



FILE 770:83

FILE 770:83, the "everybody else's Worldcon report" issue, is edited by Mike Glycer at 5828 Woodman Ave. #2, Van Nuys CA 91401. Please step up and receive your copy in return for barbed gossip, self-accusation, but mainly 5 issues for \$5. Others may get it for arranged trades (primarily with other news or clubzines), useful wordage and surprising long-distance phone calls (being able to get through despite my incessant use of the modem is considered surprising.) The number here is (818) 787-5061. Finished December 4, 1989.

File 770, which has never been famous for its proofreading, was plagued last issue by annoying little errors. Reading the finished copy was frustrating because I had spent a great deal of time editing and melding segments of the WorldCon report. This experience has driven home the lesson that heavy editing for style is not a substitute for proofreading. In fact, it actually increases typos, accidental word omissions and improper punctuation. Two of the three best lines in the report were slain for want of a missing noun!

The next issue of File 770 will carry Windycon, Loscon, Mythcon reports, artist David Lee Anderson's Mythcon Goh speech, and the first of several articles by Annemarie van Eyck looking ahead to the 1990 Worldcon in The Hague.

SUE STONE

SAN FRANCISCO BID CHAIR LOST: Sue Stone, 37, a very active member of Sacramento and Northern California fandom for many years who succeeded John McLaughlin as chair of the San Francisco in '93 Worldcon bid earlier this year, died October 27 at a Sacramento hospital after life-support machinery was disconnected. (Source: Andrew Porter quoting Mary Mason) According to Michael Wallis' phone message to File 770, Stone was admitted to the hospital complaining of symptoms that were discovered to have been caused by a aneurism. Beginning Sunday of that week she had suffered leakage in the carotid artery in the back part of the brain. She went into hospital Tuesday assuming she had a severe headache associated with a case flu she'd been trying to shake. She collapsed in the hospital on Tuesday when the artery actually burst. She was in a coma until her death. Stone was married and is survived by her husband and two children. (Some details varying from Wallis' account were received by Andrew Porter from Mary Mason.)

4E TURNS 73: by Forry Ackerman "The Sci-Fi Guy, Forry Ackerman, celebrated his 73rd birthday and 63rd year as a fan at a standing-room-only brunch at a former Brown Derby restaurant in Hollywood on he Sunday before Thanksgiving. (His actual birthday was one day after Thanksgiving.)

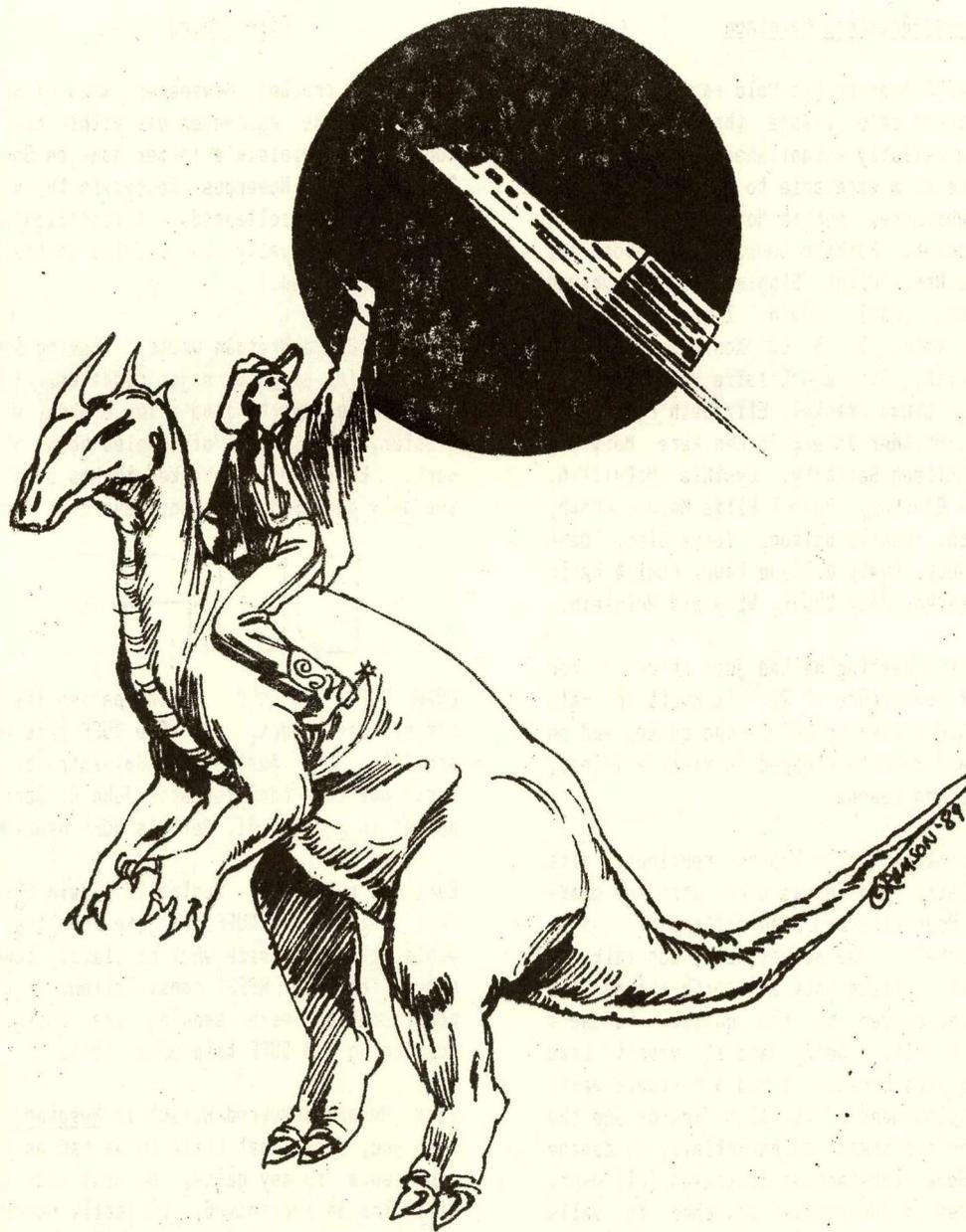
Among the profusion of pros present were Sontow Sucharitkul, Charles "The Misfortune Cookie" Fritch, Kenneth "Hollywood Babylon" Anger, Paul "The Beat Within" Clemens, cult queen Brinke "The Demon Within" Stevens, Sherwood "No Land of Nod" Springer, Hank Stine, Janrae Frank, Don Glut, Ib "Deathrace 2000" Melchior, Bill Warren, William "New Lensman" Ellern, Bob "Amazon Women on the Moon" director Weiss, A.E. Van Vogt, Bob Burns, Ferdinand "The Fearless Vampire Killers" Mayne, Helga "It Happened in Horrorwood" Oswald, Ann "War of the Worlds" Robinson, Jean "The Reader Has Forgotten" Cox, J. Harvey "The Planet Prince" Haggard, Charles Lee Jackson II, and Dr. Donald Reed, creator of the Count Dracula Society and the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films.

"Fans came from as far away as San Diego, Tijuana, Baltimore, New Jersey, and Israel (Jerusalem: Oskar Wahrmann, #1 collector of American sf there since 1950), including Walter J. Daugherty, Ron Borst, Dik Daniels, Gayna Shireen (Miss Science Fiction), Tigrina, Marjii Ellers, Mary Ellen Rabogliatti (Mrs. Daugherty), Paul Turner, Len Moffatt and 5 members of the Ackermmonster's Bat Pack. Introduced was Michael D. Stein, the man who plans to devote the remainder of his life to preserving, protecting, promoting and presenting to posterity the 300,000 genre items collected by Forry since 1926 in 4 museums throughout the world. The 3-hour event was video-cassetted by Forry's assistant Lincoln Bond and fan Dik Daniels as Forry went the rounds of all 88 individuals present, identifying them from memory and describing their relationship to the fantasy field. Party continued afterward at the Ackermansion till 5:30 PM."

In a separate letter substitute Forry writes that his wife, Wendy, continues to experience very serious medical problems: "[Her] kidneys have practically quit functioning and it takes 4-5 hours three times a week to take care of her hemodialysis cleansing process. Off an on she's been hospitalized in Intensive Care. The worst part is her persolity has altered incredibly." This includes occasional hallucinations and an almost daily expression that life is no longer worth living and she would prefer to die.

-----+++++:(((ART CREDITS)))++++:-----

Ruth Thompson: Cover
Peggy Ranson: 3,12,14
Diana Harlan Stein: 5,10
Alexis Gilliland: 17



BAY AREA SHAKE-UP

FANDOM SHAKEN, NOT STIRRED: Or so we might apply James Bond's martini instructions to the October earthquake in Northern California.

Lucy Huntzinger phoned Friday, October 20, to report, "All of Bay Area fandom survived the quake just fine. Some of us had bookshelves turn over and some of us had our pets scared into catatonic bliss, but mostly everybody seems okay. And in fact John Bartelt and I are going ahead and getting married tomorrow. We defy the forces of nature to stop us from doing something we think is right. Most of

the locals so far as I know are going to be at our wedding and whooping it up and celebrating life. It's all okay and I expect to see something about this in the next File 770."

Locus editor Charlie Brown makes his home in the hills above Oakland. Faren Miller, Associate Editor wrote, "The Locus offices and staff all survived the earthquake -- Charlie didn't even lose power up here. So we were lucky, with regard to the Pretty Big One."

At the October 19 LASFS meeting Lee Gold reported a list of Bay Area fans whose safe passage through Tuesday's earthquake had been reliably established by phone. A number of fans in the room were able to make additions. The list read: Tom Whitmore, Debbie Notkin, Alan Winston and Vanessa Schnatmeier, Patrice Cook, Dean Anton and Rowan Sherwood, Dave Nee, Clint Bigglestone, Greyhaven Inc., Diana Paxson, Paul Edwin Zimmer, Carolly Hauksdottir, Janice Gelb, B. & L. Konigsberg, Flieg Hollander, Leslie Fish, Owen and Eclair Mannifen, Don Simpson, Sue Potter, Linda Frankel, Elizabeth Fox, David Bratman, Ken Butler, Heather Jones, Jordan Kare, Mary Kay Jackson, Steven & Colleen Saritsky, Cynthia McQuillin, Jane Robison, Sylvia Stevens, Russ & Wilma Meyer, Kathy Mar, Chuq Von Rospach, Laurie Sefton, Terry Gish, Dave Barry, Victoria Ridenour, Rusty & Diane Dawe, Poul & Karen Anderson, Pieter Thiessen, Joey Shoji, Virginia Heinlein.

Jerry Pournelle told the meeting he had just returned from a Byte magazine staff conference at Ricky's Hyatt in Palo Alto. The meeting had broken up before the quake, and on the way home Jerry and Roberta stopped to visit a friend, in Los Altos, Dr. Stephen Pasone.

Because of a debilitating stroke Pasone routinely sits belted in his easy chair, and he was there when the quake struck. But Jerry Pournelle had been sitting alongside him in Pasone's wheelchair. One moment Jerry was talking, the next moment he was rolling back and forth across the living room to a tune played by the quake. Pasone's refrigerator moved 8 feet. Jerry said it wasn't like Southern California quakes because it had a rhythmic wave. He could see the displacement of the floor inside and the earth outside. At the end there was essentially no damage to Pasone's house. Some freestanding bookcases fell over, and the loose shelves in bookshelves attached to walls slid onto the floor. The house was without lights, but still had water and telephone service.

Jerry and Roberta drove south. Traffic lights were out. Some communities had electrical power, others had lost it, depending on the status of the grid which served them. Jerry noticed that the farther away from San Francisco they drove, the more hysterical the radio news coverage sounded. He also noted with irony one broadcaster who persistently referred to the "disparaging reports" about quake deaths, rather than "disparate reports" -- and used the misnomer during his attempt to interview Mayor Art Agnos, leaving Agnos confused.

The Pournelles were first to call Virginia Heinlein, now living in Carmel. She told them Pixel, the 14-year-old male cat written about in Heinlein's books, was in her lap when the quake struck: Pixel went nuts and hopefully didn't leave too many scars.

Pournelle checked newspaper maps of the quake, and is convinced the epicenter was within hundreds of yards of Robert A. Heinlein's former home on Bonnie Doon road in Santa Cruz. Numerous houses in the vicinity of the old Heinlein place collapsed. (Clint Bigglestone reports one earthquake casualty was killed on the beach near lower Bonnie Doon Road.)

Recently David Bratman wrote, "Having sensibly stayed away from the few spots of major disaster, I haven't even seen any damage apart from a few broken windows and fallen plaster, and a lot of tumbled books both at home and at work. Everyone I've talked to has been startled but o.k.; the only panicked reactions have come from out of town."

DUFF

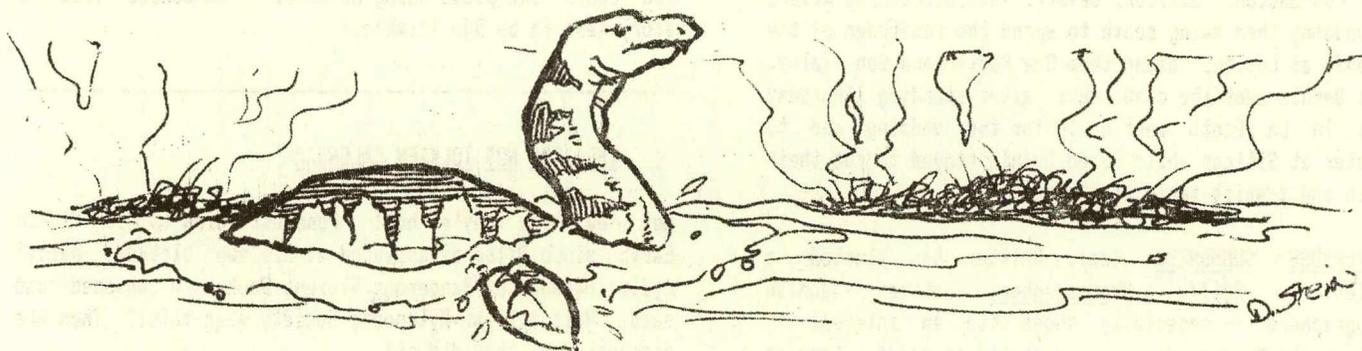
DOWN UNDER FUND: Having passed its latest political-correctness check, the 1990 DUFF race will take place on schedule, say Australian Administrator Terry Dowling and North American Administrator John D. Berry. Their comments appear in Redback #1, Berry's DUFF newzine.

Earlier this year, Australian Irwin Hirsch editorialized that selecting a DUFF delegate to attend the 1990 NASFiC would help legitimize what he plainly considers a malignant growth on the WSFS constitution. Alternatives under consideration were sending the delegate elsewhere, or postponing the DUFF trip until 1991.

Jack Herman answered Hirsch in Sweetness and Light #2. (I warn you, Jack, that title is as bad as File 770, and if my experience is any guide, by next year a beginning editor will find an overlooked, perfectly wonderful title for his newzine that will make you green with envy. At least it won't be Ansible this time.)

Sydney fan Jack Herman said, in part, "DUFF is not purely a fannish thing and relies on the support of all fandom, particularly of Convention fandom, who will be well-represented at San Diego." Also, "I bow to none in my opposition to the inclusion of NASFiC...in the Worldcon constitution... But it will be a major con in 1990 and it should be the central stop in the visit of the DUFF delegate because it will gain s/he the potential to meet the greatest number of North American fans, promote Australian fandom (and Perth in 94) and keep DUFF before the eyes of fandom."

In Redback Terry Dowling agreed with Herman, and added, "The important thing is that fandom is served fairly, that the ambassadorial nature of DUFF be maintained especially in those years when there is no Worldcon held in the US."



Nominations are now open for a fan from Australia or New Zealand. A candidate needs five nominators: three from Australasia and two from North America. Nominators must confirm their status in writing to the Administrators. Candidates must submit a nonrefundable \$10 bond assuring they will make the trip if selected, and a written platform of 100 words or less. The DUFF winner will succeed Terry Dowling as administrator.

Terry Dowling: 11 Everard St., Hunters Hill, NSW 2110, Australia. John D. Berry: 525 19th Ave. East, Seattle WA 98112.

TAFF

TAFF GOES ON HIATUS: Meantime administrators of the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund have discovered the prospect of being able to attend a European Worldcon in 1990 has resulted in a lack of candidates for the Europe-to-North-America leg of the TAFF trip that would ordinarily awarded that year. Robert Lichtman writes, "A random sampling of fans queried while I was in the UK indicated a general preference for attending a Worldcon in Europe over NASFiC in North America as their 'big convention' of the year."

European TAFF Administrators Lillian Edwards and Christina Lake and North American Administrator Lichtman have agreed that under the circumstances there will be no 1990 TAFF race. Instead, nominations will be opened during the summer of 1990 for a candidate to travel from Europe to Chicon V in 1991.

During the interim Lichtman will be fundraising by sale and auction: a listing of the items will be available for a long SASE with 45 cents postage (non-US send two IRCs). The administrators' addresses are: Robert Lichtman, PO Box 30, Glen Ellen CA 95442; Lillian Edwards, 1 Braehead Rd.,

Thorntonhall, Glasgow G74 5AQ U.K.; Christina Lake, 47 Wessex Ave., Horfield, Bristol BS7 0DE U.K.

THE SKELTON CREW: Joni Stopa's plot to bring Skel (Paul Skelton) and Cas from England to the next Midwestcon has been undone by its success: before the fundraising could begin, Alyson Abramowitz made arrangements herself to transport Skel and Cas to the US by cashing in her frequent-flyer mileage! With plenty of thanks to Alyson, Joni is still proceeding to raise money to help ease the expenses of the couple's anticipated 5-week US visit.

Said Joni, "From all I've heard, they are planning to spend five weeks in the States. I am sure that they're juggling household funds frantically to pay for the coming trip. Cas is no doubt planning meals around meat substitutes to keep costs down. I know how all that sort of thing goes. They are probably even thinking of taking out a loan. This is where we come in..."

"Dave Rowe is designing a t-shirt. I will see that it gets printed. We will need articles and artwork donated for a fanzine which I propose to call the Skelton Crew; Dave [Locke], Jackie [Causgrove] and I can handle that. Then we will need auctions, and material to sell at them. Perhaps those of you who are artists or crafts people could donate your works." Contact Joni Stopa at PO Box 177, Wilmot WI 53192.

"TOOTING MY OWN HORN? YA DAMN BET!" Congressional aide Tim Kyger called to make sure we knew he appeared on CNN's "Sonia Weib Show" (sp?) on October 11, debating a member of the Christic Institute about their attempt to legally block the launching of the space shuttle carrying the nuclear-powered Galileo probe. Long-time space activist Kyger often appeared on radio when he lived in San Francisco. He now works in Washington DC for Congressman Dana Rohrabacher.

WEDDING PLANS: Terry Gish wed Dave Berry on Friday, November 24 in the Greek Amphitheater at Kelly Park in San Jose. Although the date coincided with the start of a local convention, Silicon, several fans elected to attend the wedding then swing south to spend the remainder of the weekend at Loscon, among them Sue Potter and Ben Valow. Scott Dennis went the other way: after spending Thursday night in LA Scott went north for the wedding and to huckster at Silicon while Jane Dennis stayed to run their button and t-shirt table at Loscon.

SHUTTERBUGS SUMMONED: Terry Whitter has started a newsletter, Skiffy Photographer, where fannish photographers -- especially those with an interest in shooting the Masquerade -- can workshop in print. Contact Terry at 5563 Sunny Oaks Dr., San Jose CA 95123-1341. Those responsible for masquerade photo areas should ask for a copy of issue 1, which contains the contributors' pet peeves.

CLARION WEST APPLICATIONS SOUGHT: Applications are now being accepted for the 1990 Clarion West Writers Workshop in Seattle. The intensive six-week workshop prepares writers for professional careers in science fiction and fantasy.

The seventh annual workshop will be held from June 17 to July 28 1990 at Seattle Central Community College, in Washington. Writers in residence will be Marta Randall, Pat Murphy, Lewis Shiner, Vonda N. McIntyre, David G. Hartwell and Gene Wolfe.

In workshop sessions students work with the writer in residence to critique students' stories. They meet with each week's writer for private consultations, are given assignments and writing exercises, and are expected to start and complete independent projects during the workshop. Tuition is \$995 until March 1, 1990. For applications and scholarship information write to: Clarion West, Ste. 350, 340 15th Ave. East, Seattle WA 98112. Or call (206) 322-9083.

SF WRITERS JOIN MCC FORUM: Shortly before Armadillocon, the Microelectronics and Computer Technology Corp. (MCC) computer research consortium imported several notable cyberpunk science fiction authors to participate in a workshop as part of a regular seminar of technical discussions. William Gibson, Walter Jon Williams, Lewis Shiner, Pat Cadigan, Bruce Sterling, Tom Maddox and Ellen Datlow conducted a two-hour panel, "View of the Technology Future."

MCC technology analyst Gary Knight came up with the idea. "The writers have insight into people and society so their views and intuitions about how society and technology will interact are of value to us," he said. "We gave the

writers some tours of our labs and ongoing projects. Being writers they had their notebooks out. Something would be said and I'd notice two or three of them scribbling away. You could see plots being hatched." (Condensed from AP story sent in by Bjo Trimble.)

THE 1990 NOT TOLKIEN CALENDAR

Get 'em while they're hot! Funniest thing to hit Middle Earth since Bilbo disappeared at his own birthday party! Lydia Marano of Dangerous Visions Bookstore whooped and said, "Wait til the Mythopoeic Society sees this!" Then she discovered -- they did it!

Art by Pat Wynne, Nancy Lou Patterson, Christine Lowentroun, Not Paula Di Sante, Sarah Beach, Sylvia Hunnewell, Tim Callahan, Bonnie Callahan and Lynn Maudlin.

\$6.50 each (plus 75 cents postage) or 3/\$15.00 (plus \$2.00 postage); overseas airmail postage additional. Order from: The Mythopoeic Society, P.O. Box 6707, Altadena CA 91003.

COAS

ASTOUNDING NEWS blatts the change of address announcement for Judith Hanna and Joseph Nicholas. "The 22 Denbigh Street People's Revolutionary Collective is soon to be no more!" The couple subleased from a previous tenant who came under an eviction notice by the landlord, so with their house of cards tumbling they have reluctantly escaped to "a quiet suburban backwater with no buses thundering past all day and half the night. Judith will have a room or her own and Joseph can be ultra-tidy everywhere else...there's even a patch of garden to play in come next summer, provided we get the weeds cleared...blah drone, cosy domesticity...."

:::::=====++++[CHANGES OF ADDRESS]++++=====:::::

Michael Donahue, 4901 Clair Del Ave. #1104, Long Beach CA 90807

Ross Pavlac, PO Box 816, Evanston IL 60204-0816;
Phone: (312) 264-4583

David Bratman, 1354 Crane St., Menlo Park CA 94025

A. Joseph Ross, 648 Washington St., Brookline MA 02146

Judith Hanna & Joseph Nicholas, 5A Frinton Rd., Stamford Hill, London N15 6NH U.K. (tele. 01-800-4899)

Dan Hoey, 6004 Quebec St., Berwyn Heights MD 20740
Phone: (301) 220-2345

BEST NONFICTION BOOK: (598 ballots)

	<u>1st</u>					<u>2nd</u>				<u>3rd</u>			<u>4th</u>	<u>5th</u>
44	<u>Motion of Light in Water</u>	172	177	179	184	240								
55	<u>First Maitz</u>	161	167	170	190	226	211	223	227	259				
33	<u>New Encyclopedia of SF</u>	116	128	128	147		154	173	176	204	207	239	246	
37	<u>Biographical Dictionary</u>	56	63	64			73	82	83		133	158	163	211 222
24	<u>SF, Fantasy, Horror 1987</u>	34					45				73			130 132 249
	No Award	59	59				63	64			78	82	90	123

BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION: (905 ballots)

	<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>				<u>3rd</u>			<u>4th</u>	<u>5th</u>
209	<u>Who Framed Rogert Rabbit</u>	560								
61	<u>Beetlejuice</u>	72	248	253	290	402				
58	<u>Big</u>	94	207	211	249	317	274	280	342	378
60	<u>Alien Nation</u>	58	104	115			141	158		215 420
	No Award	48	80				104			149 203

BEST PROFESSIONAL EDITOR: (698 ballots)

	<u>1st</u>					<u>2nd</u>				<u>3rd</u>			<u>4th</u>	<u>5th</u>
144	<u>Gardner Dozois</u>	266	267	293	319									
85	<u>Dave Hartwell</u>	131	132	143	163	198	200	226	302					
87	<u>Edward Ferman</u>	81	83	91		157	159	179		248	250	303		
74	<u>Stanley Schmidt</u>	111	111	124	144	162	162	190	243	189	189	231	277	286
59	<u>Charles Ryan</u>	75	75			97	97			136	136		206	211 366
	No Award	34				38				46			74	92

BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST: (745 ballots)

	<u>1st</u>					<u>2nd</u>				<u>3rd</u>			<u>4th</u>	<u>5th</u>
90	<u>Michael Whelan</u>	241	242	260	286	326								
97	<u>Don Maitz</u>	171	172	191	237	320	239	241	282	354				
69	<u>David Cherry</u>	116	118	132	150		178	180	203	235	274	277	344	
56	<u>Bob Eggleton</u>	75	75				101	101			148	150	253	257
43	<u>Thomas Canty</u>	107	107	110			118	118	126		176	176	212	253 254 416
	No Award	35					41				45		57	74

BEST SEMIPROZINE: (712 ballots)

	<u>1st</u>					<u>2nd</u>				<u>3rd</u>			<u>4th</u>	<u>5th</u>
171	<u>Locus</u>	243	248	250	286	344								
126	<u>SF Chronicle</u>	160	170	174	194	269	248	251	271	327				
44	<u>NY Review of SF</u>	124	130	130	179		149	150	165	239	221	224	269	
54	<u>Interzone</u>	100	113	115			144	146	162		182	185	231	292
57	<u>Thrust</u>	42					58	59			112	113	153	354
	No Award	43	44				47				58		73	91

BEST FANZINE: (462 ballots)

55	<u>File 770</u>	94	105	116	124	159								
60	<u>Lan's Lantern</u>	85	96	117	119	155	110	130	134	182				
24	<u>Niekas</u>	89	95	104	108		101	112	117	134	125	131	160	
38	<u>Fosfax</u>	63	64				80	86	90		114	117	140	148 161
24	<u>Other Reales</u>	57					72				95	97		125 131 217
	No Award	74	76	80			80	84			83		103	127

for its small-than-expected number of entrants but I heard it ran on time and the pictures of the winners were pretty. It was thoughtful of the staff to put them on display the following day.

Opening and closing ceremonies had a few slow moments but were well attended. I especially liked the presentation of slides taken during the con. They were well grouped and set to classical music. Social highlights included the Meet the Pros mixer on Thursday with Pat Cadigan handling the mike duties and a Friday night blowout, last ever, goodbye Boxboro Fandom and Louis Wu Birthday Party. It's a shame they had to close by 2 AM, they could have gone on all weekend. This party cost thousands and featured half-a-dozen rooms, many special presentations and a live band. At one time there was a line of over 200 people just waiting to get in!

The Hugo presentation ceremonies started with a little pomp and ceremony in the form of a fan carrying each award followed by all the nominees for that category. I didn't like it at the time, but later decided it was a good way to honor and thank ALL the pros and fans that were nominated. I hope future Worldcons do something similar. George Alec Effinger finally won years after first being nominated in 1973 -- long overdue. Mike Resnick was speechless for the first time in his life after winning on his first nomination. Not surprisingly since he has been writing even longer than George. Fred Pohl did a good job as Master of Ceremonies and his exchange of quips with Isaac Asimov was priceless.

Priscilla Olson and Ben Yalow, with the help of a far-flung staff, did an outstanding job with programming. The pocket program was useful and accurate, I felt the Souvenir Program Book was a little disappointing. However, its cover was beautiful.

The biggest complaints I heard were the hotel clamping down on parties too quickly and too hard. Pros and publishers were not immune. The Bantam Party on Friday was cordoned off by hotel security without even warning the hosts. They found out when several pros phoned the room to say they weren't being allowed off the elevator on that floor. The party was eventually moved down into a larger and cooler room on a non-sleeping-room floor. When you consider that Noreascon Three spent many thousands of dollars in legal fees simply to enforce their letter of intent, perhaps the fact that ANY parties were allowed is a surprise. There was no hospitality suite to speak of, though the mixing area [ConCourse] helped a lot.

I personally got tired of site staff in blue suits telling me what to do.

Overall my feeling is it was a well-run Worldcon prepared

to deal with most worst-case scenarios. They tried to encourage most subsets of fandom to mingle and learn. The staff should be commended for a job well done and given a few well-earned years off before they start worrying about 1998. Since the con committee seems to be fairly far-sighted as well as mobile, perhaps they can work on another venue besides downtown Boston in the interim.



ASIMOV

ISAAC ASIMOV'S SPEECH AT NOREASCON III: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 -- reported by Edward F. Roe

The crowds Isaac Asimov can attract is impressive. This is a credit to him and an indication of how widely he is read. Asimov filled the Marriott ballroom with a crowd of over 1000, and gave some remarks on what it is like to be a science fiction writer. His remarks were spontaneous and amusing. He appeared to be a healthy man in his 70s. He is energetic and speaks in a conversational tone of voice, punctuating his remarks with plenty of anecdotes. He had the aura of being a hard worker, if somewhat overworked. He is quite modest about his achievements and had praise for other members of his genre.

According to Asimov, when people interview him or find out that he is a writer they're always interested in the quantity of his output and Asimov has some wry comments since he is a notably prolific writer. He said that people always manage to ask how many books he's written even before asking if any of them are any good.

When meeting new people Asimov tends to be modest and not dwell on the fact that he is a writer, but some people want

to know what he does and will pursue the subject. One gentleman of his acquaintance has a son who wrote two books on sports. After some inquiries the guy found out that Asimov had written over 300 books. The next question this guy came up with was, "Were any of them on sports?"

In Asimov's early career he was a pulp writer. He stressed that pulp writing had two characteristics: high output in word count, and low pay. Asimov developed the habit of writing a piece once and not rewriting, in order to keep his productivity high. His pulp pieces were commissioned by the word and written to a deadline. He developed a reputation with publishers for reliability and reasonable quality. Asimov coincidentally developed a reputation with his readers for good science, good quality and good storytelling. Modestly, Asimov did not dwell on this point, although he accepted the admiration of two female fans, one on each arm, when he left the hall.

Asimov is somewhat unusual in that he is also a well-regarded mainstream writer and science writer. The job that gave him his start was a biochemistry textbook. Asimov was asked by a colleague to write a biochem textbook and didn't know whether he could do it. He was qualified in the subject matter but didn't know if he could handle the writing. He agonized over the decision and talked to a psychiatrist friend of his. Her advice was to do it: "You never know what you can or cannot do until you do it." After this mental turning-point Asimov launched into mainstream writing and was in demand.

Throughout his career while his scorecard of novels, textbooks, commentaries and other full-length works has climbed into the hundreds, Asimov has come into contact with other writers. Some have envied his productivity and tried to duplicate his prolificity. And some have come to the conclusion that Asimov is not normal but exceptional. Asimov commented that he wishes he could write as well as some of the other sf authors! As a fan of sf I find that some of my favorite are prolific writers. It is good to find an author with a volume of interesting work. When looked at from a literary point of view Asimov doesn't seem brilliant yet it is hard to put one of his novels down. I think this is because he gets the job done. He tells a story and develops his line of conjecture.

Asimov commented that the literary quality of science fiction has improved over the years, a fact he is glad to have witnessed. Given the duration of his career, he should know. He felt more good writers were entering science fiction due to the difficulty of entering professional writing in other fields and due to the increasing "legitimacy" of science fiction. He said that the current crop of sf is the best which has ever been produced. Asimov stressed that he does not insult his readers. He omits connective passages in his books,

leaving them for the reader's mind to fill in.

Asimov has a sense of humor about himself. He is the only writer to have done a commissioned work for the New York Times magazine. When he submitted the story he expected a call for rewriters, which he was unwilling to do. Instead, the Times loved the piece, so Asimov never got the satisfaction of telling off the Times.

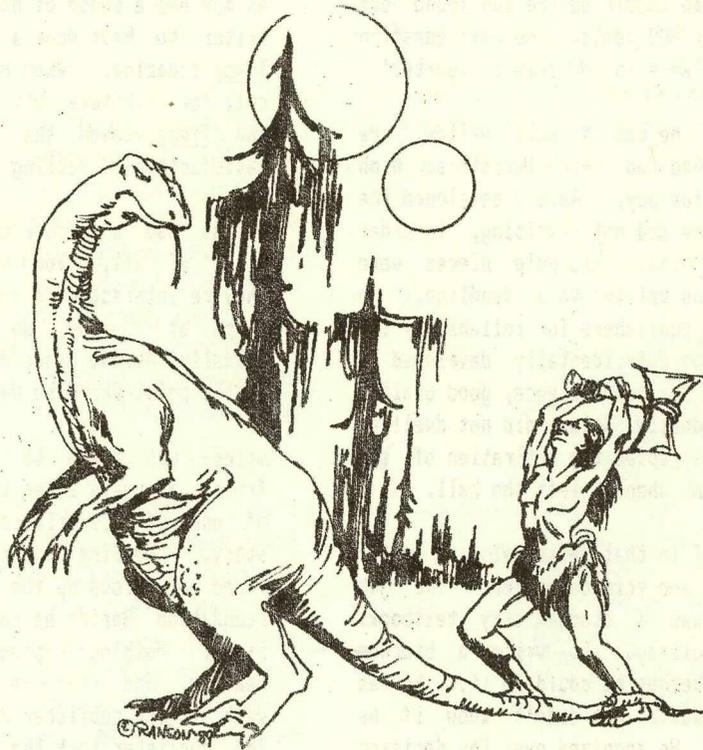
Asimov had a number of things to say about publishers. First of all, "You have to understand they're crass, they're interested in money." At first he had to write for pulps at low pay, so to make a living he was prolific. Actually, Asimov began as a professor, and later progressed to the point where he was making more money by writing.

Asimov was asked to write a sequel to his Foundation Trilogy 30 years after its first publication. In the words of one of his critics, "nothing happens" in an Asimov story. "Nothing happens" means that no one gets killed, raped or blows up the galaxy. When Isaac re-read the Foundation Series he commented, "You know, that guy was right: Nothing happens." Asimov's prose employs dialog heavily, and what the people say is interesting. Asimov went to the publisher and said he couldn't write a sequel. The publisher took the time and explained it very nicely. He said get out of here, go home and write!

When events such as the Voyager Neptune fly-by occur, Asimov is called upon to give press statements. He enjoys doing the statements, but his phone never stops ringing.

Asimov states that only people over 65 years old understand the Great Depression. To him it was the greatest disaster in human history not involving war or plague. It left him with a deep sense of insecurity. His family owned a candy store and he worked 16 hours a day, 7 days a week, except for school. It was impressed on Asimov that this was a normal work week, a habit he maintains to this day. He feels insecure when he is not working. He said, "Mentally I'm still imprisoned in that candy store." Even though he has written many hundreds of books he still feels he has many books yet to write. He said that his dying thought will be, "Only six hundred?"

He looked back on a long career and life with a sense of accomplishment. He projects a sense of self-satisfaction, mixed perhaps with a little bit of resignation. Asimov's writing has brought many people into science fiction and has advanced sf. Asimov is a person to whom fame means less than telling a good story, and perhaps contributing to the advancement of science fiction. I found Asimov's vast lifetime inspirational and instructional. Many of these experiences were gotten by hard work during Asimov's early period. The best summary of the mood of the speech was his own words, "I am proud to be a credit to science fiction."



MIKE RESNICK'S COMPLETE N3 REMARKS

((Many pros took their turn in the spotlight at the Noreascon 3 Sunday brunch telling what science fiction has meant to their lives. Mike and Carol Resnick's first Worldcon was Discon in 1963. Mike's account of the con with its implied comparisons to Worldcons of today was among the most interesting segments -- and I was surprised to hear he'd have said even more if he'd been able to read his notes with the spotlight in his face. Mike Resnick has consented to have his complete text printed in File 770.)

* * *

Our first convention was the 1963 Worldcon in Washington, D.C. -- Discon I -- and I can remember it as if it were yesterday. I was 21, Carol was 20, and six months earlier we hadn't even known that fandom existed.

The total attendance was about 400. Rooms were \$8 a night. The banquet \$3 (and everyone was furious about it).

A Frazetta cover painting sold for \$70, the highest price of the auction, and people doubted it would ever be

equalled.. (I think the same painting sold 20 years later for something like \$16,000.)

Everyone agreed that things were looking up for the field. Some of the better writers could even foresee the day, not far off, when they could make almost \$7,500 a year from their science fiction -- provided that Bob Silverberg would stop selling 30 stories a month.

There were no regional parties, because there were only 3 regional cons in the whole world, and they didn't have to compete for customers.

There were no mail ballots for site selection. You dragged yourself out of bed on Sunday morning, listened as various pros told you which city had better restaurants and various fans told you which city had better bookstores, and then you voted.

The nightly entertainment was provided by future worldcon bidders, each of whom reserved one evening to sponsor a beer blast for the entire convention. The costume ball was a costume ball, complete with a dance band.

There was a special interest group that constituted almost 20% of the membership -- and no, it wasn't the Trekkies. It was the Burroughs Bibliophiles, all of whom wore suits and ties (as did almost everyone else.)

The Hyborean Legion spent most of its meeting debating whether there would ever be enough interest in Robert E. Howard to get at least a couple of the Conan books reprinted in paperback.

Femefans were outnumbered almost 10-to-1, female authors by an even wider margin.

The huckster room sold books and magazines. Period.

Fans who actually read science fiction outnumbered those who didn't.

The convention wound up with a play, written and performed by the pros, just the way summer camp used to end up with a play put on by the counselors.

There was no social schism between fans and pros. Hell, most of the pros had been fans...and an awful lot of the fans were on the road to becoming pros. There was an almost tangible sense of community among the members of the convention.

I was the greenest of neofans, and fully expected to be ignored by everyone, but before I had been there for two hours Doc Smith -- Doc Smith himself! -- bought me a cup of coffee and spent half an hour talking to me.

Sam Moskowitz gave me the first of many condensed courses in the history of science fiction.

Jack Chalker, who was only 19, and I, who at 21 should have known better, both remarked at a party that we planned someday to make a living writing sf -- and I was amazed that not a single person scoffed at the notion, and indeed everyone seemed to encourage it...the very first words of encouragement I had ever heard except from Carol.

Stan Vinson, an old-time Ohio fan whom I had known only through correspondence, bought me a book that he knew I wanted and couldn't afford, and for the next 15 years refused to let me reimburse him.

Bob Tucker taught me my first 50 fannish words.

Randall Garrett invited us into the darkened recesses of a pro party.

The NSF made sure I went home loaded down with half a hundred fanzines.

John Campbell sat me down in a corner and explained what his latest editorial really meant.

Ed Wood sat me down in another corner and explained why good science was far more important than good writing.

Then Fritz Leiber came over and gently explained why I shouldn't necessarily believe everything Ed Wood told me.

The legendary Lou Tabakow hijacked us to the Cincinnati Suite and insisted that we think of it as home.

We even met the Chicago fan group who, unbeknownst to us, had been meeting regularly across the street from our apartment for years.

If there was an unfriendly fan or pro there we never met him.

That was the main impression we carried away from Discon I: the feeling that we had found ourselves among friends we had had all our lives but simply hadn't met until then.

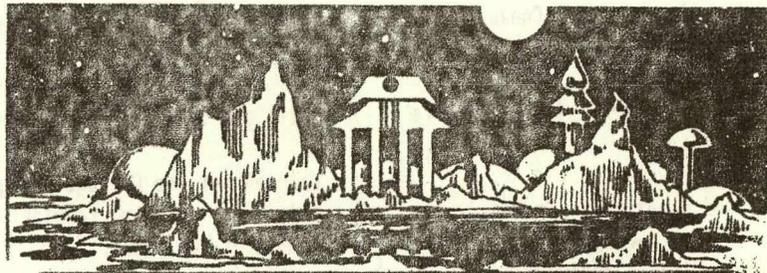
Things have changed over the years. Nowadays when I come to the worldcon it's at least as much for business as for pleasure -- but that wonderful feeling of community remains unchanged.

There is an old saying that you can choose your friends but you can't choose your family. To which I reply: Bunk!

We chose our family 26 years ago and we've been coming back to its annual reunion ever since.

NEW MEDIA ATTENTION FOR WORLDCON: True to its image as a lightning-rod for interests of the Yuppie Generation, USA Today's Life section used the Worldcon as its Cover Story

on Wednesday, August 30. Writer Trish Wells interviewed C.J. Cherryh, Charlie Brown and Patrick Nielsen-Hayden: you can't get any more authoritative than that, can you?



GRIPE SESSION: MEDIA

BANNED IN BOSTON: *by Francis Hamit

I've been a member of Fandom about half as long as I've been a journalist. In fact, it was a desire to do an article on fandom that led me to attend my first science fiction convention ten years ago. The paper I was working for folded about the time of the dead dog party, but the article was done eventually.

Over the last decade I've been to 60 conventions, including 5 Worldcons and a NASFiC. Those I usually go to as Press, not as a fan.

For a number of years I've also attended more mundane events. A good part of my journalism when I lived in Chicago involved reportage on trade shows and conferences. In outward form, the Design Engineering Show, the International Machine Tool Show, or the Consumer Electronics Show are little different from a Worldcon.

This is by way of stating that I know my way around a press room. Like every freelancer, I have worked the other side of the street. I did so at the Worldcon in 1984 and 1986, helping out by escorting less knowledgeable reporters and assisting them in getting the proper story.

The Worldcon in Boston, or at least the committee thereof, was determined to prevent press coverage of the event in any way they could. This was allegedly because of an incident at Boskone some years before. A reporter for some local teenage rag had described the con as a good place to get laid and drink while underage (ah, youth!) The resulting near-riot conditions and subsequent problems with the hotel and police should have been blamed on poor

security, not the press.

Representatives of Noreascon 3 whom I encountered at various cons answered my queries about press passes with the curious assertion that I should buy a membership, citing the above instance as justification, and assuring me that this was the policy at Boskones. If I purchased the membership, then my fee would be refunded when I sent in a copy of my coverage.

Outrageous. Absolutely outrageous!!!

Journalism is a profession. It has a canon of ethics that does not permit a reporter to be paid by the subject of the article for doing the article and getting it published in a publication when that publication has made the assignment and is paying for the article. To do so is the most blatant possible conflict of interest. That same code frowns on being a participant in the event covered, although exceptions are made when that participation enhances one's ability to report the story. Either way, the reporter is working, and is not expected to pay to be able to do the work.

When I made these points (admittedly, in a vociferous and, alas, even intemperate manner -- I was really pissed!), I was told that reporters in the East liked the arrangement because they could claim the membership as an expense and then keep the refund.

Great! You want me to be an embezzler as well!

Requests for the name of the person in charge of Press

Relations were met with either a blank stare of a vague assertion that I should write to the concon's post office box. I was not even given the courtesy of information on the convention hotels, on the grounds I that I was not entitled to know this because I was not a member of the convention.

Well, any reporter knows how to get information, and eventually I got Richard Brandt's telephone number. I had been told that he had been given the task of "handling the press" by the concon. His response was totally professional. He asked only that I send him a letter from my editor at the Los Angeles Daily News verifying the assignments for my associate, Leigh Strother-Vien, and myself. This was done. We made reservations for the Hyatt Cambridge, which was not a convention hotel.

Because of my other job we did not arrive until Friday morning, when we found Brandt, Chris Barkley and the rest of the press staff had not been able to get press badges made ahead of time because the concon had decreed that all press would go through the normal registration process. (That might seem like a reasonable procedure, but it nearly made one television crew miss their deadline. Brandt had to handle the matter personally.) Dissatisfaction and lower morale among the press room staff were the result, since the concon seemed determined to frustrate coverage. There was a panel on the matter that I am told turned into a bitch session. I was elsewhere. I had offered to be on the panel, had been told it was full, and had a commitment to assist Jan Howard funder with the SFWA charity auction.

Many of the local fans seemed to feel that the policy was entirely reasonable, citing (ad infinitum, ad tedium) the unhappy experience of Boskone years before. In addition, some accused reporters of freeloading: signing up for press passes that resulted in no stories.

Well, that happens. In fact it happens all the time. Reporters are not usually editors. (SF semiprozines are an exception to this...but I think the term itself tells you why. Semipro, as in less than...) Reporters cannot guarantee when, why, how or even if a particular piece will run. Those are decisions made by editors. It is the same for television, except that if someone sends out a five-person crew, there have to be compelling reasons not to use the piece -- breaking news of national or international import for instance.

Now I suppose that the folks who run Boskone may do as they please about that. It is their own convention and they have the right to be as bullheaded, ignorant and foolish as they want to be. A Worldcon is a different matter, since it encompasses all of Fandom, is the site of the annual business meeting for SFWA and other pro

associations, and includes the Hugos: the major awards for our literary form. It is truly a global event and receives global attention.

In 1984 the press room at Worldcon handled 155 different media organizations with about 300 representatives. In 1986 Atlanta handled about 125 organizations. The range cut across the entire spectrum of journalism. No one has shown up from Field and Stream yet, but the range is impressive and includes the top news organizations in the world.

At Boston, by their total non-cooperation and hostility, they managed to hold the rampaging hoard to less than 80. The list included the New York Times, Variety, the London Daily Telegraph, Good Morning America, The Economist, ABC Radio, USA Today Television, Publisher's Weekly, PC World, the Boston Herald, the Christian Science Monitor, and my own paper, the Los Angeles Daily News.

One of the objections to press coverage of science fiction convention (one I share, I might add) is the emphasis on the silly and superficial. I call it "Look at all the funny people" journalism, and find it as abhorrant and disgusting as you do. This kind of snide coverage is something we can well do without both as fans and journalists. However, it is all you can expect if you make no effort to educate the press, and yes, manage the coverage.

That is the proper function of a press room; to make the reporter's job easier. God (or Goddess, if you prefer) knows that Richard Brandt tried. Press kits were preaped and credentials asked for and escorts were provided when requested. However, the official hostility to the press probably resulted in some negative images being generated.

When Fred Harris, with the able assistance of Karen Boehler, ran the press room in Los Angeles at the 1984 Worldcon, there were releases generated on every aspect of the events. Fact sheets were provided. (No honest reporter will run a press release verbatim, but we do rely upon them for such essential details as the correct spelling of names, dates, titles and so on.)

Fred and Karen also made sure that plenty of typewriters and telephones were available, that volunteer aides were present to assist reporters in comprehending what they saw. (Time is of the essence for a reporter on deadline. Explanations are welcome, usable quotes more so.)

Fred also made sure that coffee, tea, soft drinks and various kinds of food were also provided. A hungry reporter is an unhappy reporter. Coverage suffers thereby. The room itself was of a generous size, not the closet provided in Boston.

The press room is also supposed to provide the press controlled access to the pros, making appointments for interviews. Some authors are better than others at this, but all realize the absolute importance of giving interviews. It is a symbiotic relationship: they need the publicity, we need the story. Among the authors I have interviewed at or in connection with conventions are Robert Adams, Steve Barnes, Larry Niven, David Brin and C.J. Cherryh. I don't think any of them considered it an ordeal. We had fun. Most reporters are positive people. They want the truth of a matter and will consider all of the information presented. The New York Times piece on the recent Worldcon is a case in point: a model for the kind of coverage we do not want; coverage that occurred despite the paranoid policies of the concom.

"Look at all the funny people" journalism will continue to prevail as long as Fandom is hostile and elitist. You set yourself up for such coverage by not providing the necessary information. The fact that people abuse the press privilege is irrelevant -- Noreascon's policy was designed to throw the baby out with the bathwater. The press are who they say they are. No one issues press cards anymore and no one can ethically guarantee the coverage you want or kill the coverage you don't want. That's part of the cost associated with living in a free society.

HOGUS

THE 1989 HOGU AWARDS: Considering that the Ranquet is virtually always held at a local McDonalds -- which this year looked deceptively like the Burger King a block from the Hynes Auditorium -- there could be no more appropriate Hogu guest than the author of "Why I Left Harry's All-Night Hamburger Stand." Guest of Honor Lawrence Watt-Evans said, "This proves I finally made it. I wasn't sure -- last year I won one of those joke awards...." Giving the importance of literature its proper perspective, Watt-Evans noted that Tolkien's Lord of the Rings has sold 11 million copies, "Which is about one-quarter of the people who watched every episode of My Mother The Car."

Such dignitaries as Julie Evans, Martha Soukup, Brian Burley and Tom Galloway listened to Elst Weinstein explain the Hogu selection procedure. Said Elst, "The voting system has changed over the years." Yes, we used to count them. Somebody shouted, "Don't worry -- I'm from Brooklyn -- I have plenty of postal money orders!"

Too bad, actually: this was a strictly cash operation. I was a bit self-conscious sitting in the Boylston Street Burger King while someone ran through the aisle waving a

dollar bill and shouting, "Dianetics! Dianetics!" With 60 people on hand there were tidal waves on a sea of green making sure a broad spectrum of favorites (or whatever the right antonym is) won. Elst made one small exception to the cash only rule: he accepted an Exxon credit card -- cut in half -- as worth \$5 voting credit in a category where the oil company was nominated.

There was a commotion when Elvis made an appearance at the Hogu: it seems some local college group had picked the same hamburger joint at the same time and was conducting some meeting of their own when Elvis passed by to tell them hello. It was promptly dubbed the Best Hoax Appearance at a Hogu Ranquet. ...And the other winners are:

BEST BLOCK VOTE: Hogu Committee Blockheads
 THE DEROACH AWARD: John Guidry III
 THE ARISTOTLE AWARD: Leona Helmsley
 BEST NEW FEUD: Hugo Committee vs. Hamilton & Beese
 BEST TRAUMATIC PRESENTATION: Exxon Productions' "Oil Quiet on the Western Front"
 BEST RELIGIOUS HOAX: Jim Bakker
 BEST HOAX AWARDS: The HUGO Awards
 BEST TYPEFACE: Joker type face
 BEST PROFESSIONAL HOAX: Dianetics
 BEST FAN HOAX: Nolacon II
 FANDOM'S BIGGEST TURKEY: Robert Sacks
 WORST FANZINE TITLE: Freeze-Dried Wombats Dun Et My Settee
 BEST DEAD WRITER: John Norman
 BEST HOAX CONVENTION: Nolacon II
 BEST PSEUDONYM: Nefadamus
 DEVO AWARD: Mary Mason
 BEST HAS-BEEN: Ronald Reagan
 BANGER AWARD: Andy Porter
 CUISINART AWARD: "Star Trek V"
 MOST DESIRED GAFIATION: Robert Sacks
 FREE FOR ALL: "Chains Required -- Whips Optional"
 SPECIAL BAGELBASH AWARD: Drivers Against Mad Mothers
 BEST NEW DISEASE: St. Walden's Dance (Rushdie Rush)
 MOST BIZARRE HALL COSTUME: Elvis Alive!
 MIXED MEDIA: Ellison's Geo Commercials
 CLOSEST ENCOUNTER OF THE FOURTH KIND: Rob Lowe and Young Thing
 SPACE GEEK OF THE YEAR AWARD: Dan Quayle
 BEST JESSICAN RABBIT LOOK-ALIKE: Kees Van Toorn
 BEST HOAX BID: DC in '92
 STANDARD BLACKHOLE (vote for 4): Jim Bakker, Justin Winston, John Guidry III, Vanna White
 INVISIBILITY AWARD: NOLAcon Committee
 INCOMPETENCE AWARD: Ed Koch
 PUBLISHERS AWARD: Bridge Publications
 GREED AWARD: DC Sheraton
 HALF-ASSED CON OFFICIOUSNESS: Noreascon 3
 BROWN HDLE AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONALISM: Pete Rose



HUNTING ARMADILLO

ARMADILLOCON 11: (October 13-15, 1989) by Mike Glycer

I love Texas conventions anyway, but attending Armadillocon as fan GoH also permitted me to enjoy the extraordinary hospitality of Karen Meschke and Fred Duarte. They collected me from the airport at the unconscionable hour of midnight, then still made it a point to show me some of the city of Austin, treat me to a wee-hours supper at Katz' Deli and check me into the hotel. Then they drove off to run more middle-of-the-night errands in preparation for the con.

Austin is an appealing contradiction. On the one hand the city is capital of a huge and wealthy state; on the other hand it's a small western city on the arid hillsides of a mesquite-dotted alluvial plain. The Texas capitol glows like its open all night. Glass office buildings hover like terrestrial space stations over Main-Street-storefronts and old houses. Pointing to new developments it's clear only the recent oil bust stifled the same impulse that caused LA to choke itself on stucco-mountain apartment buildings and claustrophobic mini-malls, but for the moment Austin retains a subliminal feeling that there is breathing room.

Across Austin from the airport in a Wyndham Hotel Armadillocon gradually collected members throughout Friday afternoon. The registration staff included Judith Ward who sat behind the table handing out red "pro" ribbons, artfully folding them so the "NOLACON 1988" was invisible. "We got a good price on them," she said as she deftly

stapled one to my badge. Asked about my newfound status as a "pro", Judith replied, "I don't say 'pro what'." Which was right in line with her appointment as "Official Rude" for Armadillocon. Judith told each pro, "I'm the official rude person -- if anyone's rude to you, come see me because they're doing my job."

I sat near registration to talk to Judith and see people as they arrived. That's how I met Casey Hamilton. She came over to greet Judith and catch her breath. Casey had finished verbally climbing all over Lew Shiner, the writer Guest of Honor. Casey also claimed a job description: "I always give the Guests of Honor shit. That's how they know they're human." In fact, somebody complimented Judith who took off her hat and said, "My head's swelling up." Casey replied, "Then it's time for me to go to work."

Casey, Pat Cadigan and I launched the Armadillocon program on "My First Convention." Pat introduced Casey and herself, saying, "Hi -- we're Casey Hamilton and Pat Cadigan. We laugh too much, we drink too much, we talk too loud, we wear too much makeup, and you want to meet us." There were two first-timers in an audience otherwise congested with convention veterans. It seems that genuine neofans don't know enough to find such a program in the first hour of the convention, and that people who have been going to cons for years are attend orientation panels in order to relive their original thrill at discovering cons.

Bill Parker will never lose the thrill of attending cons as

along as he continues living out his attitude that he likes to help -- literally -- anywhere he's needed. I discovered the Houston techie crew leader checking badges at the door to the Dealer's Room -- because that's where he was needed. Parker was at the con between engagements as an effects tech on the Rolling Stones world tour. In a forthcoming issue I'll publish a sidebar story about STAFF, the Houston tech group that is making a valuable contribution to conrunning.

Friday evening toastmaster Connie Willis presided over Opening Ceremonies. Lew Shiner must have been bragging to her a bit about his successes as last year's toastmaster because Connie devoted over 20 minutes to razzing him for being "Lew Shiner, the funniest man in science fiction," quoting a virtual roll-call of his friends and colleagues which mostly sounded like, "Lew? Funny?"

Fannish adaptations of TV game shows were a prominent part of Armadillocon's programming. On Friday night Ken Keller hosted a science-fictional "Name That Tune" replete with buzzers and bells for the contestants. On Saturday night Dennis Virzi hosted "Win, Lose or Draw," a game where players convey a phrase or proper name by drawing clues. Virzi's clue, "Television: two words" elicited a correct guess without the player actually drawing a single stroke -- "Star Trek". More typical of the game was the attempt to communicate the title "Silver Metal Lover" by drawing a vampire targeted by a silver bullet. They didn't get "Michael Valentine Smith" at all.

Armadillocon's top-rated game show drew 150 fans on Saturday afternoon to see Pat Cadigan host "Family Feud". The feuding fans were Scott Cupp, Ben Yalow and myself; if I was envied at all as fan GoH, it was for having a spot on one of these teams. The feuding pros were Connie Willis (TM), Pat Lo Brutto (editor GoH) and Lew Shiner (writer GoH). Answers for the game, in which players attempt to predict the most popular responses to various questions in a science-fictional opinion survey, had come from the SMDF BBS and were quite eccentric. Most bizarre were the responses to, "Name a science fiction writer whose last name is a 'C' word." Cherryh and Clarke were good guesses, but how William Gibson made the list was a mystery, and Connie Willis was still angry an hour later to discover that while her guess, John Crowley, drew a blank, Alastair Crowley made the list! While neither team was especially successful at predicting such random answers, just the same our fan team won by over 300 points. Near the end when Lew Shiner boldly exclaimed, "We'll pull it out yet!" I answered, "Before you can pull it out you have to stick it in!" (When you're up against the funniest man in science fiction, you have to take your shots where you find them...)

The con was a great source of linos. Pat Cadigan says she

likes fantasy fans "But I wish they'd use the unicorn box." Retelling her early fannish exploits, Judith Ward said, "I found you were supposed to buy a new trashcan to mix blog in." Running a con suite she also learned, "Gamers can clear a \$100 table in five minutes." Casey Hamilton added, "But you can smell them coming." One evening by the pool a bunch of us were drinking Coronas, talking about kids and Christmas gifts and how the more complex the toy the more likely it is that within three days the kid will get bored and start playing with the box it came in. Dennis Virzi said, "I know that happened to me after the baby came." Pat Mueller promptly demonstrated alongside Dennis' head how to make a bullwhip-cracking noise using a handy diaper.

Dennis Virzi and Pat Mueller initiated me to the southwestern mysteries of Chuy's. The road to the restaurant passed the Zachary Scott Theater, where "Crimes of the Heart" was on stage. Pat asked, "Is that with Angina Dickinson?"

Chuy's is a gaudy Tex-Mex diner decorated in early Demolition Derby with hubcaps, tailfins and auto lights. With their baby, Frances, in Pat's arms I waited to see if the same trick that got people seated so quickly at Legal Seafood would jet us to the front of the line. Not really, but it did get us a perch in the bar where patrons paid rapt attention to a TV replaying highlights of a rare Texas victory over Oklahoma. For dinner I enjoyed a plate of fajitas and listened to Dennis pretend to be frenzied with interest about a female diner he could see in the next room who allegedly was wearing black fishnet stockings and not much else.

On Sunday Howard Waldrop's reading drew a standing-room only crowd. The reading was promised to be the best program of the weekend and a silver-haired man sitting at the end of my row (probably Chad Oliver) told the woman beside him, "I wouldn't give up a hamburger for just anybody!"

When Waldrop entered the room there was as much hooting and applauding as when the Aggie cadets saw the first bugs in Aliens. Howard blew the whole audience away with his absurdly funny parody of a slightly-alternate-timeline modernist France during the years of the Dreyfus affair, packed with twisted allusions to Proust, Picasso and Jarre, plus the art and habits of late-19th-century Paris. At times the wordplay was so incredibly right and funny we would have given the man a standing ovation except that it would have interrupted him reading!

When the convention closed up Sunday afternoon it was time to shanghai any conveyance with wheels and peel out for the County Line. No, we weren't leaving town with the sheriff breathing down our neck. The County Line is a barbecue place in the foothills outside of Austin that serves the

best barbecued beef ribs, brisket and sausage I've had in years. Judith and Lynn Ward gave me a ride and we were among the first 20 or so to be seated. (Scuttlebutt was somebody had called in "reservations for 40 or 50.") You can order the food country style -- which means each type of meat comes on a single dish to be passed around, and with 20 fans that was timed about right so a dish completed its a circuit when you were ready for seconds. Or fifths.

A lot of diners returned to the Wyndham for a Dead Dog party. Waiting in the lobby for the con suite to reopen we passed around pages from a long printout Kurt Baty had downloaded from a BBS, full of hilarious gaffes contained in manuscripts actually submitted to New York science fiction publishers. There were rampant chuckles in the foyer, prompting Greg Ketter to ask wht was happening. Debbie Hodgkinson told him, "We're suckers for the written word...the poorly written word." When the suite finally opened next year's guest of honor, Pat Cadigan, toasted the party, "Fasten your seat belts, boys, it's going to be a bumpy ride."

How prophetic. Monday morning I was up before dawn with the airline crews to catch a cab to the airport. The cabbie's attire made me wonder if Zonker Harris has started selling a line of menswear, and the upholstery smelled like it had been rescued from a burning rope factory. As all are cabbies he was full of information. Learning I had just come from a science fiction convention he told me that L. Ron Hubbard was practically his favorite writer, and did I know that Hubbard had been Bob Heinlein's roommate at college? I said that wasn't true, Heinlein had attended Annapolis, and so had to leave Austin without further benefit of his stock of little-known-facts about great SF writers.

MORE ABOUT WESTERCON 42

CONFESSIONS OF A NEOLIZARD: WESTERCON 42 REPORT BY C.S.F. BADEN

Okay, so I can't call myself a neofan anymore. I guess someone who knows the word is too experienced to be a neofan in the first place. But it was my first Westercon. I can only offer my first-hand viewpoint.

At Conosaurus, the volunteers were called Lizards. The convention staff had actual dinosaur-print shirts, and the volunteers received dinosaur-print sashes (while they lasted). After the sash supply dried up (or, after extinction?) late-coming volunteers had to scrabble for pieces torn off somebody else's sash. My "piece of the

con" was cut off somebody else's half.

So, we were little lizards and the staffers (in the shirts) were Big Lizards. And operations + Volunteers Headquarters, I'd hear called either "Lizard Headquarters" or "Lizard Lounge." I asked for a volunteer assignment and they said go up and report to the Con Suite. I went to the Con Suite stock room, was handed a box of fruit juice cans and told, "Take these to the Lizard Lounge." Well, I knew where that was -- I'd just come from there.

"You ordered some fruit juice?" No, they hadn't, actually. "But I'm supposed to bring this to the Lizard Lounge." Well, the real Lizard Lounge was the hospitality suite reserved for volunteers. (Wow, we get our own suite?) And -- it was on the same floor as the Con Suite, the smoking Con Suite, and the Con Suite stock room. Back up the tower...

Volunteering was a lot of fun. Knowing the bare minimum about the con, I got to help man the information desk (I was the one with a dinosaur on my head). I did several odds-and-ends jobs some of which stick in memory as I write two months later...

I helped set up the Masquerade; my principal activity helping was to act as door guard to keep out anyone who didn't have a Masquerade-staff badge. A surprising number of people had convincing reasons to be let in anyway. We also gave handicapped fans (they had a badge with a wheelchair-riding lizard on it) special treatment. Deaf people got to sit near the announcer, heart conditions got a seat by the aisle, the blind were invited to go backstage and feel the materials.

Being a volunteer I got to sit in the special Lizard Cheering Section, on the righthand side. It was a good seat, better than I would have found on my own -- I wouldn't have been waiting in line long enough. I've determined, though, that one of the best seats you can get is by being a catcher. You wear a black shirt, preferably black pants, and sit right up front at the edge of the stage. You tell the masquers if they're too close to the edge, and if necessary catch them if they fall off. Easy work, great view if a little skewed from the angle.

Another great angle is to bring a camera and participate in the masquerade photo session. They bring the costumers in one by one. Funny, though -- "Killer Queen" (I still don't know how she kept those spiders on -- pasties? glue? rubber cement? velcro?) looked a lot more alluring on stage than she did standing still under the harsh light. I guess it goes to show that masquerade presentation is an art, along with good photography.

I schlepped ice and dry ice upstairs AND down. I was one of the lizards who brought the ice/dry ice from the loading dock up to the ice-storage room, and I also delivered over half of the ice to the various parties in the towers. (Memo to party-runners: if you order ice, try to be on hand in the room to accept it when it's delivered! When I have to traipse down one tower, across the hotel, up to the other tower, then back down again, dripping all the way, it makes for a soggy operation.) I also helped deliver the dry ice to the Ice Cream Social, where I stuck around to scoop out ice cream. I was the one dishing out too-small portions at first. Sorry about that. I tried to give extra service to authors I recognized from my bookshelves, though... Our ice cream station was the one that stayed open to the last.

Our editor's conreport left out one of the highlights of the night of the Ice Cream Social: Roger Rabbit was playing in the other half of the ballroom. This meant I missed seeing RR for the second time: I hope to rectify that come Loscon. Apparently part of the deal with Disney (re: RR) was that the concon couldn't advertise Roger Rabbit, so all the signs just said "Feature Movie Presentation." Word sure got around, though...

Then the dance -- I helped set up, and then put up little signs with arrows pointing ballroomward asking "Ever danced with a dinosaur in the pale moonlight?" The convention, being dinosaur-themed, had several inflatable 'sauras on the dance floor. I saw two of them participating in a conga line, and there was a menage-a-trois of thunder lizards on the sidelines. I got to stand guard behind the DJ to keep people from bumping the turntable. I also took "suggestions" (no "requests" as such) and relayed vital important messages. That's why we had that barricade of chairs back there.

During the evening, I slipped up to the Con Suite to grab a soda. I discovered a young lady (which I guess means any female younger than me) apparently not having a good time at all -- she looked very distressed. I overheard her mentioning her home city (which was just a few miles from the convention) and sidled up next to her. I asked if there was anything a fellow Orange Countian could do for her and pointed out that there were several exits if she wanted to make an inconspicuous departure. So out the side room, pause for her to have a brief breakdown, and down to the dance we went. She cheered up, we danced a few dances, and then she asked if I was married. Being honest (and I always wear my ring) I admitted so, and she disappeared not long after...

I enjoy dances, despite my inability to dance. Sadly, the Westercon dance made me appreciate how good a DJ Steve Barnes (at Loscon) is. Nobody complained when they shut down the Westercon dance. I remember last year's Loscon,

when Hilton management shut down the dance early there was much lamentation. Memo to Vancouver: Have you got somebody good lined up? And if you do, make sure he has a copy of the hotel contact when he's doing the job.

Somehow during the dance I managed to twist my ankle, sending me in writhing pain (but only when I tried to use that foot.) I reported to Lizard HQ to see if there was anything a limping lizard could do, and they not only released me from duties but they even loaned me a wheelchair. Unexpected, but I was grateful.

Other highlights: the movie room was well-run, although I didn't get to see as many of the "must-see" items on my list. I did finally see The Birds and A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum for the first time. I caught the tail-end of an educational-film spoof about "Gravity" ("There's a gravity shortage...") I saw a few of the fannish legends panels, including the editor's; the fannish panels seemed to be different installments of the same idea, i.e., get a bunch of con veterans together and let them tell stories. Sounds okay by me. I'd been following The Shaft's adventures here in F770 but hadn't heard all the details.

The fan guests of honor, Hlavaty and Bosky, were a delight -- I crashed their party, didn't say much, brought my own drink, sat around and listened, enjoyed myself very much. At one point, they were trying a few rounds of "can-you-top-this-disgusting-joke"...such as the one about the lazy camel, and the one about the incorrigible grade school student.

John Varley was pro guest of honor. I enjoyed his speech, but by sitting in the back I didn't get to see all of his visual aids, such as the Weasel Award (awarded by Varley to exceptional concons for GoH coddling). The Weasel Award looks different every time because requirements call for it to be cheap, touristy, and preferably for sale in the hotel gift shop. Being held in Anaheim this year, the Weasel was a Mickey Mouse souvenir. Varley explained why he decided to start giving away awards. It seems it started in Australia. He was a GoH at the national convention down under and was admiring their Hugo-equivalent [Ditmar]. He was very surprised when they presented him with an award looking just like it (only without the "Best Australian Novel"-type designation.)

It's a shame Varley couldn't see the Ace Hardware store in Orange while he was here -- all summer their signboard proclaimed "We Have Weasels."

JOHN HERTZ' WESTERCON NOTEBOOK: Westercon 42 was smooth and rich as Scottish eggnog.... Lex Nakashima, the current inexplicably talented master of strangeness to enchant Los Angeles, had filled everyone's minds with dinosaurs and was

billed in con publications as "Chairosaurus Lex" and "the Brain in the Tail". He made 42 matching dinosaur trophies for the con to think up uses for. The Art Show judges threatened to give them an award but were relieved by the discovery that while the trophies sat in the Art Show, they were not entered.

John Varley in the Pro GoH speech explained a new Philanthropic Order of Professional Guests of Honor, or PDPGOH, and gave its new award, the Weasel. Mike Glycer accepted for the concom.

Prowling the Art Show with Kelly Freas put new lenses over my eyes. "What do you see?" I kept asking him, fascinated. "Look at the modeling of that face," he said, pointing to a Betsy Mott. "Look at Richard Bober's freedom with oils, the ease of his detail. Man! what technique." Don Simpson's masterly Puppeteer Skeleton won the judges' Best SF award. There was less trite and derivative work and more new art media. Mary Jane sold her fabric picture Jupiter and Io. I struggled to focus on the weakness of bad Art Show pieces. "It's inability to handle the medium chosen rather than using a medium they can handle," Kelly said. He called it self-expression at the expense of the viewer, the reverse of bad commercial art. Good art is tuned better.

The Fanzine Lounge, an increasingly usual feature of larger cons, is still, as Professor Harry Kalven would say, working itself pure. We know it isn't the "fan room"; every room in a con is a fan room. We put in a display of historic fanzines and a supply of current ones for sale (trade is too complicated). Showing current Hugo nominees and GOH pubs and contribs is a good idea, as Westercon 42 did. I like refreshments and hanging-around space to encourage people interested in fanzines to congregate. Bruce Pelz steadily manned the Lounge, comforted by the chance to get some sorting done. Beverages were brought to him.

Robbie Cantor did start the Masquerade on time, fandom's own cross between kabuki and Little Theater, but she erred in the way most of the concom did not, and costume fans groaned. Backstage was confused, judging took triple time, and Kees Van Toorn [who, in an excellent gesture, stepped in as Master of Ceremonies when Rick Foss' voice failed] never an MC before, and uninstructed, often floundered. At halftime a folksinger who might have been fun to hear in the lobby at 3 a.m. grew almost unbearable as she stretched into her fortieth minute; "Drivel!" she sang, helplessly self-referential.

The costumes were good. Jennifer Tiff wore a splendid headdress of stars and stalks (Master class; Honorable Mention for Workmanship, headdress design). Shawn Marshall made a fixer-upper "D-27 Scratch and Dent Droid"

with a sound track like a year 2018 pitchman (Best Original, Journeyman class; Workmanship award for Fiberglass and electrical). Rob Davis was a nicely accurate Dr. Strange (Best Re-Creation, Novice class), and there was a Sanders fuzzy-animal fantasy of the four lead characters from Xanadu (Best Re-Creation, Master class). Andy Neal's mommy-deadest "Armando Creeper and Mother" nearly stole the show with Neal cross-dressed as the mother, carrying a loathsome doll like a ventriloquist's dummy that was all too plainly in charge (Best Original, Novice class; Honorable Mention for Workmanship, makeup and props).

"Dorothy's Return to Hollywood", celebrating the 50th anniversary of MGM's Wizard of Oz, lulled the audience into expecting pathetic dullness and then sprang laughter (Most Humorous, Master class; Workmanship award for accuracy). Janet and Gary Anderson took Best of Show with "In the Courts of Chaos" (Master class; Workmanship award for use of fabric and jewels). Even though one of Gary's ferocious special effects failed, the blend of majesty and decadence, the carefully distinguished movement of the two characters -- and Janet's fingernails -- struck the sense of wonder.

To me a Dealer's Room holds verbal and non-verbal ware, books and gadgets. Half a dozen dealers told me they saw a better proportion at W'con 42. Maybe we're settling back into balance. Marty Massoglia, as usual, grumbled (but Georgette Heyer is still his best-selling author). The Green Room was stocked with real food, a blessing to panelists struggling against both hunger and time; it even had Guinness.

I got into a lon whither-SF discussion with Art Widner, who ought to know. I suggested a panel title "Why Is Everything So Dark?" Here we are with PC's, microwave ovens, and cheap photocopies. The world is still full of jerks, but we act like it had gone to the dogs. We try to make Batman realistic by painting him in anguish. (Realistic!?) Why are we sorer now than when we had legal segregation and Nazis choked the sea? Art thought SF was under a failure of nerve. He distrusted the great organic turn away from science and the supposedly mature withdrawal from optimism. Why are we, concurrently with this trend, so taken with medieval lords and ladies? Will I ever write about it for a fanzine?

Regency dancing drew about 150, not bad considering it had to be scheduled for the night before the con opened. Science and art, I hasten to add, were on good terms in 1800. About a third were in period dress; there were a few, but not enough, hall costumes, which I think always add zest to this madness. Alan Winston led a second installment Monday night. By then the Costumers Guild had held a smashingly successful Romance of the Desert party with belly dancers and drummers and Arabian finery overflowing into the halls, so I borrowed sheikh's robes in

the interest and Anglo-Arab relations. Fan 60H's Bernadette Bosky and Arthur Hlavaty were there. Bernadette, a student of the previous century, knew the Regency meaning of "bosky" and tried to help me convince Arthur that Regency dances were like football plays.

I moderated one panel and sat on two -- Harlan Ellison did eight. Don Fitch said in APA-L he was shocked to learn Harlan's chronological age, since in vitality and energy Harlan is at least 20 year younger.

In a picture hat and a fake finishing-school voice Harlan joined Elizabeth Berrian to make a panel for Vanessa Schnatmeier's famous "Fannish Ask Ms. Manners." He harangued the audience on how bad their manners are. "Most of you don't read; for the rest, human speech is not your natural tongue." Near despair I handed up the question, Can any of you recall an instance of particularly GOOD fannish manners? Harlan did think of one, a gesture of hospitality at the con itself which had pleased him, but in a minute he was off again. The notion of good manners as the art of rescuing people from needless unpleasantness or warding it away, of prosaic acts of compassion -- indeed a form of art -- was not in his mind. I wonder what he would make of Freddy Standen in Heyer's Cotillion. On another panel, while throwing cracks into the audience he twice insulted the wife of one of his friends, whom I happened to be next to. Bernard Shaw wrote of Frank Harris, "The truth is that Frank was

an exceedingly sensitive man, who reacted with violence not only to facts, but to any sort of gossip that stirred up his always seething susceptibility to scornful indignation. I think I know pretty well all the grievances his detractors had against him; but if I had to write his epitaph it should run, 'Here lies a man who hated cruelty and injustice and bad art, and never spared them in his own interest.'

FILE 770 FOUND AT SCENE OF THE CRIME: Quebec subscriber Steve Gold told me a whale of a tale at Noreascon 3. His copy of File 770:80 arrived weeks late and when it did, it was stapled inside a plastic envelope with the following letter from a United States Postal Service Postal Inspector in Pasadena, CA: "Dear Postal Customer: Please find the enclosed mail which was recovered and held as evidence in a criminal matter. This mail matter is no longer required for investigative purposes. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused. For your information a suspect was apprehended relative to this crime." Up til now the only crime File 770 has been connected with is the cold-blooded murder of the English language!



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