

The Ghosts of Worldcons Past

From Worldcon Runners' Guide

The Ghosts of Worldcons Past: Ops Log Excerpts

Most of the content of the logbook kept in Operations/Services is pretty dull stuff — who has which radio, which rover is patrolling where, reports of broken radios/pages, etc.

However, even the most dull Worldcon has a number of entries that illustrate the kinds of problems that Operations and the rover net are the first defense against. In many cases, the problem is handed off to the appropriate department; in other cases, Ops must try to handle it themselves (especially with late-night problems).

Below are partial excerpts from the Operations logs of MidAmeriCon (1976) and SunCon (1977.) For those who were there, it should be an amusing trip down memory lane.

MidAmeriCon Ops Log Excerpts

- Wednesday, 9/1: insufficient wheelchairs were provided by hotel. Ops had to call local rental places until some were located.
- The N3F room has been moved from its original location. No one seems to know where the new location is, and N3F'ers would really like to set up.
- Friday, 9/3: insufficient tables were provided for the dealers' room. Howard Devore is not amused.
- The pros at the Weird Fantasy banquet were not going to be served because they had no tickets. Ross Pavlac talked the banquet manager into serving them, then contacted Ops to find someone who could sign for the pros' tickets.
- A big name pro with a short fuse had asked for a slide projector for his presentation, and none had been ordered. A hunt was made for a projector, lenses, screen, etc. In the meantime the pro dropped his slides (randomizing them) and had to put them back in order before the presentation could begin. The ops discovered that the room's light switch would not turn off the lights, and a search for hotel maintenance had to be launched.
- A group arrived to set up a light show but could not get into the room because the lock had been pinned. Hotel security was contacted, but they did not have the pin-puller for that lock. After much discussion and investigation, it was discovered that the head of security had gone off duty and taken the pin-puller with him. It took more than an hour to track him down once it was realized who was needed.
- September 4:01:52 am. Larry Smith has been given his daily feeding: triple-deck baloney-Swiss-Cheddar sandwich, apple, and cranapple juice on the rocks.
- 04:29 am. Possible drug deal going on at the 15th floor. Police and rovers are on the way. (Turned out to be a false alarm)

- 07:23 am. Freight elevator alarm going off in dealers' room — possible break-in. (Turned out to be a false alarm, the stupid elevator was just malfunctioning)

Suncon Ops Log Excerpts

- September 1, 18:22. Publications forgot to put a copyright notice in the program book. Rubber stamps with the correct copyright notice were obtained, and the call went out for a zillion gophers to stamp the copyright in.
- The dealers' room is in the hotel parking garage, and the garage floor was freshly painted (Battleship grey) at the beginning of the week. The paint is still wet, and complaints are pouring in from dealers who are having, um, difficulties in setting up.
- The hotel is demanding advance deposits, in violation of the contract. Hotel rep sent.
- There is a dispute about exactly WHO has after-hours access to the Art Show. Request clarification of policy from upper concom.
- Just inside of main ballroom entrance was lots of cable, lying loose on the floor. No duct tape was available, so masking tape was pressed into service to tack the cables down.
- Not all lights in the dealers room are functional. Hotel engineer called.

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