

Virtual Tucker Hotel



Issue Nine

<http://www.ustream.tv/channel/the-virtual-fan-lounge>

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VTH is primarily an electronic fanzine, available on <http://www.efanzines.com>. Paper copies of this fanzine do exist, however, and will be available for the fannish usual. In any case, e-mails and letters of comment are, of course, welcome.

Thanks to: Bill Mills ("FanLounge"), without whom The Virtual Fan Lounge wouldn't exist. Also to Shelby Vick, for agreeing to be interviewed by me. And to everyone in the audience..

Member fwa. Startling Press Production number 277. Today is Thursday 19th June, 2008.

Looking Back and Looking Forward

It was a busy weekend in The Virtual Fan Lounge last weekend, with three events scheduled:

- There was the regular Southern Fandom Classic chat session on the Saturday.
- As an extra event on the Sunday, we also had "ShelVy Speaks" – an audio interview with Shelby Vick.
- And, following on afterwards, there was a re-broadcast of The Wasted Hour 3, with more debate and discussion.

Meanwhile, the Virtual Fan Lounge has been invited back to the Vegrants' party in Las Vegas next weekend, with another episode of Arnie Katz's "The Wasted Hour," his 30-minute fannish programme. There are rumours that this may include a conference call to Curt Phillips' fannish party across the other side of the continent.

Joining the Party

To use the chat-room, just go to <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/the-virtual-fan-lounge>. On the left hand side of the page is the live video feed – replaced by a slide show when there isn't anything happening. On the right is the actual chat-room. You can see what everyone else is typing in the top window, and add your own contribution in the smaller box at the bottom.

You will be assigned an initial user name in the format "ustreamer-12345." If you'd rather change this – to your real name, livejournal name, or whatever – you can do this by clicking the "Sign Up" link at the top to register for free. Some people have been slightly put off by the amount of information that the registration

form asks for, which I can empathise with. But registration is entirely optional – you can simply stay as "ustreamer-12345" if you prefer.

Of Firewalls and Fen

Some people have reported the following problem when trying to connect to the chat room. When you get to the page it tries to connect to the chat, but then comes up with a message: "disconnect (security)." Then underneath it says "reconnecting....." – except it never does. This is due to the firewall settings at your end – the firewall is blocking port 6667, which is what the chat client uses to connect.

If you have a software firewall on your own computer, you should be able to re-set it to allow port 6667. If you are behind a work or network firewall, the same principle applies, except that you'll have to talk to your network admin to get 6667 unblocked. You are warned that they are likely to take some persuading, as they will know that this port is pretty much solely used for chat room software!

Video Library

As well as the live events, The Virtual Fan Lounge is beginning to build up a library of recorded material available for viewing. The clips are listed under the main viewscreen – just click to select. Several new videos have been added this week:

- The Wasted Hour 3, presented by Arnie Katz.
- ShelVy Speaks – an audio interview with Shelby Vick.

Art Credits

Front cover: Shelby Vick, pictured at his computer. Or so he claims....

Schedule for the next few weeks

Vegrants Party

The Vegrants in Las Vegas, Nevada meet the first and third Saturdays of the month. The presentation in TVFL will start with the fourth edition of The Wasted Hour – 30 fannish minutes with host Arnie Katz and guests for fannish chat and fannish fun. This will be followed by the Vegrants "Voyeur-Cam" (sans audio) – which may allow viewing the members mingling and perhaps chatting with the visitors in TVFL's chat room. Also possibly music from Vegrants Bill Mills, Teresa Cochran, et al.

- Saturday 21st June, 8.00 pm PDT (Pacific Daylight Time)
- Saturday 21st June, 11.00 pm EDT (Eastern Daylight Time)
- Sunday 22nd June, 3.00 am UTC (Co-ordinated Universal Time)
- Sunday 22nd June, 4.00 pm BST (British Summer Time)
- Sunday 22nd June, 11.00 am WAST (Western Australian Standard Time)
- Sunday 22nd June, 1.00 pm EAST (Eastern Australian Standard Time)
- Sunday 22nd June, 3.00 pm NZST (New Zealand Standard Time)

Southern Fandom Classic chat-room session

Dean Sweatman and other members of the Southern Fandom Classic group will be holding their regular chat session in the Virtual Fan Lounge, and invite other interested fans from around the world to join them on Saturday 29th June. Start time still to be confirmed – see next issue.

And More?

Other ad-hoc events may be added around this 'core' schedule – see future issues of Virtual Tucker Hotel for more details. And, of course, the chat-room itself is open 24/7.

The Wasted Hour, 7th June

(This is a partial transcript of the third show in the series. For a longer version, view the video on the website.)

Arnie Katz welcomed everyone to the show – the fastest hour in fandom, as it was only supposed to last for thirty minutes (although it practice it might run a little over). He wanted to start by talking about Core Fandom. This was a new label that was becoming increasingly popular for what had previously been called fanzine fandom. Arnie felt that a new name was needed as fanzine fandom was no longer just about fanzines. For example, this show was clearly not a fanzine. New fans like Bill Mills were active on websites like lasvegrants.com and The Voices of Fandom. Fan activity within Core Fandom these days included a lot of things not previously possible, but with the same social contract as before, reflecting the continuity

with fanzine fandom. That wasn't to say that other branches of All Known Fandom would have their own views of fandom that were right for them.

After a break, Arnie introduced his first guest, Joyce Katz, wearing an Isadora Duncan-style shawl. Arnie mused that shawls tended to move about the body as women grew older. When a woman was in her twenties, the shawl would usually go around the waist. Then it would migrate to around the shoulders, and eventually end up around the head. He was hopeful that Joyce's shawl could be kept around her shoulders.

Arnie also showed off Joyce's marble collecting box, as also discussed last week. More contributions for the box were welcome, and Arnie gave out the mailing address for marble donations.

Arnie asked Joyce whether she preferred to be addressed as 'the Sweetheart of Fanac Falls'

or as 'The High Priestess of Fandom.' Joyce declared that she preferred to be a Sweetheart, as Priestesses got nothing but vegetables and old fruit. As an alternative, Arnie suggested 'Queen of Queens,' which Joyce said she liked the sound of – as long as it was said with head lowered. Arnie suggested that she was like one of those wrestlers who demanded respect. Joyce agreed – or else she would hit them with a chair.

Arnie asked about neofans – the care and feeding of newcomers to Core Fandom. Joyce declared that Las Vegas had seen more than its share of neofans, but that she was proud to say that she had been able to drive most of them away. (She had to admit that some did remain, but she didn't sound especially enthused at this prospect.)

Arnie was more upbeat, saying that a well-trained neofan had many potential uses – they could save a seat for you or bring you drinks. He believed in being kind to neos, as when he was a neo, people had been kind to him. Plus, it never hurt to build up a little goodwill.

Arnie asked why there were no teenage neos any more. Joyce said that younger people, even fans, have better things to do these days. Being a fan no longer carried the stigma it used to. There was a look (half-way between fear and sudden comprehension) on Arnie's face as he asked Joyce if their marriage was based on Joyce being driven into the arms of a fellow SF fan by a hostile world. Joyce wisely refused to answer.

Joyce mellowed somewhat and clarified that she believed in being good to good neofans. But made the point that you couldn't coax someone into being a fan if they didn't have the right stuff. Arnie felt that some seemingly untalented neofans just needed time to get going. As an example, he gave himself and Lenny Bailes, whose first fanzine together he declared had probably been the worst single issue of any fanzine in the whole of the 1960s, but who were both still active fans to this day.

But Joyce felt that looking after neofans was like looking after feral cats – you couldn't take them all in. Arnie felt that neofans didn't come and go in those kind of numbers any more – there weren't hundreds of them every year. Nowadays, if we were getting half a dozen neofans a year, we were “doing good.” The main growth area these days was in old time-fans coming back.

It was asked how to introduce new fans to Core Fandom. Arnie felt that new technology could be a hook – core fandom did not necessarily have to be just about fanzines these days. That said, the best way to get people into good fanwriting was still to show them good fanwriting. He also mentioned the importance of having a fannish mentor – in his case, Ted White and Rich Brown.

(Further parts of this show included a panel discussion of what makes a good fanzine, with additional comments interjected via speaker phone by Curt Phillips and John Purcell, amongst others. See the video on the website for full details.)