

Blue jeans, pizza, rock 'n roll ... convention gears up at Cobo

GOP hysteria!

By ALICE COLLINS

Observations from this week's Republican National Convention preliminaries at Cobo Hall:

While members of the GOP platform committees debate women's rights, foreign policy and other hot issues in assigned rooms, convention delegates are wandering through the halls, veering off onto escalators or down stairways or into rooms.

You can tell who they are if you get up close and look at the identification tags hanging from chains around their necks.

A majority of them appear to be members of the news media. The masses of convention delegates are due in this weekend, but will still be outnumbered by the news coverage people.

The most apparent color is blue — blue on security people like Detroit police and private guards; blue jeans on members of the news media, especially men and women carrying large TV cameras and small press cameras; blue work clothes on people still putting down carpet and others driving cargo vehicles through the long halls of Cobo; and blue as in red, white and blue posters, badges and flyers.

MOST PROMINENT convention aroma — pizza. If you followed the pizza aroma trail through the building, it would lead you to room 3185, the official media center run by the Convention Civic Host Committee. That's where the free pizza, beer and pop is being handed out.

The most dominant sound — the hum of people talking, backgrounded by telephones ringing, typewriters clicking.

Sound appeared to be the cause of some conflict Tuesday afternoon between press people and sound people getting set up for the Foghat rock concert later that night in Cobo.

The Foghat crew, just across the hall from the press setup, was tuning up their mountains of sound equipment by blasting it out.

"Hey, turn that down or turn it off, there are press people trying to work over here," complained an angry man.

"This is just ridiculous," said Jim Slisko, stage manager of Foghat.

"They're trying to tell us we can't work. It's not our fault they scheduled us the same time as this convention."

"Vote Democratic!" shouted another member of the band crew in the direction of the complainer. It was a stand-off.

THERE'S NO contest for the most elaborate set-up. This award must be divided among the three major TV networks which have set up their own cities.

At the height of the convention next week, each network will have 800 to 1,000 news and camera people and technicians on hand.

Ron Rhodes, production coordinator for ABC's convention complex, said Tuesday he had about 700 in town and more coming.

"We've been setting up here since May 3. We're getting tired and things are getting a bit hectic and testy," said Rhodes. "But it's also building with excitement now that the convention is about ready to roll."

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— Jim Slisko, stage manager of Foghat.

ABC newsmen Max Robinson is already broadcasting the 7 p.m. "World News Tonight" from their studio at Cobo. "Our convention coverage, 'Good Morning America' and 'Nightline' will be broadcast directly from our set-up at the Joe Louis Arena (where the actual convention will be held Monday through Thursday.)

INTERVIEWED in the hallway at Cobo, Detroit Police Sgt. Evo Guerrini said his operation was getting organized. "I just started here yesterday," said Guerrini. "I'm normally a plain clothes detective. This is the first time I've had a uniform on since I can't remember when and it feels strange.

"Some people are asking us for directions," said Guerrini, "but most of them seem to know where they're going."

Baseball card show coming to Midwest

One of the largest baseball card collections in the nation will be coming to Plymouth at the end of this month.

The Plymouth Hilton Inn will be hosting the 11th annual Midwest Sports Collectors Show — the largest and longest running in the nation — on Friday-Sunday, July 25-27.

This will be the second year in a row that the Plymouth Hilton, 5 Mile and Northville roads, has hosted the show.

More than 150 collectors and dealers from throughout the United States and Canada will be displaying for sale all types of sports collectibles on 200 tables in the Plymouth Hilton ballroom — the largest such

facility at an area hotel.

During that weekend, hundreds of thousands, perhaps more than a million, of baseball and football cards (1910-80) will either be on sale or on auction.

Also shown and sold will be other items, most dealing with baseball in its younger days such as uniforms, guides, programs, autographed balls and bats, magazines, pins, pictures and books.

Tiger broadcaster Ernie Harwell, "the voice of the Tigers," will make an appearance at the show Friday afternoon.

Plans also are being made for current and former sports figures to appear for autographs during the three-day event.

The Midwest Sports Collectors have been holding shows, sales and conventions since 1970.

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