

SUMMER, 1992

FIRST FANDOM

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

ANNOUNCING:

SOONERCON 8

CENTRAL PLAZA HOTEL

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

(1-800-522-4383)

NOVEMBER 20 - 22, 1992

**GUESTS: L.S. & CATHERINE C.
deCAMP, FRANK KELLY FREAS,
JUANITA COULSON, MARTHA
BECK, BOB TUCKER, MARK
SCHULZINGER...**

AND ALL OF FIRST FANDOM!

REVENGE OF THE SCI-FAN

In recent years NASA has been a nightmare. It's gone from an organization that managed to get a man on the moon to one that couldn't find its fanny with both hands in broad daylight. It oversold a clunky shuttlecraft to Congress with the ridiculous promise of "zero defects", put all its technological eggs into a limited fleet, overbooked missions, and wound up almost scuttling the whole thing with a defective gasket.

Then it had to send a team up to repair a satellite that had been placed in the wrong orbit. The chairborne blue-sky jockeys rattled their collective heads together, and came up with a custom-designed tool that would allow one man to snag the errant bird and affix an auxiliary motor to it.

Problem was that someone had forgotten two very important lessons it had taken us

ages to learn: Newton's third law, and Parkinson's first. I watched in open-mouthed astonishment as a spacejack, his feet fastened to a crane arm with tape, tried to fasten his hideously expensive special tool to a weightless (but not massless) object that obediently reacted to his every action. I railed inwardly when the same man went out a second day to repeat this ridiculous dance at the bidding of some idiots on Terra who obviously did not know their own masses from black holes. I was about to write off a mission and a satellite.

And then someone came up with the kind of idea that science fiction has been coming up with for its entire life-span: a Solution. Some wise-butt actually dared to recommend that the Special Tool be shoved up a hyperspatial tube, and that three men go out and work like mechanics to install the new part. Some unknown individual who probably used to change the spark plugs and oil

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in his own automobile realized that the cunning solution isn't always the one that works when you're trying to fix something, and that when you set out to replace a windshield wiper blade you usually have to spend all afternoon doing it.

So three guys went out and made the repair *sans* glitzy special tool, *sans* blue-sky scheming. They did what any mechanic worth his wages would do, they fixed what was broke.

There is a serious lesson to be learned here. Space is a hostile environment, but it is an environment in which man can work. The old Soviets proved that to us again and again when they rescued Mir and then kept it going up using 1950's technology. They worked successfully in space and, finally, so did we. And we can all continue to do so!

So let's hear it for the three guys who Could, the guys who listened to Newton and Parkinson. These guys are what science and science fiction are all about.

The big news continues to be SoonerCon in Oklahoma City this fall. First Fandom will be honored here, and all the guests will be FFers. Just in

case you lost your flyer on the affair, here is the information again:

SoonerCon 8 -- November 20-22,
1992 -- Oklahoma City,
Oklahoma.

The con will be held at the Central Plaza Hotel, 112 South M.L.King. Room rates are \$40 for up to four in a room. Call toll free -- 1-800-522-4383.

No pets will be allowed at the con!

Registration is \$15 through June 30, \$18 until November 1, and \$22 at the door. Contact SoonerCon 8, P.O. Box 1701 Bethany, OK 73008-0701, or call (405) 843-6427 before 10 P.M. CDT. The concomm has assured us that if they are informed of the flight on which an FFer is arriving, transportation will be provided.

These folks want us -- let's all be there!

Deceased

Isaac Asimov

Jack Jennings

Dwight Swain

NEW MEMBERS

The following have been accepted as Associate Members:

Bill Bowers

Jim Harmon

Richard Kyle

Dave Rike

Larry Touzinsky

Welcome dinosaurs!

APPLICATIONS

Sam J. Lundwall has been nominated for Associate Membership by Harry Harrison.

INTELLIGENCE

Sam Basham reports that he had an article on Bhob Tucker published in *Books Are Everything*, a semi-pro mag for paperback collectors. He'll be glad to send an offprint to any FFER who requests it. Direct your letters to:

Sam Basham

734 Whithorn Ct.

Westerville, OH 43081

DINOSAUR DROPPINGS

Dear Ray:

Thought you might like to

print the latest scoop on the pseudo-Jap Lensman mess. My California lawyers called day before yesterday from San Francisco and said that the Eternity Malibu Comics outfit wanted to settle out of court. Charlie Brown has already undergone a brutal seven hour deposition pre-trial, I've just finished reading the *one hundred page* transcript! And Charlie, God Bless, covered himself with glory! Ray, you could not believe what went on, I've just finished it and I cannot believe it!

The manner in which they wanted to settle out of court is this: in place of the one hundred and seventy thousand dollars and the "apology" in *LOCUS*, they will accept eight thousand dollars and the "apology" in *LOCUS*! Interesting?

Perhaps they have discovered that they have the wrong tiger by the tail? In any case we unanimously and politely (?) refused. I hope I live long enough to meet them face to face.

We are leaving once again for Ann Arbor for more surgery for Al's eyes. Hold the thought.

Love and Clear Ether,

Al and Verna Trestrail

{I do depositions from time to time. They're as much fun as a

courtroom trial -- and I get paid good money for 'em. At about \$200 per hour the Eternity crowd must have plenty of dough for legal representation -- Mark}

Dear Ray:

The reason I stopped writing science fiction is because I could not make a living at it. The biggest reason I could not increase my income from SF was that I could not break into writing NOVELS. I wrote some, but could not sell them. In the early sixties, only people like Asimov, Heinlein, deCamp, etc. seem to be able to do book-lengths. Not enough money in short stories and novelettes -- even adding in Western and detective shorts, a few articles, etc. Forry Ackerman urged me to move to L.A. and write for the imitation *Playboys* springing up. I did, and started making in a week what I made in a month in Mt. Carmel, Ill. I also did about seventeen "sex novels" -- really almost no sex then, but just adventure and detective stories publishers hoped buyers would confuse with the few really mildly pornographic lines coming out. It was not a really elevating experience (aside from certain body parts), but I needed the

money. I was as poor as any ghetto person, just this side of homeless. Finally I sold *The Great Radio Heroes* and became a minor celebrity. I was on radio and TV almost every week for years, but again it didn't make me rich, or even secure. But more such nostalgia books continued, until it seemed they had all they wanted. There were other things like editing Marvel's *Monsters Of The Movies* for a year and a half, best paying job I had had to that time. Then for a year or so I worked as a radio writer-producer-director, comic book writer and editor, and, in effect, publisher and general public relations consultant and representative for Ralston-Purina's 50th anniversary revival of Tom Mix. For years I had been selling audio tapes, but I found when I got into video there was much, much more money (maybe ten times as much). However, that is really going downhill now that such specialized interest items as movie serials are becoming readily available in ordinary video stores. I continue to write. I finished a 600 page book on *Radio Mystery And Adventure*, out from McFarland sometime this year. I am also just beginning a new project of producing radio-type dramas for talking books. Details when every-

thing is really off the ground.

I am not writing SF now because I personally find that when I write SF I must concentrate on it exclusively, and keep my mind set in the SF world. I have a lot of other things that appeal to me -- things that I enjoy doing, almost daydreams come true, and that pay. Of course I'm married now to a working wife, a lady of property. It sure takes the anxiety out of life. Besides, it was pretty clear that my SF only had a limited appeal -- I wasn't going to become another Bradbury or Asimov. Of my generation it would be Harlan Ellison, Robert Silverberg, and Marion Zimmer Bradley who would be widely appreciated. But many people as far away as Sweden know me as Jim Harmon, the radio historian.

Best,

Jim Harmon

Dear Ray & Mark

Not having a computer printing engine, I am using one of the dwindling supply of onionskin carbon papers to reach you at the same time. You can't find onionskin any more -- it's all sprocketed paper now. I'll be getting a word processor, too, in a very

few months. I'm not against new technologies, but their expense! Will get either a 486/33 or 486/50 with 16Mb RAM, accelerator video card, flat screen 15" monitor, and so on ad nauseam...

Meanwhile, back to the onionskin...

Which brings me to you two guys' assertions of no more cons for you -- or at least Worldcons. Hey, that's what the Old Foo (Tucker) told me several years ago. I asked why, and he told me outright that he had more fun at the smaller cons. I followed up, and got him to think about what he was really saying was that at smaller cons he was a big frog in a small pond, whereas at Worldcon you can get ignored, pretty nearly. He said he hoped it really wasn't that in his case, but he would think about this possibility seriously.

Now I too have problems at Worldcons, or ever large cons of any type, these days. Of course all my old friends aren't around -- most of them are dead. But I'm not going to lock myself in a small room and dream of yesterdays and old friends. I keep making new ones -- invariably, these days, younger, often much younger,

than I. And if some of them happen to be female girls of the opposite sex, so much the better. After all, I've been going out with girls half my age since I was thirteen.

As far as I'm concerned, the only valid reason for not going to any SF con is lack of funds. So I won't be at the SFFWA Nebula Awards or Fantasy Con, but I will be at Worldcon, and will stay several extra days and see Disneyworld.

I doubt that Mark will get many paid-expenses to worldcons. If there is really anything better for him to spend his time and money on, well so be it. But this means he is giving up fandom. Dunno about Ray. For all I know, he may be too ill these days, though chances are it is financial. Sorry, in either case, Ray.

Now, about the sad state of fan affairs. Back when all my old friends, who are all the First Fandom types, were the only ones in fandom, they controlled everything, and almost everyone in a room was an old friend. Now the numbers of fans are inflated, and past the point of most of them being truly interested in SF.

It's partly a result of con-coms wanting to attract huge numbers to make money on

the event, and also to show off what the concom can do -- sheer gigantism for the sake of business. Yech!

And this is what we got stuck with. In part, at least, I blame some of the First Fandom people who wouldn't entertain in their heads what I said more than twenty-five years ago: First Fandom should induct the leading fans of the day after they'd been around a number of years. That way they would become part of the "old-timers" and absorb our "culture." Those of us still left would have an inordinate degree of influence, now largely lost, because the fans running things who don't know most of the old-timers probably don't even give them a thought, or a damn, anyway.

And again, it's too late. I remember that the major consideration of Dave Kyle was that old-time fandom should die out with the old-time fans. I told him this was sad, and even sick, especially when he kept referring fondly to the bottle of brandy the last survivor would drink all by himself. First Fandom threw away the opportunity to continue to have an influence on fan developments.

As for what the publishing houses are publishing these days: the people who run the places are not knowledgeable in the field, and they hire editors right out of college who studied the standard English courses. For the most part these are young women who work for starvation wages, and club up three or four to an apartment to get by. When someone older dies of starvation, or gets married and moves to Kokomo with her husband, the younger things move up in the organization, and, if they persist, get to be more senior editors -- still not knowing much about SF, though perhaps they think they do. After all, it is what they purchase that passes as SF these days.

Of course most of these young women know little, and care less, about technology, but feel more at home with cute, cuddly dragons, and other things that are more understandable than quantum physics. By the way, Andy Porter's comment on "multi-volume fantasies about cute cats and punning elves" was strictly sarcastic. True, but sarcastic -- he wasn't condoning it.

SF has simply been diluted into popular culture. The cons are mostly swamped by teenagers looking for a party venue. A few years later they are into "serious" things like working at mind-dulling

jobs that fit their dull minds. The equally vacuous types they associated with at SF cons don't mean anything to them because they're meaningless persons with nothing special that stimulated their minds when they were at cons in the first place.

Cordially,

Jay Kay Klein

[Quite a few seem to think there should be a Pro award and a Fan award. I may try it next time, but it may be hard to define whether some individuals are fan or pro. I hang around with the younger people also, but that has nothing to do with my feelings toward Worldcons. The reason is financial, not that I can't afford it, but I believe we do not receive value for what we are charged. I go to a Worldcon to see people and I do not need a membership for that. I am not attending Worldcons now because we have an 11 year old in school, which starts around August 20. -- Ray]

{Jay, I thought one of the great reasons for being a fan was egoboo. After paying my dues all these many years I expect to be a big frog. After all, didn't someone say "fannishness is next to frogginess?" Parm me while I eat a fly. -- Mark}

Dear Ray,

Many thanks for the winter report. I really appreciate you and Mark doing it. The letters were interesting and Mike Ashley's "The Birth of Fandom" was *great*. I really enjoyed that.

I have lately sent a letter to Joel Davis telling him why I let my subscription to IASFM expire (he asked). Some of my reasons were: I was only reading about half the stories because I found that some of them were nasty, some just stopped -- they had no real ending, some of them were so obscure to me that I just didn't understand them. Now, if you want, you can chalk all that up to my age, but I really think that Science Fiction is a misnomer for a lot of what's being published.

I buy very few books. The last one was "Nightfall" by Asimov and Silverberg. Excellent! But again, that is an old story. I used to read the original to my 6th grade when we did a science unit in Astronomy.

Besides the older SF stories, I read John. D. MacDonald, Tom Clancy, Mary Renault, Nora Lofts, Martha Grimes, and whatever else strikes my fancy in the used

book store I patronize.

I have read "Silence of the Lambs" as well as rented the video. It's powerful, hard to take in places, but it's an excellent movie. Dr. Hannibal Lector is an alien I think. He's too strange to be of Earth. I do recommend the video because when it gets too much you can press stop and go get a drink of water or whatever.

I have read your editorial several times and I think that your conclusions are correct. I remember how much I enjoyed meeting and talking with other fans in the '60's. That pleasure gradually disappeared over time as did conversation. Harlan's comment is quite right. Conventions became occasions for drinking and ingesting everything available, becoming *very well* acquainted, and playing endless games. Believe me, I have nothing against any of the above. If that's what you want to do, be joyful!

I think what annoyed me the most was the attitude that no one over 30 should be allowed in Fandom, pros excepted, of course. I finally thought "Who needs this?" and that was the end of conventions for me. Now it's a matter of health that keeps me home, but I miss it, I truly miss it.

For what it's worth, let me again agree that the Hall of Fame should be moved to a regional convention where it would be welcomed and appreciated. Midwestcon comes to mind, but I'm sure there are many other cons that would be interested. We have let you fight this indifference long enough. I can't blame you for giving it up, and thank you for your past efforts.

Sincerely,

Leigh Crouch

[I'm saving the older stuff for the boy to read when he gets a little older. -- Ray]

Dear Ray:

A nice job with the Report. Thanks for the time and effort.

As for my own personal report, I'm doing better than I have any right to expect. I got to the world SF meeting in Chengdu, along with Fred Pohl and Betty, and Charlie Brown. I have a novel *Bonehead*, due out in August, and under another contract. And I'm teaching a course in science fiction at our university this spring.

It's nice to be alive and still in the game.

Jack Williamson

Dear Ray and/or Mark:

Since you guys seem to share correspondence, I'll be a cheapass and save 29¢ for another letter. Maybe two if ye olde PO neglects to cancel it and I get it back.

Have to agree with most of the comments about current world (and some other) cons being too damn big, expensive, and overloaded with competing activities. Memories of the best conventions I attended are limited to the early Midwestcons in Bellefontaine where Ray (with bandaged hand) faced Randy Garrett (with bandaged eye), where I played two games of checkers with Arthur Clarke (and beat him), where I could compare rhymes with Charlie Tanner, try to one-up Bob Tucker, try to mediate a broken door between Jim Harmon and Harlan Ellison. I fondly recall my first Worldcon forty years ago, one of the Chicons, where I met Phil Farmer and a very attractive WAVE named Betty Jo McCarthy.

On a personal level I remember you two at a later Midwestcon, after my return from a lengthy incarceration, dragging me into the presence of LeAnn Tremper with a joyous cry of: "Look who's back!"

And that three or four day New Year's Eve party at the Phil/Betty Farmer home where Vern Corriel, Nan Gerding, Randy/Betty Garrett, Mavis Pickles, and others cavorted in gleeful abandon.

I dunno. Even the Midwestcons are getting too expensive to be enjoyable any more. About the only fannish places my family and I have been since TorCon in '73 and Midwestcon in '74 has been a regional called "Contemplation," and the only reason for that is that some fans in Columbia, MO, about 30 miles from here, do it here in our stately capitol of Missouri where we reside.

Hal Shapiro

[I think of the cons gone by also, but, unfortunately, they are gone, never to return. I would like to see you at Soonercon. -- Ray]

{But if you come to Soonercon don't expect the same welcome you got that one year. Ray and I got smarter since then. -- Mark}

Dear Ray:

My time since "retirement" has been largely taken up with writing a couple of volumes published by Prometheus

Books: *A Physicist's Guide to Skepticism* (1988), and a new one, *The Science Gap: Dispelling the Myths and Understanding the Reality of Science* (1992). Although I've been out of science fiction, I couldn't have written these books without having been in it. Indeed, I was just going through some of my old magazines, and I found that in the December, 1939 issue of *Mitty's Mag*, my FAPA publication, I said some things almost identical to the main point of Chapter One in *The Science Gap*. I had completely forgotten that I had said or thought these things fifty years ago, but they were there in my brain all the time, waiting for the right time to come out. Proving again that publishing a fan mag can be good training for professional writing.

Best Regards,

Milton Rothman

[Glad you decided to keep your First Fandom ties. -- Ray]

{I just ordered that last book, Milt. Maybe I'll review it for the multitude in these pages. -- Mark}

{This letter has no salutation -- Mark}

My husband was a proud and honorable man. He lived his beliefs even when it wasn't the

popular thing to do. He believed in freedom of speech and freedom of press and freedom for people to be stupid and not be punished for their stupidity.

He was honest. No one ever received a personal letter from him typed on University paper and mailed with University postage. He was always a little disappointed to receive such a letter from someone else.

He was truly honest -- not just on the surface.

He died in an honorable way -- by his own hand. He tried to kill himself in a way that would not leave a mess for me to clean up.

He was considerate to the end.

We believed that a man should not be forced to live with indignities. We had discussed this and we both agreed that a man has the right to decide when his disabilities and his pain in living are too great.

Dwight was not afraid of death. When he was sick or facing medical treatment he often said, "I've had an interesting life. I've done pretty much what I wanted to do. I'm an old man now, so don't be upset if something happens to me. I've had a long and a good life."

I don't know why my husband chose to die the day he did, but I respect his wishes.

He was a kind and loving person to the very end.

He died an honorable death. You don't have to whisper about it. We both respected the truth.

I was lucky to have a love most people only dream of and I cherish my happy memories of our time together.

Joye R. Swain

Dear Ray:

I received the cover of the Report but no insides. If you are going to use the foldover format you need to buy a long stapler and staple them in the center also.

Have everything moved into the Slan Shack except the offset presses and some bookshelves. It will be a neat place to disappear into.

Lynn Hickman

{Maybe someone at the USPS wanted to read our deathless prose, Lynn. It's flattering to think that. --- Mark}

Dear Ray:

Yesterday I received the Report (in terrible shape, missing pages and such). I turned it over to the clerk at the counter (who) turned it over to the postmistress standing nearby. Without batting an eyelash she barked at me: "Write to the sender!"

That burns my you-know-what. I wasn't expecting the P.M. to perform miracles, but if she had said, "I'm sorry, let me check with the clerk and see if the missing pages arrived separately," I would have felt a lot better.

Anyway, I do look forward to each issue of the FF Report. Maybe next time you should encase it in a force field to protect it from Post Office vandalism.

Very respectfully,

Lester Mayer

[Now I know why people tape the edges of brochures they mail. I suppose a certain percentage will shuck their innards. I've had several similar complaints about this problem, and I will replace all copies to which this happens. Write if you're one of the victims, folks. -- Ray]

{That leads to an interesting

speculation: how would you cancel a stamp encased within a force field? -- Mark}

Dear Ray:

It seems to me that far too many of our members simply sit around and dream about the good old days and bemoan the fact that fantasy is now what is selling. Cheer up guys, it isn't all unicorns and dragons. There is still some good science fiction being written and some good people reading it. One has to hunt for it these days, but it is there. After all, that is what reviewers are for -- to tell us what is being written. First Fandomites need to be more active. They might be surprised at the people who show up at club meetings and conventions.

Best,

Roy Tackett

[You probably are right, but we all resist change as we grow older. And if it ain't "fun," it JUST AIN'T FUN! If you find any good sf don't hesitate to recommend it to us. -- Ray]

Dear First Fandom and Ray Beam:

Jim Harmon was active dur-

ing the early '50s also. Don't you remember The Door incident at the 1953 Midwestcon when Jim rendered his smashing appraisal of Seventh Fandom?

I commenced fanac during the '50s, and was active at a time when Bob Bloch observed that the whole professional science fiction field could disappear overnight and fandom would keep up with their zines, feuds, cons, and other activities as if nothing happened. But it was before that time that editors of prozines decided that fandom was just 500 or so loudmouths out of a possible readership of 50,000, and that they didn't have to pay any attention to them, so they cut letter columns and fanzine reviews. The changes that have occurred in the professional sf/fpsy field, in print and in other media, has affected conventions, how they are organized and who goes to them. Local and regional cons that I've attended in the last five years impress me as being as consumer-oriented as theme parks or rock concerts.

Mark: Do you mean to say that you were reading *Daily Worker* during the mid-'50s or that you recall reading somewhere else that "...the *DW* called for a people's science fiction club in response to the publica-

tion of *The Space Merchants*?" I ask because I have known people in and around CP and leftwing circles from that time and, with the exception of the NY Fanarchists, while they might have read sf from time to time there were never any organized groupings that I've heard of. I guess that was just a gimmick for a front group that never took hold.

I found Mike Ashley's account of "Eofandom" to be interesting. He certainly attributes more breadth and depth to fandom at that time than does SaM's *Immortal Storm* wherein fandom doesn't really come into its own until 1934 or so, and then was primarily centered around the greater New York City area. Be sure to let us know when the book is published.

Dave Rike

{The call for a people's sf club was only that. It made us giggle in Cincinnati. Mike is having problems getting his volume published, which is a shame. I understand it's a compendious effort, and, from the few chapters I've read, is excellent. -- Mark}

Dear Ray:

Very sorry to see you need someone to take on organizing the presentation at the Worldcon, but you've done a grand job and deserve a rest. I hope you'll stay on as secretary/treasurer.

I fully agree with you and Mark on the current state of what used to be sf. Apart from all the camp-following fantasy/horror tales of sword, sorcery, epic quests, imprinted dragons, elves, trolls, and endless Dark Lords, the main line of sf is just as cliché ridden. I am fed up with weak, pimply, neurosis-ridden "hero/ines" spouting racial equality, sex equality, saving whales, dolphins, monkeys, and their alien-species clones, the preservation of ozone layers, rain forests, and suchlike. *Analog's* tales are so utterly bland these days -- and as for so-called "illustrations" -- they're nearly always faces, or occasionally figure groups, but NONE of the "gosh-wow" epic artwork of Dold, Wesso, Schneeman, Paul, or Brown. King Formula rides the range in both story and art. Like you, I much prefer my collection of pulp mags and pre-1950 books.

Sad note: Eric Bentcliffe passed away last month. He wasn't an FFER, but he had the right attitude to have been one.

All the very best,

Terry Jeeves

{Darrell Schweitzer, in a recent *Atlantic* article, talks about the "dumbing-down" of sf. Maybe that's what really killed off the previous dinosaurs -- they got "dumbed-down" to the point of extinction. -- Mark}

Hello Ray:

I refuse to go to Worldcon, so the note from SoonerCon was welcome. I look forward to seeing a gang of you there, though I regret that nearly everyone I know in First Fandom has passed on. I've been completely out of touch since I moved west 25 years ago. Modern SF means diddley to me so I pretty well keep clear of the numbnuts who churn out what passes for sf today. I like the horror books, though. I guess it's harder to screw up a vampire or werewolf story.

Sincerely,

Ken Krueger

[I hope a lot of the members will make SOONERCON. I will.
-- Ray]

{Ken made some good comments concerning the awarding of a posthumous Hall of Fame Award. You'll see the results of the balloting elsewhere in this.
-- Mark}

Dear Folks:

R.A.W. Lowndes wondered which pulp *Jan of the Jungle* was in. I'm reasonably sure it was in *Argosy - All Story*. The other possibility, *Blue Book*, does not feel right.

As to typos & misspellings, I don't know where the error first appeared (maybe in *Amazing*), but there's an extra "e" in my name on page 16. Later on it's corrected a couple of times so I won't blame Mike Ashley.

He also mentions A. B. Malorie "of Centralia, Washington." Actually he was "out of Centralia." He was the hired man on a chick-raising ranch. He lived inside an enormous sheet-metal building lined with incubators, which kept the place comfortably warm. The vast height of the roof kept it from getting too hot in summer. He was very interesting to talk to as well as to correspond with.

I stopped by rap's (Ray Palmer's) in August, 1932. You couldn't always rely on what rap told (or wrote) you. He warned me that at Dennis's (where I was to stay in Chicago) they would over-feed me. "His mother is German, and she'll keep forcing food on you at the table." I didn't notice anything unusual. I've never been able to figure out whether this was one of rap's flights of fancy or if it was just the difference between his family's feeding habits and mine.

Clifton Amsbury

{Right, Cliff, blame me for everything. You never mentioned if the chicken-rancher was tasty as well as interesting.
-- Mark}

{The notes below were addenda to the FF ballots}

Bjo Trimble --

"Put in only one complaint per issue on how cons aren't like they used to be (yawn!) and you will have a much smaller -- not to mention more fun to read zine."

{Bjo I'm glad you have the time to read us, being so busy with your video network deals and all. -- Mark}

Virginia Kidd --

"It was just about all interesting and must represent a lot of work. I can only thank you for the size of the report."

[Thanks for so gracious a comment! -- Ray]

Roger Simms --

"The size of the Report is not bad. However it would have been shorter had Mark curbed his typing finger, that is kept some of his comments to himself."

{Blame it on poor finger-training when I was a tyke. -- Mark}

Peter Rawn --

It's great -- You deserve a lot of credit for keeping the organization going."

[THANKS!! again. -- Ray]

Robert Binder --

"Too small. I wish it could be twice the size. I'm new and probably, probably should not make comments that could make more work, but it would be nice to have more. More of everything. Thanks for a fine Report and for all the work."

[Don't be afraid to make comments just because you are new, especially the nice kind. Mark and I like them! -- Ray]

Elsie B. Wollheim --

"Mark and Ray! -- It was just wonderful! I loved every word of it. It was so full of good 'stuff.' I thank you for it."

[Elsie, we thank you! -- Ray]

{And Ray didn't mention your generous donation to First Fandom because he's a slob, but we do appreciate it. -- Mark}

Dear Ray:

About this discussion pertaining to having the First Fandom Hall of Fame award at a regional conference. This doesn't make any sense to me. At most regional affairs you can't find a half-dozen FF members present. Even the LUNACON is lucky to have 6 or 8 these days. Stick with the Worldcon and the Hugo awards. To do anything else would be akin to stabbing FF in the back. After all, the Hugo awards are the highlight of the

year, and to be part of it is what we want. So please -- knock off this stuff about regional cons. To use a regional con would be retrogression to the ultimate.

Best,

Bob Madle

RAY'S RANTINGS

Dear Members

The voting for this year's First Fandom Hall of Fame Awards is over. The votes were pretty evenly divided among four candidates -- Nelson Bond, J. Harvey Haggard, Art Saha, and Art Widner. Only about 30% of the membership bothered to vote. This is less than the average in National elections as I pointed out before. Had the other 70% cast their votes the outcome could have been different, so please don't think your vote doesn't count. With the membership running around 200 your vote can make a difference. I did not include envelopes for voting this time and it did not affect the number of votes received, so I will discontinue the practice in future votes. It was my error that Andre Norton's name didn't get on the ballot. It was listed elsewhere in the report, but only a couple mentioned the oversight

and cast their vote so. Due to the error her name will appear on the ballot next year. The vote on the posthumous award question was 90% plus in favor, so our policy will change with next years vote. We will keep the posthumous vote separate so it will not affect votes for the living and the number of posthumous candidates on the ballot may be limited. There were several who asked why, since we were giving multiple awards, they were able to vote for only one candidate. The answer is it is easier to tabulate and I am all for anything that is easier on me. I talked with Mark and we may try a system that will allow you to vote for a first, second, etc., choice.

I was disappointed that no one volunteered to even try the negotiations with the Worldcon committees for the Hall of Fame Award. This is part of the job that I really dislike, but I will continue until someone takes pity on me or I decide to give up the Secretary's position altogether.

My convention schedule this year will be Midwestcon, Pulpcon, Rivercon, and Soonercon. I would like to urge all members who are able to attend to be at Soonercon. This Con is catering to First Fandom. Quite a few members have already made a

a commitment to be there. There are details elsewhere in the Report.

On the subject of dues, I am sorry to say that my system of putting the year dues are paid through on the mailing label is not working. Some members use the system but a good percentage do not. If this were a Mensa group I could understand the lack of comprehension or oversight but I had higher expectations of First Fandom. Bob Madle told me that I need to send out individual notices. This means more work for me and it uses money from the treasury for postage. I believe the label system will work. This time if your label shows you owe dues I will circle it in red. Remember you owe \$5 for each year to bring it up to 1992. I had some mistakes after the ice storm fiasco but I believe all these have been called to my attention and corrected. I talked with Mark, and we decided that about September, after we have had response from this Report, to send out one-time dues notices to those who have not paid. Some members are over 10 years delinquent. This is not fair to members who pay their dues. If we get no response from those that are

long overdue, we will assume that they are no longer interested in the organization. They will be dropped from the mailing list. Although we may keep them on the roster so that other members can correspond if they desire.

By the time you receive this I will have already had a visit from Roy Lavender, Art Widner, and Bob Tucker. That will have happened the week before Midwestcon.

That's about all this time. Hope to see you all at Soonercon.

Ray

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And so another ish comes to an end. with new type styles, a new printer, and the inevitable new DTP program.. The support we have from *you*, the real backbone of First Fandom, is wonderful. It keeps us going when the job gets long and difficult. Keep them cards and letters rolling in -- we love 'em!

Mark & Ray

FIRST FANDOM
Dinosaurs of Science Fiction

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