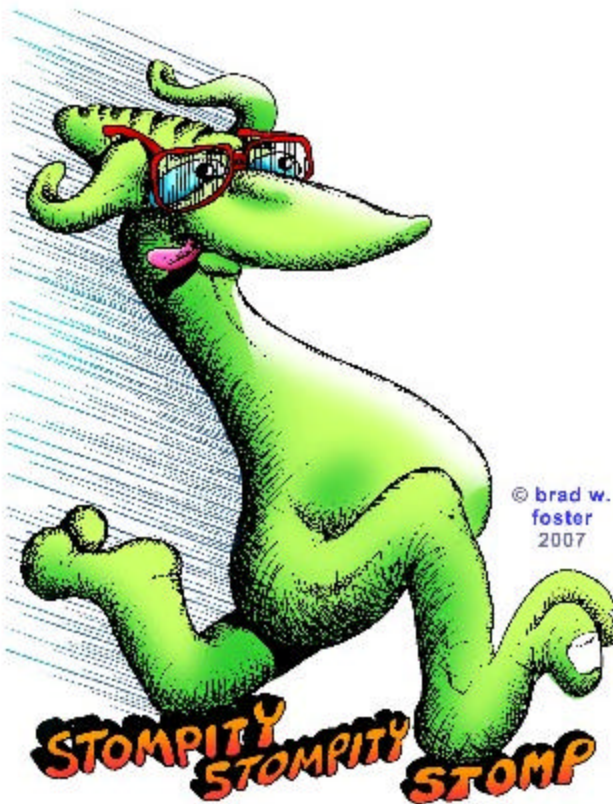


# VEGGAS FANDOM WEEKLY



## TAFF Calls for Candidates!

The TAFF Administrators have called for nominations for a US-to-UK Trans Atlantic Fan Fund (TAFF) race. Here's what US Administrator Suzle Tompkins says:

*To become a candidate for this race you must provide: Five nominations from known fans, three of whom must be North American and two European (nominators should send a signed nomination via postal mail OR if sending the nomination via e-mail, include a phone number for verification);*

*A written platform, not to exceed 100 words*

*A \$20 bond*

*A pledge that you will take the trip if you win.*

*(make checks payable to "Suzanne Tompkins.")*

*All nominations, platforms, pledges, and \$20 bonds must reach me at the address(es) below by midnight, July 16, 2007. So long as at least two prospective candidates have satisfied these requirements by that date, distribution of ballots, in both electronic and paper form, will begin immediately thereafter.*

*If you have any questions, or plan to run, please alert me as soon as possible.*

— Suzanne Tompkins

PO Box 25075

*Continued on page 17*

## Corflu Silver Breaking News

Las Vegrants, the informal, invitational Core Fandom fan club has an informal invitation to fans coming to Corflu Silver (April 25-27, 2008). Early arrivals to the Core Fandom Worldcon are encouraged to attend the Vegrants Meeting on Thursday, April 25th at the Plaza Hotel. Just to make clear to those who haven't gotten the gist of all those meeting reports, Vegrants "meetings" are indistinguishable from what some might call "parties" and contain no official business of any kind. The good is very good and we hope to assemble as much of our cast of characters as possible on a Thursday night.

A Vegrants meeting is normally distinguished by the quality, quantity and variety of the food and drink. To that end, Joyce designated a vase that sits in our living room at the Launch Pad for donations from club members. Vegrants have only been contributing for two meetings, but there are some bills in that vase. If we can't spend it all on the Thursday party, we'll use it to add to the Dad Dog Party on Sunday night.

# Inside Story

# Garcia for TAFF!

The only person who may've been more disappointed than Chris Garcia when last year's TAFF race was me. The Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund trip and subsequent administrative drudgery sounded like a great way to harmlessly divert some of Chris' massive fannish energy. Besides, I thought the Brits would enjoy him immensely and that he would write a lively and entertaining TAFF report upon his return..

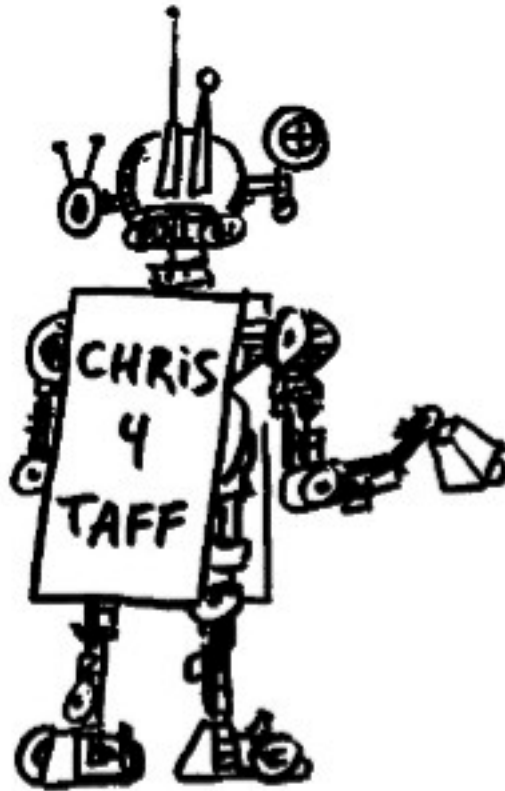
This plan fell apart when the uncertainty about the 2007 Eastercon caused the postponement of the race to this year.

Chris really threw himself into that campaign, too, with special fanzines and "Chris for TAFF" artistic support from the likely of Frank Wu (whose drawing is reprinted from an early VFW cover).

If anyone is capable of bringing that same enthusiasm to a rerun race, this is the fan. I supported Chris last year, the first time I've meddled in a TAFF race in some years. I'm continuing that interest by again nominating Chris for the Eastercon trip.

It isn't yet certain who'll run against Garcia, but it seems likely that Curt Phillips will also be on the ballot. It has been a while since TAFF had two fine fans like Chris and Curt. I consider Curt one of the finest human beings I have met through Fandom, an exemplary fan in every way. Joyce is one of Curt's nominators and she has Impeccable Taste.

I'm backing Chris Garcia, but don't expect anything but bouquets for Curt. Now, if some paper-shuffling bureaucrat runs, we can celebrate the Year of Laney in proper fashion. — Arnie



*Vegas Fandom Weekly #97, Volume 3 Number 9, June 1, 2007*, is written and produced by Arnie Katz (909 Eugene Cernan St., Las Vegas, NV 89145; Email: [crossfire4@cox.net](mailto: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), Joyce Katz (proofreading and So Much More).

**Reporters this issue:** James Taylor, Joyce Katz, Bruce Gillespie, Linda Bushyager and Joyce Katz

**Art/Photo Credits:** Brad Foster (1), Frank Wu (2), Robert Lichtman (20), Ray Nelson (22), all else by Bill Rotsler.

**Columnists This Issue:** Shelby Vick, Greg Benford, John Purcell, Bill Mills

VFW is free by request — and you may get it anyway. It can be downloaded at [efanzines.com](http://efanzines.com) and [LasVegas-grants.com](http://LasVegas-grants.com). No lawsuit-happy con committees were harmed during the production of this fanzine.

Member: fwa

Supporter: AFAL

Corflu Silver in 2008!

# Corflu Silver -- EXPOSED! Katzenjammer

No one was happier than me when Joyce captured Corflu 25 on a wave of fannish love. Going from a lonely, Corflu-less weekend to having it come to my hometown is heady stuff, even for me.

Eventually, that rose glow must collide with reality. Sitting here in the afterglow, my fannish duty is clear.

The fannish listservs have buzzed with many comments and questions about Las Vegas and Corflu Silver. It's especially noticeable that British fans are concerned with every conceivable facet of the prospective trip, from the temperature to food to the whereabouts of prostitutes. I only wish I got as many letters as the number of posts that last topic has inspired.

The intense interest is flattering, to say the least. It means a lot to me that so many fans are so involved with the idea of joining us in Glitter City in 2008. I still wake up screaming with terror at the thought of having to meet the stringent expectations that some have for the event. Then I realize that I'm only the Right-hand Man. If Corflu Silver flops, Joyce can take the heat.

Armed with that alibi, I'm ready to face reality, despite the potential consequences. I feel I must expose the Truth about Corflu Silver and Las Vegas. This may make me a pariah within Glitter City Fandom for ripping

aside the veil that cloaks the whole affair. Teresa Cochran may disown me, Bill Mills may stop keeping me out of computer and audio trouble and Ross Chamberlain might expunge my image from all of his illustrations for what I am going to tell you.

Still, I owe it to you who've supported my



The Las Vegas police force is known for their friendly, welcoming attitude toward



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writings and publications so handsomely to answer all questions and rattle all the skeletons. In order to achieve this rather daunting goal, I will shelve my style of studied insouciance -- which that artful arbiter of aesthetics Andy Hooper claimed reads like I don't know what will be in each sentence until I type it -- in favor of a rigorously organized presentation. (I still won't know what's in the next sentence, but this'll disguise it much better.)

### Climate & Weather

Las Vegas' climate and weather are ideal if you are a cactus or one of those turtles Ken Forman was always trying to save before he turned from environmentalist to survivalist. Humans from chilly, damp, cloud-enshrouded climates may find the blistering heat hard to bear and, in addition, may become frightened and disoriented by the sight of a big yellow ball of flame in what they perceive as an unnaturally cloudless blue sky.

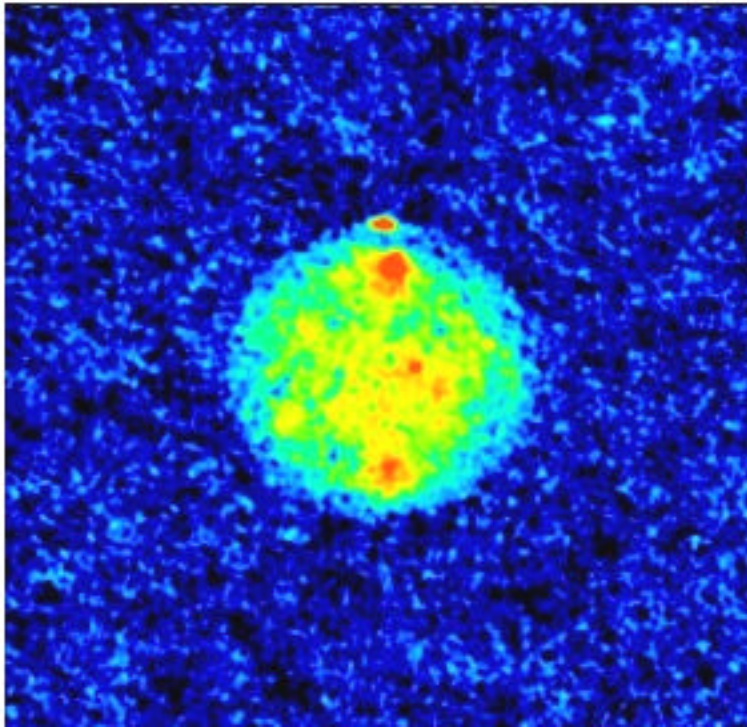


The Burning Man gathering, which takes place outside Las Vegas, does not memorialize any particular burning man or woman.

There are a lot of myths about Las Vegas climate and weather that we natives (any who has been here more than a year). Since Jamie Heine-man and Adam Savage aren't here, I'll just have to bust them myself.

The most pernicious canard is that Las Vegas is 10 degrees hotter than the sun side of the planet Mercury. Las Vegas is definitely, unequivocally, no more than five degrees hotter than the sun side of Mercury. It's exaggerations like this, along with everyday life, that give Las Vegas an unfair reputation. Truth is, Vegas is also cooler than Venus (during the winter months, at least).

Inevitably, the question of HMS arises. Let's admit that this is something that *should* scare the living crap out of any intelligent person or fan. Human Meltdown Syndrome is certainly no joke, as anyone who has seen a person simply melt down



The planet Mercury is hotter than Las Vegas, but cheaper.

visitors, with or without accompanying mad dogs, who go out in the noonday sun. Still, if everyone takes sensible precautions, Corflu won't lose more than one or two attendees to HMS.

### Food & Drink

I want to confront the Big One without flinching: Cannibalism is absolutely forbidden in many Las Vegas hotel/casinos. I don't know the specific rule at the Plaza, site of Corflu Silver, but there's every chance that is one of the downtown hostleries that discourages the practice. (Those with a more positive view of people-eating can ask their cab driver if he or she will drive them to a cannibal restaurant.)

to a pile of carbon sludge from the Las Vegas heat or even glimpse the coagulated puddles of HMS residue that dot streets in the downtown area and the Las Vegas Strip.

Not to minimize the tragedy of a life cruelly burned out HMS, but I think the risk is at least a little overstated. Now, Hyman Meltdown Syndrome may pose a danger to pasty-complexioned

Is cannibalism the secret to those low buffet prices? The jury is still out.



### **The Tragedy of Canter's Restaurant**

Joyce and I celebrated our 36th anniversary with a dinner at the Vegas Canter's Restaurant at the Treasure Island Hotel. The original Canter's on Fairfax in LA has been one of our favorite restaurants. We were keen to try the Vegas edition, especially after we heard rumors of delicacies begin flown daily from the Home Base to the Vegas branch.

It was horrible. The only link beloved Canter's and this place is the name. Patrons order food from the limited menu posted on the wall, fast food style and then are served the meal on paper plates.

The food — ten-buck sandwiches — shamed the restaurants hallowed name. The corned beef was salty and badly prepared, the French fries were frozen pre-cuts and the rye bread was stale.

This Canter's has stale bread ready for every sandwich even though it serves only rye bread and has constant heavy traffic. I imagine that, if they work through the pre-staled bread too rapidly and are in danger of serving a corned beef or brisket sandwich on fresh bread, a Claxton sounds and one of the servers rushes to the roof of the hotel where many loaves are carefully withered in the Vegas sun.

In the words of the Jewish Defense League:

**Never again!**



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The policy toward consumption of domestic animals and pets is hazier. Inquire at the front desk before ordering take-out from the animal shelter.

Some fans, who pursue a vegetarian or vegan diet, have asked about the availability of such foodstuffs. Like everything else in Vegas, vegetables and fruit are available for a price. It is not necessary to buy a ticket to Gallagher just to get a random bite of melon, though it still may be a wise fallback option.

Most Glitter City citizens, however, love meat of all types, including cooked. There is no proven connection between the town's abundant and inexpensive supply of meat and the numerous rodeos held annually in the southern Nevada area. It's true that you never see an old horse or steer -- or an old cowboy, come to that-- at a Vegas rodeo, but everyone will be happier if we treat those facts as mere coincidences.

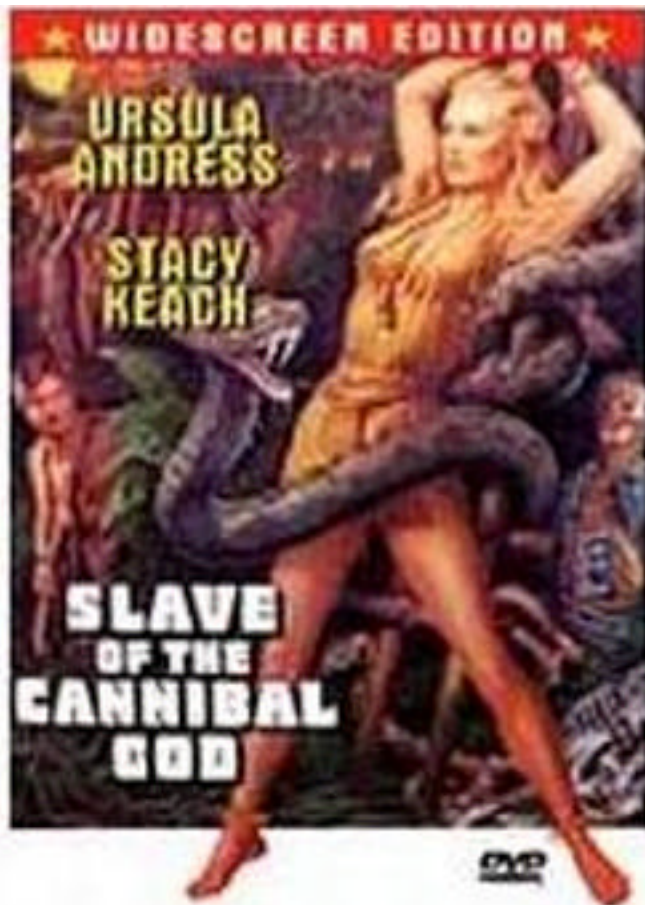
Las Vegas restaurants feature many exotic and wonderful cuisines. It is said that a person can gorge on to 50 different



styles of cut-rate shrimp cocktail before getting the one with the salmonella. Giant, one-dollar hotdogs are another durable Vegas good attraction. Many, if not most, of these zeppelin-sized are made of edible material.

Yet the one type of food that is uniquely Las Vegas is the Buffet. This should be very comfortable for Corfluvians, who have been attending buffet banquets at the annual con for many years.

The word "Buffet," which means "to jostle and shake," may derive from the gusto with which young and old alike rush the serving tables, inspect all the food by hand, , poke their heads under the guard strip for a closer look between sneezes. It is also possible that "Buffet" is a mispronunciation of the French word "Bouffe," which means a fool, an obvious reference to the people who load up on the cheap, filling carbohydrates served with such a generous hand at buffets instead of saving room for the sliced prime rib. Or "Buffet" is a word from a now-forgotten language meaning "stomach ache with flatulence."



Ursula Andress starred in this docu-drama which might have been about Las Vegas. Funny... have you heard from Ursula lately? Me neither.

tering above her waist in the skirt-blowing scene, we have them in all price ranges.

Contrary to what everyone may have heard (or seen), Las Vegas has many fine works of art, if you count neon. (If you don't count neon, I'll have to keep looking.)

No city respects art more than Las Vegas. It is literally legal tender. Well, at least if the art is on a casino chip.

Las Vegas is also a pioneer in kinetic sculpture. The surgically augmented sluts of Las Vegas are truly animate artworks. Thousands are displayed every day in a city with more gentleman's clubs than book stores. A private showing is \$10-\$25 and, like in the louver or Metropolitan Museum of Art, the management requests that you do not touch the artwork on pain of criminal prosecution or maybe exploring a hole in the desert sands outside Vegas from the inside..

As a citadel of culture, Las Vegas offers the tourist many museums and galleries. Whether you

## Art & Culture

Times change and Las Vegas' unparalleled growth has brought with it cultural enrichment as well as economic success. When Joyce and I moved to Las Vegas in 1989, the city's Art Museum was housed in a trailer in Lorenzi Park. Since then, they've planted some flowers next to it. We spell that kind of growth and progress "Las Vegas." (It is untrue that the current state of public education makes it impossible for students to spell *anything*.)

Some people scorn Las Vegas as lurid and crass with all the aesthetic subtlety of a transvestite hooker in a Cher look-alike contest. While it is true that "culture" is generally used as an indicator of sexual preference — ie, French culture, Swedish culture, English culture — Las Vegas culture now means more than a painting of dogs playing poker on velvet. Now Glitter City has paintings of Elvis on velvet, too. And if your life is incomplete without a statue of Marilyn Monroe with her skirt flut-







Elvis and velvet — made for each other. Thank you very much.

unless you put it in your Corflu Silver con report or you catch something from the down-market streetwalkers who ply their venerable profession in the downtown Vegas district.

You may have heard about beautiful Las Vegas call girls, succubi who blend the sexual techniques of the ancient temple priestesses with the modern techniques of the plastic surgeon. This has led to some confusion among the religious of southern Nevada, because exhumation shows that the bodies don't decay

The streetwalkers of downtown are definitely *not* those sirens of fantasy, unless your fantasies run toward acquiring an STD. The glamour wears a little thin when you're a middle-aged woman with a crack habit and a pimp.

Since none of the female Vegrants is currently engaged in the sex trade, Corflu Silver cannot directly satisfy the apparently limitless curiosity about prostitution in southern Nevada that exists among some fans. Nonetheless, I will rip aside the veil of coyness and tell the unvarnished facts. Well, maybe a little shella. And a few flashing bulbs wouldn't hurt, either.

A recent survey indicates that over 150,000 women in southern Nevada are engaged in the sex

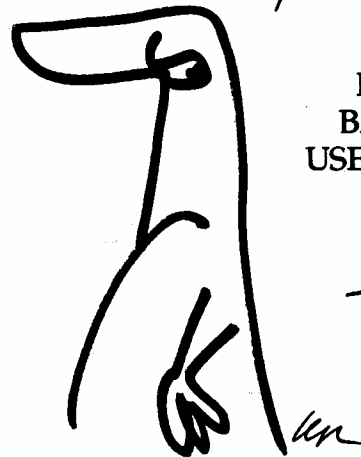
want to delve into antiquities such as Coca-Cola, study the world of Liberace or increase your knowledge about the long and proud history of the M&M, there is a Las Vegas Museum for you. The World War II Nazi Regalia museum is no longer open, but Al Capone's bullet-proof car is still in business.

Las Vegas has more live music than anywhere else in the world. You may have thought your favorite cornball crooner was dead, but chances are good that he or she is currently performing in Las Vegas. It's also comforting to know that, after those grizzled veterans of the showbiz scene have gone to that big dinner theater in the sky, there will be impersonators capitalizing on their memories in Vegas shows for decades to come.

Sex

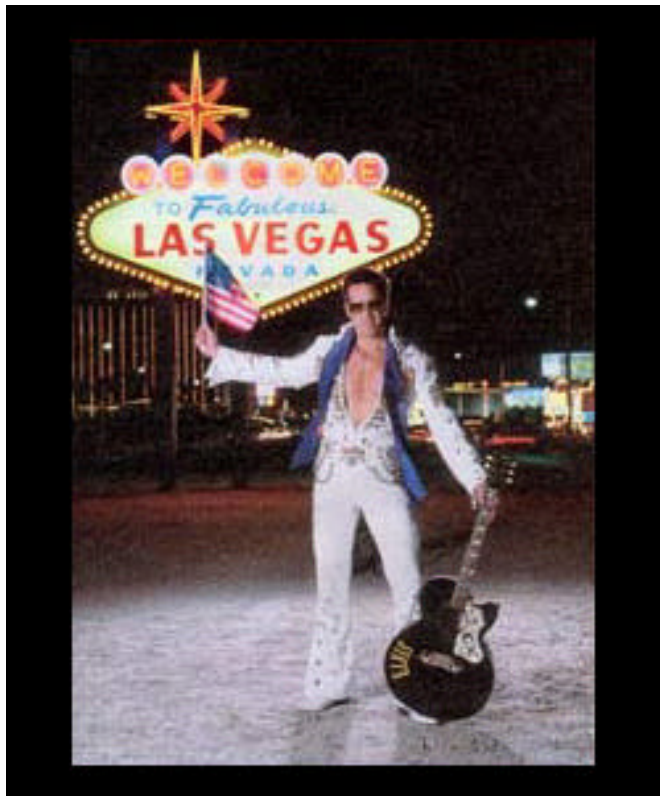
What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas,

**THIS VERY FANZINE WAS ONCE INVOLVED IN A WIDESPREAD FANNISH SCANDAL!**



**IT WAS MIMOED BACK THEN AND USED DISMANTLED HYPHENS AS SLIPSHEETS!**





Whether you want to get hitched to that “hunka-hunka burning love” or you want to renew your vows with that “hound dog,” the Elvis Presley Wedding Chapel puts The King under the *houppa* and you in the honeymoon sweet in true Las Vegas style.

believe that they all have AIDS, no matter how often local media makes that claim,

### Las Vegas: The ‘-est’ City

The important thing to remember about Las Vegas is that it is, indeed, the biggest and best in every way it deems important. We have the largest hotel, the greatest number of tourists, the largest souvenir shop, the most over-weight citizenry and the largest tobacco store in the known universe.

Therefore, one thing you can believe implicitly is that all the members of Las Vegrants (the mightiest informal invitational Core Fandom fan club in all... well, in all... Clark County) are eagerly awaiting your arrival for the greatest 25th Corflu in all fanhistory. No other 25th Corflu will be able to hold a candle to Corflu Silver. (There are women who will hold a candle to your genitals, for the right price, but that is a topic for another time.)

I felt I had to tell you these things, set the record straight. Come to Corflu Silver, anyway. It won't be so bad.

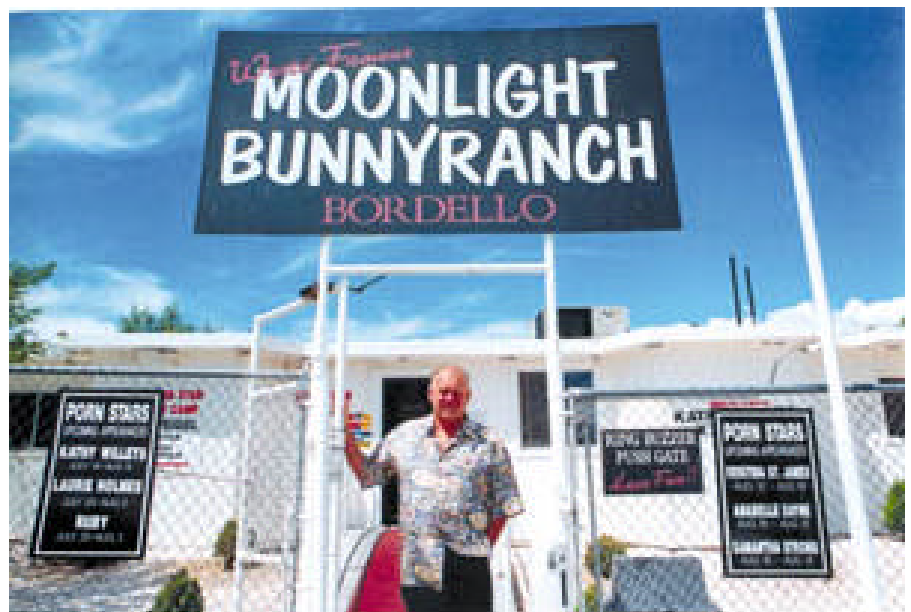
— Arnie Katz

trade. That's about one woman in five working at least occasionally. So if you see a good-looking woman you fancy on the street, just walk right up to her and ask her price. I can't guarantee that you'll enjoy it, but I can promise you an interesting time.

Some Vegas prostitutes are said to go in for wild costumes. So, if you see a woman dressed in leather with handcuffs in her belt or garbed as a nun or policewoman, chances are good that she will respond to any offer of cash for sex.

I know some fans are too shy to ask, so let's just add that there is a great selection of male hustlers in downtown Las Vegas. It is impossible to

Ranching is very popular in the counties outside Clark County (Las Vegas), Here is one of them. The cash crop is extremely valuable and costly to maintain so don't expect any bargains — but reports are there's plenty of good eating.



# Now & Again I'm a Cheater!

A good column has a theme; you know, like a good story. It should have a Beginning, a Middle and an End. I'm just saying this to warn you: This Ain't A Good Column. In fact, the closest thing it has to a theme is –

JuMbLe!

There are several brief bits I wanna write about, none (for me, anyway) enuf for a column length. Just wanted to warn you. I'll start with –

WILL power

I WILL write this column.  
(. . .Not necessarily good news. . . .)

I WILL enjoy fandom.  
(Well, that's kinda a given.)

I WILL continue *Planetary Stories*.  
(<http://www.planetarystories.com>)

I WILL enjoy life.  
(Watch *Voyager* and *Enterprise* reruns, play computer games, write, etc. . . .)

So I have LOTS of Will power. It's my 'won't' power that's weak. I say I 'will' do something, and I do it. But I've been saying for years, "I won't smoke cigarettes!" and it just don't work. (Yeah, I know – 'won't' is a contraction for 'will not', so it's still part of Will power, isn't it? Not for me, anyhoo; Will power says I 'will' do something; follow the 'will' with 'not' and you've change the whole thing!

Look at it this way: I know how to 'form' a habit, and have done it many a time. That's a positive slant. **Breaking** a habit is negative!

Heck, I can even form a habit of doing distasteful things, if properly motivated. For instance, I had minor sinus surgery. As a result, the doctor told me to flush out my nose twice a day

with one cup of distilled water with a teaspoonful of non-iodized salt. After doing it for a while, I discovered a pleasant side-effect: No mucus, no colds (and it was when lots of colds were all over.)

My doctor said that was normal; flushing my sinus clear out mucus and, since most colds are picked up thru our noses, it cuts down on colds!

So I still do it.

Now, I have cut my smoking down to where a pack of cigs last for four days, but still – it ain't quitting. My 'won't' power just won't work!

Next – I'M A CHEATER!

In my personal life as well as my fannish life, I cheat! Like on keeping up with the cigs I smoke; I don't count those I bum off of visitors, and I don't count finishing someone else's stubs.

In fannish life, I cheat. Like with my fanzine confuSon; I've lifted headers from copies of my original zine, *confusion*. And most of my memorial to rich brown was either copied from his daughter's Memorial site, or from *VFW*.

Not only that, I cheat in *Planetary Stories*. If I'm in need of an illo and don't have what I want handy, I go on the internet, search until I find something close to what I want, copy it, pull it up on PhotoShop and fiddle with it enuf so's it won't be a copyright violation; like, maybe what I copy is a photo.

Well, I change the mode to black'n'white, then change the PhotoShop 'effects' to charcoal drawing or somesuch, maybe invert the result, eliminate something or add something – and then I have an illo by that soon-to-become wellknown artist, S Tolen.

I even cheat in my columns, by throwing together what I just did.

— Shelby Vick



# Frank Gasperik

Frank Gasperik, November 5, 1942 - May 3, 2007

*Long-time fixture in Los Angeles Science Fiction Fandom and the filk community, LASFSian Frank Gasperik passed away May 3.*

*The guitarist, filk songwriter and singer, author, motorcyclist, and inveterate poker player inspired characters in three Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle SF novels, Lucifer's Hammer, Footfall, and Fallen Angels. As Jerry Pournelle's insightful and touching epitaph for Frank concludes, those who have read the novels "will know the kind of person Frank wanted to be... and sometimes was."*

Frank loved to laugh as much as he loved making others laugh. Known as much for his puckish humor as his filksinging, Frank's impish wit compelled him to bequeath to the LASFS a statuette of a 'King Kong'-ish looking ape, holding a practical clock (appearing to be torn from a wall... with bits of the building still clinging to it). But the 'punchline' is that the statue also contains some of Gasperik's ashes, so that he can be forever "present but not voting" at the LASFS meetings. Leave it to Frank to find one more unexpected gag, one last 'parting shot' to make his friends laugh, even in their bereavement.

In recent years a nerve disorder prevented his playing the guitar which depressed him terribly, and his health has been declining. Several months ago, his wife, Peggy (formerly Corrigan), died suddenly. Since then he has been sharing a house in Phoenix, Arizona with his friend and collaborator Leslie Fish. A story by Fish and Gasperik, "Janesfort War", appears in the Larry Niven edited anthology CoDominium: Revolt on War World.

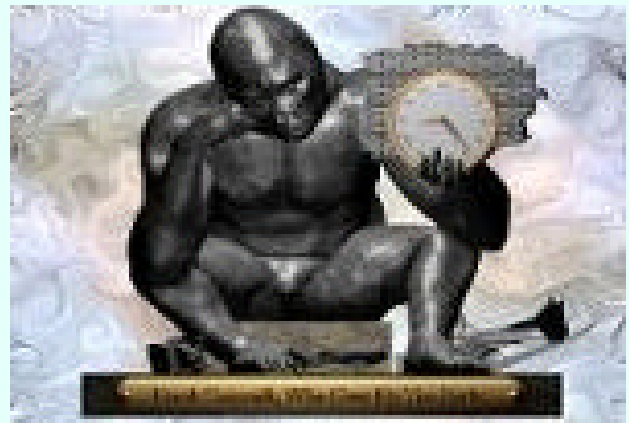
A memorial service is being planned for Frank to be held at Riverside National Cemetery. A gathering will follow at a nearby pub. Musicians are expected to bring instruments, share a drink or two and sing a few songs in memory of "The Minstrel".

By complete coincidence, I recently rediscovered a video tape of a performance by Frank at the Westercon 33 Fan Cabaret in 1980 and had encoded it for viewing on the web. It was being added to the pages of The Voices Of Fandom web site just about the same time Frank was going into the hospital for the last time, a fact of which we were totally unaware at the time. Knowing nothing of his health crisis, it had been hoped that Frank would finally get to see the rare video, for the first time ever, thanks to computer technology and the internet. As fate would have it, that was not to be. But, we are pleased and proud to make it available at TVoF for friends and fans of Frank aka Hairy Reddington aka The Minstrel aka Felix.

Go to the Voices On Video page at TVoF to see him well, beardless and having a rollicking good time entertaining his friends and family... aka Fandom! <http://thevoicesoffandom.com/vov-1.html>

You'll find my audio memorial for Frank on Page Three of the Audio Clips Pages. <http://www.thevoicesoffandom.com/audio-clips-3.html> —

— Bill Mills



# HAPPY BENFORD CHATTER

## The Intellectual Life of a Lesser Physicist

### *Southern Twin*

Gregory Benford (GB) grew up in rural Alabama, in the small towns of Robertsedale and Fairhope, across the bay from Mobile. From his birth as an identical twin in 1941 until his father took the family to Japan in 1948, he lived a simple and probably idyllic life, amid a Huck Finn world of sluggish heat, muddy rivers, infinite pine forests, and abundant creatures. E. O. Wilson relates in his memoir, **Naturalist**, how the same land made him into a biologist a decade before and only a dozen miles away. Somehow, despite a lifelong fascination with the myriad complexities of the natural world, GB became a physicist. Abstractions can appeal if you live in humid heat and work on farms.

GB was an identical twin of the closest variety—mirror twins with opposite birth marks, handedness, and opposite spirals in head hair. Having separated later in the womb than other types of identicals, such twins are the last stage viable; beyond that lie Siamese twins. GB and his brother Jim quickly became Us against the pervasive Them of rural Alabama. Aware of a larger world out there, the narrow hardscrabble life did not appeal even to GB's Huck and his buddy, Jim.

They were mischievous, of course. Confronted in the kitchen with a breakfast item they did not like, the twins stashed it behind the stove when Mom wasn't looking. Lacking foresight, the six-year-olds did not realize that a week later the smell would unmask the trick. This is his first memory of cause and effect played out over time—at that age, a week is forever.

Along the way GB was a good but unexceptional student, more interested in hobbies than studies. Not until 1958 did GB's future take shape, mostly because a battery of tests, the Iowa Exams, showed GB to rank in the 99th percentile of ability, with Jim a point behind--genetic determinism at work, perhaps. Their high school in Dallas immediately placed them in advanced classes, but the

major propelling factor was the chance reading of *Atoms in the Family* by Laura Fermi, as already described. This vision of a life spent pursuing deep aspects of reality entranced the twins. They took advanced physics and math in their senior high school year and found the experience thrilling.

### *The High School Science Project*

A highlight of Benford's high school experience was duplicating the Rutherford alpha-particle experiment. He entered the National Science Scholarship competition with a small version of Rutherford's apparatus. He took a thin foil of gold and stood it on end, making a circular structure like a thin gold crown. At the center of this crown of gold he put a weak source of alpha particles, and set the entire arrangement in a transparent plastic box. By attaching a pump to one end, he could create a thin fog inside. At the right levels of





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vapor pressure, the alpha particles left trails in the fog. Particles from the source spread out, most passing through the gold foil. Time-exposure photographs made from above recorded for minutes at a time.

Measuring the number of trails that made it straight through the foil, and then the smaller number that got deflected to the side, provided a rough measure of the nuclear size.

He still recalls the spooky feeling he got when watching tiny vapor trails form in the silky fog.

Besides the alpha-particle tracks he had expected, other lines came and went in the vapor. These moved mostly downward toward the table from the top of the plastic box. It took him a moment to realize that these were tracks of *cosmic rays* – a subject GB had only heard about. These particles were coming from the sky. Some of them had passed all the way from interstellar space, perhaps born during the explosive deaths of distant, ancient stars in supernovas. Other tracks came from air molecules that broke apart when hit by the incoming cosmic rays. All this was happening steadily, particles from the stars slamming into our atmosphere and showing up as little lines momentarily forming in a thin gas.

This was astonishing and quite unforeseen. And it left a deeper impression than the experiment GB had planned. In that moment he discovered that experiments can be planned but not their results predicted. Nature always has surprises in store for us. From that day forward, GB knew that he wanted more than anything to be a scientist—to be surprised again and again.

### *The Twins Diverge*

A scholarship sent the Benford brothers to the University of Oklahoma, and after four years there they went to the University of California at San Diego (UCSD) for graduate school. The twins were hellions, independent minded, a pattern that took them through twenty-five years together as

they attended the same schools and universities. Both received their doctorates in physics from UCSD, GB in 1967, Jim in 1969.

For his doctorate GB had begun as an experimenter in solid-state physics, studying the relaxation of electron and nuclear spins in low temperatures. A fellow student discovered a strange effect about the time GB became bored with the tedium of experiment. GB was also getting tired of being a student.

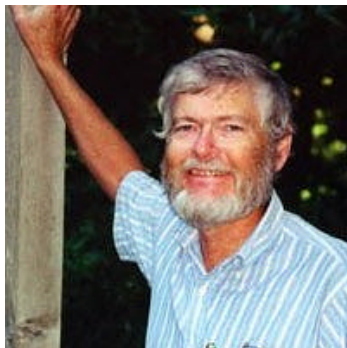
Theory afforded a chance at relatively quick liberation from the doctoral grind. GB was not at all confident that he could do theoretical physics; his mathematics was sound but not inspired, and he had a more intuitive feel for physics than an analytical one. Somewhat timidly, he switched professors and attacked his peer's strange discovery with an arsenal of theoretical approaches. Most of these failed but led to interesting calculations in themselves, which he eventually, and thriftily, published over the years. After more than a year he did find a plausible explanation, which alas still awaits the technical capability required to test it.

Nonetheless, this early theoretical result netted GB his doctorate in four years, the first in his class to finish. For the first time in his career, he felt relief from a chronic sense of inferiority that he had developed as a result of coming from a small Southern town, of going to Oklahoma University instead of MIT or a similar Big Name School, though GB realized in his first year at UCSD that he had received quite a good undergraduate education in Oklahoma.

### *Learning from Teller*

From 1967 to 1971, at the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory at Livermore, California, GB lived a life devoted to directed research. Perhaps the single most rewarding aspect of this period in his career was the opportunity to get to know one of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century's great physicists, Edward Teller.

It started right from his job interview. That afternoon in 1967 a personnel clerk ushered him into a large, messy office, saying only that "someone" wanted to ask "a few questions." Freshly minted Ph.D.s usually take positions doing research as 'postdocs' for a few years to show their



stuff, then move to a permanent position. GB wondered if this someone was a minor administrative person who wanted to see him about a security clearance. Instead, Edward Teller peered at him from behind a messy desk piled high with physics journals. Teller insisted on taking the measure of every postdoc candidate. "We didn't want you to be nervous," the clerk said later. It worked; GB was merely terrified.

For the next hour no one disturbed them as Teller quizzed GB about his doctoral thesis in great detail. Teller turned every facet of GB's thesis over and over, spying undiscovered nuances, overlooked difficulties, a calculation perhaps a bit askew. GB struggled to keep up, questions incoming like bugs splattering on his conceptual windshield.

Soon Teller was standing beside him at the blackboard, dashing out equations. Though this was not really Teller's field, the man was brilliant, leaping ahead of GB's jittery explanations to see connections GB had only vaguely sensed. His mind darted as swiftly as any GB had ever encountered. Within minutes GB was sweating. The hour lasted days.

To his vast surprise, GB apparently passed inspection. At the end, Teller nodded and paused a long moment, then announced "the most important kvestion of all," gesturing for GB to sit in the wooden chair beside him. GB sank into it with relief, showering chalk from his hands onto Teller's desk. Leaning closer, Teller spoke with a sudden scowl, "Vill you be villing to vork on vwhatever comes up? No matter vat?"

Unbidden, images from Stanley Kubrick's film *Dr. Strangelove* leaped to mind. *No matter vat...* He had already asked if GB would be willing to work on weapons; this was even more open-ended.

But Teller had impressed GB as a deep, reflective man. GB had grown up deep in the shadow of the Cold War. GB's father was a career Army officer and the family had lived in occupied Japan and Germany--advanced nations, yes, but the greatest could blunder the most. It seemed to



GB that the sheer impossibility of using nuclear weapons was the best, indeed the only, way to avoid large-scale conventional war, whose aftermath GB had seen with his own eyes as a child in shattered Tokyo and Berlin.

So GB nodded.

This was no Dr. Strangelove. Teller just wanted to do physics and have fun. Within a few weeks, GB had a job offer from Livermore. For whatever came up.

In the next four years at Livermore, first as a postdoc and then as a staff physicist, GB worked with Teller and other wild talents. He got involved with the exotic theory of tachyons, the theoretically possible particles which can travel faster than light--not the sort of thing one imagines a "weapons lab" doing. Teller allowed his theorists a wide range. When the tachyon idea popped up in the physics journals, Teller thought they were highly unlikely, and GB agreed--but worked on them anyway out of sheer speculative interest. Moving faster than light implies particles can travel backward in time.

Teller invoked a different argument against tachyons, recalling the great Italian physicist Enrico Fermi's famous question, "Where are they?" Fermi asked why aliens, if they are plentiful in the galaxy, haven't visited us by now. Teller noted that if tachyons existed, "Why haven't they been sent? Vere are our messages from the future?"

GB's quick answer was that nobody had built a tachyon receiver yet. Neat, but perhaps too neat.



---

Surely somehow nature would not disguise such a profound effect, he felt. This suggests that fundamental puzzles remain. The decades since have certainly shown this to be true; physics now ponders whether there are undetected extra dimensions in our universe, perhaps as many as seven.

This pattern, speculation leading to detailed theory, GB encountered often. Ideas blossom from imagination, but they must be tested against reality--that, GB learned from Teller, is the essence of science. The received wisdom of science is quite prissy, speaking of how odd data leads theorists to explore models, which are then checked by dutiful experimenters, and so on. Reality is wilder than that.

### *Return to the Ivory Tower*

The Lawrence Radiation Laboratory was a prime fusion research center. GB entered into its diverse projects exploring, trying out several fields: mathematical solid-state physics; plasma stability theory; relativistic plasma beams--in the hope that something would announce that *here* was his life's work.

Nothing did. GB carried through a lot of calculations but found his interest in fusion flagging,



as he came to doubt that any of the approved methods--machines with names like Astron, Magnetic Mirror, and Tokomak--would truly produce a practical reactor generating electrical power. [And thirty-five years later, this has proved true, with many billions spent and the program in retreat.] He moved most enthusiastically into the study of relativistic electron beams, a hot new area where much theory beckoned. His brother moved in the same direction intellectually, and they have worked together ever since, albeit at some distance.

In 1971 GB's daughter Alyson was born, his father suffered a near-fatal heart attack, and his disagreements with the leadership of the plasma physics theory group came to a head--all in the same month, January. Also, maybe not coincidentally, he turned 30. Within half a year he had found a position as an assistant professor at the newest UC campus, in Irvine, and the family moved to Laguna Beach near UCI.

Finally settled, GB began a long research career that has had some success: grants, thesis students, honors, even the Lord Foundation Award in 1995 for his work in theoretical astrophysics and plasma physics. The key benefit to life in the ivory tower for Benford was having the freedom to follow his nose, to work on promising and enjoyable ideas. The fusion program was still floundering in 2006 which seemed to fit the wry joke of the 1960s—that fusion lay fifty years ahead, and always would.

The great virtue of university research is freedom. There is less money, but GB felt repaid in the simple satisfactions that lie in asking questions of nature, and in getting answers that no one had ever thought of before.

### **Quiet Pleasures of the Scientist**

Fundamental scientific revolutions are great fun, and most scientists would love to make one themselves. But they aren't common, and they require a lot of hard work. A new understanding of nature brings a burst of intense pleasure. On much smaller scales, in clearing up the nooks and crannies of our current understanding, we scientists still find great rewards.

— Greg Benford

# Percolations

## Przywitac, Y'all!

It is a lovely drive coming north on State Highway 90 out of Anderson, Texas. The fields are a rolling green patchwork of pastures separated by split-rail or barbed-wire fences, sometimes both. Post oak trees gather in clumps, sheltering the ranch homes from the elements. Even so, the homes are set well off the highway, and the gravel drives that wind back to them are as sinuous as the snakes populating the area.

I enjoy this drive twice a week. Of the four classes I teach at Blinn College, one is a Dual Credit English 1302 class held at Anderson-Shiro High School, about 28 miles southeast of Blinn. It is an easy drive, direct and through pretty area. Heavy rainfalls tend to force the closure of State Highway 244 since it dips very low in a few spots as 244 wends its way up, over, and around wooded hills gathered around pastures like well-armed sentinels.

But when I head back to campus after that class is over, I have to come back via highway 90 to get to 244, and that's when I enjoy watching horses and cattle lazily grazing in rolling pastures, with dogs occasionally seen running through them.

One of these spreads is very large; my guess is that it's about 20 acres or so, replete with farm ponds, horses on the south side pasture of the gravel drive, cattle in the pasture on the north side, luscious green grass everywhere, and the simple yet elegant tall entrance arch lends a quiet air of authority to this spread. It really is a beautiful acreage, and the attractive ranch-style home can be seen from Highway 90, even though it is hunkered underneath a stand of oak trees. How I would love to live like that!

There's a sign just before the entrance arch that identifies the owner, with a name and title that nearly made me drive off the road and into a ditch:

Sczymczak's  
Polish Ponderosa.

That's pronounced "ZIM-check," I believe. It took my mind a few minutes to get a grip on what the sign said and meant. Obviously, a family by the name of



Sczymczak owned the land, apparently doing quite well, too. Land down here is not cheap, and they had a lot of land. And livestock, too. Cattle, horses, sheep, and I saw a few dogs, too. There was a barn well off to the rear of the main house, storage sheds, and what appeared to be a guest house thirty feet to the right of the family home.

Like I said, this was a heck of a set-up, and I had to admit that here was a family that obviously had some bucks in the bank.

But the name still threw me.

As I pulled back onto Highway 90, my mind started asking questions that did not have straight answers. Questions like, "What exactly goes on behind closed swinging doors at a Polish Ponderosa?" Or, "Do they ride horses upside down and backwards?" Even, "What's a typical day like at their dude ranch?" Oh, I'm sorry. In their language, that would be a *chlopak Gospodarstwo*, or something close to that.

Then I began wondering about the beasties wandering the pastures. Do the cows moo with a distinctive slavic accent? My mind pictured sausage links lazily grazing on the prairie grass, and I could just imagine a slogan designed to perk up lagging sales: "Eat free-range kielbasa – it's good for you!" *Swietya Krowa*, that sign really gave me strange thoughts.

I could see it well: spending a weekend in the *gospodarst dom*, with *kolache* roasts and bonfires – careful, kiddies! – on Friday nights, singing polkas around the campfire after a day of sauerkraut and llama round-ups led by Cowboy Rolf, who greets people with the warm, down-home country greeting, *Hej, jak sie masz?*; riding the trails on your trusted *Kon* as you brush the low-hanging branches away from your face. Ah, such a life! It almost made me turn around and book a room during *Oktoberfest*. Then I remembered this was somebody's home, so I kept driving.

Strange musings like this aside, it is an interesting fact that the third most spoken language in Texas is Czech, with Polish not that far behind. Apparently, large numbers of eastern European immigrants settled on the Texas plains to farm and raise cattle back in the late 19th century. Entire communities in central Texas have phone books with near impossible to pronounce names filling them. Yet, it is a rich heritage, and these people celebrate their heritage proudly. So with a hearty wave of a ten-gallon *kolache* as I ride off into the indigo sunset of the wide Texas skies, I bid a hearty *Do widzenia, y'all*. — John Purcell

Continued from p 1

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*WHAT IS TAFF? The Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund was created in 1953 for the purpose of providing funds to bring well-known and popular fans familiar to those on both sides of the ocean across the Atlantic. Since that time, TAFF has regularly brought North American fans to European conventions and European fans to North American conventions. TAFF exists solely through the support of fandom. The candidates are voted on by interested fans from all over the world, and each vote is accompanied by a donation of not less than US \$3 or UK L2. These votes, and the continued generosity of fandom, are what make TAFF possible.*

More information about TAFF's history, customs, and practices may be found at the unofficial site maintained by Dave Langford at <http://taff.org.uk/>.

So far, it looks like Chris Garcia and Curt Phillips are likely to run. I'm thrilled to see two such fine fans stand for TAFF,, even if I am pledged to Chris, whom I supported in the the TAFF race that had to be postponed last year due to uncertainty about the destination.

### **VSFA Scratches Two More Meetings!**

The apparent deconstruction of the Vegas Science Fiction Association as a fan club continues to gather momentum in Mat. According to a post on the VSFA listserv from club president Rebecca Hardin:

*The meeting scheduled for Saturday, May 5, at Dead Poets has been cancelled. So has the third Friday Movie Night at Cooperville.*

*Because there are three major genre release this month we've decided to cancel the regularly scheduled activities in favor of three Dinner and a Movie with VSFA events as follows.*

*Sunday, May 6 - Spiderman 3*

*Sunday, May 20 - Shrek the 3rd*

*Saturday, May 26 - Pirates of the Caribbean*

VSFA had previously eliminated the Sunday Social and has not kept its website functioning and updated. The members are obviously enjoying watching movies and videos, but the group no longer offers much in the way of fan activities. The listserv, which has experienced low traffic in recent months, is the last bastion.

### **Final Note Sounds for Frank Gasperik**

Long-time LASFS member Frank "The Minstrel" Gasperik passed away on May 3. Active in Los Angeles Fandom for roughly 30 years, he was best-known as a filk BNF.

A statue Gasperik commissioned for LASFS (King Kong holding a clock) will be modified to include the late fan's ashes. The statue will be on display at the LASFS clubhouse. **SNAPS Elects New Official Editor!**

Arnie Katz (me, folks), the second-best official editor in the history of SNAPS — Joyce was the other one — cruised to victory in the recent SNAPS OE election on the wings of supreme indifference. Steadily improving eMailings, a slicker O-O and the influx of non-Vegas fans made a second term pretty much a given. Besides, no one else wanted to do the work.

Since I was running unopposed and hadn't done anything fatal to the electronic amateur press association, only Robert Lichtman and Joyce Katz bothered to actually send votes to the Election Teller (Joyce).

### **TAFF Calls for US-to-UK Nominations!**

The Trans-Atlantic Fan Food (TAFF) will put the confusion and frustration of last year's abortive race behind it with the call for nominations to send a worthy fan from North America to the British National Convention in the United Kingdom.

Here's what US TAFF administrator Suzle Thomkins had to say:

*Nominations are now open for the 2008 North America-to-Europe TAFF race. The winner will attend **Orbital 2008**, the Eastercon, being held on March 21-24, 2008, near Heathrow Airport in London, England. For convention details, see <http://www.orbital2008.org/>.*

Frank Gasperik's performance at the Westercon 33 Fan Caberet can be enjoyed at TheVoicesOfFandom.com, thanks to some farceology by Bill Mills who recently unearthed the video, thought to be lost.

### **Harry Turtledove to Sign Books in LV!**

Harry Turtledove will be appearing at the Thursday Night Live! event on May 17th at 7 pm at the Events Plaza Amphitheater in downtown Henderson.

Local fan Rachel Mainz furnished a link to the city of Henderson's event's calendar: <http://ecalendar.cityofhenderson.com/Details.asp?EventIndex=2115&EventRecur=0&CURDATE=5%2F1%2F2007>

### **Heard Around Fandom...**

John Purcell has just released the second issue of what is this year's best fanzine start-up, *Askance #2*. You can download it for free at [efanzines.com](http://efanzines.com) with this URL: <http://efanzines.com>...

Chris Garcia and Jean Martin have just released an



issue of *SF/SF* dedicated to the late Kurt Vonnegut. You can pick up the free .PDF at: <http://efanzines.com/DrinkTank/DrinkTank125.pdf>...

James Taylor' unemployment lasted an egoboostingly short time. He took a contract job in his field (title management) and then got an offer to return to his original company, albeit in a slightly different position...

I (Arnie) was a guest on Legends Radio on Wednesday 5/9 in my guise as Wrestling Historian and editor-in-chief of ProWrestlingDaily.com, You can hear it for free at: <http://www.radiohaven.net/legends/050907.mp3>...

Ben Zuhl and wife lost just about everything they had in the world when their rental home burned to the ground. Commiserations to the Zuhl's. Perhaps a little fannish charity should be considered....

Ross Chamberlain has done it again! Just when you've finally digested the last *Fangle*, he has produced a third issue only three decades after the second. The new one and the outstanding first issue are both now available at efanazines.com.

#### ChatBack: The VFW Letter Column

*Let's get to this issue's fresh batch of scintillating LoCs..*

*Leading off is a name connected with ChatBack since the earliest installment.....*

#### Eric Mayer

Just read *VFW 96*. Speaking of the Robby the Robot Chair I had a Robert the Robot. I'm pretty sure it was him because when you pulled the string sticking out his back he said so. Back then a miniaturized record inside a toy which also featured flashing lights was pretty amazing.

Great news from John Purcell about Harry Warner's collection. I'm rooting for the scanning and putting it on a website option!

Your list of all-time greats is a good one. Walt Willis is

one of my favorite essayists, right up there with E.B. White, James Thurber and Robert Benchley. He expressed himself so gracefully. Burbee is another favorite -- some hilarious stuff -- although I liked the personality Willis projected quite a bit better. Harry Warner in a way might be more important to me than either of the above thanks to his fan histories and his loccing prowess. Those would probably be the first three inductees to my own personal Faanish Hall of Fame.

As for who you might have left out...Someone who's been doing great work for what seems like forever, even though he's still going strong, is Brad Foster.

And I don't know about putting in Joyce by herself. No disrespect to Joyce's contributions, but that's kind of like putting Tinker and Evers in or leaving Chance isn't it?

By the way, kudos for mentioning Richard Bergeron. Just because he put some noses out of joint doesn't mean his accomplishments should be overlooked. I understand Laney wasn't universally loved himself.

Which reminds me for some reason of your biggest omission -- Claude Deglar. OK, I guess he produced no writing or zines or artwork of any value. He didn't even put on a convention. But you have to get some credit for making yourself into an archetype. Or should I say legend? Or both? Can we be sure he wasn't a genius performance artist who created himself as an enduring gift to fandom?

Of course we all have our own personal fannish halls of fame -- fans who influenced us strongly, but maybe did not influence all of fandom, or fans whose work we admired but who were not admired to the same degree by fandom as a whole.

It's hard to say where to draw a line. Willis and Burbee are pretty unarguably Ruthian figures. But you may just have a Mazeroski or two on your list.

Which is why, maybe it'd be better just to discuss our favorites and make up lists, than to actually vote for a real Fan HOF. (Although, I have to admit FHOF is certainly a faanish acronym)

Enjoyed the articles by Greg Benford and Terry Kemp. The latter reminds me that the first fanzine I ever received was George Scithers' *Amra*.

Arnie: I agree completely about Walt Willis' standing as

## Snapshots Hot Streak Continues!

The May eMailing of SNAPS, the electronic amateur press association, totaled 47 pages, despite the absence of regulars James Taylor and Teresa Cochran. Nine others were onboard, though. Charles Fuller authored the largest contribution at 8 pages; Joyce and I had six each. Others in the 24th eMlg. Were Robert Lichtman, John Purcell, Laurraine Tutahasi, Chris Garcia, Ross Chamberlain and Bryan Follins.

SNAPS is open to all fans, not just southern Nevada, and currently has a very pleasant mix of fans with a Vegas accent. There are no dues and the activity requirements are minimal. The group could certainly use a few more participants, so if you'd like to know more, send me an email. — Arnie

## Deadline for June eMailing: 6/17

# Hot Streak Continues!

# TVoFactz

The major posting on TheVoicesofFandom.com is my latest fannish radio show. As of last night (5/29), the new TVoF podcast is up and ready for free download.

It's my mini-memorial for Frank Gasperik. It's about 30 minutes long and includes an introduction and thoughts about Frank's passing followed by a personal filk concert of six classic filk songs and one new one written for Frank (called "Gasperik Was A Filker" to the tune of "Stewball"). Roxie even stepped up to the mic to sing "Revenge For Alderon" for the 'ol Minstrel. — Bill Mills

*a writer. What always impressed me was the way he could write a serious, coherent essay and make his points while being hilariously funny at the same time. Apart from the need to understand the fannish context within which Willis worked to fully appreciate his brilliance, I'd put him up there with the best 20<sup>th</sup> Century humorists.*

*If you're offering me egoboo for being part of an unusually prolific and accomplished fan couple, I'll gladly accept. I think Joyce has also earned the same right as every other fan, to be judged as an individual. She has published several outstanding fanzines, chaired a worldcon, Corflu and several regionals, been one of Fandom's best writers, founded and hosted clubs. I don't know another living female fan who can match those credentials.*

*The next contributor explores the dark side of fannish fame...*

## Lee Lavell

First let me say that before you have a Lifetime Achievement Award you need a Hall of Fame (or Infamy) list. This list should include those fans who had a decisive influence on their field (pubbing, writing, art, politics, clubbing, letterhacking or whatever), geographical area and/or era, no matter how ephemeral or long-lasting their appearance might have been. You also might consider a fan-into-pro category.

Incidentally, what do you plan to do about those fans

who have had 20 or more years in fandom but those years have been punctuated by years of gafiation so that they are not 20 consecutive years? (I think of this because I am one of those who have been in and out of fandom for 57 years, and not because I think I am in any way qualified for any Hall of Fame.) But there seem to be many fans, I have found, who have "come back from the dead." Do you add up their active years or do you count up the whole span?

Many things to think about...

So saying, here are some of my candidates for your list:

Buck and Juanita Coulson

Harlan Ellison

Claude Degler

Earl Kemp

David Kyle

Arthur C. Clarke

Isaac Asimov

Bob Madle

Big Hearted Howard DeVore

Roger Sims

Ted Cogswell (who not only attended conventions, but belonged to our local club and published that fanzine for pros, *PITFCS*, or *The Proceedings for the Institute of Twenty-first Century Studies* <Pitfucks>)

The whole Cincinnati Group – Don Ford, Doc Barrett, Lou Tabakow et al, who really started the whole idea of a relaxacon with the Midwes(t)con

How about Dick Lupoff who jumped-started comic

# Corflu Silver Info

Corflu Silver will be held over the weekend of April 25, 26 and 27, 2008, at the Plaza Hotel, One Main Street, Las Vegas, NV 89101. Room rates will be \$35 per midweek night (Monday through Thursday) and \$72 per night on Friday, Saturday & Sunday. Reservations must be made prior to **March 22, 2008** in order to obtain the special Corflu rate; after that date, the regular room rates will apply.

Membership is \$60 attending (£35). Send checks payable to Joyce Katz to 909 Eugene Cernan St., Las Vegas, NV, 89145, USA. You can also submit funds via Paypal. It's a good idea to drop me a note to let me know you've done this. The name of the account is Joyce Marie Katz. Email for the account is [JoyceWorley1@cox.net](mailto:JoyceWorley1@cox.net).

# A Note of Mystery

Hal Hughes sent me this in an email:

*I was leafing through some old journals, and came across an entry in one, dated 8/9/77, written when I was in Copenhagen: Dreams - Talk of A. Katz and A. Porter - movie: "Everything You Wanted to Do with Your Girlfriend But Didn't" - Cary Grant's tires - shoes in trees - Sandra on roof - ladder.*

*I'd be very surprised if that makes even as much sense to you as it does to me, but thought it might tickle you that you'd popped into my sleeping brain there and then. Does that count as fanac?*

There you have it. Now it's up to you. Can you weave these mysterious notes into a coherent, if fictional, story? Consider this an invitation to a mystery.

— Arnie

fandom with *Xero*

Some of the very fine artists in fandom such as Alicia Austin, Steve Fabian, George Barr and Morris Scott Dollens

George Scithers

Marion Zimmer Bradley

*Arnie: I wasn't really thinking about a Hall of Fame, but rather a "Top '0" or "TYop 20," so my criteria are bound to differ from yours. A lot of the fans you mention are Fine Golks and/or Good Fans, but not among our very best.*

*Isaac Asimov, Arthur C. Clarke and Harlan Ellison are giants of science fiction, but not really contenders for this list. Earl Kemp and Marion Zimmer Bradley are certainly reasonable additions to my original list.*

*The Safe of Fandom weighs in with his thoughts about the greatest all-time fans and more...*

## Robert Lichtman

How excellent to read in the latest *VFW* that a hotel for next year's Corflu has been nailed down! I've enjoyed being at the Plaza Hotel for the two previous Corflus and for at least one Silvercon back in the '90s. I like its being in the heart of downtown *and* at a good distance from the craziness of the Strip. Its ample free parking is another plus for those of us who are driving to the convention. So I'm looking forward to staying there again.

So, watching the WWE "Hall of Fame" induction ceremony tweaked you into considering a similar hall of fame for fandom! You write here, "Maybe down the road, we'll take a poll and see how it matches the extensive vote rich brown and I took as part of the 1951 *Focal Point* Poll." After un-fogging my mind from your reference to a poll that would have been taken when you and rich were Very Young, I found the Hall of Fame results from the 1971 poll. You write there that "The winners will be the charter group in the Fan Hall of Fame, with additional votes in future years to

add to the original list of ten." Well, it's only taken 26 years but here you are with suggestions. But first, these are the top ten from back then: Bob Tucker, Harry Warner Jr., Walt Willis, Forrest J Ackerman, Charles Burbee, Terry Carr, Ted White, Bob Shaw, Lee Hoffman and F. Towner Laney. You also listed five "runners up": Robert Bloch, Sam Moskowitz, Bill Rotsler, Redd Boggs and Jack Speer.

All of the top ten from this poll are listed in your article, and of the runners up only Bloch is absent. I would include him. In addition to contributing a lot of terrific articles for fanzines for over five decades, he was instrumental in bringing a steady flow of new fans through his "Fandora's Box" column in Hamling's *Imagination*. One of them was me. I was pleased to see the inclusion of both Richard Bergeron and Dick Eney in your "partial catalog of some of the names that...should be considered." Although both of them disgraced themselves fannishly, each in his own way, they undeniably contributed in major ways to fandom via the publication of three of the largest fanzines of all time. In this spirit I would include Bill Donaho, who also caused controversy but published three waves of a fine fanzine, *Habakkuk*, and was an excellent fanwriter.

Others I would offer for consideration: John Bangsund, one of the mainstays of Australian fanzine fandom and an excellent writer. Ron Bennett, TAFF winner, publisher of an excellent newszine (*Skyrack*) and a fine fanzine (*Ploy*), extensive fanwriting, all around nice guy. Bill Bowers, publisher of the long-lived excellent fanzine *Outworlds*. Rich brown, coeditor of both versions of *Focal Point*, excellent fan historian, good writer. Norm & Gina (Ellis) Clarke, two of fandom's funniest writers (especially Norm), who published many issues of *Descant*, an excellent fanzine, and with Boyd Raeburn produced a series of "Queebshots" that raised the bar for short, pithy oneshots. And Boyd himself, whose *À Bas* was one of the best fanzines of its time and who was an excellent fanwriter, as well as a mainstay of FAPA for many years. Robert & Juanita Coulson, whose *Yandro* ap-



peared for decades; often underrated, it published a steady stream of excellent writing (and, admittedly, some not so great stuff) and was undeniably a focal point for many fans. Bill Danner, who published fandom's last printed fanzine (from handset type, yet), *Stefantasy*, for over fifty years. Gary Deindorfer, one of the funniest fanwriters of all time. Howard Devore, mainstay of FAPA and SAPS for decades, producing an ongoing autobiography of his iconoclastic ways. John Foyster, another stalwart of Australian fandom, who produced hundreds of fanzines and a lot of excellent writing, and died too damn' young. And while on the subject of Australian fandom, how about Bruce Gillespie, whose prolific publishing (*SF Commentary*, *The Metaphysical Review* and several long-lived apazines) and writing are unimpeachably good? We didn't run a special fund to bring him to America for no reason. Mike Glicksohn, publishing giant of Canadian fandom, whose *Energumen* (most issues done with the late Susan Wood) is well-remembered (and let me work in another plug for Taral's CD collecting all of them and much more

of Mike's prolific output). Terry Hughes, whose *Mota* is one of the all-time great fannish fanzines. Lee Jacobs, all-around great guy, funny fanwriter, hard partygoer, and the only fan who's had a movie made of one of his stories. Earl Kemp, publisher of fanzines and more, producer of Hugo-winning *Who Killed Science Fiction?*, cofounder of Advent Books, Worldcon chair, fine fanwriter. Bob Leman, fanzine publisher and another of fandom's best humorists. Dick & Pat Lupoff, for *Xero* and so much more. Larry & Noreen Shaw, for *Axe*, spearheading the 1962 Willis fund, and Larry's other fanzines done back in the day (both on his own and with his previous wife, Lee Hoffman).

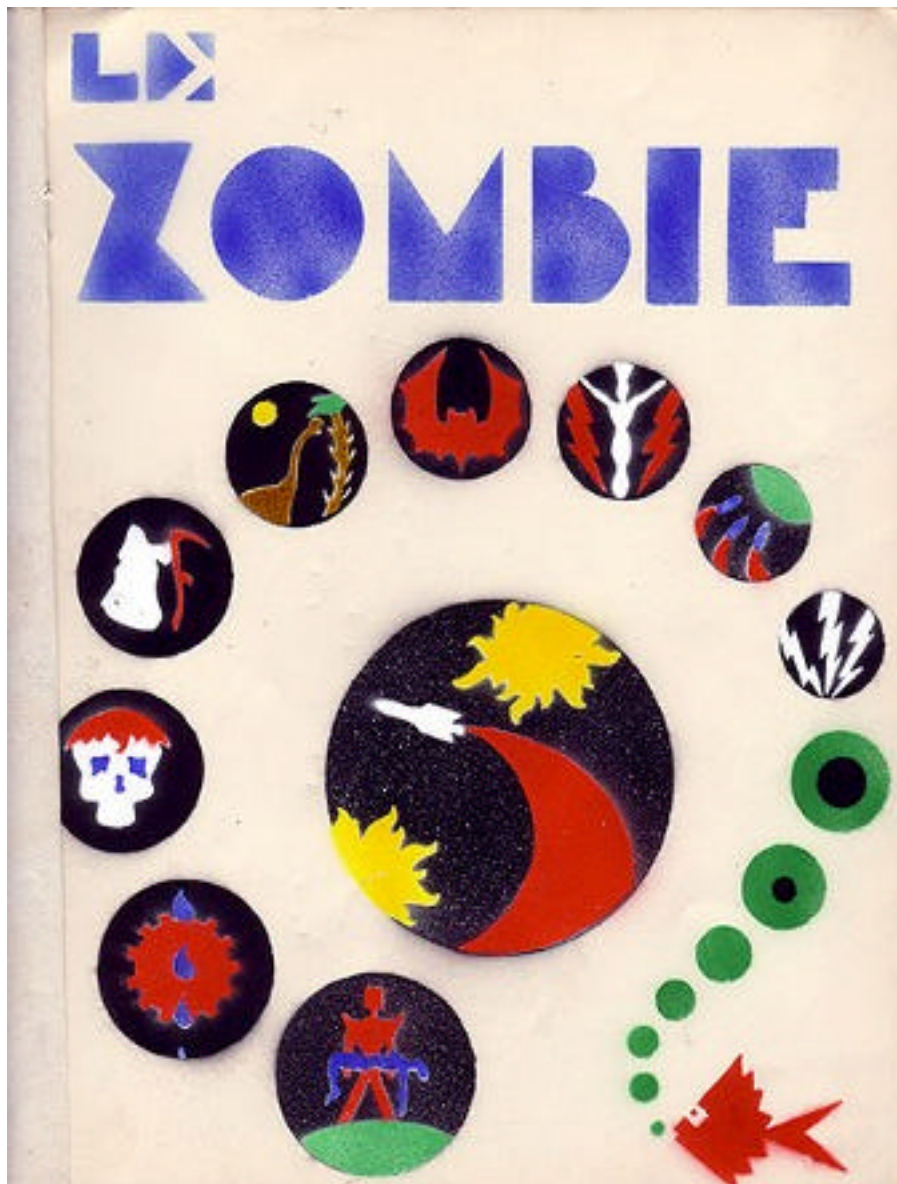
Possibly not among the great greats, but all of whom enriched my experience of fandom in one way or another over the decades I've been around, I can't overlook fans including Es Adams, Mal & Hazel Ashworth, Lenny Bailes, Wrai Ballard, John Baxter, Harry Bell, Bill Blackbeard, Claire Brialey, David Bridges, Phil Bronson, Sandy Brown, Dave Burton, Elinor Busby, Randy Byers, Avedon Carol, Graham & Pat Charnock, Rich Coad, Ed Cox, Roger Ebert, Leigh Edmonds, Gordon Eklund, Dick Ellington, Bill Evans, Don Fitch, Ken & Aileen Forman, Mike Glycer, Pete Graham, Rob Hansen, John Hertz, John-Henri Holmberg, Lucy Huntzinger, Rob Jackson, James Kepner, Jay Kinney, John Koning, Christina Lake, George Locke, Frank Lunney, Andy Main, Vernon L. McCain, Mike McInerney, Dan McPhail, Bill Meyers, Len Moffatt, Les Nirenberg, Simon Ounsley, Ella Parker, Ted Pauls, Bob Pavlat, Greg Pickersgill, Mark Plummer, Ken & Irene Potter, Dave Rike, Jimmy Robertson, Jeff Schalles, Greg Shaw, Ken Slater, Rick Sneary, Larry Stark, Geri Sullivan, Bruce Townley, Willy Watson, Wally Weber, Helen Wesson, Peter Weston, and Jean & Andy Young.

Oh yeah, I almost forgot... Arnie Katz!

Returning to your article: Joe Kennedy's fanzine is apparently so scarce that the correct spelling of its title has been lost in the sands of fannish time. It was *Vampire*, not *Vampyre*. To me Joe is also memorable for his fanwriting, his cartoons, and the two *Fantasy Reviews* he published back in the '40s. For more on them, see my article in the second issue of Shelby's *ConfuSon*...

<http://efanzines.com/Confusion/Confusion02.pdf>

And speaking of Shelby, I believe the print runs on his '50s fanzine, *Confusion*, were even less than



those of *Vampire*. He told me in correspondence that they were in the neighborhood of 60-70 copies. You mention Laney's sercon fanzine, *The Acolyte*, and his memorable *Ah! Sweet Idiocy!*—but in my view his FAPAzine, *Fan-Dango*, is one of the best apazines of all time. You'll notice that a considerable amount of the contents of *Ah! Sweet Laney!* is from it. To your notes on Bjo I would add that in addition to starting Project Art Show she was also instrumental in ramping up Worldcon masquerades exponentially.

I enjoyed Terry Kemp's article on the Paperback Show down in L.A., in which I learned that Dick Lupoff and Michael Kurland are "cornerstones to the entire show." I wonder if Dick will agree. When I think of Frank Robinson, it isn't as an author but as a long-time fan and collector. He's also a memorable fan artist, who created that amazing multi-colored silkscreened cover for the *Le Zombie* fifth anniversary.

I learned a couple weeks ago that James Halperin was the mystery buyer of Harry Warner Jr.'s fanzine collection, but was sworn to secrecy until I was given the go ahead or the news got out in some other fashion. Thank you, John Purcell, for spilling the beans (I mean, breaking the story). John refers to me: "I can just hear Bob muttering now at his computer, 'Halperin? James Halperin?? Wrote a couple SF novels in the '90s???' Gotta track this down...' Easy to find, I might add.)" Indeed he is, and I was well aware of him before I learned that he bought Harry's fanzines. He's the guy who made Andy Porter happy when he paid big bucks for copies of Jay Kinney's *Nope* with Robert Crumb artwork, and has his own Wikipedia entry...

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James\\_L.\\_Halperin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_L._Halperin)

...in which we learn that he's a coin expert (wonder if he knew Walter Breen?) and the co-owner of Heritage Auction Galleries, which periodically holds huge auctions on high-ticket items on eBay, including a recent one in which some really choice fannish items were sold. I worry a little more about John's mentioning that Jerry Weist is "writing a reference book on fandom, which Mr. Halperin is helping to fund, and may possibly even help write or edit this reference book if Mr. Weist so desires." Recalling that it was the dozen or so pages of fanzine valuations at the end of Weist's *Comic Art Price Guide, 2nd edition* that did much to jack up the price of old fanzines on the open market, this book may do even more to further that. Also, I wonder how accurate a survey of our fanzines can be coming from a dealer and a non-participating collector. (Well, Halperin *did* publish a comics fanzine in the '60s; I saw a copy of it auctioned on eBay a week or so ago.) That said, I of course am curious to read it.

I did like Halperin writing that when he's done luxuriating in having a huge fanzine collection he might "fund having them all scanned and posted on the Internet." That would be a good thing. We here in Core Fandom occasionally daydream about doing this and some of it has already been done; but none of us have the financial resources to pull it off on the grand scale Halperin envisions.

Thanks for publicizing the details of Taral's upcoming Laney compilation. As you may already know, I've had the pleasure of previewing your excellent introductory essay and

look forward to reactions about it from Core Fandom. I'd like to suggest that when the CD is about to come out it might be a good idea, if Taral agrees, to publish it in *VFW* or some other widely available fanzine as a way of focusing attention on the CD. I would think that everyone who's bought a copy of *Ah! Sweet Laney!* would also want to own the disk.

Let me put in a positive word about Dick Lupoff's *Marblehead*, the available of which you note here. I was one of the first to obtain a copy, I've read it with great relish, and I found it an excellent piece of work reflecting considerable research on Dick's part not only on Lovecraft but on the era in American history in which he lived.

I was surprised, to put it mildly, that you've provided Jeff Redmond with a platform to publicize his commercial ventures. Without going into detail, it's my feeling that he hasn't earned a place in the *VFW* universe for such efforts. To refresh your memory about why, I refer you and *VFW*'s readers to Ted White's columns in *Pixel* Nos. 9 and 10 and my letter in *Pixel* No. 12, in which ample evidence is presented to demonstrate that Redmond is *not* a nice person. Some may say he deserves a second chance and I would agree, but I'd like his redemption to take the form of actual engagement with us (for instance, he could become a *VFW* letterhack) not merely self-dealing plugs.

I enjoyed Shelby's column, Greg Benford's short article on seeing Arthur Clarke, and Bill Mills' piece on the latest features of his Website—and would add that I've spent some time in the Mills Photo Archive and liked what I found.

Lloyd Penney writes: "Once launched and fully stocked, The Faan Store should do some good business. Also, after years of being scolded for not having read certain fanpubs...not much you can do if they've been out of print for 15 years, and no one would be insane enough to loan you their copy...having at least a .pdf'ed version would fill in the gaps for a lot of people, including myself." And John Purcell notes: "Maybe offering a central Internet location for storing/retrieving/buying old zines and such would make the Faan Store a going venture. If there is a project that I get the hankering to do, I will keep this option in mind. Thank you for the idea." It must be recognized that preparing PDFs of those old fanzines takes a lot of time. Building up an inventory of items for sale at the Faan Store may be a long, gradual process. Taking a cue from John, I would encourage anyone with access to scarce and desirable old fanzines "everyone" would like to have the opportunity to read *and* with time and energy to scan them as Taral has done for Mike Glicksohn's zines and I did recently for the brown/McInerney *Focal Point* to just go ahead and do it. You then have the choice of offering them for sale in the Faan Store or giving them to Bill Burns for posting on [efanzines.com](http://efanzines.com).

That said, I agree with Mark Plummer that hard copy collections of vintage fanzines are also a desirable thing—and in many ways they're much easier to put together than PDFs. Instead of having to scan and tweak each and every page to get a decent image, all one needs to do is make decent photocopies of the original fanzines, perhaps write some introductory material, and go to press. There used to be a list

of “fan history for sale” at fanac.org, but I just went there in order to offer a link to it in response to Mark’s noting, “I wonder whether it’s the case that in some cases at least the print editions are actually still available—although only in the loosest sense because they’re sitting in boxes in lofts and garages, their availability no longer advertised.” And it’s now a blank page with an introduction but no listings. It used to contain information on how to order a fair number of remaining copies of hard copy fanzine collections (two volumes by Joe Siclari of whole issues of *Quandry*, for instance), and it’s a resource that should be continued and enlarged. For instance, as I mention in my letter in this issue I still have a handful of copies of *Fanorama*. I also have a few remaining copies of *Fanthology* ‘92, done for the Nashville Corflu. They are, respectively, \$12 and \$10 including domestic postage.

In my letter in this issue I allude to a major postage rate increase for both domestic and international mail that takes effect on May 14th. Much is being made of the fact that although the price for the first ounce is going up by two cents, the price for successive ounces is being lowered from 24 cents down to 17 cents. However, for the first time ever first class mail is being priced differently according to the envelope’s size. Without going into the detail you can find at the post office’s Web site, it means that fanzines sent in 9x12-inch envelopes will be categorized as “retail flats” and the postage rate will start out at 80 cents, not 41 cents (after which it will climb in 17-cent increments for each additional ounce). So while *Trap Door* just squeaks by being mailed in a 6x9-inch envelope and will cost 75 cents each to mail instead of 87 cents, a fanzine of the same weight (three ounces) that’s sent in a 9x12 envelope will now cost \$1.14. I forecast a lot of paper fanzines switching to half-lettersize format.

*Arnie: Joyce, with some help from James Taylor and Merric Anderson, explored dozens of hotels. She evaluated room rates, meeting facilities, staff attitude, on-premises food and accessibility to restaurants and other diversions.*



*We could’ve had a hell of time at one of the upper-end Strip hotels – at \$389 a night. The plaza was the site of both Corflu Vegas and Corflu Blackjack. New ownership has revitalized and renovated the place, so it is going to be a lot better than it was for Blackjack.*

*How can you do it, Meyer? How can you hold me to things I said more than a Chris Garcia ago? Rich brown and I must’ve been Thinking Expansively, probably too expansively. Maybe I’m a little wiser; I just want to know which fans current Core Fandomites most esteem.*

*The Faan Store is a work in progress, something that will certainly take time to develop. I believe we’ll have some good things to offer within the next few months.*

*Our stalwart letterhack from the Lone Star State cruises through a variety of topics, including Corflu Silver and Robbie the Chair.*

### John Purcell

At long last, despite the constant struggles with a recalcitrant computer, the latest in a long line of fine *Vegas Fandom Whenevers* appears! Sound the trumpets, let the nickelodeon ring, go read the runes that for-tell the future of this fine publication, and cry for the nameless ones who shamble in the dark...

What the hell was I saying? Oh, yeah. Thanks for the zine, Arnie.

The update on Corflu Silver is most enlightening, and I thank Joyce for her hard work. The hotel rates are very reasonable, especially when I compare them with the Austin Doubletree rates for Corflu Quire. And I know I haven’t pre-registered yet for the con, but that is forthcoming, I assure you. Now we need to see if Chris Garcia is going to have a conflict with those dates; he hinted in a recent *SFinSF* that such may be the case. Let’s hope things work out for him to be in Vegas for his third year of being nominated for Best New Fan.

Do Vegrants really battle for rights to sit in Robby the Chair? Sounds like quite the sight. Maybe you should start a rotating seating arrangement so that everyone gets a chance to sit on Robby. Boy, does *that* line sound suitably nasty when taken out of context. Thank Ghu you know what I mean.

Fandom’s All-Time Greats would be one heckuva Hall of Fame. Just reading the names and their all-too-brief annotations makes for an astonishing initial class. No argument from me on all of these names.

However, I can think of some others who deserve mention, such as Bill Bowers, Lou Tabakow, Walt Leibscher, Len Moffat, Damon Knight, Dale Spiers, Mike Glicksohn, and others, but how could you possibly *not* think of Carl Brandon? Can’t have a Hall of Fame without a shadow wing, can we? Even so, I think you’ve covered pretty much most of the most important fans over the years.

Then the question arises whether short-term but well-known fans deserve honoring this way: names here are fellows like Ray Bradbury, Hannes Bok, Harlan Ellison, Isaac Asimov, Frederik Pohl, and so on. There are so many fine,



deserving people who were fans for only a short time before ascending to filthy prodom. Man, there has been a wealth of talent over the years. Somehow I feel humbled to be following in their footsteps.

Moving along in this lovely issue, I guess ShelVY can get opinionated if he wants to. But, since you're the editor, Arnie, can't you trump any of the cards he plays if they don't follow suit in an ish? Just a thought.

I remember hanging out and chatting with Frank M. Robinson, Jr. at ByobCon 5 and then MidAmeriCon (both in Kansas City, how about that?), and having a wonderful time. He really was one of the nicest guys I ever met in fandom, and until I read Terry Kemp's article, it has been years since I've thought about Frank. I seem to recall him even playing my guitar once at a long-ago Minicon. This was a nice recollection by Terry, with cameo appearances by George Clayton Johnson, who *still* looks just he did when I got his autograph in Phoenix. Great photos here.

Nice to see Greg Benford showing up in these august pages, and in May, no less. How incredible that must have been to be sitting on the beach, talking science and science fiction with Arthur C. Clarke over gin and tonics. It's a good thing Greg knows a whole bunch more about those topics than I do; if that had been me, I would have been so tongue-tied that nothing intelligible would come from my mouth. Not only that, but the political/military situation in Sri Lanka would have lent a surreal air to everything. How Clarke can keep his optimism in such an environment is beyond me.

Hey, nice photos you found to accompany my article. They look good. I have a follow-up note about this, too. James Halperin has agreed to meet for an interview. My wife and I will be heading to Dallas on May 25th to spend some time with Lloyd and Yvonne Penney, so I need to let Mr. Halperin know in order to line-up the interview time. I can't wait! It is going to be a long three weeks until then. I promise to take plenty of pictures, but the interview gets published in *MY* zine first.

You know, before I sign off here, I briefly entertained the notion of running for OE of SNAPS, but immediately slapped myself silly for thinking like that. With my current academic workload, no frigging way! Maybe in 2009, after I graduate (December, 2008) with my PhD in Education, Curriculum and Instruction. Then it will be Doktor OE to the rest of you peons... I promise to run a benign dictatorship

*Arnie: I'm putting the latest breaking news about Corflu Silver into VFW and then following up with pieces for Corflu.org and LasVegrants.com. I also plan to publish a hard copy progress report.*

*While we're all cavorting at Corflu Silver, Chris Garcia will be serving as toastmaster at a costume con. He's more to be pitied than censured.*

*A "rotating seating arrangement" would be very u-Vegrants-like (except, of course, for the swivel chair in my office.) We prefer to let the free market dictate the occupant of Robbie the Chair, so its usually in the possession of either the largest fan in the living room or the best-looking woman.*

*The Official Editor is always a Dictator – and I would like to think that the first two (Joyce and now me) have been reasonably benign. I hope you will run eventually. I don't really want to be in charge forever.*

*It's good to see this guy resurge a little in Fandom, and this LoC offers fresh evidence why that's a Very Good Thing...*

#### **Gregory Benford**

It's an honor to be included in a list of major fans. I've always thought the distinction between fan & pro isn't huge, as both engage similar energies for me.

WAW was surely the best fanwriter, though Burbee was great, too. Ted White was a mover & shaker in fandom all my life, and still has plenty to say. I sure miss Terry Carr! -- and Rotsler, of course. Cons don't seem the same without them.

## **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:**

James Taylor  
Email: dfh1@cox.net  
Phone: 434-5784

## Las Vegas Fan Events Calendar

### **VSFA Monthly Meeting** Saturday, June 2 11:00 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, June 2 7:30 PM

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

### **SNAFFood June Dinner** Saturday, June 10 6:30 PM

The monthly dinner meeting will take place at Hush Puppies. Contact LindaBushyager@aol.com for details.

### **SNAPS Deadline** Sunday, June 17

Contributions should be sent to Official Editor Arnie Katz (crossfire4@cox.net). Everyone is invited to participate in this popular and enjoyable fan activity.

### **Las Vegrants Meeting** Saturday, June 16 7:30 PM

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

### **SNAFFU Discussion Meeting** Sunday, June 23 2:00 PM

Vegas' formal science fiction club meets for a lively discussion meeting once a month at the Clark

Good issue. Do get John Purcell to write up his visit to James Halpern. As an advisor to the Eaton collection, where I just spent 2 weeks as Writer in Residence, I still yern for the Warner collection Halpern has now. I read through the issues of A Bas at Eaton and found several I'd not seen, yet still haven't seen all of them. We need to mass other collections to get a true, complete run of the major fmz. Eaton has over 100,000 items, mostly sf mags and books, but many fmz too. Otghers should give!--it's a charitable donation, deductible.

*Arnie: I suspect the account of the Halperin visit will find its way into John's excellent new fanzine Askance, available at efanzines.com. If John doesn't want it for his own zine, you can bet I'll be first on line with my hand out.*

*I see that similarity between fans and fans, too. Core Fandomites and professional writers share a love of words and, usually, some desire to use them.*

*The next letter brings up some very worthy fans opitside North America – and with good reason.*

#### **Mark Plummer**

As a list aficionado, I welcome your 'partial catalog' of names to be considered for a Fandom Hall of Fame (VFW#96). No real disagreement with any of those you put forward, and while I know relatively little about a few of them (Joe Kennedy, for instance) what I know of the others makes me think I should rectify that. I will say, though, that I'm pleased to see Richard Bergeron listed be-

cause, for all the Topic A unpleasantness, he was a damn good writer and artist who produced some really fine fanzines and I think you're entirely right to acknowledge that

I will, however, pitch in a few more names for consideration, working on a kind instant reaction. First up -- and for me the most obvious omission to the extent that I keep double-checking the list to be sure that he's really not there already -- is Arthur Thomson. Atom virtually defines fan art for me; his drawings spoke to me long before I really understood the context in which they were produced. They have a kind of elegant surface simplicity and a great deal of charm.

And I hope it's not simple nationalistic pride that makes me want to continue with a few more British names. I'd also suggest Greg Pickersgill and Peter Weston, as significant fanzine producers across many years although in both cases their role and influence in British fandom goes far beyond that and indeed continues. And maybe Peter Roberts whose *Checkpoint* pretty much documents the seventies and who was, I get the impression, a visible international presence at a time when British fandom was more insular. All of the foregoing are also TAFF winners, it just now occurs to me.

But I'll change country, and note that you don't have any Australians, something I'd rectify by the inclusion of Bruce Gillespie and John Foyster. Bruce has been steadily producing quality fanzines for forty years, and manages to maintain a real fannish touch behind slick productions values. John also had an extensive publishing record, but

seemed to me to be an important catalyst, goading fans in Australia and elsewhere to \*be better\* (he reminded me a lot of Greg in this respect). I think I'd also suggest Mike Glicksohn, as a fine fan editor for sure but more as the most consistently interesting of the high-volume letter writers.

I am conscious that I haven't put forward any American names, although that's not a deliberate choice. Rather I found that mostly when I thought, 'Ooh, what about...?' you'd already listed the person in question. I think, though, that I would like to suggest Avedon Carol, and Patrick and Teresa Nielsen Hayden, simply because I consider them all to be really fine fan writers.

I don't know, I could probably go on for ages like this (it's just occurred to me that when I was looking at Australia I should really have mentioned John Bangsund, for instance). I'm also wondering whether I'm unfairly shying away from more recent candidates, given your suggestion of 'twenty years as an active fan'. The most junior of the people I'm proposing here go back to the mid-seventies, and most have been fans since the sixties or earlier, giving them more like forty years in the field. I guess twenty years just doesn't seem all that much these days.

*Arnie: You're not the only list-lover. I kinda like 'em myself, going back to when I would chart the ups and downs of the weekly "Top 40" on New York's three rock radio stations in the 1950's.*

*My "20 year career test" was just a guideline, meant to focus attention on those who've done substantial fanac over a significant length of time. Someone may cite a fan whose five- or 10-year spree entitles him or her to be ranked among the very greatest. I could've said 30 or even 40, but I didn't want to make mere longevity the ruling criteria. Being one of Fandom's 10 (or 20) best is about more than endurance, though stamina is a good quality in a Publishing Giant.*

*I left out some names as a spur to comment, but the omission of Atom was a simple (and stupid) oversight. He's one of Fandom's greatest cartoonists, perhaps second only to Rotsler. And was a fine writer, a good fanzine publisher and one hell of a terrific guy.*

*You really firmed up the list of potential candidates for the mythical "Top 20," for which many thanks. Pickersgill is truly one of the greats, Weston is an exemplary and Roberts might be in the select circle, too, if he had the longevity. Avedon Carol is bound to be a popular choice as are the Nielson-Heydens.*

*John Foyster and Bruce Gillespie are two more worthies, indeed!*

More letters next time, especially if you write them!

## THE KINGFISH SAYS

This has been a grim time, technologically speaking. I feel like I've run a marathon, yet this is still the first issue in about a month. Even "sorta weekly" doesn't cover that kind of hiatus. I guess that's a point in favor of electronic publishing; Putting out a 26-page genzine in a month used to be considered pretty fast stepping' back in tree-killer days.

Most, though not all, problems are past and I expect to do #97 out within more quickly, despite lingering difficulties. Apologies to contributors, including letter-writers, whose contributions had to be pushed back to next issue. I promise I won't make folks wait a whole month again, especially if *you* contribute something. — Arnie Katz

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*... and a ton of news.*