

it's supposed to be -- relaxed, uncrowded, good but not overwhelming programming, and lots of parties! Nashville will go down as one of the best. Held over the Halloween weekend, the convention featured Piers Anthony as Guest of Honor, Frank Kelly Freas as Artist Guest of Honor, and Charles L. Grant as MC. In addition, Karl Edward Wagner was honored as Special Guest, with Val Lakey Lindahn and Ron Lindahn as Special Artist Guests. Andre Norton was unofficial special guest.

WFC is officially limited to 750 members, but this quota has been stretched in recent years, due to the rising popularity of the convention. This year's committee tried to hold the line at 750 regular memberships, but allowed special "unaccounted" memberships for certain categories such as committee and staff, invited guests, and some professionals. The final total was 950. This method, similar to what was done by the 1986 committee, seemed

The main hotel, the Nashville Hyatt, had excellent convention facilities, along with the usual 25-story open atrium and glass elevators. The staff was friendly and helpful. Many of them wore costumes on Halloween, making an unusual role reversal from most sf/fantasy conventions.

For a change, the overflow hotel was really "right next door." And a very fine overflow hotel it was! The Hermitage is one of those elegant, old fashioned hotels that have been modernized without sacrificing much of the original charm. The lobby has a marvelous stained glass ceiling (with twelve tasteful nudes that were not obvious unless you lay on your back on the plush Oriental carpet and carefully inspected the art work). All of the rooms were suites, for \$90.00. Also, the Hermitage Restaurant is one of the best in Nashville, and presented quite a contrast to the mediocre coffee shop and disappointing high rise,

many people sorry they weren't staying at the Hermitage -- until the lights went out.

Due to a bizarre construction accident, a section of street collapsed about 5:30 a.m. Saturday, cutting off electricity to one quarter of Nashville. The Hyatt had a substantial auxiliary system and was able to keep almost all functions going. Not so at the Hermitage, which had only minimal back-up. People awoke Saturday morning to discover they had no lights or water. The hallways were dim and spooky; everyone had to walk down the stairs. Fortunately, the hotel was only nine floors, and the freight elevator was available later in the day. Arriving in the lobby, guests were issued flashlights and served breakfast by candlelight. As Esther Friesner said, "It was kind of fun once we knew nothing dangerous had happened. Sort of appropriate for Halloween." A large display of ten or twelve jack-o-lanterns, which had been purely decorative the day



Con runners Maurine Dorris, Barbara Harmon, Beth Gwinn

Jane Jewell



Artist GoH Kelly Freas

C.N. Brown



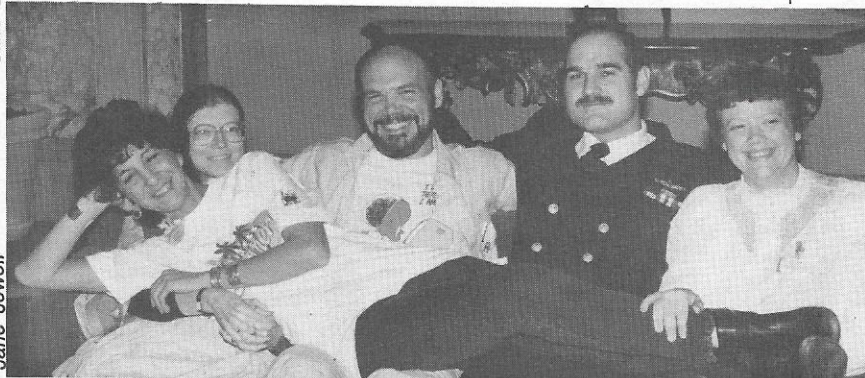
Justin & Fritz Leiber

Jane Jewell



Jack Williamson, Julius Schwartz & Andre Norton
Terry Bisson (l), Piers Anthony (c), & Avon's Linda Cunningham,
Rena Wolner, John Douglas (tp), Gary Farber, Chris Miller (bm)

Jane Jewell



4-headed author "Robyn Tallis" supports editor Ellen Steiber
(Sherwood Smith, Bruce Coville, Jim McDonald, Debra Coye)
Jack O'Lanterns!

Jane Jewell



Jane Jewell

Jane Jewell



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before, became the main source of illumination in the lobby. People started hanging out around the pumpkins, singing and telling ghost stories. However, as the day went on and the electricity was not restored, the novelty began to lose its appeal. Those who had scheduled parties in the Hermitage for Saturday evening scurried to make alternate arrangements. The formal banquet planned by Avon to honor Piers Anthony was transferred to a function room in the Hyatt. The CyberPrep Tea was cancelled. The electricity finally came back on around 11:30 p.m. Saturday.

It was a real coup for the Nashville committee to lure both Piers Anthony and Andre Norton to their convention. Although they are two of the most popular and successful authors in the field today, neither goes to conventions very often.

Piers Anthony gave a speech in the form of a sermon, "The Power of the Word", which started as a history of writing and turned into an articulate and passionate defense of freedom of speech and the press. He fears that people today have become so concerned with public appearance that they have forgotten private values. The first act of a tyranny, he said, is the suppression of free speech. He longs for the day when there will be no more political prisoners, not because they have all been released but because they were never imprisoned. He pointed out that there is no evidence to indicate that pornography encourages crime, while there is some good evidence that watching violence encourages crime. Yet police continue to raid adult book stores, while any child can watch violence on tv. He thinks the reader of fiction has a more flexible mind

and is more receptive to new ideas and less afraid of differences. In his novels, he tries to address the causes of the evils of our times, not just the symptoms.

On Saturday morning, Andre Norton was interviewed by Susan Schwartz. She talked about her long career and her plans for the future. Her first vocation was as a librarian, but due to health problems she had to quit after almost twenty years. It was at that point that she turned to writing full-time. For the next three decades, she was virtually house-bound. Recently, due to new medication, she has been much better and is starting to get around more and even attend conventions. She does not have word processing; all her manuscripts are written on a typewriter. And, she's still a three-finger typist! Currently, she said, she is owned and operated by seven cats.

She and Robert Adams began the "Ithkar" anthologies because they like to help discover and develop young talent. It bothers her that most of the sf/fantasy magazines, the traditional market for new writers, have disappeared. She used a masculine pseudonym when she began writing, because she was told she would have trouble publishing sf under a feminine name.

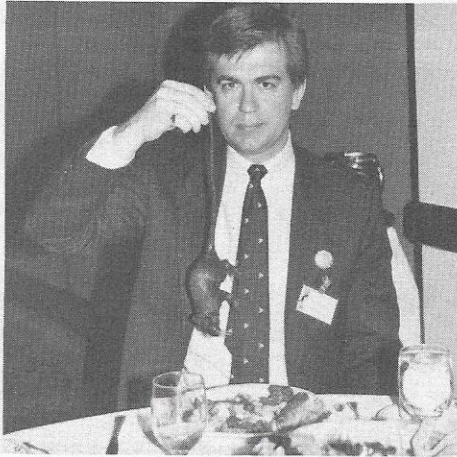
Only one of her books, *The Beast Master*, has been the basis of a movie. It was so bad that she disowned it.

Artist Guest of Honor Kelly Freas showed slides and talked about his long career in the field of fantasy art. His first cover was for *Weird Tales* in 1952. By 1956, he had won several Hugos. His professional career, however, was hampered by the tendency of art directors to typecast artists and assume they can only do one style. Freas went on to gain success in almost every area of commercial illustration.

One very lively panel was "What We Learn From the Fans". Don Wollheim said the interaction between writers and readers of sf and fantasy is unique. Mystery, romance, and western writers all have their own conventions, but they are populated almost exclusively by professionals. Sandra Miesel pointed out that fandom and conventions are a fertile breeding ground for new professionals. Many well known authors were fans first. Half or more of the current editors, including John Douglas, David Hartwell, Ginjer Buchanan, and Beth Meacham, began as fans. There is often a symbiotic relationship between fans and pros. An avid sf reader at the Jet Propulsion Lab worked out the details of a fictional laser for one author. British editor Jo Fletcher said American fandom is not only much larger than British fandom, but it is also growing and thriving, while UK fandom, she fears, is declining. She knows of four sf/fantasy editorial positions in England that are currently going begging.

Panelists at the session on "Social Activism: The Writer's Moral Responsibility" discussed how literature is not only a product of the times but also influences the times. Terry Bisson said he didn't think he'd be capable of writing a novel today that contained only male-dominated women, but twenty years ago he probably wouldn't have been able to create woman characters who weren't male-dominated. Many works of speculative fiction, he noted, have been very political - Le Guin's *The Dispossessed* on the left, and Skinner's *Walden Two* on the right. The panelists agreed it was difficult to combine good storytelling with political, moral, or religious tracts, which is why the essay and the short story evolved as separate literary forms. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*,

Piper Janny Wurts

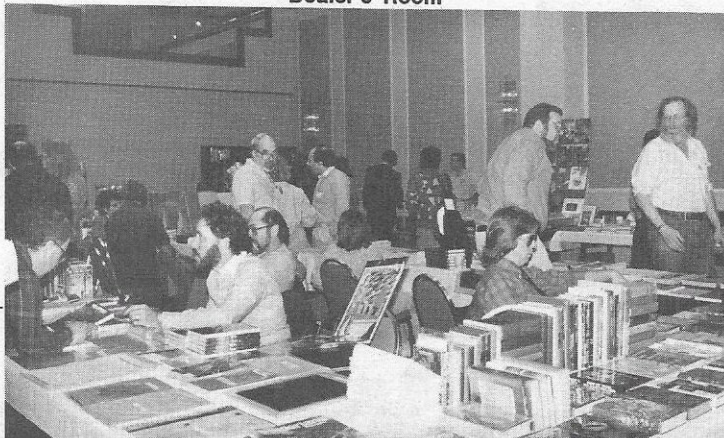


Douglas Winter

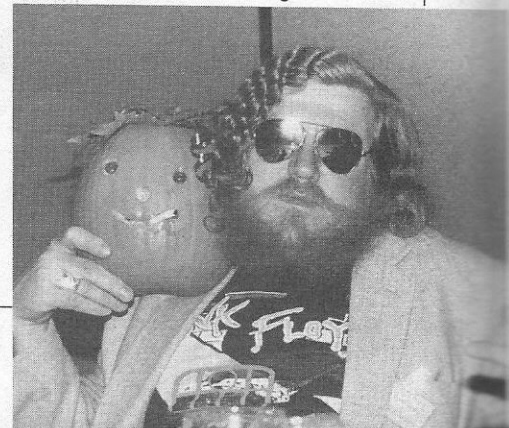


Pool playing at Tor

Dealer's Room



Karl Edward Wagner & Jack



while it had a great impact on its time, had not held up as fiction.

"Contrasts Between Rural and Urban Settings in Horror" also evoked lively discussion. Traditionally, horror stories have been placed in rural or small town settings – the isolated country house, the dark and gloomy forest, etc. Now there is a trend toward urban horror. People now seem to associate horrible happenings with the city, while the countryside is seen as a peaceful place. F. Paul Wilson attributes this change to violence and over-crowding in urban areas. To Dennis Etchison, there is a sense of urgency that contributes to the power of urban horror and gives it more relevancy and sharpness than the traditional "haunted house" story. Michael McDowell took exception to the stereotype of the violent city. Grow-

ing up in the rural South of the 1950s, he was exposed to much more violence than he has ever encountered in any major metropolitan area. It wasn't until he had been living in the city for some time that he even realized you weren't supposed to know people who kill. City people, he feels, read about a lot of violence but do not experience as much of it in their daily lives as do the inhabitants of rural areas, in the South at least.

One of the more humorous panels was "A Day in the Life of an Editor". Moderator Jane Yolen led five major New York sf editors through a role-playing game of a typical day at a publishing company. Yolen had great scenarios, such as: "Your leading feminist author is on the phone. Her latest book has just come out with a cover that features a long-legged,

large-breasted bimbo. What do you say?" The funniest scene was undoubtedly Lou Aronica's solution for two editors who had to cancel several lunch dates in a row. "You send out for sushi over there, and I'll send out for sushi over here. Then when it arrives, we'll call each other and you can send me the bill." This panel was a great way to show the various responsibilities of an editor. Not surprisingly, there was no time for editing during the day. That part of the job, Ginjer Buchanan said, always goes home in the briefcase.

Though not large, the art show was powerful. Many of the big-name artists, such as Don Maitz, Kelly Freas, Carl Lundgren, Dawn Wilson, Ron Walotsky, and Tom Canty, had displays, as well as a good selection of other professional and amateur artists. It was also



Jane Jewell

Terri Windling



Carol Jacob, Piers Anthony (Jacob)



Jane Jewell

Andre Norton



C.N. Brown

Jane Yolen

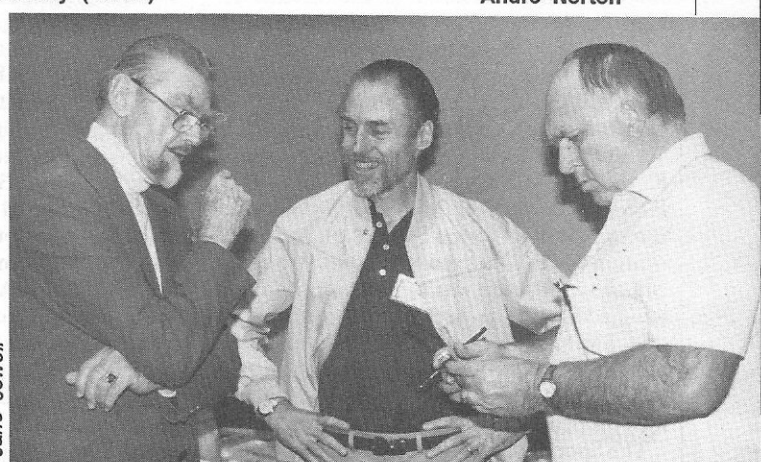
MC Charles L. Grant



C.N. Brown

W. Paul Ganley, Jeff Conner

Slightly atilt Orson Scott Card & John M. Ford



Jane Jewell

L. Sprague de Camp, GoH Piers Anthony, Tom Doherty (Tor)

David Schow bites Lovecraft



Jane Jewell



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nice to see a lot of local talent from Tennessee and nearby states.

Unquestionably, the most popular piece of the show was Dawn Wilson's "Queen of the Snows". It was the first public presentation of this companion piece to her highly successful "Winter King". Wilson worked all week to finish, varnishing it only after it had been hung.

The Saturday evening music festival was an unqualified success. Ellen Kushner was the MC again. As always, I was amazed by the multitude of talents that people in our field have. Janny Wurts presented a wonderful contrast as she vigorously played the bagpipes while dressed in high heels and an elegant black and white after-dinner dress. Steve Gould demonstrated his virtuosity on the harmonica, and Peter Stampfel sang commercials from the Fifties. The most popular act was "Armadillo Frisbee and the Road Kill Bar-B-Q", an impromptu group consisting of Steve Gould, Peter Heck, and Adam Stemple (Jane Yolen's son). The evening's program also included music from Jane Yolen, Emma Bull, Will Shetterly, and Orson Scott Card.

The World Fantasy Awards were presented Sunday afternoon at the traditional rubber chicken banquet. MC Charles L. Grant regaled the audience with the "true" story of how nominees and winners are selected. Chair Maurine Dorris presented Barbara Harmon with the committee's award for most valuable staff member. Then Harmon announced the Art Show Awards. Best Monochrome went to Todd Hamilton for "Fiona". Best Light Fantasy was won by Don Maitz for "Contra Maitz". Keith Parkinson was awarded Best Dark Fantasy for "What Do You Mean, We're Lost?" Best of Show, to no one's surprise, was "Queen of the Snows" by Dawn Wilson.

Finally the time came that everyone had been patiently, or not so patiently, waiting for. The World Fantasy Award judges, Tappan King, Melissa Singer, John M. Ford, Paul Hazel, and Michael McDowell, were presented. Andre Norton received a standing ovation as she was given the committee's special award. Norton was clearly surprised and touched by this unexpected token of appreciation. She said, "I haven't attended very many conventions, but this is definitely the best. I feel like I've come home and found a world with the people I've always known must exist."

The Special Award -- Professional category was won by Jane Yolen. She seemed even more surprised than Norton. She'd been told by a "reliable" source that, unlike the Hugos, if you hadn't been notified before the convention, you hadn't won. She had already told her friends and family that the real honor was in being nominated. This was not true. "It's better to win."

Terri Windling accepted the Best Artist award for Robert Gould. Jim Turner of Arkham House accepted the Best Collection award for the late James Tiptree, Jr.

Orson Scott Card picked up his own award for Best Novella. Although "Hatrack River" was his 60th story, he said, it had a special



Jane Jewell

Armadillo Frisbee & the Road Kill Bar-B-Q: Adam Stemple, Peter Heck, Steven Gould

meaning for him, and he was very pleased that it had won. Michael McDowell accepted the Best Novel award for German author Patrick Suskind's book *Perfume*. The Life Achievement Award went to Jack Finney, with Robert Weinberg accepting.

During the banquet, things got a little silly as "pumpkin wars" broke out at several tables. Orson Scott Card and David Schow at the Tor table threatened WFC judge John M. Ford with one of the jack-o-lanterns that constituted the centerpiece of each table. At the head table, Karl Edward Wagner carved a more menacing face into his pumpkin. Gardner Dozois, George R.R. Martin, Susan Casper and others got into the act, doing unspeakable things with the unfortunate orange vegetables.

While there weren't as many parties as there are at the average sf convention, there were certainly enough to keep everyone happy. Thursday evening, Mary Mason and Steve Goldin sponsored a San Francisco bid party in the Hyatt, while Kathryn Cramer hosted a party at the Hermitage. The Convention Suite was open every night, and ASFA also sponsored a party. Friday seemed to be the big night. The Baen Books party, the Tor party, and the combined Ace/Avon party were all lined up in a row on the 23rd floor. There was a mix-up, and Baen Books was assigned to the deluxe suite that Ace/Avon had reserved for their bash in honor of their mutual author, Piers Anthony. Even though they didn't have the fancy suite, the party was still splendid. The large painting by Darrell Sweet for *Bio of an Ogre*, Anthony's autobiography, was presented. The Tor suite had a large pool table where Craig Spector, John M. Ford, and others spent the evening. Other parties were hosted by *Weird Tales*, Bantam Books, NAL Signet, Bridge Publications, and David Hartwell.

The publishing community always turns out in force for World Fantasy Con, as there is usually more business done at this convention than at any other. This WFC lured representatives from the higher echelons of publishing, as well as a large contingent of editors and assistants. Rena Wolner, president of Avon Books, was there, along with editorial director Linda Cunningham and the three members of the sf editorial staff -- John Douglas, Chris Miller,

and Gary Farber. Betsy Mitchell and Toni Weisskopf represented Baen Books. Brian Thomsen and Mary Allen represented Warner NAL sent John Silbersack. Tom Doherty, president of Tor, was there with Beth Meacham, Melissa Ann Singer, Linda Quinton, David Hartwell, Jim Frenkel, and Debbie Notkin. Algis Budrys was there for Writers of the Future, while Simone Welch represented Bridge. The large contingent from Ace/Berkley included Executive Vice President Roger Cooper, Susan Allison, Ginjer Buchanan, and Beth Fleisher. Lou Aronica, Shawna McCarthy, and Amy Stout were there from Bantam. Also present were Don, Elsie, and Betsy Wollheim of DAW. Two editors, Jo Fletcher and Stephen Jones, came from England. There were some book packagers, including Ellen Stieber of Cloverdale and David Harris and Byron Preiss of Byron Preiss Productions. Small publishers were represented by Donald M. Grant, Stuart David Schiff, Ted Dikty, W. Paul Ganley, and Jeff Conner.

Quite a few magazine editors were also present, including Ellen Datlow of *Omni* and Tappan King of *Twilight Zone*. Davis Publications sent Gardner Dozois, Sheila Williams, Tina Lee, Stan Schmidt, and Bill Battista. On hand to celebrate the revival of *Weird Tales* were editors John Betancourt, George Scithers, and Darrell Schweitzer. Pat Price was there from *Amazing*.

Lots of agents were on hand to woo editors and take their authors to dinner. Eleanor Wood was there with her two children. Others included Howard Morhaim, James Allen, Merrilee Heifetz, Susan Protter, Val Smith, Kirby McCauley, and Kay McCauley.

There were too many authors there to even start to mention. Look at the photos.

Next year the World Fantasy Convention will go abroad for the first time. Scheduled for October 28-29, 1988, it will be held at the Ramada Inn London West in London, England. The theme will be "Gaslights and Ghosts" and the Guest of Honour will be the acclaimed British horror writer James Herbert. For information, write The World Fantasy Convention, 130 Park View, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 6JU, UK, or in the U.S., 4326 Winslow Place North, Seattle WA 98103.

--Jane Jewell