie Causgrove, 6828 Alpine Ave. #4, Cincinnati OH 45236.

July 3-6. **Halleycon / Westercon 39. SF convention.** Town and Country Hotel, San Diego, CA. GoH: David Brin; Fan GoH: Karen Turner; TM: Greg Bear. Programming will include sf, fantasy, science and technology, and fannish tracks. Masquerade, fan room, film & video room, authors' readings, large art show, even larger dealers room, and all the other traditional Westercon stuff. ("We also have a few new things planned which defy brief description.") \$30 through February, \$35 through May; higher at-the-door rates to be announced. Supporting membership \$10. Info: Westercon 39, P.O. Box 81285, San Diego, CA 92138.

July 4-6. **Conzinelece. Media fanzine convention.** Panels, dealer's room, art show/auction, banquet, costume ball, more. Info: Galactic Winds Press & Graphics, c/o Jeanine & John Hennig, P.O. Box 166362, Irving, TX 75016.

July 18-20. **OKon '86. SF convention.** Tulsa, OK. Info: P.O. Box 4229, Tulsa, OK 74159.

July 25-27. **Dark Shadows Festival. Dark Shadows con.** Marriott Park Central, Dallas TX. GoH: Jonathan Frid, others TBA. Dark Shadows episodes,

blooper tape, dealers, costume contest, memorabilia auction, displays, music videos, fan fare fest, movies. Memberships \$18 to May 1, \$20 thereafter; daily rates at the door. Info: P.O. Box 11641, Fort Worth, TX 76109.

▶ August 28-Sept. 1. **ConFederation. The 44th World Science Fiction Convention.** Atlanta, GA. GoH: Ray Bradbury; Fan GoH: Terry Carr; TM: Bob Shaw. \$55 to Feb. 15, more later, much more at the door. Info: 3277 Roswell Road, Suite 1986, Atlanta, GA 30305 (note address change).

Sept. 12-14. **Project Star Bright. SF/Media convention.** Houston, TX. Guests: Muff and Real Musgrave, Dell Harris, David Martin, David Wellings, others TBA. Hall costume awards, gaming tournaments, six video rooms, masquerade, tavern, Killer game, 20 gaming tables, dealers room, more. \$15 to Aug. 31, \$20 at the door (\$2 discount if in costume). Info: 5700 FM 1960 Suite 207, Houston, TX 77069.

Sept. 26-28. **DeepSouthCon 24. SF convention.** Galt House, Louisville, KY. GoH: David Hartwell; TM: Somtow Sucharitkul; Fan GoH: Ann Layman Chancellor; Featured Artist: Alex Schomberg. "Interesting" programming, large huckster room, art show and auction, masquerade, 24-hour hospitality suite, game room ("featuring the hearts championship of the known universe"), and a film program. \$15 to Sept. 3; \$20 thereafter. Info: L&N Deep-SouthCon, P.O. Box 58009, Louisville, KY 40258.

▶ Oct. 11-13. **Armaddillocon VII. SF convention from the folks who brought you Lone Star Con.** Sheraton Crest & Towers, Austin, TX. GoH: William Gibson; TM: Lewis Shiner; FGoH: Debbie Notkin. It's back — the ArmaddilloCon you all know and love. Programming and parties with that special Lone Star flavor. Panels, discussions, autographing, baaad movies, dealers room, art show, video room, masquerade, pig-out, con suite, parties, more. This year for ArmaddilloCon, FACT will be publishing a limited-edition book containing a previously unpublished work by the GoH, written especially for the occasion. Memberships \$5 (!) until AggieCon, then more. (Get 'em now! Buy six or seven!) Info: P.O. Box 9612, Austin, TX 78766.

Nov. 8-10. **TusCon 12 (Dust-ball Con). SF con "brought to you by some very weird people and the society for the preservation of fortnight-old casseroles."** Executive Inn, Tucson AZ. GoH: Vernon Vinge; FGoHs: Hilde & Bruce D. Arthurs; TM: James Corrick. "Madness and death stalked the WorldCon... idle sophistry choked the regional cons... now it's time to pay the piper at TusCon 12!" \$12 through April 7, \$15 till October 1, \$20 at the door. Info: P.O. Box 26822, Tucson, AZ 85726.

▶ Nov. 28-30. **Context IV. SF convention.** Houston, TX. GoHs: Catherine & L. Sprague de Camp; AGoH: Pat Breeding; FGoH: Carolyn Cooper. Special early-bird rate: \$10 for full convention membership. Info: Friends of Fandom, P.O. Box 772473, Houston, TX 77215.

▶ Aug. 27-Sept. 2, 1987. **ConSpracy '87. The 45th World Science Fiction Convention.** Brighton Metropolitan Hotel, Brighton UK. GoHs: Doris Lessing, Alfred Bester; AGoH: Jim Burns; FGoHs: Joyce & Ken Slater. Special fan guest: David Langford. TM: Brian Aldiss. Membership: £19.50/US\$30/A\$40 to 3/31/86, then more; supporting £10/US\$15/A\$20. US Agents: Bill & Mary Burns, 23 Kensington Ct., Hempstead NY 11550. Info: ConSpracy '87, P.O. Box 43, Cambridge, England CB1 3JJ.

▶ Sept. 3-6, 1987. **CactusCon. The 1987 NASFiC.** Phoenix Hilton/Civic Plaza Convention Center/Hyatt Regency, Phoenix AZ. GoH: Hal Clement; FGoH: Marjii Ellers. Membership: \$15 supporting, \$25 attending to 12/31/85. Info: Cactuscon, Box 27201, Tempe AZ 85282, (602) 968-5673.



# Letters of Comment

July 1, 1985

Thanks for the copy of the *Texas SF Inquirer* (issue 10/11) that you gave me at Midwestcon. It's quite pleasant to read a publication which captures a Texas flair without the bland "nationalism" that would seem inevitable for a Texas 'zine.

I was most captured by Fred Duarte's account of the Dallas Fantasy Festival. Although the entire occurrence would hardly qualify as funny, I laughed with irrepressible delight as the story grew worse.

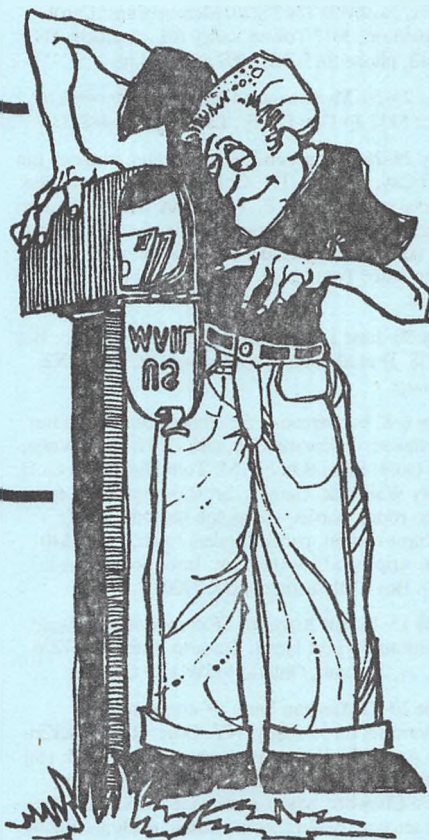
Having spent a year and a half in Dallas, my wife and I tried desperately to picture what type of SF convention could possibly happen in that city. Now, it seems, the worst version of these possibilities has materialized. While there are many wonderful people who live in Dallas, the "conform or die" attitude which prevails there is hardly conducive to fannish gatherings.

Greg Jordan  
Cincinnati, OH

29 October 1985

Well, it was great to see my name in print. Moreover, my mind also keeps going back to the good old days of AZAPA. For so long it seemed like the brightest band on earth, and my memories of it are still pretty enjoyable. Once in a while, I re-read the old stuff, and I'm only mortified at a comparatively small portion of it. Ah, but that small portion ... gack. Sometimes it's just a phrase, or a fillo. Sometimes it's entire exchanges over a period of months. How could I have been so uncritical as to let some of that stuff out? On the other hand, I keep intending to mine what remains for illos I could re-use and re-draw (and do it right this time).

It's great to see that Mel. White has a graphic novel in the works with Bob Asprin. Her editor is the guest of honor at a convention we're going to in Virginia Beach. This con



is my big chance to make a couple of friends in the area. I only hope I don't seem desperate. I've been here two months, and already I know one person. Happens to be in SlanApa, which I'm also in.

Awful sorry we didn't get to Lone Star Con. Seems like whenever we sign up for a big convention in our area, we move. I think we should save this maneuver for emergencies from now on, and not leap about frivolously.

Osmosis amoebas,  
Kip Williams  
Newport News, VA

*There's times when I reread my old fan-writing that I, too, say to myself, gack!!! And then there's times when I wonder why I can't write anything that good these days. I suppose the credo for playing it safe would be to write something and not print up very many copies — but save the stencils, just in case... On the other hand, there's the dilemma between wanting to get something perfect, and wanting to finish something before the end of the century.*

*It was a shame that you and Cathy moved from Houston to Virginia just before Lone Star Con. Why, I was going to wait until the day after the con, and draft you to help move stuff out of the hotels and back the office... But no, you were too smart for me...* —pm

I have the definite impression various Seattle fans are thinking about bidding for the 1988 Corflu. If so, barring a major upthrust in high-profile fanzine activity by Dallas fans, I suspect such a Seattle bid would win in a walk. I know, pointing this out is bound to rouse the ire of defensive Texas fans, leading to yet

another dreary round of the we'll-show-them syndrome, but really: Corflu was conceived as a *different* sort of con, a gathering of active fanzine fans to be put on by people sensitive to what that sort of fandom wants out of a convention. Instead of trying to Make A Name For Themselves by bidding for a Corflu, I'd suggest that Texas fans occupy themselves with the task of making a name for themselves putting out the witty, entertaining, fascinating fanzines they're doubtless all capable of doing. After a few years of that, then they'll be ready to run a Corflu for the rest of fanzine fandom.

(Another virtue of doing things that way is that, if they don't do a perfect job of producing fanzines the first time out, no one will kill them. If, on the other hand, they seize Corflu, through whatever business-meeting stuffing techniques it'd take, and then do a half-assed job of putting it on — *then* their names would be mud. For all that I've criticized the idea of Corflu, I recognize that it's a pretty precious thing to a number of people; it's young, a fragile ecology not ready for the hurly-burly of Bidding Wars and neo-ish committees.)

The memoirs of AZAPA were intriguing but disappointing. Your own piece couldn't seem to make up its mind whether it was autobiography or exhortation: were you trying to tell a story, or convince people of the virtue of apas? Andruschak's piece, on the other hand, was simply dull.

Two corrections: I didn't model AZAPA on MISHAP; I *couldn't*, not having seen a mailing of that latter group until some months after I founded AZAPA. The true models for AZAPA were SAPS, APA-L, and rumours of Minneapa. Additionally, Bruce D. Arthurs *didn't* invent AZAPA's formal official organ; Harry only thinks this because the apa he was mostly familiar with before AZAPA was probably APA-L, which (at the time, anyway) limped along with little more than a table of contents. Again, I initiated the detailed and informative O-O in the first mailing. Definitely, Bruce slicked up and codified the Official Organ when he took over the apa soon afterwards, but this is hardly surprising: unlike most of the rest of us in that group, Bruce was an experienced apa-fan with a background in groups like TAPS (a Cult-like rotating-publisher apa), where he'd produced entire mailings.

Yes indeed, Bruce was a swell OE and probably did more to maintain AZAPA through its best years than anyone, but no, he didn't invent everything good about it; the actual Acts of Creation, as was often the case in that late unlamented generation of Phoenix fandom, resulted from the naive, silly actions of people too neoish to know any better. If the idea had been suggested to him, *would* Bruce D. Arthurs have founded AZAPA? An interesting question (to me and about three other survivors).

I see Harry Andruschak still smarts over Oasis, as well. As you know, that crack about Oasis being "AZAPA without the fuggheads" was one member's joke, not any sort of Official Policy; in fact about half the members of Oasis were people who'd never been in AZAPA. But to the extent that the crack contain-



ed any truth, Harry was one of its prime targets, so it's no surprise he still stings over it. Again, I'm unsure who said it (Taral? Me? Who knows?) but from this late date, Harry, I'm sorry; long ago & far away, etc.

You miss Tom Whitmore's point about that media fan who said sf conventions should provide "someone of 'star caliber'" to amuse mediafans who help in their running. I think. Ultimately, what's croggling about such demands is the misunderstanding they betray: these people don't mean *at all* the same thing by the word "convention" as we do. When we have conventions, we *convene*: our stars are, primarily, each other. Yes, we have GoHs, even some concons (too many) who lick the boots of anyone exalted enough to have made one pro sale. (This last spring I attended a con behind a Pro badge for the first time; amazing and distressing to see the change in gofers' attitudes towards small problems involving me. I had to resist the urge to tip.) But out basic assumptions are irreconcilable with those who say "convention" and mean "show." For this reason, I am *not* ecumenical any more about Outreach To Media Fans, Extend The Hand Of Friendship To Our Trekkie Brethren, etc. Their hobby may be a good hobby. It may even be a *better* hobby than my hobby. But it's not anything *like* my hobby, despite superficial resemblances; in fact, it actively disrupts and lowers my enjoyment of my hobby, much as if I were trying to practice madrigals in the same room as several people playing handball. I think We and They would profit from a little more mutual benign neglect.

Best, &c.:  
Patrick Nielsen Hayden

PS: Ted White is *not* "coordinating" the 1986 Corflu. Rich brown is the Chair. (Ted White is the Table. Dan Steffan is the Lampshade. I'm not making this up.)

*I hadn't heard about the Seattle-in-'88 Corflu movement when I started agitating for a Corflu here in Texas; if it comes down to it, I'll yield to them. I'm not dumb. They can do all the work!*

*On the other hand, there's quite a number of Texas fanzines that just don't seem to make it out of Texas and into the regular fanzine trading circuit. Son of Wagnerama (by Martin Wagner out of Houston — sercon book reviews, etc.) springs to mind, as does \*ahem\* The Texas SF Inquirer. Why, Willie Siros himself used to publish a zine (Cambion) in El Paso; he even has the stencils from his last, unpublished issue hidden away somewhere. Rumor has it that Neil Kaden is actually going to publish a zine again . . . and I'm subverting as many people as I can here in Austin to the inky side of fandom. I mean, I'm sitting here in the middle of Fanzine Fan's Heaven at Stately Smof Manor, what with three mimeos, a ditto, an electrostenciller, a light table, empty-ump boxes of stencils and ditto masters and corflu, six cases of paper, two cases of ink, a color-change kit, a gallon of ditto fluid, a typewriter, a computer with a line printer, art files, clip art, a small fanzine library — why, hey kids, let's pub an ish!*

*Not being immersed in fan history, the only way I could talk about AZAPA was subjectively — which is why my piece had trouble making up its mind what it was. I was, however, trying to bring across the wonderful nifty-neat goshwow feeling AZAPA meant to me, as well as quelling the incipient rise in certain Texas circles of the attitude that "trufans are boring old farts." (I hate it when that issue comes up, because then I have to stir myself out of being a B.O.F. and back into goshwow, which is a lot of work, and tiring besides...)*

*As far as the media fan issue goes . . . you have a definite point about "their" conventions being much different from the type of con that you and I enjoy. However, I have to*

*sit on the middle of the fence on this one, and only get testy when a media fan comes to a sf convention and complains that it's not like a media con.*

*But I still can't out-and-out ignore the Texas media fen. We can show them that there are other kinds of fandom (and they might listen; after all, I like discovering new and different permutations of "trufandom"); but any "Outreach Program" should stop there, before we reach a frenzy of religious conversions. Besides, a lot of Texas sf-fen started out as media fans — and many of them still think of themselves as media fans first and foremost, which is where this whole brouhaha started... —pm*



## Media Fan Trapped in Central Texas! Forced to Eat SMOFs to Survive!!!

by Cl. Crouch

Long-time readers of the *Texas SF Inquirer* may recognize the parody trapped in the title above. Suffice it to say I am a great believer in recycling. But the sentiment is true, and it directly relates to a letter in issue 12 of the *Inquirer*, regarding my intentions as a media fan toward my "literary" brothers and sisters in SF/F fandom. First off, I repeat, I am on *both* sides of that fence, having cut my teeth on the godfathers of SF like the "literary" fen, and having also a fine-tuned sense of fun and therefore being appreciative of "media" SF, such as *Star Wars*, *Doctor Who*, and yes (blush) even *Star Trek*.

Pat was right in picking up on the fact that "bite when bored" was an off-hand phrase; I never meant for anyone to assume it was license to smear condiments on elevator buttons — indeed, if I ever catch some snot-head doing any such thing you will have to race me to the manager's office to report him/her! I utterly *refuse*, however, to be responsible for someone interpreting my words in such a manner. And in the interest of self-expression, I also refuse to explain what I *did* mean. I leave it up to the individual to shade in the meanings. Snot-heads will do it in one way, intelligent beings another...

But that's history. What is coming is more important, now. There is a newly-formed *Star Trek* club in Austin — nameless and politics as yet, meeting informally at interested parties' houses — and if you want to know more about it (and you can attend meetings) SASE Jay Marchand, P.O. Box 18193, Austin, TX 78760. And I guarantee these ST fen *don't* sit around watching boring video of so-and-so doing this and that for whole meetings! In fact, the current project is *making* a video — a short costume drama concerning the Prime Directive — and discussions and help on

props, filming, whatever, are *welcome!!!*

The local Who-club has lost its summer dol-drums, and is making plans for some charity work, including a March-of-Dimes walkathon of some sort, and maybe a few more parties this winter season. On another Who-front, WHO-Tex II is gearing up for its second bash in May, and for details on *that*, SASE F.Z. Productions, P.O. Box 19415, Austin, TX 78760.

Since Lone Star Con, there has been a general awakening in the minds of the mundanes (no offense — it is a handy term for the sorts who still think science fiction means Godzilla movies or *Lost in Space* — only) about SF. They are now not only aware the beast exists, they know there's gold in them thar reels — and I think by the time Worldcon gets here (I was a late-believer that the NASFiC would ever get here — I am *not* gonna be caught napping again!) we may find the great nation of Texas a lot more receptive to the "nether side of literature."

As for other media fronts, I know nothing or as little as makes no difference. This is not to imply they are not active — I am aware, for example, that a Buckaroo Banzai club has come into this dimension, but damfino anything else about it. If you want to know more about it, you can SASE them at The Blue Blaze Irregulars, The Banzai Institute for Bio-Medical Engineering and Strategic Information, 20th Century Fox, P.O. Box 900, Beverly Hills, CA 90213, attention Barry Diller. According to the flyer I grabbed on this, it is important to *NOT* put (Pat — be *sure* you get *that* "not" in!) any mention of Buckaroo on the outside of the envelope, or apparently it will get Barry Diller in trouble. I liked BB, but I don't have time for any more projects. You're on your own ... onward through the mountain!



## Lone Star Con / F.A.C.T. (continued from page 1)

grown to almost 100, with members from Dallas, San Antonio, and Houston as well as Austin; the monthly club meetings are well attended. The next F.A.C.T. meeting will be held on Saturday, February 22 at Context in Houston.

F.A.C.T. vacated its office space at the end of December and is now operating out of various workrooms in members' homes in Austin and Dallas. William Watson has been delegated to update and maintain the massive F.A.C.T. mailing lists; A.P. McQuiddy is handling miscellaneous correspondence; Joe DiMaggio is Social Director; and Robert Taylor is chairing the 1986 ArmadilloCon. The F.A.C.T. "publishing empire" is housed at Stately Smof Manor, where Pat Mueller maintains the fanzine library and ministers to the mysteries of mimeographing, while Willie Siros handles the "smoffing" end of things.

Several F.A.C.T. committees have also been working diligently in the past few months. The Constitution Committee, headed by Yolanda Garza, is assembling a proposed club constitution, to be voted on by F.A.C.T. members at the annual meeting at AggieCon in April. Dennis Virzi heads the Special Projects Committee, which is soliciting ideas for F.A.C.T. projects and activities.

A committee headed by Willie Siros is investigating the possibilities of holding another major convention or two in Texas; he will report on his findings at AggieCon. Pat Mueller and Neil

Kaden will be attending Corflu this coming February, to spearhead their bid for a Texas Corflu in 1988.

Currently, F.A.C.T. is sponsoring the SMOF-BBS, the local science-fiction electronic bulletin board (phone (512) UFO-SMOF). The sysop's modem will only operate at 300 baud at present, and F.A.C.T. is acting as a clearing-house for contributions towards repairing it or obtaining a

working 1200-baud modem.

In addition, F.A.C.T. will be assisting one of its members, S.E. Woodard-Vladyka, in publishing her "For Your Information" convention listings.

And, of course, F.A.C.T. is still publishing *The Texas SF Inquirer* — "the best little newszine in Texas."

—Pat Mueller

## ADDENDA TO THE BETTER BOOKS OF 1985

**O**K, so I decided to make a minor adjustment or two. First, a quick comment — if you haven't been rushing out and reading the various short pieces this year by Bruce Sterling and Lewis Shiner, you've missed some fine stories. And Howard Waldrop's famous ArmadilloCon story, "Flying Saucer Rock and Roll," finally saw light in 1985!

Secondly, in reference to a book review on page 2 (since I'm writing this because Pat said she had some extra room) — *EON*? Come on, Fred, give me a break. It's a well-written book and all. But as Bear nears the end, he changes the focus and direction to a far grander scale and it just didn't hold together for me.

I think Card did a much better job of keeping the focus on Ender even as the scale changed. This may convince me to move *Ender's Game* up a level (but not yet).

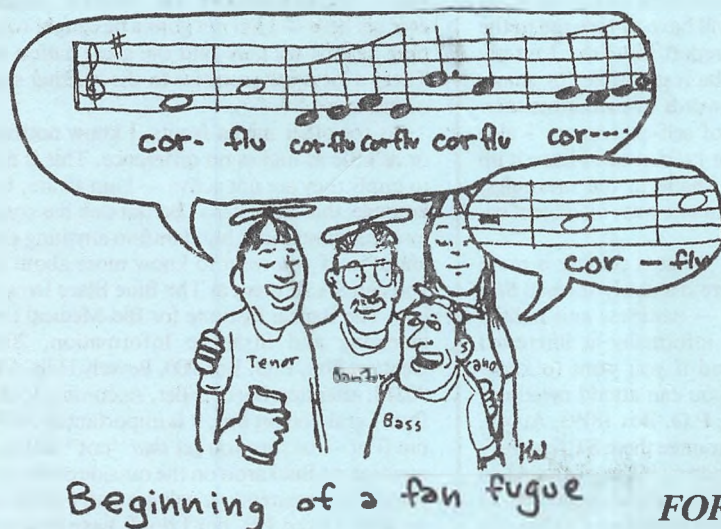
While I've been working on Le Guin's *Always Coming Home* (I'm not sufficiently convinced it's a novel yet), I did manage to read the new Bradbury. It didn't do anything for me, and I hope he goes back to writing short stories. I also would add Rudy Rucker's *The Meaning of Life* (Bluejay) to my **Very Good** list, and *The Woman Who Loved Reindeer* (Atlantic Monthly) to the **Strong Novels** list. Don't you just love subjective opinions?

—Willie Siros

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