

# FANTASY FICTION FIELD

Founded by Julius Unger

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## OPEN ESFA BIG SUCCESS

THE OPEN ESFA MEETING for 1963 was held March 3 in the basement meeting rooms of the Newark, N. J., YM-YWCA. Attending the conclave, honoring John W. Campbell on his 25 years as editor, were about 150 fans, approximately 30 of whom were either non-paying guests or members of the Eastern Science Fiction Association. Income from the one dollar entrance fee amounted to \$120. Expenses for the room, etc., was \$87, plus some incidentals. The program began about 2:00 PM and concluded at 5:15 PM and featured speeches by Lester Del Rey, Isaac Asimov, and Randall Garrett, in addition to the guest of honor. Sam Moskowitz gave a slide lecture and discoursed at some length on other topics. A fuller and more personal account of the con follows on subsequent pages of this issue for those interested in more than the bare essentials.

## Fan Ballot Deadline Changed

ACCORDING TO A NEWS RELEASE from Charles Wells, Fan Poll Committee chairman, the new deadline for return of the ballots has been set at May 1, 1963. He expects to get out the poll report in early June. Harry Warner, Jr., who is in charge of distribution of the ballots, is now reported to be home and back at work, but the amount of physical activity he is permitted is still very limited. He has, however, assigned a top fannish priority to distribution of the ballots. Harry, as reported in an earlier issue of PFF, recently fell and broke his hip and severely injured his head. Charles Wells further notes that he will have a supply of ballots for anyone who does not get one. His address is: 200 Atlas, Apartment #1, Durham, North Carolina.

OLD TIME SCIENCE FICTION WRITER Harl Vincent (pen name of H. V. Schoepflin) attended the February 28 meeting of the LASFS and reported that he is currently revising his old novel "Venus Liberated" (AMAZING STORIES QUARTERLY, summer 1929) for possible book publication. The new version will run only about half as long as the original 80,000 word novel and will incorporate the latest scientific discoveries about Venus.

X. J. KENNEDY, once known as just plain Joe Kennedy, or sometimes as JoKe, in the days when he was publishing the leading fanzine VAMPIRE, is living and teaching this year in Greensboro, North Carolina. Next year he will be teaching at Tufts.

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EDITORIAL COMMENTS News items have been arriving quite well recently, and getting enough material to print each issue is not the problem it was in earlier issues. However, the problem still remains to some extent, and I will repeat my usual plea for anyone with news items to send them to me. My appreciation for items this issue goes to Redd Boggs, Harriett Kolchak, Tom Haughey, and others which may have either slipped my mind or will send material after this is written. Thanks go to the editors of AMAZING, FANTASTIC, and F & SF for making advance information about their magazines available. I hope to add ANALOG and Fred Pohl's magazines to the group when someone there gets hot and sends the information in. Don Wollheim at Ace is cooperative, as always. ... Another word about money: There are so many fanzines you can't buy 'em all--I know. Trades with other zines which appear regularly are welcome, and if you have sent me something recently, you need have no fears of being cut off my mailing list. The same goes for those who send news items. So far, subscription monies have paid the postage, but on the day I have to dig down and finance that personally, I am going to engage in some prayer and self-examination about whether fandom is really ready for this newszine.

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## Fan-Dango

Fred Chappell, one-time fan writer and associate editor of Redd Boggs's SKYHOOK, appeared on an ABC TV panel in February, along with William Styron, Mac Hyman, Reynolds Price, and William Blackburn. His novel, "It is Time, Lord," will appear in August from Atheneum Publishers. Chappell attends graduate school (English) at Duke.

Philip Jose Farmer, the victim of a 40% layoff where he worked in Ann Arbor, Michigan, has returned to Arizona. His new address is temporarily unavailable.

The March 12 LOS ANGELES TIMES reports that Jerry Bixby, once a well known sf writer, is now living in a cave. Bixby has been employed as caretaker-custodian of Cave Falls, a cavern high up in Box Canyon just over the Ventura County line near Los Angeles. The cave once belonged to the Fountain of the World, a cult headed by one Krishna Venta, who was killed five years ago in an explosion set by two disaffected members of the cult. Recently it was bought by Marvin Rubin of the Chouinard Art Institute and illustrator Bill Tara. In exchange for free rent for himself, his wife, and two children, Bixby maintains the grounds, helps install new improvements, including modern plumbing, etc. A photo of Bixby accompanied the news-story.

FAME IS A FLEETING THING DEPT: From a recent letter: "Harry Warner, Jr., seemed to have some hard luck there. That name sounds familiar somehow, so I suppose he must be a fan celebrity of some sort." Had a letter some time ago from a neo-fan in Illinois--some chap by the name of Tucker. If I can find his address, I want to welcome him to fandom.

# ZIFF-DAVIS LINEUP FOR MAY

## fantastic

May, 1963

### Novelets

THE MESSAGE  
by Edward Wellen

ANYTHING FOR LAUGHS  
by Ron Goulart

### Short Stories

DEVILS IN THE WALLS  
by John Jakes

THE CLOUD OF HATE  
by Fritz Leiber

THRESHOLD OF THE PROPHET  
by Roger Zelazny

ONE FALSE STEP  
by David R. Bunch

THE SCREAMS OF THE WERGS  
by Jay Scotland

PROFESSOR JONKIN'S CANNIBAL PLANT  
by Howard R. Garis(fant. classic)

LOVE STORY  
by Laurance M. Janifer

## amazing stories

May, 1963

### Novelets

JOBO  
by Henry Slesar

THE ROAD TO SINIHARAT  
by Leigh Brackett

### Short Stories

THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE TRACKS  
by Albert Teichner

THE DEEP SPACE SCROLLS  
by Robert F. Young

### Articles

A SOVIET VIEW OF AMERICAN SF  
by Alexander Kazantsev

WHERE IS EVERYBODY?  
by Ben Bova

also in FANTASTIC...

### Vignette

MONOLOGUE FOR TWO  
by Harrison Denmark

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## FANDANGO continued

Thomas B. Haughey, 4211-71 Avenue, Landover Hills, Maryland, writes: "There is a very definite reason why the next issue (MIRTH & IRONY) is not out yet and will not be out for at least two to four months. The reason is simply this: The physical appearance and number of copies distributed will be slightly altered. The page number will also be slightly greater. Number 2 will be a semi-professional magazine with a circulation of 1000 copies. It will contain at least 11 full-page illustrations and will have an internal and external bleed halftone cover. The size will be 8½ by 11 inches. The interior stock paper will be 70 pound, high bulk, 25% rag, natural white, lithographic book paper. All illustrations will be lithographically reproduced. All text will be printed with a complete assortment of types on a letterpress. Length of the magazine will be about 80 pages. The price (25¢) will not be raised." More interesting details, but we're out of space.

# OPEN ESFA REPORT-1963

by Harriett Kolchak & Don Studebaker

This is likely to be the only convention report you will ever read which is written from two simultaneous points of view. The only way to tell which of us wrote which part is by being us. Entrances and exits of the authors are written in a manner to give the best possible description over all. Due to the devastation of our memories by one Dr. Isaac Asimov, some things may be left out. Out of four people polled, all of whom took notes on Asimov's speech, only one had any cognizant notes. We, therefore, attempt to bring you the flavor of this year's Open ESFA, rather than a detailed account.

We arose at eight AM on March 3rd. It was a bright, sunny day, with a strong breeze and a faint nip in the air. This made up in part for the necessity of arising at eight AM. Arriving in beautiful Newark, about three blocks from a stinking river, or perhaps it is a canal. We de-trained, the train being 15 minutes late. We went to the central Y and stepped out of Jay Freedman's car. Harriett walked, through sloppy streets, and Don rode to the door.

We entered the lobby and looked around for familiar faces. Walking to the bulletin board, we ascertained that the meeting was to be held "down." We descended. At the bottom of the stairs we found the meeting room, and it was open. There was a light at the bottom of the stairs, and in the radiant space we found Milton Spahn, surrounded by ESFans and Neofans. We asked Milt, "Who is handling registration?" He answered demurely, "Gee, I don't know." Which meant Harriett Kolchak was handling registration. Taking stock of the stock, Harriett discovered that the registration desk was fresh out of everything, including the desk. Milt went running to phone Chris Moskowitz but returned with the sad news that she was not home. He left a message with SaM for her to pick up some cards, etc., on the way to the con.

Meanwhile, we had to inform everyone who passed through the doors of our misfortune. We had no registration cards, so they would have to wait to fork over their money to us. As fen are always ready to hand over their money, this became quite a problem. A large crowd gathered, demanding we take their money. It was growing too large to handle. Finally, in desperation, Milt asked, "Do you have a tablet?" "Yes," we answered. "So fine," Milt said. "Write their names on that."

Isaac Asimov walked in and signed our copy of "Foundation," our autograph book, the tablecloth, two neofen, and the manager of the John Birch Society. By this time, the name tags had arrived, and it was problematical whether they would all be made out by the Good Doctor, until a young lady, who used to be Judi Beatty, but who has since married, arrived with a box full of safety pins.

Hundreds of people poured through the doors. These people displayed the usual fannish superiority of intellect by asking such questions as: "Remember me?" and "Are you the guest speaker?" After a while we

ESFA REPORT continued

caught on to this and asked them first. This also allowed us to find out who the devil they were.

At this point, Don Studebaker entered with his entourage, many of whom were there first. Surrounding him were Jay Freedman, Rick Robertson, Harvey Forman, and many others. At this spectacular entrance all were filled with admiration. Dozens of BNF's ran to greet him, most of whom vanished when they found he did not have any money. Among those who stayed were Mike McInerney and the entire Evening Session Science Fiction Society of the University City College of New York, under the bearded dictatorship of Elliot Shorter.

The program officially opened as Belle Dietz told everyone to sit down and shut up. She said this was because poor Milt was trying to make himself heard by the simple expedient of screaming into a microphone and was not succeeding. There was a general fear that if things did not quiet down Milt might develop laryngitis and turn the whole program over to Sam Moskowitz.

When Milt was finally heard, he said several kind words about various worthwhile projects--the Silvercon coming up in '64 and the Neofund, Harriett's pet project.

A clump of women had sprung up in the corner, and from this magic glade appeared Randy Garrett. He took a seat next to Asimov, and most remarkable conversations began. Every few minutes for the next few hours Asimov would lean over and say to Randy, or Randy would lean over and say to Asimov--something! A wide smirk would appear on the recipient's face. If anyone in the audience overheard and remembers this conversation, it will probably make them a fortune.

Sam Moskowitz started to talk, and besides John W. Campbell had not arrived. It takes someone like Sam to fill a gap like this, and only SaM can talk about data as long as Campbell can talk about ideas. There were no more tags at the desk; shortly, there was no more anything at the desk, and Harriett was going slowly mad. SaM continued to talk. Empty chairs were filled with people whom Harriett had no name tags for. SaM introduced Don Benson. Don is, if we recall, from Pyramid Books. SaM then introduced someone from World Publishing, if I recall correctly, who plugged SaM's new book. (Sounds fine, and I wish I could afford it.)

Lester Del Rey was next on the program. He looked hale and healthy, and everyone was delighted to see him again. Even without his usual vessel of acid remarks. Lester made us aware that Campbell had arrived, and, indeed, was sitting right behind us. If anyone set the pattern for the program, it was Lester. He proceeded to tell how it was Campbell who made a writer of him. In fact, how John just about wrote many of his stories, providing him with idea and/or outline. He said he considered John one of the three great magazine editors. True to form, Lester concluded by pointing out a few dozen things on which he disagreed with Campbell, but he disqualified his displeasure, saying he had probably disagreed less with Campbell than with any other editor.

ESFA REPORT continued

Sam started to talk again, and Isaac Asimov sat up and took notice. Sam was talking about Isaac. He was telling of the many accomplishments of that astute gentleman. About that remarkable little story, "Nightfall." About the three celebrated Laws of Robotics, and the fantastic and gigantic concept of the Foundation stories, a massive, self-consistent background for many stories. About the large books on authors, which give Isaac Asimov lots of space--for, after all, he is an impressive literary figure. Asimov enjoyed and enjoyed.

Chris Moskowitz was sitting beside us. Over and over, she muttered, "For Ghod's sake, will you shut up and let him talk?" He finally did, to her relief.

Asimov began to speak. He started something like this: "Sam has just told you how much I owe to John Campbell and has said just about everything about me I can think of. I was going to talk about me, but now I suppose I will have to talk about John." (Forgive us if our memories falter some. It is hard to recall every pleasant detail of so engrossing a speech.) He continued, "Sam told you that John discovered me. Really, I discovered myself and simply picked John as the first person to inform." Asimov continued, telling about the first time he submitted a story to JWC. He took it right to Campbell's office and was nearly frightened to death when the secretary told him that Mr. Campbell would see him. (Note: it's hard to see Isaac frightened of anything.) He said John sat him down and started to talk and talk and talk. John had rejected his first eight stories before buying one. He then rejected eight more and bought the 19th. Also, Campbell claimed to have rejected 12 stories, "But this was just bragging on his part."

The legend of JWC grew and grew, as legends can under the fertile watch of biochemists. So when Isaac went into John's office with an idea about a star system so complex that one of the planets knew night only once in a thousand years, John was enthusiastic, and Isaac went home to write a story about it. Meanwhile, back at ASTOUNDING, John told Willey Ley about the story. (At this point, Dr. Asimov gave a brief dissertation on the dialect, illustrating with a fascinating imitation of Willey Ley.) Needless to say, Ike got the cover of that issue with the memorable "Nightfall."

We all knew Asimov made his early reputation with a series of beautifully written stories about robotics. Isaac told us how after he had been writing these robot stories for a while John called him into his office and sat him down and said, "Now look, Isaac, I've noticed certain things about these stories. Consistencies, subtle, well ... rules, that run through them. For instance, one:..." And then John Campbell dictated the Three Laws of Robotics. Then, Isaac came into John's office one day with an idea for a very short story about a galactic empire in the last stages of decay. John sat him down and dictated the Foundation stories and kept him busy for the next ten years. "In fact," said Asimov, "it was not until the boom of the early fifties, when other magazines began asking me to write for them, that I knew I could write." Until that time, he was afraid he was John Campbell's creation, doing the master's bidding. In fact, it was not until this time that he

ESFA REPORT continued

thought of writing anything else. Or so he would have us believe. One factor emerged from this mirthful maelstrom, and that was the fact, pointed out by Asimov, as stated by Del Rey, that John Campbell was a man of ideas.

Randy Garrett was next on the program. This is sort of unfair to Randy. I even heard some comment about Randy doing an encore of Isaac's act. This was not true. Randy was very careful to take a different route entirely, and only the Ghodd Doctor's prerequisite of the day's best lines bogged him down. For instance, Randy talked about his rakish conquests as a ninety-seven pound weakling. How he had written his first story on a bet. The usual sort of adolescent thing. Randy looked at a story in ASTOUNDING, publicly said he could do better, and had to prove it for the sake of his pride. It was a great surprise a year later when a young lady friend was thumbing through ASTOUNDING, and Randy's name glared up from the pages. "Gee," she said, "ain't that funny, a writer with the same name as you." Then Randy got a check.

After that it was not easy, not as easy as it seemed at first. Randy told us the usual about initial failure to make money without working. The truth of the ism that one can't make money without working was upheld when Randy asked if he could apply to the Neofund. Not contribute, apply. It is a shame someone did not have the good sense to splice Lester between Asimov and Garrett. This would have provided better balance, allowing the audience time to recover.

After Randy came the intermission, giving SaM a chance to set up for his slides. Also, to give the audience a break. This it almost never does. Asimov was cornered and asked dozens of stupid questions. Some tried to get him to return to the fold and write more SF.

At the table with Harriett, people began running up and asking things. Mostly the usual line of: do you remember, who's here, will you keep these, etc. John Campbell appeared and placed an impressive device on the table before us, admonishing us to guard it with our lives. From this moment on, the hall was filled with foreign spies, intent on tampering with the machine. It was obviously some new discovery of John's, possibly comparable to the Dean Drive. In desperation we shouted, "It's Campbell's!" People respectfully withdrew. Then John forgot the device, and we were left to its safe-keeping and our self-defense for the rest of the afternoon.

The program resumed with another of SaM's slide lectures. This time, it was on the covers of ASTOUNDING. A brief survey, at least for SaM. His comments were all pertinent, and it is significant that no one left the room.

Picture taking time again as the lights went on, and Campbell was presented with a plaque. John opened his mouth, then shut it again. Pause. Yes, he admitted, he had given writers ideas. Sometimes writers came to him with ideas they were not qualified to handle, and they allowed him to pass these ideas on to someone more qualified. Sometimes he elaborated on ideas the writer already had. He merely organized them.

ESFA REPORT continued

The Three Laws of Robotics were already in Asimov's stories, and John merely codified them. One of the things Garrett had spoken of earlier was John's ability to make people think. John proceeded to do this. He first reiterated his view that SF is the mainstream of literature, being concerned with the whole scope of time and space, of which the here-and-now is but a small part. He then moved on to the new data concerning Mars and Venus recently sent back by our probes.

After Campbell concluded, the con was over, and in the dispersing crowd Don sought out Susan McInerney and didn't let go of her the rest of the afternoon. Asimov slipped away silently. Don went with Terry Carr, the McInerneys, Ted White, Harvey Forman, Larry Ivey, and some others, to play hide and seek in the Newark subways. Harriett, with the rest of us, went to the restaurant. Here the scene was confusion.

Asimov had gone before anyone could thank him for his delightful part. Possibly to get back to his school work or an important experiment. Possibly because he was worn out from signing autographs, though this is unlikely. Campbell slid after him shortly, but we did manage to thank him first.

In conclusion, the post-convention let-down is a symptom caused by our realization that you missed so many good things at the con. The trouble with cons is--too much, all at once. Even so, here's to the next con, and the next, and the next, into infinity.

the end

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