

## What We've Been Doing

As the upheavals and layoffs of winter rocked the comics industry, the FoL Board and action committees have been attending to a number of unglamorous but necessary administrative tasks. Here's what we've been up to:

**Conventions:** Lulu has made successful appearances at Mid-Ohio Con and the Great Eastern Philadelphia Spectacular. Both shows were coordinated by the New York chapter (See NY report and photos, page 5). With signings, candy, and information dispensation galore, the Lulu booth is definitely becoming known as one of the "cool" booths at cons.

At press time, FoL was scheduled to go to the New York Great Eastern Show, but the show was canceled at the very last minute. (Check out Lulu's Diary next time!) A one-day show for retailers and artists was put together at the last minute, and FoL was there. The FoL-NY Big Apple Pie Contest fund-raiser went on as planned Friday, March 1st, and was a big success. Details and photos next time.

**Membership Drive:** As of the present writing, Friends of Lulu has over 250 members and is still growing.

**Retailer's Handbook:** This is being planned for a summer release. Paul Curtis is putting together the outline for a book that will explain proven methods for retailers to get more women into their stores, convert drag-a-longs, and sell more to the women customers that they have.

**Lulu AOL Folder:** FoL now has its own folder on America On Line. Go KEYWORD: Comics, under General Comics Board. This is a great place to ask questions, post news, and stay in touch with other on-line Luluites.

**Future Activities:** Samantha Sackin, formerly the marketing manager for Full Moon Comics and currently account manager at Fleishman Hillard, will be coordinating future convention booth appearances for Friends of Lulu (including booking space, coordinating staffing, etc.). Similarly, Mimi Cruz has agreed to be FoL's programming liaison for major conventions. This includes suggesting panels on Lulu-related topics and helping to get women and Lulu members on more panels in general. If you would like to volunteer to help staff the booth, do a signing, or appear on a panel, please let Samantha or Mimi know. We also encourage members to set up meetings at their own local cons, as a way to get new chapters going.

## Survey Results (cont.)

qualify. In short, females are finding plenty of comics to read among those that are regularly published. The one single title listed most often was *Sandman*, with 123 mentions. Next closest was *Bone*, with 60 mentions, *Love and Rockets* with 44; *Spawn*, 43, *Gen<sup>13</sup>*, 39; *X-Files*, 38; *Books of Magic*, 37; *Naughty Bits* and *Ranma 1/2*, 35; *Shi*, 31; *Hate*, *Strangers in Paradise*, and *The Maxx*, 29; *Eightball*, 27; *Catwoman*, 26; *Lady Death* and *Wonder Woman*, 25; *Action Girl*, 22; *Star Wars*, 21; and *The Desert Peach*, 20.

The X-Men family of titles was the most popular, with more than 130 mentions. Other families that did well included Archie (57 mentions), Batman (54), Spider-Man (49), Elfquest (47), and Superman (37).

In recommending comics for teenage girls, respondents came up with more than 250 titles they thought would be appropriate. Even with a cutoff of at least 3 mentions, more than 70 titles were listed. The respondents again went with *Sandman*, giving it 61 mentions, followed by *Bone* with 47; *Love and Rockets*, 32, *Ranma 1/2*, 24; *Action Girl* and *Tank Girl*, 22; *Books*

*of Magic*, 20; *Catwoman*, 19; *Wonder Woman*, 18; *Strangers in Paradise* and *X-Files*, 16; and *Gen<sup>13</sup>*, 14. The recommended comics families included X-Men (50+ mentions), Elfquest (40), and Archie (31).

Finally, in making recommendations for adult female readers, the respondents came up with more than 260 titles, with over 80 getting at least 3 mentions. This time *Sandman* was really ahead of the pack, with 88 mentions. The next closest was *Love and Rockets* (38 mentions), followed by *Bone* (36), *Naughty Bits* (30), *Strangers in Paradise* (24), *X-Files* (19), *Action Girl*, *Catwoman*, and *Ranma 1/2* (18), *Tank Girl* (14), *Books of Magic* (13), *Dirty Plotte*, *Desert Peach*, and *Twisted Sisters* (11), and *Shi* (10). With regard to families, only the X-Men (25+), Elfquest (18), and Spider-Man (12) scored high.

Perhaps the most significant thing about these results is the wide variety of titles that females read and recommend. Our fully expanded report, complete with demographic breakdowns, should give many a publisher and retailer food for thought.

—Jackie Estrada

## Friends of Lulu 1996 Goals

The Board of Directors adopted the following 1996 goals at its February meeting:

### Membership

- Maintain membership, increase to 300.

### Publications

- Produce three issues of our lively and informative newsletter, February 1, June 1 and October 1. Go quarterly if possible.
- Retailer's Handbook: produce "How to get girls" handbook, including info on recommended titles to carry, store design, promotions, etc. Should be done in time for San Diego.

### Mentoring

- Set up a framework for Mentoring program.

### Research

- Distribute results of our readership survey and retailer survey. Retailer survey will be announced in *Comics Retailer*. Set up PR plan for maximum impact of readership survey announcements. Results incorporated into Retailer Handbook.

### Public Relations

#### Outside

- Include comics in "Take Our Daughters to Work" campaign.
- Create a press kit that local chapters can use to get publicity. This will include an electronic press kit.
- Get at least one story on FoL placed nationally to get PR ball rolling.

#### Inside

- Set up schedule of conventions, including Philadelphia and New York Greenberg shows, APE, Chicago, San Diego, Dallas, Mid Ohio Con, Motor City Con, plus possibly Atlanta, Florida Mega Con.

Goals at conventions will be twofold:

**At the booth:** Set up signings and appearances by Lulu Members, use the booth as a showcase for member work. Possibly create an "Oasis" for drag-a-longs.

**Programming:** Set up a panel presentation at every convention. Content to be discussed.

- Set up a seminar or presentation at the San Diego Trade Expo. This can use the Retailer Handbook as a basis.

### Social Events

- Throw parties at Chicago and San Diego, plus 2nd annual LuluPalooza during Pro/Con and Wonder Con.

### Regional Chapters

- Finalize regional chapter policy.
- Keep NORCAL FoL and FoL-NY going, establish FoL-LA and 2-3 other chapters.

### Web Site

- Get web site up and running, with newsletter uploaded, more member news, examples of women's comics, and so on.

### Fund Raising

- Raise enough money to pay for all of the above, by any means necessary.