



volume two

OFFICIAL N. F. F. F. MAGAZINE

number one.

THIS IS AN EXPLANATION -- NOT AN APOLOGY

Most of you who receive this issue of BONFIRE know about the letter and ballot which I sent out. There are a few of the newer members whose names and addresses I did not possess at the time and they did not receive that communication.

When it was first suggested to me, early last Spring, that I run for the Presidency of the NFFF, I truly had never thought of doing such a thing. But upon reflection, and after talking and writing to a number of influential fans, I began to feel that I could, after all, possibly do something for the good of Fandom. I therefore allowed my name to be placed in nomination, and received more than the required quota of signatures easily.

Immediately I began thinking in terms of what my plans would be in case the fans saw fit to elect me to that office. I gave countless hours to thinking, and to talking and writing letters to other fans about it. The preliminary steps began to form in my mind. And also, as I studied the matter more fully, I began to perceive what seemed to me some rather pointed inaccuracies and incompletenesses in the original set-up of the NFFF.

Then came time for the issue of BONFIRE which was to contain the platforms of the candidates -- but no issue appeared. Several weeks later the issue with the ballots was to have appeared -- and still silence. I knew the war had made vast inroads into our fan personnel, and into the time of those fans who were not in the Armed Forces. Still, I could see no reason for the magazine not appearing, for I knew there were still fans and fangroups who had mimeos, and would gladly have done the work, if that was all that was holding up the appearance of BONFIRE. Our group here, would have done it gladly, had we been asked, but we were not.

Then came several fanzines with articles about the decline and probable death of the NFFF. Letters from some of the officials, even, deplored the fact that it was about all gone. It all left me dumbfounded, for I had thought that it was on quite a solid basis, and that, with the new plans and ideas worked out by the Long Range Planning Committee, it would pick up speed and go forward ever faster and surer. Then one of the fans, who had received a notice of his failure to pay his latest tax, and who had then done so at once, received his money back, with the surprising statement that as the NFFF was all done, there was no necessity of his paying the tax.

This literally made me ill. I could not believe that the organization we had worked so hard to form, and which had seemed so well fulfilling a need in Fandom, was to die without more of a trial than it had been given.

In the end, I took the step that I did. Ol' Man Evans stuck his neck out again, and so far this time that any future "hecking" will seem pale and insignificant in comparison. I wrote a letter to all the members of the NFFF as given in the latest (Vol.1, No. 5) BONFIRE, which I had, and enclosed a post card ballot. I gave a lot of thought to the names I would include on that ballot for officers, picking them not only for their ability and achievements in Fandom, but for their geographical location as well. I included, of course, all those who had been nominated for the various offices, and "drafted" enough others to make a full slate. I put in three statements with a "Yes" or "No" clause, so that the fans could express their sentiments about the step taken, and also about their belief in whether or not the NFFF should be continued.

I stated in that letter, and I wish to reiterate here, that I believed the near-disaster was the result of CIRCUMSTANCES, and NOT of PERSONALITIES. I still so believe, in spite of many who have stated they believed otherwise. I think the sudden transition from peace to war; the uncertainties of the individual fan's status; the loss of so many fans to Armed Services or to important war work that took so much of their former leisure time, was the greatest reason for what did happen. I felt then, and still feel, that the great majority of the fans wanted Fandom to continue to grow and expand, and that they knew and felt that these things could be accomplished only by the closer UNITING of Fandom.

The results of that letter and balloting have convinced me I was right in my assumptions on all counts; i.e., that the step I took was justified under the circumstances; that the fans did want the NFFF continued, and that such a step would shock fans who had become a little diffident into becoming more aware of the seriousness of the situation, and of their own part in it.

On another page I have tabulated the results of the election showing that the following were named to office. In only one position was the vote so close as to present a real problem, and I believe I have solved that problem to the best interests of Fandom. The ballots will be sent to the Secretary for inclusion in our official files. Only those ballots received on or before October First were counted, as that was a full month for voting.

For President, E. E. Evans; for Vice President, Bob Tucker; for Secretary-Treasurer, Chauvenet and Speer tied; for Members of the Advisory Board, Widner (most votes so named Chairman), Warner, Morojo, Thompson and Bronson.

It had been my intention from the start to use the Members of the Advisory Board as the chairmen of my various committees, and this plan has been carried out as closely as possible.

The President and Vice President will divide the work of getting out the official issues of BONFIRE (Ashley and Wiedenbeck of NOVA Press having graciously volunteered to assist me when it is my turn to do so.) In addition, Tucker and myself shall collaborate closely in forming the plans and policies of the Federation, as I shall insist on his ideas at all times, and anything I plan to forward to the members will first be presented to him for his approval, correction or veto, if there is time to do so.

Since Chauvenet was the only one who originally filed notice of intention to run for the post of Secretary-Treasurer, he has been given that task, and I have already had an acceptance from him. I have asked Speer to undertake some special work for the NFFF, and he has replied his willingness to do whatever he can best help in doing.

We feel that there should be some very definite changes made in the present Constitutional set-up of the NFFF, and have given that task to Harry Warner, who volunteered to do the work and who has already sent me a draft. The final results will, of course, be presented to the members in a special edition of BONFIRE, within a very short time, probably shortly after the first of next month.

This is perhaps the proper place to make a short statement of policy and belief on the part of your new President. I think that one of the mistakes in the original set-up of the NFFF was that it tended to be, in and of itself, just another fanclub, although National in scope. This was not the original idea, but it seemed to be developing that way. I vision it as something far different, and far more important. I think it's place is almost entirely Co-Ordinative; that it's function is to assist in the up-building of fan groups, from isolated individual fans as corresponding members of their nearest local clubs; of the local clubs themselves, and of state and sectional Federations. It is my earnest desire to see Fandom so well organized and so smoothly functioning that whenever something comes up that fans want done, we will have the machinery ready and working to handle the work. You will hear much more in detail of this conception as time goes on.

Morojo will have charge of the correlating of all FemmeFan activities, for I believe that this work will be of a very essential nature, and that within a short time we will be hearing in a telling way from the activities of our rapidly-growing group of La Fans Femme.

Widner will, of course, continue his post as our Poll Officer, as well as being the Chairman of the Advisory Board by virtue of having received the largest number of votes for that office.

Don Thompson has been assigned the extremely important task of running the recently-created Welcoming Committee. Having been a member of the Plancom when that idea was formulated, he is well versed in all that we had planned for it and hoped from it, and will be an ideal man to handle the actual working of the committee which we hope will greatly aid in the growth of Fandom.

All of the Chairmen have been told that they are to appoint such assistants as they may feel they will need. Later, we hope to give you the complete lists of all committee personnel.

When Bronson and the other Minnesota boys were at the Midwest Conference, they volunteered to handle one of our first most important projects, and Bronson has been assigned that Chairmanship as his first duty. Since two other fan groups are contemplating projects that, while not exactly the same, complement each other, we are doing some co-ordinating in getting these three individual jobs worked into one or two super-productions that will really give Fandom something it wants and needs. More later on this when there is something really definite I can tell you about our plans.

I have written to Harry Jenkins asking for detailed information about the Fannual which he is publishing, and if it is at all possible, we shall make this available to all members of the NFFF free (one copy to each, that is). We feel, and so do a lot of others, that members of the NFFF should not be made to pay individually for this, as it is entirely a NFFF project.

You will notice in this preliminary report that I am not making any definite statements about finances. This matter is under advisement, and will be published later, probably in the next issue of BONFIRE. However, there seems to be a growing sentiment that the present plan does not work out as was hoped when it was chosen, and there may be a change.

In another section of this issue, I shall present excerpts from some of the many fine letters I got in answer to my letter and ballot. I want you all to read and study them carefully, and am asking now, as I shall repeat again and again -- PLEASE WRITE IN OFTEN AND FULLY ON YOUR OWN IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE BETTERMENT OF OUR N.F.F.F. I fully realize what a tremendous job it will be to get a permanent, smoothly-running organization, and I will need a lot of high-powered help in doing this important job. I want you all to realize to the fullest that this is YOUR organization, and that one man, however willing or with whatever capabilities, cannot run it alone. We must UNITE and make this, in its fullest sense, a UNITED FANDOM. Only so may we prosper and advance to the kind of an organization we want and need.

In other words, while we are trying to make this a functioning organization at the present time, we are also trying to build for the future -- for that time when Fandom shall have grown to the proportions we visualize and for which we hope. I repeat it again -- we want to see Fandom so well organized in all its branches, that whenever anything comes up that the fans want, they'll be in a position, with the already-functioning machinery, to make

that desire become a reality. We want to see more local clubs and those local clubs organized by states, and the states into sections. I hope to see six great Sectional Federations before the end of the year, and the states under them organized. What if there are only one or two fans in that state now -- with the help of the rest of us, they can start building up that number as time passes and will have a functioning organization into which to invite the prospective members, rather than merely being able to dangle before them a bunch of unreal generalities.

If my actions seemed dictatorial, please believe that I have no desire for such powers, nor do I believe in or want to see our work done by that method. Sometimes it is needed for a single action, but not for continued use. I plan, and promise, to devote all my Funtime toward Co-Ordinating the activities of Fandom, to the ultimate proposition of making a UNITED FANDOM that shall be of benefit for and to all Fans everywhere, whether in isolated sections, or in the more heavily-populated Fan districts. If, at any time, you believe I am not fulfilling that duty to the utmost I shall gladly step aside to let you place this important task in the hands of one you consider more capable. And I promise that, without bitterness, I will assist that new Co-Ordinator to the best of my abilities, and to the extent of my hobby resources.

WILL YOU ALL, THEN, CO-OPERATE WITH ME IN THE SAME MANNER?

THANKS!

Everett Evans

President, N. F. F. F.

V-P Sez:

First of all, I approve (if my approval amounts to anything) the steps taken by Evans to maintain life in the NFFF. There are times when it becomes necessary for one man to seize the initiative -- call it dictatorship if it pleases you, words mean little -- and plunge ahead along a road everyone else has sidestepped. I think Evans has done an admirable job in 'drafting' his officers, getting them elected and installed and practically functioning. Here is one gentleman who sat with open mouth and watched himself be elected. Now if I can just wangle me a salary.

I have a pet idea which I shall want to introduce for NFFF consideration after awhile when these other, first-steps, have been smoothed out and the organization is functioning. As usual, it has to do with fanzines for the fans in service.

Ackerman brought into the open a thought I had in mind: he requests two copies of each and every fanzine published while he is in service. One copy to be sent to his home, the other to him in camp. Because, quite naturally, he wants to read it now and save it for his collection, too. Which is hardly possible, we imagine, under the circumstances.

We have heard that some copies of our own magazine are almost "read to pieces" in army camps. Fifty or sixty other people line up after the original subscriber and read the fanzine until

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it falls to pieces. Saving it is impossible. Yet, the majority if not all of the fans in the army want to keep up with Fandom.

The answer is two copies. One to the fan; one to his home address. In the months to come I suggest that the NFFF, thru one of it's Directors and his committee, work on some solution to that problem; a way to collect and maintain a complete file of fanzines for the fan who is in the army -- the fan who will (because he is a collector) want to have a complete file of what-went-on while he was away. ((Your President has written Tucker that HE is now the Chairman of a committee to handle this work, and to get busy and present us a complete and workable plan, and we will try to see that it gets put into action.--EEE.))

And please don't say no one wants such. Ackerman does. And I know another guy who will, if and when he gets the works, next year!

Meanwhile, I suggest that the "fan manual" (not to be confused with the Fannual) be completed as soon as possible, and copies be placed in the hands of the 'welcoming committee', or whatever body is to function as such. ((Work on this is being pushed as fast as we can get details smoothed out.--EEE)). Such booklet will be invaluable for the NFFF'er in introducing the new reader into the mysteries of fandom. I've often wished I had such a publication, many times, when applying the screws to a likely prospect!

On this membership application form, a copy of which is attached to the dummy I am reading, there is room for a few changes I believe. I think all wording should be removed from that form which will tend to cause suspicion or questioning in the applicant's mind. I suggest "sponsor" and "recommendation approved" be removed. The newcomer, if he be the timid type, is apt to think we are filing him away for future murder. Leave those lines blank as the other two signers will know where they should place their names. ((In this final form as printed, we are following the V-P's suggestion, and the form is the amended one.--EEE)).

(Signed)

Bob Tucker

His
* Mark.

One of the things your President most wishes to see accomplished during the coming year of his administration, is the more complete organization of Fandom, in all its many branches and ramifications. He wants to see more local clubs started all over the country; that all of the States possible be organized into State Federations; and the six main sections of the country fully organized into Sectional Federations. These sections are: The New England (already started in the Boskone); The Eastern, to be comprised of New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania and such other adjacent states as may wish to join them; further development of the Dixie and the Mid-West; the Western, which would include the states between the Rockies and the Mississippi; and the Pacific, including Washington, Oregon and California, which might also take in Idaho, Nevada, Utah and Arizona. How about it?

TABULATION OF VOTES IN THE SPECIAL ELECTION JUST HELD:

67 ballots were sent out; one was returned because of wrong address; one came in five days late; 24 were not voted.

Of those voted, four (4) voted that the step taken was NOT justified. From the remaining 37, the votes tabulate as follows:

FOR PRESIDENT: Daugherty 1, Rothman 1, Evans 35 (elected).

FOR VICE-PRESIDENT: Koenig 8, Tucker 26 (elected), Fortier 3.

FOR SECRETARY-TREASURER: Speer 18, Chauvenet 18, Widner 1. (Since Chauvenet was the only one who had originally filed for this position, it was given to him, and Speer was picked for other very important duties.)

FOR MEMBER BOARD OF ADVISORS: Wollheim 12, Ackerman 12, Widner 31 (elected and named Chairman, having the highest number of votes), Jones 12, Jenkins 19, Warner 30 (elected), Bronson 20 (elected), Morojo 23 (elected), Massion 5, Thompson 21 (elected).

THAT THE NFFF SHOULD BE CONTINUED: 31 Aye, 1 not voted; 4 not sure. THE STEP IS JUSTIFIED: 35 aye. THE STEP IS NOT JUSTIFIED: 4.

NOTE: The ballots have been sent to the Secretary for inclusion in the official files.

We are appending herewith a form for Membership Applications which we wish you would use when sending in any applications. We wish you would PLEASE put it on a half sheet of 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 inch paper, thus making a standard sheet of 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$, for ease in filing.

NFFF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I hereby sponsor for membership in the N. F. F. F.:

_____ (Type or print name)

who has _____

(List membership in clubs, fan or pro work, etc.)

Applicant's signature _____

Street Address _____

City and State _____

Approved: _____

Approved by Directorate _____

(Chairman)

(For Secretary to fill out):

Date Recorded _____

Applicant Notified _____

EXCERPTS FROM LETTERS

PHIL BRONSON: "I'm wholeheartedly in favor of the step you have taken in regards the NFFF. If anyone squawks because of the 'dictatorial' ideas (and someone is bound to) I'm with you all of the way. I think that after the way the NFFF drifted downward we need a lot of dictating. I'm not one to talk, however, as I must embarrassedly admit I was a trifle lazy in my capacity as one of the Advisory Board. But not this time -- if I'm elected. Hope others will see things this way."

HARRY WARNER: "I rather think you're justified in taking this step, although certain of your reasons for doing so may not be too valid. Anything that will mean the continuation of the NFFF is worthwhile at the moment; if you'd sent out a postal like this offering to act as dictator of the organization, with complete charge of everything connected with it, I'd have voted for such a move. I feel that the NFFF simply cannot continue under its old arrangement. The whole idea back of the NFFF was a central organization for active fans who like to 'get things done', as differing from those who like to 'see things done'. And that is precisely where THE NFFF has failed. It hasn't accomplished anything; it hasn't given these active fans anything to do. Above all, let's not stick to the original ideas and plans just because they were the first, in the faint hope that it was builded better than we now believe." ((There's a lot more space does not allow printing.))

PVT. EDWARD C. CONNOR: "It is my opinion that the NFFF should not be allowed to deteriorate. Unity must be preserved at all costs; I personally believe that any method which will attain this result should be followed. Your effort certainly has my support."

JOSEPH FORTIER: "Your recent move in regard to the National Fantasy Fan Federation meets with my whole and undiminished approval and may every phase meet with the best of success. It is indeed good to find in these times a fan who has enough courage and faith to go ahead. If you find yourself in need of any help when you are elected, I wish you to feel yourself free to ask my help." ((We have asked his help already -- we have appointed him as Publicity Director to see that our activities reach the light of fanzines and prozines.))

MILTON ROTHMAN: "As for the NFFF, I hardly know what to say about that. Strong measures must be taken, however, and pressure exerted. As soon as the election is over, immediately bring out another BONFIRE. ((Here it is, Milty.)) For future projects, I hope we can keep away from making catalogs for awhile. But things like a History of Fandom, and a Booklet explaining Fandom to newcomers are fine." ((Both are coming up soon.))

ART WIDNER, JR.: "I can't see where it is going to do much good unless some new and different treatment is tried on the patient during the next period of temporary revivification. ((That's just what we plan.)) The first thing we guiding genii should discuss, when and if the present crisis is surmounted, is how to avoid a similar crisis when the 1943 elections roll around. Should we lengthen the present terms of office? I think the latter isn't a half-bad idea to start chewing on? What do you think?" ((Me too.))