

# The Filking Times

October 1989

The Official Filkzine of Con-Chord V

Issue 9

## Changes Coming to *The Filking Times*

**Address List to be Published  
Subscription Rates Going Up  
Monthly LAFA Filk Flyer  
Available Separately**

Effective October 1, 1989, the subscription rate for TFT will be going up to \$7.00 for twelve issues. Until December 1, 1989, renewals for current subscribers or new subscriptions for members of ConChord 5 or OVFF 5 will be accepted at the special discount rate of \$6.00 for twelve issues. (ConChord members, please give your membership number; OVFF members, please include a photocopy of your membership badge.) Any current subscription may be extended at this rate if paid before December.

If anyone is wondering, this rate increase is actually due to the unexpected success of *The Filking Times*. The subscription rate was originally computed on a basis of 4-6 pages/issue, and assumed that many of the issues would be delivered in person at local filks, saving postage. Both of these assumptions have proved otherwise. Page counts are running consistently at 6-8 per issue, and all issues are being mailed - partly because TFT hasn't always been printed in time for the filks, and mostly because of the large number of out-of-town subscribers makes the hand delivery savings comparatively small.

In response to overwhelming demand, the monthly LAFA Filk Flyer will now be available separately for \$4 for twelve issues by first class mail. However, subscriptions to *The Filking Times* will continue to include it, so duplicate subscriptions are not **See Times on Page 8.**

## ConChord 5 Arrives on October 6

### Filk Invasion of LAX Quality Inn Hotel Planned

The next LA Filk Convention, ConChord 5, will start on Friday, October 6, and continue through Sunday, October 9, at the Quality Hotel at LAX Airport. Full memberships are \$30 after September 30 and at the door. Supporting memberships are still \$8. One-day memberships will be available at the Con at the following rates:

- \$10 Friday only
- \$15 Saturday all day (Including the concert)
- \$10 Saturday night-Concert only
- \$10 Sunday only

**Focus on SoCal Filking and LA  
Filk's Anonymous  
A Special Report from *The Filking  
Times* appears on Pages 5-7.**

**From the DAG BBS**

## Child Policies at ConChord 5

**From: Kay Shapero  
Date: Fri Sep 01 14:59:46 1989**

I don't want to start up the whole fuss again, but I will not be going to ConChord unless someone has the guts to allow a babysitting co-op to exist in their vicinity. I have a three-and-a-half year-old. Last year, I was one of two or three folks who spent most of their time out in front of the function rooms watching their own and other kids mostly because nobody else was. Not again. Sorry, Eric.

**From: Paul J. Willett,  
ConChord 5 Chairman  
Date: Sun Sep 17 08:05:01 1989**

1) The problems we had last year (and the year before, and...) with people letting their kids run loose is **See Child on Page 8.**

The hotel is located at 5249 West Century Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90045. Call them directly for reservations at 213/645-2200. State that you are with ConChord and remind the clerk that Con room rates are \$50 for a single, double, triple or quad.

**Finding the Hotel:** This may not be as easy as you think. The hotel is on the northwest corner of La Cienega and Century, but this area is undergoing major construction for the Century Fwy. See Thos. Bros. page 56, grid E-3, but be aware that the map may not be accurate as they tear-up and re-build exit ramps and roads.

**From I-405 Northbound:** Take the Imperial Hwy Exit (construction has closed the Century exit). Follow the detour signs towards LAX, they will take you to Century Blvd. La Cienega is one block west of the Fwy, then Aviation is another block further west. We don't know where the detours will take you - you'll have to find it from here on your own.

**From the I-405 Southbound:** Take the Century Blvd exit. Turn left (from the right-hand lane) at the bottom of the ramp onto La Cienega. The hotel is on the near right-hand corner at Century, the next cross street.

**Flying:** Call the hotel from the airport for the free shuttle bus. Look for the special hotel phones in the lobbies (?).

And finally, call Paul Willett, the Chairman, at 818/995-0855 all day (although after 5 PM is best) until 9 PM for any last minute questions about the Con.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Conventions:

**OVFF V**, October 27-29, 1989. P.O. Box 211101, Columbus, OH 43221. Memberships: \$20 after Sept 30 and at the door. GoH's: Barry & Sally Childs-Helton. Toastmaster: Joey Shoji. Hotel: University Inn, 3110 Olentangy River Road, Columbus, Ohio, 43202. Call 800/262-7468 (800/282-3626 in Ohio only) for reservations. Annual Midwest Filkcon. Vote for the OVFF *Pegasus Awards*. non-members can vote, too!

**LosCon Sixteen**, November 24-26, c/o LASFS, 11513 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601. GoH's: Writer, Jeanne & Spider Robinson; Artist, Erin McKee; Fan, John & Bjo Trimble. Membership: \$20 until ?, \$25 at the door. Hotel: Pasadena Hilton.

**Sillicon '89**, November 24-26, 1989. P.O. Box 8029, San Jose, CA 95155, 408/993-0140. GoH's: Charles de Lint, David Cherry, Nancy L. Cobb. TM: Diana Paxson. Membership: \$25 thru 11/1/89, \$30 at the door. Hotel: San Jose Red Lion Inn, 408/279-0600.

**Consonance 1990**, March 2-4, 1990. Bob Laurent, Chair, Wall Songs, P.O. Box 29888, Oakland, CA 94604. Membership: \$20 thru 10/09/89; \$25 thru 2/2/90; higher later. GoH's: Barry & Sally Childs-Helton. Toastmaster: Chris Weber. Hotel: San Jose Radisson Hotel 1471 N. 4th St., San Jose, CA 95112, 408/298-0100. Room rates: \$52 Sgl/Dbl, \$62 Trip/Quad.

**Random Realities, The Convention**, a.k.a. Randomcon I, April 13-15, 1990. Keith Williams, Chair. P.O. Box 2690, Bell Gardens, CA 90201, 213/927-3200 (phone 6-10 PM only). GoH's: Frederick Pohl, Bill Conlin. Membership: \$25 thru 1/1/90, higher later. Hotel: The Hacienda Hotel, 525 N. Sepulveda Blvd., El Segundo, CA, 800/262-1314 (from CA), 800/421-5900 (from outside CA). Rates: \$49 Sgl/Dbl. Free Parking. Random Realities ran the LA bid for Westercon 40, and has/had local filkers Paul Willett, Eric Gerds, Chris Weber and more on the committee.

**Westercon 43**, July 5-8, 1990. P.O. Box 5794, Portland, OR 97228; 503/283-0802. Attending membership: \$25 till July 4, 1989; higher later. Supporting: \$15.

**ConCerto**, Rich and Carol Kabakjian, Chair (?). East Coast Filkcon. No other info yet, watch this space for updates.

### Future Filkings:

#### Los Angeles Area:

**Oct 6-8:** Con-Chord V (see Page 1 for more info)

**Nov 4:** Harry & Mara Brener, hosts; Arcadia, CA

**Dec 16:** Jane Mallander, hostess Rancho Palos Verdes

For info/mailing list, contact Rick Weiss, 714/530-3546.

**San Diego Area:** Usually second Saturday of each month, 7 PM at Windbourne's studio, near 7th & Broadway, San Diego. Call Barney Evans at 619/576-2344 for info.

**SF Bay Area:** For info/mailing list, contact Bob Kanefsky, 415/324-2001, Kathy Mar, 415/481-5736, or Colleen Savitzky, 408/294-6492.

To have your (or any other) filking listed in this column, call or write Rick Weiss (see above).

### THE FILKING TIMES Editorial Policy--TAKE HEED!

Rick Weiss, *Publisher*

Deborah Leonard, *Contributing Editor*

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**CONTRIBUTION POLICY:** Those who send items for print that generate 3-4 column inches of text (3.75-inch width and 10-point type) in one issue will receive that issue free; subscribers having a published item conforming to the above will have their subscription extended by one issue.

**RATES:** \$7 for 12 issues; \$5 for backdated subscription (issues 0-12); 1st class mail. Single or sample copies are available for \$0.75. Send cash, check or money order payable to: Rick Weiss, 13261 Donegal Drive, Garden Grove, CA 92644-2304. We will also trade for other filkzines.

**DISCLAIMER:** The opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and are not necessarily those of the editors. We will try to publish different viewpoints and responses on issues of interest. Do be aware that "No Comment" is a response, albeit rather unenlightening.

**REVIEWS, ARTICLES, COMMENTARIES, LETTERS:** We are looking for items on topics of general interest to filkers, be it local news, filk reviews, tips on songwriting, Convention reports, filk history, local filk customs, comments on previous articles, or whatever else you can think of. Please write!

**EVENT LISTINGS:** We will publish information about upcoming filk events and conventions. So send us something, gang, so we can print it!

**SUBMISSIONS:** Send your submissions to the above address in hardcopy OR 3.5" diskettes (Atari ST or IBM 720 k format) with ASCII files OR upload ASCII files to the DAG Electronic BBS (213/546-1861) at 1200 baud) via the Control Z upload to Sysop command.

**CLASSIFIEDS/ADVERTISING:** Classifieds will be published on a space available basis. Free classifieds up to 4 lines for subscribers; additional lines and non-subscribers: \$0.25 per line. Other advertising--call or write us and we'll negotiate.

**TRIVIA:** This 'zine was produced on an Atari 520ST upgraded to 1 MB using Timeworks *Word Writer ST* and *The Timeworks Desktop Publisher* and printed on a Citizen MSP-10 9-pin dot matrix printer.

## A Review: Filking at Westercon

by Robert D. Coleman

You asked for comments and reports on filking at Westercon. It was the Pitts. NADA. A Big Zero. This was the least (to say the most) that I have ever seen at a major convention. It was all the more bitterly disappointing in that I discovered filking at the big Hilton across the street, at LA Con II, five years ago. That was about the most fun I've ever had in my life (at least in the vertical position).

Let me hasten to add that the low level of filking was no fault of Those In Charge; they did the best they could against a stacked deck. The one small room we had was quite nice and very convenient to my hotel room. I never found anyone in the other room, far down at the end of the convention space, which was a long walk for me. It seemed as though we gave a party, but nobody came. Possibly they were scared off by advance notice of limited opportunities.

In the Filk room, a very few regulars "hung in there" through thick and thin; notably the Golds, who never seemed to sleep. I also frequently saw a couple of our better satirists and song writers, whom I don't know personally. Other than these four or five familiar faces, I saw very few people I knew, even on the convention floor.

As for me, I was disappointed. I had brought several songs, including a new version of "Waltzing With Bears", which I arranged. This is, I think, the only six-verse version in existence. I put it together from a number of different sources. I had it well-polished, but when I sang it the group was tired, and the response was minimal. Maybe another time.

I also had a personal disaster; I lost my main song-book. This contained not only several versions of the "Waltzing With Bears", with my sources, but other songs in my own versions that could have been difficult to replace. Fortunately, I had all

From the DAG BBS

## Reports on Noreascon 3

**Name:** Rich Kabakjian

**Date:** Tue Sep 05 18:25:56 1989

Me first? How strange... I'm probably the last one to return, except for those who are on a holiday tour of New England.

The filking was great. Spencer Love did a terrific job under fire of coordinating a HUGE filk program schedule. There were some initial problems with some of the innovations that were tried (In recording rooms, there was a monitor inside controlling a light outside the door; when the light was on, someone was singing and people were initially directed to wait until the light went out before entering. This offended a number of people greatly, so the signs were re-written to request that if the light was on, please enter quietly. This "toning down" of the

my songs (I think) in computer storage - my "other hat" is a PC guru.

As for others, I scarcely saw my good friends, the Creasey's, at all; I'm not absolutely sure they were ever in the filk room. I always look forward to Jane Mallander's peerless parodies; I was fortunate enough to catch her for a half-hour's conversation in the "Dead Dog" hours, but she just didn't filk.

Leslie Fish held court in the main convention lobby, in that grouping of sofas across from Registration. She never entered the (non-smoking) designated Filk Room. Don't ask me what hours she was singing; after losing about sixteen hours of sleep I was past being able to read a clock. I enjoyed a couple of her "World War II" songs, but unfortunately wore out just when she was hitting her stride. I was also lucky enough to find her alone, once, and enjoyed a rare half-hour or so of uninterrupted conversation.

Kathy Mar and several of her friends occupied the very same space at different hours. They sang a number  
**See Westercon on Page 4.**

request went over much better, but the light was still seen as a pain.), but by the end of the weekend, much praise was being overheard. The concerts and one-shots were pretty good as were most of the rendezvouses(?); I expect some pretty good tapes to come out of Wall Songs this year.

Notables in attendance included Jordin Kare, Bill Roper & Carol Poore, Bill Sutton and Brenda Craven Sutton, Chris Weber, Lee Gold, Mary Ellen Wessels, Heather Rose Jones, and at least a dozen more I'm forgetting and please forgive me it's late and I'm exhausted and what am I doing calling here anyway when I should be in bed? So ANYWAY...

**Name:** Eric Gerds

**Date:** Wed Sep 13 06:12:50 1989

I didn't get to see as much of the filking or convention as I would have liked (being a dealer does have MANY drawbacks) but from what little I did see, the filking was some of the best seen in years. Spencer Love gets a lot of credit for pulling things together...GREAT JOB.

My reports were that the filking broke up around 5 AM to 6 AM each night. The only problem that I saw was that they kept moving the filking around from hotel to hotel. I kept bumping into people who would ask: "Where's the filking tonight?"

Considering that was the only real problem, the filking at Worldcon gets some of the highest marks around.

**Name:** Rich Kabakjian

**Date:** Wed Sep 13 11:41:19 1989

Actually, the hotel-switching was a working-around the Boxboro Louis Wu party on Friday night, which took over the designated filking area in the Hilton. For that night, we were moved over to the Hynes Convention Center. Filking returned to the Hilton Saturday and remained there through the dead dog filking, which ended around 7 AM Tuesday. (At least, that's when I left...)

## Westercon Filking

Continued from Page 3.

of the longer traditional ballads, and that was the general mood of that group. Unfortunately, I didn't know the long ballads and could hardly participate. I enjoy them, though, and hope to acquire some for my repertoire. Kathy sat out quite a few, too, away from the group, watching her adorable twins. I talked with her quite a bit in these interludes.

That was my experience of filking at Westercon. I don't recall the launching of any significant new songs; I could easily have missed them. I was with my wife (she was riding in the wheelchair) as much as I could be and she often needed my TLC elsewhere while the filking was going on.

Where were the rest of you? I was saddened to hear, from one of the Bay Area contingent, that the best of the filking at the last Baycon occurred in private parties away from the designated filking rooms. I hope this was not the case at Westercon and that it does not represent a trend. I know that is how filking got started in the first place, and I know how much fun an "exclusive" party can be: "Us-uns" on the inside and "Them-uns" on the outside.

But that way leads backward to the small, private activities of an unrecognized splinter group. I'd prefer that we retain our public, recognized status as a legitimate part of SF fandom, with a little "Clout", entitled to our own rooms and some respect from the Con Committees. Also, I want to see our numbers, and the talent within them, grow. That requires both a public presence and high visibility (audibility?) to draw in people who don't even know we exist.

I think we have a lot to offer. After all, who else is going to sing the Songs of the Spaceways, and set the "Horns of Elfland faintly blowing" the Faerie Harmonies of the Heart? What we have, I want to share as widely as possible. And the best way to do that is to be inclusive, not

## Quick News

➤ Robert Coleman reports that he lost his main songbook at Westercon. It was a black spring-clamp notebook, about 9 x 14. Several of the songs have his full name or his initials (RDC) on it. He was sitting near the Golds the last time he remembers having it. If anyone found it, drop *TF7* a line and we'll pass it along.

➤ Firebird Arts & Music recently mailed a new edition of The Firebird Flyer, giving a list of recent releases and upcoming tapes. There is also a list of stores and dealers - and the Cons they will be selling at - who carry their products. Look for a new catalog from them sometime in September. If you haven't received a flyer, drop them a line to add you to their mailing list.

➤ From Unlikely Publications: *Moon Shadows*, a collection of vampire and werewolf songs, cassette tape and songbook, will be released at ConChord.

➤ Rich and Carol Kabakjian are starting a new East Coast Filkcon - ConCerto. Rich thinks they succeeded in annoying EVERYONE with their constant pushing and pulling about ConCerto at Worldcon. ConCerto started its life very well with MANY flyers being scarfed up at Worldcon and lots of interest being shown by filkers near & far, new and experienced. Eight memberships were sold. Carol will be annoying us all further at ConChord and they'll both be annoying people at OVFF 2 weeks after that. *From Rich Kabakjian via the DAG BBS*

➤ The folk song book *Rise Up Singing* credits seven verses from *Old Time Religion* (page 211) to "Filk Singers" and adds: "Seeger reports that 'Filk Singers' are Science Fiction fans that enjoy writing folk music parodies."

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exclusive. Encourage the shy, be kind to the newcomer, and open doors to all. Who's with me, fellow Filkers?

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## "Quoth the FilkLord..."

by Quentin Long

An eccentric column from an off-centered filker

It behooves a would-be filkwright to acquire an understanding of the rhythms and the patterns found in sung and spoken English. If you try to write a filksong and you lack this understanding, you will surely find your scansion limping like a hemiplegic! Count the notes within each measure of the tune that you are filking; after that, count the syllables (which helps ensure that words and tune will match).

Note that good scansion can never be guaranteed simply by counting the numbers of syllables. Do keep in mind that one does not apply equal stress to each syllable; some get no accent, while others are accented strongly. A similar feature is noted in music, where all of the notes are *not* equally prominent - some of them stand out, by virtue of rhythmic constraints, while others are almost not noticed. So if you write a good filksong, remember: strive always to keep track of stresses and accents, and let every stress of the words be accompanied by an analogous one in the tune.

"Well, sure," you say, "that's fine *in theory* - but how can I do that in practice? It's so academic, this counting of stresses!" Says I: Only when it's explicit. As soon as you've written a lyric, all you need do is recite it! The stresses and such will make themselves known, as soon as you utter your lyrics. It's simply a matter of noting the rhythmical patterns of speech. If it rolls off your tongue like a ball down a hill, you know the rhythm's correct. After you pass this first hurdle, sing your words to the tune you have chosen; if the syllable flow feels "bumpy", you've erred - but if not, you have done it correctly.

So: if you want to check your scansion, read aloud what you just wrote. Rhythmic flaws will be revealed, at which time they can be fixed, in a process that we might refer to **See FilkLord on Page 8.**

A Special Report from *The Filking Times*.

## Focus on SoCal Filking and LA Filker's Anonymous

### KUSHYON'S FLYTE HOUSE

by Tera Mitchel

When I was asked to write an article for *The Filking Times* on the history of KFH my first reaction was "But everybody knows what Kushyon's Flyte House is". I had to be reminded that, like any community, filking in the Los Angeles area has changed and that many of our present "regular" filkers weren't around during KFH's hay days and really do not know what it is or how it started.

This story starts some ten years ago. I met Diane Lee Myers through the place we were working and became friends. Now, I was heavily involved in the SCA at that time and would go away on the weekends. Diane would come over to "house sit" and feed my cat. After a while she asked if it would be OK to invite some friends over for a "filk sing" sometime and I said "Yes." It was not until the second or third time that she held one of these filks that I attended, and that was only because I came home early from an SCA event. I met a bunch of nice people who sang these wonderfully offbeat songs, but I had no idea that these people and songs would change my life.

I introduced Diane Lee to the SCA and she would teach me songs, which was very interesting because Diane is tone-deaf. (To this day, I still sing "Banned From Argo" in the wrong tempo, out of key, and three notes out of four are wrong.) There were times Diane would cook dinner for me and my friend Ben Koslover. Ben was a notorious punster and for revenge we would throw pillows at him. First we started with small sofa pillows, then we graduated to large pillows from my waterbed, but the ultimate was when I bought two big floor pillows to sit on and Diane dubbed them the "Heavy Artillery". We started throwing them at Ben too.

### A Brief History of LAFA

by Rick Weiss

Filksinging in the Southern California (or greater Los Angeles) area entered its current incarnation around 1980, when Paul Willett, Ron Bounds, Ev Turner, Gary Anderson and a few other brain-damaged people started Filker's Anonymous. This was (and is) a semi-disorganized group of people who meet monthly at some poor sucker's house and sing. Paul became the first de-facto leader because he was crazy enough to undertake to keep a mailing list and to compose and print flyers every month to advertise the next sing. From there, he quickly went off the deep end and started publishing the Philk-Phee-Nom-Ee-Non, which went from a four page review and gossip sheet to a fourteen or more page Hugo-award Nominee filkzine, publishing filk songs and news monthly, in only a few short years.

With the Fee-Nom-Ee-Non and the mailing list as a uniting force, attendance at the monthly Filker's Anonymous events was usually in the 20-40 range, and often reached into the 60's or higher. (Not all at one time, thank ghod, but total body

throughput for the afternoon/evening.) (Instant) fan traditions called for LAFA filks to be a strict Bardic Circle, to start at 3 PM, have a dinner break and business meeting at about 6, and end when the last person fell asleep on the floor towards dawn. The dinner breaks quickly became either a pizza run, or a buffet served by the host (spaghetti, hamburgers, etc.) who passed the hat to pay for it. The sole "business" for the business meeting was passing out the latest PFNEN and setting the date and place for next month's filk. (At least, this is how I remember the period of 1982-1985 or so.)

In addition to the LAFA filks, others also hosted filk events, from the occasional Kushyon's Flyte House mini-filks, to the Maxi-Filk held at LASFS several weeks after Bayfilk I. Bayfilks, and then ConChords, which provided more concentrated filk fixes for desperate fan. Off-Centaur came on the scene in 1980 and took off for the stratosphere with their filk books and cassettes. For California filking, the early 1980's truly were a "Golden Age".

See LAFA on Page 7.

One evening I was telling them about something that was going on in the SCA. Some people were starting a "Household" and I had been asked to join. Diane asked, "What is a household?" I explained, "A household is a loosely knit together group who do things together in the SCA." Diane responded, "That sounds like fun! I want to be a member of a household." And of course Ben chimed in, "Me too." I laughed and said, "OK, you're both members of a household and I am the Head." That is how we started.

From there Kushyon's Flyte House grew to include first Chris Weber and Eric Gerds, then Arthur Rubin, Paul and Janet Willett, Tim Merrigan,

Catwin Smullen, Paula Green and Cindy McQuillin. Karen Willson-Weber was brought into the household at her wedding, when all of the attending household members (including Chris) threw little satin pillows at her (her parents didn't know what to make of that).

We had fun. About once a month Diane and I would throw a mini-filk (Invitational only because of the size of my apartment) and of course we would go to the regular monthly filks. Every once in a while we would need an extra "filk fix" and have an intra-filk (call everyone that same day). Those were the good old days. Where has all my time and energy gone to since then?

A Special Report from *The Filking Times*.

## Focus on SoCal Filking and LA Filker's Anonymous

### Opinion

### Is There a Future for LA Filker's Anonymous?

by Rick Weiss

LA Filker's Anonymous has been meeting every month now for almost nine years. During that time, individuals have come and gone, as have popular filksongs, filkzines, and filk publishers. Although Jane Mallander has her own opinions on "Now" vs. "the good Old Days" (see her article at right), I feel there are definite observable reasons to be concerned about the future of LAFA:

1. Total attendance is down. Where we once attracted 30-40 people routinely, now 20 is a big filk.
2. Fewer performers and/or guitarists to lead the singing are attending. For a variety of reasons, many of our performers have left and not as many new performers have come in. I can remember filks with at least 4-6 guitar players present; now we are fortunate to get two.
3. Newcomers are not returning to become regulars. They show up once or twice, then disappear. The present "hard-core" group has been together for several years without many new additions.
4. I feel that the energy and enthusiasm are waning. Fewer songs are sung and fewer people are writing and introducing new songs. Even a major convention (West-ercon) held locally was unable to generate a noticeable crowd of local filkers.

LA Filkers Anonymous has seen a lot of changes in people and customs since its beginning and some of its present members are trying to ask questions about the future. Some discussion of this was brought up at the November 1988 filk at the Creasey's and at a separate meeting last April. The general consensus (of those who attended the April meeting) was that they wanted to shake up Filkers Anonymous a bit and become more active in promoting filking and attracting and keeping new people. The Bill of Rights and Responsibilities was generally approved of as a document that can be referred to if/as/when needed. The recent changes in local custom on start times, dinner breaks and type of filk circle were approved and the right of the host to have free choice and control of these things was emphasized.

Deborah and I have become disenchanting and have discussed gaffing from LAFA. We would regret doing this, but the monthly filks are no longer fulfilling our needs. Tera Mitchel tried to get more active recently, but has already dropped out because she found it lacking in creativity and enthusiasm. The same may happen to us

### The Way The Past Will Be

### A Non-Reminiscence of SoCal Filking

by Jane Mallander

One of the fastest ways to get me angry is to shove an Ann Landers column at me. In almost every column, Ann gives in to her incurable disease, to the distress of those who know about it and to the glee of those who share its symptoms. Ann Landers delights in reassuring distressed pinheads from Bible Thump, Nebraska with these words: "I agree completely. Whatever happened to the good old days when kids respected their elders, went to church, did their homework and got their mouths washed out with soap for saying 'darn'?"

You see, Ann Landers has "oldfartitis." She really and truly believes that morality stopped with her childhood, and that things were better in the old days. Ann keeps forgetting that Aristotle said the same things she does. I could add to her plaint: "Whatever happened to segregated water fountains, institutionalized child abuse in Catholic schools, slavery and smallpox? Why isn't rape the woman's fault anymore?"

Why is Ann Landers showing up in my column? I believe a good number of filkers who remember the beginnings of Southern California Filkers Anonymous are suffering bouts of "oldfartitis" when they recall the old days of home-grown filksings.

I got into filking as soon as I was able to stay overnight at hotels for a convention and discovered the stuff not on the program book. At the October 1982 Fantasy Faire at the Fullerton Griswold's Inn, I heard about getting together at someone's house and I loved the idea of not having to wait till another con to hear the music. My first home filk was at Tera's parents' home the next month, and I aired my own first attempt at writing a filksong. To put it bluntly, I got seduced.

Of course I have fond memories of those first times--there is nothing remembered with such clarity as the first time, and my intro to filking coincided with my discovery of fandom. A heady cocktail (though not nearly as strong as the boilermaker of 1977, when I discovered science fiction, "Star Trek," "Star Wars," "Lord of the Rings" and puberty--all within a three-month period).

**See Non-Reminiscence on Page 7.**

soon. We still want to continue to be active. Does anyone else care enough to try to do something? Let's get together and try to create an atmosphere to bring in new people, generate enthusiasm for writing and singing new songs, and to just plain have fun.

A Special Report from *The Filking Times*.

## Focus on SoCal Filking and LA Filker's Anonymous

### Lafa History

Continued from Page 5.

To the filk community's great loss, however, Paul and Janet had started a family in the mid-1980's, and as their children increased, time for pubbing filkzines decreased exponentially. The Phik-Phee-Nom-Ee-Non slowed and stopped, although Paul did keep the monthly flyer and mailing list going for quite a while. With a second child, however, Paul faflated from the filk world for a couple of years. Tera Mitchell, the Ghodmudder of Filkdom and founder of Kushyon's Flyte House, also gaflated for a while. Ron Bounds, Cindy McQuillin, Gary (the Grim) Anderson and several other LAFA regulars moved away from the area. Attendance at the monthly sings started to decline, perhaps because of the loss of the Phee-Nom-Ee-Non, perhaps other reasons. Some new faces became regulars, but not as many as were lost.

PFNEN was sorely missed by local filkers. In the summer of 1988, I took over the mailing list from Paul and stepped into something as LAFA coordinator. Insanity is obviously contagious, however, for having touched the mailing list I too was daft enough to pub a fanzine to fill part of the void left by PFNEN and *The Filking Times* was born. Filling the rest of the gap left by the demise of PFNEN, Lee Gold started publishing filksongs with two issues of *Filker Up*, then went to a regular schedule with *Xenofilkia* in late 1988.

Gary (the Grim) Anderson returned to the LA area in '87 and once again injects large quantities of Ose into the filks he attends. And now, a third child notwithstanding, Paul Willett is attempting to revive PFNEN, much to everyone's delight and disbelief.

That's a very brief history of LAFA, which is still meeting every month somewhere in the LA area. Atten-

From the DAG BBS

### San Diego Filking

by Michael Liebmann

For the last few months, I've been going to San Diego filksings. They are held in the same place every month now (Windbourne's studio in downtown) and only a small group of people show up (max 18), and it's a lot of fun. There are a few rules: enjoy oneself and don't sing "Little Green Eyes" when Windbourne's around (some of them go into uncontrollable crying). I've not enjoyed a filk like the ones there. For instance, at this month's filk, I started doing "Argo's Fire Breathing Daughter" on piano and singing it (I am singing again, people). I had trouble getting through some verses (I kept flubbing the words a bit) and I would start laughing, stop for a second, and then start again. It got SO bad that I started laughing at one point and couldn't stop for almost two minutes, after which I had to use my inhaler to calm me down!

The San Diegan people are very kind, friendly, whatever. They've accepted me as a part of them (I also sorta help Windbourne out from here in LA). If I need a place to stay, there are now two homes w/o felines (and I don't mind sleeping on a floor in my sleeping bag). We do crazy things there during the day (like the time the Navy filkers took me to the 32nd St. Exchange and I felt like a kid at Hannukah time) and enjoy each other at night at the filk.

By the time Sunday comes, I don't want to leave. They make me feel welcome, loved, wanted, appreciated. I know I have to go (if only because of the laundry), but there are times I think I'd be better off in San Diego.

Now tell me, why can't we in LA be like them in San Diego?

### Non-Reminiscence

Continued from Page 6.

Now I play the old worn Memorex I recorded so faithfully at the Willett's Christmas filks and Kushyon's Flyte House and all the old haunts, and the old feelings surface, from a time

dance lately has usually been in the 15-20 person range. The "traditions" had a shake-up last year, so there is more variation in start time, type of circle, and dinner break than previously. Most notably, fewer filks follow a strict Bardic circle, with most of them now some form of Chaos. Con-Chord has also changed from a biennial to an annual event and moved from March to October. What's next? To find out, just stay and listen awhile, and try to sing on key.

when I didn't know Cindy McQuillin from Tera Mitchell. The songs, however, have passed from my interest for the most part, and the quality of the singing and my taping make me wince.

Of course filking is different than it was. People have married, had kids, moved two and three times, disappeared from Southern California. Commercially-produced filk tapes are more available than ever, and filk is becoming known to the public a little more through occasional airplay on Dr. Demento; there is less reliance on home-taped filks and filksings to fill that need to filk. Filk cons have sprung up since that first Bayfilk in 1982 and are now strewn like flowers throughout the country and throughout the year; people save up and go, setting aside one three-day weekend of undiluted filk rather than twelve Saturday-night doses a year.

See Past on Page 8.

## Past Filking

Continued from Page 7.

When I was a brand-new fan/filker, I couldn't bear missing a single month of filking; I remember how grief-stricken I was when I missed my third home filksing (I even wrote a song about it). I was in college and had no major responsibilities. Now I work for a living and am involved with several social outlets and a writers' workshop; my time is not as free as it was. Filksings are old hat, and it doesn't kill me to miss a month or two.

I get tired of hearing the same songs--even "Hope Eyrie" palls on the twenty-ninth rendition. I have never believed that a 20-verse song is twice as enjoyable as a 10-verse

song. Filksing rooms are sometimes close and stuffy, sometimes huge and chilly. And every now and then a newcomer sings a new song that blows you out of the water and reminds you why you do this. All this is as true now as it was in the old days.

So I bite down hard on my tongue every time I am tempted to rhapsodize about the "good old days" of filking, and I don't gab about the time when PFNEN came out every month, because no matter what your age is, the minute you suffer nostalgia out loud you are an Old Fart. Things are better than they were; things are worse. The world has a way of doing that with everything, given a good dose of time. Wake up and smell the Tully!

## Child Policy

Continued from Page 1.

what has prompted our current flap over our "kids policy". In brief, it's:

a) We STRONGLY encourage you to NOT bring kids if at all possible. b) Anyone causing a disturbance, adult or child, will be asked to leave. We realize from experience in the real world that this rule is more likely to be enforced on children rather than on adults; one of things that adults are supposed to know and children are not (always) assumed to know is when/where/how much/in what context a disturbance is allowed/expected, etc...

c) ConChord CANNOT provide space for a babysitting co-op. Insurance and liability considerations would bankrupt the Con before we opened the doors. However, this only means that we cannot pay for a room for you to have a co-op in. We STRONGLY encourage those who must bring kids to talk amongst themselves and co-op IN THEIR OWN HOTEL ROOMS.

d) Our original plan to ban kids completely from certain "kid-free" zones has been modified due to popular demands (i.e., death threats). However, read item "b" above.

Let's try to get some of the righteous indignation and nonsense out of this discussion. The facts are:

A) In the past several years at ConChord (and other cons, filkcons and otherwise), there have been increasing numbers of kids. Fandom has entered a baby boom. (I'm guilty, too, with three.)

B) Kids act like kids. This is wonderful in many contexts. It's not so wonderful in the middle of a filk concert when someone's doing a soft, serious song like "Cranes Over Hiroshima" and a kid starts running up and down the aisles playing and screaming.

C) Many fannish parents let their kids run loose. This is not judgemental; it's an established fact from watching, being on the con committees and working them, and having to babysit other people's kids myself simply because the other parents didn't bother or believe it necessary.

So, Kay, if you're not coming to ConChord because we would prefer you not bring your child or because we can't provide babysitting service, I apologize, but that's the way it has become. We've had too many problems with unsupervised kids creating chaos (and I'm NOT saying that yours was one of them!!!) and we're

## Times Changes

Continued from Page 1.

necessary. This gives you the option of receiving only the Flyer (without *The Filking Times*) at a lower rate.

The (current) subscription list - names and addresses - of *The Filking Times* will be published in Issue #12. This is intended as a public service for you, the filkers, and not for use in any commercial application. If you do NOT want your name and address printed, let me know! If you DO want your telephone number added, let me know. If you know anyone who does not subscribe to TFT, but would like to be added to the list, let me know. I will be glad to add or delete anyone from the list, but I can only do so if you tell me to. If I don't hear from you, your name and mailing address will be printed. Your telephone number will only be printed if I do hear from you.

## FilkLord

Continued from Page 4.

as the "alpha test". Once the major glitches vanish, you can "beta test" your song: add the musical accompaniment that the alpha test ignored. Sing it aloud, and pay attention to the flow, the sense of rhythm - do some words feel "out of place" with the syllables ineptly stressed? If they do, you've made an error, some mistake that must be fixed. Rearrange the words a trifle, try a couple of synonyms; that's the kind of thing you do to make sure that your lyrics shine. True, it helps to have a subject that is worthy of your muse.... but since I am out of room (or near enough), I'll end it now.

not big enough to provide child care.

If you're not coming to ConChord because you're one of the people who got stuck with the problem last year, please reconsider. We're doing our best to make sure that those kinds of problems don't happen again.



## Advertisement

### OVFF Pegasus Awards

Final ballots for the fifth annual OVFF Pegasus awards for the best works in the field will be available at many cons and are also available from us by mail. We encourage reproduction of these ballots to get maximum distribution. You do not have to be a member of the convention to vote. Ballots must reach us by Friday Oct 27, 1989.

### Songwriting Contest

Come one and all and raise your glasses high! This year we are looking for the "Best Drinking" song. As before, the lyrics must be your own and we need to know the source of your music if it is not also original. Songs will be performed at the convention for judging (and toasting).

### Hotel

Ramada-University Hotel  
3110 Olentangy River Road  
Columbus, OH 43202

Rooms: \$52 flat rate. Call 800-262-7468 (or 800 - 282-3626 in Ohio) to make your room reservation.

### Memberships & Dealers Tables

Memberships in OVFF V are \$18.00 until September 30 and are \$20.00 at the door. Dealers tables are \$15.00 plus membership. Please make your check or money order payable to "OVFF V" or to "OSFS, Inc." and mail to:

OVFF  
P.O. Box 211101  
Columbus, OH 43221-1101



## Ohio Valley Filk Fest V

Guests of Honor  
Barry and Sally Childs-Helton

Toastmaster  
Joey Shoji

October 27-29, 1989

Since the October LAFA Filk is combined with ConChord 5, there is no flyer this month. See the article on Page 1 for directions to and other information about ConChord. Tentative schedule for Registration is to open at 5 PM Friday; 10 AM Saturday and Sunday.

**PRELIMINARY** schedule highlights: Friday night, Tuning Session (let's get re-acquainted) and open singing; One-Shots, Saturday at 4 PM (be sure to sign up!); Concerts, Saturday at 7 PM and Sunday at 1 PM. **PLUS:** the Totally Tacky, Tasteless Concert (sponsored by Thor Records), Saturday at 1 PM.

***The Filking Times***

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