

# VEGAS FANDOM WEEKLY

## Vegas Fan Events

**Cineholics Meeting**  
**Friday (9/22) 7:30 PM**

**SNAFFU Discussion Meeting Social**  
**Sunday (9/24) 2:00 PM**

**Cineholics Meeting**  
**Friday (9/29) 7:30 PM**

**SNAFFU Ice Cream Social**  
**Saturday (9/30) 1:00 PM**

*Check out the Calendar  
and preview stories*

Contributions can be made to either of the administrators. There's also a web site where you can get tee-shirts and other merchandise: <http://www.cosmicminds.net/harry.html>

### **SNAFFU Invites Fans to Ice Cream Social!**

SNAFFU will host an Ice Cream Social and Pool Party on Saturday, September 30, 2006 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at the home of Roxanne Gibbs and Michael Bernstein (4009 Evesham Ct, Las Vegas, Nevada 89121; phone: 1-702-765-7279). The city's oldest club has thrown open its doors to *all* Vegas fans and hopes for a big turn-out for what could well become an annual event.

Says Roxanne: "Our gated community has a large pool and hot tub available for your enjoy-

*Continued on page 16*

### **Fans Launch 'Get Harry' Fund!**

Rich Coad (124 Cottage Ave., Richmond, CA 94801; e-mail: [richcoad@comcast.net](mailto:richcoad@comcast.net)) and Rob Jackson (Chinthay, Nightingale Ln, Hambrook, nr Chichester, PO18 8UH; [jacksonshambrook@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:jacksonshambrook@tiscali.co.uk)) have started the Get Harry Fund to bring long-time fan and celebrated artist/cartoonist Harry Bell to Austin for the 2007 Corflu Quire (February 9-11).



# Inside Story

## A Special Fund for a Special Fan

Assuming you start reading *Vegas Fandom Weekly* with the front page, you saw the story about the Get Harry Fund that Rich Coad and Rob Jackson have started to bring Harry Bell to Corflu Quire in February, 2007. Like the Bring Bruce Bayside Fund, which brought the Australian BNF to the '05 Corflu, this is a great idea on every level.

I first encountered Harry Bell in the 1970's, during the period I did *Focal Point* and *Swoon*. He often contributed his wonderful cartoons to my fanzines. I was delighted to see him return to active fanning after a lay-off and he is currently well-known to many as the genial guiding spirit of IntheBar, one of the most successful fannish listservs.

I've never met Harry Bell, a situation not unusual in Fandom. I'd very much like to correct this oversight, though, and I believe a lot of other fans feel the same way. Check the info in the news piece and send Rich Coad or Rob Jackson some dough to forward this wonderful enterprise.

I especially love the fact that this is a Special Fund, not a new, continuing fannish charity. I think fans *should* help each other and come to each other's aid in time of need, but I'm also leery of the kind of bureaucracies that spring up around such continuing funds. The idea of fans uniting to accomplish a specific project strikes a resonant chord with me. It means that we only collect money when there's a reason, a reason that enlists the enthusiasm of enough fans to make it possible.

This is not an attack on continuing funds. TAFF has just paid off like the MegaBucks progressive jackpot by sending Bridget Bradshaw to the US (with Simon as value-added guest star), so I can hardly knock the organization that brought her to the Worldcon and, especially, to Las Vegas. And with Chris Garcia running for TAFF, my interest is set to continue for a while. In the long run, though, I think it's better, not to mention less wasteful of time and money, to create special funds to do things like bring Harry Bell to Corflu. — Arnie



*Vegas Fandom Weekly* #85, Volume 2 Number 32, September 20, 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 (Mountaineering Consultant), Alan White (arty fella), Bill Mills (technical advisor) and Joyce Katz (proofreading and So Much More).

**Reporters this issue:** Linda Bushyager, Alan White, Chris Garcia, Bill Mills and Joyce Katz

**Art/Photo Credits:** Frank Wu (1), Ray Nelson (2), Alan White (12,-16), Bill Mills (14 bottom-right, 15 top-left) all else by Bill Rotsler.

**Columnists This Issue:** John Purcell

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

Member: fwa

Supporter: AFAL Believer: United Fans of Vegas

# The Game of Fandom *Katzenjammer*



I've been interested in games nearly as long as I've been a science fiction enthusiast. As kids, Lenny Bailes and I spent nearly as many hours playing games as we did reading and discussing science fiction.

Board games, many of which are now half-forgotten classics, usurped the kitchen table at the Bailes and Katz houses at least several times per week. We played then-contemporary games like *Careers* and others, such as *Pirate & Traveler*, that had first seen the light of day well before either of us was born.

I started designing games around the same time as I wrote my first humorous sfnal essay, roughly age 12. The essay was a soliloquy from the point of view of the dog the Russians rocketed into orbit in *Muttnik*. The game was a finished first contest called "Rocky & Bullwinkle Go to the Moon."

About the time I became associate editor of *Amazing* and *Fantastic*, I worked on games for Avalon-Hill Game Co. I'd started bombarding the A-H office with questions and a young fellow named Thomas Shaw got the job of answering my detailed and somewhat technical queries. He and I

became correspondents and, when reorganization placed him in charge, he picked me to do fine-tuning design work.

So it shouldn't surprise anyone that I've always wanted to combine my love of Fandom with my love of games and create a game with a fan-nish theme.

Shortly after I contacted Fandom in March, 1963, I learned that I wasn't the first to nurse this dream. The worldcon that year, Discon I, revived the game *Triplanetary*, a space war board game designed and refined by fans including Art Widner and Bob Pavlat.

It looked interesting, but it wasn't what I had in mind. *Triplanetary* was about science fiction; I wanted to do a game about Fandom itself.

Bruce and Dian Pelz produced the Game of Fandom in the 1960's. I enjoyed its many bits of cleverness, but it still wasn't the game I wanted to

Continued on next page





The inspiration for a fanhistory quiz game might be *Go to the Head of the Class*, a copy of which I inherited from a somewhat older cousin.

create. I'd guess that there are countless other attempts at a Fandom Game that I simply haven't seen. It's a pretty obvious idea, when you think about it

Rich brown taught me the joy of Five-

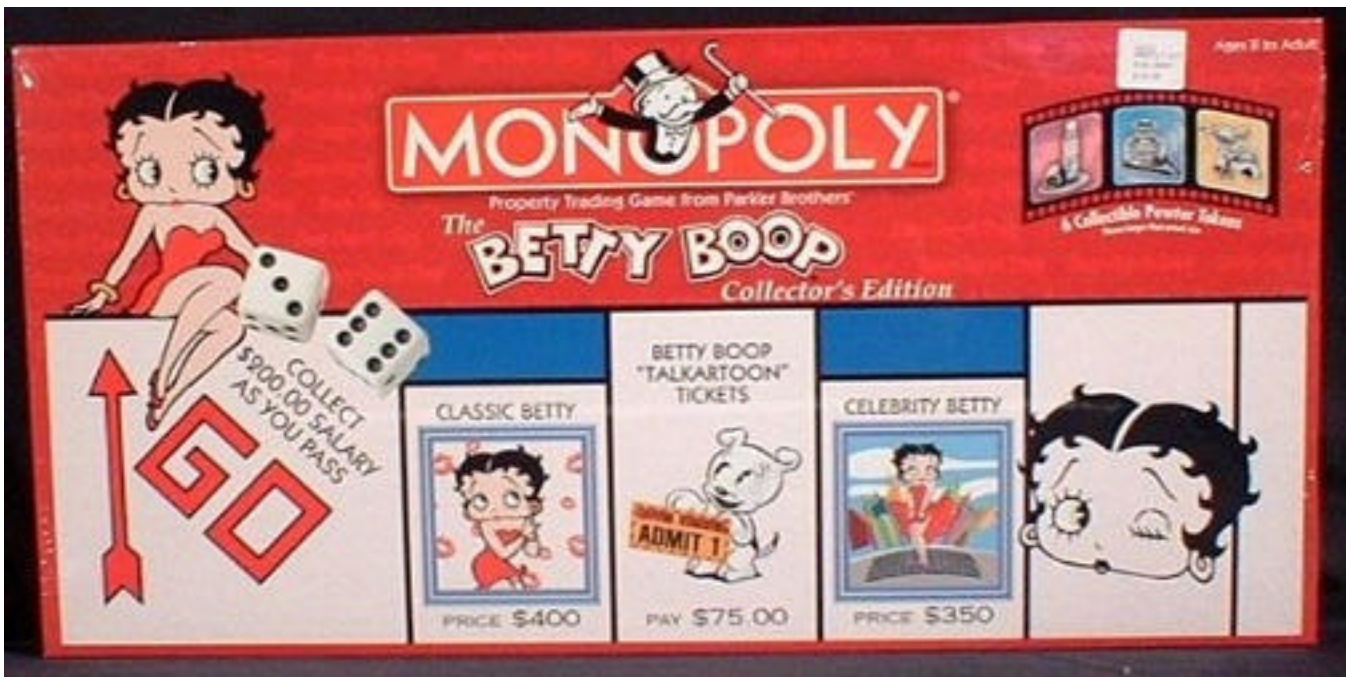
Dimensional Mental Crifanac. That's where you spend a lot of time thinking about something and practically no time at all actually doing something. A practitioner of this discipline revels in the complexities of awesome projects conjured solely in his Fine Fannish Mind – and never lifts a finger to translates those musings into reality.

I was an apt pupil. As a result, I enjoyed hours of blissful daydreaming about the hypothetical game I would design to entertain and delight fans. I designed two-dozen computer and video games and worked on a couple of hundred others starting in 1984, but I never tried to develop an electronic Fandom game.

There were two main reasons. The first is that I was gafiated during that period. I occasionally thought about Fandom, but I wasn't participating in it at any level.

The other reason is that I am a *designer*. I could no more program a game than I can turn invisible or walk through walls. I think a computer game would be ideal, but my search for a programmer who feels the same way has been unsuccessful in the 18 years since I returned to the hobby.

I've thought about several different electronic



This *Monopoly* variant combines my interest in games with my Betty Boop collecting in a game themed to the enduringly popular character. I don't own it so I haven't played it, but I wouldn't be surprised if it was less fun than the original game which it is based.



Each of the snake-like interior pathways of the *Careers* board represents one type of career. In a Game of Fandom, each symbolizes a type of fanac.

Fandom games. A first-person shooter like *Doom* or *Descent* could be fun. I see it as a cathartic fantasy in which the player, armed with the Gafia Gun, invades a hotel in which a worldcon committee is staging its exclusive pre-con meeting. The player explores the hotel, encountering enemies of various magnitudes. The bosses will be awesome; wait till you see the giant, radioactive Craig Miller in the penthouse!

Or maybe it should be one of those action-strategy games, like *SimCity* or *Civilization*. Each player starts with the bare-minimum fan club and has to build up their Fandom into a strong and vital center of fan activity. Can your party-oriented group compete with the serious SF enthusiasts who meet in the nearest city?

Knowing that I couldn't produce an electronic game myself, my (mental) effort has concentrated on unplugged games. Here, too, I see numerous possibilities.

If there are, as I suspect, Fandom Games I haven't seen, I'd wager that most of them are based on *Monopoly*. The great "folk game" about capitalism offers the perfect template for almost any abstract simulation board game. The layout would have squares for NESFA, LASFS, Vanguard and all the other fan clubs. *Fanopoly* would have special "TAFF" and "DUFF" squares and four fannish listservs would have squares equidis-

tant from each pair of adjacent corners. One corner is a free space, "Guest of Honor" only a lucky roll of the dice or a special card can get you off the "Gafia" space.

I could go on to sketch out the rudiments of *Fanopoly*, but my heart wouldn't be in it. It just doesn't reflect any actual aspect of Fandom. I'd rather play *Monopoly* than a witless version that substitutes fannish references for the traditional ones.

If I were going to do a fannish board game *pastiche*, I've got several much better candidates. With a re-drawn board and a new set of questions, *Fanhistorian* is an easily developed version of the classic *Go to the Head of the Class*. For that matter, a fannish *Trivial Pursuit* variant would be easy to generate and fun to play.

My personal favorite version of an existing board game is based on the Parker Brothers classic *Careers*. Instead of the careers, the game world offer players the option of exploring a type of fanac. Following the career path accrues Experience, Egofoo and Fame. The first fan to fulfill his "success formula," determined at the start of the game, wins. I may yet produce this one, assuming someone hasn't done so already.

A lightweight, fun Game of Fandom could also be built on the framework of TSR's *D&D*-themed board game, *Dungeon*. It would resemble the design of the first-person shooter described earlier,



One of the easiest fannish games to design would be something along the lines of *Trivial Pursuit*. It's mostly a matter of coming up with the categories and then filling each with questions. Shown here is the board for a *TP* edition based on *The Lord of the Rings*.

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minus the electricity. Fans would move around a con hotel, looking for fannish treasures and destroying the fakefen that guard them.

Convention Fandom, admittedly, offers a lot of gaming possibilities. Con Fandom has much more competition than Core Fandom — the need to bid for a con before you can host it guarantees that — and competition is a huge plus for any game’s excitement level.

*Kingmaker* could possibly be reworked into a con bidding game, though the pitched battles would have to be transformed into something less drastic. The players would move across a map of Fandom, trying to sway the allegiance of various groups so that their bid obtains a majority vote at the convention.

Con-runners who would like their children to follow in their footsteps might appreciate a “finish first” game that takes the con-toddler from the an-



nouncement of a bid to winning the convention.

Add computer power and you could do a simulation game about managing a worldcon. Frankly, this would have a lot more appeal than some professionally published titles in this category, even for someone outside con-running fandom. I’ll leave this one for someone else, though, both on the grounds that I don’t know the subject sufficiently well to simulate it and that I would rather gafiate than play that game.

And the more realistic and evocative *Worldcon Chairman* was, the less it would appeal to me. If I liked that sort of thing, I would be a very different person — and active in con-running rather than in Core Fandom

Another way to come at the goal of a Fandom Game might be to theme it to something like *The*



*Enchanted Duplicator*. Jophan starts from Mundane and must get passed the various obstacles of the story. This would work well either as an electronic or unplugged game. The *TED* story is a natural for gaming, because it consists of a wide variety of picaresque adventures.

The nature of the encounters between Jophan and the fannish epic’s other characters could be on any of several levels. In an electronic version, Jophan could do anything from play a little arcade game themed to a particular character or location or engage in an adventure-game-style dialogue that rewards Jophan with a talisman that allows him to continue toward the Magic Mimeograph.

The non-electronic *The Enchanted Duplicator* could be a “finish first” game with lots of complications somewhat like *The Game of Life*. Each Jo-



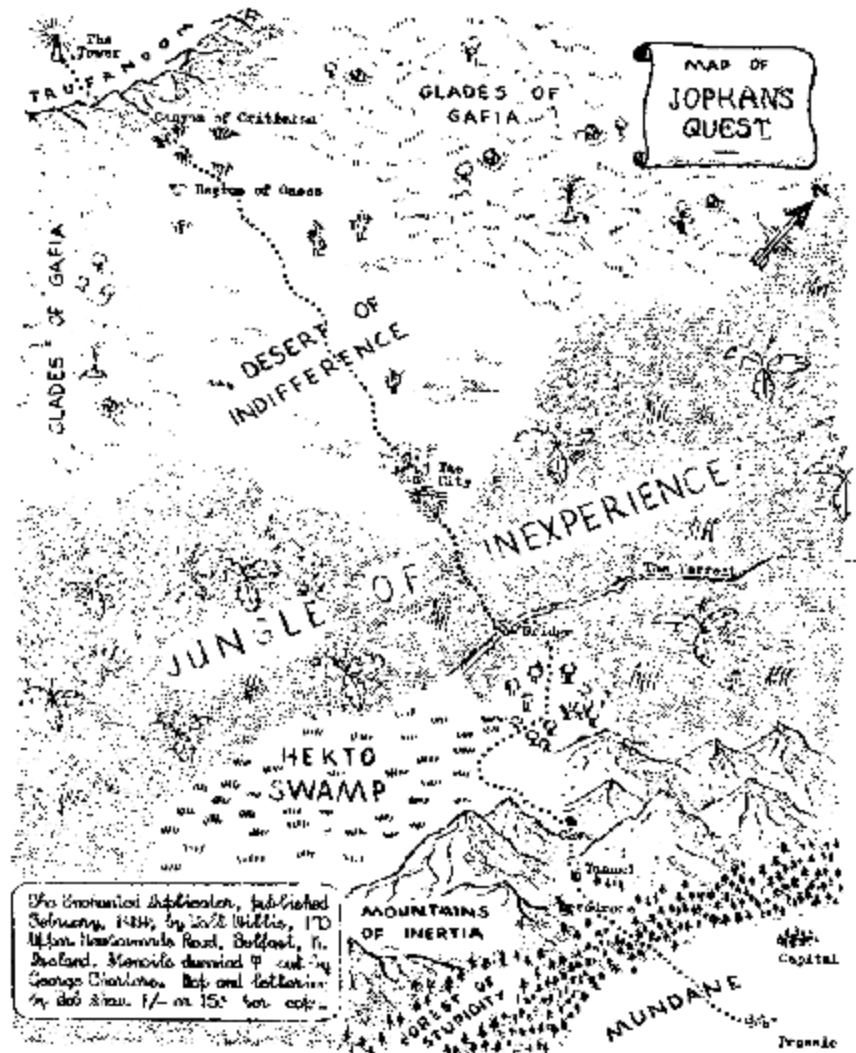
This photo from *Magicon* (the 1992 *Worldcon*) shows part of NESFA’s miniature golf course with an *Enchanted Duplicator* theme!

phan tries to avoid the penalties and exploit the bonuses on the long and winding road to the top of the mountain. You know: “The friendly Giantess gives you a drink of Egg O’Boo – roll two dice and advance that number of spaces.”

I’ve purposely left one of the most important and dynamic types of games for last. The techniques that Arneson and Gygas applied so brilliantly to creating a full-blown fantasy environment should work equally well with the far-fetched, but not quite supernatural world of Fandom.

My first thought was live-action roleplaying, like such popular pastimes as *Vampire*. Each player would assume the identity of a fan – we could have lots of the convoluted character-generation foofaraw that RPGers love so much, and then immerse them in a multi-layered fan environment. It would, in fact, be a lot like *Vampire*. Players would portray the role of a fan 24/7, meeting other players at “clubs” and “conventions,” where they “speak on panels,” “present costumes,” “sing filk music” and all the other forms of fan activity. Personally, I can’t wait until they game publishing a fanzine.

That much hustle and bustle may be too much for today’s low-energy, sporadically active Core Fandom. That’s why my Game of Fandom will thumb its nose (and spin its beanie propeller) at those weirdo live-action roleplaying



This and other, similar maps based on *The Enchanted Duplicator* make it pretty obvious how the player would journey to the Mountain of Trufandom in a board game.

games. Heck, I have enough trouble being me 24/7; I don’t want to have to create a whole new life. It’s too much work and, besides, it sounds like the storyline of a fannish version of *Sybil*.

No, indeed.

*The Game of Fandom*, like *Dungeons & Dragons*, will exist primarily on the ideational plane. Oh, there’ll be a line of miniatures – wait till you see the Ted White figurine – but basically, adventures will unfold as a dialogue between the Players and the referee, known as the Secret GameMaster of Fandom.

In other words, this game will be Five-Dimensional Mental Crifanac, but with codified rules. How fitting that that is the very same plane on which the entire idea of a Katz-designed Game of Fandom is based. I think I’ll mentally create some scenarios and maybe an apa to discuss it, while I’m at it.

-- Arnie Katz

# Classic Reprint Rich brown's Early Days

*When I was eight or so I returned one summer afternoon from a swimming class more slowly than I should've. My mother found me a half dozen blocks from home, walking very slowly and reading a Wonder Woman comic I'd just been given by a friend. (This would've been circa 1946.) She was very angry with me (I'd dawdled more than an hour), so to punish me she made a fire in the incinerator we had in the back yard, and burned my entire collection of comics. I was deeply and permanently offended by this, and have compulsively collected far too much since then. The "collection" she destroyed was a dog-eared, beat-up batch of maybe 20 or 30 comics, many of them coverless, some with pages ripped out, and almost none of them bought new by me (I'd gotten them by trades and handmedowns). But they were mine.*

*That was when I was eight. By the time I was in high school the Washington Daily News (a now defunct tabloid absorbed by the Star in its last years) ran a piece on me (with photo) called "The Kid With 10,000 Comics." It's amusing to speculate whether I'd ever have been a collector if not for that incident.*

-- Ted White

I had something similar that was a turning point in my life, too. I was 16 going on 17, about a month short of graduating from High School, from which I returned one afternoon to find my mother confronting me with a fanzine in her hands. It was a Cult zine. As an Active WLER, I had a letter in it in which I said that I was an Atheist. She had read it and was Very Upset; we were not a "church-going" family, since my mother and father subscribed to different Christian beliefs, but the last time she had looked--when I was 10 or so--I had been baptized in the faith she had come out of, which was Southern Baptist. I was a Good Christian until about age 12, when I stopped going to church (just like both my mother and father); I had a paper route that took me out early Sunday mornings and I managed to stretch it out until after 9 a.m. when the church bus came by our area. This is all digression; I quit because I was pretty disgusted with all three religions I had "tried"--the Methodists told me my mother was going to Hell, the Baptists told me my father was going to Hell,



the Church of the Nazarene told me my father and my mother were going to Hell, so I decided to let them all go to Hell....

Back to the point. My mother was upset; she showed me what I had written, asked if I had written it and when I confirmed it she tore up the fanzine.

As far as I was concerned, that was a Big Mistake.

My parents believed in corporal punishment; my mother spanked me with the back of a hairbrush, my father used his belt. On this occasion my mother had at me with the hairbrush and sent me to my room where (I was told) my father would be sent in to Deal With Me when he got home.

It wasn't the corporal punishment and the threat of more to come but the destruction of a



fanzine I knew to be rare and to contain something of mine that sent me on out the back door. I walked up to a little park which housed the local public library and wondered how long I could stay away from home. The park had some pomegranate trees, and I thought maybe I could just hang out there for a few weeks eating pomegranates and using the public rest room there to wash and give me a place to do the other things one's body requires one to do for which they have been set up.

I even went into the library and checked out an sf book. I read it until it got too dark. As dusk was coming on, I kid I knew named Ronny Shalvis greeted me as he was coming through the park. I bummed a cigarette off him and told him that I'd run away from home. He invited me to come stay at his place-- he and his brother David had tossed their abusive/drunken dad out on his ear and were living with their drunken but non-abusive mom and could do pretty much what they wanted.

So I went and lived with them. Ronny told his mother that I had been kicked out of my house.

Since I was so close to high school graduation, I decided to go to school and finish it up-- reasoning that it was the last place my parents would ever think to look for me. In that I was right--they never did. I no longer had a paper route but, along with Ronny and David, made a few dollars a day chasing golfballs in the Arroyo Seco. [If you've seen either Buckaroo Bonsai or Terminator II, you've seen the concrete-enclosed Los Angeles River, which ((some Californian correct me if I'm wrong)) flows out of the Arroyo Seco, which is also concrete enclosed but the walls of which are slanted -- \\_/\_ --so you can walk up and down them. The Arroyo Seco, passing by the Rose Bowl, cuts up the middle of a golfcourse. Golfers tee off on both sides and frequently knock balls into the Arroyo Seco, but don't want to try walking down those walls in cleated golf shoes. By placing ourselves at strategic points, we would get the golfballs knocked into it and bring them back to the golfers. At times we'd get no more than a "thank you" but often we'd be "tipped" a quarter or a half dollar.



We could make anywhere from \$4 to at times as much as \$10 doing this a few hours after school. Again, I digress.)

The Shalvis brothers wanted to join the Navy after getting out of high school. All three of us went down, but being on the verge of our 17th birthdays, we all needed the consent of a parent or guardian. Ronny was eventually rejected because of a bad back. David went in. I contacted my parents for the first time in a month and a half and was promised their cooperation--they even let me go to the Solacon. My mother, however, feeling that she'd not raised her boy to be a sailor, had my rich uncle, the Garbage Disposal King of Southern California, take me out on the ocean in his cabin cruiser and get me seasick. That ploy worked; I've never felt worse in my life. I went into the Air Force instead. -- rich brown

### Special Thanks

Bill Mills put together this piece from material circulated on the Internet through Trufen.

# Percolations How I Found Fandom - Again!

It must be a sign of the aging of fandom that a recurring feature in this zine is something called “How I Found Fandom.” This is also a popular programming feature at conventions under the guise of titles like “The Neo-Fan’s Guide to Fandom,” “Now you’re in fandom: what’s next?” or “We’ve got you now!” In all of these formats, usually old and tired fans tell of how they discovered science fiction fandom, why they like it so much, and why they have stayed.

Well, it is also a sign of our technological times that old-time fans are returning to the fold and becoming quite active, sometimes much more active than their first time around. Arnie Katz is one such example, as are Earl Kemp, David Bur-

ton, Robert Lichtman, Art Widner, and Shelby Vick. You can lump me into this category, although I really don’t consider myself on a par with these stellar fans. So to maybe explain a bit of who I am, where I came from, and how I got re-involved with fandom, my take on the classic “How I Found Fandom” topic is to add the word “Again” to the title. And my answer is a deceptively simple one:

It is all Bill Burns’ fault.

Maybe even Al Gore’s, or whoever it was who “invented” the Internet. But definitely it is because of what Bill Burns has been doing for quite a few years. If he had not created efan-zines.com as a repository for old and new fanzines, I know for a fact that I would not be in this illustrious fanzine’s pages today. Then again, somebody else probably would have started up a site similar to efan-zines.com, so I could blame that person instead. For now, though, I’ll keep the blame leveled at Bill.

This is entirely too simple of an answer to an age-old question. The aforementioned Mr. Katz, in a lengthy article in Vegas Fandom Weekly #78, explored a number of reasons why former fans were returning to fandom in increasing numbers. Some of his explanations make sense to me: nostalgia, curiosity, longing for old friends, an increase in spare time, creative impulses, electronic fandom. In a way I was waxing nostalgic around the end of 2002, wondering what had happened in the decade since I had last been at a convention, wondering who was still knocking about up in Minneapolis fandom, and so on. The Internet made it so easy to explore and find some of these long-ago names, faces, and places. All I had to do was use a search engine, type in the requisite key word, and up would spring any number of hits on that term.

So by the end of 2002 I was occasionally surfing the net for certain names, groups, cons, and places. The Internet became



Bill Burns, who operates efan-zines.com, has helped many former fans reconnect with the hobby.

my personal time machine, stopping at portals labeled “Minicon,” “WorldCon,” “Minn-stf,” and “Science Fiction Fandom.” Moving through some of these doorways was a bittersweet experience as I learned of the passing of Harry Warner, Jr., Walt Willis, George “Lan” Laszkowski, Terry Hughes, and many others. But I also learned that many of my old friends and contacts were still very much involved in fandom, which made me feel better.



Art Widner, King of the Returnees!

Then came that day in late February of 2003 – a Thursday afternoon, I do believe – sitting in my office at Texas A&M University, when I typed in that one fateful word: “fanzines.”

There were nearly 2 million hits on that term. My brain crogged at the prospect of sorting through such a number of sites. “How can I possibly whittle this down?” I mused, then tried again, this time googling “science fiction fanzines.” That narrowed it down to under 100,000 hits. Better. Still a lot of material to sift through, but thankfully it wasn’t in the millions. So I started perusing the first few pages of lists. Halfway down the first page I saw this website called “efanzines.com,” and clicked on the link. To my complete and utter delight, I realized that I had stumbled onto an electronic gold-mine of fanzines both old and new. “Dang straight!” I yelped, maybe startling my colleagues down the hall, but nobody came by to see what had happened. (They were quite used to my quirks by this time.)

Looking down the list of names and zines on efanazines was another trip down memory lane. There were people listed who used to trade their zines with me when I was publishing *This House*, *Ennui* and *Bangweulu* from 1976 to 1989: Mike Glycer, Jerry Kaufman, Suzanne Tompkins, Eric Mayer, Arthur Hlavaty, and many, many others. Some of these fine folks were still producing their zines. Others had archived their dead-tree zines on this site (which is a wonderful advantage to electronic publishing: preserving your material for

posterity in a format that, for all intents and purposes, will not decay). I couldn’t believe my eyes: here were back issues of *Hyphen*, *File:770*, *Mimosa*, *Idea*, and a slew of other old zines. I felt like the proverbial kid in a candy store, not knowing which tasty treat to try.

That “winter” afternoon in February, 2003 opened my eyes to new possibilities. In the summer of that year, I tentatively rejoined the

fanzine fray by producing my first e-zine, *In A Prior Lifetime* #1, a five-page Word document using clip art as fillos to break up the text. The ease at pubbing again – and the speed at which I got locs in return – breathed new life into me. A fourteen year barrier between the Then and Now of my fannish life was obliterated, and I discovered how much I had missed the contact with other fans.

This was fun. Voices from the past spoke to me again and I answered back. Thanks to the wonders of the Internet and then new technological capabilities of Word document, desktop publishing and all, I had returned to fandom, and doing fanwriting, pubbing, and loccing was a blast.

What had begun as one of those “whatever became of \_\_\_\_\_” Internet musings had morphed into a second career in fandom. In a sense, I am having more fun now than I had when active up in Minneapolis Fandom back in the 70s and 80s. Conventions are still a major part of the scene, but they’re a whole ‘nuther kettle of fish to fry in an article some day. For now I enjoy my cyber-fanac, and for that I can thank Bill Burns for creating the efanazines website.

See? It really is his fault! — John Purcell

#### **More by John Purcell**

If you enjoyed this article, I heartily recommend John’s fanzine *In a Prior Lifetime*. It’s frequent, fannish and full of John’s excellent prose. It’s available as a free download at efanazines.com.

# Las Vegrants After the Worldcon

The September 2 Vegrants meeting was anything but fanac as

usual. I'll admit we have largely mastered the preparations for a normal Vegrants meeting, as

opposed to a big open party, but I knew this wasn't going to be fanac-as-usual.

Joyce had an operation on her right ankle the day before to remove some metal and shave a bone. The pain of the incision and a drug-induced fog combined to restrict



Left: Arnie & Joyce greet the early arrivals, including Roxanne Mills (*left foreground*)

Below: Joyce Katz and Alan White relax in the Launch Pad living room.



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Joyce to largely supervisory duties. I took care of things like setting up the chairs, picking some music, tidying the house and such, but I'm not very useful in the kitchen.

Fortunately, other Vegnants rallied to the task. James Taylor, Teresa Cochran, and Bill & Roxanne Mills arrived at roughly the same time, 6:30. That's an hour before the unofficial official start of the meeting, so they pretty much handled everything. You gotta love friends like that.

Bill Mills mentioned Charles Jackson and then wasn't entirely happy with some of the comments, including mine. In my case, it was a simple misunderstanding, since what I said – that Charles had shown great promise as a fan, but had gone on to professional pursuits before he could realize that potential. My point was that it was probably Fandom's loss, since Charles has subsequently demonstrated much writing and editing talent.

Teresa's curiosity about a jalapeno bread Joyce was serving led to a discussion of home-baked bread. Joyce blamed my parochial tastes in food for the fact that she generally makes only white or rye.

"I'm one screw closer to getting on a plane," Joyce told us, elated over having gotten through Friday's hardware removal surgery..

"Who did you screw – and how many more do you have to do before they let you fly?" I demanded.

Ross Chamberlain arrived bearing a mock-up edition of his novel-in-progress *Angels Without Wings*. It looked like a glossy-covered trade paperback, with a four-color artwork cover on stiff cardboard.

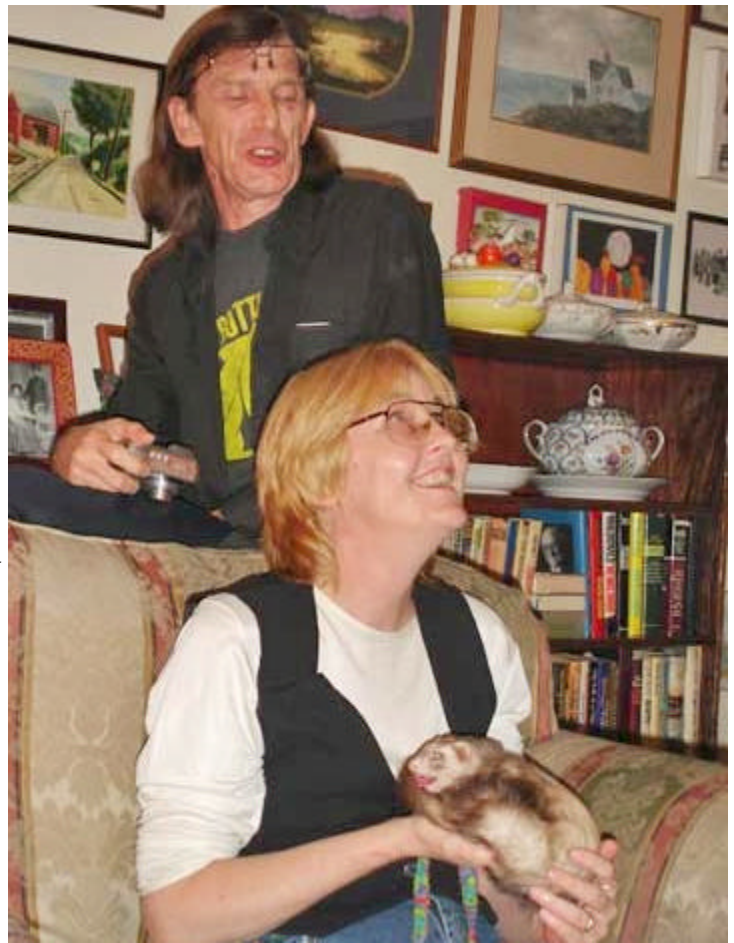
Those who've been allowed to read the book as it stands say Good Things. Now, we've got to nag Ross into buckling down and finishing the novel. That he has written several chapters of a sequel only underscores the need for an ending to the first one.

The second webcam experiment was no more successful than the first at the previous



Arnie and Joyce survey their handiwork.

meeting – and even less the fault of our resident audio guru Bill Mills. He even tested the system successfully at home before letting me know that it



Roxane and Bill Mills are caught in a moment of domesticity with Candy Madison, the friendly ferret.



Bill Mills wrestles with the technology as the screen shows the image from the webcam. It was a worthy try, even if it didn't pan out this time.

was all right to send out the announcement that the Vegrants would be visible to all during the gathering.

Unfortunately, the webcam didn't like the



way we've hooked up the system. Despite Bill's

best efforts, which included consultation with other compu-audio experts, the webcam proved incompatible with our set-up's router.

The result of the problem was that, though we could see the video feed on the monitor, the camera didn't share the view of the night's festivities with the rest of Fandom. Once Bill has had a chance to work on it, we'll try again with a field-tested hook-up.

There was a lot of talk about the just-completed LACon IV. The Vegrants were well-represented at the event; Lori Forbes and Teresa Cochran attended a worldcon for the first time. Everyone was pretty upbeat about the experience, though I wished I'd been there to grease the wheels for them a little bit.

Both Alan White and Lubov went to LACon IV, in part, with hopes of selling their artwork. Neither did as well as their fondest hopes, but both sold enough to be fairly satisfied.

Alan White sold the never-to-be-used cover for an issue of *Crazy from the Heat* that brilliantly parodies the late Tom Reamy's fanzine *Trumpet*. I was glad for Alan, because most of the editors felt we had to kill the cover, because it was shown at Corflu before we could even get the issue started. (I was still for using it, but got out-voted.)

Below: Merric Anderson makes his debut on Vegrant Radio, a special broadcast beamed by the dwarf planet Eris.



I'll spare you the details of the chatter about computers, virus and all the other things of vital interest in today's electronic-based Fandom. I seem to recall a lot of conversation about mimeos, lettering guides and stenciling back when that was central to the hobby.

Alan and DeDee White have a new car, a Scion. That's the one that offers a wide range of add-on packages that can quickly change the vehicle's appearance. When I said as much to Alan, he replied that it was the biggest worry about the car. "Why's that?" I asked.

"If it's stolen," he said, "they might re-customize the car so I can't recognize it."

As often happens when meetings get off to a premature start, it ended a little earlier than usual, too. Teresa, James and neofan David Purdy sat with us in the living room and talked of fannish things without solving anyone's problems.

David continues to ask a lot of questions about Fandom, most of them pretty good. Alas, as it



James Taylor contemplates his Grand Design with apparent satisfaction.

turns out, he has had some contact with more fans than we thought, though not always in a fannish context. For instance, he knows Ayesha Ashley from a non-stfnal discussion group both attended.

Now we're watching for signs that this exposure to Fandom will translate into some activity. It may be that David will find more common cause with some other facet of Fandom, though he certainly gets along well with the Vegrants. At this point, we're trying to get to know him and see if he relates to the group's chemistry.

The 12 Vegrants and three guests who frittered away a Saturday night were: James Taylor; Teresa Cochran; Lori Forbes; Alan & Dedee White; Bill & Roxanne Mills; Luba & Merrick Anderson; Ross Chamberlain; David Purdy; Bridget Westerman & David ???; Joyce Katz and me... -- Arnie Katz



A crowd always gathers in my office, one of the areas designated for pipe and cigarette smoking.

## Next Meeting

The next Vegrants meeting, scheduled for Saturday, October 7, will feature the usual mix of food, chatter and joyous excess. This will also be the meeting at which members of the informal, invitational Core Fandom fan club will (finally) take a whack at that much-delayed issue of *TGCC*

The theme is "The Holiday Season," so if you have an idea for an article that relates in some way to the upcoming season, write it up and bring it with you. We'll be writing the round-robin part of the oneshot at Joyce's trusty computer.

Continued from p 1

ment, and we will have all the fixings for an ice cream sundae of your dreams. Also, please feel free to bring your musical instruments and Filk to your heart's content.

“Please RSVP by Saturday September 23, 2006 to [missroxanne@cox.net](mailto:missroxanne@cox.net), so that Roxanne can bake enough Ghirardelli brownies and peach cobbler for everyone, and purchase adequate supplies. Also let her know what your favorite ice cream topping is so she can have it available.

### **SNAFFU Plans Return to Candyland!**

SNAFFI members will indulge themselves in the Fourth Annual Field Trip to Ethel M's Factory and Christmas Cactus Gardens on November 25. The group will meet at 6:00 PM for a tour and chocolate consumption.

After that will be a trip to Metro Pizza (Stephanie and Horizon Ridge) for those who, in the words of my mother, want a couple or three slices to “wash down” the candy.

Joyce and I, as serious students of science fiction, plan to be there and hope to see you, too. To RSVP and get more information, write to Roxanne Gibbs ([missroxanne@cox.net](mailto:missroxanne@cox.net)).

### **SNAPS Reaches Out to Fandom!**

SNAPS (Southern Nevada Amateur Press Society), formed as a hardcopy amateur press association in April, 2004, has taken another major step in its evolutionary journey.

The group, which switched to electronic distribution during its first year, has now unanimously voted to admit fans from outside Nevada. For now, the new Official Editor (me) has decreed that the number of non-Vegas fans will be limited to half the number of Vegas fans on the roster. Inquiries have already been received, but nothing settled enough to warrant mention now. (This news story is also a general call to those who might want to join. Contact me.)

In conjunction with this change, SNAPS has set very modest participation requirements for those who want to be active members. Each fan is required to contribute to SNAPS every other month. There is no minimum size; the idea is to

promote continuity of participation.

SNAPS is also eager to attract more Las Vegas fans, both those who may have contributed in the past and those who have not yet joined in on the fun. There's plenty of help available for first-timers (and old-timers).

For those who aren't familiar with the concept, an amateur press association is a fanzine trading club — a virtual fan party that takes place once a month. Each member writes and/or draws a contribution and sends it to the Official Editor. At the monthly deadline, the OE combines all the individual contributions into an electronic file and dispatches it to the members.

Though there are always lots of essays and informal musings, a key facet of the content is that

### **Free Book Offer!**



Jean Marie Stine and Bill Mills of Renaissance eBooks have a special treat for fans. The publisher will give fans a free download copy of *Murder at the Worldcon* by JD Crayne — whom fans may know better as Dian (*née* Girard).

All you have to do is go to [Renebooks.com](http://Renebooks.com), register for the store and use the code (redrum) to get your free download.

It's a very entertaining story, liberally laced with fans and pros from the 1960's.

This offer is probably going to end shortly, so pay the site a visit and get your gift book. — Arnie



members write comments about the material in the previous distribution to create multi-pathed discussion threads.

### **ChatBack: The VFW Letter Column**

*This is one of my favorite parts of the fanzine, so I won't shilly-shally.*

*Leading off with a comment about VFW #83, which featured my lengthy report on the Vegas Pre-Con Weekend...*

### **Peter Sullivan**

It sounds as if the lack of a Toner II didn't really detract that much from the overall level of fanac going on in Glitter City the weekend before the Worldcon - lots of out-of-towners (or, in the case of taffbug, out-of-countryers) as well as a good turn-out from the resident crew. For next year, I'm not sure that Las Vegas is really "on the way" to Yokohama for most people, so probably no excuse for a Tonercon 2007.

But, now that Denver has been confirmed as the 2008 Worldcon, maybe Tonercon 2008 might be worth thinking about - as Las Vegas is a logical stop-over from anyone coming from the west coast on the way. (Actually, I've just checked this on Yahoo Maps, and it says Las Vegas to Denver is ten and a half hours drive. I guess from over here I forget just how darn big the United States really is.) Of course, the main convention focus for 2008 in Las Vegas will be Westercon, but if Tonercon is true to its relaxacon roots, it's not really going to drain off much con-running resource.

*Arnie: I greatly enjoyed the Vegas Pre-Con Weekend. It was especially nice to see such old friends as Ed Meskys. That said, I couldn't shake the feeling that, with just a little more effort, we could've drawn even more fannish visitors. I just missed some of my closest friends, I guess.*

*I have already broached the subject of a pre-Denvention Toner to several of Las Vegas' New Generation. There seemed to be some interest, but I don't think we'll hear anything concrete for a while.*

*The Westercon is always a big deal, but I don't see it becoming the focus of Las Vegas fan activity. The group that won the bid is, by and large, not from Las Vegas and even the Daugherty's divide*

*their time among two other homes. The committee has apparently made a very strong move by accepting James Taylor and Teresa Cochran's offer to run the Fanzine Lounge, but the high price, remote location and no-smoking policy of the hotel remain concerns...*

*Out of the North comes a ChatBack stalwart with comments on a variety of topics, including rich brown and LACon IV...*

### **Lloyd Penney**

First of all, good to see your various operating systems are up and running again. Second of all, you were sorely missed at the Worldcon; it had a great fanzine lounge you and Joyce would have greatly enjoyed. Third of all, I am two issues of Vegas Fandom Weekly behind again, what else is new. Here come comments, as best as I can on issues 82 and 83.

82...In past issues that mentioned rich brown's passing, I said about all I could say. I didn't know him beyond the little discussion we had over *Emerald City*, and I haven't met most of the people involved in fanzine fandom. He did have a presence at LACon IV, though...Milt Stevens had commemorative ribbons to hand out, and many of us bore them on our badges, that the doctor was OUT. (Just for the record, just how tall was Judy-Lynn Benjamin? I remember seeing her at some of my early Worldcon, and she couldn't have been over 5 feet tall.) I am afraid that I can do no more than to offer condolences to his friends, and they were legion.

83...Hey, you've got a Bug on the cover! The Cineholics? I don't think this is a group you've mentioned in VFW before. Tell us more!

Simon never made it to Toronto, and I never got to meet Simon in Anaheim, for Bridget was too busy being a good TAFF delegate. She did her TAFFish duties, came to the Third Monday pub-night, and was charming and patient throughout. I admit I am a little nervous about what she'll say in her trip report. She did divulge that she was hosted by two separate NYC fannish group, both of whom spent a good amount of time informing her how bad the other group was.

I look forward to Bill Mills getting you on the air with a Vegrants e-party. I did register with

EarthCam, and once you work out all the kinks, let us know, and we'll keep trying it until it works. We've got to find someone to run against Chris Garcia in order to make the TAFF race work. Otherwise, all of Chris' hard work to promote himself will have gone for naught. Good to see you have someone new in the form of David Purdy...

I hope Joan Hoffman will make an appearance soon. (Arnie, if she doesn't drop you a line in the next few days, I'd suggest sending one to her, and seeing if she's recovered from the Worldcon.)

And now, some comments about LACon IV. The activities were great, and bit of travel we did around LA was great, but it's always the people you run into. Yvonne and I met Alan White, James Taylor, Teresa Cochran, Lori Forbes (Lori, did Chris really say what he said he did?), and David Gordon. Folks, a pleasure to finally meet you all, long overdue. The fanzine lounge was a comfort, an oasis from the maddening crowd, and a place to meet up and chat. After telling Murray Moore that I wouldn't be bidding for anything in the fan fund auction, I promptly bought two first-day covers from past Worldcon, a copy of *Science Fiction Review 16* (Feb. 76), and the November 1966 issue of *Science Fiction Five-Yearly*, meant for FAPA 117. One of the traditional red TAFF shirts went up for auction, and with Yvonne's good idea, I was the top bidder, and promptly gave it to Chris Garcia for his TAFF campaign.

Besides you good Vegas fans, I ran into lots of Canadian fans, and people I hadn't seen in 10 or more years, like the Trimbles, and like Phil Saunders, a kid from Toronto who, with a little direction from Yvonne, is now a conceptual artist for the movie industry, living in Santa Monica. The whole convention was a fabulous time for me, and I will remember it a good long time.

I think I'm done now, and I am caught up.

*Arnie: There seems to be some confusion about who did the rich brown memorial ribbon at the worldcon. In the spirit of giving credit where due, is there someone who can shed a little light on this? James Taylor and Teresa Cochran brought us back a couple of the ribbons as souvenirs.*

*That's an especially fine issue of SFFY. Lee Hoffman had just re-connected with active Fandom and the enthusiasm comes through very nicely. I was sitting next to LeeH when she turned*

*a stop at a gas station into the adventures of Reg and Ethyl Gribble.*

*Alan and DeDee White, hosts of Cineholics, began inviting a few of their friends (mostly pals from the Vegrants) several months ago. Alan sends out background material during the week, the group watches a movie and gorges on White-provided delicacies and talks about the movie. (Well, David Dal Valle talks about everyone who isn't there.) It's highly informal and it's invitational (because seating is limited).*

*Bridget Bradshaw was the very essence of Fannish Charm during her visit to Las Vegas and I get the impression that she maintained a friendly attitude and mellow mood throughout her trip. I have also heard that things got a little strange in one or two places – and not just in Vegas, which I freely admit is strange – that might make her trip report even more riveting than expected.*

*He's the most active publisher in all of Core Fandom and he doesn't even collect Social Security! We've got to send this guy to a foreign country or something...*

### **Chris Garcia**

Good to see that Vegas has opened up its apa! I'm not sure if I can join right now, but I'm certainly glad that I'll have the chance to be a part of SNAPS. I think I'm Vegas enough to warrant inclusion.

Glad to hear that Joyce went through another surgery and came out better on the other side. It's gotta be tough on both of you to have to deal with so much medical drama.

Ric Carter passed! I hadn't heard about it. I'm usually pretty up on the members of the wrestling community who leave us but I hadn't heard at all. I know I heard them at one point when I was down there a lot back in the day. That's awful.

I can understand why you wouldn't want to attend the large cons, though there was a sort of a "con within a con" feel to the Fanzine Lounge. There was Randy Byers and Lloyd and Yvonne and Marty Cantor and Milt and so many others that it felt like a fanzine fan gathering. It was fun time but WorldCon's not for everyone.

I've said that *The Drink Tank* is the *Citizen Kane* of crudzines in the past and I stand by that. I



actually like some of the worst zines that are out there from the olden times. One of the things that I enjoy about them is that if they're done by folks who don't really know much about fanzines, they are usually way out there, and some fun stuff can come out of that, especially when you don't know what you 'can and can't' do in a zine. Sadly, my pubbing software doesn't have a working spell-checker. That explains a lot now, don't it?

I love Mimeo. I wish I'd been around in the days when Mimeo was the rule instead of an antique notion. Colin Hinz is still doing them, in fact his last FAPA contrip was Mimeoed. I spent hours watching folks Mimeo at CascadiaCon. I guess with distance comes admiration.

Again, I feel so bummed that I missed the visit of Mr. Earl Kemp and all the others. Had I known Alan could sling a good Cuba Libre, I'd have forced the ingredients on him at WorldCon! I loves me a good Cuba Libre. Earl makes Bug sound like some sorta spy. It's always good to hear from Earl and it sounds like he had a good time. In fact, everyone I talked to about the Vegrants meeting said they had a good time.

Sadly, I'm not at all familiar with Bob Leman. He sounds like the kind of guy I'd like to have met. I'm hoping I can find a copy of The Vinegar Worm.

Must read Murder at the WorldCon. Bill Warren brought another murder mystery thing with him to sell at LACon, but I didn't pick up a copy. I'll certainly buy one down the line (I hope they

show up at LosCon). I'm still trying to find a copy of Murder at the ABA by Isaac Asimov. That would make something of a trifecta.

Love the photos. I ran into Alan a few times at WorldCon. Sadly, no Merric Anderson with whom much cane would have been raised. I did get to chat with Lori Forbes, Luba, Teresa and James and Dave Gordon. It was a good time getting to chat with everyone. I'm happy that I'll get to see at least some of them again at LosCon.

I do sorta have a homeless guy look about me. When people asked why I was carrying a sign, I said 'Well, there were these fundamentalists down the way and it looked like good fun to carry a picket sign.'

Don Anderson, you're my hero. I spent years studying the history of wrestling. I got to see Lou Thesz a few times at the end of his career. Same with Buddy Rodgers. I heard stories of Ed Lewis and George Hackenschmidt, Jim Londos and the French Angel from folks who worked with them. I love boots and trunks wrestling, and it's not quite dead. There were several groups promoting it as recently as the late 1990s. With shoot-fighting on the rise there's more interest in the older ways.

*Arnie: As OE of SNAPS, I'm expecting to announce several non-Vegas members in the next VFW. I hope you do join, Chris, and I want to extend that invitation to the entire VFW emailing list. You can get a sample distribution of this monthly electronic apa at [www.snaffu.org](http://www.snaffu.org).*

*Vegas fans seem to have enjoyed the world-con, by and large, and they said many Nice Things about your role in enhancing that experience. I don't think large cons are Evial, Chris, just not my preferred ambience. My friends in Fandom are very important to me and I've found that my greatest convention enjoyment comes, not from panels or masquerades, but spending time with my favorite people.*

*I understand the "con within a con" idea and enjoyed that aspect of the Westercon I attended a couple of years ago in LA. Since that "con within a con" is the kernel of what I want, though, I am more attracted to conventions that simple do away with the unnecessary and distractive "outer shell."*

*I wouldn't want to take large conventions away from those who enjoy them. I just don't*

much want to go to them unless there is some special reason. I attended that Westercon, because Robert Lichtman and Ross Chamberlain were both guests of honor.

*My fanzine collection figures to emerge in better, and more accessible order as a result of the work on the SNAFFU Library. If the Vinegar Worms surface, I'll reprint one or more pieces. I don't want to see Fandom lose any of its literary legacy as it transitions from paper to digital.*

*A welcome visitor to ChatBack muses about mimeos and more...*

### **JoHn Hardin**

Thanks for your kindness in describing my contribution to the first issue of *Dalmatian Alley*. I don't have any recollection of being even "sporadically funny," so this is a boost. I also LOLd at your closing sentence to the funny Mimeograph sidebar. "Ask *Chunga*" should be the VFW motto, if you ask me.

*Arnie: Although the editors of Chunga appear to be quite learned, I think there'd need to be more than three to fill all my gaps in knowledge. I think it's fairer to limit their additional burden to the details of print publication production.*

*The Sage of Fandom continues his reign as King of the VFW letter-writers with yet another fine contribution. Where would he be, though, if I didn't keep making mistakes?*

### **Robert Lichtman**

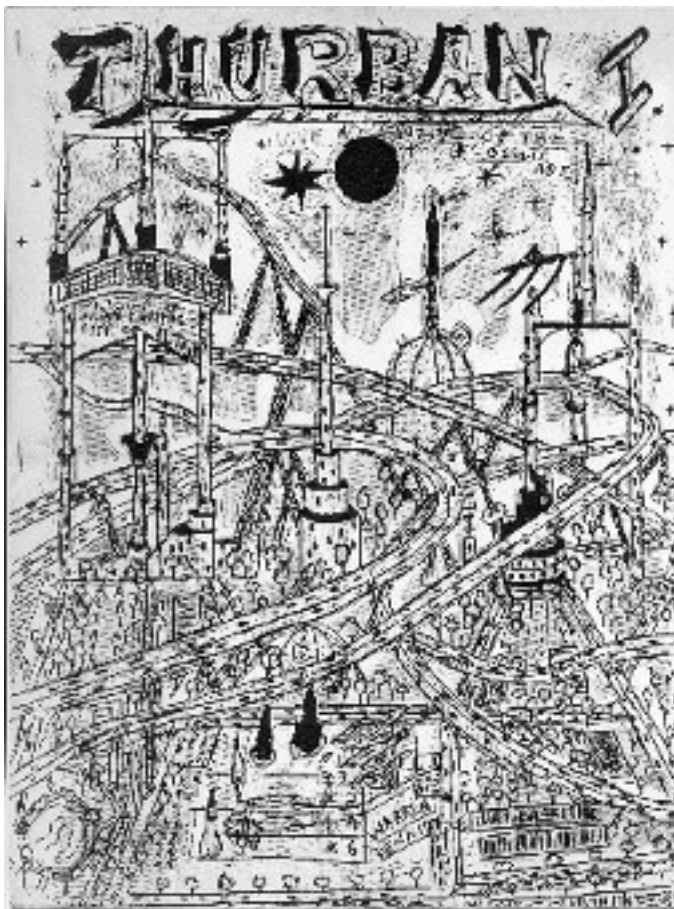
It's amazing to note that between my three letters of comment published in this bumper issue I've consumed 20% of *VFW* No. 84. What sort of LoC Monster are you aiding and abetting!?

I was happy to read on the first page that Joyce's ankle surgery went well. It's definitely a good thing that her pain level is receding, and I hope that the follow-up visit brings no surprises. All egoboo to Bill Mills for providing transportation to and from the Southwest Medical Center.

Continuing on the subject of surprises, it was no surprise that the members of SNAPS voted to open up the apa to non-Vegas members. I'm looking forward to seeing the revised rules once you figure them out, but am not sure that I have room

for another apa on my ever-busy plate. Between the four apas I'm already in, my efforts to get out the long-delayed next issue of *Trap Door*, my being Secretary-Treasurer of FAPA, and the many e-lists I'm on (and active on them all to varying degrees)—and on top of that my LoC-writing activities—it's hard to imagine taking on another monthly obligation. As you know, I've been on the distribution list for SNAPS since its inception. I've at least skimmed everything in the mailings, read parts of them all, and written the occasional LoC to you and/or Joyce on your contributions in various mailings. I assume I'll continue to receive the mailings on that basis, and perhaps it would work better for me not to be a member but instead to contribute occasionally on an informal basis when time and inclination coincide. This view is, of course, subject to change.

I didn't go to the Worldcon, either, even though I had an attending membership. Like you, I don't much care for large conventions—and although from the reports I've read it appears that there were at least as many fans I'd like to have seen at the Worldcon as at a typical Corflu, still



the occasion came and went. Perhaps what I miss the most by not going was the opportunity to meet the Howard Devore family and to see the extensive exhibit about Howard's life and times. I was there in a way because a special edition of Howard's last fanzine was made available, and that carried my introductory material.

As you point out, First Fandom has been doing an excellent job of preserving the crudzine as an art form in the present series of its official publication *ScientiFiction*, but they're not the only ones who are maintaining this particular fannish tradition. If you go to... <http://surprisingstories.dcw.com/> ...you'll find that John Thiel—who you may remember as a crudzine producer going way back—is still very much active maintaining his own personal tradition. While he's moved up from the blotchy mimeography of his youth to an electronic format, his prose has maintained its muddy consistency and he's acquired a coterie of contributors of both art and prose to aid and abet him. There are a few familiar names in the mix, however; John Boardman is present with a short article, "Some Remarks on Religion in Science Fiction," and there's a poem by Steve Sneyd.

As for you, Ken and Dwain standing together at Corflu Blackjack and marveling at your joint ability to survive having published terrible first issues and gone on to become well-regarded active fans (we speak not here of Ken's current absence, as he's busy with Aileen, Ben and Cathi establishing the love camp in the Ozarks as a b&b), I can't help but chime in on my own behalf. Perhaps you've never seen a copy, but my own *Psi-Phi* No. 1 is certainly a contender. Faintly dittoed on one side of a mixture of slick paper that was provided courtesy of my coeditor's father, a paper salesman, it features both me and my coeditor (Arv Underman, who was believed to be a hoax when we emerged near the end of 1958 just after Carl Brandon was unveiled—"under man," get it?) editorializing rather aimlessly, a really horrible short-shot story by me ("La Petite Vamp"), my only-ever attempt at fan art, and a couple pages of pretty shallow fanzine reviews. Still, apparently because we "showed promise" (as one reviewer charitably put it), the second issue was hugely better with cover art by ATom, interior art by him, Dan Adkins, and

Joe Sanders, and written material by John Berry, Ted Johnstone (starting his multi-part series on making a movie of *The Lord of the Rings*), Guy Terwilleger, and the first installment of Roger Ebert's book review column. I guess that's an example of Second Issue Recovery.

But in closing, let me observe that the *true* classic crudzines aren't yours, mine, Dwain's or Ken's. In the past the most oft-cited one was Warren Dennis's *Thurban I* No. 1, published in June 1953. It's pretty bad, but it does have an interesting pair of contributors in the form of short pieces by "Bob Stewart of San Francisco" (later to be known as "Boob Stewart" and to have his fanwriting collected in 1960 by Terry Carr in *The Expurgated Boob Stewart*) and "Bobby Stewart of Texas," who I don't think turned into Bbob Stewart but I could be mistaken. But topping even Warren Dennis's efforts is just about anything by Norman G. Wansborough. I've attached cover scans of both *Thurban I* No. 1 and one of Norman's SAPSazines for your delectation.

It was enjoyable to read Earl Kemp's account of his Vegas visit again *and* to have it in a more permanent form than on whatever list it originally appeared. If I'd been editing it, I would have corrected the spelling of Ed Meskys' name. And I wonder if after reading of the \$159/night room rates at a *non-smoking* hotel Earl is quite so hot to come to the 2008 Westercon.

Thanks to John DeChancie for an excellent remembrance and obituary of Bob Leman. How fortunate for him that he got to have some contact with Bob in his final weeks of life, and to have had Bob as a near-neighbor in his (John's) early days in fandom. John doesn't mention it here, but he and one Lawrence Connolly published several issues in the mid-'80s of a fanzine called *Glaroon*, both of which had material by Bob. It was interesting to read of Bob's extensively varied reading tastes, and like him I also read Tolkien in first editions from the library back in the late '50s.

You note that "Many fans consider *The Vinegar Worm* #1 as the best first issue of all time." I don't dispute that claim, but want to point out that it was called *The American Journal of Oculenteratology* and didn't become *The Vinegar Worm* until the second issue. There were four issues of it as a genzine followed by a dozen more circulated

through FAPA. Bob also published half a dozen issues of *Nematode* for SAPS and at least one one-shot fanzine. The latter was titled *An Inquiry into Certain Little-Known Consequence of the Berlin-Baghdad Pact*.

In his obituary John notes that Bob's "collected stories appeared in a limited edition from Midnight House in 2002, under the title *Feesters in the Lake and Other Stories*. I heard of this prior to publication and immediately sent for a copy, which I treasure. Checking the book search engines (via Bookfinder) I find that there are a dozen copies available. Some of them are at exceedingly high prices, but the first seven listed (lowest price first) are at or not much above the book's original \$40 cover price. The dealer offering the cheapest copy also lists it on eBay as a buy-it-now. If you love Bob Leman's fiction, now is the time to pick up one of these books. Even if you have all the science-fiction magazines in which they originally appeared, without the book you'll miss the one story in it that's original.

I just followed Bill Mills' advice and went to Dian Crayne's Website to download a copy of her novel, *Murder at the Worldcon*. I have it now as a 123-page PDF and will have to give it a whirl. If I like it, I can get a hard copy for only \$4.99—much cheaper than printing it out. Thanks for passing on this offer.

In your comments on my first letter you write of how when we were neofans we could have "direct contact with the folks who started" fandom back in the '30s, but that "now, sadly, we are in a transitional era and, all too soon, we will not have that luxury of such contact." This is sadly true, and all the more reason to treasure what contact we can still have with Bob Tucker, Jack Speer, Art Widner and a handful of others.

You also believe I'm "dating *Egoboo* a little early. My memory is that Ted and John D. did *Egoboo* after the genzine issues of *Focal Point*, which would place it in the early-to-mid-1970s." Alas, your memory is skewed. The genzine *Focal Points* were Nos. 31 to 35 (also known as Vol. 3, Nos. 1-5). These appeared between July 1971 and July 1972 (with a long gap between the fourth issue in November 1971 and the final one in July 1972). The first issue of *Egoboo* came out about June 1968 and the final one (not counting the *real*

final issue that was a supplement to *Blat!* No. 3) was published in August 1972. So it overlaps the *entire* run of your and rich brown's version of *Focal Point* (which started in 1970).

John Purcell might be pretty disappointed if he came all the way out to a BayCon, "where you can have conversations with really neat people, much like Dick's [*Lupoff*] with Chris Garcia." Yes, Dick and Chris are undeniably cool, but from what I've heard BayCon is a largely media-oriented convention. However, I've never been to one and would be happy to be proved wrong.

Lloyd Penney writes of "gallivanting around the L.A. area" before the Worldcon including a visit to "the L.A. County Coroners' Department gift shop." This of course leads me to wonder what he and Yvonne got there (or were looking for). I think we should be told.

Commenting on the special rich brown issue of VFW Mike McInerney "was surprised that more people didn't write about...his efforts to help university library collections to get it right." As it happens, that's one of the likely subjects I plan to write on in my editorial column in the upcoming *Trap Door*, as rich and I had a lot of correspondence about his exchanges with George Slusser at UC Riverside over George's background material on fandom and fanzines at the Eaton site.

*Arnie: I grant that the fanzines you invoke are very, very bad. Thurban I #1 is a complete mess and the second and third issues were cut from the same cloth, the story by Roger Zelazny notwithstanding. It does make it one of the most valuable fanzines auctioned on eBay, though.*

*I don't count the fanzines of Norman G. Wansborough for the same reason that I exempt those by Raleigh Multog, Fans with diminished mental capacity or severe mental problems are probably not going to produce very good fanzines, though they occasionally produce interesting ones.*

*Indianapolis Fandom's Guiding Spirit continues her welcome resurgence in Core Fandom with a letter that includes an update on some popular Indy fans of the 1970's...*

### **Lee Lavell**

You mentioned back in vfw 81 that you wondered what had become of David Gorman and

David Lewton. Well, Lewton is still around, living in Arizona now. If you will look carefully at PIXEL #2 and 5, those are his photographs on the cover. As for Gorman, he's still here in Indy but apparently is no longer interested in anything fan-nish as both my and Burton's attempts to contact him have been met with silence.

I do have some very sad news concerning a former member of our old local sf club, ISFA. John Miesel, husband of Sandra Miesel and fan himself, passed away August 30 of a malignant brain tumor. He was only 64. John was a lovely, gentle man, intelligent, friendly and humorous. Although I had not seen him since I went into my gafiation I shall still miss him in my heart.

I do have some things to say about your article on crudzines in *Vegas Fandom Whenever*. Yes indeed, the crudzine needs to be saved but for other reasons than were mentioned in the article. The crudzine was the young fan's stumbling attempts to edit/publish. As yet he doesn't know how. But if he tries and the results are not quite what he wanted he has nothing to be ashamed of because there are dozens, nay hundreds, out there that are just as bad if not worse. There is always hope of improvement. So he stumbles on. Nowadays (she says, stroking her gray locks) there don't seem to be many young fans. And by young, I mean YOUNG as in teens, even early teens. At least they don't seem to be in the fanzine business. Why? I suspect part of it is the lack of crudzines. I think a lot of them may be intimidated by what is being "published" now and don't want to be humiliated. So, what can we of the elder group do to help the growth of new fanzines, fanzine editors and publishers? Encourage, help, mentor, and if things turn out cruddy the first or second or third etc. time, be positive. As much as you may scringe at some of the results, they are at least contributing to the crudzine pile that will give some other poor neo some hope, and who knows, out of all that slush may crystallize a gem.

*Arnie: I don't think the lack of young fans is attributable to the absence of crudzines. For one thing, I can point you to some doozies and, for another, I have heard the same lament about how the fanzines are now too good for about 40 years. I think more people are likely to be inspired by good material and repelled by bad content.*

*A first-time ChatBack writer tells a fascinating fannish story about Bill Donaho...*

### **Terry Kemp**

It was interesting to have, I believe it was Robert Lichtman, compare me to Bill Donaho. I was flattered. I've seen photos of the man from the early 1960s and don't really suppose I look anything like the man, but the comparison was nonetheless delightful.

I do have a quick Bill Donaho story. Back in the fall of 1972 I was attending UC Berkeley. At the time I was still a young seventeen and learning how to get around in the local scene.

Just coming back from a prolonged summers-long journey around Guadalajara and Acapulco, I didn't have much time left to get organized before the fall quarter started. So my father arranged for me to stay with Roberta (Collins) and her husband Joe Gibson. Joe, an old-time pulp writer of some note, was working on campus at that time. His wife Roberta was my godmother. (Rog Phillips was my godfather.)

Roberta and Joe didn't have enough space to put me in, so they arranged to hand me off to Bill Donaho. My first night back in Berkeley (I was now a sophomore, having starting attending the year before) we all got together for dinner and the hand off was completed. Bill had enough time to introduce me to his latest girlfriend, hand me the keys to his fabulous house, and leave with her for Las Vegas. He was currently in the process of testing a new theory he had on how to win at 21 at the card tables.

I spent the next week and half at his house meeting the most interesting characters, all while looking for off-campus housing. One afternoon when I came back to his place I found his kitchen counter covered with left-over marijuana. Someone had stopped by to split up a key. The left-over debris was very welcome and tasty. Later I met the nameless gentleman who had done this, as he was wandering around the house very stoned and very naked.

Another time, later in the evening, I received a call from a friend of Bill's asking to stop over. Shortly a young man dropped in with his two current girlfriends and they all proceeded to have a very long, loud lovers quarrel. I was never exactly

clear as to who was sleeping with whom, and where the problem was. One of the young ladies, exasperated with the arguing, shrugged off her clothes and joined me in Bill's jacuzzi. It was an eye-opening experience to say the least. It's amazing what you really can do under water. Before they left they showed me where Bill kept his secret stash, in a bronze Aladdin's lantern on his fireplace mantle.

These were just a few of the colorful, crazy, characters I met during that hectic eleven days. But school began and I found my off-campus housing just in the nick of time. I never did find out whether or not Bill's gambling system was successful. I'd like to think it was.

I'll never forget his generosity to a stranger. Just as I'll never forget that very strange, very stoned, and very naked man beating off into one of my t-shirts. Or the wonderful free ride I received in his jacuzzi. All just regular daily happenings. Gosh, I miss those days.

*Arnie: Wow, first a visit to the Vegrants and now a letter of comment! Welcome to VFW, Terry. Hope to hear from you again soon – and Kingman isn't that far from Glitter City, either.*

*Our Fan from Texas dreams some mighty dreams – and wraps up this issue's letter column in the process...*

### **John Purcell**

Oh, boy. Today, Southern Nevada; tomorrow, the rest of the Known World! Bwhahahahaha.... Oh, you evil, twisted secret smoffers... Making an unassuming apa your vehicle for dominating the fannish universe.

I ain't buying.

But I am glad to hear that Joyce is doing well. By all means, take care of her first before you work on a zine; certain people and things are *much* more important than fanac. Besides, if you didn't take care of her, I'm positive she'd strap you to that big wheel in the backyard.

Being at home during a Worldcon weekend can be a nice way to catch up on reading, loccings, writing, and so forth. I shall do my part to keep the fannish flame burning.

Your arkle "Save the Crudzine!" sounds like you're throwing down the fannish gauntlet, complete with instructions on how to produce a crudzine. That devilish part of me thinks evil thoughts

# 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

## **GayLesBiTrans SF Club**

Joshua Andrews  
Email: andrews1701@gmail.com  
Phone: 759-9303



## Las Vegas Fan Events Calendar

**Cineholics** Friday, September 22 7:30 PM

The invitational film circle meets weekly at the home of Alan and DeDee White.

**SNAFFU Discussion Meeting** Sunday, September 24

The city's oldest formal SF club meets at the library. The main discussion topic is: If you could produce one science fiction or fantasy TV series, what would it be and why?

**GayLesBiTrans SF Club Gathering** Monday, September 25 7:30 PM

This alternative lifestyles group meets on the fourth Monday of the month at The Center (953 East Sahara Ave., Suite B-25).

**Cineholics** Friday, September 29 7:30 PM

The invitational film circle meets weekly at the home of Alan and DeDee White.

**First Friday Video Group** October 1 6:00 PM

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

**VSFA Monthly Meeting** October 7 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** October 7 7:30 PM

The informal invitational Core Fandom club meets on the first and third Saturdays at the Launch Pad.

**Second Sunday Movie Screening** October 8 6:00 PM

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

**SNAFFU Dinner Meeting** Friday, October 13 7:00 PM

SNAFFood will convene at a restaurant to be announced

**VSFA Sunday Social** Sunday, October 15 2 PM

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

**Las Vegrants Meeting** October 21 7:30 PM

The informal invitational Core Fandom club meets on the first and third Saturdays at the Launch Pad..

when I read something like this. Include fan-produced skiffy poems and stories, uncritical book reviews, poor layout and repro. This last item can be done electronically: howzabout dark font on a dark background? Huh? Or messing with the margin settings under the format drop-down menu? I'm warning you, Arnie; an electronic crudzine can be done, but it must be done *deliberately*. So there.

The very, very first fanzine I ever produced, *This House #1*, way back in the Springtime of

1976 was a horrendously reproed two-pager done on ditto, with the second being my first attempt with a 10-dollar mimeo I bought at a Goodwill in St. Paul. I had no idea what I was doing, but I did it anyway. Shortly thereafter, my brother got a job as a printer at Apache Corporation in downtown Minneapolis, so all further zines from 1978 to 1989 were xeroxed, about a half-dozen with offset covers drawn by the likes of Jim Odbert, Steven Fox, Alice Ableman, and Alan White contributed

a marvelous cover for *Bangweulu* #5 (1988). Those were decent zines, once I got those initial gawdawful zines out of my system. One definitely improves with practice.

Glad to see that Earl Kemp's mellowed out. It was fun chatting online with him for a few minutes, and I don't remember reading any misspellings and creative typos due to the teensy-tiny font on the screen. Needless to say, I am looking forward to meeting Earl and some more of you Vegas types at Quireflu. (Yes, Chris Garcia has me doing this now.)

I am very saddened by the news of Bob Leman's death. Here's yet another fan and writer I never had the chance to meet except in print. Thank you, John DeChancie, for the tribute and bibliography; this will be a nice reference for tracking down his stories and that book.

Sad news also from the letter column about Helen Wesson. Now here's a ground-breaking femmefan from way back when. I was just re-reading *A Wealth of Fable* a couple nights ago, and Helen figured prominently in the first chapter (and elsewhere in the book). These fan-obits are rapidly becoming commonplace, which Peter Sullivan mentioned in a *VFW* loccol many issues ago. The fine tributes and remembrances of these people really are becoming a mainstay of current fanwriting. It is sad, but to be expected.

Arnie, I really enjoyed the captions to the Worldcon photos. Highly amusing. Makes me wonder what's going to be slapped under my mug after Quireflu is history.

Well, I gotta cut this loc short since I have about 600 pages worth of reading to get done this week for my doctoral classes Wednesday and Thursday nights. Have you ever read *Middlemarch* by George Eliot? I finally passed page 300 last night; only 515 to go... The other class text is a paltry 56 pages left before that book's done, and written by the class prof, too; very readable, I must add. Thank Ghu I'm almost done with my classes.

*Arnie: "Evil, twisted secret smoffers"? That's harsh, John, harsh. We are definitely not secret smoffers. Evil and twisted, perhaps, but we aren't very good at being secret and smoffing sounds like something exceedingly unhealthy, something that might give you a rash.*

*I shudder at the idea of someone using it as a handbook. I intended it more like a list of the Danger Signs of a serious disease.*

We Also Heard from: Shelby Vick, Randy Byers, Bill Mills, Bud Webster, Dan Joy.

That's it for this issue, but I'll be back Sooner Than You Think with another. Among the items scheduled are worldcon reports by Teresa Cochran and James Taylor.

There'll also be a letter column, assuming you write and send 'em. — Arnie Katz

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*and a ton of news.*