



Well, maybe
we won't
print it
after all...

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—! yeech—! yeech—! ye
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robin

A New Fannish Hope



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VFW is free by request — and you may get it anyway. It can be downloaded at efanzines.com and LasVegrants.com. No slash fiction fans were harmed during the production of this fanzine..

Member: fwa

Supporter: AFAL

Corflu Zed in 2009!

A Matter of NATTER Katzenjammer

Rank Files

My office may not betray it, but I periodically go through a process of cleaning, consolidation and straightening. I've just finished combing through my floppy disks and computer CD disks.

As I methodically booted and explored the software, many thoughts occurred to me. One is that it was a pity. When I switched from Macintosh to PC in the 1990's, I should have executed then-easy conversion of my Mac files to something readable by my Windows-based computer.

Now I have a pile of hard-shell Mac floppies with intriguing titles. Some are the files for issues of *Wild Heirs* and *Folly* that I wouldn't mind having, but can do without. More interesting to me are disks labeled "Fandom in Mind."

That's the title of the memoirs I wrote shortly before returning to Fandom in 1989. Yes, I said "before." I think I felt the need to look at my own fannish past before embarking on a new chapter. In any case, I wrote a *lot*. I didn't count the wordage, but there must've been over two-dozen chapters, each about the length of the ones I published in *Fanzine Dreams #1* in the mid-1990's. I published a few more chapters in, if memory serves, in *Xtreme* (or maybe *Glitz*), but those only took my fannish bio up to the day I joined the Fanoclasts.

I don't know if I would publish that material, or whatever lurks on the disks marked "Fan Stuff," but not being able to delve into those disks certainly whets my curiosity. I guess I need to find an obliging fan with a Macintosh SE or thereabouts and System 7. Until then, the disks are safely stored in a very attractive wooden box that Joyce would like to re-assign to some jewelry-connected function in her life.

Not that I don't have plenty of half-finished pieces awaiting fresh inspiration on my computer at this very minute. One of the byproducts of my recent spate of major pieces is that I left a lot of literary debris along the way.

It makes sense to finish pieces from my "in progress" file while they're still fresh in my mind before I exhume older ones. So, you'll see a couple of lengthy faan fiction stories, the 2008 FAAn Awards Results fanzine and a complete re-done edition of *The Trufan's Advisor* before any installments of "Fandom in Mind," even if I find a benefactor.



An Unkind Cut

Seeing those Macintosh disks, relics of a long-gone age, reminded me of a cluster of advantages of electronic fanzines. Don't get me wrong, there are many, many positive aspects, but proponents of the hard copy kind often act like going digital is tantamount to melting down the Enchanted Duplicator. It reassures me to remember that electronic fanzines have many good points, too.

The main one that occurred to me is that electronic fanzines will remain accessible to all fans as long as



Continued on next page



the underlying technology exists. A recent discussion focused on one fan's habit of cutting up fanzines to save his cartoons and trashing the rest.

While a property owner has the right to dispose of it as he or she sees fit, some fans have commented wistfully that it seems a terrible shame to shred even a single copy of what is surely a very limited run of the fanzine involved. It's good that a few universities have fanzine collections, but it is the circulation of fanzines among individual fans that perpetuates our subculture.

Electronic fanzines are immune to death by ego-centric clipping. If you want a hunk of fanzine, you can just ask the fanned to send a jpeg. And anyone with a copy can share it with any other fan without even diminishing their own collection.

Diet of Worms

Seeing those old disks with labels so smeared by

the passage of time that I could hardly read some of them also made me think about the passage of time in my own life. Specifically, it reinforced my commitment to losing weight and even eating a little more sensibly.

Ok, maybe my diet is not *that* bad, but I've been attempting to lose weight since early April. I wanted to get in a little better shape for Corflu and feel a little healthier going forward.

My dieting proved only marginally successful in the weeks preceding the convention. I started at 265 (I'm 6'3") and lost only a few pounds. It was a shaky start that promised little ultimate success; if you can't shed a bunch off pounds at the beginning of a diet, how well can it do when the initial motivation begins to wane?

The turning point came on Friday at Corflu Silver, when I realized two things: I hadn't had any chocolate since Wednesday and that some skin eruptions had virtually disappeared. I took it as a Sign and resolved not to eat chocolate for two weeks.

That was no idle decision, lightly made and just as lightly forgotten. I was definitely a chocoholic and, just as definitely, caught in a bad cycle of eating much too much of the Brown Ecstasy.

There are many good things to be said about chocolate, including the taste, texture and effect on brain chemistry. It even has a good effect on the digestive system.

Unfortunately chocolate manifests some bad effects when over-consumed. These include heart burn, gas and (probably) weight gain.

I'm not sure whether I developed a mild allergy to chocolate or simply OD'd. I *do* know that I ate a couple of chocolate bars a day, plus other chocolate items such as ice cream and cupcakes every day at the time I went Cold Turkey.

I am fairly proud of my willpower in this sudden break from cocoa-mania. I sat through most of Corflu Silver in the Smoking Consuite with a pyramid of chocolate cupcakes, the kind with the squiggle on top and the cream in the center, and never ate one.

I felt so much better after I completed the second week that I extended the ban on chocolate for another two weeks. Since then, I've limited my chocolate-eating to less than one instance per week and don't plan to increase that much in the foreseeable future.

A collateral effect is that, since chocolate is my favorite treat, I stopped snacking. I'd fallen into the pattern familiar to many writers: I had something next to the computer at all times and scarfed constantly while I wrote.

The effect on my diet was both immediate and significant. I am now down to 235 and cherish the hope

that I will get down to something in the 210 range. (Then, like Oprah Winfrey, I can give condescending sermons on the evils of being overweight while I slowly gain back every ounce.)

Chocolate Dreams

My change in diet has continued with fair results. I haven't lost a lot of weight since I hit 235, but then, I haven't gained it back, either. The problem is probably reduced motivation. After such a big initial loss, I haven't been quite as strict about my food intake.

On the other hand, my campaign to wean myself from my luscious brown mistress, Chocolate, is going very well. I'd started to experience some physical effects, such as heartburn and skin eruptions, so I knew it was time to do something.

I thought I might be slipping back after a four-week run without eating anything chocolate, so I went back on total abstinence for a couple of weeks. That seemed to set the change more solidly.

I was really into Chocolate, too. I averaged several servings a day at my worst. Kind, well-intentioned friends fed that addiction. One gave me bars of nearly pure Chocolate with astronomic percentages of cocoa. They hurt my insides, but I still ate them.

Now, I have one serving of chocolate a week, maximum. I can't say I spend a lot of time thinking about eating chocolate, which offers some hope for the future. (I recognize the danger of recidivism.)

FanHealthWatch.com

The increased concern with my own health has given me an idea that is both a service to Fandom and a chance for me to make Fabulous Sums and retire in splendor.

As everyone knows, the changing demographics of Core Fandom have caused topics related to health to become much more common. Sometimes, it seems like too much information, but I think most current fans have at least some interest in the well being of their fannish elders.

Why, just a month or so ago, Ted White caused a furor on the inthebar listserv. That, in itself, is not unprecedented, but what made this time remarkable is that he did it accidentally and without writing a single word.

It's True.

All he had to do was not post anything to inthebar for a few days. After this uncharacteristic silence, concern for Ted bubbled up across Fandom! As fans tried to shield each other from the mounting worry over Ted's safety by repeating the mantra, "I am not concerned," fans began to take progressively more elabo-

rate steps to determine whether or not Ted was all right.

The prosaic truth was that Ted had other things to do and was giving the listservs a short breather. The thing that's important to take from this, apart from the fact that the Group Mind loves its leader, is that a lot of fans really wanted to know about Ted White's health.

With **FanHealthWatch.com**, fans will never again have to wonder whether some major BNF is shacked up with a soccer mom, pruning a garden or slowly decaying as their house pets prepare to make a masterful meal.

The online service runs in the background of your computer, where it will not interfere with fanac or watching porn. **FanHealthWatch.com** allows the busy actifan to keep tabs on the health status of all fans.

FanHealthWatch.com has up-to-the-minute health reports on all major fans. That's a lot of information, probably more than most fans actually want or need. That's why it'd fully customizable. Your "**My FanHealthWatch.com**" lets you concentrate only on the fans whose life and death matters to you – and ignore the rest. If Earl Kemp catches a cold, you'll know by the second sneeze; unknown con attendees raise no alerts until they lie moldering in the grave and then **FanHealthWatch.com** sends them off with one chorus of "Another One Bites the Dust."

No matter what else you are doing on your computer at the moment, **FanHealthWatch.com**'s Alert System notifies you immediately, but without interrupting your work (or porn movie). The state-of-the-art software uses sound principles of medical science to evaluate the severity of each reported Health Incident. Then the intelligent program considers such additional factors as the sufferer's status in Fandom and degree of friendship to you. After all, you want to know when your best fan friends are teetering at death's door – and you probably also want to know if your stock of enemies is about to diminish by one.

Because the automatic health alerts are always prioritized, **FanHealthWatch.com** always tells you about the most important health incidents first! You won't have to wade through the story about a member of the NFFF Directorate suffering a near-fatal, self-inflicted gunshot wound when what you really want to know about is Frank Lunney's sore knee.

When one of the fans on your hot list experiences any degree of negative health, **FanHealthWatch.com** immediately lights a color-coded border around your computer screen. Minor injuries and colds trigger a yellow frame. Serious, but not life-threatening situations rate an orange frame. Critical injuries and serious illnesses are represented by a deep red frame and,



The Fan Sanity Council will keep fans who go over the edge from disgracing themselves and will, ultimately, get them the care and supervision they may need.

course, the black edging signifies that a fan has afiated.

Now all we need to do is fit all the fans with implants that report directly to [FanHealthWatch.com](#). That should be easy to accomplish. Oh yes.

Hey, maybe we could add a GPS component so that the service could also alert subscribers when fans are approaching for an unexpected visit.

The Fan Sanity Council

Discussion of [FanHealthWatch.com](#) brings up a matter of some importance. It's certainly good to monitor Fandom's health, but it is even more important to directly address those health concerns.

As many have remarked, Core Fandom today has more senior participants than at any time in its history. Fans no longer have the good manners to slink off into the Glades of Gafia and crumble inconspicuously.

No, indeed. The problems of youth such as acne and VD, have receded. Today, some of the most active fans are in their fifties, sixties, seventies and more. This raises issues in Fandom that have never been worth consideration until now.

The most compelling threat is that we could lose our minds as a result of possible mental deterioration. While most Core fans are neurotic and a few suffer from even more serious mental conditions, they generally manifest these aberrations during their neofan period. Fans get used to them the way they are and accept or reject them as seems best.

No, the real dangers are mental deterioration, senil-

ity and Alzheimer's. Imagine the horror, the pain and the anguished embarrassment we would all feel if some stalwart BNF, after a half-century or so of exemplary fanac, begins to act deranged or exhibited greatly diminished mental capacity.

So far, Fandom has been spared that tragedy, mostly because fans who have suffered in these days have also lost access to the means of sharing their illness with Fandom.

We can't count on continued good luck, so I propose that we do something about it now. Specifically, I advocate the establishment of the Fan Sanity Council.

The mission of the Fan Sanity Cou8ncil, apart from giving out some egoboo and titles, is to monitor all written and spoken fan communications, including artwork and video, for signs that a fan is sliding down that slippery slope to insanity and/or feeble-mindedness.

When the Fan Sanity Council detects such deterioration, it swings into action. The FSC will contact the fan in question and, gently but firmly, explain that it might be time to take it easy and watch Fandom from the sidelines. If that doesn't induce the fan to subside, more draconian measures could be implemented, including cutting the fan's Internet connection or breaking their hands.

The Fan Sanity Council will be a three-fan committee, elected by members of Corflu. Each member of the FSC will serve three years. So, once we elect the original committee, only one fan will be elected each year.

Let me be the first to nominate three worthies for the august positions: Robert Lichtman, Jay Kinney and Andy Hooper. All three are fans of outstanding repute and none has had any serious mental derailments. (Hmmm... perhaps we need a fourth commissioner to keep tabs on these three, lest one of them succumb to the very peril that we are attempting to thwart.)

The Bank of Fandom

When I first got into Fandom in 1963, fan careers averaged much shorter than they do in contemporary Core Fandom. Sure, Tucker, Bloch and a few others stayed fairly active over a long period of time, but a period of less than a decade as an actifan was much more common.

These days, fans routinely last three-to-five decades. Traditionally, Fandom has a surprisingly short memory. Oh, we know about past achievements, but there's not a lot of residual egoboo now for things done in the 1990's. You've got to earn your egoboo every day, which may not be too easy for fans of advanced years that are no longer nearly as prolific as in former times.

Recently, on my Internet TV show "The Wasted

Hour,” I unveiled my newest invention for the Good of All Fandom.

I call it the First Bank of Fandom. I know what you’re thinking: “Fandom doesn’t need a bank.”

In the traditional sense, I have to agree. Fans are notoriously short of money. Some kind of job-finding agency would probably be much more useful than a repository for fans’ virtually non-existent surplus funds.

Fortunately, the First Bank of Fandom isn’t about money, but rather a commodity that may be even more precious — Egoboo. (To quasi-crib from Freewheelin’ Frank of *The Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers*: “Egoboo will get you through times of no money better than money will get you through times of no egoboo.”)

Egoboo is the fuel that powers much of fannish endeavor. We all have other reasons for writing, drawing and publishing for Fandom — and damn good reasons they are! We want to keep in contact with our friends or we have something we’d like to say to Core Fandom. A friend has requested a contribution or we yearn to be in some particularly good fanzine.

All that’s true and yet...

And yet...

Take away life affirming, feels-good-to-the-bone egoboo and those other motivations suddenly seem a lot less vital. Enthusiasm wavers and motivation wilts.

When the egoboo flows like wine, Fandom seems like such a wonderful place. Some of my fondest moments have been when I was awash in egoboo, riding a tide of approbation.

When the egoboo dries up, things don’t seem nearly so rosy, do they? Prolonged deprivation of egoboo can lead to paranoia, hurt feelings and even gafia. (“Nobody loves me in Fandom so I’ll just leave. They’ll be sorry.”)

Egoboo is a little like Vitamin C. You can’t leave it lying around or it spoils. You can’t gorge on egoboo and then, like a camel, live off the stored up sustenance until you arrive at the next egoboo-collection point in your fannish career.

The First Bank of Fandom is the first real attempt to confront, and solve, this vexing problem.

The First Bank of Fandom will end the boom-or-bust nature of egoboo. No longer must fans suffer the dizzying roller coaster of too much and then not enough egoboo.

Like most other brilliant ideas, the First Bank of Fandom operates with elegant simplicity. Let me explain the procedure in hopes that you will be among the first depositors.

Periodically, a BNF will write, do or say something that earns egoboo. Not just egoboo, but a wild torrent

of egoboo that almost dwarfs whatever it was that inspired it in the first place.

Until now, fans had to get what joy they could while they could get it. But a lot of the egoboo in such situations had virtually no effect, because the recipient was already a little dazzled.

Now, thanks to the First Bank of Fandom, the surfeited BNF has an option. He or she can deposit the excess egoboo in the bank’s climate-controlled virtual vaults.

The First Bank of Fandom collects a modest transaction fee (in egoboo, of course).

The egoboo thus collected doesn’t just sit in the vault getting old and useless. While it is still fresh, the Bank uses it to satisfy withdrawals by fans that are experiencing an egoboo drought.

The bank clients receive fresh egoboo at need, so there is no waste. The transaction fee is a fraction of what the depositor would lose without the Bank’s facilities.

Come to the First Bank of Fandom and never be egoboo-less again!

Look Back in Affection

The sorting of the old disks was only part of a general office clean-up that also included consolidating fanzines into boxes for better storage. I also sorted them, roughly, by quality so that later I might actually be able to put the ones I most want to preserve into some kind of usable order.

I don’t know how *you* sort fanzines, but I can’t go through several hundred fanzines without stopping to look, read and remember. The zines in question ranged from 2008 publications to some that first hit someone’s mailbox in the postwar 1940’s.

As I often do, I paused to admire the artistry of some of the classic columnists who have graced Fandom. Though I mostly emulate columnists that devote each installment to a single essay, I greatly admire the writers who weave many elements into a cohesive piece.

Maybe some day I’ll try that.

The Wasted Hour

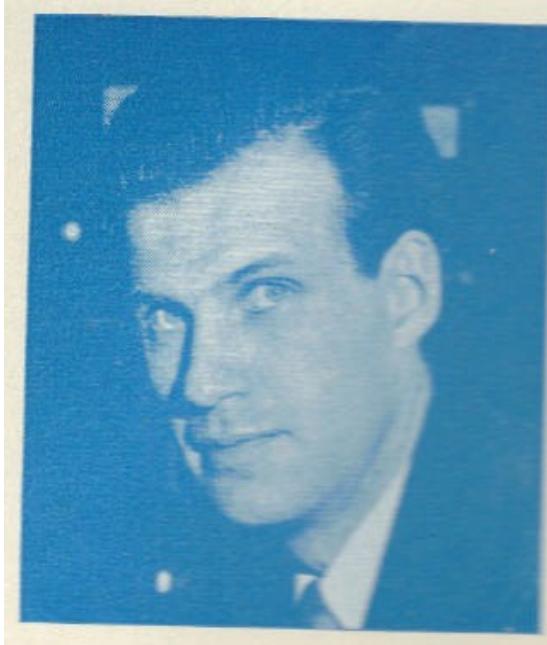
Fandom’s fastest hour, because it’s only 30 minutes, is an Internet Television show hosted and written by me and produced and directed by Bill Mills.

The latest episode, which features Joyce Katz, Bill Mills and Rich Coad as well as the Kingfish, will be available in the next few days. It and all past episodes are available for free download at LasVe-grants.com

The Gray Fox The Daze RETURNS!

In all of history there have been something like 23,000 professional science fiction, fantasy, and weird fiction writers. That's a hell of a lot of writers. Of course that number includes a lot of very minor figures. Fans who wanted to do it just to see if they could, and sold a story or a few and then went back to work at the shoe factory or the bakery or the insurance office. Longtime fans will remember Harry Warner, Jr., Hal Lynch, and Bill Venable among the many who did that. Lyn Venable, too—an otherwise very minor writer who scored with a *Twilight Zone* episode based on her story "Time Enough at Last." The episode turns up on cable to this day.

Then there were fiction writers who really belonged in the mainstream or in some other genre but who wandered into science fiction a few times, almost by accident. Think Richard McKenna who openly wrote science fiction as a training exercise, then wrote *The San Pebbles* to immense acclaim, and who then died. Think Edison Tesla Marshal. Think Howard Fast, and Howard's talented if less famous brother, Julius Fast. And serious minded beginners who really intended to make a career of it until they discovered how much work was involved, for how little pay.

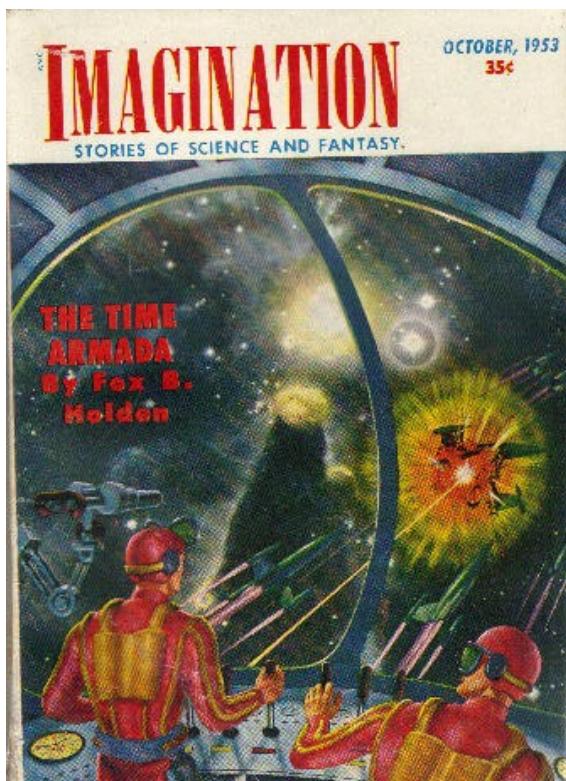


Enter Fox B. Holden (his real name) with a vignette called "Noise is Beautiful" in the February, 1943 *Astounding Science Fiction*. He had a story in *Thrilling Wonder Stories* in 1945, then disappeared until late in 1950 when he hit *Planet Stories* with a short called "Sidewinders from Sirius." After that he turned up sporadically in the pulps and early digest magazines. His last appearance was with a story called "Dearest Enemy" in *Worlds of If* dated October, 1956. There were a total of nineteen stories, all of them short stories or novelettes except for one. He wrote a novel and sold it to Bill Hamling for *Imagination: Stories of Science and Fantasy*. It ran as a two-part serial in the issues for October and November, 1953.

That novel was called *The Time Armada*. Enter your humble and obedient servant, the author of this little essay. In the early 1950s I was an avid science fiction fan. I bought and read everything stfnal I could lay my hands on. Yes, youngster, ask your grandpa to explain stfnal when you get a chance. And your grandma will teach you to blow eggs. In those days keeping up with all the science fiction published was a difficult but not impossible feat. I read *The Time Armada* and thoroughly enjoyed it.

Fast forward a decade and a half. It's the late 1960s

Continued on next page



and I am working at a day job, writing and directing movies for the International Business Machines Corporation in Poughkeepsie, New York. I also have a moonlight job as an editor at Canaveral Press in New York City. And a third job, if you can call it that, writing books and short stories of my own. I'd had a non-fiction book and a novel published by this time, sold short stories to markets as varied as Dude and Crawdaddy, and was hoping to quit my day job and write full time.

The manager of the IBM film department – my manager – a fellow named Ed Casazza -- was transferred to another division of the company and a new person was brought in from another division to take his place. He was a tall, slim, career IBMer named Fox B. Holden, highly visible because of his prematurely silvery gray-white hair.

Wow!

For the next couple of years – from 1968 to 1970 – I worked for Mr. Holden. He was known, because of his that spectacular hair and his name, as the Silver Fox. We got along famously.

Fox was under a good deal of pressure. The computer industry, even then, was a lucrative but stressful place to work. Fox smoked heavily and was known, when off duty, to sip appreciatively at an ancient vintage. At work, though, he was dry as could be – a strict IBM requirement.



Every so often, during the working day, there would be a knock on my office door and Fox would ask, "May I come in?"

I'd say, "Of course."

He'd pull up a chair opposite me, put his elbows down on the battleship gray composition desktop, and support his forehead on the heels of his hands. He'd take a couple of deep breaths, then say, "Dick, you're a science fiction person. You're the only one around here who speaks my language."

Then he'd unburden himself of whatever problems and frustrations had laid him low.

He loved to talk about his days as a pulpster. His great regret was that he'd never had a book published. One of his stories – one – had once been included in a paperback anthology by Don Wollheim. That was a moment he treasured and relived during those little office visits. On one occasion I mentioned the Day Index to Science Fiction Magazines, and its successor, the Metcalf Index. I'd looked up Fox and brought the indexes to work with me. He was intensely excited and asked if he could borrow them long enough to shoot photocopies of the pages listing his stories, to add to his personal archive.

In the spring of 1970 I was due for my annual employee appraisal. I hated these events and I knew that Fox hated them as well. He offered me a seat in his office and I said, "Before we start, I think you should read this."

I handed him an envelope. He removed its contents and read my brief, pro forma resignation. He asked if I wanted to leave IBM because of something I disliked about the company, and I said, No. Had I been hired away by a competitor? No, again. Still, No. I knew the drill, believe me. Earlier in my career at IBM I had been the editor of the manager's manual. I wrote the lines that Fox was delivering.

He asked if there was anything he could do to get me to change my mind and I said, No. And what was I planning to do? I said, Sit at my typewriter and write books.

Fox looked into my eyes. There was a lengthy silence. Then he said, "I once faced the same decision that you're making. I wish..." He stopped. He couldn't go on. He didn't need to.

A few years later Charles Brown phoned and asked me to write Fox's obituary for Locus. He had died at a tragically early age of cancer. I can't prove it but I am morally certain that it was all those cigarettes that cost Fox his life.

Fast forward again. It's 2008. I've been writing books for a long time and God willing I'm nowhere near finished. In the past few years a little company in Louisiana called Ramble House has published several

of my books to reasonable success. I've also done some volunteer acquisition and editing work for Ramble House. I've even, in effect, ghost-collaborated on a couple of books that I was merely supposed to edit.

They needed the help and I was willing to provide it.

The boss at Ramble House is a marvelous character named Fender Tucker. Early in 2008 Fender told me that I'd done a lot for his company and he'd like me to continue doing it, but on a more formal basis. He offered me a private imprint. I took the offer, and named the imprint Surinam Turtle Press. An odd name, I'll admit. But I do so admire the Surinam turtle, a creature whose ugliness is exceeded only by its laziness. It is my personal totem.

The biggest problem with the imprint is that I don't have any budget to work with. In fact, our first four releases will be long out-of-print books by the prolific and unjustly forgotten Gelett Burgess. Public domain stuff. No royalties to pay.

But then...

I did a little internet research on the name Holden in and around Poughkeepsie, New York. Turned up fifteen listings for people with that last name. Sent them all identical letters, identifying myself, explaining my connection with Fox B. Holden, and asking if they were relatives. I also mentioned Surinam Turtle Press and my desire to publish at least one book by Fox B. Holden, maybe two. Those would be, of course, *The Time Armada*, followed, if possible, by a collection of his short stories.

Within a few days I had six responses. Four were emails from assorted Holdens stating that, no, they were not related to Fox. Then I had a phone call from a woman who identified herself as Fox's sister, Joyce. She liked my ideas but suggested that the best person to consult would be his son, Scott. I did ask Joyce if she remembered Fox as harboring fond recollections of his days as a science fiction writer and she confirmed as much.

The second call was from Patricia Holden, Fox's widow. I had met her in the late 1960s when Fox was my manager. I made my pitch once more and she seemed receptive. She asked about financial compensation and I explained that Surinam Turtle Press was, alas, a very low-budget operation. We pay no advances -- much as I would like to! We do pay standard royalties on all books sold, but to be candid, nobody is going to make much money as a Surinam Turtle Press author. That didn't exactly thrill Patricia, but she was still interested. She was concerned about rights -- canny lady! Worried that Fox had sold all rights to Bill Hamling, the publisher of *Imagination*. I promised to look into

that. I asked about Fox's attitude toward his science fiction career -- same question I'd asked Joyce Holden -- and Patricia said, "He was obsessed!"

And -- get this! -- he had saved everything science fictional, a complete archive. And she has it!

She said that she would discuss the matter with her son and daughter -- I hadn't known that Scott Holden has a sister -- and promised to call me again in a few days.

In the meanwhile I consulted Earl Kemp and Frank M. Robinson, both of whom had worked for Hamling back in the day. They both assured me that there would be no problem with Hamling. Chances are that the Holden material is all in public domain anyway, by now -- but I'll still publish it only if the Holden family approve.

As for obtaining copies, I've got the issue of *Imagination* with the first half of *The Time Armada* on my desk right now. I've located a copy of the issue with part two and ordered it from a dealer. Pulp fan and collector Curt Phillips has offered to help me with other items, if we get as far as that second book. But of course my highest hope would be that Fox had saved carbon copies of his manuscripts, and that Patricia Holden will permit me to use those as the basis for the two books.

As of today -- April 19, 2008 -- that's where we stand, amigos. I'll keep you posted as things move along.

— Richard Lupoff

An Editorial Explanation

The move to digital composition and publishing of fanzines has eliminated most of the problems that beset fanzine editors during the mimeograph era. Sadly, it has visited several new ones on we who produce electronic fanzines.

One of them struck last issue. Somehow, the whole file didn't migrate from its position in a file on my hard drive to its spot in the file for #109.

Dick was so nice about it that I suggested we run the article and, this time, actually run the whole thing.

Again, apologies to my old friend Mr. Lupoff.

— Arnie



Politics is A FOUR-LETTER WORD Now & Again

Yeah, yeah, I can count the eight letters there – but I still say it's in the same category as 'four-letter words'. And, while making stupid statements to attract your attention, let me add that I blame it all on our Constitution!

Or, at least, what we have done to the Constitution.

There are two different areas, both with very good intentions behind them. First, having come from a land where the rulers could create crimes to fit their own desires, our forefathers wanted to give justice a chance, and came up with solutions like trial by jury. In fact, they worked so hard at preventing injustice that criminals are protected – and victims are not. For instance, if the Miranda isn't properly used, an obviously guilty party can get away. What about the victim, who might have been robbed, injured or killed?

Okay, okay; 'better for the guilty to escape than to lose protection', or something like that. I must remember that Justice is blind.

Don't misunderstand me; what our forefathers did was a needed step. It just bugs me that we protect criminals with greater fervor than our protection of victims.

But my biggest complaint concerns what has become of another well-meant work of the Constitution: Representation.

Our forefathers knew that the average person couldn't keep up with everything that was going on in the country, so they came up with the idea of citizens electing more knowledgeable people to represent them.

Great idea – except for the way it has developed. These days, politicians look down upon the voters as the 'little people' they need to protect. (And I'm referring, here, to Republicans, Democrats, Liberals and Conservatives.) We don't know enuf to take care of ourselves, so it's up to them, The Elite. They decide that ANY problem can be solved by throwing money at it. OUR money, that is.

Instead of working to help voters stand by themselves (Heaven forbid!) they develop voters who expect the government to take care of them.

'Tax the big corporations!' Sounds good. . .but then the corporations just pass the increase on to their customers.

The Rich are the big villains. . .but, if we don't have rich people, who will create jobs for others? Sure, people like Bill Gates have become billionaires – and have turned other people into millionaires while doing it.

Universal Health Care reminds me of a comment by a neighbor who said it would mean she would be paying the medical bill of her low-income cousin. Now, I've no doubt our medical program could be improved and the cost of prescriptions is way out of line with production cost, and it irritates the devil out of me to sit in a doctor's office and wait an hour or two to have the doctor spend five minutes with me – and charge me eighty dollars or more.

I know, I know; if the government can't improve things, who can?

Even tho I am – obviously! -- a fan of science fiction and fantasy, I don't believe in the fantasy worlds of Utopia or socialism, becos of my knowledge of human nature. There will always be someone trying to take advantage of any weaknesses of any system. Capitalism, on the other hand, takes

Continued on next page

human weaknesses into consideration – that is, the strongest will survive, and everyone has the opportunity to give it a shot. . . .Or mebbe I should say that capitalism is more suited to human nature?

Y'see, I don't believe that mankind has improved with the years. I've often said that if someone could bring a caveman baby to the present, he would grow up to be no different from the rest of us. It's kinda like the old statement that a benevolent dictatorship is the ideal government; the problem is, how long will it remain benevolent?

I guess I'm a pessimist. . . but I survive because I don't really take it all that seriously, unlike some of my uptight friends who got upset when I tried to puncture their political balloon. C'mon, guys!

'Live and learn – die and forget it all' or 'We won't know the difference in a hundred years.'

To which they can respond with the computer adage, 'Garbage in, garbage out.'

It all appeals to my weird sense of humor.

Society has tried, many times, to score improvements. *Knowledge* has been greatly increased – but human nature is still the same. . . and that gets us back to the problem with our Constitution: Human nature has worked it over, and created that eight-letter four-letter word.

— Shelby Vick

Fannish Links

LasVegrants.com

This would be the official site of Las Vegrants, the informal invitational fan club, if Las Vegrants had anything official. Bill Mills is the genial host and posts a lot of timely material.

TheVoicesOfFandom.com

Bill Mills covers Fandom in sound and images on this often fascinating video and audio site. There are always new entries, including Bill's series of podcasts. This site is now available at TVOF.Info if you want to get there with a lot fewer keystrokes.

Cineholics.com

Alan White runs this increasingly interesting site that reports on the doings of the film-oriented Las Vegas club.

Efanzines.com

Bill Burns operates the free online fanzine newsstand.

Fanac.org

This large and varied site has a lot of information about Fandom as well as archives of some excellent old fanzines.

Phlizz.com

Chuck Connor is doing a very innovative and entertaining site-based ezine. He tends to post big chunks of interesting material and there's a sizable archive.

SNAFFU.org

CochTayl (Teresa Cochran & James Taylor) now operate this site for Las Vegas' formal science fiction club.

VirtualFanLounge

Fans get together for chats and there are also scheduled audio and video feeds. The best way for first-timers to enter is through LasVegrants.com. Follow the links, register your name and have fun!

One Fan's GAFIA Fan Noir

One fan's gafia is another man's crifanac. It ought to be an old saying, except it's such an insult to the ear I can barely type it I refuse to say it out loud.

But the observation is a valid one. For instance, when Arnie and I started to trade e-mail about a year ago he was under the impression that I had "returned" from gafia. My first instinct was to deny it. After all, there has not been a single year since 1972 as far as I know in which at least one loc and a little art of mine has appeared in *someone's* fanzine, even if only in the dependable File 770. Not one! Not only that but I had greatly stepped up the amount of time I spent on fanac beginning in 2006, well before Arnie "rediscovered" me.

I must admit, though, that the years from 1990 or so, to nearly 2006 had been very thin for me as fanac goes. I was sending off xeroxed artwork to whoever I could think of, not really expecting it to be published. More often than not it wasn't. All the snappy little fannmags wanted something else. I might write a few lines, but full letters of comment were a rarity as my connection with fandom had grown so tenuous.

My perception of those years wasn't that I had gafiated though. True, I had diverted a lot of my time to other pursuits, notably being a mainstay through the early years of the furries, nee funny animal fandom. I had limited careers at magazine illustration and as a comic artist. But my experience of the last years of the century was of fandom slowly turning its back on me. Many of the people I knew had drifted away, others simply weren't publishing, and I wasn't able to keep in touch at cons since expensive traveling was out of the question. The local fandom was not really about fanzines, and didn't hold my interest. What was there for me to do?

At times my memories about fandom grew a little morbid in these years. I used to imagine, sometimes, being hunted down by the Ghostbusters at conventions, as a mere shade of myself, condemned to overhearing offhand remarks about the fan I'd been. Never speak ill of the dead? Someone should have told fandom.

My memories weren't *all* that negative.

One of my activities in the late 80's and early 90's was the creation of a vast alternate history that only a few friends know much about, centered around a small town called Willow Run in what might be but isn't called West Virginia. I won't go into the specifics of the Napoleonic Wars and the War of 1812 that created Willow Run's world, or tell you much about it here. Why I bring it up is that I also created a science fiction fandom to go along with it.

It isn't our fandom, though it has much in common with what our fandom once was. I decided there had been no Star Trek or Star Wars and fandom had simply gone on being a marginal literature for people drifting near the intellectual margins of society. It was also graying very badly in 1990, as ours is. Willow Run was the home of a group called the Offworlders, who had quite a long history. I'm not just saying so. I wrote it, only breaking off sometime in the 1960's when I began to lose my direction. I have even drawn a number of illustrations that incorporate bits and pieces of Offworlder history.

Most of the characters have recognizable parts of people I've known in real fandom, though none are one person in their entirely. I pictured them as people who had roughly peaked in their fanac in the late 50's and were approaching retirement age or had passed it in 1990. Some were in fact dead. I invented a couple of professional writers to be honorary members, and gave both of them life histories and bibliographies. The library of the Offworlders' clubhouse is named after A. Leader Carroll, author of *The Dark Mountain* and other early fantasy novels. I stopped a little short of actually writing *The Dark Mountain*, but I do have a plot synopsis if anyone cares...

The clubhouse is only a remodeled attic in a large house in Willow Run. The club is given its use by the university, which has a program of encouraging offbeat groups and talented individuals. By the 1990's the Offworlders did little. They were mainly older men and women, and a few younger members who dropped in

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whenever they felt like it. They had "meetings" once a week. The meetings would be little more than a card game or watching a movie on TV. It didn't matter. Their main reason was to give an excuse for getting together.

The oldsters would re-live old triumphs, laugh at old feuds, and bond. The youngsters would explore all the club's old technology, still ready for use -- spotless, well kept, and patiently waiting to be given a purpose again someday that would probably never come.

The mimeo, the assortments of stencil tools, the reams of warm fuzzy paper, pregnant tubes of glistening ink in colours no one could find anymore at any

price, the antique upright manual typewriter that was more for show, the cracked leather office chair whose height you adjusted by turning.

And in the library the priceless books – first editions, signed editions, small press editions – and the fabulous collection of fanzines slowly turning into twil-tone dust. Hell... the library was even thought to be haunted! How's that for class.

That was sort of how I wanted to remember fandom, what I wanted it to be. Make of it what you will.

And whatever fandom has become, whether or not I was gone, here I am still.

— Taral Wayne

TVFact A Big Blochtober!

On The Voices of Fandom website, on the [Oral History](#) page, I have added audio of a panel discussion, apparently from the 1974 Eastercon in Newcastle, England. The subject is "The Golden Fifties - 1950's Fandom." Panelists include Jim White, Ken Bulmer, Ron Bennett, Bob Shaw. Peter Weston appears from the audience. It's a challenging listen in parts, but a great piece of audio fannish history and well worth checking out.

You'll find three new recordings on the new page Five of Fannish Music. One is Nic Farey singing his fanzine filk song "[Roll Over, Bob Lichtman](#)" as he performed it live at Corflu Silver in April 2008, the second is a rare recording of Frank Gasperik performing "[The Green Hills of Earth](#)" and the third an even more rare recording taken from a 45 rpm record of Chuck Rein performing Tolkien "[In Western Lands](#)" which was contributed to TVoF by well known fan Ned Brooks. Among other things Mr. Brooks is known for publishing the legendary fanzines "It Comes In The Mail" and "It Goes On a Shelf" and was a friend of Mr. Rein. He copied the 45 to cassette and generously sent a copy to TVoF. Sadly, one side, containing an original song by Chuck Rein was far too damaged to actually be listenable. The other side also had damage, but with a little editing magic I got it into a listenable condition and posted it to the site. It's a wonderful bit of audio fannish history which I am proud to make available at The Voices of Fandom and for which I sincerely thank Ned Brooks. You may click on the links above (the song titles) to listen or download the mp3 files or get them at [TVoF.info](#) on the Fannish Music pages.

I recently transferred primary management of The Virtual Fan Lounge to British fan Peter Sullivan who, together with TVFL stalwarts like Dean Sweatman, Curt Phillips, Lloyd Penny and John Purcell, is working towards finding a regular schedule for fan chats and other events at The Virtual Fan Lounge. Peter also continues to publish a fanzine called "The Virtual Tucker Hotel" with scheduling info and recaps of previous chats as an adjunct to the Lounge which is available at Bill Burns' wonderful fanzine repository efanzines.com. Please stop by [The Virtual Fan Lounge](#) any time you have a few minutes and say hello... Peter is a good chap and could use all the support and encouragement you can offer.

Arnie Katz hosts and I produce "The Wasted Hour," the fannish video webcasts. It's available in the Fan Lounge video gallery, The Fan Video Network and at [BluBray.com](#) and on [iTunes.com](#). If you're an iTunes user just type Arnie Katz or "The Wasted Hour" in the search window and you should find it easily.

I am proud to announce that The REB Audio Book of "The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam" read by Joyce Worley Katz was released in mid October and went to #1 on the Bestseller list at Fictionwise.com within days of its debut there! To listen to a short preview [CLICK HERE](#).

The REB Audio Book "Of Late I Think Of Cliffordville" is currently in limited release, but it is available at the REB Audio Books web site. The audio dramatization is adapted from "Blind Alley" the Malcolm Jameson short story that inspired the famous Twilight Zone episode. I am delighted to say that It features the voices of several local fans and Las Vegrants members including Ross Chamberlain, John Hardin, Roxanne Mills, Joyce and Arnie Katz and Don Miller. You'll find both audio books featured on the main page at [REBAudioBooks.com](#). — Bill Mills

When Is the **SOUTH?** Buffet

An old, favorite, interesting issue was raised during a panel at Trinoc*coN: Where is the South? If we use the DSC guidelines, the South's border states are Texas, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia. If we take Kelly Lockhart's definition, some parts of Maryland, West Virginia, and Missouri would be included, as would the District of Columbia, while most of Texas would be excluded. If we use the Mason-Dixon line, we would include Delaware, which no one I've talked to seems to agree with (probably because it's only the popular conception of the line which I was thinking of – the actual line includes the long North-South line between Maryland and Delaware, but that took some research to determine). You'll even hear the occasional wisecrack about Florida no longer being a Southern state.

Should we define ourselves by the states of the Confederacy, in which case Missouri should be included (it got involved in the same ways as Kentucky, after all)? Should we define ourselves by the Mason-Dixon line and the traditional expanse of Southern nationalism (which predates the War Between the States, and maybe even predates American nationalism)?

Or perhaps should we take the practical approach of evaluating the South by the congestive boundaries of the Interstate Highway System and the ranges from which folks will reliably drive to participate in fanac with each other?

By this approach, we would need to establish certain locations as definitely being in the South, and note that any place with regular interchange of fans with that place would also be in the South. I don't just mean communication, but the physical presence of fans from one locale in another. From a fannish point of view, I'd estimate that the four most important Southern cities are Chattanooga, Atlanta, Huntsville, and New Orleans. There's no arguing that these places are anything but bastions of Southern Fandom. I'd then suggest adding a few locations which are seen as definitive Southern cities – Richmond, Charleston (SC), Nashville, and Mobile, for instance. Memphis has a traditional association with Southern Fandom, so it's in, and there seems to be a growing interest in Southern Fandom in Dallas, so I'd think it appropriate to include it. There's a long-standing history of participation in Southern Fandom from various locales in Florida, with notable Floridian Southern Fans including Shelby Vick, Gary Brown, Sheila Strickland, and Judy Bemis and Tony Parker (these last two being more recent as Floridians, but long-standing Southern Fans nonetheless), as well as the view from Floridian conrunners that their cons are Southern cons, as evidenced by the participation of the folks from Oasis in the now-defunct Southeastern conrunners' group which grew up around the era of the Charlotte bids. Kentucky might be questionable, but the fanhistories seem to indicate that when the DSC went to Kentucky, the questioning of its legitimacy led to the creation of the Rubble Award, resoundingly backing its status as a part of Southern Fandom.

So even before we apply the method of seeing who travels to participate in fandom in Southern locales, we can easily define the South to include Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, Kentucky, and Virginia. The two prominent gaps (North Carolina and Mississippi) should be easy enough to fill in under any argument we choose to define the South. The only traditional Southern Fandom state which is difficult to include is Arkansas (which gets the shortest section of all in the 1997 *SFCHB* – even NC's short entry has some information to get the researcher started, and Laura Haywood-Cory's corrections quickly expanded it, while no corresponding effort has



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arisen for Arkansas). The problem for Arkansas may well be that it's just not a very populous place, and has a low number of fans in general. I suspect that what Arkansas fans there are would be most inclined to participate in Southern Fandom when they do indeed venture outside of their home state.

We should now turn our attention to the matter of where fandom will drive. I think that the traditional inclusion of Kentucky in Southern Fandom is a result of a great deal of traffic between Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama.

There is a similar (though admittedly weaker) corridor from Atlanta to Baltimore. It is common for fans from Atlanta and Richmond to drive to Greensboro and Charlotte, and for fans from Baltimore and DC to drive to Richmond. I have my doubts that Southern fans regularly travel north of Baltimore (which is, to a great degree, an old Southern city), and not many from beyond Baltimore will travel as far South as Richmond.

There was certainly participation by fans from NC and southern VA in DC fandom stretching back into the 70s, evidenced by photos of a great number of Southern fans at early DisClaves. Contemporary events would also indicate that DC is clearly a part of Southern Fandom – CurtCon 1 (because 1 implies 2 in a way that '08 doesn't imply '09) drew fan from eastern TN, central NC, and the DC area (and Canada, too) to Abingdon, VA, and WSFA are among the regular party-throwers at RavenCon in Richmond.

The trickiest part would be demonstrating that Baltimore is a part of the South. I do know fans in Chapel Hill, High Point, and Charlotte (all in NC) who enjoy going to Balticon, and Kelly Lockhart has long used them as one of his boundary markers, along with Louisville, St. Louis, and College Station, TX.

I've noticed that his listing includes cons in West Virginia, and as far west as Kansas City, MO. The oddity in using his listings is that he argues against

most of Texas as a part of the South. Perhaps that argument could be applied to El Paso, but Dallas is only a three-hour drive from Shreveport, LA, and is certainly interested in being seen as part of Southern Fandom.

Sure, it's also part of Texas Fandom, but then, by a similar token, North Carolina Fandom could be seen as pretty insular at times, and no one felt a need to question my Southern-ness, after all.

One other possible marker of Southern culture, which I mention only as a half-hearted means of determining the Southern identity of a place, is the tendency of the locals to correctly define barbecue as the meat rather than, Ghu forbid, the act of grilling a few burgers. This would create a broader South than even I would propose, grabbing Oklahoma and Kansas, and perhaps even more far-flung locales.

So I'll leave us still stuck with the question of what makes the South, at least for Southern Fandom. I don't believe it to be the Lost Cause – after all, there are thirteen stars on the Confederate battle standard, and only twelve states are represented by the SFC. I find it hard to believe it's the Mason-Dixon line – that would, after all, include Delaware, and I've heard no arguments for that. I suspect, at this point, that it's in reality some combination of old friendships, tradition, barbecue, and congested interstates, and that neither Kelly Lockhart nor the SFC is completely right in their boundary definitions.

— Warren Buff

Las Vegrants Online

Bill Mills is Vegrants' leading exponent of online fanac. His enthusiasm and technical expertise have led to the creation of several sites of interest.

To see Bill's fanac at its most interesting, check out TheVoicesOfFandom.com and LasVegrants.com. TVoF.com has many audio and video clips as well as access to Bill's excellent podcasts. LasVegrants.com has a file of VFW, info about logo merchandise, material about the Vegrants and links to a lot of interesting online fan stuff.

At the top-center of the main page of LasVegrants.com is a link to Bill's latest invention, The Virtual Fan Lounge. This free service has a 24/7 chat room, slide shows, and audio and video casts.

"The Wasted Hour," my video show, airs the first and third Saturdays of the month at 7:00 PM PDT. A rebroadcast with a live chat that features Joyce and me runs on "off" Sundays at 10:00 AM. You can also listen to past episodes "on demand."

— Arnie

Fanzine REVIEWS Percolations

Already? It's time to produce another fanzine review column for *VFW* already?!? Good grief, Charlie Brown; I thought I had a bit of a breather here...

Let me begin this time with a bit of a caveat. When it comes down to fanzines, there are certain things that I look for when I read them. In no particular order they are legibility, attractive layout, readability (meaning: literate), with interesting and varied content, good artwork, a solid editorial presence, a well-edited lettercolumn, and that one thing that is so extraordinarily hard to define: fannish personality. Sure, it helps to know who the person(s) producing the zine is/are, and that has a definite impact on a zine's personality. That goes without saying. Still, if there is a sense of "fannishness" running through a zine's bloodstream, that is A Good Thing. Put all of these criteria together and the result is a fanzine that I find enjoyable, enlightening, and also contributes to the community that is fandom by participating in this nearly 80-year old, on-going fannish dialogue.

See, I believe that a good fanzine needs to participate in the conversation that is fandom. A fanzine does not and should not float around in a vacuum all on its lonesome, and a reader should be able to make personal connections not only to that fanzine, but to others as well, while bringing their own prior knowledge to the reading. It has taken me many years to finally realize what it is that I enjoy so much about fanzines and how they fit into the overall Fannish Grand Scheme, historical and otherwise, and it is this:

Fandom is a participatory hobby. One can only get enjoyment out of fandom by actively participating in some aspect (or more, if one wants) of fandom. Fanzines are one such aspect, and I most certainly enjoy being part of the conversation. It really does make it much more fun and stimulating.

So. With that off my chest, out of my mind – or where-ever else it came from – the obvious question to ask of myself is, "Self, which fanzines floating around right now do you enjoy the most? What are your personal Top Ten fanzines in production right now?"

Easy questions to ask, but limiting myself to only ten makes the answer much harder. But, I shall try. Even worse, I'll start with my Number 10 and work up to my current personal favorite.

10. Challenger. (Guy H. Lillian III)

It may not come out that often, but when it does there is always a lot of fun reading to be found within its pages. The latest issue (#28) is a whopping 104 pages long, and is themed to critter stories. If you like that sort of thing, this is a fun issue – lots of great contributors, including some Big Names, like Greg Benford and Michael Resnick – and the variety makes for a fun read. Issue to issue, Guy acquires solid material, always providing some himself by drawing on his years of convention attendance as inspiration. The artwork likewise is good, sometimes old and re-used, but that's okay. We fanned do that sort of thing from time to time. Guy definitely has a love for producing this



"Fall ing, Board! Don't you remember from 'New Zephis'?"
See Brett Bruen's artwork at www.liliane.com. With the usual apologies to Oliver.

zine, and his enthusiasm and years of experience show. Sure, there are the occasional pruf-redding and production errors, but that's to be expected when the zine comes out in paper format besides also being available online as a webzine (www.challnet.com). I do like this zine, it has a huge and interesting lettercolumn to boot, and get the impression that I would enjoy Guy's company very much.

9. Pixel/Time & Again (David Burton/Dave Locke)

I am listing this one like so because David Burton's *Pixel* (which I nominated for a FAAn Award as one of the 5 best zines from last year) is now officially retired, and the hand-off has now been officially made to Dave Locke, who is ably picking up where *Pixel* ended. Dave has morphed Burton's zine into a title that he has used before: *Time & Again* had seen two issues mumble-dy-mumble years ago, and it just seemed logical to blend the one into the other. Both zines have impeccable visual appeal: so easy on the eye on screen (they are available for downloading at that virtual compendium of online fanzines, <http://efanzines.com> maintained by the lovely Bill Burns). And the material is of top quality. Dave Locke has renewed the publishing contracts of Lee Anne Lavell, Chris Garcia, and Eric Mayer from the pages of *Pixel*, so that right there ensures good, solid, interesting material. But since this is now Locke's zine, he can go after other writers who deserve exposure. May I suggest we start considering Curt Phillips as one of fanzine fandom's better writers? His two contributions in *T&A*'s 3 and 4 are extremely well-written and enjoyable. Top flight articles, both. There is also an article in the fourth issue by some schmuck from Texas moaning about a near-death experience nine years ago, but we can ignore that guy... Again, here is a well-edited lettercolumn, which is usually the first place I go to in a zine; an interesting loccol of decent length is an excellent barometer of any fanzine, In My Humble Opinion.

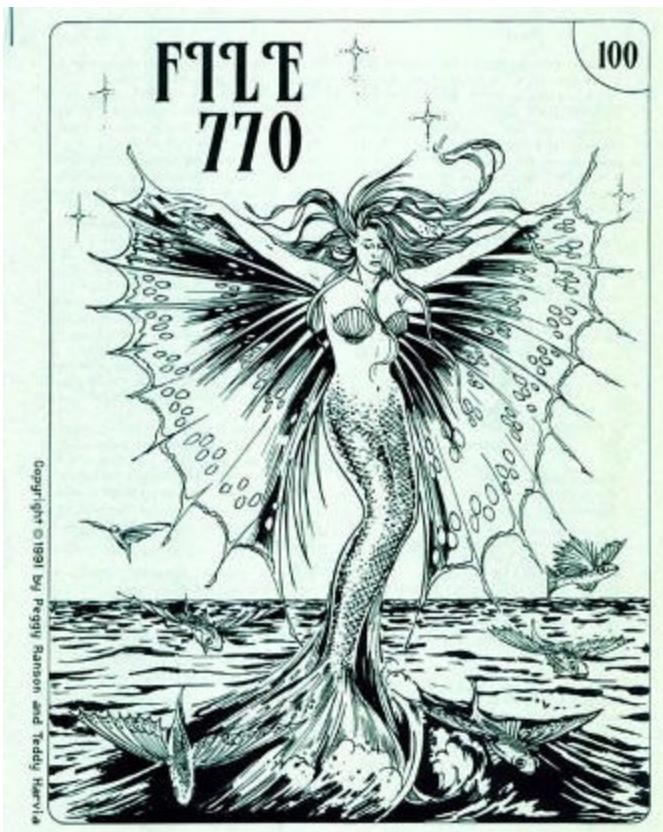
8. Sense of Wonder Stories (Rich Coad)

An extremely literate, impeccably produced fanzine by a fellow who surprised the heck out of me with the first issue at Corflu Quire last year. I had no idea that Rich had such a strong fan-editing Jones. But I will say this: *SOWS* not only has a great acronym, but strikes a solid balance between the sercon and the fan-nish, which is a very hard thing to do. The latest issue contained Lovecraftian themed articles, and while I am usually not one for serconish fan writing, I really enjoyed reading them. That's the mark of a good writer – and editor, of course – if they can suck such a non-sercon person like me into their article. That impresses

the bejeezus out of me. Rich also presents a clean, easy-to-read zine, with a layout that impressively uses white space to make the pages eye-friendly. *SOWS* is available both online and in dead tree format. By all means, check out the cover by Dan Steffan on issue #1. So delightfully stfnal.

7. Steam Engine Time (Bruce Gillespie and Janine Stinson)

Here I go again. Just when I had finally convinced myself that sercon zines are simply not my cup of tea, Bruce and Janine (who for many years pubbed the delightful *Peregrine Nations*) spew out one of the best sercon zines currently running. Honest, people: I really don't care much for sercon fanzines, but the articles that run in *SET* are always so dagnabbing *interesting* that I can't help myself! Not only that, but *SET* is a beautifully produced zine visually, textually, and artistically. Not only that, but any fanzine that can boast covers and interior art by Ditmar (Dick Jenssen) on a regular basis has an advantage that other zines can't approach. Ditmar's art is distinctive and owns that "sensawondah" so essential in establishing a fanzine's personality. Yeah. I like *Steam Engine Time* even though I really don't think of myself as a serious and constructive science fiction fan. Maybe I really *don't* know myself...*shudder* Now that's a scary thought.



6. Chunga (Randy Byers, Andy Hooper, carl juarez)

I am definitely happy that this zine is going to start coming out more often. It really must do so, it is that good. Then again, producing a zine that uses computer graphics and assorted layout tricks in the way that the *Chunga* editors do obviously takes time and effort. All I can say is that I am very glad they make such an effort each issue. I really love the way these guys make *Chunga* look so good; whereas I think my zine, *Askance*, has a rather predictable layout from issue to issue – which can be a good thing, you have to admit – the visual variety that this editorial team employs is very appealing to me. Every time I finish reading an issue (the 14th ish is online at efanzines, of course) I start thinking about trying to do something different with my zine. To me, if someone else's fanzine leaves that kind of an impression on me, that's gotta be one heckuva good fanzine.

5. eI (Earl Kemp)

Last time I wrote about this zine – available online at <http://efanzines.com> in both html and pdf formats – and I will say it again: *eI* is one of the most consistently interesting, enlightening, and entertaining fanzines being pubbed. Earl is a veteran fan – he's been involved in fannish silliness for 50 years, I think, possibly more – and he pulls in old and new friends every time he puts one of these together. A bimonthly zine, the quality of material, layout, and readability Earl maintains is phenomenal. Seriously, folks: I am going to keep nominating *eI* for Best Fanzine FAAn Award every single year until it wins that damned award!

4. Trap Door (Robert Lichtman)

I have no idea exactly how long in terms of years that Bob has been producing *Trap Door*, but it's gotta be something like 20 years or so. One of fandom's pre-eminent loc-writers today, Bob Lichtman brings his fan-historical perspective and many friendships from his lengthy involvement in fandom into every issue. The result is always a blend of literate, intelligent, and witty writing that has that intangible "fannishness" sprinkled on every page. It isn't an overbearing sense, either, but a light touch that simply makes reading this fanzine such a joy. And not only that, but Bob is one of the better loccol editors working right now. *Trap Door* has a personality of intelligent fun, if you can believe that. Case in point: I don't have the 24th issue at hand, but I believe Grant Canfield wrote in there about his years in architecture and construction with that serio-comic diction one can only find in a fanzine. It was brilliant writing, and I stand in awe of people who can

write like that. And the entire issue is like that. Bob Lichtman is one of the more respected people in fanzine fandom, and *Trap Door* clearly illustrates why. The artwork he uses ties in perfectly with their attendant articles, and it one of the very few zines printed in digest-size. There are also issues at efanzines to peruse (but only since issue #21) but they are well worth reading and will give you a good reason why I feel so strongly about *Trap Door*. Enjoy it. I sure as heck do.

3. File 770 (Mike Glyer)

Seems to me Mike's zine is always on the short list for the Best Fanzine Hugo Award each year. No matter what anyone feels about those awards – and I will **not** talk about them here (I promised Arnie I wouldn't; he knows where I live) – there is no question in my mind that *File 770* deserves its place as my third favorite zine being pubbed at the present time. The 152nd issue (March, 2008) was the 30th Anniversary Issue, and has made the transition from mimeo to on-line smoothly without losing anything in the process. The years of experience in producing this fanzine shows, and Mike produces what I feel is right now one of the more indispensable fanzines. It provides news of fans, conventions, articles of interest, interviews, publication news both pro and fan, general articles of interest, and so on and so forth, and has been doing this since January of 1978! *File 770* is always informative and entertaining and even though I can find most of the information on-line about someone's death or a major SF event, there is something about reading it in Mike's zine that simply makes it "fannishly official." I dunno. This is where my criterion of a zine's personality comes into play. It is hard to define, but *File 770* has "it", and I'm glad it does. For its contributions to fan history, *File 770* is an important fanzine and that's why it places so highly on my personal favorite list.

2. Prolapse (Peter Weston)

Oh, gee...Where do I begin? While the textual layout of *Prolapse* at first is daunting – such tiny print, and there's so *much* of it – I cannot begin to stress why I feel this is one of the more important fanzines being pubbed right now. Eminent Peter's intent here is to provide a forum for fan histories of British fandom. So far, its eleven issues have done that admirably. Peter didn't really get on a roll with it until the third issue (November, 2006), and he produces an issue approximately every two or three months now, usually in a limited print run of 100 copies with an on-line version to follow a month later. What I find so

fascinating here is the sense of history; people still around from the formative years of British fandom, especially the 1950s, are regularly contributing articles to document events from those times. I guess I am a bit of a fan historian at heart; I find these articles downright fascinating (there's that word again) and I learn so much from each issue of *Prolapse* that I feel I have just attended a history class at Fandom University (course catalog entry BFAN 2302: History of British Fandom, 1950-1980; covering the formation of the BSFA and the first British Worldcon, and the development of regional clubs in the British Isles. *Prerequisites*: BFAN 1301-1302, and BFAN 2301; upper level students only). And then there's that *Prolapse* lettercolumn: it is probably even *more* informative than the articles they comment upon! This is simply one of the most important zines right now. It is documenting the development of an entire fannish history like never before, and I don't know what else to say. *Prolapse* may be decidedly British in its contributors and lockers, but I don't care; it is interesting beyond comprehension, and I thoroughly enjoy each issue – even though each of my locs gets relegated to the WAHF listing. (Bastard...)

1. Banana Wings (Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer)

Oh, how I love it when the post offal deposits an envelope into my mailbox that contains the latest issue of *Banana Wings*. Claire and Mark have been producing one of the most consistent high-quality, fannish zines for years now, and besides, they are a lovely, charming couple. (I met them for the first time at Corflu Quire, and they really are delightfully funny and sweet. Also witty.) This is a zine with a solid editorial presence that is not over-bearing, and the editors definitely understand the concept that they are participants in the fannish dialog. Issue to issue contains quality writing that ranges from sercon – discussion of Greek Tragedies, no less – to pure fannishness (Nic Farey's recent Corflu Silver report or anything written by Graham Charnock), and all points in between. Then again, Charnock is one of those “all points in between” people, but that's another matter. At any rate, I personally hold Claire and Mark responsible for producing my favourite fanzine right now. Each issue doesn't contain much artwork – most British fanzines don't, which is very surprising considering the splendid artists England has produced over the years (ATom, Jim Barker, Harry Bell, Terry Jeeves, Sue Mason, to name only a few), but it is the *content* that makes *BW* such a fine, fine zine. The articles are always of fine quality – highly literate, and I wonder how much editorial work (suggestions and feedback) Claire and Mark provide – and really don't need artwork to complement them.

Again, much like *Prolapse*, this is a content-driven fanzine, and the lettercolumn is one of the highlights of each issue. The editorial tone strikes that balance between serious and comic, and that is one of the major defining criteria by which I evaluate a zine. For me, this is Number One. Don't even try to argue with me about, either. I am not going to budge. At least not until the second issue of *Beam* comes out.

I just received that zine from Nic Farey a few days ago, and holy Mary, mother of God, is it an impressive fanzine. Next issue I plan on commenting upon *Beam*. It deserves the attention.

Also, very quickly, here are some other zines that I always enjoy reading: *Drink Tank*, *Inca*, *Bento*, *VFW*, *Knarley Knews*, *Alexiad*, *Argentus*, *Plokta*, *Some Fantastic*, *brg*, *Procrastinations*, and *Motorway Dreamer*. Please don't hate me for not listing your zine in my Top Ten Current Favorite Fanzines or in this little addendum listing; I enjoy all sorts of fanzines. Do your best, pub away, and send them on in. I definitely will enjoy your effort.

- John Purcell



FANDOM NEWSBREAKS

Aileen Forman Hurts Hand!

Aileen Forman, former Las Vegas fan (and presently First Lady of Flippen (AR) Fandom, suffered a serious accident when a trailer hitch nearly pulverized her right thumb. The hitch laid open her thumb so severely that she required surgery.

Aileen still has a pin in her thumb, but the prognosis is generally pretty good. She has feeling in the digit, there is no deep infection and healing is proceeding normally, if too slowly for the restless patient. Aileen actually returned to her pie-selling business a week after the accident, though she undoubtedly required considerable help from husband Ken.

Naturally, we all wish Aileen a speedy and uncomplicated recuperation.

DeChancie Returns!

John DeChancie will be a Vegas fan once more on November 1, if current plans go as scheduled. The professional author and fan, currently living in Los Angeles, has announced his intention to return to Las Vegas and the bosom of the Vegrants

John has lived in Las Vegas previously, where he became a member of the invitational, informal Core Fandom fan club. His friends are hoping to fete him at the Vegrants meeting schedule for the night of November 1.

ReneBooks Release All-Fan Audio Book!

“Of Late I Think of Cliffordville,” based on the Malcolm Jameson story “Blind Alley,” is an October audio book release from REB, Inc.

The Bill Mills Production dramatizes the words of Malcolm Jameson’s story, which also served as the basis for the all-time classic episode of *The Twilight Zone*.

From a fannish standpoint, the most remarkable thing about the product is that the entire cast, from star Ross Chamberlain to the tiniest bit parts, is composed of fans. If you’ve ever wanted to hear Joyce as a Zombie Secretary or me as the Devil, this is your chance.

Says Bill: “I’m delighted to say that the cast is made up entirely of members of Las Vegrants: Ross

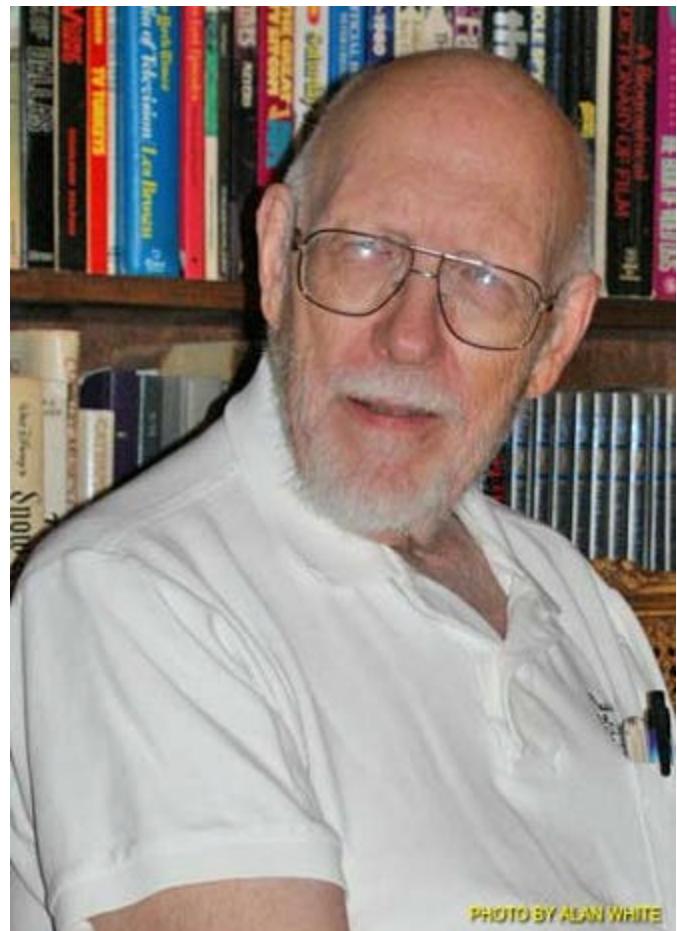
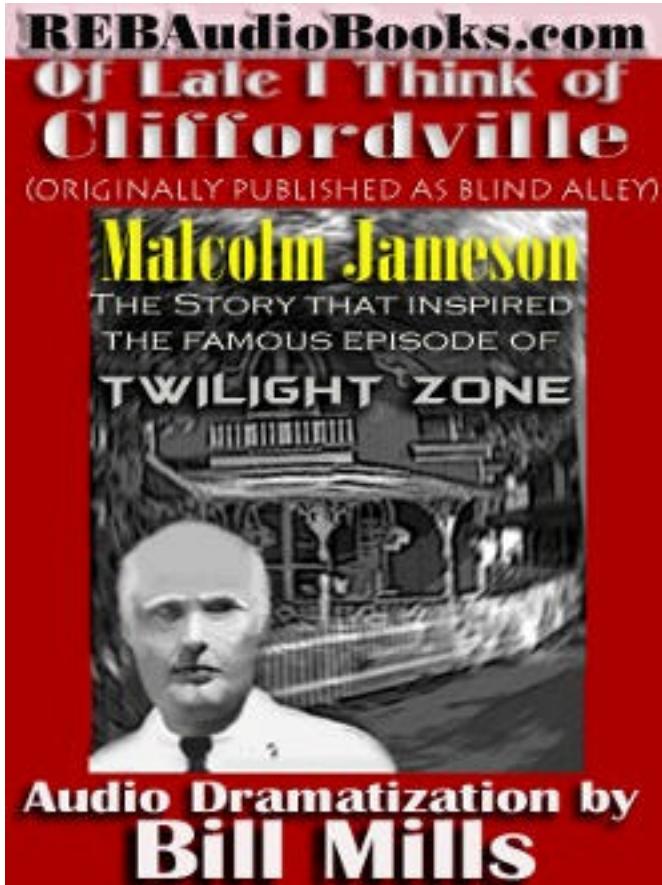


PHOTO BY ALAN WHITE

Ross Chamberlain heads an all-star cast in the Bill Mills Production of “Of Late I Dream of Cliffordville” for Renaissance eBooks.



Chamberlain, Don Miller, Roxie Mills, JoHn Hardin, Joyce Katz, Bill Mills and Arnie Katz. And an "out-of-town" Vagrant (Jean Marie Stine) wrote the introduction to boot."

It's available for purchase as a download at
[HTTP://REBAudioBooks.com](http://REBAudioBooks.com)

Las Vegas Fandom Sets Holiday Parties!

Under the umbrella of United Fans of Vegas, Las Vegas Fandom is again set for a lively holiday season. All of last year's hosts are back for another round, so the Halloween, Christmas and New Years festivities are in good hands.

VSFA will provide the Halloween cheer. Carol Kern, James Willey and Mindy Hutchins did a great job last year, so momentum ought to make this the most successful spook fest since Ken and Aileen Forman hosted them.

The party is scheduled for October 31 at Cooperville, the home of James Willey and Mindy Hutchins. Contact James W for more information at: hor-gon@yahoo.com

James and Katherine Daugherty will again open their fabulous home to fans for Vegas Fandom's traditional celebration. They will host the Cookie Bake-off

on December 11 and the Christmas Party (with the Alien Auction) on December 13.

The Vegrants will help bring in 2009 at the 19th annual New Years Eve Open House. Come to the Launch Pad on Wednesday, December 31 any time after 7:30 and stay as long as you like. Some fans make it a stop on the way to other celebrations, while a goodly number stay to see the change of year.

You can get more information about the party from Joyce at: joyceworley1@cox.net.

Alexei Panshin Survives Second Heart Attack

Alexei Panshin suffered a second heart attack on Friday, August 15. According to Cory, he came back home after his daily walk feeling bad and sweating profusely. He went to the hospital located about two blocks from his home, where they at first decided he hadn't had a heart attack and later, decided that he did.

Accordingly, they moved Alex to Bethlehem's larger hospital so he could get needed care. They kept him for observations through Wednesday, when Alex was allowed to return home.

The doctor inserted a stent in an artery to address some possible problems, but the popular fan and pro is apparently fine for now.

Graham Jarvis, Shaken but Not Smashed

British fan Graham Jarvis, currently most active on the InTheBar listserv had a car accident at the beginning of August. His car rolled, but he emerged from the wreck in one piece with all vital functions working properly.

"I am pretty shook up and find it amazing that I'm in one piece given the car rolling over," Graham told his InTheBar buddies.

Fan's Son Searches for Dad's Zines!

Murray Moore recently received an intriguing email from the son of a well-known fan of the 1950's. Here's the salient portion of the letter:

"My name is Max Riddle and my father, who died in 1968, was Charles Lee Riddle. I would like to know how to purchase or bid on the Peon magazines. These would mean a lot to me:

middle@midwestsg.com Thank you."

Breaking News

As I prepared to distribute this issue, word reached me that Forry Ackerman has had a serious heart attack.

Let's all hope that Forry confounds the experts as he has so often. More details to come.

ChatBack

The VFW Lettercol

It's time to click the inbox and share the readers' cogent comments.

Leading off this issue is a letter from one of my long-time favorites. Let's hope she joins the ranks of the Stalwarts and returns soon.

Dian Crayne

Wow, pro wrestling! I grew up with pro wrestling, but my heroes were Baron Leoni and the Garibaldi brothers (actually father and son). I did admire the platinum blond (at least on black and white TV) Gorgeous George, but Leo Garibaldi was to swoon for!

If I had been old enough to swoon, that is.

I remember stopping at some little restaurant in Needles on the way back from a convention in the 'Sixties and seeing two perfectly enormous men with dazzling blond hair and muscles on top of muscles. I didn't know who they were, but I recognized the style immediately, and it took me back to those nights of watching championship wrestling at home, on our little 19" B&W TV.

Arnie: *Coincidentally, I'm very familiar with southern California wrestling of the 1960's and 1970's, because a Spanish-language UHF station carried "Wrestling from the Olympic" for many years. They first ran it in Spanish, but they gave up after a while and started running it in English.*

Because it was the era of promotional territories, we often saw things that the promoter in the Northeast might well have wished we hadn't. The best one was when a mysterious Arab appeared at the Olympic and began laying waste to every babyface in the region. We devotees of the WWF knew him as perennial jobber (loser) Johnny Rodz

You know, if all the fans who've eaten at that restaurant in Needles, CA, went there at the same time, it would be a terrific convention.

As T O'Connor Sloane once wrote in Amazing Stories, now a letter from a reader from the Antipodes...

Bill Wright

Thanks for VFW #105 and in particular the link to the Endless Convention in the Tucker Hotel via Bill Mills' Virtual Fan Lounge. I tried accessing the latter during Corflu Silver but encountered so many glitches I gave up. This time it worked and I tuned in to all four songs. I am looking forward to posts on this site under many of the categories listed

in your announcement. I suggest putting in a 'rogues gallery' static display of notable fans with their names and a 40-word CV. Then, when unfamiliar faces are centre stage, we'll have a way of pausing the action and identifying them quickly.

I can see why Chris Garcia features so prominently in this year's FAAn Awards. The account of his visit to the British Museum mentions exhibits in passing, as if they were less interesting than the personalities he meets along the way. And he is right. Given that I spent my formative years during WWII being taught to hate the Germans, I found it disconcerting that London nowadays seems to be overrun with Germans. Sounds like how a Melbournian would feel visiting Adelaide*.

* Adelaide was largely colonised in the nineteenth century by Germans who set up magnificent wineries in places like the Barossa Valley. The ultimate source of their vintages is strained through countless human kidneys in its progress down the mighty River Murray on its way to what some geographers refer to as the Aarsse** end of the planet in Spencer Gulf. (For imagery to that effect, please refer to <http://www.meteor.org.au>). Such is the magic of the grape that the product commands a superior price. I was offered a bottle of 1998 Grange the other day for nine hundred and ninety dollars – that's over two hundred and eighty dollars a glass. If I had bought it – and I was sorely tempted – there is no doubt I would have consumed it in salubrious surroundings (maybe at The Athenaeum, Melbourne's oldest gentleman's club) within the hour.

** Obscure pun based on German surnames.

Arnie: *Isn't there a law against the footnotes being longer than the body of the text? At least yours were fairly interesting, so you are *forgiven*.*

Chris Garcia is one of the friendliest and most pleasant people to have entered Fandom Prime in recent years. I may occasionally disagree with some of Chris' perceptions, but I think he's a great addition to Core Fandom, a fine fellow and a good fan friend of mine.

These days, the good old Antipodes are just an email away, as this second missive from one of VFW's favorite Australian fans...

Bill Wright

Thanks for the Corflu Silver report in VFW #106.

Fannish to the core! A cast of legends with fabulous photos. I liked your parallel streams of prose, ie. factual accounts of events in standard type, interspersed with artistic verisimilitude in italics. It is a precious gift nowadays to read anything that holds my interest to the end. I read your report in one sitting and keenly regret the recent sub-prime mortgage crisis that has eaten sixty-five per cent of my life savings. (Specifically, I have 220,000 shares in Australia's leading biotech research company that have sunk from \$1.08 to 25 cents a share – an absolute bargain at that price but you'll have to wait four years for a dividend). Otherwise I might have been at Silver.

I'm not used to Internet chat rooms, so it's going to take me some time to participate in Bill Mills' Virtual Fan Lounge. I'll get there some day.

Arnie: The italicized section were meant as a send-up of heat-in-month, mystery/suspense cliches. I've never felt the need to confine my con reports to truth. This time, there was so much amazing real material coming out of Corflu Silver that I devoted more space to journalistic reportage – and then threw in the fiction bits as a change-of-pace from my account.

Weighing in with some cogent comments on VFW #106 is the former "Best Neofan," now a serious contender in the FAAN Poll for "Number One Fan Face"...

Chris Garcia

It seems like just last week I was LoCing *VFW 105*. I remember when it was normal to be LoCing one issue of *VFW* one week and have the next one show up the next! I remember when that was true of the Drink Tank too, and I've slowed down way too much to claim to be a weekly anymore.

I've gotta say that CorFlu sounds like it was a lot of fun. I wish I could have gone. Too many things all happenin' at once and there's no way to do them all. I had a blast at CostumeCon though, and I wish I could have kept up via the Virtual Fan Lounge.

That's a great cover from Bill Mills. I think he's got the stuff!

Anytime I miss the chance to be a part of a trivia challenge, I'm bummed. I did get to make up some trivia for BayCon this weekend, even some that were about CorFlu and the FAAn awards. It was a fun quiz for the half-time of the Masq. The audience loved it!

I've gotta say that there are so many people I've never met, and it sounds like almost all of them attended CorFlu. This weekend, I got the chance to meet Jon deCleas and Tim Powers, and I talked the old days with both. Tim mentioned that he was a big fan of Mimosa and was sucked into the Lounge. Of course, that was during a time when I was elsewhere, and that's probably a good thing because he's one of those guys I just go all fanboy over. The talk with John was more than two hours, and my buddy RJ, who you wouldn't think would be interested in that kind of thing, just sat around and gaped and was fascinated by the talk of the olden days. Of course, Jon's a good talker, and Milt is fun and he

was there too. It was very much a history lesson for both RJ and me. But that's beside the point. The point is, I wish I'd have had the chance to meet everyone who went to CorFlu. At least I think that was my point. I mean, I sorta went off into left field now, didn't I?

I gotta disagree with your view of the Hugos and FAAn awards. I've got that soft-spot for the Hugos and their history and even the way they come about today for the most part. They do produce a long-list with all the nominees, even the ones who didn't make it onto the ballot. They're even covered in Locus during the brief moments they seem to care about Fandom in their pages! I do like the way that the Hugos treat the Fan Categories and the Pro Categories the same, which shows a tremendous amount of respect for the Fan sections if you ask me. Of course, there's the problem of uninformed voters, but they're also voting blind in the other categories too often, so it's inherent with the system. My only beef with the FAAn awards is simple: it just doesn't get enough voters from across the spectrum of fandom, but I understand that's why some folks love them, because they're more representative of their part of fandom, and that's fine too. I love the fact that I won Best New Fan (and was so happy that Coxon won it this year) and I am so glad that there are several places that treat the FAAn awards as significant (again, Locus lists them).

Multiple Consuites! That's nuts...save for the idea that there are folks who don't like smoking. Sadly, in California there is no option for a smoking ConSuite, so there goes that bonus!

I gotta meet this Nic Farey guy. He sounds like a very convincing ruse...but he's a wrestling fan! I'm a guy who likes his wrestling a lot more like TNA, though I'm not a fan of much of what they're doing. On the other hand, Ring of Honor is well-worth seeking out!

Kat Templeton is a BArea lass who actually admits that it was the BayCon Fanzine Lounge that got her into Fanzines! I was shocked! She's a Virtual Fan Lounge Regular and I wish I had internet at home and that the only time I usually have with Linda is usually the only time folks are in the Lounge! I'll make it sooner or later, that's for sure.

Good to see Glycer and Cantor at CorFlu! I get a couple of chances a year to talk with Mike and maybe one with Marty. Those are two nice guys who will talk your ear off! I was really happy that Glycer came down to the Fanzine Lounge at LosCon last year and chatted for more than an hour. It was a really nice thing to get a chance to know him as more than the editorial column in File 770.

Of course, there's so much to say about the whole thing. 18,000 words is a lot about a weekend (considering my TAFF report ran just 50k for two weeks!) but it gave what will probably be the best memory of what CorFlu Silver was all about, and I thank you for that!

*Arnie: Just today, I got a note from Robert Lichtman in which he referred to the fact that he hadn't downloaded an issue of *VFW* since late August. That is two months between issues; not at all what I want for this fanzine. I've got lots of boring reasons for the delay, but I'd rather emphasize what I'm doing to do to get *VFW* rolling right again. Since I've*

described some of the changes elsewhere, I won't repeat here. I'd estimate that the next issue won't be more than about two weeks after this one. They'll come faster, though, if people write LoCs and send contributions of writing and artwork.

The trivia contest at Corflu Silver got a mixed reaction. Rob Jackson wanted to substitute his trivia contest for the one Ken Forman planned and then Ken did have a little trouble as emcee. By the way, did you know that Lee Hoffman won TAFF in 1956? It's true, it's damn true.

You can have any soft spot you like, Chris, but it won't change the fact that the fan Hugos have picked more duds than gems and that most of the voters don't know much about the material on which they are voting. If the worldcon opens the voting to all fans with no voting fee, it might make them a little better.

Now let's turn ChatBack over to one of my oldest fannish friends going back to the holden days of the Fandomclasts...

Steve Stiles

Once again, applause to you and Joyce, and all those on the committee who helped make Corflu Silver as enjoyable as it was: Elaine and I had a fine time, and if I have any regrets it's only that there were those I didn't get to talk to as much as I would've liked, and --worse-- there were those I didn't get to talk to at all. Had I been the Master of Time and Space, but.... (Maybe next time I should carry a checklist.)

I'll have to say, though, that even if Corflu, and our subsequent visit to the Bay Area, had been a total flop, there was one thing, in my mind, that made our trip worthwhile: Ken Forman's excursion to Red Rock Canyon. For someone who has spent the first half of his life communing with the nature found in Manhattan's Central Park, this was so much outside my experience that my Sense of Wonder was considerably goosed. To say that the beauty of Calico Hills rivals a Max Ernst dreamscape is putting it mildly. Having Jim Young along to inform us with his knowledge of geology was an added bonus.

Arnie: Ken's trips have acquired a large following over the three Corflus held in Las Vegas. If there's a fourth, as I think there will be eventually, I would automatically want to include a Forman-led excursion as part of the program.

Your presence at Corflu made it a better convention for a lot of us, Steve. New friends are wonderful, but old ones are treasures, too. Seeing so many of the old gang really touched my heart.

It's the great pleasure that I welcome a lengthy loc from the First Lady of British Fandom...

Claire Brialey

Since I haven't said it in a letter for publication yet, I should start by saying thank you, belatedly, to Joyce and James and you and everyone else involved in Corflu Silver. I really enjoyed the chance to get together with so many other

fanzine fans at the con, and found Las Vegas itself to be a remarkable place quite unlike anywhere else I have ever been.

Consequently I've also been enjoying all the post-Corflu material in recent issues of VFW and it seemed like time to catch up again. Shelby Vick mentioned in his column for #105 the fine fannish art of procrastination, and it almost spurred me to write. Seeing the same column again in #108 made me realise I had no more excuses. But to write what? I need to work on some pieces for the next BW. I should really get started soon on another APAzine for Bruce Gillespie (technically it's for ANZAPA, but it's always Bruce's expression of resigned disappointment I see in my mind when I fail to meet another deadline). I have a big pile of editing to do for James Bacon and Chris Garcia, and an even bigger pile of fanzines I've been meaning to write to since... well, since we went back to work after Corflu. And those all just keep coming. Probably in this mood the most fitting thing to do would be to write a letter of comment to John Coxon's fanzine Procrastinations but, well, there hasn't actually been one of those for a while.

No, VFW it will be. I could try to claim again the advantage of my procrastination being that I can see topics develop, arguments circle, and views harden over several issues; but of course the risk is that everyone's said everything there is to say on a subject before I stick my oar in. Which makes for some great reading for me, but I feel bad about not contributing to these conversations. It's perhaps particularly fitting, then, that my eye fell for a second time on Warren Buff's account in #105 of the old discussions between Walt Willis and Robert Madle about different modes of fan activity, quoting the definition on which the two found they could agree: 'A fan is a person interested enough in SF to wish to communicate with others of a like mind.' I was interested to see Warren's reading of my article in Askance #6 as being a 'dissenting view' to yours; to some extent it was, but what provoked me to write it was the desire to steer a middle course between the stances taken by you and James Bacon in the previous issue – or, if you prefer, to dissent from both your opinions! Having read Warren's piece, I could characterise your articles and James's as taking up the respective positions ascribed to Willis and Madle about 50 years ago; and I still position myself somewhere in the middle.

Lots of people are SF fans. Some of them are fans with whom I have a lot in common, many are fans in ways I hardly recognise and with whose activities I would thus not choose to get involved or be categorised, many more are fans with whom I have a reasonable intersection of interests but we nonetheless have quite different priorities. I don't disagree that we sometimes need some terms to describe these different groups or their relationships to ourselves; and I obviously don't reject the idea that sometimes we just want to have conventions, for instance, that are targeted at one of these groups rather than making everything appeal to everyone and thus diluting the overall experience. But I do question what feels like a need to assert the absolute primacy of any one group or make such primacy so intrinsic to our own

identity. In my view of broader fandom there are many overlapping circles and what for you, say, is at the core of a set of concentric rings may still be significant for me but a little more off-centre in my mental map of my own fannish world.

This is an impression reinforced by reading Bill Mills's Corflu report in #107; I share Bill's regret that I didn't manage to talk to everyone I wanted to, and he's at the top of my list of interesting people I wish I'd got to know. But Bill mentioned two things that clarified something that had been nagging away at me: that Corflu 'was like being invited to a meeting of "the Kewl Kids Klub" and then being treated as though we belonged. Or more specifically, like we had always belonged'; and that it was calmer and quieter hanging out in the smoking con suite. I tend to spend Corflu flipping between two modes of engagement: feeling that I am back amongst my people, and feeling that I have tagged along to a meeting of the Kewl Kids Klub and that some time soon the mood will turn and I'll get picked on by the cool kids. And often the coolest kids, and thus probably the best conversations, are in the smoking con suite; so there's an edge to the centre of the con, and if I'm having a good time somewhere else I usually find I have all sorts of excuses to not quite make it down to the smoking room.

I enjoyed reading your own con report of Corflu Silver (#106); I've seen some good ones this year, but it's always particularly interesting to see a report from the perspective of someone who ran the con since as well as the personal experience of the event itself there's the background drama and indeed the original vision to measure up against. And in fact what most caught my eye were some of your comments as a conrunner; indeed, I quoted you at the British ConRunner convention at the end of June, where I moderated an item based on some ideas I'd earlier suggested were worth exploring, and which the con organisers decided to title 'Great Expectations'. The basic description of the discussion was: 'Members have expectations of a con and its committee, but equally a committee has expectations of members. What are these expectations? Are they reasonable? And are they articulated clearly? Do we provide adequate feedback mechanisms to allow members to make genuine contributions? Do we articulate our expectations, and in a way that will avoid us having to codify them in a set of rules and allow us to keep flexibility tinged with common sense? Do members expect too much of the convention?' I had been particularly interested in your comments about some run-ins the committee had, in advance and at the con, with a few specific attendees and their expectations and reactions; I wasn't all that surprised about the general tenor of the discussions/questions/complaints, and I had quite a lot of sympathy with your reactions. But I was actually quite surprised to see you writing about this so openly, naming the other protagonists and so on; I'm not sure whether this is a good example of your conrunning and fan writing aspects being in constant harmonious balance – whereas I usually keep these modes in separate mental folders – or whether I'm just being a bit British...

This might also be the thing that always makes me want both to look for parallels and draw careful distinctions

between the National Fantasy Fan Federation (which you mentioned at length in #107) and the British Science Fiction Association. We celebrated, or at least commemorated, the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the British Science Fiction Association at this year's Eastercon; you can read more about that in Peter Weston's Prolapse (available, of course, on efanzines.com), and Peter also produced some lovely display boards for the con about the path to the BSFA as well as its early days. This material is now available in Greg Pickersgill's online BSFA archive (<http://www.gostak.co.uk/bsfarchive/BSFA1.htm>), along with some fascinating documents from the early years. But I'm not convinced that the BSFA has much of a purpose or a role these days; I think part of its continued existence is down to nostalgia, possibly for something it has never really been. And there's always been a tension, including between various committee members over the years, between the competing agendas that the BSFA is a recruiting ground for active fandom and that it is a sercon organisation distinct from this juvenile fannish stuff. Moreover, apparently like the N3F and doubtless many other community-based organisations, it has always suffered from having a very small pool of people at any given time who are both willing and able to play a part in running it – and that actually seems to be getting worse these days.

In comments to Robert Lichtman's first letter in #108, you mentioned raising gafiated fans from the dead: 'It sounds like a worthy project in theory, but I can't help fantasising a "Con of the Dead" scenario in which deceased con fans rampage through the world as flesh-eating zombies.' In this context you should check out <http://www.zombiecon.co.uk/> to which, despite the continued urging of James Bacon of this parish, we shall not be going.

Robert also writes in the second of his letters that you printed in #108: 'No doubt I'm about the 67th person to tell you that the fan in the photo on page 9 [of #106, presumably] is Bill Burns, not James Taylor.' That had obviously been fixed by the time we printed our copy, but meanwhile allow me to become the 167th person to tell you that the fan on the right of the photo on page 11 of #107 is Mark Plummer, not Andy Hooper.

Finally and formally, congratulations on your FAAn awards. After three years I'd been pondering whether I should opt for my own version of the Steve Stiles footnote to stop cramping everyone else's style, but also suspected that the fan writer category remains the liveliest and most competitive around – and so it proved this year. Indeed, on the evidence of the most recent Nova awards as well as the FAAns, the natural order of things has been restored and rather than being voted the best fan writer in the community I am once again only the second-best fan writer in my own house.

And that's what I call lively and competitive...

Arnie: One of my (many) regrets about Corflu Silver is that Joyce and I didn't get a chance to spend more time with you and Mark. I'm hoping that we can lure you back, perhaps even for Corflu Zed, and that we'll be able to be more accessible without the duty of hosting the con.

It's good to give the discussion historical perspective, but remember Fandom was a lot different in the mid-1950's than it is today. The division into distinct sub-Fandoms hadn't yet occurred.. In that homogenous, and much smaller, Fandom, a more inclusive definition of "fan" was reasonable

At that time, the main distinction was between people who believed in the social contract of Fandom and those who didn't, fans and non-fans. This defines today's Fandom Prime, the universe of all those who do something in any facet of Fandom.

That's 250,000 fans, Claire. Call it my limitation, but I wouldn't be able to get to know that many people very well. Any if I did get to know them, I would discover that there are now many fannish social contracts, some of which have features that are diametrically opposed to the subculture that interests me.

My interest, therefore, focuses on fans who share my interests. Those who also share my allegiance to the Core Fandom social contract are more likely to do so than those who subscribe to other social contracts in other sub-Fandoms.

I have many interests that go beyond Core Fandom. I like meeting others who share one or more of those interests and, conversely, am receptive to those whose interests go beyond their primary forms of fanac to embrace things that I like.

He's young, he's energetic and he's here with his second letter in this instalment of ChatBack...

Chris Garcia

What a great cover! Is that a new Ray Nelson, or one that's been around? It's just fantastic!

I stopped by the Virtual Fan Lounge this weekend and it wouldn't let me partake for some reason. I did manage to leave a comment, but that's all I could do. Perhaps with my new OLPC I'll be able to join in, but who knows?

This reminds me that I am not currently a member of the N3F. I didn't reup when I was desperately low on money. I still feel a terrible amount of fannish guilt for not doing more while I was President. I read Jeff's issues of the Fan and they were pretty good. I heard that someone had reedited at least one of them and I don't think that's right, especially without a notice. Then again, if someone were to come along and tidy up my stuff, with or without telling me, I'd be a happy boy. I still believe in the N3F, absolutely, but there does need to be some change. There have also been several projects that have come through in the last couple of years that were really great. One project that hit was when the Art Bureau put out a fine little art sampler last year, which I've had out at all the Fanzine Lounges. The Presidential Problem they're currently in is not an easy one.

And oddly enough, I was introduced to someone at Eastercon as The Hyperactive Ferret of Fandom. Go figure.

I will also say that the best thing the N3F could do is get closer involved with conventions, pump up the website and just keep on going. The idea of the N3F as an entry point

really means that there has to be a presence where Fans enter nowadays, and that's at cons. The website needs to flow more heavily because that's where those who have put a toe in decide to jump. It'll be interesting to see what comes next, but I hope they'll pull it together. I'm gonna have to send in my membership soon, too.

What a great report from Bill Mills! I've added a couple of his videos from YouTube to my regular rotation. All these reports make me wish I could have gone, but Costume-Con was amazing too. I also have to say that that's a great shirt Steve Stiles is wearing in that photo! I gotta go and check out the song Bill writes about. Perhaps it will gain a slot on my WMP playlist!

In strange news, I'll be down there this Sunday for a Westercon meeting, but I doubt I'll have a chance to get to swing by and say Hi since I'll be flying out pretty much right after. I'm hoping I'll get a chance to chat with some folks when I'm out there for the con itself.

I'll be running the fanzine lounge and the newsletter, so I won't be hard to find!

OK, that's a brilliant **Potshots!** It reminds me of a moment in one of my favorite films, Singles, where Eddie Vedder and friends are staring at a television documentary about Bees and hushing people.

Must fly back to Computer History and Intel, who is slowly taking over our fair museum for a product launch. At least it's for a supercomputer and not some new microprocessor!

Arnie: I believe it's an unpublished Ray Nelson, but sadly, not a new one. I have a great admiration for Ray's work and I am sorry to see him recoil from Fandom. As a BArea fan, Chris, you could do what Andy Porter did for New York Fandom a generation or two ago. He brought Lee Hoffman back to in-person fanac; you could, perhaps, woo Nelson out of his self-imposed exile.

I'm not sure failure to pay your N3F dues releases you, Chris. The organization has been known to carry people for years past the expiration of their memberships. It has resorted to this strategy when the roster has shrunk to an alarmingly small size. That sounds like the current situation in the N3F, so I'm sure you'll have a ringside seat for the next round of bureaucratic convulsions. Of course, you could rejoin and see if you get any interesting letters from the Wel-committee...

I don't think you're the Hyperactive Ferret of Fandom. That's Candy Madson's job. Since she is an actual ferret, let's leave this to the experts.

Now let's hear from a fan who was much-missed, especially by Joyce and me, at Corflu Silver and is correspondingly enthusiastically welcomed to the letter column. (And don't miss his article in this issue, restored to its full majesty.)

Richard Lupoff

Much enjoyed VFW 107 on first (cursory) skim. Will read it more thoroughly when I get back from jury duty (!) today. Hey, I may be excused without serving. Last time I

Contact! Las Vegas Club Directory

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

Cinaholics

Alan & DeDee White
Email: podmogul@cox.net
Website: <http://fanbase1.com/cineholics/cineholics.html>.

Las Vegrants

Arnie & Joyce Katz,
909 Eugene Cernan St., Las Vegas, NV 89145
Email: JoyceWorley1@cox.net
Phone: 702-648-5677
Website: LasVegrants.com

SNAFFU:

James Taylor
Email: dfh1@cox.net
Phone: 702-434-5784
Website: SNAFFU.org

was summoned, I got as far as "voir dire" (or whatever it's called) and was tossed by the prosecution.

Much enjoyed the photos in 107, and I'm devastated at having missed Corflu Silver. Any chance of a do-over?

All of the fuss over the N3f merits lengthy comments, which I can't furnish right now. (Reason: see "jury duty," above.) But I must mention Robert Lichtman's segment on collating parties. Wow, the ones we used to have at 210 East 73rd Street in the heyday of *Xero!*

Arnie: I wish you and Pat had been able to make Corflu. I hope you'll attend the next Corflu in Glitter City. Meanwhile, you might want to think about going to Seattle in 2009 for Corflu Zed.

One of the fans who helped ignite ChatBack 90 issues or so ago makes one of his periodic appearances with a characteristically thoughtful set of comments....

Eric Mayer

Well, if it's O.K. not to mention everything in VFW 107 then it must be terrific to mention hardly anything at all. At least that's my excuse.

I'd heard from John Purcell about your web-show. I apologized to John for missing his "appearance" due to inadequate equipment and Internet access. He reckoned I was right that I wouldn't be able to see/hear it.

I thought I was being very modern, eschewing paper for electrons, and here Fandom has leaped out ahead of me already. It is amazing to think we have progressed far enough that someone can actually be a computer troglodyte, practically living online and in front of a computer but only an old fashioned computer with dial-up. None of them there new fangled moving pictures!

What I loved about computers and the Internet when I first encountered them was how well they dealt with my favorite thing of all -- words. Computers made it easy to manipulate words, and store them, and the Internet made it easy to transmit and receive them. Sounds and moving pictures are fine, but not so important to me as plain old words. Someday I will pull myself into the twenty-first century with regards to my computer's capabilities. Maybe.

I'm not hard to please. I just want fanzines exactly like the ones I liked back in the seventies but rendered electronically. (And I'll also have back all the fans who produced them and I'd like to be in my twenties again, thanks.)

So the N3F is in danger of collapse? It turns out it is not a mighty juggernaut but merely an empty shell like the old Soviet Union. Maybe we should all have a little scrap of an N3F zine to keep on display, to remind us, kind of like a piece of the old Berlin Wall. (My scrap will be a .jpg of course. You could keep a little scrap on display in VFW)

I never had any contact with N3F and so I can't say the organization bothered me. I looked at the newsletter when Chris Garcia edited it and I certainly have no interest in play-bureaucracy.

We all suspected Chris' enthusiasm knows no bounds and I guess his thinking he might wring something out of N3F proves it. However, I can see how people who know nothing about fandom might be initially attracted to it because it resembles what we usually think of as a "club" or a special interest organization more than fandom does.

It has never been very clear to me what exactly one needs to do to be considered a member of fandom. It seems to depend on who you're talking to. A lot of fans apparently keep their own membership rosters. I suppose the N3F gives out a membership card and that's that. Or rather gave one

out. Much simpler, really. Rather than writing LoCs or articles or doing a fanzine, you can just show your card.

By the way, when hand stencilling is mentioned I always think of Jackie Franke/Causgrove who did some really nice work, especially in some of her perzines as I recall.

And, also, Mike Gorra...I had an email until my computer meltdown a year or so ago. I found it googling around I think.

Arnie: Computers have a lot of words, but I don't think they promote literacy or literate communication. I suppose Art Widner and Forry Ackerman are chuckling with satisfaction over the ultimate triumph of symplified spelng. I don't object to the orthography as much as the exceptionally limited vocabulary that seems to go with it.

Stop the letter column! It's time for the Sage of Fandom. Take it away, Sage...

Robert Lichtman

Your plug for the Virtual Fan Lounge in VFW No. 107 has caused me to finally bookmark it and have a peek now and then. The other day I happened upon it mid-afternoon and found Bill Mills holding forth with a few typists on the side, and after observing for a little bit joined in.

After I made a few comments Bill asked who I was, since I was showing up as an anonym-numeric “ustreamer,” and once I signed my name I watched him suddenly turn toward the camera and address me directly. We carried on for a while, and it was kind of enjoyable. And as I was on my daily morning troll through the various Yahoo groups this morning, I ran into posts on Southern Fandom Classic that things were happening at the VFL *right then*, so I opened it in another window and mostly listened in while I continued to read posts (having moved over to Trufen by then where the year of Ron Ellik’s death was still being debated from the night before). Eventually I joined in for a little while—I never identified myself, but I was the one who noted that *Quandry* had a larger print run than 100 and made a rude remark about John Thiel—until the show was over, at which point it was time to dive into the morning’s InTheBar crop and I bolted. Overall, it’s still a work in progress, or so I feel, but at least it’s moved beyond my earliest experiences with it, which were mostly exchanges of (to me) deadly dull wonkspeak.

It’s hard to detect what was so pressing about Sally Syrjala’s plaintive letter about the future of the N3F that caused you to “postpone not one but two instalments of *Katzenjammer*,” since in essence this is but a lengthy restatement of the problem that has plagued the club for decades. How many articles have we read, Arnie, that essentially were titled, “The NFFF: Does It Matter”? It’s easy to sympathize with Sally’s real life problems of having become the only caretaker for her aging father-in-law, but less so her concerns with the local historical society and the social service agency. “These are the areas I have chosen to primarily address in the remaining part of my life.” It’s good that the experience she gained in the N3F is of some assistance to her in these other activities, but there are plenty of other places

in life—and even in fandom—where similar skills can be acquired.

Reading her letter brought back an ancient N3F memory of receiving letters from another housewife, Joan Cleveland, written in longhand and containing such deathless prose as her asides about how she had to take a little break so she could make “a nice cheese sandwich” for one of her children. Of course, the all-time classic N3F letter was the one circa 1948 welcoming Charles Burbee to fandom.

Without knowing more, it’s hard to parse what led the officers of the N3F to dump Jeff Redmond as editor of *The Fan* (there’s a title I’d not previously heard—what happened to *TNFF* and *Tightbeam*?). But as the victim of his various attempts a couple years ago at stealing my identity by setting up e-mail addresses that appeared to be mine and harassing various fans, I’m completely unsympathetic to his plight.

Thankfully, your article ends on a humorous note.

And along the way I laughed out loud at your noting that the N3F “has a constitution lengthy and detailed enough to run a country, let alone a small science fiction club.” And I really howled at your suggestion that “The N3F could become to fandom what Coventry was to amateur fantasy fiction.” I can hardly wait.

Although I enjoyed Bill Mills’s, Shelby Vick’s and Nic Farey’s Corflu reports, I have little to add except to note that now having read quite a few accounts (add Graham Charnock’s in the latest *eI* to the list) it’s clear that everyone’s experience was unique. In Shelby’s he notes that he won a copy of *Fanorama*, Walt Willis’s fan columns from *Nebula*, at the auction, and that I’d “run 150 of them, and this is number 16.” The low number on that copy is because when I was originally distributing them back in 1998 I saved the sequence from 10 through 19, taking the long view that in years to come these might well become good fan auction items. The very lowest numbers are in my files, plus the copies that went to Walt (who got #1), to Darroll Pardoe (who contributed to the introduction), and to a handful of the first fans to pre-subscribe. The bulk of the copies sold in 1998 through 2000, with only a handful since then, and at this point there are just three copies left (all low-numbered). If anyone is interested, please e-mail me for price information.

In his letter Lloyd Penney observes, “I never knew that Calvin Demmon worked for a newspaper in Edmonton. I’m not sure I’d move that far for work, even in my own country.”

I don’t think Calvin would have moved that far, either, except that—as noted in my memorial to him in the latest *Trap Door*—he was deeply religious and the newspaper crew was something of a commune. As his oldest son wrote in the eulogy he delivered at Calvin’s funeral: “We lived in an apartment complex in Canada while he was working for the *Edmonton Report*. My understanding is that anyone who worked for ‘the company’ got room and board (there was a store room stocked for meals) and received one dollar a day. If you needed to go somewhere, you checked out a car. All of the parents worked with each other at the *Edmonton Report*, and all of their offspring hung out in the backyard of this apartment complex on 149th street in Edmonton.”

The conclusion of Lloyd's letter appears to have vanished in the Chorp Dimension.

Eric Mayer writes that "the best LoCs were those which doled out some egoboo to all the contributors," and from that appears to conclude that any LoC that doesn't is somehow deficient. As you note, if one *did* comment on everything in some fanzines the letter would be longer than the fanzine. I'm always happy to get a detailed letter of comment on *Trap Door*, but appreciate that not everything in each issue sparks a response from any given respondent. Even the late Harry Warner Jr., noted for his prolific and extensive LoCs, didn't attempt that. And I don't, either, in writing my own LoCs.

He also writes, "Even though I'm not publishing these days, those are painful memories and I have decided to limit myself strictly to ezines, which probably has offended some folks who still produce paper zines but, you see, I do have my reasons, not to mention deep psychological scars." One has to sympathize with those scars, but when the lead-up to this statement is that because he was short of cash he published on a hectograph, later on "a hand cranked spirit duper," and limited his circulation to save on postage costs, it's hard to parse just how such considerations are "deep" and would leave "scars." Is there something Eric isn't saying here?

As for his limiting his LoC-writing to electronic fanzines only, as a publisher of a paper fanzine I suppose I could be one of those "offended...folks who still produce paper zines," but instead I would say that it's more his loss because the people still publishing non-electronically will simply cut him off after too many issues with no reply.

Arnie: Unfortunately for me, the chat room feature of The Virtual Fan Lounge is very hard for me to use. I just can't handle that small type since my 1990 cataract surgery. I also regretted the necessity of not trying to do "The Wasted Hour" live; the uStream system is balky and often uncooperative.

It's probably a stretch to attribute concern to authors of articles about the imminent demise of the N3F. Rather, the N3F is one of the everlasting weapons in the arsenal of fannish humorists. Other amusing topics may come and go, but in a pinch, the N3F is there, waiting to be the butt of jokes. It's sort of like the Republicans in the Mundane World, except that the elephants can't destroy the economy or lead us into pointless wars.

OK, maybe there's a little concern. There's a nagging worry: What if the next time we need something funny to take our minds off more dire situations – and the N3F is gone? We might have to start a new wrong-headed organization just to have something to get laughs. Thank Ghu for the World Science Fiction Society!

Speaking of ChatBack's stalwarts, here is one of the column's luminaries with comments about #106 and #107...

Lloyd Penney

First of all, please pass along to Joyce that I had a great time at Corflu Silver, our trip to Vegas was a great time, and

it's hard to believe it was so long ago already. Where'd those two months go? I've got issues 106 and 107 of VFW to respond to, so here it comes now.

106...I have to ask...has Hope Leibowitz read this issue? Did you send it to her directly, or will she get it from eFanzines.com?

I admit that I got your telephone number and Bill Mills' telephone number mixed up, so I called Bill before calling you, but at least more than one couple got the warning that we were in town, and that's probably good. We did see the Clorfu sign, and figured it was a floor cleaner, an island in the Mediterranean, or a weird martial art. Right on all counts!

Don and Sue Anderson seemed to have a good time, but Don really needed a scooter to get around. He was in some pain near the end of the weekend, and Sue really wanted to see more of Vegas. So do we; we do have some plans to return one of these days, and spend more time on the Strip, exploring some of those marvelous hotels.

One thing I did notice...not many of the other local fans came out to the convention, not even for the parties. Not in their line of fanac, or just more comfortable with Vagrant meetings or other forms of fanac in town?

The rooms looked good, but as most of us were sitting and chowing down, we didn't get a good look at the whole place. It was big enough for the majority of the convention, and at no point were we stepping on each other.

It was interesting to have the FAAn Nominee button from Corflu Quire. Murray Moore brought it back for me from Austin, and right now, it hangs from the frame of the FAAn Award certificate I won. It was something unexpected and a pleasure to receive.

I am glad the connection on the third floor worked for Bill, but I must admit that I was so busy with things, I kept forgetting the camera was there. Thinking about upcoming panels, lunches, meeting with others and a trip to Fremont Street for something or other kept our minds busy enough.

By the calendar, Westercon is in a week or so. I know you won't be there, but to those who will be, I hope the convention is a success, both financially and popularly. We have many fannish artists who deserve that silvery rocket, and few of them even make it to the ballot. The only way to change that is to attend more Worldcons, and for many, that's not too likely.

I talked a little bit to Belle Churchill as well...she feels pressured to write something, but is never sure what to write, or even if she wants to write anything at all. She either needs a break from the pressure, or an assignment editor to give her a gentle push with an idea or two.

I fully agree with you about all the hard work that Bill and Roxie put into the convention, and the Virtual ConSuite, and The Voice of Fandom, and all egoboo that came their way that weekend was well deserved. I kinda doubt that I'll be able to get to Seattle, so I expect that the Virtual ConSuite will be how I take part.

In my area, the number of used book stores is shrinking with every passing year. Few of those remaining are taking books, and none of them are hiring. Used book stores

have become almost uniformly hobby companies, with no hope of growth. With this shrinkage of the market, I can only hope that your Mr. Barca was himself unceremoniously and enthusiastically fired. Or, he was killed by a falling bookcase.

I've had my fun as a conrunner, and I know where responsibility lies. I don't think I could be as comprehensive about it as Kevin Standlee is, but I think I can strike the balance between the business end of things and the fun end. I have run a few conventions, and you have to make sure all are enjoying themselves without letting them see the potential chaos going on behind the curtain.

I helped Joyce get the cakes upstairs...greed may be good, but I felt if I made a detour to anywhere but the con-suite, greed would get me gutted stem to stern. We all made sure our chocolatey cargo got upstairs. I didn't sample much, but what I did get was good.

And now I know the story of why the bathroom door was off its hinges...matched a few other people at the con. And, the story of Hope, as well. I won't go further.

At one point that weekend, I saw James Taylor going a little crazy trying to keep the suite clean and stocked, and I offered to help. (I should have made that offer a few times.) He asked me to take some Diet Pepsi down to the smoking con suite, that it was Ted White's favorite. I did just that, so I kept some BNFs happy, before they even asked.

With Aileen Forman nominating Ken for past president of fwa, I think that's why Yvonne spoke up to nominate me. Not a hope of winning, but what they heck, it's participating that counts, and I got a few votes. I didn't see any mention of it here, but the Hooper play *The Price of Pugwash* was a hoot, and not just because I got to play a role in it, and flirt with Aileen Forman.

107...I agree with you about Peter Sullivan's Virtual Tucker Hotel. I check it from time to time to see what's coming up on VFC, the Virtual Fan channel.

Jeff Redmond asks a question all fan club managers ask, especially today...is the format of a club a suitable format for today's fans? Never mind that it's the N3F, but will any club survive? Are the next generation of people who like the fantastic and different as social a group as we were? Even at the dawn of fandom, anyone who ran a club knew how much work it was going to be, and the vast majority of people who were members were the happy deadwood... here's my money, now entertain me. The deadwood used to make up about 90% of the membership; how close is that number getting to 100%? I've chaired cons and I've run clubs, and I found how valuable that experience was. Some of what I learned I put towards my job at the time; helped out. Some years ago, the head of the Star Trek Welcommittee, Shirley Maiewski, shut the organization down when she realized that the Internet, but its very nature, was distributing Trek news far more efficiently than the Welcommittee could. Perhaps it is time to shut the N3F down if it no longer serves the purpose for which it was created. I'd like Chris Garcia's feedback on this; as a single-year N3F president, I'd like to know his opinions

Hiya, Bill! Good on yer, mate... I think we need another weekend just to party and recover, and chat. I wish there wasn't so much geography in the way. I think we all had a good time with Andy's play. And Yvonne and I ran into the Moores in the laundry room, too. Nice little set up they had going, too.

Aha, the locol! It's been a while. I can tell that my cataract is getting a little worse, just by the quality of my vision, but the more I learn about cataracts, the more I know that it's a simple procedure, and decent vision (as good as it gets with my glasses, anyway) will be mine again. Ken Krueger was indeed able to join us for that fanzine panel at Eeriecon Nine in Niagara Falls, and it was an enjoyable hour. Did the end of my loc drop off into the ether?

When it comes to choosing between Dragoncon and Anticipation, I think many fans would choose Dragoncon, sad to say, but more and more, as fuel prices rise to ridiculous levels, I am thinking that they will take a third choice, to stay at home. But, I do know some who will take a pass on going to Montréal, and buy their tickets for Atlanta instead.

John Purcell knows those Canadian fans from some time ago? Mike Harper still lives just up the street and around the corner from Mike Glicksohn in Toronto, JoAnne McBride has had addresses in Toronto, Vancouver and the Yukon Territory, but I think she's around Vancouver these days. And Mike Wallis is happily married, gafiated I gather, and firing rockets in the California desert. Perhaps paper fanzines may be dying, but fanzines overall? I've never been busier with trying to loc everything in sight! Another load of zines just arrived from eFanzines.com, everyone's friendly neighbourhood zine pusher.

Hey, I'm at three pages, according to Word, so I should turn it off at some point. This weekend is the General Assembly of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, and this afternoon is a tour of MacDonald Dettwiler & Associates, maker of the remote manipulator arms for the shuttle and space station. Should be fun. Take care!

Arnie: There may be a difference in the way we look at things, Lloyd. To me, there is no "business side" and "fun side.?" There is only fannish fun – and whatever must be done to facilitate that fun. I may generate press releases like a cheap hack, count ballots like a bookkeeper or dole out food like a caterer, but that's all subordinate to the main thing: fun.

I respect skill and hard work, including all those facilitating jobs, but I believe that it is better to minimize the need for such skills and effort as much as possible to give fans time to do all those wonderful creative, entertaining and pleasurable things we do.

We also heard from: Dick Lupoff, Earl Kemp.

Last Hurrah

As should now be obvious, I'm now in the midst of making some changes in *VFW*. That's something I've done, in a small way, about every 10 issues since this fanzine started nearly four years ago. Anyone who compares, say, #9 with #50 or #100 will immediately spot the differences as well as pick up on the similarities.

One thing that hasn't, and won't, change is its essential character. If you've enjoyed the content to this point, chance are excellent that you'll continue to find what you like in these pages. (If you didn't like *VFW* I can't honestly say you'll like it much better in the future. Fandom, like life itself, has its inevitable disappointments.)

Why makes changes? Well, a review of my publishing record suggests that most of the genzine titles stop somewhere between 10 and 30 issues. That's when I usually take a little break and come back with a new fanzine with editorial policy, graphic design and title to match. I'll spare you a recitation of all the genzine titles I've used since I became a fan in March, 1963.

Since I still very much enjoy producing this fanzine, I don't feel compelled to mothball it in favor of some new concept. Still, *VFW* has evolved quite a bit from the four-page locally oriented newszine I originally envisioned. It has become both much less frequent and considerably larger. The need for cover-to-cover cheerleading for local activity has grown less important as other Vegas fans have started calendars and so forth and Vegas Fandom outside the Vegrants has grown less active and more Mundane. *Fandom Newsbreaks*, now resident just before *ChatBack*, will continue to include the latest about fanac in southern Nevada and I plan to keep the contact directory as well, but the rest of it now seems superfluous.

Among the things that hasn't changed is that I sure do like to get contributions of art and written material, definitely including letters of comment. I'd like to develop a new schedule somewhere between biweekly and monthly, but there's a definite correlation between your response and my enthusiasm and sense of urgency.

As I write this, I have an issue in mind for two-three weeks from now. I hope you'll enjoy this issue and come back for the next. — Arnie Katz