

RATTAIL
FILE 2



RATTAIL FILE #2

Letterzine of the 1984 World Science Fiction Convention -- L.A.Con II
At long last mailed June 1984

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DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL FOR THE NEXT ISSUE: JULY 7, 1984

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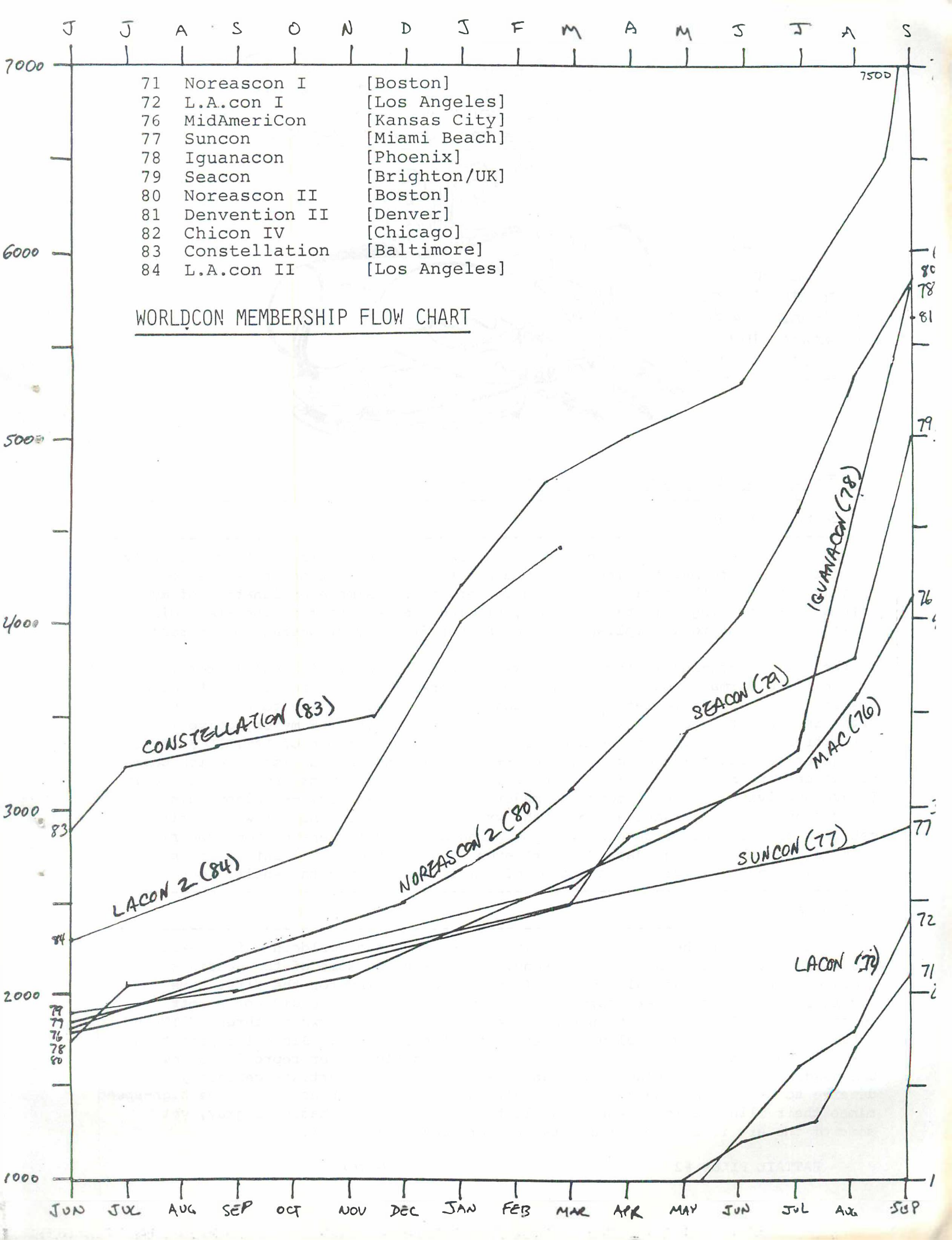
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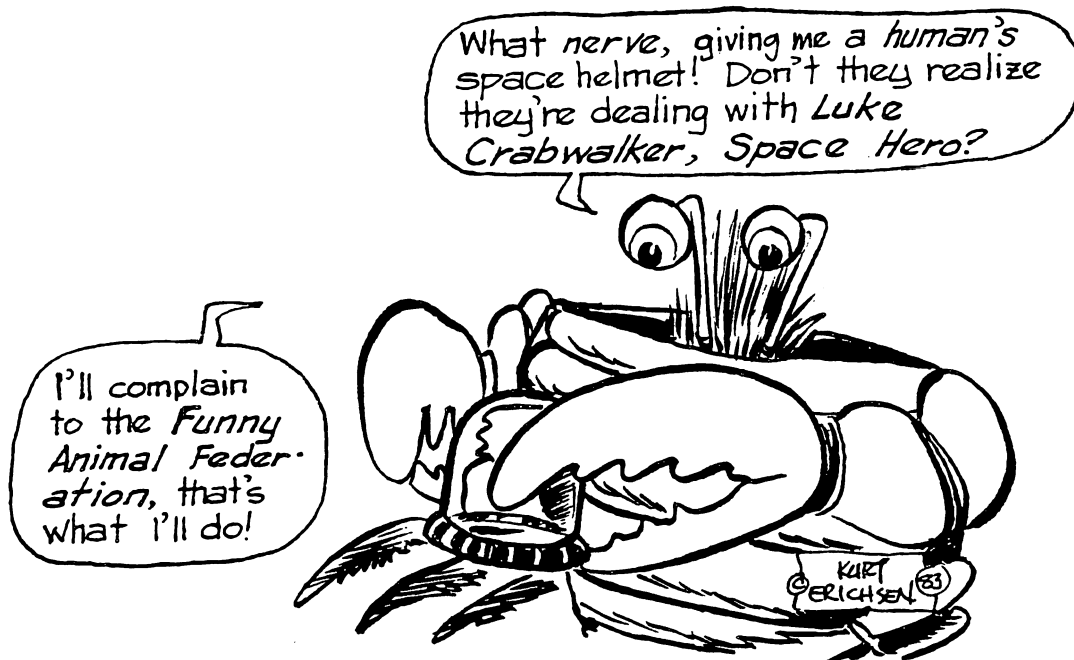
THE RATTAIL FILE RIDE AND ROOMSHARE BULLETIN BOARD

LACON II offers no official roommate/ridesharing service, so this quickie list lists inquiries we've had. (R) indicates rideshare wanted; (M) for roommate.

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(M) Rev. Janet Baernstein 297 W. Eighth St., Upland CA 91786

Pardon us for being coy, but L.A.Con II has not performed any screening process on the persons listed above, and any decisions are the responsibility of those who elect to room- or ride-share.





RATFILE TALES: MIKE GLYER editorials

1. Scalpels of Gor

Techniques of letterzine editing have been discussed for years, most exhaustively in Dave Locke's former fanzine AWRY. Rather than squander time and space completely reviewing the options, I would rather offer a simple explanation of my method of performing this task so that, viewing the results from the standpoint of what I set out to accomplish, you may better direct your outrage or approbation.

In the average genzine lettercolumn I will always run an individual letter in an undivided format, however heavily I may otherwise edit it for interest value and space. I prefer to let the individual writer's personality come through, with his thoughts organized as he wrote them. In RATTAIL FILE my objective is a bit different, therefore my methods are changed. The purpose of RATTAIL FILE is to generate discussion of many issues -- so it is the various issues which command our attention, not an individual's exercise of personal journalism. Generally I have subdivided letters among the major topics they address -- seldom doing any violence to the organization of the writer's material since it was itself set down as a series of unrelated topic paragraphs. But whenever some contributor wrote at length (such as Jack Chalker) even if his subject fell into a given category, I have exercised the option of simply reproducing the entire letter.

2. Reprise

As a salute to all the artists who helped illustrate the worldcon daily newzine SCUTTLEBUTT this past Labor Day Weekend, I am rerunning some of the headings prepared for the individual issues. I am also publishing for the first time a few illustrations that were turned in that weekend which time did not permit me to use -- had the convention been a few days longer, at two or three SCUTTLEBUTTS a day I would eventually have exhausted the supply... Since I expect this issue to be xeroxed, this will also result in slightly better repro for a few of the headings involving black areas and shadowing, and the artists certainly deserve to be seen at their best. They're usually brave about letting us high-speed mimeo their illustrations, where the last 1500 copies are shades of gray, yet some of the art is so good it merits another look from fandom.

Art credits are located on the table of contents page, where else?

3. RUNNING RISKS?

The saga of ConStellation runs on and on like a Flash Gordon serial, except it keeps getting stuck on Chapter 11. The committee appears to have run out of tactics to use encouraging fandom to pay the Worldcon's large debts, which means they will probably remain in fannish history books chronicled in red ink, without much acknowledgment of the thousands they did raise and turn over to creditors.

A few months ago in *egoscan* 3 Ted White articulated two conclusions about ConStellation and discovered both were popularly received. I seconded his statement "...I for one feel no generosity toward them," but I strongly dissented from his declaration "Let them bankrupt!" Nor did I entirely share Alexis Gilliland's view in the same issue, "If the hotels were not aware that each Worldcon is separately incorporated, it is damn well time they found out."

If ConStellation stiffes any part of the \$10,800 claimed by the Convention Center, the \$15,000 owed to the exhibit furnishers, or the \$5000 owed to the Hilton (figures from treasurer Shirley Avery quoted in the 12/83 LOCUS), any assumption on fandom's part that this will have no impact on any other worldcon would be naive. Nor do I mean, specifically, a Washington DC worldcon as Alexis did, I mean any Worldcon in North America.

Figures recently released by ConStellation show they have made small payments on almost every debt they owe, but it appears the con will run out of money long before they run out of bills. Debtors will be unable to collect from anyone once the corporation which ran ConStellation becomes insolvent. Does this leave the rest of fandom free and clear?

Hotels and convention centers share information. They have never been shy about putting the screws to solvent conventions -- how many whimsical managers have we run into over the years? Why would they overlook how the 1983 Worldcon left a legacy of unpaid bills? Wouldn't you, in their place, strongly consider demanding cash-in-advance from a customer you knew had stiffed one of your competitors? I doubt the distinction between corporate entities will overcome the similarity of the events staged by these corporations.

Local businesses unpaid by ConStellation such as printers, Diamond Vision, etc., will not influence the reputation of the Worldcon. Failure to pay businesses with regional and national connections such as hotels, convention centers and exhibit hall furnishers could affect the Worldcon's reputation and threaten its credit. Film rental companies are already universally tight, demanding cash in advance. It would be much more than just inconvenient for a Worldcon to be required to pay cash up front to its major vendors. Obviously ConStellation would never have taken place in the absence of credit, and Chicon IV would have had serious problems paying bills in advance. Any con seriously attempting to return to its members the maximum amount of benefits based on total income needs credit and the good faith of its vendors. The alternative policy of going into Worldcon weekend in the black, while financially preferable to risking bankruptcy, makes certain that attendees will receive no benefit from tens of thousands of dollars of income generated at the convention.

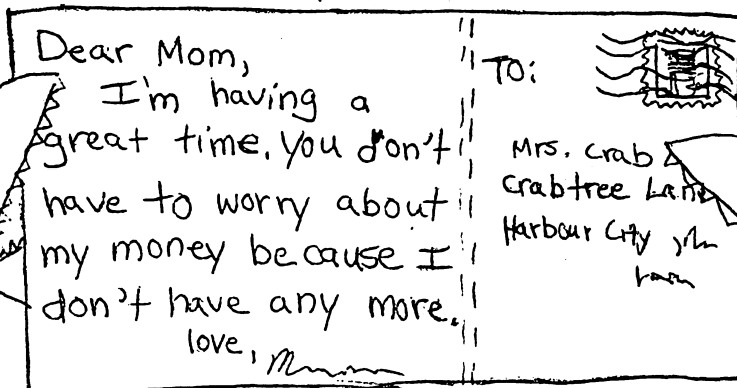
Precisely because of ConStellation, we are unlikely to see any future worldcon trying to cut it that close in favor of the members. Sæsbily they will go into

the con in the black. Automatically they will generate tens of thousands of dollars in profit which will look nice on the balance sheet but actually help no one. Fandom would hang any committee that split the take, assuming fans got there ahead of SFWA (the writers would wonder why they worked for free), and the IRS (which calls it an improper distribution when such funds are given to anything besides another nonprofit corporation). Worldcon profits are that lump in the rug our hosts hope nobody will notice. Notwithstanding 1983, there are getting to be too many lumps in the rug. The 1980 and 1982 Worldcons' profits are public knowledge. Apparently 1981 came out in the black to some extent. I have heard the allegation from more than one DC-area fan that the 1974 profits are still banked somewhere. Granted that "fandom" is not an entity with any legal claim on these amounts of money, but I think most fans would share the philosophy that profits generated by a Worldcon ought to be used for the benefit of fandom. That's easier said than done, judging by the efforts of MCFI (Noreascon II) whom one would say have sincerely and creatively tried to do something with their profits. Considering how little is ever done with profits, I would encourage a committee to operate in a way that minimizes the risk of loss, and provides contingencies to use at-con income. Sounds good. Not necessarily possible, but good.

Planning to operate as a true nonprofit group would involve a concom committing to expenses based on anticipated income. The example of ConStellation hardly encourages that, I admit. In any case, blithely allowing ConStellation to go bankrupt can reasonably be expected to create a business backlash among hotels and convention centers that might hinder future concoms from negotiating favorable terms. Will this "backlash" necessarily be anything worse than a little more hassle from hotel sales staffs, or larger deposits on our facilities? Perhaps not. Since it is probably beyond fandom's capability to keep ConStellation out of bankruptcy we should be glad that's the worst that will happen to the rest of us. I just don't believe fandom is going to come out of this so unscathed that we can cheerfully disregard ConStellation's misfortune.

Besides, weren't 85% of America's sf fans on the committee anyway? Every time the term "them" is applied to ConStellation, odds are it's being used by one of "us." (I swear I didn't use more than my allotment of paper and ink to publish the daily newzine, so my conscience is clear, wherever it is.)

The OFFICIAL :



CONSTELLATION POSTCARD

by Michelle Goldman

4. Stone Age Zineman

Not long after ConStellation Terry Floyd sent me some quotes from a report by Carolyn Cooper. She had written a verbal snapshot of my daily newzine operation contrasting my laboring over a typewriter for hours, just a few feet away from a microcomputer with word-processing capability, and a photocopying machine.

Within the context of Cooper's anecdote, her facts were correct, other than omitting that my typewriter (the "warm, humming" one) was a Facit with word processing capabilities built-in. Of course this turned out to be a rather significant omission when the story was used to illustrate how "Glyer has been doing his WorldCon daily newsheets the same way for so long that it didn't occur to him to update the technology when it was made available to him."

Wishful, too, was her recommendation that a Kodak photocopier of the size possessed by ConStellation be used to run SCUTTLEBUTT, with its average printrun of 3000. I'll be delighted anytime a Worldcon provides me with a Kodak, IBM or Xerox capable of high-speed repro on two sides -- one of those in the \$16,000 range would be handsome. The model available at ConStellation would have taken 2½ hours to run off one issue, provided it didn't overheat or break down. The lease cost of adequate high-speed equipment, the per-copy cost, and the unavailability of maintenance men on a holiday weekend, do not make photocopiers an attractive alternative to mimeos.

For L.A.Con II I'll be pretty much in charge of setting up my own shop, and I don't foresee using a microcomputer and printer to produce original copy. The time factor is not in the mechanical act of setting words to paper -- it's in the writing and editing. This process is done, for better or worse, in my head after the material has already been scribbled in some form by the individual submitting it.

Speaking of fanpublishing generally, except for those illicitly using that certain defense agency computer network whose abusers have of late been arrested by the FBI, most fans do not have an economical way of distributing their electronic fanzines. One can pick up the phone and call the 300 people on one's mailing list, and link modems; paying the associated phone bill. One can solicit fandom to mail in floppy disks to record a fanzine on, and return to sender, paying postage. How many will do it? Isn't it true the reason people haven't abandoned mimeo for microcomputers is mimeo's cheapness? That's the same reason fans haven't gone over to offset enmasse, even though it provides a higher standard of reproduction. Xerox is also widely used, by fans whose employers are inattentive to their repro costs. When did a fanzine fan ever go out and buy a photocopier for the primary purpose of doing his zine?

I'll be happy to give up the grinding chores involved in physically producing FILE 770 just as soon as something cheaper and easier than mimeo evolves.

5. Coda

Yes, you're right, it is bizarre to see anyone extolling the virtues of mimeography in a photocopied fanzine. Well, it is easier for me to turn over my camera-ready copy to somebody who can take it to their place of employment and xerox the damned thing, and I thank that person profusely. Whether I should identify them by name is another question entirely -- so better safe than sorry.

FINANCIAL PREVIEW OF AUSSIECON 2:

Provided by Carey Handfield

I really liked RATTAIL. The following is for both RATTAIL and FILE 770. It is from Aussiecon PR 1 out next month but I thought you would like and advance copy.

MELBOURNE IN 85 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

	Income	Expenditure
Kanga Ruse subs	439	
SMOFFCON Profits	349	
FUNCON Profits	410	
Funds raised at cons & games days*	2731	
Sales of t-shirst, badges, donations & miscellaneous fund-raising	733	
Interest	73	
Loans from committee	650	
Printing		842
Postage		470
T-shirst		1231
Advertising & artwork		976
Chicon suite etc		300
Constellation suite etc		500
Transfers to US agents		200
Repay loans		650
Miscellaneous expense		164
Transfer to Australian SF Foundation		52
TOTALS	5385	5385

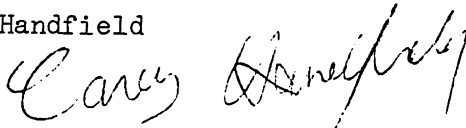
* Includes sales of t-shirst and badges not shown elsewhere.

I will push RATTAIL through the Aussiecon committee apa QVC - Quatre Vingt Cinq (dont ask my why an Australian worldcon uses a french title for its apa, its all David Griggs fault.

I am editor for QVC so if you ever need to circulate something round the Aussiecon committee just send it to me. Mailing deadlines are the 15th of each month.

best.

Carey Handfield



M O O M S R O P S

THE HORROR-STRICKEN FANZINE

No.

15

*Written by Fred Patten on 27 February 1984.
Intended for RATTAIL FILE #2, February 1984.
Address: 11863 West Jefferson Boulevard, Culver City, California, 90230.
Telephone: (213) 827-3335.*

L.A.con II in 1984! Aussiecon Two in 1985! Salamander Press No. 1250.

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Mike Glycer: I may also kill you if you continue to print my Minutes and other contributions so that one has to pull the staples out of RATTAIL FILE to read them. They're designed with wide margins to be easy to read, not to have the margins displayed and the text run into the binding.

Complaints about a profusion of Masquerade categories and awards may be something new, but they don't seem to be making any points that weren't made long ago in debates as to how many Hugo categories there should be. I can't speak about any Art Show Award debates since I haven't participated in any of them. On the other hand, both the Masquerade and the Art Show seem more open to fandom than do the Hugos. The Hugo Awards are basically designed for the professionals, with a small number of categories open to fans. Even there, the fans almost have to be professional fans -- veterans of fandom, that is -- to have any serious chance at one of the fan category Hugos. When was the last time that a fan got onto the ballot for Best Fan Writer or Best Artist within his or her first couple of years within fandom? A neo seems to have a much better chance of winning a Masquerade or an Art Show prize as a talented newcomer. How do both the artists and the Masquerade contestants feel about the proliferation of award categories? Do they share the same outlook as the literary fans who feel that the number of awards should be limited to be meaningful? Or do they prefer the extra awards so that more artists can get recognition for their work?

The amount of programming at conventions has also exploded in recent years, and I find myself going to fewer and fewer of them. Yet I don't really think that, if there were fewer programs, they would be more interesting to me. Con programming may be irretrievably dreary for me, simply because I've seen so many of them since I entered fandom in the early 1960s. Yes, it would be nice if somebody came up with new ideas. But a lot of the old ideas are still fresh to neos, and there are always lots of neos at Worldcons. New concepts tend to be esoteric, because most of the obvious good ideas for con programming have been used too often because they are obvious good ideas. My gut feeling is that we shouldn't worry so much about designing innovative programming; we should put more effort into making the standard programming more interesting. Work more closely with prospective panelists to make sure that they have something worth saying, rather than sticking a number of Big Names on a panel with no idea of what to say. How many times have you seen a panel that's started cold, begun to build up slowly, and has just gotten really hot when it's run out of time?

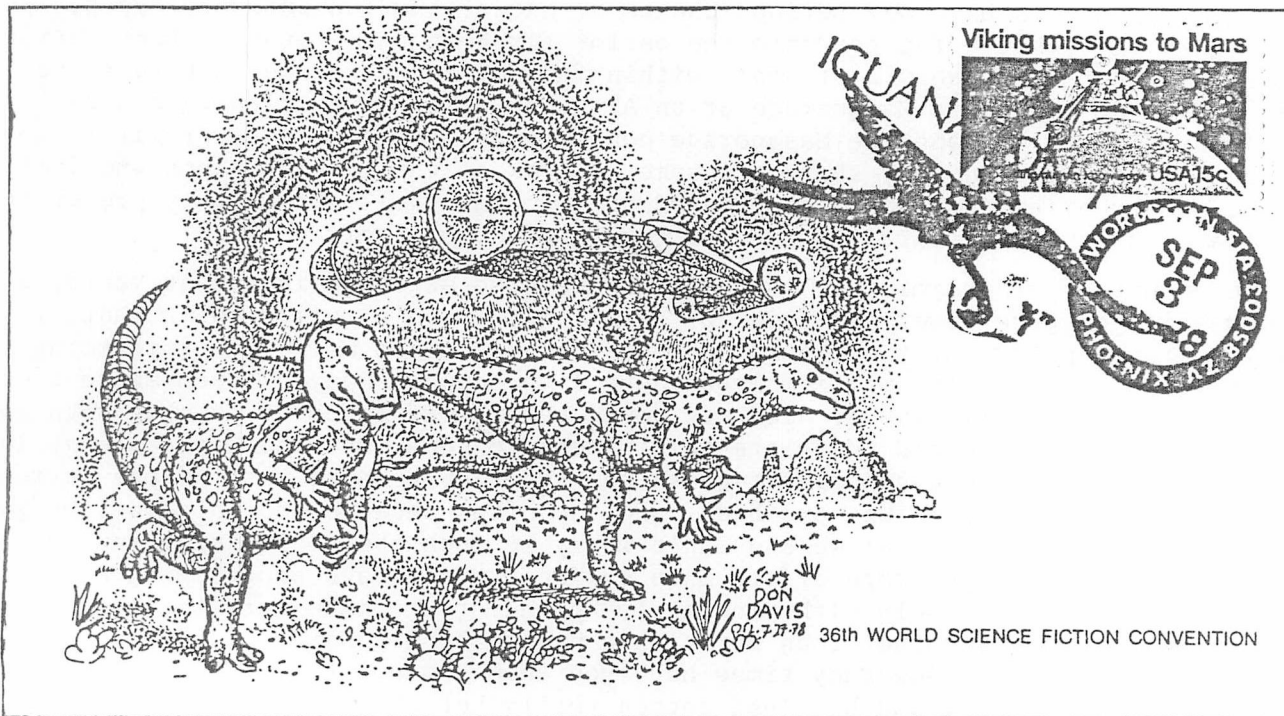
Robert Jansen: I've never been able to make up my own mind whether I'm for or against "media commercials" at conventions? On the one hand, I somewhat resent these big movie studios or publishers coming into our conventions to promote their new mega-hit (they hope). On the other hand, the majority of the attendees seem to really like these events. I'll confess that I myself go to lots of them, and seldom pass up the opportunity to collect all the promo buttons and glossy brochures.

I do agree that round-the-clock movies should be scheduled, to give the night owls something to do. If cons can afford to set up three or more simultaneous tracks of programming during the day, they should be able to afford to keep one movie room going all night.

I, too, hope that there will be a wider variety of materials in the dealers' room at L.A.con II. One topic that ConStellation was short on was alternate comics. At Chicon IV, I discovered a number of interesting s-f/fantasy small-press comic books that I'd never seen before, and that still aren't distributed in Southern California. I was looking forward to catching up with several new issues in ConStellation's dealers' room, but nobody had them. There also didn't seem to be as much movie material. There were lots of fantasy ceramics & handicrafts, which is fine except that those don't appeal to my tastes. Unfortunately, it's difficult to create variety in your dealers' room. It's up to the dealers themselves what they sell.

=====

Speaking of a variety of s-f/fantasy merchandise, I'd like to solicit opinions on the desirability of a special Worldcon philatelic cachet. The 1978 Worldcon, Iguana-Con, got itself declared an official U.S. Post Office sub-station and sold three commemorative envelopes with a special cancellation: a George Barr fantasy envelope on Sep. 1st; a Robert McCall astronomical envelope on Sep. 2nd; and a Don Davis s-f envelope on Sep. 3rd. That is, these envelopes were offered; almost nobody bought any. However, when I've discussed these with IguanaCon attendees, the almost universal response has been, "What commemorative envelopes? I'd've loved to have bought a set if I'd known about them!" IguanaCon had put its Post Office table in an obscure corner and not given it any publicity. How many fans, if they knew about such envelopes at a Worldcon, would want to buy copies?



36th WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION

ConStellation did have round-the-clock food & beverage service at the "Con suite", I believe. I went by it at some pretty early hours, like 2:00 or 3:00 a.m., and I can't recall that the soft-drink bar was ever closed or that there wasn't at least one dish of nibblements out. (I can't speak for what it may have been like around 5:00 or 6:00 a.m.)

Alan Winston: I disagree. Considering the scale to which the Worldcon has grown, the fact that we're now charging \$75.00 at the door, and the fact that more and more fans are arriving earlier and earlier for the con (it's no longer unusual for there to be an appreciable number of fans in residence at the con hotel two days before the con officially opens), I feel that round-the-clock films should be scheduled between the opening and closing ceremonies of the con. There are fans wandering around in the early morning, after most of the "all-night" parties have closed, looking for something to do. Particularly if you're going to make room on the film program for non s-f films like "Scaramouche" and "The Last of Shiela" (no matter how excellent they may be), you ought not leave any hours unprogrammed so you can get in as many s-f films as possible.

"The Russian picture with the dragon" is probably "The Sword and the Dragon", the 1960 American version of "Ilya Murometz". I've seen it over a half-dozen times; it really is an excellent film. The last time that I saw it was when Mike Jittlov arranged a special screening, so if you can't find a print available, you might ask Mike where he found his. I have heard that the original Russian version was two or three hours long, and almost half of it was thrown away when it was condensed into the American version. I wonder if a more complete version, maybe with English subtitles, could be obtained through the Soviet embassy?

Speaking of Soviet films, there's usually at least one good Soviet s-f or fantasy film per year that comes through Los Angeles, in the annual FILMEX or on the art-theatre circuit. It then disappears and is never heard of again. Some of those would be worth tracking down for the L.A.con program. These are all usually two to four hours long with an intermission in the middle, in Russian with English subtitles. For fantasy, there was a superb presentation of "Russland and Ludmilla". For s-f, I'd recommend a film whose title has been translated both as "The Thorny Way to the Stars" and "To the Stars By Hard Ways".

In fact, if you go through the Los Angeles FILMEX program books for the past dozen years, you'll find a number of s-f & fantasy films from all around the world, and the names & addresses of their distributors.

In 1975, give or take a couple of years, FILMEX ran a controversial 50-hour s-f movie marathon, featuring many rare and almost never-seen s-f features. The reason they're almost never-seen is what made the program so controversial; many were so bad that they were never distributed. FILMEX defended the program by saying that it was designed for s-f connoisseurs who wanted to see even bad s-f movies at least once. It's true that many fans do think that way. While we wouldn't want as many bad films as FILMEX showed, one or two of them might draw appreciative audiences -- for example, "Idaho Transfer", which has high production values, good acting, and an intelligent story, although its deliberately-unresolved ending tends to infuriate audiences.

=====

At a recent Worldcon, I happened to be near Takumi Shibano when a staffer came by and set down a stack of the latest daily newszine. I asked Takumi if they had daily newszines at Japanese s-f cons? "Oh, yes," he replied. "We even had a con which had an hourly newszine. Throughout the con, the editor kept running up to me shouting, 'Quick, give me something to put into this hour's edition!'"

Go to it, Mike!

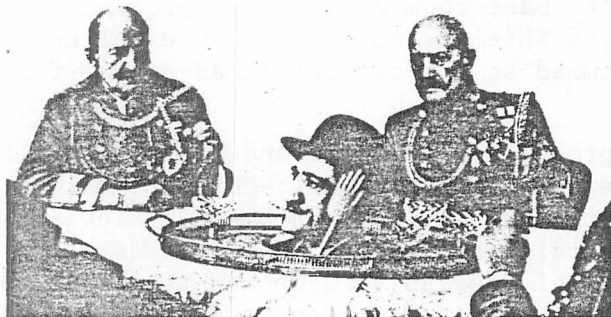
Here are a couple of features that I remember as being particularly good, and which haven't been over-exposed at s-f conventions. These notes are from the 1974 FILMEX program book.

Sunday, April 7, 7:00 p.m.



Saturday, April 6, 2:00 p.m.

43 Ukřadená Vzducholoď The Stolen Airship American Premiere



Czechoslovakia, 1966, 105 minutes
In Czech with French subtitles (Special arrangements have been made to present simultaneous English subtitles)
Director: Karel Zeman
Screenwriters: Karel Zeman, Radovan Krátky
Cinematographers: Josef Novotny, Bohuslav Pikhart
Editor: Jan Chaloupek
Music: Jan Novák
Principal Cast: Jitka Zelenohorská, Jana Sedimajerová, Vera Macku, Cestmír Randa
Production Company: Film Studio Barrandov and Film Studio Gottwaldov
Source: Czechoslovak Filmexport

Karel Zeman, one of the most innovative masters of the motion picture medium, is likewise one of the most obscure for American audiences. With the exception of his 1957 *Invention for Destruction* (released in this country as *The Fabulous World of Jules Verne*), and the mutilated television versions of *A Journey to Primeval Times*, *The Fabulous Baron Munchhausen* and *A Jester's Tale*, his work is unknown here. The only public screening of *The Stolen Airship* on this continent was at Expo '67 in Montreal; then it promptly disappeared owing to legal complications and changing patterns of distribution.

The Stolen Airship is based loosely on themes from Jules Verne's *Two Years' Vacation* and, while it is faithful to the Verne spirit, it is a spectacular, original creation, blending animation and live action techniques in an incredibly sophisticated and successful manner. The setting for the action of the film is the Prague Exposition of 1896 in which the most advanced inventions of the time were assembled. Instead of attempting a "realistic" treatment of this exciting event in which sets, props, costumes and action are made to contribute to a heightened sense of reality, Zeman takes real actors and fits them into sets, props and animated backgrounds that have a romantically exotic air of fantasy. The resulting film dazzles the mind with magic. — Philip Chamberlin

Short: *Life Times Nine*, Pen Densham & John Watson (Canada, 1973), 13 minutes

37 Ruslan I Ludmila Ruslan and Ludmila American Premiere



USSR, 1972, 225 minutes
In Russian with English subtitles
Director: Alexandre Ptouchko
Screenwriters: Alexandre Ptouchko, S. Bolotine
Cinematographers: Igor Guelein, Valentin Zakharov
Music: Tikon Khrennikov
Principal Cast: Natalia Petrova, Valeri Kosinets, Vladimir Fiodorov, Maria Kapniste-Serko, Andrei Abrikossov
Production Company: Mostfilm
Source: Sovexportfilm

This spectacular and entertaining motion picture is based upon the epic poem by Alexander Pushkin and represents the last work of the late Soviet animator and film director, Alexandre Ptouchko (creator of highly imaginative puppet films in the 1920's and 1930's). The story concerns the mythic adventures of the warrior Ruslan in the rescue of his beautiful bride, Ludmila (daughter of Prince Vladimir), from the unwholesome hands of the evil dwarf, Tchernomor. There are encounters with sorcerers, witches, enchanted forests, and a massive sleeping head that eternally guards a magic sword. Filmed over a period of several years, and utilizing magnificent costumes, exotic sets, and sophisticated special effects, the film continually dazzles the eye of the viewer. — Gary Abrahams

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR FAN INTERESTS, INC.

L.A.CON II COMMITTEE MEETING No. 6

SUNDAY, 15 JANUARY 1984, 4:21 P.M.

Freehafer Hall, 11513 Burbank Boulevard, North Hollywood, California 91601

In attendance: Bobbi Armbruster, Jordan Brown, David Butterfield, Bobbie & Marty Cantor, Cheryl Chapman, Michele Coleman, Patrice Cook, Jeff Copeland, Linda & Jim Daniel, Harry Davidov, Genny Dazzo, Dan & Danise Deckert, Ed Finkelstein, Alan Frisbie, Mike Glyer, Mary Jane & John Hertz, Eric Hoffman, George Jumper, Stephanie Keith, Jay Konigsberg, Randy & Jean-Marc Lofficier, Michael Mansfield, Alice & Marty Massoglia, Craig Miller, Dennis Miller, Len & June Moffatt, Bob Null, Fred Patten, Bruce & Elayne Pelz, Nancy-Lou Polk, Allan Rothstein, Larry Rothstein, Ken Rowand, Drew Sanders, Milt & Sylvia Stevens, John & Bjo Trimble, Bill Warren, Dianne C. Wickes, Keith Williams, Alan Winston.

Minutes. There were two corrections to the Minutes of the previous meeting. Bjo knew of some people who were working on a general restaurant guide to Orange County, not a guide for the dietary-handicapped; although this information would be included. Frisbie had checked out a card-reader, not a machine-reader, for tallying the ballots.

Programming. Milt announced that news in the current LOCUS raised doubts that any Soviet authors would be allowed to attend L.A.con II unless we could guarantee the Soviet government that their authors would not be asked any politically embarrassing questions. Milt proposed to discuss this matter with Frederik Pohl, who was involved with the World SF Organization, and to ask him to give a talk on s-f in the Soviet Union in the eventuality that the Soviet authors could not attend to make their own presentation.

Fan Cabaret. There were queries as to whether this was worth scheduling? Fred said that it was a catch-all for those people who wanted to perform to the public. An announcement of its tentative scheduling would appear in Progress Report #3 to see if there was enough interest to warrant holding it.

Program Coordination. Dan announced that he had asked Tim O'Hare, the Denvention II program head, to be his assistant. Craig asked all Department heads to give him the names of appointments to their Departments in writing, for accuracy of spelling.

Films. Alan Winston had a list of the films ordered/confirmed so far. There were no major changes. Craig suggested that the proposed film program be published in RAT-TAIL FILE for discussion. Alan reported that the film of "1984" had been legally tied up since 1973 and would not be available. Bill recommended that we try to obtain the BBC presentation of "1984" with Peter Cushing & Donald Pleasance in its place.

Video Programming. Craig read a statement to be published in Progress Report #3 explaining why L.A.con II would not have a fully-programmed Video Room. The statement allowed leeway for us to hold some video programming if we so chose.

Special Interest Groups. Fred had a list of about two dozen requests for Special Interest activities ranging from club meetings to presentations. Some of the requests were vague, and the requestors had been asked to clarify them. Most of the requests were for Saturday or Sunday early-afternoon time slots. If we wanted to keep all the Special Interest activities in the Convention Center, the available rooms were just about all booked. If we were willing to spread into our hotels, there were still plenty of rooms left.

Fanzine Room. Marty Cantor would be meeting in two weeks with Terry Carr and Ted White to discuss possible special programming in the Fanzine Room.

Gaming. Linda had a letter from Avalon-Hill offering to trade us prize certificates at 150% for Program Book advertising space -- i.e., \$75 worth of certificates for \$50 worth of advertising space. The certificates could be used as prizes in the gaming tournaments. The consensus was that this offer was agreeable in theory, but that we wanted to clarify it further. For example, would the tournaments have to be of Avalon-Hill games only?

Miscellaneous. Milt thanked June Moffatt for helping to answer all the correspondence. Ed read a letter suggesting that a workshop be conducted on s-f stage plays. Bill asked if a video tape of the stage production of "The Forever War" could be obtained, and was told "yes". Drew said that Freff had phoned to offer a display of computer home equipment, which he would drive out from the East Coast. It was generally felt that there would be enough public interest in such a display to justify allocating a room with electricity to it; but we were concerned about the security problems that such equipment would entail. Drew was asked to find out from Freff how much space the display would require, and what security he would want for it? Jean-Marc offered to put together an exhibit or an illustrated presentation on French *de luxe* s-f editions. This could stand on its own as a program presentation or be integrated with the panel on s-f in Europe, or it could be a standing exhibit. Jean-Marc also offered, if there was to be a charter flight to L.A.con from England, to publicize it in France in the hope of encouraging French authors & editors to come to the Worldcon.

Administration. Treasury. Bruce handed out copies of the budget as it stood. There was \$107,000 currently in the Treasury, and planned expenses were budgeted at \$228,000. This budget was to be revised, based on recent data. For instance, \$3,000 had been allocated for production of the Dickson souvenir book, but we had just learned that the actual cost would be \$7,000. Expenditures for a new NEOFAN'S GUIDE and for our Toastmaster and Master of Ceremonies would be added. It was agreed that all program guests should be offered a single free guest membership as well, for a spouse, friend, or whoever. If the convention ended up in the black, membership refunds would be made to program participants and to volunteers who put in at least 8 hours work. These would be mailed out after the con, after all expenses had been covered. We were admonished not to promise anyone a refund before the convention. Bobbi asked what the Committee's reimbursement procedure was, and was told that reimbursements would be made upon presentation of receipts. \$600 had been spent outside the budget for the production of bronze rat necklaces, which were for sale to Committee members only at cost (\$30.00) as exclusive souvenirs.

Silent Radio. Sylvia reported that it would cost \$200 to \$300 per day to rent each unit, to announce program changes and other messages in such places as the dealers' room. The consensus was that this was too expensive.

Allan asked what the "Public Service Functions" category on the budget meant? This was a catch-all for impromptu spending which we might want to do at the convention, such as supporting open parties.

Memberships. Membership was 3,955 as of January 1st, and should be about 4,000 now. This was about 1,000 over what Norwascon Two had at this point, but was 200 below ConStellation's membership. By extrapolation, L.A.con II should end up with 6,500 members.

Registration. There would be a request in Progress Report #3 for volunteers with experience in handling convention registrations to contact us.

Postmaster. Dan reported that some complications were developing. Some Committee personnel were getting into private correspondence on convention business, rather than routing mail through our P.O. Box. This was all right as long as copies were made for our records of the correspondence. Some Committee members were not answering their mail by the due dates, or were not bothering to return copies of replies or the cover sheets to him. Dan urged everyone to answer correspondence by the due date on the cover sheet, which allowed two weeks. Many people who had written to the convention felt that this was already too long to wait for a reply. L.A.con II was presently receiving 100 to 200 letters per week on all matters. All Dealers' Room correspondence had been answered. Dan

still hoped that the Department heads would design form letters which he could send immediately in reply to the standard queries.

Publications. Mary Jane said that Progress Report #2 had been mailed ten days earlier, and that copies had begun arriving on the East Coast. Several submissions had already been made to Progress Report #3. She wanted to know what topics needed to be addressed in PR #3, so she would know what omissions should be rectified. The reason for the tiny illustration on page 7 of PR #2 was given, leading Craig to formulate Motto No.5: "Always read the small print". Drew got an okay to submit a Masquerade form as an insert with PR #3. Sylvia wanted to have the questionnaire for the handicapped printed in large type. It was noted that items that needed to appear in PR #3 included the WSFS Constitution, business passed on from ConStellation, Hugo and site selection voting information, new business and the rules for submitting new business, and an announcement that the Hugo ballot would be sent out in a separate mailing. It was also noted that we were looking for a new printer, and that until we found one, we would not be sure when PR #3 would actually be published or what the advertising rates for the Program Book would be.

On-Site Publications. Mike Glyer announced that RATTAIL FILE #1 had been published, and that #2 should be out on schedule.

Information. Allan said that he would like to get general feedback from the Committee on the suggestions that he brought up at Committee meetings. One topic was that of message delivery to attendees. Even at local cons, committees could expect two or three phone calls per day of "emergency" messages which "must" be delivered to some attendee immediately. A possible solution would be to give each attendee the option of leaving a card at the registration desk to say where he was staying. This information would be kept confidential, but it would enable the Committee to deliver emergency messages. The consensus was that this would entail too much work to maintain such a card file and to deliver messages to hotels, and that such messages still might not reach the attendee for hours. Our responsibility should be limited to providing a message board where written notes could be posted, and to making an announcement over the Public Address system for real emergencies. On the other hand, Communications should be kept posted as to where Con Committee personnel, especially Department heads, were at all times. A special message board would be set up for them in Communications, and they would be expected to check it frequently for messages.

Press Relations. Craig said that two monthly publicity releases had been sent out, and that a third would go out this month.

Personnel. Jeff made a plea for warm bodies for specific purposes; i.e., volunteers should let him know their areas of expertise in fandom rather than just going into a general labor pool.

Operations. Facilities. Craig and Patrice would be meeting with hotel representatives the next day. They asked for any questions that anybody might have relating to the hotels. Drew asked what the situation was regarding sleeping rooms for the Committee? He was told that 150 rooms had been blocked for Committee members, to whom a special registration card would be sent soon. Sylvia requested floor plans of all hotels and of the Convention Center.

Technical Services. Ed said that planning was not yet advanced enough to know what or how much equipment would be needed for each room. Each room should have two floor microphones. He asked if we would be getting a video tape of ConStellation? Drew said that their tape was still being edited, but that we should get a copy of it when it was ready.

Logistics. Dennis was about to mail out a form requesting Department heads to state their requirements to do their jobs smoothly at the convention.

Exhibits. Bobbi said that everything was progressing without problems. She had a tentative list of more than twenty exhibits offered to L.A.con II.

Art Show. Elayne reported that the Art Show Rules had been printed and over 400 copies mailed out. The Rules were six pages long; they would not be printed in Progress Report #3, but would be sent to anyone who wrote and asked for them. Two auctions were scheduled, on Sunday and Monday. Seven bids would be required for a piece to go into the auction.

Sales Room. George announced that 185 of the 300 dealers' tables had been sold.

Masquerade. Drew had written out the procedure for advance registration. Staging and half-time entertainment still needed to be worked out. Two offers of half-time entertainment had been received. One was from Freff and his computers; the other from Cosmos & Chaos (three jugglers). These would be checked out for suitability.

Hugo Awards. Alan Frisbie reported that the trophies had been ordered, and should arrive in February or March. 24 nominations had been received so far. The nominating and voting schedule was tight, but he felt that it was realistic.

Handicapped. Sylvia had given a speech at the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films, and had gotten nine volunteers to serve in her Department. The only problem was that eight of them were not Worldcon members yet.

ConStellation Debt. Craig reported that ConStellation had raised \$5,000 to \$6,000 on their \$40,000 debt so far, largely through advance orders for their video cassette of the convention. They had not written to us yet. When we received their list of convention supplies for sale, we would consider it and make them an offer.

Publicity. Bruce urged all those who could use them to take supplies of the L.A.con II business cards. He requested that members of the '84 Bidding Committee who still had supplies of the buttons please return them.

Childrens' Programming. Michael Mansfield had printed the first Newsletter for those interested in childrens' programming, and had a list of activities in this area at previous Worldcons. He planned to issue a Newsletter each month. He requested information about any animation to be shown at L.A.con II, and the names of any people who might want to participate in the childrens' program.

Olympic Conflict. Dennis warned that practically all the aerospace companies in Los Angeles were considering closing during the Olympics in late July & early August, and requiring their employees to take their vacations at that time. Since many Committee members worked for aerospace companies and had planned to take their vacations at Worldcon time, this might create a problem for us.

The next Meeting was scheduled for Sunday, 26 February 1984 at Freehafer Hall at 2:00 p.m. The Meeting was adjourned about 7:15 p.m.

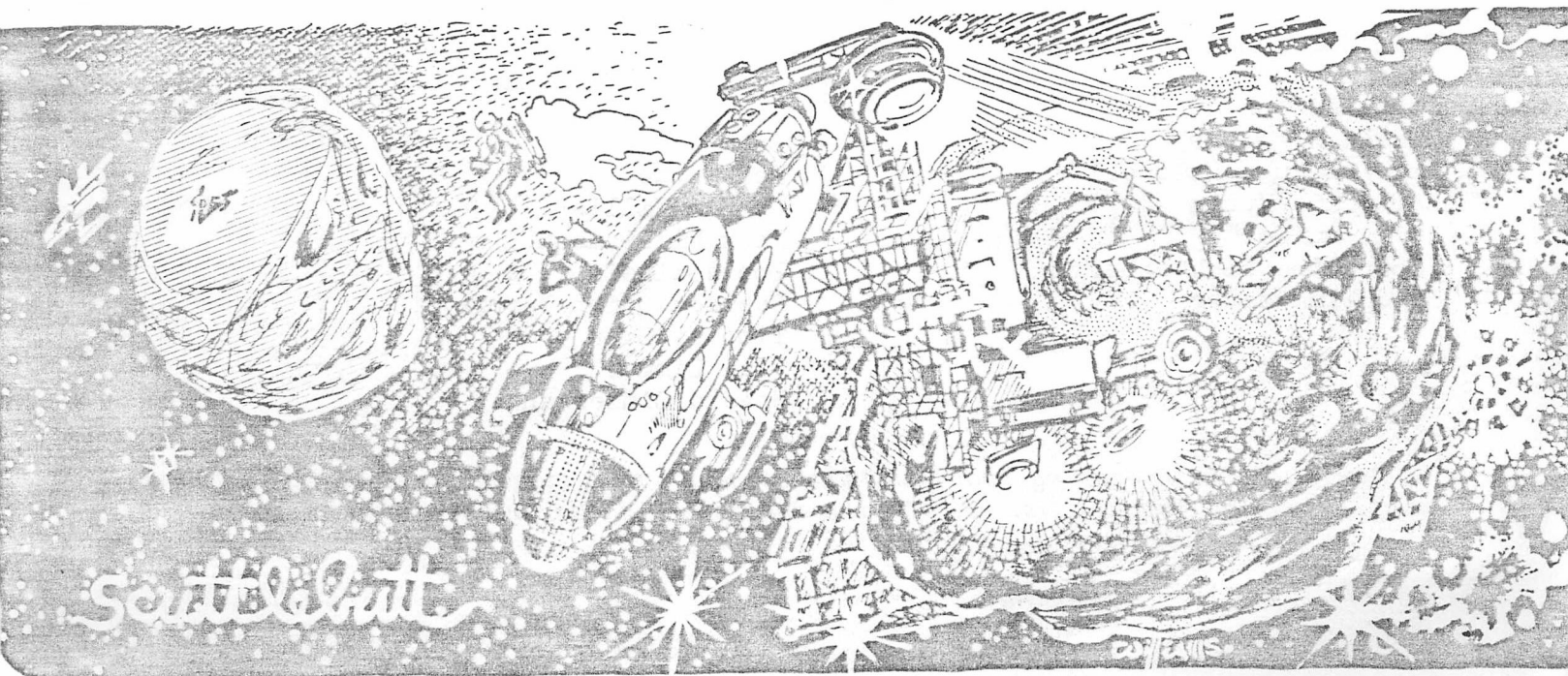
Respectfully submitted,



Fred Patten
Secretary

Principles of Programming: MILTON F. STEVENS

1. The ideal panel is a bull session that the audience would like to join.
2. Panel topics have to be fairly general or the panelists won't have any maneuvering room. An example of a topic that was too specific was "SF in L.A." at the 1982 Loscon. After twenty minutes, all of us on the panel had said everything we knew about the topic. We then had to search for an exit tangent to avoid total silence.
3. Between Worldcons and multi-track Westercons alone there have been somewhere between 500 and 600 topics used within the last two years. That doesn't account for all other conventions and all other years. While people couldn't attend all these program items, they do generally read the program. With so many topics having been used, the chances of coming up with very many items that don't sound familiar is extremely remote.
4. All speakers have a certain range of topics they can or will discuss. Some have a very broad range and some have a very narrow range. While putting Hal Clement on a heroic fantasy panel or Marion Zimmer Bradley on a speculative physics panel would certainly be different, I doubt it would be a good idea.
5. There is a certain element of balance in panels. You don't want all big names on one panel and all small names on another. Strange as it sounds, you also don't want five really strong speakers on the same panel. They tend to cancel each other out if not kill each other. Quieter, non-theatrical speakers have a function in that they reduce psychic tension. Another aspect of balance is the male/female ratio. I've tried to avoid having high tech panels all male and fantasy panels all female.



Program Guests (Apr. 1984)

Forrest J. Ackerman
Robert Adams
Poul Anderson
Betty Ballantine
Ian Ballantine
Steve Barnes
Greg Bear
Breg Benford
Ben Bova
Ray Bradbury
Marion Zimmer Bradley
David Brin
Ed Bryant
Terry Carr
Michael Cassuit
Jack Chalker
A. Bertram Chandler
C. J. Cherryh
Hal Clement
Jerry Conway
Dr. Norm Dalkey
John DeCles
Ted Dikty
Robert Forward
Alan Dean Foster
Kelly Freas
Polly Freas
Jim Frenkel
David Gerrold
Mel Gilden
James Gunn
Joe Haldeman
Harry Harrison
David G. Hartwell
Mike Hodel
Eric Hoffman
Dean Ing
Franz Joseph
Donald Kingsbury
Michael Kube-McDowell
Katherine Kurtz
R. A. Lafferty
Jacqueline Lichtenberg
Brad Linaweaver

Jean-Marc Lofficier
Jean Lorrah
Dick Lupoff
David Martin
George R. R. Martin
Adriene Martine-Barnes
David Mattingly
Julian May
David McDonnell
Thomas R. McDonough
Sandra Miesel
Betsy Mitchell
Sharon Newman
Larry Niven
Kerry O'Quinn
Dr. Eremey Parnov
Dianna Paxson
Emile Petaja
Charles Platt
Fred Pohl
Marta Randall
Spider Robinson
Bill Rotsler
George Scithers
Stanley Schmidt
Charles Sheffield
Takumi Shibano
Robert Silverberg
Norman Spinrad
J. Michael Straczynski
John Streakley
Somtow Sucharitkul
Bjo Trimble
John Trimble
Kees Van Toorn
A. E. Van Vogt
Robert E. Vardeman
Joan Vinge
Bill Warren
Ted White
Connie Willis
Jack Williamson
Don Wollheim
Chelsea Quinn Yarbro
Timothy Zahn
Paul Zimmer
Howard Zimmerman

EDITORIAL NOTE: Appearing above is Milt Stevens' most current list of confirmed program guests for L.A.Con II. On the succeeding pages are projected programs and the guests who have been contacted to join them.

Program Update
April 1984

(T)-Talked To (L)-Letter (C)-Confirmed *-Moderator

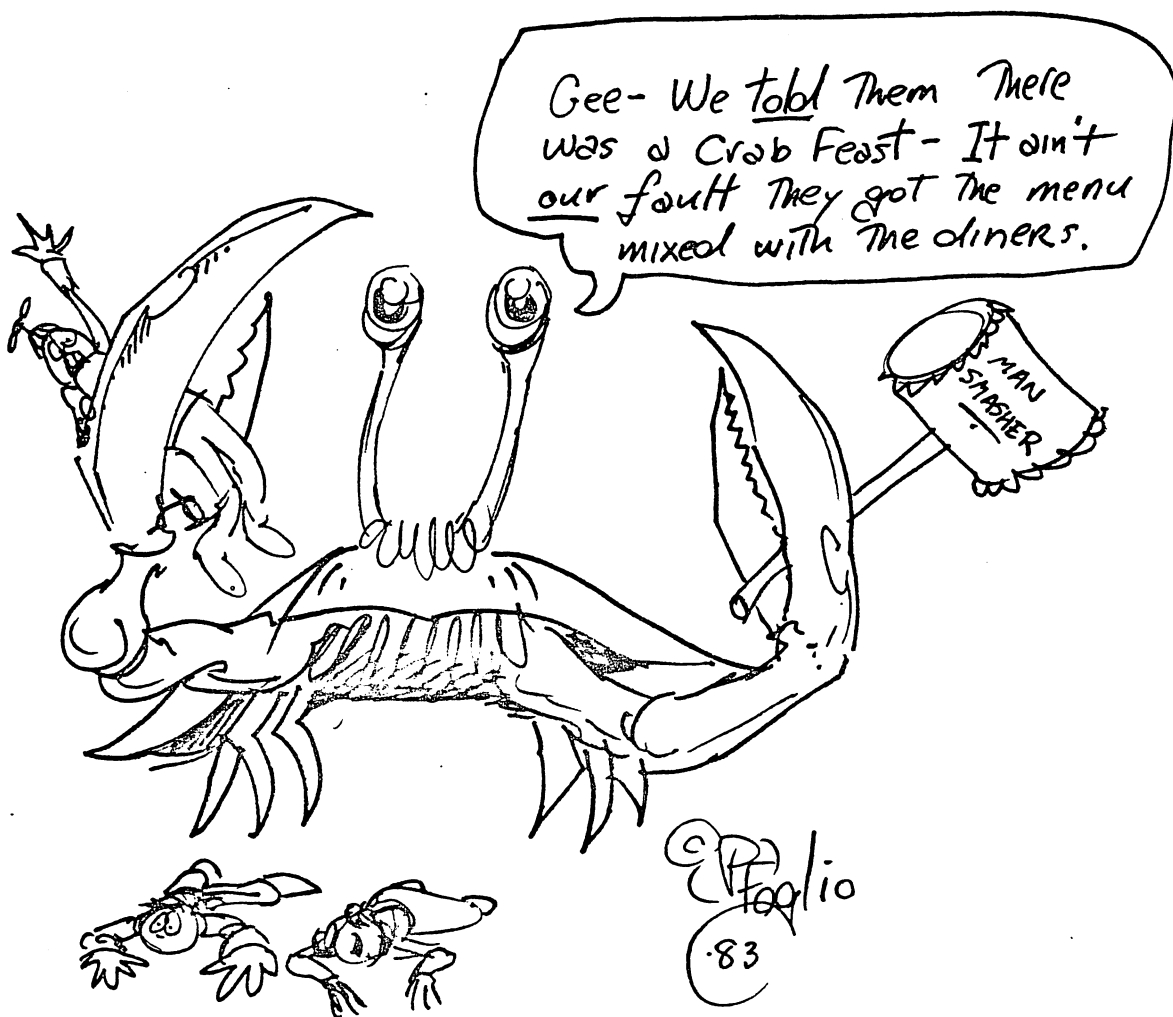
1. Gordon R. Dickson Interview
Miesel(C)
2. Gordon R. Dickson Roast
3. Authorship (What Writers' Workshops Don't Tell You)
4. Tourist Spots for Time Travellers
*Miesel(C), Willis(C), Anderson(C), Sucharitkul(C)
5. Pulp Cover Slide Show
- Schirmeister(T)
6. SF in Japan
Shibano(C)
7. SF in the Soviet Union
Parnov(T)
8. Tolkien Panel(C)
*Goodknight, Paxson, I & B Ballantine, Marion Zimmer Bradley
9. The Decline and Fall of Practically Everybody
Klein(C)
10. How Editors Develop Writers
*Scithers(C), Hartwell(C), Betsy Mitchell(C), McCarthy(L) Frenkel(C)
11. One Man Show
Forward(T)
12. Science and the Martial Arts
Kato(C), Barnes(C), Lynn(L)
13. Bleep Em If They Can't Take a Joke(Humor in SF)
*Harrison(C), Bryant(C), Vardeman(C), Gilden(L)
14. The SF Political Spectrum
*Benford(C), May(C), Spinrad(C), Butler(L), Pournelle()
15. Gadgets, Gizmos, and Gewgaws(Designing Things That Don't Exist)
*Kelly Freas(C), Franz Joseph(C), Sternbach(), Ron Cobb()
16. The Professional Illustrator
*Polly Freas(C), DiFate(L), Wendy Pini(), Mattingly(C), Martin(C)
17. Artists Workshop
David Lee Anderson(C)
18. Market Report
Brown(L)

19. Technology and Its Problems
*Bova(C), Franz Joseph(C), Ing(C), Schmidt(C), Williamson(C)
20. World War III and Its Aftermath
*Willis(C), Haldeman(C), Zahn(C), Chandler(C)
21. An Old Fashioned Wedding for Twenty-Seven(Family Associations in The Indefinite Future)
*Vinge(C), Kingsbury(C), Randall(C), DeCles(C)
22. Beyond Communism and Capitalism (Political Conflict in the Indefinite Future)
*Kingsbury(C), Pohl(C), Brin(C), Spinrad(C)
23. Delphi
*Norm Dalkey(C), Bradbury(L), Gerrold(); Martine-Barnes(C), White(), Van Vogt(C), Bear(C), Hodel(C), O'Quinn(C)
24. The Oddest Place in the Universe
Niven(C), Clement(C), Forward(), Sheffield(C)
25. Guilty Pleasures(Things You Enjoy But Shouldn't)
*Rotsler(C), Barnes(C), Gilden(L), Lupoff(C), Eisenstein(L)
26. What If?
*Bryant(C), Benford(C), Zahn(C), McIntyre(L), Robinson(L)
27. Anglo-American SF From The Outside
*Van Toorn(C), Mazuranie(C), Lofficier(C) Japanese()
28. SF in Europe
Van Toorn(C), Mazuranie(C), Lofficier(C)
29. Vincent DiFate Slide Show(L)
30. When Proazines Were King(1926-1958)
*Pohl(C), Dikty(C), Hornig(), Gold(), Klein()
31. The History of SF:Trends
*Gunn(C), Dikty(C), Williamson(C), Ackerman(C)
32. So It's 1984(Dystopian SF)
*Ing(C), Harrison(C), Gunn(C), Bova(C)
33. How To Succeed In Book Publishing
*Hartwell(C), I Ballantine(C), Frenkel(C), Kay Reynolds(C), Doherty()
34. If I were A Sorcerer(ess)
*Kurtz(C), Petaja(C), Duane(), Robin Bailey(C), Hambly()
35. Galactic Politics(Political Problems With Aliens)
*Cherryh(C), Niven(C), Haldeman(C), Schmidt(C), Van Vogt(C)
36. Making Your First Sale
*Jordan(C), Sharon Newman(C)

37. Heroic Fantasy, Avoiding the Curse of Sameold-Sameold
*Thomas(L), Bradley(C), Jordan(C), May(C), Adams(C), Roberson(C)
38. Don Bluth & Animators
39. Bluth Studios History & Future
40. Other Animation Panel
41. Writing a Series
*Chalker(C), Bradley(C), Foster(C), Petaja(C), Lichtenberg(C)
42. Going Pro
*Sciethers(C), Carr(C), Martine-Barnes(C), Yarbro(C), Catalano(L)
43. The Adventure Story
*Foster(C), Adams(C), Anderson(C), Chandler(C), Lorrah(C)
44. The Old Dark Places (Gothic Fantasy)
*Yarbro(C), Martin(C), Etchison(), Eisenstein(L)
45. On a Colonial Planet
*Clement(C), Brin(C), Van Soyoc(L), Silverberg(C), Kube-McDowell(C)
46. Creating Cultures
*Martin(C), Kurtz(C), Sucharitkul(C), Bear(C), Vinge(C)
47. Interview with Andre Norton
48. Movie Poster Slide Show
Warren(C)
49. Costume Workshop
Trimbles(C)
50. Fandom Is A Way Of Death I
51. Fandom Is A Way Of Death II
52. To Live Forever
*Randall(C), Chalker(C), McIntyre(L), Robinson(L)
53. ET Phone Earth(SETI Presentation)
McDonough(C)
54. The Day After The End Of The World
Harry Harrison one act play(L)
55. Bradbury Talk(L)
56. Pournelle Talk(C)
57. Bakshi Slide Show
Carl Macek(C)
58. Dr. Who Presentation
Hoffman(C)

59. History Does It Repeat Itself?
Cherryh(C), Linaweaver(L), Zimmer(C), Goldin()
60. The Next Hundred Years
*Vardeman(C), Baen(C), Van Scyok(L), Butler(L)
61. The Year in SF Media
Warren(C), Zimmerman(C), Straczynski(C), Ackerman(C), Cassuit(C), McDonnell(C)
62. The Year in SF Novels
*Lupoff(C), Brown(L), Hodel(C), Benford(), Platt()
63. The Year in SF Short Fiction
*Carr(C), Lynn(L), Catalano(L), McCarthy(L)
64. The Year in SF Fandom
65. The Wonders of the Ackerman Collection(C)
66. Elfquest Panel(L)
67. Gaming Panel
68. Lucasfilm Presentation(C)
69. Starlog Panel(C)
70. 1986 Bidders Presentation
71. Spanish Inquisition-Aussie
72. Spanish Inquisition-1986
73. LACon Critique Session
74. Phoney Writers
Jerry Conway et al (C)
75. Who You Callin Fringefan, Fringefan?
*Kyle(), John Trimble(C), Bjo Trimble(C), Ted White(), Carr()
76. Caltech Attacks The World
77. Kelly Freas Slide Show(C)
78. Computer Art Demonstration
Freff(C)
79. Don Glut Dinasauro Presentation(L)
80. Craig Miller I
81. Craig Miller II
82. Warner Bros. Presentation
83. Far Frontiers Panel (Pournelle, Baen, et al)

FILM PROGRAMMING



FILM	Ordered	Confirmed	Library
Beauty and the Beast	x		Brandon-FI
Blithe Spirit	x	x	Budget
Brigadoon	x	x	MGM
Bulldog Jack	x	x	Budget
Captain Blood	x	x	MGM
Captain Kronos, Vampire Killer	x		AB-PAR-FI
Cat People (original)	x		Brandon-FI
Court Jester	x		"
Creature from the Haunted Sea	x	x	Budget
Damn Yankees	x		Brandon-FI
Duel	x		Swank
Green For Danger	x	x	Budget
Hollywood Boulevard	x		Films, Inc.
Judex	x	x	Budget
Little Shop of Horrors	x	x	Budget
Mad Max	x		Swank
Man in the White Suit	x	x	Budget
On Her Majesty's Secret Service	x	x	MGM
Orphée	x	x	Budget
Phantom of the Paradise	x		Films, Inc.
Raven, The (Price - Karloff)	x		Brandon-FI
Road Warrior	x		Swank
Road to Rio	x		Brandon-FI
Scaramouche	x	x	MGM
Seconds	x		Brandon-FI
Seventh Seal, The	x		Janus-FI
Singin' In the Rain	x	x	MGM
Sleeper	x	x	MGM
Stunt Man, The	x		Films, Inc.
Sunset Boulevard	x		Brandon-FI
THX 1138	x		Brandon-FI
Stairway To Heaven	x	x	Budget
Targets	x		Brandon-FI
Them!	x		Brandon-FI
Thing, The (from Another World)	x		Brandon-FI
War of the Worlds, The	x		Brandon-FI
Willard			West Coast
Wrong Box, The	x		Brandon-FI

Confirmed films to borrow	Expected Film	Suggested Films
STAR WARS	CAT WOMEN OF THE MOON	ALIEN
THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK		DARK CRYSTAL
RETURN OF THE JEDI		ET
		RAIDERS
THE SECRET OF NIMH		BLADERUNNER

NOTES: There will be a 25% discount on FI films. Each of those will require \$100 as deposit.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This list of films was prepared by Alan Winston as part of his report to a previous L.A. Con II committee meeting, and was current as of 2/26/84.

Comments on RAT TAIL FILE (how's that for a classy salutation?)

As head of Programming for Loscon Eleven (that's how it's supposed to look, orthography fans), I was interested in your comments about your job at Loscon in 1982. I had thought for some time that one-hour slots were too short for the average programme items at cons. Apparently EdFink thought so, too. But his two-hour slots don't seem to have been the answer. Now, I have to work mostly from conjecture and innuendo (old time fans?), but perhaps the "starting and stopping at odd times" was a function of the panellists' feeling that they had all the time in the world to get going, and not enough stuff to fill the whole time-slot (although I heard of a couple that used all their time and then some).

My plan has been 90-minute slots, and I programmed the films to fit that plan. I also have devised a list of items based on three groups of ideas: stuff that I've never seen at a con and always wanted to; stuff to follow up on L.A.con II and promote LASFS (admittedly, not too valid for cons in general); and just stuff I thought would be interesting. (I think that covers all my programming.)

As head of Film Programming (and for those of you who worry that I'm tackling too many jobs, I do have Programming Ops and Film Ops people to stick with the ~~stuff~~/~~work~~ important job of running those departments during the con), I have a few words to address to APW:

So you don't see much excuse for Westerns, huh? Well, how about Red Garters or Skin Game or even Stagecoach? I bet any of those could get an audience at Worldcon. And by the way, spy films are a definite bet (as you well know): the three spy pictures run at Loscon 10 were the three most popular items on the film programme.

That Russian picture of Bruce's is Sword and the Dragon, and, wonder of wonders, even though I couldn't track it down for love nor money last year for Loscon 10, it has just turned up in the FILMS INCORPORATED Comprehensive catalogue. Several films I was looking for last year (including Magnetic Monster) have been located and are now available (some because I spent last year prodding libraries about them).

And hey -- no splicing of rental prints! They've sock you heavy for that (on the theory that you've been deliberately taking clips out of the prints). Better to have splicing tape on hand if you need to do spot repairs; just remember to remove the tape before returning.

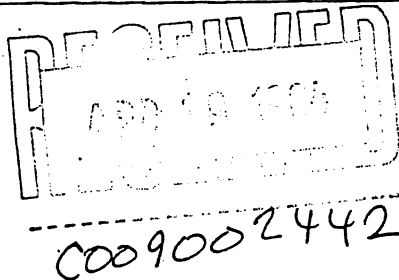
Also, we need a Projectionists' pool and some training sessions. We really need a few people who can run these machines and can handle anamorphic lenses, too.

Well, it's time for this week's chapter of Drums of Fu Manchu. More on this stuff later,

CHARLES LEE JACKSON, THE SECOND

Chair, Loscon Eleven
LASFS Film Coordinator

Gregory Kunz
6362 La Jolla Blvd
La Jolla CA 92037
(619) 459-6674
5 April 1984



Mike Glycer
Editor
Rattail File
L.A. Con II
PO Box 8442
Van Nuys CA 94109

Dear Mike Glycer:

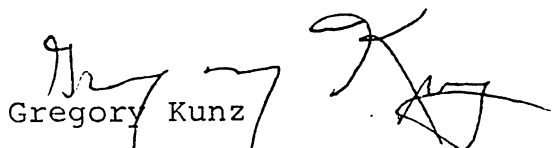
I would like to make a few comments about Rattail File#1. What I was disappointed with was the very quick dismissal by Alan Winston in Holy Sprockets #1 of Western movies for the film program (especially if he is thinking of the 'odd musical, comedy...'). The Western has to be the ultimate mythic film genre. A perfect double bill would be a showing of Seven Samurai (by Kurosawa) and the Magnificent Seven. Another wild suggestion would be The Fastest Guitar in the West (featuring Roy Orbison). How 'bout showing episodes of the Wild, Wild West series (a perfect example of the mixing of myth, fantasy and western ideas).

A quick dismissal of westerns is a dismissal of the early history of science fiction in the pulps where many of the authors wrote for both genres and 'space opera' owes much to the form and style of the written western.

More films with L.A.: War of the Worlds and Rebel Without a Cause (the only connection with SF is the scenes take at the Griffith Park Observatory). For short films, try contacting the radio station at the University of California at Irvine (KUCI). When I went to school there, we made a parody of 2001 where HAL runs the radio station of the future--see if they still have it or know where it might be (done c. 1975).

Contact Ed Emsmiller (spelling?) at Cal Arts to see if he is willing to show some of his and his students experiments in Video arts (he has also done some of the illustrations for Harlan Ellisons books.

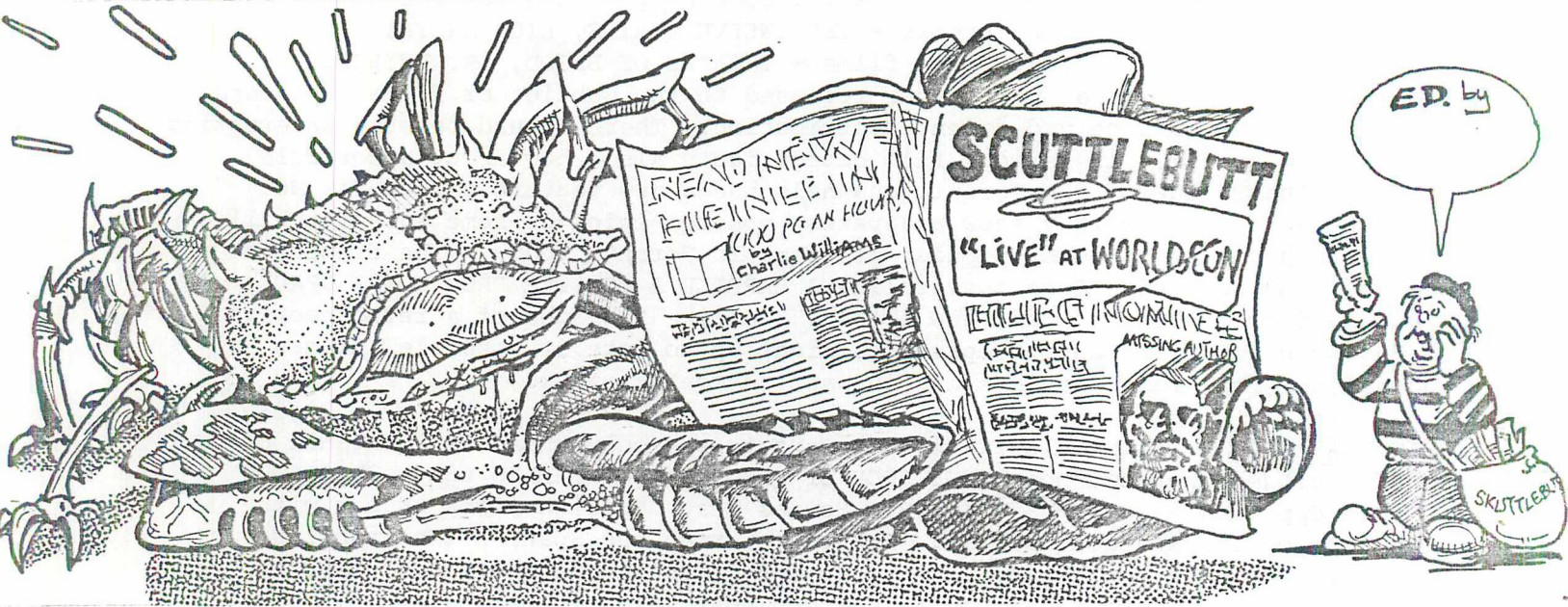
Sincerely,


Gregory Kunz

LLOYD & YVONNE PENNEY: Re: Holy Sprockets: Some suggestions for variety in the film program: Some early Mel Brooks - THE TWELVE CHAIRS, HIGH ANXIETY, YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN... Some Vincent Price films - THEATRE OF BLOOD, DR. PHIBES... Orphan films - films that were never released to the public, or films that were released but never received decent distribution. There should be some interesting but obscure sf films in various film categories. Also, how about a Horrible Film Festival? One of the Toronto channels has a new feature called The Not So Great Movie, where they show a Japanese monster epic, or some such cornball film. It's one of the most popular programs in Toronto today. The films are so bad, they're good. Such movies like I MARRIED A MONSTER FROM OUTER SPACE would be fairly cheap to rent and obtain. We like the idea of a retrospective of Hugo-winning films and tv episodes, right up to date if possible. I can suggest two fan projectionists if you want to contact them.

JEANNE A. ROLLER: Films: love 'em, but want to see only those in the genre or on the fringes thereof. Not BETTY BOOP or SINGING IN THE RAIN ugh. BRIGADOON is more applicable as a musical. Rat. Movies Yes. Foreign films OK but with some form of translation, please. English, German and Spanish (Mexican) are all I speak plus a smattering of Italian and Japanese and about six words in Russian. Foreign cartoons from the Cartoon Festival are great. Love the cat from Yugoslavia. Amateur films, like the Masquerade, are great egoboo. I'm all for it. Promotes experimentation and provides feedback to the filmmaker.

FRANZ ZRILICH: Previewing should be applied to films. I realize the film committee volken cannot literally preview prints, but they can check up on the reliability of various distributors on print quality. A few other things they should do are make sure that the three projectors (one in reserve) of each film size are in fantastic shape, have extra lamps or carbons, a lot more extension cord than they really think they need, a ton of six-inch-wide silver duct tape to tape it down, as well as taping down the sound system wires, and little red lamps by the projector to light up the floor so that people can move around without tripping over and smashing things. There should be movable partitions by the door(s) so as to keep light out of the film room, and there should be a large map in thick black felt-tip marker on posterboard of the layout of the room (outside the room) so that entering flicker freaks can orient themselves. Put six inches between seats on a side-to-side basis, and have three feet minimum between rows of seats. After each feature have ushers (Shock!) who will straighten out the chairs and clean up broken champagne glasses and spilled chocolate pudding. There should be clean-up equipment -- robust clean-up equipment -- available for this. Front rows should use bean bags instead of chairs. I suggest the Committee On Film buy heavy canvas (white, so that it shows up in the dark) filled with plastic foam peanuts. The Head Usher will be by the door with a red-filtered two-cell flashlight to both escort guests to seats and to keep order -- which includes excluding champagne glasses and cans of chocolate pudding and watching for beanbag theft. Needless to say, the Usher maintains order (or at least a semblance of order) and the Head Projectionist runs the machinery. Maybe you can rent or make Italian 1930s movie usher uniforms -- or use El Salvadoran General uniforms. Naturally there should be a magic marker whiteboard (erasable like a blackboard, but far easier to read) on an easel, (or better yet, suspended or mounted sturdily to the wall outside the film room) which lists movies and showing times. It is erasable because no matter how hard you try, things change. And do tell people if a film has been dropped, moved, etc. (All the above blatherings were by a former Assistant Manager of a movie theater that had 1200 seats, and carbon-arc projectors.)



 CONSTELLATION

MEL. WHITE: You write "What I don't find clear is who was holding a gun to your head to make you place this artwork with hucksters." I reread my letters and, you're right -- the point isn't as obvious as I thought it was. Let me try to make the situation a little clearer.

Like a number of other artists I rely on the sale of my artwork at convention shows to cover all or part of the expenses of a convention. In a way, we're very much like the hucksters. Like all other artists (and hucksters), this strategy works really well sometimes...and sometimes it doesn't. In the case of a Worldcon, I had already paid for a panel (\$25 -- steep compared to most other cons, but in the past, the sales have justified the expense.) I'd worked up several pieces that I felt would sell well (the notorious prints) and they comprised 50% of the items I had for sale. When they were marked "NFS", I was told I could not put other artwork in their place. I could withdraw the prints, but I could not HANG additional pieces on my very expensive panel. Oh yes -- no refunds, either.

Imagine you had set up a huckster table at a very large con (which cost you \$25) and then the concom came along and told you that you were barred from selling half your stock (the hottest selling items on your table) while the dealer next to you was allowed to sell the same things you were told not to sell. (Literally what happened to me, there were photoprints on panels near mine that were not marked "NFS".) You couldn't replace your stock with other merchandise. You could leave it on the table (marked "not for sale") or you could remove it. No refunds. How would you feel?

There was probably a better solution than the one I found (I'm afraid that I was a bit "shocky" over the whole affair and not thinking straight.) My friends and I checked around for alternative solutions and the only ones we found involved either placing my prints with the "print dealer" outside the Art Show (I would have paid 25% of my sales to him for this service, on top of the \$25 already spent), placing my prints with another dealer, or leaving the prints in place

and absorbing the loss. The latter wasn't a viable option -- my financial situation was grave. Jinx Beers (Alicia Austin's agent) took pity on me and allowed me space in her print file (sold one print there, which helped) and charged me nothing for the service.

I could rant and rave for quite awhile about how badly I was hurt by the Art Show's capricious practices. (I don't think anyone was "out to get me." I wound up on the wrong side of some poorly-implemented policies.) I could have accepted my loss if everyone else had been forced to abide by the same laws, or if I'd gone and (as might happen) no one wanted to buy any of my artwork. I knew the risk. But the injustice of the situation combined with the financial loss and the lack of alternatives really hit me hard. Other artists who were also hurt by the arbitrary rules were probably in the same sort of situation. The prints, incidentally, justified my gamble; at subsequent conventions they have sold well.

J.R. MADDEN: Air conditioners should always be turned on in convention centers BEFORE the convention gets started. Of course, this will mean a higher utility bill for the convention center but the concom and staff will have a much easier time dealing with irate fans who are not hot to begin with. *((Is there any doubt in your mind that failing to turn the Con Ctr air conditioning on Wednesday before ConStellation was solely a cost-cutting move?))*

The ConStellation Art Show made a good decision in not having sale of art for minimum bid following the close of formal bidding. The scope of a worldcon art show these days is simply too large to have that sort of additional burder. If the buyers can not put a bid on a piece of art during regular bidding, there should not be a foot race afterwards with the art going to the fleetest!

On the other hand, the art sale at ConStellation left a lot to be desired regarding the handling of the art at the sale table. The stacking of the pieces followed by a shuffling search by gophers for individual pieces surely did not endear the art show staff to the numerous buyers. I would think the bid sheets attached to each piece of art could be marked at the conclusion of the bidding to indicate the status of that particular piece. The buyers, under supervision of the art show staff, would remove the pieces they had won in the bidding and carry them to the table for purchase and paperwork. Some might argue against this as being too labor-intensive for the art staff, but then again, the ConStellation art sale was quite late in getting started because they removed all the purchased pieces from the floor and then tried to sort them out by number on the top of tables.

There were quite a number of people in the line for the art sale in Baltimore who did not know if they had the highest bid on a piece and were merely trying to find out. But since the system was not set up to tell them that particular fact, a lot of time was wasted by the art staff in trying to find certain pieces. If the art was just left hanging, the bidders could walk in, check it out, and then hang around to buy or move on as the case turns out.

The hospitality suite in the convention center was a great idea. If there had only been a couple more spigots for the drinks and the staff to work them! As to the "bottomless munchie bowls" -- isn't there a popcorn vender in Los Angeles with a colorful little wagon who would be willing to contract with the concom to provide hot popcorn in a large consuite arrangement? Perhaps not a free distribution of the consumables as there would be too much abuse, but a subsidized fee of say 10¢ per good-sized bag to encourage reasonable attitudes on the part of the congoers.

DONALD FRANSON: If Worldcon site voting goes to three years in advance, making the in-person voting at the con subject to local fan influence (we still don't have 100% mail voting, which was supposed to remedy this), wouldn't it make sense to also change the rotation plan from three years to four?

There could easily be four zones, including the South. We have already had five cons south of the Mason-Dixon line, four counting as Eastern, and one that could qualify as Central, though before the rotation plan started (New Orleans). (Also Louisville and Austin NASFiCs).

New zones could be Northeastern; east of Chicago, including Indiana, Michigan, and north of the Ohio River and Mason-Dixon line; South: Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kentucky and on East; Central: Chicago to the Rockies, etc. The Central zone now is too large, the Eastern zone (outside of the South) too small, so that Eastern time zone cities such as Detroit and Toronto bid as Central cities. We need to retain the rotation plan, but the borders can be changed to make four zones instead of three. No need to make any city ineligible then (a hard rule to enforce).

Also, it looks like some cities and zones don't want to make Worldcon bids as often as every three years, and may prefer four.

To those worried about repeat bidders, I would say that this is not a problem, never has been. Los Angeles has had Worldcons 12, 14 and 12 years apart; Chicago 12, 10 and 20; New York 17 and 11. That's not very repetitious. It just seems that LA and the others are always bidding as they have often lost.

BRAD FOSTER: I'm seeing bits about the ConStellation debt problems popping up all over in zines now, and from my admittedly out-in-the-boonies perspective, seems that although it's too bad, I don't understand why people should be expected to bail out what sounds like a badly planned and run con. Of course, I'm also a tight-fisted s.o.b. so that might be coloring my attitude a bit. (*Maybe -- I don't think we should let Jeffersonians run Worldcons, only Hamiltonians.*)

FRANZ ZRILICH: Charge more. I think membership rates are too low. I warned a few years ago in LOBSTER TAIL ((?)) and CONS AND SHELL GAMES that cons don't charge enough. What happened at ConStellation was predictable. What should be charged? It is probably too late for L.A.Con II but group pressure should be exerted by all of us on future con committees (especially Worldcon types) to start at \$50 and charge in excess of \$100 at the door. It isn't my intent to chase fans away, it is my intent to guarantee a higher quality of con. After all, given travel, food, lodging, a fee of \$125 or \$150 (to cover some of the improvements I suggest below) is quite reasonable.

What are some of those improvements, I hear you ask, Mike; I'm glad you asked. Here they are. To prevent a Worldcon from becoming a bust, a permanent and central treasury. Each WC committee would be required to turn X percent of its gross take over to this fund to cover the occasional mess that Worldcons are heir to every five or so years. And whom, I'm quite sure you are asking, should handle the boodle?

The Permanent Central Committee, that's whom. My idea is that we need a Committee of Committees, so to speak, that weeds out the weak bids and supervises the current committees to make sure they aren't doing anything foolish. Membership requirements and election procedures I'm sure can be settled upon without too many fireworks. I would like to see people with real world business sense, like Steven Spielberg, on the committee of committees (though I realize he's probably too busy to join, it would be fun if he did. He has a flair for costumes and sets that would liven things up.)



Jack L. Chalker, 4704 Warner Drive, Manchester, Maryland 21102

February 7, 1984

Mike Glyer
5828 Woodman Ave. #2
Van Nuys, CA 91401

Dear Mike:

This will be a wide-ranging combination letter with some File 770 and some Rattail File material, and you may feel free to assign parts to either. It will be longer than practical to print, anyway, since I don't have a hell of a lot of time for letters these days and try and pack everything into what letters I do write.

Firstoff, got a mass mailing from Writer's Digest the other day which said, "Imagine going into a bookstore and seeing on a book prominently displayed there, 'BY JACK L. CHALKER.' No, it's not impossible -- it COULD happen to YOU!"

WSFA on February 3 turned down advancing any more money for ConStellation, voting 18-~~4~~ (12 abstentions) to forgive the debt owed WSFA for money already advanced, though. There was a lot of negative feeling towards the con from members, many of whom believed that they worked to win the bid and were then cut out when the final committee was made, and many of whom tried to object to policies and procedures involving money before the con and were curtly told to tend to their own areas and mind their own business. Older members recall the aftermath of the 1974 Worldcon, when the relatively large surplus was engineered in a corporate maneuver into the hands of people who did not run the con and who told WSFA that they had no right to or call on the money. The old-timers were particularly incensed by the same individual who told them they had no right to profits telling them that they had an obligation to cover losses.... The telling blow, however, was the tactical error by ConStellation in not including money owed WSFA (a considerable sum) in their liabilities statement at all. It was one thing to forgive the debt, but quite another to wipe it out unilaterally while keeping some other fan obligations on, and this pissed even the newer members. The issue is now closed as far as WSFA is concerned, but individual personalities in WSFA who were on the ConStellation ConCom are under no clouds. Mike Walsh will run the 1985 Disclave, for example.

An item in Chronicle stated that the ConStellation fundraising committee was composed of department heads who came in under budget or made money. In point of fact, no department head who came in under budget or made money is on the

fund-raising committee, another severe tactical problem for trying to convince locals to chip in. For the record, the following made money for ConStellation: Crab Feast (Eva Whitley), Huckster Room (Natalie Paymer), Art Show (Bob Oliver), Tour Desk (automatic breakeven including expenses) (Miriam Kelly), and that's about it.

I had a wonderful time at ConStellation and I like a lot of the folks at the top, and I think we all threw a really good worldcon, so I'm loath to do all the individual finger-pointing and bad-mouthing I usually do, but for the sake of future conventions -- including those in Baltimore/Washington -- some points need to be made.

In 1974, Ron Bounds and I had the worldcon dropped in our laps with no warning and little prep when the chairman moved to Florida the previous November. The organizational team we put together was based on experience at each position, there being great depth of this in Baltowash, and on adopting an open and motor-mouth approach to management. The four real top committee people -- Ron, me, Bob Pavlat, and Bill Evans -- attempted to reach a consensus on all questions needing hard choices. If we could not (which was very rare) the decision of the Chairman, Ron, was final. We held only three top committee meetings not open to everybody, two of which involved the Hugos and the third of which was post-con and involved the final financial disbursements. Everything else was held in a series of open meetings at which not only was every department head required to tell the assembled multitude what they had done to date but also anyone at all in the room could comment and make suggestions on anything they heard. Again, a consensus was almost always arrived at, and if it could not Ron decided and that was that.

We were quite budget conscious -- Ron and Bill came up with the Budget of the Week, then the Budget of the Hour as time grew short -- and required all expenses to be cleared by the Treasurer and all expenses above a small amount -- \$250 I think -- to be approved by the full top committee. Lines of authority were clear, and departmental level people were expected to do their jobs and report to their senior committeemember regularly. Each department head met regularly with his or her staff and the top CC member in charge. There was minimal paperwork, but only Evans (as Treasurer) could write a check or incur a financial obligation. Every time income and outgo exceeded \$500 a new spreadsheet was created, xeroxed, and in the hands of all top CC members. Equally important, if a department head wasn't doing his or her job, they were told to shape up. Those who didn't, including CC personnel, were canned.

We wound up throwing a con for 4400 people at nine bucks a head and making over six grand. Adjusted for inflation, we charged about \$27.50 and made \$19,000 in 1983/4 dollars. When you get to that size, there is very little difference between

4400 and 6500 if you have a few larger rooms, which Connie did.

ConStellation started well with an avowed policy of emulating Discon II in style and management, but it quickly turned in other directions. Although bimonthly meetings were held, the agenda was rigidly fixed and the CC disallowed anyone asking questions or making suggestions outside their own area. Massive appointments were made without discussing those appointments with the department heads and often without telling the appointee until after the public announcement. Some votes were taken at committee meetings when it seemed clear a consensus could be reached, but those votes were deemed "advisory" and quite often were unilaterally reversed by the CC, again without telling the rest of the people. Virtually all major decisions on the con wound up being made in closed sessions by the CC. Income and outgo was regularly read, but no spreadsheet breakdowns were ever seen that were not hopelessly out of date, and CC spending decisions were made on the spot without consulting current conditions.

The department heads were among the most experienced and competent it is possible to recruit, and at the start they submitted their budget requests and submitted the ever-increasing paperwork, but nothing ever got done. It became impossible for many to get a simple yes or no, and every time someone pointed out a possible problem they were told to put it on a form and put it in the mailbox. I never had any evidence that such reports were ever even read; they certainly were dismissed or never acted upon.

Being experienced and competent people, the department heads then proceeded to do damned good jobs but as autonomous units. That way lies budgetary disaster, because there was nobody putting it all together, but it explains why the parts all worked very well, the total just didn't add up.

This brings me to the areas where ConStellation fell into the hole, and these deserve some commentary.

Diamondvision: Charlie Ellis is getting a bum rap on this one, even though my request for the Hugos was for a banked set of slide projectors in back of me, with all the visuals projected the way we did the films at the Hugo awards. This was simple and cheap. It wasn't until I actually got to the con that I discovered that all the visuals were to be Diamondvision.

Charlie, however, felt Diamondvision was necessary for the big hall for full events, and he was probably right. He got a cut rate for it, and then asked the CC for approval before committing the con to it. He had checked his budget and found that it was within his set budget line to use it, which is why he did it. This expense was approved by the CC. Only later, much too late to do anything about it, did everyone discover that

Charlie's budget, for accounting purposes, included everything -- mikes, typewriters, xerox, you name it -- not just the AV section. Although according to the way he understood the budget (and the way the majority of the CC must have, too, since they looked at it and said O.K.) he was \$5000 under, he was actually \$10,000 over. That's a fourth of the deficit.

A week before Connie I had to be down to the Connie office on my own business, and Lee Smoire was there going over all the hotel reservations and doing a fine check and double-check job. While I was there, and in my hearing, she noted that there were very few reservations at the outlying hotels and suggested that we quickly rethink the massive and expensive bus system we'd planned to cover those places. She was told by the two CC members there to put it in writing and stick it in the box. It was never acted upon. Thus, we paid \$18,000 for a bus system that averaged just 6 people per trip. It would have been far cheaper to pay their cab fares, and in fact the whole thing could have been handled with one minibus and three shifts of drivers, information which was unearthed and made available in time to do something about it. An effective system could have been done for about \$3000; the extra \$15,000 represents three-eighths of the deficit. Again, this was a department head doing her job well and going as far as she could -- and getting no action from those who could take it.

The CC and close friends of the CC insisted on setting the at the door rates very early, before there were even estimates for many of the larger turkeys (and before Diamondvision). I and several others managed to put it off for 2 months, but the CC finally set the rate arbitrarily and then told us at a public meeting that money was not a problem....

Publications were done by a single printer favored by the publications chief; print runs were set at the maximums always rather than going with a good percentage and reprinting as necessary. The type of paper, ink, etc. was insisted upon, including specific typesetting which was contracted out or done by the printer. This perfectionism may have looked nice but it raised the bill by thousands of dollars over what could have been done, and it did not produce a better product. Indeed, deadlines were so far in advance that little updating was possible in the entries.

The list goes on and on....

Also, it was often impossible to tell who was really running what. Nobody was ever fired even when they did a bad job, and their jobs were given or assigned to others without really anyone knowing until a month or more might pass. There was an absolute horror of canning anybody for fear it would "look bad," even on the CC. As a result, the bottom ran without a head, and without real controls, with existing members taking on too much.

Just like the federal government, a competent body without a head will produce a good result and massive deficits. That is ConStellation's story, but as they are not a continuing organization they can not borrow to cover or print more money.

They have currently reduced the deficits by about half, and if they get another \$10,000 the matching grant from NESFA will break them even. However, as their presentation to WSFA showed, they do not even now seem to know exactly how much they owe and to whom, only now those whom they treated less than well during the duration and are now taking some of the blame from the CC, unjustifiably, are not inclined to help. If fandom wants to rally, fine, but I am, as far as I know, the first Toastmaster in recent years to get a bill for everything over and above my basic suite upon checkout, and since my suite was a comp this shows what I really got from them.

That brings up another point. In 1974, every single person including Ron and I paid for our membership, and everyone was expected to pay their own hotel bill except the GoH, FGoH, and Toastmaster. It was known that when the con was over and accounts were settled there would be a pro-rata reimbursement of those bills based on how much we made and how high a position the committee member occupied. And this was with a lot of comp rooms.

Baltimore had few comp rooms, and the Hyatt was the only place where comps really paid off anyway, since we wanted the CC and Dept. Heads to be easy to find in an emergency. Because the Hyatt was a smaller hotel, and because it knew we had no place else to go, we received fewer comps than the usual worldcon, but enough to cover the rooms of the GoH, FGoH, and Toastmaster. My comp was a suite on the luxury floor of the Hyatt that would have cost \$500 a night otherwise. I luxuriated guiltlessly, knowing it was a comp. However, I was quite surprised to see several CC and department heads going in and out of rooms on that luxury floor, including a few who could hardly afford a Hyatt single, let alone the 14th Floor. Apparently the rooms of departmental level and CC people were picked up by the master account, or so I read the figures, including some very expensive rooms. I don't know exactly who and/or how many, but it seems to be considerable and accounts for several grand. This violates a cardinal rule of all cons, world or otherwise -- don't advance, reimburse, reimburse, reimburse, reimburse -- if the money's there at the end.

One budget I saw near the start of the con included estimated revenue from the art auctions and walk-ins. Another cardinal rule, particularly of worldcons -- never budget what you don't have. Those funds are your slush fund and insurance policy.

I never knew about the free rooms, but I knew about the second and loudly protested. My protest was noted and I was told

to go mind my toastmastering, which I did.

The bottom line was that the CC ran this like amateur night while absolutely ignoring possibly the largest number of resident worldcon experts in the country or telling them to mind only their own business and not intrude. The result of this is the bankruptcy, but you still had a fine con because these people who actually ran the departments were so good, had so many years and cons of experience, that they did expert jobs automatically.

This large fund of experienced people, now grown larger, will not go away. Although BSFS and WSFA are quite different clubs with extremely different outlooks and philosophies (not to mention 60 miles separation) and with little membership overlap, their combined expertise -- and they showed they could combine -- is unbelievable. These people will bid again, and will do a fine job, but I think they, too, learned that you don't put the amateurs at the top for political reasons and leave all the pros on Level Two. They will throw a hell of a worldcon in the Nineties as they did in the past 3 decades, and that time they will not go broke. I do not expect, however, any bid for either Baltimore (which now has lots of hotel rooms and more rising daily -- rats) or Washington to succeed if it includes any of the former CC members in top spots.

As for the long-term effect on cons, I doubt it, both in a positive and a negative way. We will continue to have organizational errors and bad top management, not every time but some of the time, because of the nature of our convention. Leadership from single, permanent organizations is certainly best, but may not always be possible. Baltimore was the best place to hold the 1983 Worldcon in the area, but WSFA could hardly have done it without BSFS's full cooperation, support, and partnership, and the reverse is also true. Nor is this necessarily a hard rule. Discon II was run by a group outside all local groups and it did quite well. I well remember LACon, though, where some horrible policies and procedures were causing harm and bad feeling and not working (and this was admitted by the concom) but when pleas were made to change these policies those involved were told "Sorry -- we can't change the game plan."

So don't take that rule as hard and fast about single organizations.

However, the financial difficulties will have little impact -- far less the more time passes. Three or four successful worldcons will more than wipe out any "slow pay" or "financially questionable" ratings. I do not expect LACon II to have financial problems, I expect Aussiecon II to have a really tight budget but to break even, and I don't see finances being the problems in the next couple of years, either. Remember, the 1956 Worldcon went bankrupt (chaired by Dave Kyle, Connie FGoh....)

Hmmm....

O.K., on to some commentary....

Since something has been made (in SFR mainly) about my "I didn't get a Hugo" routine, I suppose I should comment. Anyone who could take that seriously, even if they didn't recognize it as a variation of the Bob Hope Oscar bit as stolen by Isaac Asimov before he won one, considering I also complained about not winning the Fan Artist Hugo, is not someone who can be taken seriously. The audience en mass took it as a humor bit and went along even to the mock-sympathy mass responses, and I think anyone who would see it otherwise says more about themselves than about me. There were also, so help me, lots of complaints that the Hugo Awards ceremony was too short!!!! First of all, 1200 people had been sitting there for a good three and a half hours and certainly deserved a short presentation; second, I firmly believe that short and sweet and direct is best.

I also had some complaints about using the Diamondvision for the visuals, which was not my original plan (see above) and about my being obscured by the TV monitor. I did not have anything to do with the placement of equipment or the arrangement of the podium save for my insistence that all the Hugos be lined up there for all to see. My script was submitted well in advance to all the higher-ups and technical people.

Some comments on Robert Jansen's letter....

First of all, Iguanacon was in 1978, Connie was in 1983, and the first NASFiC was in 1975. I'm not sure where or what Mr. Jansen attended during the years he cites with names like those.

My normal hours are roughly 2 P.M. to 7 A.M.; so if I don't qualify as a nocturnal nobody does. At worldcons this tends to shift from about noon to 6 A.M. the next day, give or take an hour at either end. This last has been normal to me for at least my last twenty worldcons, and I've made every single worldcon (and NASFiC) since 1966 and some worldcons before that. So let's see what his complaints are:

1. A proper round the clock film program: I'm not sure what a "proper" program means; at least, I'll bet you that every single reader of this line has a different idea. Films were shown from Wednesday into the wee hours of the following Tuesday with few (and brief) breaks. In addition, a video program was simultaneously run during this period, except during the "big" events when live feeds were carried.

2. Food and beverage service at the Con Suite: First of all, few worldcons have con suites. They are expensive and unnecessary. Anyone who can't find a party at any hour at a worldcon probably couldn't find the con suite, either. The Hyatt

coffee shop was 24 hours starting Thursday and said (after intense negotiations and financial guarantees) that it would remain open 24 hours so long as business warranted. At about 3 A.M. on Sunday business just plain died, and was never very good that night, so they closed. Shane's, however, and Pollack Johnnie's, were both open and an easy and safe walk. Food and beverage service between midnight and 6 A.M. on a weekend and holiday in a convention center requires that you use the center concessionaire at their rates, plus triple time for help. A 12-6 Coke would have cost \$3.00; a hot dog \$5.00; a beer also \$5.00. Faced with this, we decided that anyone who needed late night food could find it easily in the hotel or down the street. I'm surprised Mr. Jansen couldn't. If he knows Anaheim so well, though, he's certainly buying into a share of that Denny's just across the street from the parking lot.... Of the cons he says he attended, only Iggie negotiated a 24-hour food service for the full con in the hotel, and that was because it was 24-hours normally anyway.

3. A 'round the clock well-equipped arcade.... This almost says it all. Anybody who'd want this at a worldcon isn't my kind of attendee, anyway. Arcades need licenses and are subject to lots of local codes and restrictions, not to mention taking up room and driving insurance rates up the wall. Besides, this will be a dead duck in another year or two as those arcades close around the country for lack of interest. Connie had Dragon's Lair, and it was never turned off....

4. Awareness that many of us live by a different biological clock.... Um, maybe he didn't notice that we do, too. That's why we have all those movies and videos, and that's why our parties start late and run until morning. What does he wish? Programming? We had programming at midnight each night, and some of that ran until 2 A.M. Getting pros late in the evening is always a problem, because the Worldcon is also a business convention with the entire trade there, politics being done, PR, even deals made and signed. This is generally done at night, at the parties and in private meetings.

5. The Worldcon is no place for a commercial disguised as a major event.... Huh? And this guy's been to how many other cons? The Worldcon is a commercial, and major media events are now standard. In 1976 we had Mark Hamill and the Star Wars promos, and so on and so on. I think people like and want this kind of thing. If in fact Jansen doesn't, that's the beauty of the worldcon -- there's so much going on you can't possibly find it all to your taste but there's almost always enough.

Aside not worth a number: Brainstorm's "preview" was in fact a commercial disguised as a major event. It was shown at a theater at the insistence of the studio, not ConStellation.

O.K., let's go general and freeform.... Sorry about the criticism of the film equipment, but it was the best available to us at the time without requiring triple-time union projectionists for the weekend, late hours, and holidays. The bulb and insurance on 35MM equipment makes general use of that medium financially prohibitive, and also generally requires an expensive union projectionist. I have no idea as to the schedule problems (I haven't seen a movie at a worldcon in years) but don't recall this as being unusual. I do know that when they're on time and exactly as scheduled it is a major news item in fanzines.

As to the unreliability of the schedule of appearance by the authors at the con, I find this puzzling. I did get screwed up once, when given the wrong time for an autograph session, but this was apparently rare. I was on scads of panels and such and don't remember a single substitution among the other members. At Iguanacon, I was a substitute almost every time I was on a panel. Some authors say they'll show and don't. Other authors beg to be included when we didn't know about them until they showed up. The programs seemed to go on time. All scheduled participants knew their topics well in advance, via mail, and all were told to gather before the panel in the Green Room to chart the course. Many choose not to show up for this pre-session. Few authors "prepare" in any way. They are not in show business, are not getting paid for their appearances, and generally have done the same panel at least 12 times by the worldcon. I suspect, too, that Mr. Jansen wants his cake and wants to eat it, too. Authors in particular do a lot of business and partying all night and are in lousy condition for panels, particularly in the morning or early afternoon. It is the audience's fun, but for us the worldcon is part of our business and involves far more than public appearances.

Our list of authors who actually attended seems about average for a big convention. Between two and three hundred SF authors, about half of all those who write the stuff or ever wrote it, plus all the editors, publishers, agents, etc. were there. Seeing them all, or meeting them, is something else again in today's worldcon, where everything is so spread out. I, for example, remarked recently at a WSFA meeting that I hadn't seen Gordie Dickson at Connie and wondered about his health. A dozen people leaped to tell me that Gordie was there and in fine form. See?

Huckster rooms have been getting more and more homogenous because the big crowds all want and buy the same things and those folks aren't sitting there for their health. I didn't find this one much different than the last half a dozen, and wonder just what was missing other than low prices?

All main events were videotaped and were played not only at the same time as on but later as well. Mr. Jansen is making a complaint that does not exist. Methinks Mr. Jansen should plunk

down a half a million bucks and run a worldcon exactly to his convenience and the hell with the other 6500....

There are no Gyro Gearloose cartoons. That character, a Carl Barks invention, exists only in comic books. Connie had at one time or another almost every Disney film the studio makes available. Many were shown late at night....

Yeah, I know, I know, but the above deserves to be said simply because if he reads Rattail File, then so do a lot of others with little direct involvement and attitudes like his.

As for LACon II, I must admit that from our only previous experience with LASFS worldcons I can't feel tremendously enthused or excited about it. It's my experience that worldcons are run generally (A) from the viewpoint of making the most money (B) from the viewpoint of presenting a well-oiled technical model that satisfies the travelling con committees, or (C) from the viewpoint of making it a creative and fun enterprise for the attendees. These are not mutually exclusive but I've never seen one of the above given primacy where the other two were also present, and I've seen these all accomplished (very rarely) only when (C) was primary, and that involves some risks.

LACon I was certainly run from the viewpoint of (A), and it succeeded on that level quite well. (B) and (C) it sure as hell wasn't, despite an impressive committee. I still remember being absolutely crogged at the armed security guards at the door to the Hucksters Room who almost frisked people and wouldn't even allow folks in with program books. I remember the (unpublished) requirement that all dealers bag, staple, and give a signed receipt for all purchases for the guard to let anyone out. I remember the yells and screams when the Huckster chief then offered to sell lots of bags, receipts, and staplers to satisfy this requirement. Bad taste from the dealers, but to prospective browsers it was like a Gestapo stop, with guards being absolute and unwaivering. Complaints by all of the hucksters not living in LA that this was stifling business, insulting and driving away customers, and causing much discomfort to all were met with shrugs by the committee. Even when several of us stole a third of the stock of the huckster chief and moved it out past the guards, demonstrating how ineffective it all was, there was no inclination to change. "We can't change the game plan in mid-stream," we were told. "Why not?" we asked. "Because that's not the way LASFS works," was the reply. Oh, yes -- we put back everything we took and she never even knew she'd been hit.

Now, the point wasn't the guard business, nor the bag business, but the absolute inflexibility shown by the committee when something obviously did not work, was making everyone (attendees and dealers) unhappy, and which would have taken only minor adjustments to correct. That is a specific example from

one area, but I saw this same inflexibility demonstrated in almost all other areas. This was not true of LASFS Westercons, so I can't say from my (better) Westercon experiences that this is true on a worldcon scale. As has been amply demonstrated of late, when it comes to a worldcon with that enormous crowd and operation staring them in the face, even some of those who've run big regionals panic or go into Never-Never Land.

On a more positive note, if it wouldn't bankrupt the con, might it not be possible to rent one of those parking lot trams to go from the hotels to the front door of the convention center during peak hours and before and after big events? I well remember a number of fans not being present to receive awards or recognition because no thought was given to their physical infirmities.

Also, some real showmanship would be appreciated. It's been conspicuously lacking in prior LA westercons or its worldcon, and it would be very nice to see and costs very little to do.

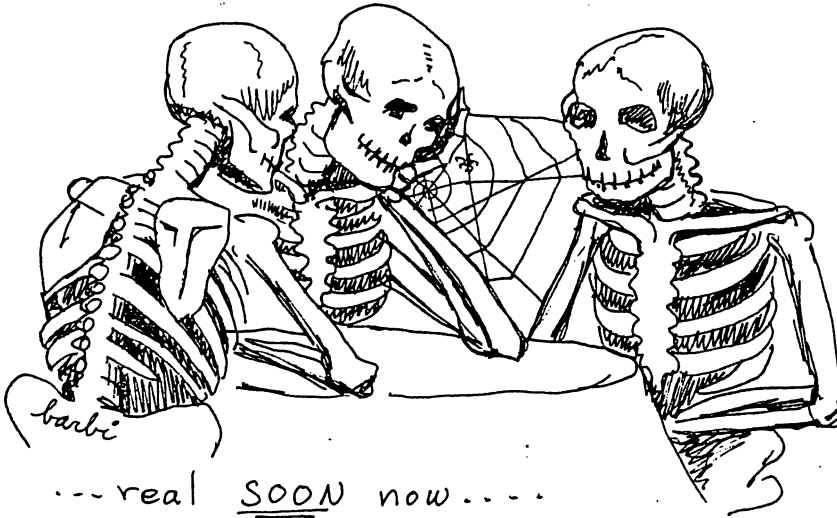
On to File 770:45. ConStellation also announced at WSFA that it was reprinting those Stiles tee shirts to sell. This was news to Steve Stiles, who was sitting there and was to have gotten a percentage from sale of said items and who holds the copyright on the illustration. This sort of thing kind of illustrates their problem at getting much at-home sympathy.

Nowhere in LACon P1 does it note that Fancyyclopedia III is being done with the permission of Mirage Press, current rights holders to Fancy II, who waived all royalties and fees and enthusiastically supports the idea -- but did at least expect an acknowledgement. No mention was made of the large facimile run of Fancy II we did, either.

I hope this will not be too insular an updating, either. Lots of stuff happened in this area in the sixties, but so far as I know nobody's been contacted for anything. One hopes that such things as S.M.O.F. will be included as history and not just as a term definition, and one hopes, too, for no whitewashes of southern California antics of the time. Coventry, one would hope, would be mentioned and explained, and one particularly hopes that the truth about lime Jello, a WSFA item, will also be included.

Cincinnati in '88 is for real and seems to have the support of at least many of the major names in Louisville and Nashville as well. It looks like a solid committee, and to my great surprise it has the facilities to hold it. I've been to that town every year for a decade but I guess I just have to go downtown more.... Mike Lalor (not Layler) is its current head, the man who founded the Travelling Worldcon Committee in St. Louis in 1969 and was responsible for saving that and many other worldcons after.

CHINESE GOURMET



EVERYTHING ELSE

BRIAN EARL BROWN: RATTAIL FILE reminds me in many ways of CONS & SHELL GAMES, starting with the lousy title. I never cared for C&SG since it ~~seemed~~ to imply that running a Worldcon was rather like any other bunco operation. Well, maybe it is, but one shouldn't boast about it. RATTAIL FILES just doesn't roll off the tongue easily. Not that it really matters since RTF will be over and done with in a few more months. And that, of course, is the other parallel with C&SG. Your first issue comes out just 9 months before your convention. C&SG had its first issue out somewhat earlier, like maybe a year-and-a-quarter, but nothing else happened with it for a half-year. I got a phone call from Ross Pavlac about this time two years ago wondering if I would take over editing C&SG because its original editor, John Mitchell, just wasn't getting it out. I eventually pumped out four issues in about 18 weeks from May to mid-August. It's an experience I don't want to repeat. SMOOF was considering publishing a C&SG-like zine as part of their promotions but never did partly from lack of finances and lack of an editor who'd take on the heartbreak of such an operation. At a SMOOF meeting at Conclave the idea of a conrunners' zine was again brought up as part of a program of continuing activities for SMOOF but the meetings scheduled afterwards were never held so I think this is all a passing dream. At the time of C&SG I don't think there was much to talk about in terms of running worldcons. VOICE OF THE LOBSTER was still fresh in people's minds and it had pretty well covered the territory. Since Chicon a lot has changed regarding Worldcons. Actually the big change was Baltimore's unholy financial fiasco. There clearly is a great need at this time for another Worldcon fanzine. The question is, will there be time for people to read these issues and get responses back in time for the next issue? And are they going to want to respond since it's pretty clear to most people that by this time L.A.Con II has pretty well mapped out how it's going to run the Worldcon. All the advice and suggestions that come into RTF aren't going to affect anything. It's too late. That was a problem I faced with C&SG and is one reason why it never went anywhere. It did carry some discussion of the Hugo amendment, and I did suggest in it the idea of a sales table in the fanzine room, which Marty Cantor picked up on and turned into an instant institution. I wish you the

best of luck in making this zine work, because frankly you're going to need it. Of course I was working with one disadvantage that you don't have. I've only been to two worldcons, ever -- Big Mac and Iguanacon. I don't really have a feel for the nature of a Worldcon or the problems inherent in running one. Thus it was hard for me to lead discussion into the different areas that need discussion. You seem, just from looking at this issue, much better acquainted with your subject and better able to launch topics for discussion.

P O Box 18610-A
University Station
Baton Rouge, LA 70893

14 February 1984

RatTail File
c/o Mike Glycer
5828 Woodman Ave, #2
Van Nuys, CA 91401

Dear Mike,

RatTail File #1 was in my postal box on 2 February and I'll have you know this has got to be one of the fastest replies on my personal record! Of course, the fact that the deadline for material is 29 February does have a little something to do with it.

Probably for the umpteenth time: Where are the minutes for the "L.A.Con II Committee Meeting No. 1"??????

I would support a Heinlein Blood Drive at WorldCon '84. I would need to know several months ahead though so I could schedule my donations to coincide with being in Los Angeles (Anaheim). If this is going to be definite, the sooner the word gets out, the better.

Regarding Glycer's "Correct answer #3 . . .": The problem of convention finances, latest example (bad) being ConStellation, results from the lack of continuity in the WorldCon quasi-organization. I find it hard to come up with a word to describe WorldCon as an organization since it is not one; what it is is a series of tenuously connected individual organizations in truth bearing no resemblance one to the other. Mundane groups (i.e., convention centers, hotels, unions, rental agencies, etc.) have absolutely no experience with such a non-structure. They can not relate to, understand, cope with something so far removed from their ken. IMPORTANT FACT #1: Mundanes will not change their way of doing business to suit fandom.

Any other group the size of international fandom, be it professional, scientific, social, fraternal, charity, whatever, has the continuity of a full- or part-time national/international staff which has the responsibility of dealing with the various business groups supporting conventions. The closest fandom can come to this are the large, regional cons which have an ongoing committee such as Boskone, CoastCon, OryCon, etc. WesterCon is NOT one of these. These large regional cons with continuing corporate structures are something mundane business persons can deal with and understand. WorldCons are something unique unto themselves. IMPORTANT FACT #2: WorldCons would greatly benefit from a continuing, corporate structure (paid staff, volunteer, or whatever).

I could do a LONG paragraph at this point but it is self-evident that IMPORTANT FACT #3 is: Fandom will never agree to a continuing, corporate structure!! The reasons are varied: paranoia about "losing control", . . . strange . . . all the

other reasons I can think of at this moment are all variations on the "paranoia" theme!! Yup, I would have to be honest and state that, as I see it right now, fandom would never "subjugate" itself to a formal, incorporated body, even if it were formed by fandom itself. The World Science Fiction Society, INCORPORATED will never come to pass.

Therefore, we come to the only two options foreseeable for science fiction fandom at this time:

1. We will hope and pray that each, individual WorldCon ConCom will turn out to be fiscally responsible in the future and the mundane business community will THINK that WorldCons are more coherent than they actually are,

OR

2. Fandom will have to lower its expectations regarding future WorldCons because, as future WorldCon screw up, the reputation of fiscal irresponsibility will carry forward each year and continue to escalate. Eventually, hotels, convention centers, etc will cease to do business with WorldCon concons and the cons will have to decrease in size and scope due to a lack of suitable facilities. It will not be possible to have a WorldCon of 6000+ because we will only be able to get one or two smaller hotels desperate for business with almost no convention facilities other than one big room in back!

IMPORTANT FACT #4: Fandom is going to do nothing about this problem except talk. Despite our lip-service to being forward-looking, open-minded folks, fandom is, in fact, one of the most conservative associations around today. The world is changing, technology is changing, societies are changing. And fandom . . . fandom is arguing that, unless a fanzine is produced on a second-hand mimeograph, it is not a true fanzine!!!!

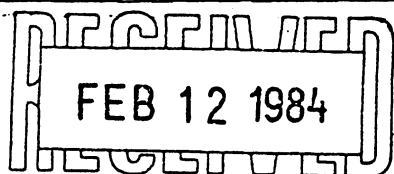
(Pant, wheeze, deep breath . . . I think I'll be okay now)

Looking forward to ish #2 of the RatTail. Hope you don't wear yourself out with all of this zine production!!

Fannishly yours,



JR "Mad Dog" Madden



C006001737

P. O. Box 10860
Chicago, IL 60610
(312) 784-5092
3 February 1984

L.A. Con II
P.O. Box 8442
Van Nuys, CA 91409

Attn: Personnel department

Dear Folk--

By now you've probably had advice up to here. Everybody's willing--eager, even--to tell you what you should do and how you should do it.

Yeah, this is another one of those letters. Maybe you should sit down.

Running any large operation that depends on volunteer labor is difficult. There are things that can make it more difficult. It's somewhat easier, for example, to run a volunteer operation on an ongoing basis. When you've got to run a staff that's mostly active for just a few days, it's exceedingly difficult to manage things like morale and training and supervision.

It's also hard for people to get better at what they do. You don't get much of a chance to learn from your failures and successes when the experience comes in widely separated chunks. And it's tough for most people to remember that the job they have to do is a job--that people are depending on them. In the case of a Worldcon, that's lots of people.

My experience managing volunteers is mostly outside fandom, running a 24-hour crisis intervention hotline. But many of the problems I've seen over the last few years, at cons of all sizes but especially at Worldcons, aren't fan problems--they're volunteer problems.

So here are a few suggestions, in no special order. Take them for what they're worth--it's nothing more, after all, than more free advice. Some of these things you've probably been over long ago. But it never hurts to be reminded...

(1) Every supervisor--every supervisor--should remember those three simple phrases that can make everyone's life so much nicer: "Please," "Thank you," and "Would you like to sign up for another shift before you go?"

That's all the way through the operation, from con com on down. Sure, volunteers can be a pain; anyone who's really screwing up should be replaced. But there's really only so much you can offer a volunteer besides free coffee.

One thing you can offer is niceness. Another is appreciation. A third is a solid sense that we really *do* need you, that we can't make this con run without at least every volunteer we've got.

Everyone who deals with volunteers has to remember these things--and keep reminding him or herself of them. If you don't give volunteers something to come back for, they won't come back. And then, come Sunday night, you're in *deeeep* trouble...

(2) Supervisors should supervise. They've got to keep an eye on what's going on. If a job isn't getting done, a supervisor should find out why.

Not all volunteers will ask for help when they need it; it's important that supervisors glance over shoulders and keep an eye out for problems as they come up.

And it's old news, but it's always worth repeating: supervisors *must* be tough about enforcing the few necessary rules. If a volunteer is drunk or stoned or too tired to function, the supervisor has to pull the volunteer out, gently read the riot act, and send the volunteer off to bed.

(3) Everybody's got to know the rules. Whatever they are (and the fewer the better), they *must* to be clear to everyone.

Every volunteer and every supervisor should get a copy, on paper, of whatever rules apply--and should also be told, out loud, what the appropriate rules are. That reduces the chance that anyone will neither read nor hear the rules.

The same is true for procedures and instructions. Whenever possible, people should get a copy on paper and

also be told by a supervisor what's going on. There's not much chance for training most people to work on a Worldcon; in place of training, there's got to be communication.

(4) There should *always* be a place for a volunteer to sign up for *any* job that needs to be done at *any* time during the convention.

OK, temper that with common sense. Folks who are enthusiastic on Thursday shouldn't be signing up for hours and hours of work throughout the weekend, especially if they've never worked a Worldcon before. "Burnout" is as big a problem with fannish volunteers as with any other kind.

But when a supervisor says, "Would you like to sign up for another shift?" there's got to be some place for the volunteer to sign up. That's mostly the responsibility of the other department heads, not Personnel--but you've got to encourage them as much as you can.

(5) In the same line, it's important--essential--critical that department heads estimate when they'll need how many volunteers, and get those estimates to Personnel as early as possible.

And it's essential that Personnel demand those estimates as early as possible.

This isn't just while the con is being planned. What each department needs will change over the course of the con. Some jobs demand the same few people for the whole weekend. Others, like crowd control, require lots of bodies at once--bodies that shouldn't have to be collected on short notice (though they probably will be).

When volunteers wander into the Gopher Hole and ask if there's any work to be done, they're often told something like "Not right now--come back maybe in an hour (or a couple hours, or tomorrow)." Fifteen minutes later someone may come shouting for a dozen ushers *right now*, but the people who were told they weren't needed won't be there. Indeed, they may not be back at all.

The Gopher Hole may be a lot of things, but it's *always* the place volunteers will come looking for work. It's important to tell a volunteer *something*--"we'll need ushers tomorrow for the banquet"--or even just to ask, "What can you do?" That tells the volunteer that we really

do want help, even if we're not sure right now what kind of help we need.

But generally we *should* know what kind of help we'll need. As soon as a department head knows he or she will need people, that word *must* go to Personnel--and to the Gopher Hole.

Now aren't you glad you sat down?

There are a lot of *shoulds* and *musts* in this letter. Please take them with an appropriate quantity of salt.

But you know how rough it can get when there aren't enough volunteers to do the work. And you also know how tough it can be to get what you need from other departments if you don't push a little.

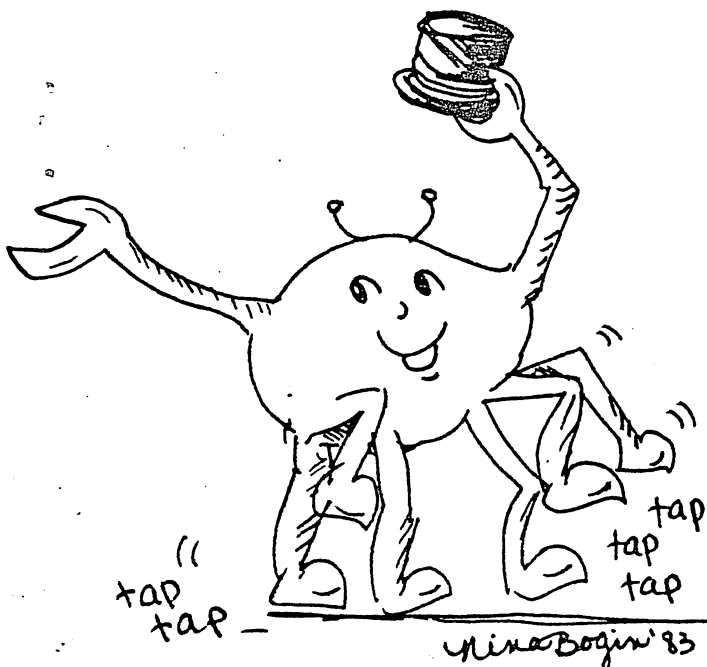
There's no magical way to get all the volunteers you need where you need them when you need them, all properly trained and working happily and efficiently, hi-ho hi-ho. It takes a lot of work, and a lot of thought. I hope these suggestions help.

(And, yes, I'm already signed up to work. Look, I've got to find out whether you take my advice, don't I?)

Cheers--



Frank Hayes



MARK OLSON, 1000 Lexington St. #22, Waltham MA 02154

I suspect that Gary Farber's suggestion that worldcon bidding committees announce during the bid how they will dispose of any surplus they may generate creates more problems than it cures.

To begin with, I doubt that it is very good for a committee, that's still bidding for the convention, to spend too much time worrying about how they'll spend the loot - they have many more immediate problems which should be claiming their attention. Besides, spending the surplus before it hatches will make people more ready to be profligate with funds and may wind up causing a loss.

Secondly, it seems clear that no committee which is in the middle of bidding can have any real grasp of what things will be like a year after running the con - the problem of dispoosing of the surplus comes up something like five years after the new rule would require a binding decision. Minds change. In Noreascon's case, I have not heard that anyone even thought about the problem pre-con (they were a lot more concerned with not going broke).

The question really came to the front for Noreascon about 12 to 18 months after the con. At that point the size of the surplus was reliably known and things had - mostly - been wrapped up. It quickly became apparent that there were as many views on the proper disposal of the surplus as there were committee members. Individual options ranged from "we earned it, it's ours." at one end to a proposal to turn the whole boodle over to an upcoming worldcon on the other extreme.

We debated this for the best part of a year and finally decided: (1) To fund a post-con report. (2) To rigorously segregate the Noreascon Two profit from the Boston in '89 funds. (3) To fund a more-or-less annual "Noreascon Fellow" to bring people to the worldcon who we wanted to see and who otherwise wouldn't make it (Spider and Jeanne Robinson at Connie). (4) To fund other worthy worldcon-related functions. (5) To make it hard to spend the money without substantial unanimity amongst the committee. I doubt that anyone was fully satisfied, but this was accepted by all members.

In some respects, Connie's deficit and our resulting decision to turn the bulk of our remaining money to that end was a relief - it made moot an annoying and continuing debate.

A very rough breakdown of the disposal of our surplus:

\$26k Total surplus
\$7k Interest earned
\$10k Post-con report (committed, but not yet spent)
\$10k Connie bail-out (committed, but not yet spent)
\$8k Operations, donations to worldcons, TAFF, DUFF, Noreascon Fellows, etc.

\$5k Remaining

SETH BREIDBART: Several weeks (months, maybe, by now)(but this year, anyway) ago, I was discussing LACon with Craig Miller, and I expressed my pleasure at their Motto No. 2, "No standing in line (unless you really want to)," because I remembered the huge lines at Westercon Ice Cream Socials, and I explained that, as a pushy New Yorker who practices on rush-hour subways, I would have little difficulty getting to the front of any LA mob to be served. Craig differed with me, explaining that the correct (ie, official) interpretation is "No standing in line (unless you really want to...eat ice cream)." I asked what would preclude interpretations like "...see the Masquerade." He not only said "Nothing," but added that a similar interpretation could apply to "...Register for the Convention." I SMELL A RAT!

Somehow I suspect that you will not have much difficulty arranging not to be scooped on Hugo balloting this year. I do agree, though, that the matter should be handled more "professionally" -- that is, each Worldcon should make, and stick to, a policy. You might want to introduce your amendment even if Aussiecon will do it "right." The amendment will first bind the 1987 Worldcon, and by the time you know that they intend to screw up (by your standards) it will be too late. To avoid problems of definition, I suggest you require that the statistics be available to any convention member.

I think that the reason most fans leave the Masquerade early is its habit of taking too damn long! By the way, being fandom's top expert in Queuing Theory (despite being unable to spell it) by dint of 2 years of graduate level courses and some professional work, I hereby volunteer my efforts to improve your procedures: that is, I am willing to listen to (or preferably read) your detailed procedures and make suggestions. You do, of course, have the right to ignore my advice (or not even to ask for it), but I reserve the right to explain to whomever I desire exactly how the Committee is screwing up, and what they should have done -- after all, why should I be different from the rest of fandom? (That's a rhetorical question, Mike -- you don't get to make any snide comments "unless you really want to.")

LLOYD & YVONNE PENNEY: Re masquerade: Even though I'm biased, I wish I could give everyone who crosses that stage a prize or award of some kind to recognize the effort that goes into many costumes. The hall costume rosettes are also a touch of well-deserved egoboo. Whether it's for fanzines, costumes, or whatever, there should be an award for being best in your niche. The Worldcon masquerade divisions not only make awards for achievement possible, but encourage beginners and intermediates to keep going, not to mention seniors as they go for a Master Costumer button. Drew /Sanders/, you have a difficult task in front of you. Hall costuming has cut down on Masquerade entrants for the past two Worldcons. We'd like to make one suggestion. Please, please, PLEASE start the Masquerade earlier than 8 PM. We were in the lineup at ConStellation, and did not appear until the wee hours of the morning. We're not nightowls like Robert Jansen; our lights go out after 11 PM. We feel that because our performanee suffered, we did not win anything. We walked up there half-dead. We think Masquerade pre-registration is a good idea; however, some people don't register until the con, and they should get the opportunity to register. The at-con registration should be severely limited, however, to, say, 25 entries. Re photo area: Please make sure you've got one person in charge, and that the area's well set-up ahead of time. At ConStellation, they weren't quite ready when the Mayquerade started, and some photographers were -- to put it mildly -- pissed off.

HARRY WARNER JR: The obvious difficulty with all those prizes for the masquerade is their cheapening of the prize concept: if half the entrants win something or other, the egoboo inherent in such a prize is less than a prize list restricted to perhaps ten percent of the entrants. While there is so much concern about the effect on Hugo losers when specific voting totals are announced during a con, I should think more concern should be felt for individuals who don't win something at a masquerade when so many awards are handed out. In some recent fanzine or other, a loc writer made a suggestion that sounds sensible to me: revert to the old masquerade concept by doing away with prizes and formal presentation of entrants. Just encourage people to dress up and mingle with the ~~undressed~~ rest of the throng in the masquerade area for the entire evening. Anyone interested could get long and closeup looks at the costumes that way and some of the masqueraders who are little known in fandom in general could become better acquainted.

((Such a suggestion raises many points of contention which I'll leave to the other readers. My personal argument against an "open mingle masquerade" is that we have just enough photographers in fandom that I would spend those hours looking at purple flashburns on my retina instead of the fans in costume. While the concept of a photo area outside the masquerade goes back years, I've been one of the idea's silent advocates. We would lose this buffer zone if the processional format was removed from the worldcon masquerade.))

...At the risk of poking my inexperienced nose into an area where it shouldn't be until it has accompanied me to some modern cons, I would suspect those boring repetitions of talk and symposium and debate topics in the formal program area needed because of the rapid turnover in worldcon attendance. When Ackerman was editing FAMOUS MONSTERS, I believe he rehashed features on the same celebrated horror movies every third or fourth year, because within that span of time his readership would have changed so much that the material would be new to most readers. I've noticed similar practices by the large circulation photography magazines, which reveal all over again how to get started in color printing, or a comparison of zoom lenses vs. fixed lenses in resolving power two or three times each decade. I have no idea what the worldcon attendance turnover may be, but I suspect that not more than fifteen or twenty percent consists of individuals who attend most or all worldcons. The remainder must differ radically from year to year because of changes in location for the worldcon and emergence of new congoers and other factors. So the standard program topics will be novel and usual for most of the worldcon audience.

BRIAN EARL BROWN: You can't win with Masquerades as near as I can tell, in terms of running them properly. They always seem to run too long, most people are too far away to see well and photographers never have enough room clear for shots. What's a poor concom to do? Prejudging the Masquerade, I think, is the first thing to do. The whole program shouldn't run much over two hours, which I think is a reasonable length of time to hold people's attention. We've had the same problems with art auctions, which started to run on and on, and solved that by imposing requirements that would limit the number of pieces sent to auction. The same should be done for the Masquerade with prejudgings going on throughout the convention, open to the public, with photo opportunities, etc., so that on the night of the final showing only the best costumes will be allowed to make a presentation. Video broadcast both on the hotel cable system and into rooms fitted with large-screen TV should be considered de rigeur. This would draw away large numbers of mildly interested fans who would otherwise crowd the presentation hall and make it possible for those that actually do come to get

good seats close to the stage.

JENNIE A ROLLER: Re Masquerade: Yes, they are long, but I really enjoy them even though some costumes are "Big, Fat, Hairy Deal" compared to "WOW! YIPEE! WA-HOO!" Maybe there should be a limited number of entrants like the Art Show. Everybody getting some kind of award does not (in my eyes) lessen the recognition. It seems that there should be no formal presentation of awards, that is what is BORING. No-way can it be easy to judge what costume is "best." There is just no "better" when comparing Smurf Hunters, Godzilla, and Mercury Sun Rise. They do not equate. All are excellent.

I fully agree with Robert Jansen about the unreliability of scheduling appearances of various authors at Baltimore. Nuf said. Except for one observation: I believe a book not signed by Isaac Asimov is more difficult to find than one signed by him.

FRANZ ZRILICH: I noticed your implied attack on the practice of giving everyone at Masquerades an award of sorts. Personally, I tend to favor that practice. The Grand Prize, of course, is the big ticket with costume freaks, but they can be helped along the way with tangible encouragements. I liken the situation to the movie business. Out of a hundred or so flicks ground out each year, it isn't true that only one succeeds and the rest fail. Some are BO gross-grabbers like ET. Others have high investment-to-return ratios like AMERICAN GRAFITTI. Others get Oscars. Too many get obscure film festival awards. However, enough of them make money to keep the industry going. So it should be with Masquerades. If enough people are interested in a category to support an award in it (and this includes literary as well as costumes, too, Mike) then that category should have an award. Not only do a lot of awards give people encouragement to try for the Big One, but they provide diversity -- diversity that might lead to innovation.

((Your comments are almost persuasive enough to revive my idea that the top Masquerade honor at the Worldcon -- which I suppose would be Master category Best of Show -- actually be a Hugo, and that there be a rocket presented to the winner.))

Soaking of diversity and innovation, I would like to make a few comments on programming:

(1) I just read THE CURVE OF BINDING ENERGY and think a con panel with Freeman Dyson, John McPhee and Theodore B. Taylor would be a good idea. Subjects they can talk about include: are we safer now from home-made or small group nuclear bombs than we were ten years ago? And can they suggest spaceships/starships that can make space travel cheap, fast, and be buildable in this century? Dyson and Taylor were behind the defunct Orion spaceship-to-the-outer-planets idea. Taylor even suggested a starship buildable with today's technology.

(2) How about deliberately outrageous panels? "Why and How The United States Should Destroy the Soviet Union," with Jerry Pournelle, a General Curtiss LeMay type, a couple retired weapons engineers, a G. Gordon Liddy-type, etc. A live on-stage demonstration with TV closed-circuit monitors of an endoscope on a human subject. (Care to volunteer, Mike?) "The Don Rickels - Harlan Ellison Faceoff." (No comment is necessary.) Send some Gor books to Gloria Steinem and invite her to appear on a panel to discuss "Why Some Science Fiction Should Be Censored." "Inside the Fourth Reich: Nazis and Nazi Ideology in SF from Doc Savage and the Lensmen to Norman Spinrad and George Lucas," with Spinrad, a Lucasfilm person (Kurtz?) and a proper mix of leftists and rightists. "How To Rob Fort Knox: Ideas for Writers," include some mystery, action-adventure and technical writers.

((ZRILICH continued)) All panelists at all conventions should be required to exchange papers and letters through the mail prior to attending the convention. And they should meet for an hour or two prior to the panel to discuss what they will discuss. This will avoid boredom among the audience. (Spontaneity can be faked, Mike. I do it a lot in class.)

Ah, uh, one problem that not only panelists might have, but fen, too, is maneuvering in LA's criminal environment. I think the Con Committee should draw up a list of areas (another map, to be put in the PRs and the Program Book) in which there are crime problems. I speak from experience. I live a few blocks from SC (University of Southern California) in the South-Central area. Statistically the crime rate here is substantially worse than in the big cities up North (street gangs with car clubs, arsenals, and overt regalia just wouldn't be tolerated in Cleveland or Detroit), yet neither Watts nor East Los Angeles begin to approach the physical deterioration of The Bronx or Hough. Consequently, an out-of-towner can get himself/herself in a lot of trouble. ((Attendees at L.A.Con II who are anywhere near USC will have more problems than you think -- like being 25 miles out of their way, for one. Nobody in the immediate vicinity of L.A.Con II runs any more risk of criminal whatever than the average visitor to Disneyland -- for obvious reasons. Your suggestion is rather condescending. Why should L.A.Con create such a map, when nobody urged the Boston committee to produce such a map, even though allegedly dangerous neighborhoods existed within easy walking distance? --I say allegedly, since after walking through those neighborhoods, I felt safer than when I walked around the corner from the Hyatt Regency in Phoenix, located in the heart of a derelict zone.))

I'd like to own a Hugo, too. Can some plastic replicas be made and sold by some Hucksters?

Badge holders should be designed so that regardless what happens, the label with my name, number, etc., can never, ever fall out, come out, shake out, etc. I suggest if it's not too late that the holder be a solid plate of plastic with a bulldog clip. The label can be self-adhering and stuck onto the roughened surface the ornate frame circumscribes.

Finally, the Hugo Awards ceremony. Why not have a live orchestra play John Williams music? The stage people (MC, category MC, etc.) can wear some snaffy fascist-like STAR WARS costumes, and there can even be a few dozen searchlights to form a Speerian "Cathedral of Light." In fact, why not hold the event out of doors if the weather is fine? It seldom rains in Anaheim, anyways, and the Convention Center can be set up just in case of a wind or rain problem. ((Edited for space are Franz' suggested stage design diagram, and some of the description.)) As you can see, the fen will be in blocks about 60 feet wide and 30 deep. At both ends of the main stage will be large Eternal Flames of Fandom. Similar flames will flank the T ramp as it joins the Main Stage. Behind the 150' wide Main Stage will be an appropriate banner at least 70' tall. Originally I thought of a gray banner with a silver mailed fist holding two or three lightning bolts, but decided that was a tad militaristic. Then I thought of the LACon II mascot, but decided some people might have an aversion to rats. (We have one in our student housing. The University tells us to "Live with it. It lives with you, too.") So my final decision was that in order to finance the stage we should sell advertising. How about a big sign pushing Hostess Cupcakes, or Domino's Pizza, "The Official Junk Food of the L.A.Con II"?

Anyways, it will be real nifty to have tension built up by the MC in announcing

the category, the category MC the winner, a long drum roll followed by a STAR WARS fanfare, and the slow ascent of the winner up the ramp. Our first awareness of the passage of the person will be the Space Cadets (mounted on pedestals a foot or two off the ground) coming to attention with the passage of the winner, and then the head, the upper torso, and finally the entire body appearing, the crowd stomping and cheering with no restraint as the orchestra chugs out an appropriate tune. Makes ya wish we didn't have to live in a democracy, don't it? Betcher Argentina ain't as bad a place as them thar lib-er-alls put it, do ya', Mike?

LLOYD & YVONNE PENNEY: Re: programming. What is new in programming? No matter how original your idea may be, someone will pipe up and say "It's been done before!" Others sit back and complain about the "dull" programming, but won't offer alternatives. They won't attend the programming anyway! The most popular programs at a Worldcon, even for the hard-core literature fan, are media-oriented...

Re letter from Robert Jansen: The con suite was a little out of the ordinary, but yes, beverage and food services should have been around the clock, like most other con suites at conventions. It possibly should not only have been provided by ARA, but also served by ARA staff. Re adverts for Dune movie: You must admit, in spite of the commercialism, the Worldcon is the best place (from the film makers' POV) to advertise such a movie. We, too, were bothered by constant film re-skeds. When it comes to the dealers' room, I speak from experience, having run the dealer's room for three Toronto conventions, and a fourth coming up. Talk to the dealers you'd like to see at the con, not the huckster chief (HC). The HC can only provide the facilities and the included amenities that go with each table, notify the dealers about the con, and, in the case of a Worldcon, throw open the tables to whoever wants to buy them. If comic dealers or book sellers buy the majority of the tables, them's the breaks. The HC can't make other dealers come; he can't force more variety into the hucksters' room. He simply has to hope for the best. Remember, the HC is an interested shopper, too. He'd like to see the maximum variety of hucksters, too.

BRIAN EARL BROWN: I'm amazed to hear of the steadily increasing number of tracks of programming at every worldcon. It reaches the point where there are people complaining because they can't attend nearly half the program items they want to because so many conflict. Worse, I would think, is trying to get people to fill all these worldcon program items. I was, and still am, amazed by the rule-of-thumb that one-tenth of the worldcon will need to be working the worldcon! How does one begin to consider staffing. This is completely out of hand. Are there 500 people in fandom willing to throw away their chance at a good time just so other people can have a good time? I really think there ought to be ways to reduce the number of people needed to run a worldcon, and one way to do that, I think, would be to reduce the number of tracks of programming. I don't think the worldcon should be expected to provide 24-hour-a-day entertainment.

((Considering the desertion rate from the ConStellation staff later in the convention -- if I have properly interpreted Johnny Lee's comments -- we may have just surpassed that number of fans who are willing to give up their weekend in the interest of producing the con. Perhaps past worldcon organizers will cast a vote one way or another on the necessity of worldcon staffing levels I will assert that for a couple of hundred fans, anyway, working the worldcon is their "fun" -- if you can somehow define fun as ego reinforcement, and a temporary mission in life.))

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