Welcome to Boskone 46!

Thanks again for being part of our program, and for your continued patience and understanding. Please read the information in this letter – you'll be glad you did. Honest!

Your program participant materials include:

- **Your Program Participant ribbon** – Wear it proudly!
- **Your final schedule** and **a back-of-badge label** that also shows your schedule.
- **An extra name card** for your use (see below)

Program Ops (Galleria) will be open at 9:00 in the mornings. It will close on Saturday evening shortly after 5:30, and on Sunday at around 2:00. Please note that Boskone does not have a separate closed Green Room: coffee, munchies, and areas for conversation are available in the ConSuite.

We've tried to accommodate your **scheduling requests.** If you have a problem with your schedule, please let us know as soon as possible. The sooner we find out, the sooner we can solve the problem. There will be a "Help Wanted" list posted in Program Ops announcing panels for which we need additional participants. If you see a panel that looks interesting to you, let us know.

The Mysterious M: An M beside your name means that you are the moderator of that panel. Use this power wisely (and read our handy hints!) We'd appreciate your assistance in making sure name cards get to your program item, keeping the program energetic and interesting, and in ending it on time. Name cards are provided in a folder on the table. Please collect your name card at the end of the panel for disposal or future use.

If one of your program items requires **audiovisual** equipment, please check that we know about it. If you requested audiovisual equipment for your program item, we assume you know how to operate it – if not, (again) let us know. Finally, we'd like you to verify whether that your software or computer is compatible with out equipment; please find the time to stop by Program Ops to check that everything works well before your program item!

Timing of Program: Most program items (including autographing) are 55 minutes long. Most readings and "onesies" will last 25 minutes. Kaffeeklatsches and Literary Beers are 45 minutes long. Please make sure that you end your program item promptly! Members of the convention (as well as other program participants) will be grateful for the 5 minutes or so between different program items – whether they use it for getting from one location to another, or just for a bathroom break. Please vacate the room promptly, taking any conversations or autographing into the hall, or wherever!

In Conclusion

Relax and have fun. Feel free to *attend* the convention, as well as to participate in it. Conventions are meant to be enjoyed by program participant and attendee alike. We will try as best we can to help you have an enjoyable time as a program participant. If you have any suggestions for improving our performance and/or program this year or in the future, we'd *really* like to hear them.

Thank you again for volunteering to be part of the Boskone 46 program. Have a great time!

-- Boskone 46 Program

As the moderator, you can help make a panel focused and fun. You should try to:

- *Be prepared.* If possible, briefly talk to your fellow panelists before the program item. Think up some questions or topics to keep the panel going if conversation lags. Make a crib sheet. And....start on time!

- *Briefly* outline the topic of the panel for the audience.

- *Briefly* introduce the panelists, or ask them to introduce themselves. (Do *not* allow others to join the panel unless the Program staff authorizes this addition.)

- Avoid the temptation to start the panel by announcing that you have no idea what it's about or why you're on it. Keep others from doing the same. (Yes—it is an easy way to start, and could well make the audience feel a sense of rapport with you. It may even be amusing. However, even if this *is* true, drawing attention to the convention's failings is discourteous and generally unnecessary.) If you are on a panel and are uncomfortable with the topic, notify Program Ops, and we'd be happy to find a replacement.

- Make sure that all panelists start with an equal chance to participate. As moderator you may need to adjust panelist participation depending on panelists' contributions. Be fair, but firm.

- Prevent the discussion from drifting away from the topic. Don't let panelists (including yourself!) pursue individual agendas unless they are *directly* on topic.

- Allow time for questions, but don't let individual questioners monopolize the panel or drag it away from the topic. (If necessary, consider announcing that you will only take audience questions and comments after a specific time.) If you are in a large room, repeat questions from the audience so everyone in the room knows what was asked.

  While you should try to keep the program on track, don't let any of these guidelines cause you to stop a discussion which is interesting to both the panel and audience! Keep the "big" picture in mind.

- Keep an eye on the time (check a watch or clock). Consider asking a summing-up question near the end of your allotted time. Then, bring the panel gracefully to a close when your time is up. *Thank everyone!*

- Please do not linger after the panel, and discourage other panelists from doing so, so that the next program item can start on time. If people want to talk with the panelists, please encourage them to do it outside the room.

To the best of our knowledge, moderating has never killed anyone. Yet.

Go with the flow. Relax. Enjoy.

Being a moderator is a JOB – but it can be a rewarding one. Thank you for your willingness to take it on.

<u>Some assorted mostly-general advice:</u>

Think.

People issues cause burnout, not amount-of-work. Fix people problems ASAP to save sanity.

Find people you can trust, and use them. Forgive them if they screw-up.

Use as much technical help (pre-con) as possible. Use Email a lot.

Be polite. Answer every piece of paperwork/queries that come to you in a reasonably timely and affable manner. (Even if it kills you.....)

Don't assume that anyone has actually READ anything you've sent to him/her.

Communicate with other people working on your convention—they may be able to help you. (And if you don't talk to them, things *could* get much worse...)

Don't feel you have to take everyone who offers to be on program. You're the editor.

Don't make at-con stuff too complicated. Most program people know what the gig is, and neither want nor need a lot of shepherding/paperwork. Simplify.

Write a "precis" (short description) for everything - even if your program participants don't read the stuff, at least you've done your part.

Give the people who work for you chocolate.

Life isn't fair. (And—you don't have to be "fair" to your program participants.)
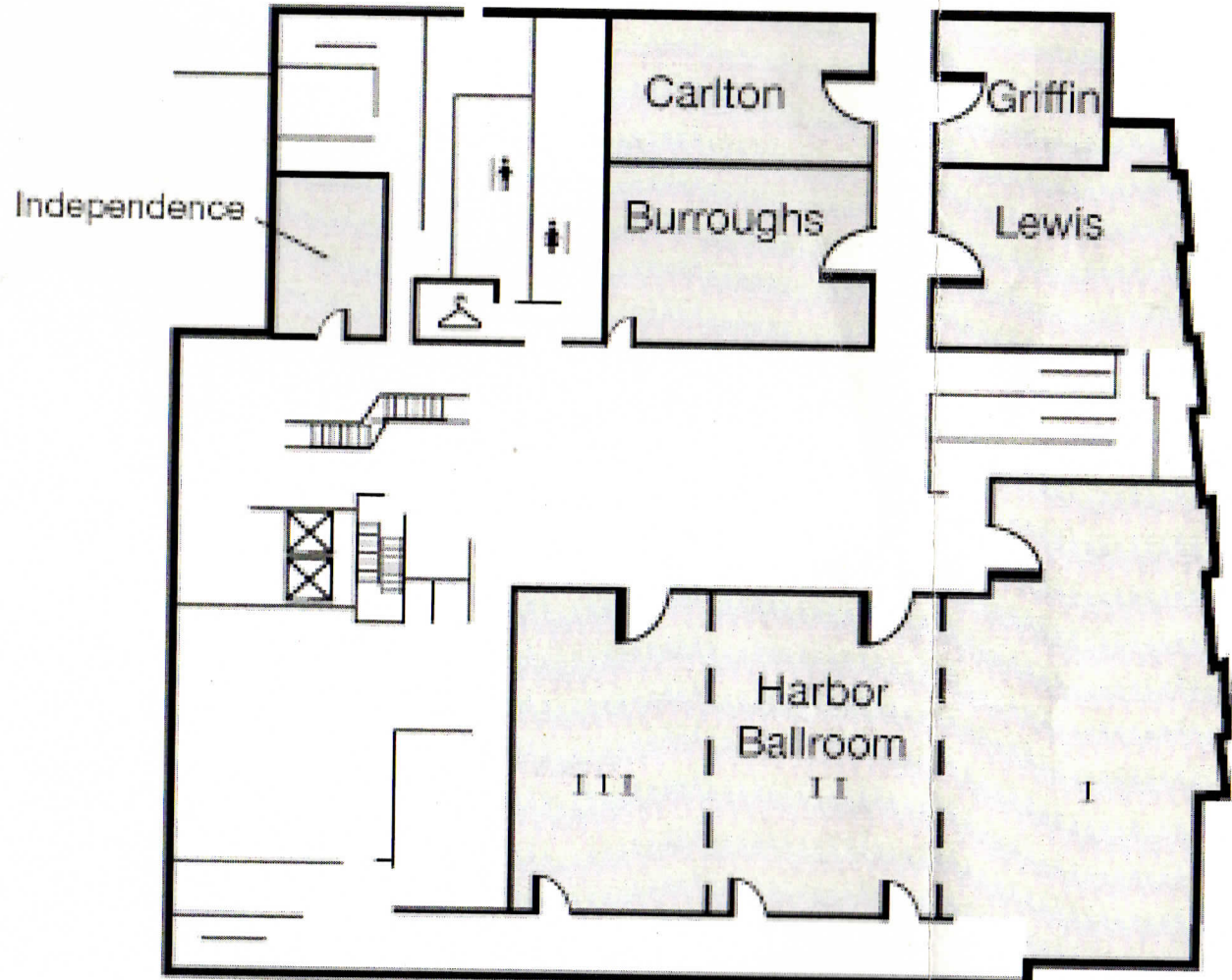
Don't feel forced to put an ultra-preliminary program on the net (for the general public or to program participants). It *will* cause you Embarrassment. Put something out when it's clean.

Don't let the Chair order you around.

Remember that regardless of what you do wrong, it will still be better than Nolacon's....

Realize it's only a con, and that real life is more important.

Conference Level

Carlton

Griffin

Independence

Burroughs

Lewis

Harbor Ballroom

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