

VEGAS FANDOM WEEKLY

Vegas Fan Events This Week

**Happy
New
Year!**

Las Vegas Fandom New Year's Eve Open House To Include the Return of the Vegas Oneshot!

Saturday night will see the 15th renewal of a local fan tradition, the Las Vegas New Year's Eve Open House. As always, we invite all Vegas fans to stop by for a while or for the evening. There'll be good, chatter and maybe a glass of champagne.

The address is 909 Eugene Cernan Street. Our phone number is: 648-5677.

You can show up any time after 7:30. Gifts of food and drink are not necessary, but they will be gratefully accepted and consumed. The living room, kitchen and dining room will be a "no-smoking," but there are indoor (and outdoor) places for those who want to smoke.

We thought this might be a good time to reintroduce another Las Vegas fan tradition – the one-

shot fanzine. Vegas fans produced 60 monthly issues of *The Vegas All-Stars* in conjunction with the monthly Socials held during the early 1990's. They were fun and easy to do, which explains why a lot of locals made their first appearance in a fanzine in *The Vegas All-Stars*.

For those who aren't familiar with the idea: A one-shot fanzine is produced in a single session. If you want to give it a try, the computer in the dining room will be bet up with a Word document. Sit down, read what has been written so far and then add whatever you want to it. You can either write it off the top of your head or you can prepare something in advance and just cut and paste it into the page.

The general theme is New Year's. You could write about your experiences in Fandom is the year just ending, something you are hoping for in the coming year or perhaps a memory of a New Year in your own past. The only real "don'ts" is that it'll end up better if you don't thank the hosts or wish people a "Happy New

Year." You can thank the hosts personally if you so desire and the fanzine as a whole will say "Happy New Year" to everyone who receives it.

You don't have to participate, but might be fun to try. It's just something you can do, not something you *must* do. After the results are thorough proofread and otherwise corrected, it'll become an electronic fanzine that will be available at the local club websites, by direct delivery to my mailing list and posted on efanazines.com.

(If you are an artist who'd like to draw something, it would be greatly appreci-



Inside Story Happy Fanmass!

The next time something in Fandom pisses me off and I maybe even wonder if it is all worth it, I'm going to stop and think back to Christmas (or the first day of Chanukah, if you want to think of it that way). I may still lash out with flaming Insurgent rhetoric, but in my heart I will know that it is only one blemish on a fair face.

This figured to be a pretty low-key holiday at the Launch Pad. Hellacious medical expenses, Joyce's ill-health and weak finances had Joyce and I pretty much expecting a small and quiet weekend. We weren't hurting or anything, but circumstances kept the tree and ornaments in their boxes, eliminated the need for a tree trim party (as we have held for several years now) and we planned to forget about presents. I think that, in a way, Joyce's return to a semblance of health was enough of a gift for both of us.

Enter Fandom.

Cards came via email and surface mail in great profusion, from many friends include Jack & Ruth Speer, David Burton, David Gordon and 'way too many others to list, Then Su Williams brought us a bag of presents as well as gifts from those fine Flippin fan folks — thank you so much Formans and Wilsons — and *then* Snata Clais left us a miniature tree and many delectable goodies at our front door on Christmas Eve. (Thank you, Michael Bernstein, James Taylor and Roxanne Gibbs, for the wonderful, thoughtful, generous things you did.)

Then, on Christmas Day, James Taylor, Alan & DeDee White, and Bill & Laurie Kunkel for an afternoon dinner that made the day seem a whole lot more festive.

And when the weekend ended, Joyce and I sat in the living room and I could see she was happy and content with the holidays.

"Thank you, Fandom," I say again. "You came through in fine style."

— Arnie

ated._

Joyce and I are looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Launch Pad on New Year's Eve.

(Reminder for Vegrants: As in past years, the Open House replaces the "first Saturday" Vegrants

meeting.)

Joyce Set for Eye Surgery!

A Friday (12/30) appointment with the ophthalmologist went well and Joyce is now scheduled for

Continued page 13

Vegas Fandom Weekly #59, Volume 2 Number 5, December 29, 2005, is written and produced by Arnie Katz (909 Eugene Cernan St., Las Vegas, NV 89145; Email: crossfire4@cox.net; phone: 702-648-5677).

Special Thanks to Roxanne Gibbs (many things), Bill Burns (posting), Mindy Hutchings (posting), David Gordon (Futurists liaison), Alan White (arty fella) and Joyce Katz (proofreading).

Reporters this issue: Roxanne Gibbs, Michael Bernstein, Teresa Cochran, James Taylor, David Gordon, Bill Kunkel, Ruth Davidson and Joyce Katz

Art/Photo Credits: Bill Kunkel (12. 17), Ray Melson (4). all else by Rotsler.

Columnists This Issue: Shelby Vick, Dick Lupoff, John DeChancie, Bill Kunkel.

VFW is free by request — and you may get it anyway. It can be downloaded at the SNAFFU site and at efan-zines.com. No excessive prolific faneds were seriously 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 Crystal Ball Katzenjammer

In between sieges of book editing, I spent a lot of time this week wondering what I ought to do to mark the final 2005 issue of *Vegas Fandom Weekly*. I wanted to do something appropriate, something befitting the season.

I tried to draw on my pro experience and mentally inventoried the seasonal articles I've written for 35 year in the business press, video and computer gaming, the collecting field and pro wrestling.

That gave me a lot of ideas and even I was surprised at how many sounded ideal for my purpose. I won't tell you about all of them now, because I will undoubtedly tell you about them one at a time in the not-so-distant future, but you can take my word that it was a rich haul.

I contemplated my options and when I thought I'd pondered them long enough without reaching a conclusion, I did what I often do in such situations; I consulted The High Priestess.

"What do you think about an article of fan predictions as my end-of-year 'Katzenjammer' column?" When she looked at me benignly, I let out the breath I'd held since I'd asked Her the question.

Fortified with what amounted to Fandom's equivalent of a Papal Blessing, I plunged enthusiastically into the work. I focused the full power of my mental faculties, a potency rivaled only by my sexual virility, on what I now thought of as The Great Work.

In other words, I blew my nose to stall for time and then said to Joyce, "So, what kind of predictions would *you* make?" The publisher of a weekly fanzine

must learn to get others to help with the heavy lifting or risk Nydahl's Disease, a sort of digital double hernia.

Her brows knit in occult concentration, as Joyce sought the infinite for an answer. Suddenly, her expression returned to its normal, beatific state. "Somewhere in an important place, something will happen to someone some time in the future," she intoned. The Oracle had spoken. Joyce fell back on the couch, overcome by her mighty effort.

"No, no, no," I protested. "I mean a *real* prediction."

"There are no real predictions," she informed me.

"No one can predict the future."

"I don't mean with psychic powers," I replied. "That would be ridiculous. Besides, I have to hoard my psychic powers to keep Las Vegas free of snow!"

"And you've done a good job," she acknowledged, "though you let down last year, and I don't want to see it happen again."

"How often has it snowed since we moved here?" I asked rhetorically. "It has snowed three times in 16 years! That's a batting average of over.800!" I would've called myself the Ted Williams of Psychic snow fighting, but I didn't think she'd recognize the Splendid Splinter's name.. "But I still need predictions," I persisted.

"You could predict that a fan will die in 2006," she answered, "If the fan dies, you're a seer. And if the fan doesn't die, everyone will be so happy that no one will say anything."

Her logic was irredutable, but as I told her, I don't really want to run a Death Pool on my friends.

"Then why don't you do something like predict the TAFF winner?" she tried again.

I thought about it and realized that to do so would seem more like meddling than prognostication.

"What does that tell you?" Joyce asked.

"That I shouldn't try to do fannish predictions for the coming year."

She nodded approvingly. I knew I would get no more help on forecasting the future from her.

Since I am on my own, thrown upon my own resources as it were, let me offer one blockbuster prediction before the bottom of the page puts a period to this prognosticatory piece.

Somewhere in an important place, something will happen to someone some time in the future.

— Arnie



Now & Again An Insight

It's raining.

It's Christmas Eve.

I can't sleep.

I can't sleep, so I'm writing this column.

Now, if I was still a kid, I could understand my wakefulness; when I was a kid, I never wanted to go to sleep on Christmas Eve – I was too excited about the impending visit from St Nick! But I am definitely no longer a kid, and we've already opened a lot of the Christmas gifts. So...why

can't I sleep? What's the excitement that's keeping me awake? (It isn't the rain; I like to sleep to the sounds of rain.)

Well, I do have something to be excited about: Today the mail brought me a CD from Ned Brooks; it contains a scan of ODD #14! I've already spent a lot of time on that, getting it ready to turn into a PDF that I can send fanac and efanazines and anyone who requests their own copy. Also, today I got in a column from Arnie Katz to go into confuSon #3. LOTS of things to be excited about.

So why am I pestering you with all this instead of working on confuSon 3 and ODD 14?

I guess I'm sadistic.

Besides, trying to write a column might get me sleepy,,, ME, not YOU! Don't go to sleep on me now!

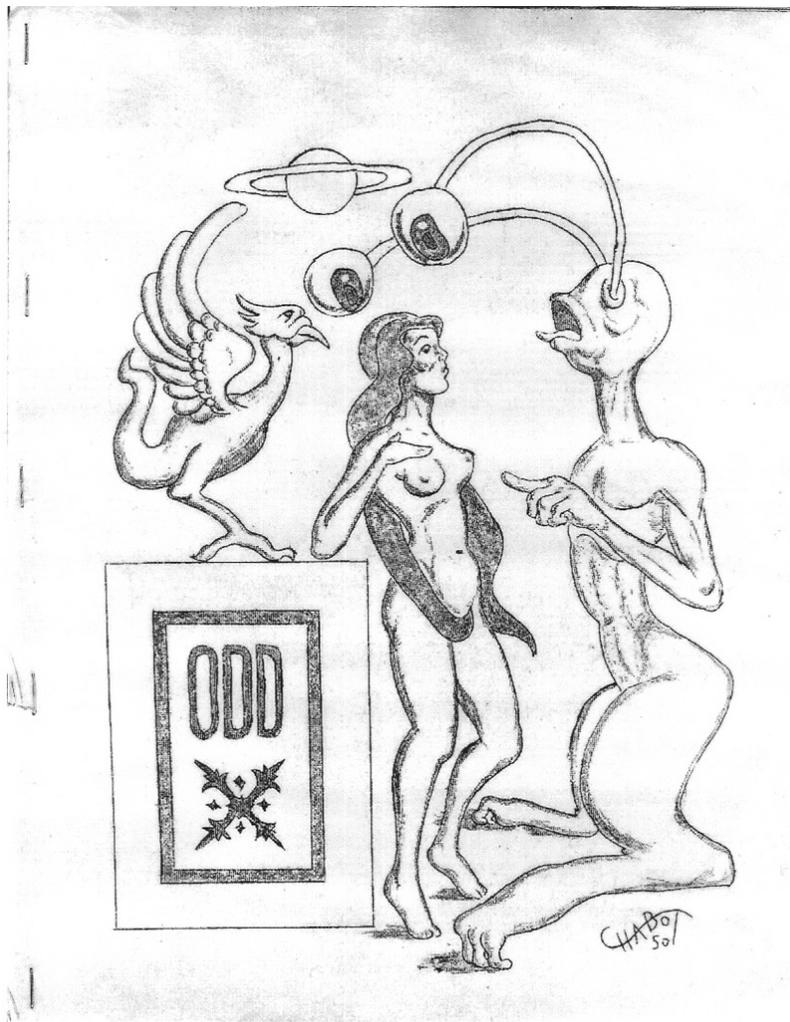
Well, I've got to get a column together, for one thing. I could be watching the World Poker Tour championship match (I watch a lot of those, as well as playing no-money poker online, but that wouldn't accomplish anything towards this column!

I find it interesting, the way confuSon has become a magnet for historical fanzines. I've done (with the help of Ned Brooks) ODD #9, already. Then I found a copy of Scientifantasy #4 and scanned it, made a PDF for fanac and efanazines and friends. Then Ned says he finds he has Scientifantasy #3, scans it, and sends it to me. I PDFed it and distributed it. Now Ned supplies

...Survival of the Fittest!



From Comics



me with ODD #14, and it will be distributed, as well. And Robert Silverberg sent me some copies of my old *confusion*, so I'll hafta do them, as well.

Anybody wanta scan some old fanzines and sent them to me?

Let me describe what I do. When I pull up a page in Adobe *Photoshop Elements*. I first use the magnifying glass to see if it's legible (after, of course, using the Auto Enhance command.)

If it's okay, I reduce the size to make the PDF easier to load, then save it to the new folder I have created – on my desktop. (Which reminds me; my desktop would drive many of you crazy! I have it cluttered with all kindsa things – folders for different issues of *confuSon* and *Planetary Stories*, for one, plus one or two issues of *VFW* and programs I use a lot: Adobe Acrobat, Adobe Reader, Photoshop, etc. It's really cluttered! Occasionally I move things into my Unused Desktop Shortcuts folder, but the desktop screen is, usually, at least

half full of icons! I find it much easier to locate things that way.)

Anyway, sometimes I find a page with incomplete letters – 'a', 'b', and so on; *those* kinds of letters, I mean, not letters of comment. Then I use the magnifying glass, set the Photoshop pencil on the smallest size dots, then try to complete the letter. Also, there's what I call the Spot Remover; the icon is a hand with a pointing finger. I can set this tool to large size to remove BIG messes, but not for letters; there, I use the smallest and wipe away dots and clear up letters. So far in this issue of *ODD* there were two good examples of my 'improvements' – two Ray Nelson cartoons with almost-illegible captions. I snipped out the caption, enlarged it, then used the pencil to improve it. One was a hand-lettered caption, which isn't that much of a challenge. After doctoring it, I patched it back into the cartoon, keeping the larger size.

One had a typed caption which contained letters that were almost missing. Again, I enlarged it and starting using the pencil. That isn't too difficult on straight, horizontal or vertical lines – but slanted lines or curves. . .whew! There, I would just place single dots where I thought they would do the most good. In one place, the letter Y was totally missing! THAT was fun. But, when finished, I don't think my 'doctoring' is TOO noticeable. Unless you enlarge it. . . . But, at least, it's legible!

(If any completist out there wants an unbesmirched original, just let me know!)

You ask, 'Doesn't that take a lot of time?' To which I respond, 'Why, sure! But I enjoy that kind of nitpicking detail. That's why I'm doing it! You should see what I've done to some old photos.'

(I did, finally, get to sleep – after one ayem!)

— Shelby Vick

Them Daze Timebinders.com

Yes, it's true, I've been writing quite a lot about my younger days. Columns for *VFW* and a couple of invited pieces for Earl Kemp's ezine, *eI*, and a series of short stories I've been writing lately for various markets. These stories feature a private eye named Nick Train, whom I invented when I was a kid at summer camp in the mid-1940's.

I only wrote one Nick Train story back then, and it disappeared decades ago into the archives of the camp I attended. Said institution has long since disappeared from the face of this planet,



Robert Lichtman (left) and long-time fan (and *Crawdaddy* founder) Paul Williams.

and the disposition of its records is a mystery to me.

In later years a few of my friends and professional associates learned of Nick Train and suggested that it would be a hoot to revive him. Gordon Van Gelder, now editor/publisher of *F&SF*, but previously editor of my mystery novels at St. Martin's Press, was one of them. I finally yielded and wrote a Nick Train story, "The Laddie in the Lake," for Crippen & Landru.

They're bringing out a collection of my mysteries in 2006. The story takes place in August, 1946, just about the time

I first wrote about Nick.

Then the Seattle Mystery Bookstore announced that they were going to publish a book of material related to New Orleans and donate the proceeds to Hurricane Katrina relief. I wrote a second Nick Train story, "What It Means," for that book. The story takes place in March, 1946.

And then British anthologist Mike Ashley asked me for a new locked-room mystery for a book he's compiling, and I wrote a Nick Train story called "Benning's School for Boys." This one takes place in December, 1942.

For some reason, this series keeps receding farther and farther into the past. I have a couple more stories in mind, one set in 1938 (when Nick was a rookie cop on the NYPD) and another set in 1936 (when he was a high school senior and amateur boxer)

Thank heaven for Art Widner, Shelby Vick, and Earl Kemp. At least there are a few guys around who are older than I am.

If anybody knows who first popularized the idea that fans were timebinders, it's probably that Most Excellent Person, Robert Lichtman. But I guess what I'm doing is not just navel-gazing (and if it were, there are ever so many navels more gaze-worthy than mine, believe me), it's some kind of historical preservation. I wonder if there's a website called Timebinders.com – if



This patriotic gentleman, like Shelby, Earl Kemp and Art, is older than the noted author and *VFW* columnist, Richard A. Lupoff.

there isn't, there should be.

I've been writing about my Army days in Indiana (and elsewhere), and if this is starting to get boring, just say the word, children, and I'll go off to sit with my fellow geezers and complain about the younger generation. (They ain't no good.)

I also mentioned that I was the only Jew in my Basic Officers class. Another member of the Chosen People turned up a few months later and we wound up assigned to the same department, sharing space in the same office. We became pals. I'll call this other fellow Leonard Kessler. He was married and lived in a tiny facility off-base with his wife and their dog.

As things worked out, Len's wife, Charlotte, was out of town visiting her family and he invited me over to hang out. He had a book of cocktail recipes and we decided that we would study the art of mixology by whipping up a batch of one kind of cocktails each night and drinking them down. We would continue this experiment until Len's wife got back. We decided to toss the recipe book in the air that first night and make whatever concoction it opened to.

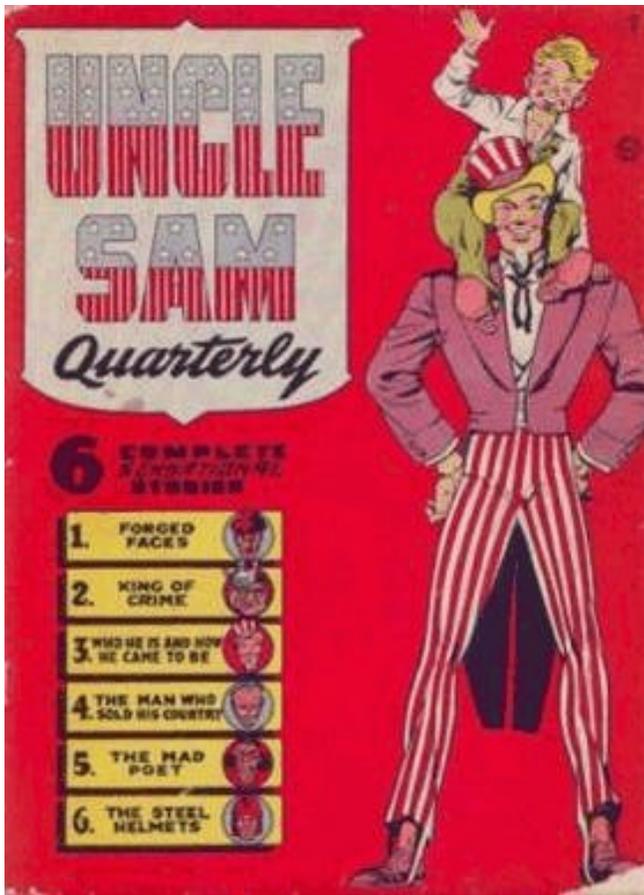
The book opened to a drink called a Manhattan. I don't remember the formula and I'm not going to look it up right now, although I think it in-



volved bourbon, vermouth, and maraschino cherries. Len and I made a shaker full of Manhattans and drank them up. We got totally stinko. I don't know how I made my way from his place back to my quarters, but somehow I must have, because the next morning I made it to the office, haggard and hung-over but freshly shaved and wearing a fresh, clean uniform. Len made it, too.

Thank God Charlotte got back that day and Len and I called off our experiment.

He had been a psych major at San Jose State



The subtle influence of comic books such as this may have helped pave the way for this and other recent Lupoff columns, not to mention *All in Color for a Dime*.

University before donning his uniform. He'd worked summers as an orderly at Agnews State Hospital in California, and used to tell spellbinding stories about the patients there and his experiences with them. After leaving the Army he got his Ph.D. and the last I knew he was teaching clinical psychology at Duke University.

One day I made the mistake of asking Len how successful the members of his profession were at curing insane people. Good gosh, you'd think I had insulted the Torah! Words like "sane," "insane," "crazy," and "cure" were anathema. I rephrased my question, asked him something about helping mentally ill people to get well. He seemed less upset, then, but still wouldn't buy my vocabulary. We finally settled on something like this

Some people are so severely mentally disarranged that they cannot function in open society and need to be hospitalized. Of these people, some improve sufficiently to leave the institution and

return to general society. Other do not, and remain there for the rest of their lives.

Okay, pal, what are the numbers?

Well, Len told me, if you took all the incoming patients at the hospital you could group them by modality of treatment: group therapy, individual counseling, electro-shock or chemical shock treatment (1950's!), psychosurgery (1950's!!). Of all the patients treated in any matter, 25% were eventually able to leave the institution and return to open society.

Then there were the patients who received only custodial care. Keep 'em warm, clean, nourished and housed. Don't let them hurt themselves or others. Otherwise, leave 'em alone. Of these patients, some also improved and were able to leave the institution and return to open society. How many? Oh, 25%

People came and went all the time, but there were generally three or four lieutenants in our office, a couple of captains, and a few civilian employees. There were even a few regular soldiers. One fellow who worked in our office had recently completed a doctorate at Columbia. There he was, a buck private in Uncle Sam's Army. At least he'd managed to get assigned to a job in a more-or-less academic environment. I thought it was a shame, but what the heck, I'd quite ruthlessly gamed the system and wangled a cushy life for myself. He hadn't.

I mentioned that I was the only Jew in my basic officers' class, and was the only Jew in my department until Len Kessler came along. Nobody made much of this. Well, except for a certain captain, the rotten son-of-a-bitch, but he was one of a kind, in my Army experience. Maybe God watches over fools like me.

One day I was having lunch at the Officers' Club with my boss and a couple of colleagues when a captain left another table and approached ours. He leaned over and asked if I'd stand up, take a little walk with him.

Hey, lieutenants don't say no to captains.

In a moment we were standing out of earshot of both his tablemates and mine. I looked at his branch insignia; he was in the Army Finance Corps, not the Adjutant General's Corps – my branch – which may be why I didn't recognize him.

In little more than a whisper he said, "I've heard that you're Jewish."

"Yes."

"Well, I want you to know that I admire your courage. I'm Jewish too, but they don't know. And I trust you won't say anything."

I was flabbergasted. "Okay," I said.

He went back to his table.

I went back to my table.

Anti-Semitism in the Army? That was new to me. My brother, Jerry, was an officer in the Navy at the same time. I'd heard that the Navy had a long-standing tradition of racism and Anti-Semitism, but Jerry never reported any problems to me. It was all very strange.

But as for racism, ah, that was an interesting topic. I mentioned my classmate and friend Ray Murphy. He was a tall, good-looking black man who had been a star athlete in college. We used to play pool, talk about books, and in general act like Army buddies. That was when we were on the post.

When we went into Indianapolis together, we drew a few stares. This was the era when Oscar Robertson was one of the nation's top college athletes, and Ray Murphy bore a remarkable resemblance to Robertson. On occasion we would stop into an ice cream parlor and if there was a black waitress on duty, we got amazing service. We also hit a local jazz club now and then, and became friends with a superb saxophonist named Booker Hollis. I've tried for years to find any recording of his or any reference to him in jazz literature, all in vain.

The peacetime Army is marked by a lot of time to kill, and I spent a lot of my evenings in the post bowling alleys, which were over-aged and poorly maintained. Once in a while a few of us would head off-post and take our business to a commercial bowling

alley. These were more expensive and less convenient than the ones on the post, but they were better maintained.

One night a threesome of us young looeys went looking for an off-post bowling alley. It was Carlos Peay, Jim Gilreath, and me. At the first one we found the manager told us he was sorry, they were all booked up. We went to another alley and the manager told us the same thing. By the third or fourth attempt, I was feeling pretty frustrated. Especially since I'd seen vacant lanes at each stop and the establishment we were in was more than half empty.

I pointed out that there were plenty of unused lanes.

The manager pulled me aside. In a low voice he told me, "Look, *you* can bowl here but your friends can't."

Talk about innocent! Yes, Carlos and Jim were both black. We'd bowled together on the post and nobody so much as blinked. But in urban Indianapolis, things were different.

I will confess that it took a minute for the meaning of the manager's statement to sink in. Then I went ballistic. These were tense times in the world, remember. I could feel myself getting red in the face. "My friends and I are in the Army together. We wear the same uniform and we put

our lives on the line to protect you. If the balloon goes up, enemy bullets won't stop and ask what color our skin is. And you're saying that - "

At this point I felt a strong hand on each of my arms. I turned around and saw Carlos at one elbow, Jim at the other. They both shook their heads. "Come on," one of them said, "it isn't worth it. Let's get out of here."

We headed back to the post and went bowling on Uncle Sam's old, battered, integrated lanes.

Them wuz sum daze.

— Richard Lupoff



High Risk My Winter Vacation

Greater Pittsburgh International is a cold, lonely place late at night. My Southwest flight from Vegas got in about 10:30 PM Eastern. The huge airport was practically empty, shops shuttered, slidewalks unmoving, concourses almost completely deserted and swept with cold drafts. There's a big shopping mall at the juncture of the X-shaped "Airside" terminal. It was mostly closed down for the night. The cold outdoors seemed to permeate the place. When they were planning the new airport, they thought it would be a 24-hour concern. These concessions, this plethora of shops and restaurants and bars and food courts, were supposed to stay open all night. At least I think that was the original plan. The realities of business hadn't shaped up to the planners expectations. The airline whose hub this was had long since gone belly up. Sic semper urban planning. Or in this case suburban.

My son Gino was supposed to pick me up. He'd give me a call to let me know. But there's a hitch. I have left my cell in Nevada. I am incommunicado in Pittsburgh. But coin-operated pay phones still exist. And I still have my old-fashioned spiral notebook phone directory, which I consult for my brother Dave's number. I dig in my pocket for fifty cents in coin. Gone are the days when you could drop a dime. I have only dimes and nickels, no quarters--I really hadn't planned on making any pay phone calls -- and depositing all this loose change takes so much time -- my fingers are already stiff and cold -- that the dial tone stops before I get the last coin in the slot, and a voice comes on and tells me to hang up and try again. But if you'd only give me enough time to -- grrrrr! I try again. Same thing happens. Try again. Same. Try once more, trying to be quicker, and this time Dave's num-



ber is busy. I slam the phone down. Once more I reload the coins as nimbly as I can and dial my mother's number. She answers. I ask her to call Dave and ask him to pick me up. She will. Call back in a few minutes to confirm.

When I call back it's all straightened out. Gino can't pick me up because he has a final this very evening and doesn't have his car at school. I wonder why he's taking finals in the evening. He's not going to night school. No matter. Dave will be there in a few minutes. I drag my luggage out to the Arriving Flights passenger pickup. It is freezing cold. I stand there for five minutes until I realize that if I con-

tinue this madness, I will get very cold and be shivering before I know it. I am forgetting where I am. This is the part of the country, the larger part by far, where the environment is not suited for human habitation. It is like living on the Moon or Mars. Humans have to huddle inside enclosed artificial biospheres in order to survive. If left unprotected, they die in a matter of hours. It's not like it is in California or Nevada, where the temperature is always temperate, and the weather and the climate have some rough equivalency. Not so here, where the weather right outside your door can begin to kill you in a matter of a few minutes.

I drag my bags back inside and find huge picture windows near the luggage carrousel. Anyone driving by can see right into the terminal. I'll see Dave and wave, and I can stand here right by the comfy radiator. Perfect. But what if he doesn't see me? I wait and wait. I hate waiting to be picked up. There's nothing you can do. You have to pay attention and keep on the lookout. You can't read. You don't know exactly when the person will arrive. You have to stand and look. And what if you're not really sure what kind of car the picker-upper is driving? I thought I knew what Dave drives,

but now I'm not so sure. It's been a while since I've seen him. I have a memory of a red Mustang, mid-nineties. That can't be right. That was ten years ago.

Dave was driving a black Mustang of 2001 vintage. He saw me standing at the window before I saw him. He waved, and I strode out of the terminal and into the stone cold of the winter night. Since my arrival I've been holed up in the house, unwilling to go out. It's *cold* out there. I mean Antarctic cold. Very cold. And there's this white stuff all over the ground. It's called *ice*, and if you walk on it, you slip and slide. Most curious. They don't make this stuff where I live except for use in cocktail glasses. Oh, you can see it, up on the highest peaks above the desert. It's there, all right, capping a 6000-foot crag, but here it's on the *street* and cars run over it a smash it down into dirty, gray-brown slush that slops into your shoes and gets your socks wet.

So I'm staying inside. Well, I did go over my brother Paul's for dinner Sunday, after I had gone to see him play tympani in a performance of Handel's *Messiah*. The concert hall was Shadyside Presbyterian Church, a beautiful old stone building out in the Victorian mansion area of the city. Its plush padded pews have cushioned the bottoms of Mellons, Carnegies, and other Pittsburgh pillars over the decades. The performance was splendid, and I enjoyed it, but I also hated the walk to and from the car, and the hand-numbing wait for the car's heater to kick in (it takes forever) and walking over frozen glazed sidewalks. I loathed all of that.

Otherwise, I'm having a wonderful time. Wish you were here. I brought my laptop, and I intend to get some writing done. I have a short story to finish for an an-

thology, and I'd like to at least get started on a new book. So I do not lack for something to do. I left all donkey work behind, intending this to be a writing vacation. But there was a problem. My bedroom was like an ice box, and that is the only place in the house to write. Then I remembered seeing a space heater around here somewhere. Found it in a closet. Turned it on, and it works. The bedroom is now toast-warm and bug-rug-snug.

The one warm spot in all this is the chance to see some old friends. I'll be seeing Larry Connolly, Tom Monteleone, and David Bischoff at the Seton Hill Writers' Residency, but that doesn't happen until January. I may bus to Baltimore to visit Tom and family before then, however. Then there is the local fan group, PAR-SEC, but they've already had their meeting for the month (a Xmas party, too, darn it). And there is Phil Klass, a.k.a. William Tenn, and family. Phil is still as lively as ever at the age of 85 and he told me with some enthusiasm that he'd be GoH at Loscon next year. As if I didn't know. He's looking forward to it.

And Bob Leman, veteran fan (gafiated since the late 1960s) and sometime professional writer, whose collection of short stories *Feesters in the Lake* is already an underground classic in the horror field. Wait, there's more. Living just outside the city is John Alfred Taylor, whose stories in Asimov's recently have gained him a growing reputation.

Not to mention my fan friends and neo-pros. Hey, it's pretty warm here after all, now that you mention it. Let me bask in all this light and warmth. Pass me that sun-blocker.

-

— John DeChancie



Potshots AK: Artist of Persuasion

"Pretty smart on my part," you must be thinking, Mr. Katz. "This was even easier than taking one of his cartoons and blowing it up onto a virtual STAGE, an amphitheater so grand that he was helpless abandon it!"

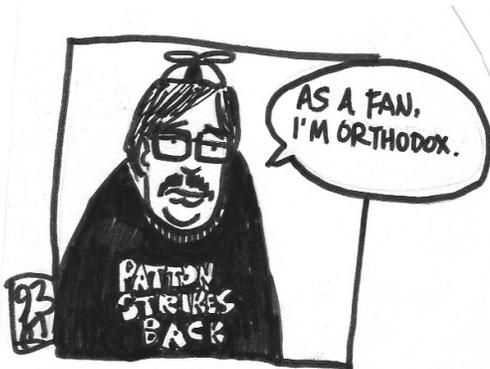
I remember the first time Potshot's Cartoon Theater arrived as if it were the day before yesterday. Okay, maybe two days before. Anyway, I found myself looking at one of my generally-stuck-in-the-corner cartoons thrown up on a 70mm screen where it seemed horribly overblown and not-funny-enough. Suddenly I'm the centerpiece interior illo in the whole mishegas -- how can I fail to continue contributing to what is now an established feature of *VFW*? I envision Arnie's gloating over this success to be followed by a burst of evil laughter worthy of Sideshow Bob.

And it worked. Oh, how it worked. The calls come earlier and more often now. "Think you'll be able to do something for this issue?" he asks, in a voice that suggests butter would not melt in his mouth. "I think I have some scraps around here somewhere that you probably meant to throw away -- or I could just blow up your signature to fill the entire space," he suggests, as if this -- while cool -- would not be at all perceived as, oh, I don't know, appropriate?

The guilt worked, forcing me to actually attempt to draw FUNNY cartoons; whereas I was previously satisfied with having to draw stuff that made people smirk, now I was expected to actually make them laugh. I resist this impulse to what degree I do not know. This part of my brain is mysteriously missing.

Of course, Arnie WAS trained by a Jewish Mother

But now, you see, the virus spreads. By cleverly reshaping a few stray comments intended as a throw-away loc, I have "become" a columnist. Embedded in the virtual world of *VFW*, trapped like all those other desperate souls, once-proud men like Dick Lupoff who only worked for money. Dick merely wrote a letter or two and now is shambling endlessly through *VFW*, spilling his guts (in a good way) all over the magazine's pages on a regular basis.



Tell me, Arnie, did you seduce him as you did me? Or did you take an alternate approach by which to enfold him within your fannish tentacles? Here was a *VFW*, a 5-page newsletter on the Vegas scene that now morphs endlessly, absorbing new "columnists" much as *The Blob* engulfed that movie theater in both versions.

Now allow me to segue along the 50s horror film strand and I think you'll see where I'm going with this. If the Pod People (no, not the iPod people, though they sometimes frighten me more) had brought you on board to help enlist the citizens of Santa Mira during their 50s' invasion, Kevin McCarthy never would have MADE it to the highway to disrupt traffic with his typically human, emotional tirade. Arnie would have some ensnared his character, Dr. Miles J. Bennell and had the big mouth asleep, transformed or truncated with guilt before his girlfriend ever hit the nod.

As it was, it took Kang, Kodos and me two more films before we successfully absorbed your species. And yet, I stand here powerless, like a dysfunctional Gort, in the thrall of his fannish wiles. Barata Niktu, indeed.

Well, looks like I just wrote ANOTHER "column." This buries me, you understand. I shall never be free now.

For ghod's sake, watch the skies; keep watching the skies!

Arnie Katz is out there... waiting... waiting...

--Bill Kunkel

(whose hilarious book -- go ahead, Google it, I dares ya -- *Confessions of The Game Doctor* is available from RolentaPress.com)

Continued from p 2

cataract surgery on January 19. After giving her a battery of tests, Dr. Westfield cleared her for surgery with a date several weeks earlier than the preliminary pessimistic date (which would have been some time in February).

The procedure will be done at Southwest Medical Center and will be fairly brief. She'll probably use Med-Ride to go to and from surgery unless a volunteer chauffeur materializes.

Big Weekend '06 (Mark One) Hits In Just Two Weeks!

Just about the time you've recovered from the New Year's Eve Open House 00 it'll take the full two weeks if you do it right — it'll be time for Big Weekend '06 (Mark One). A happy accident of the calendar, plus some terrific organizational work by David Gordon and Roxanne Gibbs has clustered three major events on Friday (1/13), Saturday (1/14) and Sunday (1/15).

Here's what's scheduled for the Big Weekend:

LV Futurists/SNAFFU Joint Meeting (1/13)

Wil McCarthy, scientist and science fiction writer, will address an open meeting that unites SNAFFU and the Las Vegas Futurists in a single event for the very first time.

McCarthy, who has not previously appeared at a Vegas fan-sponsored event, will discuss the science that serves as the foundation for such science fiction novels as *The Collapsium* and *Hacking Matter*. The author will also answer questions after his speech and sign books bought at the store during the event.

The meeting will be held at Borders bookstore (2190 North Rainbow Blvd) on Friday, January 13 at 5:30 PM.

VFW First Anniversary Celebration

SNAFFU, and Yours Editorially, invites Las Vegas fans (and everyone coming to town for the weekend's other events) to a pizza party to celebrate completion of *Vegas Fandom Weekly*'s first year of publication. Be-fitting the nature of this fanzine, you can expect the festivities to be long on pepperoni and short on stuffy speeches.

Hosts Roxanne Gibbs and Michael Bernstein invite fans to gather at Metro Pizza at the corner of Decatur & Flamingo (4001 South Decatur Blvd.) at 2:00 PM for fun and gourmandizing.

3. VSFA Sunday Social

A great way to finish off a big fannish weekend's a

convivial afternoon lunch with a lively cross-section of Vegas Fandom under the sponsorship of VSFA. By happy coincidence, that's exactly what's on the menu at the first VSFA Sunday Social of the New Year.

As usual, it'll be held at the Blue Ox. The staff is helpful, the food is tasty and economical and the company is always pleasant.

Heard Around Vegas Fandom (and Beyond) ...

Shelby Vick continues to produce some very tasty goodies. He has not only caused a digital reprint of *Odd #9* to come into being, but he has gone on to make *Odd #14* available. The latter is the first revival issue, produced by Ray & Joyce Fisher in the mid-1960's. It has a lot of excellent material, including little-seen reprints by Charles Burbee, Ray Nelson and Joe Kennedy...

Mark Plummer & Claire Brialey, who co-edit the UK's top fanzine *Banana Wings*, have published *Can't Get Off the Island*, a marvelous anthology of the fan-writing of Greg Pickersgill. I'll print full info on how to acquire this "must have" fanthology in the next issue...

Ayesha Ashley still hasn't recovered from the seemingly minor, but tenacious flu-like illness that has had her in its grip. She's hoping to be there on 1/14.....

Ruth Davidson reports that, no thanks to Comcast, she is now re-connected to the Internet. Her email address is: rcmalgroups@gmail.com,

John DeChancie is still Back East. He expects to return to southern Nevada around January 10.

ChatBack: The VFW Letter Column

It's a holiday week, but VFW's loyal letterhacks may more than risen to the occasion. Let's give them the stage...

And what better way to start the last letters section of the year than with one of '05's brightest newcomers to fanzine fandom. I predict that, one day, he will be a prolific publisher...

Chris Garcia

I'll be reading SAPS in the next few hours. We did Christmas on the 23rd, since my Aunt Susie had to return to Oregon, so I've been addicted to the game *Animal Crossing* all morning. I was a damned fool to get one.

Thank the alphabet, I was the first name on the list of Outstanding non-Vegas Resident Fan! Still, I'd vote for Art. I mean, he's R. Twidner, for all gracious sakes! He was at the first Worldcon! I'm a popular visitor? I've only made it out there once! I was actually thinking of surprising y'all with a visit on New Years, but alas, I'm on Evelyn duty that night, so no dice. And ahem is as good a reason to vote for someone as any, Arnie. I think you're rigging the vote for Outstanding Vegas Fan!

What's beautiful about the web is that it's the arena that will bring us into the future and it's full of the items and stories of the past. It's wonderful, and the stuff that ShelVy has

found is only the tip of the iceberg. It's why I believe every fanzine, whether it's made for print or not, should be scanned and put on the net. In the future, people will become hooked on zines because they run across an article linked to on Google that points to a fanzine from somewhere in the distant past that they just can't stop reading. I've got an article on that that's cooling as we speak.\

I have spoken to Dick Lupoff once, I think. I believe I said, 'Excuse me' and he responded 'Oh, sorry' and let me by. Or at least that's what I think happened at Corflu this year. His stories are great and they keep me reading and reading.

I only wish I could make the Wil McCarthy event, but I'm lucky enough to get to hear Mr. San Jose Fandom Nanotech, Kevin Roche, talk at cons and once in a while I'll ask him about something I read while we're at BASFA.

Believe it or not, I think I have an idea of what that pin is and I don't think it has anything to do with fandom proper. You see, I'm fairly certain there was a series of filmstrips that had pins that were made with 'Truth - fiction' as a motto. I saw one that had 'History: Truth - Fiction' while I was at an antique store on Santa Monica Blvd. back a few years ago. It didn't look exactly the same, but it was close. I would have bought it, but it was 20 bucks and I just didn't have it. I can find out more once I'm back at work. And I still have trouble with Ackermanese.

Wow! That was an effective piece on Singaporean hangings. We in NorCal had an execution recently, and it brought some bitter protests and some bitter protests of those bitter protests. It always happens like that around here...

I work at a museum with an archive and I lived with two librarians for almost twenty years. I've heard some horror stories ('Hey, this first edition of Dracula is pretty old, I don't think we should hold onto it', 'Yeah, go ahead and sell it at the Friends Of bookstore for a buck!') Sounds like an interesting collection this Clarkson had...

You know, I disagree with Good ol' Lloyd on there being no more BNFs, but they are much different. There are folks who are known across many fandoms (costuming, anime, media, fanzine, etc, etc) and they continue to grow in numbers. It's the fragmentation that makes it harder to be a BNF, but really, there are names you can drop at almost any kind of SF-related con, from CostumeCon to Filk-A-Rama (names like Frank Wu, for instance) and you'll get a bit of recognition from the other half of the convo.

And with that, I sign off hav-

ing to start my research for an article for another Magazine about Why Monkeys are the New Zombies. I know...I can't figure it out either!

Arnie: I'm looking forward to seeing who gets the votes in that category, because I'm curious about which fans are making the greatest impression on the local fan community. Those who've visited obviously have an advantage, but some fans have made very big contributions to Vegas Fandom through the written word.

BNFdom is defined a bit differently these days. If the status – and let's remember that it is pretty much irrelevant to anything real – depended on being known by All Known Fandom, few actual fans would qualify. I think there are those whom Core Fandom recognizes as having earned some renown with their contributions to the Core Fandom.

The science Illustory Fandation may be only a distant memory, but he's still Dr. Gafia to me...

rich brown

I'm even falling behind on comments on VFW. I only belatedly noticed, in Robert Lichtman's letter in the 57th issue, the talk about fans who've become famous in the great mundane world, so I don't know if you've already mentioned Sidney Coleman and/or Rog Ebert. Sid, actually, is just Well Known in the much larger scientific world as a renowned and awarded Harvard educator and lecturer in quantum field theory; just Google on "Sidney Coleman" and



you can get the details (along with Alexei Panshin quoting him on Heinlein) on how highly he is regarded there. Sid gave us "37x" as a designation to use in place of "the Comma Fault" -- which occurs when you use a comma where a semi-colon is required -- for those of us who may be too sensitive to hear the name of the crime (which results in run-on sentences) actually spoken aloud, or if you wish to talk about it in Mixed Company.

Rog Ebert is probably better and more widely known in the mundane world than any other fan, given that he presents his movie reviews both in newspapers and on television -- although a few who've gone on to write sf and other stuff might not be all that far behind (Isaac Asimov, Harlan Ellison, e.g.).

Hmm. Shelby's musings on Tom Swiftys reminds me of one Robert Silverberg used in his long-running serial in Lee Hoffman's *Science-Fiction Five-Yearly* #2 (that was 1956): His hero, Floyd Scrilch, runs into space pirates and one of them runs his liver through with his trusty sword:

"You can't do that!" Floyd Scrilch grated hemoglobinically.

Which in turn reminds me of a similar bit of wordplay that was popular for a while in some fanzines at a slightly earlier time -- coming up with variants on the lyric "Say, it's only a paper moon/sailing over a cardboard sea." I came across it in some fanzines published earlier in the 1950s, before I became involved in fandom myself, and I was little saddened because I thought I came up with a pretty good one and of course it was too late for me to offer it anywhere. It involved a fictional visit paid to some U.S. metropolis by the Pope, and his disappointment that the people who belonged to the city's diocese expressed their disfavor with the church's position on birth control.

The language barrier and a lack of translators kept the Pope from expressing his feelings while he was there, but as his plane subsequently flew over the city on the way to the next place he would be visiting, he pulled up his robes and stuck his bare rear end out the window. It was so high up that most of the people below couldn't make out what it was, but there were a few of them who had binoculars and could see it all quite well, and when they were appealed to, to say what it was, they explained, "Oh, it's only a papal moon, sailing over the diocese."

I had an experience similar to the one Dick Lupoff outlines at around the same time he did. It was after the London Worldcon but before the Solacon and hence while I was still in high school and before I was in the Air Force; I'd only recently discovered fanzines, publishing my first two or three, joining SAPS and The Cult and getting on the FAPA waiting list. My parents weren't too happy with me for all the time I was spending on my strange new hobby, feeling I would be better off (i.e., more "normal") playing kick-the-can with my childhood friends.

As it happens, I was off playing kick-the-can with my childhood friends when one of my childhood friends who wasn't playing kick-the-can with us came to tell me that he'd just seen my parents and they'd told him to tell me to come home. So I went home and there were a couple of guys in suits and brown shoes there who identified themselves as

FBI men and, with my worried parents looking on and with very little in the way of preamble, began questioning me about this "organization" I belonged to called The Cult.

They told me they were investigating Dave Rike, who had applied for a security position (when I checked this out with Rike later, he told me he hadn't actually applied for any new job, much less one that might have involved a security check), and they'd discovered that he belonged to The Cult, and apparently already had at least one Cultzine or they wouldn't've had my address to contact me. I explained that it was an amateur press association that got its name from the fact that it had 13 publishing members. I wasn't a publishing member, but I was on the waiting list and received the publications. Like Dick Lupoff, I *also* had visions of being thrown in jail for being part of some kind of Commie Plot; I told them I knew Dave was some kind of socialist because he'd said as much, but explained I didn't know or care what kind of socialist he was, as I wasn't interested in politics. I also explained that everyone in The Cult was an sf and we discussed everything, including but not limited to politics, and if they wanted I'd show them the Cultzines I'd had letters in so they could verify that I wasn't expressing any political opinions whatsoever. In later years I would learn that a standard police interrogation technique was the good cop/bad cop routine, and come to realize that I'd been subjected to it in that interview. But it didn't really work, or at least not for very long. One of them behaved as if he would like nothing better than to drag me away from my parents, kicking and screaming, and bury me under a rock with a bunch of beetles and cockroaches, while the other told me he had been a fan himself -- and, no, not just a reader, he'd been in fandom, attended clubs, gone to conventions, received fanzines "back in the early '50s." I immediately felt better for hearing this, since I wouldn't have to try to explain what fandom was to him, and, though I had no intention of trapping him, I bumbled happily my envy of the fanzines he must have seen that I had only heard about, unthinkingly naming *Vampire* and *Spacewarp*, to which he immediately replied that he had "subscribed to them both, starting with the first issues." I knew *Spacewarp*'s *last* subscription issue was published in the early 50s, but that it started in the late 1940s -- and that *Vampire* had been published in the mid-40s, so I knew he was lying. Which was probably why, although I remained scared, I only reluctantly gave up to their hands a copy of the *Fantasy Amateur*, after having blurted out that Dave was also a member of FAPA and that the only time I'd met him had been when he and some other Berkeley fans came down to visit the FAPA OE, Charles Burbee. The one pretending to be a fan promised to bring it back (and it was later returned to my parents) and they eventually left; I then had to spend the next few weeks convincing my mother and father that fandom wasn't a subversive organization. It was no doubt partly my internal relief mechanism that had me, not long after, bemusedly envisioning them trying to run the same lie by Burbee, and picturing how the FBI might be thrown into a sweat after Burb rolled a stencil into his typer and said, "Hey, fine -- let's put out a oneshot!"

Regarding that sf pin that came from Forry Ackerman's estate which Art Widner sent you a picture of, I have no firm

Contact! Las Vegas Club Directory

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

Las Vegrants

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

Neon Rainbow SF/F Club

No Data Provided

SNAFFU:

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

VSFA:

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

knowledge about it but I'd speculate that it *might* have been one of the distinctive sf lapel pins which Moskowitz tells us Gernsback's Science Fiction League distributed to its members. Before assuming this is the case, however, a damper on the notion is that one would suppose that Forry would remember if this were one of them, and from what Art says Forry doesn't recall where it came from. (And, by the time I got to Art's comments in the letter column, I see he says much the same. Don't know precisely what it is, but I think it's the depiction of Jupiter--or at least a "ringed" planet--that made me think so; it's like something taken off an sf magazine column logo, although I can't...no pun intended...pin it down to anything specific.)

Similarly, I can't supply detail about Dick Clarkson's death, but I can at least tell Bbob that, for reasons I'm not sure of, other library collections allow no writing instruments other than the pencils they provide to researchers. I was recently at the Pavlat/Coslet collection housed at the University of Maryland/Baltimore Campus, doing a little fanhistorical research, and although I didn't have to fill out any forms and found the "responsible" librarian there and eager to help me, I was handed one of their pencils and told not to use my pen for the notes I was taking. I guess they're afraid people might mark on the publications and pencil marks can be erased.

Oh, in response to something Art Widner said in his loc, I really have ambitions of eventually writing more "Totem Poll" columns. It's my longest-running column title, starting with (iirc) Cindy Heap & Joni Rapkin's *Zarathustra*, including (iirc) maybe an installment or two in *Focal Point*, definitely through several issues of Dan Steffan's *Boonfark*, and finally winding up in Art's *YHOS*.

Naturally, if I do revive it, I will send it to Art. Wish I could be certain of when that might be forthcoming, but I

can't. As you know, Arnie, I've kind of bogged down on all my fan writing commitments, including the fan history column I was doing for *VFW*.

Eric Mayer does make good points about the volume of writing that appears on the internet. Much of it is in "informal mode" -- not bad, just not particularly, polished, the stuff of which letters (like this) are made, and far too much of it to read, even of people one knows to be good writers. I know a handful of really excellent blogs, and make no effort to "keep up" with any one of them. And I'm retired, so I can spend five or more hours per day doing *some* form of writing. But, if you know what I mean, I think there's more writing than reading going on with most of us

Arnie: There has always been "a great volume of writing" in Fandom. I think the difference now is that we've raised casual correspondence to a level of visibility it has never before enjoyed. Remove the utilitarian posts that comprise the bulk of listserv traffic and the amount of actual fan-writing doesn't seem all that great,

Our next writer has some interesting observations on the causes, and cure, for his 15 years of gafia...

John Purcell

I hope you and yours had a Merry Christmas. The upcoming plans you folks have for New Years Eve sound like a lot of fun and make me homesick for Minn-stf's traditional HolidayCon celebrations (translation: non-stop parties between Dec. 24th and Jan. 2nd). Some Fans from elsewhere, such as Jerry Boyajian and Krissy from Boston, usually made the trip in for the celebrations, they were so legendary back in the day. As far as I know, they probably still do. Ah, me. Good times, good stuff.

Your comments on why you returned to fandom got me

to thinking about why, after a fifteen year absence, why I returned with a new zine, and now loocing at a rate I used to maintain back in the late 70s, early 80s. Like you, it's the camaraderie, the friendships, the fun, and the feedback that make it so worthwhile. Even John Neilsen Hall, a long ago British fan, is getting back into the fanpubbing world with Motorway Dreamer #1 as a result of meeting old friends at John Brosnan's wake. Yeah, when you talk about the first amendment and freedom of the press, that's all true. I, for one, disagree with our President's interpretation of internal spying and executive privilege - and pretty much anything else that he says, thinks, or does - but that's my right as an American citizen. But back to your original question of "why come back?" Bottom line, because it's fun. I'm enjoying my cyber-fanac because old fannish friends are in touch with me again. We time-binders tend to hang together, you know.

Which leads neatly into Shelby Vick's piece on his cyber-fanac. I have already come to the same conclusion that he has, and I am no way nearly as involved in all of the electronic fanac like ShelVy. I don't have that kind of time. In

fact, I am probably going to drop my Live Journal membership since I rarely use it (not enough time to really enjoy it), but I think I'll keep my Trufan account for the purpose of simply keeping up on fan news happenings.

Fanac.org is fun to pop in and out of every so often to see what's going on, too. And thus will the extent of my activity be, otherwise it will be way too easy to get sucked in too deep again. That's what forced me to gafiate back in 1983 (I think) for about 8 months: I got too involved and took it too seriously. I am having fun now in my own way, and I want to keep it like this. So therefore, on-line zines are my little fannish diversion from a quite maddening world. And that to me is the way fanac should be enjoyed.

Dick Lupoff's contribution was wonderful! Thoroughly enjoyed it. If things had happened differently when I turned 18, I would have gone to Annapolis to avoid getting plucked by the Army and shipped to Vietnam. My dad had everything arranged, too; maybe I should have gone anyway. But, that would have disturbed the continuum and the fabric of the universe, or some such nonsense. Things turned out okay

Potshot's Cartoon Theater



anyway. And speaking of time-capsule type stuff, that pin is quite cool. It will be interesting to see if anybody remembers anything about it. A most curious collectible. Plus, Bbob Stewart's article about Dick Clarkson collection should generate some response. I really like the fan-historical bent of VFW. It is SO much like our time-binding nature to write and reflect on stuff like this. Again, I can't wait to see what responses you get on Mr. Clarkson's fan career.

Many, many thanks for an enjoyable read, and I am happy to refrain from needing to compose another Lloyd Penney-type loc. There! I said it again, Lloyd!

Arnie: A change in written fanac that is not often discussed is that those old instincts to be in "all the rooms" so as not to miss anything can get us buried under data in the digital information age. If I tried to read everything that is sent to me or is available to me online, I'd never have the time to do this little fanzine. Speaking of which, I'm glad you're enjoying it and I'm equally enjoying your letters, whether issue by issue or catch-all.

One of the leading publishers and writers of Southern fanzine fandom tries to Name That Tune...

Rich Dengrove

Richard Lupoff's experience must have been very harrowing. It was bad enough in high school. A friend and I started the Grouchist Party. We were "for the cause because we don't have any cause." Our motto was "Organized Confusion." Also, the most visible official was the head of the Secret Police. We got quite a few members until a teacher told us this: if some security official asked whether we had Communist tendencies, he would have to say Yes.

By the way, Richard mentions something dear to my heart: the rendering of eras into their most inane stereo-type. Summarizing an era into a sentence is not enough; eras should be known by their show tunes. You know right away when you hear "Oh Susannah," it is referring to the gold rush

of 1849; and when you hear The Charleston, it is referring to the 1920s. Now, I am going to unveil the tune of the '60s: Bob Dylan singing "Everybody Must Get Stoned." And the tune of the '70s: "Disco Duck." A younger person will have to figure out the tunes of the '80s and '90s. However, I might take an additional stab and guess the tune of the '50s: "Annie had a Baby."

Arnie: The story of Hank Ballard is a microcosm of the era, so it's more fitting than some might suppose. With that subcontext in mind, I might choose Work with Me, Annie as the inane symbol of the 1950's. I remember the 1960's, at least some of it.

Stop the letter column! It's time to introduce the Sage Himself with another superlative loc...

Robert Lichtman

Your editorial, "The Last Bastion," took me back to the Robert Bloch "Fandora's Box" column (in the October 1958 *Imagination*) that got me into fandom in the first place. In it Bloch is lamenting "the lack of freedom available to writers today who seek publication in commercial media," that only the "expert" or the "celebrity" can express personal views in those venues.

He goes on: "Now where does this leave the average citizen? In most cases, it leaves him standing in the bar, exercising his much-vaunted 'freedom of speech' by sounding off to the bartender. But you and I have certain advantages denied most writers of fact or fiction, and nearly all of our fellow-citizens. We have the fanzines." And today, in an environment very much like the '50s with much dissent being actively squashed by a Republican administration, we *still* have the fanzines. Thank ghod for that!

Thanks for including me in the "Outstanding Non-Vegas Fan" category, to which I would add only that I've visited Las Vegas fandom more than the three times with which you credit me. I was fan guest of honor at the first Silvercon and attended the other three as well. I also was at the first Toner, at two Vegas Corflu, and finally I was in Vegas to join the motor caravan to the spreading of Burbee's ashes near Amboy on old Route 66. I think the population of the city has approximately doubled between my first visit (in 1991) and my most recent one (for the 2004 Corflu).

I enjoyed the columns and articles by ShelVy, Dick Lupoff, Bill Kunkel, Bill Wright and Bbob Stewart, but amazingly have nothing to add to any of them. Well, almost nothing – I need to check out Kunkel's book sometime, and I couldn't find much of anything about Dick Clarkson beyond his involvement in 1951 with noted fugghead Orville Mosher's Project Fan Club (and that photo you ran of



PUTTING A GOOD FACE ON LARLICK

Las Vegas Fan Events Calendar

SNAFFU Meeting December 23 8:00 PM

This formal SF club will have the last "fourth Friday" discussion meeting at its eastside Borders bookstore location. Next month, it'll be replaced by a dinner/social meeting at a location to be announced.

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.

LV Futurists/SNAFFU Meeting January 13 5:30 PM

Wil McCarthy will address a joint meeting of the two clubs, plus any other Vegas fans who'd like to see and hear the noted scientist and science fiction author. It will be held at Borders Books (2190 North Rainbow).

Vegas Fandom Weekly First Anniversary Celebration January 14 2 PM

SNAFFU salutes Vegas' weekly newszine with a party at Metro Pizza. All Vegas fans — and any roving out-of-towners — are enthusiastically invited..

Sunday Social January 15 2 PM

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

Las Vegrants Meeting January 21 7:30 PM

The informal invitational Core Fandom club meets on the first and third Saturdays of every month.

him from the second Midwestcon). I hope, as Bbob does, that "some other *VEGAS FANDOM WEEKLY* reader will fill in the blank."

Bbob's 1996 information from Nicholson Baker's *NEW YORKER* article about the McComas Collection of Science Fiction and Fantasy at the San Francisco Public Library appears to be out of date. Bbob says it's "consigned to 'the squalor of a storage area, near carpet remnants and construction debris' in an 'off-sit megacrypt...a vast, dusty space under the street.'" However, the library's Website lists it (at <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us/librarylocations/main/gchc.htm>) as being one of the "collections and services available" on the third floor in the General Collections and Humanities Center, and it is described as follows: "McComas Collection of Fantasy and Science Fiction is an in-library use collection of 3,000 volumes of fiction and 92 science fiction magazines, dating from the 1920s." I'm not able to find a specific catalogue for it, though, in the library's on-line search function. I suspect that in '96 it was where Baker described it on a temporary basis while a new library was being built.

In the letter column, I certainly hope that your other bound volume of the 100th FAPA mailing, which you describe as "the one that has some of the big postmailings," turns up. From what you wrote in *VFW No. 56*, the one you have contains Eney's 389-page *A Sense Of FAPA* within which is Laney's *Ah! Sweet Idiocy!* -- but the other large postmailed item to the 100th mailing was the eighth issue of Bill Evans's *Remembrance Of Things Past* series, this one a compilation of material from Harry Warner Jr.'s early '40s

fanzine, *Spaceways*. It would be a shame for that to go missing.

Art Widner is correct that the "Hi Priestess of FooFoo" was Pogo, also known as Patti Gray. And the late Nancy Share Rapp was the High Priestess of Ignatz. On a somewhat hotter trail, there's Gina Ellis (who was Gina Clarke when she was married to the late Norm Clarke). In the '50s she was known as the "Duchess of Canadian Fandom." And these days she's the President of the Pagan Federation of Canada, so by extension she *is* the High Priestess of Fandom.

At the head of Mark Plummer's letter, I enjoyed the Johnnie & Joe reference. Was I the only one, or did you tell all the sands and every blade of grass?

Arnie: How stupid of me to say three visits. I know perfectly well that you've been here many more times. In fact, you, Richard Brandt and Eric Lindsay may be the three most frequent out-of-town visitors to Las Vegas, though Don Fitch, Jack Speer and Art Widner would also be in the running.

I believe it was Ted Paul who dubbed Joyce the High Priestess of Brooklyn Fandom back in '71 or so. That's when he and Bruce Gillespie alleged that she had destroyed science fiction. As part of the counter-attack, which including articles by Terry Carr and me in Potlatch, we embraced the idea of Joyce as High Priestess.

Doing so taught us all that power, once given, is hard to reclaim. So she became the High Priestess of Brooklyn Fandom. Since Joyce hasn't lived in Brooklyn in over 16 years, it

now seems silly to refer to her as the High Priestess of Brooklyn Fandom. Fortunately, Joyce has now extended her beneficent reign to include all of Core Fandom, so we can just call her the "High Priestess," since she will brook no other.

Here comes the sunshine! Here comes the nicest fan I know – and one of this fanzine's most valued contributors...

Shelby Vick

Anyway, it was nice to hear more from Dick Lupoff. And I expect more!

Potshot is doing a column??? GREAT! And it was a good beginning. More?

I know how you feel about losing a mailbox. I really miss box 493, in Lynn Haven. But some things are beyond our control.

Bhob Stewart. *Bhob Stewart*. THE Bhob Stewart?? Arnie, you're really bringing back to good ones!

Robert Lichtman! You referred to my *Interplanetary Stories*. For shame! As I'm sure you are aware, it's *Planetary Stories*! But I appreciate any plugs.... And it's good to know I am not alone in turning off my computer at night.

Speaking of computers, Chris Garcia has shown that computer addiction is a healthy thing. His grandmother was addicted, and lived to 106! MUST be healthy!

Art Widner. In a way, I have thoroughly beaten your record of reviving a fanzine. I brought out confuSon (OBVIOUSLY a continuation of confusion) with a gap of FIFTY THREE years!

So there.

Arnie: I was tempted to make a bigger commotion last issue about the two additions to the writing staff, but I didn't want to scare them away. But now Bill has done a second installment and Bhob wrote to say that he is working on another article, so I think it is safe to give out a "yippee!" or perhaps a "Ya-hoo!" (if the Internet company hasn't polluted that interjection..)

Art still has you beat on the technicality. Confusion is not quite the same as ConfuSon, after all. I sort of wish you had simply continued the original title verbatim, not because of the record, but because I always have liked that fanzine name.

WAHF: Robert Lichtman, Shelby Vick, Richard Lupoff

I'm Late...

This issue of VFW is a couple of days later than I expected due to various things, but I'll be back in a few days with a new issue. Write if you can. — Arnie Katz

Howard Devore

It is with great sadness that I report the death of Big Hearted Howard Devore, long-time Detroit fan and Fandom's favorite huckster, after a long illness on December 31.

My condolences to Howard's many friends in Fandom and to his family.

In This Issue of Vegas Fandom Weekly...

Vegas Events This Weekend ::: 1

Inside Story ::: Happy Fanmas ::: Arnie ::: 2

Katzenjammer ::: The Crystal Ball ::: Arnie ::: 3

Now & Again ::: An Insight ::: Shelby Vick ::: 4

Them Daze ::: Timebinders.com ::: Richard Lupoff ::: 6

High Risk ::: How I Spent My Winter Vacation ::: John DeChancie ::: 10

Potshots ::: Arnie Katz: Artist of Persuasion ::: Bill Kunkel ::: 12

ChatBack: The VFW Letter Column ::: You ::: 13

Contact Information ::: 16

Potshot's Cartoon Theater ::: Bill Kunkel ::: 17

Calendar ::: 19

... and a ton of news.