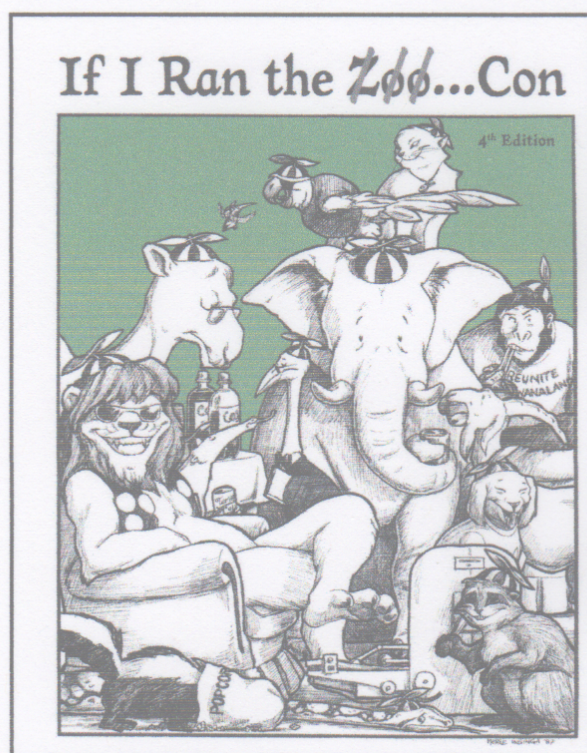


1986-2015 - If I Ran the Z/o/o/... Con

After I ran a successful Worldcon in 1980, people suggested that I should write a manual for how to run a Worldcon. I gave it a try, but the effort quickly ran aground. It was pretty clear to me that there is no one 'right' way to run a Worldcon. So many times, the answer to any question is "it depends".

At the same time, Boston was about to host a Smofcon (convention for convention-runners), and it's traditional to have some sort of ice-breaking game the first night of the convention. So someone came up with the idea of making a convention-running game. A bunch of us dived in, and this game was the result.

Over the years, 'The Game' has continued to be played, and the game concepts of *People* points and *Goodwill* points have become ingrained in the con-running vocabulary. But new developments, especially with the rise of the web, offer new opportunities. So with the help of a whole bunch of people, we've produced an updated Fourth Edition for Sasquan.



2004 - Noreascon 4: First Night

I'll be honest here. By Noreascon 4 I had become an old fan and tired. Time for the younger folk to kill themselves running Worldcons; I just wanted to settle back and enjoy them. But it was not to be.

Noreascon 4 had come up with a great idea called "First Night", but the person who started out the planning couldn't continue with it. So in the final year before the convention, I was asked to take over and I just couldn't say "no". Like an old war horse who hears the bugle, I made one more foray out of the barn. (Thinking to myself, "Let's not f*** this one up.")

What we tried to do was put together an evening event to kick off the convention that showcased all the different facets of the convention in a festive format. I think it worked.

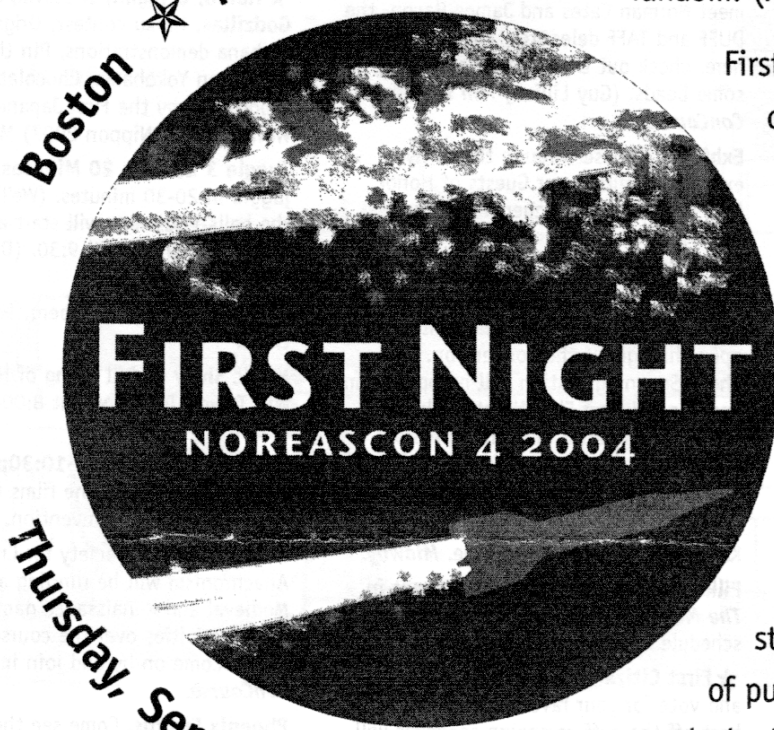


First Night Brain Trust at N4: Leslie Turek ran it; John Pomeranz started it; Priscilla Olson invented it.

Button design by Alice Lewis



Boston ★ Massachusetts



Thursday, September 2, 2004

Welcome to **First Night**, the Noreascon Four opening night celebration! We've brought together a myriad of activities designed to give you a taste of the convention and of the different aspects of fandom. (And some things just for fun!)

First Night runs from 7pm–11 pm on Thursday night (with a few items starting earlier or ending later). We will have activities throughout the second floor of the Hynes Convention Center, centering on the Midway and the ConCourse (Hall C). See the map on the back of this program, and look for signs, balloons, and streamers in the First Night colors of purple, red, and yellow which will mark the locations of First Night events. Many of the program items are interactive, and are designed so that you can drop in and sample many different activities during the evening.

Several of the activities, marked by the ★ symbol, will be giving out tickets that can be redeemed for silly carnival prizes. The First Night Prize Table will be located at the Information Desk in the ConCourse.

We hope that you will come, participate, and have a great time! 🗡️

The FIRST Night TIMES



Noreascon 4/Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

Thursday, September 2, 2004

"Not Bad for Our First Time"

My First Public Performance of Cigar-Box Faust

"Cigar-Box Faust," my only performance piece to date and the title work of my collection, *Cigar-Box Faust and Other Miniatures*, was originally written to amuse my wife. It's a five-minute version of *Faust*, performed by a cigar in the title role, a cigar-cutter as Mephistopheles, and a box of matches as Helen of Troy, an Angel of the Lord, the light of ontology, and the flames of hell. When Marianne came home from work, I sat her down at the kitchen table and said, "Watch."

But its first public performance was at Noreascon 3. It wasn't a program item. I just stuck the cigar box with the props in one jacket pocket and a tape recorder with the spoken text in another, figuring an opportunity to show it would arise.

It did. The first evening of the con, I wound up in a wandering group of die-hard revelers. One by one, the parties closed behind us. Until at three a.m. we found ourselves meekly watching James Patrick Kelly release a helium balloon. Not a *special* helium balloon, mind you — just an ordinary party balloon he'd found.

It was obvious to me these people were starved for entertainment. So I led them outside, and set up the theater atop a convenient trash receptacle. I hit the Play button on the recorder.

"Watch," I said.

Michael Swanwick
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.



Welcome to the one-shot fanzine that's one lasting legacy of Noreascon 4's magical, manic First Night celebration.

We asked you to contribute words or artwork on the theme of your First Time. So many of you replied that we're lucky to get this zine out by the con's Last Night ...

Thanks for sharing your thoughts on dogs and cats and crabs, sex and stalking, worldcons, more worldcons, and the Wild Leafy Sea Dragon. Hope you had a good Night.

The Editors