

VEGAS FANDOM WEEKLY

Vegas Fan Events

SNAFFU Dinner Meeting Social
Friday (11/10) 7:00 PM

Cineholics Meeting
Friday (11/10) 7:30 PM

SNAPS November eMailing Deadline
Sunday (11/12)

Cineholics Meeting
Friday (11/17) 7:30 PM

Vegrants Meeting
Saturday (11/18) 7:30 PM

*Check out the Calendar
and preview stories*

TAFF Postpones Race

There won't be a North America-to-UK TAFF (Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund) election this year after all. The just-announced postponement is due to the cancellation of this year's Eastercon, (British National Convention) the intended destination for the winner.

Vegas Fandom Weekly maintains its strong support of Chris Garcia despite this transitory setback. I hope we'll have another opportunity to try

to deport him when the administrators call for a new election next year.

SNAFFood: Thai-Yi-Yippee!

The November SNAFFU Dinner Meeting (SNAFFood) marks the group's first gastronomic rerun since its inception a year or so ago. The November (11/10) gathering will be held at the Lotus Inn (Sahara & S. Maryland). Fans should aim to arrive at 7 PM.

Linda Bushyager, who coordinates these monthly sallies into gastronomic, can provide additional information. You can contact her at: lindabushyager@aol.com.

Cineholics Have an 'Accident'!

Writer/Director Brad Anderson's *Happy Accidents* (2000) is the featured selection at this com-

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Inside Story

Back to Normal

Nothing could feel better fannishly, than doing a “regular” issue of *Vegas Fandom Weekly*, I got catharsis out of the recent special issues dedicated to rich brown and Bob Tucker, but that’s one form of satisfaction I eagerly volunteer to do without. It feels good to be writing about Halloween Parties and Vegrants meetings instead of fallen comrades.

A fan friend asked if 2006 could be designated another Year of the Jackpot. My visceral reaction was, “Ghod, I hope not.” I know this is a newszine of sorts, but I don’t relish toting up the deaths and judging whether they are numerous and significant enough to merit the dubious distinction.

And the whole thing rests on such a shaky foundation. The fans I consider significant may be distant echoes for someone whose activity is convention-centered and, conversely, there may be someone whose name is unknown to me, but who would be extremely meaningful to someone who attends WSFA or FISTFA.

So I’ll leave pondering the Year of the Jackpot to those who are more comfortable with it. Until it’s settled, though, I wish all of you would refrain from dying (or even getting sick) and muddying the whole issue.

The touchstone of Fandom is fanac. With participation, we’re just a bunch of fat people in the audience. Not real fans. I mention this, because one of my strongest desires is to invite and incite more participation in *VFW*. No one likes “blanket calls” for material, but I hope you’ll bear with this one. A lot of readers haven’t written anything for Fandom in quite a while. I hope they’ll give it a try and share something with the 350 or so of us who peruse this pixelated rag. Please don’t make me write all the articles (and forge letters of comment over your names).

There! Wasn’t *that* a touch of the normal? Didn’t it feel good? You may express your gratitude in writing. (*See colophon for email address.*)

— Arnie

Vegas Fandom Weekly #88, Volume 2 Number 35, November 10, 2006, is written and produced by Arnie Katz (909 Eugene Cernan St., Las Vegas, NV 89145; Email: crossfire4@cox.net; phone: 702-648-5677).

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Reporters this issue: Linda Bushyager, Alan White, Bill Kunkel, Randy Byers and Joyce Katz

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Columnists This Issue: Roxanne Mills, 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 hyper-kinetic sidekicks were harmed during the production of this fanzine.

Member: fwa

Supporter: AFAL

Believer: United Fans of Vegas

The Big Burn-out of '06 *Katzenjammer*

Joe Walcott sat at his computer. The flat screen reflected his sensitive fannish face. The fan in the reflection looked very unhappy, which was exactly the way he felt.

He had been sitting there for two hours. He had sat there for two hours last evening and he had sat there for two hours the day before yesterday, too. There had been other nights, other sessions, but he knew it wouldn't make him feel better to catalog them.

All of these sessions had ended in the same way: Him staring into the accusatory blank screen with nothing written.

This session was the worst yet. He had tried to change the rhythm by stopping about the first 30 futile minutes. Nothing had changed when he returned to the screen.

He was not "refreshed, re-invigorated and re-inspired."

He hadn't gotten anything out of it except a

nasty computer virus, an unwelcome gift from a site that specialized in a woman who'd been blessed with or otherwise acquired stupendously large breasts. He had liked the site, except for the virus, but he had already written articles about boobs in general and, in carefully worded prose, the boobs of every female fan he knew.

When he'd gone back to work after his half-hour of Internet surfing, he had actually written a paragraph. It was the first article he'd started since the ill-fated "Let's Repossess Langford's Hugos." Joe realized, ruefully, that he had grown so desperate as to actually consider attacking one of Core Fandom's most talented and popular fans, if only he'd been able to think of something after the opening paragraph:

He'd written only a paragraph when he just couldn't continue. Joe liked Langford well enough. Besides, if Hugos were as meaningless and irrelevant as Joe had often claimed, then he really shouldn't flail around humorlessly about them.

He felt happy as he wrote that paragraph an hour ago. That slightly elevated his fannish mood

Continued on next page

Faan Fiction

This issue's *Katzenjammer* differs from most of its 60-plus predecessors in that it is a work of fiction. I realize that you are accustomed to reading highly serious essays about such weighty topics as a Fandom Game and the possibility of setting up a Fandom Fantasy Camp, but sometimes I like to change up things a little with faan fiction (fiction about fans). I mention this so prominently, because I got a letter from a fan who wanted to know if my Jekyll & Hyde story had really happened.

So before that, or any other fan can ask: This didn't happen.

This is actually the third faan fiction story I have written about Joe Walcott. In the first (in *Quip #1*), Joe had to rouse himself from the torpor of semi-gafia to preserve his FAPA membership. In the second, done a few years later, Joe had to face the problems caused by his job as a government agent.

— Arnie



for a moment; his common sense told him that there was no way an article called “Rating Corflu Hags’ Funbags” would be well-received. Stephanie, his girlfriend, would never speak to him again if he finished it, so he was almost glad when he found that he was too cowardly (or too smart) to get past the one-paragraph statement of purpose.

The memory of these two recent failures forced the long-time fan to recall the ones that had preceded it. He had a file on the hard drive crammed with false starts for faan fiction, humorous articles that didn’t have a single funny line, fanhistorical analysis that illuminated nothing and so forth and so on.

If he didn’t come up with something in the next 24 hours, he’d have to pull the plug on *Proclivity*, his Very Frequent electronic fanzine. He could edit the letters and maybe fake his way through the fanzine reviews, but he just couldn’t seem to come up with something that he could call an installment of “Off the Wallcott.”

At first he thought it might be a writer’s block. He had heard of such things, though that blight had never paid him a visit. Gradually he realized that this was something more, something worse. He was still writing his reports down at the law firm, he still wrote correspondence, posts on the listservs and correspondence. It was only when I turned to writing something for Fandom that his creativity dried up like a drop of corflu caught in an afternoon sunbeam.

With the greatest reluctance, Joe acknowledged, if only to himself, that it was time to face the Awful Truth: he had nothing left to say. He did not have a single idea, not so much as a vague topic, for his next fan article.

“Next fan article.” What a joke, thought Joe as he laughed mirthlessly.

Once it had all come so easily. He’d sit down, put his fingers on the keys and, dammit, the fannish essays just *flowed* out of him in what he, in his confident pride, had thought was an inexhaustible stream of verbiage.

He had written prolifically for years. Maybe not Chris Garcia or John Berry

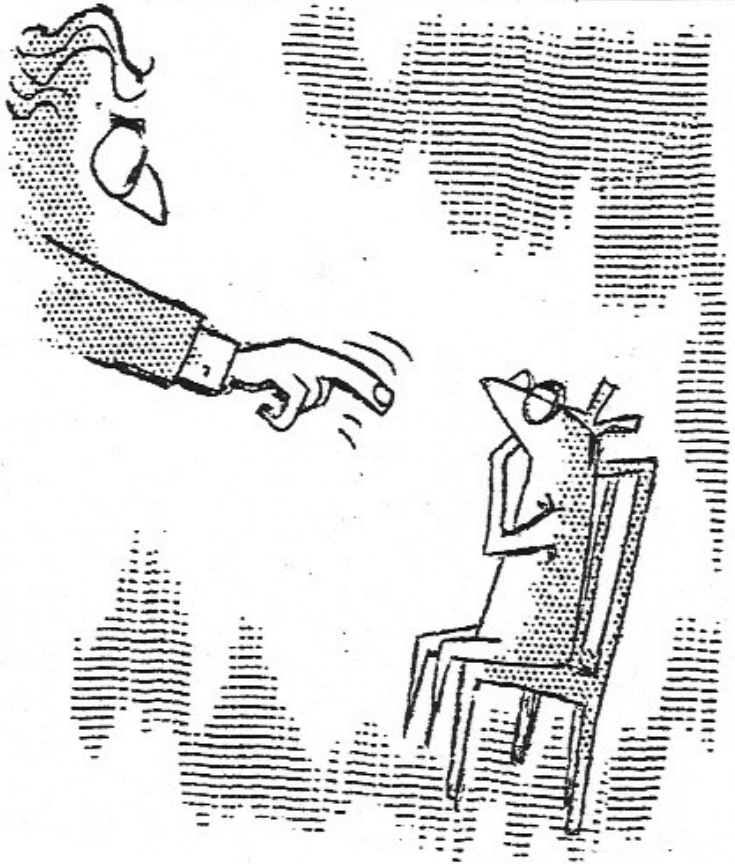
prolific, but he had written hundreds of fan articles and published many hundreds of genzines, newszines, perzines, apazines and just about every other type of fanzine that he or anyone else had invented. He had published oneshots, annuals, quarterlies, monthlies and even more frequently. *Proclivity*, now in its 56th issue, had averaged about 20 a year for nearly three years – and he had started it with hardly a break after he’d folded the all-faan fiction bimonthly *Fanacdots*.

Joe had written just about every possible type of fannish material. He’d even mentioned science fiction a few times, though he felt that it lowered the tone of his fanzines just a little. He had written funny articles and serious ones, crusading polemics and effervescent chitter chatter. He’d written about his past, his present and his future and he’d even written a number of biographical pieces about other famous fans.

Now, it was over. He had written himself out and his days of joyful fanning were finished. He didn’t know if he was the first fan to run out of things to write, but it didn’t matter. Whether he was the first or the hundredth, his career as a fan had come to a dead end.

He’d long since used up the tired old fannish





ploy of writing about his empty head. In fact, he'd also done the one where he claimed to have something important to tell the readers, but never got around to it. Joe knew with complete certainty that he could not go down those roads again.

As he sat there, frowning at his frowning reflection, Joe wondered what he would do with his spare time. He didn't think he could bear to be one of those fans who *used to write* for Fandom, but who now only come out to fan when Corflu is conveniently close to their homes. Glad as he was to see some of those once-a-year fans, Joe knew he could never be one. He had to be in the game, whatever it was, not a sideline observer. That was just his nature and he'd long ago come to terms with it.

So he sat there, thinking about the wonderful times he'd had in Fandom. It was too bad he'd written up every incidence, occurrence and happening in his entire life, many more than once, or he could have done an "Off the Wallcott" that went down Memory Lane.

While he sat there, he wondered just a bit what he was going to do to fill up the time formerly oc-

cupied by writing and publishing fanzines. He could follow Laney's example and collect stamps or maybe he could be like Ken Forman and sit in the Ozark Mountains meditating on the sunset.

Neither sounded like as much fun as doing *Proclivity*. In desperation, he typed things at random. The screen filled up with gibberish. None of it made any sense or led to anything that did.

So, it's good-bye Core Fandom, Joe said aloud. A tear slid down his sensitive fannish face and, for a moment, the wild light in his eyes dimmed to a ruddy glow.

He started to write an email to tell John Purcell that *Proclivity*, and his fanwriting career, were both as dead as Robert Heinlein. He could hardly bear to look at the words on the screen and left off typing short of finishing the letter.

Joe thought about *The Enchanted Duplicator* and *The Eighth Stage of Fandom*. He thought about *Void* and *Innuendo* and *Hyphen*.

And then he *knew*.

He had something to write about, something more to say. He didn't have an idea for next month's column, but somehow he knew that wouldn't be a problem. Once he wrote this faan fiction story, the fannish prose would flow again. He could do his fanzine and write his articles.

With new resolution, he turned his attention back to the blank *Microsoft Word* document on the screen. Eyes blazing with fannish zeal, he began to type the piece that would save him from an early gafia...

"Arnie Katz sat at his computer. The flat screen reflected his sensitive fannish face. The fan in the reflection looked very unhappy, which was exactly the way he felt."

— Arnie Katz

Roc Pile

Scent Of a Femmefan

For as long as I can remember, I've had a severely impaired sense of smell. Of course, I didn't know this when I was young, but as I got older I realized that when other people were complaining or commenting about some strong odor, I noticed nothing. It never bothered me. I never thought of myself as being impaired or handicapped in any way; it was what it was.

My diminished sense of smell actually came in handy more than once.

When I was a sophomore in high school, there was some kind of accident in the chemistry lab that involved rotten cabbage. I never knew exactly what the experiment in question was, but when it went wrong it created an odor so foul and so strong that the chem. lab and all the surrounding classrooms were evacuated with everyone gagging and choking, running from the rooms with their hands over their noses. I never smelled a thing. In fact, while the chemistry teacher and the janitor were standing in the hallway trying to figure out who was going to go in and clean up the mess, I confessed my condition and volunteered to do the job. I thought I'd be a minor hero, at least for a few minutes, but in the end all it really did was make the other kids think I was even more of a weirdo than they had previously suspected. Sigh.

As an adult, I learned to "hide" my disability. It got to be a drag trying to explain to people



who wanted me to sniff something and tell them how wonderful it smelled, or what it smelled like, that it either smelled like nothing or it smelled like soap to me.

Especially flowers and perfumes, people always want you to smell the flowers they just got or smell the new perfume they bought. But all flowers, soaps, and perfumes have always smelled the same to me. A bar of Ivory, a bottle of Channel No. 5, a dozen carnations... I couldn't tell one scent from another.

Anyway, it was easier to just pretend. I learned the trick of observation to accomplish this. Think about it. Damn near every time someone wants you to smell something, they smell it themselves first and will show some sort of reaction. They might come right out and say "Gosh, don't these smell wonderful!" or they might just wrinkle their nose, frown or smile... I learned to mimic whatever reaction they

gave. If they said it smelled nice – I agreed. If they said "Doesn't this smell like chocolate?" I agreed. If someone said "God, what is that awful smell?" I would just make an unpleasant face and shrug my shoulders. Most people outside my immediate family never knew about my olfactory handicap.



I also couldn't smell animal odors, which, in hindsight, was much more of a blessing than a curse.



A dirty litter box smelled just the same as a clean litter box to me. A wet dog didn't smell any different than a dry dog.

A freshly mowed lawn would make my eyes tingle, and I could "taste" the grass in the back of my throat, but it didn't smell any different to me than it had before the mow.

There were things I could smell, though I don't know if it smelled the same to me as it did to everyone else. Diesel fumes, for instance, have always smelled wonderfully sweet and pleasant to me. Gasoline fumes are the same. When other people were gagging at the smell of dead skunk, I would secretly smile and think "What a pretty smell..." I had no trouble smelling the ocean, though the smell of dead fish was lost to me. I could smell strawberries and apricots, but not things which were artificial versions of those scents. Oh, and bananas have always had a nice, subtle smell for me. Leather was always a good smell for, too. But by far my favorite odor has always been that of old books. The mustier, the better. I'd walk into a used bookstore and stop, close my eyes, and just breath through my nose until someone or something brought me out of my reverie. If I could have bought "old books" incense, bath soap, perfume, and air freshener, I would have!

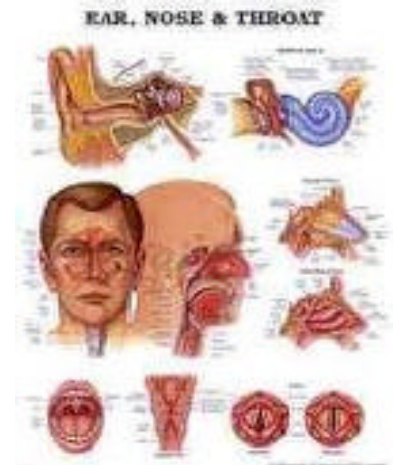
The biggest scent for me, though, has always been smoke. I could be a human smoke alarm. I can smell smoke a good fifteen minutes before anyone else can. I can smell a good brush fire a state away. I can smell a roast burning in the kitchen next door. I can smell a wood-burning fireplace from blocks away. I've also always been able to smell heat. I know, it sounds weird, but I have no other words to describe it. When something is overheating, not yet smoldering nor producing any smoke or flames, but just damn hot – I can smell it. I've prevented office fires several times by identifying electrical components that

were about to go bad – in one case it was the air conditioner about to go on the fritz and I was lucky enough to have called a repairman before anyone else knew a thing. The damn thing actually blew and sparked just a few minutes after the repairman got there.

I was traveling from California to Texas with my father once, and I smelled heat coming from the engine. Not the usual heat, either, this was different; this was not a "right" smell. I tried to tell him there was something wrong, but he insisted he couldn't smell anything and all the gauges and idiot lights were good. Must be your imagination. Two hours later, we were stuck at the side of the road with a blown radiator.

Now, I've always had health issues of one sort or another. When I wasn't falling down and breaking something, or getting hit by something, I was down with the flu, suffering from allergies, having a bad tummy day, just about everything you could think of. In grade school, I collected broken arms the way other kids collected baseball cards. In high school, I switched to concussions and other head injuries. This, too, I learned to live with and accept. It didn't bother me or upset me, because I knew there were plenty of other people in the world who had it much worse than I did. And it wasn't like I was constantly suffering... more like often inconvenienced. My point being that I saw a lot of doctors and a lot of doctors saw me. Never once did any of them mention that something was wrong with my nose... at least, not until I was in college.

I was seeing an ear, nose, and throat specialist about a nasty flu that had turned into a sinus infection. After my second examination, the doctor actually asked me if I had a diminished sense of smell. Well, yes, I admitted. The doctor told me that my sinus membranes (or something like that) were under-developed... they had never com-



pleted growing and that was why I couldn't smell things the way other people could. He offered me a cure.

Now I wasn't in any great hurry to have a "normal" sense of smell, because I

had gotten along just fine for 20 plus years the way I was. My mother seemed to think it was important, though, and with her encouragement I went ahead and tried the treatment. This treatment was in the form of a small capsule filled with a corti-



son who was really consciously aware of my condition, stopped to smell the little white flowers. Without thinking about it, I stepped forward and leaned into the tree for a sniff. "Wow," I said, "those really smell terrific." And we continued walking.

I don't think we got more than 75 feet before my mother stopped dead in her tracks, turned and looked at me with huge eyes and said, "Wait a minute! Did you actually smell those?" I nodded, we both whirled around and raced back to that tree. It was wonderful, marvelous, such a lovely scent. The people in the cars driving by must have thought we were nuts the way we were fondling that tree and me stuffing flowers into my face. But it sure was a treat.

I didn't end up maintaining the treatment for one simple reason... it wasn't a cure in the usual sense. The only way I could maintain my sense of smell was to continue with the every-two-hours treatment for the rest of my life! Having smelled a few yucky things in the days that followed the orange blossoms, it wasn't that difficult a decision to make.

Jump forward twenty years...

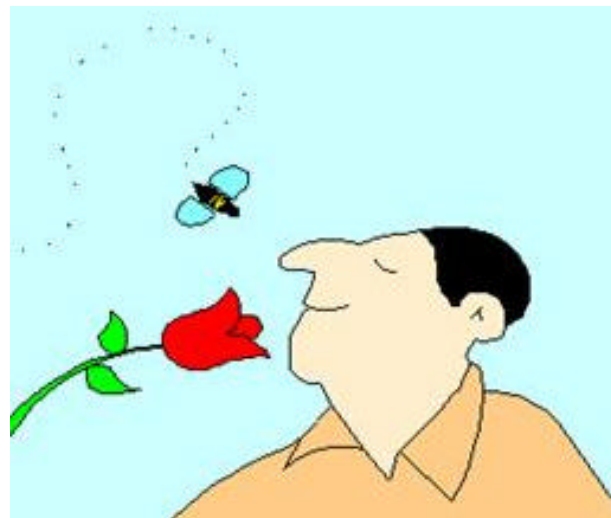
Earlier this year, after having been mistakenly diagnosed – and treated for two months – for an eye infection that didn't exist (that's a whole 'nother story for another time), I was finally referred to an ENT – the first I'd seen since those college days. Tests were done, scans were taken, and I was informed that what I had was a very severely deviated septum and a grossly enlarged



sone powder. I had to place the capsule inside a device that looked a lot like one of those pocket asthma inhalers – except this thing had a mini guillotine inside. Instead of spraying a mist when the plunger

was depressed, the blade would cut open the capsule and a small fan at the bottom of the device, also activated when you depressed the plunger, would blow the powered contents of the capsule out the opening. I had to hold the device to my nostrils instead of my mouth... and I had to do this every two hours for the treatment to work. Needless to say, this got very old and very inconvenient very fast. Two weeks of this silly and undignified regime and I'd just about had enough... especially since I hadn't noticed any change in my ability to smell things.

Then one Saturday my mother and I were walking over to the local market when we passed an orange tree in full bloom. My mother, the only





middle turbinate (one of the sinuses). Surgery was recommended, and I was promised all kinds of wonderful changes if everything went right. Fewer headaches, fewer colds, fewer sinus infections, and, drum role please, a normal sense of smell.

At the time, the whole sense of smell thing was the least of my concerns. Not having headaches almost every day, not coming down with a cold or flu every few weeks... *those* things meant something to me and so I agreed to the surgery immediately.

There were, of course, complications – nothing is ever easy for me when it comes to medical issues – but those are part of that other story I mentioned.

When I finally had the splints removed from my nose and was told that I now had a sense of smell just like everyone else, I didn't really know what to expect. I couldn't, and still can't, remember much of those few days in college when I could smell things. I walked out of the clinic and took a careful sniff. I smelled air. Normal, every day air that didn't smell any different that day than it had a month before. I was a little disappointed – but in for a big surprise.

Because of those complications I mentioned, we had to go to the pharmacy to fill an antibiotic prescription before we went home. The pharmacy

closest to our house, and the one we use 99% of the time, is located inside of an Albertson's grocery store. With a full service deli, bakery, and Starbucks also located inside the same store.

Looking forward to testing my new sense of smell, I marched straight to the bakery area – holding my breath until I was standing in the center of all the smell sources. Then I took a slow, deep breath through my nose... and nearly choked! Oh My God! It was devastating, overwhelming, unbelievable, and AWFUL. My eyes watered and I began to gag and laugh. My poor husband was trying to be supportive, trying not to laugh, shaking his head and saying "I was afraid of this." Apparently, he had the foresight to imagine the horrors of suddenly having a sense of smell where none had existed before. I couldn't believe it. It was like a bad joke. I kept looking around for the guy with a big tank of "smells awful" who was responsible for all this. I rushed over to the pharmacy area and begged for a tissue so I could cover my nose and mouth. I had to retreat to the back of store while we waited for the prescription because the food smells were just too much for me.

During my retreat I discovered that the soap aisle was also not a good place for me to be; but the coffee and bread aisle wasn't quite as bad. I finally hid out in the frozen foods section where the cold air helped to soothe my burning sinuses. I was as much amused by my predicament as I was horrified. Was I ever going to be able to enter a grocery store without gagging? This would diminish, wouldn't it? I'd get accustomed to the smells eventually, wouldn't I? Calm down, I told myself, it's only the first day. Maybe tomorrow, or the next day, it wouldn't be so bad.

That's what I thought, anyway. And to some extent it's true, it just didn't happen as quickly as I had hoped. It's been just over three weeks since that horrible day in the grocery store, and I'm still learning to deal with my new sense of smell. I still breathe through my mouth when in that Albertson's, and do my best to avoid the food court area. The soap aisle in any grocery store still stings and irritates my sinuses something awful.

I was surprised to discover how much odor my pets have, and have adjusted my cleaning habits in an effort to control it. One doesn't think of

iguanas as being smelly creatures, but believe me they are. Our ferret, thank goodness, still smells pretty much the same to me. I find the musky scent of a clean ferret to be quite pleasant – I don't think they stink at all and I am relieved that still holds true. The cat still smells like a cat, but our litter box gets cleaned a lot more often than it used to. I was also surprised to discover that even our fish tank has a strong odor of its own, regardless of how recently I've cleaned it or how clear the water is. Who knew?

Of course, the best part is all the good smells. Bread is magical, freshly brewed coffee is heavenly, and I got to smell my very first flowers that didn't smell like soap (not counting those orange blossoms twenty years ago). I think they were chrysanthemums, and they smelled quite purple to me. I've yet to smell roses, but my mother-in-law let me smell some gardenia perfume and it was very pretty if a bit strong.

Speaking of perfumes, I'd like to just strangle those people who feel that have to dump half a bottle of perfume or cologne or aftershave on themselves before going out in public. There have been at least two occasions since my surgery where I have had to leave my office because a client was wearing so much scent that it literally made me ill.

Foods are tasting better, which I was told to expect but was skeptical about. My appetite has increased, and that's probably a good thing as long as it doesn't go too far. And I have noticed much fewer headaches; though I still get sinus pain because technically I am not yet fully recovered. I had my final follow-up with my sinus surgeon a few days ago. The good news is that my septum is



still straight as an arrow (I think he's so proud of his work that he wants to put me in his resume); the bad news is that the doctor said I can expect to have continued sensitivity to pressure (touch) for as much as 8-12 weeks more! Oh well, I guess it's a small price to pay for the pleasure of enjoying the smell of fresh baked pizza, a field of flowers in bloom.... and though I've yet to visit a used bookstore... I just can't wait!

-- Roxanne Mills

A Small Circle of Friends **Las Vegrants**

Joyce answered the first knock at a little before 7:00, which was unusual. I'm generally the one who rushes to fling wide the portal. Joyce likes it that way. I think the theory is that if it's international terrorists or home invaders, I will absorb the initial contact, allowing her to escape. I keep pointing out the flaw, but Joyce assures me it is entirely logical.

Once again, my luck held. The knock belonged to James Taylor and with him was Teresa Cochran, armed with nothing more lethal than her newly purchased harp.

I expected a small meeting. I knew a few Vegrants were out of town and I hadn't heard from any of the semi-regulars. That was both good and bad. We'd had a run of large gatherings. Knowing that the most prominent Vegrants were the likeliest to be there made it pleasing change of pace.

Teresa excitedly told us that she and James are going to England and Scotland for the second half of December. It's some deal about traded time-shares and benevolent relatives, but the end result is that they are Crossing the Big Pond. I hope British Fandom, will swing into action and grab this chance to meet this charming fan couple.

Kent Hastings arrived right after James and Teresa. Work on Neil Shulman's indy movie had kept him extremely busy and the round trip from Pahrump is a serious time commitment.

Kent insured a warm welcome by bringing a pizza.

With everything. It turned out that the early arrivals had almost all skipped dinner and fell on the pizza like a pack of - of... well, fans.

Teresa is learning harp. She played a little and has a characteristically light touch. She appears to be learning to play it very rapidly, probably because she already plays several stringed instruments quite well. I thought it would be nice if James learned some of those Irish dances to accompany Teresa's harping, but he assured me that he is only a *Private* of the Dance.

Movie talk dominated the living room once all the Vegrants arrived. There was much favorable

comment about the Cineholics' selection the previous evening, Garrison Keeler's movie *A Prairie Home Companion*. We weren't able to go, because Joyce's pain level was particularly high on Friday, but Alan White generously loaned us the DVD.

Lori Forbes called to say that she was going see Tony Bennett. I didn't blame her. He's not a favorite of mine, but you have to recognize good work even when it isn't to your taste.

Inevitably, Nevada's election season political scandals got an airing. Without going into *all* the mud-slinging, but the opinion among the Vegrants is divided on the question of whether gubernatorial candidate Jim Gibbons walked the drunken waitress into the parking lot and tried to force his attentions on her. On one hand, there seems to be some corroborative testimony; yet it's hard to believe that Gibbons would be so stupid two weeks before Election Day. I'm voting for Dina Titus, anyway, so my interest is purely academic (and prurient).

Bill Mills resuscitated Joyce's Omnichord, an electronic instrument that stopped playing about a decade ago. It's a strange gizmo with keys like a chord organ and a strum bar. Joyce brought it to Teresa, who noodled musically while Kent and James supervised the end-of-meeting clean-up.

Gathering at the Launch Pad were: James Taylor, Teresa Cochran, Ross Chamberlain, Alan White, Kent Hastings, Lubov, Merric Anderson, Joyce Katz and... -- Arnie



James Taylor and Teresa Cochran

SNAFFU Central SF or Fantasy?

There was a brass band out to meet us as we arrived at the 10/22 SNAFFU Discussion Meeting. OK, no brass band met us, but there was one playing in the Library's Jewel Theater.

Libraries have certainly... evolved. You'd think that nothing could be more antithetical to a library than a brass band.

Nonetheless, the band was in the Jewel Theater. Fortunately, excellent sound proofing made it a barely audible rumble in the room set aside for the group's monthly session. (James Taylor and Teresa Cochran, who attended the concert, pronounced it very good.

SNAFFU President Michael Bernstein and club stalwarts Linda and Ron

Bushyager were already there when we arrived. It didn't take long to rearrange some of the chairs into the desired circle. I thought it was overly ambitious, but subsequent events proved me wrong. Three non-fans making their first visit to the club, one making his second, and local fan Robert Aynsworth coming to what may have been his first SNAFFU Discussion Meeting swelled atten-

Why 'SF or Fantasy?'

An important part of most SNAFFU Discussion Meetings is the designated topic. There are always lots of other items on the agenda, but the Main Topic gives *all* members a chance to air their opinions. Everyone participates, which makes the meeting a lot livelier than when two or three fans dominate the chatter.

Sometimes, the most basic topics turn out to be the best. This time, the question up discussion was: "Science Fiction or Fantasy — which do you prefer and why?"

Scattered through this report, presented more or less in chronological order, are the distilled comments of the fans who spoke at the meeting. These are not exact quotes, though I worked from digital recordings to insure that each entry accurately portrays that person's opinion.

VFW readers are, of course, invited to share their views on this topic in the next letter column.

dance enough that we had to *enlarge* the circle.

Joyce and I have together for over 36 years, so we look like a good bet for the long haul. However, if a divorce should eventuate in the future, you will be able to pinpoint the start of the trouble from Sunday 10/29. I will never forget



SF or Fantasy? I'm not much of a fantasy fan, but at Halloween, I like the classics that you associate with the holiday, so I've returned to *Weird Tales*, Hodgson and Lovecraft. I've been reading about creepy, scary things, the sort that you glimpse out of the corner of your eye and never quite know what it is.

I don't like slasher stuff at all and I am not into gore. But I definitely *do* like Frankenstein, Dracula, werewolves and things. **Joyce Katz**

SF or Fantasy? It's certainly not an either/or choice. There's no reason that the same person can't like both, since each appeals to different aspects of the human psyche. Science Fiction appeals to our logical, reasonable and rational side, while Fantasy appeal to the id, to our imaginative side. I prefer science fiction, but I also enjoy Fantasy from *The Incomplete Enchanter* to *Lord of the Rings*.

Arnie Katz

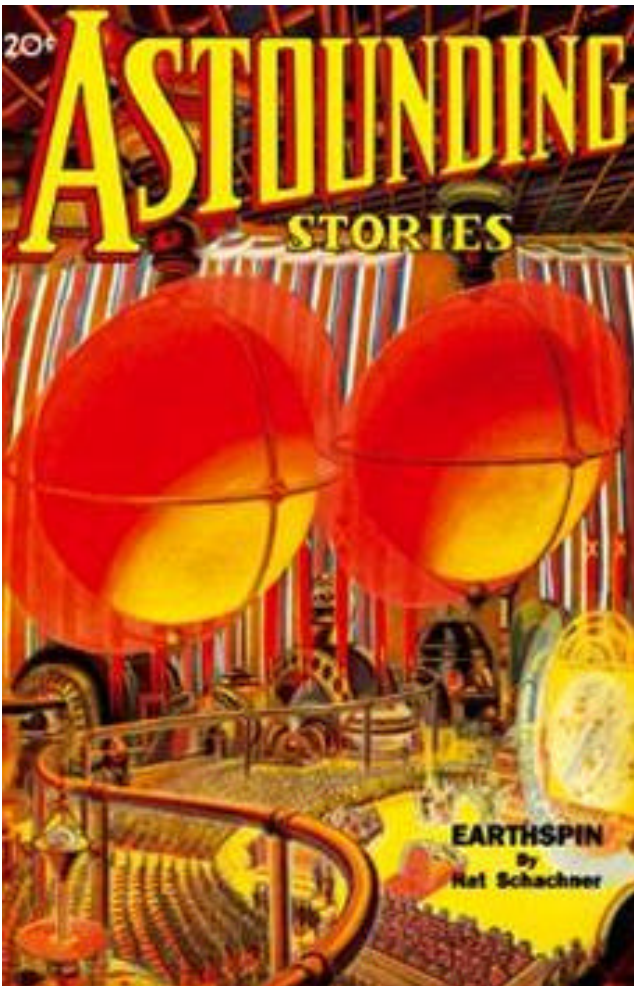
that it was on that fateful, foul day that Joyce did the single most horrible thing she has ever done to me – and that includes her unprovoked physical assault. Truly, she committed the type of sin that

lands people on *Jerry Springer*.

It started innocently enough, I suppose. Robert Ainsworth complained about not knowing about a local fan event.

I pointed out that the information is in *VFW*, which comes directly to his email box. That was too much trouble, he told us, and added a vague comment that suggested someone should have called him. I guess an engraved invitation would've been all right, too.

That's when Joyce spoke the words that will live in fannish infamy:



“You don’t have to read *VFW*; you can just delete it when it arrives.”

Jean Roger, best-known as Dale Arden in the pre-WW II *Flash Gordon* movie serials.

SF or Fantasy? Some might think that, because I'm female, I would automatically prefer Fantasy, but I like Science Fiction. Not that I don't like Fantasy, but many stories are often set in a Medieval world with little room for social mobility. Fantasy tends to be set in pre-industrial or anti-industrial societies in which women, for the most part are spilling out of their bodices or washing the dishes.

Technology is probably the best leveler between the sexes.

Jolie LaChance

SF or Fantasy?

I think Science Fiction and Fantasy are growing closer and closer together. I'm more of a watcher than a reader. I don't read that many books, but I see a lot of movies and TV shows like *Babylon Five*, that embody a "fantasy philosophy." It has elements like magicians, even though it is set in the future and features advanced technology, too.

Robert Aynsworth

The room spun and I flew toward a Great White Light. I could hear the sounds of a room party, though I couldn't tell if it was the Enchanted Convention or the Netherregional.

Suddenly, I heard the Irish lilt of Walter A. Willis, relaxing and soothing, telling me, "Go back, Arnie! Go back! Your father must have been a fisherman, because you have reverted to tripe!"

They revived me to consciousness, fanning me with a copy of *Banana Wings*, we keep on hand for such purposes.

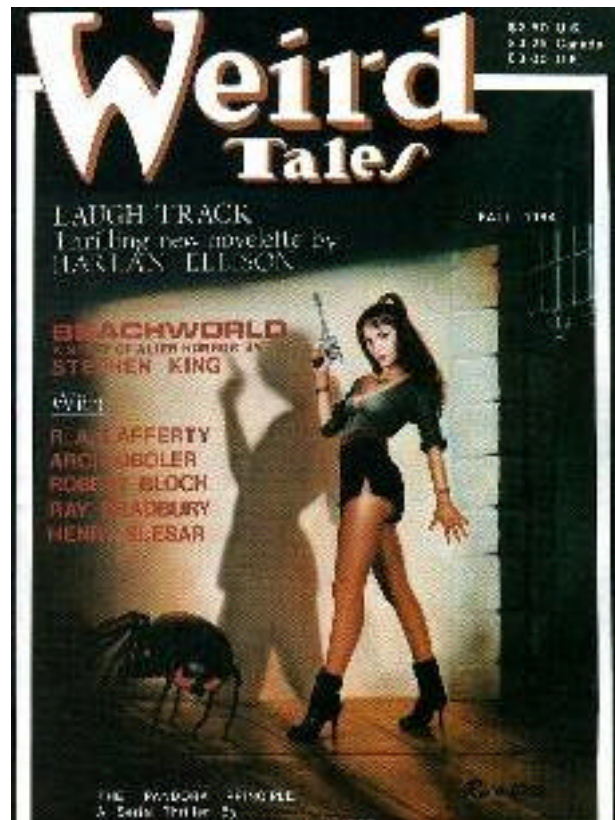
Joyce had blithely violated the sanctity of the Faned's Creed. My fanzine not indispensable, "must read" fanac for the entire microcosm? Such an admission is dangerously close to reality.

And to think, Joyce herself is a fanzine editor and could say something so lowdown.

The shame of it, the bloody fakefannish shame.

Linda Bushyager had a very good idea for increasing the accessibility of the club to those who might be looking for such an organization. She is starting a Yahoo Group for SNAFFU that will link to the Google groups the club already has.

Invisibility was the subject of Joyce's Science Report. As she explained, buttressed by some



SF or Fantasy?

While thinking about this question, coming up with my answer was quick, but the explanation came much harder. I kept coming up with these two- and three-hour explanations that even I didn't understand. I kept getting farther and farther away from an answer.

My answer is that Science Fiction is the only thing I *will* read. I don't believe I could live long enough to read all the Science Fiction I'd like to read. I don't want to offend anyone who likes Fantasy, but my preference goes all the way back to my roots, *Fahrenheit 451*. I'm happy just to see people reading! I had custody of my niece and nephew for a long time and I couldn't bribe them to read a book.

The reason I like Science Fiction so much is that it is believable to me. I can put myself into the story, because I think it's possible.

This week, I was reading some of the things that Heinlein said 50 years ago that are very true in this country right now. These SF authors are visionaries who can create stories and concepts that are plausible even if they don't actually turn out to come true

Joe Richards

SF or Fantasy?

I really have no preference. I probably read more Fantasy than Science Fiction, because it's easier. I'm a slow reader, and I read stuff other than science fiction as well. I read the dreaded romance novels. There's a lot of fantasy, and even some science fiction, in them. Romances aren't the bodice-rippers everybody thinks they are. There are some actual good authors out there writing romances.

I read something, because it sounds like it has a good story. It doesn't matter to me if it's Science Fiction, Fantasy, Romance, Historical or another category.

Rebecca Hardin

timely additional details from Ron Bushyager, scientists have discovered invisibility on the atomic level.

After Joyce waxed enthusiastic about a couple of SF book releases that she will never read, Linda presented a concise and informative *Dr. Who* update. The show has two spin-offs coming, one of which is already airing in the UK. That show, which focuses on Sarah Jane and (presumably) K-9, is aimed at younger viewers, while the forthcoming *Torchwood* targets adult viewers.

Michael Bernstein, the resident book reviewer, commented on Kim Stanley Robinson's Mars trilogy and highly recommend it. He praised the sweep of the three novels and praised the multi-generational plot.

Michael showed the range of his taste by also covering a new graphic novel called *Grease Monkey*. It's main concept is that, after 90% of the human population dies, other species are "uplifted" to fill in the gap.

Jolie LaChance put in a good word for *The Chronicles of Narnia*. She was prepared to defend it against the criticism that it is for kids, but instead

got widespread support for her recommendation.

That led to a more general conversation about a new generation of "young adult" novels. Michael pushed the *Jupiter* series as one that evokes an updated version of what young readers once found in the Asimov and Heinlein juveniles.

And *that* led, for unguessable reasons, to Joyce ragging Michael about why he "wastes time" reading children's books. The victim defended himself, pointing out that many such books are written on more than one level and have something for adults as well as the young ones.



SF or Fantasy?

This is a slightly awkward topic for me, because I don't draw a sharp line between Science Fiction and Fantasy.

In line with Halloween, Linda and I were talking about which has the scarier stories, Science Fiction or Fantasy. I said, "Science Fiction, definitely," because it is grounded in fact, in reality, which makes it scarier to me. I pulled out a very frightening story by a Science Fiction writer who also happened to be an RN about the experience she had shrouding a corpse. She told it extremely well. The thing is, it could be a scary thing, late at night, when a dead person groans and moans, like a new corpse can certainly do.

My point is that it is how well a story is told, not it's category, that matters. A good piece is going to be good, no matter how you categorize it. A mediocre piece is going to be just that.

Ron Bushyager

SF or Fantasy? All things being equal, I like Science Fiction and Fantasy about equally. But I find that the market for Fantasy is so much more forgiving that a lot more crap gets published. It's a lot harder for me to find good Fantasy than it is Science Fiction/

The pseudo-Medieval settings that are so easily digestible for many people are completely without rigor. The equivalent in Science Fiction is turning cowboy stories into rocketships and ray guns.

Fantasy's stylistic anachronisms just get copied by newer authors over and over again. A lot of the current stuff is merely one author copying another author copying another author. Eventually, it comes down to somebody who was copying Tolkien. There seems to be less originality in Fantasy, because the people who buy it aren't really looking for originality. They're looking for comfort food. They like stories that are set in a world that is contrary to what we know to be real.

Science Fiction fans are more demanding. They won't let authors get by with slapping glossy paint on something old and tired. **Michael Bernstein**

Next Meeting

The main topic on the agenda for the next SNAFFU Discussion Meeting, scheduled for November 26, is quite a change from recent ones. This time, the focus is neither SF nor Fandom, exactly, but rather the club itself.

On the table is an exciting proposal for a new SNAFFU activity that could eventually connect our local Fandom to others around the world. The suggestion is to establish a memorial grove for the greats of Science Fiction and Fandom.

Vice President Joyce Katz will explain the nuts-and-bolts info about the project and then we'll talk about whether we want to do this, what it will take and what the guidelines should be.

There'll be a lot more stuff at the meeting, but that discussion could be one of the most important moments in recent Las Vegas fanhistory.

SF or Fantasy? I like SF and I'm not as fond of Fantasy, but what I really like is Science Fantasy. That's Fantasy, but with scientific roots based in reality. Andre Norton is my top all-time writer and a lot of her books are Science Fantasy.

Ron and I were talking about what is scarier, something like a zombie created through supernatural means or a zombie that has a scientific basis for its existence. There are places where bad people give drugs to friends and family and strangers that makes them into zombies! Then these zombies become slaves of other people, based on the reality of these drugs. In the culture, they persuade others that these zombies are dead folks brought back to life.

So, what is more scary, a supernatural zombie or one made using such a drug? The SF version is scarier, isn't it? **Linda Bushyager**

Continued from p 1

ing Friday evening's Cineholics meeting at the home of Alan and DeDee White (podmogul@mac.com). The group is invitational, but the Whites are very approachable while limited seating lasts.

A typical "meeting" consists of a little pre-film socializing, a movie selected by Head Projectionist Alan White, delicious and abundant food and informal discussion after the flick.

Heard Around Fandom...

Su Williams has returned from her cruise down the Rhine River. She apparently enjoyed the cruise, but she took home an unwelcome keepsake in the form of a semi-mysterious illness. They're giving her antibiotics and we hope to see her in full vigor by the next Vegants meeting...

Greg Benford, physicist, author, lecturer, BNF (and my former co-editor) plans to visit Las Vegas early in the New Year. He'll be here to give a speech and conduct some business, but we're hoping to give Greg a chance to meet some of the Las Vegas fans...

Bill Kunke is now the top editorial person at *Tips & Tricks* magazine. LFP Publications signed him up as a consultant and has now put him in overall charge of leading the publication's turn-around...

Shelby Vick is a happy granddad once again! He has a new baby granddaughter (as yet unnamed), 6 lbs., 8 oz. Congratulations!...

Ken Forman, job-hunting since the cave closed for the winter, has an income source again. He's working at a bowling alley in the Flippin area. I'd change his nickname from "Mainspring" to "Kingpin," but that would just create confusion with The Kingfish. Besides, I'll bet he'll be back in the cave, battling those Deros to a standstill when the weather turns warm again.

Chatback: The VFW Letter Column

Let's get right to it without delay, because there are some mighty intriguing letters on hand this week.

Let's lead off this installment with a Modest Proposal from a big-time con-runner who is mak-

ing his first appearance in "ChatBack"...

Craig Miller

Thanks for the latest VFW. An off-the-top suggestion for a new title, if you truly feel the need for more truth-in-naming:

Vegas Fandom Weekly-Ish

It's not really weekly but it's still weekly-ish (in that you're trying for weekly and will sometimes succeed) and it's got the bonus of a fannish pun, since it's your weekly "ish"

Arnie: I don't think that's quite the Right Name, but must admit that it embodies the spirit of the zine's original motto: Las Vegas' sort of weekly newszine."

Bob Tucker and the future of Core Fandom are on the mind of one of ChatBack's top contributors...

John Purcell

Arnie, the article I sent to you - soon to appear in *In A Prior Lifetime #16* - says it all about how I feel about Bob Tucker. He was one of those people who seemed indestructible in real life. At least in my memories he will live on. These next few weeks, if not months, of fan writing throughout our microcosm should be an incredible journey through the life and influence of Bob Tucker. You weren't kidding; Tucker was a transcendent figure, and always will be so. He will be missed, but man, did he bless us with wonderful memories.

A name change for VFW? How about something like *Vegas Fandom Wealty?* No? Well, I'll keep thinking about it.

Core fandom has a definite future, and it may not require building a fannish retirement community, although that would be a most intriguing set-up. I think the idea of taking over a small town would be our best bet. Al Ashley's concept of building a Slan Community rears its mangy head when I think of this, but It Just Might Work. My wife and I have talked about how great it would be to live in Eureka, since the geeks and freaks there would fit right in with fans. Somehow I get the feeling that a fannish community would be like a 24/7 consuite. Do you think anybody would ever get tired of living that way? If so, we could always set up a distant suburb - Gafiaville - off on the

SNAPShots: Purcell's in!

The November SNAPS eMailing will include at least one new name on the roster, John Purcell. The active and popular Texas-based fan thus becomes the fourth member of the monthly electronic apa from outside southern Nevada.

As the group's Official Editor (OE), I'd like to invite all of you to participate. It's fun, it's free and it's a way to get to know some very interesting folks.

The SNAPS concept is fairly simple. Members write whatever they want and send the file to the OE (me). I meld them into one electronic bundle and send it to everyone on the SNAPS roster. You can check out a sample disty at www.snuffu.org and you can write to me directly with any questions.

This is really easy to do with a high return of enjoyment. Hope you'll give the eMailing a look.

— Arnie

Deadline for Nov. eMailing: 11/12

cliffs overlooking a nearby river. One push...

That illo on page 4 looks like one that I purloined from the Corflu website, and is appearing in my next issue. Great photos of the mimeo equipment. Reminds me of that A.B. Dick mimeo I bought at a Goodwill store in St. Paul, Minnesota for \$10 back in 1976. After a couple of aborted attempts to produce zines on that beastie after cleaning it up, I donated it to Erik Biever, who really knew his way around a mimeo, after my brother had landed a job as printer for Apache Corporation in downtown Minneapolis. My zine printing costs were merely supplying the paper and a case of beer, which, in those days, was nothing compared to what both cost now. Oh, how I wish I hadn't thrown away those plans for that time machine.

Great pictures accompanying the worldcon reports. The one that really struck home was the "Big Hearted Howard Devore" (sic) photo. In early August, Howard's daughter Karol contacted me since I had access to Joe Sanders' book *Science Fiction Fandom*, for which Howard had written a chapter, "A Science Fiction Collector." Karol and her sisters were putting out a reprint of that chapter for the worldcon, and I'm wondering if anybody out there grabbed a copy; I am wondering how well the reprint turned out.

Oh, boy! A photo caption contest! I love photo caption contests! Why is Lubov praying? No, Arnie. Luba isn't praying, at least not in the conventional sense of the word. What Luba is actually

doing is showing Denny Lien - a very tall Minn-stf fan - that hand-chapel finger visual that goes with the attendant rhyme. This photo was obviously taken when Luba was at the part that goes "Up on the hill, there is a chapel," just before her two index fingers create the steeple. It's obvious. End of contest. So what do I win?

I think Lisa Spenser and Frank Wu are jazzercizing down the concourse. My guess is that the papers in Frank's left hand are diagrams of the exercises.

Now that you and I have that SNAPS snafu out of the way, I look forward to being involved in that apa. See you in there as well, fellow faned.

Great letter column again. I don't have any real comments to add here, so I think I shall sign off and get back to grading on-line papers that my students have sent in. It's midterm conferencing next week, and these fine scholars are supposed to get printed reports on their grades. Not a problem.

Arnie: I left it in the bit about your Tucker tribute, because I wanted to be sure and draw everyone's attention to that issue of In a Prior Lifetime. Get it at efanzines.com.

I remember Denny. Will he now burst forth with a torrent of activity?

Yes, "Eureka" should be our inspiration. We may not be as smart, but we are at least as freaky and much more colorful.

Robert Lichtman

The Tucker memorial VFW spoke eloquently for itself, but I found a few comment hooks here and there and I guess I'll use them up before filing it away. First, even over forty years later and not being there myself I can completely relate to the awe and wonderment you convey so well in your encounter with Vic Ryan's "boxes of catalogued fanzines" in the back of Bob's station wagon.

How wonderful for you at that stage of your fanish career that you not only had access to *reading* choice old fanzines but could actually begin a collection of them at Bob's bargain basement prices.

You write, "I've never sold fanzines for money in preference to giving them to people I thought might care about them." My own record in this regard is, as you know, a mixed one. Back in the early '70s when I was pretty far removed from fandom and then faced an imminent move to Tennessee, I both sold and gave away my fanzine collection—even including my file copies of my own publications. I've always particularly regretted the latter, even though over time I've pretty much reassembled almost everything I published back then (and certainly everything of any consequence—the only things I don't have are the first two issues of my Cultzine, *Acculturations*). Since coming back to fandom I've built a much larger and deeper collection than I had before leaving, which is saying something because I had a damn' fine collection back then. I've been helped by the generosity of various of our fan fathers who passed on their collections to me, and I in turn have passed on great gobs of surplus fanzines over the years.

But I've also sold them. I first got into this when I was administering TAFF back in 1989 through 1992 as a fund-raising effort. This gave me a set of Likely Suspects which I mined when Dick Ellington asked me to sell off his fanzine collection shortly before he passed away in 1991. I took no money for that effort, instead agreeing that I could keep a reasonable number of fanzines I really wanted, and raised a couple thousand dollars for his widow, Pat. Late in the '90s I performed a similar function for Noreen Shaw, raising about the same amount of money and on the same terms regarding fanzines for my own collection. More recently I ran a fanzine auction for the Bring Bruce Bayside fund, donating almost all of the fanzines

for the effort. And earlier this year I auctioned off a few more fanzines to raise money for publishing *Trap Door*.

Over time I've also engaged in a lot of back-and-forth fanzine trading with other fans for our mutual benefit, and have contributed fanzines to various other fund-raising efforts beyond the ones mentioned above. I feel pretty good about my overall record, on balance.

One of my favorite lines in your piece on Bob has to do with his modesty as a joint fan and professional: "In this day, when people who pay to have their books published strut around like they're Robert A. Heinlein, Tucker's aplomb in seamlessly blending the fan and pro aspects of his life is worthy of fans' respect and pros' emulation." Indeed!

I've been continuing my belated reading of Bob's books, and am currently nearly through *The Science-Fiction Sub-Treasury*. Many of the stories are familiar to me, which makes me think I might have read it forty-plus years ago in its abridged paperback edition, *Time:X*. Next up is *The Warlock*, and then I'm going to return to his science fiction and read the two "Gilbert Nash" novels, *The Time Masters* and *Time Bomb*. I am enjoying myself, but still wish Bob was around so I could e-mail him about my progress.

Arnie: Selling fanzines for a good cause, as you have done several times in recent years, is more to be applauded than considered a sign of commercialism. Not having engaged in that activity myself, my fanzine transactions are giveaways. I don't think it's evil to sell fanzines; I just have never gotten into it.

Here's a letter from a fan who is currently out of Las Vegas, but always in Las Vegas' fannish hearts...

John DeChancie

Keep the VFW's coming, whatever you end up calling it. How about THE COMPLEAT VEGAN? No, sounds like a vegetarian newsletter. How about NOUVELLE VEGAS? Nah, too hoity-toity. If you want to widen the local context, change it to FANTASIA. But maybe Disney would object. How about THRILLING MERRIC STORIES? You do realize the Andersons feature

prominently in just about every ish of your zine? Well, they make good copy. I have no idea what Luba is doing praying, by the way, or to whom or to what she is directing her supplications. I'm praying she stays my friend, because I like her so much. And Merric, too, the big oaf.

I especially enjoyed Teresa's and James's Worldcon reports. And no, I was NOT the pro named John sleeping on the lobby couch; and besides, I wasn't sleeping, just generating alpha waves. I am flattered that Teresa thinks my piano maunderings "beautiful." Now I just have to find out what all those lines and dots mean on the sheet music. I'm told you have to figure this out to be really good.

I had a fine time at the con myself. Even my fan showed up. I attended the Hugo Award ceremony, but they didn't call my name. I thought it was a longshot, as I didn't publish anything last year. But I sat there hoping anyway. There's always the chance of a write-in vote. I had my acceptance speech in my pocket, just in case.

Again, keep the zines coming. I certainly can use them.. After all, unlike Pah-rump, gambling and brothels are illegal in LA. There is absolutely nothing to do here! It's always the same old boring crap.

Arnie: If there's one thing worse than being hoity, it's being toity.



Some of the stories about Merric are more chilling than thrilling, but I think we should reserve all such titles for the day on which Merric overcomes his fear and bursts forth as the excellent fanwriter we Vegrants know he can be.

Here with some thoughts on Harlan Ellison and other relevant topics, is a recent addition to the letter brigade – and a very welcome one, indeed...

Terry Kemp

As to Robert Lichtman and Chris Garcia: Re: Bill Donaho

I wasn't certain I should mention it, as a rather disturbing part of my stay at Bill's house. The naked guy, complete with long black hair and beard, was wandering around the house.

I finally caught up with him when I returned home from the university. He was lying on the bed in the study, which was the room I had been a loaned to stay in. It was a very nice little room with wall-to-ceiling bookcases filled with paperback books.

Well, the naked guy was laying down on the bed reading a paperback copy of *Ringworld* by Niven. By the time I showed up he had managed to ransack all my luggage and find my very last (hidden) clean t-shirt. It was a favorite which I had acquired during a visit

TVOF Topics: More Content!

Want to hear the toast the Vegrants made to Tucker or a fannish radio show? Check out Bill Mills' The Voices of Fandom (<http://thevoicesoffandom.com>.) It is evolving into a highly entertaining and diverse site-based electronic fanzine.

Bill is an audio professional and it certainly shows in the technical excellence of everything he posts on TVOF. Content includes fannish anecdotes, music and a lot of things Bill thought you might enjoy hearing. There's also a forum where you can comment.

— Arnie

from the University of Guadalajara, complete with blue campus logo.

He had it wrapped around his dick and while reading was beating-off into it. (I have never found Niven erotic, but to each his or her

own.) It's enough to say that when I left, I left the t-shirt behind. I always wondered what Bill thought of the soiled and stained item when he crossed paths with it. Probably something not very nice about me. Oh, well...

Wilson Tucker & Harlan Ellison

As always, it is sad when one of the great fans and writers of science fiction passes. I hardly knew Tucker, but I do remember him attending many parties at my father's house. Of note was one such party which was fully documented by my father in his July 15, 1959 edition of SaFari for the 47th SAPS mailing. (I was there also, having a great time, watching the greats trip over the little kid who was always underfoot.) I include a photo (which was printed in that issue) of Harlan and Tucker in front of some of father's books and paintings. Clearly, the best of friends. I have often taken a magnifying glass to the photo to read the titles of various books in it, such as those by Gnome Press and Advent:Publishers.

The Ray Nelson, McCauley, William Terry and Hannes Bok paintings are all also part of my cherished childhood memories. Now, all long gone. I'll leave the story of the party for my father to retell, or to reprint from *SaFari* #2.

I was also saddened to read in your last issue that Harlan has announced his retirement. I have long admired the man, and as a child and young boy, followed him around conventions and parties, camera in hand. Any who know him are well versed in his spellbinding ability to hold a crowd entranced while entertaining them with anecdotes of his contractual problems.

I well recollect his anger and fierce bellicose harangues at various fans when they would bring



Harlan Ellison (left) chats with Bob Tucker.

his lesser-known, pornographic works (written under various pseudonyms) to him to autograph. Loud displays complete with ripping up valuable copies, refusing to sign "that trash." I have heard that he has mellowed with time, and now acknowledges some of his lesser known works, and will sign them. I was disappointed when I heard this. Much like the passing of an age or era, something wonderful disappears from our own worlds and they become less when the "Great" change.

I include one such treasured childhood memory of Harlan the Icon, taken by me with my first camera. It was taken at the 1967 WesterCon. That's Harlan with his latest on his arm, winking at me. This is how I'll always remember Harlan.

So, with a wink and a nod... here's looking at you, Harlan.

Arnie: Thank you for both the anecdotes and the great pictures.

A fitting way to round off this issue's letter column – I'll be fully caught up in the next issue – is a LoC that explores a classic game, among many interesting things...

Lloyd Penney

First of all...we're still getting over the death of rich brown, and now, Bob Tucker leaves us. That's far too much grief for anyone who knew these gentlefen. We must find fitting reminders of their fanac without resorting to acrimony in print or online.

85...Years ago, we purchased at a yard sale a rather silly-looking game, the Rocky and Bullwinkle Role Playing Party Game. We tried playing it with friends, and none of us could figure out how the damned thing was played, but at least we all got diplomas from Wossamatta U., and a Ukrainian Safe-Cracking degree from the Academy of Pottsylvania. We still have the NESFA game that was introduced at Noreascon 3, If I Ran the /Con/ Zoo. There might be a game about Fandom, but I'd have to wonder if anyone ever wins... I think the Trivial Pursuit model would be best, especially with the trivial questions that could be asked.

It truly is Bill Burns' fault, for all excellent values of the word "fault". If we didn't have a place to gather electronic zines, would we have the community we have now? Don't think so. Maybe

it's an idea that would have happened if Bill hadn't thought to do it, but Bill did, and he has my thanks for keeping me overly busy responding to dozens of e-zines regularly. All your fault, Bill, and thank you.

My loc...I think Yvonne and I have decided that LAcon was our last Worldcon. Another reason for that, besides the rising costs, is that Yvonne has one more project, the 2009 International Space Development Conference in Toronto. We plan to go to next year's ISDC in Dallas, and the 2008 version in Washington. Once that the 2009 convention is done, we are completely retired from con running of any kind. Any response from Joan Hoffman yet?

86...Bob Trucker? Oh, what a typo...I think he'd be smiling, though. A name change for the zine? Vegas Fandom Weakly if you're getting a little tired...if Focal Point is turning your crank, go for it. You remember some wags in the locol many issues earlier speculating what else VFW might stand for...Veterans of the Fannish Wars, Very Fat Writers...whatever you decide, you'll get more letters from me. You have been warned.

I can see a fan-run retirement home...a duper/

puter room, a large function room that could easily hold an internal relaxicon every so often, and a staff of younger fans who do remember what's important, and can keep the list of activities busy for as slow or hectic a schedule as you wish. There are minac requirements to stay in the home? The condominium managers would have to have the discretion to not minac out a long-term resident. It's only fair.

Except for my impressions of Worldcon, I haven't really written my report. It's about six weeks past now, and I'm sure it would blend in with all other reports. I might do something on a side-trip we did in LA, to the gift shop of the LA County Coroner's Department. Robert Lichtman asked in 85 for more details about this, maybe I'll whip that up...

I had seen mention of Keith Kato's usual chili party, and had thought that I might try to get to it, but I can't remember if I never found out where it was, or was simply too busy with other things to go to it. If it was on the Friday, we missed all parties that night. We did something extremely unfanish (gasp!), and turned in early for the night. The next day, we were recharged, and ready to tackle

Contact! Las Vegas Club Directory

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

Las Vegrants

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Las Vegas Fan Events

VSFA Sunday Social Sunday, October 15 2 PM

SNAFFU Dinner Meeting Friday, November 10 7:00 PM. SNAFFood will convene at Lotus of Siam. To RSVP or get info email Linda Bushyager (LindaBushyager@aol.com)

Cineholics Friday, November 10 7:30 PM

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

SNAPS Deadline Sunday, November 12

Second Sunday Movie Screening November 12 6:00 PM

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

Cineholics Friday, November 17 7:30 PM

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

Las Vegrants Meeting November 18 7:30 PM

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

SNAFFU Discussion Meeting Sunday, October 22 1:30 PM

The city's oldest formal SF club meets at the library. The main discussion topic is: "The Science Fiction Grove."

Cineholics Friday, December 1 7:30 PM

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

First Friday Video Group Friday, December 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 December 2 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 Saturday, October 21 7:30 PM

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

the convention again.

All sizes of conventions have their charms. Worldcons are great not for their size, but for their depth and breadth, and the people you never thought you'd run into. Medium-sized conventions allow you to see most of what's happening, and relaxicons and small conventions let you see everything and everyone. I enjoy them all. In fact, in a couple of days, Yvonne and I will be attending our

first post-Worldcon convention, Con*cept 2006 in Montreal.

Our First Thursdays at the Foxes' Den continue, and with the new surroundings, and a menu that even the pickiest of our group likes, I think we'll be there for a good long time. Our regular waitress, Margo, has a welcoming smile and even a hug or two ready for us when we arrive. I think we've found our Cheers.

John Purcell should know that long ago, I played a little golf myself. I caddied for my father for many years, and when I expressed some interest in playing myself, he got me a set of trimmed-down clubs. However, my father was not a good instructor, preferring to yell rather than teach, and my interest understandably waned. Bill Mills, I did pick up a flyer at LAcon telling me that Lee Gilliland was staging a Man from U.N.C.L.E. convention soon in the Virginia area.

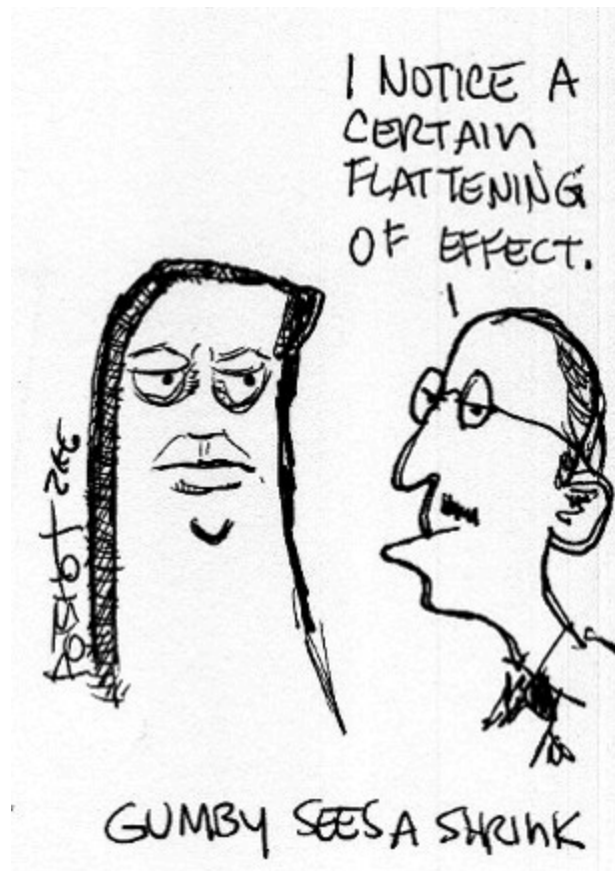
All done...a couple more trades shows done since those previous locs, preparations to go to Montreal, and I've been very busy downloading zines from eFanzines.com, and seeing what papazines come through the mailbox. I've been sending out more resumes, had what I think will be a very successful voicework audition for a yet-to-be sold children's programme, and long night-time hours at the Globe and Mail. No time for anything else right now, so I will fold up, say my thanks, and look forward to seeing more VFWs, whatever the name. See you then.

Arnie: Much as I love those old moose-and-squirrel cartoons, roleplaying the characters is not a appetizing prospect to me. I'd think a game would break down into various imitations and impersonations of the show's characters. The game I designed had none of those problems (or that degree of complexity). It was basically a finish-first game in which Rocky and Bullwinkle tried to beat Natasha and Boris to the Moon.

I doubt that I will ever again attend a world-

con unless someone very special to me is named Fan Guest of Honor. Then it would be a case of supporting a friend.

That's it for this issue — and a second year of publication for *Vegas Fandom Weekly*. Next up... the Second Annish — send something, please. — Arnie



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