

NEWS
WHILE
IT'S
HOT!

COMPLIMENTARY FANTASY-NEWS

the science fiction weekly newspaper

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TEN
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WHOLE NUMBER 129

6 AUTHORS AT QUEENS SFL!

ARTHUR J. BURKS REVEALS HOW TO WRITE

MORE AUTHORS TO ATTEND NEXT MTG!!!

Director Hyman Tiger and Sec'y Treasurer Scott Feldman are to be congratulated on organizing one of the most successful meetings that the Queens Science Fiction League has ever held. Making up for their lack of club experience by dint of hard work, these two popular QSFL members worked until 7 A.M. on the three days prior to the meeting in order to insure the presence of the celebrities they had invited. The result of their painstaking effort was the attendance of a record number of celebrated science fiction personalities at the meeting of Dec. 1st.

Among those present were Arthur J. Burks; Isaac Asimov, L.S. deCamp, Malcolm Jameson, Frank Belknap Long, Leo Morey, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Walton, Mr. and Mrs. George Walton, Walton Lincoff, John Giunta (up and coming young artist), Bob Studley, Stan Bachrach, Bob Thompson, A. Hendricksen, A. Claasen, Bill Groveman, Frank Moroff, Abe Oshinsky, Mr. and Mrs. Will Sykora, Jean Asimov, Mary Grosso, Kay Brickman, Pauline Lincoff.

The meeting was called to order at 4 P.M. The minutes were read and accepted after Stan Bachrach pointed out that though his jalopy was supposed to be in worse shape than Art Widner's Skylark of Woodoo, nevertheless he only had one flat on the way to Philly while Art had three. A treasury report was given showing a balance in the treasury of nearly twenty (on.P. 3)

THE PROS WRITE LETTERS TOO!!!

The following are some of the letters recently received by Scott Feldman, Secretary of the Queens Science Fiction League:

Dear Feldman:

I'll be there! There you have the substance of my message. If I were a man of few words I would stop for I really have nothing further to say. Being Asimov I will continue to the bottom of the page or perhaps a little on the other side.

I am quite certain that you have often heard the phrase "Get Asimov." I have heard it, too! I have heard it roared, howled, shrieked, screamed and yowled---at such frequent times as I have found myself three feet ahead of a lynching posse. Luckily they never got me. ---All right then, unluckily.

You needn't worry about my companions. I'll be therein solitary grandeur. The scientific definition of Futurian is: "A guy with whom Asimov has little, if anything, to do." In fact, you can tell the bunch I won't come in with my hair in my eyes and a book of parliamentary Rules under my arm just aching to disrupt things.

Make sure Moskowitz is there. I've got about seventeen bones to pick with him---none personal, you understand, but just on science fictional topics.

Say I'll tell you one thing, though. I may want to bring my sister along. I understand the Queens SFL branch has a feminine contingent and the kid sister might think it a treat to come along with me. Then again, she might (Con.P.4)

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BOOST SCIENCE FICTION

GUEST EDITORIAL by Raymond A. Palmer

The well-known editor of AMAZING STORIES and FANTASTIC ADVENTURES writes:

I admire greatly the splendid work the fans are doing to advance science fiction. After fifteen years of hard work, they have developed a tactic that is absolutely unique. They have, in short, invented a necktie which makes their ruddy complexions simply glow with self-importance, and has the added feature of being instantly adaptable to a strangler's noose--squarely around the neck of all that is good for science fiction!

With such good magazines as ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION, THRILLING WONDER STORIES, STARTLING STORIES, UNKNOWN, COMET, AMAZING STORIES, and FANTASTIC ADVENTURES, all built up by hard work to fine sources of science fiction for those who love this type of literature, those same lovers turn wildcat, and enthusiastically spawn a succubus to prey upon the books they love to read.

What they propose is incredible. First, the author. He is asked to slit his own throat by donating stories to feed the monster.. He may be paid, in the non-existent future, at atrocious rates--starvation rates, "if the mags go over"! Second, the artist. He is asked to do a cover painting for \$15! Heaven knows I pay little enough, but that rate! And \$2 for an illustration. Why insult the artist? Just ask him blindly to follow the author's suit, and do it for nothing. Next, the editor. Mr. Wollheim has a contract(next C.)

This week Harry Warner is back with his deservedly popular:--
FAN MAG REVIEW by Harry Warner, Jr.
Pluto: vol.1, no. 5. 34 large, mimeod pages, devoted mostly to humor. It's one of the few existing humor magazines, and if you like the lighter side, you'd do well to get it. Five colors of ink are something special, too. A dime, Lit., Sci., & Hobbies Club, Decker, Indiana.

Futurian Observer: no. 21. Two lg legal-size mimeod pages of news, mostly of Australian fandom. 7 issues for 20¢; 10a Sully Street, Randwick, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia.
Voice of the Imagi-Nation: no. 10.

The unique "Forum of Fandom": devoted to letters from famous and infamous fans. 12 large mimeod & lithoed pp. and a steel engraving on the cover! Keeps you right up to the minute. A dime, Box 6475, Metro Station, Los Angeles, Calif.

GUEST EDITORIAL Cont'd: to edit 12 issues of two new mags. A contract! (may we insiduously mention that coy "if the mags go over over"?) Mr. Wollheim, does that contract mean you are privileged to sit grandiosely at a battle-scarred desk and be a pro editor in all your magnificence for donating your time?

Okay, so be it. But here is my opinion, my stand, my promise! First, the fans are a bunch of idiots if they think this is good business. Second, I will buy absolutely nothing from the established author who falls for this wildcat scheme, except under the same terms. Next, I will run my books without covers rather than feature an artist who is so rotten he has to sell his art work for less than the cost of his paints, brushes and the board on which he paints. And lastly, I will offer to pay Mr. Wollheim's income tax. It will be no hardship, I'm certain.

NOTE: A special delivery letter has been sent to Mr. Jerry Albert, Editorial Director of Albing Pubs, who are to publish the new magazines referred to in the above editorial. We are awaiting a statement from him.

OSFL MEETING Cont'd: dollars. A recess for dues collection was called, during which some informal discussion was held.

Business was dispensed with and the celebrities immediately introduced. Leo Morey, who had arrived with Arthur J. Burks, had to leave before the meeting. I. Asimov was the first called on to speak. As an introduction to Mr. Asimov's talk, a letter from him to Mr. Feldman was read by the Secretary, Mr. Asimov blushing profusely the while. This popular author then spoke on "What an STFan Ought To Be". He condemned the mixing of political schemes and isms with science fiction and brought out several arguments which proved, he said, that fans cannot influence the editors, and therefore neither the world with their utopian ideas. Mr. Asimov recommended that science fiction clubs be social clubs, whose members are joined together by the common bond of Science Fiction.

Next called upon was L. Sprague deCamp, author of "Last Darkness Fall". Mr. deCamp deplored the absence of Sam Moskowitz, whose letter in the first issue of the new COMET had provoked much discussion. Mr. deCamp stated that after all, science fiction authors, like anyone else, have to make a living and wrote to live, and although a great many of them loved their work and considered it an art, nevertheless, ideals high though they might be would never suffice to pay the rent.

Arthur J. Burks then was requested to speak. As he stood before the club, he said that contrary to the beliefs of the previous speakers, fans and fan letters have often influenced editors' decisions. His personal experiences have shown this to be true, he said. As a matter of fact, Mr. Burks pointed out that if any author's work drew an unusual amount of unfavorable comment from the fans, it usually knelled that author's swan song, as far as that particular mag might be concerned. Although the fans may number only a small fraction of the entire reader audience (next column)

OSFL MEETING Cont'd: nevertheless their opinions, on the whole coincided with that of the general readers. To prove this he said that many who do not write letters do read the readers columns and often think to themselves that this letter expresses their own opinion to a "T" while another letter is all wrong. He also stated that readers' ideas often prove of great value to the author, and that many of them provide new plots or new twists to old schemes. He urged stfans to keep writing to the editors, and if they feel they cannot write stories themselves they should not hesitate to discuss story ideas and plots in their letters, for these may well prove the starting point for an excellent yarn.

In the discussion following Mr. Burk's remarks, the author was asked how a beginner can break into the writing game. He brought out what may be called the "Burks Formula For Breaking Into Fiction." Mr. Burks advised the budding author to pick out the story he likes best in the magazine he likes best and type out three or four pages of the yarn chosen. He should then analyse the story carefully, as well as a great many similar stories, for plot and characterization. Copying part of the yarn will teach the swing or style of the story. Analysing the yarn will indicate the framework on which the story was built. Throw away the copy typed out, get yourself a good title and smooth opening paragraph, and go ahead. Burks said that most of his yarns are written starting with nothing more than a promising title, a carefully worded first paragraph, and a clear idea of the characters. With these things to hand, the yarn usually writes itself. Mr. Burks has written as much as 50,000 words in a single day and sold them all.

Harry Walton, Malcolm Jameson, and Frank Belknap Long also gave brief talks.

Letters were read from Frank R. Paul; Dorothy McIlwraith, editor of WEIRD TALES; Ed Bodin (Con.P. 5.)

The PROCS. WRITE Cont'd: have something else lined up for Sunday afternoon and not be able to come. If I come myself, well and good. If I come dragging along a female by the arm, that's my sister. She is a very well-behaved little girl, and won't bother anyone.

Oh, for God's sake, remove that frown. She's not as little as all that. She's 18½.

She's also pretty!

But remember, I don't promise she'll come.

If you're willing to wait a few months, you can shake the hand of the guy that wrote "Reason" (unless Campbell changes the title.) He bought it from me last week and with characteristic modesty, I think it is the best peice of work--or, to be exact, the least triny--that I have ever done. For instance, I think it is better than "Homo Sol" and if you are so easily pleased as to like that thing, you ought to be nuts about "Reason".

Harry Walton, in writing me, suggested that I might be asked to stammer out a few shy words---blushing furiously the while. Well, if I were coaxed, I might. Just get me up at the desk, tell everyone to sit down and look interested (or a reasonable facsimile thereof). Half an hour later you can call for a gun and threaten to shoot me if I don't stop talking. I mean it! I'll talk as long as you let me.

So long till Sunday. A for God's sakes, don't consider me a Futurian---not if you want to shake my hand.

Isaac Asimov.

Dear Mr. Feldman:

Thank you very much for your kind invitation to come to the meeting of the Queens SFL. I would like to accept but unfortunately I have made rather definite arrangements for this Sunday which I cannot break anymore. Please give to the meeting my best wishes for success.

I notice that you do not have my new address in your files. Since the beginning of this year it as stated in the letterhead.

QSFL MEETING Cont'd: author of the Book "Scare Me" published by the Orlin Tremaine Pub. Co.; Arthur L. Zagat; and Willy Ley. These letters appear elsewhere in this issue.

The question of joining was put to the visitors present. Harry Walton, Arthur J. Burks, Isaac Asimov, Frank Belknap Long, and Frank Moroff were voted in as new members. Mr. Jameson was already a member, and Mr. deCamp said he could not make such an improtant decision without first consulting his wife.

The meeting was then given over to the program for the day. Tiger and Feldman had prepared a science fiction quiz of 100 questions. All present were eligible to join in the fun. As the questioning proceeded, member and visitor fell by the wayside until only three stalwarts were left. They were Walter Lincoff, Will Sykora, and Isaac Asimov, who surprised everyone including himself by lasting longest. The first prize, a copy of "Turnabout" by Thorne Smith was won by Asimov, some interior illustrations, the second prize, went to Will Sykora, and Lincoff won the third prize of a complete set of ASTOUNDINGS containing the Nova yarn, "Slan".

Just before adjournment, Stan Bachrach suggested that the club hold another social and dance. This was put over to the next meeting for final discussion and arrangements. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7 P.M., but several of the members and authors remained after that to discuss writing and other aspects of science fiction.

Among those expected to be present at the next meeting are F. Orlin Tremaine, Leo Morey, Frank R. Paul, Mary Gnaedinger, Ed Bodin, Arthur J. Burks, Willy Ley, and other well known science fiction celebrities.

Please send further invitations and correspondence to this address. It has happendd several times that I could have attended meeting of the Queens SFL if I had known about them.

Willy Ley.

PRO MAG REVIEW by Sam Moskowitz.
MARVEL STORIES, Nov. 1940:-

The reversal of form this mag has gone through has been complete and all inclusive. Gone is the slight taint of sexiness--returned are the solid off-trail science-fantasies that MARVEL SCIENCE STORIES so popular in the past.

Editor Erisman solves the problem of cover lettering in a highly satisfactory manner--by framing the painting and printing title heads about it. The entire effect, though the cover is no masterpiece, of artistry, is one eminently pleasing to the eye.

While almost every story is off-trail, all of them are tainted by some literary crime. The yarns of Raymond Z. Gallun, A. Fedor and Henry Hasse, and D.D. Sharp contain outstanding ideas, but ideas so clumsily handled that the stories lose the fine punch proper handling might have won for them..

John Russell Fearn's effort is run-of-the-mill science-action-adventure. John L. Chapman does best with his story idea despite the fact that this is only his second published effort.

In summary, the general format of MARVEL STORIES is pleasurable, the type easily readable, the stories definitely enjoyable--but poorly handled. (sm)

AMAZING STORIES QUARTERLY, Fall '40:

To an individual who has picked up his first science fiction magazine, AMAZING STORIES QUARTERLY should be a bargain indeed. To the scientifi-fictionist who has followed AMAZING STORIES regularly it is an out and out swindle.

From the cover, one would think the entire four hundred pages are newly printed. Although the average reader would undoubtedly recognize such titles as "The Fish Men Of Venus", "Black World", "Terror Out Of the Past" as being recently published, he would be lulled into believing that the publishers had simply made poor choices for reprinting. But to open the magazine and find that the ZIFF-DAVIS Publishing Company has simply sold him a couple of covers(next C.)

PRO MAG REVIEW Cont'd: and a contents page for his quarter is highly disillusioning. It makes one kick oneself for being sucker enough to cough up sixty cents for these three issues of AMAZING when he might have purchased them belatedly, and bound into one volume for less than half of that price.

What will happen is this. AMAZING STORIES readers will make up by far the largest percentage of purchasers. They will be so enraged at the hoax that they will not only neglect to purchase future quarterlies but AMAZING Monthly as well. Secondly readers are going to do some mental figuring and say: "Why should I pay sixty cents for three issues of AMAZING, when by waiting a few months, I can get all three issues nicely bound into one volume for only twenty-five cents?"

Anyway you look at it, ZIFF-DAVIS stand to lose plenty for this action, especially since they lead fans to believe that this would be a legitimate reprint edition. The idea of getting rid of returns is admittedly ingenious--but surer than all hell it is going to backfire, and back-fire hard!

ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION, Sep 1940:

The covers of the last 4 issues of ASTOUNDING are sufficient to bring tears of joy to the jaundiced eye of the embittered sf fan. Rogers' swell painting of the "Einstein Eclipse" is certainly no exception. The cover, having put the readers in the right frame of mind, seems to make the stories read even better. "Slan" is an above average serial, highly enjoyable, but definitely not up to the super-super raves. Two other yarns in the number are outstanding. These are tear-jerker "Quietus", and laugh-provoker "Homo Sol". Ross Rocklynne and Isaac Asimov have done themselves proud on these two fine yarns, which any fan cannot help but enjoy.

HELP! HELP! HELP! It is humanly impossible for one or two fans to read all of the 20 or more fantasy magazines. D.B. Thompson and Sam Moskowitz have done a swell job so far. HOW ABOUT YOU, and YOU!?!?

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 Flabbergasting Stories: 1936-Jan (vol.1, no. 1, no.2), 10¢(no covers).
 Spaceways: 1939-Nov, 10¢.
 Tesseract Magazine: 1936-May, Jun, 20¢; 1937-Oct, 15¢; 1938-Feb, 10¢.
 FANTASY NEWS: 1939-Jun (First Anniversary Issue-24 pp, Cover by Paul) 50¢.
 Cosmic Tales Quarterly: 1937-Fall, 15¢; 1938-Mar, 15¢; 1939-Special
 New York Convention Issue, 10¢.
 Fantascience Digest: 1937-Nov (First Issue), 25¢; 1938-Jan, Mar, May, 20¢.
 1939-Mar, May, Jul, 15¢.
 Helios: 1937-Oct, 15¢; 1938-May, 15¢.
 Le Zombie: Second Issue, 15¢; 1939-Aug 19th, (Photo Ted Carnell), 10¢;
 Oct 28th, 5¢; Special N.Y. Convention Issue, 5¢; 1940-Jan 27th, 5¢.
 Science Fiction Collector: 1936-Oct (combined with Fantasy Fiction Digest)
 20¢; 1937-Jan 21st, 15¢; Nov, 15¢; 1938-Jan, Mar, 15¢; May, , Aug, 10¢.
 PSFS News: 1939-Nov (Philly Conference Issue), 5¢.
 ISA Song Sheet: 3¢.
 Will Sykora's Resignation From the Presidency of the ISA (The letter
 that started the longest and worst Fan Feud): 10¢.

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Marvel Tales: 1935-Summer, 25¢.
 Science Fiction Critic: 1935-Nov (First Issue, Mimeod, titled "Science
 Fiction Review"), 25¢; 1937-Jul, Oct, 20¢; 1938-Jan, Mar, 20¢ (Mar ish
 combined with Phantastique).
 Amateur Correspondent: (Formerly "Science-Fantasy Correspondent") 1937-
 May, Sep, Nov, 20¢. (Nov was first anniversary no. and last issue.)

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