

VEGAS FANDOM WEEKLY

Vegas Fan Events This Week

SNAFFU Meeting
Friday (12/9) 8:00 PM

LV Futurists Meeting
Friday (12/9) 6:00 PM

Las Vegas Fandom Christmas Party
Saturday (12/10) 6:00 PM

VSFA Breakfast & a Movie
Sunday (12/11) 9:45 AM

*Check out the Calendar
and preview stories*

Vegas Christmas Party Is Saturday!

The Las Vegas Fandom Christmas Party, a tradition started by Ken & Aileen Forman back in 1990 at the dawn of modern Vegas Fandom, is this (12/10) Saturday at 6:00 PM at the home of James & Kathryn Daugherty. Festivities get underway at 6:00 PM with the Alien Auction scheduled for 8:00-8:30 PM.

All Las Vegas fans are invited, though the Daughertys have asked that everyone RSVP. Their address is: 6 Charriers Court, Henderson, NV 89052. The Phone number is: 702-328-6006. (A few folks seem to be a little shaky on the meaning of "RSVP." It means you call the host one or more days before the party to tell them you are coming. And then you actually show up.)

To participate in the Alien Auction, always a big feature of the Christmas Party, bring a wrapped gift not to exceed \$15 in value. Re-gifting "white elephants" is permissible, so it doesn't even have to be very expensive. Those

who haven't participated in something like this can learn the brief rules right on the spot.

SNAFFU to Discuss Biotech in SF At Its Friday, Dec. 9 Meeting!

Its venue having gone through its major renovation, SNAFFU is gearing up for its "second Friday" discussion meeting at the customary Borders bookstore venue. The meeting starts at 8:00 PM.

The main discussion topic for this SNAFFU meeting is "Who's your Daddy? Hybrids, Clones and Genetic Engineering."

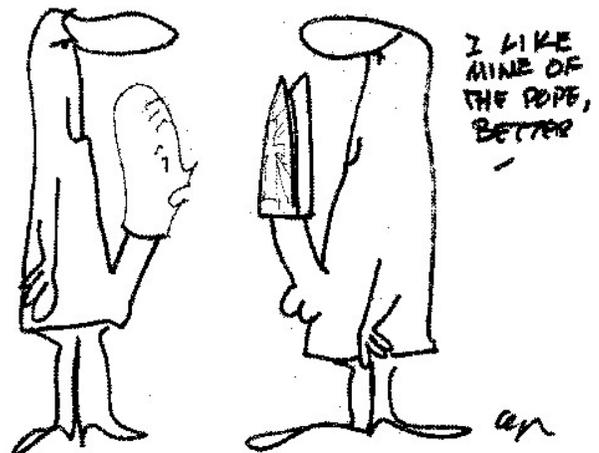
Michael Bernstein enlarged on the theme as follows:

"Biotechnology is making enormous strides, with amazing results being announced every day. How will this impact human reproduction and the cultural institution we call a 'family'? A number of authors have tackled this in fiction, including Robert Heinlein, Nancy Kress, John Brunner, Vonda McIntire, Charles Stross, and others."

Breakfast & A Movie to See Narnia!

Want to see the *Narnia* movie with a bunch of your fan friends? VSFA is sponsoring a "Breakfast and a Movie" outing on Sunday (12/11) to see the movie based on the CS Lewis novel at the Crown Theatre at Neonopolis.

Participants will gather at Jamm's restaurant (1029 S. Rainbow) at 9:45 AM. They'll head for the theater after the meal and expect to see the 12:10 PM showing at the Crown Theatre.



Inside Story Blue Christmas

"I'll have a blue Christmas... without you," Elvis Presley sang. It's one of my favorite performances by The King, even though it is distinctly later than the Sun Records stuff that I consider his best. This year, I feel the meaning a little more than the melody.

Now, I realize that Christmas is December 25 (for those of you who aren't looking forward to Chanukah or Quansa), but for me (an agnostic of Jewish heritage), Christmas comes on December 10th this year.

That's the day that Las Vegas fans will gather at the opulent home of James & Kathryn Daugherty for what is looking more and more like the best Christmas party since Ken & Aileen Forman's heyday. Lou Reed sings about *Christmas in February* and I guess that's what it'll feel like on 12/25, knowing everyone has celebrated on the 10th.

Joyce and I will definitely be with you in spirit, but only because Joyce's flesh is still a bit weak. The good news is that she is starting to walk with (and without) a walker and is itching to get back behind the wheel of her fiery red car.

Joyce and I can't wait to hear all about it. So (ahem) if each of you who attend will send us a short report — as little as one incident is fine — we can put 'em all together and give everyone who couldn't be there a taste of what promises to be an outstanding event.

— Arnie

Las Vegas Futurists Announce New Venue, Special Guest for December Meeting!

The Friday, December 9 meeting of the LV Futurists Salon — note name change — will take place at the Amanda & Stacy Darling Memorial Tennis Center, COMMUNITY ROOM (Enter through the Pro Tennis Shop) 7901 W. Washington, Las Vegas, NV 89128.

The meeting starts at 6:00 PM and should wind up by 8:00 PM. You can then either join the group for a post-meeting excursion to a nearby restaurant or zoom over to the SNAFFU meeting.

The meeting topic will be a discussion of the book *The Pentagon's New Map: War and Peace in the Twenty-First Century* by Thomas Barnett. Elaine Baran (President and Founder of Baraness Ventures, a strategy consulting practice specializing in business venture assessment and corporate strategy) will lead the discussion.

Participants in the Salon are not expected to play tennis at this time.

Next SNAPS Disty Looms Large!

The deadline for the 8th Distribution of SNAPS (Southern Nevada Amateur Press Society) is still comfortably in the future (December 18), but major contributions are already in place from David Gordon, Linda Bushyager and Charles Fuller. It looks like the last distribution of 2005 could well be the largest in the short fanhistory of the group, founded last April.

SNAPS is an apa (amateur press association), a sort of fanzine trading club, for fans in the Las Vegas area. Each participant prepares a little fanzine as a contribution and sends them to the Official Editor, Joyce Katz

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Special Thanks to Roxanne Gibbs (many things), Bill Burns (posting), Mindy Hutchings (posting), David Gordon (Futurists liaison), Joyce Katz (proofreading). Page 1 cartoon provided by Shelby Vick (by permission of Lee Hoffman) from *SFFY*.

Reporters this issue: Roxanne Gibbs, Michael Bernstein, Teresa Cochran, David Gordon, Kathryn Daugherty and Joyce Katz

Art/Photo Credits: Vick/Rotsler (1), David Gordon (8, 9), Ja,es Daugherty (11), all else by Bill Rotsler.

Columnists This Issue: Shelby Vick, John DeChancie

VFW is free by request — and you may get it anyway. It can be downloaded at the SNAFFU and VSFA sites as well as at efanazines.com. No wannabe skinny dippers were harmed during the production of this fanzine.

Member: fwa. Supporter: AFAL. Believer: United Fans of Vegas; Toner II in 2006! Vegas Westercon in '08!

The Newcomers

Katzenjammer

Last issue, I announced the Vegas Fan Awards, a nice way for the Las Vegas fan community to dole out some well-deserved egoboo. The ballots will be distributed during the first week in January and I expect to have tabulated results, with laudatory write-ups, ready within a week of the voting deadline.

Having briefly outlined the five categories, I thought it might be a good idea to look at the categories in depth. This time, I'll focus on the two categories that relate to newcomers to our city.

There are two reasons for two separate awards instead of a catch-all award. One is that there is a fundamental difference between the contributions that a seasoned fan who immigrates to Las Vegas can make versus the impact of someone previously unconnected to, or aware of, Fandom.

The other reason is that new blood is vital to the health of any local Fandom, especially one that had sunk into the doldrums like much of Vegas Fandom did in the late 1990's.

The first category I want to consider is "**Outstanding New Las Vegas Fan of 2005.**" These are the fine folks who have encountered Fandom for the first time here in Las Vegas.

Truth to tell, it is easier and harder to be a neofan these days than it was when I entered the hobby in 1963. It's now so vast that a newcomer may take years to acquire an appreciation and understanding of it.

Vegas Fandom has gained several neofans in the last year.

Let's briefly look at some of the best, presented in alphabetical order so as not to direct the vote:

Ayesha Ashley. Fandom doesn't get a neo with an effervescent personality, strong intellectual chops and a voice like a meadowlark every day. Ayesha isn't ready for a fannish trivia quiz, but few neofans have picked up the essence of the subculture more quickly.

Joelle Barnes. Surprising things come in small packages and that is certainly true of this first-year fan. She has dabbled a little in local fanzines and listservs and attends many of the local events. Sometimes controversial — and always good-humored — Joelle's irrepressible spirit has made her a familiar face on the local scene.

Mindy Hutchings. This very intelligent and mature female fan has shown both competence and energy in taking over the VSFA listserv, helping with *VSFA Valley Voyager* and spearheading the "Dinner & a Movie" series.

James Willey. Since joining VSFA around mid-year, James has shown a strong inclination to do things rather than watch from the sidelines. He hosted this year's Las Vegas Fandom Halloween Party, reviving a dormant tradition. More recently, he has begun hosting a TV viewing circle that is currently making its way through the four seasons of *Farscape*.

The other category for newcomers is: "**Outstanding Addition to Las Vegas Fandom in 2005.**" Las Vegas is one of the fastest-growing cities in the US, as it has been for a decade, and this has brought many fans to the city, making it a much better Fandom for all of us.

Here are the leading candidates for this award (again in alphabetical order):

Lubov Anderson. She's not only a successful professional fantasy illustrator, which would be distinction enough, but she's also an enthusiastic fan who's a fascinating conversationalist and one of the leading members of the Vegrants.

Merric Anderson. Like his wife, he has had a lot of contact with the fringes of Fandom, but had not experienced Core Fandom until his arrival in Glitter City. Merric is co-chairman of Toner 2 in '06) and has quickly emerged as one of the leaders of the city's largest fan club.

Teresa Cochran. The BArea's loss is Vegas' gain. The sweet-natured neo has become an active fanwriter and has also published a string of very entertaining zines for SNAPS. She's a popular Vegrant and also a participant on the Trufen listserv.

Ruth Davidson, The president of the N3F found Las Vegas a gateway to actual Fandom. She is the editor of *VSFA Valley Voyager*, a member of eAPA and a participant in several listservs. Ruth has relocated to Yuba City, CA, but spent most of '05 in Vegas.

John DeChancie. The SF author has shaken off that LASFS rust to become an active Las Vegas fan. He has written for *VFW* and is an active member of Las Vegrants.

David Gordon. Although David has attended many conventions, this is his first encounter with Core Fandom as exemplified by the Vegrants — and he has shown the kind of wit, intelligence and perception that augur well for his future fan career.

There are probably other good candidates who've slipped my mind. Drop me an email and I'll get them into the vote. — Arnie

Las Vegrants Shock and Awe

Joelle Barnes arrived at about 6:30 to help Joyce and I prepare for what I was fairly sure would be a fairly small turn-out for the 12/3 Vegrants meeting. This was extraordinarily kind of her, since she is only an Invited Guest of the invitational fanzine fan club.

The end-of-year holidays bring non-fannish obligations that tend to hold down attendance at everything but the main Halloween, Christmas and New Year's Eve parties. The November Sunday Social, Eastside SNAFFU meeting and VSFA "First Monday" meeting all had very low attendance, so I doubted that Las Vegrants would come anywhere near the recent meeting size.

I was right. Ross Chamberlain came down with the Official Unofficial Vegrants Fall Cold, Bill Kunkel was still recovering from an early-week sick spell, Su Williams was visiting the Formans and the Wilsons in Flippin, AR., and Alan & DeDee White had ventured across the state line to California.

Fortunately, Las Vegrants is a very large and active club, so it drew a respectable 11 fans despite the listed (and other) understandable absences. Making up the happy company were: Merric & Luba Anderson, Ayesha Ashley, David Gordon, Kent Hastings, John DeChancie, Lori Forbes, Joyce Katz, Joelle Barnes, first-time visitor Dan O'Leary and me.

Joelle is one of the most unusual people I have met in Fandom. She superficially resembles the club-centered fans, yet she is strongly drawn to us lovable reprobates, the Vegrants. And truth to tell, the Vegrants return this strange attraction, which accounts for the fact that she is a frequently invited guest to the meetings.

She sure can get a conversation going — or stop one in its tracks. This time, for instance, her assertion that all pornography is the same — a vorpal thrust against Las Vegas culture — which ultimately led to me explaining the psychological theory of catharsis to her to refute the idea that watching a movie will incite that behavior in the real world.

Once fans arrived in force, Loscon took center stage as the main topic during the early part of the evening. I was amused to find out that current Vegas Fandom has at least one characteristic in common with their 1990's fancestors — they go to conventions in far-oof cities and then spend most of their time together. I like it, in a way, and I think it'll be a different matter when they get to go to cons that have more

members of Core Fandom (and perhaps even the Group Mind/Virtual Fan club itself).

David Gordon lamented the complete absence of skinny-dipping at Loscon. His Fine Mind has been captivated, seized, ensorcelled by this concept since Merric Anderson revealed the existence of nude swimming at cons to him at a Vegrants meeting last month. Our protestations that Loscon was not one of the likely venues for such doings, David had hoped to observe the phenomenon in person (for artistic and scientific purposes, one presumes). At the 12/3 meeting, his disappointment knew no bounds. "The strippers, porno actresses and Playboy Bunnies who usually attend Loscon must've all gone home," I said, consolingly.

Joyce and Kent Hastings were leading opposite points of view in a discussion of Ayn Rand when Lori Forbes arrived, fresh from seeing *I Walk the Line*. That turned the group conversation from Objectivism to Recent Movies.

Lori liked the Johnny Cash biopic a lot. Questioned about the fact that the actor sang, instead of the real-life singer (as in *Ray* and *The Jolson Story*), Lori said it was not objectionable. She found the singing a little weak during the early portion of the film, but thought that it got very good by the final two major songs, *Jackson* and *I Walk the Line*.

John DeChancie saw some value in the Edward R. Morrow picture, though he didn't like the reliance on clichés like the actor, hounded by McCarthy, who commits suicide. Kent Hastings made noises as if he'd like to give us liberals what-for about Morrow, but he decided not to pursue the point.

Joelle brought up the announcement that famed former Hollywood madam Heidi Fleiss plans to open a brothel ranch in Nevada that will cater to men. She waxed enthusiastic about the prospect of paying \$250 for one of Ms. Fleiss' employees as she disparaged the sexual capabilities of the rest of the male population. I thought this was rather unfair.

Since Joelle has made such a point of telling us about her near-total lack of sexual experience. Several Vegrants felt compelled to mention that she didn't have any basis for such a negative opinion.

"Let's start a special fund," I roared. "Let's take a positive slant. The BBB Fund is fanhistory; now it's time for the Joelle to the Ranch Fund." It was difficult to gauge the degree of enthusiasm for this proposal, because everyone was laughing as I made Dramatic Gestures to accompany my stirring words, but we're



Heidi Fleiss, though not at the meeting, was a topic of conversation.

reading to accept donations at any time. We need to come up with \$300, I guess, so that Joelle's choice won't feel slighted by the tip.

A discussion about LV Futurist Dick Pelletier on David Gordon's online discussion group spilled over into the Launch Pad's living room. Pelletier is a nice enough fellow, but he is addicted to writing exceptionally shallow predictive articles.

When I read one of these essays for the first time, I thought it might be outrageous deadpan humor, like *The World of Tomorrow (Some Aspects)* that Gary Deindorfer wrote for one of my fanzines several decades ago. Then I read a few more — Pelletier is unbelievably prolific — and came to the inescapable conclusion that he is serious.

His articles — and he has sold a few to print and online magazines — generally describe the impact of one or more developments on the world of 2020, 2030 or 2040. He invariably forecasts a world that might've been predicted at a 1950's world's fair or the like, only Pelletier's world is even more antiseptic, squeaky clean and sterile. Whatever development is the focus always leads to a utopia in which even things like marital friction, sibling rivalry and frustration are totally absent, along with such Mundane trifles as poverty, inequality, unemployment and disease.

One of the fans tried to excuse Pelletier on account of his age, 77. I reminded that the Vegrants had just

had two visits from an 88-year-old who repeatedly demonstrated intelligent perception.

David beat the drums for the Wil McCarthy event he has put together for LV Futurists in early January. McCarthy will speak on January 13 at a meeting that will also have SNAFFU and VSFA sponsorship. (No one asked about Las Vegrants...) It's really good to see this kind of cooperation and it looks like this event will be the first outside the Launch Pad since Joyce's September 7th surgery.

David said that several pros at Loscon sounded interested in coming to Las Vegas to hear McCarthy speak. One was Greg Benford. Dave related with some astonishment that Greg had suddenly gotten much more enthusiastic when he realized the speech was in Las Vegas. "I have a couple of friends there," he told David, "Arnie and Joyce Katz." David is clearly impressed by this connection and seemed even more so when I point out that Greg and I have been *co-editors* and that Greg has written voluminously for my fanzines over the years. I pushed the name-dropping too far, however, when I told David I also know Greg's twin brother. I'm afraid Jim doesn't have quite the same cachet with David. Maybe I can find a reprint...

Browsing the shelves, John DeChancie noticed a book with a very special meaning to me — a bound volume of about half of the 100th FAPA mailing, the half that includes *Ah, Sweet Idiocy!*

Yet the content is outweighed by the personal significance; I got it from rich brown, who was at that moment in the throes of the period despair that caused me to nickname him "Dr. Gafia." As we chatted before a mid-'60's FISTFA meeting, he told me he planned to move to Seattle and began to offer me choice parts of his fanzine collection at bargain-basement prices.

At first I refused to buy the bound FAPA volume for the ridiculously low price rich quoted. He then threatened to sell it to any of a number of suitable owners who'd shortly arrive for the FISTFA meeting.

I bought the book, but set the condition that rich could buy it back for the same insane price. I kept it next to the door in Brooklyn and, even though rich has renounced all claim to it, continue to display it on a shelf near the door. It just seems to belong there.

I'd better admit that my notes get a little surreal about here. There's something about Merric and a pumpkin with a stem shaped like a penis and things that are even stranger. Best not to rake up some memories, I think...

It wasn't one of the larger meetings, but it certainly was lively and entertaining. The next one will be the Chanukah celebration (well, maybe sort of...).

— Arnie

NOW & Again Fandom

*(Looks like I need to change
"Now and Again" to: "Try and Stop Me!"
I'm **really** dangerous, now: My volunteer work is
over! VFW – fandom in general! – watch out!)*

Now, as long as I've been around, you'd think I'd be an expert on it.

Guess again! Yeah, I was a fan in the late '40s, early fifties. I was quite active in Fifth Fandom. But – I'm not analytical. For that matter, I'm not even that observant. When I'm active, I'm guilty of tunnel vision; I see where I'm going, and that's about it.

–Oh, now, not exactly.

When I was doing cf., my vision (at first) was fairly broad. I wanted to spread my circle of friends, and get Well Known.

Then came the Willis Campaign, and you know the story from there. And then came gafia-tion.

So I'm not like Ted White or rich brown, who have pretty well hung in there right on thru. In fact, except for occasional letters with rich brown, and a visit with him and other NY fans whilst I was with Met, I have over a thirty year gap in my fanac. Coulda been longer, but for Lynn Haven fan, Tim Riley, who ran me down, stirred me up, and got me going again.

Kinda.

It was in the mid '80s when he called and introduced himself and asked if I'd be willing to give him an interview so he could write it up for his fanzine.

Egoboo reared its head, and I agreed.

We met one weekend at the Met office, where we would have peace and quiet, and we talked. And talked. And I began, as time passed, to get back into fandom. In 1988, I attended Tropicon where Walt Willis was special Guest of Honor. With Madeleine. And Lee Hoffman! How could I not go!

But, now, about fandom and how I see it.

Back in the 40s and 50s, there was just – fandom! There were too few of us to split, regardless of how we felt. Yeah, some did fanzines, some didn't – but all were fans. I think it all started with Star Trek. Yeah, we were still all fans, and many/most of us were eager to see Star Trek, the first serious sf on TV, succeed.

Then con attendance was wanted, so stuff went around mentioning Star Trek and conventions and then Trekkers started showing up. There would be special Star Trek attractions, including guest appearances by one star or another. And, of course, then came Star Trek conventions – but sf cons still had their Trekker factions.



Shelby is surrounded by Madeleine and Walt Willis at the 1989 Tropicon.



Lee Hoffman and Shelby ponder.

Then came filkers.

Filksongs were an obvious by-product, because some fans liked to sing and create take-offs of folksongs slanted to sf. I guess 'The Green Hills of Earth' got it all rolling, but I'm willing to be corrected on that.

Fans started showing up with their guitars and serenading those who would listen. So another splinter group was formed.

Don't forget gaming! The game industry loved sf for the basis of their action games. Then someone started bringing games to contentions. You know the rest!

Japanese Anime is something I'm not that familiar with – the history, that is. I wonder if it started as game animation and then went to cartoons, or vice-versa? In any case, it began appearing among fans and at conventions. Seemed like a con wasn't complete without its anime room.

Another aside:
(Yeah, there had to be one!) (. . .Maybe there should be an Aside

room at the next convention?) I just realized! Now I know why the Sunsplash Corflu we put on was so sparsely attended – we didn't have a game room or anime or Star Trek! (I do seem to recall some filksongs going on.) No wonder we had such low attendance!

So these days there are Anime fans who think sf just comes in cartoons. There are Trekkers who think Star Trek is the origin of sf. There are filkers more interested in rhyme than reason/sf, and gamers who consider that rocketships are just things to fight with.

But we're having bigger and bigger conventions!

In fact, I think that's the secret behind all the schismatic action. In 1951, the Nolacon committee was bragging that there were over 400 paid members.

Today, there are more fanzine fans than that!

Back then, 'It is a proud and lonely thing to be a fan' was a statement of fact. Today, there are fans everywhere (that is, if you include gamers, Trekkers, and anime fans – and don't forget SG1, Farscape, etc, etc) and the majority of them never heard of Isaac Asimov, Bob Tucker or Lee Hoffman. As the number increases, the fragmenting causes us to drift farther apart.

If Shelby Vick at age 21 could come forward to 2005, he would be flabbergasted at all the sf: New movies all along, a day doesn't go by without some form of sf on TV, literally hundreds of books

by Asimov, shuttles going into space, rockets going beyond the solar system, the Hubble telescope. . .amazing! (Also Astounding, Startling, Thrilling, Fantastic. . .)

But then he would be lost, trying to find fans. In a way, it still is A Proud and Lonely Thing. (But then he discovered the internet. . .)

— Shelby Vick



High Risk At the LosCon!

Every LA-area con report of mine now starts with the same description of driving from Pahrump, Nevada to LA. Let's start with that. There are two legs of the trip, the first from Pahrump, Nevada to Baker, California. You can do this two ways. Either you go Over the Hump to Vegas and take I-15 south, or you take back roads that skirt the edge of Death Valley. The former route is longer but safer and more convenient. The latter is shorter and coffee-table-book picturesque, but there is but one gas-station or comfort stop between Pahrump and Baker, in

Shoshone, California. You had better have a full tank and an empty bladder when you go the back route. Also, if you drive after dark with no moon, there is nothing but intergalactic blackness out there, no reference points, and a very lonely and uneasy feeling develops when you consider the possibility of a breakdown. Most of the trip is a cell phone dead zone. And some of the higher parts of the road have no guard rail. If you fall asleep and run off into a side canyon, you stand a



good chance of being overlooked by passing traffic, which tends to be sparse. Take this road only on a bright sunny day and only in good weather. It's scenic as hell, and there are many interesting dry-lake areas that warrant your attention. Also dunes. There are impressive sand dunes at one point along the way.

You can stop in Baker for gas or food or both. Many choices here. Then you get on the good, old 15 for the trip down to the 10. As an alternative, depending on the time of day, you can get off the 15 at Victorville and take the Palmdale Road to the 14 freeway, to the 5, and descend to the San Fernando Valley (if you're going to LASFS or to Burbank). I usually do this, but to get to the con hotel I took the 405 cutoff (off the I-5) and fought the traffic to the LAX Marriott, where I parked in the self-park lot. The con parking rate was \$9/day. Rotten miserable mumble grump. But it is a major airport area. Sigh. On



Greg Benford gestures expansively at Steve Barnes and his daughter Nicki.

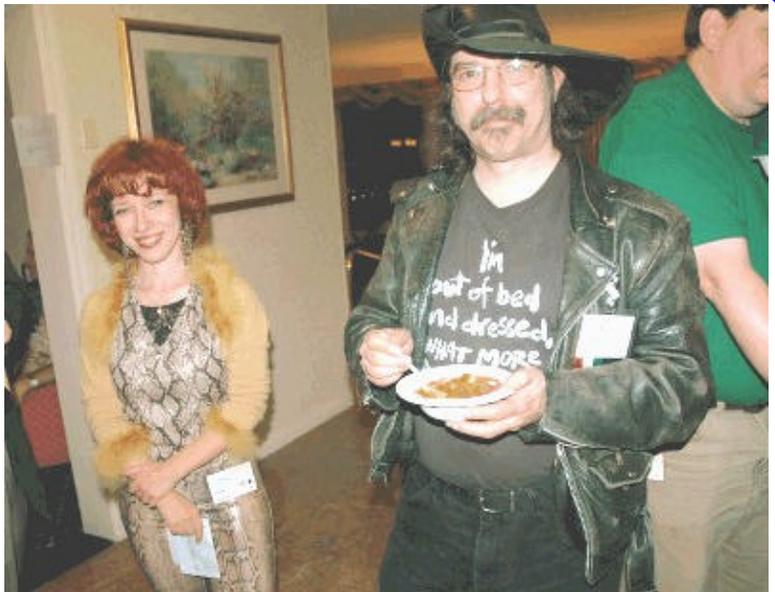
the other hand, you'd think that if they're charging \$100/night, they'd throw in the parking. Don't make me laugh.

The con was run well. I helped run it, handling the publication of the newszine (the "Daily Libretto" in keeping with the con's theme, "A Space Operetta"). I got out the first issue, and wondered why I didn't feel so good about it. I finally realized I had come down with some form of con crud (yes, call it that whether it derived directly from the con or elsewhere—no matter what, you're sick). I get sick just about every Loscon. Be fair. I get sick a lot in November, for some metaphysical reason. Spent most of the con nursing a mysterious sore shoulder and bout of gastrointestinal distress. I tried

typing in my room on the laptop that con chair Karl Lembke loaned me, but I couldn't sit for more than ten minutes at it. Every time I shifted my shoulder, a searing bolt of pain would shoot from shoulder to back. I asked Peter Grace to take over production and editing, which he did, doing a great job. I went to bed Friday night without setting foot in a party room. Woke up next day feeling a little better, but still not 100%.

I went to my one panel, and then went out to an early dinner with a gang of my Nevada fan buddies. I got back in time for the Masquerade, and during the intermission, I accepted the Forry Award for conspicuous contributions to science fiction and fantasy. I was honored. I was proud. "This is the first plaque I ever got that wasn't on my teeth," I said, accepting the thing. Then I launched into "It all started at a 5000-watt radio station in Fresno. . ." Most of the younger fans in the audience probably did not get the reference. I made the rest of it short and simple, finishing up with, I hope, a not too maudlin, "I love you fans. Thanks!"

I also got to hang out a bit with my pro colleagues. Steve Brust, whom I haven't seen for ages, was Writer GoH, and we did a lot of catching up. And drinking Scotch, in his room, along with several other people, including half-naked women. Brust makes that sort of thing happen. I listened to him filk, and folk, and sing, and even watched him dance a few steps.



Steve Brust chows down as Lubov Anderson looks on with bemusement..

He's a great entertainer. Very cool, very charming. He missed his calling, and his era. He needed to have been born ten to fifteen years earlier, maybe, and start all this deep in the 60s. He has that style. You know, although we see eye to eye on practically nothing politically, I love this guy. Always have, from the moment we met. And he's one hell of a writer. (See, that always comes *last*.)

And there was Tim Powers and his wife Serena. Fine writer, fine couple. And we agree on a lot of stuff. I can get into real rapport, too, make no mistake. In the end, though, ideologies make little difference.

It was typical Loscon. I got sick, but managed to have one hell of a time anyway.

That's life in LA. — John DeChancie



Teresa Cochran and James Taylor at their first con together.

What's Cookin'? **Cookie Fest**

I'm very happy to have made it to the cookie-baking event at the Daughertys' on Wednesday. Lori and April came by to pick me up and we chatted in the car on the way there. I think I understand why the door-to-door bus service doesn't go there; it's way out in the netherworlds somewhere. Here I was, hearing descriptions of a lake and trees. It was as if I'd teleported to some strange distant shore.

When we entered, I could simply hear how big the house was. There was a cavernous echo, and I knew there was lots of open space and high ceilings. I heard the chatter of fans and the drone of mixers as the fan-elves shaped and baked cookies. Then familiar voices began to emerge: Joelle Barnes, Kathryn and James Daugherty, Robert Ainsworth, Roxanne Gibbs and Michael Bernstein, and others. It was amazing to see Roxanne not only out and about, but competently directing the assembly line. Soon she put me to work, once I announced that I couldn't necessarily anticipate what needed to be done, but I could be conscripted. So I rolled little cookie-balls and dipped them in egg white and finely-chopped nuts. I'm one of those rarities that does not eat cookie dough, so the little creations were safe from consumption by me, at least till they came out of the oven.

James Daugherty made coffee when there were cries for it (mostly from me). The coffee machine brews one cup at a time, and it's pretty good coffee.

James also showed me an elephant tusk he said was given to him by his daddy. It was not a huge tusk, but it was the first one I'd put my hands on. I had a seat and talked to Kathryn about being a foodie who doesn't cook well. She assured me that it isn't necessary to be a good cook to appreciate good food. Then she made sure I got to taste the shortbread-like cookies, and one of the chocolate tarts, which nearly made me die of pleasure.

I talked to Joelle about a number of things for at least an hour. I really got to chattering, and she is a very good listener.

This event was an amazing success. I'd love to do something like it again. There was much camaraderie and warmth in that kitchen.

— Teresa Cochran



(Left to Right): Joelle Barnes, Lori Forbes and April Reckling test the results.

the best collection of letterhacks that ever favored an electronic fanzine...

What's this? Looks like a brief, if revolutionary, proposal from the fertile imagination of Fandom's foremost son of the Sunshine State...

Shelby Vick

Just one brief comment, Arnie: Looks like a change of name is needed for your second year. (Your fanzine, not you.) I can see it now, with a splash of neon and some Vegas glitter:

INTERNATIONAL Fandom Weekly!

Arnie: I've ducked this question long enough, which is why I'm printing your comment. Several friends have voiced this suggestion in various ways.

While intriguing in some ways, I don't think that's in the cards. I like serving the Las Vegas fan community as a

source of news and information and I don't see how I could provide all of Fandom with a comparable level of service. Besides, there are excellent websites like Trufen.net that have the latest news, so VFW would always be a day late and a dollar short.

What I would like to do, though, is publish more articles about activity in other fan centers. I hope readers who are involved in local fandoms will give it a try.

From the BArea comes the Young Publishing Giant with a letter of comment in his mighty hand...

Chris Garcia

Good to be back! Nice to see my article on running into all the wonderful Vegans down in LA. I must admit to doing an egoscan to see how it turned out, and of course, it was wonderfully done.

I see that you've left FAPA just as I've joined. It would

Contact!

Las Vegas Club Directory

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

Las Vegrants

Arnie & Joyce Katz, PMB 152, 330 S. Decatur Blvd., Las Vegas
NV 89107

Email: JoyceWorley1@cox.net
Phone: 648-5677

Neon Rainbow SF/F Club

Joshua Andrews
Email: Andrews1701@gmail.com
702-759-9303

SNAFFU:

Michael Bernstein
Email: webmaven@cox.net
Phone: 765-7279

VSFA:

Rebecca Hardin
Email: hardin673@aol.com
Phone: 453-2989

seem that the potential rumors of us being the same person may be helped by the timing of it all...

Christmas and cookies. Sounds like a good time. A friend of mine once had a cake party for Christmas, with a battle for the most original cake design. No one really seemed to go for the Best Tasting Cake award, but the most original had three entries that I still think about. The first was Salvadore Dali Presents: Cake, which was dripping off the edges of the serving platter (though it was fully cooked and solid. The second was a cake with a centre hole which he then filled with cookies stacked on top of each other, which he then sliced horizontal. The last was JFKake. It was an accurate recreation of Dealy Plaza and the Presidential Motorcade. It was all done of cake and it was something like 7 feet by 5 and over three feet tall. It was also pretty tasty.

Good to hear that Joyce can start the process of getting up and at them without the boot. I can only imagine how rough this must have been for her, but the end of the tunnel is coming up fast. And the possibility of Fan Events outside of the Katz home must be appealing.

Interesting survey ideas. I gotta say that my vote for outstanding event in my Fannish year would have to be the First Saturday Party when I came down to visit.

It's very easy to fall under the spell of Mr. Art Widner, the dark sorcerer who uses all the knowledge of the old days and still keeps himself up with all of the wonderful fanac that's going on. His presentation at NASFiC was wonderful, but even better than that was all the times that I've managed to talk with him in Fanzine lounges or at Corflu or at World-Con in 2002. And that car! Sounds like you all had a wonderful party.

I love Puffins!

Arnie: My decision to resign from FAPA was made only after a lot of thinking and with a heavy heart. Even FAPA costs quite a bit if you publish for it the way I have done over the last 15 years and I have never been a good minacker. I think it's wonderful that Bob Silverberg and other Venerables enjoy doing one zine a year, but that would never engage my interest. I have to be involved or it doesn't mean anything to me.

What is this "First Saturday Party" of which you speak? That was a meeting of Las Vegrants. We just don't get very formal or organized, so I can see how you'd have confused it with a party, but trust me, a meeting was taking place on some level.

Here's a big LoC on the anniversary from one of VFW's most faithful commenters...

Lloyd Penney

A local newszine is something I have thought of doing, and I've discussed it in my locs, but response from local fans has been nearly nonexistent. I may wait until the new year when fanac is a little low to give it a start, but it lies dormant until at least the Christmas madness is done, and the left-overs noshed and enjoyed. You have enjoyed a stable of contributors I couldn't possibly have here, so I will keep the project on the back burner, and see if enthusiasm for it catches fire or cools off.

"How to Write a LoC" may be a reprint, but it's something that perhaps should be printed from time to time. VFW may look like a letterzine from time to time, but discussion is

a good thing, and I may be a little biased, but if the odd(er) issue of VFW was all locs, I wouldn't mind that at all. Four Kinds of Fanac should be reprinted, too. I see too many passive fans, when active fans tend to make the fannish world revolve. Perhaps the passive fans make a good audience, but that's activity too, and the passive fans barely make it to club functions.

Will Australia rival Vegas in debauchery? A fan from the antipodes reports on the state of hedonism in his homeland...

Bill Wright

Your dealings with The Merry Widner in the Las Vegas segment are the most interesting part of this issue. In the same piece you have this to say about local mayor Oscar Goodman...

"I don't see how anyone can fail to love a man who tells school kids that, if consigned to a desert island, he would take a bottle of booze and a woman. He also told the same youthful audience that his hobby is drinking. "I would vote for him as many times as necessary," I said, overcome by

Potshot's Cartoon Theater



political enthusiasm. "He wants baseball for Las Vegas. He wants football for Las Vegas. He wants to legalize prostitution and pot. That's my kind of mayor!"

I forwarded your remarks to the Mayor of St Kilda, who responded that perhaps he could arrange for a particularly noisome beachside dive called 'The Palace' to be dismantled and sent to the antithetically named Mayor Goodman, along with everyone concerned with running it.

A veritable river of recreational drugs flows from that joint into the community. Council's persistent attempts to close it down are confronted by treacherous quicksand politics and a five million dollars legal defence fund.

After typing the above, I received a phone call to say that, in the dead of night, three expensive plants had been expertly dug out of our apartment block's newly landscaped front garden. I responded with incredulity, given that a crazed saxophonist had kept everyone in the street awake until four o'clock this morning.

I reported what happened to the police and was promised a report on the incidents. Explaining that to the body corporate manager (who has the unenviable duty of attempting to claim the loss on our common property insurance) will be difficult. 'Stolen under the watchful eye of a street saxophonist' is not the sort of crime description that endears itself to claims assessors. I also have to ask Jock the Horticulturist for more plants. St Kilda is a rumbustious place but it can get to you sometimes.

Arnie: We only have the fanciest, glitziest most exciting venues here in Las Vegas. We may be degenerates, but by Moloch, we do it in style!

Dick Lupoff's article in VFW #55 drew a lengthy comment from a ChatBack favorite, so let's give him his piece of the page...

David Burton

I was amazed to read Dick Lupoff's account of his early fan life, if only because there are a couple of parallels both in my "real" and "fan" lives.

He mentions being at the Adjutant General's School (located at the now decommissioned Ft. Benjamin Harrison) in the mid-1950's. From where I sit typing this, with a moderate tailwind I could *spit* on the School. (This is considered a sport in Central Indiana. Not spitting on the Adjutant General School in particular, but spitting in general, although it's considered bad form if you don't have a target.

When I first moved here, and before I had the range and elevation down pat, my neighbor (apparently not from Central Indiana and so uninitiated) inquired one day if *I* had a similar problem with birds "messing" on my windows.) We could have known each other back in those halcyon days. Never mind that I was a toddler and lived 300 miles east at the time; I marvel at the possible synchronicity of it all.

And then he goes on to mention ISFA, the Indiana Science Fiction Association, a club I helped re-found in the late 1960's. With many, but not all, of the same people. Buck and

Juanita Coulson were there (they'd moved about 50 miles north of Indianapolis in the interim, but still made nearly every monthly meeting), as well as Lee (nee Lee Anne Tremper) and Jim Lavell. Again my "a dollar short and 15 years too late" luck holds, otherwise Dick would have been there with us all.

We never got around to electing a dog as our President, largely I suspect because no one in that incarnation of the club *had* a dog. Still, in those looser, more freewheeling days, we didn't even feel the need to have human club officers, so I guess the point was moot.

Sadly, the only member of the club who went on to become a pro writer I would qualify as well since I was a staff writer for Ziff-Davis Publishing for 10 years. But I wouldn't take much credit for the pieces I wrote, although some of them *could* be considered "science fiction" -- a few sure weren't "science fact!")

I can only echo Dick's "them wuz the days," although mine came somewhat later than his.

Hey, and a suggestion. When you copy & paste e-mail LoCs, why not replace comments like *this* with either italic or bold? It'd look better...

Arnie: I've never thought that the number of pro writers in a fan group had much correlation with the quality of that group. Yet I've noticed that invitational fanzine-oriented fan groups like Fanoclasts, Brooklyn Insurgents, Saturday People and Third Friday have an unusually large number of folks who earn a living as authors. Among the Vegrants, Joyce, Bill Kunkel, JoHn Hardin, Ross Chamberlain, Laurie Kunkel, John DeChancie, Linda Bushyager and Michael Bernstein have all done a substantial amount of professional writing and Joelle Barnes has made her first article sale this year.

*The only problem with your suggestion is that when most folks write "*this*" they actually mean to include the asterisks. Calvin W. *Biff* Demmon is probably responsible for popularizing, if not introducing, this form of fannish punctuation.*

The proprietor of Potshot's Cartoon Theater has some pertinent comments about Julie Schwartz inspired by the ongoing discussion in recent issues...

Bill Kunkel

Another plump, spicy sausage of an issue there, my friend.

I think it was you but I already closed Adobe Reader and I'm too lazy to check. Anyway, somebody reported a conversation (and you're the only one I've ever seen at a party feverishly dictating notes into a tape recorder -- I keep waiting for you to have a flashback and start reporting the play by play for a Bruno vs. Waldo Von Erich match) so if it wasn't you, it was definitely somebody. And in this conversation they said:

"When I enlarged on the theme by mentioning Mort Weissinger and Julius Schwartz, John DeC talked about his personal impressions of Julie. My

Las Vegas Fan Events Calendar

SNAFFU Meeting December 9 8:00 PM

This formal SF club meets the second and fourth Friday's of each month. This time, it will be held at Borders bookstore on Sahara.

Vegas Fandom Christmas Party December 10 6:00 PM

James and Kathryn Daugherty are the hosts for this years Christmas Party, open to all Vegas fans.

Las Vegrants Meeting December 17 7:30 PM

The informal, invitation club meets on the first and third Saturdays at the home of Arnie and Joyce Katz

Sunday Social December 18 2 PM

One of Vegas' most convivial groups gets together at the Blue Ox for food and chatter

SNAPS Deadline December 18

Get your contributions to OE Joyce Katz (joyceworley1@cox.net).

SNAFFU Meeting December 25 8:00 PM

This formal SF club has a dinner/social gathering on the fourth Friday of the month.

Las Vegas Fandom New Year's Eve Open House December 31 7:30 PM

Come for the evening or a stopover as Arnie & Joyce Katz invite all Vegas fans to help them usher in the New Year.

VSFA 'First Monday' Meeting January 2, 7:00 PM

A little discussion, a bit a business and a bit of socializing comprise this monthly session of this small, but active group.

contact with Schwartz, when Lenny Bailes and I visited the DC Comics offices, left a far different impression. Julie seemed like the office curmudgeon, a talented but taciturn man. John found him friendly and fun-loving. Just shows how different folks can be when met under differing "circumstances.

That is interesting in terms of perceptions because Julie must've been having a bad day when you and Len went to see him. Julie was a great guy, incredibly warm and amusing -- he would always go crazy when I'd admit to him that I'd eaten a Sabrett hotdog (alongside which your typical boiled hotdog is as ashes in my throat) from a street vendor. He'd go on and on about the dangers of eating such food ("You don't eat food -- especially hot dogs -- that you buy off the street!").

I worked for him writing the script for a "Private Life of Clark Kent" story as a backup in an issue of Action Comics and we didn't have the same perspective on comics. It was the 70's and although he edited all those groundbreaking Denny O'Neil/Neal Adams stories, I doubt there was much editing involved. Judging by the general griping that went on while I was there (in the early 70's and again in the mid 70's), by the time Neal got a story in they'd be lucky to get it to the printer in time. Besides, Denny's stuff was brilliant. All you had to do was pass it along.

But Julie was so old school (and I was probably so high) we never meshed creatively, but in my experience he was a fantastic guy who had a good sense of humor and, not for

nothing, brought in and trained some of the top writers in the business right into the 80's -- I mean, these people were working at *Charlton*, for ghod's sake, and he saw the potential.

I'm not sure he would resonate to, say, *Watchmen*, though I suspect he would have liked it. He'd never make it through *The Invisibles*, however, which, along with *Astro City* (a comic book Julie would adore) the only superhero comics I've read through in a decade. I didn't even like the second Dark Knight book, though the original was brilliant reinvention on a level with Denny and Neal's revival of the character.

Arnie: I met Julie Schwartz several times and he was generally friendly with an edge of curmudgeonliness. A big difference between our experiences is that you worked with him and I met him as a comic book enthusiast. Lenny and I weren't active in Fandom yet, so we didn't even have that touchstone connection.

Always welcome in ChatBack is one of Las Vegas' most active fans and a long-time friend of mine...

Linda Bushyager

Suggestion - could you put the issue number of VFW on the front? It would be easier to keep track of them.

This was a very good issue. I am glad you were able to include a picture of Art's car! His car is really amazing. You should find out the story of how he came to have it and publish that.

My shingles outbreak has subsided greatly, but I thought

I'd better not go to Veggrants in case I was still slightly contagious. Hopefully by the weekend it will be entirely gone. I see follow-up doctor on Tuesday.

Glad to hear of Joyce's continued progress. I hope you two can get a ride to the Xmas party - you really should go!

I'm not much for awards. But it would be nice to give Roxanne Gibbs an award - she does so much and has been so sick. I found out recently that she had lung cancer (awhile ago I guess) and that is what really lead to the bad asthma. I'm not sure if 1 lung was removed or just partially removed??

Hard to say what the most significant thing to happen in Vegas fandom was during 2005. Certainly a lot of fans moved (or are moving) out of the area, including Woody, the Kunkels, even Andrews (or is he still here??). But Woody's departure probably is quite significant. But maybe VSFA's coming forth as an important group sponsoring the Socials, the 1-day-con, movie outings, etc. as a whole is more significant. Woody started it, but it has blossomed even without him.

Outstanding event - also there was the Art panel Sunday Social. I'd have to say the Las Vegas 1 Day con was probably the most outstanding though by far. Really a great effort on Woody's part and showed that you could really do a con without a lot of expense and have it be a very entertaining and educational and interesting event.

Outstanding new Vegas fan/Outstanding Addition to Vegas Fandom - there have been several (or a half-dozen) - including Merric and Lubov. When did Teresa show up (in 2004??) and I think David Gordon actually might have appeared more in 2004 than 05. I'm a bit confused by these 2 categories - aren't they the same? I'm not sure it is fair to pick one person out of a half-dozen or so. I really don't think I could vote on one. James Willey did an outstanding job

with the Halloween party, Mindy is great, Teresa is unbelievable, Merric and Lubov are terrific, David is interesting, etc. etc.

Still, while it is nice to praise people and all that, I really don't know if the egoboost of an actual award is necessary.

I really enjoyed the Loscon reports by Chris Garcia and James Taylor. Vegas had quite a good sized group attending. James' report really made me feel like I'd been at the con with him - thanks James.

Arnie: I appreciate the suggestion, though I don't plan to follow it. After all, the issue number is mentioned both in the name of the file and in the colophon on page two. I think most fans are able to differentiate one issue from another, even though they do occur at great intervals.

The purpose of The Vegas Fandom Awards is not to give someone a certificate or bowling trophy. It's just a way of noticing and honoring achievement during the year. I would say that both Teresa Cochran and David Gordon are eligible for "Outstanding Addition to Vegas Fandom" and that James Willey is a reasonable candidate for "Outstanding New Fan." And I'd say that Roxanne is an exemplary choice for "Outstanding Las Vegas Fan" even if she was the picture of perfect health.

WAHF: Michael Bernstein, David Gordon, Gilda Cabral, Peter Sullivan

Sweet Little Sixteen!

Time constraints and a little computer trouble spell the end of this issue, even though you may've started to get used to bigger issues. I don't want to fall behind, so it's best to cut it here. I'm already working on the next VFW, so time should be less of a factor. See you next week.

— Arnie Katz

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... and a ton of news.