



Welcome to *Union Street* #75 (Obsessive Press [JG] #177 and Peerless Press [SC] #77), the zine with the transmogrifying seasonal masthead which this month celebrates 10 years of *Turboapa!* It comes to you from Jeanne Gomoll and Scott Custis, whose address is coincidentally 2825 Union Street, Madison, WI 53704-5136. Phone 608-246-8857. *Union Street* was created on a Macintosh Quadra 840av, and hardcopy was printed on a LaserWriter Select 360 printer. Text was created with Microsoft Word 5.1 and laid out with Aldus PageMaker 6.0. The *Union Street* Logo was designed with Adobe Illustrator 5.0 and Adobe Photoshop 3.0. All contents are copyrighted © by Scott Custis and Jeanne Gomoll, June 1996, for *Turbo-Charged Party Animal* APA #120. Members FWA.

Official Business

[JG] I cast my 1/2 vote for **Steve Swartz**. Steve has put a lot of effort into his zines these past few months; I think the apa is one of his priorities, and I think the apa does well when the OE devotes a lot of energy to it. Certainly, that's one of the reasons I think, that the apa has fared well under **Scott's** control. I also like the idea of giving it to someone who hasn't done it yet. New blood, and all. As for the deadline changes, I agree with Steve, the potential savings could very well cancel out the potential extra expenses. In our case, we won't have to copy our zines at Kinkos any more. As soon as I finish laying out our zine, I'll fax it directly from our computer to Steve's, tell him what color on which to print it, and then just wait to receive the finished apa. Sounds easy to me.

Mailing Comments for Back Issues [JG]

[JG] Tuesday, June 4, at the Borders Book Discussion, Gerald Schoenherr personally handed me a copy of *Blue Mars*. He knows how eagerly I've been awaiting Kim Stanley Robinson's third Mars book. But I will have you all know that I have not begun it; I've barely skimmed the jacket blurbs, and instead have concentrated, this whole past week, on catching up with back issues of *Turbo*. There was quite a lot to catch up with, since I haven't read anything (other than ego-scanning) since issue #115, and damn little ego-scanning at that, since I've contributed no zines, only a couple of covers, since #116.

I started with the most recent issue, the WisCon Suck Zone issue, figuring that I would write mailing comments on the current issue and scan the earlier issues . . . eventually. But I discovered that I'd been away too long, and references zipped way over my head. Like eavesdropping as a kid on a conversation among grown-ups, I lacked context. So I went back to #116 . . . and discovered—to my amazement—that people seem to have continued living normal day-to-day lives during those four months, and much of those lives had nothing whatsoever to do with WisCon.

Reading over four back issues of *Turbo* at once was an interesting experience. I picked up on more cryptic mailing comments than I usually do, since I'd just finished the previous month's issue. And I was impressed all over again, with what a fine group of writers this apa publishes. I had a good time reading your zines; thanks for your patience with Scott's and my minac.

#116

I won't promise you mailing comments of the type I usually manage when I have only one zine to comment upon, but I am going to try to go through and pick up on some of the "x's" floating in the margins of your zines.

. . . Like this word of advice to **Jim Frenkel**—Jim, don't go into the crystal ball business. Keep your day job. "*Not sure why, but I just think [Lisa will] deliver on, or real, real close to term, one side or the other.*"

I like the out-of-context, Forrest dialogs you've been printing in your colophons, **Hope**. They remind me of the weird logic that entangles the conversation one might have with someone who talks in his sleep. Scott maintains that he does *not* talk in his sleep and seldom recalls his dreams. In spite of that official disavowal, I imagine that I could liven up our colophon if I started publishing some of the bizarre conversations we sometimes have when I'm awake and he's not.



So, did you regret your decision, **Pat**, not to go to what turned out to be your last chance to visit the Club de Wash before it burned down? Or did the World Professional Figure Skating competition and Men's Tennis Finals on TV prove to be worth the sacrifice? • I can't remember now, did I get the idea to do the lame duck OE countdown cartoon from you, or did we both come up with the same idea at the same time?

Well, I didn't spend the *whole* week reading *Turbo* back issues. In the middle of reading #116, **Georgie** tantalized me with her review of the film *Persuasion*, I remembered that I'd missed seeing it when it came to town, and that I really wanted to see it, and I thought to myself, "WisCon is over, after all. I don't have to stay up till 3 am working on WisCon stuff." So I picked up the phone and called Four-Star Video. "Do you have any copies of *Persuasion* available?" I asked. They had 12 copies and were open till 1 am. I took it as a sign and picked up a copy after work and watched it that night. Thanks Georgie. I really enjoyed it.

Steve took off on a tangent from my comment that quite a few so-called "angry white men" view themselves as an oppressed group, and suggested that if you define the group with class as the major criteria (rather than gender), many white men are indeed part of an oppressed group. I suppose. But that only fiddles around with and sort of obscures the point I'd been trying to make (and amazingly, still recall). We had been talking about the effectiveness of exposing the callousness of racism and sexism to bigots and sexists, with fiction that encourages the reader to consider what it might be like to be oppressed themselves. I (still) think it's crucially important to an understanding of our culture, right now, that many individuals who, in spite of the fact that they belong to a not very oppressed group, view themselves as oppressed anyway. A book or a movie about white guys who are treated badly by their society, may not inspire epiphanies of enlightenment, but will more probably reinforce the notion that white guys have a bad lot in life these days, and that *someone* should fix it. Whether that identification with an oppressed class comes from a realistic assessment of class inequities or pent-up frustration at the uppityness of women and blacks, it doesn't much matter, does it? Fiction that employs "the other shoe" technique probably doesn't have the effect intended unless the reader is predisposed to view themselves critically.

I've come back often to **Jae's** critical comments about the Internet, and I find that I agree and

disagree with her in various and sometimes conflicting ways. I share with her some of the frustration she expresses about the gushing celebration of the sheer availability of information and data on the net, as if the surfeit of details was reason enough to consider the Internet essential to all. Folks who spend vast amounts of time surfing the Internet, I think, have a lot in common with the "early adapters" of the 1950s who would watch the test pattern during non-programming hours, fascinated with television's potential. On the other hand, the ability to send and receive electronic files and messages has become an essential part of my life from the moment Scott and I hooked up. . . . As a tool, I think, it will eventually become integral to our culture as it has already become so for the minority of people who already use it. Individuals who avoid it may become isolated in the same way that people without access to telephones are isolated in this world. That isolation will not diminish the richness of their lives, but it will cut them off from some of the newest and most dynamic communities springing to life as a result of that network.

Thanks, **Karen**, for mentioning "the Tale of the Smoked Duck," that I told to John Berry and Stu Shiffman at Potlatch, about Bill Hoffman's legendary post-WisCon feasts. I think I've got that story fairly well shaped. I should write it down someday. It would make a good fanzine article.

How embarrassing it is to realize that I was so obsessed with WisCon that even a simple, postoperative, get-well gift to **Bill Bodden**, was tinged with WisCon ulterior motives. You know that copy of *Slow River*, I gave to you, Bill? I was thinking that you might like to read it before your stint as guest liaison for Nicola Griffith.

#117

Scott, Steve and I visited Munising and Pictured Rocks in the Fall of 1995, and so I found **Bill Dyer's** description of the area in winter quite evocative. I can imagine that those roads must have been impassable with snow cover; they were almost impassable without snow, with their tire-eating, giant pot-holes.

Lisa Frietag's pregnancy seemed to rush past in fast-forward flashbacks for me as I zoomed through four issues of *Turbo*, and always William's tiny face floated in my mind, because I'd already met him at WisCon, even before I read the story of how he came into the world.

Pat's reasons for disliking clowns caught my attention. She distrusts those big, painted-on smiles

but likes the red noses. As a kid, I connected the red nose of an uncle who had a serious drinking problem with the red noses of clowns, and distrusted their jolliness, because my uncle's drunken joviality so often erupted into sudden anger and cruelty.

All knowledge is contained in fanzines. It turns out, from the description that **Andy** supplied in his zine, that I've been a "gluer" in my time. I had no idea. It was during my work-study career in college, at the University of Wisconsin Memorial Library. I worked for about a year in acquisitions, where we processed new books, stripped off the book jackets, lettered the Dewey Decimal code onto their spines, and sent them off to be shelved. A lot of books passed through my hands and that was pretty fun, although I wasn't allowed to delay any of them however temporarily from their destiny on the shelves. On the other hand, I could do anything I wanted to do with the book jackets. It started on beautiful Fall afternoon when I was feeling particularly grumpy about being cooped up in the tiny, windowless room where we worked. I can't recall the first picture on the first cover that I cut apart and taped onto the wall next to me. I think it might have been a picture of a large golden bust of Cortez, or perhaps it was a colorful parrot. Whatever it was, it was soon followed by more and more pictures, carefully scissored from book jacket covers and attached—with self-adhesive tape—in circles of ever-increasing diameter around that first image. At first I chose pictures that were beautiful or meaningful to me in some way. But then I began snagging any book jacket with a clearly defined, largish object, that could be easily cut out. I taped each image so that it overlapped the picture behind it. I left no part of the wall peeking through between the pictures, which meant that I was often challenged by how to add a new picture without obscuring essential details of another picture. The smallish collage of a few beautiful objects grew, by the end of the year, into a gigantic, nightmarish collage of hundreds and hundreds of images . . . well over 6 feet in diameter at the end. It was a small room, as I said. There were only three of us working in it and the width of the room barely accommodated the width of our desks pushed up against a blank concrete block wall, and an aisle to one side. I considered the yellow concrete blocks as my canvas. I began previewing book covers on the "to do" cart with an eye to the appropriateness of images for my collage. Everyone had a few pictures on the wall next to them, but I was the only one building a monument. Oddly enough, I don't remember anyone commenting on my project to me. I wonder now,

as I read Andy's zine and contemplate the inexplicable, possibly loony motivations of gluers he describes, if I was making my co-workers a little nervous by my odd obsession. And I wonder what happened to the wall after I left it. Congress cut back work-study loans the next year and I got a job at K-Mart in Fall term.

In *Turbo* #118, **Karen** says that I am "*famous for keeping almost nothing, resulting in a very uncluttered household.*" You never know when a gluer obsession will erupt in the most uncluttered of households

I was impressed enough with **Vicki Rosenzweig's** insight (that the Oankali in Octavia Butler's *Xenogenesis* trilogy mirror European colonialism) to give it three stars in the margin. I may have to re-read those novels again and think about them from that viewpoint. Thanks, Vicki.

I wish that **Georgie** and I had been able to sit down together at WisCon to take up the discussion that she proposed in her zine, of the sinister/heroic crone in *Twelve Monkeys*. Thanks for the meaty elaboration on my comments: I do think her character was an extremely surprising one, in that I can think of no other film characters like her. . . . Can you? • And I liked, too, Georgie's relation of Patricia McConnell's advice about pets to our treatment of delinquents and other individuals who are disapproved of by society. Good essay!

Michael praised the marguerites served by the Austin restaurant "Baby Acapulco" in his comment to **Jim Brooks**. And I thought, oh yes, coconut marguerites. I'd almost forgotten!

Pete Winz recounted his encounter with Morgan Freeman in Madison, and I realized that I hadn't yet described my encounter with Freeman's co-star, Keanu Reeves. I was on my way to my office from a meeting at the Concourse (a WisCon meeting, of course), and was crossing Mifflin Street on the Square. There was a group of men approaching me, crossing from the opposite side of the street, and I suddenly realized that I recognized the man in the center of the group. There was a small smile on his face as he waited for me to realize who he was, and he lifted an eyebrow when I said the first thing that occurred to me, which was "Hi!" He said "Hi!" back, and I blinked when I reached the other side of the road. What had just happened? I turned around and watched the now besieged Keanu Reeves as he signed autographs for the crowd of (mostly) women who seemed to have come out of nowhere. I paused, and then said, "no..." turned around again and got myself back to work, where I disappointed all my



office-mates by not producing a KR autograph. One woman with whom I work, wailed that she had camped out for her whole lunch hour and hadn't caught a glimpse of him.

I was impressed with both **Jae's** essays, the one on Hotel Washington and the one describing her walk along the creek. I liked both for the details that she chooses to weave into her stories. Thanks, Jae.

#118

Thank you, all of you who sent in contributions to Scott's Little Book of Reincarnation. We read aloud the ones that arrived before his party, and I repackaged a single copy of the book for him later the next week, including all the predictions of what Scott would be reincarnated as in his next life. It was a fairly laid-back party, with lots of beer, sub sandwiches, salads, and exquisite cheesecake, baked by **Tracy Benton**. We all had a good time, and Scott seems to be dealing manfully with his status as a 40-year-old guy. Of course, with all the WisCon stuff he was involved with at the time, he hardly had time to dwell on it, did he?

Since I read *Turbo* #119 first, I'd already heard about **Bill Dyer's** stint in the hospital, and I am glad to know that he recovered. It's been a year of ups and downs for you, hasn't it, Bill?

I sympathized mightily with **Jim Frenkel** and Joan Vinge's car troubles. Essential but unexpected big-ticket repair bills are never fun. (Scott and I are nervously anticipating similar trials and tribulations with our roof that needs re-roofing badly and a very, very old furnace. Both may put us in an uncomfortable situation if the necessity to replace them takes the form of an emergency.) But as a biker and bus-rider myself, I couldn't help but wonder if either Jim or Joan use mass transit from their conveniently located address. Do you?

It looks like WisCon affected my awareness of current events to a greater degree than I was aware. I hadn't heard until I read it in **Tom Havighurst's** zine, that Tommy Thomson had written a book (*Power to the People*). I absolutely love the idea of a contest for anyone who re-writes it with a line-item veto editing pen! I sure hope WORT follows through on that idea. The only downside of it is that people will actually have to buy the book in order to enter the contest . . . I am also curious about who, really, wrote the book. Tommy doesn't do much of his own writing, of course. My old boss, Jeff Smoller wrote most of the "SAVE" publication (the blueprint for Wisconsin state government downsizing), not to

mention a lot of Tommy's letters and speeches. Jeff may very well have had a hand in the book. I'll have to find out.

Andy Hooper's summary of the end of an *X-Files* episode pretty much encapsulates the reason I don't often watch that show. "*The author is left with a compelling story—about ten of them actually—but few coherent answers and fewer clues as to how to proceed further.*" Come to think about it, that sentence describes much of my feeling about the last episodes of *Twin Peaks*, too. I understand that consistency is not something that the writers of these shows wanted to achieve, but I can't help but want it myself. I am comfortable if a story, or a novel, or a movie, or a TV show creates a world with very different laws (natural or otherwise) than the one in which I live. If it is well done, I will gladly suspend my disbelief and accept, temporarily, a whole different set of assumptions. But I get real grumpy if a work of fiction doesn't stick to one set of assumptions within its own parameters. Most SF TV irritates me to some degree on this score: One episode, the crew of *Star Trekers* accidentally stumbles upon a method to go backwards in time, or much faster than they thought possible, or to create an alternate reality, and the next episode, when the major conflict might have been solved in two minutes with that newly learned tool, the crew appears to have forgotten all about it. But *X-Files* is so saturated with the writers' abdication of a coherent reality, that watching it feels, at times, mighty close to watching the film, *Solaris*, one of my all-time, least favorite films, which posits that it is absolutely impossible for any human being to understand anything other than a human perspective, and perhaps not even likely that we can ever understand another human being, really. With *X-Files* I wouldn't mind terribly if the writers never did explain what was really going on, but I want the occurrences to have some consistency. I would like the writers to have an idea of how they all link up, even if they don't spell it out for us. Every time I watch, I wind up arguing with the screen that if such-and-such is really true, that Mulder and Scully should be reevaluating their lives and doing something drastic, because *everything has changed. Everything they know is wrong*. Obviously, I'm taking this all too seriously, and I must admit that I have laughed heartily at a few episodes (the cockroach episode, especially, comes to mind), but I find that I cannot watch it more than sporadically, because the internal contradictions send me shrieking into the kitchen where Scott is doing the dishes to avoid the show, and where I tell him over and over again how stupid it all is . . .

I really like and agree with your suggestion, Andy, that UFOs have entered into the area of religious argument, with the issue at stake being faith, not proof. But I am not convinced by your arguments as to why the U.S. government might have chosen to hide alien contact. The military seems comfortable telling the American public that there is a powerful, possibly more-powerful-than-us, enemy out there. For years they inflated the USSR's military prowess to convince Congress to increase their budget. I have no doubt that the Pentagon would have been eager to make some pretty vast claims of potential danger from alien attack and would have extorted even larger munitions budgets if they could have. Nor to I accept your argument that the "Majestic-12" conspiracy is based on job security motivations. "Confrontation with the unknown" would have guaranteed the job security of this group, not threatened it.

Georgie's mention of the possibility of the Milwaukee crew staging a mutation of Flamingo Croquet at WisCon, made me wonder what happened to that plan. Did Milwaukee fans forget to register until too late? Or did the plan simply fall through for other reasons?

I agree with whoever it was (in *Turbo* #119) that noticed the waving woman described by **Martin Smith** in his Eastercon report. I would bet that she was making a pass at you, Martin.

#119

Cathy Gilligan

[SC] I liked reading about the adventures of Molly and Jane. I was a bit alarmed at the ferocity of their fight in your living room that resulted in fairly serious injuries to Jane. Is this common for them to fight that roughly? What caused it? You and Greg seemed to take it in stride, but I think it merits some concern.

Hope Kiefer

[SC] Re: OE Stuff, I will comment on copy count stuff in the business pages. As for summarizing the OE race, I intend to run the names of the candidates each month that elections are open in the business pages as well as a running vote count. I don't think taking up space with their "platforms" is necessary because it comes down to a race about keeping the apa in Madison or letting it go to Seattle. There are significant differences in administrative style between **Kim** and **Steve** as well, but I think members can best judge that by talking directly to them.

We are experiencing some turnover in the apa membership right now and some of our new folks may be reluctant to vote. In the event that we have trouble determining a clear winner, I will stay on until I am satisfied that the "will of the people" is clearly decided in Steve or Kim's favor. I can't promise more than that.

Re: That Baby Thing, I wanted to remind you that if I am OE when the big day comes, you can count on Grace for that month if you want it. I was unable to extend this offer to **Lisa** in time for her to take advantage, but I figure it is the least I can do for you.

Pretty exciting story about the near-hit with the lightning strike. My assumption has always been that you are relatively safe from lightning in your car as long as you avoid touching metal parts (not so hard in modern cars). Of course in a storm like you were in, it's tough to decide what to do. You don't want to be in the car if there are tornadoes around or things like trees or phone poles are falling down. On the other hand, leaving the car is not good if you're afraid of getting hit by lightning. Worth thinking about it for "next time." It's a cool thing that Forrest handled the situation so well.

Bill Humphries

[JG] You brought me up short when you said that the Mackinaw Bridge "*authority has to provide standby drivers,*" I assume for folks that get too nervous driving across it themselves. Since I get nervous on *any* bridge that rises in an arc and prevents me from seeing the other side, I assume that I would be a nervous wreck crossing the Mackinaw. Thanks for the warning, Bill. When we get up there, I'll make sure it's Scott's shift to drive when we have to cross it. It's good to hear that you like your job and the area you live in. I'm happy to know of your success and wish you the best!

[SC] Thanks for the journal of your travels. I always enjoy reading travel pieces. It sounds like you took essentially the same route Jeanne and I took a couple years ago when we drove out to SF to pick up a piece of her late brother's furniture. We went in July, so snow on Donner was not an issue. I would like to drive out west to the coast again, but I'd like to take more time and a different route.

Glad you're settling in to your job and the area. Julie has my sympathy when it comes to her concerns about earthquakes, but hopefully living so close to one of the most beautiful cities in the world (in my opinion) will eventually be worth it.



Kim & Kathi Nash

[SC] Thanks to you also for the travel piece on World Horror Con. I don't know much about World Horror, but they seem to be trying to copy World Fantasy. It sounds like a convention that is very professional writer- and business-oriented, wildly expensive and limited in size. I read horror occasionally and I might be interested in a horror convention sometime, but it would have to be more reader-oriented.

Jeanne and I really liked Portland when we went to Potlatch last year, but I confess to wanting to see Eugene and Salem sometime, too. Your piece added to my curiosity.

I'm glad you found your way Dr. Bill's house. It is quite an adventure, isn't it? I wonder how his apa ever got to him on time when cab companies and pizza places sometimes can't find it. Nothing like that welcoming shot of ice-cold vodka to blow away those travel cobwebs from the old brain, don't you think?

Georgie Schnobrich

[JG] I loved your story, Georgie, of how you foiled the speeder on the freeway. But you're right, you're lucky you didn't try something like that in California!

[SC] Thank you for reminding me of the "Age and treachery..." maxim. I have heard of it before, I forgot about it when I made up my list and I agree with you that it is the one saying I look forward to testing.

Your piece on deteriorating driving habits made sense to me. Whenever I travel to a big city, I expect drivers to be rude and aggressive compared to home. But here in Madison, I have also observed a gradual trend towards more impatient and surly drivers. I figure this is the result of greater demand on our streets and highways. With mass transit suffering from political indifference and road builders buying the loyalty of the state house, driving is becoming vital to life for a growing number of people. Folks get testy when they feel their need to be on the road is essential rather than recreational.

Nevenah Smith

[SC] Wow, great zine, welcome back! It is a very fine thing that you have found such success in New York. You seem to have made just the right choice at just the right time. It's rare to hit a grand slam in life. Moving to a city that you love, getting a job that you like and finding a new lover, that's pretty damn impressive.

I think that refraining from writing a new "intro zine" is perfectly OK in light of the fact that you wrote so well and so thoroughly about your current life. I think most folks who don't know you will get a solid sense of

who you are today. The rest of your wild self they can find out about as time goes on.

It's been entertaining the last year getting periodic "Nevenah sightings" and stories. "Guess who we saw in Glasgow!" for example. Or, "Yeah, I heard Nevenah is in Rio. How did she do that?" It's nice to have the details filled in. It all sounds completely believable except for the stepmother stuff. Pardon me if I find it a bit hard to picture you presiding over a brood of rowdy kids. When I try, I wind up chuckling nastily. Sorry.

Sandra Taylor

[SC] June 15th is a good day to take possession of your new place. It's a Saturday. Jeanne and I will try to be there for the move if you need help.

Re: the orange sheet between Pat and Tom's zines last month, Tom's zines came collated with the orange sheets separating the copies. I decided to leave them in when it turned out that Tom and Pat had chosen a very similar color for their zines that month, so as to provide an obvious separation between them.

Thanks for the birthday advice. I'm not sure it makes sense to me now, but I have the feeling it eventually will.

Pete Winz

[JG] Your story of the signs warning against swimming in Hanama Bay in Hawaii, remind me of a similar story about my brother, Steve, when he and his wife went on a vacation to the Islands. I don't know whether his story happened at Hanama Bay or someplace else, but he entirely missed the signs warning about dangerous swimming conditions. After he got out of the hospital, several folks sent him photos of the huge billboard posted along the path he must have walked to the beach. It warned, in big bold red letters, DO NOT BODY SURF AT THIS BEACH. DANGEROUS WAVES, or something like that. Anyway, what does my type-A, always-looking-for-a-thrill brother decide to do when he gets down to the beach? Look at those waves! he exclaims. I bet there's good body surfing here! Steve was alone. He had just been taught to body surf for the first time a couple days before, and as far as he knew, he was miles away from any potential help. But he just dived in, swam out, and assumed the position.

As luck would have it, some tourists emerged from the same path Steve had taken down to the beach, just about the time Steve was violently thrown upon the beach by a wave, head first. Wham! For a while, they assumed he must have broken his neck, but they managed to get an emergency team down

to the beach right away and Steve lucked out again. No broken vertebrae. But he still keeps an enlarged photo of that sign framed on his bedroom wall. I like to think it might help him keep his thirst for thrills in perspective. Unfortunately, I think he keeps it because he's proud to have done what authorities warned him not to do

Jae Adams

[JG] Sometimes I have weird dreams as I wake up. The radio comes on at least an hour before I have to get up, and my mind sometimes does playful things with the news, so that I'm not quite sure whether something really happened or not until I read a newspaper later in the day or hear it again and confirm it in a more conscious state. Once I thought I heard on the morning news that Donna Shalala had come out as a lesbian, but nobody seemed to have heard the news the next day, so I shut up about it. I can only remember hearing about the phenomenon I am about to tell you about a single time and if nobody has heard of it, I may cite Revised Dream News as its probable source. On the other hand it may be true. But just so you know

One of the reasons we haven't been hearing about oil shortages lately (in response to your essay, "Shape of Things to Come") is that it turns out that as we drain a pocket of oil, that the pocket tends to be refreshed by oil soaked into the adjacent layers of rocks. As space becomes available in the pocket, oil squeezes out from the other layers, as from a wet sponge, into the available space. As a result, estimates about available oil in the world has been increased. We'll end up in the same place eventually, with a shortage of oil, but in the meantime, the short-sighters are breathing a sigh of relief, saying "whew, glad we don't have to think about that any more! Let's make big cars again."

After your comment about energy shortages, you wrote some about our so-called Social Security System: *"it is quite easy for anyone to see the problems that will result when the number of retirees increases and the number of workers decreases."* True. But what I think of when considering this dilemma is how several European countries seem to have dealt with the numerical inequities of generations, by defining social security as a benefit for all ages, not just the old. A society that accepts the obligation of basic medical care for *all* its citizens, is less likely to have to settle arguments between one group that receives benefits and another that pays for them.

I agree with you that the same thing for most of our generation to do, is to assume that we will all probably have to work throughout most of our lives. If we're lucky, we won't have to work full time to the end.

So why *shouldn't* one plant a garden next to a walnut tree? Risk of concussions from falling walnuts?

[SC] I appreciate the "public-spirited effort to keep *Turbo* from shrinking away to nothing..." last month. Your zine was one of several really fine zines, but *Turbo* still weighed in a little thin. We can hope that will change now that WisCon is over, but my experience is that summer is a typically slow time for the apa.

Your piece on social security was a bit depressing, but it is a subject we all need to confront eventually. I don't think the social security situation is as bleak as it seems, but it would be wise to think about retirement independent of government benefits. Your points about working into your seventies and having skills that will always have value are good ones. However, I don't think our economy is headed for doom because baby boomers are getting old. I think the growing influence of huge multinational corporations and our addiction to vast unproductive investment in a bloated military are more worrisome. Also, the redistribution of wealth from the middle class to the wealthy is going to put more "boomers" in the position of growing old poor.

Re: November 8, 1992, wonderful and powerful piece. I was completely entertained by poor Matthew's experience at the hospital. Needles don't bother me much, but blood and gore sure does. In Matt's situation I would have been relieved at having someone stop the blood even if it meant getting sown up. I was taught early on to obey grown ups in authority, so the thought of fighting a doctor would never have entered my head. Matt's probably better off in the long run not being so blindly respectful of authority figures.

Tracy Benton

[SC] Thanks for translating the work stuff into fablespeak. That was a clever and very helpful approach. Funny too, of course. Not much wisdom I can offer, you seem to have a very firm grasp of the moral of the story.

Clay Colwell

[JG] Thank you for giving me the only mailing comment I received in *Turbo* #119, not that I deserved any, of course, since I hadn't contributed any writing to the apa for three issues. But serendipitously, you decided this issue to write mailing comments on a zine 3 issues prior. Thanks!



You asked whether volunteering as a half-naked, apricot feeder for **Vijay** would have counted toward official volunteer time at WisCon 20. It is indeed unfortunate that Vijay wasn't able to attend WisCon because we had the paperwork all prepared, and as it turned out, you ended up working long hours in the hospitality suite for lack of demand for nude serving guys. Sorry about that.

Well, just so you know, we had prepared a pad of forms for Vijay so that she could award points to the various half-naked apricot feeders (HNAFs) and express her assessment of their charms and skills. HNAFs would then have been eligible to convert these points into hours for application to their 6-hour work requirement as WisCon gophers and their volunteer refund. We thought that it would be in keeping with certain principals, to give Vijay the power to award, withhold or simply tease her HNAFs with points. We listed some suggested criteria for points (How much and *which* half did the HNAF disrobe?, clean fingernails, quality of chocolate, etc.), but we would have left the final assessment to Vijay's capable hands. Too bad we missed the spectacle, hmm?

You referred (in a mailing comment to **Pat Hario**) to baseball teams that sucker their home towns to build them expensive stadiums. Did you hear that the Milwaukee Brewers may finally have acted stupidly enough and gotten Wisconsinites tired enough at their demands to have lost the stadium? It turns out that the Brewers never could have afforded the 90 million dollars they'd pledged to add to the \$160,000,000 pledged by the state for the stadium. They finally got around to mentioning that fact, months after the agreement had been signed. They asked for bonds backed by the state to cover their part (basically another loan). They asked for the state to guarantee a minimum attendance level (as current attendance drops more and more each week), and finally they asked for an *even more expensive* stadium. Things are falling apart rapidly. The representative who changed his vote and clinched the agreement between the state and the Brewers has just lost his job in the first successful recall election ever held in Wisconsin. Politicians are shaking in their boots. I hope another city in another state offers the Brewers a new home and that they go away.

Several DNR folks who work the deer hunt annually have told me that it's quite common for farmers to paint the word, "cow" on their cows. Sometimes it works. Last year, a hunter shot a tractor. Sometimes it doesn't.

Jim Frenkel

[SC] I'm rather liking the current cool weather. For one thing, I don't like it hot and for another, I know once it warms up the mosquitoes will be horrendous after all this rain. So, it can stay cool all summer as far as I'm concerned.

I seriously disliked *Twister*. The opening sequence was very good. Most of my experience with tornadoes has been at nighttime, when I think they are most terrifying. That sequence in the picture connected strongly with me. The other good part of the movie was the ending monster tornado sequence, mostly because the storm was so noisy that the actors had to finally shut up and run for their lives. Everything in between those parts was dominated by a profoundly stupid story that often got in the way of the action. I found most of *Twister* as irritating as *Waterworld* because it was a good idea for a movie sunk by very bad writing.

Cover and WisCon Ramblings [JG]

[JG] That "WisCon Suck Zone" cover brings back the rush of energy and mad activity that was my life during those last few weeks before WisCon 20. It had been several months since the last time I'd slept more than 5 hours at night, but the urgency level still seemed to turn up another impossible notch during those last couple weeks. I'm still incredulous that I didn't get sick before or during WisCon; I certainly was treating my body very badly. Not enough sleep, not enough exercise, way too much work. Scott usually gave me a ride to my office, so I wasn't using my bike to commute as usual. I didn't even have time for the bus, because most often we were dealing with emergency email first thing in the morning, and I would miss the bus; or else we'd have a pre-work meeting at the Concourse hotel, and Scott would drop me off at my office afterwards, usually a bit late. And of course my mind was not much on my job while I was there. I'd use my lunch break to do WisCon business, and found myself apologizing, every once in a while, to friends not connected to the convention, about how I seemed to have forgotten their existence. And truly, when I wasn't apologizing to them, I *did* forget their existence. In the last month, Scott and I rarely discussed much *except* WisCon; I still feel badly about how little we discussed his job interview that led to the new position at the Department of Transportation that he gleefully accepted three weeks ago. I am very thankful that he was involved in the convention with me; it would have been difficult balancing our relationship with convention obligations if he had not. As it was, he threw himself into

WisCon, until, in the last few months, we were so much in accord with what needed to be done, and how to do it, that it felt to me as if we were coordinating the convention together. I found myself saying "we" more often than "I" when announcing decisions at WisCon meetings.

But since Memorial Day weekend, I haven't been able to force myself to stay up past midnight, I've gotten *at least* 7-8 hours of sleep a night, and have gotten terribly lazy. I've developed what I can only describe as a phobia to email, which is temporary, I think, but will not go away as quickly as I might have predicted. I do the bare minimum of email responses, emergencies only, and it piles up like it never did pre-WisCon. (Many of you are probably quite relieved to find your email in-boxes so uncluttered with messages from ArtBrau!) I've gotten back on my bike and last night I met friends at the Union Terrace and found myself grinning like a loon, reveling in how pleasant it was to meet with a group of people after work and not have to call them to order to get some WisCon work done. I'm very pleased with my body, actually. It gave me all the energy I needed to do what had to be done, and after it was over, withdrew manual control from my brain and forced me to recuperate. Without a cold or a nervous breakdown. Pretty cool.

I'm glad it's over. But I am even more glad that we did it. I think I am more proud of my contribution to WisCon than I am about almost anything else I've ever accomplished. It feels to me that projects like the previous WisCons, *Janus* and *Aurora*, essay-writing, the Tiptree Award, the cookbooks, the quilt, the hundreds of energized conversations, and my interest in feminism and SF which is what got me into this in the first place, all culminated and fused in a whole much bigger than the sum of its parts, at WisCon 20 and in the preparation for it. I believe that it was the sheer *joy*—and there is no other word for the emotion that grabbed me sometimes when I realized how well things were turning out, and what was all coming together—that kept me healthy during the countdown to the convention. And at the convention, the elated, wonder-filled, superlatives that people offered to us all as compliments, kept me high as I have been high at no other convention or no other project. How could I feel tired or grouchy, when every time I turned around, someone would say, "this is the best convention I've ever attended! Thank you!" And of course, people are still sharing their reactions about the convention with us via email. The messages have been flowing in, especially from the FEM-SF discussion list. I think it's no

surprise that I never experienced the post-convention "crash" of anti-people emotion that I usually feel after a big convention.

I am very proud of us. And I hope that all of you who worked on WisCon are also happy and proud of your work. You deserve it.

It's very exciting to contemplate what new things WisCon may have instigated. The FEM-SF list, a discussion group that attended WisCon almost *en masse*, is still buzzing with the excitement generated on Memorial Day weekend. The Australian fans, that amazing group of high-energy women you might have seen whizzing past you in the halls, is planning on publishing a new semi-pro magazine devoted to issues that WisCon fosters. Their first issue will concentrate entirely on WisCon. Trina Robbins called me up last week and bubbled over (again) at what a good time she had had, and said that she'd been thinking: "If *they* can do it, *we can too!*" Trina belongs to a group who call themselves "Friends of LuLu," a group of women comic artists, I think, and they are now contemplating a groundbreaking, revolutionary convention of feminists interested in doing for comics what WisCon attempts to do for SF and Fantasy. This is certainly what I hoped would happen after WisCon. I want this convention not to be merely a culmination, but a new beginning, and it looks like for a lot of people, it is just that. New stuff is starting up all over the place. New connections are being made between people who didn't know the others existed. New ideas are flowing because we know there are lots of ears out there waiting to listen.

I don't know yet, whether that sense of renewal has affected the Madison group to the extent that new volunteers will join us at the Postmortem and build upon the momentum of this year's WisCon with next year's. But I hope so. We'll see next week.

There will be a few conreports in this issue of the apa. Some of the comments made by folks on the FEM-SF list have been passed along to the concom list when FEM-SFers gave their permission. **Andy Hooper** wrote a marvelous report in *Apparatchik*, entitled, appropriately, "How I almost attended WisCon 20," from his point of view as newszine editor. Scott and I could easily copy his title for our conreports, since we were also much involved with the behind the scenes convention, more than the public parts. I thought I'd frame a few comments with some information gleaned from the questionnaires we received from WisCon attendees.



We received (so far) 69 questionnaires. I expect to receive more from **Bill Bodden**, and will update my information before the Postmortem, but the responses we got from 69 people makes some interesting patterns

❖ Most people found out about WisCon 20 from a brochure they received in the mail (49%), but almost as many people reported that they had heard about the convention at WisCon 19 (37%). Here is the breakdown for other contact methods: 20% were contacted by someone on the committee; 15% heard about it from a friend; 13% picked up a brochure at local stores or other conventions; 12% read about it in a con listing or ad; 6% saw a posted brochure or poster; and only 4% found the WisCon Web Page. This last really surprised me. Perhaps we should publish the questionnaire on the web. Perhaps, just coincidentally, few of the foreigners filled out a questionnaire.

❖ *Everyone* with the exception of one person who didn't respond to that question, said that they would like to attend a future WisCon.

❖ Most people liked the format **Steve** settled for program lengths (55 minutes long, 5 minute breaks).

❖ Nearly *everyone* responded to the question, "Please list your favorite panels, and what you liked about them." Many of the questions further on in the survey were skipped by the respondents; but only two people failed to list a favorite panel. WisCon continues to be a convention at which people attend programming!

But more interesting than merely the fact that nearly everyone had one (or more often several) favorite panels, is the fact that there are no big "hits." No less than 135 panels were listed as favorites by the 68 respondents! Many of these 135 panels were listed by 2 or 3 folks. Many were listed by only one. This means that Steve's plan—to scatter WisCon attendees into a great many smallish panels having intimate discussions in spite of the huge attendance—was absolutely successful.

There were a few panels that attracted more than 3 or 4 votes and these were the major events whose audience filled the three ballrooms: GoH speeches garnered 9 votes; *Always Coming Home* got 5 votes.

Several respondents responded to the question about which were their favorite panels with a simple, "all of them." Others said they enjoy everything with Ursula Le Guin involved.

❖ In contrast to that question which attracted nearly universal response, 24 respondents did not answer the next question, "Please list your least favorite panels, and what didn't work about them for you." 6 respondents wrote that there were no panels they disliked.

Among those who did have complaints about some panels the range was equally scattered. There were no big "winners" among the 61 panels listed. Only one panel got more than 2 votes as least favorite, and that was panel #53 ("Are aggression, competition, and hierarchy sex linked?") Comments indicated that there was some fairly fierce, polarized debate going on in that panel. On the other hand, that panel received 2 votes as a "favorite panel" and one general comment from someone who enjoyed the "panels on violence." Martha Bartter moderated. Other panelists were Suzette Haden Elgin, Nancy Kress, and Katherine MacLean. I heard rumors afterward about a fairly fierce confrontation between Elgin and Kress. It sounds like that might have been one of the most interesting panels of the weekend. I'm sorry I missed it. Did any of you see this? I'd like to hear about it.

Other complaints about programs took the form of irritation with unprepared panelists and moderators who didn't know how to moderate. One respondent wrote: "In general, I thought too many of the panels lacked a male viewpoint."

❖ We used the questionnaire to find out how people felt about the stuff we *did not* do. We asked them, "How much did you miss not having a masquerade? an art show? a dance?" A whopping 51% of the respondents responded with very definite responses: "not at all," they said. Only 3 people failed to answer this question, so it was viewed as an important issue, but most people seem happy with the fact that we've chosen to concentrate on feminist SF programming, and are actually quite glad not to have a masquerade or dance.

25% of the respondents were quite passionate about wanting the art show back, however. One person wrote a little essay about the importance of an art show and many of the others underlined, wrote in all caps, and enthusiastically urged us to have an art show next year. A few people didn't realize that WisCon 20 lacked an art show; they were satisfied with the GoH showcase.

5 people (7%) said they missed a masquerade; 7 (10%) said they missed a dance. "A dance would have been nice," one wrote. "Masquerade would have been OK," wrote another. I don't think we disappointed many people very much by dropping these events.

- ❖ "What was missing from the WisCon Program?" We gave people an open-ended opportunity to criticize WisCon. 28 people simply did not respond. 8 people responded with variations of "nothing!" The largest number of complaints (only 5) came from folks who asked for less programming, breathing space, downtime, quiet. Some of them seemed to be joking.

The other complaints ranged from single requests for media-related programming, biographies of all our panel participants, more gaming, better parties, better parking, better consuite hours, costumes, a GoH interview, more autographing sessions, a photo of Kris Rusch on **Pat Hario's** display boards, and specific program suggestions. One person asked for a Christian feminist perspective on panels, one asked for the kitchen sink, and another asked for "Free money, true love, universal truths."

It seems that few people had any big complaints about WisCon.

- ❖ As with programming, people's favorite films didn't clump much, with the exception of the popular *Lathe of Heaven*. We asked "Which was your favorite film," and 32 people didn't respond; 17 wrote that they failed to see any films at WisCon, for a total of 72% no response. Of those who did respond, it's possible that every film shown had at least one person who claimed it as their favorite. *Lair of the White Worm* and *Lathe of Heaven* were the only two films to receive more than one vote with 2 and 7 respectively. One person responded: "Of all time? *Citizen Kane*" Another wrote, "What films? Were there films?"
- ❖ 61 people (90%) skipped the questions as to which film should not have been shown at WisCon. *Tootsie* was the only film to get more than one vote in this category: it got 2 votes.
- ❖ 48 people (71%) skipped the question about the technical layout of the film room. "Enough space? sound?" 10 people said it was all OK (15%); 2 thought it was too small, and others had complaints about the sound quality, the mirror in the ceiling, distraction from drummers in the next

room, temperature, and body odors of audience members.

- ❖ "Do you have any comments about scheduling?" we asked, thinking that a lot of people might want to vent about the density of programming. 21 (31%) people skipped this question; 17 (25%) praised scheduling with superlatives, multiple exclamation marks and all caps. ("Very well scheduled—diverse and well timed, VERY, VERY, WELL ORGANIZED!!") 6 (9%) complained that there was too much programming, too many hard choices. Another 5 (7%) voiced similar complaints but were most concerned about time to eat. Two people suggested that we consider *repeating* panels.

Two people wanted more lead time before the convention in which to prepare for their panels. Others had specific gripes about cross-programming (science programs, the Tiptree auction and bakesale, readings, two utopian panels, and programming anything against the *Always Coming Home* performance.

One person put it best: "I think everything should be scheduled around my life. Yes, that would be a good thing."

- ❖ The Concourse Hotel got fairly good marks, in answer to our questions "What did you like most/least about the Concourse Hotel? Only 7 folks (10%) failed to respond to this question. One person listed "the air," but who knows what category to put that comment into, least or most. 17 folks (25%) praised its central location; 6 (9%) praised the staff; 5 (7%) praised the hotel's rooms and layouts.

The most significant fault found with the hotel was, overwhelmingly, its elevators. 20 people (29%) mentioned the slow elevators which exacerbated the stress people felt with the heavy programming schedule because they could not easily move between the lower floors and the 6th floor by elevator. Some people hinted that the elevators were actually malevolent, purposefully skipping floors, attempting to kill them, etc. Another fault found with the hotel was about bad restaurant hours, slow service, and mediocre food. 5 people (7%) mentioned this. Other complaints had to do with parking, first floor chairs, and bad ventilation.

- ❖ Surprisingly few people seemed to know about the WisCon Web page. We asked them "What



did you like the most/least about the WisCon web page?" 43 (63%) did not respond and 16 (24%) claimed never to have seen it. 3 people liked it; 3 others complained that we didn't include adequate hotel information on it. One other person wished we had been able to put the program on the page before the con.

- ❖ We asked "What did you like most/least about WisCon publications?" 25 folks (37%) did not respond; 25 (37%) used superlatives, multiple exclamation points and all caps to praise the pocket program and souvenir book. One person wished for an index on the retrospective material. Another would have liked bios of the panelists.

One person complained that they only received one WisCon brochure. Two people complained that the restaurant guide needed a map. The newsletter attracted four comments with high praise. And there was even one compliment for the name tags.

- ❖ The Dealers Room garnered more displeasure than any other area of the convention, with the possible exception of those darned elevators. We asked, "What did you like most/least about the Dealers Room?" 17 (25%) people did not reply; 13 people (19%) complained that it was too small. Another 6 people (8%) complained that there were not enough books or that there were not enough books by attending authors and 5 others (7%) felt that it was dull and lacked diversity. 10 others listed other complaints ranging from lack of buttons to "Crummy!" One person, weirdly, felt that the Dealer's Room was "out of the way"! Only 13 people (19%) gave the Dealers Room passing marks.

We need to do better on this next year.

- ❖ Few people responded to our question about childcare since only a small minority of the people who attended made use of it. Some of the responses we got were from people who thought the question referred to the kids programming track. 50 people (74%) did not respond. Those that did respond liked it (or kids programming) quite a bit. Two people thanked us for having it even though they themselves did not need to use childcare.
- ❖ "What did you like most/least about the hospitality suite?" Although 29 people (43%) did not respond to this question, hot dogs were obviously on the minds of many who did. 8 folks

(12%) praised the availability of hot dogs in their questionnaire. 5 (7%) gave the hospitality suite generally good marks. But 3 people (a very significant 4% I would say, and none of them was me) thought that Pepsi should have been replaced by Coke.

Most of the positive comments praised the food, though there were a few who wished for more vegetarian fare. Others complemented the staff. Some people complained about lack of cleanliness, and others about the fact that the hospitality room didn't open on time and that coffee wasn't available when they wanted it.

One person wrote: "Nice people, no beer. Oh well, heaven's for the next life."

- ❖ Finally we asked them what they liked most or least about WisCon 20. 13 people (19%) did not respond. 5 (7%) people praised the panels. And the other responses were so varied, I couldn't group them in meaningful ways. But they were almost all full of delighted praise. Several folks praised Ursula Le Guin to the skies. I liked the compliment that we "take feminism and SF seriously."

There were a few very constructive complaints about scheduling volunteers better and other items, which anyone who attends the postmortem is welcome to read.



That's all for now. I feel like I've *really caught up*, at least with *Turbo*. I think I'll go read *Blue Mars* now.

WisCon 20, What Went Wrong

[SC] Late in the weekend of the convention, Minneapolis convention guru Victor Raymond came up to me with high praise for how WisCon was being run. "It is definitely one of the five best run conventions I've ever been to," he said. Pretty heady stuff from a guy who knows what he's talking about. I took much of this praise as directed at me since I was in charge of Operations for the convention. I thanked Victor, but admitted that just before the start of the con, in a near panic, I almost called him up to beg for his help at the hotel front desk in case the Concourse really screwed up hotel reservations or massively overbooked rooms. It turned out that the Concourse behaved themselves and we had no room reservation complaints that I know of. Things went well at WisCon, much better than we could have hoped, but there were still some significant problems. Some that will

continue to be concerns of the next WisCon committee and SF3.

From start to finish there was a chronic lack of volunteers. Few areas of the convention were adequately staffed through the weekend. **Hope** was scrambling for help in the Consuite. Spike and Jim Hudson largely recruited their own staffs before the convention started, but still had to draw on our tiny pool of people. The registration desk, once again, was run by Dick Russell nearly all weekend. **Tom Havighurst** wound up doing a lot of gopher work around the hotel simply because he often didn't have anyone else. Tom and I moved a vast amount of stuff (including those damn art panels) both into and out of the hotel with little additional help. I don't have much room to complain about what I had to do because Dick brought all his own registration stuff in, Spike rented a big car and brought her Green Room stuff in, Hope somehow got all the Consuite stuff in and out and **Jae** brought in the mimeo. But there was no army of gophers at the ready on Thursday or Monday to help anyone. The hotel housemen were very helpful on Thursday and Friday, but Monday it was me and Tom moving art panels in the rain in a borrowed pickup (thanks **Sandy!**) And on Tuesday it was just me rushing AV equipment back by the time it was due as well as a truckload of leftover stuff in the OPS room to our house. Also in the rain. As far as I know, the situation wasn't much better for Hope and Dick and Jae, etc.

Some of this is the fault of poor planning on my part, I suppose. But my feeling is that WisCon has long been short on volunteer staff and the situation is reaching critical proportions. We should not be trying to run a convention of 500+ people with so few gophers. It means that people who have had large planning responsibilities over the course of many months also wind up lugging boxes around at the con or spending the whole weekend working. That's doesn't do much for encouraging key planning staff to sign on for big responsibilities again.

We should have offered to pay for the Capital Ballrooms on Saturday night two years ago rather than let the Concourse keep them for a wedding. About a month before the con, we realized that the Concourse meant to keep *both* Capital Ballrooms for the wedding. We had planned all along that they would only need one of them. This meant that we would lose all our large programming space starting at 3 PM Saturday afternoon until the next day. Our solution was to move the Showcase across the hall to the University AB (which worked out OK) and to squeeze the Dealer's into the Madison Ballroom only instead of the Madison and half the Wisconsin ballrooms. This solution freed up the large Wisconsin ballroom for Saturday programming. What this also meant was that the Dealer's room became immediately booked full. Some

shuffling had to occur between the Dealers room and the Showcase for table space for a couple of guests and Hank Luttrell was put in the difficult position of informing other dealers and vendors that he was suddenly full and there was no room left. This left Hank open for the ugly and unfair charges of favoritism leveled at him at the Wrap-Up panel. Had we paid for that space two years ago, or had I looked closer at our contract earlier this year before our room allocation meeting, we could have avoided an unpleasant experience, especially for Hank and some frustrated dealers.

I also didn't like the wedding crowd in the middle of our convention. We didn't experience many problems (Jane Hawkins had one brief negative interaction with a drunken wedding guest, but not serious). The wedding folks were a bit weirded out by the scene they were in and as it got later, more drunk guests started scoping out our people and our stuff. I think there was potential for trouble. They were also loud enough that we had to move some program items out of University CD.

Julie Zachman and the hotel staff did a fine job bringing off the Tiptree reception. But they did their job within parameters of a plan the concomm came up with that was not so great. For one thing, it was too short. There wasn't time to do much mingling. By the time you got through the food line and got a drink, there wasn't a lot of time left. We also should have introduced some people to the crowd at the start so you would know who to look for if there was someone you particularly wanted to meet. It took a lot of time to run around that room looking at name tags in the dark.

I didn't like the idea of shutting down parties at 3 AM. I have to give credit to everyone who ran parties at WisCon that they worked out really well, and I had very few problems related to them. Everyone was cooperative the first two nights. By Sunday, things were getting wilder and I believe some parties went as late as five or so. As it turned out, the hotel cleaning staff didn't even start until 8 or 9 AM so we could have let parties go later every night. But I also didn't want to stay up that late myself or ask any of my security staff to stay up. I would hope that future WisCon's avoid using this day program/night party plan. It worked out for us, but there is plenty of potential for problems.

There are a large number of other smaller issues that I would do differently if I were to do it again. I would come up with a better system of doing tips for hotel staff. Bringing a bundle of cash to the convention and leaving it in my room until I was ready to pass it out was not a good idea because by Monday I lost it (or it was stolen) out of my luggage.

I would do a better job of setting up security at the reg desk and OPS HQ room. We were letting entirely too



much traffic behind the tables where we were keeping entirely too much valuable stuff accessible. Since we were not too busy with registration after Saturday morning, we got a little lax figuring it was easy to keep an eye on people, but that was not a good idea.

The biggest problem for WisCon, as I see it, is that we have no one talking about stepping forward to run the con next year or even to do programming or publications or take over the database from **Tracy**. If one of our big goals for WisCon 20 was to inspire a new group of people to step up and take a turn at running the convention, we failed. I have heard of no one interested in doing any of these things. We certainly succeeded in promoting WisCon to an excited crowd of new attendees. Even Ursula Le Guin told Jeanne that she would like to come back to another WisCon soon. Pamela Sargent and Elisabeth Vonarbug pledged that they would never miss another WisCon. Many of our attendees were practically delirious with excitement and could talk of nothing but "next year." But as I see it, we are in no position to do this next year.

Jeanne and I have been working on WisCon 20 for two years. It has consumed our lives especially in the last six months. We need a break. We are not interested in working on WisCon 21 in any serious capacity. **Steve Swartz** is moving to Seattle and is definitely not interested in doing this again. Neither is publications head **Meg Hamel**. **Tracy** wants to give up managing the database (a critical job for any WisCon, but utterly vital for WisCon 20). No one is talking about stepping forward, that I have heard, to assume these responsibilities for next year.

Next year's committee is already running behind. It is very hard to get people to come to WisCon meetings in the summer, but the committee will need the time to plan. Last summer I lured the prime department heads to the Union Terrace on Monday nights and plied them with beer to get work done. The next committee will need to

start work at once and probably resort to a similar tactic.

I think the SF³ group is tired of running WisCon. To pull off WisCon 20, we dragooned everyone in town to work on it in some fashion or another plus we aggressively recruited people from around the country to do key jobs. I think we pretty well burned everyone out on con running for awhile. We did good, folks. Maybe we should consider resting for a while on our laurels.

I don't believe we have enough committed people here in town to pull off a convention larger than say 200-300 attendees, with, at most, one to three tracks of programming, a dealers room, a consuite, maybe a film room and very little else. My suggestion is to take some time off, say a year or two, let our contract with the hotel go, and inform our guest for next year, **Melissa Scott**, that the convention won't be happening after all. Then, next Spring, if someone is talking about putting together a committee for 1998 we can look for a hotel (a small enough WisCon could fit in the Inn on the Park as well as the Concourse) elect a new guest (or invite **Melissa** again), elect a committee and have more than a year to get ready. Doesn't that sound more sane?

I was deeply moved when people told me they want to come back to WisCon or they would never miss another WisCon or that it was the best convention they've ever been to. I can't help feeling that we should try to give them the best time we can if and when we do this again. We really shouldn't just do it because we always have, or because we have a five year hotel contract, or because some guilt-ridden, halfhearted individual finally puts up his/her hand at next week's Postmortem meeting and says "Yeah, OK, well I guess I can do it next year." I want those great people who came this year to come back to a con sponsored by another excited and ambitious concomm that maybe has a clearer vision of what the local group can realistically and reasonably do. I can see myself being part of something like that again.

—Scott & Jeanne, 15 June 1996