

# VEGAS FANDOM WEEKLY

## Vegas Fan Events

**SNAFFood Dinner Meeting**  
Friday (3/24) 7:00 PM

**Bernstein/Gibbs SF/F Garage Sales**  
Sat & Sun (3/25-26) 7:30 AM-4:00 PM

**VSFA Formal Meeting**  
Saturday (4/1) 11 AM

**Las Vegrants Meeting**  
Saturday (4/1) 7:30 PM

*Check out the Calendar and preview stories*

### Ken Forman Injured!

Ken Forman, the Mainspring, seriously injured his right hand on Friday (3/24) while working on a construction project at his home in Flippin, AR.

Ken fell backwards while standing on the porch roof of an under-construction cabin with an electric saw. He caught himself before what could've been a really disastrous tumble, but the saw sliced into his hand.

Aileen alertly flagged down a passing police car, which cleared the way for a fast trip to the hospital. They released Ken after about 30 minutes of surgery and he is at home already.

Su Williams, newly arrived in Flippin for a nice, restful vacation (*see VFW #69*), sent this report late Friday evening:

"It's 9:30. Ken's been home for about an hour. He has an impressive cast, a sling, and several bottles of pills.

"The surgeon says that of all the things that COULD have happened, this was the best it could possibly be.

"Ken severed one tendon that goes to his middle finger. There's *another tendon that covers that finger, so he's ok there. (They couldn't repair that tendon.) He fractured a metatarsal. (Run your finger down the forefinger, to the palm. THAT's the bone)*

"He messed up a nerve cluster, so he'll have some

numbness in the webbing between his thumb and forefinger, and at the base of his thumb and forefinger.

"The surgery lasted less than 1/2 hour.

"The bad thing is it is his RIGHT hand, not his left hand.

"He didn't fall off the roof and break his neck. He didn't cut off any fingers.

"He's in a pretty good mood, and the other three are out on the porch, tormenting him for his clumsiness.

"My toes may never uncurl again."

### Huge SF/F Yard Sale This Weekend!

Roxanne Gibbs & Michael Bernstein are hosting a mammoth, two-day yard sale that should be of special interest to booth science fiction and fantasy readers and electronic gamers. Although the Bernstein-Gibbs household has just donated six cartons of prime books to the SNAFFU library, there are still quite a few stfnal treasure — hundreds of hard-

*Continued on page 13*

LAS VEGAS FANS  
HAVE DESCENDED  
FROM A LONG  
LINE OF THE  
STAR-BEGOTTEN



Whatever  
that  
means

# Inside Story Congratulations!

LACon IC has released its list of Hugo nominees and it's time to congratulate a number of contributors to *Vegas Fandom Weekly* and some of the fanzine's most faithful readers on getting their name on the ballot for those rocket ships. Here are the nominees in the three fan categories:

## Best Fanzine (176 ballots cast)

**Banana Wings** edited by Claire Briailey & Mark Plummer

**Challenger** edited by Guy H. Lillian III

**Chunga** edited by Andy Hooper, Randy Byers & Carl Juarez

**File 770** edited by Mike Glycer

**Plokta** edited by Alison Scott, Steve Davies & Mike Scott

## Best Fan Writer

(202 ballots cast)

Claire Briailey

John Hertz

Dave Langford

Cheryl Morgan

Steven H Silver

## Best Fan Artist

(154 ballots cast)

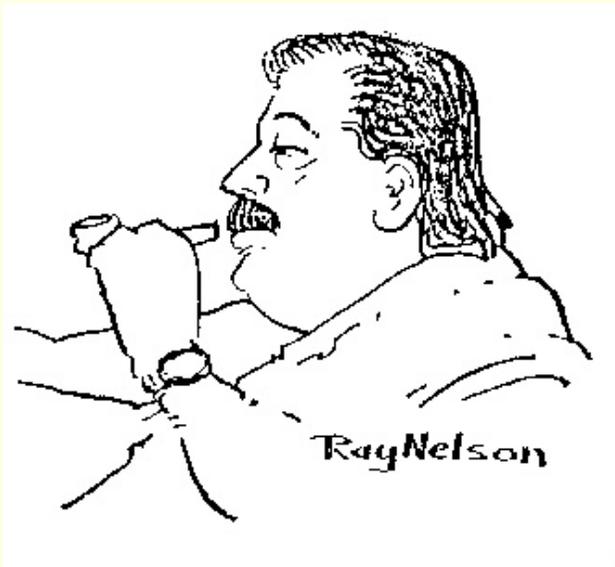
Brad Foster

Teddy Harvia

Sue Mason

Steve Stiles

Frank Wu



Sparing everyone the philosophical rant, I must say that the "Best Fanzine" category is particularly good this time. I know whom I'd pick if I were voting — I'm not — but all are certainly worthy of consideration.

The other two categories may not be *quite* as impressive, but each has several good choices. And if I can be partisan for a moment, how about a Hugo for Steve Stiles, perhaps Fandom's all-time greatest cartoon? If these awards mean anything, that one's overdue. — Arnie

*Vegas Fandom Weekly #70, Volume 2 Number 16, March 23, 2006*, is written and produced by Arnie Katz (909 Eugene Cernan St., Las Vegas, NV 89145; Email: [crossfire4@cox.net](mailto:crossfire4@cox.net); phone: 702-648-5677).

**Special Thanks to** Roxanne Gibbs (many things), Bill Burns (posting), David Gordon (Futurists liaison), Alan White (arty fella), Bill Mills (technical advisor) and Joyce Katz (proofreading and So Much More).

**Reporters this issue:** Roxanne Gibbs, Bill Mills, Judy Bemis, Mindy Hutchings and Joyce Katz

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**Columnists This Issue:** Dick Lupoff, Chris Garcia

*VFW* is free by request — and you may get it anyway. It can be downloaded at the SNAFFU site and at [efanzines.com](http://efanzines.com). No humorless fuggheads were permanently harmed during the production of this fanzine.

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

# Why 'Core Fandom'? Katzenjammer

As you may (or may not) have noticed, there's been a continuing give-and-take about the nomenclature I've been using. Specifically, the term "Core Fandom" has drawn a lot of pro and con comment.

This seems like a good excuse to explain the idea at semi-tedious length. (I always have the feeling, when writing one of these fan sociological essays, that I ought to decorate page two with some porn pictures as a "thank you" for reading even that far. I will try to do without the reward this time, though, and in exchange I'll try to go easy on the punishment as well.)

I coined the term "Core Fandom" to describe a specific type of involvement with Fandom. I called it Core Fandom, because I couldn't think of anything better and it might've been confusing just to leave a blank spot each time I wanted to mention that segment of Fandom.

I didn't go with "Core Fandom" until I'd considered, and discarded, other alternatives. Among the possibilities were:

- **Fanzine Fandom.** That's the term I was using when I started *Vegas Fandom Weekly*. It's pretty accurate description, if you're describing is our cabal circa 1990, but I soon realized that it didn't adequately map the territory as it now exists — and that the mergence of digital fanac had greatly weakened its



Forrest J Ackerman is generally considered the first fan, the progenitor of Core Fandom.

claim to describe this segment of Fandom.

- **Trufandom.** This deeply resonates with some members of Core Fandom, including me, but it implies a superiority that I don't think that segment of Fandom wants to claim. It is better for us, but clearly, it is a level and type of activity and type of commitment that is not for everyone. I didn't want to insult fans outside of Core Fandom and *definitely* didn't want to argue this name with non-Core Fans who might think it denigrated their approach to Fandom. Besides, "Trufannish already has a use and a meaning in Fandom. We already have enough trouble with terms like "fan" without creating yet another ambiguous one.
- **Real Fandom.** This one didn't have the ambiguity problem, but it's connotations had even great pfeud-producing potential. If we are "Real Fandom," then what are all those other folks?
- **Literate Fandom.** It's not only a mouth-

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Above: Fans visit Coney Island while at the 1939 New York Worldcon - Front (l to r): Mark Reinsberg, Jack Agnew, Ross Rocklynn; Top: V.Kidwell, Robert A. Madle, Erle Korshak, and Ray Bradbury. (Photo by Robert Madle)



Robert Silverberg and Dick Eney are two fans with a long-standing interest in fan-history. The former contributed significantly to the development of the Numbered Fandoms Theory and the latter published *Fancyclopedia II* and *A Sense of FAPA*.



Walt Willis, circa 1957, is shown pounding away at a typewriter that was three decades old even then.

ful, but also not a very fair or accurate description. I have positive proof, available for inspection here at the Launch Pad by appointment only, that there are fans outside Core Fandom who can both read and write. They may not *like* to do it, but they can (and will) do it in an emergency.

- **Classic Fandom.** I used this for a while, but it just didn't sound right. It might create more confusion than it dispels, though I wouldn't mind being sent a bundle of Classic Comics.
- **Original Fandom.** I came up with this one by analogy with OG (Original Gangster), which only goes to show that I need to cut back on the *Sopranos* reruns. Besides, it sounds more like a rival organization to First Fandom. Core Fandom may some day want to form such an outfit, but that's not the issue here.



Dean Grennell enjoys a Bob Sandwich. Bloch is to the left and Tucker is on the right.

At this point you may be wondering why I felt the need for a term that more accurately defines our sub-culture than "Fanzine Fandom." That term was sufficient when everything revolved around paper and ink, but that's no longer true.

Fanzine Fandom has entered the digiverse where fanzines are no longer the only valid form of fan-

literary expression.

Traditionally, members of fan-connected apas have been considered within the bounds of Fanzine Fandom. Should not listserv participants be granted the same status? I don't see that listservs are much different than at least 80% of what I've read in apas in recent years. (The remaining 20% represents apazines that present genzine-like content that goes beyond mailing comments.)

I doubt many would argue that publishers of digital fanzines are any less part of our subculture, which I call "Core Fandom" than those who still publish the paper-and-ink variety. Would we not extend similar status to those who produce or contribute to fannish web sites?

And much as I dislike the form, blogs with a connection to our subculture are pretty similar to columns in paper fanzines. I don't think blogs will endure in their present form for many more years, but while they're here, they seem like a form of what *used* to be fanzine fanac. (OK, how about this: they are analogous to personalzines.)

As our subculture persists into the future, assuming we don't kill it with foolish mistakes, the options for fan-literary expression may proliferate even more as our consensus, the social contract that binds Core Fandom together, will grow to embrace these new forms.

As a result, the "Fanzine Fan" designation will become increasingly inaccurate and more and more of a detriment to the continuation of what we have been given, what we have developed and what we want to pass along to our fannish "descendants." (I think there might be the sound of a chorus rising to a crescendo right about here. Maybe even a soft beam of light that plays across my Sensitive Fannish Face.)

"Fanzine Fandom" will probably stay in use as long as this tribe continues, but it *is* going to be a misnomer and it would be handy to have a term that does faithfully describe what we are.

I would be delighted if someone proposed a term everyone likes better than "Core Fandom." Whether we come up with a better name or go with "Core Fandom," the first, logical step in picking our name is to define what we think it ought to mean.

This is my attempt. I hope others will feel free to work over the definition in future installments of *Chatback*

What I am trying to describe is a network of people — a subculture, if you will — who subscribe to the basic consensus that established Fandom in the 1930-1964 period that preceded the population boom, specialization and Balkanization of Fandom that has spawned today's All Known Fandom.

No question, the details of that consensus have



Core Fandom— UK Style: (left to right): [Greg Pickersgill](#), [Peter Roberts](#) and [Darroll & Ro Pardoe](#) are enjoying a companionable lull at the 1973Ompacon.

evolved over the years as Fandom itself elaborated and added activities and institutions and accumulated a history, customs and literature.

Core Fandom is the acorn that has not fallen far from that ancestral tree. We are still a meritocracy, still a haven for maladjusted but talented people, still an alternative to the values and mores of Mundane society, still an arena for personal literary expression and intellectual communication.

Members of Core Fandom have a devotion to the communication of ideas, observations and opinions. They generally have a particular devotion to the written word, but fans who write plays, make movies and create audio content are also recognized as equal participants.

It is the devotion to the written word, however, that is responsible for Core Fandom's strong connection with its roots, the 75-year history of All Known Fandom that began with Ackerman, Darrow and Williamson.

It's kinda fun, too.

— Arnie

# Them Daze

## Jack & Jack & Alice & Steve

A couple of years ago a radio producer in Santa Cruz put together a panel on small-press publishing. Among those involved were my darling spouse (in her capacity as a book-buyer for what has now grown into a small chain of “independent” bookstores), Kage Baker (a truly fine author who has been published by both large commercial outfits and little basement presses), several editor/publisher types, and Your Humble and Obedient Servant.

It was a long drive for exposure on a small station, but it was also a pleasant Sunday afternoon and Santa Cruz is a nice town to visit. To add to the pleasure, our host invited everyone out for dinner at a truly swell Mexican joint on the waterfront. I wound up sitting next to Kage, and she mentioned that a friend of hers named Chris Conlon was editing an anthology I might be interested in.

She was right.

Conlon is a talented guy. He writes really good poetry and short fiction, as well as teaching English to some lucky high school students. His taste runs to the fantastic – science fiction, fantasy, horror, macabre. He came across a fragment of a story by Edgar Allan Poe, left unfinished at the time of Poe’s death in 1849.

If you’ve been around the science fiction world as long as I have, you may remember that the great Robert Bloch also stumbled across the Poe fragment back in the early 1950’s. Poe had left the piece untitled as well as unfinished, but it’s generally known as “Poe’s Lighthouse.” Bloch finished the story, and the odd collaboration was published – lemme check this out – in the old Ziff-Davis *Fantastic* dated January-February, 1953, under the title, “The Lighthouse.”

Conlon’s editorial specs didn’t require each author to sit down and complete Poe’s story (which is what Bloch did), but to write something thematically connected to the fragment. Each story would be published as, “by Edgar Allan Poe and

(fill in the blank).

This all sounded like an intriguing project, so I downloaded the fragment. It was easy enough to locate on the blessed internet. I hadn’t read Bloch’s collaborative version since it was first published and I chose not to track it down and reread it. Instead, I used the Poe fragment as an artifact. If I’d been writing a crime story, it would have been my McGuffin. And if you don’t know what that is, look it up. Hint: the term is often attributed to Alfred Hitchcock.

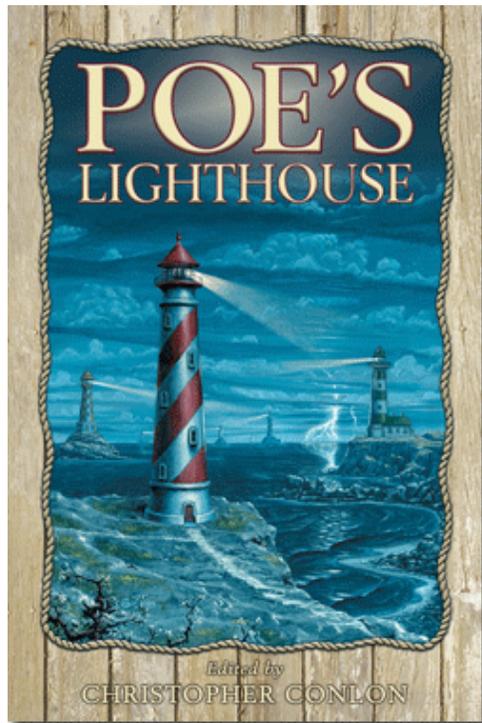
My writing these days draws increasingly on my past. Might be I’m just getting old and weary but I prefer to think that I’ve finally accumulated enough life experiences to have a useful stock of material, and it’s about time I started putting my recollections to good use.

I thought of the time in the early 1960’s when the big Edgar Rice Burroughs boom was getting started. I’d come of age either too soon or too late to grow up reading about Tarzan and Jane, John Carter and the incomparable Dejah Thoris, and the rest of old Mr. Burroughs’ creations. Besides, at this point I was a serious-minded junior executive climbing the corporate ladder in the then-fledgling computer industry. I was above all of that stuff about lost cities in the jungle and green-skinned six-limbed egg-layers on Mars

Still, I came home from work one evening and found my bride immersed in a copy of *Tarzan of the Apes*. I patted her on the head and made a suitably condescending remark.

A month later, when she let me back into the apartment, Pat informed me that *Tarzan of the Apes* was a remarkably good book and that she thought I would enjoy it. I gave it a try and was surprised. To me, Tarzan was an over-aged, overweight Johnny Weissmuller yodeling his way through badly-scripted low-budget B programmers. The book wasn’t like that at all.

Also, I should note that my beloved spouse tends to curb her enthusiasm and vary her interests while I often go on cultural jags, whether they represent the jazz



compositions of Thelonious Monk, the chamber music of Dmitri Shostakovich, the literary works of Rex Stout, the published screeds of the unjustly forgotten John Kendrick Bangs, Clare Winger Harris, and George Sylvester Viereck, or the single-malt whiskies of Scotland. Naturally, while Pat went on to read Agatha Christie and Mervyn Peake and assorted works of literary and scholarly interest, I set out to read everything that Edgar Rice Burroughs ever wrote.

Just about this time, the proprietors of a little company called Canaveral Press discovered that the copyrights of many of Burroughs' works had lapsed due to an oversight at the offices of ERB Inc. They began reissuing long out-of-print books like *The Moon Maid*, *A Fighting Man of Mars*, and *Tarzan at the Earth's Core*. They announced a pretty ambitious production schedule, and I just lapped these things up as fast as I could lay my hands on 'em.

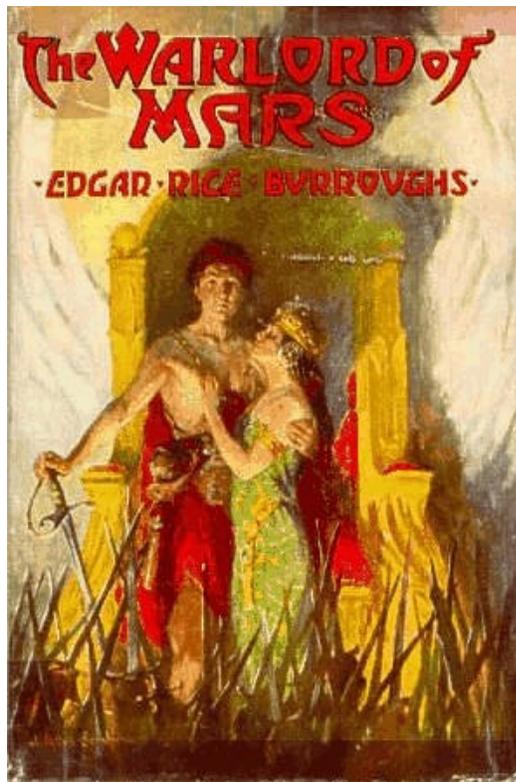
I got most of my science fiction in those days from a little store called Stephen's Book Service, run by a wonderfully grumpy and downbeat character named Stephen Takacs. According to Steve, business was always terrible and he was constantly losing money. When I asked him how he managed to stay in business he explained, "I just keep falling deeper in debt.

Sounds like a plan.

Every chance I got, usually on Saturdays, I would make my way down to the Lower East Side and check out new arrivals at Steve's store. On the day a new Burroughs release was due, I would be there bright and early, trembling with eagerness. When an announced book didn't appear on schedule, I was like a junky without his fix.

Finally, Steve got tired of my tantrums. "I can't control the publishers," he told me, "there's nothing I can do about it. If you want to complain, why don't you go over to their office? It's right near here."

Shy and diffident fellow though I normally am (really), I took Steve's suggestion to heart. I marched over to the offices of Canaveral Press – if you can call them offices. Canaveral was operated by Jack Biblo and Jack Tannen, the owners of a glorious used-book emporium on legendary Fourth Avenue. I introduced



myself to the owners and started in on my litany of complaints about their dilatory conduct, So what did they do? Probably they should have tossed me out on my ear. Instead, one of the Jacks – I can't recall which one – said, "If you think you can do better, why don't you come and work for us?"

Jesus Christ on a Crutch! What a thing to say. After a moment or a century of stunned silence I said, "All right."

And that's how I got one of the few jobs that I've ever truly loved in this life.

Once I got comfortable working at Biblo & Tannen, Booksellers and Publishers, I started to explore the many attics and basements above and below their sales floor. The building at 63 Fourth Avenue was a virtual

Aladdin's Cave for anyone who loved books. I worked there until 1970 (while still keeping my day job at IBM). Then Pat and I and our children moved to the West Coast. I really loved the people there, Biblo and Tannen and their secretary – office manager – mother hen, Alice Ryter and a wonderful hanger-on and sometime, part-time employee named David Garfinkel.

In one of the upper floors of the building I discovered a painting of an old man with a white beard and a floppy hat. The Jacks told me that they believed it was a self-portrait by Walt Whitman. If they could ever get that authenticated, it would be worth a fortune. If they couldn't, it was just a curiosity.

Somehow I wrote my story for Chris Conlon's anthology around that experience in my life. The Whitman painting is transformed into a full version of the Poe fragment. Is it authentic? Aha, you'll have to read the story to find out.

There are some other changes in the story. I made myself a decade or so younger and set the story in the late 1940's instead of the early 60's and I fudged some of the other details. But it's essentially a memoir of those days and my love for those people and that job.

Chris Conlon's book is called, simply, *Poe's Light-house*. It should be hitting the bookstores this spring. Costs more than *Vegas Fandom Weekly*, but I think it's going to be a good book and I'm really proud of my story, "Fourth Avenue Interlude."

-- Dick Lupoff

# London Calling England Fans!

Such is the scale of London, such is the sheer size, such the density of its dizzyingly varied and multiethnic population, that even after more than a quarter century of living in the capital there are still many parts of it I've never visited, and some I haven't returned to in decades. Twenty years ago (though in memory it seems more recent), I used to regularly meet up with the denizens of North London fandom, people such as Leroy Kettle, Pat & Graham Charnock, Leroy Kettle (now an OBE), John Brosnan (now, sadly, deceased), Chris Atkinson, and Malcolm Edwards - who was then editing the fanzines TAPPEN and DRUNKARD'S TALK, both of which I used to run off on the Gestetner that resided in the kitchen of my flat). We used to meet up to play pool in the back bar of a pub called The Salisbury. Somehow, we drifted apart and, until last Friday (10th March), I hadn't been back to the area in the two decades since then.

The Tollgate is a pub on Turnpike Lane, a street I don't think I've ever been down before. Like most large and modern pubs it doesn't have a lot of atmosphere. Fortunately, it also lacked something too many other modern pubs have - loud music - and had something they often don't - good beer - and thus was perfect for our needs. I arrived at 7pm to find John Hall and the Charnocks already present, a plate of nachos on the table in front of them. John was smartly dressed, having come straight from work, and the reason for this



Rob Hansen

meeting. He and the Charnocks had known each other since the early 1970s and the days of Ratfandom, but I'd first met him about 15 years ago when he called at my house to drop off a pile of mostly 1960s UK fanzines, a godsend since I was then just about to start writing that section of THEN, my history of British fandom, and 1960s fanzines were very thin on the ground for some reason. John bought me a pint, and we started in reminiscing about absent friends and the last time we'd all been together at John Brosnan's funeral.

I was delighted when Rob Holdstock joined us about a half hour or so later. Rob lives locally, about two streets away from the Tollgate, and had been persuaded to drop in by Graham. Older and a bit greyer, perhaps, but he didn't look much changed by the passage of years. We got onto the subject of the urban fox for some reason - London's back gardens are getting overrun by them - and I mentioned Patrick Nielsen Hayden's surprise on seeing one nonchalantly strolling along the wall at the rear when he and I were recovering in my own back garden last summer following a long, hot bicycle ride:

"Holy shit, you have wild beasts roaming your gardens!" he'd said.

"You know Patrick Nielsen Hayden?" said Rob, genuinely surprised.

"Since my TAFF trip in 1984," I said.

"Avedon's known him since he was sixteen."

"He's my US editor, but I've never met him," said Rob. "What's he like?"

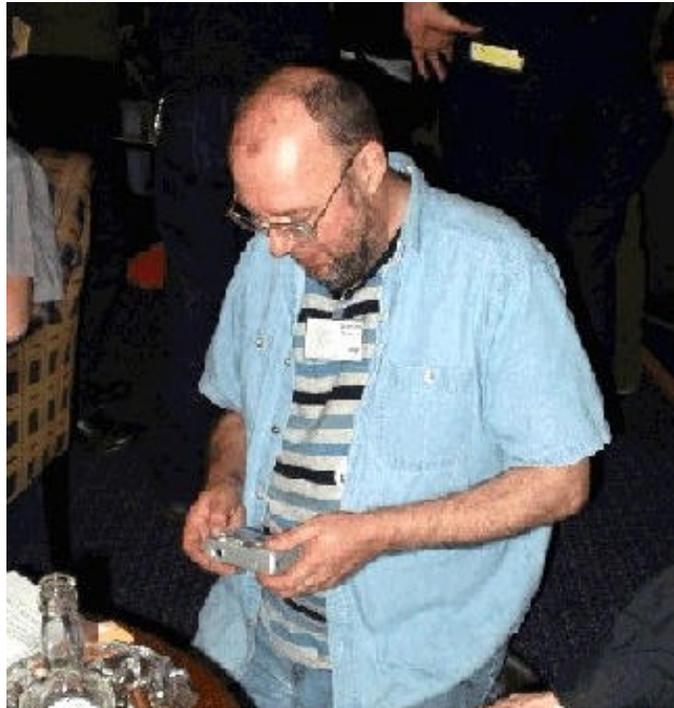
Now it was my turn to be surprised. The Nielsen Haydens had been at YORCON III, the 1985 UK National Convention (held that year in Leeds) and so had Rob, so far as I knew, so I assumed

they must have met then, but apparently not. As it happened I still had a little videoclip of Patrick on my Palm Zire that I'd taken during our last trip to the US, so I was able to show him this. Rob declared Patrick "much younger" than he'd imagined.

Around 7.45pm Sandra Bond showed up. I introduced everyone but obviously didn't do too good a job since Sandra misheard me and spent the next half hour chatting to Rob under the misapprehension he was Leroy Kettle. Only after she made a joke about his work on 'Slimer' – a novel (and I use the word advisedly) Kettle co-authored with Brosnan - did the truth dawn.

Shortly after this Rob Jackson appeared, the final arrival of the evening. Rob was another long-time fan, someone I'd first met in 1976 and also not seen in about 20 years. His fanzine, MAYA, was the second I ever received a copy of in the mail, the second I ever wrote a letter to, and had the most impressive reproduction of any UK fanzine of the mid-1970s. There were contemporary US zines that equalled or surpassed it in this department, of course, but Brits of the period were generally more impoverished than their American counterparts and did the best they could with what they could afford.

I found myself the second youngest person at the table, something that doesn't often happen when you're over 50, while at the same time finding myself more comfortable and at ease conversationally than I sometimes am with those younger than me. The shared memories and ex-



Graham Charnock is one of London's best-known fans.

perience of your age cohort really are a wonderful thing.

Conversation was lively, there was much laughter, and I think a good time was had by all. John had to leave early to catch a train, and Sandra too did not stay long, with the result that when those of us remaining left the pub at the end of the evening, Pat and Graham found themselves outnumbered by Robs. Holdstock and I had to head for our respective homes, leaving Rob Jackson and the Char-

nocks to seek out a curry.

All in all it was a pretty good evening in that way that touching base with people you have not seen in too long can sometimes be. I hope it isn't another twenty years before we do it again.

- Rob Hansen



Rob Hansen is one of British Fandom's top fanwriters and publishers is also one of its foremost historians. He is the author of a four-volume fanhistory called *Then*, which he published in the late 1980's and early 1990's. It's a great way for US fans to become a little more familiar with our brothers and sisters on the other side of the Atlantic.

You can read Rob's magnum opus online at: [http://fanac.org/Fan\\_Histories/Then](http://fanac.org/Fan_Histories/Then).

# Las Vegrants Ywo Waves, One Cabal!

I'm so used to James Taylor and Teresa Cochran arriving first that it just didn't seem like a normal — if that word can ever be made to apply — meeting of Las Vegrants as 7:30 PM approached.

I already knew that some of the gang wouldn't be there, at least not during the early evening. Ayesha Ashley had snagged a gig under the aegis of the Guitar Society of Las Vegas and James, Teresa and Lubov & Merric Anderson had decided to go and give Blondie some support. Joyce and I would've gone, too, had it not been a Vegrants night.

In addition, a few members were out of town, a couple more were working Saturday night. DeDee White was ill and Bill & Roxie Mills were feeling poorly and had told us not to expect them.

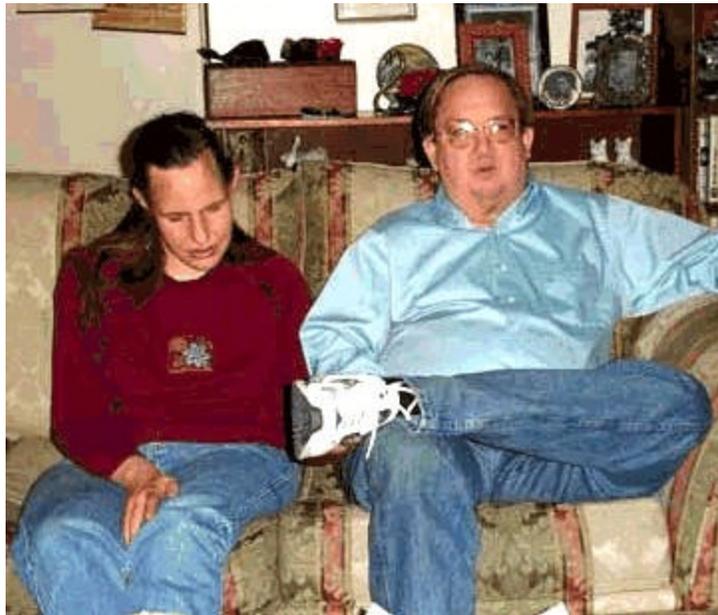
As I finished selecting the music and polished off a few other pre-meeting chores, I wondered if this Vegrants gathering would be... excessively intimate.

Don't get me wrong; I enjoy spending an evening alone with Joyce. Still, I think we were both looking forward to some fannish company.

Joyce busily counted potential guests on her fingers and had trouble using them up.

We needn't have worried. Vegrants is on such a roll these days that even the small meetings are large, if you know what I mean.

At about 7, Bill called to say that he and Roxie were feeling somewhat better and were



It would hardly seem like a Vegrants meeting without Teresa Cochran and James Taylor.

coming after all. Since they live very close to the Launch Pad, it wasn't long before Bill's syncopated door-knock announced their arrival.

The four of us talked about some projects we've contemplating together until the place began to fill up as Su Williams, Alan White, Ross Chamberlain and David Del Valle arrived at fairly close to the same time.

With some prodding from me, Su described a little of the tumult at her job (she is in charge of virtual library research for Nevada) to explain her sudden decision to go to Flippin, AR for eight days to see the Formans and the Wilsons. I'd think the relaxed atmosphere will be a wonderful tonic for her frazzled nerves.

David Del Valle, who has both visited and resided in Las Vegas, and I got into talking about Glitter City then and now. He is nostalgic for the days when the town had about 150,000 people, just about all of whom were living colorful lives.

I had to admit that there was a certain forbidden excitement when I visited Vegas with my parents in 1958 (age 12) with my parents or in 1965 and 1866 with the Fanoclast contingent that went



Candy Madsen, the first ferret to be according membership in the Vegrants, arrives at the Launch Pad.

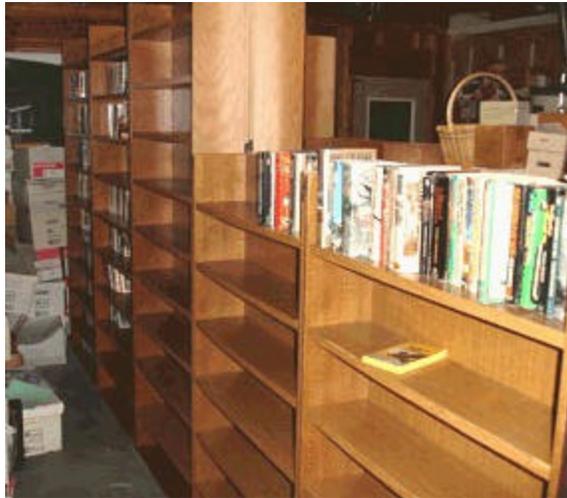
to Midwestcon and Westercon both years.

I also reminded David about the teeny bopper prostitutes who used to prance up and down Fremont Street. Vegas high school girls allegedly had the highest VD rate in the country during the so-called "Golden Age" and there was also a lot of casual violence in dealing with problem casino customers that you would never see today. (Vegas ultimately addressed the underage street-walker problem by instituting a curfew that kept the girls off their stroll in the evening.)

Since most of us like to write, it's not surprising that the decline of literacy and the "dumbing of America" are subjects of on-going interest. For some reason, we like to torture ourselves by swapping the latest batch of facts that proves the public is progressively less able and interested in reading anything.

Ross and Joyce brought up *Dr. Who*, which premiered the previous evening with two episodes on the Sci Fi Channel. Both thought it was Not Terrible, though they also agreed that the first episode wasn't nearly as good as the second. I thought the homage to the original series, when the Doctor "fought" a plastic arm torn off a mannequin, was a nice touch, but agree that the episode wasn't strong over all. The story about the Doctor taking his new companion Rose to see the final destruction of Earth in the far future, though derivative in some ways, was much more entertaining.

Teresa Cochran, James Taylor and the Andersons brought the



This may not look all that exciting, but it is to Vegas fans. It's the assembled shelves of the SNAFFU SF Library.,

everyone called it a night.

group up to an even dozen when they arrived from Ayesha's concert about 10 PM. (The *artiste* herself was understandably tired and elected to go home, instead.)

The arrival of four such prominent members kicked the festivities back up into high gear just as the early arrivals were in need of a little recharging.

The yakking, snacking and (in Teresa's case) tobaccing continued for some hours until, at about 1:30,

— Arnie

## Next Meeting



The Vegrants' next meeting is Saturday, April 1. And with two oneshots successfully completed, we're going to try a third.

Since most of the oneshot will be written at the 4/1 gathering, the theme will be "jokes, tricks, scams, comedy, humor and the lighter side of life." Naturally, participants can bring drafts or even completed contributions with them to the meeting if they don't want to sit for too long at the computer.

The Vegrants would also like to invite fans outside Vegas to share their favorite fannish anecdote with us for inclusion in the oneshot.

If you'd like to write something for the oneshot, send it to me by March 31 at [crossfire4@cox.net](mailto:crossfire4@cox.net).

# High Risk

## World Domination... and Other Fannish Daydreams

One day, while trisecting an angle, I happened to look up and see a tiny white dot floating in the blue. It did not look like a plane, nor was it a cloud. It was too small to be a cloud. It moved like one, however, and after staring at it for a few minutes, I decided that it was a wisp of cloud that had strayed from its parent. No matter how hard I tried, however, I could not resolve it to anything other than a dot. It eventually floated away, and the sky was again empty of anomalies.

This was as close as I ever got to seeing a UFO. I grew up in the 1950's, when the UFO phenomenon began to grow. It has never stopped growing and I have never stopped having at least a passing interest in the subject, but as UFOs mutated from curiosities to urban myths and beyond to full-blown Jungian cultural archetypes, my interest just about passed away. Anyone could see that the mythos fed on itself and could not be expected to be parsed rationally anytime soon. Something was behind it, but no one knew what.

The first UFO incident I was ever exposed to was through television, on a show called "You Asked For It," an early version of Reality TV. I don't remember much about the show, but the segment about a rural family's encounter with a supposed UFO-naut riveted me. After seeing something streak through the sky and crash into woods, a woman and her children ran to investigate. The woods were on fire, and walking

through the flames, they said, was this robot-like figure in a lead-colored suit—and when the "artist's representation" of that figure came on the screen, it ignited a burst of wonder in my six-year-old heart.

Gosh! Wow! Right out of *Captain Video*! In fact, *Captain Video* had something like that figure, a robot character named "Tobor," robot spelled backwards (and I even remember the scene in which the factory worker mistakenly paints the stencil on the wrong way). Years later I got Damon Knight to admit that he had invented this character. He and other genuine SF writers had written for the show. He groused at me for bringing it up, and all but denied it until I made him holler uncle. Well, he never really did 'fess up, but it was either Damon or Robert Sheckley.

The extent to which hard-core SF, and I mean the literature, written by the gals and guys we know so well, has influenced the culture is yet to be calibrated, but I for one suspect that our SF subculture has reshaped the world at large on a grand scale. It's easy to see today—movies, TV, anime, comics—it's all around. But in the past, when SF was hidden away in pulps, and those pulps stashed in boxes in garages and attics all over the nation—remember those dark days?—even then it was remodeling the way everyone thought about the universe.

That's how powerful SF/fantasy was, and still is. Ever wonder why the history of fandom reads as a struggle between factions for control? Fans are by nature aggrandizing creatures. Ever wonder why the literature is filled with stories of ever-expanding, far-flung empires and confederations?

One day, fandom will be the world, and the world will be fandom. Fans will rule—over a world of fans.

— John DeChancie



Continued from p 1

back and paperback science fiction and fantasy books — up for sale. In addition, Joyce and I have put a large number of computer and video games into the mix with proceeds of the sale going to SNAFFU.

Says the charming hostess, Roxanne Gibbs:

*“We invite everyone to do some spring cleaning and donate items for sale for the SNAFFU library fund that they no longer need. Michael will be selling hundreds of books from his Science Fiction and Fantasy collection and we are clearing out our garage and unused household items. We live in Southeast Las Vegas at 4009 Evesham ct., 702-765-7279.”*

### Bill Mills Sets Up Website for the Audio Oneshot!

Proving that he is definitely a doer as well as a talker, Bill Mills has established a website (<http://www.billmills.net/vegrants-odeo.html>) that puts teeth into the Vegnants’ invitation to the rest of Fandom to participate in its forthcoming audio oneshot, which will be worked on at the 4/15 Vegnants meeting.

Bill had this to say about the site and the Audio Oneshot:

*“This is an all-in-one type of web page, built on standard html, which includes the Odeo in-browser PLAYER, to hear our ‘welcome’ audio... And an obvious and simple little box that says “Send Me A Voice Message” below it (which is all vocalized in the audio mentioned above)...*

*“Clicking that box/link takes the user to a specific (and much simpler to understand and use) in-browser REORDER on which users can leave their 3 min message(s).”*

Bill will also preside over recording at the meeting, so those who want to make their contributions on Saturday will

be able to do so, although there may be a little wait for your crack at the microphone.

To give contributors to the audio oneshot something to talk about and to give the whole thing some coherence, Vegnants will talk on the theme “How I Found Fandom — or It Found Me.” Individual contributions must, of necessity, be held to six minutes (two messages generated using the Audio Oneshot site). Bill will assemble the whole thing into an MP3 that we will distribute as a free download and, possible, a disk.

This is really something a little unusual, but it looks like it could be a lot of fun. I hope Vegnants and other sterling fans — especially those who are regular contributors to VFW — will give it a try. If you aren’t happy with your first try, delete it and the second is sure to be better.

### Willey, Hutchings Announce Engagement!

James Willey and Mindy Hutchings are engaged! The twosome met through their participation in local Fandom in early 2005 when both joined VSFA.

According to the happy couple, they expect to formally tie the knot sometime in 2008. Meanwhile, they are industriously refurbishing James’ house. They’ve just done a lot of painting and have an ambitious “to do” list that may well keep them busy right up to the actual wedding.

Fannish love strikes again! Congratulations James and Mindy!

### Fan Club Is Not Dead Yet!

The LesBiGayTrans SF Club of Las Vegas has not breathed its last, informs Joshua Andrews. The club reportedly met 1

The next meeting is March 27t at 7:30 PM at the Gay And Lesbian Community Center of Southern Nevada. (inside

# Vale, Noel Kerr *The Wright Stuff*

Noel Kerr, a stalwart of Melbourne fandom in the 1960s and 70s, died on New Year’s Eve

(31st December 2005) after a long battle with heart disease.

Primarily a comics fan, he was also interested in films and numbered newspaper cartoonists among his many friends. He was a regular contributor to ‘The Cinema Record’ and was an enthusiastic member of the Melbourne Science Fiction Club..

Throughout the 1970s Noel did jobs for the MSFC and its members, notably for Mervyn Binns’s epic enterprise, Space Age Bookshop. He introduced talented artist Gerald Carr to the club, who helped with publicity for Melbourne’s first Worldcon in 1975.

Noel won a Ditmar (Australian SF Achievement Award) in 1971 for editing the MSFC clubzine, The Somerset Gazette. It ran for five issues from March 1970 to January 1971.

Noel was a luminary in the early days of Anzapa, the Australia and New Zealand Amateur Publishing Association founded in 1969 and still going strong. His Anzapazine Sweet Nothings featured pulchritudinous cartoons by Gerald Carr that had a stimulating effect on impressionable young fans.



The late Noel Kerr (left) is shown with fellow Australian fan Gerald Carr.

— Bill Wright

Commercial Center). Josh didn't say anything about the name change announced a few months back, and now apparently rescinded, but he did specifically want me to mention that *all* fans are welcome.

### Heard Around Fandom...

The LACon IV, the folks who'll hand out the Hugos this August has launched a site (<http://www.laconiv.org/2006/hugos/nominees.htm>) to help Hugo voters. It contains sample work by this year's nominees...

Judy Bemis told me, at the SNAFFood Dinner at Cool Cuba on Friday (3/24) that Joe Siclari, proprietor of fanac.org, would be receptive to turning a lot of the pages now in jpeg into actual text — if volunteers step forward to help. Fanac.org is crammed with wonderful stuff, but a lot of it is in jpeg format, and therefore inaccessible to our own Teresa Cochran, so I'd think Vegas fans would have a special motivation to help. (If you haven't visited the site, but all means do so. It is a wonderful Internet destination for fans.)

David Burton has retooled his electronic fanzines *Catchpenny Gazette* into a sprightly new look under the name *Pixel*. The first issue, available as a free download at [efanzines.com](http://efanzines.com), looks great and is definitely worth every fan's time...

Robert Lichtman reports that his Internet Fanzine Auction to raise money to finance the next hardcopy issue of *Trap Door* is a rousing success. The Sage is busily bringing the spirited bidding to a close and plans to have a new issue of arguably Core Fandom's finest fanzine for us soon...

Woody Bernardi sends the glad tidings that he is home and recovered from the galloping infection that put him in the hospital for five days starting March 9. He thought it was the flu at first, but one shin got worse and worse until it became clear that Something More was at issue...

John Purcell has released *In a Prior Lifetime #9*. The issue contains a con report, a critique of the fanzines of Chris Garcia and a lively letter column. It's available for download at [efanzines.com](http://efanzines.com).

### ChatBack: The VFW Letter Column

*Headlines come and go in today's fast-paced Core Fandom, but ChatBack rolls on forever — or at least until they find me slumped over the computer with my fingers on the letters "L," "o" and "C."*

*Let's give the podium to the man who, after all, invented the 'Lloyd Penney-style LoC'...*

### Lloyd Penney

It's the day after the Day...you can almost sense the group hangovers from the partying at St. Patrick's Day last night, and I'm sure someone has to sweep up the leftover pseudo Irish crap, the tat, as the British fans would say. The first day of spring is a couple of days away, and with it will come some warm weather, I sincerely hope. Here are some comments on issues 67 and 68 of Vegas Fandom Weekly.

67...Does VSFA have any special projects on the go? Any trips, any ideas beyond the new library? If there's not much to talk about at the next meeting, there might not be much to keep the club together. Do you trade with other clubs? Use their clubzines to find other activities that might interest your members.

Chris Garcia is the new president of the N3F, and good for him. I suspect that Chris is breaking with stereotypical attitudes about the N3F, and decided to find out for himself why fans have those attitudes. Maybe he'll find out why, maybe he'll try to make some changes to make the N3F more outward-looking and less navel-gazing, which is a criticism I've heard before. Sounds like Chris has a plan...

The discussion between paper vs. digital continues. Look at it this way...it is the 23rd century. Science fiction still exists, as does fandom, in this distant era. We still want to communicate with each other. Are we still going to do so with paper? I doubt it. Who knows, by that time, we might be hearkening back to the Golden Era when we all communicated by (snicker) the Internet!, instead of the new technology that will probably be in use by that time, GPS-style implants, voice transcription, who knows. We honour hekto,

## Vote in the 2006 FAAn Awards

Colin Hinz of the 2006 Corflu hosts in Toronto, has announced that the 2006 FAAn Awards (Fan Activity Achievement) are now open for voting at <http://www.trufen.net>. The FAAn Awards are the highest honor that Core Fandom can bestow on its own. (The FAAn Awards also have a special connection to the Las Vegas Fan Community, because Corflu Vegas revived them after a hiatus and they have now been going strong for 16 years.)

The voting process is very simple and you'll be giving egoboo to the editors, writers and artists who make hard copy and electronic Fandom so enjoyable.

**Vegas Fan Awards Poll Update.** As previously mentioned, my recent back troubles have stalled a lot of planned stuff. I am now sufficiently recovered to think about tabulating the ballots. It can't be more than another couple of weeks before I actually follow through on that noble thought. Still, FAAn Awards won't be announced until May and fan Hugos until late August, so I hope I can be pardoned for shooting for mid-April..

ditto and mimeo, and even Xerox by now, but what's the more likely today? Digital. Time for us forward-thinkers to start thinking forwards. I will admit that not every avenue of the digital communication appeals to me, but for what I do, the digital zine stand, and e-mail my letters of comment, make doing what I like to do faster and cheaper. What would I really like in my heart of hearts? A paper fanzine. What's more important, Bucky Fuller notwithstanding, the contents of the zine or the medium it is relayed on? For me, the contents are more important, but in some ways, Fuller is right in that the medium is the message, and the medium/message is, get with the new technology, and get communicating.

In some ways, ayjay, or personal journalism, has been reborn as the blog. I prefer to write for a larger audience, which is one reason I left the apas I was in. I find blogs are a little too chaotic for me, as I would like to find an eFanzines-style list of blogs from fans and writers. I think Chris Garcia was interested in just such a list. Still, blogs are like diaries, and commentary is lost in the various levels of the webpage. I shocked a friend recently by revealing that I am "refreshingly LJ-free". Arnie, I have seen the same thing you have... looks like blogs may be becoming a little passé, because as we all know, the novelty of starting a new project like a website or a blog is quickly replaced by the drudgery of having to continuously find new content for it.

Dick Lupoff probably knows that there are, last I heard, several thousand American draft dodgers and conscientious objectors (hate those terms, sound so negative) living in Canada. A couple of them have been living in Toronto, trying to prove they should become landed immigrants. I certainly welcome them, and many others do, too. Recently, a Canadian citizen living in British Columbia since deserting the Marines in 1968 was apprehended and imprisoned on a base in California. He was released on an administrative discharge...I think even the Marines felt that being away for 38 years was fair enough. Bush is rapidly running the US into a debt black hole from which there may be no escape. With the war in Iraq running into billions, and the national debt of the US running close to \$10 trillion, can this possibly continue? Each American citizen now owes \$30,000? This must stop; not even the richest country on earth can finance this kind of debt. If Bush wants more war in the future, it can come out of his own pocket.

Corflu Toronto has put to rest all my doubts, and has not only gotten a hotel, but put out a progress report, produced by a mimeo on twiltone, no less. The con has members, and should be a good time. I'm producing the name badges for it, and that's my next project after Ad Astra in two weeks.

68...In my early convention days, we didn't know about Worldcons, but we did go to New York City of some of the later Strektaculars at the good old Statler Waldorf in Manhattan. One name recalled is an artist, Chris Cloutier. After all these years, we still have a bit of Cloutier artwork in our living room, dated 1981.

If there was intelligent life on this planet, it took off for someplace better a long time ago. Proof of this is readily available...it's called the evening newscast.

In the PR that Corflu Toronto or Corflu 23 issued, I don't see Teresa's or James' names on the list of people who

have purchased memberships. It'll be great to see you there.

John Purcell's loc...I wonder if it's pure coincidence or not that 25 years after Mike Glicksohn see his article about a urinary tract infection, he has to have that urethra removed through surgery. Such irony, and so below the belt... Sure, John, laugh at my locs! Yuk it up, let's all laugh at the duck. With additional time coming up in the fall, I may not be writing LP-style locs any more. They'll be individual issue locs. Who am I kidding? I'll do two- and three-issue locs anyway. I'm sure life will add to my workload just as I shuffle some other work off my shoulders.

Would someone care to produce Contact 2? I tried to get my own fannish beginnings to the original Contact!, but I think I was a little late for it. I will be writing a similar article for Chris Garcia, RSN.

*Arnie: I'm not familiar with Contact, but it sounds like it might be somewhat along the lines of the Audio Oneshot we are going to do on 4/15 under the baton of Bill Mills. I hope everyone will read the news story and then, perhaps, give it a try.*

*That's a very fair and sensible statement of the digital fanzine situation. I love those paper fanzines, too, but I love producing a fanzine digitally a lot more than I love not producing a fanzine in hard copy.*

*With talk of Corflu and other fannish matters comes one of today's leading fanzine publishers – and a great favorite here in Vegas...*

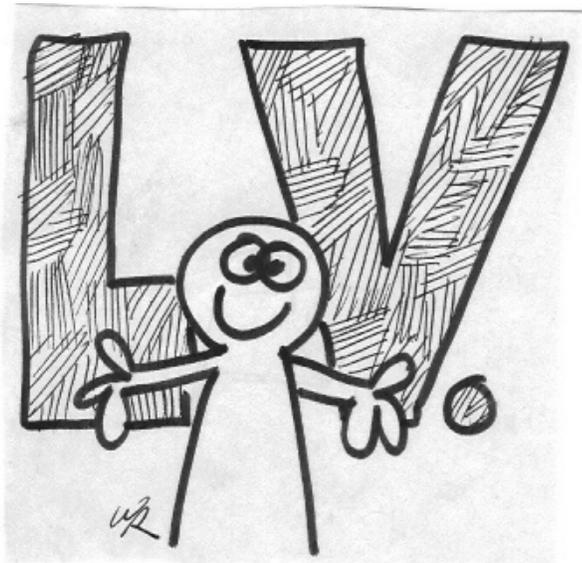
### **Chris Garcia**

Here I was, half-hoping for a sex issue of VFW and all I get is the same great stuff that's there always!

First off, for Robert Lichtman (And sorry you picked the single most Sex-laden issue of TDT to view. Try issue 56. It's much better). Nope, 'twasn't the previous issue that kept me from sending off my LoC, but the fact that I'd been bogged down in work with the Cinequest Film Festival where my movie (along with a few others) twice sold out theatres in San Jose. The best way I can describe the level of my running around would be to think of going to a con that lasted 12 days in a row with parties every night and panels all day.

I must admit, I'm a little taken aback by all the hubbub Arnie's comments on my N3F Presidency seem to have stirred up. No one takes good-natured (and usually deserved) ribbing as well as I do. Then again, I've been known to dish as well as I take, so I'm OK with that.

I really think some people take things too seriously, but I can understand why people might. I think my article here answered all the questions and comments on why I took the job and what I wanna do with it. R. Twidner's comments were particularly pointed and important to me personally, as he's a guy I have nothing but respect for. (When they turn the lights out on FAPA in 2055 or so, I'm fairly certain he and I will be the only two left!) His comments on entering the N3F suite when he returned from GAFIA are troubling. It's one of the things I hope we can change, by getting members (and others) to understand the history of the N3F, warts



and all. I also have to get myself a copy of *The History of The Stranger Club*.

Pete Sullivan called me Insurgent? I've been labeled and therefore negated!

On your Techno issues, I'm lucky. I've got a full Adobe suite courtesy of the Museum and that actually makes some of my huge zines quite a bit smaller (but still usually too big for my liking). You may want to think of Earl Kemping and putting out an HTML version alongside the PDF one if you're worried about file size.

I loved Corflu last year, and this year, I'm not going to be there, but I will be attending. What? I hear you gasp. How will I be doing that? Let me just say that I'll be enlisting a cadre of cronies to assist me (so if any of you are going, let me know and I'll assign you a part to play). The main beef I've heard people say about Corflu is the presence of the Corflu Mafia, those souls who are numerous and poorly defined. People complain of feeling excluded, though I felt none of that last year. Then again, I'm more at home at an auction than anywhere else in the world, and since there was a Corflu auction, I fit right in.

Dick Lupoff's talk about Army food is interesting. There's this challenge that I've seen on Food Network where the best Army chefs challenge each other for bragging rights by cooking fancy meals and then doing a meal for a platoon. That's a good challenge. I almost went into the Army to become a Chaplain. Imagine how that would have gone.

I wish there was a crown and throne for Vice Presidents. I'd have my BASFA one modified so that there's always be a seemingly endless supply of grape and strawberry soda that I would sip through a straw. My crown would glow and blind the other patrons of The Original Hick'ry Pit! San Jose is lucky, we've got lots of areas to meet. Sometimes they cost money (the Computer History Museum costs 200 bucks to rent a room, but I often get this waived, including holding two BayCon meetings here) and there are a couple of food venues that work very nicely indeed.

I love Cuban food. I must go to this place the next time I

come out (which may be April). There's a great place in San Jose that does the best Fried Cow (Vacha Frita)

I saw *V for Vendetta* last night. It was fan-freakin'-tastic. Very dark and very violent and really amazingly well done. After Cinequest, I didn't expect to like a Hollywood film as much as I liked *V*, and it was so powerful that it blew everything I saw at CQ out of the water (well, except for Thank You For Smoking).

And that's another in a long line of LoCs to my favourite Weekly zine.

*Arnie*: Now, Chris, you know there's no such things as a Corflu Mafia. I've told you this more than once as has the Godfather himself, Ted White. It would be more healthy for all concerned if fans took more care with their stray thoughts and spontaneous elocutions.

And here, with a wide-ranging collection of provocative perceptions is one of *VFW*'s finest commentators..

### John Purcell

Many thanks for the latest. First and foremost, I really have to say something about the art in *VFW*; I have been enjoying it for as long as I have been reading this zine, especially the recycled Rotsler stuff. Always have enjoyed WR's sense of humor. He always had a way of conveying expression in his delightfully minimalist style. Always good, but the page 1 collaborative illo with Steve Stiles was choice.

Like you, I have had some technological problems with my zine, but the new computer we have at home seems to have the capability to overcome all sorts of weirdness I can throw at it. Here's to both of us for attempting to adapt to the technology. So far, I think we've been doing pretty good for a couple of old pharts.

Oh, gawd almighty, but I would love to attend Corflu again. It's been ages since I've been to one - the Minneapolis version for a way too brief time - and consider attending another Corflu my personal Holy Grail of fandom: this must be accomplished so I can die a happy camper.

I so agree with your appraisal of the different feel of Corflu from Worldcons. Likening Corflu to a gathering of the tribe is an appropriate metaphor. And you know, I think Minicon always felt like that to me because it always felt so much like that "this is where I belong" type of feeling. It is so hard to describe the cohesiveness of a group like Minnstf, fanzine fans, or whatever club or group you belong to; this is just something you simply *feel*, and I'll be damned if I can't describe it any better. This is just one of those things you simply cannot *define* and you have to accept at that level.

When I was studying "20th Century Military History" as part of my minor in Russian Studies at Iowa State University, I learned a lot about the M-1 Garand rifle. Without that gun, our infantry would have been in serious trouble. It was quite an innovation, and, as usual, I so love Dick's stories; they are a delight to read.

His opening comment about combat being "long periods of grinding boredom interrupted by brief moments of abject terror" meshes really well with stories my dad told my

brother and I about his days in the South Pacific during World War II. Dad was a radioman on an aircraft carrier, the *USS Kitkun Bay*, which saw action from Guadalcanal, up through the Solomons, into both Leyte Gulf engagements (got hit by two kamikazes during the second battle there), and onward to Saipan and Okinawa. One thing Dad told us has stayed with me to this day. He had said that one day he was at his station and suddenly realized that he had spent the last four days surviving on the Three C's: cigarettes, coffee, and catnaps. He simply didn't have the *time* to eat! The ship was constantly on and off battle stations. What a lovely all-expense paid trip to the South Pacific; that's how dad always referred to the war.

So SNAFFU is searching for a new home? Judging by the people involved, I say use a pub as a temporary meeting place until someone, in a semi-drunken fit of inspiration, "volunteers" their home to host regular meetings. Or you could rotate meeting places, like Minn-stf does. Happy pub hunting!

Ah, I see it's official; you've included in this issue Chris Garcia's inaugural address. In deference to Chris and others who have served the NFFF over the years, I really have no snide, silly, or other type of comments to make. Truth be told, I've never been a member, and traded zines with the organization back in the day. However, I do think the group is a great idea (thank you, Damon Knight), and I do wish Chris all the luck in the world in his intention to make the N3F a portal of fannish information. Nothing wrong with that, and given his vast reservoir of energy, I think Chris would be the logical choice to make this possible. I am going to watch how this goes during the course of his term. All hail!

Onward to the locs, thy middle-aged letterhack...

Lloyd Penney really is starting to refer to his own locs as "Lloyd Penney-style locs", which is fun. To me, the fun part of creating new fannish jargon is when others start joining in on the gag. Being self-referential is definitely part of the fannish persona, and that is whether or not there will ever be a *Fancylopedia II* in the future. I know I'm not going to hold my breath on that one.

Peter Sullivan seems to be on target saying that most fanzine fans are opting for the electronic route while still making dead-tree versions available. This is what I am now doing; the last couple issues of *In A Prior Lifetime* have had the last page be in 2-column layout, with one side blank to be used as a mailer. The way I do it is to make a master print copy and then run off exactly as many double-sided paper copies as I need on a photocopier. It's a pretty easy way to hold down print costs.

I think that most fanzine fans would much prefer to be called FAAN Award losers than Hugo Award losers. Using myself as a hypothetical example, if I ever by some miracle of Roscoe's doing wound up on the Hugo ballot for Best Fan Writer, while still being flattered by the honor, I would much prefer the voting being done by fans who *know* me and my work rather than by the Faceless Masses of world con membership. I mean, when I've searched out recent Hugo voting nominees and winners, there are not many writers and sto-

ries that I am really familiar with, sad to say. Now the fan categories are another cup of tea. If I know the material and writers involved, then I feel qualified to vote.

The peer recognition involved with the FAAN Awards is much more meaningful. In fact, I think peer rejection is more meaningful, too. Hmm...I don't think that sounds quite right. To quote Pat Paulson's ill-fated presidential campaign of 1968, "If nominated I will not run. If elected, I will not serve." (Chris Garcia should have used that slogan.)

I vaguely remember Eric Mayer writing about "Cafe' Fandom" back in 1985. Well, I don't think he was using it as a put-down, as you say, but as a bit of an in-joke. My take about fanzine fandom is that it is an elitist group with an open-door policy, but subject to Proof of Membership (locs, zines, artwork, or whatever it takes) with the prospective member holding out their latest ish as some sort of ID. I have visions of a private party at a world con with the ghosts of faneds past acting as bouncers at the door, checking zines. Or something like that. It's a weird vision.

At any rate, I really liked this latest edition of *VFW*. Thank you, Arnie, for keeping me on your mailing list.

*Arnie: Glad you mentioned the art, which is a part of the zine I greatly enjoy, too. Rotsler gave me many, many illos, so the ones you see in VFW are partly recycled and partly new. (Anyone with old Rotsler or ATOM illos who'd like to see them preserved in electronic form need only send them this way.) The Stiles-Rotsler collaboration, however, came from the relatively lively and lovely Steve Stiles. Which reminds me that I should mention that VFW is always delighted to present the cartoons of contemporary fan artists and would very much like to hear from the fine ones on the distribution list.*

*Looks like we've picked up another regular contributor; this is the second LoC in as many issues for this de-gafting fan.*

### Jean Marie Stine

A zine with Lupoff (on the late lamented *Algol!*) and a long LoC (oh how long since I last typed those three fateful letters) from Bob Lichtman. Not to mention filled with fannish references and terms of the purest ilk.

I am filled with nostalgia.

It makes me pine for Dave McDaniel (but then everything makes me pine for Dave McDaniel, aka Ted Johnstone), Owen Hannifen, Elmer Perdue, Charles Burbee and all the other members of the fandom that first stole my heart away. It is good to know that (to paraphrase Ogami Itto in one U.S. translation of the third of the Lone Wolf and Cub movies) at least a few "true samurai have lived long in this world." Plug in "trufan" and you will know what I mean.

Even the names on your CC list make me swoon to read, Gordon Eklund, Andy Porter (of the late lamented *Algol!*), Milt Stevens, et al. This is the first I have heard of Corflu, which sounds like scads more fun than the avian kind, and I can't claim not to be interested in attending some time.

And you pub this zine weekly! Are you people crazy or

what? Weekly zines have spelled the end to more fannish careers than snogging! For your sake, stop now! For my sake, keep going! Speaking of going, I must. I have miles of ebooks to publish before I sleep...

*Arnie: As the owner/editor of Renaissance E-Books, you know how much easier it is to publish electronically than in hard copy; the same is true for fanzines, especially when the impact of desktop publishing is also figured into the equation. A weekly fanzine of this size would've driven me crazy if I'd tried it in 1975; now it only makes me semi-nuts.*

*Now it's tyme for the Sage to offer a heady mix topped with a whiff of N3F scandal...*

### **Robert Lichtman**

The first thing to catch my eye in *VFW* No. 69 was the Page 3 Girl, who looks nothing like any version of Lucy Huntzinger I've ever seen. Lucy is an attractive woman, but her appearance in no way resembles whoever you've got impersonating her (who is much more, er, conventional-looking). Elsewhere in your article on Corflu, I certainly agree in a first-hand way that "the anti-party patrol at Corflu Nova proved a small, surmountable obstacle to a good time" and remember fondly that party at the Steffans. (And the main thing I remember about that Corflu other than conviviality was the lead-in to the Sunday banquet, where places had been set for maybe 25% of the attendees, food was largely absent, and not-very-warm pizzas making their appearance after an inordinate delay.) Having been to both, I loved your writing that "It's hard to tell the lobby at the worldcon hotel from the main hotel of, say, the Consumer Electronics Show." And I feel that Corflu already \*has\* become "Core Fandom's Worldcon."

Not knowing the ins and outs of Microsoft Publisher, it's a mystery to me, too, why changing the text to "running around" instead of "squared off" in the two places you mention in *VFW* No. 68 would make a nearly five-megabyte difference. Unlike my old work computer, I don't have a copy of Publisher here at home; but that's a small price to pay for Being Retired, let me tell you.

Dick Lupoff's writing about how he and his Army mates spent time "taking our rifles apart and putting them back together" reminded me of my own ROTC days. When I attended UCLA back in the early '60s, it was a "land grant" college. I no longer remember exactly what that means, but it *did* mean that they required all undergraduates to take four semesters of ROTC. My attitude about this did nothing to improve my overall grade point average, and perhaps the nadir of the entire experience was one mid-term exam that was supposed to consist of taking apart one's ancient M1 rifle and reassembling it. Since I'd either slept or read fanzines during the class in which this was being taught and couldn't have cared less about acquiring such a useless skill, my approach to the mid-term was to cheerfully take apart the rifle, carefully and thoroughly stir up all the parts on the, um, operating table, and then walk away. An ROTC upper classman just about went ballistic, sputtering "you can't do that!" menacingly. "Sure I can," I replied. "I just did." "But, but,"

the guy went on in a tone that was supposed to engender pity in me, "that means I'll have to reassemble it." "Have fun," I said as I left the room. Happily, after three semesters something changed concerning "land grant" colleges and I never had to complete the final semester. My GPA improved after that.

"What science fictional concept, except for the obvious one of space travel, would you most like to see come true?" Color me Trekker, but I'd like a future in which poverty, class distinctions, racism, wars and material need were all eradicated. I'm ready to take delivery of a replicator at any time, although instead of ordering "Earl Grey, hot" in Shakespearean thespian tones I'd probably go for things like "carrot juice, cold." "chocolate egg cream, well-stirred" and/or "Canter's matzo ball soup, hot."

It's good that Chris Garcia has a sense of humor about being president of the N3F, as evidenced in the first paragraph of his article; but I'm dubious that he can accomplish any of the lofty goals he sets forth for making the N3F somehow matter in fandom's anarchic meritocracy. And I wonder which sites he means when he writes that "With the potential loss of a couple of the fannish super sites, I really think that NFFF.org can fill that gap and powerfully." I know that the Timebinders site might go down due to the server owner's problems, but that hasn't been anything approaching a "fannish super site" for years. That aside, like you I wish Chris the best of luck in achieving his ambitious goals but "maintain skeptical until empirical evidence mandates a change in attitude."

And balancing Chris's good humor and intentions, there's Ruth Davidson at the end of this issue's letter column showing her total lack of a sense of humor and her complete misapprehension about the gentle ribbing of Chris in the previous issue's letter column. But then I thought, perhaps she's better versed in the checkered history of the N3F than either you or I are giving her credit for. Perhaps her letter is a pastiche of, say, the Alma Hill and Art Hayes rants of the '60s when we were neofans and had gotten sucked into the N3F ourselves. In that case, credit should be given. But on second thought, I doubt it.

It's good that SNAFFU has Jolie LaChance, with "considerable skill and experience as a professional carpenter," working with the library crew to construct and stabilize the shelving going up in your garage. I'd hate to think it was being done by amateurs and that it might not be done right, and that some night you and Joyce (and your neighbors) would be awakened by cracking sounds following by the loud mass thud of hundreds of books hitting the floor.

I hope you'll be able to get Su Williams to write up her visit to Flippin for *VFW* following her return!

Following up on Peter Sullivan's tracking of his "reference that Robert called me on to the 'last letterpress FAPA zine'," he writes that he found it in a 1998 issue of *File 770*. After checking through all the 1998 issues of that zine in hard copy searching for my "FAPA news squib" and finding nothing, I went on-line and located it in the September \*1999\* issue posted at efanazines. I'm not quite sure why Mike Glyer titled my article about Bill Danner ceasing publi-

cation of *Stefantasy* as “FAPA News,” since FAPA is mentioned nowhere in it—and Danner was last a member of FAPA in 1962. The last issue of *Stefantasy* was No. 123, dated December 1998, but the last issue distributed in FAPA was the 46th issue, which appeared in the February 1961 mailing. This still leaves open the question of whether or not there were subsequent letterpress fanzines in FAPA mailings, but if there were it’s likely they would have been the work of Helen Wesson—who, like Danner, came to SF fandom via the “mundane” amateur press world.

By the way, in doing the above research I ran across Glycer’s notices in three successive issues that I was planning a special publication collecting Walt Willis’s “Fanorama” columns from the ’50s Scottish SF magazine, *Nebula*, followed by a notice that I’d taken in a dozen pre-publication subscriptions (I wasn’t going to press until costs had been met), and then finally a report that it had been published and copies were available. As it happens, there are still a handful of them kicking around here. It’s a 100-page publication with stiff covers, containing all forty of the *Nebula* columns, plus one that appeared in my own *Psi-Phi* and four others that were in Peter Weston’s *Zenith*. Those are available for US\$12 postpaid to any U.S. address or US\$15 postpaid to anywhere else on the planet. This is a supplement to the 620-page *Warhoon* (also still available—see details at fanac.org under “fan history for sale”) collecting Walt’s fan writing.

Peter also writes, “And a rare LoC from Sandra Bond—can the next issue of *QuasiQuote* be far behind?” One would certainly hope so, but most of the activity I see from Sandra these days consists of posts on various of the fannish e-lists. I haven’t even been able to convince her to rejoin FAPA.

And Peter further writes, “Hugo nominations have just closed...it’s a fairly safe bet that *Drink Tank* won’t even be on the list for Best Fanzine, which is a travesty.” Not in my book—it’s entertaining enough, but it’s not of the caliber of those that *should* be nominated (though it could be on a par with some of those that are nominated, depending on which they are). I think Peter may be considering enthusiasm and frequency with \*quality\*. (No offense, Chris!)

Dick Lupoff writes, “I don’t think I can remember the first fellow-fan I ever met in the flesh.” Don’t feel bad, Dick; neither can I. But I suspect it would have been whichever LASFS member answered the door at 2548 W. 8th Street on the fateful Thursday evening that I attended my first LASFS meeting. That might have been the now-forgotten Zeke Leppin, whose house it was; but I also remember one (also-forgotten) Ann Chamberlain (a middle-aged N3F member who made some of her income producing rubber stamps—I remember buying a return address stamp from her that I used for many years). Of course, being as it was LASFS soon enough I met people like Bjo, Ted Johnstone, Forry Ackerman, Milt Stevens and Don Fitch. And I well remember at an early 1959 meeting being introduced to Elmer Perdue, who gave me a copy of the memorable *Burbblings c/w Elmurmurings* “No. 4 or 5 or possibly 7,” which was perhaps the most unusual fanzine I’d received up to that

point. Somewhere in there I met Burbee for the first time, too.

Thanks for the explanation of why you included Ken Forman on the list of old-time fans with direct knowledge of Degler. There seems to be quite a mystique building up around Ken, especially now that he’s living in far-oof exotic Arkansas and thus more available in his absence for mythologizing purposes. To think, I could have met Ken at the Solacon in 1958 if I hadn’t been in fandom for just a month and too shy to check it out. You write that if Ken’s “fan career continues to reach farther and farther back in time, it is inevitable that he will soon have met Degler and can tell us all about the Cosmic One.” My response to this is that it’s not outside the realm of possibility that as that happens there will be a Cosmic Burp and Ken will turn out to \*be\* Degler (but have reformed his nutty, thieving ways along the time line).

Art Widner has told me his Damon Knight quote—“Kate, I’d like you to meet the guy who helped me start the dumbest organization in all fandom”—in person a number of times (Art doesn’t speak in simplified spelling so I’m not directly quoting his letter) but it’s good to see it here in print. I wasn’t previously aware that his, Damon’s and Russ Chauvenet’s “vision” for it was “something like the WSFS, capable of dealing w hotels, media & other serious parts of mundanie.” To me WSFS isn’t a good example (and you couldn’t write an article about it because it came and went before your time in fandom) because it dissolved in feuds and acrimony back around the time I got into fandom in ‘58. But Ted was there for its several years of existence and would be a good candidate to write something about it for publication.

Art inquires, “Who is Ralph Holland?” He was an officer in the N3F back in the late ‘50s or early ‘60s and was the 1961 winner of the “Kaymar Award.” For those unfamiliar with this award, here’s what it says about it at the N3F Website: “The N3F was organized in April 1941, so the Kaymar Award is always given in April every year since 1959. The selection is made by a committee, consisting of previous winners who are still in the club, from nominations submitted by members. The Kaymar Award, like few other awards in fandom, is awarded only once. It is given not for talent or popularity, but for work, for the benefit of the club and its members. It is a fitting memorial to K. Martin Carlson (1904-1986), who originated, maintained and financed it for 25 years. Now it is paid for by the N3F Treasury, which is small compensation for the value of the work done by the winners over the years. Prizes include a year’s membership extension, \$10 cash and a certificate.” According to Warner’s history, Holland became chairman of the N3F directors in 1957 and was elected president in 1958. He died in 1962, having served the longest time ever (at that time, don’t know about later) as N3F president. Warner credits him with pumping up the organization’s numbers; there were 79 N3F members in June 1956, but over 200 by the end of the ‘50s. There’s also a most interesting story about Holland possibly involved in some pretty weird plagiarism. You can read about this at... <http://postcardfrommagonia.blogspot.com/> and also at... <http://www.homestead.com/wintersteel/files/>

[Unexplained/How did a European time-traveler mystery end in Akron Ohio .htm](#)

...and most interesting reading it is, too. I remember Holland being stuffy and boring, but this casts an entire new light on him as also Very Weird.

*Arnie: Bill Mills has offered some concrete suggestions to help with the memory reduction process that precedes distribution of each VFW. I have followed some of his suggestions this time and will be doing more in the future to keep each issue's memory size as small as possible.*

*If Chris didn't have a sense of humor, I wouldn't have teased him about the N3F. Whether he's successful in rehabilitating the club or not — and I understand your skepticism — I am kind of proud that he's willing to invest the time and effort to try. And if the N3F is to be brought into better contact with the rest of Fandom and fulfill its oft-stated mission of being a gateway to Fandom, it's going to take a fan like Chris Garcia to lead the way.*

*And I am sure Chris, as a budding fanhistory, will find the Ralph Holland material fascinating, as I did.*

*One of VFW's outstanding columnists offers some fan-ish anecdotes that make a crucial point about the hobby...*

#### **Dick Lupoff**

I really enjoyed your piece on Corflu, especially the discussion of egalitarianism. Reminds me of one of my own favorite themes. Whereby hangs, as usual, a tale.

In 1978 the late Jerry Jacks asked if I would like to be Guest of Honor at the 1979 Westercon in San Francisco. I told him there was only one condition: no color-coded name badges. I'd had enough of conventions where pro's got to wear blue badges and fans wore red badges (or whatever)

and the whole world seemed to be based on upper and lower castes. Jerry agreed, and I got to be GoH. Which of course was great fun.

My GoH speech was pretty impassioned, and devoted largely to the concept of egalitarianism in the science fiction community. Instead of a hierarchy with major star pro's at the top, then minor stars, then midlist professionals, then minor pro's, then BNF's, WKF's, and so forth, on down to the lowest of neo's —

I made a pitch for the image of a circle of science fiction enthusiasts of whatever stripe, with science fiction itself in the center of the circle, something that we all enjoyed and participated in, in whatever manner.

Well, the speech was total boffo. It was delivered at a buffet brunch in the Palace Hotel. Everybody loved it. Even the great Robert Silverberg congratulated me on it, and the thing was reprinted a couple of times.

That night, instead of going out for dinner, Pat and I and our three kids entered the dining room right there in the hotel. As we entered the room a certain professional SF writer, well known for his bibulous habits, rose from his table and lurched toward us. Oh, heck, why be coy, it was Jerry Pournelle. It was obvious that Jerry had taken exception to my speech.

As a matter of fact, he drew back his fist and swung at me.

Fortunately, he was so stinko drunk that he missed by about two feet.

His poor wife, Roberta, after watching in horror, jumped up from their table, grabbed Jerry, and pulled him back to his chair. She started apologizing for her husband's gaffe and I will admit that I was so damned gracious about the incident

# Contact! Las Vegas Club Directory

## Las Vegrants

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## Las Vegas Fan Events Calendar

### **VSFA Monthly Meeting** April 1 11 AM

The small, but active formal club meets at Dead Poet Books (937 South Rainbow Blvd.). The meeting usually focuses on club business, followed by a socially oriented after-meeting meal or snack.

### **Las Vegrants Meeting** April 1 7:30 PM

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

### **First Friday Video Group** April 7 6:00

James Willey hosts this monthly get-together. They are currently doing *Farscape*. More info from Mindy Hutchings (204-4332).

### **SNAFFU Discussion Meeting** April 7 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. Topic: What SF concept would you most like to see come true?

### **Second Sunday Movie Screening** April 9 6:00

James Willey hosts this monthly get-together. They watch genre movies. More info from Mindy Hutchings (204-4332).

### **Las Vegrants Meeting** April 15 7:30 PM

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

### **Sunday Social** April 16 2 PM

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

### **SNAPS Deadline** Sunday, April 16

Las Vegas Fandom's own electronic amateur press association has its deadline for contributions to the February distribution. Send your file to Joyce Katz (Joyceworley1@cox.net).

### **SNAFFU Dinner** April 27 7:00 PM

The SNAFFU Dinner Meeting will take place at Cool Cuba (2055 E. Tropicana (Burnham near Eastern). RSVP (this time only) to Joyce (joyceworley1@cox.net).

that, hey, what's the expression, "butter wouldn't melt in my mouth." Come to think of it, what the hell does that expression mean.

But oh, that was fun!

Next morning I found myself on a panel titled "Guilty Pleasures." The idea was that panelists would describe junk SF that they were inordinately fond of. Sci-Fi comic books, I suppose, or old Buster Crabbe serials, or maybe the collected oeuvre of Robert Moore Williams. Strangely enough, panelists instead started "confessing" to enjoying good, even great, literature. One panelist -- I can't remember who, Dave -- went on a Shakespeare rant. My personal contribution was a paean in praise of *Gravity's Rainbow*.

The audience was of middling size. This was on Monday morning and the convention was going to end at noon, I think. People were pretty sleepy. The management had kindly furnished carafes of coffee and plates of donuts for the panelists.

One of my fellow panelists, okay, it was Kathleen Skye, had apparently got upset over my GoH speech of the previous day. All of a sudden, instead of talking about her favorite book or movie or whatever... she started in on a rant against

egalitarianism and in favor of a caste system within the SF community.

Aha, thought I, there's a way to respond to this.

As soon as the outraged Miss Skye paused to catch her breathe, I addressed the audience. "You are all invited up here to partake of coffee and donuts."

Ah, that felt really, really, really good.

And the fans responded with alacrity, you can be sure.

BTW, there's an annual book show in Mission Hills, California, about which I feel very much the way you feel about Corflu. It's mainly for paperback collectors, but this year they're expanding to include hardcovers and pulps. People come from England, Canada, Chicago, New York, and assorted other exotic places to buy, sell, or swap books, get autographs, and renew friendships. It's very much an egalitarian event. I also get to feel like a fan again.

Couple years ago Kelly Freas was there and mentioned that he'd never got to paint a cover for one of my books. I said I'd love to have him do so. He said, "You'd better hurry up, then." Alas, I didn't make it. Last year, though (or was it the year before -- I'm afraid, Dave) I got to hang out with Mickey Spillane and tape a radio show with him. Wow!

Lissen here, Ms. Stine, I am hugely flattered by your kind words about my writing, but I haven't been in this racket so long. Why, I recall patting little Master Gernsback on the head and telling him, "This new idea of yours has potential, Hugo. You ought to try the publishing game when you grow up. But I think you should call your magazine by a snappier name than Scientifiction. Why don't you consider something like Amazing Stories?"

And little Hugo looked up at me with a grin and said, "What a wonderful idea, Mister Lupoff. Thank you, sir! Now can your grandchildren come out and play with me?"

But are you actually reprinting those Toffee stories? How can I get copies? I tried to track down Charles F. Myers about ten years ago. Got as far as Bill Hamling. Found that two Charles F. Myerses had lived in Auburn, California. One had died. He was not the author. The other had moved away, and there the trail went cold.

I did try and locate at least the digest-size reprints of the Toffee stories on abebooks.com, and they're available, as are some of the original Fantastic Adventures publications, but they are getting pretty damned pricey these days. If you're reprinting 'em, I'd like to get a hold of copies!

Enough, enough, gotta run! I'm busy dubbing tapes of old radio dramas to take in the car when we drive to Southern California next week.

*Arnie I find the way some fans abase themselves to even the most marginal pros kind of disgusting. I respect good pro SF authors for their creations, as I respect good authors of all types, but I definitely agree that Fandom was better when it was a circle rather than a mountain.*

*Egalitarianism is a lost cause in SF convention-land. Convention Fandom appears to be one giant hierarchy. It's clear that con fans often feel a distance between themselves and the pros that fanzine fans don't share. Maybe it's because fanzine fans and pro authors have substantially the same skill set and interest profile.*

*I think the Hugo Awards committee this year tried to do something good by moving Certain Titles out of the "Best Fanzine" category, but it was philosophically dead wrong. I don't like the implications that the best fanzines aspire to be*

*semi-prozines or that a successful fanzine is "rewarded" by ascending to semi-pro status. The idea of a fanzine and a semi-prozine are entirely different.*

*And now, the absolute lock to end this installment of ChatBack on a rising, positive note – a letter from VFW's resident Mr. Sunshine...*

**Shelby Vick**

Hey, I'm slipping badly! Not only have I missed an occasional issue of my column, I haven't even written a LoC laterly! Not only no letters of mine printed, but also no mention in the WAHF department. So I'll settle for the LoC, this time. I could babble out another column, but I'm beginning to feel guilty about my output!

Got several projects keeping me busy that have nothing to do with fandom; Diane's orchids and, now, a blooming pineapple plant! Not "blooming" -- it actually has a small pineapple growing in the middle!

Well, let me stumble forward. In a past letter I mentioned weekly mailings from John Hertz. Well, it FEELS like weekly! Seems like every time I turn around, there's another batch. Usually before I can finish the last one! Of course, I gotta remember that I'm currently a slow readers.

And I wasn't at all taking down *Office Word*; not having *Microsoft Word*, it seems to be the Next Best. But I'm kinda sot in my ways; I've been into *Word Perfect* for years.

Arnie, I look at Vegas Fandom as your garden. Yeah, there are other established fans who sometimes help with the cultivation, but you're Head Gardener.

And I ain't saying nuthin' about fertilizer. . . . VFW is kinda your plant catalog.

*Arnie: Not my Garden, surely. It's more like a kibbutz – or since it's composed of a lot of talkative fans, a Kibbitz.*

**From My Sickbed...**

... I caught a cold, but the issue gets done! Send me a letter of comment and cheer up a Gallant Invalid.

— Arnie Katz

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