

VEGAS FANDOM WEEKLY

Vegas Fan Events

SNAFFU Discussion Meeting
Friday (4/14) 8:00 PM

Las Vegrants Meeting
Saturday (4/15) 7:30 PM

VSFA Sunday Social
Saturday (4/16) 2:00 PM

Check out the Calendar and preview stories

will get together for its mid-month meeting. Chris Garcia, pride of BArea Fandom and the leading young Publishing Jiant, will be there to continue his search for the formal portion of the meeting.

Another highlight of the meeting will be the production of *Fannish Voices #1*, an audio oneshot under the editorial direction of Bill Mills. The idea is for fans to record three-to-six-minute audio contributions on the subject, "How I Found Fandom or It Found Me."

A couple of fans have already recorded their contributions, though many will do so at the Vegrant meeting (with some helpful guidance from Bill). He will continue to accept contributions for about the next week (until April 22). The resulting oneshot will be available

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Vegas Fandom Prepares For a Big Weekend!

All three of the major Las Vegas fan clubs have events scheduled for this weekend. Fans who go to all three will have quite a fannish social weekend.

Here's what's in store:

- **SNAFFU Discussion Meeting**
Friday 8:00 PM

The city's oldest and largest formal science fiction/fantasy club has its monthly discussion meeting at Borders bookstore.

Vice President/Meeting Director Joyce Katz promises that the improvement noted in last month's will continue at the April gab-fest. There will be short reports from a range of members of subjects like new science fiction and technological breakthroughs.

The discussion topic is already generating comment from out of town fans: "What science fictional concept, aside from space travel, would you most like to see come true?"

Meetings are open to all.

- **Las Vegrants Meeting**
Saturday 7:30 PM

The informal invitational Core Fandom fan club



Inside Story Chasing the Muse

I'd be sitting pretty right now, patting myself on the back (with all due humility and self-effacement) for another perfect week of fanzine publishing, if it wasn't for the Muse. I would've had this out on Wednesday, just like the previous issue of *Vegas Fandom Weekly*, but now I'll have to go at a pretty good pace to insure that this issue reaches readers before the start of any of this weekend's big local events.

It's because Arnie the Fanzine Editor must sometimes step out of the way of Arnie the Fanwriter. When I've got something that feels like I *have* to write it, it's likely that all other forms of fanac will go into a holding pattern until I either write whatever it is or screw it up so thoroughly that I lose interest in continuing with it.

Failure to pursue each brainstorm as it occurs is dangerous. It can lead to mental over-revving. I begin to spew forth ideas and, buffeted among them at dizzying speed, fail to finish any of them. Before long, I have a (digital) stack of unfinished pieces, tons of frustration and very little to show for it.

The culprit this time is the faan fiction story that starts on the next page. It's the sequel to *The End of Vegas Fandom*, that I published in *VFW #71*.

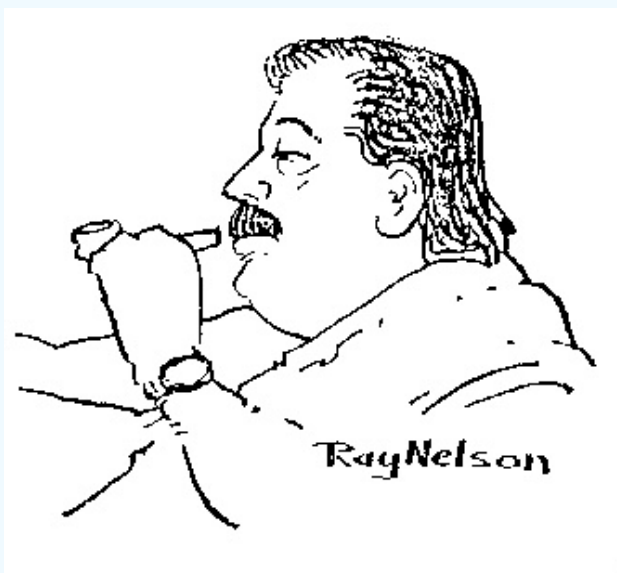
By the time I pasted up that story, I knew I was going to write a sequel that would restore Las Vegas Fandom to its proud, if abnormal, stat.

What I didn't know until I was solidly into writing it is that the sequel would be a lot longer than the original. It'll probably get even longer if I carry through with plans to eventually combine both pieces into one, loner work.

Meanwhile, I hope you enjoy this story and that you will accept my pledge to write something more or less *non-fictional* in the next *Katzenjammer*.

Unless, of course, I am beset by another "must write" notion.

-- Arnie



Vegas Fandom Weekly #72, Volume 2 Number 18, April 12, 2006, is written and produced by Arnie Katz (909 Eugene Cernan St., Las Vegas, NV 89145; Email: crossfire4@cox.net; phone: 702-648-5677).

Special Thanks to Roxanne Gibbs (many things), Bill Burns (posting), David Gordon (Futurists liaison), Alan White (arty fella), Bill Mills (technical advisor) and Joyce Katz (proofreading and So Much More).

Reporters this issue: Roxanne Gibbs, Rebecca Hardin, Lori Forbes and Joyce Katz

Art/Photo Credits: Steve Stiles (1), Ray Nelson (2, 10), Alan White (4, 5), Bill Mills (7), Steve Jeffrey (9), all else by Bill Rotsler.

Columnists This Issue: Me

VFW is free by request — and you may get it anyway. It can be downloaded at the SNAFFU site and at efanzines.com. No over-indulgent fan fictioneers were permanently harmed during the production of this fanzine.

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

The Rebirth of Vegas Fandom! Katzenjammer

"I miss them already," said Chris Garcia. "I still haven't gone to one of those Vegrants meetings and now they are gone."

"I'll miss Joyce," Robert Lichtman conceded.

"Yes, she was nice," agreed Dick Lupoff.

They shared a long sigh of regret. Together, the three of them had thwarted the insanely evil designs of a cabal that had wanted to wipe Core Fandom from the face of the Earth, expunge it with a Gafia Serum.

Though they had stopped the plan to taint the Corflu con suites with the foul potion, their victory had come too late to save Las Vegas Fandom. A preliminary test of the serum, nudged along by some nefarious intervention by the SMoFs had wiped out Las Vegas to the last fan.

"There's got to be something we can do," said Dick.

"You tell me what," Chris replied, "and I'll do it.

"How about this," said Robert. "They did things to push a lot of those fans toward Gafia. It was a struggle, even with the serum. What if we pushed them in the opposite direction? Perhaps their innate fannishness would come out and reverse the gafiation process!"

"Do you think it'd work?" Chris wanted to know.

"If it gets them back, it's worth a shot, don't you think?" Dick said.

"Do you really think we should meddle?" Robert asked.

"If we don't," said Chris, "the next few pages in this fanzine will be blank."

"Point taken," said Robert.

I'm embarrassed.

After the *Katzenjammer* in which I wrote about the mass gafiation of Las Vegas Fandom, which included mention of Joyce and my decision to gafiate, I feel a little funny about being back in Fandom two weeks later. (It took me that long to actually publish the issue...)

Maybe I'm slipping or something. The first time I gafiated, with no announcement whatsoever I must add, I stayed gone for about 14 years. This time, I didn't leave Fandom for 14 days. Anyway, you can expect *Vegas Fandom Weekly* to resume its

more or less regular schedule. I hope you won't rag me too much about this; I just want to get back to fanac.

Still, I've got to share with you the strange circumstances that brought Joyce and me back to Fandom. In a way, it was even odder than the impulse to gafiate.

Joyce and I were strolling down a beach in Baja California, sweeping out metal detectors back and forth across the trackless sand. Suddenly, both machines went nuts, beeping wildly to indicate a substantial concentration of metal and very close to the surface, too.

"Let's dig here," Joyce said as though the digging would be done by "we" rather than "me." Not that I argued. There was no way we were going to pass up something that set off the detectors like that.

So I took out the shovel and began to scoop up the sand. It wasn't that hard, especially since I didn't have to go down more than a few feet before the shovel hit metal. "There's something there," I called to Joyce as I tossed aside the shovel.

"So? So?" Joyce was eager to see the fruits of my labor.

"I got down on my knees and used my hands to work a small, dark green metal box free of the sand.

"Can you open it?" she encouraged mere seconds after I lifted the box out of the hole. "Can you?"

I didn't reply, just pulled open the metal lid. The metal was a little corroded, but one good tug was enough.

"What's in it?" she asked.

"There's nothing but a piece of paper," I said as I passed it to her. Joyce ran her finger over the blank sheet. She held it up to the light.

"It's not blank," she pronounced.

"Not blank?"

"You can feel the little bumps with your fingers," she said. "It's something in Braille!"

"So far so good," said Robert Lichtman. "They have the box."

"It's a start, anyway," agreed Dick Lupoff

"Yes, but there's so much more to do," Chris Garcia reminded his two comrades. "Arnie and

Continued on next page



Teresa Cochran and James Taylor sit and ponder the Great Mysteries

Joyce are back in Las Vegas and ready to fan, but there's much more to do."

"We'd better get to it," said Robert. The other two nodded their agreement.

"What do you think it is?" I asked Joyce when we'd gotten back to the room.

"Someone must have thought it was pretty valuable, since they buried it," she observed.

"So we better take it to someone we can trust," I said. "We need someone who will tell us what it really says and won't try to beat us out of any treasure or whatever."

"Teresa," said Joyce.

"We'll have to find her," I said.

"That's going to take some time at the computer," Joyce said. "We'd better get back to the Launch Pad."

I agreed immediately, while noting that it was the first time Joyce had referred to our home as "the Launch pad" since our recent gafiaction.

We spent the short flight to Las Vegas discussing plans for future fanzines. The more we talked about it, the more fannish I began to feel. More and more, my gafia began to seem unreal, artificial – like a childhood illness dimly remembered.

Some checking on the Internet easily located Teresa, who was giving dulcimer concerts at community colleges throughout Nevada. She was supposed to be performing at the Princess at State Line.

"That's in driving distance," said Joyce.

"OK, let's go," I replied.

After an uneventful drive to Jean, NV, we reached the Princess. We aren't huge gamblers so we got a bargain-priced room, ordered room service and watched wrestling on TV until it was late enough for Teresa to arrive at the hotel for her gig.

Sure enough, when we went to the lounge, she

was backstage. The guard took our names and soon returned to usher us into small dressing room where Teresa and her manager James Taylor awaited us.

We exchanged happy greetings with James and Teresa. She had to go on stage, so we took seats in the audience with a promise to meet immediately after the performance.

Tee played and sang with her usual skill and energy, a fine folk music set. The audience was something else. They all text-messed constantly, many couples were using Tee's music as background for more intense activities and people milled in the aisles as they called out to friends with their outdoor voices..

"Tough crowd," I said as we sat around one of those big Metro pizzas.

"I thought they were pretty good compared to the one we had three weeks ago," James said. "I don't think any of them were playing radios and no one threw anything at Tee."

"I love to play," Teresa said, "but I don't like all the traveling – and the audiences aren't very good."

That's when, after swearing them to secrecy, Joyce and I told them about the green metal box and the mysterious sheet of paper it contained.

Teresa agreed to examine the paper. I placed it in her hand. We all watched as she ran her practiced fingers over it. "I Well, I can tell you one thing about it," she said after she'd fiddled with the paper for a while, turning it this way and that. "It's not Braille."

"It-it's not?" I said, my mind frozen by surprise.

"Absolutely not," she reiterated. "There's no Braille writing on this paper."

"Can you tell anything about it?" Joyce said, grasping at straws. "Is there anything?"

"I think there's something, but it's not in Braille," she decreed with finality.

We lingered over the pizza and then went back to the Launch Pad. We continued to talk about the mysterious sheet and what it might mean.

"We're at a stalemate," Joyce pronounced.

"It's going to take a fresh approach to this thing," I agreed.

"Maybe someone with a finely-tuned sense of spatial relationships," James suggested. "If there's no Braille, maybe there's some other kind of pattern."

"So, someone with good pattern recognition skills," said Joyce.

"And maybe someone who likes mysteries and puzzles," Teresa added.

"This is easier than I expected," said Robert

Lichtman. "Arnie and Joyce are doing a lot of the work for us."

"I think it's all those computer adventure games," said Chris Garcia.

"What do you mean?" asked Dick Lupoff. "I think anyone would find the kind of clues we left."

"No, it's the mind-set of the computer adventure game writer," Chris explained. "They turn every job into a multi-part chain of sub-tasks."

"That's what Arnie and Joyce are doing," Robert acknowledged.

"We still can't drag in everybody," said Dick. "There are just too many of them."

"I don't think that will be necessary," said Chris.

"Why not?" said his two cohorts.

"I think they only targeted the major Las Vegas fans," Chris said. "If they could gaffiate the most active fans, they figured they could get the rest to disperse."

"That has happened in some other local fandoms," Robert recalled. "It even happened in Las Vegas in the mid-1960s. When Dwain Kaiser moved to southern California, the rest of Las Vegas Fandom melted away."

"I've got him on the phone," Joyce said to the rest of us. We listened intently to her side of the conversation as she turned her attention to the person at the other end of the line. "It's good to hear your voice, Alan," she said.

"Yes, we're fine, but we miss you and DeDee."

"How is the radio show?"

"Oh, that's too bad. It turned out no one wanted a new Ed and Pegeen Fitzgerald? That does seem like a possibility."

"You're coming back to Vegas? I'm sorry things didn't work out, but I am glad you are coming back. We've got something to show you when you get here."

"I'll tell you all about it when we see you, but it's a mysterious puzzle."

"Right after you get back, if you can."

"OK, see you tomorrow morning." Joyce hung up the phone and immediately launched into a recap. The Whites' show turned out to be an experiment in retro radio that didn't quite work and the station had already hired a "Morning Zoo" group from California to replace Alan and DeDee's relaxed chatter.

"Well, there's *something* there," Alan said as he examined the paper. "Can I try something? I

don't think it'll ruin the message or whatever it is?"

"Might as well," said Joyce. "We haven't gotten anywhere on this before now."

Alan took a pencil and began to draw lines to connect the little bumps. He drew a few faint lines and then looked up at the rest of us. "This is going to be hard," he said. "I need more light." He walked to a large window and placed the sheet against it. He started to draw a new line, stopped short and broke into a big smile.

"I've got an idea," he said. "Darken the room." We soon had the room dark enough to use for photo developing. "Have you got a flashlight?" he asked me. When I said I didn't know where it was, he told DeDee to take the shade off the desk lamp. As she did this, Alan took a painting off the wall – not one of his -- to clear a space.

He turned on the lamp and held the paper in front of it. The lamp projected a diagram done in little pin-points of light onto the bare wall.

"What happens when they figure out the paper?" Chris asked Dick Lupoff.

"They'll have to figure out what it maps," said Dick. "It shouldn't take them too long."

"And then?" Robert wanted to know.

"It could go several ways, but it's tough to know



Joyce looks happy about her de-gaffiation.

which one they'll choose," Chris said. "We'll just have to watch and hope for the best."

"Maybe we need to give them an additional clue," offered Dick. "One of us could play Deep Throat and just give them the answers."

"It may come to that," Chris said, "but letting them find their own way is likely to be more effective – and less work for us."

"Good point, Meyer," said Robert.

"What does this look like to you?" I asked the others. No sense denying the fact that my vision would be less than useless in deciphering the luminous diagram on the wall.

"It could be a cabin," said DeDee. "It's more or less square and most of the space is in that one large rectangle."

"I don't think so," said James. "It could be a free-standing structure, but with windows only on one wall, it's probably part of a larger building."

"Like a strip mall?" asked Alan.

"Maybe, though it doesn't look like the design for the inside of a store," James replied.

"What does it say in the lower right corner?" I asked. It looked like a blur to me, to tell the truth, but maybe one of the keener pair of eyes could make something out of it.

"It's two words," said DeDee. "It's really a word and a number."

"What are they?" I said.

"'Union' and '1812'," DeDee read aloud.

"Did anything unify in 1812?" Teresa asked.

"We had a war with Britain," I said. "I don't think there even *were* unions in 1812," I said.

"Maybe it's not a year," Tee suggested.

"Union 1812!" Joyce shouted. "Union 1812!"

"What about it?"

"Don't you remember?" Joyce scolded. "That was the And Smoking Suite at Corflu Vegas! Whatever it is we are looking for is hidden somewhere in that room."

"And how are we going to get into that room to search?" James wanted to know. "I'm not going to dress up as a chambermaid, no matter how nicely you ask."

"That's a little too *I Love Lucy* for me," I said.

"Have you got a better idea?" Tee said.

"Well, yes, I do," I said with some satisfaction.

"Merric Anderson installed the security system in the Union Plaza. He can surely get us into the room for a quick search."

"Let's get him," said Alan, enthusiastically.

That's when we remembered that Merric was

trapped in a hotel room of a Best Western in eastern Oregon.

"I'll go to Oregon," said James.

"Are you sure you want to get involved?" Joyce asked. "This is our mystery and, frankly, I think it's going to be something less than the Lost Dutchman Mine."

"Tee and I talked it over and we... Well, we've started feeling fannish again."

"We want to see what happens," Teresa seconded. "I'd rather play for my friends."

"How do you plan to bring back Merric?" Alan asked James.

"I'm not sure," James replied. "I thought I'd go up there, look at the situation and figure out what to do."

"I'd hate for you to make the trip for nothing," said Joyce, "Maybe we ought to think up something here, before you go."

"Now, as I understand it, Merric and Lubov are trapped there in Oregon, because Merric refused to write a summary report of his work for the Best Western. The manager won't let him leave until he does the report and he just says he won't write anything."

"I have an idea," Teresa said. "Why don't we get Bill Mills to go up there and record Merric's report? Merric can email the file to the motel owner and they'll let him leave."

"That's a great idea," I said, "but how are we going to get Bill to leave his radio job in SoCal? Bill had gone to a radio station where he was part of one of those 'Morning Zoo' radio shows. He and Roxanne might even miss their Las Vegas friends, but it didn't seem likely that they would come back."

"I'll give Bill a call," said Joyce.

"Can you believe it? They got Bill and Roxie to go to Oregon!" marveled Dick.

"Well, his radio job was up" said Chris. "The 'Morning Zoo' got hired to work in New York City after the station fired Alan and DeDee White. He and Roxanne didn't want to move to New York."

"I felt bad about that," said Robert, "but it was the only way we were going to get them out of New York and back to Las Vegas."

"They would probably have gotten canned anyway," Dick noted. "I mean, 'Slasher Film Week' may have been just a bit too much for the geriatric audience they inherited from Ed and Pegeen Fitzgerald."

"Did they get Merric and Lubov out of that Best Western?" Robert asked.

"It was easier than publishing a weekly fanzine," said Chris. "Bill called the Andersons' room and Merric told him about the job. Bill sent the MP3 to the owner of the Best Western and Mr. Rogers signed a release and endorsed the check."

So Joyce talked to Bill and, sure enough, he and Roxie decided to meet us in Oregon and see what we could do to liberate Merric and Lubov.

Bill got Merric to record an oral report and the incident resolved itself. I think they evening we all spent together in Oregon reawakened a lot of memories and feelings. Bill and Roxanne went back to southern California to wind up things and get back to Vegas, where Bill was already planning to return to his true love – audio books.

Merric and Luba came back to Las Vegas with the rest of us, much relieved to be out of cramped quarters and back to their recently acquired house.

We went to the Union Plaza and, with Merric working the lock smoothly, got into room 1812. Merric positioned himself next to the door, watching and listening for anyone's approach. James and I searched the room with particular attention to the bathroom, where the mysterious diagram had an "x."

Sure enough, James found an air-tight plastic bag in the flush tank of the commode.

"We better get out of here," I said, wiping excess water off the outside of the package.

"We've done anyway," said Merric and the three of us filed back into the half-lit hallway.

We all gathered around the Launchpad's big, oblong dining room table and watched Joyce unwrap the package with the studied care of a spinster trying to preserve the Christmas wrapping paper off her present.

She pulled another box, green like the first one we'd found, but smaller and flatter.

"What's inside?" I asked, unnecessarily. Joyce was already prizing it open using her fingernails to separate the lid from the base.

"It's full of buttons," I said.

"Buttons? All the things we collect and we find buttons?"

Joyce said with some bitterness. "Maybe they'll be valuable to someone else."

"You may not want to sell these," James Taylor said as he held up a handful of buttons and badges.

"That's the NYCon 3 'big eye' yellow badge," Joyce exclaimed. "Arnie and I met at that convention!"

"Ohmyghod," I said as my eye lit on a "Folly" button. Ken Forman had made up a bunch for me when that fanzine was at its zenith. "Look at this stuff."

"Not exactly a treasure," said Joyce. "Sorry to put everyone through this for so little."

Everyone protested that they didn't mind. We started sifting through the buttons, swapping stories about the conventions and fans they brought to mind.

"Truth to tell, it has been great to be with everyone again," Teresa Cochran suggested. Echoes of assent came from everyone around the table.

"We ought to get together again soon," DeDee White said.

"How about the first and third Saturday's of the month at 7:30?" Joyce proposed.

"We could call it Las Vegrants," I said.

"That has a good ring," said Bill Mills.

So we agreed to have a Vegrants meeting on the third Saturday, which happened to be the very next night. Joyce sent out the notices as she had so many times before.

The White's, the Mills'es, the Anderson's, the Katz's, James Taylor and Teresa Cochran were all in the living room, watching the door when the clock struck "7:30."

Just as De Dee was wondering aloud if anyone would actually come, we all heard a knock at the door.

"Come in!" we chorused. The handle jiggled, the door swung open and in walked Ross Chamberlain.

"Back from gafia, eh Ross?" I said.

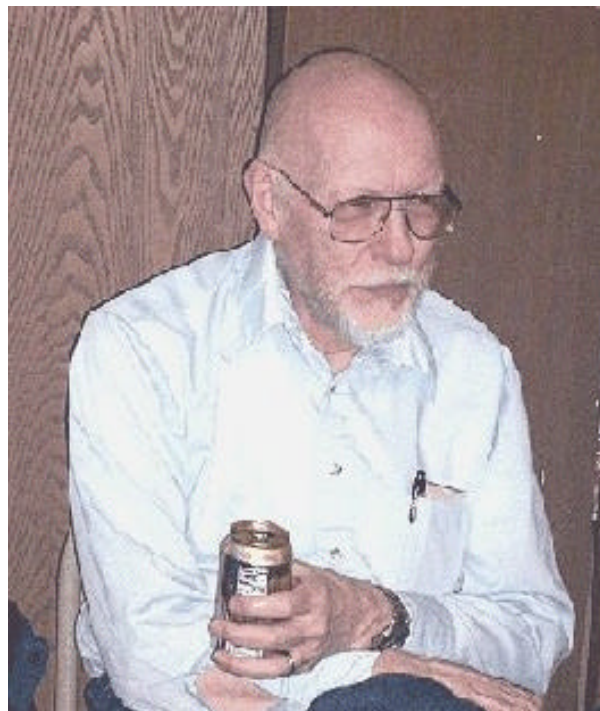
"Gafia? No, I don't think so," he said dubiously. "I felt a twinge of gafia a few weeks ago, but I brushed it off. I missed a meeting, but I'm on time for this one, right?"

We assured him he was definitely in the right place at the right time.

We were all in the right place.

And there you have it. Locals are still drifting back. And even though everyone hasn't yet returned, it's only a matter of time before Las Vegas Fandom is at full strength again.

Nothing, not even gafia, can stop the Trufans of Glitter City.



Ross Chamberlain has Total Immunity from Gafia.

— Arnie

Las Vegrants Nobody's Fools!

Strangely enough, there were no April Fools jokes played when the Vegrants assembled for the 4/1 meeting at the Launch Pad. We expected a good-size crowd, because of the return of several Vegrants who'd missed the mid-March meeting. But fans were too busy planning devilment for the oneshot to spend time trying to trick each other.

Lubov & Merric Anderson, newly returned from Memphis and the Mid-South Con, had nothing but good to say about the con and its hosts. Luba was Art Guest of Honor and they worked her moderately, honored her profusely and kept Merric from tearing up the city. (The committee encouraged Luba to return next year and didn't positively say that Merric can't accompany her.)

The Andersons came home bearing gifts for us. They gave us a screensaver of Lubov's art, which Joyce immediately appropriated, and one of her beautiful painted tiles (which has already found a prominent place on the Wall of Fame that leads from the front hallway to the dining room.

Merric may be getting a little more eccentric. He picked up some odd habits while in the sunny South. His sudden craving for barbeque and southern cooking in general is more understandable than his new penchant for moo-ing like a steer until someone gives him whatever food on the Vegrants buffet has caught his fancy. (Merric might well have a perfectly reasonable, if humorous, explanation for this notable deviation from the ordinary, but alas, he still adamantly refuses to share his considerable writing talent with the rest of us.)

Bill & Roxanne Mills had a rough week in some respects and, in particular, a grueling Saturday. The visit to Petapalooza was enough to kayo Candy Madsen, the friendly ferret, who missed her first meeting of 2006.

Bill also gave us something,

though it's destined for a place of pride on the wall of my office. It's a framed piece of pop culture memorabilia built around a 3-D foil collector card of Marilyn Monroe.

Bill, after making sure no one had any objections, brought his guitar in from the car and played a few selections to an attentive audience in the dining room. He does a very nice, laid-back version of *Tiptoe Through the Tulips*.

At more or less the same time, we also used Joyce's computer in the dining room to work on the third Vegas oneshot in the current series. Participation was fairly good, though there are still a few folks who are a little scared to sit down in front of the keyboard and let it rip.

Not that it was different during the Golden Days of Vegas Fandom. The start of the first Las Vegas oneshot, *The Vegas All-Stars Roll the Dice*, sat there for half a night before Laurie Yates (Kunkel) broke the ice by giving it a try. The New Generation of Las Vegas Fandom isn't nearly that reticent about trying various forms of fanac, so there's some hope they'll get into the idea as we do them at irregular, but frequent, intervals.

Su Williams also returned to the club. She'd spent about eight days with the Forman's and the Wilson's in Flippin, AZ and pronounced it the most beautiful place she'd ever visited.

She seemed a little skeptical about some of the Flippinites' plans, but very happy to have had some time with her good friends. Frankly, Joyce and I both envied her a bit and made tentative plans to see if we can lure them West for a visit this summer.

Reveling in the Trufannish fun were: Teresa Cochran, James Taylor, Merric & Lubov Anderson, Roxanne & Bill Mills, Alan & DeDee White, David Del Valle, Ray & Marcy Waldie, Lori Forbes, Ross Chamberlain, Ayesha Ashley, Su Williams, Joyce Katz and me

-- Arnie



Continued from p 1

for download and will probably also be distributed as an MP3 disk.

You can participate from home, even if you don't have a microphone attached to your computer. See the story on the back page.)

- **VSFA Sunday Social**
Sunday 2:00 PM

VSFA has been sponsoring these easy-going Sunday afternoon meals for over a year. The venue moved to the Blue Ox a few months ago and those who haven't tried it are in for a very pleasant surprise. The setting is attractive, the food is decent and the prices aren't too steep.

Joyce and I plan to be there and hope to see a lot of our Vegas fan friends there, too.

SNAPS Anniversary Distribution Deadline Is 4/23!

The Southern Nevada Amateur Press Society (SNAPS), the local amateur press association formed in April '05 will celebrate its first year of operation in the April '06 distribution. The deadline for sending an electronic contribution is next Sunday, April 23.

Joyce Katz, the group's official editor, encourages all those who've participated in SNAPS during the year as well as local fans who haven't yet given it a try, to produce a contribution for this distribution.

Contributions can be sent to Joyce at Joycworley1@cox.net. You can find a full explanation of the group's simple rules in many back issues of *VFW* or you can ask Joyce any questions you may have.

ChatBack: The VFW Letter Column

Fandom's foremost letter writers are stacked up in my in-box, ready to dip their stuff, so let me move discreetly to one side and let 'em loose for this week!

Leading off this issue's letter column is an aurally inclined fan from the BArea who may (or may not) be a fugitive from justice...

Chris Garcia

I should come up with a short-cut for my desktop that automatically launches my New Mail screen and fills out crossfire4@cox.net and LoC on *VFW*. That would save me so much time.

Nice to get a mention on the first page, but ahead of Ross Chamberlain going in for surgery? That's important news. I really hope his recovery goes smoothly and fandom retains the Golden Tones of Ross Cham-

berlain!

Indeed, April Fool's Day was entertaining, with Locus, EmCit.com's Blog, and my LJ all getting involved in the fun. I thought that Cheryl Morgan claiming that I was a terrorist on the run (and then following it up with the fact that I was still at large because I missed BASFA this week to watch Evelyn) was really funny.

Ah, Secret SMOF headquarters. I'm a big fan of SMOFs, not that I could ever be one myself. Folks keep trying to recruit me, but I resist (except for running a fan lounge at BayCon, but that's not SMOFing!). My fear of GAFIA was pumped full by this article. I've also ordered my N3F staff to begin working on the GAFIA cure. It's a tough one, but we will have a lasting FANAC in our time! This is also the first time that I've appeared in a faan fiction piece that I know of. Much hilarity!

I love these pieces of Joyce's on her discovery of fandom. It's one of the things I love about *Hard Science Tales*.

Am I just forgetful or is this Dave Gordon's first piece in *VFW*? I know he's in SNAPS, but I can't remember anything of his showing up in the pages of the Valley's leading newsmag. Always good to see a piece by Lloyd Penney as well. He still owes me a piece for the Drink Tank. Quality in other people's zine does not excuse tardiness towards the Drink Tank, Lloyd!

Sounds like a good crowd at the Cuban joint. I wish I could've been there. Indeed I am one of the beasts behind the Hollister in 2008 bid. They're having me act as the future Mayor of Casa de WorldCon. I'll gladly send in an article right after I finish the next Regress Report (which should be next week).

Wow, I lead off the lettercol! And a hefty one it is too. I may in fact be a virus, as I seem to keep cropping up in more and more LoCs in *VFW*. You didn't actu-



ally skip a week from my point of view. You put the last one out on Monday and this one came out on Wednesday. That's still two contiguous weeks!

I think that EmCit didn't become a semi-pro zine until this year. Cheryl changed things around so that she could keep doing it and that made the beast into a semi-pro as opposed to the fanzine that it was. I'm not sure what changed for Ansible to go Semi-Pro, but there was a marked change in the way things were set up for EmCit.

Corflu Mafia isn't a knock at all, Mr. Lichtman. Everyone loves the Mob (except for Law Enforcement Officials). You find me anyone who doesn't like the Godfather movies. Robert also mentioned the Paperback show, which I believe that Earl Kemp also attended. I was so interested in going, but it was either going there (and spending far too much money) or going to Vegas next week (and spending less money and seeing good folks). I've got a lead on The History of The Strangers Club and should have it soon. I'll likely write an article about the whole programme book for The Drink Tank soonish.

I totally agree with Lloyd that e1 69 would be insane and wonderful. Don't worry Lloyd, people have called me much MUCH worse than either of those.

Can't wait for the Audio One-Shot. I've been working my voice to make sure it's up to snuff.

Arnie: Anything that has the potential to affect the health and safety of one of my closest friends is certainly of paramount importance to me, but that isn't the sole criteria for choosing the order of news stories in VFW. For instance, I often put stories that are chronologically closer before those that will occur later. In this case, you'll be able to convey your good wishes to Ross at the Vegrants meeting this coming weekend.



In Core Fandom, there is a world of difference between a BNF (Big Name Fan) and a SMOF (Secret Master of Fandom). The former is a mild honorific that denotes a combination of knowledge, longevity and respect while the latter is an ironic insult aimed at those for whom fan politics is 'way too important.

While your effort to save Las Vegas Fandom, as detailed in Katzenjammer, are worthy of a medal, you will notice that the N3F did not gets its project underway in time to Save the Day.

One of my favorite fans takes issue with my comments about fanzines and semi-prozines...

Randy Byers

I'm still not sure I understand the grievance against *Ansible* and *Emerald City* moving themselves to the semi-prozine category. You call it "self-aggrandizement," but surely this assumes that semi-prozine is somehow a grander category than fanzine, which is not an assumption I agree with. You then go on to ask by what alchemy fanzines become semi-prozines, and I would say it is by the alchemy of fan-nish discussion. Fans have debated whether these zines are really fanzines or not (see <http://trufen.net/article.pl?sid=04/09/05/0051254>) for one such discussion of EC after it won the Hugo in 2004), and the editors made their decisions based on the debates.

Again, isn't that what happened with *Locus* years ago too? It really strikes me as a lose-lose situation for them, because they're criticized if they stay in the fanzine category and now they're criticized for moving out of it. Ah well, at least they have their Hugos to console them during the tearful, sleepless nights.

I've also been thinking some more about the Core Fandom terminology. What do you think of *Roots Fandom* as an alternate term? It's short and punchy, and it also gets at the idea of tradition that I was talking about in my last letter. It's the part of fandom that's interested in the history -- the roots -- of the community. "Roots" itself suggest community, as in grassroots, and also a network. Probably means that *Roots Fandom* needs a little water, and I'll take mine with malt and hops, please.

Arnie: Whoa, Randy. I don't have a "grievance" against Ansible, Emerald City or their creators. I originally said, with reference to putting those two fanzines in the "semi-prozine" category, that I thought the committee made a well-meaning, but incorrect decision. Informed that the decision was made by the editors of the two fanzines involved, I redirected my comments.

I think a fanzine is a fanzine and a semi-prozine is a semi-prozine. They are as different as a short story is from a poem. By moving the Hugo-winning fanzines to the semi-prozine category, it creates the very hierarchy that you and I both agree shouldn't exist. The idea that a fanzine gets better and better until it "graduates" to the "more prestigious" semi-prozine category.

"Roots Fandom" also occurred to me as a possibility. I was haunted by the vision of the members of the Group Mind/Virtual Fanclub, in full costume, dancing around the stage as we sing, "You say 'potato' and I say 'potato'." It also sounds as if it might be a group devoted to Alex Haley's miniseries.

Now let's welcome one of VFW most excellent regular contributors...



John Purcell

As soon as I can track down that microphone for our computer - I think our 21-year old daughter has it - I will give that audio one-shot a shot. If it doesn't work, expect a phone call from me next Saturday night.

Garcia's going to visit Vegas again? Quick! Grab up all the cherubs and hide the kinfolk! All I can say is that this is a helluva long way to go to help pub an ish. I'd like to visit you folks someday, too. Aside from the student sf club at Texas A&M University and the local chapter of SCA, there ain't much stfnal activity here in town. Houston's an hour and a half drive from here, but I don't know anybody down there, either. *sigh* It is a

proud and lonely thing to be a fanzine fan in SouthCentralEastern Texas nowadays.

Well, not really. The week before AggieCon 37, there was a fanzine convention in Houston that I had never heard of before. Didn't go since it was too short notice. Maybe next year I can make that one. In the meantime, if I can swing it, Bubonicon is like a full day's drive from here, and would be worth the trip. From what I see on the flyer I picked up at AggieCon, there are oodles of folks who will be there that I've known for at least a coon's age. My wife's birthday is two days before Bubonicon, so that would be a great birthday gift for her/us: a weekend getaway trip the

Vote in the 2006 FAAn Awards

Colin Hinz of the 2006 Corflu hosts in Toronto, has announced that the 2006 FAAn Awards (Fan Activity Achievement) are now open for voting at <http://www.trufen.net>. The FAAn Awards are the highest honor that Core Fandom can bestow on its own. (The FAAn Awards also have a special connection to the Las Vegas Fan Community, because Corflu Vegas revived them after a hiatus and they have now been going strong for 16 years.)

There are six categories. This year, they're: Best Fanzine, Best Fanwriter, Best Fan Artist, Best New Fan and the Harry Warner Memorial Award for Best Fan Correspondent. You can vote for up to three fans in each category.

The FAAn Awards voting process is very simple and it doesn't cost anything to participate. Most importantly this is a terrific opportunity to give some egoboo to the editors, writers and artists who make hard copy and electronic Fandom so enjoyable for all of us.

— Arnie

week before classes start up again. I'll have to work on this one. . .

My prayers and thoughts are with Ross Chamberlain for his throat surgery. Keep us posted.

Very enjoyable bit of faan fiction about the death of Vegrants and SNAFFU. Your piece actually supports a theory that I've been formulating: Robert Lichtman and Richard Lupoff have been long-time Secret Masters of Fandom, and Chris Garcia is bucking for SMOF-dom. *I knew* it! Today it's the N3F, tomorrow, the WorldCon! Oh, the power, the glory, the private parties. . .

. . . the terrible puns!

Joyce's "Blue Jaunt" is most enjoyable, too. What I really like about this is how she describes her growing need to get involved, read fanzines, pub a zine, start a club, and getting that maddening idea to begin running a con. Man, she sure got bitten by the fandom bug big time, didn't she? And aren't you glad she did? Always, I look forward to the next installment.

Well, change is a constant in life, David Gordon, as you and all of us can readily agree. This was brought home to me most realistically at the most recent Aggie-Con. As far as cons go, it was *not* what I was brought up on as a neofan back in the mid-70s. Of course, getting into fandom at that time in the Minnesota Science Fiction Society, Inc., was like being nursed by Pamela Anderson, and she's not even my biological mother! (I could go on using this simile and metaphor, but I won't. After all, I *am* a gentleman.)

Going into AggieCon weekend, I had prepared myself by repeatedly telling myself "This is a media con, a student-run con on a college campus, so it's not going to be like Minicon or any other con I've ever attended." Even so, the mantra didn't help. What a change! At this con, at least, gaming and Anime were the dominant topics, with a nice sprinkling of the accoutrements of traditional cons: huckster room, hospitality suite (finger foods, drinks - no alcohol (on campus, remember?) - and conversation), art show, masquerade, auction, and midnight showings of *Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Surprisingly, I was a bit upset by the lack of a film program.

Dumb college punks.

At any rate, the con was vastly different from my earlier incarnation in fandom. Despite the changes, I was not scared away. Like David notes, there was the formation of some new friends - the club's main party home is on the other side of the circle I live on, go figure - and it was fun in its own way. In a week or so, *In a Prior Lifetime #10* will be on your local Internet newsstand (efanzines.com) with a full con report (of sorts) therein.

You've set this issue up with a nice segue into Lloyd's Pubnighing report. Unfortunately, it once again reminds me of the dearth of local fanac and my near-isolation down here in the Land That Time Forgot. Lots of bars here, yes, and I could easily party with the Cepheid Variable folks every other weekend half a block away, but it's sadly not the same as *growing into* a fan community like Minn-stf, Vegrants, LASFS, and so on. It's a college sf club with no real ties to fanzine fandom. Unless I *do* join them and begin to subvert them, subliminally channeling their energy into a club-zine, getting art from them for my zines, and. . .

Euuwwwww! I think I begin to understand why smoffing can be fun. Note to self: Self, must investigate the possibilities.

Finally, I must say that e-pubbing is definitely much easier and cheaper than dead-tree pubbing. To me, this is a given. The basic nature of "pubbing your ish" is still the same: communication with other fans. I think I get as much joy now from getting e-locs and e-zines in trade as I used to back when letters and zines would plop into my mailbox. The joy is still there, and I look forward to reading these whenever I get the chance.

Case in point: a few days ago I received my first *Banana Wings* in the mailbox. YAY! The old, traditional way! It's been so much fun reading it and now I



must loc it and send same off to them. Interesting development here, though, is that I can either mail a traditional loc or e-mail it to Claire and Mark. Here's a change that makes fanac easier. The communication lines are much faster nowadays than they were a mere decade or so ago. This change is most acceptable, In My Humble Opinion.

Many thanks again, Arnie, for a fine zine. Keep a candle in the window: I'm checking into professional conferences that might be held in Las Vegas over the course of the summer or fall. See you in the funny pages.

Arnie: I think the truth is that the one shot is an excuse and that Chris sorta likes Vegas Fandom. That's fine, because we think he is a fine fellow.

I don't think any of us veteran fans – a nice way of saying “old pharts” – would choose electronic fanzines over printed ones, all things being equal. Sadly, they are far from equal now and growing less so with every passing month.

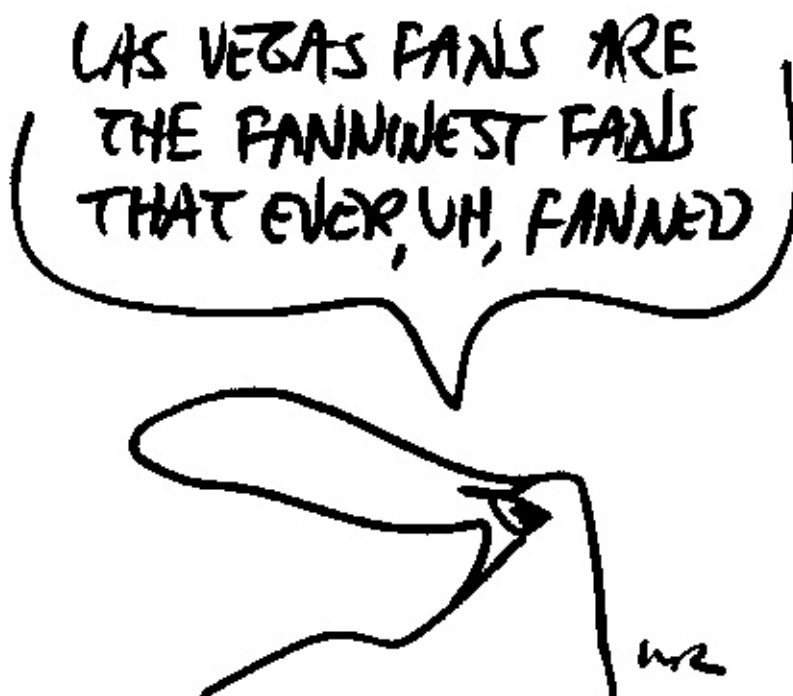
Making his VFW debut is one of the greatest fans of any era...

Ted White

It's hard to keep up with weekly fanzines, and all the more so when I'm doing it On Company Time. I've been working on transcripts of depositions in the Dr. Hatfill case -- Hatfill vs. the Department of Justice -- which are fascinating, but I signed a piece of paper saying Mum's The Word, so I can tell you no more. Except maybe that Hatfill -- singled out by the FBI as a “person of interest” in the anthrax attacks of 2001 -- is this millennium's Richard Jewell, and the FBI has cost him his livelihood. No one in the DoJ gives a good ghoddamn about Hatfill, either, no more than they did about Jewell (whom they falsely accused of the Atlanta bombing).

Anyway. I'll never keep up with Lloyd Penney on LoCs, and now I can see why. For him a “pubnight” starts at 5:30 and ends at 8:00. More of a late-afternoon or evening than a “night,” I would think. But of course in the Far North the nights start much earlier....

Randy Byers suggests “Traditional Fandom” for “Core Fandom.” Well, both can be considered “elitist,” I guess -- and the E. B. Frohvetts of the world will call us “elitists” no matter what name we pick to



describe ourselves, so that criticism needn't be given any serious consideration. But “Trad Fandom” has a musty odor to it -- almost that of moldy figs.... It implies a backward look, an adherence to “tradition,” shoving us into the ranks of such groups as the Daughters of the American Revolution. And I dunno about you guys, but I'd just as soon avoid that.

Not that we don't have traditions. Of course we do. But we tend to treat them with humor; our “tradition” is find contexts in which to quote good Burbee lines...and I always say you can't have too many of them.

Hal Hughes remarks on his “warm welcome” into fandom, and I'd like to amplify on that.

When Alexei Panshin walked in the door of my Brooklyn apartment that Fanoclast night to tell me/us that he'd invited someone new to that night's meeting, my initial reaction was cautious. Alexei said, “I met this guy at [name of a long-forgotten Times Square book store] and I think he'll fit in here.” I was less certain, but willing to give the unknown visitor a chance. Then Hal showed up.

He was One Of Us. Alexei had sensed this immediately, and the rest of us grasped it readily once we started talking with Hal. It didn't hurt that Hal was a long-haired hippie-type like many of us, but more important was his *attitude*. It was his attitude toward things which cemented him to us. His attitude was entirely simpatico. He knew nothing about fandom, but his attitude was fannish. When that first night approached its end, we all enthusiastically told Hal we'd

like to see him at the next meeting, and at the next meeting, there he was. An Instant Fanoclast.

This was hardly a unique situation. We used to have a word for such people: "fakefans." Mostly fakefans were fans of fandom rather than of SF, but more importantly, they got into fandom by being friends with fans, rather than finding it on their own, in the back pages of a prozine. My '50s buddy, Richard Wingate, was one such fakefan.

Hal became almost immediately a valued member of the Fanoclasts. This was entirely due to his own qualities as a human being. He brought much with him. (I think his being able to sing along, closely, with the first album by The Band, is what drew me initially to that album. He had the same kind of insight into The Band that Alan Shaw -- another Fanoclast -- had into the music of Van Dyke Parks.)

Certainly the internet does indeed restore contacts between people who had long ago lost touch. I'm really glad to be back in contact with Hal again after so many years.

A belated comment on Ken's injury: I know someone who was less lucky than Ken. My old buddy, Steve Brown (SF EYE), worked in the '70s for Ringling Bros.' circus -- the big one. One day, while using a hand-held power saw, he accidentally cut across much of his left hand. He kept the hand, but with reduced function. He could no longer play guitar, but he *could* play bass. (He was in my '80s band, Barbara & The Bohemians, on bass.) Ringling Bros. promoted

him to being in charge of lighting, but he left the circus before I met him. Steve wrote a really good piece about his accident, "Circus Hand." But I can't remember where it was published. (We workshopped it first in our writers' group, The Vicious Circle.) The important thing is that Steve survived the experience. I'm sure Ken will too.

To John Purcell I advocate reading Rob Hansen's THEN. It's a good history of British fandom. But if he's lucky maybe John can find somewhere copies of Rob's early-'80s fanzine, EPSILON. A short, unpretentious zine of 20-odd pages, it was superbly edited. Rob had contributions from a variety of the fans who made up Ratfandom (London's answer to the Insurgents, and the brightest group of fans in the '70s), and he was extremely good at editing letter columns, so that each letter seemed to answer the one it followed and set up the next -- even when he was publishing letters from people as clueless as Brian Earl Brown.

Rob's fanac kinda followed on the heels of the previous decade's (Ratfandom, et al), and was treated at the time almost as a postscript, and EPSILON was at times overshadowed by zines like Malcolm Edwards' TAPPEN (which published D. West's brilliant "Performance"), but I look back on EPSILON quite fondly. A high point in British fanzines.

Arnie: Las Vegas fan events tend to start and, therefore, finish on the early side. I'm not sure why. I think it had to do with the work schedules of some of the fans who started SNAFFU and then it became

Contact! Las Vegas Club Directory

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

Las Vegrants

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

SNAFFU:

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

VSFA:

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

Las Vegas Fan Events Calendar

Las Vegrants Meeting April 15 7:30 PM

The informal invitational Core Fandom club meets on the first and third Saturdays of every month.

Sunday Social April 16 2 PM

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

SNAPS Deadline Sunday, April 23

Las Vegas Fandom's own electronic amateur press association has its deadline for contributions to the February distribution. Send your file to Joyce Katz (Joyceworley1@cox.net).

SNAFFU Dinner April 28 7:00 PM

The SNAFFU Dinner Meeting will take place at Boca di Bepo. RSVP to Linda Bushyager (LindaBaudendistle@yahoo.com).

First Friday Video Group May 4 6:00

James Willey hosts this monthly get-together. They are currently doing *Farscape*. More info from Mindy Hutchings (204-4332).

VSFA Monthly Meeting May 6 11 AM

The small, but active formal club meets at Dead Poet Books (937 South Rainbow Blvd.). The meeting usually focuses on club business, followed by a socially oriented after-meeting meal or snack.

Las Vegrants Meeting May 6 7:30 PM

The informal invitational Core Fandom club meets on the first and third Saturdays of every month.

Second Sunday Movie Screening May 14 6:00

James Willey hosts this monthly get-together. They watch genre movies. More info from Mindy Hutchings (204-4332).

SNAFFU Discussion Meeting May 12 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. Topic: Should Science Fiction Be Predictive?

habit. Even the Vegrants starts at 7:30, as compared to the Fanoclast start-time of 8:30 or 9:00. They tend to run until 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning. Some meetings have petered out by 11:00, but those are ones that somehow got started a couple of hours or so early.

Whenever an affinity group appears, there'll always be folks outside the circle who resent those within it. I think we can all live with charges of "elitism." We might as well; they aren't going to stop no matter what we call this human network. The limitation of "Traditional Fandom," as you suggest, is that it looks backward instead of forward. I don't think of us as archivists.

Totally agree about Epsilon. Rob send me a batch of them while I first returned to Fandom and I enjoyed them a lot. They're harder to find than Then, which is posted in an online edition.

We Also Heard From: Jan Stinson, Bill Wright, Dick Lupoff, John Purcell.

Meet My Deadline

It's a very nice deadline... for a deadline. I'll be back next Thursday with Dick Lupoff, John Purcell, James Taylor and, hopefully, you. Have a great week!

— Arnie Katz

The Audio Oneshot

Many Vegnants will be contributing to the groundbreaking audio oneshot *Fannish Voices #1* at this Saturday's Vegnants meeting. But if you don't get a turn to record at that meeting, want to do it more privately (to re-record mistakes) or want to join the fun from outside Vegas, there are two easy-to-use options.

Editor Bill Mills has put together a website (<http://www.billmills.net/vegnants-odeo.html>) for recording contributions.

Bill offered these comments on the site and its use:

"This is an all-in-one type of web page, built on standard html, which includes the Odeo in-browser PLAYER, to hear our 'welcome' audio... And an obvious and simple little box that says "Send Me A Voice Message" below it (which is all vocalized in the audio mentioned above).."

"Clicking that box/link takes the user to a specific (and much simpler to use) in-browser RECORDER on which users can leave their 3 min message(s)."

Those who don't have microphones on their computers can still play. Bill has developed, and Teresa Cochran has successfully tested. A simple system for phoning in your contribution!

Here are Bill's instructions:

The actual ODEO.COM "channel" page for the Vegnant's Audio One Shot Welcome audio and for recording a reply if one chooses is: <http://odeo.com/audio/890719/view>. This was simply the default page they set up when you use their system to deliver or deploy an audio stream (mp3 or rss-iPod style feed).

To leave a reply (record audio) from THIS window it is necessary to have an ODEO.com account and be logged in. If you do not already HAVE an ODEO.com account you must sign up for one before you can leave replies or audio messages using this page.

To do this:

1. Go to the url for the Las Vegnants at Odeo.com

2. At the top right of the screen there is a button labled "SIGN UP" (with a pink bird graphic aside it). Click this, follow the instructions, fill in the spaces and sign up for an account. When it completes the sign up you are taken to you 'in-box' where you find a Welcome from the ODEO.COM people (not us).

3. Then you must go back to the original url (<http://odeo.com/audio/890719/view>) while still logged in and then the top right of the page will have changed from a "SIGN UP" button to a menu of several choices, one of which is "Phone Record Set Up". Click that and go there. Follow the instructions and you can now record a message using your telephone. Be sure to set the "Select a Channel" setting to: "Don't place in a channel".

BTW: This mandatory account sign up is not a requirement when a person uses the "Send Me A Message" box on the page I built for us to use. That link/box goes to a recorder for us specifically and doesn't require an ODEO.com account to use.

Good luck!

To give contributors to the audio oneshot something to talk about and to give the whole thing some coherence, Vegnants will talk on the theme "How I Found Fandom — or It Found Me." Individual contributions must, of necessity, be held to six minutes (two messages generated using the Audio Oneshot site). Bill will assemble the whole thing into an MP3 that we will distribute as a free download and, possibly, as a disk.

— Bill Mills & Arnie Katz

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and a ton of news.