CONVENTION



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CONVENTION

CONVENTION: News For SF Convention Planners, is edited and published by Andrew Porter, 55 Pineapple Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201, USA. Published 3 times annually, in March, June and September. Available to those concerned with SF conventions, suppliers and hotels only. 50¢ per copy, one year's subscription \$1.20. Entire contents copyright 1970 by Andrew Porter; all rights reserved. DP 336. Date of publication June 24, 1970. Advertising rates on request.

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Cover photo courtesy New York Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Editorial

Response to last issue has proved encouraging. The primary ingredient of last issue, and this one as well, is THE COMPLEAT CON GUIDE, part three of which in this issue features registration procedures and the details of setting up effective registration. Next issue will cover banquet set up and scheduling, and future issues will cover other aspects of the convention business. After the series is run through here in CONVENTION we hope to gather it together as a booklet for the future use of convention committees.

A recent letter from John and Bjo Trimble points out the advantage that association conventions have over us; simply, they have a central convention bureau or convention chairman which coordinates advertising from hotels and con suppliers with those conventions which at the moment are in the market for a hotel, badges, con flyers, etc. A central coordinating bureau would be a good thing for the SF conventions to maintain — not in the style of an over-ruling World Science Fiction Association, but simply a central mailing address for convention bureaus and hotels to send their flyers to. From the central office incoming mail would be distributed to those committees which need specific services at a specific time.

We have already received a number of brochures from cities such as Denver, Chicago, Atlantic City and San Francisco; brochures from audio-visual manufacturers, flower mailers and roving convention photographers. Even a listing of which firm s offer which service, together with their prices, would be a handy thing for concomms to have.

The convention listing in this issue is a step in the direction of maintaining a list of current conventions available to hotels and convention bureaus, but a central office would be even better. We'd appreciate comments on this line of attack -- suggestions, rebuttals, solutions.

Current News

HOW MANY BIDS FOR NEW YORK FOR 1974? TWO AT THE MOMENT, MORE LATER:

New York fans, upset over the possibility of a con bid for Columbia University (UNI-CON), have organized another con bid for New York. Another group, equally distrustful of the UNICON bid, may put in a bid in order to split the vote for New York and throw the convention to either of the other two bidders, Montreal or Washington, DC. The UNICON bid has run into opposition within New York fan circles chiefly on the basis of the personalities running it. Other criteria, including the use of Columbia University dorm space for housing con attendees, are objected to by many fans.

CONVENTION learned that there are 2 major blocks in the path of the UNICON. Firstly, any group using the college dorms must be a student group. The second and more important is that the Columbia dorms are not air-conditioned. Labor Day Weekend is one of the hottest periods of the year; couple high temperature with high humidity, and the result is anathema. Although meeting rooms would be air-conditioned, other facilities would not be. Another major factor is the reluctance of many fans to attend a convention which would be held in the middle of a slum area. Still others voice objections to living in dorms; fans with military service or who lived in college dormitories express aversion to any return to such a life, however temporary.

The first anti-UNICON bid is waiting to see how the WesterCon, also being held in dormitories, does before it publicly announces its intention to bid. Should the WesterCon fail they hope to convince UNICON to withdraw from the race. If the WesterCon proves successful, as now seems likely, then the race will be on. Whether the second group of anti-UNICON fans will surface with one dissident bid already in the open is a question we're unable to answer at this time.

CONVENTION PLANNERS TO MEET IN DALLAS; EVENTS COULD HAVE SOME EFFECT ON SF CONS:

Planners of business and association conventions will meet in Dallas, Texas June 28-30 for several days of working out solutions to problems they face in running their conventions. Workshops include the following: Facilities; Dates, rates and room reservations; Food, beverage, and room service; Written notice cancellation. Results of the conference which will have bearing on SF cons will be published here in future issues; of especial interest is the possibility that hotel and convention people may work out a standard contract applicable to all conventions, including our own. Such a contract would mean that no longer would inexperienced convention committees be at the mercy of unscrupulous hotels and sales departments.

FUNCTION ROOM SET-UP BOOKLET AVAILABLE:

The Hotel Sales Management Association has now made available a 44-page booklet, "Function Room Setup Manual," which offers more than 20 different ways to set up rooms for various functions at conventions. The manual covers such important things as audiovisual equipment; banquets; and general meeting room setups. Copies are available at \$1 from: Frank Berkman, Executive Director, Hotel Sales Management Assn., 358 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10001.

CHASE-PARK PLAZA EXEC APPOINTED TO NEW POST:

Edmund Sansovini, VP and Director of Sales for the Chase-Park Plaza, was recently named general convention chairman for the 1970 International Convention of the Hotel Sales Management Assn. The Chase-Park Plaza was the site of the St.LouisCon, which experienced considerable trouble from hotel management.

* * *

The Indianapolis Hilton Hotel, first major hotel in the city in more than 4 decades, will open this month. Grand Ballroom holds 1,200 with 6 additional meeting rooms. 7 floors of the hotel are for parking, and the hotel features the usual glass-enclosed exterior elevator and revolving rooftop restaurant. Indianapolis has experienced a revival on the SF scene this past year or so; with other bids for the 1973 WorldCon lapsing, this city might be an unexpected bidder for the Midwest Worldcon for '73.

LOS ANGELES BID HOTEL TAKES ADVERTISING OUT IN HEICON PROGRAM BOOK:

The International Hotel, Los Angeles, site of the 1972 Los Angeles WorldCon bid, has taken a half page ad in the Heicon program book. The hotel, taking a tip from the Boston-Sheraton, feels that this is tangible evidence of its support for the LA bid. In addition, information on hotel facilities in the Heicon program book will add to Los Angeles' chances of winning the WorldCon for that city.

HEICON CHARTER FLIGHT SET FOR TAKEOFF WITH KLM:

The East Coast Heicon charter flight will take off in a KLM plane, switching from World Airways, which has been strike-bound for several months. Don Lundry, organizer of the flight, notes that World did not return their contract with their counter-signature to Lundry, and after waiting several weeks he was forced to go to another airline. The KLM flight will be aboard a regular airliner; the group will share the plane with mundane passengers.

As of this writing 82 persons are signed up with their payments in, out of a possible 100. Cutoff date for those signed up but not yet paid up is July 1st, according to Don. The flight will leave JFK August 10th, arriving in London via Amsterdam later that day. Return flight is set for August 31st from Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam.

CHARTER MAY BE ORGANIZED FROM DALLAS TO BOSTON FOR '71 WORLDCON:

Tom Reamy and the DallsCon bidding committee are looking into the organization of a charter flight from the Dallas area to the Boston WorldCon in 1971. American Airlines has quoted a price to the committee of half round-trip tourist fare, providing a full planeload of 129 persons is achieved. DallasCon Bidding Committee hopes to fill the plane, as voting for the 1973 WorldCon will take place at Boston. For further information write: DallasCon, P.O.Box 523, Richardson, Texas 75080.

AUSTRALIA PLANNING TO BID FOR '75 WORLDCON; WANT RULES CHANGED BACK TO PRE-1969:

Australia plans to bid for the 1975 WorldCon, only on the basis that the rules be changed back to their status before the St.LouisCon Business Meeting, i.e., that the WorldCons be held in the US with a foreign convention once every 5 years; that convention being a bona fide WorldCon, with no National Convention in the US during the year of the foreign WorldCon. The rules as they now stand make the title of WorldCon a meaningless one, according to the Australians. Several members of Australian fandom plan to attend HeiCon in order to set the rules back they way they were.

While Australia is bidding for a WorldCon, it may be unlike any WorldCon previously held. All of Australia's convention have been held without the benefit of a single hotel/meeting room complex. Instead, they have been held in meeting halls, often far from where attendees are staying. Current suggestions as to a site include coastal resort towns as well as the major hotel complexes found in Australia's larger cities.

SAN FRANCISCO HILTON DENIES THEY ARE BAY AREA'S BID HOTEL:

The San Francisco Hilton denies that they are the bid hotel for the 1972 Bay Area WorldCon bid. Although their property was described in several paragraphs of the BayCon II ad in Heicon Progress Report #0, they have not heard from J. Ben Stark for

more than a year. After initial contact with him in 1969, no word was heard by the hotel in the ensuing months. After Stark's failure to respond to repeated phone calls, letters, and telegrams, the hotel cancelled the tentative hold on their space for the 1972 Labor Day Weekend time period, according to Mr. George Meyer, Director of Sales and Catering for the SF Hilton.

This somewhat confusing situation is not helped by word that Stark will personally fly to HeiCon to offer the BayCon II bid to attendees of the WorldCon. If he thinks that he has the SF Hilton for the bid, he is mistaken. But if BayCon II wins out over other bids for the '72 WorldCon, the possibility looms large that there will be no WorldCon that year.

LITERARY PLACES FOR LISTING YOUR CONFERENCE OR CONVENTION:

Good places for drawing editors and bookmen to your convention are free listings in the following magazines: "Calendar," PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, 1180 Ave. of the Americas, New York, NY 10036; also "News Notes," AB BOOKMEN'S WEEKLY, Box 1100, Newark, New Jersey 07101. Listings of name, date, Guest of Honor, membership fee, and address will be run free for up to several months before the event. Memberships from personnel in book retailing and publishing are likely.

[JB Post]

PORTLAND, OREGON ENTERS BID FOR '72 WORLDCON:

HeiCon Progress Report #2 bears word that Portland, Oregon has entered a bid for the 1972 WorldCon, in addition to Los Angeles. No word yet on a bid from BayConII. The Portland bid must be assumed to come from Mike Zaharakis and the Portland Society of Strangers, which hosted a local convention the weekend of May 30-31st. Rumor has it that the Fan GoH, Stan Woolston, did not attend because no one had told him of the honor.

NEW ORLEANS WITHDRAWS FROM RACE FOR '73 WORLDCON:

New Orleans has withdrawn their bid for the 1973 WorldCon. Reasons for the move include hotel trouble and the Shriners. The hotel refused to give them the room because of an unfavorable report spread by the Chase-Park Plaza, site of the 1969 St. LouisCon. Both the Chase-Park Plaza and the Roosevelt (New Orleans) are represented by Robert F. Warner, hotel reps. Evidently because the WorldCon's report on hotel treatment caused the Chase-Park Plaza some woe (cancelled conventions by other groups) the Warner reps are spreading a tale of hippy vandalism and raucous conventioneers. Other problem for the New Orleans group was the Shriners: with every other hotel in New Orleans filled up for the '73 Labor Day Weekend, the New Orleans bid was simply out of luck. Plans for shifting the bid to a Gulf Coast resort motel fell through, and the bid was withdrawn.

OTHER BIDS FOR '73: COLUMBUS AND CHICAGO OUT OF THE RUNNING:

Two other bids for the '73 WorldCon, Columbus and Chicago, have quietly faded away. News from Columbus indicates that the best possible hotel for the WorldCon bid is in process of being converted to offices. Chicago sources indicate that the driving members behind the Chicago bid are simply not as interested as they once were. Without the vital members of the committee, the bid simply withered and died.

LUNACON GROWS LARGER, MOVES TO COMMODORE HOTEL:

The LunaCon, or NY SF Conference, continued its growth this year. Attendance swelled to 737, with total membership approaching 800. At the current rate of growth, the con now ranks as largest regional ever held, with attendance topped by only 7 World Conventions out of a possible 27. Due to the increase in size, the con has moved to the Commodore, one of the largest hotels in NYC, from the McAlpin, where space was limited and rooms divided on several floors.

CONVENTIONS

since last issue

BALTICON 4 (February 20-22). Estimated attendance: 150-200. Actual attendance: 123. Jack Chalker, organizer of the Balticon, suggests that there will be no more Balticons because of dropping attendance.

MARCON (March 20-22). Estimated attendance: 100-150. Actual attendance: 80.

BOSKONE 7 (March 27-29). Estimated attendance: 300-350. Actual attendance: 373.

SFCON 70 (March 27-29). Estimated attendance: 50-150. Actual attendance: 261. Convention was held at the SF Hilton Inn, not SF Hilton Hotel.

SCI-CON 70 (March 27-30). Estimated attendance: 200-350. Actual attendance: 160.

MINICON 3 (April 2-4). Estimated attendance: 50-100. Actual attendance: 160.

LUNACON/EASTERCON (April 10-12). Estimated attendance: 600-700. Actual attendance: 733. See news feature elsewhere in this issue.

FANCON 70 (April 30-May 3). Estimated attendance: --. Actual attendance: 150.

DISCLAVE (May 15-17). Estimated attendance: 150-250. Actual attendance: 183.

in the future

WESTERCON 23; July 3-5, Francisco Torres, Santa Barbara, Calif. Registration: \$3.00. Est. attendance: 300-500. Information: P.O.Box 4456, Downey Calif. 90241.

NEW YORK COMIC ART CONVENTION; July 3-5, Statler-Hilton, NYC. Registration: \$3.50. Est. attendance: 750-1,000. Information: Phil Seuling, 2883 W. 12th St., Brooklyn NY.

ILLICON; July 10-12, Sands Motel, Peoria, Illinois. Registration: \$2.00. Est. attendance: 50-150. Information: Don Blyly, 825 W. Russell, Peoria, Illinois 61606.

OZARKON 5; July 10-12, St. Louis, Mo. Est. attendance: 150-250. Information: Bob Schoenfeld, 9516 Minerva, St. Louis, Mo. 63114.

PGHLANGE II; July 17-19, Chatham Center Motor Inn, Pittsburgh, Pa. Registration: \$2.00. Est. attendance: 150-250. Information: Linda Bushyager, 5620 Darlington Road, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15217.

GOLDEN STATE COMIC-CON; August 1-3, San Diego, Calif. Registration: \$3.00. Est. att-endance: 250-400. Information: Bob Sourk, 2707 Mission Village Dr., Apt. N-1, San Diego, Calif. 92123.

AGACON; August 14-16, Howell House Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia. Registration: \$2.50. Est. attendance: 50-150. Information: Glen Brock, Box 10885, Atlanta, Ga. 30310.

* * *

FANFAIR II; August 21-23, King Edward Sheraton Hotel, Toronto, Canada. Registration:

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\$3.00. Est. attendance: 250-350. Information: Peter Gill, 18 Glen Manor Drive, Toronto 13, Ontario, Canada.

HEICON 70; August 21-24, Heidelberg, Germany. Registration: 20 DM. Est. attendance: 800-1300. Information: Heicon 70, D-6272 Niederhausen, Feldbergstrasse 26A, W. Germany.

MYTHCON I & TOLKIEN CONFERENCE II; September 4-7, Harvey Mudd College, Claremont, California. Registration: \$3.00. Est. attendance: 100-200.Information: David Ring, 1510 N. Euclid, Upland, Calif. 91768.

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DETROIT TRIPLE FAN FAIR; September 4-7, Howard Johnson Motor Inn, Detroit, Michigan. Registration: \$3.00. Est. attendance: 250-400. Information: Detroit Triple Fan Fair, Dept. F-D, 14845 Anne, Allen Park, Mich. 48101.

THE SYMPOSIUM; September 25-27, Edgewater Hyatt House, Long Beach, Calif. Information: Lee & Barry Gold, Box 25240, Los Angeles, Calif. 90025.

SECONDARY UNIVERSE III; October 16-18, Queensborough Community College, Queens, NY. Est. attendance: 100-250. Information: Virginia Carew, English Dept., Queensborough Community College, Bayside, NY 11364.

PHILCON; November 13-15, Sheraton Hotel, Philadelphia, Pa. Est. attendance: 150-350. Information: Ron Stoloff, 3112 W. Huntington St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19132.

Back copies of the second and third issues of CONVENTION are still available. The second issue features news and letters on conventions, plus plans for a new style of progress report which avoids many of the problems associated with producing, folding and mailing progress reports.

The third issue featured the first two segments of THE COMPLEAT CON GUIDE; the first on choosing a hotel, the second on negotiating with the hotel. In addition: a PhilCon report, conference and convention services available for the asking, and convention schedules.

Copies of both are available for 50ϕ apiece. Please send all requests to: Andrew Porter, 55 Pineapple Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201, Att: CONVENTION.

One foreign visitor's warmest American memory might easily be you.



Part 3: REGISTRATION

Registration is the first thing that the convention attendee does at your convention, and it's usually the principal bottleneck for conventions. Smoothly run committees are helpless when they run up against registration problems for which they haven't prepared, procedures for doing things the fastest and easiest way haven't been established, or when questions and problems no one thought of crop up. This article in the COMPLEAT CON GUIDE briefly outlines some of the problems and solutions that must be faced in order to get on with the proper business of the convention.

Time is the biggest enemy of registration procedures. If the time it takes to register con attendees is too long, an enormous backlog of people can pile up; attendees can get tired of waiting to register and simply circulate about the con without having registered; and there is added strain on the convention committee.

Decide what you want your registration to do before you set it up. If you only want a record of attendance and a check on incoming monies then a simple printed card is best. Name, address and price of registration are entered on the card. Cards can be filled out before registration even begins and handed in when it begins, together with the necessary fees. This is the fastest way of handling registrations.

The big problem here is that some people don't know what 'neat' means. Problem can be solved by printing up a card with boxes for each letter of the name. This forces the registrant to print his name, one letter to the box. Other ways to code registrations include color coding cards according to what the registrant wants -- banquet tickets, etc.

Much slower registration is the typed method, where the clerk types information given verbally by the registrant. This can really bog things down; names can be miss-spelled, etc; altogether this is a pretty poor way to register people.

The registration area is one of the most important things in registration. Signs telling people where to register are important; usually the hotel will supply these, in the form of large posters or lighted registration desks. If there are several lines (memberships, banquet tickets, etc.) signs telling what each line is for will save a lot of time for all -- attendees, concomm members, registration personnel. Registration tables should be set up so that people can go from point A to B to C -- any doubling back can result in confusion and essential time lost.

House phones are a good thing to have in the area, provided someone other than registration personnel is answering them. A central command post at the registration area headed by a member of the concomm capable of making decisions for the committee -- and answering questions from attendees -- is a good idea.

Large areas for these things -- registration, command post, banquet sales, etc., are essential. Registration and traffic flow are slowed by overcrowding. Also, proper lighting should be available. People write slower when they can't see as well. Make sure registration and command posts stay in the same location for the duration of the con. If people know where to find essential services, problems get solved sooner.

Check with the previous year's committee or previous concomms as regards peak periods of registration. Maintain full registration staff only during those hours. Many non-SF cons eliminate day-before-the-con registration, also early morning and late afternoon registration. By keeping registration at peak flow during the periods you are open, you eliminate the need for large groups of people to continuously staff registration areas -- a major problem with all conventions. When it looks like registrations are slacking off, close for the day. Most people register nowadays mainly for freebies like the Con Program Book and other publications. If people really want to evade registration, they usually can at today's conventions.

Professional staff is a good thing to have. You can usually get it through the convention bureau. With the registration fees going up, most concomms can afford some professional help, even if only one or two people. Maintain full staff only during peak hours. However, don't try to cut corners when hiring professionals. It will pay in the long run to have professionals rather than the bidders for next year's con running things. Professionals must be broken in to your con's idiosyncracies, of course. If you mix professionals and amateurs, make sure both groups know how to handle things before you turn them loose on the con attendees.

An effective pre-convention method for learning to cope with crises is through "role playing", frequently used by mundane conventions. Get your registration staff together and run through a dummy registration session, presenting them with all the problems you can think of that they are liable to face in the real thing. You'll be able to see how effective a registration force you've established, and how to solve problems before they come up.

Official policy must be established if things do come up that the registration people can't handle. Make sure everyone knows the official policies on refunds, lost badges, lost memberships, checks, advance registrations, etc. If a problem does come up that hasn't been thought of, make sure the attendee can refer to your command post or nearest concomm member.

Badges are usually standardized -- plastic see-throughs with room for paper insertions. Make sure the plastic on your badges is tough enough to last through the con -- and that inserts go through a typewriter easily. Make sure they can be inserted in the badges easily and quickly. If they can't, registration may be held up. Perforations are a necessity for lables going though typewriters. Make sure your badges come in strips suitable for going though typewriters. Finally, make sure that inserts stay in the badges -- too large and the badge flops open; too small and they fall out and are lost.

The following list highpoints registration needs. Make sure all points are covered before the con starts.

- 1. Check registration needs.
- 2. Keep registration cards simple.
- 3. Color code cards for filing ease.
- 4. Check badges for ease in handling and inserting.
- 5. Inserts for badges should be in perforated strips.
- 6. Design the registration area for smooth traffic flow.

- 7. Hire professionals if needed.
- 8. Make sure answers are ready for any and all questions.
- 9. Choose people familiar with money as cashiers.
- 10. Make sure registration will flow smoothly. The speedier the registration procedure, the less time needed for registration.

Next issue THE COMPLEAT CON GUIDE: Part Four will feature Banquet set-up and scheduling, and procedures to use prior to selling tickets.

Do something nice for your secretary. Take a vacation.

Chances are your secretary would love to send you packing. This time, why not let her have her way?

No matter which vacation you pick, you'll enjoy VIP treatment all the way. And that means luxurious round-trip jet passage on a "name" carrier with in-flight meals and beverages provided. First-rate accommodations at a fine hotel with breakfasts and gourmet meals included. And all ground

services—transfers and baggage handling—at no extra charge. Plus your own tour escort, free wine and cocktail parties and superb round-the-clock entertainment.

A quality vacation at a wholesale price—no matter which itinerary you pick. Just decide where you want to go—and when. We'll take care of all the details.

A 2 Week Mexican Adventure, \$490.75 complete

A 2 Week Hawaiian Adventure, \$429 complete

2 Weeks along the Costa del Sol, \$475 complete

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