

— Special "Boskone Fallout" Issue —

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In This Issue: The Hotel Situation

by Leslie Turek

In the last issue, we promised more information about our hotel problems, specifically, the desire of the Sheraton-Boston to cancel their participation in Noreascon 3.

One question that is difficult to answer is why the Sheraton has changed its position on Noreascon 3 after many years of active bidding support. The decision was apparently made within a few days after Boskone 24, at about the same time as the hotel decided not to host future Boskonos. (Boskone is the New England regional science fiction convention, run by the New England Science Fiction Association.) The Sheraton's stated reasons, given in their letters to NESFA and MCFI (printed on page 3), are the "24-hour intensity of the convention . . . the crowds, noise, damage, litter, fire alarms, and guest complaints." It seems that these concerns are emanating mostly from high-level management; most of the people the Boskone committee actually worked with seemed to appreciate the committee's efforts to alleviate the problems, and have expressed their regret that Boskone would not be returning to the Sheraton (see letter from Convention Coordinator Kim Pazera to the Boskone Services heads, also on page 3).

To put this in the context of the events at Boskone, we reprint an article by Jane Wagner, co-head of the Boskone Services department, that originally appeared in Apa:NESFA. This article, "The View From Boskone Services," describes how the Boskone committee worked with the hotel staff to eliminate episodes of minor vandalism that occurred on Friday night of Boskone.

Our current goal is to set up a meeting with the Sheraton, at which we would like to discuss in more detail the Sheraton's misgivings and to present some of our ideas for things we can do to address the problems perceived by the Sheraton management. We still have hopes we can convince the Sheraton to change their position on this matter. We *do* have a letter of agreement with the Sheraton, and if they prove unwilling to negotiate, we will certainly investigate what legal options we might have.

In the meantime, to compensate for the potential loss of Sheraton function space, we have reserved one additional floor of the Hynes Auditorium; now we have the entire Hynes reserved. If we actually use the entire Hynes, it would significantly increase our costs, but we feel that this would give us enough function space to put on a credible Worldcon. We haven't yet worked out what would be located where in such an arrangement, but this is one of the things we will be looking into. (For more details on the extra space in the Hynes, see Mark Olson's apa com-

ments on page 13.)

We are also looking into booking additional sleeping rooms at other nearby hotels. Again, this would be less desirable than using the Sheraton, since the Sheraton is one of the largest hotels in Boston and is directly connected to the Hynes. If we are forced to go to other hotels, our membership will be scattered amongst a larger number of smaller hotels, and we might find it necessary to hire shuttle buses to aid our members in traveling between the more outlying hotels and the Hynes Auditorium.

To give you some idea of the hotel possibilities, we have a short article and accompanying table on page 6. This lists the various hotels in the vicinity of the Hynes, their capacities, the number of rooms currently committed to Noreascon 3, and the status of negotiations with each of them.

Our goal is to have a viable plan to present at Conspiracy. If the resulting plan differs significantly from the situation under which we won the bid, we will probably allow current members an opportunity to get refunds for their memberships. Details will probably appear in Progress Report 2.

In addition to the hotel information, this issue also has reports on the Noreascon Three brainstorming sessions at Boskone, the text of the NESFA/MCFI clubhouse and equipment rental agreement, and the usual meeting summaries, APA:89 excerpts, and letters.

Next Issue

For the June issue, we are working on an article analyzing ConFederation program attendance, and another giving the results of a Boskone attendance count and exit poll. The theme of the issue will be where fans spend their time at conventions. If anyone out there has any additional data on this subject, we'd love to see it.

Back Issues

Back issues of *The Mad 3 Party* are available from Noreascon 3 at a price of \$1 per issue. Here are descriptions of the past year's issues.

#11 (April 1986) Balticon report; Questions on GoH criteria; December, January, and February meetings. 10 pages.

#12 (June 1986) Officer profiles; Discussion of art show fees; Hynes description and floor plans; Boston bookstores; Preview of Atlanta WSFS Business Meeting; May news release; April and May meetings; Letters on GoH criteria, etc. 22 pages.

#13 (August 1986) Preview of bidding activities at ConFederation; WSFS Standing Committee; Smofcon flyer; Apa excerpts on children's admissions, computer recommendations, etc.; June meeting; Letters on art show fees, etc. 12 pages.

#14 (October 1986) *Post-ConFederation Issue*. Bidding activities at ConFederation; WSFS Business Meeting events; ConFederation debriefing; Apa excerpts on space usage, etc.; August and September news releases; July, August, and September meetings; Letters on children, ConFederation events, etc. 22 pages.

#15 (December 1986) *Bidding Finances Issue*. History of Boston in '89 bid; Financial reports from '88 and '89 bidders; Apa excerpts on committee organization; Letters on Worldcon bids, ConFederation, etc. 22 pages.

#16 (February 1987) *Smofcon Issue*. Smofcon 3 report; What goes wrong with Art Shows; Brainstorming at Philcon; Discussion on committee organization; Apa excerpts on budgeting, new approaches to traditional events, etc.; December news release; October, December, and January meetings; Letters on "Whither the Worldcon," etc. 20 pages.

#17 (March 1987) *"Fun With Computers" Issue*. Using computers for convention planning; News release on hotel problem; Apa excerpts on beepers, division head job description, planning budget, etc.; February meeting; Letters on Smofcon, "The Game," Art Show, Masquerade, Hucksters' Room, committee organization, bidding finances, Winnipeg bid, etc. 22 pages.

Related Fanzines

The following is a list of other fanzines that might be of interest to *Mad 3 Party* readers.

- *Con Games*, edited by Bruce Farr. Published by Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society, Inc., PO Box 11743, Phoenix AZ 85061. The purpose of this zine is to circulate info to those who are involved in sf and related conventions. The first two issues were subsidized by CASFS and were sent free to interested parties.

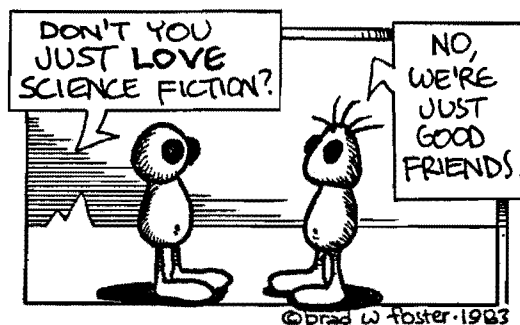
- *File 770*, edited by Mike Glycer, 5828 Woodman Ave #2, Van Nuys CA 91401. General fan news and gossip; convention reports. 5/\$4.00, plus \$1.25/copy for overseas air delivery.

- *Jane's Fighting Smofs: The Magazine of SF Convention Bidding*, edited by Jane and Scott Dennis, 347 West Second St., Paris KY 40361. Published quarterly, \$3/issue or \$12/year. Primarily about Worldcon, NASFiC, and Westercon bidding; contains a definitive list of current bids.

Missing Fans

The following fans are those for whom we do not have correct addresses. If any of our readers know the current address of any of these members, please let us know.

Susan B. Collingwood, Alachua FL
Cary Anne Conder, Victoria BC, Canada
Michael Hammond, Waltham MA
Frederick Prophet, Detroit MI
Valerie L. Richardson, Riverside CA



Letters from Sheraton-Boston Hotel

Letter to MCFI

Mr. Mark Olson
 Chairman 1989 Worldcon
 World Science Fiction Society [sic]

Dear Mark:

Enclosed is a copy of the letter to Chip. While Worldcon may not be exactly the same as Boskone, the nature of both conventions remains constant. The intensity is there and with it the attendant pressure on the hotel. Having 7500 attendees instead of 4000 magnifies the situation.

I know that you sincerely believe that the differences between Worldcon and Boskone are such that we will not encounter the same experience. However, Mr. McEleney is responsible for everything that goes on in the hotel, and he simply cannot take the chance that there could be a repeat of the problem.

We wish everything had run smoothly so we could have continued the relationship but it did not.

My suggestion is that you ask . . . the Convention Bureau to send out another bulletin requesting room blocks from interested and available hotels to make up for the loss of the 1000 rooms here.

We do wish you good luck.

Sincerely,

Sheraton Boston Hotel and Towers
 Don Lawrence
 Senior Sales Manager

Letter to NESFA

Mr. Charles Hitchcock
 [Boskone] Chairman
 New England Science Fiction Association

Dear Chip:

This will follow up our conversation. It is no easier writing than it was telling you over the phone. However, based on discussions with members of the Executive Committee, our Managing Director, Robert McEleney has made a final decision that we cannot rebook Boskone due to the experience we had this past weekend.

The 24-hour intensity of the convention is beyond controllable managability. The crowds, noise, damage, litter, fire alarms, and guest complaints are all tied together as the reasons. The hotel cannot be put under that pressure again.

I know that the Boskone leaders are not to blame but rather the general pattern of the convention itself. We are sorry it did not work out.

We hope you can bring the situation under control in the future and we wish you success with whatever other hotel is chosen.

Sincerely,

Sheraton Boston Hotel and Towers
 Don Lawrence
 Senior Sales Manager

Letter to Boskone Services Heads

Mr. Jim Mann/Ms. Jane Wagner
 New England Science Fiction Association

Dear Jim and Jane:

I enjoyed working with the both of you on the preparations for Boskone 24.

Thank you for all your patience and assistance during the weekend. Your organization on Saturday evening really made a difference.

I too am sorry that NESFA will not be back next year. Please convey my thanks to all of your staff in services and logistics who made my job easier and enjoyable.

Best of luck on future conventions.

Sincerely,

Sheraton Boston Hotel and Towers
 Kim A. Pazera
 Convention Coordinator

The View From Boskone Services

by Jane Wagner

This article originally appeared in Apa: NESFA #201, February, 1987.

I'm writing this to describe the vandalism and rowdiness we had at Boskone this year. The following are my opinions, as hotel liaison for function space and co-head of Services.

There was a fair amount of regrettably "normal" rowdiness (throughout the convention, but especially Friday night) such as overturned ash trays in the halls, soda cans in the elevator lights, people unscrewing light bulbs in stairwells, people sliding down escalators, graffiti, etc. One person was ejected by the hotel (on Saturday afternoon) for abusive behavior to hotel employees. We were also invaded by a group of punk rockers (not members of the convention), who were ejected by hotel security several times. Some people on the 14th floor managed to smuggle a cotton candy machine into their room (not only potentially damaging to the room's furnishings, but also a fire hazard). There were several loud parties and loud TVs/stereos at very late/early hours.

The hotel's blocking broke down, and airlines people were assigned rooms on the 14th and 16th floors (North Tower — the North Tower was always more of a problem than the South Tower). Unfortunately, 14 and 16 seemed to be among the noisier floors, so the airlines people generated a lot of complaints. Despite the weapons policy, some people had bare swords/daggers in the Costume Party. One attendee was arrested for picking pockets in the dealers' room. A perennial problem through the weekend was people without badges attending program func-

tions and the Con Suite. There was also a periodic problem of crowded hallways near the Con Suite.

The two really significant pieces of vandalism both occurred on Friday night, and both were relatively minor in and of themselves, but had major consequences. One incident involved either a pillow fight or just deliberate destruction of pillows in the hallway about 3 am. The hall and elevator lobby of that floor were covered with feathers. The particulate in the air from all the dust/feathers set off the fire alarm. (This was reported to Services, and I called hotel security on it shortly before the fire alarms went off.) Because of the amount of particulate in the air, the Fire Department could not make the alarm quit ringing. The hotel told us Saturday that the Fire Department was very close to ordering a couple of floors evacuated, since the only way to make the alarm system quit ringing was to shut it off. I'm not sure how they eventually made it quit ringing.

The other incident (at about the same time, or a little earlier) involved people setting off the fire extinguishers and fire hoses on another floor. Again, the damage was relatively minor, but the fire alarms went off and, as above, the Fire Department had a hard time getting the alarm to quit ringing.

It should be noted that although false alarms rang almost continuously during the weekend (at least 12 of them, giving the impression of a widespread and serious problem), *the above two incidents were the only false alarms directly attributable to vandalism.* The Sheraton has an extraordinarily sensitive fire alarm system, which can be set off very easily. Once it picked up the crowd leaving the Grand Ballroom. Another fire alarm was genuinely inadvertent — someone coming down a stairwell did not realize that the door led outside and when he opened it, the cold air triggered the alarm system. The hotel people we dealt with acknowledged that most of the false alarms were not intentional or malicious.

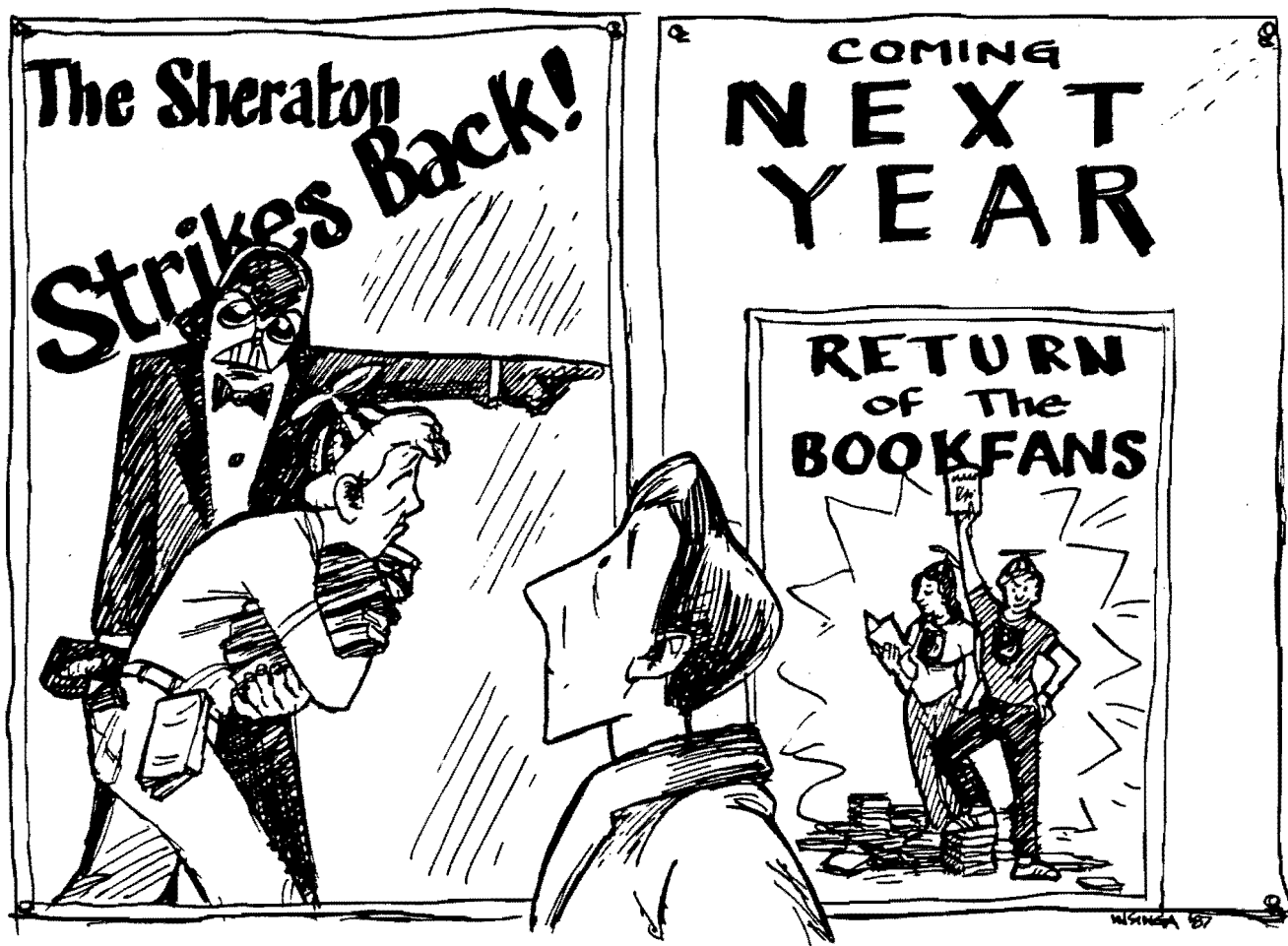
This was not immediately apparent, and the vandalism problem may have appeared worse on Saturday morning than it really was. I didn't have anything to do with drafting the Helmuth appeal (being asleep at the time), but I approve wholeheartedly of it. Even if the problem wasn't as bad as it appeared, it was bad enough, and was more than any convention should tolerate.

[The Saturday morning Helmuth (the convention's daily newsletter) read as follows:

Vandalism and False Alarms

Last night there was vandalism in the North tower — damage to the hotel and several false alarms.

Whither Boskone:



If this happens again, there probably won't be a Boskone next year — neither the Boskone Committee nor the Sheraton will want one.

Boskone belongs to all the fans who attend, and it's up to all of us to see this does not repeat. We know that this was caused by a small number of people, some possibly not even Boskone members. We have been approached by many fans this morning to express their disgust with this and to ask what they can do to help. You can do this:

- If you see people trashing the hotel, call hotel security and report it.
- If you see fellow fans misbehaving, ask them politely to stop. If they won't, please call Boskone Services at 4580 or 6161 and tell us.

Last night was the worst we've ever had — it's got to get better or Boskone won't be fun any more; and if it isn't fun, we aren't interested in running it.

Fans who attend Boskone, the Boskone Committee and the Sheraton all have the same interest in stopping the vandals. Please help us all.

I might note that at the time this appeal was written, in fact throughout the whole weekend, the hotel never said anything to the Boskone committee about not wanting Boskone back next year. The comment in the appeal was based only on the committee's desire to emphasize the seriousness of the situation, and the fear that if events continued as they had started, relations with the hotel could deteriorate. — LT]

Chip Hitchcock (Boskone chairman) and Jim Mann and I (the two heads of Services) met with the hotel (our convention services contact Kim Pazera, Ed Doocey of Security and his assistant, and Mary Hines, Assistant General Manager) at noon on Saturday. We exchanged information about the specific problems, and discussed ways to cope with Saturday night's anticipated problems. All of the hotel people were frazzled and definitely not amused, but none of them appeared adversarial. They were willing to work with us to plan security coverage, and to cooperate on getting names of offenders.

Among the options we discussed at that meeting were the recruiting of "invisible rovers" to be alert while wandering the parties and specifically to keep an eye on the stairwells, and the hiring of additional guards both by Boskone and by the hotel. We agreed to meet with the hotel at 8 pm to discuss arrangements.

Once we were back in Services, we got ahold of Kurt Baty (Suite Coordinator) and Andi Shechter (Elevator Management). We asked Kurt to provide us with a complete list of suite rentals for Saturday night, including comments about probable parties (open or closed). He gave us the list later that afternoon, and it was very helpful. It not only showed us where the heaviest concentration of parties was (8th and 9th floors North), but Kurt also commented on the people he knew, which parties were likely to be quiet, and which would probably be large and loud. We used this list to direct our "invisible rovers" (who were instantly defined as "Peggy Rae [Pavlat] types" — much to Peggy Rae's dismay).

I also discussed with Andi her plans for elevator management Saturday night. She had been planning this before the convention, but was handicapped by running a program item Friday night and by being unable to recruit enough people. (We snagged people all afternoon for this, and many thanks to all who helped.) Based on Kurt's list, we scheduled the express elevator to run from 3 to 6 (the location of the large Boxboro party) and 9 (highest floor with a heavy concentration of parties). In addition, Andi had "elevator party hosts" in the other elevators, and "flight directors" in certain elevator lobbies. Incidentally, the hotel asked us to start the express elevator from 3 rather than 2, because a Valentine's Day dinner in Apley's would have mingled a large number of non-attendees with the fans waiting for the elevator.

I'm not sure how well the elevator management worked, since I spent the evening in Services. My impression is that despite the handicaps (including not one, but two elevators out of service), it did manage to control the flow of people up the elevators.

Throughout the afternoon, we kept getting volunteers in response to the Helmuth appeal. The continual fire alarms certainly gave the general fan an impression of a serious problem; many were overheard saying things like "we've got to do something about this," or "the people doing it are pretty stupid," or just agreeing that these weren't the kind of people they wanted at their convention. This is the only way in which the continual fire alarms may have helped us.

Some of the volunteers we recruited for party wandering and/or elevator management. Other concerned fans identified several of the Friday night offenders. We passed the names on to hotel security.

At 8 pm, when we met with the hotel again, we were able to assure them that we had recruited at least 20 (probably more) "invisible rovers" and were stationing hired guards on the 8th and 9th floors. The hotel also hired additional guard coverage for the evening. Again at this meeting, the hotel people were pleased with our efforts and were willing to work with us. They were also impressed by the favorable response to the Helmuth appeal.

Saturday night was relatively calm (except for the usual false alarms). The hotel reported no trouble to us Sunday morning, and seemed satisfied with our efforts.

[Sunday morning's Helmuth contained the following notice:

Thank You!

The Boskone Committee really appreciates the efforts of the fans attending Boskone to eliminate the vandalism which marred Friday night. We received numerous offers of help, including tips about minor misbehavior. You were all a terrific help — we couldn't have done it without you. The Sheraton saw and liked the attitude of the fans.

Last night's fire alarms appear to have been accidental — people smoking under smoke detectors and the like (not too bright that. . .). There has been no reported vandalism and, with the help of hotel security, we've been able to eject a number of people (mostly outsiders) who were causing us trouble.]

Boston Hotel Overview

The following list of Boston hotels is divided into three groups. The hotels in the first group are within a few blocks of the Hynes Auditorium. In some cases, they adjoin the Prudential Center, which means that part or all of the walk is under cover. The hotels in the second group are somewhat farther: either a 10–20 minute walk, or a short subway ride. The hotels in the third group are more remote, but still within two miles of the Hynes. These hotels would require a longer subway or bus ride, a walk from the subway, or shuttle bus service.

The nearby hotels (and some of the second and third tier hotels) have received a memorandum from the Greater Boston Convention and Visitor's Bureau asking for their participation in Noreascon 3. The letter gave the Bureau's estimate of our total room requirement as 2000 rooms, with the Sheraton-Boston providing 1000 of those. After the Sheraton problems surfaced, a follow-up memo was sent indicating that we would not be using the Sheraton and requesting additional rooms.

The Back Bay Hilton, Lenox, Copley Square, Midtown, 57. Inn at Children's Hospital, and three Howard Johnsons have responded with the firm commitments shown below. The Copley Plaza and Hyatt Cambridge have made tentative commitments, and the Parker House has indicated a desire to participate without yet estimating how many rooms they can contribute. Our current room count stands at 1330; we expect this number to increase over the next few weeks as we continue negotiations. There are still several hotels that we have not yet heard from, and we will also try to increase our blocks at some of the participating hotels.

Although there are plenty of hotel rooms in the immediate area, the four largest hotels are currently declining to participate. The Sheraton-Boston was discussed on page 1. The Boston Marriott's refusal is apparently based on their own experiences with the 1985 Boskone, and on information received from the Sheraton-Boston and Atlanta Marriott Marquis. Similarly, the Boston Park Plaza has turned down a request to hold the 1988 Boskone, citing reports from their "sister hotels" of lost business by regular return guests due to Boskone. The Westin's refusal was probably due to their status as the most "upscale" hotel in the "nearby" group, and their refusal is probably not linked to these other problems.

Since we have no contracts with the Marriott, Park Plaza, or Westin, they are free to refuse our business. However, there are still more than two years until Noreascon Three, and it is certainly possible that their opinions may change in the intervening years. For example, a change of management, a trouble-free 1988 Boskone, or a lack of other business, could all make a difference. In the meantime, it is our goal to acquire enough rooms at the smaller hotels to support a moderate-sized Worldcon. Then if we succeed with only one of the recalcitrant hotels, we will be in better shape.

For each hotel in the list below, we give the total number of rooms and the number of rooms currently committed to Noreascon 3, followed by comments. Hotels marked "upscale" are unlikely to want to participate in

Noreascon 3. (The code *N2* indicates hotels that participated in Noreascon 2 in 1980.)

Nearby Hotels:

Sheraton-Boston (<i>N2</i>)	1400	0	Negotiating
Back Bay Hilton	335	275	
Lenox (<i>N2</i>)	220	100	
Copley Square (<i>N2</i>)	153	30	
Midtown (<i>N2</i>)	160	50	
Colonnade	294	–	
Marriott Copley	1139	0	Declined
Westin	800	0	Upscale
Copley Plaza (<i>N2</i>)	393	300	(Tentative)
<i>Total nearby:</i>	<i>4994</i>	<i>755</i>	

Second Tier Hotels:

Eliot	100	–	
Park Plaza (<i>N2</i>)	977	0	Declined
The 57	360	100	
Ritz-Carlton	277	–	Upscale
Four Seasons	288	–	Upscale
Bradford	287	–	Under renovation
Ho Jo's Commonwealth	180	50	
Ho Jo's Fenway	94	25	
Lafayette	499	–	Upscale
Parker House	540	–	Favorable response
<i>Second tier:</i>	<i>3602</i>	<i>175</i>	

Third Tier Hotels:

Meridien	326	–	Upscale
Bostonian	153	–	Upscale
Holiday Inn (Gov Cent)	301	–	
Inn at Children's	160	100	
Hyatt Cambridge	471	250	(Tentative)
Marriott Cambridge	431	–	
Sonesta Cambridge	400	–	
Holiday Inn (Brookline)	208	–	
Boston Harbor	230	–	Upscale
Marriott Long Wharf	400	–	
Ho Jo's Cambridge	204	50	
Embassy Suites	310	–	
<i>Third tier:</i>	<i>3594</i>	<i>400</i>	
<i>Grand total:</i>	<i>12,190</i>	<i>1330</i>	

N3 Brainstorming at Boskone:

Unfocused (Friday)

by Tony Lewis

The ideas expressed here are those of the participants in the session. They do not necessarily reflect the viewpoints or policies of Noreascon Three, MCFI, nor the compiler.

This was the unfocused brainstorming session held at Boskone XXIV. I was very pleased that most of the participants were people I did not know and had never talked to before. *[But I saw at least one M3P correspondent there. — LT]* These people had very definite ideas and talked about what they wanted. It is very informative to see the ideas of people who do not work on cons and who are not (subconsciously) locked into the *right way* of doing

things. This session lasted about one hour; eventually about 30 people showed up. In addition to the Noreascon I chair (me), the Noreascon II (Leslie Turek) and Noreascon III (Mark Olson) chairs were also present to answer questions.

General Comments

I asked people why they attended conventions, in order to start the discussion. Almost all the people said programming. One person said she came to meet friends. Another person said he attended Worldcons to work on them and really enjoyed going to the business meeting. This person was *not* Ben Yalow.

Program

Please put more editors and publishers on panels.

Have more program items with people from academe, especially in the science areas. Make use of the proximity of M.I.T.

Have film makers and other media experts (for example, special effects) *talk* about their professions.

Don't have panels on art at the same time as art show closeout or art show auctions.

Structure the panels so that there is more time for questions and answers.

Meeting Pros

Break up the *Meet the Pros* function into a number of smaller ones. These would be by themes — artists, high fantasy writers, hard core sf, D&D crossovers, etc. These could be held at the same time to make it easier to schedule and serve food, drinks. There would be some conflicts, but with a big function you don't usually get to meet the people you want to because it is too crowded (and some pros won't come because it is too large).

Find some way to meet the pros in small settings — discussion groups, lunches, etc.

Set up the author readings in a cafe environment rather than a classroom; people could sit around a table and listen. There could be a place nearby to buy coffee, tea, etc.

All readings should be scheduled in advance and this information printed and posted.

Encourage editors to have discussion groups where they can talk to prospective writers (but not read their manuscripts there).

Films

Have a retrospective of old cartoons with a theme.

When showing major films, turn the lights up and allow time for people to move in and out just after a major film and just before one.

Look into renting a local theatre to show films. After all, those buildings are designed to show films; hotels and convention halls generally are not.

Show films that were designed to be shown on large screens and/or require special sound equipment. These do not hack it on the television at home.

Filking

Interestingly, almost all the participants requested *less* structured filksinging. They wanted to get together and sing, *not* listen to someone perform. They definitely did not want a recording session, as one person put it.

It would be nice to be able to sit and filk in the hallways — either on the sleeping room floors or in the function areas.

Art Show

Encourage more 3-D artwork.

Security: find a way to handle the bringing of prints into the art show by people who have bought them in the hucksters' room or in the print shop.

Large Functions

Very large functions really need raked seating or people in the back really can't see.

There should be a special seating area set aside at extravaganzas for the staff and committee so that people who cannot stand in line because they are working up until the last minute can get a decent seat. [These comments from people who did not work on conventions.]

Food Functions

There is a very persistent and very strong desire to have a communal food function in conjunction with the Hugo Awards.

The meals at the Awards ceremony could be restricted to pros and/or those nominated for awards.

Have the Hugo ceremony in the afternoon with a cold collation.

Serve meals "cafeteria style."

Serve "box lunches." People could order in advance; get a ticket; pick up their lunches as they entered the room; and go to a table. Some tables could be reserved for guests, committee, etc. Maybe some pros could sit at each table in return for a free meal.

Parties

There should be designated party floors and quiet floors. Quiet floors should be so marked on stairwell doors and outside the elevators. This information should also be printed in the newsletter.

Try to put the large parties on the lower floors so that people can walk to them and not tie up the elevators.

Ask in the registration forms if people intend to hold parties at the con.

N3 Brainstorming at Boskone:

Extravaganzas (Sunday)

by Jim Hudson

We started with some boundary setting, and then relaxed the boundaries in the discussion. The session was primarily a brainstorming, with general support for new ideas, and only limited discussion of their practicality. About 10 people were there, all contributing. I thought it was a good session.

Connecting fans and pros

Make the Meet the Authors sectional, by genre (different times or places?). Split the authors and audience by hard science, high fantasy, cyberprep, etc.

Or, redo the "authors breakfasts" by having a series of subgenre breakfasts or receptions. This reduces the information overload on the fans trying to figure out whether a breakfast is interesting, simplifies our organizing, and improves the fan/pro connection. Pros would get a free meal, and be instructed to sit one per table. Fans would pay, and divide themselves around.

Perhaps a permanently-running slide show of pros, to help them be recognized. Could also include BNF's, etc. Maybe rear projection in a gathering area?

At the Meet-the-Authors, have a wandering minicam with several large monitors (no Diamond Vision, obviously, more like 25-40" screens). Possibly do interviews, possibly just show pros with names over or a second screen showing name and some works.

Performances

Much interest, in all levels: street (or corridor) performers, small club, and big event.

Concert related to SF (anywhere from Clam Chowder to professional rock).

Gunderson Corp., Karamazovs, or other SF/fannish new vaudeville.

SF dancing (live music?) (lasers?) (country dances of the future?) (sock hop?).

Film premiere or, probably, pre-release viewing of something targeted for Christmas release.

Fan Participation Events

Blood drive.

Video dating/meeting service (send in tapes in advance?).

Photon, LazerTag, or equivalent environment area for running off energy and at-con craziness — get a manufacturer to do it.

Lots of interest in a food function, as with Friday's brainstorming session.

Other

Exhibit showing pseudo-scientific equipment from the 30's.

Include traffic reports and alerts on the video news during the con. ("The third floor Sheraton-Hynes corridor is packed. Go outside as an alternate route".)

NESFA/MCFI Rental Agreement

Since we had a little extra space this issue, we thought our readers might be interested in seeing the rental agreement between MCFI (Noreascon 3) and NESFA for use of the NESFA clubhouse and various shared equipment.

This document summarizes the understanding NESFA and MCFI have reached concerning the use of each other's facilities. It is understood by both parties to have been written in ordinary English and should be interpreted reasonably.

NESFA brings the NESFA Clubhouse, some equipment contained in the Clubhouse, and ordinary operating supplies to this agreement. MCFI brings some equipment including a Macintosh, a copier, and a waxer. It is the intent of this agreement that each organization will lease the use of the other's facilities, with one organization paying the other a net rental.

This agreement will be reviewed every six months (in April and October) by both organizations. Rental rates for the May-October and November-April periods will be set. An additional review can be requested at any time by either organization.

MCFI as NESFA's tenant has full use of the clubhouse and its furnishings and equipment, including ordinary use of supplies. In general, NESFA use of its facilities will take precedence over comparable MCFI usage. Except in important cases, NESFA will not bump scheduled MCFI usage. It is the intention of both organizations that the facilities be maximally used.

NESFA will have full use of MCFI's equipment including ordinary use of supplies and disk space. In general, MCFI use of its equipment will take precedence over comparable NESFA usage. Except in important cases, MCFI will not bump scheduled NESFA usage. NESFA will provide a non-public area for storage and use of valuable equipment. NESFA will cover MCFI's equipment kept at the clubhouse under its own contents and fire insurance.

Rental rates will be computed by assuming that the owner of the facilities has essentially full use of it except for some fraction actually used by the other organization. I.e., unused but usable time will be allocated entirely to the owning organization. The estimated fair market value of the facilities (including the ordinary supplies) will then be allocated by estimated usage to the two organizations.

These estimates will be made by a joint NESFA-MCFI committee ("The Greater NESFA-MCFI Coprosperity Committee" aka "The Financial Incest Committee") and submitted to the two organizations for approval.

Extraordinary damage or costs caused by non-ordinary or abusive use of facilities will be the responsibility of the party causing them. Damage costs associated with ordinary and expected use of facilities will be the responsibility of the owner. Use of MCFI equipment at Boskone or NESFA equipment at N3 is considered to be non-ordinary use.

[The rental to MCFI for the first period of the agreement has been set at \$150/month. The rental rate will be reviewed this month (April) for possible adjustment.]

MCFI Meeting

Wednesday, February 25, 1987, at the NESFA Clubhouse, Somerville, Mass.

The meeting was called to order at 8:42 pm. The late start was due to the work session for preparing about 2000 copies of PR 1 for bulk mailing.

Chairman's Report: Mark Olson started out by saying that we have some good news and some bad news. The good news is that we have lots more members. The bad news is that we have no place to put them. He deferred discussion of our hotel problems until after all the routine reports were out of the way.

Andre Norton celebrated her 75th birthday last week. Mark wired her a floral arrangement on behalf of the committee.

Treasurer's Report: Ann Broomhead said that we are making more than we are spending. This is good.

Preregistration Report: Sharon thanked all the people who helped run the Noreascon table at Boskone: Rick Katze, Andy Cowan, Bill Perkins, Jill, Don, and Donny Eastlake, Pam Fremon, Elisabeth Carey, Paula Lieberman, George Flynn, Peggy Rae Pavlat, Pat Vandenberg, Al Kent, Kris Brown, Greg Thokar, Susan Hammond (who got the Memory Books from the clubhouse), and Jim Hudson (who helped greatly on Saturday and Sunday, saving Sharon's life).

We took in about \$16,000: 400 new members and 100 conversions. We gave out more Memory Books and took in 20 more *M3P* subs.

Sharon said that it was useful being outside the huckster room. People came to the table before being admitted or after getting shooed out. It also helped emphasize that we are a separate organization from NESFA.

The biggest confusions were 1) presupporters who thought they already had supporting memberships, and 2) people who thought that the voting rate meant that they had voting rights and the non-voting rate meant that they didn't.

Total membership is now 2183, with 1902 attending, 242 supporting, and 39 children's admissions. We have 302 presupporters who have not yet joined.

In response to a question, Sharon said that about 2/3 of those who had coupons used them.

Mark said that the price break at Boskone turned out to be a bad idea, due to all of the extra work it entailed when everyone was already quite busy. Next time we should perhaps make it April 1. George said that we now have more members than Noreascon I did. Jim H. said that he wasn't sure whether we should be glad or sorry for the 3-year lead time.

Publications: Mark said that Greg Thokar had done an extraordinary job on PR 1. Those who saw it at Boskone were unanimous in their praise.

Jim H. said we should write down when we get it, to monitor the progress of bulk rate mail.

We printed 7267 copies. Mark noted that the cost of reprinting would equal the cost of printing 3000 extra, so we opted for the extra-big print run. We discovered that

if we made the PR four pages longer than we had material for, it would take less time to print because the larger presses could be used. Therefore, we picked 4 of our best bidding ads to place at the back of the book.

Sharon Sbarsky said that she had opted to not put fannish names on the mailing labels, given the general feeling about these since Boskone. [*There has been some feeling that allowing individuals to remain anonymous by not having their real names on their name badges has been encouraging anti-social behavior.*] She said new members who joined at Boskone seemed to think they were required to fill in the "fannish name" blank on the forms.

In response to a question from Tony Lewis, Rick Katze said he'd mail copies of the PR to advertisers. Greg will mail copies to contributors.

Gadgets Committee: Mark said that the Gadgets Committee (aka the Capital Equipment Committee, aka the Computer Committee) would not be buying anything else until we straighten out our facilities problems.

Mad 3 Party: Leslie Turek said that she now has enough subs that she is breaking even on *M3P*. Should she keep publishing? Mark said yes. Could she put out an extra issue? The next one isn't due out until April, but she has enough material on hand to put one out in March. Mark suggested slipping the others a month and inserting the new one.

This won't affect subs, since we specified subs at \$1/issue, not \$6/year. (Although we estimated 6 issues/year.) Leslie pointed out that she had done it this way in case she came out with fewer than 6 issues a year; she didn't expect to have the reverse problem. Jim Hudson noted that at least one person had a 14-issue sub and Sharon said there were longer ones.

Rick asked if we will explain the hotel problem in *M3P*. Mark said we would when we know enough to say something.

Taxes: Leslie passed on from Carl Brandon, who passed on from Fred Isaacs, who passed on from Joe Siclari that the IRS had rejected Tropicon's bid to be tax-exempt. Archon was cited, though it was not clear whether the IRS was asking them to "show us how you are different from Archon." The general sentiment was that Tropicon should appeal the ruling.

N3 Party at Boskone: Laurie Mann said that the party was fun. Pam Fremon reported that it closed down around 3:30 am. The Sheraton, as part of their support for our bid, gave us a 2-bedroom suite on the 11th floor. [*How quickly things change.*] Sharon, Greg, Pam, and Jim H. worked sales. Mark said that it was a pleasure to be at. Paula said that some media fans gathered in the bathroom to discuss running a Boston media con near Boskone. [applause]

BS Sessions: Tony and Jim H. reported on their respective brainstorming sessions. (See pages 6-7 for detailed reports.)

Along these lines, Mark reported that he'd met Ian Ballantine. He's been reading *M3P* and noticed our idea for a book-publishing exhibit. He'd like to get together an exhibit of art, maps, drawings, etc., showing how this sets SF off from the mainstream.

Paula Lieberman said that Susan Shwartz was willing to put recordings of Norton's reading together for us.

Market Survey: Jim H. reported that we'd gotten back about 100 questionnaires at Boskone. [*The results should appear in the next issue.*] He also has info about times when things were busy, when they closed down, and such.

General Boskone Comments: Paula noticed that there were more people wandering around at 5 and 6 am than at ConFederation. Jim H. commended Andi Shechter's elevator parties; he thinks we now know how to run elevators at Boskone. Jane Wagner suggested that we could pay to have this done in the future. Tony suggested that we consider hiring professionals for logistics, and Ellen Franklin agreed. Don Eastlake pointed out that the hotel only has so much staff; they couldn't even find people to keep the coffee shop open. Nancy Gerlack noted that paid security wasn't too effective in badge-checking.

Facilities: Don summarized his talks with the Managing Director of the Sheraton, and with the Greater Boston Convention and Visitor's Bureau. The Sheraton will be sending us a letter, and we should wait to see it and compose a reply.

The GBCVB seems to think we only need 2000, not 3000 rooms. Joe Rico said that he had asked for 3000, but they are working from Atlanta records. They feel that we can always enlarge our blocks later. George noted that Atlanta probably had a higher percentage of out-of-towners than us. Jim H. said that we should suggest that they also look at the L.A. records. Don said that Boskone, with 4000 attendees, peaked at about 1000 rooms on Saturday night. (Noreascon 2, with about 6000 attendees, used about 2200 rooms.) Don suggested that we write up our arguments as to why we need 3000 rooms.

The GBCVB sent a memo to hotels (before the Sheraton problem) and has gotten back some acceptances. The Westin and the Marriott have both said no.

Don told about his contacts with the Marriott. Way back, they had said that they wanted to take part. But shortly after ConFederation they said we couldn't use more than 500 of their rooms, and that they therefore weren't interested. However, Don called them after the problem with the Sheraton developed, and the sales person was enthusiastic. Don set up a meeting, but by the time he got there, the GM (a new one) nixed the idea because of problems reported at the 1985 Boskone at the Marriott, and at the Atlanta Marriott at ConFederation.

Joe then asked what problems he reported. Don replied: 1) public sex, 2) complaints from other guests, and 3) strain on their staff. He emphasized that damage was not a problem. Don plans to write to the Marriott to try to change their minds.

Don also said that we are now pencilled into the entire Hynes. More comes free than it used to, but the cost per square foot will be higher. Mark said that it used to be true that total cost equalled 2.5 times the rental cost, and asked if this was still the case. Joe said that they are saying that it is **not**. Chip Hitchcock did some off-the-cuff calculations (assuming 210-220,000 sq. ft.) to come up with a rental cost of \$100,000. He estimated additional costs at perhaps \$50-60,000.

Chip said we have to investigate who else we need on site (Fire Marshals, electricians, etc.). Don said we also should anticipate paying a deposit about a year ahead of the convention. Last time the deposit was 1/3 of the rental cost.

Rick asked if we'll need union projectionists to run films. Don said that the Hynes claims to be anti-union, but who knows? Ellen said that she doesn't believe their anti-union stance will be effective. Jim H. said that we should reopen the idea of renting the Cheri [a nearby movie theatre] if we need union projectionists. Chip said that if we assume 100 hours of film, the cost for union projectionists would be \$2000-\$2500.

Tony asked if, since we had received a letter of intent from the Sheraton, we can take legal action. Rick summarized our legal standing:

- We have a detailed letter of intent from the Sheraton, dated 1/25/85, which comes very close to being a contract.
- We have a past relationship, based on Noreascon 2.
- The Sheraton provided financial aid to our bid.

Rick said we have two options if things go that far: 1) sue for damages or 2) equitable relief (that is, a court could direct the hotel to give us the space). We could sue under Chapter 93A, which provides for triple damages plus all lawyer fees.

Mark said that although NESFA and MCFI are two separate organizations, we should cooperate fully with NESFA in solving these problems.

Jim H. said that we should also investigate other cities, and make it plain to the GBCVB that if we are forced out of Boston, they would be losing about \$2,000,000 worth of business.

There was much speculation about the events at Boskone and the hotel's motivation in taking this action.

Mark said that we won't be out of the woods yet for several months. However, we want to know what we're doing by Conspiracy. 1) A letter to the Sheraton is going to be developed. People will see it and be able to comment upon it. 2) We will continue to explore other options. 3) We should see what help the GBCVB can give us. 4) The legal aspects must be explored further. 5) We need a Press Release.

Discussion of member refunds will be deferred until we know what we will be doing.

Pat asked why we need the Press Release. Mark said that people have heard. We have to put a statement out. Jim H. agreed; we have to keep the fannish press informed. Leslie said it should mention our letter of agreement from the Sheraton. Laurie said that it should also say that everything is OK with the Hynes. [*The final press release text appeared in the last issue of TM3P.*]

The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution: Rick moved that we empower the Board of Directors (the 3 officers) to take any action they deem expedient for the profit/survival/benefit of Noreascon Three. Mark said the board would consult with as many people as they could before taking any action. George said the bylaws already allow this. Rick said he made the motion as wide as possible, so people won't complain later. The motion passed unanimously.

Mark moved to appoint Leslie the chairman for the duration. Greg motioned that we change our name to Noreascon Two. [Leslie, who had been fading out, suddenly realized what was happening and gestured wildly to be recognized. She was ignored, but it appears that the motions were, also.]

Rick asked to be officially asked to be our attorney. Mark polled the board, which unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30, and the secretary rushed out the door, since his baby sitter was due to turn into a pumpkin at a bit after 11.

Excerpts from APA:89

March 15, 1987

Not surprisingly, the March APA:89 had a lot of commentary on ways to alleviate rowdy behavior at conventions. (As always, these apa contributions are the personal opinions of the individual contributor, not official committee policy.)

Radios and Rovers (Andi Shechter)

I know it makes people nudgy, but clearly, we're going to need rovers and some radio contact at Noreascon (and, I will argue, future Boskones). At Noreascon, we simply have to have people on the floor to ensure that the large number of bodies are moving well, getting where they want to go, finding the things they want to find. We all would prefer to teach folks that Reading Signs is a Good Thing, but, in fact, some folks cannot read a map, no matter how clear, some people take a long time to get oriented to a large place (north tower? south tower?), and not all people will think clearly and cooperate. (As I sat here last week, a person walked into my 1st floor office and asked, "where's the third floor?")

We are running a convention for us and for our friends and compatriots. We are also running a convention that we want everyone to enjoy, and that means that we need to be helpful, and that the con needs to run smoothly. And problems, whether they are bats in the atrium, snakes in the punch, or gr**n dr*g*ns in the Jacuzzi, must be dealt with 24 hours a day. It can be done without ending up staffing the con with nazigestapothugs. Radios *do* help in the rare situations of emergency or with rapid communication when you're spread over a large area, and we will be. And it's clear that the right people are out there. We want people cut out of the Jane Hawkins/Tom Whitmore/Louise Sachter Essence-of-Calm competence mold. If we can't find enough of them, then we look for Obi-Wan Kenobis ("These are not the fire alarms you are looking for." "These are not the fire alarms we are looking for." "Move along.") But we do need warm bodies who aren't already working on something else. Yes, committee and staff are always roving convention ambassadors and trouble-shooters, but it's a lot harder to pitch in with an instant answer if you're already working on a different job.

I also feel that a visible presence, including someone with a radio and an earphone in their ear, can add to, rather than detract, from a con. Not only is there someone there with a staff/committee ribbon, but they appear

to have the ability to get an instant answer. I feel that if we had a more visible presence of rover-type people (and let's definitely change the name/title of rover — I get weird *Fahrenheit 451* vibes from it) we might have cut down on some of the less-than-wonderful behavior. It's been my experience that simply by rounding a corner at a con where people see that I'm "on duty" and I've got a radio, I'm asked for assistance and I've stopped people from behavior like goons. And if we're worried about rovers overusing the damn things, let's do some training.

On the same track, Pam Fremon and I recently discussed the possibility of doing some training regarding confrontation and crowd behavior for con staff who don't have a lot of experience in dealing with people, especially angry or hostile people, or who just don't have a lot of experience in direct service and would benefit from it. Let's think about that. I think we do have the potential to turn a lot of negative behavior around (just explaining *why* we're doing something, e.g., the elevator parties, helps a great deal).

Protofans (Jim Hudson)

I feel like I've been dealing with this issue for decades. At Boskones and Worldcons, we regularly have younger fans — or nonmembers — who cause trouble. It seems to get almost serious every year at Boskone, back for at least a decade, and serious every 4–5 years. At Worldcons, the situation is a bit different: it's somewhat serious almost every year. And there are always stories of conventions where things are out of hand: Star Trek Cons were the problem area a while ago; gaming conventions more recently; media cons; and usually some other East Coast regional ("Balticon had a lot of trouble this year," was the common refrain a few years ago).

For us, the key tradeoff is generally put in terms of "freedom," a definite "good thing," and other goods such as order, safety, and lack of hassle. By defining it that way, you go straight to the *Federalist Papers* and look for control systems which will maximize freedom consistent with a productive society. That is, you try to stop and punish crime: crashing without memberships, running in the halls, and the various other problems.

If you're smart, you also try to enlist the populace in reducing crime and working together to make a productive society. We did that at Boskone with the various announcements, and we had very few problems on Saturday. The elevator system even worked well, with only a few antisocial kids and a lot of antisocial older fans (often pros) who stood on their rights to get priority treatment. Anyway, by Saturday, we had "solved" the problem — though the fire alarms kept going off for reasons which don't appear to have had much to do with the convention.

And once we actively started calling people on their antisocial behavior, they shaped up. At least, the younger ones did: I spoke to several groups about running in the halls and so forth, and got *exactly* the right reaction from them every time. While I know (from experience in raising one) that teenagers have short-term memory lapses, I think we made a difference. Not by being the voice of authority, but by enlisting them in the common problem.

On reflection, though, I'm not sure how much difference all our Saturday activity made. In other words, *Would Saturday have been any different if we'd just ig-*

nored the problem? I'm not sure it would have been, and here's the basis for my argument:

Consider a teenager attending, perhaps, his third Boskone. He shows up Friday after school, to what may be the greatest amount of freedom he sees all winter. He meets up with 5 friends to share a room, and they start attending the convention. They go to the costume party for a while, and that ends. But they've got a lot of energy, probably plan to stay up all night, and see what's offered.

So what we have is generally not maliciousness, but high energy and excitement. And, probably most important, a critical mass of kids who don't want to go to bed yet. Sounds like the dorms I used to live in. At least we haven't had a VW moved into one of the sleeping rooms.

Now think about Saturday. They've been at the convention for 24 hours or more. There's been more going on, and they're more likely to be actively involved. Most important, everybody is tired, the energy levels are lower. Even if we hadn't done anything, I think we would have had a relatively quiet Saturday night, at least compared to Friday.

So if we think of ourselves as a society, we look for a few things in our policies:

1. *Reducing the chance of critical mass, and of damage when critical mass is reached.* This is simply size reduction to fit the real capacity of our facilities. This isn't just ballroom size or number of sleeping rooms, but *must* include crowding, elevators, and ability to program for the quantity of people we attract. For N3, it probably means space to spread out, which implies the Hynes into the night; it definitely means elevator management if we're in the Sheraton; and it means working to keep the flows even rather than peaked in any way we can.

2. *Policing the society to stop significant antisocial behavior.* We *must* be tough on badges on Thursday and Friday for a Worldcon. That clearly includes function space, and may include the elevators. We need to get rid of open parties serving open alcohol, probably by requiring bartenders and ID checks if alcohol is to be served at any listed open party. There is nothing wrong with beer, only with people who can't manage their consumption. And that's typically a youthful problem, so we should control it by controlling access. Much as I hate to admit it, I think we're going to need rovers on Thursday and Friday nights, and maybe later (in smaller numbers). I see no need for them to be the "eyes of the convention" with regular reporting and radios — at least if we have a decent phone net. But I think we should have responsible people looking for ways to keep the tone of the convention *controlled chaos*, rather than *total chaos*.

3. *Enrolling our members in the goals of the society.* We're working on that by being open in our discussions and careful to listen in our planning, but our approach is limited to people who join early and read the progress reports. I think the most important thing to avoid is having groups of fans considering the convention to be a faceless "them" who are interested in rules and aren't interested in what the fans want. We're doing our best to avoid that, and I hope it's enough. We keep saying that it's their convention, and I hope we mean it. The fans will pull together in a perceived crisis, as they did at Boskone.

What we need them to do is pull together *before* the crisis, and that's harder to achieve.

4. *Providing useful channels for all that youthful energy, particularly early in the convention.* While policing can move us from total chaos to chaos-with-a-bit-of-order, we're not interested in a police state. We can't achieve the level of control that would stop all our problems. So I think we should try to channel their energy.

My solution is to provide distractions. On Thursday and Friday at a Worldcon, I'd run dances, parties, or equivalent to midnight or 1 (or even later), and I'd put major films into the 11-3 slot. If they're watching films, they're not using fire extinguishers. If they're at a party, they're not roaming the halls. And, if we don't provide those distractions, then they will be getting wild; kids tasting freedom always do — it's how they learn to deal with freedom. Along the same lines, I think the Boskone-style con suite works well: I don't view it in terms like "free lunch" but rather in terms like "get the kids off the street."

A final thought: when we focus the debate on "law and order" or even "kids who are weirder than any of us ever were [Comment: HAH!]" we're putting on blinders. When we open our eyes, we see our society has people of all ages, interests, and cultures. That's more trouble, but a lot richer than one which is just 5,000 clones of Tony or Mark or (God Help Us) me.

[I can't resist throwing in a quote from Fred Patten's Worldcon history in our very own PR 1. Talking about Philcon, the 5th Worldcon in 1947, Fred says, "Jack Speer and Chan Davis climbed onto the hotel's roof at 3 am with a box of fireworks, and shot off Roman candles until the Philadelphia police took them to the local precinct to sober up." Rowdy behavior in fandom certainly isn't a recent phenomenon. — LT]

Rowdiness (Paula Lieberman)

NESFA is cutting back Boskone; N3, however, is going to have an immediate precedent of what could be the rowdiest Worldcon to that date.

Nolacon II, the 1988 Worldcon, campaigned on party, free-flowing booze, 24-hour wide-open New Orleans, and party. Their bidding party at Atlanta spent almost (or perhaps more) on alcohol as MCFI spent on our whole bid!

New Orleans itself is a party town: the French Quarter is a 24-hour, drink-in-the-streets (quite literally and legally; so long as it's from a paper cup), nude bars, costumes in the streets, etc., party. And it's a wide-open invitation for Worldcon attendees to join in.

And in 1989, people who were at the '88 Worldcon are going to come in with the expectation that N3 is going to have the same party atmosphere, or will encourage the same atmosphere, or will condone it. . . .

Assuming that there are '88 and '89 Boskones, Boskone attendees *may* not be anticipating a Nolacon atmosphere. However, if they're been going to Worldcons, and go to Nolacon, they may expect N3, as a Worldcon, to be like Nolacon. Meanwhile, Boston hotels are not New Orleans hotels, and what's tolerated in New Orleans has been shown to, um, upset Boston hotels.

So we have another challenge — how do we tell people that the behavior acceptable in New Orleans is intolerable in Boston? And how do we get people who, having gone wild in New Orleans, will leave behavior that offends general hotel clientele (nudity, 6 am rowdiness, drinking in the streets) behind in New Orleans, and not take it with them to Noreascon 3?

Program (Priscilla Pollner)

Some thoughts on Program (from my recent ~~Wiff/Waff/Wag~~ experience at Boskone).

It is probably possible to separate at-con from pre-con Program stuff (i.e., planning vs. implementation?) a lot more easily than I would have thought (also, Green Room — catering/R&R/GoodWill — splits off easily). This depends on lots of communication, and probably some overlap between the two areas. But — if done right — it's a good idea.

There are basically three sizes for program items, "Discussion Groups" (small), "Regular Program items" (medium), and "Extravaganzas" (your guess . . .) I really enjoyed setting up/scheduling the small side-shows at Boskone (being of the opinion that having lots of smallish things should make a big convention feel smaller — as opposed to the other point of view that having large events that the whole convention watches at once will make everyone feel like family. . .). Anyway, while thinking about it, I guess one of the major things that sets a Worldcon apart from a regional (or, should set it apart), is that Worldcons need more (and bigger?) "extravaganzas" ((I like that term)). In terms of regionals (i.e., Boskone): fewer large-large things . . . in terms of Worldcons, more? done better?

Program stuff could really do with the same degree of computer/software support that other areas have . . . at-con too (ah . . . getting further away from the index cards daily, *sigh*). And, what about setting up program idea databases? (secret?) dossiers on program participants???

Hynes Function Space (Mark Olson)

Function space looks pretty good: as soon as we heard about the Sheraton's decision, we added the bottom floor of the Hynes to our reservation. This would appear to be enough to make up for the loss of the Sheraton's function space.

Our initial plans called for the use of halls C & D (37K sq. ft. each), the multipurpose room (5000-seat auditorium), and the 3rd floor ballroom (25K). The ballroom would take Art Show, hall C Huckster's, and hall D would be the exhibits and gathering room.

The addition of halls A (38K) and B (44K) give us two more big rooms as well as a number of smaller rooms on the first floor. Let's move Art Show and Huckster's to A and B, and use C and D for general use (milling around, standing exhibits, meeting areas, freebies, information, voting tables, etc.). We then can list the new space next to the corresponding lost space from the Sheraton (sizes in 1000 sq. ft.).

<i>Additional space at Hynes</i>		<i>Sheraton</i>	
Ballroom B	10.5	Grand	8.6
Ballroom A	7.0	Republic A&B	4.9
Ballroom C	7.0	Independence	3.7

M 114	3.0	Constitution	4.5
M 101	1.8	Commonwealth	2.8
M 107/B	3.0	Fairfax	2.2
2 rooms @	1.8	Liberty, 7 @	.6
2 rooms @	1.3	Beacon, 6 @	.6
5 rooms @	1.0	Gardner	1.3
M 102	.8	Hampton	.9
		6 others @	.6

The upshot of this is that we lose a few rooms, but actually gain space. The biggest problem I see is locating films — Grand and Republic in the Sheraton appeared ideal, but now there's nothing else but using a ballroom or two and/or the Multipurpose room.

[A description of the Hynes, complete with floor plans, appeared in issue #12. That issue is still available for \$1; or, if you will send us a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your request, we will send you a copy of just the page of Hynes floorplans. — LT]

MCFI Meeting

Wednesday, March 25, 1987, at the NESFA Clubhouse, Somerville, Mass.

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm.

Smofcon: Mark Olson reported that Aron Insinga has transcribed most of the notes from Smofcon 3, and has sent them out to the various brainstorming group leaders to be reviewed. We're still working on the format, and looking toward late May (around Disclave) as a publication date.

Leslie Turek said that the Texas people (FACT) want to produce a PC version of the Smofcon game. They sent us a sample disk, which is pretty good. They made a few changes, most of which are improvements. They broke the timescale into smaller pieces, such as dividing the con into days. They have preserved the spirit of the original.

Leslie wrote to them, suggesting that we share each other's scenarios and that we trade rights. She also suggested that we sell a certain number of copies to each other at cost. Steve Jackson's initial response was favorable and he will take it up with FACT. Leslie sent him online copies of the scenarios, with copyright notices attached.

George Flynn said that the FACT newsletter credited the game to NESFA. Leslie has mentioned to Steve that the game was created by MCFI; NESFA is just marketing it for us.

George also said that the game has received several good reviews. Kelly Persons said NESFA sales has only 8 more copies. Mark said he has a few more stored at home, but we should probably authorize reprinting. There were no objections to reprinting, or to Leslie's proposals to FACT. Leslie would like someone to take over the game, including future revisions.

Future Meetings: Mark said we should aim for six weeks between meetings rather than four. There was general agreement. The next meeting will be held on May 6 at 7:30.

Treasurer's Report: Ann handed out a detailed Treasurer's report covering the period through February 28.

Noreascon 3 Financial Report

Income:

General (Admin.)	899.29
Membership	66078.00
PR 1	455.00
Mad 3 Party	776.00
Over/Under Account	679.75
Donation	46.00
Total Income	<u>68934.04</u>

Expenses:

Administrative	524.66
Meeting, Storage, and Apa	1675.78
Capital Equip. and Maintenance	5892.69
Membership	326.52
Membership Computer	198.86
PR Computer	550.92
PR 0	127.35
PR 1	183.61
Mad 3 Party	430.17
Guest of Honor	73.25
Boskone 24	70.00
Advertising Capture	3.00
Total Expenses	<u>10056.81</u>
N3 Balance	58877.23

Smofcon has \$700 remaining to pay for printing and mailing the proceedings. NESFA has \$12,000 of our money, mostly charges collected at Boskone that haven't yet been transferred.

Preregistration Report: Sharon Sbarsky said that things have slowed down after the price jump. There was a draft acknowledgment card in the last apa. Sharon asked if we should print them soon. Mark said not yet. We don't want to spend much money until we know more about the hotel situation.

Progress Report 2: Greg Thokar said that a cover by Charles Lang and Wendy Snow-Lang is on the way. We have announced a July publication date. Mark said that this is contingent upon having concrete information on the hotel. Greg said that it will be 8-12 pages maximum. Mark said we'll include new member info only if it fits. He asked Greg to have something for the April apa, listing the contents and a sentence or two about each item.

Rick Katze said that the charges for foreign mailings of the last PR were \$106.06 (about 85 of them). It would have been about 3 times as much by air mail. Leslie mentioned that at Lunacon, Lise Eisenberg and Andy Porter mentioned a service called "International Surface Airlift" in which a private company crates mail overseas. It is cheaper than air mail but almost as fast. Mark asked for volunteers to look into this.

NESFA/MCFI Agreement: Mark called our attention to the draft agreement between NESFA and MCFI [on page 8]. Paula Lieberman objected to the style. Nobody objected to the substance. [The agreement was also approved by NESFA at their meeting of April 12.]

Computer Nets: Mark said that Don Eastlake will watch for mentions of Noreascon on the sf-lovers computer net and respond when appropriate. There has been a fair amount of material on Boskone and Noreascon, and many of us don't have access. He warned those who do have access to think twice, three times, or even four times before firing off random replies. We'll be posting our press releases and other info occasionally.

Paula wanted to know if she could see a copy. Mark said we'll only put the really interesting stuff in the apa. There is too much of it to print all of it. Sharon said we can attach a routing slip to a paper copy and pass it around. [Various gasps. "You mean paper? What's that?" etc.] We then agreed it was a good idea. Sue Hammond volunteered to handle this.

Mark said that James Turner has agreed to receive messages on various commercial bulletin boards. James said that we have an account on Genie; Compuserve hasn't yet sent him a commercial application. We should get one on Delphi, since that's where many of the SFWA people are. He can see no reason for getting an account on The Source or MCI Mail.

When asked how much this is costing us, he explained we pay for connect time. The total cost is perhaps \$50 a month.

The Hotel Problem — Overview: Mark said that Rick sent a letter to the Sheraton, stating that "We think we have a contract. Settle amicably. Let's talk." We haven't heard back yet.

The next stage would be to send a "93A" letter. This is formalistic. The basic idea is "Here's what we want. You have thirty days to do something, then we go to court." If they think we have a case, they'll probably ask us in for a meeting.

At the end of 30 days, we could ask a judge for a temporary restraining order (TRO), forbidding the Sheraton from renting out our space. To get this, we must convince the judge that we have a reasonable case.

The restraining order (RO) is a key tactic. If granted, the Sheraton can't rent the space/rooms. Therefore, it won't be in their interest to delay the hearing. If we don't get the RO, we're in a poorer position. It could take a year to 18 months to reach a hearing. In deciding whether to issue the RO, the judge will look to see if there is damage that we could suffer that money won't solve. The judge will also look at our chance of winning.

Mark said that in six weeks, we'll either be negotiating or we'll know we're in for a long fight. If the latter, we should start looking at other options.

Other Hotels and the GBCVB: Don Eastlake said that not much new has happened. The Marriott turned us down for the second time; they say they have two medical conventions booked. They still remember Boskone, plus the Atlanta Marriott seems to have confirmed some of their fears. (Note that the Atlanta Marriott did *not* think ConFederation was a real problem.)

The Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau sent out a memo on 2/6, and an update in March saying we wouldn't be using the Sheraton. They requested responses by 4/10.

We have 300 rooms at the Copley Plaza. We have 100 rooms at the Inn at Children's Hospital, 125 at three different HoJos, 100 at The 57, and 50 at the Midtown. Our total nailed down is now 1050.

GBCVB also said they had a verbal "no" from the Park Plaza, but nothing in writing. They hadn't heard from the Colonnade.

The Hynes: Joe Rico talked to the Hynes regarding service costs. Perimeter security is free. The general corridors are also cleaned free. Cleaning and security for our areas are at our cost. He mentioned to the Hynes that we could go 24 hours. His contact said "I don't see why not," but clearly this possibility hadn't occurred to him before.

They probably won't have paramedics on duty. We may have to supply fire marshals. Tables and chairs may be included; we will know soon.

Mark said that he and Joe will keep trying to work out a preliminary Hynes budget. It looks expensive, but not too bad: \$100,000 to \$150,000.

The Next Steps: Mark said that Rick has suggested we submit our case to a local law firm as a sanity check. Ellen Franklin pointed out that the three lawyers who'd looked at our case so far were fans. All want us to be right. We need other counsel before we move ahead. Don said that the fannish lawyers, however, know the background to the case.

Mark said that Ellen's point backs up Rick's suggestion, and asked Rick how much we could expect to spend. Rick said about \$500-\$1000, mostly for research.

Rick mentioned a legal principle called Promissory Estoppel. If we can show we relied upon certain actions, based upon totality of actions, even if the judge doesn't think we have a contract, the Sheraton may be barred from using this as a defense. *[If this sounds confused, please remember that I'm transcribing the remarks of a lawyer. — Jim Mann]*

Tony Lewis moved that we appropriate \$1000 so that he could consult with a significant law firm. Suford seconded. Mark said that he wanted people to think about whether they wanted to spend substantial money later. Don't vote to start the process now if you think you are going to vote against it next month.

Paula asked what the total cost would be. Rick said that, assuming that we get a positive response from the other law firm and the Sheraton does nothing, a limited battle could cost us \$5000-\$10,000. Mark reminded everyone that the point is not to score against the Sheraton but to get back into the Sheraton.

The following actions were approved:

1. Sending a 93A letter (if no response is received to our request to negotiate).
2. Going to court to get a TRO and an RO and then pursuing the suit (if the Sheraton fails to negotiate, and we receive a favorable opinion from an outside law firm).
3. Spending \$500-\$1000 for an initial legal opinion.
4. Spending \$500-\$1000 additional to begin the process of obtaining an injunction, if that becomes necessary.

Other Hotel Discussion: Ellen said that she and Jim Hudson would be willing to house up to 10 hand-picked fans in their home. Leslie liked the idea, saying that no one would have to worry about fire alarms. Susan Hammond said we should just place a lot of mobile homes on Huntington Avenue.

Harold Zitzow read some of the letter the Sheraton sent him after Boskone. The Sheraton apologized for closing some restaurants, pleading that they had fewer people than usual in the hotel over Boskone weekend. (!)

Other Business: Mark said he'd gotten good response on the area budgets. Talk to him if you are interested in working up one. Also, keep talking about division structure in the apa. And talk about long-range plans.

Brainstorming sessions are on hold until we know where we stand with the hotel.

Leslie reported on Tropicon vs. the IRS, as heard from Joe Siclari at Lunacon. They were applying as an all-round club, not just as a convention. The application was handled by the Atlanta office, by a new staffer. There were two rounds of questions; the first was mainly concerned with the Art Show. When they were finally turned down, they were given only 7 days to respond. Joe said that he planned to appeal, and would send us a copy of the correspondence.

The meeting adjourned at 9:46 pm.

Letters

Hotel Situation

• Lloyd Penney, Toronto, Ontario:

Greetings to you all, and thanks you very much for another TM3P. I'm glad it's here; the grapevine has brought some disturbing news that you deal with on the first page. . .

Re Hotel Problems: This was the disturbing news. I'd heard about the Sheraton-Boston's not wanting future conventions from some Ottawa fans who had attended Boskone. It seems that no matter what happens in a hotel, the sf cons get blamed. I guess it's a mentality of the hotel staff . . . they're weird, they do strange things . . . *they* must have done it! I hope it's possible to persuade the S-B to get fans back in their good books. Unfortunately, because of those ill feelings caused by vandalism, or whatever happened at Boskone, a substantial deposit may have to be paid to the hotel before they'll let a convention enter its doors again.

Re MCFI meeting of Jan. 21: The Republican Party is in New Orleans just before the '88 Worldcon? Didn't something similar happen in Chicago for the last Chicon? I can't recall if it was the Republicans or the Democrats.

[Don't think it happened in Chicago, but George Flynn says the Republican Convention was in Kansas City in 1976 just before MidAmeriCon, which was forced to move their start date one day later. — LT]

Use of Computers

- Dennis Virzi, Duncanville TX:

High marks to Olson on his budget planning spreadsheet. Will it eventually travel over into Ms. Broomhead's area or will Treasury use the accounting program? I like the concept of summarizing by category for the entire convention. Detailed department budgets should stay at department level; only they need to know how much is budgeted for paper clips, for example. Simple reports are more likely to be read and acted upon than massive detailed outputs listing every little item.

I'd like Sharon Sbarsky's ideas on what she thinks should be included in the members database. FACT is exploring various options on what to do with the database generated from the NASFiC and I'd like to know how other cons are handling theirs.

[We're not quite sure yet whether or how we will combine the accounting function (keeping track of what we've spent) with the budgeting function (keeping track of what we expect to spend). But we'll let you know when we've figured it out. Sharon and I were both a little confused by your question about what should be in a members database. For Noreascon 3, the database currently contains the fields illustrated on page 3 of the last issue. Many of these fields are Noreascon-specific and wouldn't need to be repeated for another convention. One of the nice features of dBase is that it is easy to add new fields when you discover a need for them, rather than being forced to figure out in advance everything that you might ever want to do with the database. — LT]

- Lloyd Penney, Toronto, Ontario:

Thank you for allowing room for a Country field on the record screen. The Zip field that allows caps for Canadian postal codes is a good idea, and thank you again. How large is the Zip field? I wonder because of the 6-character Canadian codes, the up-to-7-character British codes, and the enlarged American codes.

[The Zip field is 10 characters long, which allows for the U.S. Zip+4, as in "12345-6789". — LT]

Can't really comment on the budget too much . . . it's more detailed than anything I've had to deal with in the past. I might suggest that if chits and receipts are handed in to the treasurer for redemption, that the people who present them be advised to wait until a certain date, when the treasurer will issue refund cheques in a flurry. It makes it easier for the treasurer to keep track of the expenses and the monies paid out. Also, issue all concom members with a short stack of expense claim forms.

[We do already have expense claim forms. (In fact, Boston fandom shares an all-purpose expense form that can be used for NESFA expenses, Boskone #___ expenses (fill in the blank), or Noreascon expenses. To save the treasurers the trouble of writing checks for every little expense that is reported, they maintain "advance accounts" for each individual. People can request payment either when the organization owes them a significant amount, or can ask for an advance check before they actually spend the money. With an advance, expense forms must still be filed as the expenses are incurred and the amount is deducted from the advance. — LT]

Whither the Worldcon

- Lloyd Penney, Toronto, Ontario:

Re letter from Neil Rest: Trying to set guidelines for admission to a Worldcon comes right down to the prejudiced question of who's a fan, who isn't, and how does one tell the difference. Fandom has changed over 50 years (unavoidably), and so there's a larger variety of things to take interest in. Who do we eliminate? The gamers? The Trek fans? The Georgette Heyer tea-drinkers? The Regency dancers? Many people have multiple interests, too. Instead of elimination, we should try delegation. If the mediafen want a track, find someone involved in Trek fandom (the only one that seems to have any vitality these days) and ask her/him if he/she'll run it. This is one of the many methods to turn this special-interest fan into a general sf fan, and yet cater to the many 'fringe' interests that we simply can't ignore.

[I agree that this is a good tactic, but just want to point out that we shouldn't underestimate how much effort we still need to invest even when areas are 'farmed out.' There is still a lot of coordination and support that must be provided. — LT]

Leslie, your comments to Neil and Garth re 'unworthy' sections of fandom are spot on. We had no options way back when the Worldcons started to explode memberwise, and we really have none today. Is a "trufan's" money worth more than that from a Captain Harlock fan?

On why do it . . . we are in a competitive sub-culture. Especially when it comes to a fan who wants to keep busy, he or she has to continually prove his/her competence, or she/he will be cast aside. Adding more activities to one's fannish workload is a symptom of this demand for proof of competence, and I think the desire to work on or hold a Worldcon is another. I'm guilty of both symptoms, even though I enjoy them. If we were willing to accept a person just as she/he is, and not discard that person if a mistake was made, it would make fandom a happier thing to be part of. It would reduce the feuding, the labelling we do to, say, filkfen or mediafen, and the grey hairs we get. However, there is demand for excellence, especially when it comes to projects from a one-day to a Worldcon. I think that competition is part of our nature as humans, and while we do compete to be better, the backbiting, bitching, and snarking at one another is what comprises the negative of fandom, and the egoboo and accomplishment is the positive side, just like we do in any other part of life. We do it to prove ourselves, but fandom often demands that we prove it again and again constantly.

Worldcon Management

- Andi Shechter, Cambridge MA:

The last paragraph of Tom Whitmore's letter to *Mad 3* #17 is one which I plan to copy and carry around with me at any convention I work on. (Hi, Tom!) In it, Tom makes some clear, useful, and oft-overlooked suggestions regarding avoiding con burnout, and I think they are right on target. (I almost suggested they be written up on large sheets of paper and be chanted each morning during a con, but, er, that would hurt the ol' spontaneity just a wee bit.) (Yuck.)

I think Tom's suggestions and similar suggestions are useful for people who want to be department/division heads — a sort of self-test. I think you have to be comfortable with the things Tom mentioned: you should find it easy and appropriate to thank people and give and share credit; you should be able to take time to say something, and ask, not tell. Many of us are competent people who, under stress, forget to ask, forget to say "thank you" and, in my book, that makes you a bad manager. Trust your people, and don't expect the glory all to fall on you. That, of course, involves picking the right people (the personalities that mesh well, not necessarily the most efficient, or all-knowing) and involves shaking loose of a little ego. The catch for many of us (yes, I'm included) is that we *are* still learning that we are competent and good at things, and we're understandably proud of that. Sometimes we find it difficult to share the credit. If you can't do that, you should not be in charge of something, as you will burn out your co-workers.

[In fact, most reasonable people are likely to give more credit to the manager who praises the work of his assistants, than the one who preens himself when those watching know very well that others contributed to his success. By giving appropriate credit, you are more likely to gain in stature than to lose it. (This doesn't have to mean that you have to claim you did nothing — just acknowledge that it was a joint effort.) And of course, people will be more willing to work for you again some time in the future if their efforts are recognized. — LT]

The other part of the self-test is "Can you do all this without forcing it?" Can you respond easily, and say "nice job" or whatever, without someone having to prompt you? I know of instances where people have been "forced" to be nice, have felt obligated to express appreciation and it's phony and artificial. If you can't be natural or comfortable with it, you probably shouldn't be in charge of an area with a lot of people.

[It's certainly true that appreciation should be natural, rather than forced. But it's also true that many shy people find it hard to do this, and one of the ways to make something feel natural is just to practice doing it, even if it doesn't come easily at first. — LT]

Tom's suggestion that you "let people know what you're doing, even when you don't think you're doing very much" is also vital. Don't assume people notice what you're doing, since they're often too focused on what they themselves are doing. But not only do you often deserve credit, but by pointing out something you've done, it may help make other tasks easier to do later on.

Katie Filipowicz makes good points about ops and ops staff. I especially like the definition of "problem finder." Ops staff should not be limited to responding to the problems, but also to spot problems or potential problems to be solved when they're as little as they can be. I also appreciate her point about information not really doing anything. And information, often more than anyone else, hears about problems, sees problems. Their connection with ops and the chairman's staff is vital. And yes, members of the chairman's staff, like the chairman, must be generalists, and flexible and calm.

As far as pre-con information, the more I think about it, the more I would push for the use of a division/department apa or newsletter. This wouldn't be the only means of communication — we'd still count on meetings, phone conversations, etc. We can't all make it to meetings, but we can almost always find time to read something. And while we're not all writers, we are all readers. A mini-apa will help ensure people know what other departments are doing *before* the con. What *you* are doing may affect me later on. If, for example, we structure the concom with Information and Ops in the same division, the information they share early on will help the con run well later. (If they aren't in the same division, somehow it's vital for cross-communication. Ditto for programming and information, etc.)

• Lloyd Penney, Toronto, Ontario:

An idea for the handling of problems at the Worldcon . . . the establishment of a 'hit squad,' a mobile problem-solving team that appears only upon request. This squad may or may not consist of members of the senior concom. If there is an operational problem, and there is no way to solve it, or if there is a dispute, or a personnel problem, the hit squad is called upon to look things over, and be the final ombudsman. With squabbles caused by frayed nerves, smartasses who think the way they're doing things is the right way, in spite of what they've been told on how it should be done to keep plans in effect, and the fans who don't have enough sense to be the braves, and end up trying to be chiefs, a team to handle major decisions and major pains in the butt would be a benefit, especially to division or activity leaders who are too busy trying to run important programming items to solve problems or separate combatants.

Worldcon Bidding

• Dennis Virzi, Duncanville TX:

Hotel facilities must be closely examined by potential Worldcon bid committees. Though I don't know what can be done in Boston's case where you thought you had everything sewed up. A reluctant hotel makes for an irritating stay. The Anaheim Hilton didn't like fans so I didn't spend much money there, while the Atlanta hotels were so accommodating that I didn't mind the prices at the Marriott. Holland sounds like a good idea, but now I'm going to verify their facilities before I actively support them/oppose LA. To me, being assured the ability to attend any Worldcon is paramount to whether I'll have a good time at said Worldcon. (And I don't mean that I'd rather attend a crummy convention at a good site. I mean we should pay more attention to the whole package presented by Worldcon bidders so that alternative doesn't happen.)

• Lloyd Penney, Toronto, Ontario:

Re letter from Dennis Virzi (in issue #17): Funding *can* be difficult to obtain for a Worldcon bid. You can be more goshwow than the average fan, but you won't be able to do too much about it unless your personal income is at a particular level. Also, some cities do not have a central club with a substantial treasury; in this aspect, Boston and Los Angeles, among other cities, are truly fortunate. Heck, some cities don't have a central club,

period. (Toronto falls into this category.) Then, add in the fact that for many foreign bidders, exchange and distance make it difficult to bid the necessary amount of time, effort and visibility, not to mention money, into producing a successful Worldcon bid. Winnipeg may find it difficult, with the exchange on the dollars, the small local club, and the distance to put up with. True, Winnipeg is central. It may be difficult for fans to drive there, though. The airlines can get you there no problem. I'm not putting the bid down; I'm trying to illustrate the fact that it can be difficult for a bid to raise funding and pull off a successful bid. I'm sure Texas would have an easier time doing that than Winnipeg.

[At the risk of being repetitive (and of further inspiring the editor of The Bad Brie Party), we must point out again that Boston in '89 bid financing did not come from the NESFA treasury. See issue #15 for more details. — LT]

- Michele Canterbury and Chandra Lea Morgan, Cleveland OH:

On March 21, 1987, we held a fundraising event to benefit Cleveland in '94.

The event, in the form of a one-day mini convention and banquet, drew about sixty people. It was a moderate success; we took in enough money, over and above the costs of holding the event, to pay for the publicity mailing, a smallish bid party (at Millenicon, the evening before our event), our \$25.00 non-profit incorporation fee . . . and we have a few cents left to rub together. In addition, a wonderful time was had by all, and we seem to have generated some local interest in our committee and support staff.

We are incorporating as "Cleveland Association for Speculative Fiction," with specific language allowing the corporation to act as statutory agent for any future organizations we may incorporate. In this way, we hope to avoid having to pussyfoot around the new tax laws, should CASF prove ineligible for tax-exempt status.

[I'm not a tax lawyer, but I don't really see how this will help you. When applying for tax-exempt status, the IRS does ask about related organizations. Setting up a tax-exempt group to act as a "front" for a group that has been refused exemption seems very unlikely to succeed. Or have I misunderstood your intentions? — LT]

Since the successful fundraising event, we have decided on our next fundraising project: a small convention to be held September 18-20. This is the customary date of Earthcon, Cleveland's annual convention, which will be held in November this year due to hotel availability problems regarding September. We are hoping that the familiarity of the September date will help us to draw the 250-350 people we're planning for.

Connption, as we are calling it, will be held in the same hotel we sued for the March 21 event (The Quality Inn, in Wickliffe, a Cleveland suburb). The focus of the convention will be workshops; we have confirmed instructors, for (so far) four writing workshops, three costuming workshops, two art workshops, a game-module-writing workshop, a make-up workshop, and a filk workshop. We will also have a Dealers' Room, Art Show/Auction, Video Room, and a Con Suite, as well as a buffet banquet and a

Masquerade Ball. All program participants are local, with the exception of Michael Banks, who will drive in from Cincinnati (he's also doing a workshop at a local college that weekend, only 2 or 3 exits up the highway from our hotel).

Our financial projections show income around \$4000 (conservatively) and expenses around \$2500 (on the high side). Thus, we should be able to raise at least \$1000 for our bid expenses.

We are not aware of any other bid committee's fundraising activities (if any), and we'd like to hear how other bids are raising money to cover their expenses.

[Funny you should ask. The Mad 3 Party #15 focused on bidding finances, and had reports from all the 1988 and 1989 bidders. Back issues are still available (see page 2). — LT]

We will also be holding a raffle, selling 1000 tickets for \$1.00 each, with 100 prizes to be awarded when all tickets are sold. Top prize will be an expense-paid convention weekend for two at any Midwest con, top value \$250. Other prizes will include Earthcon memberships, toys, games, tote bags, items of clothing (such as T-shirts or sf belt buckles), and anything else of interest that we can get donated. Of the \$1000 we collect from the ticket sales, \$250 will be spent on the grand prize, with the remaining \$750 spent on bid-related expenses, or deposited in an interest-bearing account.

Although we have plenty of experience at the top level of Earthcon, and have worked on many regional cons and a few Worldcons, this is our first try at something as complicated and many-faceted as a Worldcon bid. We'd appreciate any help we can get, any advice from others who have been where we are now.

We're enclosing a copy of our current bid flyer. To summarize all that pretty-talk small type on the back:

Cleveland Convention Center:

3 exhibit halls (total 278,600 sq. ft.)
Ballroom (38,000 sq. ft.)
Little Theatre (seats 600)
Music Hall (seats 3000)
Public Auditorium (seats 10,000)
46 meeting rooms and offices

Bond Court Hotel (attached to Convention Center):

20 ballrooms/meeting rooms
526 rooms, 45 suites

Other Hotels (1-3 short blocks away):

Stoufferts Tower City Plaza (496 rooms/suites)
Hollenden House Hotel (510 rooms/9 suites)
Holiday Inn Lakeside City Center
(428 rooms/14 suites)

The meeting space at these three hotels totals almost as much as the Convention Center's meeting rooms plus the space available at the Bond Court Hotel.

Altogether, we have almost 2000 rooms in these four hotels, plus another 1000 rooms in the downtown area, and at least 300 rooms under construction at this time, with more promised in the next 3 years.

Thank you very much for sending us *The Mad 3 Party*. We are also enclosing letters to you from Michele's children (Alison, age 3, and Sean, age 5).

[For those interested in receiving information on the Cleveland bid, the address is Cleveland in '94, PO Box 5641, Cleveland OH 44101. — LT]

The Art Show

• Linda Ross-Mansfield, Winnipeg, Manitoba:

Art Shows are my bailiwick, so to speak, since I have worked more time on art shows of various sizes, than on any other convention section. It is all an illusion. That is to say, the layout and the positions of the entrance and exit can either make or break the display, and that is all there is to it. Lighting can always be managed (unless someone is stupid enough to put it into an area with no electrical outlets) but if you build your display stands and put them up in such a way that your allocated space creates a bowling-alley effect (long and looking very narrow), you have just about killed off the artists assigned to the "back space." Personally, I would, if forced to use such a layout, assign all the top sellers, such as the illustrious Mr. Whelan, to the 'back.' As any store owner worth his salt will tell you, if what they really want is at the back, they can't help but notice some of the merchandise along the route. The big-name artists are the only ones who can pull the fen all the way to the back, and if you don't get the fen all the way back, you can't sell them the stuff in between. It is much better to set the art up in an area where the "in" is on the long side of the area. Fen just naturally travel off to either side. It must have something to do with our natural penchant for going off on tangents. We just don't like to travel the "straight and narrow."

Now about the payment end of things (every art show director's nightmare). Logic dictates that trying to cramp a square peg into a pinhole *won't work*. No matter what size of show, there are inevitably too few people working to get the buyer in and out quickly. Part of the onus is on the buyer. Anyone who is going to be leaving early and doesn't try to make a special arrangement with the art show deserves what they get. Anyone who wants to get their art during the "peak period" must expect to have some delays. It is up to both the Art Show Director and the Treasury Director to alleviate the situation as much as possible. Anyone who doesn't apply the following maxims is in the wrong job.

Rule 1. Provide reminder cards to people entering that helps them know where the piece(s) they bid on were located. (Section numbers should appear on both the panel and each individual bid sheet.) Encourage the use of these by having a "fast lane" for people with these cards and a "slow lane" for the nit who comes up with, "I think it was a piece with a frame and by another piece with a unicorn. . . ."

[This rule seems to assume that the art show staff will be fetching the pieces for the buyer? At Boskone, we let the buyers unhang their own pieces, although the first sales station does check to make sure they haven't taken anything they're not entitled to. (So far, this hasn't been a big problem.) — LT]

Rule 2. Treasury and Art Show must work out a system for payment together. Never assume that either one has done it for you. No matter what type of recordkeeping the art show is using (and there had better be *some*

method). Treasury should have at least one of its own personnel there to track the cash, cheques, and credit card purchases in its own records. Generally speaking, the best run at it (Worldcon-level) was still at Chicon. Art show staff helped each purchaser to find all his pieces, check the art show paperwork, and then get them into the pay line. The actual pay line was a bit slow, but looked like greased lightning in comparison with the "system?" used at Baltimore.

Rule 3. Worldcons should not allow after-closing sale of art. Any art show at a con bigger than 800 membership shouldn't, either. I have worked under Quick Sale systems which don't work too badly if the piece is not available for pick-up until after the last auction call, but again logistics should dictate discretion here. Most directors and artists are approachable if you don't try to do it when they are frenetically attempting to handle fifty things at once. (Saturdays are usually best for this.) So try to ask them if you want to make any special arrangements, or contact a specific artist.

[I don't understand why you think after-closing sale of art is a problem. At Boskone, we allow artists to set a separate after-closing price, which may be higher than the minimum bid. People who are buying pieces under those terms can just go through the same line as everyone else, so there's no special work for the art show staff. — LT]

Rule 4. Observe, observe, observe, and then, when you see a problem, ask yourself, a) Can I think of a good solution? b) Can I think of a second? and, finally, ask about the problem: you may find out that the problem was accepted as the lesser of two or three bad situations. Every problem you see elsewhere could one day be yours, so get out there and see what others are doing to handle the wide variety of problems which can crop up.

Rule 5. *If it ain't broke, don't fix it.* There have been some very well-run Art Shows at Worldcons. The biggest problem has always been pick-up and payment, but what do you expect at a gathering of at least 6000 people? The worst fiascos I have seen in recent years have been the result of "grand" changes. Baltimore tried to "pre-sort" all sold art. Great idea that didn't take into account the many folks who didn't know if their single bid had been overbid or not, and often spent hours in line only to find that they had lost a piece. Lots of unhappy people there, not to mention the fact that when things were "pre-sorted" they were stacked up in a very unacceptable way. The pre-sort might have worked a bit better in a larger, more spread out area with more runners and more cashiers.

[I also saw this system being used at Philcon last year. Even though this was a smaller show, it had much the same problems as you describe. As mentioned above, Boskone just lets the buyers handle their own work, which alleviates the possibility of the art show damaging work between the time it has been "sold" and picked up.

There are techniques that can be used to analyze major proposed changes for potential problems. You need to have fairly good estimates for the size of the show: the number of pieces, the number of buyers who will be hitting you during the peak sales hour, etc. Then you step through your system, figuring out how long it will take you to sort each piece of art, and to deal with each buyer.

From this, you can get a rough estimate of how many people you need to have working on each task in order to keep up with the flow.

For example, if you figure that you will have about 500 buyers checking out in about 4 hours, with maybe half of them appearing in the peak hour, and if your system requires an average of 5 minutes to deal with each buyer, you can see that you would need more than 20 people on duty to keep lines from building up.

Another technique is to put yourself in the position of the art show bidder. Assume that you know nothing about the system, and consider what the person is likely to do, and what he needs to know when. This might have prevented the problem you describe, where people were not given the information they needed to know whether or not they needed to stand in line. — LT]

I hate to say it, but Atlanta's attempt to get rid of the line-ups [by spreading auctions and sales over several days?] left a very upset bunch of people. I don't think anyone got to see a number of pieces, and the auction system was very confused from the buyer's viewpoint. The only way I can see that idea coming even close to working is if the auction were held within the display hall itself, and pieces were to be pre-paid (i.e., pay when you buy it), but not picked up before Sunday noon at the earliest. A pre-paid line just to shuffle the papers would be separate from the other lines. Anyone with both types of purchases could choose to hit both lines, or be in the "problem" section.

Now, about the great bottleneck. As I said, Treasury and Art Director have to work together on this one. In a 4-6 hour period you have to sell thousands of dollars worth of art and get the artists checked out, too. The paperwork end of things is basically the art director's problem. Usually, a bit of common sense and application of the adage "put it in writing" works well, but my corollary to that is put it in triplicate. It is much easier to cross-reference 3 sets of records than *not* to have information that is essential.

Where are the Worldcon stats for the following questions? How many people were purchasing just one or two pieces? How many had three or more? How much of the sales were cash? How much was cheques and credit cards? The fastest system I recall had people to handle the checking that the buyer actually was the correct buyer (checking bidsheets, marking if off on a control sheet, then getting the buyer to the pay side), then there were about six cashiers for fast line (cash and two or three pieces), six to handle the credit cards and cheques. Some of these were "floaters," i.e., if credit cards were slow, they would help out at the cash side, or vice versa. The floaters were the key to handling the sudden rushes and bottlenecks. The Director and two assistants were where they should be — at the "problems table" — and had the grouchers and difficulties to take care of at the top, so to speak, so there was none of the repetitious complaint up the staff hierarchy.

[Well, I do have some statistics from the 1985 Austin NASFiC, LoneStarCon. These were assembled by Claire and Dave Anderson and sent out to the artists after the show. Attendance at LoneStarCon was about 2800, so most of these numbers should probably be doubled for a

Worldcon.

There were 140 artists displaying 1689 pieces on 177 and 1/4 panels, 16 tables, and 5 free-standing spaces. 613 pieces were sold for a total of \$48,196. 8 artists sold everything they entered in the show. 19 artists sold nothing, including 3 artists who entered only NFS work. (A total of 65 artists had some NFS artwork in the show.) The highest number of pieces sold was 38. 20 artists sold up to \$75, 25 sold \$76 to \$200, 20 sold \$201 to \$350, 18 sold \$351 to \$703, 13 sold \$799 to \$1361, 5 sold \$1500 to \$1826, and the top 3 sold \$2100, \$2587, and \$3015.

Of the pieces sold, 292 had only 1 bid, 68 had 2 bids, 50 had 3, 31 had 4, 34 had 5, 21 had 6, and 17 had 7. 50 pieces of artwork accumulated 8 bids and went to voice auction.

106 of the 140 artists allowed some of their work to be for sale after closeout. There were 26 pieces sold after closeout for a total of \$1815. This accounts for 3.8% of the total sales, and 1.5% of the total number of pieces sold.

458 convention attendees registered to bid, 367 actually did bid, and 285 purchased art (about 1 out of every 10 attendees). Of these, 128 purchased 1 piece, 78 bought 2, 38 bought 3, 19 bought 4, 10 bought 5, and 12 bought 6 to 11 pieces. By amount spent, 50 bidders spent up to \$20, 59 spent \$21 to \$50, 54 spent \$51 to \$90, 53 spent \$91 to \$175, 51 spent \$176 to \$450, 6 spent \$460 to \$600, 9 spent \$815 to \$1313, and the top 3 spent \$2180, \$3250, and \$3385.

We also have "method of payment" statistics from this year's Boskone. The total sales income was \$48,300. 41% of that was charged, 33% was paid by personal check, 3% was paid by traveler's checks, and 23% was paid in cash. (This traveler's check number may be higher than usual, because one buyer used \$2000 worth of them for his payment.) The average check transaction was \$178 and the median was \$50; the average charge transaction was \$201 and the median was \$95; and the average cash transaction was \$56. Out of 99 charges, 74 were for \$50 or more and 57 were for \$75 or more. Out of about 400 total transactions, 23% were by check, 25% were charges, and 52% were cash or traveler's check.

Boskone uses your suggested job split, with "tally clerks" who check the bid sheets, total up the purchase, and calculate the tax, and then a separate station handling payment. Different types of payment are handled at separate tables; although the only one that really needs to be separate is charges over the threshold that need to be called in for approval. The "large charges" line is always the slowest because of the approval delays. The show likes to encourage charge payment, however, because a properly-approved charge is sure to be good (whereas checks can always bounce). — LT]

I don't set myself up as a be-all and end-all. All of the ideas here are just my opinions, but I think that one of the biggest problems overall at Worldcons is that many people make two or three assumptions. First, that what works at their regional should work equally well at a Worldcon. Boskone is the only one who might, due to size, be able to get away with that. Second, that somehow miraculously, everyone will just *know* the right things to do in their departments. And thirdly, what you

said is what others heard.

[See also Linda's comments under "The Mad 3 Party" heading. — LT]

• Tom Endry, Flushing NY:

I would like to add to or support Jim Hudson's comments on the Art Show:

- a) A two-tier Art Show (since you really have the resources), with a large pro contingent.
- b) The pros paying some minimal fee (remember — they are a panel, not a bazaar), get reserved, choice front locations, Green Room treatment, not required to sell and if they do, pay only a small commission. This is to encourage participation. They can fill up 55–60% of the Art Show easily.
- c) The semi-pros and amateurs should pay some modest fee and commission, certainly not in the range of the Atlanta \$28/panel, and should be limited, say 2 panels per artist and 40–45% of the show space. (Somebody's gonna kill me for this!)
- d) The "wall," just like in L.A. '84.
- e) A vintage exhibition, just like in Atlanta, possibly with emphasis on vintage Andre Norton covers.

Re my prior LoC on the Atlanta guided Art Show tour: I don't know who set it up; the participants were Carl and Michele Lundgren, Ron and Val Lakey Lindahn, Bob Walters, and Ron Walotsky. Each pro took a group of 6–15 people and gave a fairly interesting little lecture.

• Andi Shechter, Cambridge MA:

Big art shows can be exhausting for people who can't walk very far for very long, and it's sometimes hard to get back and see everything. Might it be possible for us to put a couple of benches hither and thither in the art show, as they sometimes have in a large museum exhibit? It might encourage loitering, but then again, what's wrong with encouraging people to stay? Maybe they'll buy something. If it's not possible, so be it, but I've never yet made it through a Boskone-size or Worldcon-size art show without getting very tired and wanting to sit down.

[What a good idea! I suspect that we haven't thought of it before, for Boskone, because until the move to the large Sheraton exhibit hall, the show had always been short of space. And in the Sheraton, we had a problem with the hotel running short of chairs. But if the space and chairs are available, it seems like an excellent thing to do. — LT]

The Masquerade

• Tom Endry, Flushing NY:

Nasty note on the Masquerade: when discussing it, you people keep forgetting that you are not running it for the judges and the 3–400 pros and "know somebody's" up front; there are another 4,000 people in the back and they also want to see the costumes and they were very vocal about it in Atlanta. So you need a longer run-through time. Besides the bad, Atlanta also had the good idea of semi-pro filk entertainment during the judging, so you may want to try that. You also may start your preferential seating earlier and with a time limit, so there will be less delay at the start.

Fan History

• Garth Spencer, Victoria, B.C.:

Your Fan History Directory/index proposal was interesting. Be advised that *Maple Leaf Rag* has run a number of articles on Canadian fan history, roughly one for each fan community. My bias is to focus on *what* happened, *how* it happened, and how it *worked* (or didn't). The weakness of the articles I wrote myself is that I compile *volunteered* information from other people, who were there. I just learned something that didn't get into my Winnipeg history, because it wasn't volunteered — the Winnipeg in '94 bid has a history predating the current, ST Winnipeg-populated bid committee. Garth Danielson and Steve George were involved in a hoax bid several years ago. This didn't get into the Winnipeg fanhistory although Steve had contributed information at the time.

Further on this: I've been struggling for a few years to complete a volume of Canadian fanhistory. Recently the B.C. SF Association (well, members of the Western Canadian SF Convention Committee Association; some of the same people) offered to publish a summary of this history. This May, V-Con 15 is being held, with a theme of the history of SF and fandom, so it sort of fits. I'll keep you posted.

Worldcon News

• Lloyd Penney, Toronto, Ontario:

Has anyone heard anything from Nolacon? No one here has received so much as a postcard. We'd like to know what's going on. I think I might just take down that new address listed in the last SFC, and write again. It's too quiet.

[Boston-area fans received, in early February, a 4-page *Nolacon Progress Report 0.2* dated January, 1987. And *Progress Report 1* arrived just as we are going to press in late April.

Speaking of Worldcons, the *ConFederation* videotape, "Best of *ConFederation*," arrived at my doorstep on April 13. It included montage shots of the convention (especially the Marriott atrium); longish excerpts from Terry Carr and Ray Bradbury's *GoH* speeches; most of the Hugo Awards ceremony; excerpts from the opening and closing ceremonies, interviews with Ray Bradbury and David Brin, and the Secular Humanist Revival Meeting; bits of parties, filking, site selection, and panels; and a montage of the Masquerade.

It was good to see parts of the convention I missed (and to see again parts that I didn't). I found the narration a bit much at times; as an example: "All *Worldcon Masquerades* are glittery and special. But what made *ConFederation's Masquerade* a standout affair was the fact that it started on time and ran so smoothly, perhaps setting a trend for future costume events to follow." I also wished that the Masquerade sequence had chosen to show longer bits of the winning costumes (with the original sound), rather than short bits of most of them (to an accompaniment of Strauss waltzes). But over-all, it's a nice job, and I'm glad to have it.

On a less cheerful note, on the same day as I received the *ConFederation* tape, I also got a note from *Conspiracy* informing me that I had lost out in the great room lottery,

and had failed to get a room in any of the main convention hotels. I hope the rest of you had better luck. — LT]

Progress Report 1

- Lloyd Penney, Toronto, Ontario:

I've yet to receive PR 1 [letter dated March 29]. I imagine it will arrive at my address before this letter gets to yours.

[We certainly hope so. Bulk mail in the U.S. has been slow. We mailed the PR on February 26, and it took until mid-March to get to the New York area. We'd be interested to hear when it was received in other parts of the world. — LT]

The Mad 3 Party

- Linda Ross-Mansfield, Winnipeg, Manitoba:

May I congratulate you at this point in continuing on with this massive effort and say I would like to donate regularly to your zine, but I usually find that a family, a business, and my local fanac is filling up more of my time than I have. (I firmly believe that time warping is a female-linked genetically transferred secret of the human female. How else do I get everything done that I do?) I will however try to respond as often as I can to ideas and questions in your zine.

I just received my February ish, and have spent some two hours carefully going through it. It is sometimes scary how people so far apart can come up with the same

or similar ideas, but I noticed many things that have been discussed in our Winnipeg in '94 committee, or the committee for our local con, KEYCON. I am hoping to attend the Columbus Ohio's Smofcon, along with other members of the Winnipeg in '94 committee, and I hope to meet some of the many nice folks whose opinions I have read in *M3P*.

I hope that what I have written [see "Art Show" heading] doesn't make some people feel I am trying to teach their Grandma to suck eggs. There are always people out there who have not run into the problems you have and haven't had the years of background. Boston and NESFA, and Los Angeles and LASFS, are the Grande Dames of Fandom, and as *Mad 3 Party* exemplifies, we can all learn at their knees. But if the letters don't get written, then those who are new to all this can't learn. The school of Hard Knocks can be avoided only if some other form of schooling is available.

Again, keep up the Good Work, and I will attempt to contribute whenever possible. I encourage everyone to pass their *Mad 3's* on to others for perusal and to *ask questions*. Leslie may not be the Oracle of Delphi, but *Mad 3 Party* is a great sounding board.

[Gee, I'm not the Oracle of Delphi? I'm crushed. . . Seriously, though, finding that everyone is talking about the same things may be scary, but I would find it scarier if we weren't! Glad to hear your group will be getting to Smofcon next year. — LT]

The Mad 3 Party #18

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