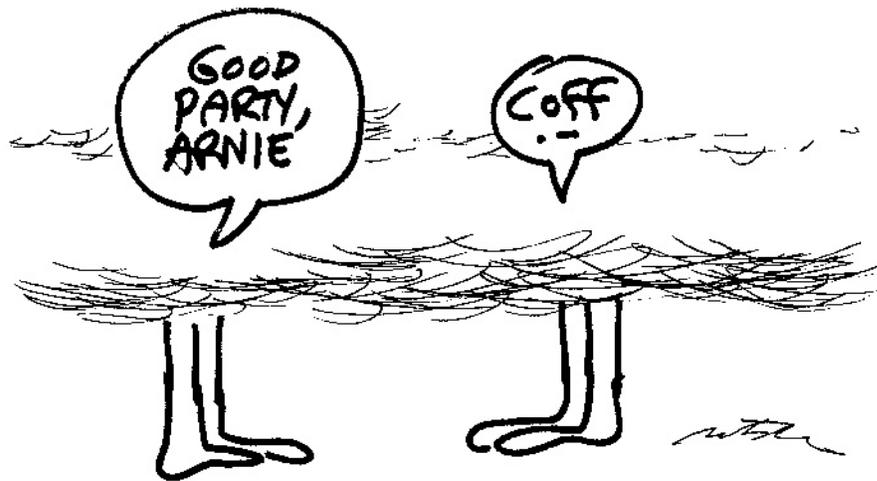


MEMORIES TOMORROW



What Happens in Vegas
Stays in Fanzines

TONER MEMORIES

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When Merric and Luba Anderson first began talking up the idea of putting on an informal convention for their friends (artists) and mine (fanzine fans) just prior to the Los Angeles worldcon in 2006, it immediately put me in mind of the 1996 Toner convention hosted by Ben Wilson and Tom Springer (ably supported by their wives, respectively, Cathi and Tammy). They liked the concept so well that, after getting permission to use the name, they decided to make their intended event Toner II!

That sent me to the fanzine collection to jog my memory about the first one. Sometimes, good times and good memory can be mutually exclusive.

I came upon Wild Heirs #17, which has a batch of articles and columns about Toner. Two things happened as I read: I recalled what made Toner such a wonderful experience and I decided to share those memories.

So whether you attended and have forgotten, didn't make Toner or weren't even an active fan back in 1997, I hope you'll enjoy these articles.

And if you'd like to bring this spirit into the new millennium, why not come to Toner II?

— Arnie Katz

Toner Memories is brought to you by Arnie Katz (330 S. Decatur Blvd., PMB 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107; cross-fire4@cox.net). It is intended to evoke blissful thoughts of Toner and is dedicated to the two fans who chaired it, Ben Wilson and Tom Springer.

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Member: fwa Supporter: AFAL Believer: United Fans of Vegas Toner II in 2006!

Arnie Katz

"I've got an idea," I said to Joyce, Tom and Tammy a couple of days before Toner. "Why don't we make the next *Wild Heirs* a Toner Memories issue?"

They all liked it, and *Wild Heirs* #17 took its first steps toward what you just took out of the envelope. Everything derives from Toner in some way. For example, our Elmer Perdue reprint was Lichtman's main reading, and the Roscoe manifesto is from Geri Sullivan's shtick in the Toner opening. My faan fiction piece? Well... It's true that I got the idea about a month ago, but it wasn't until I conferred with Bill Rotsler at Toner that I decided to actually write it.

My greatest fear about Toner, before the fact, was our high expectations for it. Nothing crushes spontaneity like worry about potential Great Fannish Significance.

Tom Springer, whether you call him chairman or ring leader, brushed aside the expectation like so many cobwebs. His jovial, if weary, stewardship got the nearly 50 attendees to put aside pre-conception and let it happen naturally.

Ben Wilson's contribution only began with the home made wine described in his new column. And it is impossible to say enough about the food Tammy Funk and Cathi Wilson prepared. Their bountiful and delicious cuisine helped give Toner its unique character and make it more than Just a scaled-down ersatz Corflu.

Tom Springer

Zooooom! Whoosh! Vrooomm!

And then Toner was gone, leaving a black smear of ash and the lingering smell of Woody's dried up chili to coat your olfactories. Six days later, Wednesday morning, and I'm dropping Perry Middlemass off at the Southwest terminal and circling back home for another two hours rest before heading off to work. After four hours at work I woke up from a nap and cruised over to the Katzes where the remnants of Toner reside. Richard Brandt and Michelle Lyons, Martin and Helena Tudor, Karl Kreder (who may be back), Ron Pehr and Raven, Ken Forman, Ben Wilson, Arnie and Joyce and Tammy and myself. Amazingly we create enough noise among the 13 of us to drown out the phone. Bunch of loudmouths.

I'm still riding a Toner high. Whoa, Marcy Waldie just walked through the door. That makes fourteen refugees of the purple black dust. The bursts of laughter signal high spirits and with some seven steaming Bulgarian pizzas of assorted makes on the way I see quiet bloat time in our future. More food.

They always said, "If you feed them, they will come." And they did.

"I'll call your bluff, Brandt," Arnie shouts from over my shoulder. Another challenge has been made. Richard scurries off to Ross's office and already, over my own, I can hear Richard's tap-tapping on the keyboard as he creates his first assault against the wrath that is Arnie.

Laurie Kunkel

Toner seems to have dragged lots of long-lost Vegas fen from their caves -including yours truly. Trying to put together a fanzine, after writing the vast majority of the day is pretty tough, but I've started an article Bill asked me to write. Who knows - maybe there will be another zine from Spyglass soon.

I know I've missed the fun of fannish writing...



Toner Time!

Cathi Wilson

The crowd at the kick-off party was amazing.

There was such an interesting mix of fen at Arnie and Joyce's, it was hard to keep them all straight. Ben and I had the pleasure of having Martin and Helena Tudor as our house guests Thursday night. After traveling for about twenty-five hours, they were quite gracious and accepted our invitation to dinner. We had a chance to get to know each other and compare governmental quirks.

Tammy Funk

Like Cathi and Ben, Tom and I also had some excellent houseguests at both ends of Toner. Perry Middlemiss stayed for a night, along with Christina Lake for one or two more. I had a long and pleasant conversation with Perry over thick imported beers at a local pub with the rest of the crowd.

Our talk ranged far and wide over topics from his delight at fatherhood, to my obscure last job, to American and Australian schools, and so forth. I couldn't have asked for two easier guests. If we overslept (which we did consistently, as we are not morning people), Tom and I would emerge to find Christina curled up on our ugly-yet-fairly-comfortable couch, a fanzine held aloft, quietly thumbing along at a leisurely pace. Christina, Martin, and Helena, like Pam Wells before them, added to my delight with what I know of British fandom. I probably got to know Christina the best, and found her to be an agreeable companion on various sub-Toner excursions.

After straggling back at 4:00 a.m. with Geri Sullivan one Toner evening, it took me virtually no arm twisting at all to convince Christina to go scouting for breakfast before I passed out. (I'm hardly wasting away, but it sometimes feels that way.) Whether I was going to 7-11, Mount Charleston, or Red Rock, she was always willing to come along. To top it off, all of the Brits and Perry appreciated a good drinking excursion, so I was more than pleased with our out-of-town company.

Toner itself was a delightful experience, even with the frenzy of food preparations Cathi and I made. I found time (but wished I had had more) to get better acquainted with Suzanne Vick, chatting about food, fandom and her special knack of getting all manner of people to listen to her. (She says that "they all think of her as Mom".) I did learn not to leave anything laying around Bill Rotsler for too long.

Several of us were lounging on the living room bed when Bill seized my feet in a sudden compulsion to label them ("left" and "left," in case I got confused). Cartoons sprouted up everywhere with the tenacity of weeds, bursting with the

usual wit. In addition to the crop of illos that grew on dressers and side tables, I found a paper-platter face in my bed.

Geri Sullivan found out how one stray remark can inspire Bill to great bursts of activity, dashing off a whole series over an especially amusing lunch. A great time, indeed.

Ken Forman

Robert Lichtman turned toward me, grinned and said, "It always happens. I always do lots of fanac right after a convention."

I agreed. He went on to describe the contents of the next *Trap Door*. Apparently Ben Wilson felt the same. The lad sez he wants us to do something about the fabled Bogart.

We made the mistake of telling Christina Lake.

"Oh, you simply must do it...you must do Bogart right away," she said with that wonderful accent she has. (She gave me a copy of her fanzine, *Never Quite Arriving*, at Toner. Reading it, I can hear her voice in my head.)

As if that weren't enough, she also grabbed my arm and leaned against me.

Ben proceeded to explain to Christina that we (Tom, Ben and I) had this great logo for a new fanzine. I just stood there with her hanging from my arm, ready to promise her anything.

I'm a fool for beautiful women; just ask my wife.

Arnie

Toner entered the Chorp Dimension late Sunday night. We might be there yet, but for the intervention of Walter A. Willis. Who knows if we would have ever emerged from this wrinkle in reality to produce this *Wild Heirs* - or anything else. Therefore, blame for all future Las Vegas fanzine fanac must be laid at his (new) door.

Joyce was a bit sickly at Toner, so she and I took a break in our suite about 11:45 Sunday night. Some of you, savvy about today's fashionably surreal con reports are saying, "Midnight on the third day of a partycon... where else would they be but the Chorp Dimension?" Granted that things sometimes get out of hand at such times, both Joyce and I were reasonably well connected to the prevailing view of reality at this time. Because she wasn't her normal, robust self, Joyce needed more sleep and rest than usual, and I tended to keep her company. Thus we were still spry as neos at their first con. We sat there, contemplating the infinite, as she gathered her strength for another foray to the uproarious consuite down the hall.

That's when it started. "I wish Tom were here," Joyce said. Like several other lively local groups of the past, the Vegrants enjoy each other's company enough to hang out together at cons.

I was on the point of reminding Joyce that Tom had lots of responsibilities, complicated by the flare-up of his bursitis. That's when I heard the knock at the door.

It was Tom.

He'd finally hobbled over to a comfortable chair when I observed that it would be nice to have Ben there, too, so I could give them a carload of egoboo for their feats of the weekend.

Again, the knock at the door. "Hi," said Ben as he walked in and took a seat on one of the couches. If you know Ben, you'll guess that he almost immediately voiced the wish that Cathi were there to enjoy the company.

The words were barely out of his mouth when we heard another knock.

I got up and went to the door. I opened it wide for Cathi. Tom observed the Wilsons cuddling on the couch and

said that he wished Tammy was there, too. Knock. Tammy. Who else would it be?

Personally, I thought it was one hell of a run of coincidences, I said nothing to the others, afraid they'd laugh - and afraid to break the spell.

We talked about fanzines, mentioned the recent Crawdaddy and someone wished Paul and Cindy Lee would've come to Toner as originally planned.

When I heard the knock, I knew who was at the door even, as I walked across the suite's main room to the door. I found myself wishing for Robert Lichtman's wise counsels in the face of the fannish supernatural.

Sure enough, it was Paul Williams and Cindy Lee Berryhill. Accompanying them was Robert Lichtman.

I wasn't the only one who'd noticed the pile up of arrivals-on-demand. Once everyone got settled again, all we could talk about was the Wish Party.

Perhaps to change the subject, Paul asked what we thought of the TAFF delegate and expressed a wish to meet him.

We waited for the knock.

The wait lasted about 10 seconds.

In came Martin and Helena Tudor with bonus guest Christina Lake. (I concede that she proved so popular at Toner that anyone of the others may've silently wished her into the room.)

We all looked at each other. The Wish Party had become almost too good a thing. If Himself materialized at our door, it would confirm that we had departed the known world and ventured into a faan fiction universe from which we might never return.

As a trufannish chairman should. Tom seized the moment to confront the Unknown. "I wish Willis was here!" Tom declared in a strong voice that had just the shadow of a quaver.

We waited for the knock that might seal our eternal doom.

That's when Walter intervened and restored balance to the fanzine universe. The psychic pull emanating from so many fans must have been formidable. It is a monument to his fortitude that, even in his still-frail post-operative condition, he repelled our unbidden psychic emanation and stayed put in Northern Ireland.

The knock never came.

We all exhaled.

"It's over," I said, brushing away the wisps of sin... so I could see those whom Willis had delivered from endless wandering in a faan fictional never-never land. "We have escaped the Chorp Dimension and returned to the world of the relatively mundane."

Drat. We all dispersed to our rooms and late night avocations.

— Las Vegrants

"Vague Rants" was the group-created round-robin editorial that opened every issue of *Wild Heirs*. We started doing the round-robin in homage to *Wild Hair*, published by our fancestors, the Los Angeles Insurgents about two decades earlier

We generally wrote "Vague Rants" during one (or sometimes two) Las Vegrants meetings. Folks would stroll up to the Macintosh on my desk, erupt onto the page and slink back to the living room for more fannish revelry, — Arnie

May 27, 1996

Tonight Cathi and I were invited over to Tom and Tammy's place for dinner and some lite conversation.

As it turned out, dinner was great.

Tammy prepared, I'd say, 12-oz. T-Bones, baked potatoes, pre-dinner salads and fresh out-of-the-oven biscuits. For dessert, we had an apple pie, served with Dreyer's Vanilla ice cream.

After we finished dinner, we got down to our "lite" conversation. Neither Cathi nor I knew what was in store for us this evening. The talk started casually enough, a-little-of-this, a-little-of that, sort of thing. Tom then produced the crux of the evening, Toner.

We've agreed to help Tom and Tammy run Toner. Cathi will assist in the food prep. division and I... will do whatever Tom needed.

Ok, no problem.

Not a lot for me to do; seems like Tom's got most of it already done.

We've also decided to make our own beer and wine. I'm doing the wine, and Tom will do the beer. I figure I'll need four or five jugs worth. So I'll have to call Mom tomorrow and see if I can get her gallon wine jars. Need to start yesterday if I want to pull this off.

May 28, 1996

Talked to Mom today. She's got only one empty jug; the other two haven't dropped yet. I'll stop by tomorrow and get it. Need to spend time with Ma anywho.

Stopped by Von's today and looked for some jugs. Not a damn one. Nothing comes in gallon glass jugs any more. No more barbecue sauce, no fruit drinks, only eight-dollar jugs of wine.

I hope I can find something else. I really don't want to waste the wine, but there is no way I can drink a tall glass of this stuff, let alone a gallon of the shit.

Picked up some balloons and yeast, Ill get the fruit when I get the jug.

May 30, 1996

Finally got by Mom's today. Looks like she'll have two more ready in a week or so. I hope it's sooner though.

Stopped by the store on the way home. I picked up some Granny Smith apples and two dry quarts of strawberries. While I was there, I also grabbed a fiver of sugar.

Didn't need the sugar after all. Cathi had recently restocked. Good thing sugar doesn't go bad quickly.

Started with the apples. They'd take the longest. They did. After a brief thought of peeling them, I cored them and took off any blemishes. As I created more and more smaller chunks of the sweet-smelling fruit, I recalled how much work and time we spent crushing the apples when we last made wine. Damn, that was fifteen, sixteen years ago.

Out of the corner of my eye I saw it. That wondrous kitchen appliance.

As a bachelor, it would have never even entered my thoughts that I needed this apparatus, let alone go out and embarrass myself in buying it. Thanks to Cathi, it was there, on the counter, just waiting for me.

A food processor works wonders on small chunks of apples. It sliced, diced and smushed them to a semi-liquid mess. It was hard to tell how much two cups were. I ended up being almost on target. I only needed about 1/2 an apple.

I had a peanut butter and apple attack with the other

BEN WILSON

Diary of a Winer

half, while I cleaned the strawberries. I cleaned both quarts, but only really used one. I'll surprise Cathi with a bowl of vanilla ice cream topped with them.

I need to get a funnel before the next batch is started. Pouring four cups of fruit and four cups of sugar into that small opening with a rolled up pizza flyer just won't work. It took two hands to control the flow of the fruit and a hand to hold the paper funnel. What a mess.

It's made though. Now comes the wait.

May 31, 1996

Over nite, the wine has inflated the balloon over half its capacity. Guess shaking it after adding the yeast mixture might have been a good idea. Normally it takes two to four days to inflate to this extent.

June 3, 1996

Mom called earlier, she says her pulp dropped in both wines and that one's balloon is down to the size of a softball. If it stays down she'll strain it tomorrow. I figure she'll get the one tomorrow and the last will be done in a few days. I should have two more batches started by the weekend.

June 5, 1996

Tina called; said Mom was working on bottling the last of her wine. I could stop by and pick up the bottles anytime Thursday.

I've got to remember to call and see what she wanted. Tina doesn't call to give me Mom's messages.

That was on my machine along with one from my ma later on, telling me the same thing.

At baseball tonight I asked Tom how his beer was going. He hasn't even gotten it out yet. Said he'd get it out tomorrow, and see how long it takes. Hope so.

June 8, 1996

Finally got around to doing the wine tonight. Peach and Watermelon. The Peach went well, easy fruit to prepare. The watermelon, on the other hand, was not. Ok, maybe it would have been if I hadn't rewarded myself so well after completing the peach.

We'll see how this watermelon turns out. As it's an experiment, I'm not sure how it'll turn out. Instead of the

Toner's enterprising co-chairman Ben Wilson bottled his own wine for a special tasting at the con.

This is the story about how the bottles came to the table at Toner.

On page 5 is one of the custom labels that Ben created for each of his wine varieties.

standard 4 cups, I used the complete contents of the damn thing. It was a little over a foot long. I used everything except the rind, even the seeds after much thought. It came to a little less than a gallon of sticky goop. Once I added the sugar and yeast mixture, it needed only a couple of cups of water to bring it up to the proper level

Had to try and drain the balloon on the apples, berry. Guess I filled the jug too full. Only partially successful, I'll have to watch that one and really pay attention to the others I make.

Found more glass gallon jugs. Five bucks worth of apple juice and apple cider. I guess I can handle drinking apple stuff for a week or so. I bought two.

June 10, 1996

Glad to report all balloons are at max capacity, and they're working fine.

Finished the first of the apple juice. Had help though, Cathi's girls were here over the weekend. They also helped me make the Black Plum.

As I sliced the plums, Nikki pulled out the pits and Cassi processed them. I still ended up with clean up, though. That never happened when I was the kid.

June 12, 1996

The balloon on the apples. Berry exploded some time during the night. Surprised it didn't wake either of us, although I bet Nimue got scared silly. Lucky I had a spare. It'll be fine. Better stop by the store tomorrow and get a few more of those spares.

June 15, 1996

Finished that second thing of apple... My second major experiment in my trip down the whining road, is spiced apple wine. Here I added some nutmeg and cinnamon to the standard recipe. It looks like that stuff Mom used to use on toast when I was younger.

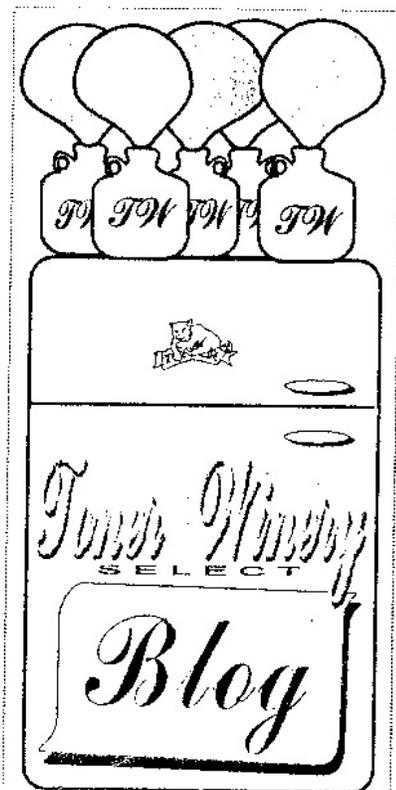
As for the sugar, only 3-1/2 cups of white cane sugar. The other half cup will be replaced with brown cane sugar, which I added separately. I also threw in half a cup of raisins.. no more apples.

June 24, 1996

Tom still says he plans to make the beer, but he hasn't started it yet. I wonder if he's even looked to see how long it'll take. I think he should give up the idea, but that's up to him.

He must think he's superman with all the things he's trying to do.

My fridge looks like one of those fields with all those hot air balloons. Five full-size punching balloons all a different color, atop their glass baskets.



July 6, 1996

The peach pulp dropped today, and the balloon has shrunk a little. If it stays down and the balloon deflates, I'll be able to strain it off Monday. I want to ask Cathi and Tammy what flavor they'd like me to try. Hope it's not too bizarre.

July 9, 1996

Peach wine I now have. Not too bad, a little sweet. Nothing a splash of club soda won't cure. Tammy likes it, and the half-full water glass of it hit her pretty good.

It does pack a punch. I like the feel of it. It actually has the texture of a ripe peach, tender skinned and fuzzy. The taste, although not the feel, of the peach lingers for an acceptable amount of time.

Well, the next wine was decided today. Grape. Not just any kind of grape, but Toner Grape. We decided that we need to honor this wine with a special title due to the fact that Joyce has spent the last four years tending her grape vines with love and

care. This is her first harvest.

After Toner, I'll have to make the peach-raspberry that perked Tammy's interest.

Watermelon looks like it's going to be super sweet. The seeds are hanging in random locations throughout the bottle. It looks like they're suspended in a firm gel. I gave it a shake, and it was just as liquid as the contents of a baby's bottle. I'll have to wait and see.

July 10, 1996

Cathi brought home a surprise. While she was gathering food stuff out in the forest, she came across the last gallon of apple shit in glass. I'm glad she found it but large amounts of the contents gives me the runs. Waste not, want not.

As I yanked the grapes off their vines, I realized that the largest one was maybe 3/8 of inch across. Worked on them for two hours while watching TV, half done, maybe a bit more. I'll finish them tomorrow. For now, it's time for bed.

July 11, 1996

I was pouring myself a nice tall cool refreshing glass of that wondrous drink, so aptly called apple juice. Anyway as I was pouring this glass of juice, the bottle slipped out of my hand. I was able to prevent the bottle from breaking, but lost about a third of the juice.

"That's my story and I'm sticking to it."

I found I had just the right size pitcher for the half-gallon of apple juice left. So that's where it is now and can stay until Cathi either drinks it or throws it out. I've done my bit for the cause.

I was able to do that peach-raspberry after all. Plus the Toner grape, that makes the top of my refrigerator awfully full. Purely by accident, I put up different-colored balloons than those already there.

A huge basket of grapes reduced down to four and a half cups. It's a good thing I got what I needed, 'cause Joyce has no more.

July 14, 1996

The plum dropped while I was at work today. I didn't waste any time waiting around to see if the balloon was going to re-inflate, what with the grape and peach-raspberry balloons blimping out.

The plum is much drier than the peach. Not nearly as sweet. It's much like a wine you might drink at an afternoon rendezvous with your favorite lover.

A 50-ft.-high wall of green surrounded me. I stretched out on a black and blue plaid blanket in the middle of a glen of tall wild grass, 20 yards from the two-foot-wide stream that loops around the edge of the hill.

Now others may not get the same impression, but that's what I got. I think I'll have some more of that. I'll have to let Tammy try this one, but keep her away from it until Toner.

July 15, 1996

I was right. Once Tammy drank the sample I was so kind to bring her, she yelled at me for more. She got right uncivil with me. Came close to throwing me out of the apartment. Luckily Tom came to my aid. What a gentleman! He got me off the hook. I could see, though, that she was upset.

July 26, 1996

The watermelon hasn't done so much as made the tiniest of gas bubbles. So I pulled out the cheese cloth. I tripled it, figuring on the existing pulp barley. Correct-amundo. I ended up rinsing out the cloth about a hundred and one times.

I don't care for this one. I can't put my finger on it, but I don't like it.

Cathi says not to throw it out, that from her understanding, fans will drink just about anything with alcohol.

Bottled it gets.

August 9, 1996

Peach-r. berry is poured off and bottled.

This is cool. The flavors didn't combine like I had expected. It's more layered than anything else. Peach layer is just like the straight stuff, but the flavor doesn't linger..

Then it's the raspberry's turn, coming on with a sweet bite. All together likable. With more raspberry and less peach by about 1/2 cup each, this should bring a better balance.

August 11, 1996

It's four days until we move. The stupid apple-strawberry and the spiced apple are still working. Must be due to the density of the fruit. I'm not going to move them like they are; I'll strain them Thursday, done or not.

On the other hand, today was grape day. The Toner grape was the easiest to pour off. Maybe that's one of the reasons they use grapes.

The sweetness is too much for the grape. Next year I'll have to use less sugar. On ice and after a bit of melting, the wine becomes surprisingly refreshing.

The grape produced the largest quantity of usable wine of all the wines I've strained off.

August 15, 1996

We did it. With Ken's help, we were able to move all in one day. I wish I didn't prefer upstairs apartments, (cause oak furniture is really heavy.)

I'm going to have to tear the computer back down to arrange the living room.

That apple juice that I stuck in the fridge had to be thrown out today. Nobody would drink the damn stuff.

I had to do it. The apple combo had to be forced to finish.

The apple-strawberry is like drinking kool-aid mixed with a light whiskey. Not too bad, but definitely not my best -- or just not a good combination.

My spiced apple is a complete failure. It tastes worse than the watermelon. I think I could have left out the raisins. The brown sugar, I believe, is the culprit for the burnt caramel taste. In the process of moving, I was unable to throw it out, just not enough time.

I guess I could do it now, but I barely have the strength to move my fingers.

Piss on this damn thing, I'm going to bed.

August 17, 1996

I talked to Ross, and he's agreed to draw my labels. He'll have them to me before Toner.

We came up with a real cute idea. A refrigerator, with bottles of wine and their balloons, setting on top. "Toner Winery" and the name of the wine across the front of the fridge. It would work.

Tomorrow starts Toner, I pick up the Tudors from the airport in the evening. I doubt if I'll even get a chance to write for the entire con. Time for Total Fannish Immersion.

August 29, 1996

Where to start? What a con!

Cathi brought the wines over to the hotel on Sunday morning, along with Tammy and the Tudors. And Ross delivered the labels to me the night before, just as he had promised.

Fantastic labels. He even had a couple of surprises for me. First off, Ross had printed them on self-adhesive paper. Second, he had created a Toner logo. Slugger.

These were perfect. Remember to thank Ross just in case he missed my first dozen attempts.

Ken and I produced a wonderful display for the unannounced Sunday evening wine tasting.

Everyone seemed to enjoy at least one of the wines. So I'm happy. I have to say that by the time the tasting came around, the spiced apple had changed. The burnt taste was gone and the flavor the raisins produced left as well. Unfortunately, the watermelon stayed unlikable by me. Geri seemed to like it, though. She had the choice of all of them and that's the one she chose.

Having seven mason jars of wine left after the tasting, I let those who seem to enjoy it the most have their choice of the remaining wines.

A few people even told me I should go into the wine trade. They're crazy as far as I'm concerned. My stuff might be enjoyable, but for the industry they don't hold a candle. Like fanatic, it's just a hobby.

I plan on making some more in the near future, mainly because I didn't have any to bring home. I also enjoy drinking the stuff. Making it makes it taste even better.

-- Ben Wilson

Screen Navigation Tom Springer

Insanity Conceived

I sit at the computer waiting for it all to come rushing back in order of time and events, but the memory flow sloshing through my cerebellum is an incomprehensible stream of people, places and words. All revolving around Toner. Verily, a great idea. Certainly not a new one, but I knew it would work. The not-so-new idea was to parallel (we never follow) Precursor of last year and toss off another pre-worldcon relaxicon for all the adventuring fanzine fans who journey every year in pious fannish t-shirts to declare their faith and respect to Roscoe, Ghu, and Fandom, too (and to partake in one helluva party).

During its inception, many smoke signals were passed back and forth between Vegrants, communicating in the cloudy and high-minded way that we do (when we aren't reaching for a lighter). Conversations were held, glorious ideas were revealed with rapturous joy, marveled over with great enthusiasm, and once held up to the harsh and critical looking glass that is reality, carefully and quietly discarded. This, or course, didn't stop us, foolish fans that we are. No, we continued meeting and discussing, talking and conversing, sharing great big ideas and feeling like great big fans. It was good fun. Big fun.

Living in Las Vegas, that's almost required.

It was quickly decided. I spoke loudest about the idea and was pronounced Ringleader on the spot. As my co-editor would say, "It's all in the charisma." Quick to assume command and even quicker to realize I'd need a lot of help, I looked to Ben to act as my Right-Hand Man. Young, neat, strong, stoned. . . he accepted my invitation to potential repu-

tation-ruining disaster and joined me as my partner.

Together we would hold Toner, Ben and I. Tom and Ben. We would walk the social tightrope that is party-throwing and create a swirl of smoky, boozy fun that would croggle even the most dull-minded fans. Together we would make Big Names for ourselves and create Big Reputations fans would talk about for decades to come. (Many would argue that clinical study is not a form of egoboo, but they'd be wrong.)

Four fun-filled days of debauchery. What could be better? Four fun-filled days of debauchery with fanzine fans, that's what. This is what we'd need if Toner was going to have the resounding note of success Ben and I had imagined. Inside bacover advertisements began to appear in Wild Heirs, proclaiming to one and all that we had picked the weekend before the LAcon to celebrate our first five years of Vegas fanning. Vegas fanning? Yeah, that was Arnie's idea, the five-year anniversary thing. Make them feel, if not obligated, at least invited. Good sneaky advice. But there was more. . .

"This is more than a party," Arnie said one night. "Yeah," Joyce added. "Fanzine fans are gonna want things to do."

"They're gonna drink, smoke, eat, and sleep," I told them.

"No, Tom, you don't understand. We're talking about fanzine fans," Arnie explained. "They're going to want to do stuff."

"What sort of stuff" Ben asked.

"Fan stuff," Joyce answered.

"Humph," I humphed.

Ben reached for the pipe. "I think we should think about this."

We all nodded agreement, perilously close to mirroring ourselves in the muck of convention thinking.

"This isn't a convention," I reminded our little group of brainfarts. "It's a party."

"A fannish party," Ben reminded me around the pipe in his mouth.

"I hate to say it Tom, but you're going to need some programming," Arnie told me, point blank. My back stiffened.

"Fannish programming," Joyce supplied before I could open my mouth to protest.

Ben blew a jet cloud and passed me the pipe. "Fun fannish programming," he added.

Before I could even have a puff it was decided. Programming, by Ghu; the last thing I wanted was a convention. I needed to think. I needed to think great big thoughts that

would save my party. I also needed a smoke. Where's a lighter? I looked around, spying the mauve plastic tool on the arm of the couch. As I reached for it, my fingers leading the way and ready to grasp, the great big thought I'd been thinking about the programming for the party that wasn't a convention slipped through the curvy canyons of my brain.

It slipped away like a buttered banana peel. Lost to the aether. Brainfart.

I could only hope mine wasn't the first, and puffed great big clouds in the hopes of disguising my failed genius. They either didn't notice or were numb to the many electrons charging around my gray matter. It's not like



sparks go off shooting out my ears, and If they had, whoever had the pipe at the time would lean forward expectantly, eyes crossed on the bowl. I inhaled a mighty lungful and passed on the brass tool.

"Maybe some sort of roundtable discussions," Arnie suggested while fidgeting with the contraption.

"Like at Corflu Nashville," Joyce supplied.

Ben sat up. "We could have some fanzine readings!"

"Ooooooh," we marveled together. Heads nodded in enthusiastic agreement. Before we could laud our comrade, Arnie brought us back to reality.

"Could I get a light?" he asked. I tried another great big thought, but Joyce thrust forward the lighter, turned its wheel, and fire appeared. While Arnie puffed a cloud we sat back collectively and thought about what we'd been talking about. Fanzine readings, and a couple round table discussions. Yeah, we could do that. It wasn't going to be so bad. Thanks to Joyce we knew what to do.

For we are the blessed. We've been chosen and schooled by the Vegrants' High Priestess in the way of the Hosting Fan. She passed on to us her wisdom and knowledge, ancient lore passed down through the Numbered Fandoms, arcanum known only to a few. By lecture and example she guided us down the path, pointing out the important stuff with austere confidence. Is she not the High Priestess?

"The way to a fan's heart is through the stomach," she advised us one Saturday after noon as we sprawled about the Katz estate before another Snaffu Social.

"Shouldn't it be a little higher up, through the chest?" Ben asked.

Wisely (because she's the High Priestess) she ignored him and glided into the kitchen. "Come, slow one, let me show you," she beckoned with one elegantly crooked finger.

Ben got to his feet and clumped into her laboratory.

Despite her lack of the plural I jumped to and followed Ben. In what she called her kitchen, with her pots and pans and electric heating elements, she showed us the way. Soon food was sizzling and sauces were simmering and the tummy-tickling wafting of her labors proved her point.

"Listen carefully, your women probably know it, but you do not," she advised us. "Food is the way to a fan's heart. With food you may control and manipulate," she said, waving a spatula around for emphasis. Food will keep them happy, keep them slow and sluggish, making them more manageable, more pliable. With food you will fulfill their desires, forestall their questions, and give them... something to do."

She pointed her greasy food-tool toward the couch. "Go now and contemplate. We will talk of this later with your women." Stomachs growling. we did as she ordered, retreating to the couch to assuage our hunger with potato chips, chocolate chip cookies and a sympathetic Arnie, who passed us the pipe. We were hers to command.

And so the Master Plan was made clear. Inundate them with food. Bury them in it. When they open their yaps to complain about something. Stuff them full with cookies. Ah. It could not fail.

A tested and time-honored method. We would succeed where other fans had failed, for Tammy and Cathi could cook. Oh baby, could they cook! Everywhere they turned they would find food, see food, breathe food. We decided to keep a large bucket and some mops around in case someone exploded. Those were the chances we were willing to take. Like a large drunken fan, the idea of Toner took awhile to get going. We had menus to plan, articles to pick, programs to do, er, program. Yes, we had lots of stuff to do.

Too much stuff.

This, sadly enough. didn't discourage Ben and me from our mad plan. Erroneously believing in the backs of our minds that our women would stop us. Silly men. Silly fans.

When queried, Cathi and Tammy responded delightfully to the challenge. Eight soups? Hors d'oeuvres for forty? Hot-wings, meatballs, pasta salad, deviled eggs. Mexican layer dip, ham asparagus roll-ups. Cookies and sweets, a vegetable tray, cold cuts and sandwich fixings for everyone? No problem! Willingly they followed us down into our self-made hell. (Now, in the aftermath of Toner, Cathi and Tammy have been secreted away to a private psychological clinic for further study. Experts say they're beyond treatment.)

Two whiz-bangs, a golly-gee, and several joints later, we had a tentative menu. We were intent on doing Joyce proud. Trouble is, we never stopped to think about what we were planning to do. Actually, that's what saved us. If we'd taken the time to stop and consider what we were planning, it's likely one of us would have come to our senses. Three regrettable but necessary murders later would find the impromptu snuff film on its way to an underground middleman who arranges such things. Luxuriating on some sandy Barbados beach dr1nkJng an ice cool pina colada, the sole, sane, surviving member of our party would lean back, scrunching toes in the sand and wonder, "What's new in fandom?"

As you can see, there's no sand between my toes
Plenty of it between my ears, but not my toes.

A flyer was written, something like "Come to Toner!" Oh yes, it was a piece of work, that flyer. Told the date and times, the convention hotel, how much it was going to cost, room rates, and a stupid little ramble by me (much like this one) about what we were going to be doing for four days holed up in some downtown casino in Las Vegas. On the second flyer I accidentally moved the date to July instead of August.

I wondered, once Arnie pointed out my typo, who would show in July. Turned out the only fan visitation was Mike McInerney. He brought a small stack of 'zines to contribute to the Toner auction. I took Mike's visit as a sign. I knew on some mystical level, despite my own publicity, that if we held it, they would come. Unlike in all those science fiction books we've read. No one came more than once.

— Tom Springer

Art Credits

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Ray Nelson
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Bill Rotsler
8, 10, 12 (T)

Back Cover by Bill Rotsler

KEN FORMAN

Counting My Blessings

I am an explorer. I've always been one. Whether it was climbing the eucalyptus trees in our back lot when I was a kid, or canoeing down the Colorado River, I've always liked adventure.

When I got my job at Hoover Dam last year, I received 2 1/2 days of training. Then I started giving tours. The training was intensive, but fun.

Part of my continuing training includes the authority to go just about anywhere in the entire dam and power plant complex. They (your government) also gave me a copy of the master key, the one that opens *every* door.

Not all benefits are monetary; I also get to bring friends along. Ben Wilson and I spent six hours climbing, walking, peering over, looking at, and generally exploring the place. Much of the massive structure is automatic; we didn't encounter many technicians (besides, I had my Advance To Go, I'm Allowed to Be Here ID Card with me). Civil Service is such a joy.

Alyson L. Abramowitz called me, the week before Toner, asking for two favors,

"Please come to Corflu Wave, you can help." I, of course said 'yes.' Her second favor was even easier to grant. "Fiona Anderson and I would like a tour of the dam." I love my job, and I especially love playing tour guide for my friends.

At the pre-pre-kick-off party Thursday before Toner, Fiona, Alyson and I made plans to rendezvous early the next

morning. Robert Lichtman accepted our invitation; him being the only other fan who came into Las Vegas a day early.

As is often the case in such stories, the next morning came all too early. At least I got to drink coffee and share a bagel with Robert as we both tried to convince our eyes we wanted to stay awake and that they should remain open. We retrieved the rest of our party and drove out across the desert.

I don't recall all of the nooks and crannies we poked our noses into: my audience of three seemed to become more in awe of the immense building and machinery. I do remember watching Robert's face change from the relaxed observer, his usual facade, and to the eager spectator.

Fiona and Alyson seemed amazed, as most people are, but they didn't show the sheer astonishment that Robert did. For just a moment, I got the idea that he was daydreaming about the number of electric stencilers and mimeos that could be operated from the generators.

We ducked under pipes and climbed over railings. I didn't want to exhaust my guests so we went to the more spectacular, albeit readily accessible, locales.

Toner blessed me twice. The last day of the con, Monday, a troop of out-of-town fen (Hope Liebowitz, Linda Bushyager, Paul Williams and Cindy Berryhill, Martin and Helena Tudor, and Christina Lake) and Ben Wilson headed down to the dam for a tour. After I showed them the sights, we had time to chat.

I think I was telling stories about the people who built Hoover Dam. I explained that we (your government) didn't have accurate records of some of the older areas of the power plant. "We find stuff, about once every three months, that has been lost for 60 years. There are structures - tunnels and such - here that we don't know anything about."

"Wow," cried Paul, "how Campbell-ian, how stfnal."

Toner blessed me a third time. Through an unfortunate set of circumstances, Joyce Katz offered me her LACon III membership. She couldn't attend and knew I wanted to go.

I was a little nervous about meeting all the fans there. I'm sure you can guess where this is headed...I needn't have worried. After spending four days with the people who attended Toner, the Worldcon was just an extension of the good times here in Las Vegas.

The other reason I was a little concerned about attending Worldcon had to do with the fact that my first convention ever was the 1978 Worldcon in Phoenix. I didn't know what, or who, fandom was all about back then.

Since that time, I've wielded an enchanted duplicator (or at least the 90's version: an enchanted photocopier), I've tasted Boo Bird Eggs, avoided Collecting Bugs and generally followed my own version of Jophan's epic journey.

Of course, I shouldn't have been concerned.

Geri Sullivan's fanzine lounge proved to be the best part of LACon III. Without her (and Don Fitch's) efforts, the lounge would have been an out of the way hole with BNFs wandering in and out. Instead, they made it a home away from home. It was the place that everyone wanted to hang out in. To be truthful, though, while I thoroughly enjoyed the Worldcon and the fanzine lounge. Nothing could beat Toner for the sheer camaraderie and *Joi de vivre*.

— Ken Forman



From the arrival of the first guests on Thursday afternoon, until the goodbyes on Wednesday night to the last ones heading on westward to the Worldcon, Toner was a pleasurable reunion of friends. One high spot blew into another, and if my memory of the week is hazy, then perhaps that's my best description of the convention as well. I had few responsibilities; the convention work was done mostly by Tom and Ben, Tammy and Cathi, Ken and Aileen and the others who pitched in when muscle was needed. The Friday kick-off party ended my heavy duties, so I was free to drift from one pleasant pastime to the next.

Therefore, it's no wonder that I floated into the con suite on Sunday afternoon, ready to co-chair a round table with Tom Springer.

Arnie had conducted a fine panel on Saturday, subjected "Can The Numbered Fandom Theory of Fan History be Revived?" He, Robert Lichtman and rich brown pretty well tore up the subject, with lots of audience participation. The final decision was still under debate the next day when I came into the con suite; it had been a rousing discussion and everyone seemed anxious to have another round of high-toned fannish conversation.

Tom and I had discussed our approaches to the topic, "Should Fandom Proselytize?" We decided to do it SNAFFU style, each of us making Strong Statements and taking Firm Stances. I had just written an article about recruitment a month or so before, and felt like a change, so I talked Tom into taking the pro side: he'd make a jolly, full-hearted statement on the affirmative, urging fandom to go out into the highways and byways as a missionary force to bring in the sheaves. I'd pop up next with my iconoclastic views and say the equivalent of "Hell NO", and then we'd throw it to the round table to discuss.

Naturally, formally laid plans are unlikely to succeed in a free-form convention like Toner. The fans gathered in the con suite were raring to go, already chatting on the subject, and our orderly arrangements seemed inappropriate. Tom was there, but his leg had gone bad on him from the strain of pre-con arrangements, and his pain killers weren't taking; I believe it was a relief to him not to have to give a bombastic show.

There was a zig-zag ebb and flow to the conversation, defying any formatted debate. There was only one thing that everyone seemed to agree about: new blood is needed, wanted. The question is, whose, and how much.

I think it was Art Widner who pointed out how many years (20 or more) it's been since the prozines had done the task for us. I think it was me who said that we must recognize that the involvement of prozines in fandom is out of our control, so we shouldn't depend on it any more.

Linda Bushyager (who's been a path toward fandom for neos in her part of the country) discussed the desirability of special fanzines, easily accessible and stripped of most inside references, to be passed out at conventions. We all tipped our hats to Barnaby Rappaport

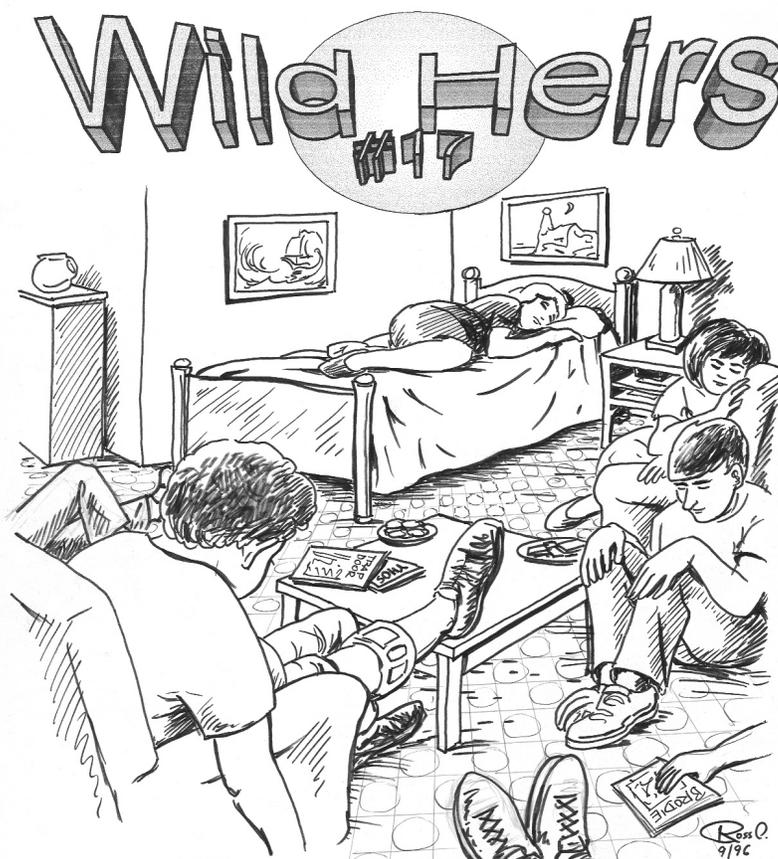
Blue Jeans JOYCE KATZ

Nights at the Roundtable

(wish you had been here, Barnaby!) who has tried this method.

Unfortunately, no one could think of any fan who came into fanzine fandom through that door.

After a round of the expected proposals (notices in



Toner - Day 3: The Hilarity Continues

LIFE IS LIKE THAT-
FULL OF
DUMB
SURPRISES



bookstores, aggressive approaches to people (seen reading s.f., outright kidnapping of potential fans to force them into our ways), we all had to admit there were few new faces coming from those sources.

Not that we need that many. The finesse of recruitment is to find a few, not hundreds or thousands. "Look what happened to us before," I ranted. "First the Burroughs Bibliophiles, next the Trekkers, and then the Star Wars fans. And when Arnie and I gaffed, you all really lost control of the situation, and see where we are now!"

I got the expected laugh, then the subject turned more serious again. "What we need is one or two good new fans a year, not hundreds of new fanzine fans." No matter who said it first, (it may have been Arnie) that seemed to be the consensus of opinion.

I trotted out my own pet theory, that s.f. clubs are the most promising place to look for them. "They're already captive; we have repeated exposure to them; we can seduce them to our ways," I promised.

Several others mentioned the Internet, a subject that had come up in Saturday's discussion. Undeniably, there've been a few science fiction fans who became attracted to fanzine fandom because of interaction with others on the 'Net. We even had one among us, Roxanne, to point at as a good example.

Linda spoke of her good luck in finding potential fanzine fans through her local group. Everyone seemed to agree that, although it wasn't necessarily true in the past when fandom was more focused and we did have the help of fanzine review columns in the prozines, now it takes a fan to make a fan. Befriending interested club members and

involving them in our ways will land us new fans...plus a lot of free collating.

Another topic got kicked around, that the extremely high-quality of today's fanzines may actually discourage neos from trying their own. There's hardly a fanzine existent that would have rated less than six or seven on a 1960's scale. Where are those that rate three or four or five? Potential fans back then could look at a typical fanzine and feel they could do the same.

Arnie pointed out that the fanzines in electronic gaming fandom, mostly done by teens, run the gamut in quality. Although he's shown our zines to a few fans from that milieu, only one or two (Hi there, Mike Pezzano, and aren't you ever coming back Ed Finkler?) continue to read them. Most say, "It's really good, but..." then go back to an arena where they feel more comfortable.

No one in the room volunteered to put out a regularly appearing crudzine, though lots of us agreed that poorer zines might provide inspiration to the potential new fan.

Christina Lake talked about fandom in England, where it seems definitely to be on a person-to-person basis. (If you think of it as an Immortal Headcold, rather than an Immortal Storm, you'll get the picture of how fannishness is passed from one to another.)

The panel didn't exactly close, but broke down into small groups of twos and threes, discussing how fandom can be perpetuated, and how we can acquire the necessary new faces.

It was notable that this conversation took place in the bosom of the biggest group of new fanzine fans there's been for the last several years. I think I showed great restraint in not pointing out that all the Vegants came into fanzine fandom after being recruited from the local s.f. club, thus proving my own pet theory.

It was an unusual conversation, in that by the end, everyone more or less was in agreement. We don't want hundreds of new fans; even dozens would be too many all at once. But we do need a few each year, and how wonderful it would be if each fan club or local group managed to scare up just one.

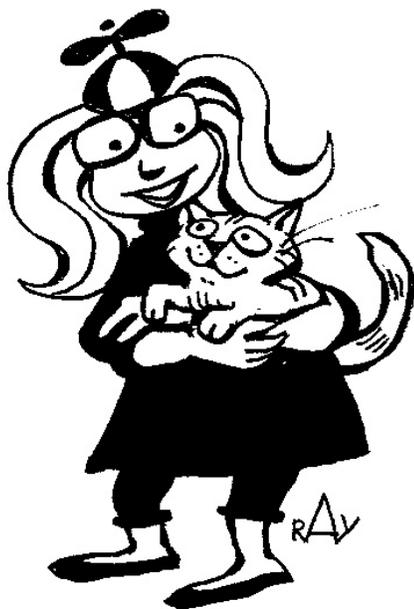
The discussion wound down, and Arnie, Ken, Martin Tutor and Perry Middlemiss started setting up for the auction. The room was crowded and incredibly noisy from the many conversations;

Arnie sidled up to me and said something had to be done to make the auction possible.

So in my best stentorian voice (betcha didn't know I could speak that loud!) I told people to stay and enjoy the auction, but be quiet, or to join me in the Katz suite for conversation. I was sorry to miss the auction, but pulling a dozen or so bodies out of the suite seemed like a good idea.

And in fact, it worked out great. Ron Pehr and Raven, Bill Rotsler and Karl Kreider and a few more sat with me in uncrowded comfort in Room 1231, and laughed at a series of hilarious tales from Bill and Karl about slaughter houses.

But that's another story, for another day. -- Joyce Katz



The Tudors' arrival officially kicked off the Toner weekend in my household, although Tom Springer, Tammy Funk, my husband Ben Wilson and I had been preparing for it far in advance. Ben was to meet the TAFF couple at the airport while I worked. We were scheduled to have dinner after I had been released from my indentured servitude for the weekend.

My husband arrived on time to fetch me, and we headed straight for our half unpacked, recently procured apartment.

On the way home I pumped Ben for information about them. "What do they look like?" "How old are they?" "Are they nice?"

He assured me that they were nice, about our age, and kind of like us. I was seriously worried about making a good impression. I mean, I didn't want the Tudors' first impression of Vegas Fandom to be a disaster. And I wanted them to have a good time.

They are great people. You could see that they were as nervous to meet us as we were to meet them, so that soothed my mind. We had no problem communicating. We were interested in each others' lifestyles and different cultures, so that conversation came easily.

We ended up going to dinner at a hole-in-the-wall bar and grill called the Third. Ben and I frequented this place when we were living on the other side of town, but we haven't had much opportunity to eat there since we moved West of the Strip.

To my surprise, they had cleaned up the place. Now they have real menus and everything. But they still had the big cozy booth in the corner, so we made a bee-line for that.

We ordered drinks and dinner and chatted some more. I wanted to hear everything they were willing to volunteer, but I didn't want to pry.

I wanted them to take me into their lives, to see what they saw everyday. This was fascinating stuff for me, since the farthest East I have been is Utah. Being a desert lizard has its disadvantages. We talked about the difference in governments and cigarettes and commuting while we waited for the food.

I was hungry when the meal came. I hadn't eaten on my break, because I knew we would be dining out. This was also going to be the first real meal in months for which I didn't have to count fat grams. It was the same greasy food I remembered, and I ate every bite. At least they hadn't changed the vittles.

After dinner we headed for home via the scenic route. Ben thought that he would give the Tudors a taste of the "real" Vegas experience. He cruised down our brightly lit Strip (which we never do unless we absolutely have to). Helena seemed very impressed by the spectacle, but it didn't quite get the same reaction from Martin.

He was busy sleeping in the front passenger seat. I guess the twenty-five hours of traveling took its toll on him.

We didn't get to bed until somewhere around 1:00. Believe me we all welcomed a good night's sleep.

I woke the next morning around 8:00. To my surprise, I found that my house guests had been awake for an hour and a half. I made a pot of coffee for us to share while I tried to delay getting started on my day's agenda.

You see, Tammy and I foolishly volunteered to do all the food preparations for the con suite. I still had more food to finish for the con as well as a dish for the kick-off party that afternoon. I made another pot and breakfast for everyone including my husband, who had staggered out of bed sometime during the first pot

When my new found friends were whisked away to their

Lost Fandom
CATHI WILSON

The Tudor Toner Tour

hotel, I had no more excuses not to get my ass in gear. I started my day.

Ben and Tom had a full agenda for Friday, too. They were to shuttle out-of-towners to and from the airport, hotel, and the Katz's, site of the pre-con bash. I knew we wouldn't be seeing much of them for the day.

Somewhere around 3:00 Ben did find time in between excursions to pick me up to go over to Toner Hall so that I could be at the party. That was the last time I saw him for any length of time that day.

It was a good party. People happily greeted friends whom they hadn't seen in a while and chummed up to the new faces. If this gathering was any indication of how the weekend would go we were facing no problems. Everyone had a great time.

The men finally finished with their taxi service chores around midnight, but the day wasn't yet quite over for them. Ben and Tom still had to pick up supplies for the con suite and transport them to the hotel. Tom and Ben intended to spend the night there. That way, they could open up the suite in the morning after they finished necessary errands.

I'd volunteered to transport the bagels and doughnuts first thing, so that they had one less duty before opening for the day. You could see the gratitude in their eyes after I opened my big yap, so I couldn't rightly take it back.

Friday morning came far too early. I found myself at the Funk/Springer homestead at 8:30 in the morning, knowing that I had only minutes to get the goodies downtown before the food fest started at nine.

I was beckoned into the apartment to find that Tammy had prepared us breakfast. My first thought was that she had gone mad. She knew as well as I did that I was running behind. She had explained to me that Tom had taken the initiative and notified everyone that we were going to sieve the breakfast late.

I am very grateful to have these friends. This was the weekend's last peaceful little moment with my pal Tammy. We had our respective toasted bagels over gossip and anticipations about the weekend. Then I was off to make my delivery before I had to put finishing touches on some dishes and make a few desserts.

I missed the opening ceremony.

I missed the first roundtable discussion.

Continues on page 15



Confessions Of a Con Woman

I love conventions. When Ken started dating me, one of our first dates was CopperCon. It seemed like a huge block party full of the kind of people I always wanted to be around. I was hooked. The main regret I had about moving to Las Vegas was that there was no convention convenient. When SNAFFU started, it assuaged that need for fannish companionship, but my lust for conventions never dimmed.

Even being one of the people running our local convention didn't ruin my enjoyment of other conventions. It just gave me an enormous respect for a well-run convention as well as a fear of registration desks.

Arnie and Joyce introduced me to the joys of fanzine fandom as it relates to conventions. It came down to relaxation and conversation. Much different from the hectic pace of the rest of the convention. It still isn't my favorite activity at a large convention. The art show and filking, panels and parties are still my major interests, but it's wonderful to find a quiet room filled with intelligent people in the midst of convention chaos. And of course, the more I participate in fanzine fandom, the more I enjoy talking with these long distance friends.

Then I realized that there were "specialized" conventions. I could attend a flinking convention and gorge on song and singing. I could go to a gaming convention and be bored. Or I could attend a fanzine convention and hold many interesting conversations with neat people. Corflu Vegas was the first such convention I attended and I had a blast! I didn't have the opportunity to go to the next Corflu, but luckily, the Vegrants decided that fen who were visiting the Worldcon deserved a relaxing convention prior to the bustle of LACon III. I wasn't involved in the running of this convention, but instead got to just sit back and enjoy it.

Unfortunately, I had to work most of the days of Toner. The good news is that it was financially worth the loss of conversation. We had a golf tournament that same weekend and golfers are "high rollers." The down side is that I missed all the scheduled events at the convention. Friday night after work found me at the Katz's, reacquainting myself with old friends. I almost didn't recognize Geri Sullivan because she

wasn't smiling. I don't think I've ever seen her not smiling before! Actually, she wasn't unhappy, just seriously listening to someone else talking. She looked a little puzzled at me as well, probably because of my flat-top hair style. She's never seen me in my "summer cut."

Speaking of my hairstyle, Rotsler admitted to me that he keeps expecting to see me sporting a tattoo on my arm and cruising for babes. I told him I'll just have to flirt with the men aggressively to dispel his concerns and then proceeded to do so. I'm not as successful a flirt now as I used to be, but that could be my age and chubby thighs, not my hairstyle.

That does bring up an interesting aside, though.

I found myself a little disconcerted when I lost a lot of weight about 5 years ago, since men now seemed to take it for granted that they could touch me, hug me, grope me, etc. I must admit that I never had that problem before I lost the weight, whether that was because they weren't attracted or whether it's because my flirting wasn't taken seriously then, I don't know. I do know that men being more aggressive is part of the reason that I gained a lot of the weight back.

Then I decided that a firm "get your hands off me" was a better idea than health problems and a size 20 dress. Be that as it may, I've since noticed how my fellow female dealers are treated by the male dealers at work. Example: Two cute Oriental women are waiting in the hall for us to go en masse to the assigned tables and two Occidental male dealers come up, and each takes an arm of a woman, saying, "Hong's yours and Michelle's mine." Each woman looks uncomfortable, but they acquiesce and allow the guy to hug them close. Watching them, I realized that that behavior is insufferably chauvinistic and offensive. Neither man meant to harm the women, but the "ownership" question is appalling. Most of the dealers seem to take this attitude for granted. As long as I'm overweight. I don't have to deal with this, but I hope to be svelte soon. I'd appreciate advice.

Anyway, Saturday afternoon was the first chance I had to get to the Four Queens. The downtown traffic was as annoying as I had remembered since the Fremont Experience made street navigation a nightmare.

But I didn't let that stop me, for I had Baked Goods. Neither rain nor snow, nor sleet nor hail (or even one way streets) may keep home baked goodies from being delivered to ConSuites on time. Su Williams and I made it through the crowded casino, bearing pies and cake, looking for the convention area. When we reached it, feeling like Indiana Jones arriving at the site of the Lost Ark, we found ourselves alone, not a fan in sight. A quick call to the ConSuites changed that quickly, and at last we found the true treasure, friendly faces.

Ben Wilson met us at the door and relieved us of our aromatic burden.

"Go on in and have some soup," he said, and so I did. Very quickly I found myself in a conversation with Rotsler and my husband, then I started migrating around the room, chatting with Roxanne Smith-Graham, Michelle Lyons, Richard Brandt, Christina Lake, Martin Tudor and eventually, the Vicks. It was a lovely evening.

The only regret that I have is that Saturday was my only

day off. Sunday found me back at work again, staring at unfriendly players and wishing that I were back at the ConSuites. Actually, I'd rather have been just about anywhere but there, as long as I was still getting paid. My job isn't bad, but when there's a convention going on, it seems like forever before the workday is ended.

Sunday evening I was back at the convention.

There were readings from fanzines in the Katz's room, and Cathi Wilson, Ken and I ended up on their bed, which had the tendency to lift up at the head when we sat on the foot of the bed, producing hysterical laughter from the occupants. There was a wooden lattice between the bed area and the rest of the suite that allowed sound through but not sight, so our loud giggles elicited a few speculative comments. It was a terribly comfortable way to listen to Richard Brandt and Robert Lichtman reading fanzines aloud.

Around 11 pm, my husband said, "I'm supposed to take the Vicks to the airport at 1 am." I acted suitably appalled and told him that he shouldn't stay up that late, since he had to go to work at 7am. "I'll do it," I said. Gee, how awful to have to have some quality time with two of the nicest fen I know. I

lollered around the ConSuites, munching on the food that was set about the room. I declined the home-made wine that Ben and Cathi brought, just because I'm not much of a wine drinker.

Actually, I've got appalling taste in alcohol, drinking mostly light beer and frou-frou cocktails like pina coladas and margaritas. Eventually, though, 1 am arrived, and off we went to the airport. I think my driving makes other people nervous, but not so nervous that they feel compelled to mention it. I get a lot of people that grip the "taxi handle" that's set above the passenger seats. The Vicks seemed pretty relaxed, though. Perhaps all those Floridian drivers make me seem positively laid-back.

Monday I didn't get a chance to go to Toner at all, but I rested in the firm knowledge that I'd soon see all these folks at LACon III. But that's another tale, and since we have a deadline to meet here at the *Wild Heirs* editorial office, you'll just have to look for the continuing stooooornnyyyy in future issues of *Wild Heirs* or in *Glamour*.

That's the closest I'll ever come to a cliff-hanger...

— Aileen Forman

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I missed the first fanzine reading.

My last-minute preparations took a lot longer than originally calculated, of course I believe I arrived about 3:00 pm, after the formal (such as it was) programming ended for the day. I was loaded down with part of my contributions as I trudged my way to the rooms where a good part of the socializing was taking place. Many people were already there, and Ben and Tom had everything going as planned. Now I could relax and enjoy the fest ties.

Now this is the part that gets a little fuzzy. Because of this being Vegas fandom and best-laid plans and all, nothing really got started on time. I couldn't recite any of the schedule to anyone.

No one seemed to mind about the delays. They were having too good a time to notice clocks. Food was served and devoured.

I did get to go on the bar hop/pub crawl on Saturday

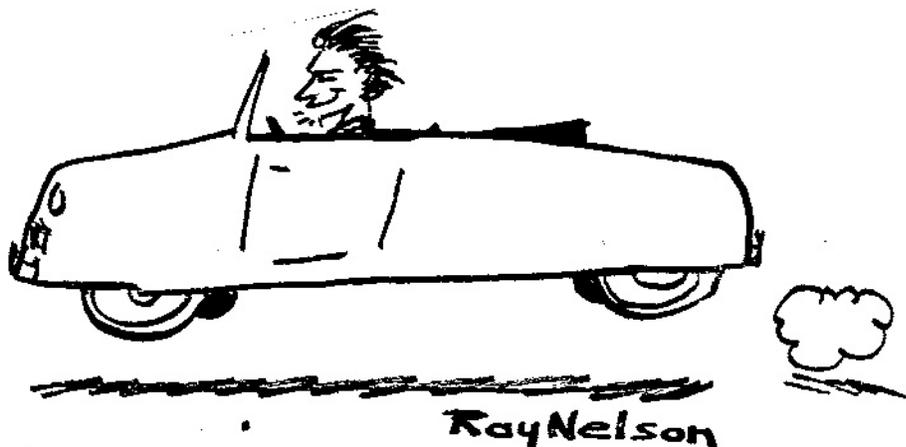
night; that was fun. I drank my share and of course, Got Drunk.

There were hundreds of different conversations among dozens of people that weekend. One was illustrated by William Rotsler.

We were sitting around the con suite Monday afternoon waiting for everyone to get organized to go to lunch. Geri Sullivan had said in passing, "It took me years to perfect the art of silent farting." and off Bill went. He had started the cartoon series in the con suite. It had followed us downstairs in the restaurant for lunch and back to the con suite for a time after that. That for me was the most memorable conversation of the weekend.

I have never before participated so heavily in a convention. I am fairly new to fandom, and I don't yet know many outside our local circle. I've made a few more friends because of this little idea of Tom Springer's. Thanks, Tom. I had a great time at your party.

— Cathi Wilson



Katzoniammer Arnie Katz

Seven Pizzas

"Seven pizzas, that's not too many," I said. Or I would've said if this wasn't the seventh day adventure known as Toner. What I actually did say was, "Sausage and pepperoni, please."

Toner: The Final Party gathered 14 slightly shell-shocked fans: Ben and Cathi Wilson, Tom Springer and Tammy Funk, Martin and Helena Tudor, Richard Brandt and Michelle Lyons, Ron Pehr and Raven, Ken Forman, Karl Kreder, Marcy Waldie, Joyce and me, Now, you may count 15, and so do I, but Tom repeatedly assured me that there were 14. Of course, he's one of the 14 slightly shell-shocked fans. Except that he is more than slightly shell-shocked after running his very first convention.

We ordered pizzas, seven of them, from the Bulgarian. He's back in business after a month in the motherland, and he's already back in form.

Michelle sidled up to me as we waited for the delivery. "I'm really looking forward to this," she said. She looked up at me with those captivating eyes, now lit by anticipatory enthusiasm. A little too much enthusiasm for the situation, I thought.

Everyone was hungry. I knew that. For understandable reasons, our six o'clock dinner slipped back to 7:00. Stomachs set for one time were rumbling. Yet a bunch of pizzas didn't explain Michelle's excitement.

"Why is that, Michelle?" I asked.

"I've never had... Bulgarian pizza," she said through a smile of incandescent happiness.

"It's just made by a Bulgarian," I told her. "It's regular pizza."

"It's made with potatoes, right?" she asked, hopefully.

"No, no potatoes," I said. I was sure she was teasing me. Well, pretty sure. "Just tomato and cheese and toppings like pepperoni."

"Oh," she said. "No potatoes." She said it the way a little girl might say "No Santa Claus."

I tried to cheer her up with an explanation of how we came to order Bulgarian pizza from a place with the delightfully ethnic name "Pay-Less Pizza." After a couple of pizzerias dropped off the bottom of the Katz Rating System, we dug the Pay-Less menu out of the drawer. We ordered despite misgivings and enjoyed the New York-style pies. Six months later, at the end of July 1995, the telephone order-taker told us that Pay-Less was closing for August so that the owner and chef could visit his family in Bulgaria.

She smiled, but the wattage was lower. I think she was really looking forward to the potatoes.

Seven pies were "not too many." It works out to half a

pizza per person, since Marcy had eaten a roast beef dinner with her family. She nibbled at one wedge.

Toner Hall was nearly empty when the delivery man rang the bell. Almost everyone was outside, enjoying a warm Vegas evening. The boxes barely hit the dining room table when 15 fans pounced like a pack of wild dogs on a trapped rabbit. I might not have gotten my share if I hadn't clipped Tom behind his bursitic knee and hit Brandt on the back of the head with my newly purchased Fancyclopedia II.

Marcy approached my chair at the end of the table nearest the door the garage. "Do you think we need more pizzas?" she whispered. I looked at the remains of the seven Bulgarian pizzas. Torn boxes and sauce-smear paper plates covered the table. I counted two pieces left, plus the one I'd just taken.

I threw the question open to those still clustered in the dining room. Our pooled mathematical talents determined that each fan had an inalienable right to three pieces. "I have my third piece right here," I said righteously.

"I had four," Tom bragged.

"I only had two," Christina said. She aborted Tom's apology with murmurs about the sufficiency of that portion.

I couldn't let matters rest there. To permit an amicable resolution would compromise the idealistic declaration I'd made to Martin a half-hour earlier. I'd expressed my heartfelt desire, Alison Freebairn's *Wild Heirs* #13 review notwithstanding, that US and UK fandoms grow closer together. "Some of fandom's best eras included close cooperation," I said. "I'd like to see that again."

"There's a lot of energy coming into British fandom just now," Martin observed.

"American fandom needs to tap into that energy," I admitted. I told him about the WH outreach. We've added three-dozen UK readers, courtesy of Pam Wells. The results are very heartening so far. We've gained contributors and received some entertaining tradezines.

"There's a lot we can learn from UK fandom," I conceded. "And there's quite a bit you could learn from us." I told Martin how funny it was, for someone whose fanning temporarily ended in the mid-1970s, to see that the two fandoms have swapped at least one aspect of their group personalities."

"In the '50s and '60s UK fans slagged American fans as brutish barbarians."

"That's true."

"British fans set the standard for polite, decorous behavior," I rhapsodized. "Urbane, well-mannered, well-balanced, mature - that was British fandom. "Now it's reversed," he said, before I could.

"In general, yes," I said. "And American fans are too nice. We honor the social conventions, while truth still reigns supreme in the UK." We ended by agreeing that both fandoms would also have to make some adjustments to facilitate the rapprochement.

"This pizza controversy threatens US-UK fannish solidarity," I said jovially. "Isn't that always the way with those Americans?" A low buzz of muttered assent.

"When it comes to sharing, American fans think 60-40 is an equal split." A few cheers and scattered applause broke out among the guests. "American scum" For a moment, I felt like a Leeds fan.

Alas, the Pizza Feud of 1996 never got off the ground. Despite my best efforts as a tummeler, everyone decided to have a sidebar and go swimming.

— Arnie Katz

