

ScientiFiction

Winter, 1997



The First Fandom Report



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Cover: Connie Ruppert at I-Con XIV, April, 1995. Photography courtesy of John L. Coker, III.

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FIRST FANDOM REUNION IN ATLANTA

DRAGON CON SNARES BID

Dragon Con, a con that is known for drawing more attendees that many worldcons, has successfully bid for the 1998 First Fandom reunion and Hall of Fame award presentations. Dragon Con has been running for over 12 years in the heart of beautiful downtown Atlanta. Because of a change in the date of worldcon, Dragon Con will be taking over the accustomed Labor Day slot.

Dragon Con offers First Fandom members free membership for each member and his or her companion, a special First Fandom suite where we can all get together and hatch dinosaur eggs, and as much time as needed for the presentation of the Hall of Fame awards. The awards will be presented in conjunction with the Dragon Con GoH banquet.

All facilities at Dragon Con are wheelchair accessible, and a handicap access staff will be available around the clock for all us fossils who want to go out and boogie in the wee hours.

Dragon Con is accessible electronically through their Web site at <http://www.dragoncom.org>. A special mailing from the con will go out to all First Fandom members with even more information.

CONRAD H. RUPPERT: VISIONARY OF THE WORLD OF TOMORROW

A Tribute by John L. Coker, III

Conrad H. Ruppert, pioneering Science Fiction fan, died on August 28, 1997, at the age of eighty-four, as a result of heart and lung failure, following an in-hospital procedure. Regarded as one of the last of the early fans, he made numerous contributions to modern Science Fiction fandom from the late-1920s until the early 1940s, but he will probably best be remembered as a photographer and provider of printing services.

Ruppert described as "the thrill of a lifetime" being able to witness the transformation of science and technology from when he first read of the marvels of television and rockets in the early SciFiction magazines in the

1920s, to the reality of watching a live broadcast of Neil Armstrong walking on the moon in the summer of 1969.

"Connie" Ruppert was born on November 12, 1912, in Brooklyn, New York. As a boy, Connie enjoyed reading the adventures of King Arthur and Tom Swift. When he was ten years old, he was confined to bed for ten days with rheumatic fever, and among the magazines provided by his mother was an issue of *Science and Invention*, published by Hugo Gernsback. It was here that Connie first experienced the sense of wonder which was to last a lifetime. He began reading every issue of the magazine that he could find, and when he was twelve years old, he applied for a card which made him a *Science and Invention* reporter. He wrote a number of articles for the magazine, several of which Gernsback published. Over the next few years, Ruppert spent a lot of time in the public library reading as much Science Fiction as he could find, especially the works of H. G. Wells and Jules Verne.

During 1929-30 while studying electrical engineering at Indiana's Tri State College, Ruppert maintained an active correspondence with Raymond A. Palmer and Walter Dennis. As part of a campaign to promote a Science Fiction Week in 1930, Ruppert convinced

newspapers in several major cities to run editorials in support of the idea. At about the same time, Gernsback was sponsoring a contest to recognize people for contributions to Science Fiction, and though Ruppert hadn't even heard about the contest, Gernsback awarded him a second prize of fifty dollars.

Soon afterwards, while working as an assistant in his father's bakery, Ruppert bought a small hand press. With his friend Donald Alexander, he formed ARRA Publishers, and began printing small booklets. They bought rights to reprint Merritt's 'Through The Dragon Glass', and released it as their first publication. Shortly thereafter, Connie received a mimeographed copy of *The Time Traveller*, Science Fiction's first fan magazine. Ruppert contacted editor Allen Glasser, and after several meetings, they agreed that he would begin printing the magazine, starting with the third issue (March 1932). Ruppert's production values greatly enhanced the appearance of the fledgling magazine, which led to an increase in the number of subscriptions and attracted the interest of many established writers, who were inspired to contribute material to the magazine free of charge.

During 1932-35, Ruppert produced some of the finest periodicals in the history of Science Fiction. He lovingly set the type by hand for several more of the monthly

Issues of *The Time Traveller*, then with Julius Schwartz, Mort Weisinger, Raymond A. Palmer and Forrest J Ackerman, went on to produce other legendary fan magazines such as *Science Fiction Digest*, which eventually became *Fantasy Magazine*. During the same period, Ruppert printed all eighteen issues of Charles D. Hornig's monthly magazine *The Fantasy Fan*, the quality of which so impressed Gernsback that he offered Hornig an editorial position with *Wonder Stories*. In addition to his duties as printer, Ruppert was at various times columnist, editor, advisor and business partner in these pioneering fanish enterprises.

In 1934, Ruppert had an idea of doing a comic strip about a super being, and he approached artist Clay Ferguson, Jr. about working on it. Ruppert wanted a strip where he would supply character development and story line, and Ferguson would illustrate it. The premise featured a young man from another solar system who fell in love with the princess of a planet. The king opposed this relationship and decided that the man's punishment would be to be made immortal. The man and the princess were banished to the outermost planet, where they lived until his wife and children died. Over time, he gained extraordinary strength and exceptional mental powers, and traveled from planet to planet, doing good. They prepared a few strips to sell the idea, and Ruppert

contacted the syndicates, but there was no response to his letters and they could find no publisher. After some time, they abandoned the idea.

By the mid-1930s, other commercial opportunities made it increasingly difficult for Ruppert to donate time each month to typesetting these magazines, and after *Fantasy Magazine's* Third Anniversary issue, William Crawford took on the printing responsibilities. However, Connie remained active in Science Fiction, and attended important meetings and regional conferences through the late-1930s, where he established friendships with such luminaries as H. P. Lovecraft, David A. Keller, Otto Binder, A. Merritt, Frank Belknap Long, Jr., Otis Adelbert Kline and Arthur J. Burk, and met aspiring young writers such as Asimov, Heinlein, and Bradbury.

In 1936, following the death of Stanley G. Weinbaum, the Milwaukee Fictioneers, with Schwartz and Weisinger decided to issue a memorial volume. Palmer managed most of the production, and although Ruppert was busy with other obligations, he printed the volume at cost, and on quality paper using leather binding with gold stamping.

In 1939, Julius Schwartz approached Ruppert about printing a souvenir journal for the First World Science Fiction Convention, which

was to be held on July 4th in New York, and together they sold enough advertisements to raise the sixty dollars needed for the cost of printing. Connie produced a beautiful program book with a gold metallic cover and interior artwork by Guest of Honor Frank R. Paul. On the morning of the convention, Ruppert took his camera and stood outside of the hall with Schwartz to photograph the professionals and noted fans as they arrived.

It was during this same summer in New York City that Ruppert took extensive pictures at the 1939 World's Fair, whose theme was 'The World Of Tomorrow'. Knowing that his involvement in fandom was waning at the same time that a war in Europe was brewing, the utopian vision of the 1939 World's Fair certainly must have seemed to Ruppert to be the culmination of all of his efforts in Science Fiction over the past fifteen years.

After selling his printing business in 1941, Ruppert was drafted into the U. S. Army in April 1942, and received a medical discharge fourteen months later. After returning home to work and raise a family, there was not much time to devote to fandom, although he continued to read Science Fiction. His passion for color photography led him to begin taking scenic pictures and making 16mm films, and in doing so, he preserved for future generations the vanishing

images of Eastern Long Island. Over the years, Connie received recognition for his award-winning pictures and he enjoyed putting on photo exhibitions and giving slide shows in the public schools. In 1989, thirty of Ruppert's photographs of the 1939 World's Fair were showcased in a book entitled 'The World of Tomorrow'.

Then, amazingly, after a fifty-year hiatus from Science Fiction, Conrad attended the 50th World Science Fiction Convention in 1992, where he enjoyed a reunion with Julius Schwartz, Forrest J Ackerman, Sam Moskowitz, and others. This event rejuvenated Ruppert, and he became involved in fandom again. During the last five years of his life, he renewed his written correspondence with long-time friends, assembled a set of his early publications, and began going to conventions and attending First Fandom reunions.

In April 1994, Ruppert received the Raymond Z. Gallun Award from I-Con at Stony Brook University, New York, and in May of the same year he had thirty-two of his photographs of the 1939 World's Fair 'showing science as a promoter and entertainer' featured as part of a major permanent exhibition entitled 'Science in American Life' at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C.

BEAM WINS CONTEST

CLAIMS ENCYCLOPEDIc KNOWLEDGE

First Fandom President Ray Beam recently won an outhouse full of crap for his outstanding knowledge of the picayune. His haul, won from one of Kokomo's gnat-sized radio stations, consisted of a pie, several car washes, \$10.00 worth of food, and other items and services.

The station has an "Impossible question" contest every day. Ray won the contest with his ability to correctly tell the stage name of William Henry Pratt.

"And I didn't even have to call Forry," Beam bragged.

COKER WINS AWARD

HIS IS A BIG HEART!

At LoneStarCon2, the 1997 worldcon, John L. Coker, III received the Big Heart Award.

John has only been a member of First Fandom for a few years, but has contributed greatly to it through his excellent photographs, news reports and, most recently, his

obituary of Sam Moskowitz.

Keep it up, John, someone around here has to be a Nice Guy!

MILLARD HAS BIRTHDAY

"Found Under Rock" Speculators Disappointed

The Friends of the Merrill Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation and Fantasy have announced that they will be hosting John Millard's 80th birthday celebration. John as a Member-At-Large of the Friends' Executive Committee, and co-chair of the Building Committee for the Lillian H. Smith Branch of the Toronto Public Library.

Although no meeting place was specified in the announcement, it seems that it will be held at 239 College Street, 3rd Floor, Toronto, Canada.

Transportation for members of First Fandom will apparently not be provided.

NEW MEMBERS

The following has been made an Associate Member:

Everett Slossman
P.O. Box 156
Suncook, NH 03275

Welcome Dinosaur!

NECROLOGY

Herman R. Jacks (1991, but no one
ever told us)
Samuel A. Peeples
Conrad H. Ruppert

DUES

Dues in First Fandom are now \$6.00 per year. The number on your mailing label will tell you to the end of which year your dues are paid. Please keep your dues current if you possibly can.

DEADLINES

The deadlines for First Fandom events and StF are as follows:

First Fandom:

Dec 31, 1996 -- last date for Hall of Fame ballots to be returned.

May 31, 1998 -- last date for nominations for 1999 Hall of Fame award. Last date for nominations for 1999 first Sam Moskowitz award.

Labor Day weekend, 1998 -- First Fandom Reunion, Dragon Con, Atlanta. Details to follow!

ScientiFiction:

January 17, 1998 -- Closing date for Spring, 1998 ish.

April 18, 1998 -- Closing date for Summer, 1998 ish.

July 18, 1998 -- Closing date for Autumn, 1998 ish.

October 17, 1998 -- Closing date for Winter, 1998 ish.

REVENGE OF THE SCIFAN

Despite our recent losses, it's a real pleasure to see that First Fandom continues to go from strength to strength. Dragon Con, which is unabashedly a media con but which hosts far more attendees than even Worldcon, invited us to be their guests for our annual reunion. John Coker, III, who has done so very much for the organization, has received the Big Heart Award in front of Fandom,

Roscoe, and everyone. Archon continues to devote lines in its program booklet to us, and continues to receive us as family.

It's nice to think that, whenever we feel life is dealing us something from the bottom of the deck, that First Fandom is making real strides in the area of national and international recognition. In many ways it shows that the drive that created First Fandom is not diminishing as we age, but is getting stronger, and that our members are getting younger all the time. Except, of course, for Julie Schwartz who gets constantly younger, and Bhob Tucker who never ages.

I find that, as a psychologist, I am given to fits of insight; often belated, but insight nonetheless. The most recent occurred while I was reading Thomas Pynchon's latest opus, "Mason & Dixon." For those of you who have never read Pynchon, let me say that he is one of the more zany *literati*, a writer who has written the only science fiction philatelic novel, "The Crying of Lot 49," one who can conceive of more impossible things before breakfast than Douglas Adams ever could.

At any rate, while enjoying "M&D" the other week I suddenly realized that Pynchon had been writing in the style of another writer of outrageous fiction: Alfred Bester. Pynchon goes Bester one better by

inventing interesting words, but the basic approach to storytelling is the same: give the audience a show, and the more bizarre the show is then the better they'll like it.

Those of us who read, and who can conceive of a First Fan who doesn't, have a great deal of difficulty either finding books or paying for them. Many of us who couldn't afford books when Marty Greenberg and others were selling them at \$2.50 still can't afford books when the average price has gone to \$27.50, and when a volume in history or some other specialized area has gone to close to \$50.00. I suppose this is not such a terribly high price to pay given the steady march of inflation, but I do hate to walk into a bookstore and walk out \$100 (also known as a Zuni Single) lighter in the wallet.

Enter a Solution. Joe Hensley has reported that, in these days of electronic typesetting, a sales volume of 1,500 is considered "blockbuster" status for a hardback. This means that book publishers are willing to give deep discounts to retailers to sell their wares. But where does one find these deep discounts being passed on to the reader? Not at Book Star, B&N or Walden Books.

It turns out that the deep discounts are available on the Internet, from amazon.com (<http://www.amazon.com>), and from

the electronic division of Barnes & Noble (<http://www.barnesandnoble.com>). Amazon.com was the first, and still seems to be the best in my estimation. They offer a straight 30% discount on hardbacks, 40% if it's been deemed a "best seller" and 20% on paperbacks. You have to pay postage, but the postage charge is less than you might pay to a book club, and more than offsets the discount.

As an example: I bought the \$28 "M&D" for \$17. My wife purchased two other books from them, one pb and one hb. The shipping came to a bit over \$5 for three books. That means that my book cost me about \$19. Not bad.

The History Book Club recently offered a volume in which I was interested. They wanted \$28, which is their usual good discount price. Amazon.com offered it at \$23. Add the \$3 shipping charge to the latter price and it still beats the book club.

Of course I'm not advocating that everyone go out and buy a computer just to get books at a Nice Price, but it's good to know that if you're already on line you can get some bargains there, and not by subscribing to some multi-level marketing scheme either!

We got a fair number of complaints about our last mailing, mostly about where it was and why

it took so long to get out. Ray and I decided that, to save a bit of money, we would combine the June and July mailings into one. This meant that instead of two deadlines, each one a month apart, we would just have one huge deadline. It worked well, I was able to assemble all the dues notices, envelopes, ballot and magazine here, ship them to Ray for final printing, assembling and stuffing, and thence to Howard DeVore for mailing.

Unfortunately the Postal Service didn't cooperate completely with this scheme, and delivery of the mailed envelopes took longer than we anticipated. Still, it wasn't bad for Bulk Mail service, which is what we use except for overseas members.

The real confusion arose when folks decided that their mailings were about a month late. It was planned, gang, and the change was published right here in this little magazine.

As a matter of fact, as I write this there is the possibility that this issue will be a little late as well. You see Ray got an Infection. Now you might think that our Fearless Leader is a mite old to get an Infection, but such turns out not to be the case. I called him one day and he was croaking like an old frog, leaking from both ends, and vertiginous.

Owing to an infusion of

some medical quackery called antibiotics he recovered fairly rapidly, but is still given to fits of fatigue. Also fits of swearing off Greek cheeseburgers, and I really don't want to know what those might be.

You Bab5 fans have probably noticed that FoxNet has dropped the show for this season, a move that was inevitable given Fox's propensity for sleazy lineups. As a matter of fact, Fox is so excited about the entire concept of sf that it replaced Bab5 with a derivative and dated piece of garbage by the late Gene Roddenberry. So you see, there is financial life after death.

But TBS has come through for Bab5. They'll be showing the new, and final, season starting in January, and they have contracted for at least one Bab5 film.

DEPARTMENT OF EGREGIOUS EXCESS:

I got a copy of a catalog from the Easton Press the other day. Now I'm sure that you folks out there wince every time you go to buy a hardback copy of a book, they're running close to \$30 a pop. Well, old Easton Press has brought book ownership back to the pre-Gutenberg days by issuing volumes that cost something like \$80 each. As an example, Richard Burton's edition of "1000 Nights and A Night" costs \$845.75!

At the same time reflect that I live in a part of the country where little Maisha Nez and Alrith Jim can barely sign their names much less read a copy of the local paper, and consider that the USPS which used to have a mandate to transport reading matter at extremely favorable rates now does no such thing, and you won't wonder any more why a book that sells 1,500 copies is considered a "blockbuster."

In closing, I apologize for the lateness of this issue. Aside from Ray's illness and my being out of town a lot, one of our writers was terribly late with his submission. Now, of course, if more of you would write for us...but why dream when reality is so much more interesting?

DINOSAUR DROPPINGS

Dear Mark:

Pleased to say on the health front all seems to be going fairly well. The broken ankle has healed nicely and gives less trouble than the unbroken one! The slipped disc is gradually coming back to normal and gives no trouble provided I move carefully when lifting or bending. I've even dug out a stretch of

unproductive raspberry bushes. In the garage, I've started building a flying model of a Hawker Hurricane (18" span rubber powered) in a vain attempt to recapture boyhood nostalgia. We never grow up do we?

An award for SF collecting seems a good idea — naturally, it comes along just after I've started disposing of mine. Know anyone wanting a run of *Astounding/Analog* 1935-1995?

I see you mention income tax returns. Over here a new system of "self assessment" has been introduced. Val sent for a form and it was more complicated than the old one, she had to send off for the explanatory book. Even so, it took her a month to complete the thing. It proved worth it, she first got a refund cheque for £250, then a further refund of £50.00.

I also envy you getting a 2.1 gigabyte hard drive for only \$199, or about £65.00. Over here they run to about £140 or so. I'd like one as I only have a 40 megabyte disk -- but don't want the hassle (or have the knowhow) to transfer all my systems to a new disk.

Meanwhile I continue to push out ERG, now in its 39th year and currently running my SF memories: "Down Memory Bank Lane." The whole shebang runs to about 14 parts or 120 pages. Maybe I'll be flogging off complete sets

once the run finishes. If so there'll only be two or three copies so it will be first come, first served. I'll let you know in three years time!

Meanwhile, all the very best.
Terry Jeeves

{Terry, U.S. tax law is so complex I've been subscribing to a supplementary service for over 20 years now just to help me get through my own filings. I seem to recall that Simon Templar had his own run-in with the Inland Revenue in a story of the same title. Once in a while I get the urge to little boy it again with model trains, but my taste runs to Märklin and I'm not about to spend that kind of money. -- Mark}

Dear Mark & Ray,

To bring you up to date on my constitution (bodily), since the end of July, 1996, I have been on a roller coaster ride. I spent the first two weeks of July on a visit to my good friend Margaret Keifer, at her home in Loveland. I returned home on the 14th; a couple of days later I experienced some angina. I got myself to the emergency room at St. Michael's Hospital. After spending 10 days in hospital, they came with the diagnosis that all three arteries were blocked and that I needed bypass surgery. I waited from the end of July '96 to the 19th of January, '97, when I was admitted to the hospital for a triple bypass, which was done on the afternoon of

the 20th. Everything went according to Hoyle and I was discharged on the 27th.

I experienced a fair amount of chest pain, not angina. I consulted with my surgeon, but he couldn't find anything and referred me to the pain clinic. I have had a couple of visits with them, but so far they haven't been able to explain it to me. It comes and goes; right now, as I write this, it is very quiet.

Meanwhile, in June, I had some back pain which turned out to be a mild kidney infection which was cured by an antibiotic. Two days later I developed a rash on my abdomen, from mid-line around to the left. This was diagnosed as shingles, and I was given more medication. It cleared up in time without too much pain. Probably the result of the stress and trauma of surgery, etc. Then a routine chest X-ray discovered that I had an enlarged lymph node. Late in July it was diagnosed as a lymphoma, non-Hodgkins type. It's a chronic condition; it can't be cured, but it can be controlled with proper medications. I had my first course of treatment three weeks ago and things have improved a bit. I am presently on my second course, which will be completed this evening. I return to my medical day care clinic in four weeks for the results and probably some more treatment. My doctor is very optimistic, so I don't see any reason why I shouldn't be the same. If it

works, okay, if it doesn't there's nothing you, I or anyone else can do. It's in the lap of the gods, etc. My biggest disappointment at the moment is that I can't do any long distance travel, particularly to the U.S.A., as I can't get any medical insurance coverage for my existing conditions. Anyone who travels to the U.S.A. without additional coverage, it's an open invitation to economic disaster.

I am presently in the process of locating some new accommodation, as this place is getting me down. I am hoping to move into a senior's residence. I'll be 80 years old at the end of November, so I think I qualify. I will send you the details as soon as they are confirmed. I think it will be a whole new life style for me.

As I believe Ray will attest, PAPA, the Pulp Amateur Press Association, did a program in honor of the late Lynn Hickman at the recent Pulpcon held at Bowling Green, Ohio. Perhaps you will have something on it in the next issue of *ScienciFiction*. I would certainly like to see something.

Yours fannishly,
John Millard

{I'm sorry to hear your health is so poor, John. If it will make you feel any better, most Americans feel that their health insurance is an invitation to financial ruin, too. I suspect my oncologist will only be fully paid by my

estate, and I hope the date of payment is many years from now. -- Mark}

Dear Mark:

I think that I met Sam (Moskowitz) a few times at Hydra meetings in NYC in the late 40's and early 50's. I don't remember much about him except that he knew everybody.

Because I am a closet proofreader, I have a few typos to mention in this issue.

1. Page 7, 2nd column, first word of second paragraph. Shouldn't it be WHOA?
 2. Page 12, your answer to David Blair's letter. The word is "leech." "Leach" means to remove impurities by percolation. A leech is a worm.
 3. And final: on page 16 in the 7th line of the second column of Ray's letter, you left off the "t" in last.
- Thanks,
Larry Rothstein
- P.S. -- I'm having a mild feud going with Fred Pohl as to when I became a member of Hydra. -- Larry

Dear Mark:

It seemed a little melancholy receiving the Autumn issue of *SciFiction* the last week in August; I always regret the ending of summer, for I miss the twilight evenings when my city neighborhood assumes its true character, rather than the austere and businesslike face it presents to the swarming office workers by broad daylight.

I was interested in Sean Donnelly's comments on Merritt fans and how they might belong to First Fandom: I am one and I do. It's hard to say what attracted me to Merritt -- my own prose style is quite different -- but he remains an abiding source of enjoyment, and what more can one ask of any writer?

Merritt had an exceptionally successful career as a magazine editor, so he was not prolific, and much of what he did write became overworked as he touched up old pieces and untangled old plots rather than moving on to something new. One thing no longer obvious is that a great deal of his output was -- in its day -- much closer to science fiction than to the fantasy it appears to be to contemporary readers.

He's not much in favor currently, I guess. I ran a web search for information and found Merritt mostly mentioned in book indexes unlike Mervyn Peake, who seems to have a small but vocal following on the net.

One thing puzzled me: one source listed his full name as Abraham Grace Merritt. The book titles were correct, so it was the right person. I had always thought that his middle initial was "E," and had no idea what it stood for. The Clute *Encyclopedia* gives him only as A(braham) Merritt. Maybe Sean's photograph will resolve that question at least.

Sincerely,
Catherine Mintz, Sustaining Patron

{Sometimes graves aren't very helpful, Catherine. It reads: "Abraham." -- Mark}

Dear Mark!

Life in Vladivostok is mostly routine, the days are very much alike. Thank God, spring has come to Vladivostok, the days are getting longer and warmer, and the spirits of people are also rising, especially since Yeltsin made radical changes in the government. But will it help? I immediately recollected one Russian fable, in which some animals decided to form an orchestra. But no matter how they changed their places, there was no music -- the orchestra wasn't able to play. Last week there was an all-Russian strike, in which about 20 million people took part. So, the "Russian Bear" at last began to stir, though I'm really frightened to think what will happen when it finally awakens and with a roar comes out of its lair. The

consequences might be disastrous, and not only for Russia...

A few days ago there was a scientific conference at Far Eastern University. I also made a report -- on Anglophone Science Fiction of the 1990's. My talk was well accepted, the audience asked many questions about contemporary American and British sf, and I was glad to find out that there were rather many students and professors genuinely interested in sf, though they are often overburdened with everyday worries and troubles.

Good health, good luck and Clear Ether!
Yuri Mironets

{Folks, this is one of Yuri's older letters. I print them as I feel the interest you might have in them. Yuri -- most of life seems to be routine, the secret is to make each day unique. -- Mark}

Dear Mark:

I should like to take this opportunity to nominate Marty Greenberg for the most important honor it is within our power to bestow: the 1999 First Fandom Hall of Fame award. Those stalwarts who were actfans in the 30's, the 40's and the 50's will recognize Marty's extraordinary contribution as the founder, along with Dave Kyle, of Gnome Press; indeed, Dave has already been similarly honored, along

with Lloyd Eshbach of Fantasy Press in 1988, while I, as the head of Shasta Publishers (the other great specialty book publisher of the Golden Age) was so honored in 1996. How fitting -- how fair -- that the circle be closed and that Martin Greenberg be our recipient in 1999.

Respectfully submitted,
Erle Melvin Korshak

{Thanks for that nomination, Erle, and I think we gonna give you a special award for that magnificent run-on sentence. Sheesh, I ain't never seen so many commas in a long time! -- Mark}

Dear Mark:

I appreciated the very fine Autumn FF Issue and congratulate all hands for setting up the award in Sam's name. My own collection is too modest, so I need not apply, and although my friends Joe Wrzos and Steve Fabian have good collections, I would perforce say that they, too, are modest. I have about nine of Sam's books. Wouldja believe, I never had him sign them. I saw Christine this week and she is fine.

I am pleased to see fellow-FAPAn Bob Silverberg joining up. He turns out a fine apazine once a year. Do you mean he writes science fiction, too?

Be well and good luck,

Ben Indick

{Ben, it has been rumored that Bob writes a bit, but I think this may be apocryphal. Everyone knows that fanac is too demanding an occupation to permit other activities. -- Mark}

Dear Mark:

This was a rough year. I just heard my dear friend Sam Peeples died, so I've lost two good Sams. Moskowitz was responsible for me getting involved with publishing and I regret that I haven't had a chance to communicate with him in recent times.

Keep up the good work.

Cordially,
Marty Greenberg

Dear Folks:

This may be stepping out of line, and goodness knows I've been accused of plenty of that in the past few years. Still, I'm going to take this opportunity to formally nominate Ray E. Beam for the Sam Moskowitz Award for excellence in collecting.

Those of you who have visited Ray know that one entire room is devoted to his extensive pulp collection which is meticulously housed in individual plastic bags. He has complete runs of ASF, *Amazing*

and *Thrilling Wonder*, not to mention the rare quarterlies and annuals of those that issued same. He has *Unknown*, *Galaxy*, *F&SF* and a host of elusive magazines such as *Marvel*. I could go on and on, fill page after page, and still not exhaust the wonders in his collection.

As if this were not enough, Ray has amassed a stunning collection of hardbacks and art work. The latter I will certainly not enumerate out of concern for his safety, but I assure you they are impressive.

So please accept this formal nomination of Ray, one of the foremost collectors of the genre.

Mark Schulzinger

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

A while back I received a call from one of our members telling me that Bucconeer (Baltimore World Con) was interested in presenting the First Fandom awards at the Hugo Ceremony in 1998. I indicated that we would be interested and suggested that the Convention Committee contact us. We got no written reply.

In another phone call from the member I asked what the Convention was offering us. I

explained that usually our minimum requirements included free membership to the Convention for our attending members and their companions, and access to their VIP suite. A suite of our own, as some Conventions have given us, would be nice but not necessary. The answer I got was that they couldn't possibly do what we requested.

This reply was taken by me to mean that they wanted our awards but they didn't want us. Keep in mind that no one connected with the Convention committee had yet been in touch with either Mark or myself. I suggested to the member that someone on the committee write and tell us what they could offer. I was told that they probably did not have time to write us. I hate to think that they regarded us as being so unimportant that this was true.

We are a service organization, and if we cannot get something for the membership there is no reason for us to exist. With the prices of membership at all Conventions as high as they are, the free membership requirement is the only way some of our members can attend. Mark sent a letter to the Convention chairman stating that, without concessions, we were not interested. In the meantime we received an offer from Dragoncon offering us the benefits that we required, and more besides. We accepted. I have heard the

argument that Dragoncon is a media con, but nobody can argue that Worldcon is not one either; this is one of the reasons that the price of Worldcon memberships is so high.

Since taking our awards and reunions to smaller Conventions we, without question, have suffered some near fiascoes and outright fiascoes such as Rivercon and Name That Con. However we have suffered the same from previous Worldcons. Name That Con was salvaged by the combined efforts of Sam Moskowitz and Joanie Knappenburger. Mark and I are doing all that we can to see that problems are minimized in the future. We are learning as we go.

At coming reunions an attempt will be made to have either Mark or myself in attendance. I have instructed Mark to put together a First Fandom bid kit to be sent to all Worldcon Committees and to prospective regional conventions. If any member knows of a Convention that might be a good prospect please let either Mark or myself know. The important fact to remember is that all offers must BE MADE IN WRITING!

At this point we must consider the matter with Baltimore as having been a non-bid, since nothing was offered us in writing. Although Mark did receive a letter from the chairman stating that she

was sorry that we choose not to present our awards there, this is the only communication we received from the Convention.

Here is hoping that fandom in general starts to treat First Fandom with more respect.

Ray

PULP FANDOM

Fanzine Review

by

Mark Schulzinger

This remarkable piece of work came across my desk a few months ago. It's supposedly a fanzine, and is printed on newsprint in the size used by small town weeklies. The zine is subtitled "sci-fi to save the environment," and the cover price is \$5.00 per issue.

I suppose I should go easier on Garry Wayne Brown the editor/publisher/writer of this thing, but I can't. The entire magazine is devoted to "exposing" his having been fired from a job he held with a nuclear generating plant. He appears to have been a technician, despite his hints at having a position that requires vastly more experience and, from what one gathers from between-the-line reading, seems to

have been a general screwup and major annoyance.

Frankly this is a rag. The advertising it runs is almost entirely devoted to Latin introductions ("Ave, Pulchra?"), 100 horny girls (cornute, I assume), and Big Mail -- adult style (here's your chance, Tucker).

To paraphrase the Pythons, this is not a fanzine for reading, this is a fanzine for lying down and avoiding. Still, if you really want to see it, the first letter I get asking for a copy will get mine. I suggest, though, that you want a copy of this about as much as you want a case of the Black Death.

THE LAST WORD

As usual, I find that an issue has either too much in it or too little. It is extremely difficult to fill the magazine to any predetermined page length with any exactitude. So, as editor, I get to editorialize One Last Time. This is a job that isn't all that pleasant, and which reminds me of my younger days as a fanpubber.

We have some Works in the planning stages right now. By arrangement with Terry Jeeves we're attempting to publish his

autobiography. The project depends, though, on being able to read his copy which resides on floppy disks in what is as yet an unknown format. The reason why we must rely on these data in this form is due to the length of the manuscript; I will not retype 200+ pages into my machine. After all, I have a practice and two other jobs to do. Still, I have no doubt that we will be able to get the job done. Eventually.

I want to remind everyone that the nominations are now open for the first Sam Moskowitz Archive Award. This is a grand idea which was proposed by Joe Martino and Julie Schwartz, and we want to make it a fitting tribute to Sam's memory.

Speaking of whom, Ray and I suddenly realized that we did not know the birth and death dates of a former member. Our first impulse was to call SaM. Then we knew how very much we had lost. SaM was an immensely valuable repository of all fannish data.

So now I have rambled on sufficiently to be near the end of the page. I bid you all farewell until the next ish.

FIRST FANDOM
Dinosaurs of Science
Fiction

Mark Schulzinger
4 Nevada Circle
Gallup, NM 87301

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