

TORCON3

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properly advertised Con blood drive — there were three- and four- hour delays from signups to donations — and despite this, donors showed up as they were closing and they had to go past the scheduled time by ninety minutes to finish all who got in under the wire. Next year they'll know better; and we plan to have an organized group of local members ready to help them.

While this went on, just next door, in fact, at 2 p.m. we held our "Heinlein: Stranger than Stranger, Four Decades After the Hugo" panel, once again, to a packed room. Well over 120 people were present. With Dr. James moderating, Brad Lyau, Geo Rule, Deb Houdek, Fran Van Cleave, and Joe Major all presented a variety of views. Mike and I were interviewed by a television crew for a local station about Mr. Heinlein, his goals in organizing blood drives, and the society's goals in continuing the tradition by paying it forward. Funny thing, later that afternoon, while I checked by the fan table, another television crew was interviewing Sam Kramer about the Society, its goals and activities, and of course about Mr. Heinlein.

Later that afternoon, we presented, in a room four times the size of the ordinary panel room (between 400 and 500 seats), absolutely packed, the "Heinlein: Lost, Strayed, Misplaced, and Found Again" panel, which was, of course, mostly about the discovery and publication of *For Us, The Living*. We distributed the flyers Simon & Schuster had provided; and I'll cause a link put on the Society's website so you can download your own, in full color, to use as you wish. We ran out of flyers,

including those black-and-white copies we had printed knowing we were going to run out.

It was a wonderful panel, the most successful we've had. Spider Robinson, Eleanor Wood, Art Dula, and Robert James participated along with your humble obedient servant who mostly stayed out of trouble, again. Art Dula surprised me at the end of the panel, when he asked to say a final word: He told the audience that if it was grateful for this last bit of Robert Heinlein's work being published, a way to pay back that gratitude was to join the Society, through whose members' efforts the manuscript was recovered.

We continued the next two days with two more panels: "Heinlein's Take on Law and Lawyers: The Year We Hanged All the Lawyers," on Sunday and "Heinlein's Juveniles: Just Plain Kids, Superkids, or Sociopathic Monsters" on Monday, once again (I'm getting as tired of typing it as you are of reading it) to fully packed rooms.

L.N. Collier almost made it this time for the lawyers panel to join Art Dula, Sam Kramer and me; he got as far as the plane change at Chicago, when he received a telephone call notifying him that his younger son had been in an accident; and he had of course to return home to see that all was well. Fortunately, L.N. reports the boy is now okay, doing well; and he regrets missing the panel. We all shared his fatherly concern about his son's accident and are glad of the certain recovery to full health. The photos that L.N. web-posted of the Butler original Heinlein home, which was restored last year, include photos of both L.N.'s younger son and his daughter; and he reports they are wonderful children; they look bright as their father is, and as talented.

So Art, Sam and I killed all the lawyers to the best of our ability, without his help. Sam, now retired from the Army, is a Deputy Public Defender in his second real life. Next year, for Boston, I'm going to schedule a layover through Kansas City and handcuff L.N. into a chair next to me. I'll have him properly sedated and smiling when we arrive at NorEasCon to kill the lawyers one more time! Maybe we'll both need a keeper to accompany us to ensure we arrive: Oz, are you reading this?

We were joined by David-Glenn Anderson, Fran Van Cleave, and Joe Major for the Juveniles panel. David-Glenn is the manager of the Reading For the Future list Greg Bear, Greg Benford and David Brin created a few years back to encourage the use of SF in teaching, and teaches himself in Utah. All our panelists were a great help on that panel.

And, oh, yes, we held more than merely a bit of a fairly successful membership drive at Torcon. We now have FIFTY-THREE more members than we had before we left for Torcon: unquestionably the most successful drive we have ever had at a SF convention; and we're still receiving sign-ups that are attributable to the good work we all did in Toronto.

We have a brand-new designed website thanks to Deb Rule. For further information and photographs on Torcon3 events, I suggest you might visit it if you haven't lately. You'll be delighted how well executed the redesign is! See <http://www.heinleinsociety.org>

Everyone worked hard, and all mentioned above are especially commended for the hours of effort they've put in at Torcon. Success breeds success. Wait until next year!