

don't send me feeelthy peetures because this is a CONVENTIONAL FANZINE

Hello. Here I am, just back from the Nebula Awards banquet, which was, against all my expectations, quite enjoyable. I got to talk to many pros, and my conversation with two of them really sticks out.

Kathleen Sky, a young writer from California, wrote a novel called "Vulcan" which made the B. Dalton best-seller lists, and made it possible for her to ask for, and get, sizable amounts of money for her upcoming works. The novel dealt with Spock's sex life (from her description), and netted her (by her account) literally hundreds of letters from outraged "Trekkies." I heard her complain about these letters.

And well she should. I print my negative comments, but if the writer is crude and insulting, I will exercise my option to throw said letter into the handy green trash bag in my office.

The other writer I got to talk to was John Varley (who is really Herb Boehm). He had just received his Nebula for his novella, "The Persistence of Vision," and if you haven't read it, do go out and buy *The Year's Best Science Fiction of the Year 1979*, from DAW books (it's edited by Don Wollheim). He was cradling the award in the crook of his arm, and every so often would take the sleeve of his jacket and gently polish it. I congratulated him on the award, and told him how much I had loved it, and that many people were already calling it a Hugo winner. And he told me the stunning truth that few people had written him to tell him their opinions on the story, and he had read few reviews on it. He went on to say that he loved the story dearly, that while writing it he cried and laughed.

(When I talked to Varley in Phoenix, he said that very few fans ever bothered to write him to tell him that he was an enjoyable writer—I promptly wrote a loc to THE VOICE OF THE LOBSTER telling all the people who moaned about how they could never meet pros at a con, that they should write the people they admire. So much for my fantasies about being an arbiter of fan taste.)

There's a moral in that somewhere, and I don't want to be the one to point it out. Varley, after many brilliant stories, finally has an award that he richly deserves. Until now, he has been vastly underpaid for his work, a condition which forced him to do vast amounts of cutting on TITAN when it appeared in ANALOG. Now, perhaps, he will start getting paid Kathleen Sky-like sums.

And when TITAN finally appears, I'll finally write that letter to Varley that I should've written back in January of 1975. It could be that I, and the SFWA, are the only ones who can appreciate his genius, but if you were moved by his work, do write. At least you know he isn't so inundated with nasty letters, that he'll ignore your letter.

Oh yes, this may be old news by the time this zine comes out, but here are the results of the Nebula Awards:

For short story the winner is: Edward Bryant for "Stone," which appeared in F&SF, Feb. 1978.

For novelette the winner is: "A Glow of Candles, A Unicorn's Eye," by Charlie Grant, which appeared in the anthology *Graven Images* edited by Thomas Nelson.

For novella the winner is: John Varley for "Persistence of Vision," which originally appeared in F&SF, March 1978. See tirade, above.

For novel the winner was: *Dreamsnake*, Vonda N. McIntyre. Paperback of this is due in June, from Dell books, presumably with much hype, all or most of it deserved. Oh yeah, if PBS is listening, she wants it to be a mini-series on your network.

The new officers of the SFWA are: Jack Williamson, President; Bob Vardeman, Vice-President; Dave Bishoff, Secretary; & Jack L. Chalker, Treasurer. David Gerrold won for Western Regional Director. And, yes, I'm very happy that Jack won!

Now that I've changed type balls, so you can tell this is a another subject...

Those of you with eyestrain may notice some problems with this zine. After recovering from the costs of mailing the last issue of CONVENTIONAL FANZINE, I decided to experiment with ways of reducing it somewhat. After ruling out publishing less material, and not being able to use onion skin, as I like my blacks very black (I'm talking about printing, you fugghead!) I decided to switch to 9 point type, with 10 point leading. I use this type on my apazines, and I've gotten few complaints on it, so I'll try it.

After all, you read the Iguanacoon pocket program, didn't you?

Also, please forgive my laxness on getting issues out. I spent a whole month printing FANCYCLOPEDIA II, and I barely managed to get an issue out. On weekends, I went to Lunacon, or Balticon, or the Nebula Banquet, so a lot of issues got handed out, but not mailed. However, unless you are a subscriber or contributor (two exclusive groups, I assure you) you are getting this issue for free, and should not complain.

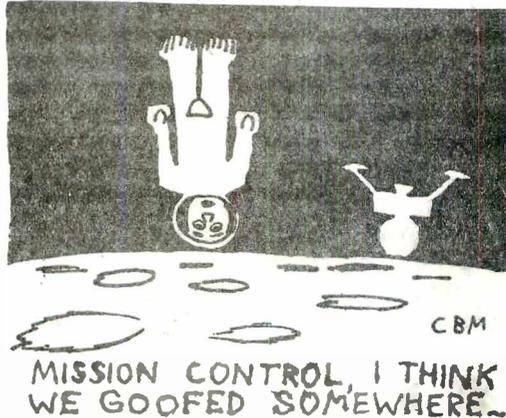
Already, the first flush of fannish enthusiasm has worn off, and I am debating several moves to try to make this zine more of what I hoped it would be.

For example, I send this issue to every group running a con, with the expectation that they would jump at the chance to have one of their flyers reprinted in a 300-copy fanzine. Most groups don't even bother to send one copy of their flyer so that you can have more to go on than the date, location, and an address to write to for more information. Reaching 300 fans interested in cons for only 15 cents strikes this former con chairfan as a good idea & a real bargain, and I wonder why more cons don't take advantage of it.

Both BRIDE OF PARACON & the Darkover con have paid the meager sum of \$5 each to get their con flyers bound in & have 200 copies brought to cons they didn't have representatives at. (The ARTKANE folks found my prices so low that they paid me to print all of their necessary paper work.) I expect to be at BRIDE OF PARACON, KUBLA KHAN, DISCLAVE, ARTKANE, UNICON, MIDWESCON, SEACON, and NORTHAMERICON. I expect to give out extra flyers at all these cons except SEACON, which I can be persuaded to bring over a few. So send me your flyers, and include \$5 if you want me to print 500 copies for binding in the zine & distribution at cons—it's a bargain.

And the rest of you, I am still searching for artwork, as well as articles and con-reports. I am toying with the idea of publishing (in hardback) an anthology of articles on con-running, and, yes, I know George Scithers already did it. I think it needs updateing. Please let me know your ideas on this matter.

And so on with the show (this is it!)...



MISSION CONTROL, I THINK
WE GOOFED SOMEWHERE..

A GUIDE TO THE AUCTIONS

by Jack L. Chalker

Back in 1974 I published a booklet called *Everyfan's Guide to the Auctions*, which went through SAPS and FAPA and was later given to just about every con committee that wanted one. The trouble is, con committees change very rapidly and conventions proliferate every year. It is obviously time to redo this for a wider audience, but also I hope that this will be the first installment in what will be a series of articles, by myself and others, on running a convention. It is hoped that, once these articles see print here, we can collect them into a guide to putting on conventions.

Let's set the scene: A letter comes from a west coast convention asking if I will do their auctions for them. Since I had few other plans for the con, I agreed. The con was to last 4 days and was held in a 2-story motel. After checking the auction schedule I went on my way, stopping off at the con suite the night before the first auction at the invitation of the committee in order to look over some of the art and other items to go up. There was no catalog, but I was assured that each item was well marked.

The next day's auction was scheduled for mid-afternoon in an otherwise unused function room at 3 PM. I closed down my dealer's table about 2:40 and went over to help with set-up. There was no set-up. There wasn't a committeemember in sight. Not one. I finally found the Vice Chairman who informed me coldly that auctions weren't his department and I'm busy and so long. Some searching and asking finally led me to the correct committee member who I immediately asked, "Where is the auction material?" His response was to hand me the trunk key to his car. In other words, I was to unload something like a dozen large boxes from the parking lot, sort them and auction them off after carrying them the length of the parking lot and up a flight of stairs! I managed to draft a couple of Baltimore-Washington fans out west with me and we got it up there with no thanks or help from the committee—about a dozen large unmarked cartons. I next sent down for the art from the art show which had been stacked in the con suite and found (A) a medieval madrigal society was practicing in the con suite, and (B) the art was gone, nobody knew where. The Chairman was finally located, told the art was gone, and promptly panicked and ran off to parts unknown for the next half hour. In the meantime a small audience had gathered upstairs and was impatiently awaiting the auction. No one was located who could give me any idea what the boxes contained and we opened the first box and started to sort it.

It was then that we discovered that there was no cashier or any other concom official. I sent out word again, only to be told that the con treasurer had locked all cash away and then gone to dinner in town.

Well, we started to auction on an exact-change basis, then finally got some cash when a committeemember who was in charge of the huckster room advanced us some of his receipts. With all this the hapless and long-suffering audience was in a really rotten mood (who could blame them?) and, worse, *they* knew what they wanted and told me—but I had no way of telling where in the dozen cartons the stuff was and there was no guide to tell me, either. Even when I hit on something they wanted I had no way of finding more of the same. The whole auction was a farce, made even moreso by the fact that the entire staff came from 3,000 miles away and even the acting cashier came from over 400 miles away. The art was later found in a committee room upstairs where an overeager committeewoman had taken it to catalog it (!) and had been called away and forgot to tell anybody.

The aforementioned huckster room chairman saw as he delivered the change that things were going poorly and the audience was angry. His reaction was to ignore our complaints, run downstairs, find a New York fan and complain, "Chalker's terrible! I can't understand how he got such a reputation! Will you take over?" The New Yorker refused; the con man returned as I'd struck a stack of vintage fanzines the audience was drooling over, then ran back down to the New Yorker and said, "It's all right—they're warming to him now."

The New Yorker was supposed to sell off the entire art show (all of it, not just the bidded items) the next day. They'd asked no one else, and after four hours he was dead and his voice gave completely out. I finally did the last twenty items myself out of pity for the man although I wasn't supposed to be doing the art show.

I might conclude this tale by saying that subsequent editions of the auction were even more mishandled. At one time they arbitrarily cancelled an auction and didn't tell anybody including the bidders, then rescheduled it without telling auctioneer or anybody else so nobody showed up.

Naturally, in follow-up reports from this committee I was single-handedly blamed for all failures. Despite all this, the general auction alone pulled in over \$1000.

The scene is a fortunately unrepeatable classic. Most committees do *something* wrong, but this was the only time I know of where a committee did *everything* wrong. It was as a result of this that I wrote *Everyfan's Guide to the Auctions* but it didn't help. Subsequent cons proved that folks like that committee don't read manuals. For the rest of you, who commit errors out of ignorance rather than outright incompetence, let's go down the auctions and see what's what.

WHY HAVE AUCTIONS?

The auction was originally created as a much-needed supplement to convention income. For some small regional conventions it's still essential to breaking even. However, even if your convention doesn't need the money the auction generates it's excellent practice to have one for several reasons.

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This is Volume 1, number 2 (whole number 3) of CONVENTIONAL FANZINE edited, published, printed, and partially written by Eva Chalker Whitley, 4704 Warner Drive, Manchester, Maryland 21102 USA. Contents © 1979 by Eva C. Whitley. All rights revert to contributors upon publication. Copies are available for 25 cents from me in person, 50 cents by mail, or \$2 for 4 issues; also printed letters of comment, artwork, articles on convention-running (see above), con report (less than 1 page preferred), or editor's whim. To be distributed during the latter part of May 1979. Next issue out in time for UNICON, July 20-22. This issue is for Arthur & Adrienne.

(1) It's the only way in most cases that SF fans can obtain original art, manuscripts, etc. Remember, too, that the majority of attendees at most conventions are from the local area; this may be their only shot at such things even if you go to a lot of cons with auctions.

(2) They provide a ready outlet where material can be gotten into the hands of people who really want it and will enjoy it instead of it rotting in somebody's attic or warehouse or being sold only to a few wealthy private collectors.

(3) It's a source of new talent exposure, particularly the art show. Although the fanzine is the first line for an amateur artist the auction is the ultimate test in the marketplace. Professionals also like exposing their work at auction, as it's a true test of their artistic rather than purely editorial/commercial worth.

(4) Public relations, in that the donors find their old stuff gets them plugs and gratitude before a responsive and appreciative audience.

(5) It's entertainment, and a challenge. Out maneuvering the other bidders, trying to get the best of the auctioneer, trying to walk out of an art show, for example, with material worth, you hope (if you did it right) many times what you paid for it. There's the more than occasional bargain sold at auction.

A world convention without auctions is unthinkable. Even a small con without an auction lacks punch. They are as essential as any other part of the program, as attested to the fact that they often outdraw the main program in audience numbers.

SETTING UP AN AUCTION

Find someone on your committee to handle the auction, preferably somebody who's done it before but if not, somebody with smarts and good common sense. Draft as many people with past experience in auctions to help you.

Now *publicize your auction in your pre-con publicity!* This lets people know there will be things to buy bring checkbooks and also tells artists and donors of other material that you're serious and are a good place in this competitive con schedule to send stuff to.

Now you have to acquire material. Send letters to everybody you think might have something to auction telling them in polite but played up terms why they should send it to you. The trick is to tell the buyers there'll be something to buy and the sellers that those buyers will be in *your* audience.

If you're having a general *and* an art auction, you have to offer to potential donors the same percentage (usually 85%) for each. If holding a general, I'd offer a bit more (90%) because they'll get less exposure in an art show. Less than 80% is counter-productive.

If you're having both a general and an art show auction, try and use the same personnel for both. This will simplify accounting and all other procedures.

Be certain in your promotion to spotlight all positive aspects (free marketplace, the fans want it, past auctions brought in a lot, etc., etc.). Don't lie, but put every positive aspect you have in a strong light. Remember, you are competing with a hundred or more other cons, some well established, for the material, and if your overall quality isn't good one year the buyers won't return the next.

If at all possible, promise (and deliver) that the work will be displayed prior to auction if possible, that all material arriving before a certain cut-off will be cataloged, and that the con's cut goes to pay needed con expenses, etc.

CHOOSING THE AUCTION

Auctions are both the most ego-inflating and ego-deflating mechanisms created by the mind of man. The donor (supplier of the item to be auctioned) is taking a risk at all times, not only gambling on a bigger reward but also gambling fragile ego that somebody will pay more than even you think it's worth. Since artists are by far the largest percentage of "donors" in my sense of that word, let's address their situation first.

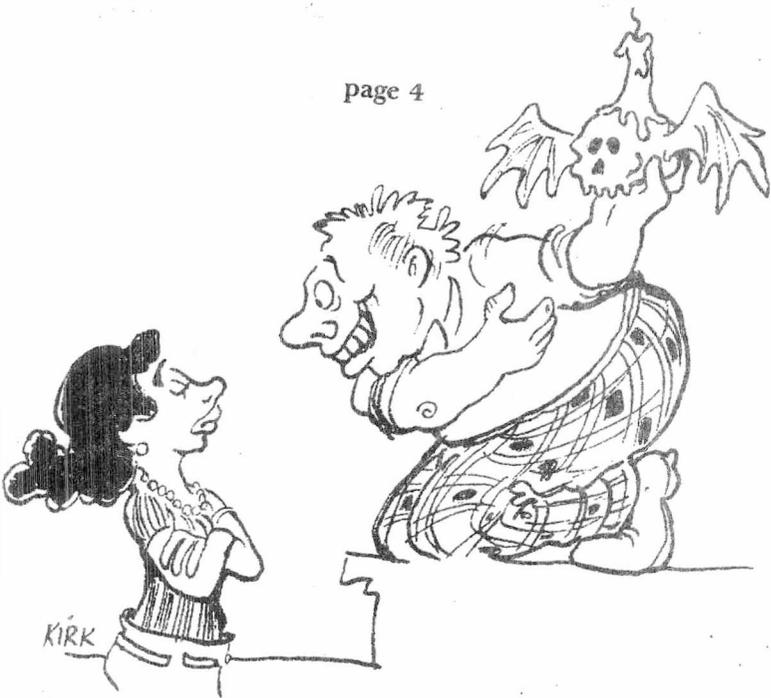
The obvious first question is whether you want to enter your work in an auction at all. If you have a clearly defined idea of what a particular work of yours is worth and what you absolutely require for finances and/or ego, then don't put it in an auction. Put a pricetag on it and sell it. Also, if you are thinking in astronomical sums, don't go to the SF marketplace at all. The supply of millionaires in SF is very thin and they usually spend less than the poor folks. The average minor piece (black and white illustration, etc.) is \$20-\$30, the average major piece usually \$200 or less. The greatest any work has ever been sold in an SF auction was \$1470 for a Kelly Freas painting. The second greatest was \$1370 for a Robert Crane astronomical. I sold both of them.

An auction is a gamble; understand and be willing to take that risk from the start or don't start. Remember, though, your audience, too—they are the world's greatest appreciators of fantasy and SF art. They buy it because they love your particular piece and want to own it terribly. I've seen friendships break up, minor fights break out, and one marriage get rocky (he refused to advance her the extra money to keep bidding, the cad) because of auctions so these people are the best audience and will provide the best homes for your work. There is no greater tribute to your art, and no better ego-balm, than to watch several people all in love with one of your works in spirited bidding over it. But you still want the best possible price. How to get both?

First of all, send your art to the places that promote their art shows and auctions first. The worldcon, of course, but also others who have built solid reputations over the years so you know the ones with money will be there. Both the Freas and Crane mentioned above were not sold at a worldcon—the record there is \$1130 for a Pini—but at regional cons in Nashville and Boston, respectively.

If you're interested primarily in exposure and the widest possible audience, though, you might do well to go to a con where atten-





dance is high and the art show not so hot. It'll make your work stand out. Even if you get less than you would at, say, Boskone, you'll be exposed to lots of new people who might not have the money this time around but will become part of your following later when they do have money. And in a worldcon you're almost drowned in a sea of the best artists around; at a small con you'll get the attention.

But if top dollar is all-important, check the cons who promote and have good track records.

O.K., so now you've decided to bring your work to a con, either at a general auction or an art show. How's yur nerves? How's your ego? How much of a gambler are you?

Remember, as I said earlier, the auction's a gamble. You might well get less than you think the piece is worth if the public doesn't agree with you. On the other hand, you might have vastly underestimated the work—and that's ego and wallet-uplifting. Which brings me to what you, the provider of the work to be sold, can do to help.

First, *identify it plainly*. Many art shows require the artist or agent to fill out the auction record sheet. Make certain that your artist name and the title of the work are clear—type or block print. Give as much information as possible to the auctioneer—is it an original or print? What medium? Are reproduction rights included or not? Remember, the only thing the auctioneer has to go on is your writing on that bid sheet and your legibility.

Second, *make the minimum bid a starting place and not the end*. People are at auctions to get the works as cheaply as possible. They have a finite amount of money to spend. If they fall in love with your work they might still pass it by if the minimum is close to their maximum. But get them into an auction and you'll find that sometimes they'll be in the back hocking their grandmother.

Minimum bid setting is an art in itself—and the ultimate gamble. Many artists tend to put on their art a minimum bid that's actually the price they'd ask if it were a gallery. Remember your competition, the limitations on your buyer's finances, etc. If your minimum is the price you'd want in a gallery anyway then don't sell the damn painting at auction at all. Put a price tag on it and sell it.

An auction is the last totally free marketplace, where the value the buyer places on an item is the only thing it's worth. Most artists with huge minimum bids suffer from ego fear; they are afraid that their work really isn't as good as they'd like to think, so they jack up the price to avoid it going for a pittance. And when it doesn't sell at their high minimum they feel justified.

Of course, your work could easily sell at less than it's valued by you—but that's subjective. It will always sell at the true value set by the marketplace.

I have seen \$50 and \$100 minimums die horrible deaths, while art starting at \$20 and \$35 was bid up to \$200, \$300, even \$800. The Crane I mentioned earlier started fairly low and went to \$1370; the Pini that went for \$1130 started at \$25!

If the minimum on the Pini had been, say, \$200, it might well have not received one bid.

An auction, remember, requires three people—the auctioneer and at least two bidders. Just one bidder and you have a sale and have wasted everybody's time; no bidders and everybody loses. We have to generate those two bidders someplace. The more bidders in at the start the higher the piece will ultimately go.

Newcomers to the auctions had better be prepared for some initial ego-blows, too. People buy names first—but how did some of those artists get to be names and have followings? Freas and DiFate and the like, of course, have professional credentials—but Crane didn't as far as that audience was concerned, nor did Pini.

If you're unknown, expect to start low. An excellent example is Mark Rogers, who for quite some time was selling stunning paintings complete in frames for an average \$35 and \$40. He became very discouraged and at one point considered giving up art, but he didn't and he kept putting these pieces into auction after auction. Over a couple of years he acquired a following right out of those buyers, slowly, then it broke. Now it's rare that a Rogers doesn't get into three figures and it'll keep building. If you're talented, patient enough, persistent enough, and have a strong ego you can actually make it on the art shows alone—but it takes time. Don't expect them to go \$300 from the start when they never heard of you before no matter how good you are. Even Finlay and Bok sold for a few bucks at the start—and I remember well when you could buy Freas preliminary cover paintings for \$10. Now try a couple of hundred...

Most important, make certain that the auctioneer and bidders can make a contest out of it—otherwise, even though it might be worth more than your price and might even have been bid up to that or higher, they'll wait for the 30 other pieces and see if there's something else coming up they like almost as much. But get some competitive bidding and you've got it made.

Remember that 85% of \$100 is \$85 while 85% of no sale is \$0.00.

Sell it or auction it—but play fair with your buyers. If you are not willing to test your wares in the free market then you're slowing the pace, boring the audience, and are definitely in the wrong market.

If it's really as good as you think and you've got a good audience and auctioneer it'll go that high—or higher.

A few practical tips: get your percentage agreement *in writing* from the auction committee before sending anything; pack it right if you're not bringing it personally. And get an agreement *in writing* on the payment schedule—you should ideally be paid by the end of the con; if not, then no more than 30 days should elapse. If the con won't promise you this in writing, pick another con.

A word for general auction people donating non-art items like zap guns, old books, fanzine duplicates, etc. The same advice goes for you as for the artists in picking a con and getting your agreements in advance. And, remember, if you are not willing to price your items low in minimum bids and take the risk of a high run-up, then don't send them to the auction. Buy a huckster table instead.

If you're going to put stuff in an auction or art show, please don't just show up with it. Let the committee know.

Artists, in particular, have been known to not reply to art show inquiries at all leading to the assumption that they're not coming, then show up at the door of the con with 150 pieces. Now, be reasonable. Those art show hangings cost money. The layout cost a lot of time. There is only limited space.

I have known those self-same artists to raise a shit-fit when they are told they can't display it all, and also to scream when they wind up being displayed in a rotten spot with poor lighting and in bad company.

My advice to art show directors and artists of this inclination is the same: remember it's a buyer's market in art right now. More art is being turned out than can possibly be sold to the people.

If an artist shows up like that, try and accomodate him if you can and as best you can. He might not have known he was coming until the last minute and the people deserve to see at least his best.

But if that artistsit gives you any shit about placement, lighting, or the inability to hang it all, then throw the bum out and let him sell it in the hallways.

REMEMBER IT'S A TWO-WAY STREET. Art show and auction personnel are not paid and devote long hours, days, weeks, months, years, to these things. Try and cause them as few extra problems as you can.

WHAT THE AUCTION STAFF SHOULD DO

(1) Art shows. Every art show should have bid sheets attached to each piece with easily removable and non-damaging tape. This sheet should allow room for the artist's name, artist's title, medium, pub rights info., and whether it's original or print. Make the artist do it if you must, but, if so, look over the sheets to see that they are 100% legible, block printed or typed. Do not use any kind of tape that is likely to stick to the work so well that it takes some of the art with it when the bid sheet is removed. Never attach a bid sheet to the front of the work.

Additionally, as each work of art is checked in it should be cataloged by number or alphabetically by artist's name. The number, if used, should be on both bid sheet and catalog. Your catalog is your ledger—use it to find the work when the auctioneer reads it and then write the name of the successful buyer and the price paid for it in the blank.

Do not expect people to pay for the work immediately. Some want to buy lots of stuff and write one check. Work out a receipt system—have a runner give the buyer a receipt coded with the number or title of the work immediately after sale, or, if you are keeping your ledger properly, give the successful bidder the bid sheet!

A few general rules...***PERSONNEL:** you will need 2 auctioneers even for a 60-minute auction (hell, sometimes we have to go to the john, too). If the auction is likely to run over 150 items, use 3 auctioneers. Do not use more than 3 no matter what; over that gets messy and confusing. You will also need a *cashier*, a minimum of 1 more *runner* than you have auctioneers, and a *records keeper*. These people should be recruited in advance and briefed exactly on what they are to do.

***BREAKDOWN and SET-UP:** have the work to be auctioned brought to the place to be auctioned at least 10 minutes ahead of time. Be set up to actually start auctioning on time. Make certain all personnel including cashier with sufficient cash and all paperwork are on hand. Remember to brief the auctioneers as to what information you will need to complete your records and give all payment information so the auctioneer can tell the audience. Don't leave your auctioneers there alone with an audience, a mike, and no art or cashier or records people.

***PAYMENT POLICIES:** get the name and amount of the transaction immediately after the auctioneer says "sold." It's strongly recommended that you give only receipts at the auction and take payment and deliver art elsewhere—but if you must do it at the auction, make the payment table (cashier) out of the way, preferably in the back of the room or to one side.

***PHYSICAL PLANT:** use at least a small program room. Provide chairs for the audience. Keep aisles clear for runners. Always provided microphones for the auctioneers, preferably two. Always provide something to drink for the auctioneers and preferably for the whole staff. Filch it from the con suite if you have to.

***TIMING:** don't hold auctions in the early morning hours. A lot of the bidders and prospective bidders will sleep through it, and your own staff won't be alert. Highest grosses come from *evening* auctions but your last auction should be in early afternoon. Set it at the hour of checkout on the last day and you'll find it'll work better.

***LIMITS:** have a sign in the art show stating that only bid items will be auctioned so everybody will know. Give them all the rules in advance or you're asking for trouble. When the auction starts, put up the works with the most bids first, then the next greatest number, etc. Why? Because the losers will still have that money to bid on other works and won't be saving it waiting for theirs to come up.

***SPECIAL FAVORS:** keep to a minimum or absolutely rule out requests that items be put up early. If you keep doing those favors you'll soon negate it by having too much like that anyway. Even if you don't have that problem, remember that someone sitting through the auction is just like all those other sufferers and should be treated equally, friend or not.

***PAYMENT—BUYERS:** have cash on hand for change in large amounts. Take checks with proper I.D. and write all the I.D. info on the back of the check. A photo ID or two sources (credit card & driver's license, for example) required. Bad checks are rare but they happen and the what do you do? Take nothing on credit. If possible, and if you can talk them into it, try and get a credit card company to help. Boskonegot at least a thousand more dollars in 1979 by allowing credit cards. Maybe you can't get one—but does one of your local SF dealers have a credit card service?

***PAYMENT—ARTISTS:** if your records are on the ball you should be able to pay every artistsit before the con's over. Use a 2-day postdated check and make sure you deposit everything the next day. If that's just not possible, plan to send checks to all artists/agents by the end of 7 days. If you can't do that, then don't have an art show.



KIRK

(2) General auctions: Most of what I said above goes for mimeos, zap guns, rare books and old fanzines, too. A few differences:

***CATALOG/LEDGER:** you must number the items in this case. You'll have to put donor's name and address on, too, remember. Keep a continous ledger as things come in numbering them in order of appearance. Have the bidder block-print the bid sheet and carefully attach it to each item. In the case of printed matter, nver tape anything—just have the sheet sticking out of the book or fanzine or manuscript or what ever.

***A PUBLIC CATALOG:** if you have a mimeo room, try and run off a copy of your ledger listing all the items and distribute it in advance of your auction if possible or at the door of the auction in any case. Remember, the buyers don't have the art show advantage—they haven't seen this stuff before.

***PRE-DISPLAY:** if you have a secure area, display the better items a day in advance. It'll help promote interest.

***PRE-PUBLICITY:** let everybody know what a general auction is in advance publicity and tell them there'll be one.

***SELECTIVITY:** in case you get too many items of dubious worth, combine them in a lot (paperbacks, for example) to save time and paperwork. If material comes in that is overpriced or ridiculous from a commercial standpoint, don't hesitate to say no. Keep the number of lots to be auctioned at 100 or less if at all possible.

General: Don't put all the good stuff up first. In an art auction, don't put all of an artist's work up one after the other. In the case of a general auction, lead off with your best item but then scatter the rest of the gold through the auction to keep your audience there. They'll often bid on the junk while they're waiting.

SCHEDULING

Always schedule general auctions just before, just after, or between major program items. That keeps or builds your audience and nets the largest number of people. The bigger the better.

Always schedule Art Show bidoffs *opposite* main programming. Otherwise you'll have a huge milling crowd who'll interfere with the buyers. For Art Show auctions you want the serious bidders only. If you have too much stuff for one day use color-tags or something to indicate which day which item is going up.

And, please remember, no matter how well you did in that 10 AM auction you'd have done better at 1 or 2 PM.

AUCTIONEERING

The auctioneer is the key person in the whole process not because he's the most important or does most of the work (he doesn't) but because he's the one the public sees and as such personifies the auction. This may seem unfair, but that's the way it is. Remember a TV show. It took 300 or more people to put it on the air, but the star is the one people remember even though he or she is just doing what they're told and saying what they've been ordered to say. Example: name the writer and director of last week's *All in the Family* or *Mork & Mindy*. Or *60 Minutes*...

Even at cons, the one announcing the masquerade gets all the applause but he's not the one running it. And many an incompetent con chairman has taken his or her bows because a nameless, faceless staff busted their asses to save that chairman's hide.

***Selecting an Auctioneer Team.** Get the two best people you can. Preferably, get the most experience. Never mind whether or not you love the auctioneer—did that person get a lot of money out of the audience or not? If at all possible pair a very experienced auctioneer with a novice who shows promise. In one major auction the newcomer will learn a lot or never be used again. Newcomers usually start by mimicking the old pro's style but usually develop their own after their grosses aren't as large and their confidence builds. When pairing a novice auctioneer with an experienced one, give the novice the easy stuff by big names with lots of bidding interest and let the experienced auctioneer take the lesser material. You'll get more money and build the novice's confidence. Make sure the two people both have outgoing personalities, like to be in front of an audience and are comfortable with an audience, and that they do not automatically put an audience to sleep. Also pick people who project two fairly different personalities; it keeps audience boredom down. Always use 2 auctioneers, never just one. That keeps the pace quick and allows for emergencies. One auctioneer is looking over the next item, maybe selecting it, while the other one is on.

Auctioneers at cons generally work for nothing unless everybody is getting paid. On small cons it's customary to do *something* if the people have given their all for you, but this can be a free membership or a banquet ticket or something equally small. It's the gesture that'll count, not what you do. If you're totally strapped for funds a sincere thanks is valued, too. Auctioneers rarely get it. However, *no auctioneer should ever volunteer in the expectation that he or she will get anything, including thanks.* Blame, yes...

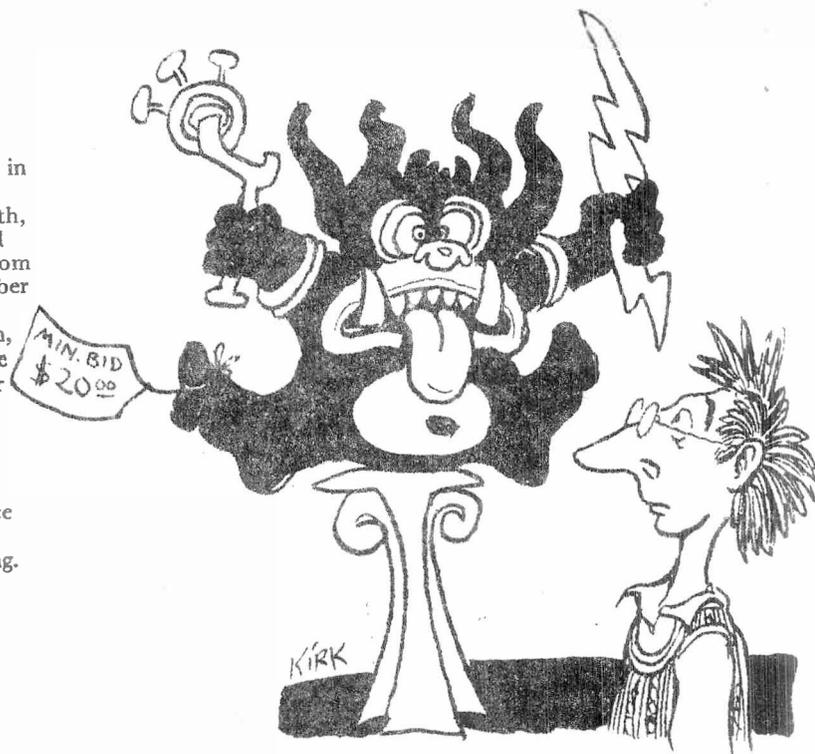
Art show and the auction committees should not expect the auctioneer to run the auction. The auctioneer is a salesman. He or she will show up and give a good show and sell art but don't expect them to also do all the set-up. That's your part of the job.

In the case of a huge auction, such as the Worldcon, appoint one auctioneer and let that person recruit the others. Some of these auctions go for four to six hours on two or three straight days and you better have a team that likes to work together.

Don't use more than 3 auctioneers and have the team set before you even come to the con. Iguanacon got its signals crossed and had 11 auctioneers show up to mass confusion; even when it was pared down, there were 4 of us, not 3, and that was one two-day. With three one rests, one gets ready, and one's on—and it's an easy matter to cover for bathroom trips, etc. With four you have one individual not doing anything except getting in the way.

***AUCTIONEERING TECHNIQUE.** I wish I knew what to tell you. I've sold over \$3,000,000 worth of SF/fantasy art and other stuff and I can't tell you what I'm doing right. It is partially a charisma thing, partly common sense, partly stage sense. Some points in what makes a good auctioneer I think I can itemize for you, though.

- [1] A good, clear speaking voice that enunciates properly. You need not do an auctioneer's cadence, but it helps—and if you want to try such a thing, practice it first or you'll be stepping on your tongue.
- [2] A personality that has some stage presence, is neutral and generally non-abrasive.
- [3] Lots of experience speaking for long periods before groups. This is essential.
- [4] A total lack of self-consciousness in front of groups. If you make a mistake, know how to cover it. The inability to be embarrassed by just about anything. The ability to laugh at your own mistakes. If you can't tell in a funny way the most embarrassing thing that happened to you in front of an audience to friends and associates elsewhere, then you're too self-conscious. Laugh at yourself.
- [5] Egomania. You must love being in front of an audience. Being a grade-A ham helps.
- [6] Improvizational skill. Sooner or later your worst nightmare in front of an audience will come true. You have to be ready to handle it.
- [7] The ability to capture and hold an audience's attention. Keep the pace swift, be ready with the jokes, puns, insults, whatever. No matter how bad it is it'll keep them interested and awake.
- [8] Common sense. Even though the audience is going for all those horrible spot illos keep putting other things in between them. Give the audience what it wants—but make them take a look at everything.
- [9] Showmanship. Spot your bidders. Note their mannerisms. Talk and joke with them.
- [10] Objectivity. Never insult an artist or any piece up for bids. It may be the worst crap in the world but somebody will love it. Hype it just like it was a top-quality oil by Kelly Freas. It may be crap to you, but not to the buyers and particularly not to the donors. Some artists, in particular, are so ego-sensitive that they even take objectivity as a put-down. I've been accused of that myself—yet



not one artist who's accused me of it has ever actually been able to show a specific case. My conscience is clear. I've sold tons of the worst crud I could ever imagine for fantastic prices. Defense rests.

[11] Position. The auctioneer is not for sale. The work to be sold is. A galley proof is as good as an oil painting. Hold the object high and under the light. If you are holding the item keep moving; never stand still unless a runner is holding the item, in which case you should be still and generally to one side while the runner keeps moving. Never show the *next* item to go up while an item is currently up for bids or you will divert attention from it.

[12] Don't close out a bid until everyone who wants to see it has. Tell them to raise their hands and we'll get it to them. On the other hand, tell the runners not to go overboard on showing the piece, either. You have a lot of items to sell.

[13] Remember what you're there for. It's not your show—the stars are the art and/or other items. Keep those "donors" in mind and sell the material.

[14] Fair play. Treat the audience with respect. Kid around with them and play them for all they're worth but don't cheat them. No shilling, no insulting the audience for not buying, that kind of thing. They may not be buying because they just don't have the money.

[15] Pacing. For heaven's sake don't drag out each auction item milking it for the last penny. When interest has flagged close it out. Keep things moving. You should average 45 items per hour minimum. Remember that while you're wasting five minutes trying to get the extra buck you're boring the whole audience that doesn't want that item but does want the next one, maybe.

[16] Energy. Treat the last item as enthusiastically as the first no matter how tired and rotten you feel. And don't tell 'em it's the last item until you sold it or they'll walk out early.

[17] Your time. If you're not willing to devote all the time required for the auction, don't do it. If you have scheduling problems, tell the auction personnel well in advance.

In general, if you think you have the personality for it, try it. Committees—consider the new person carefully. If they're good or growing, invite them back. If not, drop them quickly or you are doing a disservice to the artists and *they* won't be back.

Above all, auctioneers, remember that you are a salesman and you are there to sell items. The show you put on is to break audience boredom; it should never get in the way of selling. I've seen a lot of auctions where the audience was treated to a good show yet there were poor sales at the end and very few of them. I sat through a very entertaining 2-hour auction on Sunday at Heicon—great, funny show. But in 2 hours they sold only 20 items and most of those for the minimum, since the auctioneers weren't auctioneers at all but entertainers. Monday the auction was taken over (at the request of a financially desperate committee) by Tony Lewis, Bruce Pelz, and myself and we managed to move over 300 items in under 4 hours and made over 4400 deutschmarks—putting the con in the black.

Remember, too, to keep up the pace. Keep shoving new things at them and promise more. Keep that audience at all costs.

And, oh yes, an afterthought but important—use a system of *voice bids only*, to prevent mass confusion. Always point to the current high bidder for the same reason, and repeat the current high bid and who made it often.

What Auctioneers Should Expect From the Con Committee: That all the set-up procedure is done if you're from outside the area; if local, try and participate in the set-up as much as possible.

Expect the committee to provide the necessary personnel and be prepared to draft quickly if it's not.

Insist that the committee keep a reasonable supply of liquid refreshment on hand (coffee, beer, or soda, depending on the hour and personal preference).

And, con committees, remember that on long auctions the cashier and records keeper and runners need breaks and such, too.

What the Con Committee Should Expect of the Auctioneer: That you be willing to go over all the material with the auction personnel well in advance of the auction; that you familiarize yourself in advance with the material and the set-up procedures; that all items are clearly marked in ways you understand; that you be there on time and stay there until the end. Arrive at least 10 minutes ahead of the scheduled time.

HOW TO BID AT AUCTION

Auctions are near-hypnotic experiences with a good auctioneer. A good auctioneer can have you buying things you never intended and couldn't afford at the minimum at prices you'd never think of paying.

The first rule of bidding is the same as in poker—never enter the bidding on any item until you have first set a maximum limit of the total amount you can afford to spend. And no matter how tempting the next *Freas* is, or how infuriating that person bidding against you is, once you've bid the limit—quit.

The highest prices are gleaned from people with no self-control. If you haven't the will to quit, don't start. Because a good auctioneer will spot you and milk you dry every time.

Never make a bid you don't mean. Don't run up the price just to see people squirm or for a joke. If you win you will be expected to buy the item and if you can't or won't you have deprived someone of the work and the artist/donor of much-needed money. You're cheating everybody by phony bidding, and, I assure you, we'll make sure that is the reputation you acquire. Even if it's a mistake, it's *your* mistake and you have no right to withdraw a bid after it's been closed.

Make certain you are bidding on the work you think you are. Many artists have similar pieces in the shows and most artists have horrible and usually similar titles. It wouldn't do to buy "Pixie on Mushroom number 1" when you really wanted "Pixie on Mushroom number 3."

If you are seriously interested in a hotly contested piece and, when it's put up, people start shouting bids even before it's announced or there are lots of immediate bids—shut up and let all that frenzy subside. *Then* come in with yours. Don't join the mob or you'll cost yourself more money.

Yell out all bids—don't gesture or point. For one thing, the auctioneer might have been calling for several different amounts. If the auctioneer can't hear you he'll take the first bid at that amount he *can* hear.

If you've got a very limited amount of money and there is more than one person bidding against you it's probably not worth it.

If you have only one person bidding against you, don't jump him or her a dollar at a time. Be strong and bluff. Jump-bid significantly. Scare them out. Be very firm and confident in voice and manner at all times, even when approaching your limit. You might scare the other person into believing you'll go any amount and they'll drop. Any hesitation will encourage the other bidder to stay with you.

Jump bid early—that is, if you're going up in \$1 or \$5 jumps, jump it \$10 or \$25 and see if you can scare the other person out. If they *don't* scare, though, then *never* jump-bid late in a bidding round. If your opponent's got you to \$50 in dollar jumps a jump to \$75 may get it; if he's got you to \$200 in \$5 jumps a jump to \$225 or \$250 probably will have no effect other than costing you money.

Don't bid on the auctioneer performance, or to impress him. He is there to sell and will take advantage of this. A classic example is Harlan Ellison's auctions, where people often bid to astronomical prices and later find out they don't even have that much money and everybody's cheated and the whole auction has to be revised. So you wound up not only impressing him but instead pissing him off. An auctioneer will take your last dime if he can—he's on the side of the artist/donor, not the audience. He'll expect you to pay up.

Pay cash where possible. It's a good self-limiter.

Baltireport

If you don't have cash or check for the full amount don't bid it. You may not piss everybody off but also be blacklisted from future auctions—and the word does get around.

For the best bargains, show up at very early morning auctions. There will be less people there. Also, attend new and small regional cons. Often some nice work shows up there and you're the only bidder. Bargain city. If an item has only one bid on it (and it's not yours) and you want it, show up. The bidder might not. Also bargains can be gleaned by attending small or newer cons which feature known artists as guests.

If a painting or other object has a high minimum you can afford plus a little but can't afford too much more, wait until the last possible moment to enter your bid.

If you're going to bid on a number of items arrange to set up a tab with the records people so you can write one check. But be sure you remember just how much you're spent as you go along! That tab can amount to a lot of money...

Know the rules about what goes up when. Don't show up Saturday for a Sunday item. Don't complain when it doesn't show. If only bidded items are to go up at all, make sure there's a bid or more on it. And unless you have been overbid by two different other people it's probably best not to rebid on the sheet but wait for the item to come to the auction.

If using an art show bid sheet, remember to write your name CLEARLY in the block each time you make a bid.

Crossing out a bid written in on a bid sheet is a no-no that can get you a really nasty reputation.

Special case dept: Boskones are so affluent that only items with 8 bids or more go to auction! If there are more than 4 bids in such a circumstance, it is a good idea to force it to auction by running up to 8 bids. You could be overbid on the sheet at the last minute, but there's always the chance the other bidders might oversleep or be elsewhere and miss the auction.

That's it. Good luck. We'll see you at the auctions.
Editor's note: The author, in addition to being a best-selling novelist, has been one of the worldcon auctioneers every year since 1969 to the present and will be doing it this year in England [in pounds] and in Boston in 1980 as well. He also does a number of regional convention auctions, among them Balticon, Boskone, Lunacon, Disclave, Kubla Khan, Paracon, and many, many more.

Lunareport

LUNACON, LaGuardia Sheraton, March 31-April 2. Ron Goultart GOH. Other attending pros included Fred Pohl, Joan Vinge, Jim Frenkel, Ian Summers, etc.

It took us a while to get to this con, as we usually travel thru Harrisburg. However, as we really did not want to glow in the dark, we went thru New Jersey.

A lot of reliable east coast fen were at the con, plus some surprises like a Detroit bidding party led by Suzi Stefl, Lou Tabakow, Sid Altus, Bill Bowers... In addition to their Detroit bidding party, there was a Chicago in '82 party but no parties for '81 bidders, a serious omission.

Panels were heavily slanted towards pro publishing, not unsurprising in view of the con's location. I attended the panels on agents, which was fairly interesting.

The con also had an "Auction Bloch" which we were pulled out of lunch for. It was badly mishandled, with auctioneer Stu Hellinger auctioning off many members of the Lunarians, leaving Fred Pohl to sit and stew, and making us leave lunch early totally unnecessary. Average prices were \$10-\$25 per half hour, and some came with added inducements, such as Ian Summers came with an autographed copy of "TOMORROW AND BEYOND" and Jack offered to make his successful bidder a creature on the Well World. (Wilma Fisher won...)

I didn't get a chance to attend the art show, but the auction was poorly handled with people paying for their art in between the auctioneers. Experience in running more art shows should help here.

Other than these deficiencies, the con was fairly enjoyable. I can't say the same for the hotel, which [apparently] the con chose on the basis of its sales manager. The restaurant service was the worse I've encountered outside of Texas.

BALTICON, Hunt Valley Inn, April 13-15. Poul Anderson, GOH.

I wouldn't have thought it possible, but there I was: in a con of 2500 people, all crammed into a hotel made for a few hundred. You know what a crowded con is? It's a con that I don't even see the Huckster's room until Sunday afternoon.

I should complain. I barely saw Jack on Friday, as he was on every program item on Friday from the teacher's in-service program at 1 pm to the costume show in the wee small hours.

I was in our room ironing together Jack's wizard costume, so I missed the panel on the "Changing Face of SF Fandom." I understand that only Jack & Avedon Carol bothered to show, and no replacements were found for the others. The pro's panel I saw was about average. I had to leave it early as other dogs were yelping at my dog, Hoy Ping Pong. [Who rarely barks & was bewildered by the whole thing.]

A highlight to the con was a performance by the "Brothers Karamatsov" who combined juggling with comedy to superb results. The show was severely limited, as their truck broke down in Ohio, forcing them to limit their props to what could be carried in Bob Hillis's car.

Many of the con attendees were teenagers who were LOUD drunks. Consequently, only a few hard-core fen attended the Detroit in '82 party sponsored by the Paraconcom. I enjoyed it. As I was busy spending propaganda for Detroit, I was unable to attend the Chicago party, but I'm sure I didn't miss anything. [Most bidders were at Minicon, which had as many uncommitted voters as the 76 Republican convention...]

I missed the GOH speech to take the dog home, and feed the cat, but Anderson's speech was, from all accounts, very well-done. A major part of the con were films and talks by filmmakers such as Mike Jittlov who works for Disney. [Remember the "Mickeymania" film on the Mickey Mouse 50th birthday special? That was his...]

Despite all this, I liked the con, as many fen showed up who usually don't go to other cons. I finally got to meet Laurie Mann, and Mary Frey, and many of my State College friends came down. We got a group together to go to the Imperial Palace, and we enjoyed it. [Not so for the Lunarians, who became ill afterwards...]

I left "Allegro Non Troppo" as I was falling asleep, and attended the "Fazine Orgy" which was actually a pseudonymous effort to write about discovering fandom. I wrote a really funny piece (I was high) but I lost it. There was a lot of booze at the con suite, which led me to doing things like mixing tequila & beer (in the same cup).

This con could be vastly improved if it moved downtown into a larger hotel, but there was enough happening to make it fun.

Parareport

BRIDE OF PARACON, Sheraton Penn State, May 4-6. Ted Sturgeon, pro GOH, Alexis Gilliland, fan GOH.

I discard all pretenses at objectivity here. I founded this con, I promoted this con, and it was held in my favorite place in the whole world.

Remember when cons were 300 people, and you could find a nice small party and talk all night with people and really enjoy yourself. Welcome to State College. Most of the con was in the lobby when we arrived, and while checking in I was talking to at least three people at once.

Friday night's big event was a costume show/party judged by Sally Fink, worldcon prizewinner. I think Ron Robinson, as a "Slaveboy of Gor" won. [I suspect Sally was more concerned about his beautiful body than originality...]

The party floated between the pool [which had the costumes] and the con suite [which had the food & beer]. A repeat expedition out to the Rocky Horror Picture Show [which had been playing in town since Sep. 3, 1977] was not as successful last year [which had a filksing in the aprking lot] but was fun for those who went. The con suite party was the only one on Friday night.

The next day I attended panels ["Sex Roles in SF," for example], the art show, the huckster room, and talked to folks I rarely see. I was scheduled to moderate a panel on writer's wives on Sunday, and we held a "warm-up" on

late Saturday afternoon. That night was the banquet, with speeches by everybody BUT Sturgeon—he gave up his time to Dick Preston who went on and on and on. It was my second time at a head table, and this time I hated it, as it was damned difficult to yawn and not be conspicuous.

Sunday I did my panel with the wives and Jack says it went fairly well, but I don't have clear memories of it. My throat was pretty sore, but I attributed it to my sparsely attended party for Detroit the night before. Oh, and it wasn't all "wives"—one of the panelists was Christopher Morris, husband (ex, actually) of Janet Morris, and a "rock star." He spoke in very laid-back cliches and if I hadn't been moderating the panel, I would have laughed at him.

We decided to leave the con early, as I was running a fever and was very sleepy. So we (Jack, Scott Dennis, a Baltowash fan, and me) packed up the car, said good-bye (this took me longer than everyone else), and starting driving up Pugh street. At Pugh & Hamilton I sat up to look at the window of the apartment I was living at when I got engaged...

And suddenly there was this yellow car directly in front of us! Who hadn't stopped at the stop sign! And we were going to plow into him!

Which we did, twice, and we came to a stop.

The first thing was to check ourselves for injuries. I felt rotten, but that was the cold. Scott had his seat belt on, which prevented him from going through the windshield. (Jack won't use seatbelts, but then he usually has a padded steering wheel in front of him.)

The car that hit us was a South Carolina licensed car, driven by a grad student from another country. He was cited by police. Luckily, no one was hurt.

And it turned out to be a fannish car accident. Members of the Paraconcom were passing by & they took me back to the hotel in their truck. Bob Casto of the concom called our insurance company (or tried to...). Flash went up to take pictures. I attempted to direct things. A guy living near the accident was an insurance agent who told us the best place to get our car fixed turned out to have been at the con.

If there is to be a "Son of Paracon" next year, we'll be back. After all, it make take that long to get it fixed...

This item appeared in the Sun the Saturday of Balticon. I thought it was worth reprinting in this fanzine. Just one thing...where were the end of the world parties?

By Jon Franklin

The Hunt Valley Inn crawled with fancy critters last night as hardcore science fiction fans opened their 13th annual Baltimore science fiction convention (Balticon) with a Friday the 13th costume party.

This is the grandest sort of luck for Roger Bingham, director of marketing for the Marriott establishment. Mr. Bingham isn't into science fiction, but he is into money.

"Every year they totally sell out the hotel," he said, smiling a broad, toothy salesman's smile.

He is especially grateful because the science fiction buffs are irrepressible. When the Chinese invaded Vietnam, for instance, the Boston science fiction convention, then in full swing, broke up into wild, end-of-the-world parties.

This attitude means money for Mr. Bingham. Most groups are leery of meeting at busy times, and convention hotels generally stand empty over the Easter weekend. So the science fiction fans, who are insensitive to such considerations, are a Godsend.

"Besides," the marketing director said, "most of these people are well

He groped for a description. Finally he used his fingers to make quotation marks in the air.

A science fiction convention is a loosely organized up-

I'm concentrating on lesser-publicized cons. A full listing will appear in the next issue of CONVENTIONAL FANZINE.

BETA DRAGONIS. June 15,16,17. Downtown Ramada Inn, Toronto. Pro GOH: Fred Pohl. Fan GOH: Joan Winston ["Making of the Star Trek Conventions."] No room rates given. Registrations \$8 until the con, \$10 at the door, \$3 supporting. Dealer's tables \$30 includes 1 membership. Movies, panel discussions, art show, banquet, costume parade, slide shows, parties, dealers, filksings, movie props (?), etc. Make checks payable to "Dragon Star, Inc." Contact: Sharon Mannell, 196 Allan Street, Oakville, Ontario.

The second of THREE cons held in Toronto this year.

DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL MEETING. July 13,14,15. LaGuardia Sheraton, Queens, NY. GOH: Marion Zimmer Bradley. Other guests include Jacqueline Lichtenberg, Katherine Kurtz, Hal Clement, and others. Dealer's, art show, panels. Contact: Armida Council, POB 355, Brooklyn, NY 11219. SEE FLYER IN THIS ISSUE FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION. Try to eat outside the hotel if you can.

OKON '79. July 21-22, Mayo Hotel (as in hold the?), Tulsa, OK. Pro GOH: Jack Williamson, Fan GOH Margaret Middleton, Bob Aspirin, TM. Other guests included Bob Tucker, Lee Killough, C.J. Cherryh, Par Killough. Large movie program (15 features plus "Star Trek episodes & blooper reels"), panels, "postcard auctions", and "the largest Dealer's Room in the Southwest." \$6.50 until July 1, \$7.50 until July 15, \$4.00 per day at the door. Proceeds go to the Arthritis Foundation (yea! say I). Contact: Box 4229, Tulsa, OK 74104.

SPACECON. July 20-22, Holiday Inn, Wapakoneta, Ohio, next door to the Neil Armstrong Space Museum. GOH: Kelly Freas. A relaxacon with a tour of the museum included. Memberships \$7 until July 1, \$10 after and at the door. Rooms \$18 single, \$22.50 double, \$25 triple. Huckster's tables \$10, limit of 1, cut-off date of July 9. Any additional tables will be assigned in order of requests for extra tables at \$15 each.

Only 80 of the hotel's 100 rooms will be reserved, and Bill Bowers notes that "it is very unlikely that other accommodations in that town, that weekend, will be available." Memberships, table deposits, room reservations (one night's deposit) to: Bill Bowers, POB 3157, Cincinnati, Ohio 45201. Make checks payable to him. [I'm glad SOMEONE is doing this!]

Con listing conclude on page 12

roar in which fans arrive, often wearing the costumes of their favorite SF characters, to listen to speeches, watch movies, tinker with computers, play war games, smother their favorite authors with affection, and party.

Part of the Balticon package was an agreement that Mr. Bingham would keep the ice cream parlor open until 3 a.m.

In recent years, conventions like the Balticon have become very profitable for the convention industry, even when it's not Easter. Almost every weekend of the year there's a big science fiction convention somewhere. And they're no longer minor affairs.

Dave Ellis, the Baltimore Science Fiction Society's minister of information, said the group's 9th Balticon in 1975 drew about 200 people. A year later, 1,200 came.

The numbers have grown until this year, for the first time, people will probably be turned away. Mr. Bingham's establishment just isn't large enough to hold more than about 2,300 fans.

"The hotel was completely booked by the end of January," Mr. Ellis said. "I'd say, offhand, that this convention is probably pouring \$100,000 into the economy."

In fact, he said, next year's convention may be held downtown at the Civic Center. Mr. Ellis doesn't like the idea of turning people away.

Sci fi confab

means cash



2nd ANNUAL DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL MEETING

July 13, 14, 15, 1979

G.O.H: Marion Zimmer Bradley

CONFIRMED GUESTS:

Katherine Kurtz
Hal Clement
Donald Wollheim
George Scithers

Jacqueline Lichtenberg
Linda Bushyager
Sharon Jarvis

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Attendance is limited to 15. You must notify us by April 15th if you wish to attend (SASE, please.)

REGISTRATION RATES: \$10.00 to July 1st; \$15.00 at the door.

AT THE LAGUARDIA SHERATON, opposite LaGuardia Airport, Queens, N.Y.

HOTEL RATES: Single--\$37.00, Double--\$44.00
Make plans for your rooms early!

DEALERS' ROOM: Tables \$20.00 each including memb.
Elyse S. Rosenstein, PO Box 116,
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ART SHOW: Devra Langsam, 627 East 8th Street,
Brooklyn, NY 11218

SASEs, Registrations, checks to: ARMIDA COUNCIL,
PO BOX 355, BROOKLYN, NY 11219

THE MIRAGE PRESS, LTD. ANNOUNCES THE FIRST PUBLICATION IN TWENTY YEARS OF

DICK ENEY'S

FANCYCLOPEDIA II

Back in 1959, Dick Eney published a small mimeographed edition of his dictionary and encyclopedia/guide to science fiction fandom, FANCYCLOPEDIA II. It went rapidly out of print and into legend, and almost no copies have surfaced since, mainly because it's a basic reference, basic tool, and became, very quickly, a part of SF history itself. It is unique. Its reference information is to be found nowhere else.

A few years ago some SF fans who are devotees of fan history bemoaned the absence of FANCYCLOPEDIA II and wished somebody would reprint it.

We heard.

Now, in an edition almost as small as the original, Mirage Press proudly announces the impending publication of an exact facimile edition of Eney's 1959 classic, along with errata sheets, supplements, and appendix listing the entries from Jack Speer's original 1940s edition left out of the new one.

This is a lithographed photocopy of the original, including the illustrations (even the typos) of Eney's original—except we've added an explanatory introduction by Jack L. Chalker, a new title page, and a new cover. And unlike the original clasp binding, ours is thermal bound for permanence.

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play, computer game. Contact: Box 263, College Park, MD 20740. Registration \$5 until June 30, \$7 after. Tables are \$20 until June 15.

Basically, this is an overcrowded University con that gets a lot of help from the WSFAns. I usually commute to this one.

Also that same weekend: Conebulus c/o 619 Stolp Ave., Syracuse, NY. And Deep South Con (covered last issue) c/o 1903 Dante, New Orleans, LA 70118. This is getting ridiculous!

OTHERCON, College Station, Texas. Sept. 28,29,30. Movies, readings, contests, panels, hucksters, auction, parties. GOH: George R.R. Martin. \$8 until Sept. 15, \$10 after and at the door. Contact: Sven Knudson, PO 3933, Aggieland Station, TX 77844. Checks payable to "Othercon."

PGHLANGE, Sept. 28,29,30. GOH: Gene Wolfe. A semi-relaxacon whose main source of entertainment is watching the chair have a nervous breakdown every year. It's lots of fun. Contact: Barb Geraud, 1202 Benebum Trees Building, Pittsburg, PA

WINDYCON, Room rates \$31 single, \$35 double, hotel location not given. Pro GOH: William Tenn aka Philip Klass, fan GOHs: Tony & Suford Lewis. Oct. 5,6,7. Chicago wants to build you a worldcon in 1982. Check out their foundations. Contact: Windycon 6, POB 2572, Chicago, IL

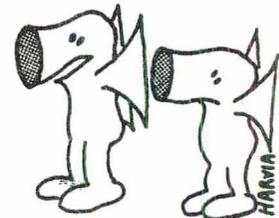
ROC*KON*4. Oct. 26,27,28. Sam Peck Downtown Motor Inn, Little Rock, Ark. Pro GOH: Gordy Dickson, Fan GOH: Dalvan M. Coger, Bob Aspiring, TM. Hucksters tables \$12 1st table, \$10 extra, membership NOT included. Rooms \$18 single, \$22 kingsize bed. Registration \$8 in advance (Oct. 20) \$10 after and at the door, free to SWFA and ASFA members. Contact: POB 9911, Little Rock, Ark. 72219

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more putting the date on. I know better. My editorial is a little dated, but the ESSENTIAL truth is eternal (snicker). Let me know what you think about Jack's auction article. Art credits: All art by Tim Kirk except page 12 is by Chris Mills and bacover is by Teddy Harvia, one of my favorite fan artists. Plates from a Gestetner PM8, printed using a Gestetner 209 offset.

Sorry about the lack of letters in this. I expect the next issue to have conreports on Kubla Khan, Disclave, Arkane, plus full letter columns and con listings. But I am out of art, and unless I am sent some, there won't be any.

Oh, yes, the tornado passed 5 miles south of here so we're okay and my brother Chuck is recovering nicely from fracturing his skull while playing tennis. Insurance adjustors have yet to see the Mercedes... P.S. The Boskone Report lastish was by Tony Parker!



You don't know how much this explains.