

# LOCUS

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE SCIENCE FICTION FIELD

ISSN-0047-4959

## EDITOR & PUBLISHER

Charles N. Brown

## ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Faren Miller

## PRODUCTION MANAGER

Donna Burrison

## MANAGING EDITOR

Dawn Atkins

## CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Norman Spinrad

Richard Curtis

Fritz Leiber

Debbie Notkin

Locus, ISSN-0047-4959, The Newspaper of the Science Fiction Field, is published monthly by **LOCUS PUBLICATIONS**. Editorial address: 34 Ridgewood Lane, Oakland, CA 94611; telephone (415) 339-9196. Please send all mail to **Locus Publications**, P.O. Box 13305, Oakland, CA 94661.

Individual copies are \$2.50. Individual subscriptions in the U.S. are \$24.00 for 12 issues, \$45.00 for 24 issues via second class mail. Individual subscriptions in Canada are \$26.00 for 12 issues, \$49.00 for 24 issues via second class mail. First class individual subscriptions in the U.S. or Canada are \$31.00 for 12 issues, \$59.00 for 24 issues. Institutional subscriptions—the only ones we bill—are \$26.00 per calendar year in the U.S. by second class mail, \$28.00 per calendar year in Canada by second class mail, or \$33.00 per calendar year via first class mail in the U.S. or Canada. We only accept institutional subscriptions on a calendar year basis. Individual overseas subscriptions are \$26.00 for 12 issues, \$49.00 for 24 issues via sea mail. Air mail individual overseas subscriptions are \$38.00 for 12 issues, \$72.00 for 24 issues. Overseas institutional subscriptions are \$28.00 per year for sea mail, or \$40.00 per year via air mail. Make all checks payable to **Locus Publications**. All subscriptions, including Canadian, are payable directly in U.S. funds only. When converting from second class to first class delivery, please convert all remaining issues on your present subscriptions (75¢ per issue). The number after your name on the mailing label is that of the last issue on your present subscription. We do not send notices when subscriptions are about to expire. If you change your address, please notify us immediately. Second class mail is not usually forwarded. It is either returned or destroyed. We subtract one issue from your subscriptions for each returned copy. We keep expired addresses on file for one year, so tell us if your subscription is a renewal or completely new.

### British Subscription Agent

Fantast (Medway) Ltd.

P.O. Box 23, Upwell

Wisbech, CAMBS PE14 9BU

### Australian Subscription Agent

Space Age Books

305-307 Swanston St.

Melbourne, 3000, Victoria

### Japanese Subscription Agent

Takumi Shibano

700 Ninomiya Ninomiya-machi

Naka-gun Kanagawa-ken

259-01 Japan

Subscriptions accepted at current exchange rate.

Display advertising rates on request. Contact Donna Burrison at (415) 339-3182.

We take no responsibility for unsolicited submissions. Contents copyright © 1985 by **Locus Publications**. Second class postage paid at Oakland, California. Postmaster: Send address changes to **Locus Publications**, P.O. Box 13305, Oakland, CA 94661.

## Contents

1984 SF Year in Review.....	p.1
Book Summary	
Recommended Reading	
Magazine Report	
Cinema Summary	
Robert Silverberg: Up, Up & Away.....	1
Contents.....	3
Announcements.....	3
Editorial Matters.....	3
Romanos Replaces Busch.....	4
Blanche Williamson Dies.....	4
Preliminary Nebula Ballot.....	4
Miscellaneous Notes.....	5
Signings of the Times.....	5
People & Publishing.....	7
The Devil & the Dingbat.....	7
Agent's Corner, Richard Curtis.....	9
Locus Looks at Books, Faren Miller....	13
Moons & Stars & Stuff, Fritz Leiber...15	
Locus Looks at More Books,	
Debbie Notkin.....	17
Stayin' Alive, Norman Spinrad.....	19
In the Once Upon a Time City,	
Samuel R. Delany.....	21
1984 Book Statistics.....	27
1984 Magazine Statistics.....	29
Recommended Reading List.....	30
Books Received--December.....	32
Magazines Received--December.....	34
Classified Ads.....	36
Bestseller Lists.....	39
SFWA Publishers Party.....	42

## Announcements

1984 publications from Soft Books of Toronto, Canada, include the first two issues of *Les Bibliothèques*, each with part of an H.P. Lovecraft chronology, and *Fubar*, vol.2 no.1, a checklist of Lovecraftian art plus 9 illustrations. All are edited by Joseph Bell. For further information, write to Soft Books, 89 Marion St., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6R 1E6.

Area, a fashionable nightclub in New York City with a policy of introducing a new theme every six weeks, will have the theme Science Fiction through Feb-

ruary 16th, with various large window displays in the entrance hall. The club has been described as "part gallery, part playground, and part three-ring circus." Previous themes included Suburbia, Confinement, and The Color Red.

The March 7-10 "Weekend of Wonder," which was to have featured founding ceremonies for the National Hall of Fame for SF and Fantasy in Beaumont, Texas, has been cancelled. Apparently the site of the museum is now in doubt, due to a problem with funding.

## Editorial Matters

This is our month for looking back over the last year in sf. It was an interesting year for us as well as for the sf field. *Locus* practically doubled in size and complexity. The circulation went up, and I went through my usual identity crisis with it. Should I let it grow as much as possible or try to limit the size and circulation? When I gave up my engineering career exactly 10 years ago, I did it partially because I wanted to have a job I could do almost entirely by myself. For nearly three years I did all the writing, subscriptions, layout, paste up, etc., with only part-time help with typing. The magazine grew and I needed more help. Gradually, I found myself with the same problem I had before; I became a manager and did less of the actual work. In the last few years, I've needed managing help and find myself being pushed up to a mainly executive position. I have mixed feelings about it and probably always will, but I know there's no going back to the simpler magazine *Locus* used to be. Meanwhile, I try to hold growth to about 10% a year and complain at least once a year.

### LOCUS SURVEY

This is the issue with the poll and survey. We give a free issue to those subscribers who return a completed copy to us before the deadline. We'll furnish an extra copy to completists who send in a stamped addressed envelope. The survey answers are useful for several reasons. Advertisers are always asking for demographics, and it's handy for us to know what your interests and background are. We're trying to see if we should cover software for writers, so the computer questions are particularly important. We need to know how many of you own your own computer and what type it is. We can review software for IBM or Apple systems and need to know your compatibility. The question on renting or sharing a house or apartment seems to have created some confusion. You rent with your family, you share with roommates even though you pay rent. When we talk about chain bookstores, we mean Waldenbooks, Dalton, and Crown. Unless you're trying to make money at it, please don't list

hobbies as secondary occupations.

### LOCUS POLL

A well-known sf book dealer accused us of trying to affect the Hugo nominations, to turn out the vote by running our own poll and by supplying a recommended reading list. He claimed that too many people just used our list for voting and didn't even think of other worthy stories. We could only plead guilty on both counts. Before we started the poll, the Hugo nominations averaged a little over a hundred votes, and they were so scattered it took less than 10 votes to make the ballot. It's now at least 6 times that. We try to make the list as broad as possible by using a number of inputs, but it is limited to about 10% of the short fiction and 15% of the books published. About 30% of our readers send in Hugo nominations and, I hope, use our list. We don't agree that this is "stuffing the ballot box," but you might keep it in mind.

The most interesting category this year is probably "First Novels." Thanks to Terry Carr, Jim Baen, and others, there were more interesting first novels than ever before. They're overwhelming the Nebula Ballot, and I'm not so sure it's a good idea. We list first novels in a separate category because they're usually read by a lot fewer people. Also, they generate enthusiasm out of proportion to how good they really are. We tend to praise any fresh outlook and overlook flaws which we would notice in books by seasoned novelists -- i.e. our expectations affect what we think of a book. We hope you'll keep this in mind when nominating for awards. On the other hand, if you think they're really top-notch, don't hesitate to nominate them in the Best Novel categories as well as the Best First Novel category in the *Locus* Poll.

### CORRECTIONS

Both Darrell Schweitzer and Joel Rosenberg wrote to point out that *WRITING FANTASY FICTION*, sold to NAL, was a collaboration between the two of them.

Phyllis Gotlieb has not moved to the U.S. (*Locus* #288, p.34) but is still

(Continued on page 44)