

Trufans on the Loose!



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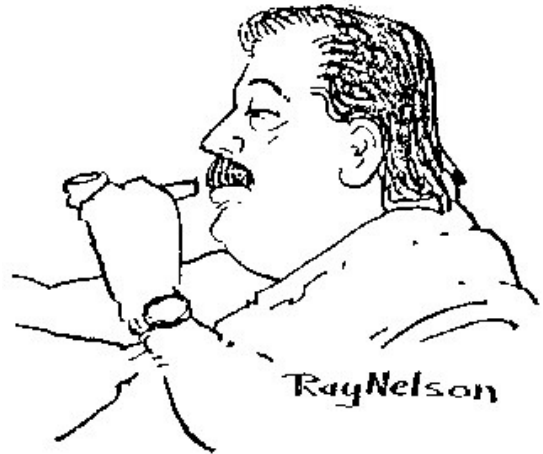
Columnists This Issue: John DeChancie, Shelby Vick, Richard Lupoff, John Purcell, Taral Wayne

VFW is free by request — and you may get it anyway. It can be downloaded at efanzines.com and LasVegrants.com. No live-action roleplayers were harmed during the production of this fanzine..

Member: fwa

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Corflu Zed in 2009!



Arnie Katz

The Ideal Convention

Katzenjammer

In Fandom, as in all other quadrants of life, we humans strive for perfection. It's part of our essential make-up to aspire to improve things to the Ultimate Degree of Fineness. We try to improve everything until there is nothing left to improve. And since humans are inherently imperfect, there is always something left to improve. We never stop trying to do so.

Maybe once a week or so, the perpetual conversation between Joyce and me will veer into our mutual bemusement at the strangeness of convention-runners and the local examples of such folly.

I'll admit that there's a bittersweet tinge to our humor; we both wish things were other than as they are. It's hard to see inexperienced local fans get pulled into a fan environment that is not exactly Fandom at its best.

Yet I am basically a positive person, a booster rather than a knocker. Our conversation led, inevitably, to what we thought would be the Ideal Convention. Or rather, because I am in charge of this article, I outlined for Joyce *my* idea for the Perfect Convention.

"We're going to need a really large convention center and a lot of hotel space," I told her between bites of my Walt Willis Memorial bacon cheeseburger (with everything). "Our TV, Internet and Radio advertising will make sure that everyone with the slightest interest in fantasy, science fiction, horror or anything that people who are interested in those things might also be interested in, so the Ideal Convention will have to have a slew of hotels and an arena like Madison Square Garden for the larger sessions.

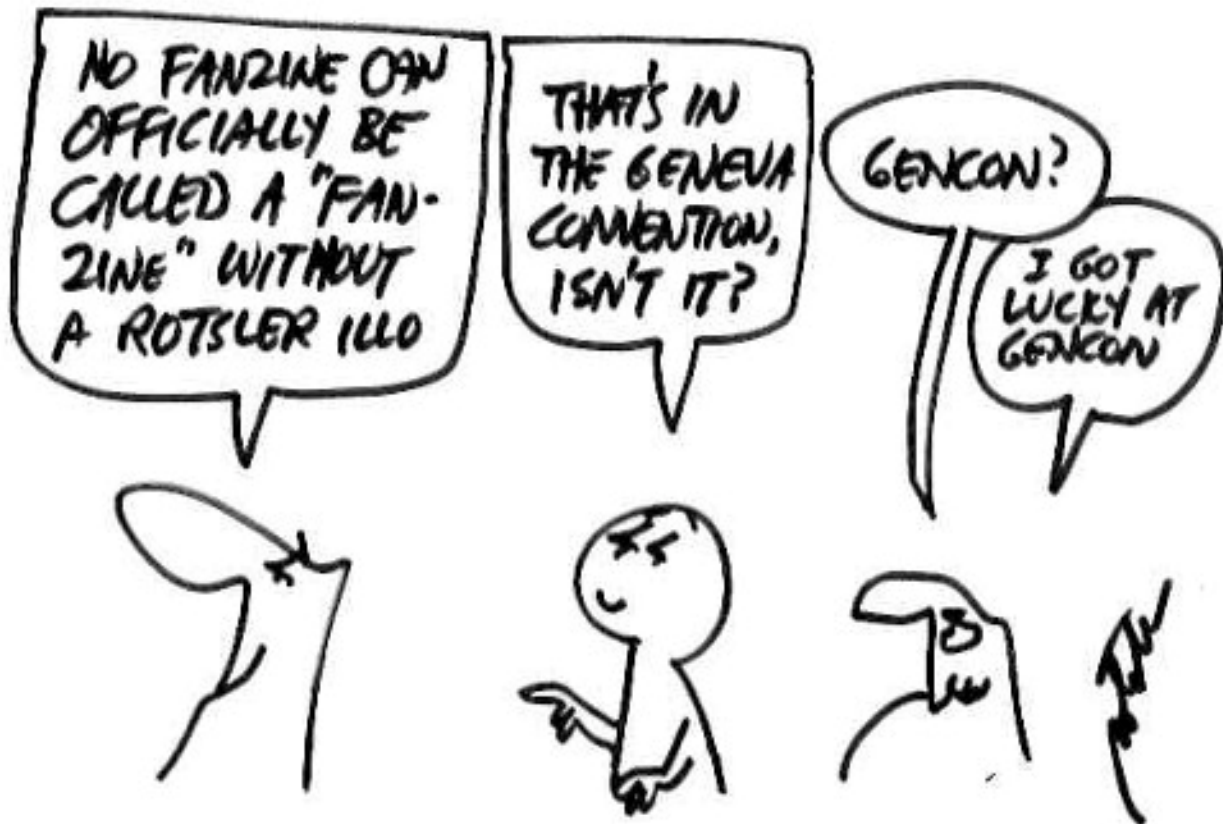
"Maybe something like McCormick Place in Chicago or the Javits Center in New York?" she asked, ever the helpful help-mate.

"You think those places are big enough, grand enough, for the convention?" I wondered. "After all this is the Omni-con!"

"I guess we could just take over the entire Las Vegas Strip," Joyce said. "Then we could use the Grand Garden, the Thomas & Mack and the aren at the Aladdin for most events. And there's always the Silver Bowl and Cashman Field for the really big attractions like the masquerade and the 24/7 business meeting."

"It sounds like this will be bigger than DragonCon!" Joyce noted.

"That's certainly the target," I acknowledged. "The World Science Fiction Convention, even with accumulated prestige and the Hugos, does maybe a third of the attendance for DragonCon. Our Omni-con should exceed



DragonCon by at least as many attendees as Dragon-Con exceeds the World SF Convention. The Omni-Con must be the biggest, the largest, the grandest convention in every conceivable way."

"And how will the Omni-Con get all those people to come?" Joyce asked.

"This is going to be the Omni-Con, the biggest of the big tent conventions," I said, unconsciously writing the first progress report. "There will be three great moments in the life of every convention fan: The day they're born, the day they die and the day they go to the Omni-Con!"

"So you're just going to tell them that they ought to come and that will make them show up?" she said, sounding a characteristic note of skepticism.

"The important thing is to make the convention welcoming and inclusion. Since all fans are brothers, the more of them we can bring together, the greater the... the... brotherhood."

"And profit," Joyce observed. She keeps the books for the Katz family. I am pure.

"Yes, we'll be getting a good price including a hefty premium for those who only realize that they must attend the Omni-Con at the last minute."

"Why is that?"

"In today's Fandom," I began, "there are two measures of a convention: number of attendees and profitability," I explained with my usual saintly patience.

"The Omi-Con must, therefore, set new standards for both size and moneymaking."

"That makes sense," Joyce said, perhaps because she agreed, perhaps because she knew how dangerous it is to interrupt my narrative. "We'll pass out free crackers and gouge them for sodas," Joyce suggested, warming to the subject of money-making. "The Omni-Con could let people into the panels for free and then charge them to leave."

"The Omni-Con must provide ultimate pleasure, infinitely prolonged, for every man, woman and child who cares to plunk down the \$99.95 for a Standard Membership or the extra \$100 for the Gold Membership with Backstage Pass."

"Backstage Pass?" she asked right on cue.

"There'll be a lot of celebrities at Omni-con," I said. "A Special Backstage Pass entitles an attendee to meet and, in some case, talk with, all the stars who will be shining at Omni-con."

"What about autographs?"

"Fair prices," I replied. "A discount if you buy the Gold Membership."

“So, why are all these people coming to Omni-con?” Joyce asked.

“They’re coming to see the professional actors and actresses, and even the authors, who make sci-fi what it is today.”

“I’ve heard a lot of high-flown promises from con committees before the fact,” said Joyce. “I need specifics.”

“Well, for example, we’ve contacted a group of pseudo-Medieval self-flagellants that Creative Anarchonists and Renaissance Faire fans are sure to love. The half-crazed flagellants will roam through the convention, whipping themselves with barbed leather straps.

We’ll have contingents who think they’re Medieval peasants, *Star Wars* stormtroopers, giant hedgehogs, dragons and vampires. Why, this convention will have a thousand – no, 10,000! – gamers festively bedecked in their brown shirts, iron crosses and swastika medals.

“What about those cretins who read all that pornographic slash fiction?” Joyce wanted to know. “Tableaux Vivants that display famous sex scenes from slash fanfic, of course, but do you have anything else?”

“We need to have something really spectacular,” I agreed. “We’ll have William Shatner and Patrick Stewart live on stage having anal sex on stage!”

“Who’s going to be the pitcher and who the catcher?” she asked, averting her eyes demurely.

“I think we should let the attendees vote on it!” I said. “Give them what they want!” I decided with the proper decisiveness expected of the chairman of the Ideal Convention. “It doesn’t matter who does what to whom as long as someone gets buggered.”

“It sounds like that’s what’s going to happen to everyone who attends this convention you’re imagining,” she observed.

“Believe me, I know what I am doing,” I assured her.

“With both Captain Kirk and Captain Picard, Omni-Con should draw a lot of *Star Trek* fans,” she said.

“That’s for sure, especially when they find out that each *Trek* and movie will have its own special theater with all the men and women who didn’t make it back from the away teams serving as ushers.

“There’ll be *Trek* programming too,” I promised, “and plenty of it.”

“Twenty-four hours a day?” she asked.

“We won’t stop there,” I told her

“No?”

“We’ll show *Trek* drek thirty hours a day if we have to,” I vowed. “And ever panel will be simultane-

ously translated into Klingon!”

“One thing bothers me about this Omni-Con,,” she said. “Well, one thing in particular.”

“What’s that?” I wanted to know. If my plan had a flaw, I needed to know it before the actual assault on perfection.

“You’ve talked about what you’re going to do for the furry fans and the storm troopers and the gamers and the fans of defunct TV shows, but what about Core Fandom?” Joyce posed. “What about your nearest and dearest? What will Omni-Con have for them?”

“Nothing.”

“Nothing?” she was incredulous. “Not even a fan lounge?”

“Definitely not!” I replied. “There’ll be nothing for Core Fandomites at Omni-con.”

“Bu— but—why not?” Joyce asked, bewildered.

“It’s unnecessary.”

“Core Fandom is unnecessary?” Joyce demanded. “The hobby you’ve given all these years to is unnecessary?”

“What’s unnecessary is worrying about them at Omni-Con,” I corrected.

“Why not?”

“Because Core Fandomites won’t be at Omni-Con,” I said, revealing the full genius of my plan for the Ideal Convention.

“After everything you’ve told me, I’ll bet they won’t,” Joyce said ruefully.

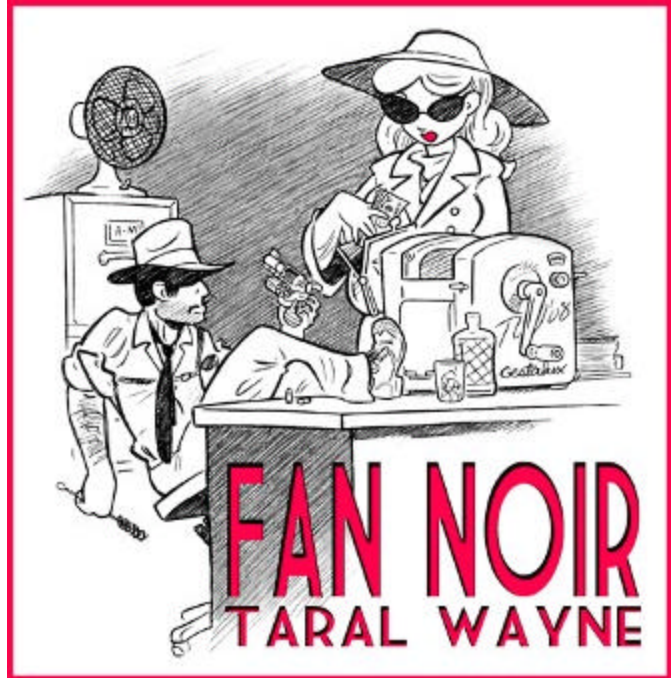
“They’re not *supposed* to be there,” I amplified.

“While this overblown, exploitative piece of crap takes place in one city, Core Fandomites will be staying at a luxury hotel in another city, expenses paid by the profits from Omni-Con, at the actual Ideal Convention! That’s my Ideal Convention.”

“Mine, too,” she said. “Mine, too.”

— Arnie





The Ages of Fandom

An entire issue on the subject of numbered fandoms (in the last *Vegas Fan Weekly*) was rather overwhelming. I've read treatments on the fall of the Roman empire that were scarcely longer...

I've always been partial to such notions, anyway. They appeal to my sense of order, and purpose. But in more sober moments I admit doubts. Are numbered fandoms real, or just another instance of the human mind's capacity to uncover patterns even when they aren't there? Another instance of canals on Mars, or Marxist dialectical materialism.

Boiling an entire issue of umpty-ump pages down to a succinct statement, I think we end up with, "a *fandom* is the network of people you know who all seem interconnected at a given time." I'm not sure that accurately describes the nature of fandom though. At any given time there are other nexii that you may know little about, that are nonetheless time-honored components of All Fandom as We Know it.

An expression I've fallen in love with by the way. It needs a star chart carefully measured out in light years and warp speeds, with different constellations imaginatively named in Hogwarts Latin.)

There have been odd men out from the very beginning. The guy who paid 1/4 cent a word for unpublishable manuscripts out of H.P. Lovecraft's or Clark Ashton Smith's attic trunk, and laboriously set them in type to publish little booklets of fantasy poetry. The guy with two complete sets of Gnome Press books and proudly shows off the copy of *Skull-Face & Others* he paid only \$400 for. The guy who has run the Pseudonym Bureau for the N3F since 1951. And the guy who made his own "Robbie" costume from *Forbidden Planet* to wear to the 1958 Solacon. They may not be Walt Willis or Bob Tucker, but their pedigrees are just as impeccable.

Years ago I tried to formulate a schemata of my own to number fandoms. It wasn't based on networks, but on continuity. It didn't matter, I argued, that people came and went, and that one fanzine held center stage then another. What mattered is that the pattern and common elements remained the same. I came up with this thought quite a long time ago, and likely I've forgotten much. But I think my reasoning was that from time to time either the number of people leaving fandom, or the number coming in caused a break in tradition. Old gags, familiar habits, touch stone events, and iconic figures would stop being common coinage in the new generation. I no longer remember how I used this measuring stick to divide up the history of fandom, but at a guess it was probably something like what follows, updated a few years to bring us to the present:

The Ages of Fandom

Earliest days -- WWII.
End of WWII -- the Breendoggle
Around 1960 -- Early 70's.
70's -- around 1990
90's -- present

First Fandom
Atomic Age Fandom
Counter-culture Fandom
"Modern" Fandom
Retirement Age, or Digital Age Fandom

Of course, the reason such formulas no longer work with fandom and we resort to disavowing portions such as gamers, media cultists, and comics readers is that All Fandom as We Know it is much too big to share common institutions. Fannish history is like the Roman empire after all. We are no longer Rome and have be-

come France, Spain, Italy, Britain and other nations.

I was going to write all this up with all my reasoning and armloads of facts, but it was not to be. At most I may have made notes, but otherwise it was just another fabled Daugherty Project.

— Taral Wayne

Fannish Links

LasVegrants.com

This would be the official site of Las Vegrants, the informal invitational fan club, if Las Vegrants had anything official. Bill Mills is the genial host and posts a lot of timely material.

TheVoicesOfFandom.com

Bill Mills covers Fandom in sound and images on this often fascinating video and audio site. There are always new entries, including Bill's series of podcasts. This site is now available at TVOF.Info if you want to get there with a lot fewer keystrokes.

Cineholics.com

Alan White runs this increasingly interesting site that reports on the doings of the film-oriented Las Vegas club.

Efanzines.com

Bill Burns operates the free online fanzine newsstand.

Fanac.org

This large and varied site has a lot of information about Fandom as well as archives of some excellent old fanzines.

Phlizz.com

Chuck Connor is doing a very innovative and entertaining site-based ezine. He tends to post big chunks of interesting material and there's a sizable archive.

SNAFFU.org

CochTayl (Teresa Cochran & James Taylor) now operate this site for Las Vegas' formal science fiction club.

VirtualFanLounge

Fans get together for chats and there are also scheduled audio and video feeds. The best way for first-timers to enter is through LasVegrants.com. Follow the links, register your name and have fun!



John DeChancie

Much Ado about Being & Nothingness

High Risk

My son Jason recently got his Ph.D. in chemistry from UCLA. I used to have a college education. Unfortunately, I defaulted on my student loan, and they repossessed. A guy showed up at my door with a sheet of paper, saying, "See that?" I said, see what? He said, "That's your English Renaissance Poetry final. See that A+? It's now an F, you deadbeat. And you get an Incomplete in the course." I said, fine.

What did Renaissance poetry ever do for me?

Before I matriculated, my dad told me not to waste money with majoring in English or any of that kind of fluff. Pick something practical, something that will get you a job as soon as you get out of school. I followed his advice, choosing philosophy.

I was a philosophy major, and when I graduated, I went right into business, opening a philosophy boutique. It was an innovative concept. I had a business plan that answered the question, where does a young contemporary professional person go to get an integrated, systematized approach to life? I wanted to open a place that provided the widest range of choices available.

A typical customer would walk in and browse the Empiricist section or Logical Positivist shelves, the philosophy of language area, Quine and those guys; next aisle, Russell, Whitehead,



Moore, and the symbolic logicians. Of course we had a classical section, Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, Zeno (his paradoxes were best sellers). We had a great Wittgenstein display, and you should have seen the Existentialist Shoppe. We had everyone, your French, your German, Kirkegaard, your Sartre, your Camus.

I don't think I have to go into more detail.

Of course, it wasn't just selection, it was service. Service is the key. You can go ahead and buy a philosophy, but you need the tech support. What good is a philosophy without an expert to guide you through the fine points of applying that philosophy to specific, concrete everyday situations? No help at all.

Say you choose, oh, Kirkegaardian existentialism, just as an example. How do you know what to do in a given situation? You call Tech Support. And that support better be right on the frickin' money, pal, or you'll get yourself and your client in trouble. A philosophy shop down the street had a Kirkegaard client who called up their TS one night, late. The guy was standing on the Triboro Bridge, wondering if he should continue his existence. The Tech guy on the other end wasn't thinking. Yep, you guessed it, he told the guy he should take a signature Kirkegaardian "leap of faith."

Fortunately, they had a good liability policy, but the family was really upset. It leaves you with a bad taste in your mouth. Anyway, the philosophy business is all gone now. The internet came along, and now anyone can log onto, say, Aristotle dot-com and get for free what I used to take a big mark-up on. I am no Luddite, but in some ways, I must admit, the web is destroying our American way of life.

— John DeChancie

The Wasted Hour

Fandom's fastest hour, because it's only 30 minutes, is an Internet Television show hosted and written by me and produced and directed by Bill Mills.

The latest episode, which features Joyce Katz, Bill Mills and Rich Coad as well as the Kingfish, is available as a free download. You can see it at www.LasVegrants.com





Dick Lupoff

Office Decor

The Daze

A long time ago I read an editorial about the fannish fantasy of what that life was like in a publisher's office, versus the realities.

The fantasy involved a luxurious suite with polished mahogany walls, deep carpets, gorgeous receptionists, and editors seated in overstuffed leather chairs behind glass-topped desks the size of aircraft carriers. Amber-toned lamps mounted in fluted wall sconces would cast a soft glow across the room. An elegantly attired editor would welcome the caller graciously, usher him to a comfortable seat, and entertain him with tales of the literary world while stylishly garbed and coiffed and subtly perfumed office houris plied them with strong waters.

The actuality, as I was to learn in later years, involved a cramped office with a bare linoleum floor and buzzing fluorescent lights. The furniture was battered. The receptionist was hostile. The editor, his collar open and his shirt caked with dried perspiration punctuated by a few well-placed beer or caffeine stains, was harried. The phone rang constantly. Piles of manuscripts and galley sheets stood taller than the editor's frenzied hair, threatening to topple at any moment. And the only refreshment was stale coffee served in cracked mugs liberated from a nearby luncheonette.

That editorial made a strong impression on me. Alas, I don't remember which magazine it appeared in or who wrote it. Some sfnal historian like the great Robert Lichtman will probably leap to his feet proclaiming,

Oscar X. MacTavish wrote that, in the July, 1949 issue of *Martian Adventure Monthly*! And of course he'll be right.

In the same era I'm talking about my personal





UNIVAC I as it existed in 1951.

pantheon was populated largely by science fiction mongers.

The authors, illustrators, and editors whose talent and dedication brought me my monthly ration of excitement and joy. I admired Ray Bradbury, Robert A. Heinlein, Arthur C. Clarke, Isaac Asimov, Frederik Pohl, Cyril Kornbluth, James Blish, Clifford Simak and a couple of dozen others. I admired Virgil Finlay, Hannes Bok, Ed Emshwiller, and David Stone Martin. But most of all I admired the editors. Anthony Boucher and J. Francis McComas of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, Ray Palmer of *Other Worlds Science Stories*, Howard Browne of the newly downsized and upgraded *Amazing Stories* and *Fantastic*.

But of all the editors of the era I most admired Horace Gold, the editor of *Galaxy Science Fiction*, *Galaxy Science Fiction Novels*, and *Beyond Fantasy Fiction*. When I grew up – which wasn't too many years away by this time – I wanted to be the Horace Gold of my generation. I wanted to sit in a luxurious office, my

every need tended by a staff of elegant young beauties, reading submissions from the best and the brightest writers of the age, and pontificating, in my editorials, on whatever matters moved me to comment.

Things didn't work out that way, of course. I finished high school and went off to college, finished college and went off to the army, returned to civilian life and started looking for a job. The year was 1958. The nation's economy was mired in a moderately deep recession. Jobs were hard to come by. Like many other young men (and women), I was caught in the Catch-22 of employers wanting only experienced workers. They couldn't afford to train beginners. They needed people who could become productive on Day One. And of course if you were a beginner, how the heck were you supposed to get that experience?

I'd hoped to find work in the publishing industry. I had a degree in journalism but I didn't think I had the kind of brash energy that a reporter needs. I thought I'd do better editing a magazine or a line of books. I

scoured the want ads every morning in *The New York Times*, left resumes at every publisher I could find, even tried advertising agencies in the hope that somebody would give me that proverbial first chance.

One day I stopped at a low-priced barber shop located inside a stale-smelling subway arcade at Fourth Avenue and Twenty-third Street. As I sat in the barber chair, trying desperately to communicate with a tonorial artist whose language I couldn't even recognize no less understand, I spotted a familiar figure seated in the next chair. It was an old college chum, one Alex Tassos.

Alex worked in the advertising department of what was then the Remington Rand Univac Division of the Sperry Rand Corporation. Today it's part of something called Unisys, or it was the last time I looked. Things keep changing.

When Alex asked me what I was up to I told him that I was freshly out of the army and looking for work. I wanted something that would utilize my alleged talent as a writer. None of the publishing houses or advertising agencies I'd applied to were very interested. Alex invited me up to his office and introduced me to some of his colleagues. There were no openings in the advertising department, but the company was hiring technical writers. Alex introduced me to a marvelous older fellow with iron-gray hair and a red face. He seemed to take a shine to me.

I was twenty-three years old. The gentleman Alex introduced me to was obviously in his sixties. The name plate on his desk said James F. Foley.

I shook his hand heartily, just as all the job-seeker's how-to-do-it manuals advised and said, "How do you do, Mr. Foley."

A mournful look crossed his face and he said, "I'm very sorry. Mr. Foley has been dead these many years. I'm his boy Jim."

He hired me on the spot. He was a grand person. If there's such a place as heaven and I manage to sneak in there, I will look for Jim Foley. Chances are, he'll be down in the bar. If I wind up in the other place, I'll still look for Jim. He'll want to be with his friends.

I worked for Remington Rand for a few years, got downsized out of a job, got a job elsewhere that didn't work out, got called back by Remington Rand (they were staffing up again), got downsized again, and caught on with IBM. I worked in an office in the Time and Life Building on Sixth Avenue, across the street from Radio City Music Hall.

One day I was strolling on Sixth Avenue during my lunch hour when I ran into a couple of people I'd known at Remington Rand. They were part of what is sometimes referred to as middle management. We all



Shown here is the lobby of the IBM building as it appeared to Our Author back in the day.

shook hands and exchanged greetings. One of them mentioned that they had moved to a new office building not far from my own new workplace. Would I like to see their headquarters?

The old location where I'd worked for Remington Rand was a decrepit 1910-ish building down on Twenty-third Street. Their new place was uptown in the Fifties. I agreed to take a look, and they escorted me to a shiny new steel-and-glass skyscraper. They showed me their offices, showed me where I'd have had my own workplace if I'd still been with Remington Rand, and...slowly the light began to break.

"Are you trying to recruit me?" I demanded. I was truly incredulous.

The spokesman for the group looked embarrassed. "Well," he murmured, "as a matter of fact..."

"Stop right there," I interrupted him. "Thank you for the tour. As for my ever working for this company again, you've got to be kidding." I rode down in the express elevator, strode back to the Time and Life Building, rode up to my own office, and went back to work.

This all happened a very long time ago, children. A few days later I went out for another stroll on my lunch hour and noticed a copy of the *New York Post*. The headline said that President Kennedy had given a speech that afternoon in Dallas. In fact, the news story was based on an advance copy of Kennedy's speech, a common enough practice in the world of politics and journalism.

Upstairs, my secretary, Myra Ferguson, had a portable radio going on her desk. People were clustered around, ashen-faced. The President was dead.

— Dick Lupoff



Shelby Vick

The Ideal Convention NOW & Again

Arnie emailed that it was time for another column.

“Fine!” I replied. “Haven’t the slightest idea what to write, but when has that ever stopped me?”

So true.

In the past, I have revealed what secrets I have of the past. I have written about the Willis Campaign (my one claim to fame) and *confusion* and my memories of Lee Hoffman and the 1951 Nolacon, Chicon II, right up to MagiCon in Orlando.

I have written about rich brown, Vernon McCain of Wastebasket fame, of Wirez and selling Sanco. I have written about my family – Suzanne, our daughters Cheryl and Diane, our home in Springfield – even up to the auto accident that brought on my ‘early’ (at age 73) retirement. . . .

And I’m sure I’ve told you WAY more than you want to know about Planetary Stories. Altho I DO want to mention that Rob Sheckley has updated the Planetary Stories promo on Youtube, as well as done one for Pulp Spirit. You can see ‘em by going to and sliding down to the appropriate two listings on the Contents page.

I reached into my magic hat. . .and my fingernails scraped the bottom.

Two disparate personal items.

First, ‘routine’.

For a good part of my life, I followed a routine. To bed by eleven, up before six, shave, get dressed, go to work – whether it was MetLife or the Property Appraiser’s office. Usually the first one in the office, the last one to leave.

When I got home, I’d take care of emails, write, and do family things.

Until, after Suzanne’s death, I had my auto accident which brought on early retirement.

Then my routine was primarily involved in recovering.

After recovery, when my daughter Diane arranged for me to have an online computer and Lloyd McDaniel arranged the Planetary Stories site, my routine changed. In my financial planning stage, I found that retirement had to be planned. Too many people looked forward to ‘retirement’ with no real idea of what it would be, other than ‘having fun’. When they retired, they were faced with the truth: You can’t spend all your time fishing or playing golf or hunting. All too soon, you find gaps in your life, wondering what to do next.



And, with nothing to do and nowhere to go, you die.

I had intended to get back to writing fulltime. Before I retired, I was going to really apply myself to writing, start sending in stories and books, and develop my skills and have something to do ALL the time.

Yeah.

Well, my forced retirement changed all that – but not only did I have something to do online, I spent much, much time at it. A program I downloaded kept track of things and I found I was spending over seventy hours a week, day in, day out, week in, week out, on my computer.

But it wasn't 'routine.' Now I get to bed between nine PM and four or five AM. I get up anywhere from four-thirty to eleven. I shave . . . occasionally. I might be in my pajamas for hours, even going outside in 'em (not at all concerned about what the neighbors might think) or might get dressed immediately.

I spend ten hours a day on the computer, but 'routine' and I no longer mix.

Now, for the second item I'll bring up that 'four-letter word' again.

Politics.

I was not surprised when Obama won. Even tho I had not voted for him, I had expected his election. When it was official, my first thought was, "Hey, I'm kinda proud of my country. Fifty years ago – hell, even *twenty-five* years ago, there would have been no way anyone with even a *hint* of black blood would have been elected."

Then I thought some more.

No, it really *isn't* something to be proud of. What brought it about was all this 'politically correct' thought that has been enveloping our country. Let's put it another way:

If someone named John Smith had done everything Obama has done, served the same time as politician, written a book, had a terrific personality, etc – he would never have been elected!

Obama wasn't elected because of his abilities – he was elected because of his skin. His skin accented by his name. Political correctness teaches liberation in all facets of life, including religious 'freedom'. Take a touch of black, a touch of Muslin – oh, yeah; another important thing – lack of reverence for our flag and patriotism.

'Patriotism' is a dirty word, these days.

Roll all that together, and John McCain didn't have a chance!

Don't misunderstand me. 'My country, right or wrong' does have its detractions. Also, I certainly don't want a hardshell Baptist for president or a lip-stick-wearing bulldog.

I also didn't want a Symbol for president.

Regardless of how thoroughly Obama represents PC, I really wish he had more well-developed qualifications.

There!

That oughta stir up some response. (I guess I'm fandom's Token Conservative.) — Shelby Vick

Las Vegrants Online

Las Vegas' invitational fan club, the Vegrants, has a fairly large online presence, thanks largely to Bill Mills' expertise and enthusiasm.. To see Bill's fanac at its most interesting, check out TheVoicesOfFandom.com and LasVegrants.com. These two sites have lots of video, audio, pictorial and written fannish content.

At the top-center of the main page of LasVegrants.com is a link to Bill's latest invention, The Virtual Fan Lounge. This free service has a 24/7 chat room, slide shows, and audio and video casts.

"The Wasted Hour," is an Internet CVideo Show written and hosted by me and Produced and Directed by Bill. Check it out at LasVegrants.com.

— Arnie



John Purcell Fanzine Reviews Percolations

In our last episode, we left our intrepid fanzine reviewer drooling over the cover of a fanzine received a month or so after Corflu Silver ended. It was bad enough that I have been kicking myself over not being able to attend, even though I made the decision with all the right intentions. Still, it would have been a great time to commiserate with like-minded fanzine fans.

Perhaps the best part of going to Corflu is reaping the benefits of what comes afterwards: the fanzines inspired by the event, most of which include reports of the con. This is always a Good Thing, because no two fans ever write the same thing about the same con. Readers can thus take all of these con reports and cull together a general consensus about said con: was it a good one, were there areas of discrepancies, how successful/unsuccessful was it, etc. Based on all of its con reports, the consensus about Corflu Silver was that it was highly successful. Another reason to make me feel bad. *grumble*



It would have been great to see friends again and make new friends, one of whom I am sure would have been Nic Farey. From all accounts, Nic's presence at Corflu Silver was felt all over the place, including his performance of "Werewolves of Fandom" at the opening ceremonies. Then a month or so later I get this 9"x12" envelope in the mail from Nic. Inside was the fanzine that Corflu Silver inspired in Nic, *Beam*. Getting the smaller loc-zine *This Here* in the same envelope was a bonus, but *Beam's* cover stunned me. Produced by another long-term fan and artist, Jay Kinney (who was likewise at the con), the cover is a perfect replica of the label from a bottle of Jim Beam, except it is appropriately modified with lines like "the world's finest fanzine", "Tucker fried urbane whiskey", "40% B.S./Vol.", and ascribed with Nic Farey's signature attesting to the zine's authenticity. The label also notes that the zine was "edited and bottled by Nic A. Farey Distilling Co." which has distribution sites in Croydon, Las Vegas, DC, Seattle, and San Francisco. The cover is indeed perfect, and set the tone for the contents.

One look at the contents and the layout proves something: Nic knows his way around computer graphics and

desktop publishing. In fact, I do believe that is his job (he can correct me if I'm wrong, and I am sure he will), so the magnificence of the zine's layout is not a surprise, but it is still astonishingly attractive and readable. The internal consistency of this zine is remarkable; not only are all the articles – from Randy Byers, Ted White, Paul DiFilippo, Rich Coad, and Mark Plummer – complemented by photos and art, but the font is clear and readable despite being a tad on the tiny side. Add in the song lyrics to the aforementioned “Werewolves of Fandom” and “Roll Over, Bob Lichtman” (a Bill Mills composition), and a few other goodies scattered around, and the result is a wonderful fanzine. For a first issue, this is astonishingly good.

A few words are in order about the contents. Nearly all of the articles, photos, etc., are Corflu Silver related, except the DiFilippo article was something that Nic had on file for at least a decade and a half. Hey, it was worth the wait. Detailing explorations into pre-SF magazine science fiction, “Maybe the Whole Thing was Mental” is fun reading, and made me want to hit up some of the plentiful antique shops in my area to find magazines from the early 1900s and see what old stories might be lying within those pages. This is a fine article; one of the best I have read so far in 2008. Thank Ghu Nic provides addresses for all contributors so that faneds like me can bug guys like Paul for contributions.

As for the Corflu-inspired material, Randy Byers' collection of “25 Things About Corflu Silver” was a delightful hodge-podge that captures the spirit of the con very well. One of the “things” was a snippet of dialogue from the Virtual Con Suite where a bunch of us lurkers were commenting about events being live-streamed from the con, which made fan history; nothing of this nature and magnitude had been attempted before, and it was a huge success. We shall see if Randy's Corflu Zed in Seattle next year attempts this live feed again. The other Corflu articles were fun, too (loved Ted White's contribution), but I do wish Nic had pubbed the lyrics to Bill Mills' rendition of “Goin' to Corflu Blues” that was also performed during the opening ceremonies. I was watching, but the transmission of the music wasn't the greatest (nor was the volume, but let's not go there right now: those are technical problems that can be addressed by those with the knowledge to fix), so I wasn't able to hear it clearly. (Aside: I *do* have a full set of those lyrics, and need to ask Bill Mills if I could pub them in my zine.)

Overall, *Beam* is a wonderful debut issue, and Nic's note that all locs and contributions should be sent to the address below indicates that more issues may be forthcoming. By all means, go to <http://efanzines.com>

and download this zine. It is so worth it! The companion zine, *This Here*, is a compilation of locs dating back to 2001, so that's not too long ago. If you ask Nic nicely I am sure he will send this one to you, as well.

Beam & This Here, pubbed by Nic Farey

Mailing address: BEAM, P.O.Box 178, Saint Leonard, MD 20685 USA

e-mail: unusualsuspects@mac.com

*

*

And now for something completely different, another genzine, but one that over the 21 years of its existence has developed a personality distinctly its own. The 129th issue of Henry Welch's fine genzine, *The Knarley Knews*, is a genzine in the truest sense: the contents are varied, ranging from serious to comic, with no thematic connection to each other. This is not a bad thing, remember, but just the way this particular issue fell together. There is some mighty fine writing in here, highlighted by the third part of Alexander Slate's series on “The Ethics of Money” and another segment of Terry Jeeves' memoirs of his years serving in the RAF during World War II, “Carry on Jeeves – Civvy Street.” Terry's article sounds like a concluding piece, so the next issue's installment might be somehow related. We will have to wait and see.

Henry – who goes by the moniker of “Knarley” (does he put that on his name badge at cons?) – provides a very interesting editorial in which he recounts selling their house in Wisconsin, moving cross-country for his new job in Silicon Valley (COA provided here), studying and testing for the California bar exams, and so on. My heart goes out to him since I've done this, too – Minneapolis to Los Angeles and back again. Not an easy process, but sometimes you do what you have to do. Thus, there was a substantial gap between issues 128 and 129; *TKK* is a bi-monthly zine, but the reasons just stated justify the delay, and I certainly don't fault Henry at all. Heck, working on my doctorate comes first before working on an issue of *Askance*, so big deal. Take care of the family first, Knarley. We understand.

The layout of *TKK* is completely different from *Beam*, naturally. Very little artwork breaks up the text, but Henry does a very good job using the two-column format and white space to make the zine eye-friendly and readable. This zine is much more content-driven than *Beam*, but one needs to remember that one zine was produced in response to a convention that its editor attended, while the other zine here is composed of contributions from assorted fans. The result makes *TKK* entertaining, but uneven in article quality.

An example of this last statement lies between pages 8 and 11. In these four pages are three brief articles: a trip report by Sue Welch (Henry's mother) to Africa ("A Day with the Bushmen"), an article from me about gardening in Texas ("When Moonflowers Last on the Mailbox Bloom'd"), and a brief paean to libraries from Jim Sullivan ("A Confession"). Three very different articles with very different styles. I will refrain from commenting upon my contribution, but Sue's article was well-written, and reading about a world completely different from mine is always interesting. Jim Sullivan's, on the other hand, is cute and attempts to be funny, and that's about it. There is no real substance to "A Confession," although I am sure many fans would agree with the basic sentiment about our love for books and libraries. The lettercolumn is, as always in *TKK*, a delight even though there is NO LOC from Lloyd Penney! How the heck did *that* happen?

So the upshot of *The Knarley Knews* #129 is that it is another fine issue, but completely different in style, tone, and sense of fannishness from *Beam*. I like both zines, and these are great examples of how varied fanzines can be. Fanzine fandom is a compendium of assorted lunatics who like to pub zines, and that is its big appeal to me. I enjoy the variety, and I am sure most of the people reading *VFW* agree. While *Beam* may end up being nominated for a FAAn Award next year and *TKK* may not, that's immaterial; both editors enjoy doing their zines and that is really all that matters. That is how I measure a zine's success, and I suspect Nic and Henry feel the same way.

The Knarley Knews, edited & published by Henry Welch

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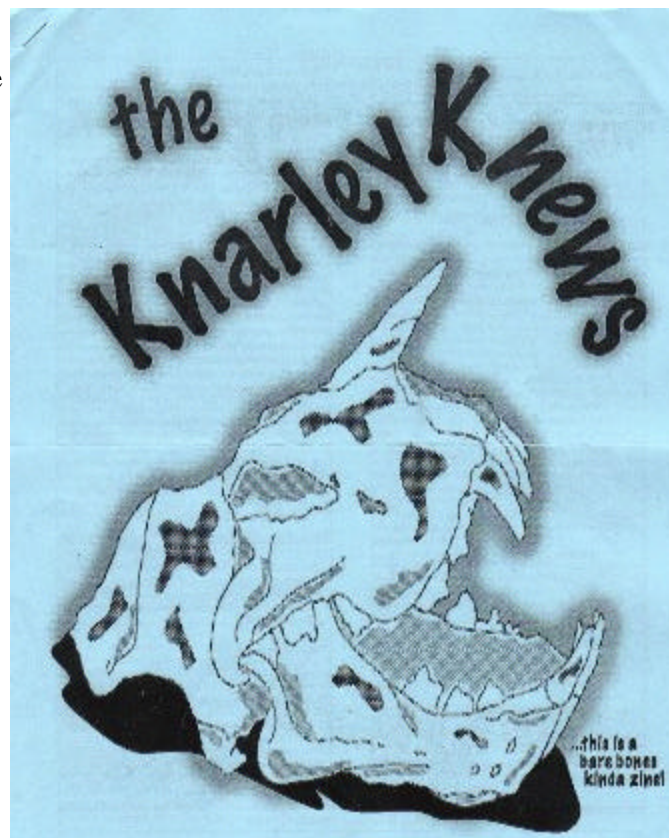
— John Purcell

Fannish Plug-ola

If you're looking for some good fanzine reading, let me recommend a fanzine that Our Beloved Reviewer has not touted in his column and probably won't — his very own genzine *Askance*.

John publishes fairly regularly and gets a good range of contributors, some of whom are rarely seen in other fanzines.

You can get free downloads of *Askance* at www.efanzines.com. — Arnie





The Stalwarts Your LoCs & My Quips ChatBack

One of VFW's most faithful, and enjoyable, letter hacks kicks off this column in fine style with his usual array of cogent comments...

Robert Lichtman

Maybe it's because I'm in mourning over the loss of Jack Speer, but for some reason I found it hard going reading "The Event That Never Was" in *VFW* No. 108. I wasn't ready for its frivolity, but will try again sometime down the line.

Like you, "I've known Jack Speer since I was a high-school-age neofan." I began sending him my first fanzine, *Psi-Phi*, from the initial issue, and was honored to publish an article by him—"The Secret of It All," about love, sex, humor, science fiction and more—in the sixth issue back in the summer of 1960. I believe that I may have roused his editorial ire in my fanzine writing somewhat less than that you, but he certainly didn't hold back his virtual blue pencil. Over the years we exchanged letters about various fannish matters (especially about FAPA); he was generous with digging up duplicates of various rare old fanzines he published; granted permission in 2006 to reprint his article on Laney in *Ah! Sweet Laney!*; and more recently gave his blessing to reissue *Up To Now* on the Web. I've been enjoying reading Patricia Rogers's "Adventures in Speerology" as she's been posting them, especially her descriptions of the stuffed garage into which Jack periodically delved on my behalf.

In spite of already knowing from direct contact with him about Fox Holden, I enjoyed Dick Lupoff's "The Silver Fox Returns." A few days after this issue appeared, I received an e-mail from him mentioning that somehow the piece had been mangled in readying for publication, that neither he nor you could figure out what had happened, and attaching a corrected copy. I've read that, too, and think it would be a good thing for you to republish this piece in the interests of allowing Dick to relate the *entire* story.

I'm wondering if Shelby Vick sent you "Bragging Rights" before the May FAPA mailing. In it he writes, "For that matter, why is my FAPAZine not submitted? (I slipped that in for you, Robert Lichtman.)" The reason I ask is that Shelby had a 12-page zine in the mailing, thus fulfilling his year's activity that *had* to be there. This was a fun piece, but made me wish that Shelby procrastinated less and fanned more. He's always been good in his own unique way.

Enjoyed Taral's article about the Nash Metropolitan. I remember them well from the earliest era of Tiny Cars that coincided with the time in my own life when I became obsessed for a couple years (before fandom, though I was reading SF at the time) with all things automotive. I would buy special one-shot publications that surveyed the cars of the world, and was particularly entranced with other small, exotic cars, most of which were coming out of Europe. (This was before Japan was a player on the world auto market.) In the spirit of Taral's 1/18 scale toy models of the Metro, I'm attaching a JPG of a 1/18 model of my favorite of those mini-cars back in the day, the BMW Isetta. I only ever saw one of these on the road, but saw lots of Metros.

Unlike Warren Buff, I never played Dungeons & Dragons. But my oldest son went through an intense period of D&D when he was in his early teens (the Golden Age of D&D is 13?), buying some of the books and getting together with his friends for some heavy-duty D&D sessions. Then almost as suddenly as he got into it, he moved on to whatever the next thing in his life was. All that remains in my possession from that phase is a ruby red 10-sided die that lives on my Rotzler plate from the '90s on which Bill drew a large, 8-legged bug (*not* a spider) crawling across the plate leaving footprints behind.

John Purcell has a decent inaugural fanzine review column, but it led me to wonder whether he intends to restrict his focus to electronic fanzines or to open up to all forms. After all, there are still some good paper zines being published—and, as has already been discussed, many that are both paper (limited edition) and electronic. John writes, "As reproduction technology changed, so did the zines; fan publishers happily experimented with any new means of repro." That's true, but the other side of the coin is that in every period of reproductive change there was a chorus of traditionalists complaining that things ain't what they used to be and that somehow the new form was *wrong* or *unfanzinish*.

Of Peter Sullivan's *TvoF* John write, "It does not exist at all in dead tree format." Actually, Peter sent me paper copies of the first three issues before I called him off.

In the lettercol you write to me, "Have you tried to raise gafiated fans from the dead? It sounds like a worthy project in theory, but I can't help fantasizing a 'Con of the Dead' scenario in which deceased con fans rampage through the world as flesh-eating zombies." A more satisfying image of gafiated fans brought back from the dead is the one Terry Carr evoked in his wonderful story, "Night of the Living Oldpharts." It first appeared as a stand-alone SAPSzine in 1986 and was

later reprinted in the huge final issue of the Nielsen-Hayden's *Izzard*, but it's most readily available these days as one of the selections in NESFA Press's "Ace Double" of Terry Carr's *Between Two Worlds* and Bob Shaw's *Messages Found in an Oxygen Bottle*, published for the 1986 worldcon at which both were guests of honor. NESFA still offers it at \$15, and it's a book that should be in every trufan's library.

John Purcell wrongly includes me in a list of "fans who are much longer in the tooth" than he is, along with Shelby Vick, Dick Lupoff and Ted White. Wait a minute! All those worthies are at least seventy, and a good five years (or more) older than me.

Loved Bill Kunkel's "Cartoon Theater" this time! So true!!!!

Arnie: My article was a conscious attempt to lighten everybody's mood, including mine. I'm sorry if you found it too soon.

I bought the boxed set of Dungeons & Dragons shortly after its release. I spent a lot of time playing game designer and customizing the concept to fit my limited circle of players, mostly Joyce, Ross Chamberlain, Bill Kunkel and Charlene Kunkel Storey.

They were rambunctious players, too. They knew they had me over a barrel; if I wanted to run a game, I needed them to play. They didn't like their characters to die and they didn't have time to work up characters from ground zero. My version pitted fantasy heroes against traps, puzzles and beings that were strong enough to carry a character to the brink of extinction -- but not over it.

One of VFW's favorite contributors shares some thoughts on VFW #108.

John Purcell

Well heck, Arnie –

I realize that you're hard at work on the 109th ish of *Vegas Fandom Whenever*, although it appears that your pubbing schedule is increasing a bit. Good for you! No matter what, here are a few comments on the fighting 108th.

The cover is quite appropriate. "Silly Humans," indeed! Especially on a fanzine coming out of Las Vegas. Nothing gets sillier than that!

You know, even my lack of personal contact with Jack Speer hasn't dulled the impact of his passing. Jack's influence on fandom is long varied, and I'm glad that I had the chance to meet him at Corflu Quire and chat with him and Ruth for a spell. One of the nicest people I have ever met in fandom. Yes, he will be terribly missed.

Say, if I had actually made it out there, I was actu-

ally planning on participating in that Arm Wrestling Tournament at Corflu Silver. Seriously, I really was! I was all set to take on Charnock and send that limp-wristed limey back across the Pond. Unfortunately, the Real World reared its mangy head and prevented me from attending. That, and my personal commitment to my wife's education. Some things really DO take precedence over fanac, I guess. At any rate, Graham doesn't know how close he came to public humiliation... Oh. Peter Weston's current World Champion of FACA? In that case, Eminent Peter doesn't know how close he came to public humiliation. Next year in Seattle, the title comes back to the USofA.

If I'm there, that is.

A couple other little things of note herein sparked my locating synapses. First off was Taral's little photo-essay about that wonderful model of the 1959 Nash Metropolitan. Very cool photos. When I was a lad I used to make model cars. Nothing really cool like this Nash, but I liked the Mustangs and stock car racers. It was a lot of fun. I still remember building model airplanes, too, then the space shuttle when that first came out. I think Daniel still has the shuttle model. It's probably stashed on a shelf in his closet.

And then Warren Buffett's article about Dungeons & Dragons reminded me that I tried playing it a few times back in the mid-80s, but it didn't grab my attention the way it did others. That's alright. Too each his/her own, that's the way it should be. Heck, it got Warren more into fandom, and I guess we really can't complain about that now, can we?

"Who's a Fan?" naturally got me thinking a bit, too. I think that the basic definition of "fan" being someone who actively participates in the hobby is just right. It may be a bit inclusive, but that's alright by me. On the other hand, the terms "crank", "buff" and "wacko" work too, especially since I definitely like it when a wacko, zine-cranking fan in the buff is involved. That, you must admit, is more like it.

Anywho, thanks for the ish, and now I have to finish reading Nic Farey's *Beam* to review it in the near future.

Arnie: John Purcell versus Graham Charnock sounds like a terrific curtain-jerker for the next big Fannish Arm Combat card. I hope future Corflu hosts will take note of this outstanding potential event.

The next LoCer has a little to say about one aspect of my mammoth Corflu Silver report...

Rich Dengrove

I bludgeoned three Alien Greys but a fourth got me under mind control with his eyes. I struggled. ... I fi-

nally got around to reading your account of Silver Corflu. Yes, you are great fan writer. I especially loved the action/adventure introductions to each part, and the fact that they had nothing to do with the contents.

Arnie: Glad you enjoyed the shlock fiction parodies at the start of each chapter of my Corflu Silver report. It was my little way of acknowledging that con reports seldom have nail-biting suspense, exhilarating action or similar elements that keep fans turning those pulpish pages.

The return of this recently re-energized fan was one of the highlights of 2008. She offers an observation or two about what didn't happen at Corflu Silver.

Dian Crayne

I am really, *really* sorry that I never got to see the Event That Never Was. I can imagine the strained sinews, the trails of sweat, the grunts and gasps as those two mighty contenders from America and England strained to win the crown! Whew!!

I wish I hadn't been there also.

Arnie: I enjoyed Corflu Silver so much that it almost seems unfair to yearn for that one outrageous event that didn't happen. At least I got a fan article out of it. And who knows? The chance to show my flair as a promoter may yet come again.

A VWF stalwart who has made quite a bit of fan-history on his own looks at the Numbered Fandoms issue...

Dick Lupoff

Wow, a whole fanzine devoted to one long essay. Amazing. What dedication! Of course I've just skimmed the issue -- only received it minutes ago -- but the photos alone brought a tear to each of my multifaceted optics.

Forry, SaM, WAW, Don Wollheim, Harlan, Terry.....and of course those great old coversmighod, my life flashed before my eyes.

Many, many thanks for this. It looks like a document that will find its way into many permanent collections and be cited for a long, long time to come.

Congratulations!

Arnie: One of the joys of Fandom is that age means very little to most fans -- always an exception to the crowd that leans heavily on the phrase "that happened before I was born" -- so that a fan will likely have much younger or much friends as well as those of his or her own generation.

The sad downside of having much older friends is that you have to say good-bye to them before you are

ready to see them depart for the enchanted convention. Fortunately, Fandom also brings us new, young and reasonably vigorous friends. They can't replace the one who are gone, but they can make their own, unique contributions to your life.

A knowledgeable Britfan offers some comments on my Numbered Fandoms fanhistory issue...

Sandra Bond

Wow, that's a pretty spectacular piece of work. And highly ambitious; I wouldn't go near such a subject as trying to update the theory of numbered fandoms, whether or not Joseph Nicholas was watching me.

I'm in two minds as to whether it's a good thing that you've done it – you could write two or three times as much and still barely scratch the surface, which means that your efforts are simultaneously colossal and yet also slightly skimpy. Like that statue of Sitting Bull that they're carving to outdo Mount Rushmore that's been in progress for fifty years or so, you can see awesomeness, but equally you can see that it's unlikely ever to be finished. (And if it is people will still argue about whether it's as good as it should be, or whether it should have been done at all.)

Also, inevitably, there are some mistakes. I'll take a quick gallop through and pounce on the ones I have noted

Johnny Hall's fanzine is MOTORWAY DREAMER, not MOTORWAY DREAMS. It's named for a Hawkwind track, and I must take the blame for reminding him in 2006 that that was the title of a fanzine he threatened to issue in 1973 and never did..

Isn't Conrad Ruppert spelt with two Ps? Likewise, Charles Hornig, not Honig.

Was Don Rogers really Degler's legal name? I confess I've never read Speer's "Investigations In Newcastle"..

Again, I'm open to correction, but I understood Art Rapp's withdrawal from crifanac and conversion of Spacewarp to an apazine was largely due to the notorious Michifandom bomb incident?

Spelling nitpick again, but Pete Vorzimer is generally spelt thus.

It's a little shaky to say that Vanguard APA was 'already in existence' when the apa boom started; it had blossomed and faded away well before that point. (There's a very good history of the group in ALL OUR YESTERDAYS; I assume Harry Warner was a member.)

WARHOON 28, thick and wonderful though it is, would have had to be still more thick and wonderful to contain every word Willis ever wrote for fandom.

There are significant omissions, as the index at the back of Wh 28 will show.

FAST AND LOOSE was edited by Alan Bostick, not Dave Bridges -- two more different people it would be hard to imagine!

Richard Bergeron's small-and-frequent fanzine was just WIZ, not WIZARD.

I think you're spot on, mind you, with your definition of a focal point fanzine, and I'd add that when fanzine fandom is without one, fanzine fandom suffers. Do we have one at the moment? HmMMMM. That's an interesting question. It's possible to argue that a focal point fanzine can only be defined in retrospect rather than being hailed as one at the time. Then again, I wasn't around for FOCAL POINT, PONG or FANAC, and I am in two minds about whether APPARATCHIK would count. This isn't much of a LoC, is it? But for now it's all I have time for. I hope it doesn't sound unduly negative; as always, I enjoyed reading VFW a hell of a lot. (I sometimes think I'd enjoy you writing out the 1989 share prices from Tokyo, but don't let's test that theory.)

Arnie: I hardly think my essay on the Numbered Fandoms Theory of Core Fandom Fanhistory is the definitive, or the last, word on the subject. You may recall that I have written other fanhistorical essays that looked at fanhistory from other perspectives. My "Philosophical Theory of Fanhistory," which I believe can still be found online at Fanac.org, comes at the subject from a completely different direction.

There's no more need for there to be a single theory of fanhistory than there is for there to be a single interpretation of World or US or UK history. Fanhistory is a fascinating subject, as you well know, and study of our roots can illuminate our subculture.

Rather than be repetitive about specific corrections, I think I'll write a sidebar and handle the whole subject at once.

One of the leading lights of the Canadian Contingent does his letterhack stuff in a big way.

Lloyd Penney

Two issues behind...that's usually my excuse to Chris Garcia, and I'm sticking to it. I have issue 108 and 109 of VFW, and there's things to say.

108... Yes, there are some very silly humans in that Core Fandom group. Isn't that what Alan meant to say?

Full agreement on Jack Speer. May we all try to do for fandom even a fraction of what he accomplished. Based on the wonderful stuff Patricia Rogers has been unearthing, would a tributezine for Jack be in the off-

ing?

Any more post-Corflu results? Anything other details? I hope the Plaza was happy with the event. It's always good to give the facilities back to the hotel in as good shape or better than when you got them.

Fox B. Holden sounds like he's a character from the X Files, but I do remember seeing that name in the few old pulps that I have. We need to find these lesser known names from our SFnal reading past, and see where they are. This episode is a good start.

One of these days, ShelVy, I will get organized, too. Around the same time, the glaciers will return and grind this continent down to a smooth finish. Pigs will also sprout wings, and we'll all need umbrellas. But until then, ahhhhh...zzzzzz...

I must respond to Bill Mills shortly...I still have the latest Voice of Fandom file to listen to. My apologies, Bill, there's never enough time to do all the things you intend to do.

Hello, Warren...I find the same thing as you do, and we seem to come from the same kind of roots. I fully admit to reading about fandom in the mid-'70's through books on *Star Trek*, and got into fandom through the formation of a Star Trek club in Victoria, British Columbia. We all have our roots somewhere. I enjoyed Trek fandom because it gave me a chance to participate and do some valuable work, especially in a group like the Star Trek Welcomittee, which I belonged to for 15 years. But, interests do change, and I moved on to other interests. I think we all do, and what we take part reflects our wants and needs of the time. I was on the committee of our local convention for 25 years, and I've moved away from that. Who knows where I will be in five or ten years? Will I be involved in fanzines at all? Time will tell.

John Purcell is right, there's lots of new ways to get your fanac done, new things to do. In spite of the current controversies on the Trufen list, I don't see anything inherently fannish or unfannish in new technologies like LiveJournal or FaceBook. What's fannish is how you use them, like any other tech we might use, like MS Word, or Mozilla or FireFox or PrimoPDF. Science fiction fandom may have taken the idea of the amateur magazine to higher standards, but the key to wanting to use this format is the same as any other tool we use... we want to communicate with each other in a proactive manner. Our preferences may be in publication design, but we all find other ways to do it...blogs, journals, simple e-mails, whatever it takes to get the word out. Some modern tools do the job better than others, but I find that that's very subjective. I didn't even want to buy a computer unless I could figure out a vital need for it. I did, and we picked up a used 8086.

We've come a distance since then. The more methods of communication that are invented, the more we'll explore them and see if they can be turned to our use.

My loc...Nothing much new on the local fandom scene, but we completed The Drop, and I wound up with the starring role. It played to an appreciative classroom, but I have yet to see the finished product. A pestering e-mail is overdue. This very afternoon, as soon as I finish up with this loc, I will be on my way downtown to another audition, this time with a professional voice company. Who knows where it will take me?

The FAAn Nominee button (wasn't a pin, was it?) was a nice touch, I thought, but reminded me somewhat of the five nominees that wind up on the Hugo ballot. No matter, the buttons were a kind thought, and mine decorates the FAAn Award I won in Austin.

109...Because this is an extensive fanhistory essay on numbered fandoms, I will merely say thank you for another text on our continuing fannish educations. I have to ask, though... the fandoms after the seventh, are those your invention? Are you embellishing on those initial fannish eras, or were those already documented in other fanhistories I haven't yet read?

This might be it...I have to leave in about 45 minutes for that audition, so I will sign off with my thanks, and I am certain you're preparing issue 110 right now. See you soon.

A letter of comment from the next writer is always a welcome sight. Here he shares some thoughts on the fanhistory essay...

David Bratman

That's a very interesting article, and it helps clarify a number of points in fan history for me, and confirming from your point of view some impressions of my own. I certainly recall, for instance, a strong impression of a new fannish era with the advent of *_Fast and Loose_* (which I recall being from Alan Bostick rather than Dave Bridges) quickly followed by *_Pong_*.

I wonder, though, if what this proves is merely that here's one point where your personal view of fandom meshes with mine, because although you've attempted to write a general history, once it gets to your own active period, it becomes a history very much from a distinct personal perspective.

Others might see focal points, or indeed periods, very differently. I note, for instance, that many of the "fast and frequent" fanzines you choose as focal points, while they contain some news - usually local to their editors - they're really a cross between personalzines and ensmallled genzines. Straightforward newszines from the 60s onward don't get mentioned, nor do

what I - but this is my perspective - consider to be the most characteristic large genzines of the eras. What about *_Locus_*, for instance? Long drifted away from fanzine status, it nevertheless started as one, and was still an important binding force for the community when I was a neo in the mid 70s

As fandom was introduced to me at that time - this would be 1974/75 - the fannish newszine, and my perception of the focal point, was Linda Bushyager's *_Karass_*, and the major genzines included *_Granfalloon_* and *_The Spanish Inquisition_* and above all *_Rune_*, which under Fred Haskell (as he was then) was the genzine I imprinted on. Some people feel a fanzine is lacking without Rotsler illos; well, I have a lingering feeling that's it's somehow lacking if it doesn't have Ken Fletcher. A couple years later, Linda folded *_Karass_* and the torch was quite consciously picked up by Mike Glycer with *_File 770_*. If F770 was never quite a focal point - though in its first years it was frequent enough - it was a major contributor to the feel of fanzine fandom at the time, and to an extent still is, and all the Hugos in the world don't change that.

I write "fanzine fandom" because I don't like giving that term up without a fight to people to whom it means "fiction about media characters." The term "core fandom" bothers me a little, because it sounds arrogant and because it seems to be used to exclude things like con-running, which to my mind are pretty well fundamental to fandom. If you mean "fanzine fandom" you should say so, and indeed in some places you do. Going back to the early days of fandom, which should be the "core" activities, I find lots of focus on wanna-be prodom (e.g. the Futurians) and science hobbyism (which is what Hugo Gernsback originally fostered fandom to do). I'd call even things like that part of "core" fandom, then; they're just not interested in fanzines for their own sake (they may produce fanzines, but it's kind of incidental to them), and fanzines for their own sake is the characteristic interest of fanzine fandom.

Arnie: There's no reason why a focal point has to be a newszine. There have been several newszines that filled that role, but most focal points were monthly genzines and a lot of great newszines simply didn't qualify as the hub of fan interest.

The only thing better than a LoC from the Sage of Fandom is... two locs from the Sage.

Robert Lichtman

Having just read and commented on your original draft in *Softcore Fantasy Adventures* of this updated

view of Numbered Fandoms as narrowed to Core Fandom—a good exercise in Fourth Dimension Mental Crifanac—my LoC on *VFW* No. 109 is quite easy. You'll find these somewhat different than what I wrote in SNAPS. Since I'm not closely rereading your much-expanded piece in this issue, I hope I'm not missing something major. But it appears from a casual scrolling that much of what you added is further detail/expansion, such as mentioning the rift between Wollheim and *Wonder Stories* when DAW complained loudly about Gernsback's failure to pay him for "The Man From Ariel" during First Fandom times, your lengthy (and much needed) addendum about the creation of FAPA in the section on Second Fandom, your mention of the founding of the N3F during Third Fandom, and your coverage of Degler in the Third Transition.

But first, that isn't the cover of the original edition of Jack Speer's *Up To Now* on page 3, but instead the lead-in page to its reprinting in Eney's *A Sense of FAPA* in 1962. I used the actual original cover as the front cover of the reissue I did of Speer's pioneering history, and you can find it at <http://www.efanzines.com/UpToNow/UpToNow.pdf>. (I'm also attaching a JPG here if you want to easily run it accompanying this letter.)

"The Focal Point Fanzine isn't necessarily the best fanzine being published at the time." That's definitely the case. For instance, Art Rapp's *Spacewarp* started out containing very thin material, but it had monthly publication and editorial enthusiasm on its side and was mostly quite good by the time Uncle Sam tapped Art on the shoulder. Fanzines I consider better overall than *'Warp* during its time would include Redd Boggs's *Sky Hook* (as it was titled at the time), Donald Day's *The Fanscient*, and especially Howard Miller's and Don Wilson's *Dream Quest*.

And in recent history Andy Hooper's *Apparatchik* was at the time the one to which (after a certain point) I tried always to write a letter of comment (even as I do these days with *VFW*). Although over time Andy took on some coeditors—first Victor Gonzalez and later Carl Juarez—for the most part in appearance it was never more than a scrappy, type-dense affair just one or two steps removed from its roots as Andy's perzine. In my subjective point of view and with the possibility that not checking my files and relying on memory is less than accurate, I recall better fanzines being published during that period including Bruce Gillespie's *Metaphysical Review*, Judith Hanna's and Joseph Nicholas's *FTT*, Christina Lake's *Never Quite Arriving*, Dick & Nicki Lynch's *Mimosa*, Simon Ounsley's *Lagoon*, Candi Strecker's *Sidney Suppey's Quarterly* &

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Looking for a local group? These are the major ones.

Cinaholics

Alan & DeDee White
Email: podmogul@cox.net
Website: <http://fanbase1.com/cineholics/cineholics.html>.

Las Vegrants

Arnie & Joyce Katz,
909 Eugene Cernan St., Las Vegas, NV 89145
Email: JoyceWorley1@cox.net
Phone: 702-648-5677
Website: LasVegrants.com

SNAFFU:

James Taylor
Email: dfh1@cox.net
Phone: 702-434-5784
Website: SNAFFU.org

Confused Pet Monthly, Geri Sullivan's *Idea*, Michael Abbott, John Dallman and Pam Wells's *Attitude*, and a personal favorite from Australia, Chris Nelson's delightful *Mumblings From Munchkinland*.

"Nor are all great fanzines focal points. A couple of current examples are *Trap Door* and *Banana Wings*. Both are outstanding, but neither is frequent enough to serve as Core Fandom's focal point. Actually, most of the great fanzines did not serve the hobby in that way, including *Hyphen*, *Innuendo*, *Void*, *Warhoon*, *Habakkuk* (a near miss, though), *Quip*, *confusion*, *Cry* and *Energumen*." I would beg to differ on *Banana Wings*, which appears quarterly and has excellent contributors, good editorial vision and content, and a lively letter column. In the era before frequent electronic fanzines such as your own *VFW*, it would have been a likely candidate for focal point. And I think both *Cry* (when it stepped well away from being the Nameless Ones' clubzine and had its glory period under the primary editorship of the Busbys) and *Void* (after Ted White took over production from the Benfords) were focal points, albeit somewhat overlapping ones as they both had their primes in more or less the same period (roughly 1959-63). If you think not, what would you suggest in their place? (Certainly not *Yandro!*?)

In a good portion of the period spanning the Second Transition through Fourth Fandom, I would add two strong candidates for secondary focal point fanzines: Bob Tucker's *Le Zombie* and Forry Ackerman's *Voice of the Imagi-Nation*. Both were frequent, had

decent-sized circulations, and were highly interactive between editors and readers. An additional candidate during WW2 might be Mike Rosenblum's *Futurian War Digest* and its many and varied riders, which did yeoman duty in keeping British fandom united during that difficult time. Interestingly, it was Ackerman who helped fund publication of *FWD* while at the same time *VoM* was also publishing letters from British fans in the service.

"This is the first time the Roll of Numbered Fandoms has included a Fourth Transition." Reading your description of the year between *Pacificon I* and *Philcon I*, I can relate to your reasons for adding this as a transition period. However, I'm not sure that it really was one. You write, "Fourth Fandom's letter column stars moved into the fannish mainstream and, in so doing, began to change that mainstream. While *Vampire* commanded respect and admiration, it seemed less compelling to these fans than Charles Burbee's *Shangri-L'Affaires* and Francis Towner Laney's *Acolyte*." Weren't most of those "letter column stars" already writing to and for fanzines by 1946? I believe *Shaggy* was the focal point fanzine during the one-year period you delineate (but it had been a contender even before, since Burbee took it over in 1944 and turned out quite a few excellent issues before being drafted, with some issues in 1945 and early 1946 being edited by Gerald Hewitt and A. L. Joquel—Burb returning with the April 1946 issue), since the last three issues of *Vampire* were much more widely spaced after the *Pacificon* (and *The*

Acolyte's final issue came out a couple months *before* the Pacificon) and it was winding down, albeit with excellence. Counter to this, *Shaggy* came out every other month between those two worldcons and might well have continued doing so if Burbee hadn't been fired by the LASFS in 1947 after running Laney's controversial article on homosexuality in the club. Rapp's *Spacewarp* began publication in April 1947 with an 8-page half-legal-length handwritten issue that showed little promise—I don't have it, but I do have the reproduction I slavishly did of it in the early '60s (from Rick Sneary's copy) for SAPS—but continued monthly and (as I noted above) improved rapidly so it was well-positioned to take over as focal point fanzine in the wake of *Shaggy*'s demise.

You also wrote that "Fourth Fandomites planned to introduce a new fandom-wide organization called the Foundation," but that "It never got proposed." On the contrary, it (actually called the Fantasy Foundation) was announced at the Pacificon and was active during the period between it and the Philcon. Please see pages 69-72 of *All Our Yesterdays* for details (here I'm assuming that anyone who's following this will have a copy), where it's noted that it had produced three publications: "a checklist of fantasy prozines, a fanzine checklist for 1945, and a catalogue of the 1,300 books in the collection Ackerman had willed to the FF." Laney and Ackerman had a rare period of cooperation in the project, but it kind of fell apart after Laney resigned his post. Still, as Warner relates, "The organization took credit for helping to publish the enormous 1948 *Fantasy Annual*, a 120-page yearbook of prodom and fandom edited by Redd Boggs and Don Wilson." (I have a copy of this and it's truly a splendid job, which of course one would expect from Boggs.) What Harry doesn't mention is that this yearbook is the third in a series, the first two of which were done by Joe Kennedy.

Of the Seventh Transition, which you place between September 1962 and September 1967, you write, "Whatever the reason, Seventh Fandom began to dissolve after Chicon III. Not only did *Fanac* slip from its focal point status with no replacement in sight, but such big-time fanzines as *Grue*, *Oops!*, *Warhoon*, *Xero*, *Hyphen* and *Void* all stopped cold or slowed to a crawl." Most of these fanzines had ceased publication before or during the early stages of this period. The last genzine issue of *Grue* was one of the first fanzines I ever saw, and was published in 1958 (although, as you know, Grennell continued it as a FAPAzine for many years); *Oops!*'s final issue was in September 1961 after a two-year gap from the previous one; and *Void*'s final issue was February 1962 (well before the

Boondoggle), not counting the actual final issue which you published in 1969 combined with *Fanhstory* No. 4. Of the others, *Warhoon* had six issues through August 1965 when it took a three-year break in publication; *Xero*'s final two issues were in September 1962 (beginning of this period) and May 1963, with an "index" issue in October 1963; and Willis published five issues of *Hyphen* through early 1965 when definitely non-fannish "troubles" took him away from most fan activity for many years. It would be my guess that the discontinuance of these fanzines had nothing to do with the Boondoggle and everything to do with changed personal circumstances of their respective editors.

Because of my own situation during the periods spanning Eighth Fandom through and including the Ninth Transition, I have little to say about that time. In the second half of the '60s, having graduated from UCLA, I moved from Los Angeles to the Bay Area—happily just in time to have a front-row seat on Ground Zero for "the Sixties." I'd folded my second genzine, *Frap*, at the end of 1964 because of the change in fandom in the wake of the Boondoggle. Somehow a light, frivolous, frequent genzine was hard to get material for in such a depressed period. I stopped responding to most fanzines (the exceptions being the remaining "fannish" ones such as John D. Berry's and Ted White's *Egoboo* and your own *Quip*, since when Geis changed *Psychotic* to *Science Fiction Review* I lost interest in the more serious publication), retreated into FAPA (on a once-a-year minac basis), and put much of my attention into what was going on around me. For the first time I also had full-time employment and a live-in girlfriend, both also considerable distractions from fan activity.

And then in 1969, through a somewhat fandom-related series of events (involving Andy Main and Trina Robbins, and to a lesser extent Bill Meyers), I started going to Stephen Gaskin's Monday Night Classes in San Francisco. (Google for it.) This led me eventually to relocate to rural Tennessee as a commune of people who'd attended MNC sprung up, and to spend the next decade living in poverty in the woods in (variously) school buses, converted army tents, and unfinished houses, marrying, having four sons, and a series of more or less interesting jobs in the commune. I wrote only a handful of letters of comment during that period: two to John D. Berry's *Hitchhike* and another to Ray Nelson's *Garden Library*. Late in 1979 my marriage ended, and in June 1980 I left Tennessee for a job with friend and fan Paul Williams in Glen Ellen, California.

Just in time, as it happened, for the beginnings of

Tenth Fandom. Paul was on the mailing list for *Pong*, and I began reading issues over his shoulder. After a handful had arrived and I noticed that many of the names were still the same ones I remembered from years past, I wrote a fateful LoC and was on my way again to becoming an active fan. (A correction in the Tenth Fandom section: it was Alan Bostick, not David Bridges, who published *Fast & Loose*. Bridges never did anything quite like what Alan turned out, but did do some excellent fanzines starting with *One-Off* 1976-80, *A Cool Head* and several minor titles 1981-85, culminating in a 200-page fanzine in 1986 that incorporated issues of *One-Off*, *A Cool Head* and *Outside Now*, and became known in various circles as “The Sheffield Phone Book.”)

From where you stopped, I would guess that we are now well into (at least) Twelfth Fandom, the Electronic Era, and that it has both paper and electronic focal points. The paper one would be *Banana Wings*, as previously mentioned, and I would venture that your own *VFW* is the electronic one. And I’ll stop here (whew!).

Arnie: It’s quite common for the focal point zine not to be the best fanzine of its era. I’d say it happens more often than not, in fact. Trap Door is much better, issue for issue, than any of the focal points of the 1990’s, but it wasn’t the focal point for a variety of reasons, most especially its infrequent schedule.

Comments on the Fanhistory

I want to thank everyone who offered factual corrects and differing opinions. I know that some fanhistorians bitterly resist corrections, but I am delighted by them. The important thing is the best possible treatment of the subject.

I’ll implementing the factual corrections and re-post the issue. I’ll ponder the varying interpretations, but I think it’s fair to say that I’ve given my interpretation a lot of thought. Most likely, if you want to see your version in an article, you’ll have to write it.

Last Hurrah

This issue completes the changes begun with the new logo, name and contents page in *VFW #110*. I’ll tinker a little, but this seems right to me now. Not that changes are foreign to *VFW*. I’ve made them, sometimes about every 10 issues, generally at the beginning of a new “decade” in the numbering.

This time, the changes are large, so I feel like I should explain what I’m doing. I’m asking you to accept my decisions, so I want to write about my motives.

The changes reflect my dissatisfaction with the slowing of the schedule in 2008. I published a lot of issues (and pages) compared to the standards of hard copy days, but the original weekly schedule is just a memory.

One reason *VFW* won’t be weekly again is that it’s so much larger now. I thought it would “balloon” to six or eight pages when I started, but I reckoned without all the great response. Most of the first year’s issues were 12-16 pages in 12-point type. The current average is roughly 30 pages in 11-point type. *VFW* will now be a little smaller (he says as he plans the Stupendous Fourth Annish), but only by a few pages. It will also be more frequent, possibly every three weeks or so.

I have dropped a lot of the Nevada-oriented departments. There are Las Vegas fans who want to do such things and I willingly yield the stage to them. I’ll still have reports on the Vegrants, SNAPS and TVoF, but others are taking care of the calendar and so forth.

I also decided that now is the time to cut “Fandom Newsbreaks.” It feels funny to stop doing the news, since *VFW* started as a newszine-plus. It made sense when it was a weekly; listservs and websites disseminate the news much more effectively than a fanzine that comes out every three or four weeks. I have an idea for something news-oriented, but I want to think about it for a little longer.

I hope you like the new layout. It gives more prominence to the contributors’ names, while also cutting memory utilization.

What’s next depends as much on you as on me. If the letters, artwork and articles continue to arrive, I’ll keep pounding out the issues. — Arnie Katz