

VEGAS FANDOM WEEKLY

Vegas Fan Events This Week

**Las Vegrants Meeting
Saturday (12/3) 7:30 PM**

**VSFA 'First Monday' Meeting
Monday (12/5) 7:00 PM**

**First Annual Vegas Cookie Fest
Thursday (12/8) 6:00 PM**

Vegas Christmas Party Details Announced!

It may not feel like Christmas to we transplants from places like New York and Michigan (and St. Petersburg, Russia), but the Las Vegas Christmas Party is coming up December 10. Hosted by James & Kathryn Daugherty, it will blend an amazing new venue with most of the traditions that make up a Vegas Fan Christmas.

Here's what Kathryn had to say:

"All Las Vegas fen are cordially invited to a Holiday Party at our home in Henderson on Saturday, December 10, 2005, from 6 pm. An RSVP to my email would be appreciated so that I don't fix enough food for 100 and force you all to take the leftovers home.

"The following foods will be available: Turkey, Ham, Cranberry Relish, Green Bean Casserole, Deviled Eggs, Chips, Veggies, Dips, Cheese, Crack-

ers, and Cookies. Eggnog, Mulled Apple Cider, the SNAFFU bar, Coke and Water.

"Any other food that you would like to bring to make the occasion festive for you will be welcome. We do not have any diet sodas here (except water). I will be glad to add other items to eat if you are allergic to all of the above or you would prefer something not on the list.

"We will allow smoking, but only on the outside patio. There will be a hot tub (and towels), but it is liable to be quite chilly outside. We don't mind well-behaved children.

"This is also the venue for the annual Las Vegas Alien Auction. This is an exchange of moderately priced science fictional gifts. If you wish to participate, please bring a wrapped gift worth \$15 or less.

"Around 8:30 pm we will pass out numbers written on a piece of paper. The person with number one will pick a gift from the pile. The next person can pick a gift from the pile or take a gift that a previous person has unwrapped. Any item can only be "stolen" three times before it stays with the last person to claim it.

"You must bring a wrapped item to participate."

Come to the Cookie Fest!

James & Kathryn Daugherty have come up with a novel and appealing pre-Christmas Party event, too: The First Annual Las Vegas Fandom Cookie Fest.

Here's how Kathryn describes it:

"All Las Vegas fen are cordially invited to a Holiday Cookie Fest at our home in Henderson on Thursday, December 8, 2005, from 6 pm.

"I will provide two ovens, a half dozen cookie sheets, all ingredients (flour, nuts, spices, sugar, butter, icing, etc.) and a KitchenAid Mixer. I will have some prebaked sugar cookies for decorating if you do not feel like actually baking. Most of the cookies will be stored for the Holiday Party on Saturday, but some will probably be sampled as well. "The cookies that mean Holiday Cookies to me are Press



Inside Story A Vegas Westercon?

The 2008 Westercon Bid, which has kept a very low profile, has stepped it up a little. James Daugherty will be a capable and effective chairman, and he has two strong supports in his wife Kathryn and Elayne Pelz. (It is slightly disturbing that there isn't a single actual Vegas fan on the committee, but perhaps James will remedy this once the bid turns into an operating con committee.)

Naturally, no guests of honor will be announced until (and unless) the Burning Fan bid wins Westercon for Glitter City. So before the issue is decided, I want to put in a plug for having *some* GoHs — they are as thick as neos at contemporary cons — be relevant to Las Vegas Fandom. While Joyce, Ross Chamberlain and I have already had Westercon honors, there are others who are very deserving who have not yet received such accolades.

I won't cause embarrassment by mentioning them in public, but there are some pretty obvious candidates for Fan GoH, Pro Artist GoH and Fan Artist GoH who would be worthy GoHs and who have a strong association with Las Vegas Fandom.

Those are small details and right now, the important thing is the Big Picture. The '08 Westercon is most likely going to be in Phoenix or in Las Vegas. I'm not a terrific lover of large conventions, but you sure can't knock the fun potential of a Vegas Westercon, especially considering who's in charge. I hope all Vegas fans, and all friends of Vegas Fandom, will get behind the idea and spread the word.

— Arnie

Cookies (also called Spritz Cookies). So I will be making several varieties of them. I am open to any other suggestions that mean the holidays to you. If you send me the recipes in advance, I can make sure that I have all the ingredients.

"Please RSVP for this event."

Their address is: 6 Chartiers Court Henderson, NV 89052. The Phone number is: 702-328-6006

Joyce Gets Good News

The fall-out from Joyce's December 1 appointment with the foot surgeon went extremely well. Dr. Morris was pleased with the x-rays and told Joyce she can begin to get rid of that big black boot. Not only did it afford no opportunity for clever autographs, but the contraption dug into her leg quite painfully at times.

It won't be long now before Joyce is walking and driving — and going to local fan events.

Vegas Westercon Bid Establishes Website!

James Daugherty, chairman of the Burning Fan Westercon bid for 2008, has stepped up the pace a bit with the launch of an official website. Go to <http://www.hematite.com/burningfan/> to see all the latest info about the bid.

Ruth Davidson Leaving Town!

Ruth Davidson, who has been very active with VSFA, will be an ex-Vegas fan by the week before Christmas. She posted the news last Friday on both of the local listservs that she and her daughter will be moving to Yuba City to live with her mother.

Ruth currently runs the website and is editor of VVV.

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Reporters this issue: Roxanne Gibbs, Michael Bernstein, Laurie Kunkel, Kathryn Daugherty and Joyce Katz

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Columnists This Issue: Richard Lupoff, Shelby Vick, James Taylor, Chris Garcia

VFW is free by request — and you may get it anyway. It can be downloaded at the SNAFFU and VSFA sites as well as at efanzines.com. No Publishing Giants were harmed during the production of this fanzine.

Member: fwa. Supporter: AFAL. Believer: United Fans of Vegas; Toner II in 2006! Vegas Westercon in '08!

The Vegas Awards



Vegas Fandom Weekly is going to sponsor a set of awards, which I hope others in the community will support, to honor local fan activity.

This has been a great year for Las Vegas Fandom after too many weak ones and deserves to be commemorated. Not only do the fans and events that did so much to entertain us in '05 deserve some recognition, but saluting exemplary efforts will tend to encourage more of them in the future.

Because the emphasis is on dishing out gobs of egoboo, not senseless competition, the ballot and the presentation of the winners will be more inclusive than exclusive. You'll have a chance to vote for several choices in each category and the survey results will include write-ups of all the top placings in each category, not just the winner.

I've been thinking about the categories for some time. It has three main criteria:

1. A good survey asks as few questions as possible.
2. There is no need to duplicate categories already covered by the annual Fan Achievement Awards.
3. It would be contrary to the ecumenical spirit of The Vegas Awards to ask questions like "What is the best club?" which would cause more acrimony than they would dispense egoboo.

The Categories

Most Important Happening in Las Vegas Fandom in 2005

What was the most significant thing that occurred in Las Vegas Fandom during 2005.

Some Possibilities: Las Vegas Fantasy & SF Day, founding of SNAPS, start of Sunday Socials, departure of Woody Bernardi.

Outstanding Local Event of 2005

What was the most enjoyable and entertaining event of 2005?

Some possibilities:

Las Vegas Fantasy & SF Day, NonCon 2 Weekend, The Good-bye Formans Party, the Las Vegas Fandom Halloween Party, the LV Fandom Christmas Party and the LV Fandom New Years Eve Open House.

Outstanding New Las Vegas Fan of 2005

This category honors the best Las Vegas neofan of 2005. for this honor.

Some possibilities: Ayesha Ashley, Mindy Hutchings, James Willey

Outstanding Addition to Las Vegas Fandom in 2005

This category honors the fan whose entry into Las Vegas Fandom has meant the most to the Las Vegas fan community. Those who have participated in Fandom in other areas are eligible for this honor.

Some possibilities: Teresa Cochran, Merric Anderson, Lubov Anderson, David Gordon, John DeChancie, Ruth Davidson.

Outstanding Las Vegas Fan

This is the category in which you will cast your vote for the top Las Vegas fans based on their fanac in 2005.

Some possibilities: Roxanne Gibbs, Rebecca Hardin, Joyce Katz, James Taylor.

No votes will be accepted until after January 1, when I will distribute an easy-to-use ballot. Meanwhile, I'm hoping some of you will suggest nominees that can be mentioned as possibilities on that ballot.

And, of course, it wouldn't hurt to start thinking about how you will vote when the time comes. I expect to put out some helpful material in the year-end issue of *Vegas Fandom Weekly*, but it's likely that the people, places and events you recall unaided are among the ones that meant the most to you, personally.

A special issue of this fanzine will present write-ups of all the top vote-getters in each of the five categories.

— Amie

Las Vegrants The Merry Widner

I don't know how Art Widner not only survives, but actually thrives on, the automobile tours that have long been one of his trademarks, but Fandom is all the richer for it. Las Vegas Fandom gets a lot of visitors — even fans think of Vegas when they want a good time — but Art's two stops in Glitter City have certainly solidified his status as one of the city's favorite out-of-town guests.

It's indicative of the rapid changes Las Vegas Fandom has undergone in the last year or so that many of the current Vegrants had not previously had the chance to meet Art, who'd not been in town since Corflu Blackjack in 2003. Art's two visits, however, did a fine job of turning strangers into Widnerphiles.

My preparations for what I assumed might be a smallish meeting were well advanced when Art's gorgeous and distinctive car rolled up to the curb in front of the Launch Pad at about 4:30 Pm on Saturday, November 19. Perhaps wishing to avoid a repetition of the "Wanted Poster" cover of *VFW #51*, Art's scheduling was faultless during the return trip portion of his Southwest tour without giving us a moment's worry about when he might arrive. On the contrary, Art arrived precisely when expected and, despite a little road-weariness, shifted into crifanac mode with the practiced ease of a long-time Big Name Fan.

We still had some time before having to start preparations for the Vegrants meeting, so Art regaled Joyce and me with a brief account of his travels until we hit upon one of his fannish Pet Peeves: First Fandom. Given the name and the original inspiration for its creation, Art is troubled that fans who entered the hobby as late as the 1960's are now eligible.

I see Art's point and sympathize to an extent, while understanding that First Fandom's members probably see the group as analogous to Mundane amateur journalism's alumni group, The Fossils. The difference, and I see how it would be significant to an authentic fannish pioneer like Art, is that "Fossils" suggests only that the members have been around a long time, while "First Fandom" denotes those who carved out Fandom.

I poured a little oil on troubled waters by mentioning that Joyce and I had been members of First Fandom for a few years, but that we had decided not to renew. The group is now dominated by folks who never did a great deal of fanac when they were supposedly active and has somewhat the bumbling character of a geriatric N3F. The benefits include little

more than a not-very-exciting bulletin, so we decided we'd just as soon spend the dues money on a couple of pizzas for our fan friends.

Ayesha Ashley called about 6:15. She'd spent the day taking a self-defense course (and was pooped), but she wanted to come over for a short visit. Naturally, I encouraged her to do so and it wasn't long before our musical blonde was chattering away with the rest of us while she applied her analgesic talents to Joyce's throbbing ankle.

Merric & Luba Anderson, James Taylor and Teresa Cochran all arrived early to help set-up the food and chairs, so the evening got off to an early (and strong) start.

Merric and James got into a general conversation about the then-upcoming Loscon and ended up agreeing to jointly chair Toner 2. (*I'll have full details in the next issue.*) This sounds like it could be a very effective partnership; James' steadiness is a nice counterweight to Merric's enthusiasm.

"Are there going to be any more people?" asked the gregarious Merric. That's when we noticed that, although the meeting wasn't planned to start for another half-hour, we already had nine Vegrants on the premises. Privately, I began revising my original estimate of meeting size upwards.

New residences were a major topic during the early evening. Merric and Luba have moved into a two-storey house and Ayesha moved to a better apartment a month or so ago. Ayesha's place sounds nice, though it has the Major Flaw of being too damn far away from the Launch Pad. She reports some night driving problems of late and that, coupled with the distance, is going to have a negative effect on her attendance at Vegrants meeting. Maybe someone could offer her a lift.

Ross Chamberlain's shirt drew many admiring comments. It depicted the night sky at the summer and winter solstices, one star field on the front and the other on the back.

Seeing this artistic production reminded me that its wearer has not been seen in *VFW* with new artwork in some time and I began the complex and prolonged wheedling procedure that translates Ross' Good Intentions into his great cartoons and illustrations.

I called Bill Kunkel and learned that he wouldn't be coming. With Laurie in Michigan to scope out their new home, Bill was finding it tough to cope with the crisis of a missing cat. Typo, fairly new to the house-

hold, had decamped while Bill and Derek Stazenski played video games. (Typo had gone to check out the accommodations in another apartment and then returned when they did not meet his standards.)

James and Ross heard me mention the death of wrestler Eddie Guerrero to Bill and that led me to some anecdotes about Latino Heat. I can't remember a comparable outpouring of sorrow among fans and professionals alike over Eddie's untimely demise.

John DeChancie mentioned a few famish alumni who have achieved Mundane distinction. I added a couple more to the ones he cited — poet XJ Kennedy and rocker Ringo Starr.

In the course of jabbering about something even more trivial, I mentioned that Ross and I became Fano-clasts about the same time, though I'd preceded him by a few meetings. "You mean you voted on Ross?"

"Well, there wasn't really a vote. Besides, I doubt my opinion would've counted for much in the Fano-clasts. At that time, I was lucky just to be a member."

"Do we vote on new members?" One of the newer Vegrants inquired.

"We don't vote," Joyce reminded.

"So, how does one become a member," John DeChancie asked me.

"Well, for example, you're one now," I told him. He seemed surprised, though pleased. I elaborated a little on the extremely informal process by which ordinary fans are elevated to Vegrants membership. "We talk until we reach a consensus. Sometimes it happens right away; sometimes it takes a little longer to tell if someone belongs in the Vegrants." I pointed out Ayesha, Merric and Luba as examples of people who'd gotten very quick invitations.

"Some people become members and some don't," I said. I stole a glance at James. "Of course, we voted him down," I said, pointing him out to everyone. "We just couldn't figure out how to tell him. We even moved, but he got the new address." (I broke up at the ridiculous notion; James is one of the most popular Vegrants.)

The most unexpected topic of the evening was Heddy Lamarr. The gearheads talked about her innova-

tive patents that helped us win World War II, while the rest of us contemplated her breakthrough film *Ecstasy*. This Czech (or German, depending on whose authority you accept) film made her an international star with its sensual scenes and (brief) nudity.

It was just a short leap from there to Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman. I don't see how anyone can fail to love a man who tells school kids that, if consigned to a desert island, he would take a bottle of booze and a woman. He also told the same youthful audience that his hobby is drinking. "I would vote for him as many times as necessary," I said, overcome by political enthusiasm. "He wants baseball for Las Vegas. He wants football for Las Vegas. He wants to legalize prostitution and pot. That's my kind of mayor!"

We talked about the influence of our Fandom on comic book fandom and prodom. I mentioned that Dick Lupoff and Don Thompson were among the founders of comic book fandom and that the Brooklyn Insurgents had included comic book pros Denny O'Neill and Steve Skeates. I also cited Superman Siegel and Shuster as fanzine publishers.

When I enlarged on the theme by mentioning Mort Weissinger and Julius Schwartz, John DeC talked about his personal impressions of Julie. My contact with Schwartz, when Lenny Bailes and I visited the DC Comics offices, left a far different impression. Julie seemed like the office curmudgeon, a talented but taciturn man. John found him friendly and fun-loving. Just shows how different folks can be when met under differing circumstances.

A discussion of the State of Science Fiction — see? Anything can come up at a Vegrants meeting — dominated the midnight hour. One SF author in the group — I won't mention his name because he's a chicken — claimed credit for his generation for the ruination of science fiction. Some of us thought the credit could be shared, while a few believe that the current variety of SF has continued to stride forward vigorously into the World of Tomorrow.

Under the theory that contemporary SF books must be good for *something*, several Vegrants showed great interest in Joyce's tales of eating the paper on which they are printed. She finally broke the habit, but at her worst, the High Priestess once ate a good portion of an issue of *Playboy* that Brian Burley was unlucky enough to bring with him on a visit.

The fans who partied till 2 AM were: Art Widner, Alan & DeDee White, Ray & Marcy Waldie, Merric & Lubov Anderson, James Taylor, Teresa Cochran, Ross Chamberlain, Su Williams, John DeChancie, Kent Hastings, David Gordon, Ayesha Ashley, Joelle Barnes, Sandra Bean, Joyce Katz and... — Arnie



NOW & Again The Silver Screen

You never know where you'll find material for a column. Now, I'll be the first to admit that I steal stuff right-and-left, but – how can it be plagiarism if you wrote it yourself???

First, a little background. Many, MANY years ago a young fan named Vernon McCain (excuse me; he listed himself as “Vernon L McCain”. Mustn't forget the L, or someone will say: “The L with it!” *(Ouch! That's an old one. But, then, consider the source. . . .)* Anyway, as I was saying before I so rudely interrupted myself: Vernon did a fanzine, “Wastebasket”. It was a printed fanzine, with cold type and all! In fact, in issue #3 he referred to a linotype he had just acquired! ‘Just’ being the operative word; he said most of that issue was handset type

Now, speaking as one who used to own a handset newspaper, I can appreciate the extreme difficulty of that. You do everything backwards and in mirror image, one letter at a time.

Such fun!

Here comes another Aside. Can't I write without one? Just want to show how dedicated a columnist I am: I'm writing this in the early morning. Suddenly I noticed it was ten minutes til eight ayem.

MacGyver!

I watch reruns of MacGyver as often as possible and TVLand runs one from seven to eight, Central time. I had missed most of it! Dashed in, caught the ending, and came back, crushed that I had missed most of it. . . .

Anywee, his co-editor was Walter A Willis, who also did a marvelous printed fanzine named

Slant before I – well, the pressures of the Willis Campaign – forced him to go to mimeo with Hyphen.

Wastebasket was a FAPA zine but, of course, was also available for ‘the usual’ – or you could send Vernon a dime and he'd send it to you. (These days, a dime wouldn't even pay postage. Didn't someone once say, “Times have changed”?)

But wasn't I talking about my column? What's the connection?

Well, I was browsing thru fanac.org the other day and found they had a scanned copy of issue number three of Wastebasket dated ‘1951 ?’ There was no publication date, but that issue did contain a plug for Chicon and the Willis Campaign, so 1951 sounded like a good approximation of the date. Aside from the brilliance of writing by Vernon and Willis, there was a column named The Blue Pencil, by – Shelby Vick! One part of it caught my attention, and here it is:

. . . I think it would be a good idea for some Hwood film company to dig up those old Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers props and launch a line of B-grade steifilms -- *Vengeance of Mars*, starring Jon Rogers and his spaceship, Trigger!

Seriously -- they could write out most of the troublesome physic phenomena; lack of gravity, for instance, can be done away with by grav-plates (or -belts). Same thing for variance of gravity on other planets. And most of the aliens could be explainably humanoid, or similar to the many monsters left over from horror movies. Or why couldn't Disney draw in the monster -- or George Pal fix up a puppet? And it's simple enough to rig a man up in a space suit and breather hel-





met. Alien scenery? Hollywood has never been at a loss for that -- tabletop stuff does good for distant shots, and they can always arrange props for close-ups.

Harmful?

You think such out-and-out spacepics would ruin science-fiction?

Why?

What harm has been done by the Saturday Western epics to the classic Technicolor extravaganzas? Have they caused such authors as Luke Short to cease turning out slick-quality material for Satevepost, Colliers, or book publication?

With the science minimized, such films could

spread the popularity of sf; an introduction for beginners, or such-like.

And I'd sit in the darkened mezzanine, joyfully masticating popcorn and shouting to Captain Putrin:

"They went thataway!"

This had started off with reference to Rocketship XM, the first rocketship movie! Fandom was a bit harsh on the epic, released in 1950, starring Lloyd Bridges. I think much of fandom had been looking for something more in the Destination Moon line, something Classic! Literature!

Well, Hollywood had their own race on. They saw the value of the sf field, and everyone wanted to be the First One Out. So, in their rush to succeed, maybe they skimmed a bit, here and there! Still, it was good pulp sf – danger, conflict, and a rocketship. Science Fiction – or, more precisely, Space Opera – had arrived.

The silver screen would never be the same.

Now, the main reason I'm bringing back Old News is to brag. Back in 1950 I was suggesting the things Hollywood latched onto for sf – animation and puppets, which became pretty much A Way Of Life for the sf film industry. Now, I fell down on how sf was going to almost take over TV, and I didn't anticipate computerized special effects, but – hey, I ain't perfect! — Shelby Vick

Continued from p 2

She has expressed the intention to continue to take care of those two activities, but doing so from California may prove difficult. She has made quite a few friends here, especially among the VSFAns, so I hope she maintains some contact with the Las Vegas fan community even as she becomes involved with fans nearer to her new home.

Widner Returns to Spark Vegrants Meeting!

Art Widner enjoyed his recent visit to Las Vegas so much that he looped back here on the return leg of his whirlwind tour of the Southwest.

He stayed with us on Saturday, Sunday and part of Monday and attended the 11/19 Vegrants meeting.

Heard Around Vegas Fandom...

Laurie Kunkel spent the week preceding Thanksgiving

exploring her future Michigan home. She stayed in the Kunkels' recent purchased mobile home and pronounced herself extremely happy with the place. As things stand now, they plan to move at the end of May...

Merric Anderson has been breaking more rocks than the prisoner of a chain gang since moving into their new four-bedroom, two storey home. He now has a fully implemented desert landscape in the backyard...

Joyce and I have resigned from FAPA, ending a run of 15 years. The expense of hard copy publishing and our commitment to the digital variety are the main reasons...

JoHn Hardin is back in the ranks of the employed. He just signed on at Client Logic...

Lori Forbes has completed her move to a new house. It's a two storey with three bedrooms and 2-1/2 baths. (Doesn't the water leak out of the half one?) She's got a roommate who is, at present, a nonfan, and seems to be quite happy in her new location.

ChatBack: The VFW Letter Column

Since the annish had no letters, the mailbag looks unusually bulbous, there's only one cure for that, so let's get to it.

What better way to begin the first ChatBack of VFW's new year with a letter of comment from one of this fanzine's Most Valuable Fans...

rich brown

The arrival of VFW #53 reminded me that I hadn't opened and read VFW #52. Started to, but got a prompt asking if I wanted to download the latest version of Adobe Reader, which I decided to do, but while it was downloading I was simultaneously answering other email, and then when I was finished with that, I was kindof tired, and so it slipped my mind.

Until VFW #53 showed up and I tried to view it, only to have my computer asking me what to use to open it, when ordinarily it just goes to the Adobe program. Anyone reasonably conversant with the way computers work would probably realize what the problem was at that point -- but it took *me* a while (and a lot of pointless searching) to reboot my computer so that those new Adobe files I downloaded could finally be installed.

After I did and they did, I was able to enjoy reading both issues of VFW.

But your piece "Say What?" on fan terms in #52 caught my eye, and I would quibble with you on a few minor points.

I remember, "I take your seat," but no doubt because the custom has been appropriated by SNAFFU members, it doesn't in this telling have one important element I recall. Which is to say, I believe the full phrase we used in those

days (where all the snows have gone and turned to slush and steam) was, "Old Fanoclast joke -- I take your seat." Too, I would suppose for the sake of brevity, or perhaps because you didn't recall it, an important feature of this custom which you didn't mention was that the *host* could not be so evicted; his chair was sacrosanct. I believe there were two well reasoned explanations which supplied the irrefutable logic which underlay this particular iron clad rule of fannish etiquette: First, you could be airily rude enough to "take" a seat from someone else who was, in fact, like you, and therefore your co-equal, merely *borrowing the use* of said seat him/herself -- but, by the same token, you could *not* take one from he who was acting as host and hence actually *owned* the seat in question. The second, of course, was that Ted White would clobber you if you tried.

It may already be too late, but you can cite me as an "authority" if it helps you to introduce that element into SNAFFU's custom at this late date. And, if I might suggest, you could explain that you were actually doing it unselfishly, and entirely for their own good -- being, I'm sure, disinclined or at least reluctant to see any of them clobbered by Ted White.

What you have as "All truth is contained in fanzines," I recall as "All knowledge is contained in fanzines." I've seen it as the acronym AKICIF, and some people -- no doubt in an effort to make it more inclusive -- seem to think the "f" should stand for fandom.

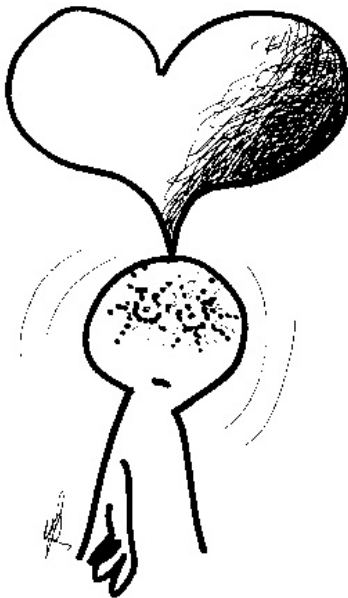
In any event, it was one of Burbee's phrases, and he was simply commenting, in his almost always ironic way, about the fact that no matter how obscure any given topic brought up for discussion in fanzines might be, there were nearly always at least a dozen fans who have and exhibit, or at least claim, some degree of expertise on it.

I don't really have a quibble about what you said about Fandom Is A Way of Life (FIAWOL) and Fandom Is Just A Goddamn Hobby (FIJAGH), but rather wish to add something to it. You wrote, "Both phrases have some validity and are often used by the same person in different situations." This is unquestionably true.

The fact is, the two have often been associated with Serconism on the one hand (FIAWOL) and Insurgentism on the other (FIJAGH), in part because of who tended to use the phrase to describe their fannish philosophies (Forry Ackerman and Francis T. Laney, respectively).

Walt Willis tried to find -- and I think succeeded in finding -- a reasonable compromise between the two seemingly incompatible viewpoints by coming up with the alternative he offered to FIAWOL and FIJAGH, which was Fandom Is A Ghoddamned Ghood Hobby (FIAGGH).

While there's no question in my mind that it's probably the most reasonable fannish philosophy, unfortunately it had one important drawback as an acronym -- which I suppose is a lesson to us all, as otherwise WAW was nonpareil and I have nothing but sincere admiration for virtually everything he said or did or stood for. The flaw, which he overlooked in his desire to heal the fractures he saw in the microcosm, is that while you can pronounce FIAWOL



A PREUMPTIVE STRIKE BY LOVE

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Hackers & Crackers

SNAFFU Central

Arriving slightly fannishly late, I found the store unprepared for the 11/25 SNAFFU meeting. In short order, and with only minor harassment, the store employees (all of whom seemed new) soon arranged our table and chairs, and put out the SNAFFU sign.

The Fourth-Friday meetings in November and December are usually only sparsely attended, due to many local fans having out-of-town plans such as attending Loscon, but for this meeting a few more members were unable to attend due to having to move or help someone else move. There's a lot of that going around just now, it seems.

Nevertheless, SNAFFU has always resisted canceling these meetings, as they also tend to attract new members and old friends who haven't attended in a while.

The regular members attending were Lori Forbes and President Michael Bernstein (yours truly). As we were setting up, we were approached by a woman who asked if we were SNAFFU. When we told her we were, mutual introductions were made, and Carolee proved to be a lively conversationalist who dove right in to the evening's topic.

I started the meeting at 8:25, and there being no significant new or old business to be worth addressing for such a small meeting, launched directly into the discussion, which was "Hackers and Crackers."

I'M BLEEP,
GOD OF FANDOM'S
FUTURE!

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I briefly explained the difference (Hackers are geeks who enjoy exploring the limits of computer software systems, Crackers are the criminal b*stards who break into other peoples' computers), and how the mainstream press keeps using the wrong word for computer criminals.

After that, we mentioned a few books that used one or the other as archetypes for protagonists and antagonists, as well as a few movies. For example, William Gibson's 'Neuromancer' has as it's nominal protagonist a Cracker named Case (Gibson calls them 'cowboys' in his books), who, in all honesty, is a complete loser who fails to even make a dent in the plot, and is merely pushed around by forces beyond his control and mostly beyond his comprehension. Similarly, in the movie *Swordfish* (2001), Stanley Jobson (played by Hugh Jackman) is pushed around by the charismatic villian Gabriel. This theme also repeats itself in 'Sneakers' (1992, with Redford, Poitier, Ackroyd, and a cameo by James Earl Jones), and other movies.

In contrast, the Hacker archetype as protagonist has fared much better in books, starting with Heinlein's hero-engineer characters (of which there were many), as well as James P. Hogan's. More recently, C.S. Friedman has Dr. Kio Masada, an extreme geek archetype, as a supporting protagonist in 'This Alien Shore', where he is instrumental to solving a central mystery crucial to the plot, and Rick Cook has genius computer programmer 'Wiz' Zumwalt as a protagonist in his fantasy 'Wiz' series. In movies, you have as an example Hope Cassidy in 'The Net' (1995, starring Sandra Bullock), and, of course, Matthew Broderick in 'Wargames' (1983).

As villains, the Hacker archetype is mostly just a 'Mad Scientist' type, and usually isn't very interesting. One exception is the CEO/Villian Gary Winston in 'AntiTrust' (2001), who is defeated, along with his various henchmen, by Hacker protagonist Milo Hoffman.

Along the way, we digressed repeatedly (and enjoyably) on such subjects as 'bad technical details in movies', how 'geeks would be more popular if they all looked like Hugh Jackman', and also talked a bit about our first SF reading experiences.

Whew. Heady stuff. So, in spite of the low turnout, it was a *most* enjoyable and worthwhile evening, and we adjourned at 9:45. — Michael Bernstein

Them Daze Annishes of Olde

An Annish! Wow!

And I'm in it! Double Wow!

Fact is, the very concept of an annish hadn't so much as crossed my mind for the past forty or fifty years. But the Vannish swept me up out of my easy chair. I heard eerie music, everything went into soft focus, and I realized that a flashback was about to occur.

Once again I was about to relive the events of long-ago, so come with me now to those thrilling days of yesteryear and listen to the Million Year Old Fan reminisce about the days of soaring fern forests and roaring fan-feuds. Come with me back to the days of the early 1950's. Longer ago than that, in fact.

I guess I was raised on fantasy. Fantasy in the older, broad sense, when that word was used to include science fiction and horror stories. Some of my earliest memories are of my favorite Aunt Marion telling tales of the Water Babies. These were tiny, fairy-like creatures who lived on lily-pads. I thought my aunt Marion had invented these beings and extemporized their adventures. Decades later I learned that they were the creation of Charles Kingsley (1819-1875), an English clergyman who wrote a fantasy novel about them to teach children good morals.

My aunt must have read the book as a child, or had it read to her, and retained the fantasy aspect while rejecting the Reverend Kingsley's high-tone morality. In fact, my aunt was the family firecracker. She did things like smoke cigarettes and put henna in her hair. *Hotcha!*

Aunt Marion was also inordinately fond of a radio show called *The Witch's Tale*. This series ran from 1931 to 1938. It was hosted by the old witch, Nancy, and her wise black cat, Satan. Each week Nancy would introduce a scary story. *The Witch's Tale* was one of the earliest continuing audio drama series, and certainly the first one devoted to the genre of the fantastic.

I had never heard the radio show, but Aunt Marion had apparently memorized entire episodes, and she would re-create them for me, performing all the roles in different voices. She was really something.

In the same era I did hear a lot of great stuff on the radio, including *The Shadow*, *Lights Out*, *Suspense*, and *Inner Sanctum*. Thanks to the last named show, a whole generation of kids grew up terrified of any door-hinge that needed oil. My early movie experiences included *Snow White*, *Pi-nocchio*, *Dumbo*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Mr. Bug Goes to Town*, and *Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman* – as well as the Rathbone-Bruce version of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *The Great Dictator*, and *Citizen Kane*. Go figure. My attachment to the comics is well documented, whether it was Flash Gordon in the Sunday paper or Captain Marvel in *Whiz Comics*.

Obviously, by the time I reached high school I was primed and ready for the pulps (then enjoying their last hur-

rah) and the SF digests (just about ready to swamp my neighborhood newsstand). I read *Galaxy* and *Other Worlds* and *F&SF* from their first issues, as well as *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, *Startling*, *Amazing*, and anything else I could get my hands on. I discovered that many of these magazines carried fanzine review columns or fan news reports. I read in *Other Worlds* that some students at Miami University were starting a science fiction club. That was a first as far as I knew, and I decided right then to enroll at Miami when the time came.

I sent off my sticky dimes and quarters to famous people like Lee Hoffman for *Quandry*, Gregg Calkins for *Oopsla!*, and Walter A. Willis for *Hyphen*. Or was it *Slant*? Even so, I was particularly fascinated by a small-format double fanzine, printed up-and-back fashion like an Ace Double (and this was before there even were Ace Doubles). The titles were *Cosmag* and *Science Fiction Digest* (one of several magazines to use that name) and the editors, if I remember aright, were Jerry Page and Jerry Burge.

Wow, I thought these things were great. I decided that I had to publish one of my own. To do it, I talked my father into buying me a Smith-Corona portable typewriter for Christmas, 1951. I still had no mimeograph or hectograph, nor access to one, but I was determined. I went out and bought a package of carbon paper and soon I was producing my first fanzine, *SF52*. By whacking the keys on the Smith-Corona as hard as I could, I was able to make four copies at a time. I typed each issue twice all the way through, and managed a total press run of eight copies.

Ah, them wuz the days!

Came September, 1952, and I was on a train from my home city of New York to Miami, Florida. I had applied to the university there, been accepted, and was ready to start my college career. I made my way from the railroad station to the campus, checked in, got a dorm room, registered for my classes, attended freshman orientation lectures, and started searching for a directory of campus organizations. There were religious groups, study groups for various majors, fraternities and sororities galore, and special interest organizations like the Glee Club, Chess Club, Stamp and Coin Society. There were free movie nights and there were great football games at the Orange Bowl. There were mixers where I could go to meet gurruls.

But no sign of the science fiction club.

I researched the subject and discovered that the news item in *Other Worlds* referred to a club being formed at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. I was at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida. I had missed my target by a couple of thousand miles.

But I did make my way into not one but two science fiction clubs while I was an undergrad. One was mainly a postal or paper organization called the Peninsula Science Fiction Society or P2S. This was started by two fans in

northern Florida. Their names, I think, were John Mussels and Ralph Butcher. Or Ralph Mussels and John Butcher. Whatever. We had a pretty nice clubzine called *Sigma Octantis*. I was so excited about the club that I joined three times. Once I was Richard Lupoff, once I was Frank Arthur Kerr, and once I was James Otho Kerr.

Mussels and Butcher were puzzled to receive three membership applications from the same street address, but using one name or another I explained that this was an apartment house. I (Lupoff) lived there with my family. The Kerrs were twin brothers and friends of mine who lived in another apartment. Nobody seemed to notice that the brothers' names, using first and middle initials, became "Fakerr" and "Jokerr."

Eventually there actually was a science fiction club at my college. I was one of the founders. If that other Miami could have its MUSFS, then our Miami could have its UMSFS. It didn't work very well, though. As I recall there were only about half a dozen members. Most were male, although I seem to recall there being one female member.

Here was the trouble:

One of our members must have been a born bureaucrat. He was obsessed with the process of writing a constitution and by-laws, electing officers, collecting dues, and petitioning the university for official recognition so we could qualify for a free meeting room instead of having to congregate in a corner of the Student Union.

Another member was an engineering student and only wanted to read the "science fact" articles in *Astounding* and talk about rocket fuel formulas and orbital trajectory computations.

Then there was the self-identified psychology major. He explained to us that it was a well-known fact that all science fiction fans were crazy. He was not a fan himself, of course; he didn't even read science fiction. He had joined the club in order to observe and study us weird specimens.

It was a disaster.

Hey, I have no idea how long the club lasted. It may still exist, I wouldn't know. Did they ever get their constitution and by-laws written? Did the engineering guy go on to a career with NASA? Did the psych major learn anything at all?

I got my degree in January, 1956. By April I was in the Army. It was actually a pretty easy life. I fell into a job as an instructor at The Adjutant General's School and spent the next two years honing my skills as a writer and teacher. Not bad. I did miss

my fan connections, though, until a couple of University of California students named Ron Ellik and Terry Carr started a newszine called *Fanac*. I was a charter subscriber and I really, really loved reading *Fanac* every week. It was a weekly, wunnit? Or bi-weekly. Whichever.

I also corresponded with a number of fans, one of whom managed to pull off the stupidest stunt I've ever heard of. The guy nearly landed me in a Federal prison. I won't tell you about that today, I'm running on too long already. Remind me some other time, willya?

After I'd been at The Adjutant General's School for a while -- it was located near Indianapolis, Indiana -- I heard of a club called the Indiana Science Fiction Association and I joined that and started spending Friday evenings off-post, attending ISFA with Robert and Juanita Coulson, Eugene and Beverly deWeeses, Lew Forbes, Lee Anne Tremper, Joe Sanders, and the person with the best fan name ever, Ray Beam, and his wife Suzy.

Both Coulsons wound up writing SF or fantasy novels, and both deWeeses did the same. Joe Sanders became a major academic and eventually President of the Science Fiction Research Association, a remarkably high percentage of "fans-turned-pro," especially for a club as small as this was.

The President of ISFA was a theology student named Ed McNulty. He was already serving when I joined the club, and after a while his term expired and he asked us to elect his successor. But nobody wanted to be President.

Not that the duties were onerous. There were none. Still, nobody wanted the job. But Ed was so insistent that we finally gave in and elected our new President, Ed's dog, a little Pomeranian named Toni.

Toni was a sweet dog. The Indiana winters can be pretty severe, and people often arrived at meetings (generally at the Coulsons' house) with heavy boots on. They would take 'em off and let them dry out and warm up during the course of the meeting. Juanita would cook

up a huge pot of spaghetti and everybody would pitch in. We even talked about science fiction, too.

By the end of the meeting everybody was generally in a good mood. People would start bundling up in heavy sweaters and coats and looking around for their winter boots. By this time on a cold Indiana night you could generally find President Toni McNulty sound asleep, snuggled in the bottom of somebody's boot.

Oh, them wuz the days all right, Arnie, them shore as heck wuz the daze.,

— Dick Lupoff



Messages Vegas Fan Encounters

Arnie had asked if I would do a column in VFW a while back, and I happily agreed after I had finished off what was shaping up to be a long and wild November. It isn't quite over as I'm writing this, but it's come and mostly gone in a wild haze. Go figure.

One part of the big deal month of November was my planned trip to Perris/Hemet, CA to go and visit my Uncle Wayne and my dog Shadow. Now, knowing how my family and I get along over stretches of more than a couple of days, I arranged for a trip to LosCon on Friday, making sure that I'd be there early. Driving from the Inland Empire, I discovered that the shortest distance between two points is always FasTrak, but since I didn't have it, I had to wait in traffic like the rest of the sucks out there. I rolled into the LAX Marriott a little later than I had expected, but still, I was fresh as a daisy and ready for fan-nish fun and frolic.

Now, here's where I failed to realize that Thanksgiving weekend is not like a regular weekend. What normally would seem like an insurmountable distance seems tiny when you have an extra couple of days off. There aren't a lot of Vegas fans who attend LA cons too often, but when I arrived at LosCon, I realized that this was the exception to that rule. I almost immediately ran into James Taylor. I had been sitting the Gnome-

ward Bound WesterCon/Baycon 2006 table when he walked by. I had not expected to run into any of the folks I had met on my trip through the desert back in October, but there was one. I should have noted that I was sitting next to the Burning Fan, Las Vegas in 2008 WesterCon bid table, but somehow that slipped my mind.

A few minutes later, good ol' James Stanley Daugherty came by and manned the table and the most recent BayCon Toastmaster was able to give the in-coming BayCon Toastmaster a single piece of advice that will help him immeasurably. Sadly, it's a secret between Toastmasters so I must never reveal it in print.

As the day wore on, and with the schedule I was looking at, wearing on was the only thing that could have possibly happened, I ran into a few fans from Vegas without even trying. There was Merric Anderson and Lubov. I had not expected to meet up with them at all, so I was quite pleased to get the chance to chat, though they had to run to the art show to set-up, so I wasn't able to talk to them much at that moment. James Taylor reappeared with Teresa Cochran. We managed a slightly longer conversation this time before I had to run off and start setting up for another event.

That night, I left the con and got myself some food at a restaurant in LAX itself. It's called Encounter and it's in the four-legged building that I always thought was the control tower. It was the first time I ever ate at a restaurant that was shaped like something. Sadly, the dinner took forever, and by the time I was finished, I had to rehearse for the reading we were doing on Sunday, so I didn't get a chance to run into any more of the folks from Vegas. Shame on me. I didn't even get to the Burning Fan party after I'd become a pre-supporter of the bid.

The next morning found me wandering around, sitting at the fan table again and just plain relaxing in the ten second intervals that came about. I spent a little time in the Fanzine Lounge which was be-



John DeChancie and Lubov Anderson at the 11/19 Vegrants Meeting, before they knew of their coming encounter with our intrepid columnist.

ing run by Milt Stevens. That was a good time, and the fanzines that were there, like old *SF Reviews*, a couple of issues of *Granfalloon*, some old issues of *Yandro* and *Al-gol*, all made me smile warmly. I set a bunch of Garcia-Zines out for people to take, but the traffic was low so not a lot of people picked them up.

That afternoon I did a panel on fanzines with Lee Gold, Milt, Fred Patton and The Moffatts. That was a wonderful panel, especially since I was the only guy who really did eFanzinery. It was mostly a chat, and with 5-time Hugo winnign Fan Artist and generally nice guy Tim Kirk in the audience, I was most pleased with it.

After that great panel, I ran into David Gordon, Merric and Lubov, James Taylor, Teresa Cochran, and John DeChauncie. They were headed for dinner, so I figured that I could let Frank Wu and the other BAarea folks I had plans with could go off on their own and I'd be dining with the good people of Vegas Fandom.

We headed to the Palm Court, or some such name, over at the Four Points Sheraton. The largeness of the group meant lots of fast and furious conversations flying back and forth. The big mistake the table made was putting me across from Merrick. The silliness just flew back and forth between us. The food was great, but the conversation was fantastic. I had a delightful Carne Asada and a glass of goodish port.

For some reason, Dave Gordon was obsessed with the concept of skinny-dipping. We discussed



Merric (left) first met Chris at the big Vegrants Open Party in Las Vegas.

it in various detail over the course of the dinner, and I'm terribly afraid that it will become an official programme item on the Toner schedule. We'll have to see.

We headed back after we took a few group photos, and while I ran up to work the Gnomeward Bound party, the Vegas Folks hung around the

lobby. I said I'd try to catch-up with them, but I sadly got a note saying that there was a party in Steven Burst's room. I heard the word whiskey and guitar and I had to make the trip. I ended up staying there until after 3am, hanging out with a rotating cast of people throughout the night. Steven entertained and was joined in song by Allison Lonsdale. The whiskey was good too. It did leave me a little wiped afterwards, but still, that was a great way to spend a late night.

Sunday breakfast is a busy time for the Restaurant 33 in the lobby of the hotel, so there wasn't actually a table for me, but I saw James Taylor and Teresa again and I joined them. A fine little breakfast was had and we chatted away, which is always a positive. I noticed more Vegites and headed over to chat with them before I embarked on my journey of three panels back to back to back. It was a nice way to say goodbye to the good people of Vegas fandom. I let them know that a trip out that way is coming up after the new year, and I was starting to feel a bit of Vegas Fandom withdrawal, but found myself recharged by running into them at the con. Once again, luck was on my side!

— Chris Garcia

Continued from p 8

(either "FEE-a-wall" or "FIE-a-wall") and FIJAGH (either "FIE-jag" or "FIH-jag"), FIAGGH is very nearly unpronounceable -- "FEE-a" or "FIE-a" followed by a gagging sound. As I said on my fan terms site, "No wonder people always talk about the other two."

Arnie: There is no doubt that the original phrase was "Old Fanoclast Joke: I take your seat." However, it wouldn't be seemly for Vegas fans to go around telling Old Fanoclast Jokes, especially as you, Ted, Steve, Ross and I are not

quite through telling them.

Interestingly, the injunction against usurping the seat of the host has endured, after a fashion, as the general prohibition against taking Ted White's seat on any occasion. There may, or may not, have been something mentioned about a deathray stare that, even on short exposure, could prevent the production of future neofans.

It is sad about FIJAGGH. More neofans are injured every year from trying to say "FIJAGGH" than are harmed by secondary smoke or business meetings. So let this be a warning to all neofans: Do **not** try to say "FIJAGGH" with-

Contact! Las Vegas Club Directory

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

Las Vegants

Arnie & Joyce Katz, PMB 152, 330 S. Decatur Blvd., Las Vegas
NV 89107

Email: JoyceWorley1@cox.net
Phone: 648-5677

Neon Rainbow SF/F Club

Joshua Andrews
Email: Andrews1701@gmail.com
702-759-9303

SNAFFU:

Michael Bernstein
Email: webmaven@cox.net
Phone: 765-7279

VSFA:

Rebecca Hardin
Email: hardin673@aol.com
Phone: 453-2989

out a qualified spotter, preferably a BNG of proven oratorical ability.

I think I get more letters from fans who don't feel they are quite up to writing one at the moment than from those who do. There's irony there, for those who enjoy such things. Meanwhile, here's a VFW debut that's an example of what I mean...

Phyrne Bacon

After some of my Yahoo! groups' messages got a hard bounce, I decided that it is now important to download my email at least once a week since I want to keep getting your fun emails as well as my usual email and spam.

I had to have emergency surgery recently. I was admitted to the hospital on October 2 with a bowel obstruction, which they managed to fix, and on October 5, my surgeon used a 15 cm by 20 cm piece of mesh to close my hernia. No doubt partly due to my age, 69, I am recovering very slowly. The upper edge of my patch is still tender.

I am not yet up to writing a letter of comment, but I have enjoyed the zines, especially the cartoons.

Arnie: Recuperation seems to have become one of the most popular forms of fanac in Las Vegas Fandom in recent days. Of course, it's a whole lot better than the alternative (non-recuperation). Joyce, Su Williams, Marcy Waldie, Bill Kunkel, Ayesha Ashley and Alan White are all on the mend from assorted injuries and maladies, so you aren't fighting the Battle for Good Health alone.

A brief, and magnanimous, comment from a valued con-

tributor whom I wronged with a hideous typo in the title of his most recent column...

Shelby Vick

'Refugee' sounds absolutely fascinating! Impressive, in an odd sorta way. . . .

And, HEY -- you put a PUFFIN on my column! (Of course, it wasn't authentic -- there was no 'Vic' signature.)

Arnie: I'll keep decorating your column with Puffins, albeit minus the authenticating "Vic" signature, as long as Google doesn't fail me. Of course, I would be even happier to print more of those authentic puffins you mentioned

Back in full force, and it's a most welcome resurgence, is that latter day Publishing Giant who has long been one of VFW's stalwart supporters...

Chris Garcia

I'm headed down to LosCon (but first to my Uncle's in the mountainous city of Perris and Hemet) and I'm not going to have much in the way of internet until then, so there'll be no *Drink Tank* or any other FANAC (other than convention-eering) until I get back a week from tomorrow. I know I'll have the shakes bad by then.

Y'all get another visit from Art, but I note that you mention that Jack Speer is ailing. I hope it's nothing serious. It's little notes like that about First Fandom folks that set me worryin'. I've only had a chance to meet Jack once, I think when I was very young, but I'd love to sit down and have a chance to chat with him.

And Art's car is, in fact, an art car. He gave me a ride to

his slide show at CascadiaCon and it has just the best Australian Paint Job.

Lovely little filk ditty that ends with something so sad it almost makes me cry. Yes, we *could* use a fan like Harry Warner again. Lloyd Penney is close, and Peter Sullivan is getting there, too, but there's no one like Harry. I'm so mad at myself for not getting started sooner and having the chance to send Harry a zine and get an LoC back. But then again, I'm fairly certain he would have hated the stuff I do.

ShelVy mentions New Orleans and Katrina. My Moms, a dedicated librarian and humanitarian, has been doing a collection of books to help the NO library system. I've been making sure there's lots of SF in the mix. I sent a box of books to be distributed to the Astrodome peoples. Lot's of children's books and many SF books I had bought at BASFA auctions.

Toner has become an Anderson-Taylor Production. I'm going to be there, at least for one full day. And no, I still will not be a part of a kick-line, Merric!

Yay! Joyce is walking! I remember when my Pops was recovering from having two broken legs and those first steps, also done with a walker, were a pain, but within a month, his was outside, complaining that we never went hiking anymore.

Potshots made me laugh hard. I'm a big fan of cocktail

culture (and it's bigger, smarter brother Tiki), and anytime anyone makes a Martini Glass into a living thing, it makes me happy.

I really like Dick Lupoff's little tale. I'd like to know what happened to Ish too. Anyone who had William Carlos Williams as a doctor would be worth talking to. I wonder what his prescription pad looked like...

Arnie: There's no telling how many neofan suicides and self-mutilations Harry Warner prevented with his habit of sending letters of comment to everyone. Just when the neofan was reeling from the criticisms of his peers – the BNFs seldom noticed first issues and tended, on the whole, to be somewhat kinder – you'd get a great, one-page typed letter from Harry Warner Jr. It was always interesting and varied and almost never mentioned what a clod you were for sending out that poor excuse for a fanzine.

And now. That Light from the East, that Golden Neofan (and a guy who, fortunately, can take a little friendly ribbing)...

Peter Sullivan

Shelby Vick's article about running into a SF fan (or at

Continued page 18

Potshot's Cartoon Theater



Taylor-Made LosCon 32 Report!

On my way over to pick up Teresa Cochran to go to the Anderson's to begin the trip to Loscon I decided my runny nose wasn't getting any better. So I stopped at the 24hr Sav-on for some generic Dayquil and Nyquil. It probably would have been smarter to have just dropped her off and gone home to bed.

The Anderson's new house is wonderful and her studio upstairs has to have the biggest copier I have ever seen as well as copiouss light, both requirements for artists. I had taken some dayquil and enjoyed the ride out of town. Merric introduced us to Trance style music. I liked it, but it wouldn't have been my first choice for accompaniment if I had been driving. The name describes the affect quite well.

At a brief stop in Baker, I had to admit the runny nose was now a full on cold. Merric downed a Rock Star and some Hostess sugar bombs just in case the Rock Star lacked enough sugar and we went back to the road. The traffic was getting heavier, but in the direction of Las Vegas. At Victorville, it became clear plans for lunch at the mall would have to be changed. We barely escaped being pulled into the parking lot and trapped forever. Del Taco sufficed.

One long swooping descent into San Bernardino and Lubov's navigational skills were tested by the *Tron* game that is the Los Angeles Freeway system. But she was up to task and we arrived without incident at the con hotel.

The LAX Marriott is an older property, but in reasonably good condition. It has a few quirks, however. The second floor is also the Lobby level. The elevators show a Lobby floor, but no second floor. This caused Merric and Lubov some confusion as they seemed to have gotten *a room that did not exist*.

By comparison, Teresa and my problem worked to our advantage. Teresa smokes, but was under the impression this was forbidden anywhere indoors at the hotel. So I was surprised by being asked if I wanted a smoking or non-smoking room. Getting a non-smoking room would require waiting for cleaning, so I went with a non-smoking room since that was what I was expecting anyway. We get to the room on the fourth floor and it had a balcony overlooking the pool. Didn't take long tong to convince Teresa that it was the proper insurgent thing to do to smoke on the thoughtfully supplied Balcony.

Registration was quick with only one person ahead of us even though it was already around 2 pm. We found the Andersons busily setting up for the art show, which seems to be the easy part compared to the paperwork that followed.

Merric and I ran into David Gordon, who was looking for help unloading his vehicle. We went to the surface lot on the other side of the hotel, but as we started down some steps David announces he didn't have his keys. So we went to his room fot the keys. He had a camera bag, two shirts, a pair of long pants, a pair of shoes. A small box completed

his convention luggage. Merric and I both agreed that this was very unlike David and the Convention was already projecting a distortion field of some kind. We arrived back at his room to discover he didn't have his card key; he had left it in the room during the prior visit. We left him banging his head on the door while he waited for housekeeping's arrived. Merric headed back to the Art Show and I went hunting for a Burning Fan.

I had promised James Stanley Doughty that I would help out on the table for his Westercon 2008 Las Vegas bid. In fact this was my major planned event for the convention. I had never done anything like this before and was looking forward to be being a neo con fan, sort of like a second childhood. Panels are like much of TV, and while fun, they are quickly forgotten. Movies and Anime come by mail from Netflix. I was also looking forward to the dealers room, the art show and based on what Teresa had said about the previous year, the Lux Theater.

I was not surprised to see that we were next to Baycon, given the Doughertys' long association with that event. But in between Baycon and Burning Fan was GnomeCon, Westercon60 manned by Chris Garcia.

With a hearty greeting, he thrust a fanzine into my hand and the real convention began.

James had somehow procured a comfy chair for himself, showing his superior con-running skills. We put up assorted signs, handed out chocolate coins and, most importantly, gave out self-stick ribbons to attach to convention badge. Some fans seem to be in a contest to acquire as many ribbons as possible. Some were even worried about the colors clashing. Yes, fandom is strange.

After James went off to a panel, I was left in charge of the bid table and the perquisite cash box. With James permission, I loaded up the duffle bag and cart at 5:00 and dragged them up to my room. Teresa and I then meet the Anderson's and considered dinner.

One of the high points of the weekend was eating at the Palm Grill at the Sheraton Four Seasons behind the Marriott. A flyer I had picked up at registration about the area restaurants had said two important things: One, it's the only hotel restaurant with a local following. And two, it had a big selection of Belgian Beers. It was not hard to get the Andersons to agree to give it a try. It was very nice and probably a few dollars cheaper then the Marriott's choices.

Afterwards, Merric took Lubov off to find the rumored hot tub. Teresa had a smoke and then we got in line for the combination Opening Ceremonies, Ice Cream Social and Lux Theater presentation of *Shindig*, a *Firefly* kinda sorta thing. I had only just settled into the line when a convention staffer in most Shakespearian tones invited us to follow him to the separate entrance for those with special needs.

We happily accepted this offer. Got Teresa some ice cream and carefully selected seats well before anyone else

was even admitted. As if by magic, Kent Hastings appeared in the row ahead, soon followed by John DeChancie who leaned on the wall nearby for most of the performance. And I didn't even have to use the Vegas Fandom homing beacon.

The opening ceremonies were quick and highlighted by Steven Brust getting a birthday cake or as he put it, "a big damn birthday cake." Everyone was invited to have some with their ice cream. The Shindig that followed was most enjoyable, funny and well-matched to the audience. This year it was based on *Firefly* and bits of movies. For Teresa, it was less of a success. Last year's show had been based on old-time radio and so had a lot of descriptive passages. This year's didn't. She enjoyed the musical bits and some of the live stage parts, but I think she preferred the previous year's effort.

Despite an invitation from David Gordon I passed on the Chili in the Presidential Suit Party, but Merric and Lubov reported that it was an amazing event. This is a Worldcon tradition that host(s) brought over to Loscon since they live in the area. I hope I can wrangle an invitation for LA con IV. For myself.

I followed the offered advice to get a long night's sleep.

Saturday started with a breakfast in the Latitude 33. It is the fancy pacific fusion place for dinner, but is a creditable imitation of an up scale coffee shop in mornings. I decided not to call the Andersons since I knew they stayed up late. Yet they soon arrived and joined Teresa and me at the table.

Afterwards, we went our separate ways, but agreed to do dinner again that night. Teresa got so involved in the fanzine lounge that she missed the panel at 10 am she had wanted to see, but did make her all-important 2:30 pm one on flintkapping. Mostly I sat at the Burning Fan table selling an occasional pre-supporting membership and talking to the Baycon/GnomeCon people next to me.

I became fascinated by John DeChancie's comings and goings. Every hour or two, he would disappear into the con operations room across the foyer from the line of bid/convention tables. Sometimes he'd pop out again quickly, other times I could see him sitting and chatting for awhile. Kent Hastings was a less frequent visitor to my range of vision, but always in determined pursuit of something with his devilish little smile.

After we packed up the table and James took off, I found myself on an elevator with David Gordon, a father and two very rambunctious children. David's opening comment to one of the boys as he bounced off the walls was classic and delivered with an absolutely straight face: "Are you possessed?" He also passed on the news that a dinner expedition was forming in the hotel lobby.

Got back to the room to find a similar message from Lubov. Once down in the lobby with Teresa, I found David, the Andersons, John DeChancie, Chris Garcia and Rochelle a friend of David's. It soon became apparent that we were headed back to the Palm Grill which suited me just fine.

The food was every bit as good this time and the service was even better. After a few minutes Keith and Ken joined us and it turned out that they and Rochelle were all Physicists and Keith had been a student of Gregory Benford at UC Irvine. The conversation was on another level with much

give and take. Even the waiter held his own and then some. David spent most of the evening trying to pin down the history of skinny dipping at science fiction conventions. I

Teresa and I walked with Keith back to the Marriot. As I had suspected, Keith and David go back a long way to neofan days. In fact, Torcon II, the 1973 WorldCon, seems to be the starting point of their friendship. Even after the return to the con hotel, the conversation went on for another hour or two before we finally went our separate ways.

The following morning as I drank coffee on the balcony of our room, I noticed a familiar figure below on the patio by the pool. Straw hatted, cell phone at his ear and a manila envelope suitable for fanzines in the other hand, it could only be Chris Garcia. Had he even gone to bed? Later at breakfast I spotted him again, gamely following the hostess as she zigged and zagged through the tables to find a place for him.

I waved him over and he joined Teresa and me. At no time during the entire convention was he ever less than energetic and ready to engage in witty repartee. This morning was no exception and made for a very pleasant meal.

Then it was off to the bid table again while Teresa returned to roost in the fanzine lounge. This shortened stay at the table was highlighted by my failure to convince Keith and Rochelle that the rates were pre-supporting \$11, pre-opposing \$21 and physicists \$100.

After the final take down, Teresa and I joined the Andersons in one last sweep of the huckster room and art show. Lubov had done well with both the GOH/writer (Steven Brust) and GOH/artist (Rowena) giving her work their ribbons for her art show exhibit.

The work of Jonathan Gage caught our attention in the art show and in the dealers' room. He does hand-carved walking sticks and staffs, as well as dragons and griffins of various sizes. Teresa was in heaven, running her hands over the amazingly detailed figures.

Then it was upstairs to pack and get on our way. Mostly we just watched the endless stream of bumper to bumper traffic flowing back to Los Angeles from points East at the end of the four-day weekend. By this time, Lubov had joined me with cold symptoms and soon even Merric was coughing. I scored some points by remembering to ask for a Braille menu at Applebee's in Victorville, just the second time in four years anyone had done so according to our server.

Our luck held as far as Primm. Then came an unexplained crawl for 30 minutes or so. After a cup of tea with Lubov and her mother, it was back to that fannish heaven, Henderson.

For me the convention was memorable for good conversation and food at every meal and sometimes after. Sitting on the balcony while Teresa smoked during a wind storm one night and the large number of fans who I had seen at LASFS when I was a member: Mike Glycer, Elist, Milt Stevens, Elayne Pelz, Len and June Moffitt. I doubt that I'd ever said anything to any of them, except Mike, back in those days. I was just to shy. And lastly there were neofans — real honest to goodness teenagers and twenty-somethings.

Yes, I know almost none of them are not going to turn into trufen but still reason for hope.

— James Taylor

Continued from p 15

least a pulp magazine collector) at a Katrina shelter isn't as remarkable as you might think. Some research was done on trying to get messages cross-country using only people's social networks (no direct communication).

I seem to remember that something like 80% of messages got through, typically only requiring a network of 5-6 people. I guess it's a bit like a pyramid scheme – each individual may only know on average as few as 100 people, but that gives a potential "fifth-cousin" network of 10,000,000,000,000,000 people. At least one of whom is bound to have heard of Shelby Vick.

I, too, have wondered about whether J.K. Rowling would kill off her hero at the end of Harry Potter book 7, if only as a way of shutting off any pressure for an 8th book, then a 9th, and so on. But I understand that, in response to suggestions and queries on fan boards, she has specifically ruled out killing Harry off at the end of book 7. Of course, there's probably more than enough wiggle room in whatever she actually said to allow her to do whatever she wants.

Anyway, there's far too much of me in the Chatback column last time, so I'll shut up here and give your other locsters a chance, instead

*Arnie: I think it's perceptive of Rowlands to realize that she doesn't have to kill off the character to end the series. All she has to do is not write any more about him. I never folded **Quip**, but it's unlikely that I'll ever produce another one.*

*At the risk of offending you with a contradiction, there is most certainly **not** too much of you in the letter column (or any other part of VFW). If you want to write a column every issue like ShelVy, you've got a home in VFW. (How's **that** for calling the neo's bluff?)*

From the soon-to-be-frozen Great White North comes the best thing since the McKenzie Brothers – and one of VFW's most faithful and popular lockers...

Lloyd Penney

Finally! Some time to myself! It's been so busy here... (chorus) how busy was it? It was so busy, now I actually get to see what my home looks like in the daytime! (rim shot) But now, things are a little easier, I can see how many zines I need to take care of (lots), and now, I have three issues of *Vegas Fandom Weekly* here, 51, 52 and 53.

51... I can gaze forward to 53 and see that Art Widner eventually made it. We must get him a button that says, "If found, please deposit in the nearest mailbox." I have a standing invite to see fans in Ottawa and Montreal, but time and money usually say otherwise.

A couple of local clubs in Toronto have been ruined by too many rules, the application of those rules by the self-important, and the willingness to stomp on others by those who aspire to be the president of a club. Sure, some work has to be done to make the good times happen, but you can't let the work dominate or rule.

In my own school days, I remember getting many printed sheets for notes for classes, and wondering where they came from. I hadn't gotten any publishing bug then, but I was intrigued enough to want to know more about what printed those sheets. I learned about mimeo and the Gestetner, and I asked if I could learn to use them. The answer was a resounding NO! and some teachers and administrators looked at me with a little distrust. Perhaps they saw repro as their own little domain, and how dare any of these snotty kids want to get their grubbies on these precious machines? I never did learn the intricacies of mechanical repro, and now, I couldn't tell you where I'd find a Gestetner. Well, maybe at Catherine and Colin's...

I have learned to accept any style of fanzine, be it paperzine, e-zine or webzine. The most convenient style of reading is the linear style, which is why even on a webzine, the links change colour after you click on them so you can tell what you've read, and what you've yet to get to. I'm sure there's some websites I've been on hundred of times, and have yet to see every part of the site. .pdf has its challenges, but whether it contains a sheet size of 8.5x11, or large enough to fit the screen, I will take content over medium any day, Bucky Fuller notwithstanding.

52... Forry Ackerman was scheduled to be at a convention in Rochester, NY about 10 days ago now. We went there to enjoy the con and run their con suite, but Forry didn't make it... something about health problems. I have few contacts in LA who would know about Forry's condition, so is there anyone you know who could fill us in?

Seeing I work in the evenings, and I sometimes take daytime assignments, I often get a chance to watch some daytime TV. While most of it is crap (Sturgeon was an optimist, and so was Springsteen), I do watch a few cartoons regularly. One is *The Fairly OddParents*, which lives up to the time-honoured tradition of the colours and action for the kids, and the scripts for the adults. I also like the sc-fi-style adventures of *Atomic Betty*.

53... It has been a great year



here, and congratulations on making it interesting and fun. The Golden Age of anyone's career in science fiction and fandom is when just holding the book took you to a realm of wonder, spaceships riding off into in charted galaxies and universes of danger, aliens usually more advanced than we are, time machines... There's just something missing today, and that's probably caused by being much older than I was when I first found that wonder. I've seen many more zines than I have in the past, thanks to this electronic era, DTP and eFanzines.com,

I knew Chris would be upset over the death of Eddie Guerrero, and I figured you and Joyce and Bill Kunkel would be, as well. The last I heard was natural causes, but I must wonder if there was something else, given how strenuous the choreography of wrestling can be.

Fanzines contain so much -- all knowledge, all truth. There's lots of room left over for bluster, BS and the like, but you get my drift. All is contained in zines, life, the universe and everything.

Arnie: Although most of us, the Core Fans, don't see much appeal in rules, voting and the rest of official-dumb, it's obvious that some fans adore Roberts Rules of Order and stand ready to plunge into any activity, no matter how pointless, that awards them a title. Joyce asserts that it is better for the rest of us that these folks have clubs that cater to those things, which leaves our groups that much freer to take a less bureaucratic approach.

Bill did a superb "tribute cartoon" that I posted on prowrestlingdaily.com. It's still there now, if anyone wants to see what Potshot had to say about Latino Heat.

Have you noticed the strong link between Vegas and BArea Fandoms? Don't know the exactly basis of the mutual attraction, but I won't question the good fortune that brings a letter of comment from The Sage...

Robert Lichtman

It was disturbing to read in VFW No. 53 that Jack Speer is "ailing." Nothing serious, I hope. Did Art provide any details when he visited last weekend?

"Strangely," you write in "The Golden Age," "few fans pick their formative years in Fandom as a Golden Age." I would be the exception, since in my view the 1958-1962 period you cite for "sheer literary excellence" in your article was the period of my first activity and still my favorite era of fandom overall. Those fanzines you list for that period are indeed a wonderful lot, to which I would add *A Bas*, *Oops!a!* and *Lighthouse*.

I was surprised that your coverage of Art Widner attending the Vegrants party didn't include at least one photo of his well-decorated car. In case you want to rectify this situation -- and I'm pretty sure the vast readership of VFW will want you to -- but are lacking photos with which to do so, I'm attaching some I took a few years ago in Santa Rosa following one of our lunch meetings.

How cool that Shelby ran into someone who'd gotten a bunch of his old pulps! I hope James Smiley follows through with his promise to come by with some of them.

After reading Dick Lupoff's mention of Doc Smith's

Have Trenchcoat - Will Travel, which I'd been vaguely aware of before but didn't know that Dick had edited it, I checked for its availability on-line. Most listings start at \$20 and go up from there, but Dream Haven Books is offering it for only \$5 (plus \$6 shipping) and apparently has multiple copies available since they refer to "copies" in their listing.

Almost I'm tempted, but not quite. I'm probably risking fate here by admitting this, but I was never able to get into Smith's legendary stf and have no reason to believe I'd find his mystery novel more captivating.

Finally, it was very cool to read the Peter Sullivan found my auction listings in the *Bring Bruce Bayside Bulletin* to be "a good way of filling in some of the fan history." Now if only he'd learn the correct way to spell "fanzine"!

Arnie: Both Oops!a! And Lighthouse are definitely good additions, though I tend to think of Lths as it was later in its run when I was getting the issues regularly. Oops!a! Made a huge impression on me; it's the biggest single reason I love columns.

No one got a good photo of the car, so I'm delighted to have yours.

The First Annish drew some very satisfying letters, of which this one from sunny Florida was the very first...

Shelby Vick

WHAT an ANNISH, Arnie!—

It was such a classic that I actually printed it! (Of course, my printer had its own comments. First, it printed just one page... and crept thru the printing of that. Then, just to show the printer who was boss, I printed just one page -- your excellent bit on Buz. It muttered a bit, but printed it. Then I restarted my computer -- the solution-for-all-computer-problems that has become a cliché -- and, again, said "Print!" Properly humbled, it printed it. Slowly, but it printed it.)

Now I can file the Annish for posterity!

...Hmmm -- can a PDF be saved to CD?

Now, you obviously put a lot of effort into this -- but you've got a hard one coming up next -- LoCs! You had none in the Annish, so you already have a collection to put in, and now you'll have the flood from the Annish!

Arnie: No printer can withstand the lure of reproducing all those cartoons.

Bill Wright

Thanks for VFW54 -- The First Annish, which I enjoyed immensely but principally for the wit and wisdom of Arnie Katz. A case in point is 'the Dear Departed' Katzenjammer page from VFW16, where you expound on Linda Bushyager's suggestion that lapsed fans be contacted to find out what is keeping them away.

This is an unusually sensitive treatment of a thorny issue. The sentiments have lodged deep in my fannish psyche and, you may be assured, will be disseminated at need with utmost discretion. The associated Rotsler cartoon is a masterpiece of metaphor where barbed comments demonstrate the virtual reality of biodegradable staples in *Vegas Fandom Weekly*. Yours, in particular, are aimed with a deftness that

anaesthetises the sting.

The 'Fannish Way' article from *VFW48* is a road map to fannish enlightenment. With surgical precision it uncovers the distinguishing marks that make trufen what they are. Those languishing in exterior darkness now need not gnash their teeth as, by pushing just a little, they may enter felicity. This first annish of *VFW* is a significant milestone. As the Gray Lensman said in quite another context, it is "a right scholarly and informative piece of work."

Arnie: I know that some of my articles are a bit elementary for a fan like yourself, so I'm glad to know that they are at least of academic interest. One of my goals with *VFW* is to help educate the increased number of neofen coming to us via the Internet.

Let's have a big welcome for a fan making his VFW debut with a letter of comment about the annish...

John Purcell

Very quickly let me congratulate you and Joyce on your first annish of *Vegas Fandom Weekly*. Pretty impressive, and here I am plunking out a little 10-pager once every six to eight months. Hats off to you, and here's to many more.

I haven't read through the whole annish yet, but plan to do so. I have always enjoyed retrospectives and "best of"s for fanzines. From what I've seen so far, this looks like a lot of fun reading.

You have done a lot of work, and I commend you. Thanks for the service, and I look forward to reading more from your corner of the fannish universe.

Arnie: The compliments are much appreciated, but I have to shovel some of that egoboo onto the plates of the contributors and the "support staff," who ate in large degree responsible for *VFW* having much more outstanding content than I could reprint within my self-imposed 40-page maximum.

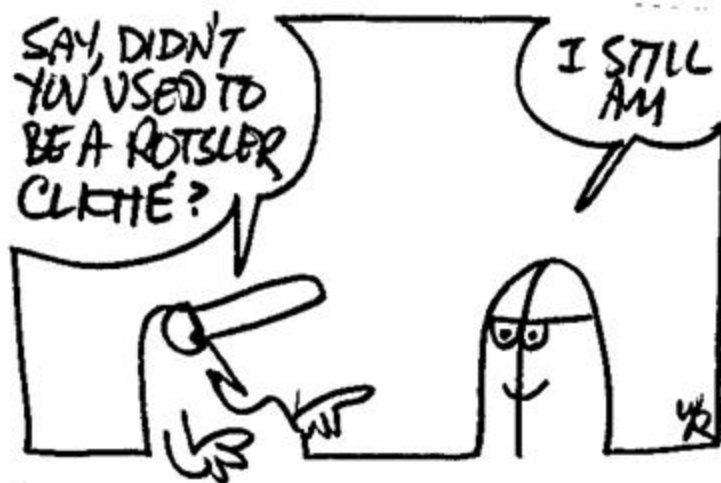
Some nice thoughts from a fellow Las Vegas fan comprise the next LoC...

Linda Bushyager

Just wanted to say that the Annish was quite impressive. Each issue of *VFW* has had great articles and seeing them all together is really something.

Anyway I enjoyed rereading some of the articles. I'm going to forward this to Moshe Feder who I'm sure will appreciate seeing all these great articles.

Arnie: I hope Moshe does enjoy the annish enough to get



in touch. I've missed hearing from the ole coke (a-cola) fiend.

Here's a letter of cogent comment on VFW #54 from a highly reliable and prolific source of such commentary...

Robert Lichtman

I really don't have too much to say about the Annish, since for the most part it's all stuff I commented on at the time it originally

appeared. If you do indeed follow through with your thought in "Annish or Death!" of "putting together a 100-page extravaganza with BNF contributions from both the living and dead," I'd be happy to provide some input.

I don't recall if I commented on this back when it was fresh in *VFW No. 25*, but in "The Secret History of Las Vegrants" where you write about the Fanoclasts being formed by four couples including "Terry & Carol (now Lichtman) Carr," it reminded me of how our respective last names have morphed in the junk mail world since my name was added to the deed to the house and various trolling computers began picking up on that. We now get occasional pieces of mail addressed to "Robert & Carol Carr," and on more than one occasions tradespeople have referred to me as "Mr. Carr" if I'm around when Carol uses her credit card on a purchase. This is something I generally don't bother to correct. We also get various other permutations of Carol Robert Carr Lichtman, mostly from realtors who would love to help us sell our house.

Arnie: As subsequent discussion has made clear, the Fanoclasts were actually founded by three couples: Ted & Sylvia White, Dick & Pat Lupoff and Larry & Noreen Shaw. I'm not sure how I got the Carrs and Silverbergs involved.

Here with some praise and a promise is one of the United Kingdom's finest fanzine publishers, the co-editor of Banana Wings...

Mark Plummer

Well, I read through *VFW #54* last night. Had to break out the Big Stapler to put it all together...

You know, we have a complete hard copy set of *VFW*. I print out the new issue most Mondays, often while skimming through its pages on screen, and usually read it properly on the train. I am convinced that this is what I do.

And yet, I don't remember at least half of these reprint pieces. I'm fully aware that my memory is Not What It Once Was, but I firmly believe that's because I'm always stuffing my brain with fannish trivia. This would seem to suggest that I can no longer even remember the fannish trivia. Good grief.

Las Vegas Fan Events Calendar

Las Vegrants Meeting December 3 7:30 PM

The informal, invitation club meets on the first and third Saturdays at the home of Arnie and Joyce Katz

VSFA 'First Monday' Meeting December 5 7:00 PM

A little discussion, a bit a business and a bit of socializing comprise this monthly session of this small, but active group.

First Annual Vegas Fandom Cookie Fest December 8 6 PM

Kathryn Daugherty hosts the big bake-off. Contact her at : 702-328-6006

SNAFFU December 9 8:00 PM

This formal SF club meets the second and fourth Friday's of each month. This time, it will be held at Borders bookstore on Sahara.

Vegas Fandom Christmas Party December 10 6:00 PM

James and Kathryn Daugherty are the hosts for this years Christmas Party, open to all Vegas fans.

Vegas Fandom Weekly First Anniversary Celebration December 11 2 PM

SNAFFU salutes Vegas' newszine with a dinner and social.

Las Vegrants Meeting December 17 7:30 PM

The informal, invitation club meets on the first and third Saturdays at the home of Arnie and Joyce Katz

Sunday Social December 18 2 PM

One of Vegas' most convivial groups gets together at the Blue Ox for food and chatter

SNAPS Deadline December 18

Get your contributions to OE Joyce Katz (joyceworley1@cox.net).

SNAFFU Meeting November 25 8:00 PM

This formal SF club has a dinner/social gathering on the fourth Friday of the month.

But on further reflection another alternative presents itself. It's this weekly schedule thing. I said above that 'I print out the new issue *most* Mondays' and '...*usually* read it properly on the train' which allows for some weeks when I perhaps don't get to print the issue out promptly, and others when, despite having a print out in my bag, I will instead opt for the non-fannish Guardian sudoku instead. So, umm, sometimes -- just sometimes -- I don't actually read VFW immediately but rather put it aside for later. Only very occasionally.

Now that's all fine and normal; it's what happens too many of the fanzines that come into the house. Skimming's all well and good but I want to give the fanzine some proper attention, especially if I'm contemplating writing to suggest that, say, rich brown might just possibly be ever so slightly a little bit wrong about the title of a 1940s Louis Russell Chauvenet fanzine (surely *Detours* rather than *Contours* -- although I'm sure that by now somebody like Robert Lichtman has made this point). I need to be able to build up to something like that. However, for most publications 'later' allows you, oh, six months to a year before the next issue comes along, but with VFW it's only a week which is, like, *nothing* and before you know it you've got pending copies of VFW on the coffee table and the bedside table, piles of

the things building up on every flat surface in the house. Why, last night I thought I'd update the 'fanzines received' log. 'I haven't done that for a few days,' I thought. I looked at the pile of fanzines to be recorded: ten -- *ten* -- issues of VFW sitting there.

Fans of my generation just aren't used to this kind of rapid-fire publications. I wonder where you got this crazy idea to churn out such a frequent efanzine?

I wonder therefore if what we actually need is a frequent publication, one of these 'backbone' fanzines that you talk about, to get us back into the habit [of writing letters of comment]. I'm slightly worried here that what follows is a What-You-Should-Do-Is argument, the sort of thing fans do so well and so annoyingly, but what I think somebody should do is start a backbone on-line fanzine, something that's substantial and frequent and at least primarily distributed electronically. This does require commitment of editorial effort, if not commitment of editorial finances. The editor may need to be prepared to wait for response to build, maybe several months and several issues. He or she may have to seed a some printable letters, perhaps specifically asking a few prominent names -- ideally people who don't usually write letters to efanzines -- to write and to help to engender the sense that there's Something Going On Around Here. Essen-

tially, I'm suggesting that we need an If You Build It They Will Come approach to fanzine production, rather than waiting until you've sold some tickets before you start building the thing in the first place.' (Extract from a letter in response to *Flicker* #3 (ed: A Katz), dated 13 August 2004)

Gosh, I wonder who said that?

But anyway, thanks to maintaining VFW. I do rather hope that some of the people who haven't given it much attention up to now -- perhaps in the belief that it's essentially all Vegas fan news of limited interest to those outside Las Vegas -- will pick up on this anniversary issue and see that there is indeed Much More (as they say in the adverts).

And I promise faithfully to keep up during Year Two. Most of the time, at least.

Arnie: You pour this advice into my ear via Flicker and, lo and behold, in three months Chris Garcia starts The Drink Tank! I think you may have Powers, Mark. Please promise to use them only for the good of Fankind.

And I won't hold you to that vow. I'm not heartless. You don't have to loc the issues to which you send a column.

WAHF: Judy Bemis, Hal Hughes, Shelby Vick, Robert Lichtman, Bill Burns, Mike McNerney, Richard Lupoff,

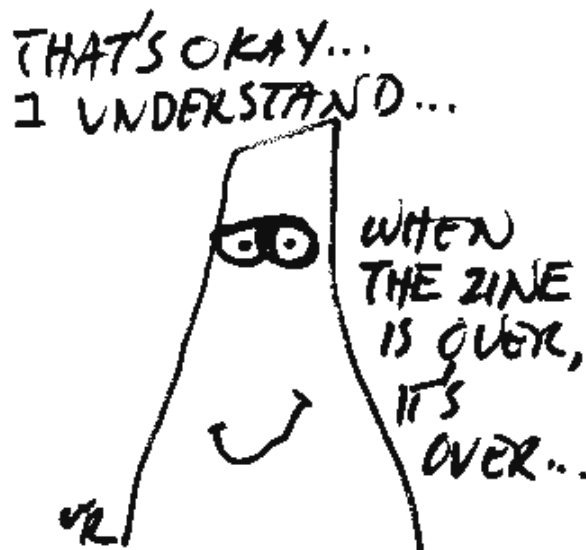
This Is What Happens

... when I, in effect, skip an issue to do the Annish. Even with smaller type and extra pages — this is the record for a regular issue — I find myself not quite fulfilling my promise to publish everything within a week of receipt.

There are a couple of late-arriving locs and a couple of of non-time-critical news stories that must wait for *VFW* #56.

Until then, I hope you enjoy this big issue and that you'll send news, articles and cartoons by the digital bushel — or use your ISP if that's easier — so that *VFW* won't go from its biggest issue to its smallest.

— Arnie Katz



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... and a ton of news.