

# ISFANEWS - JAN '72

NEXT MEETING - John & Sandra Niesel, 8744 N. Pennsylvania Ave.,  
Indianapolis, In. 46240 Jan. 8 - 7:30 PM

The following con report was graciously contributed by Jackie Franke. It is on Cham-banacan, so those of you that didn't attend won't get as much out of it as those that did, and you'll be missing some of the best parts and aren't you ashamed of yourselves?

Seventy-plus fans from Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Kentucky, and Missouri gathered at the Holiday Inn of Champaign-Urbana to initiate the underground Lecher Colony of the University of Illinois in its first Cham-banacan. Contrary to previous announcements, no vote was taken to alter the name, though LecherCon displayed much strength. Balloting may be postponed indefinitely.

In these days of declining market strength for S-F material, it is a hopeful sign that first Cons are able to attract such a goodly number of fan. Even more assuring was the appearance of many Neofans and some with no acquaintance with fandom at all. Their baptismal entry went smoothly, with neo, BNF, and seasoned veteran blending un-liquishly.

Programming was slight, making the Con similar to PeCon in tone -- namely a hybrid between the looseness of MidwestCon and the more tightly structured large regionals. Friday, Nov. 26th, a group invaded the computer center of the University and many challenges were issued for games of Space War, resulting in some jostling for positions at the consoles. A writer's panel was scheduled for Saturday afternoon and the Banquet-Art Show/Auction for that evening.

The panel, GoH Andy Offutt and unwarmed Buck and Juanita Coulson, drew well over half the attendees, but suffered greatly from lack of questions from the audience. The main topics covered in what turned out to be basically a troika-type lecture were: How I Write (an expected Offuttheme); Fun and Games in The Publishing World (subtitled Just Where Is My Favorite Editor Working This Week?); and What Is Selling Nowadays?. Points of interest included: that selling a book is only the first step, the adventure comes in getting it into print; gothics with green covers sell better than other hues, and those with two lighted windows rather than one suffer at the stands; under certain conditions, books may be sold more than once...also unpaid for more than once; and that, all in all, writing for a living ain't what it's cracked up to be. Fortunately, the good humor of the panelists prevailed despite the poor response and tear-evoking subject matter.

The banquet was edible and reasonable in cost, and marked by the best one-waitress service I have seen. Her example should have been filmed for posterity, so that all who would enter that profession could profit thereby. After the meal, the folding doors were opened to admit the non-diners to the speechifying and Auction.

Con Committee Chairman Don Blyly introduced the other committee members and the GoH and his wife, Jodie (who is certainly well known enough to be named co-GOH by now!) He then related the committee's efforts to obtain a hoped-for science fiction flick concerning the battling of giant grasshoppers along the mountain-rimmed (?) routes to Chicago. The loss of this deathless classic caused a deep grief which Andy Offutt then assayed to lift with his remarks. After the required funnies regarding motel service and food and a few local-color jokes, the mood turned serious with the mention of two articles which drew Sir Andrew's fire.

The first, from the Nov. 29th issue of Newsweek, written by a Peter Prescott (two 'T's', please note...), contained some of the most blatantly prejudiced statements I've seen in print. Among the more complimentary comments were the observations that "only illiterates and teenagers" read S-F, that the prozines (led by Analog?) are still

in the Dianetics thing, and that the writers, ungrammatical louts that they are, haven't written anything fresh or relevant in thirty years. Hackneyed plots with inserted sex-scenes were the only 'modern' offerings available. It was strongly suggested that Newsweek by informed of the grateful response elicited by such columns. Isaac Asimov came in for some fire for an article in the current Intellectual Digest, where he rehashes some Old Wave/New Wave arguments that I thought had been interred long ago.

The light-hearted Auction, highlighted by some beautiful Dollens paintings, brought good bidding response, and was capped by the auctioning of an item heavy with fannish history...a bottle of Blatz beer which had miraculously survived several years of con parties. It was sold for \$1.27, with the stipulation that Don Blyly sacrifice his stomach lining and drink the brew; he reneged despite some untender harassing from the bloodthirsty mob. The committee attempted to recoup their deficit by selling some burnt-out vacuum tubes, with poor response.

Room parties rounded off the activities of the evening. Filk singing, bridge games, elbow bending and lecherous conduct accompanied the endless rap sessions in various places, and A Good Time was had by all. Note should be made of the many toasts lifted to newlyweds Ann (Wickerham) and Bob Passovoy, who betrayed their Trufan status by honeymooning as bartenders instead of attending to more muddane affairs. More love hath no fan...

- Jackie Franke